"HOUSEHOLD ENERGY CONSERVATION PATTERNS: EVIDENCE FROM GREECE"

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Abstract

This paper develops an empirical model to investigate the main determinants of household energy conservation patterns in Greece employing cross section data. In the empirical analysis household energy conserving choices models are employed, using a discrete and a latent trait variable respectively as a dependent variable. The results show that socio-economic variables such as consumers' income and family size are suitable to explain differences towards energy conservation preferences. In addition, the results suggest that electricity expenditures and age of the respondent are negatively associated with the number of energy conserving actions that a consumer is willing to adopt. Finally, other variables such as environmental information feedback and consciousness of energy problems are characteristics of the energy saver consumer. By evaluating consumer's decision-making process with regards to energy conservation measures, we are able to formulate and propose an effective energy conservation framework for Greece. An energy policy framework is among the main prerequisites not only for achieving sustainable development but also for maintaining consumers' quality of life.

Keywords: Energy conservation, household behaviour.

JEL: Q49; Q20

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1. Introduction

Scientists agree that anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases upset the ecological balance. Overconsumption of natural resources is portrayed as a major threat to the sustainability. Environmental problems like greenhouse effect, ozone layer depletion, and acid rain effect are not any more problems of a specific region or country. They are major global problem, which cannot be tackled effectively without a global co-operation.

The Kyoto Protocol sets out certain commitments for the developed countries, in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) for the period 2008-2012. The overall target agreed is a reduction of the six most dangerous gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect by at least 5% below the 1990 levels for the period 2008-2012. These gases are: carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), sulphur hexafluroide (SF_6) and two groups of industrial gases: hydrofluocarbons (HFC_S) and perfluorocarbons (PFC_S).

Economic theory suggest that, in order to gain comfort and time households are becoming excessive energy users, neglecting the environmental impact of their choices. According to household production theory, households are treated as productive units organized to provide services for the occupants; energy is treated as input in the provision of a range of household services. Consumers' choices define the utility they can derive (Becker, 1965; Lancaster, 1966; Muth, 1966). The extent of service that we can derive from a given amount of energy depends not only on the efficiency of the technology but also the consumers' lifestyle. Several theoretical and empirical studies focused on households' energy conserving behaviour and its links with socio-economic parameters, which hint at lifestyle changes. Critical parameters, which were taken into consideration, are: (i) economic variables (ii) demographic variables of household unit and dwellings' characteristics and (iii), attitudinal variables.

The aim of the study is to compose the profile of energy saver consumer in Greece. Greeks could be more sustainable energy users if they adopt more conservation actions and one potential area is household sector. In particular, Greeks will have to restrict the average growth of the emissions of all six gases, for the period 2008-2012. This target is to be achieved through a number of interventions at national and European level that refer to all sectors of the economy and particularly to energy sector. During the 1970-1990 period Greece's energy demand was marked by a sharp increase close to 5% per year.

Transport was shown to be the most energy-consuming sector, accounting in 1990 for 39% of total national energy consumption, with the residential services sector responsible for 31% and the industrial sector for the 26% (Mirasgedis *et al*., 1996). Greek households use two main sources of energy, electricity and petroleum products for space heating (Donatos and Mergos, 1991). Residential energy consumption in Greece has increased by 5.4% annually within the period 1965 -2001. During this period the share of electricity in household energy consumption has increased steadily, by 2% annually. On the other hand the share of petroleum products seems to be declining by 0.6% per annum. (IEA- Energy balances in OECD countries various editions). The polluter that contributes the most to the greenhouse effect is carbon dioxide (CO_2), which is generated mainly from the combustion of energy inputs like lignite, brown and coal, for electricity generation and fuel oil.

Even for a medium-sized European country like Greece energy sector plays a major role in global warming. In 1990 electricity sector accounted for 50% of CO_2 emissions produced in Greece (Vassos and Vlachou, 1997). During the period 1990-1995, CO_2 emissions in Greece from the energy sector accounted for approximately 90% of total CO_2 emissions (Christodoulakis et al., 2000). The CO_2 emissions that are generated from households contribute to total emissions by approximately 8.6%. Total per capita CO_2 emissions have also increased in the period 1990-1998 by 13.6% (IEA, 2000).

The purpose of the paper is to develop an empirical model for explaining households' energy conservation patterns with regards to their lifestyle. By evaluating consumer's decision-making process with regards to energy conservation measures, for first time to our knowledge based on a cross section data for Greece, we are able to formulate and propose an effective energy conservation framework for Greece. An energy policy framework is among the main prerequisites not only for achieving sustainable development but also for maintaining consumers' quality of life.

The paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 presents the theoretical background on energy conservation. Section 3 deals with methodological issues and the data used in the empirical analysis while in Section 4 the empirical evidence are presented. Finally, in section 5, the conclusions of the analysis are summarized and the policy implications are discussed.

2. Theoretical Background on Energy Conservation Determinants

Several studies have investigated aspects of the lifestyle-energy interaction (Nader and Beckemnan, 1978; Schipper *et al.*, 1989; Lutzenhiser, 1992; Lutzenhiser, 1993; Nakagami, 1996). In the context of residential energy use lifestyle should reflect the understanding that environmental responsibility and concern for energy sources go part and parcel with our daily energy based actions (Held, 1983). This demand –conscious lifestyle does not necessarily imply curtailment or sacrifices as far as the level of comfort or the quality of living are concerned. On the contrary, this approach is centered on an altered awareness of energy consumption in our daily lives (Stern and Gardner, 1981). As Coomer (1977) claimed a significant decrease in energy consumption may mean a perceived lifestyle change and should not be identified by means of reduced quality of life or social status, and as Leonard- Barton (1981) defined in a discretionary change of lifestyle, a low energy lifestyle is characterized by ecological awareness and attempts to become more self-sufficient users, known as voluntary simplicity lifestyle. Van Raaij and Verhallen (1983) and Weber and Perrels (2000) specified that lifestyle approach should take into consideration a broader socio-cultural concept. In this concept, lifestyle patterns are shaped as a consequence of enduring activities with regards to time, housing, family and income conditions that households face and partly as a way of self-expression and self-realization. Below are described several demographic, socio-economic, housing and attitudinal variables that hint at lifestyle differences and in turns define the effect of lifestyle on consumer's decision-making process with regards to residential energy conservation.

2.1: Income influences on energy conserving behaviour

Household income is a dominant predictor of energy use behaviours (Held, 1983). Ritchie *et al.* (1981) results confirmed that family income was positively related to in-home energy consumption. A recent analysis confirmed that households with higher incomes consume more energy sources (Brandon and Lewis, 1999). Although, the relationship between annual family income and acceptance of energy conservation strategies is characterized as very weak (Olsen, 1983), conservation actions are developed by people who have higher income and/ or invested money that can be used for that purpose (Dillman *et al.*, 1983). In an econometric estimation of determinants of energy

conservation expenditures Long (1993) proved that income level of the households was positively and statistically related to larger conservation investments. Kasulis *et al*. (1981) had argued that if a household belongs to a low income group, they are already very likely to be using low amounts of energy and thus would not have the ability to respond to requests for greater conservation activity. Stern and Gardner (1981) stressed that energy efficiency rather than curtailment measures are more preferable to higher income consumers. In a recent study, Poortinga *et al*. (2003) argued that technical improvements were most acceptable for respondents with a high income, with behavioural measures being the least acceptable for high incomes. This might be explained by the fact that technical measures often require an initial investment, which might be less problematic for the higher-income group. Bearing in mind the payback period of most conservation actions, low-income households may feel financially unstable and lack the capital to invest in residential energy efficiency improvements (Schipper and Hawk, 1991). Walsh (1989) econometric analysis confirmed that higher income households are better able than lower income families to purchase energy conservation. It is evident that higher incomes mean more rapid expansion of appliance ownership and more rapid replacement of existing inefficient models (Schipper and Hawk, 1991). A survey of 1200 households in Ireland conducted by Scott (1997) supported the assumption that restricted access to credit and transactions costs (such as time and effort) made residential conservation actions prohibitive. Finally, lower income respondents were more sensitive to energy problem (Samuelson and Biek, 1991).

2.2: Energy prices inflation influences on energy conserving behaviour

Many researchers have stressed the importance of energy prices on the energy saving behaviour of the households. In a state-wide survey on 478 residential electricity consumers in Massachusetts during the summer of 1980, Black *et al*. (1985) examined the interactive effects of energy prices on conservation actions which involved energy efficiency improvements or curtailment of the services energy provides. They support that both high household energy bills and rising heating fuel price were incentives to energy saving. Long (1993) tested the energy prices and energy-reducing investments interaction using an extended database of 6.346 households in western United States for the year 1981. He clarified that there was a statistically significant relationship between energy price changes and conservation measures that individual Americans are likely to adopt. In

fact, for each percentage point rise in the cost of energy he estimated a 0.21 percentage point increase in conservation items. Increased expected energy prices appeared to have a positive relationship to total conservation expenditures. In another survey for 2.911 Californian households, Walsh (1989) confirmed that the probability of a conservation improvement decision was positively related to higher expected fuel prices. Pitts and Wittenbach (1981) substantiated the above-mentioned conclusion. But for the time trend of energy prices another important factor is the cost of conservation improvements. Although energy –efficient equipment may be more expensive at the time of purchase households tend to ignore that energy conserving appliances are less expensive in use due to the restrictive use of increased price electricity (Schipper and Hawk, 1991). Not surprisingly enough, energy price inflations do not always encourage conservation activities. In fact, as Dillman *et al*. (1983) revealed, by examining the behaviour of 8.392 households in the United States, a higher energy price encouraged wealthy households to make energy conservation investments, whereas poor households forced to take lifestyle cutbacks in all of their expenditure patterns as a response to increased energy prices. The potential socio-economic and equity impacts of energy prices increases are evident bearing in mind that this practice is a non-voluntary character energy conserving measure (Held, 1983).

2.3: Effects of tax credits and subsidizes on energy conserving behaviour

Incentives dealing with household energy conservation activity can be categorized as follows: (i) incentive initiatives, such as grants for purchase of insulation, tax credits for insulation of solar equipment and low interest loans for the purchase of heat pumps, (i) disincentive initiatives such as taxes and prices rates that penalize consumption during peak periods, and (iii) restriction initiatives such as efficiency standards, (McDougal *et al*., 1981). However, empirical research has centered on the impact of tax credits or subsidy schemes. The effects of tax credits or subsidies on energy savings are ambiguous. Some researchers hold the belief that specific tax credits or subsidies do not induce conservation activity. Pitts and Wittenbach (1981), who based on a survey of 146 homeowners, supported that no direct relationship existed between conservation improvements installed by local contractors and the existence of a federal tax credit. Similarly, Walsh (1989) examined the factors that are systematically associated with household energy efficiency improvements and took into consideration a state-level tax credit. The results provided

evidence in support of hypothesis that energy tax credits have not stimulated energy conservation behaviour. Moreover, larger tax credits were not found to be positively associated with larger improvements and attribute the failure of tax credits to promote energy efficiency to: (i) the small discount rate implied by the credits, (ii) bureaucratic barriers that consumer face in order to claim the credit and (iii) consumers' lack of knowledge about the existence of credit or consumers' misunderstanding of the price reducing effect of this credit (Held, 1983). Although, tax credits may produce distributional impacts, there are also two studies for United States that provide evidence for a positive relationship between tax credits or subsidies and energy conservation activities. Using a sample of 1761 households, Cameron (1985) focused on energy conservation "retrofits" such as insulation and storm windows in the context of a discrete continuous model. Based on the assumption that all households were perfectly informed of the tax credit and all faced the same-tax prices her simulations indicated that a government subsidy equal to 15% of improvements costs would cause 3% of all households to make some conservation improvement. She found that for each percent of government subsidization, accounting by 15% of conservation costs, about 0.2% of households would be induced to take a residential conservation improvement. Accordingly, Long (1993) found that households were to spend more on energy conservation items when these investments were subsidized by government tax policies. However, as Cameron (1985) pinpointed a major problem with subsidies, is that it is uneasy to distinguish "induced" conservation activity from energy efficiency activity, which would have occurred without the subsidy.

2.4: Households' socio-demographic characteristics and energy conserving behaviour

2.4.1: Effects of household unit characteristic on energy conserving behaviour

Studies investigating the decision to make an energy conservation improvement took into consideration various characteristics of household units' and its occupants. A survey conducted by Olsen (1983) in the State of Washington in spring 1981 revealed that sex of the respondent is not statistically significantly related to acceptance of energy conservation strategies. Energy use and acceptance of energy conservation strategies are positively related to educational level of the respondent (Held, 1983; Olsen, 1983), while less educated respondents prefer behavioural energy conserving measures (Poortinga *et*

al., 2003) and are more conscious of energy problems (Samuelson and Biek, 1991). However, education of the respondents has no significant influence neither on the number of household energy conservation actions (Curtis *et al*., 1984), or on the actual energy consumption (Ritchie *et al.*, 1981). Households' energy conservation expenditures were not statistically different between married couple households and other family types (Long, 1993), whereas, family size and composition, presence or absence of family members from home, have a direct effect on energy behaviour and use (Van Raaij and Verhallen, 1983). In fact, family size was positively related to in-home energy consumption with households comprised of two to four people took a greater number of actions than households of differing size (Curtis *et al.*, 1984). Employment is also related to energy use. Although Curtis *et al*., (1984), reported that occupation of the respondents had no significant influence on the number of households' energy conservation actions, Olsen (1983) claimed that persons with higher - status occupations are slightly more accepting of energy conservation strategies. Finally, households residing in large dwellings, as measured by the number of rooms and number of floors, are energy intensive consumers (Ritchie *et al.*, 1981). So, the older and larger the dwelling, the more likely that households will engage in an energy conservation improvement (Walsh, 1989).

2.4.2: Age as a predictor variable of energy conserving behaviour

Numerous empirical studies examined age of the respondent as a predictor variable for energy conservation actions. In his study for Canadian households Walsh (1989) argued that younger heads of households are more likely to make a conservation improvement. He added that conservation investments are less likely to be made by older persons because they expect a relatively lower rate of return from energy improvements than do other age cohorts. In an earlier study for Canadian and U.K. consumers, respectively, Ritchie *et al*. (1981) and Brandon and Lewis (1999) have proved that age of household head was positively related to in-home energy consumption levels, whereas Hirst and Goeltz (1982) clarified that age has a curvilinear relationship with conservation behaviour, as young and elderly households take fewer actions than those in their middle age. In general, the older the person is, the less likely she or he is to adopt energy conservation strategies because: (i) the housing of elderly is generally older with decayed insulation, (ii) elderly diminished physical ability for conservation improvements, (iii) elderly have fewer years of formal education and lack of energy know-how and (iv) elderly do not relate well

conservation's "spend- now- to save- later" philosophy (Olsen, 1983; Berry and Brown, 1988; Brown and Rollinson, 1985; Tonn and Brown, 1988; Poortinga *et al*., 2003). Contrary to the previously mentioned, Long (1993) estimations on energy conservation expenditures of Americans in 1981 revealed a positive sign between the age of the respondent and the money spend for conservation improvements, result that researcher attribute to the older and subsequently less energy efficient houses that elderly resided in.

2.4.3: Homeownership as a predictor variable of energy conserving behaviour

Home ownership may be a critical determinant of energy efficiency responses. As Stern and Gardner (1981) argued home ownership prescribes the type of energy conservation behaviour that residents would adopt. More precisely, efficiency measures are more available to consumers and to homeowners, whereas curtailment may be the only option for renters. Curtis *et al*. (1984), based on a sample of 473 Canadians, examined the relationship between house tenure and the number of reported conservation actions, and concluded that although form of home tenure was not significantly associated with number of actions, those who owned their homes declared a slightly greater number of actions than renters. In addition, Black *et al*. (1985), based on answers of 478 residents of Massachusetts during the summer of 1980, argued that homeownership had the strongest direct effect on investments in energy efficiency. They observed that homeowners gain the personal benefits of investment, either in comfort energy savings, property values, or whatever, whereas renters are not likely to invest their money to improve the energy efficiency of their landlord's property. Brandon and Lewis (1999) substantiated the above-mentioned conclusion and added that people living in rented accommodation might not have the right, as tenants, to invest in energy efficiency improvements of their homes. Finally, as Walsh (1989) survey indicated conservation practices are less likely to be adopted by renters because their expectations as far as the rate of return on theirs investments are relatively low due to a shorter tenure in their dwellings.

2.5: Effects of information diffusion on energy conserving behaviour

A critical question for researchers of energy conserving determinants was why do households decisions toward energy use diverge not only from what it seems effective for an economic point of view but also from an environmental one. Information seeking was another path of investigation, which was assessed. Information diffusion tends to be a

voluntary and communicative strategy for activating energy conserving behaviour (Held, 1983). There are various approaches of information diffusion that can alter residential behaviour toward energy use, such as pamphlets enclosed in utility bills, advertising campaigns and appliance energy-consumption labels McDougal *et al.* (1981). Their main purpose is to increase the recipients'- households' knowledge of energy conservation alternatives by communicating them emotional, persuasive or supportive messages, which can be a motive for taking those actions (Olsen, 1981). Another important factor is the source of information. In case of Canadian energy consumers, Curtis *et al.* (1984) indicated that the number of sources people utilize to gain information and energy conservation actions taken were positively related. Brandon and Lewis (1999) confirmed the energetic influence of feedback information on energy saving behaviour by interviewing 1.000 residents of Georgian properties in Bath (UK). As Scott (1997) stressed, in a survey of 1.200 households in Ireland, the households' sense of small potential economic savings from adoption of energy conserving actions is attribute to lack of information, whereas Schipper and Hawk (1991) reported that consumers not only may lack the information about costs and benefits of energy efficiency improvements but also may not understand how to use the available information. Every kind of information (feedback information, general information or specific information and behavioural advice) can be evaluated in the process of an energy conservation campaign (Van Raaij and Verhallen, 1983).

2.6: Effects of attitudinal variables on energy conserving behaviour

Motivation for household energy conservation actions may stem from a number of influences and sources. Many studies have focused on social or psychological factors related to energy-saving behaviour, by examining the influence of cognitive variables, such as values, beliefs or attitudes towards energy conservation (Gardner and Stern, 1996). A number of studies suggest that social factors could be an important determinant of energy conserving behaviour. A social norm is defined as an expectation shared by a group, which specifies behaviour that is considered appropriate for a given situation (Secord and Backman, 1974). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) define norms as the established behaviour patterns for the members of a given social system. Attitudes develop as a result of cumulative experience and knowledge derived from past exposure to environmental stimulus. O'Riodan (1971) refers that attitudes are organized sets of

feelings and beliefs about a subject or situation, which can influence an individual's behaviour. According to Becker and Seligman (1981) it is important to examine attitudes because "appropriate energy related attitudes and beliefs might constitute a necessary condition for appropriate energy related behaviours". Since new attitudes can be established, attitude-action association has important implications for energy education (Collins *et al.*, 1979).

Some authors have begun to speculate on the above-mentioned factors, while others have begun to provide relevant evidence. Seligman *et al.* (1979) explained a high portion of electricity consumption using attitudinal variables. Based on two samples, 56 and 69 couples respectively from a New Jersey townhouse development, agreed to fill out a questionnaire about their attitudes toward energy use and their actual summer electric consumption. Using an econometric analysis, researchers have found that beliefs and behavioural intentions closely related to specific energy –using behaviour are predictive of these behaviours. Respondents perceived their use of energy according to their judgment of the effect of energy conservation on personal comfort and health, the effort required to conserve and the monetary payoff for doing so, the ability of the individual to have an impact on the energy problem and their belief that the crisis is legitimate. Contrary to Seligman *et al.* (1979) results, Ritchie *et al.* (1981) survey for 2.366 Canadian households proved that none of the attitudinal variables was significant in the final explanatory model of actual energy consumption. Another predictor variable is perceived seriousness of the national energy problem. Verhallen and van Raaij (1981) argued that people's perception of their own contribution to energy problems is predictive of household energy conservation. Presumably, the greater the perceived seriousness of the problem, the more likely one should be to support strategies for promoting energy conservation (Olsen, 1983). A strong attitude exists that human misuse rather than resources scarcity, is responsible for the current energy problem. Energy attitudes may affect behaviour via the belief that conservation brings direct personal benefits and, the development of social norms about saving energy. This finding is similar to Olsen's (1981) who reported that Americans also felt that there was a real and serious problem in the USA. The empirical analysis of Curtis *et al.* (1984) substantiated the above-mentioned conclusions. They found, based in a sample of 473 Canadian residents, that conservation decisions were influenced by two attitudinal factors: (i) the belief that individual energy conservation actions are important and (ii) the willingness to change their lifestyle in order to save

energy. Using a survey of 1.000 Texas residents, which was carried during the period July-August 1987, Samuelson and Biek (1991) analysis replicated previous work by Seligman et *al*. (1979) by identifying the same four principal dimensions underlying energy use attitudes and beliefs: (i) comfort and health, (ii) high effort – low payoff, (iii) role of individual consumer and (iv) legitimacy of energy problem.

However, in Brandon and Lewis (1999) study, conducted in 1994, for 1.000 residents of Georgian properties in Bath (UK), there was evidence that while environmental attitudes and beliefs are important in this context on energy conservation actions, financial considerations were of equal or even greater importance. An analogous study by Poortinga *et al*. (2003), which was conducted during October and November 1999 and participated 455 households, showed related degree of respondents' environmental concern to acceptance of different types of energy saving measures. Results seemed counter-intuitive as, respondents with a high environmental concern found measures with small energy savings relatively more acceptable than measures with large energy savings, whereas the reverse applied to respondents with a low environmental concern. These results might be explained by using Stern (2000) distinction between environmentally significant behaviour that is defined by its impact and environmentally significant behaviour that is undertaken by the actor with the intention to improve the environment.

So, energy conscious attitudes do not always lead to energy conserving behaviour. Attitudes may lead to good intentions but social norms, lack of knowledge on the energy use of certain behaviours and on the energy conservation effects of behavioural change and institutional factors may block the intention to be realized in actual behaviour (Van Raaij and Verhallen, 1983). As Black *et al*. (1985) claimed, generalized concern about the national energy situation does not influence behaviour directly but exerts an indirect influence by affecting personal norms. In their model, based on 478 Massachusetts electricity consumers during the summer of 1980, researchers found that the sense of obligation to adopt energy efficiency measures in the home derives from the sort of factors that typically activate moral norms. Some of these are social in nature (concern about the energy problem, awareness of social norm for efficiency), but other factors are also influence the personal norm. An important one is the belief that personal benefits will result from energy efficiency home improvements. When people do take minor actions that save money, provide comfort, and so forth, a cognitive process involving a sense of personal obligation mediates the effect of perceived personal benefit. Norms are activated

in order to produce energy altruistic behaviour. Another work based on the interaction of attitudes, beliefs, norms, intensions and behaviour with respect to energy conservation, was that of Midden and Ritsema (1983) for Netherlands. The survey sample of 1.076 Dutch residents was conducted in June 1981 and gave insights in the impact of social norms on intention to conserve energy, which was characterized as rather weak. Energy conserving behaviour will be normatively strengthened when others in the environment of the individual perceive the benefits of this behaviour. These benefits are necessary to motivate people to exert pressure on others.

3. Methodological Issues and Data

Following previous studies of residential energy conservation, four subsets of variables were used in this empirical analysis of Greek households: economic factors (private monthly income, electricity expenditures), demographic variables (age, sex and educational level of the respondent, marital status and family size), dwellings' characteristics (homeownership, house type, number of rooms and size in m^2), information diffusion, and attitudinal variable (individuals belief about their contribution to environmental problems). All the previously mentioned variables hint at lifestyle differences. Therefore, in the empirical study the following expanded specification for consumers' participation in energy conserving actions is employed:

$$CONSERVE_i = \alpha_o + \alpha_1 AGE_i + \alpha_2 SEX_i + \alpha_3 UNIV_i + \alpha_4 MARRIED_i + \alpha_5 MEMBER_i + \alpha_6 LNINMON_i$$

$$+ \alpha_7 LNEL_i + \alpha_8 OWNH_i + \alpha_9 TYPEH_i + \alpha_{10} NOROOMS_i + \alpha_{11} TM2_i + \alpha_{12} INFOENV_i$$

$$+ \alpha_{13} CRESP_i + u_i \qquad (1)$$

where AGE is the age of the correspondent; SEX is the sex of the correspondent, accounting for 1 if the respondent is male; UNIV is a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent has completed undergraduate studies in a Greek university or not; MARRIED is a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent is married or not; MEMBER is the number of household members living in the same residence; LNINMON is the natural logarithm of monthly private income of the respondent measured in euro; LNEL is the natural logarithm of household's expenditures for electricity in euro as they recorded in the last electricity bill; OWNH is a dummy variable indicating whether the household owns his dwelling; TYPEH is a dummy variable indicating whether the household resides in a detached house or not; NOROOMS is the number of rooms of household's dwelling; TM2 is dwelling size in m^2; INFOENV is a dummy variable

indicating whether the respondent is informed about the global environmental problems; CRESP is a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent recognize his contribution to environmental problems and u is an error term.

The dependent variable CONSERVE represents consumers' behaviour towards specific energy-conserving actions. In order to construct the dependent variable we followed Curtis *et al.* (1984) and Stern and Gardner (1981) approach. The differentiation of energy conservation actions according to Curtis *et al.* (1984) and Stern and Gardner (1981) were used as a criterion for the choice of the statements with regards to energy use decision-making process. Curtis *et al.* (1984) observed that energy-conserving actions are of two types: (*i*) practices (which are no- and low cost actions that require some change in household behaviour, no capital investment and can easily implemented) and (*ii*) measures (that involve technical changes in the house and capital investment costs). Stern and Gardner (1981) distinguished between efficiency energy conservation actions and curtailment conservation actions and supported the idea of demand shift. According to Stern and Gardner (1981) demand shift refers to encourage consumers to shift to an energy type that is more available than the one they currently use or to provide consumers with initiatives in order to shift the time of day when the energy is consumed. For this purpose seven questions are included in the questionnaire to capture consumers' willingness to participate in energy conserving actions. In particular,

(*i*) con_light: I take care of switching off the lights when their use is not necessary (YES=1, NO=0).

(*ii*) con_appliance: I switch off household appliances when I don't use them. (YES=1, NO=0).

(*iii*) rp_lamp_price: Energy saving lamps can be 5 times more efficient than the conventional ones, would you buy them regardless of their higher purchase cost? (YES=1, NO=0).

(*iv*) thermal_ins: I have my house thermal insulated. (YES=1, NO=0).

(*v*) night_lig_bill: I prefer to do energy intensive tasks during the off peak period of electricity use, when the cost is lower. (YES=1, NO=0).

(*vi*) save-en_en: I would like to use a natural gas system in my house in order to decrease my participation in environmental destruction from the excessive use of energy resources. (YES=1, NO=0).

(*vii*) res_h_env: I would like to live in a house that bases its operation to renewable energy resources in order to get rid the cost of energy bills. (YES=1, NO=0).

The frequency percentages of responses for each of the seven questions as well as their categorization are presented in the following table.

Table 1.

Categorization and frequencies of variables counting for energy conserving actions

n=500		YES (%)	NO (%)		Type of energy conservation action
con_light		77.6	22.4		Practice/ curtailment
con_appliance		84.8	15.2		Practice/ curtailment
rp_lamp_price		70.6	29.4		Measure/ efficiency/ demand shift
thermal_ins		33.8	66.2		Measure/ efficiency
night_lig_bill		44.2	55.8		Practice/ curtailment / demand shift
save-en_env		59.6	40.4		Measure/ efficiency/ demand shift
res_h_env		60.2	39.8		Measure/ efficiency/ demand shift

Bearing in mind that the above-described variables are dummies, we followed two different methodologies in order to create our dependent variable. The first methodology was based in the calculation of the total number of proposed energy conserving actions by adding the responses of all seven questions. In this case, our variable ranges from zero to seven. The average actions stated were 4.3, while 9.8% and 16.2% of the respondents gave a positive answer for 2 and 3 respectively of the seven conservation actions. However, only 5.6% of the consumers were positive to all of the actions proposed. The second methodology was based in the estimation of a latent trait model using Twomiss Program. The Program is designed for fitting latent trait models. The estimated conditional mean of the latent variable given the observed response patterns of the dummies variables was the result of this procedure. In both methodologies, the transformed variable was regressed upon the explanatory variables of equation (1) using OLS technique. The empirical results are presented in the section 4 of this work.

The present analysis is based on an extensive survey of 586 Greek households, which was carried out from the 1st of June to 31st of August 2003. The form of the survey was a questionnaire, which was administered using face-to-face interviews with one adult from each household in their home. As a prerequisite, the person answered the questionnaire was above 18 years old and income earner. The sampled households were located in five

of the main and most representative regions of Athens, as far as the socio-economic characteristics of their residents are concerned. The sampled households at each region were chosen at random following the protocol of "right –hand turns"[1]. According to this method, every third house in the block in which the starting address was located was interviewed until the number of interviews stipulated for that cluster was completed. Selection of every third house as the sampling ensured that sparsely developed blocks would be adequately represented in the sample. For example we started from block number 1 and we interviewed the house number 3, next we omitted second block and we interviewed the sixth house in the block. When the rule of three was completed, we started from the beginning.

A total of 500 questionnaires were completed, one hundred of each region. Approximately 61% of the respondents were female and 39% male. Respondents' ages ranged from 19 to 76, while the average age of the sample was equal to 37 years old. Seventeen percent of the households' heads reported that he or she received primary education; 38% attended high school, while 29% of the respondents reported that they have completed undergraduate studies in a Greek university. Fifty one percent of the persons sampled were married. The average household consisted of three individuals, ranging normally from one to nine members. In particular, 53% of the households have no children, almost 14% have one, 28% have two, and 5% have three or more. The average annual household non-property income is equal to 22,500 euros, while the majority of respondents reported that their wages were ranging from 500 to 800 euros. Seventy five percent of the persons interviewed declared that their salary was not enough to cover their basic needs. That's probably explain, why almost 62% of persons questioned have zero savings. However, the average daily working time is equal to seven hours, 34% of the respondents stated an eight-hour daily working program, while 24% work above ten hours per day.

As far as the characteristics of the dwelling are concerned, 80% of the households sampled live in apartment buildings, while 20% live in detached houses. Seventy percent of respondents are homeowners. The average dwelling size is almost 94 m^2 with the majority of respondents, 38%, live in a three-room dwelling. Forty one percent of the dwellings are characterized as houses with high temperature during summer and low temperature during winter. The majority of households' members, who used central heating, admitted that they would limit their consumption for space heating in case of an increase of oil's price.

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[1] We followed a similar approach to Kasulis et al. (1981).

The average consumption of heating oil per household was 1,355 litres, 31% consumed one tone, while approximately 13% consumed 1,500 litres. 28.6% of the respondents reported expenditures for electricity above 121 euros according to the mean electricity bill during winter, 30% spend approximately 61 to 90 euros, while 25% almost 100 euros. Finally, the majority of the respondents (~75%) referred that they were informed about the environmental problems while the same percentage occurred for consumers' belief that they contribute to environmental annihilation. Table A.1 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables used in the empirical estimation.

4. Empirical Results

Several interesting results were obtained by the empirical estimation of equation (1). Table 2 summarizes the empirical results of our models. All models are estimated using OLS and the estimated standard errors are corrected using White Heteroskedasticity. Models I and III are the initial estimated models using as a dependent variable the first and the second methodology, as described in section 3. Non-statistically significant variables were omitted from the models I and III and the final results are presented in the third and fifth columns of Table 2, models II and IV respectively. All the estimated coefficients of the explanatory variables presented in the final models have the expected sign and are statistically significant at the 5% or 1% level.

In particular, both consumer's private monthly income and electricity expenditures are statically significant variables of the number of energy conserving actions reported. This finding support previous studies (Dillman *et al.*, 1983; Walsh, 1989 Long, 1993; Scott, 1997) about the positive relationship of income variable and conservation altered behaviour. In both methodologies income express respondents' intention to adopt more energy conservation actions. This result indicates that as income increases, households tend to be more willing to conserve energy mainly because they can afford the credit of energy improvement investments. Moreover, the estimated coefficient of the variable household electricity expenditures is negative. This result indicates that households with a high level of dependency on electricity use do not intend to restrict their consumption by adopting specific energy conservation actions, probably because they lack information about the positive effects of energy investments to house comfort, or because they can

afford high energy prices and energy efficiency investments are not an incentive for paying less for energy.

Both empirical methodologies support the theoretical background that respondents' sex, educational level and marital status do not affect their choice with regard to the number of actions, or the combination of energy conserving actions undertaken. The empirical results are consistent with those of Olsen (1983) and Curtis *et al*. (1984). Contrary, family size is positively related to household's decision-making process towards conservation practices or measures at 1% level of significance. In fact, as number of family members increases, household's actions toward residential energy consumption increases, too. This finding was replicated by model IV but at 5% level of significance and is consistent with results of Van Raaij and Verhallen (1983) and Curtis *et al.* (1984).

The estimated coefficient for home ownership has a positive sign and is suitable to explain the number of residential energy conserving actions. This finding is consistent with the results of Black *et al.* (1985), Walsh (1989) and Brandon and Lewis (1999), whereas homeownership was omitted from the last model as not being statistical significant in the case of the latent variable model. Furthermore, dwellings' characteristics such as the number of rooms and the fitted squared area not statistical significant determinants of consumers' energy conservation choices, whereas households residing in detached houses are more willing to engage in energy conservation activities than those living in apartment blocks. These results are significant in both final models (II and IV).

According to theory age is a dominant predictor variable of energy conservation decisions with a negative sign (Walsh, 1989; Hirst and Goeltz, 1982). This theoretical assumption is confirmed in the case of Greece. In particular, in both models II and IV, age is found a statistical significant variable of the number of actions that consumers' would intend to take part. As age of the respondent increases, the number of reported energy conserving actions decreases.

Diffusion of environmental information is found a strong predictor of energy conserving behaviour (1% level of significance), with a positive sign. This finding supports those of Olsen (1983), Held (1983) and Van Raaij and Verhallen (1983) about the importance of information to environmental behaviour and indicates that information based energy policies, could be effective for promoting sustainability through conservation activities. Finally, our intention to capture the impact of attitudes toward energy problems on energy

conserving actions reveals that, indeed, consumers' belief with regards to their contribution to environmental problems is a strong predictor of the number of energy conserving actions stated. This finding indicates that well-established attitudes towards environmental parameters hint at energy conserving intention.

Table 2.

Estimated OLS models of energy conserving actions

	Model I	Model II	Model III	Model IV
Dependent	Discrete variable	Discrete variable	Latent variable	Latent variable
(Constant)	2.987*** (3.61)	2.966*** (3.71)	-0.318 (-0.75)	-0.157 (-0.39)
AGE	-0.0006 (-1.11)	-0.0008* (-1.61)	-0.0005* (-1.61)	-0.0006** (-2.29)
SEX	-0.123 (-0.91)		-0.007 (-1.08)	
UNIV	0.142 (0.89)		0.005 (0. 64)	
MARRIED	-0.0015 (-0.10)		-0.008 (-1.04)	
MEMBER	0.129** (2.39)	0.134*** (2.56)	0.006** (2.19)	0.005** (1.952)
LNINMON	0.245*** (2.47)	0.246*** (2.67)	0.159*** (3.15)	0.124*** (2.63)
LNEL	-0.373** (-2.39)	-0.342** (-2.26)	-0.205*** (-2.57)	-0.223*** (-2.92)
OWNH	0.317** (2.12)	0.329** (2.26)	0.115 (1.51)	
TYPEH	0.327** (1.86)	0.376** (2.28)	0.237*** (2.65)	0.204*** (2.48)
NOROOMS	-0.0007 (-0.10)		-0.003 (-0.98)	
TM2	0.0001 (0.72)		0.0001 (0.94)	
INFOENV	0.476*** (3.25)	0.481*** (3.32)	0.265*** (3.54)	0.255*** (3.43)
CRESP	0.588*** (3.98)	0.610*** (4.18)	0.197*** (2.61)	0.211*** (2.82)
$R(adj)^2$	0.095	0.100	0.106	0.095
F	5.04***	7.94***	4.44***	6.43***

Note: ***, **, *, represent level of significant at 1%, 5%, 10% respectively.
    t-statistics are presented in the parentheses. Estimated standard errors are corrected using White Heteroskedasticity.

5. Concluding Remarks and Policy Implications

This study provides important evidence for the first time, for energy conservation patterns of Greek consumers. Utilizing cross-section data, we conclude that consumers' characteristics do specify energy conserving behaviours. Our empirical findings, as far as socio-economics parameters and household unit characteristics are concerned, are in line with other reported studies.

In particular, from the empirical analysis the profile of energy saver consumer can be drawn. Consumers who have higher private incomes, own their houses and are members of an extended family core are more likely to make a conservation improvement, whereas number of rooms and size of the dwelling do not explain differences with regards to the adoption of energy conserving actions. These findings support the idea that higher demand for residential energy amenities is familiar with higher demand for household comfort and qualitative services. In addition, larger electricity expenditures are negative associated with acceptance of energy conservation strategies, whereas, sex, educational level and marital status of the consumers are not predictors of energy conserving behaviour. However, elderly rather than younger consumers are energy intensive users. What is more important is that, well informed and conscious of energy problems consumers can be identified as energy savers, too.

Our estimations have important implication for Greece. An energy conservation plan for Greek households should take into consideration that acceptance of energy conserving actions is differentiated with regards to consumers' economic and socio-demographic characteristics. So, an energy saving campaign should face consumers as subgroups with different needs and different aspects of lifestyle. As it is shown, low consumer earnings are a restrictive parameter of the number of actions reported as possibly being adapted. Policy makers should address the environmental impacts of energy resources overconsumption by proposing a framework based on providing not only economic incentives for subsidizing conservation actions for the poor, but also accurate information as to how much money can be saved by taking specific energy conservation actions. This framework would be more effective if the diffusion of information with regards to energy saving measures begins from the primary education since attitudes, beliefs and norms of younger are more receptive to changes.

Given the increased need for sustainability and quality of life, Greek households may alter their energy behaviour to an environmental friendly one. While, the importance of information diffusion is established from this survey, it would be interesting to empirically investigate the "power" of information policies compared to other economic policies, such as the implementation of an energy tax. This is a question for further research of Greek's preferences towards energy conserving measures.

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Appendix

Table A.1

Descriptive statistics of variables included in the models

Variable	N	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
con_light	500	0.78	0	1
con_appliance	500	0.85	0	1
rp_lamp_price	500	0.71	0	1
thermal_ins	500	0.34	0	1
night_lig_bill	500	0.44	0	1
save-en_env	500	0.60	0	1
res_h_env	500	0.60	0	1
age	500	36.45	19	76
sex	500	0.39	0	1
univ	500	0.21	0	1
married	500	0.50	0	1
member	500	3.31	1	9
lninmon	500	6.44	5.52	8.06
lnel	500	4.38	3.40	5.11
ownh	500	0.70	0	1
typeh	500	0.19	0	1
norooms	500	3.51	1	8
tm2	500	94.27	20	350
infoenv	500	0.75	0	1
cresp	500	0.74	0	1

Voluntary Work with Refugees:

Exploring Cross-cultural Meetings "In the Street".

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Voluntary Work with Refugees:

Exploring Cross-cultural Meetings "In the Street".

This paper[1] presents the practice of a team of volunteers that pay Sunday visits to houses taken up by refugees in Athens. Voluntary work constitutes a cross-cultural meeting which is invested with different meanings from the two sides. The different interpretations of voluntary work by both sides create conflicts, misinterpretations and lead to different modes of action to the ones proclaimed by the organization and the volunteers. Volunteers invoke the code of hospitality in order to describe their practice. In their narrative they appear as guests enjoying the hospitality of refugees and thus they feel they ought to bring gifts with them. But since culturally the offer of hospitality presupposes the existence of a proper household -a space that is characterized by order- street-workers try to impose an order in refugees' lives. They try to render the refugees capable house-holders by transforming "to dromo"/"the street" where they live, into "spitia"/"houses". Thus –once more- volunteers come in conflict with their initial political intentions and attempt to apply their own cultural models to the refugees.

An anthropological approach of voluntary work

I am currently doing my PhD in the Department of Social Anthropology and History, University of Aegean. The subject of my PhD concerns the politics of voluntary work and the meaning of voluntarism in two different NGOs/ contexts in Athens. For two years, I was a volunteer and actively took part in the activities of two non governmental organizations that work with refugees. My research is based on participant observation, interviews and life stories of key informants- volunteers. I also conducted a few interviews and chronicles with certain refugees- receivers of aid. The focus however of my study is on volunteers and their point of view of voluntary work, its meaning, and its connections with other aspects of their lives i.e. towards the state, concerning gender matters etc.

There are only a few ethnographic accounts of the cultural dimension of voluntarism and NGOs. Thus the benefits of an anthropological methodology- theoretical approach and in depth micro-level analysis are missing. My PhD research aims to add an ethnographic approach to the studies of voluntarism and NGOs in Greece. Ethnographic accounts enrich the understanding of the multiplicity of NGOs and the cultural meaning of voluntarism since they account for historical, social and cultural

aspects (Cellier 1995, Buchowski 1996, Dunn 1996, Earle and Simonelli 2000, Fisher 1997, Flower and Leonard 1996, Gezon 2000, Knight 1996, Procoli 2000, Sampson 1996, White 1996).

Finally, I wish to combine an anthropological with a political science approach and view the phenomena from an interdisciplinary perspective. Concepts such as "charity" and "civil society" are often used by actors –volunteers, NGO representatives etc- in order to speak for different actions, meanings of voluntary work, as well as different kind of relations with the other- recipient of voluntary work. In my PhD I intend to explore these terms as indigenous categories, rather than analytical ones.

Introduction

This paper presents the practice of a group of volunteer street-workers in Athens that once a week pay visits to houses taken up by refugees[2]. I focus on the volunteers and their efforts, interpretations and meanings as far as voluntary work and the relations with the other are concerned. The cultural background of their practice defines their interpretations and way of action. Volunteers' "systems of meanings" (Geertz 1973) and culturally defined notions on house, order and "filoxenia" shape and reshape the way the practice as well as relations between volunteers and refugees is formed. Those relations often contradict the political intentions of both the organization and the volunteers themselves. Their cultural background influences the way work with refugees is actually done. Thus although the practice aims in the cultural bridging, it also includes intensities, conflicts, tensions, and different interpretations and cultural models from all sides that influence the communication.

The political convictions of the volunteers and the objectives of the organization aim in creating equal relations with the refugees. Voluntarism in this particular frame has an intense political content. Programmatically voluntary work is described in political terms, as a political action of solidarity towards the other and also as a political stance towards the Greek state. The objective is to "help one to help oneself" through helping one become an acting subject. The fundamental intention of the volunteers is

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[2] Legally the etic interpretation of "refugee" (Voutira 2003) as legally defined by the Geneva Convention is the one also used by NGOs and in policy. Henceforth in this article the term "refugee" will be applied when referring to them since this is the way the define themselves and the volunteers refer to them as well. The term "refugee" is used both by street-workers as well as by the people whom they meet "in the streets" who are thus self-defined. The people the group of volunteers meet are either asylum seekers (they have applied for an asylum in the country and possess a temporary permit to stay here) or they have no legal documentation whatsoever.

to draw the refugees from a situation of passivity in which they are placed (politically and legally they are considered by the Greek state as non-citizens and are thus posed in an inferior position). The street-workers try to avoid continuous benefits and their subsequent transformation into patrons of the refugees. However their attempt seems to fail, as the case of Rat Hotel that follows demonstrates. The refugees "shut the doors" to the volunteers and deny any contact with them. Progressively and despite their opposite intentions street-workers shape patron relations with refugees when they realize that their former tactic has failed. Thus they begin to provide to them as many materials and services they can. This effort is often exhausting for the volunteers that continuously offer money, goods, and services and make escorts to hospitals. Leila's family case-study is presented to demonstrate the way in which the action of the team was shaped after Rat Hotel. Through politically unorthodox methods - offers of materials and services in the refugees- the volunteers finally manage to achieve their initial objective and transform the refugees into acting subjects.

Furthermore it is the cultural code of hospitality that volunteers invoke in order to describe and perceive their practice. According to their rhetoric, the refugees are the house-holders that offer hospitality to them. Through this inversion the refugees are not comprehended as the passive recipients of alms of volunteers and they are no longer conceived as put in an inferior position[3]. On the contrary, the volunteers consider that they are found in a hierarchically inferior place since they are entertained in the houses of refugees; they accept their hospitality, the "kerasma"- offers- and communication.

Since the refugees are considered as "oikodespotes" -house-keepers offering hospitality- they need to become capable ones. Thus the volunteers try to change them into culturally acceptable and proper householders. This includes a series of actions: acquirement of the property of the space, transformation of occupied buildings into "houses". According to their own cultural model of a proper "noikokirio" –household- and a proper householder, the volunteers intervene in the houses of the refugees. The buildings are cleaned; they are dyed, equipped with furniture, carpets and other objects. Simultaneously, the volunteers undertake the role of guarantors towards the

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[3] In analyzing humanitarian aid, the receivers of the aid are usually de facto perceived as the passive receivers of the offer, according a Maussian-like exchange theory paradigm (Mauss 1st published in 1924).

householders whose houses are under occupation, and progressively they transform the property status quo from occupation into renting.

This intervention constitutes another contradiction of the practice of voluntary work. Volunteers' political intention is to give space and the ability of action to the other. However what they also do is try to impose their own cultural model and their own terms. As long as the refugees are concerned, they consciously attempt to make the volunteers their patrons, so that they shall provide, protect and guarantee for them. They also seek to impose their own cultural logic driven by the objective to survive under very difficult conditions. In the grounds of a state that officially denies them the right of legal and political existence –since they are non-citizens and shall not be attributed the refugee status[4]- and in a context of poor social care towards them, they struggle to survive also through relations with indigenous people[5].

Voluntary Work Athens (VWA)

Voluntary Work Athens is a non governmental organization that was founded in the 1990s, a period where there was a rapid increase of NGOs in Greece[6]. The field of action of the organization extends to various 'target-groups'. Voluntary work is practiced with refugees, immigrants, minority groups (Muslims) and psychiatric patients. Voluntarism in the frames of the organization has an intense political content. It is conceived as a way of political action. Many of the volunteers are intensely politicized and are also –or used to be in the past- members of left-wing political groups –as they define themselves.

Officially the main purpose of the contact with various 'target-groups' - recipients of voluntary work, is to render them active subjects so that they will be able to act for themselves. At the same time, voluntary work has a denouncing character that is expressed through the public announcement of the problems of various groups and the political background of their deprivation. Parts of the voluntary action constitute

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[4] The people that the volunteers meet are not officially considered refugees; i.e. they have not been attributed the refugee status by the Greek state. Some of them are officially asylum seekers (have or shall go through the interview process where they are going to apply for an asylum) but there are also others that carry no official documentation whatsoever. For the volunteers the legal status of the people they seek to contact and help is not of primal importance.
[5] Mestheneos (2002: 192) stresses that aliens in Greece often seek to survive through patron relations they create with indigenous people.
[6] The appearance of NGOs in Greece seems to be quite limited, compared to the situation in other European countries (Anheier 2001, Mouzelis 1995).

publications in the press, appearances in the television and in the radio as well as attendance in antiracist demonstrations.

The political character of voluntary work for the organization (for the founders but also for most volunteers) is summarized in their reaction towards other forms of volunteerism. Voluntarism in the context of the Olympic Games Athens 2004 was condemned as completely contrary to the 'true spirit' of voluntarism. Their critique was based on the commercialization of the Olympic Games, the "national" character of the endeavor and the state's promotion of Olympic voluntarism. Television programs, newspaper articles, statements and events stressed the need that all Greeks become part of the national effort. Although during the period I was in the field many NGOs were very optimistic and expressed the opinion that the Olympic Games of Athens would promote volunteerism, according to the volunteers of this particular organization, such was only a meaningless hope. Olympic volunteerism had nothing to do with the politicized volunteerism that they expressed and believed in. For them, voluntary work principally constitutes the expression of social solidarity towards populations that are on the fringe of the Greek state. It is not simply a practice of selfless and unilateral offer of time and materials. In the frame of such reasoning, refugees, minority groups, psychiatric clinic patients etc are not simply considered as categories with special needs, but as groups facing policies that further push them on the fringe.

Voluntary Work Athens' volunteers aim to approach the other in equivalent terms. Offers of materials and services are considered leading to the configuration of relations of power, dependence and patronship that politically contrasts the constitutive aims of organization and its volunteers. The transformation of voluntary work into "filanthropia"/ "charity" is the biggest danger. "Filanthropia"/ "charity" is considered politically suspect since according to a historically based perception of the phenomenon, it is perceived as the practice of the medium social layers that aimed to control the other and to strengthen the social prestige of the donors.

"Charity ladies that have tea and save poor": this is considered to be the model of old-fashioned charity that is opposite to a volunteerism based on the equality and the respect of other.

During the last two decades there has been an increase in discourses around the category of civil society. In an analytical level -by political scientists mainly- NGOs are considered as the main formations representative of civil society. In Greece civil

society is thought to be making its first shy steps in the beginning of the 1990s. Like many other NGOs, Voluntary Work Athens in an official level adopts a rhetoric that revolves around civil society in order to describe its action. In such a context, voluntarism is differentiated from practices of the past that are included in the form of "filantrhopia"/"charity" and comes to constitute part of civil participation.

"Support of refugees" program

In 1996 Voluntary Work Athens began visiting the camp of Saint Andrea in Nea Makri, where resided around 200- 300 Kurds, mainly from Iraq. Like other NGOs - Doctors of the World, Doctors without Borders, Hellenic Red Cross etc- VWA aimed to provide help to Kurds who were staying there. This activity progressively took an institutional character and led to the formation of a new program of action of the organization, the "Support of Kurdish Refugees" program. The decision to point out Kurds as their "target-group" is based on the more general confrontation of the Kurdish question during that period in Greece. Furthermore, the special characteristics of asylum seekers in Greece –not only with regard to that period, but also until today – indicate the Kurds as the most numerous ethnic group[7].

During the last eight years the "program of support of Kurdish refugees" of VWA has extended its action in various areas of Athens.

Abstract from the organization's booklet:

> "Groups of trained volunteers activated in giving Greek... as well as English language lessons. They supported the refugees in their job pursuits and collaborated with other NGOs for the resolution of basic problems of survival and existence in various reception centers. Volunteers organized art exhibitions with pieces made by refugees, aiming in the cross-cultural communication. Later… we activated in… Koumoundourou square where we provided information with regard to their refugee status... "

In 2001 the organization founded a small "xenonas"/ guesthouse, where asylum seekers are "filoxenountai"/"entertained". The guesthouse of VWA represents an innovative effort to avoid institutionalization and apathy on behalf of the refugees. It

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[7] Although official statistical facts concerning asylum seekers in Greece enlighten asylum seekers according to nationality, rather than ethnicity, the estimation is that Kurds is the most numerous ethnic group. According to UNHCR, Iraqis (most of whom are Kurds) are the most numerous group of asylums seekers in Greece in the last five years.

is now the only self-managed guesthouse in the country. According to the guesthouse regulations, the "guests" ought to participate in the functional expenses of the guesthouse (electricity and water supply bills) and take care of their private expenses and maintenance on their own. With the weekly monitoring of volunteers and occasionally professionals –social workers or psychologists– asylum seekers belonging to different ethnicities live together under the same roof (Afghan, Kurds from Iraq, Kurds from Turkey, Arabs from Iraq, Sudanese etc).

The Street-work Team

Apart from the guesthouse, the "Support of Kurd Refugees" Program also includes the action of a team of volunteers that does "douleia sto dromo"/ "work in the street" or "approach of homeless refugees" or "street-work" as it has prevailed to be called after the term in English. Forty year-olds that used to be active politically in the past, twenty year-olds that perceive their voluntary work in political terms, immigrants – refugees that work voluntarily as interpreters and foreigners that offer voluntary work in the frames of European exchange program[8] are the members of a multifunctional group of volunteers that do "street-work". Once a week volunteers visit old buildings that refugees have taken up and stay under very bad conditions (wrecked houses, with no water or electricity).

For the last eight years, the "street-work" team has been making visits to Ano Nea Smirni (1999-2001) –an area where even today many male Kurdish refugees stay- in the Pedio tou Areos and in Victoria square. In the last 3 years the group has been paying visits in Academia Platonos. The team henceforth does not offer help only to Kurds, but to any other groups of refugees it meets. During the period I conducted fieldwork, volunteers came in contact mainly with Iraqi –Kurds and Turkmen mainly. The street-work group characterizes those people as "refugees" even if their legal status varies: some of them are asylum seekers, and others do not possess any legitimizing document.

Officially street-work aims to record the problems and the conditions of existence of refugees. Furthermore, one of its main purposes is to mobilize the refugees via information for legal and medical matters, as well as on other organizations where

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[8] EVS: European Voluntary Service. A program sponsored by the EU where young people are encouraged to offer voluntary work in other European countries. The EU finances both the receiving organizations and the volunteers who travel, by providing money for their maintenance and training.

they can address. However the way that voluntary work is actually structured, depends as much on the composition of the team of the volunteers, as well as on their interaction with the refugees they meet. Street-work constitutes a cross-cultural meeting, which is shaped and intermediated by the content that both sides attribute to it: volunteers and refugees. Very often the initial intentions of the volunteers contradict the final result and the way their relations with the refugees are shaped.

The two case studies that follow indicate two different tactics of the street-work group and the reaction of the refugees.

Rat Hotel

The Rat Hotel -this was the name given to the space by one of its provisional residents- was an old factory in the area of Kolonos where a vague number of Kurdish men from Iraq resided (from 100 to 300 individuals). In spring 2002, the street-work team visited the space for first time. The team began to make weekly visits and to speak with the refugees. The volunteers faced a lot of problems: people were circumspect, many times they were even aggressive, the communication was hard, the conditions bad. When I first went to the "factory" in the summer of 2002, the street-workers were familiar to the residents of the place, although the population of the refugees was changing all the time.

Entering in the yard through a wrecked door, the space looked like a stockyard of abandoned objects: an old car, piles from iron, waste everywhere. From the old factory they had only remained wrecked columns, on one of which featured a red cross as a remnant after the last earthquake. As other volunteers had warned me before our visit, I wore socks and athletic shoes, despite the summer heat. We were walking over water, filths and waste. We thought that people were probably suffering from scabies, hepatitis, while others were sick with unknown diseases.

As we walked we entered in what had remained from the building. The refugees had set up self-made shack from carton. Some people recognized the members of the street-work team and greeted us as we passed by their carton houses: "Sala'm male'kom" we also replied. We carefully walked one after the other. They had put me walk between two male volunteers for protection as they clarified. However I was feeling insecure throughout the visit. As we entered the Rat Hotel and passed through carton houses the light became dimmer. We stepped on dirty waters and smelled

mixed smells: food, sewerage, waste that was burned and that made the atmosphere suffocating.

After a while we came out to the back side of the building in a clearing. People came closer in order to hear what the interpreter said. I felt a claustrophobic feeling of hemming. I managed to appear self-controlled and as I realized afterwards I was not the only one in the team. All volunteers felt like fainting and had the same wish to get out of there as soon as possible.

The interpreter made the known introduction in Arabic "we are from a small organization.. we have come before... to help you although our power is little". Once a sick man with high fever was brought to us, and another that had heart problems also came and told us he had to be operated. We began to give out leaflets with Doctors without Borders' address but they insisted that they could not go alone there. The interpreter made an appointment with them in order to escort them in the next day (in the end the refugees did not appear to the appointment).

Progressively the stifling sentiment went away and I could observe people around me. It was obvious that some of them approached, listened to us for a while and (as the interpreter explained to me later) said "its them again" and left. The team tried to talk with them. With the help of the interpreter we asked them where they were from, which problems they faced, how we could help.

The refugees with the time had ceased asking the team for help. They knew that either they could not, or would not help them. Their requests mainly included work, legal permit to stay in the country and when they realized that the volunteers could do nothing about these maters, they asked for material things and services.

When they first started visiting Rat Hotel, the volunteers noticed that the refugees asked for things "it is as if they have not realized who we actually are.. it is as if they believe as to be government officers", one volunteer told me. Most street-workers insisted that the relation with the other should not be based on benefits and offers, but only on a symbolic level. The decision of non benefit/ offers was actually a conscious political choice of the team that insisted on dealing with the refugees in equal terms.

In this spirit the team attempted to clean the space from the enormous amount of waste that had accumulated. The team brought garbage bags, gloves and spades and tried to help the refugees clean the Rat Hotel. The amount of waste and the unwillingness of many refugees to participate made the effort impossible. The small quantity that was gathered was considered a success by the team since it was a joint

activity with the refugees. The cleaning of the space was a demand that street-workers express; a desperate effort to do something factual "*with* the refugees.. and not *for* the refugees" as they said.

In our last visits to the Rat Hotel most of the refugees would not even speak to us.

There was a lot of intensity in the team and many times its members disagreed intensely. Some people said "they (the refugees) are bored of us. We do not have anything to give to them and they know... ". The interpreter in particular felt that all the anger and the aggressiveness of refugees addressed to him. He could not answer to their constant questions: "why are you coming? You come and go and you don't do anything… what do you want here?" Many times after a visit in the Rat Hotel the interpreter was so frustrated that burst out with anger to the other members of team "why do we go? After all we do nothing".

The persistence of the street-workers to go each Sunday to the Rat Hotel even when the disposal of refugees was negative and aggressive, their agony to form some kind of relation with the refugees, to become acceptable and welcoming in their space, finally turned out fruitless.

In autumn 2002 the team stopped it visits to the place, while the refugees often said "we kicked them out of here".

Leila's family

The case of Leila's family that follows is indicative of the shift on the way voluntary work was organized after the Rat Hotel.

Leila, her husband and their two children left Iraq and after two years of staying in Turkey, they arrived to Greece. In Athens they broke the padlock of an old house where nobody stayed and began to live there. In a Sunday afternoon, as we were passing through the house, the street-work team noticed the typical indications of a refugee house. On the door there was a chain with a padlock that made the house resemble empty, whereas in the courtyard there were clothes, containers with water and other objects that implied human presence. The interpreter struck the door shouting "Maleka!" (= "home" in Kurd/ Sorani). In the end they opened the door and we started to talk with them. The team stood around the interpreter who translated: "we are from the X organization.. We help refugees… Each Sunday we come out in the street". Then the volunteers asked how many stayed in the house, when they had arrived to Greece, what kind of legal documentation they possessed.

The refugees were hesitant. Even when we asked them if they needed something, they did not express any "demands". After a while however they began to say that they needed some things: blankets, foods, clothes.

From then on, the street-work team visited Leila's family almost each Sunday. As to other houses, they went each week, certain times bringing sachets with foods or toys for the children, them they asked if they needed something, if they had a certain health problem.

In one of our visits Leila announced us that she was pregnant in her third child. She was worried how to bring up a child under these conditions, with the uncertainty of their stay in the country, in a house with no water or electricity. She said she wanted to have an abortion. Since she was already one month pregnant, she should have it in ten days since, as she said, her religion forbids an abortion after forty days of pregnancy. The volunteers started to talk and ask each other if somebody could make the escort in the following days. Nobody however in the street-work team was available to escort her to the hospital in such a short notice. Leila then started shouting to the team, she was aggressive towards what she considered an indifferent reaction by the volunteers who did not seem to understand. Finally Leila kept the fetus.

Since Leila did not have a "pink card" (asylum seekers' temporary stay permit to the country) she would have to pay for the hospital in her own means. The street-work members mobilized, came in touch with other NGOs and escorted Leila to the police station. In the end the team's acquaintances in other NGOs proved very useful and Leila got the "pink card". Members of team made escorts with her in the maternity clinic for the essential medical tests, and when she gave birth we visited her with gifts for the newborn.

After the birth of the baby, the relations between the team and the family got closer. The team won Leila's trust. She began to speak about more personal matters, to ask for their help. We used to spend more time in the family's house, Leila offered us tea and we sat cross-legged on the floor. We talked about the family's everyday matters, their problems or their life in Iraq. We used to play with the family's children, and the atmosphere was very friendly. All volunteers were happy to visit Leila's family every week. The interpreter translated; he was the mediator of communication. The volunteers also gave advice to Leila on how her children should be taken care of.

Soon the house changed completely. After the encouragement and suggestions of the street-workers, Leila's husband dyed the walls and repaired the windows. The street-work team congratulated the family on the repairs.

The team continues to make visits to Leila's family, most of the times bringing them foods or other things. They also helped Leila's family rent a –formerly abandoned-house in the area. In fact volunteers guaranteed to the owner or the house that the rent would be paid (actually one of the volunteers paid part of the rent), and told him that the family were "noble and nice people". The family's standard of living has improved a lot and what they now ask for has also changed. Thus when the team brought Leila a bed for the baby she did not accept it since "it was not wooden and would not suit with the other furniture of house" as she said. The volunteers were speechless at Leila's refusal of offer.

Inversion of the hospitality code

Abandoning the effort of intervention in the Rat Hotel, the street-work team – including some new volunteers- moved its action to the near region. The experience of Rat Hotel had exhausted the volunteers. The team realized that creating relations with the refugees was a very difficult undertaking and the constant presence in the space once a week was not enough. The refugees resisted, were not always friendly to the volunteers and they did not appear willing to talk with them. As long as for the main objective of street-work, passing by information to the refugees (on legal matters and other NGOs that provide services to them), most of the time they seemed to be better informed than the volunteers.

Progressively the action of the street-work team was differentiated. The principle of non offer of materials and services began to become more flexible in the new houses that the volunteers started visiting. An entire neighborhood in Academy Plato where refugees resided in abandoned houses began to accept the systematic visits of the street-work team at least once a week.

The volunteers give out sachets with foods, clothes and medicines. They have either collected these goods or bought them with their own money. They shape relations of protection and giving, they are next to refugees providing materials (foods, the clothes), money (rent), information (for other NGOs), guarantees (toward house-owners), mediation (for the edition of a residence permit), services (escorts in hospitals and other services) etc.

As discussed above, the political stance of the volunteers, contradicts the giving character that the practice has adopted after the Rat Hotel experience. The transformation of the volunteers into patrons and providers of the refugees contrasts the political intention to deal with the other in equal terms and to avoid creating relations of dependence and inferiority. In order to deal with the contradiction inherent in the practice, the street-workers invoke the code of hospitality. According to them, their offers to the refugees are gifts for their hospitality.

Once a week, street-workers enter the refugees' houses, sit on the floor and have tea, play with the children of the family and discuss with the refugees. It all seems like a Sunday visit; volunteers pass by as many houses as possible and in some of them, they stay a little longer. It is a social meeting, where the volunteers are the guests and the refugees the house-holders.

Humanitarian help to refugees is often interpreted as the gift that lends force in the donor in relation to the recipient. The power of the donor allows him to decide on what to give and to control the recipient for the way that hi uses it (Harrel-Bond B, Voutira E and Leopold M 1992: 209).

In the NGO discourse as well as in the discourse of the official Greek state, the refugees (as the immigrants) are determined through the norm of hospitality as "entertained" in the country. For the volunteers of the street-work team that visit the houses of refugees, the situation is reversed. Under the present conditions, in their narrations, it is not the refugees that are considered entertained, but themselves. According to the norm of hospitality, they need to make offerings in order to compensate a situation that by definition places them in an inferior position. As guests entertained in the refugees' houses, they need to bring gifts that 'open the doors'.

> "...In the end we are the ones who go to their space, do you understand? There are certain correlations hard to reverse. Perhaps what we actually try is to reverse our inferior position by giving them things. We find therefore this way in order to reverse this situation and thus we become… those that make the offer, the donors, and the philanthropists. As those that attend, mom, the big breast, (laughter)..."

Thus, they offer materials and services in order to become acceptable. They try hard to correspond to the needs of refugees and many times they exceed their abilities. The

offer "opens doors" and allows the penetration of the limits with the other, constituting the means for the claim of his hospitality.

In that way the fundamental objective of voluntary work is achieved; to render the refugees acting subjects. Even if the means are politically unorthodox and oppose the programmatic principles of the organization (that are against the benefit of materials and services), the volunteers attempt to handle the refugees as equivalent and equally capable for action. They do not perceive the refugees as the passive receptors of aid and reprehensible "charity" or "alms", but as house-holders who receive the street-work team in their houses each Sunday, and offer them hospitality. However, disagreements are often expressed between street-workers who object the offers and the configuration of patron and protection relations with the refugees.

In the present case, refugees aim to grant the volunteers will all initiative of action, so in order to render them their protectors and guarantors. Whilst the volunteers attempt to render the refugees acting subjects able to act on their own, what the refugees actually try to do is survive through the configuration of patron relations which are considered politically unacceptable by the volunteers. In a way, the primer concern of the volunteers is achieved: the refugees are certainly acting subjects. As Benthall (2001) claims, it is often the receivers of humanitarian aid that prefer offerings despite the fact that they are considered politically suspect by the givers. Or as Stirrat and Henkel stress when talking about the development process, for the beneficiaries of such programs, access to goods and services is more important than self-actualization (1997: 73).

The conflict between the different views of the volunteers and the refugees is based on different cultural perceptions and models as well as on the political intentions of the volunteers. On the one hand, this situation leads to conflicts between the two groups since the refugees often tend to have extreme demands and to ask their donors for things intensively. On the other hand, there are many disagreements in the interior of the street-work team with regard to the new way of action, as well as doubts concerning the relations that are shaped with the refugees.

Intervening in the houses - Transformation of the "street" into a "house"

On the other hand, the volunteers use the hospitality code that is based on indigenous cultural models and describes the way relations between entertained and house-holder

are formed. At the same time, they attempt to intervene in the conditions of life of refugees and in their relation with the buildings where they reside.

In practice the street-work team aims at the transformation of the buildings into "houses". In fact, the buildings that the team visits are not considered by the volunteers as "regular houses". It seems that they are more part of the "street", than actual "houses":

> "... street- work.. we are talking about the margin.. not only for the persons (the refugees that are marginalized). Abandoned houses can also be considered a margin.. they are different from where we live.. an abandoned house.. it is not useful in anything... A home means something beyond the walls, electricity and water.. Homeless people will enter in a house and sleep (but they will continue to be homeless)... In the houses where we go they do not have water, they do not have electricity. They live in street...»

One of the first suggestions an enthusiastic new volunteer makes to the team, often concerns the cleaning of the internal and exterior space of a building. Since there is seldom a water supply in the buildings, the conditions of hygiene are very bad. The volunteers bring sachets of wastes, spades and gloves and clean together with the refugees.

The wish to clean the houses in the majority of the cases was not expressed by the refugees. Like in the Rat Hotel, in other buildings as well, the idea to clean the space was primarily expressed by the street-work team. In fact, the effort the team made in order to mobilize the refugees was not an easy affair and often lead to disappointments.

> "I do what I can..." said M, a refugee himself. "I shout to them or I begin to clean in order to make them clean too. I stand on their doorstep and shout "Excuse me! Excuse me! Could you please come here and help me?" in order to make them come out they clean as well... I do not want however to do many things for them, because they need to do something for themselves too... they only ask for things… When you say: come and do something.. (they answer)"What to do?" And I am ashamed when somebody enters in the place and sees.. (how dirty it is).. I feel ashamed, aren't you ashamed (addressing in the refugee)? All right, how many times do I have to say the same things? Each day, each day...»

The refugees are on their way to "Europe" - as they often say- and in their journey, Greece constitutes a transit country[9]. Their final destination is countries of northern and Western Europe where -as they learn through networks of friends and relatives- the conditions for asylum seekers are much better and there is an organized system of social welfare. The sense of temporariness and continuous mobility create different relations with the space to those that the volunteers can understand and approve of. Even though volunteers recognize that the particular perception for the cleanness constitutes their own cultural value, they still claim:

> "We have to educate them.. not to throw the waste outside their door when there is a bucket precisely next to them.. ... if they want to live in this society, for as long as they live, they need to respect certain things... the neighbors should not be obliged to tolerate the filth next to them.. ... we must put as a term that "guys we do not throw waste"…"

Apart from cleanness, what seems to distinguish the "house" from the "street" is the border, the limit from the exterior space. The houses where refugees stay very frequently do not have any windows or lock. Repairing of walls, fixing the door, the panes and the windows is central in order to render a house "home": asylum, a place where nobody can enter without permission.

> "These houses are... home, that is to say there are walls and a roof and everything, they have the infrastructure to provide electricity, they have the infrastructure to provide running water… Home (however) means the growth, the maintainance of a human organism in a place… where nobody can enter without permission"

The transformation of the refugees in proper house-holders also includes interventions in the status-quo of their stay in a building. In many cases after the mediation of volunteers owners agree to rent a formerly occupied house to the refugees that live there. This is one from the main objectives of the street-workers who attempt such arrangements with the householders of occupied spaces. The volunteers become the

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[9] As Wantsea mentions in a research done on Iraqis asylum seekers in Greece, most of the times it is also the Greek state that reinforces Greece's role as a transit country (2004: 37). About transit migrants in Greece, see Papadopoulou 2004.

guarantors of a "family", and this is declared and recognized by the householders of the building. In certain cases - as Leila's- part of the rent is paid (without this becoming known to the official organization) by a street-worker.

The intervention in a space where men stay seems to be beyond the possibilities of the street-work team. The imposition of order in a disordered situation, an anti-structure as the spaces where men stay, in a "communa" -as volunteers have characterized the Rat Hotel- is impossible and can only lead to the withdrawal of the team and the disappointment of its members. Spaces like the Rat Hotel resist in any exterior intervention, in any attempt of "help" from teams of volunteers or other non governmental organizations.

The structure of the Rat Hotel was vague for the street-workers that could not distinguish or come in contact with his leaders -if there existed any:

> "We as VWA go in order to we put a rudimentary order that refugees themselves will begin to respect"... The team attempts to come in touch with the leaders and to prompt them to this direction (to clean the space)… We don't say to them "Oh! You poor! No! They live under these conditions and they owe to themselves to protect the space".

According to the volunteers, in a family it is clear who the "leader" is. The head is recognized by the volunteers as the one to whom the team addresses, either the man or the woman, the one that expresses their "demands". In the buildings where men stay, the mobility is greater.

The weekly visits to the houses of refugees from the team also concern their actual way of life, the way their children are bread, fed or taken care of etc. In the case of a woman that struck her girl, refugees that used to stay in a neighboring occupied house inform us on the incident. One volunteer felt extreme anger and told me (since I seemed calm):

"Go to her house and tell her that what she does is completely unacceptable… that she cannot strike the girl... and you tell her that we are not going to help them again if she repeats it... that we shall not bring to them foods or make them escorts or anything else..."

Conclusion

Voluntary work "in the street" is a cross-cultural meeting embedded with different cultural interpretations by all sides. This paper focused on the interpretations of the volunteers –indigenous people who aim to contact and help the other. Although the politically defined intention of the volunteers is to approach the other on equal terms and avoid any offers of materials or services, in the end the volunteers form patron relations with the refugees. As two case studies presented demonstrate, it is often the reaction and stance of the refugees that reshape the way voluntary work is practiced. In the end the volunteers provide, guarantee and advice the refugees, while they consider themselves as guests in the refugees houses. The hospitality code –or rather the inversion of it, since in official discourses the refugees are considered the guests in the country- is the cultural model through which they interpretate their relations with the other, and justify their offers to them. Finally, the intervention on the way refugees live, their houses, the transformation of "the street" into a proper "house" and of the inhabitants into proper house-holders is another contradiction of volunteers' practice. Once more they attempt to impose their own cultural models to the other's lives.

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2nd LSE PhD Symposium on Modern Greece: Current Social Science Research on Greece

"Gender Equality and Positive Measures for Women in Greece"

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I. Introduction.

In the framework of international political and economic developments during the 1980's and 1990's Greece attempted to restructure its social infrastructures and implement an economic and social policy able to confront the contemporary problems of citizens. In this context gender equality was prioritised in the political agenda and became a core concern for the legislators. Positive measures, hotly disputed when first introduced fifteen years ago, have gradually but steadily gained support in both the political scene and the judiciary and are now regarded as a necessary means to achieve full and effective gender equality.

This paper purports to examine the developments on gender equality and positive action in a dialectical relation to the equality discourse and the current legal landscape in Europe and internationally. The aim is to assess the Greek legal system from the point of view of gender equality and to identify the problems that have yet to be addressed.

The first part of the paper will provide the theoretical background of positive action within the conceptual framework of discrimination and through its relation to different conceptions of equality. A general outline of the major themes and strands in feminist jurisprudence will offer the female perspective on the relevant issues.

The second part will focus on Greece and present the major legal provisions and judicial decisions that have marked the route from a formal towards a more substantive notion of gender equality. In this respect, the brief overview of our not so distant legal past does not only have historical interest, but may also serve as a useful instrument to analyse the current state of affairs and identify existing problems that put in jeopardy the achievements of the last few years. The recent legislation that introduced quotas in favour of women in critical areas of the public sphere, coupled with the Constitutional reform of 2001, will be thoroughly examined, as they now constitute the pillars of gender equality in the Greek legal order.

Finally, the third part of the paper will return to an abstract level of analysis and discuss the issue of under-representation of women in the higher end of the socio-political spectrum. The principal arguments involve the legitimacy and efficiency of quotas as a mechanism to tackle under-representation of women as a social group. The

question, then, is whether representation should be defined in terms of group membership or actual opinions that reflect the interests of the under-represented group. In the latter case, however, disadvantage should be given conceptual priority over under-representation as a criterion for entitlement to positive measures. In this regard, it will be argued that positive measures, though compatible with the general principles of justice and representative democracy, may nevertheless be inadequate – at least in their current form – to provide effective solutions.

II. Theoretical underpinnings of positive action.

Positive action is arguably one of the most controversial current legal issues. The theoretical debate, established in the 1960's in the United States, has been enriched with arguments coming not only from legal theorists, but also from all those involved in the whole enterprise: Lawyers, judges, trade-unionists, economists, politicians and members of the disadvantaged and benefiting communities. However broad the field may be, the fundamental question always remains related to equality and justice: Acknowledging that the latter cannot exist in the absence of the former, evaluative judgments of positive action as to its fairness is premised upon its relation to equality and its compatibility with the principle of equal treatment.

In this respect and for the purposes of the present paper we can distinguish three main approaches to positive action:[1] The 'symmetrical' approach, the 'equal-opportunities' approach and the 'substantive equality' approach. The first rejects positive action in principle; the second allows it within strict limits but seems generally uncomfortable with the idea of using gender as a criterion of distinctions, while the third largely supports positive measures in favour of disadvantaged or under-represented social groups.

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[1] S. Fredman, *"Reversing Discrimination"*, 113 L.Q.R. 575 (1997). Fredman's distinction is adopted here with certain reservations: not every contribution to the relevant discourse falls comfortably within the specified limits of the above stated categories. Moreover, the critical assessment of the relevant theories should be made on a comprehensive basis, if it is to provide us with sound and meaningful conclusions, since it is possible to endorse the 'substantive equality' approach (that largely supports positive action) and, at the same time, reject positive action for reasons of inefficiency (R. Dworkin accepts this possibility in *Taking Rights Seriously*, 1977). These remarks, however, do not cancel the merits of the distinction, especially in terms of its capability to reflect the basic theoretical differences among the conceptions of equality in their dialectic relation to positive action.

Before mapping the theoretical underpinnings of positive action it is essential to provide a working definition of the concept:[2] Positive action denotes the deliberate use of gender-conscious criteria[3] for the specific purpose of benefiting women[4] as a group that has been previously disadvantaged or excluded on grounds of gender.[5] Its aims may range from providing a specific remedy for gender discrimination to increasing the participation of women in important public spheres – such as education, employment and politics – where they are visibly under-represented.[6] In its strongest version positive action[7] takes the form of quotas, requiring that individual members of the disadvantaged group be actively preferred over other - equally or better qualified – candidates in the allocation of jobs, places in higher education or other benefits.[8]

1. Equality and positive action.

'Symmetrical' approach.

The 'symmetrical' approach relies conceptually on two limbs: First, the Aristotelian notion of formal equality, which requires to 'treat the likes alike',[9] and, second, a strong individualistic background that endorses the principle of state neutrality. The

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[2] It should be born in mind that positive action is an extremely broad term that may include practically any (primarily) state action towards achieving an equal state of affairs in all areas of the social field by all available means. Its use in the present paper, however, will consistently abide by the definition given here.

[3] Or race-conscious criteria etc., according to the type of discrimination it purports to tackle.

[4] Or any other social group (mutatis mutandis, supra n. 3).

[5] Mutatis mutandis, supra n. 3.

[6] S. Fredman, *Discrimination Law*, Clarendon Law Series (OUP), 2002, p. 126. Fredman's definition, apart from being concise and clear, possesses the additional advantage of being relatively uncontroversial. As the focus of the present paper is positive measures in favour of women, the definition has been modified accordingly.

[7] Often in the literature this form of positive action is termed "reverse discrimination". This term, however, will not be used in the paper, not only because it does not exist in either EU or international law (S. Koukoulis-Spiliotopoulos, *From Formal to Substantive Equality*, A. N. Sakkoulas / Bruylant, 2001, p. 59), but also because it creates unnecessary confusion by deliberately appealing to the negative public instincts towards discrimination (and quite unsurprisingly so, since it was introduced as part of the conservative agenda against positive action in the United States).

[8] Fredman, Discrimination Law, op. cit. (supra n. 6).

[9] It is important to underline that the maxim 'treating likes alike' comes, indeed, from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (book E), but the relevant passage has often been misunderstood and misinterpreted. Aristotle never said (nor implied) what the supporters of the 'symmetrical' approach usually advocate, namely that everyone is entitled to the *same* treatment. Justice for Aristotle ought to be "blind" only in respect to those differences that are irrelevant in the context of the specific case at hand. To argue, then, that a man and a woman are in essentially similar situations simply on account of their common humanity, constitutes a logical leap, because it disregards a history of discrimination and inequality that has unfairly and irrationally placed women at an inferior social position in relation to men. Aristotle cannot be held responsible for this mistake, which is clearly a product of modernity.

'symmetrical' approach invokes an absolute moral prohibition against discrimination on the grounds of race or sex. If discrimination on those grounds is unfair, then it is unfair as such and it is irrelevant whether those benefiting from the discriminatory practices are members of a so-called 'disadvantaged' group.[10] Discrimination would amount in any case to the distortion of the principle of equality and, consequently, to a violation of justice.[11] In this respect, discrimination cannot be justified by appealing to the idea of equality, since the latter is dependent upon the notion of justice, which in turn suffers a breach due to discrimination. Moreover, in this view justice is an a priori concept, formulated independently of its historical or political contexts. It applies, therefore, in the same way under all circumstances, without reference to any prior distribution of goods or benefits, which may have already established an unequal status for individual or groups.

The 'symmetrical' model asserts the primacy of the individual in two dimensions: Merit and responsibility.[12] The merit principle requires that every individual be treated according to his or her own personal characteristics that are relevant to the situation under consideration. Thus, merit emerges as an objective criterion of distribution and is – at least prima facie – incompatible with any reference to gender whatsoever.

Responsibility is conceived solely on the basis of individual fault. A direct causal link must exist between the mistake and the agent so as the latter to be held responsible for it. In this way, an individual cannot bear any obligation to compensate for social ills that are not directly attributed to him or her. According to this argument, collective responsibility should be regarded as nothing more than an arithmetical addition of the responsibility of every individual that took part in the collective decision. So, positive action would only be fair, if the individuals excluded from a benefit in favour of black people, women or members of a minority played some part in the history of discrimination against these

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[10] As Justice Powell of the U.S. Supreme Court declared in the famous Bakke case: 'The guarantee of equal protection [under the U.S. Constitution] cannot mean one thing when applied to one individual and something else when applied to an individual of a different colour'.

[11] 'All discrimination is wrong prima facie because it violates justice; and that goes for reverse discrimination too' (ibid). Also see L. H. Newton, *"Reverse Discrimination as unjustified"*, in S. M. Cahn (ed.), *The Affirmative Action Debate* (1995). This assumption, however, is conceptually flawed, if for no other reason, because it implicitly equates "discrimination" with any kind of "distinction". Obviously, not every distinction is discriminatory, as the European Court of Human Rights was compelled to point out in its *"Belgian Linguistics"* case. If this is true, however, the question must be whether "reverse discrimination" is, in fact, discrimination in the first place.

[12] Fredman, Discrimination Law, op. cit., pp. 126-128.

groups. But even in that, rather improbable, case positive action would not satisfy the condition of judging people according to merit and would again be regarded as unfair.

Finally, the 'symmetrical' approach deals with positive action under the light of the state-neutrality principle, which requires that a state has the same 'attitude' towards its citizens, without favouring or disfavouring some among them, and that it intervenes the least possible in the 'free market' economy. Positive action clearly contravenes this principle – the term in itself makes it obvious for that matter – since the state takes a stance in favour of specific groups of the populace and, in many cases, seeks to expand this favourable status to the private sector by exerting its economic powers in the field of the free market.[13]

'Equal opportunities' approach.

The 'equal opportunities' approach could be described as the 'middle way' between the proponents and the opponents of positive action and, for this reason, it is not distinctly delineated.[14] It rejects the non-proportional notion of formal equality and relies heavily on the metaphor of a 'race', where athletes begin form the same starting point. It asserts that equality cannot be achieved in a society, if some privileged individuals have a 'head start' while others begin from a disadvantageous position, because this handicap prevents the objective application of the merit criterion.[15] In this connection, this model

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[13] A state can pursue compliance with positive action schemes in the private sector mainly by state-funding policies or tax allowances to the participating employers. However, the nature of the intervention depends on the nature of the intended preferential measure. In France, for instance, the state subsidises political parties according to the percentage of women they include in their electoral lists, without imposing a positive obligation in the form of a strict quota. See As to the application of positive measures in the private sector, it is now generally accepted across the EU Member States that preferential treatment to women employees (or minority members) is compatible with the principle of equal treatment. See also *infra*, concerning the scope of application of Law 2839/2000.

[14] By and large, the equal opportunities approach has been consistently followed by the European Commission and the ECJ, at least until quite recently. See the pivotal ECJ decision *Kalanke v. Freie Hansestadt Bremen*, Case C-450/93 [1995], ECR, I-3051, IRLR 660. The extent to which the attitude of the Commission and the ECJ has changed towards a more substantial notion of equality is open to question. For an excellent account of this movement in the EU (and the UK) see C. Barnard and B. Hepple, *"Substantive Equality"*, Cambridge Law Journal, 59(3), November 2000, pp. 562-585 (esp. pp. 576-583 concerning positive action). In any case, it must be emphasised that under the new article 141 para 4 of the Treaty of Amsterdam positive action is understood as a means for achieving "effective equality". See S. Koukoulis-Spiliotopoulos, *From Formal to Substantive Equality*, op. cit., p. 59.

[15] In the literature this approach to equality is usually referred to as "fair equality of opportunities", attributed to John Rawls, who discusses it as one of his two principles of justice. See J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Oxford University Press, 1999 (revised edition), esp. pp. 73-78.

dissociates from the narrow individualism of the 'symmetrical' approach, recognising that the individual's opportunities in life are determined, to some extent, by his or her initial social position and can be distorted by structural discrimination stemming from group membership. The 'equal opportunities' approach, therefore, is committed to levelling the playing field by putting all individuals at the same starting point and partially accepts positive action as a means towards this end.[16]

At the point, however, that equality of opportunities has been achieved, the principle of state neutrality and the individualistic principle of equal treatment based on merit regain dominance. Having overcome the problem of institutional discrimination by establishing equal opportunities, formal equality and justice require that individuals be, henceforth, treated on a meritocratic basis, without any further reference to race, gender or any other irrelevant personal characteristic. Positive measures, then, are conceived of as "temporary" by their very nature designed to continue in each particular area only until their objective is fully achieved.[17]

It should be noted, still, that there is a lack of consensus among the proponents of the 'equal opportunities' model concerning the extent of the necessary state intervention. In other words, it is unclear whether equality of opportunities is merely a procedural requirement, satisfied against a formalistic standard similar to the one used by the 'symmetrical' approach, or if it entails a more substantive demand of social justice, in order for every member of the society to have a truly equal chance of meeting the criteria for access to a social good.

'Substantive equality' approach.

The 'substantive' model challenges the propositions that constitute the 'pillars' of the 'symmetrical' approach, namely the formal justice argument, the notion of individualism and the neutral state principle.[18] First of all, the proponents of 'substantive' equality stress out the incoherence between an ideal theoretical model and the real-life situations. The discriminatory practices against certain social or racial groups are undeniable and

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[16] See for instance B. Williams, *"The idea of equality"*, in P. Laslett and W. G. Runciman, Philosophy, Politics and Society (1965), pp. 125-126.

[17] Koukoulis-Spiliotopoulos, op. cit., p. 60.

[18] Fredman, *Discrimination Law* (op. cit.), pp. 126-127.

have continuing effects, because they have created a status quo that still exists. Justice, therefore, needs an asymmetric vision that will take into account the existing inequalities in the allocation of resources and will aim to change them. In simple terms, a non-interventionist symmetrical approach will lead to the perpetuation of this status quo, which is based on an unfair distribution of wealth, and will legitimise this unfairness by securing the existing stratification of society. The 'substantive' approach calls for an openly distributive notion of justice, as the only efficient way of actually making a difference and pursuing true equality.

The criticism to the individualistic notion follows on the same lines. It is false to disregard the influence of social and historical background on the opportunities of the individual. Even if we adopt a perfect meritocratic system that allows us to choose the most 'qualified' individual in every case of allocation of social goods, the very definition of 'meritocracy' will entrap us in a vicious circle. It is absolutely expectable and understandable to have more qualified men than women, since the social position and the objective life conditions of the latter prohibited them for many long years from pursuing a better education. A rigid merit-based selection process takes into no consideration the past and does not count in institutional discrimination as an important factor that limits a person's opportunities by shaping significant angles of her plan of life.

The same line of argument applies to the fault principle, in the sense that discrimination is not a result of personal mistakes and, therefore, it cannot amount to individual responsibility. According to this non-individualistic view the responsibility for correcting institutional discrimination, which is merged into the social structures, should not be attributed to specific individuals through a causal link, following the paradigm of criminal law, because there is no individual fault. On the contrary, discrimination is a matter of collective responsibility and should be treated as such. The privileged class or classes of society, therefore, are rightfully expected to bear the cost of remedy, at least to some extent.

Finally, the 'substantial' approach underlines the paradoxical nature of the principle of neutral state. Neutrality does not entail merely abstinence from action, but also a policy of non-participation in social conflicts and treating all parties indifferently, in order not to affect the result of the conflict either way. A policy of non-intervention in a society built

upon centuries of discrimination will, inevitably, favour the dominant groups by supporting the status quo and facilitate the continuity of the existing 'balance' of power. The 'substantive' approach maintains that the state has a positive obligation to intervene and take suitable measures to correct the results of discrimination, with a view to achieving a truly fair balance of power.

2. The women's point of view: Feminist jurisprudence and positive action.

Feminist Jurisprudence emerged less than thirty years ago[19], originally within the movement of Critical Legal Studies (CLS) in the late 1970s. Many feminist legal theorists subscribed to the early principles of CLS, including the 'basic critique of the inherent logic of the law, the indeterminacy and manipulability of doctrine, the role of law in legitimating particular social relations, the illegitimate hierarchies created by law and legal institutions'[20]. In a nutshell, feminist jurisprudence seeks to analyse the contribution of law in constructing, maintaining, reinforcing and perpetuating patriarchy and it looks at ways in which this patriarchy can be undermined and ultimately eliminated[21]. However it would not be an overstatement to argue that there are different feminist jurisprudences, stemming basically from different conceptions of equality. Patricia Cain[22] proposes a categorisation into four schools of thought: liberal, radical, cultural and post-modern. One of the fundamental differences among them is the way these models perceive and tackle the problem of equality, which was early theme and

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[19] The origins of this school of thought can be traced back in some path-breaking classics that long anti-date modern literature. See for instance M. Woolstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1972) and J.S. Mill & H. Taylor, *The Subjection of Women* (1989). Nicola Lacey argues, furthermore, that Bentham was a 'proto feminist' (See her relevant article in CLP S1, 441, 1998).

[20] C. Menkel-Meadow, *"Feminist Legal Theory, Critical Legal Studies and Legal Education or 'The Fem Crits Go to Law School'"*, 38 Journal of Legal Education 61 (1988).

[21] Although feminist jurisprudence has various aspects and many feminist legal theorists have contradictory claims, what unites feminist legal theorists is an underlying belief that society, and necessarily legal order, is patriarchal. See L. Bender, *"Lawyer's Primer on Feminist Theory and Tort"*, 38 Journal of Legal Education, 3, 1988

[22] P. Cain, *"Feminism and the Limits of Equality"*, 24, Georgia Law Review, 803 (1989-1990). See Also P. Cain, *"Feminist Legal Scholarship"*, 77, Iowa Law Review, 19 (1991-1992). There are, of course, other categorisations as the one suggested by Rosemarie Tong (*Liberal Feminism in Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction*, 1989) into seven different schools, namely: liberal Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, socialist, existentialist and post-modern)

pursuit for the feminist legal thinkers[23]. Let us briefly examine their position on the subject of positive action with regard to their conception of equality.

For liberal feminists equality amounts to equal opportunity and, in this respect, they share the theoretical background of liberal political theory that endorses, in general, the 'equal opportunities' approach to positive action: they believe that women, as well as men, are rights-bearing, autonomous human beings and, accordingly, they should have an equal chance with men to exercise their right to make rational, self-interested choices[24]. In this regard they are happy to accept positive action programs as long as the latter are merely means of 'levelling the playing field', with a view to fair competition[25]. Consequently, they reject the idea of positive action as an apparatus of redistributing social wealth on an equal basis, taking essentially the 'equal opportunities' approach discussed earlier.

Whereas liberal feminists put emphasis to the individual, radical feminists focus on women as a distinct social class, dominated by the hierarchically superior class, namely men[26]. Their equality arguments tend to undermine differences between men and women, which have been constructed in such a way as to contribute to women's inequality[27]. Therefore, they advocate for the special protection rule, which provides the legal basis for positive action. Since the formal equality principle requires 'treating likes alike' and women are not 'like' men, women should enjoy differentiated treatment. In this view positive action is regarded as a means of realising the existing differences between the sexes and a mechanism of ensuring equal treatment with respect to these differences.

Cultural feminists also emphasise difference but they have a more positive view on it, because they use the rhetoric of equality to advocate changes that support the values of this difference, such as caring and relational connectedness[28]. Woman's moral vision,

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[23] H.H. Kay, *Text, Cases and Materials on Sex-Based Discrimination*, 1988 (St. Paul Minn. West. Pub. Co.).

[24] Cain, *"Liberalism and the Limits of Equality"*, supra n. 22.

[25] As explained earlier, from the liberal standpoint positive action is considered to be not a barrier but a necessary condition for selecting the best-qualified candidate. See T.W. Allen, *"In Defence of Affirmative Action in Employing Policy"*, Cultural Logic, Volume 1, n.2.

[26] See P. Cain, *"Liberalism and the Limits of Equality"*, supra n.22.

[27] Ibid.

[28] C. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (1982) and R. West, *"Jurisprudence and Gender"*, 55 U. Chi. L. Rev. 1 (1985).

according to cultural feminists, encompasses a 'different voice'[29] and their primary interest is, therefore, changing institutions to give equal weight to women's moral voice. The position on positive action, however, does not seem to be clear and unanimous, since there are disagreements on the effectiveness of such schemes in producing institutional changes[30]. Finally post-modern feminism views equality as a social construct that reflects patriarchal ideas and needs reconstruction. However, postmodernism eschews the idea of unitary truth or objective reality and, in this respect, feminist theorists of this school of thought argue that there is no single theory of equality that will work for the benefit of all women[31]. As it can be easily understood, positive action does not constitute a core interest for post-modern feminists.

The conclusion deriving from a brief examination of the feminist jurisprudence is essentially that there is no consensus among feminist theorists neither on the conception of equality nor on the specific issue of positive. Although the latter is obviously not rejected in principle, liberal feminism – which is currently the dominant school of feminist thought - gives priority to the individualistic claims of political liberalism and accepts positive action programs only as far as they do not contradict the merit principle and they are restricted in ensuring equal opportunity. In this respect, it adopts almost in full the 'equal opportunities' approach. However, it should be stressed that feminist legal theorists, in general, do not resort to compensatory arguments and favour in general the idea of positive action as a means towards achieving equality between the sexes.

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[29] Ibid.
[30] Cain, *"Liberalism and the Limits of Equality"*, supra n. 22.
[31] For a stimulating example of post-modern feminist thought see D. Cornell, *"The Doubly-Prised World: Myth, Allegory and the Feminine"*, 75 Cornell L.R. 644 (1990).

III. Gender equality and positive action for women in Greece.

1. Gender equality and non-discrimination in Greece: Brief historical overview until 1998.

Greece can take pride in the fact that its "Revolutionary Constitution" of 1822[32] contained a general equality clause. Nevertheless, gender equality was explicitly recognised by the 1975 Constitution for the first time in the Greek constitutional history.[33] Although one might assume that, in theory, gender equality can automatically derive from a general equality clause, the legislation of the period and the relevant case-law of the Supreme Administrative Court (hereinafter SAC) prove that there is a long way from theory to practice.[34] Female jurists were prohibited from sitting the entry examinations for the judiciary, becoming members of the Legal State Council or associates of the Criminology service or even notaries; female archaeologists and chemists could not sit the entry examinations for the Archaeological Service and the General Chemical Laboratory of the State respectively; women were not legally competent to become members of a jury or to witness a notarial document.[35] Moreover, in judgements of 1949 and 1961 the SAC confirmed that *men are better equipped for the profession of court ushers, whereas the tasks performed by cleaners suit female employees best*.

These irrational and discriminatory prohibitions were started being abolished gradually after 1952, when the Convention on the Political Rights of Women was adopted by the United Nations and ratified by Greece.[36] Characteristically, Law 959/1949 and Law 2159/1952 empowered women with full electoral rights and may be regarded as the first legislative step towards gender equality in the modern Greek state. These

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[32] The Revolutionary Constitution of Epidavrus preceded the independence of the modern Greek state by six years, being "revolutionary" in the literal sense that it was created and enacted a few months into the Greek Revolution of 1821.

[33] Article 4 para 2, 1975 Constitution.

[34] The same is true for most national jurisdictions throughout Europe and, for this reason, separate provisions on gender equality in domestic legislation and international instruments are thought to be anything but redundant.

[35] A. Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, *Affirmative Action: Towards Effective Gender Equality*, Sakkoulas / Bruylant, 1998, pp. 80-81.

[36] The said Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1952, was ratified by Greece a year later (Legislative Decree 2620/1953) and entered into force in 1954.

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developments entailed a relative improvement in the social position of women, without, however, elevating gender equality to the status of a general legal principle or a strategic social policy goal. What is more, the unstable political situation and the military coup of 1967 left little room for further progress at the time.

The 1975 Constitution reinstated democratic order and marked the beginning of a new era in the relation between the sexes. Article 4 para 2 stipulated that Greek men and women were equal before the law and had equal rights and obligations, while article 116 para 1 provided for the abolition – by the end of 1982 – of all regulatory provisions allowing for unequal treatment. The process of democratisation and modernisation of the Greek state was slow and difficult – understandably so, given the historical circumstances. After a transitional period, during which Greece became full Member State of the European Communities and saw the socialists entering into power in 1981, a number of significant legal changes brought gender equality to the political and legal.

The first major step to this direction was the ratification of the UN Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (hereinafter CEDAW),[37] coupled with the complete reform of Family Law,[38] which revoked the patriarchal family model and recognised the role of women within the family as equal to that of men in almost every respect. Shortly after, Law 1414/1984 applied the principle of gender equality to the employment field, decisively reshaping labour relations and improving the professional prospects of women. In the period 1983 – 1998 a series of other legal provisions (concerning social security, education etc.), which were enacted as part of a dynamic process of adapting the Greek legislation to international conventions and EU Directives, contributed to the creation of an integrated legal framework[39] that progressively established a plateau of equal opportunities for the sexes in the political, social and economic domains.

Equal opportunities, however, do not guarantee the attainment of "effective equality", according to the phrasing of new article 141 para 4 of the Treaty of Amsterdam. The well-known dichotomy between formal and substantive equality, which

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[37] Ratified by Law 1342/1983.
[38] Law 1329/1983.
[39] See the first three National Reports of Greece to the Commission for CEDAW (period 1983 – 1993), as published by the General Secretariat for Equality.

permeates the relevant discourse on an international level, was acutely present in the case of Greece. Until 1998 all legal documents designed to promote gender equality were premised upon a formal conception of equality, which, by and large, was tantamount to the absence of direct discrimination. The constitutional provision of article 116 para 2, which allowed for derogations from the principle of equal treatment in cases expressly provided for by law and for serious reasons, became in practice the instrument for the promulgation of laws introducing new inequalities, especially in the form of *restrictive quotas*.[40] In parallel, the possibility of positive measures in favour of women with a view to establishing a state of true equality between the sexes[41] was not only ignored, but also found to be unconstitutional in respect of the general equal treatment guarantee.[42]

Until the end of 1990's, therefore, and despite the adoption of a set of rules that improved considerably the position of women, there was still a long way to go until the accomplishment of substantive gender equality.

2. Exceptions to equal treatment and positive measures: the attitude of the Greek courts.

Typically, positive measures have been regarded as a deviation from the principle of equal treatment, since they reserve a special benefit or they afford preference to members of an under-privileged or under-represented social group. In Greece, however, article 116 para 2 of the 1975 Constitution permitted exceptions to equal treatment without any further specification as to the purposes of the derogations. In the way, the scope was broad enough to cover both differential treatment for the protection of pregnancy and restrictive quotas against women in the entry examinations to the police academy or the military schools.[43]

Until 1998 the Greek courts were, indeed, quite comfortable with upholding the constitutionality of differential treatment towards women on account of their biological

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[40] Restrictive quotas designate the maximum number or percentage (out of the total number of applicants) of members of a specific group that are allowed to benefit from the allocation of social goods, especially in employment. They are often referred to as *maximum quotas* in order to distinguish them from positive measures (also known as *minimum quotas*). It goes without saying that restrictive quotas are the exact opposite of positive action, since their "mandate" is irrelevant to equality.

[41] Recognised explicitly by article 4 para 1, Law 1342/1983 that ratified CEDAW.

[42] See the case-law of the SAC discussed in the following section.

[43] Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, op. cit., p.87.

differences to the male sex. As early as in 1977 the SAC held that "derogations from this principle [of equal treatment], [are] lawful […], provided that they are stipulated by a formal law and justified by *sufficient reasons concerning either the necessity to accord increased protection to women*, especially in the fields of maternity, marriage and family […] *or the purely biological differences that require the adoption of particular measures of differential treatment* according to the subject matter or the relation to be regulated" [emphasis added].[44]

This line of reasoning, reproduced consistently and with identical phrasing in a number of other judicial decisions of the period,[45] is premised upon a core assumption of the discourse on discrimination: Biological characteristics may justify a state of exception from equal treatment insofar as they reflect "morally relevant" qualifications for the subject matter in question.[46] To give but a textbook example, the colour of an actor's skin (or her sex) may serve as a justified criterion of preference when auditioning for the role of Othello.[47] It is obvious that this case does not fall within the ambit of positive action as it does not serve the *aim* of benefiting a disadvantaged social group.[48]

According to the interpretation of the Greek courts as presented above, however, the "sufficient" or "substantial" reasons of article 116 para 2 may be either biological or of a *functional* nature.[49] This distinction between "purely biological reasons" and "functional" ones, also supported in the literature,[50] created unnecessary confusion. Functional reasons are understood as "relating to needs emanating from adherence to a specific social group (family, public or private service etc.)".[51] From a terminological point of view it is difficult to see why "the necessity to accord increased protection to women" in certain social fields has a functional element. To the extent that the protection of maternity and family life is a strategic constitutional choice, one may understand

[44] SAC 3217/1977.
[45] SAC (3rd chamber) 2857/1993, 2861/1993 and 5645/1996; Athens Admin. Court of Appeals 2509/1995.
[46] For the discourse on morally relevant characteristics, instead of many see J. Nickel, *"Discrimination and Morally Relevant Characteristics"*, in S. Cahn (ed), *The Affirmative Action Debate*, Routledge, 1995.
[47] It goes without saying that preference in such a case is justified insofar as the black male actor gets the part.
[48] Even if the person at the receiving end of the benefit (preference) belongs, in fact, to a disadvantaged or under-represented group.
[49] Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, op. cit., p. 80.
[50] A. Manessis, *"Η συνταγματική κατοχύρωση της ισότητας μεταξύ ανδρών και γυναικών ενώπιον του νόμου"*, Δίκαιο και Πολιτική, ειδικό τεύχος *Ισότητα των φύλων ενώπιον του νόμου*, 1983, p. 21 [in Greek].
[51] Supra, n. 49.

functionality in terms of promoting a specific model of social arrangements over another. Still, biological differences between the sexes seem to be of an even greater functional importance when they relate to the performance in a certain employment area. If being a police officer requires a level of physical strength that women are not capable by nature of attaining, the selection of male candidates for the job is evidently connected to considerations of *performance*; hence, the reasons justifying preference to one sex rather than the other are *functionally* linked to the subject matter in question.

A more plausible analysis ought to recognise that biological differences play a role in relation to pregnancy and maternity.[52] What should be emphasised here is that the measures designed for the protection of pregnancy and maternity are by default applicable only to women. In this regard, they cannot be subject to the standard comparative tests employed in the framework of non-discrimination law, simply because no appropriate comparator exists.[53] When article 4 para 2 of CEDAW stipulates that the protection of maternity does not constitute sex discrimination, it merely states the obvious. Provisions protecting maternity are neither positive measures *stricto sensu* nor exceptions to equal treatment, because the factual circumstances they regulate are unique to women. This has been acknowledged by the ECJ[54] and national courts in many European jurisdictions, as well as by the Canadian Supreme Court[55] and the U.S. Supreme Court.[56] As the ECJ emphatically put it in *Dekker*, pregnancy discrimination can only occur *against* women because only women may be subject to bad treatment for this reason.

Nevertheless, the Greek case-law of the period insisted that in professions requiring certain skills, such as physical force and flexibility, the provisions restricting the number of successful female candidates to a fixed maximum were non-

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[52] Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, op. cit., p. 88.
[53] See Fredman, *Discrimination Law* (op. cit.), esp. pp. 99-101, where an excellent discussion of the ECJ's case-law on the issue.
[54] Case C-177/88, *Dekker* [1990], ECR I-394; Case C-32/93, *Webb* [1994], ECR I-3567.
[55] *Brookes v. Canada Safeway Ltd* [1989], I, SCR, 1219.
[56] *Californian Federal Savings and Loan Association v. Guerra* [1987], 479, US 272, 107, SCt, 683.

discriminatory,[57] simply because men were thought to be physically stronger and more agile by nature (and, consequently, better qualified for the job).

Needless to say, of course, that the argument is *prima facie* theoretically sound, drawing upon the discourse on morally relevant characteristics. It is generally accepted in the international literature on equality and discrimination, as well as in the case-law of international instruments,[58] that the use of *any* human characteristic – including race and gender - as a criterion of selection does not amount to discrimination when justified *in concreto* due to the circumstances of the case. The problem, however, in the rationale of the Greek case-law discussed here (and of the relevant pieces of legislation) lies in the use of gender as a proxy for physical abilities, *without allowing for an actual comparison between individual candidates*. Restrictive quotas cannot be justified – even if we accept that physical strength is an absolute precondition for the specific jobs – because they disregard the possibility of more than 10% of the female applicants being, in fact, stronger, faster or more agile than their male counterparts. To the extent, then, that restrictive quotas serve the purpose of selecting the best candidates in employment areas of crucial public interest, they are not only discriminatory but also inefficient and self-defeating, in view of the fact that they pose an (unnecessary) additional obstacle to potentially better qualified candidates.

It is interesting to note that the SAC, in its relevant judgements, addresses directly the question of constitutionality of Law 1911/1990, which conferred the normative power to the Minister of National Defence to determine the numbers of candidates admitted to the higher military schools. The Court found that article 1 para 3 of the said law violated the constitutional provisions of art 4 para 2 and 116 para 2 because it did not specify any "criteria, related to the existence of substantial reasons that render constitutionally acceptable the different treatment of men and women".[59] In this way, however, the constitutionality of restrictive quotas *per se* was not put under scrutiny. All the Court said

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[57] Athens Admin. Court of Appeals 2509/1995 (concerning restrictive quotas for women in the entry examinations to the police academy); SAC report 243/1996 (concerning restrictive quotas for the entry of women to the fire department).
[58] Instead of many see the European Court of Human Rights reasoning in *Belgian Linguistics Case (No 2)*, Series A, No 6, 1968, I, EHRR, 252.
[59] SAC 2861/1993, thought 5.

was that the ministerial decision to impose restrictive quotas did not make use of any objective criteria that would justify deviation from equal treatment.[60]

Incidentally, in its judgement 2861/1993 the SAC was called upon to decide on genuine positive measures in favour of (allegedly) disadvantaged social groups. The compatibility of positive action with the equal treatment principle is self-evident according to the Court's reasoning. And when striking down the quota in favour of citizens coming originally from areas of the Greek frontier zone, it does so in view of "the currently existing conditions in the country" that render such a distinction unjustified in concreto.[61]

To return to positive action for women, the first provision introducing quotas in favour of women was Law 2085/1992. The latter, in its article 29, guaranteed the participation of at least one fully qualified woman in departmental boards. The SAC held, in its decision 6275/1995, that the said provision was unconstitutional on account of the lack of any clear evidence suggesting that the under-representation of women in service councils was due to discrimination.[62] It should be underlined that, once again, the Court does not go so far as to doubt the constitutionality of positive measures in principle, contrary to the concerns voiced then by feminist jurists and organisations.[63] Indeed that would have been an unforgivable mistake in the light of Law 1342/1983 and Law 1414/1984, both of which expressly acknowledged the compatibility of positive measures with the equal treatment principle.

An interesting conclusion must be drawn from the afore-mentioned decision: The dominant position in the Greek case-law, which was largely not disputed by theorists, accepted positive measures as lawful, insofar as the social group benefiting from them could *prove* the occurrence of precise instances of discrimination against it. Furthermore, under-representation was not deemed to be enough evidence of discrimination *ipso facto*.

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[60] It has to be said at any rate that the SAC received much unfair criticism, especially from women's organisations, which focused solely on the (condemnable) judicial hesitance to take the opportunity and settle the real issue once and for all. This line of criticism ignores that neither the reasoning nor the outcome of the decisions was legally flawed and that the responsibility for changing the law should primarily rest with the legislator and not the courts.
[61] SAC 2861/1993, thought 8.
[62] The said provision had already been abolished by Law 2190/1994 but the 6th chamber of the SAC went on to examine the case as it involved an issue of constitutionality and, for the same reason, referred it to the Grand Chamber.
[63] Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

The absurdity of this approach, which effectively renders any legal protection against discrimination dead letter, becomes obvious, if one contemplates that the only way of providing the evidence required would be to exhaust and rule out every other possible factor (that is, other than discrimination) that might have affected the selection process under scrutiny. Clearly, such reasoning fails to come to grips with the reality of indirect discrimination, the most pertinent and tenacious of its forms.

Not all the decisions of the Greek courts, however, were equally dismissive of women's entitlement to special treatment in areas other than pregnancy and maternity. Thus, the SAC did not hold unconstitutional the maintenance of pension for unmarried daughters in view of the equal treatment principle.[64] Similarly, the Court accorded, albeit with restrictions, a pension from the Social Security Fund for Health Professions to divorced women.[65] Let us bear in mind, however, that the rationale of these decisions does not involve protection from discrimination – and quite rightly so, since the *ratio* of the legislation was unrelated to discrimination. The measures under scrutiny were understood as reflecting factual differences in the situation of men and women that, irrespective of their causes, call for different treatment. Therefore, these cases are not justified exceptions to equal treatment – as positive measures are thought to be – but the application of the rule "treating likes alike" turned on its head (namely treating different cases differently).[66]

3. The current legal landscape: From formal to substantive equality.

In May 1998 two major legal developments were hailed by women's organisations as the hallmark to true and effective gender equality.[67] With its decision

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[64] SAC 828/1989 (grand chamber). It should be noted that the Court does not examine the issue of constitutionality as it could have done *ex proprio motu*; hence, it tacitly concedes the compatibility of the provisions in question with the equal treatment principle.
[65] SAC 4378/1995 (1st chamber). See supra n. 64 (mutatis mutandis).
[66] It is the opinion of the author that positive measures should also be conceived as an integral element of the equal treatment principle and not as a deviation from it. This point of view seems to be gaining support within the EU, especially after the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam. See Koukoulis-Spiliotopoulos, op. cit., esp. pp. 24-27 and 58-59.
[67] See A. Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, *"Διπλή νίκη: Βουλή και Συμβούλιο της Επικρατείας αποδέχονται ουσιαστική ισότητα και θετικά μέτρα υπέρ των γυναικών"*, Αγώνας της Γυναίκας [Struggle for Women], 65, pp. 1-3 [in Greek].

1933/1998 of May 8th the SAC[68] held that "the adoption of positive measures between men and women is not contrary to the Constitution".[69] A few days later, on May 20th, the Greek Parliament voted article 116 para 2 of the Constitution among the provisions to be amended by the following, Constituent Parliamentary Assembly, with a view to introducing the notion of positive action as a means to achieve effective equality.

The historical change in the jurisprudence of the SAC was confirmed in the cluster of decisions 1917-1929/1998 (grand chamber) that struck down restrictive quotas against women in admissions to the higher military schools and the police academy. In these latter decisions, however, the Court accepts the possibility of restrictive quotas *in principle*, when the nature of the subject matter may justify an exception to equal treatment.[70]

On the other hand, the afore-mentioned decision 1933/1998 went further than merely recognising in abstracto the constitutionality of positive measures in favour of women that correct de facto inequalities against them. The Court found that the provision of article 29 of Law 2085/1992, which stipulated compulsory participation of at least one fully qualified woman in the departmental boards of public agencies, was in compliance with the equal treatment principle. In this way it effectively recognised that *under-representation of women* in the higher strata of the professional spectrum *constitutes unjustifiable inequality caused by gender discrimination*. This is the first time that a Greek court expressly acknowledges the necessity to afford special treatment to women *for reasons unrelated to biological differences*.[71] Moreover, under-representation appears to be of particular importance in proving the existence of *indirect institutional discrimination* and, in this respect, becomes a factor to be taken into consideration in every relevant case in the future.

All doubts regarding the constitutionality of restrictive quotas and (genuine) positive measures in Greece have definitively ended since April 2001, when the revised

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[68] SAC 1933/1998 (grand chamber), which reverses the previous decision 6275/1995 of the 6th chamber.
[69] Ibid (thought 3).
[70] And, in this respect, the change in the case-law seems immaterial. In practice, however, it is difficult to imagine another area of the public sphere where restrictive quotas can be justified, since they were found to be discriminatory in a case where physical abilities do matter to a certain extent. In any case, after the constitutional reform of 2001 the issue has already been settled and no such concerns remain.
[71] For an interesting comment on the decisions discussed here and the issue of positive measures in Greece see K. Kaftani, "Οι Θετικές Δράσεις", Κριτική Επιθεώρηση [Critical Review], 1999, 247.

Constitution entered into force. Its new article 116 para 2 settles the issues by providing that: a) The adoption of positive measures for the promotion of equality between men and women does not constitute gender discrimination and b) the State undertakes the obligation to abolish all de facto existing inequalities, especially against women.

The phrasing of the revised article 116 para 2 leaves no room for misinterpretations: Deviations from equal treatment are permissible *only* insofar as they consist in positive measures, designed to redress discrimination and its effects and to promote *substantive equality*. Restrictive quotas are by the same token in violation of the equal treatment principle, *irrespective* of the nature of the subject matter or the circumstances of the case. In this way, the Greek Constitution stands now in complete harmony with EU Law, declaring positive measures a means to "ensure full equality in practice".[72]

Alongside the constitutional reform, two new pieces of legislation introducing quotas in favour of women entered into force in 2000 and 2001. The first, Law 2839/2000,[73] aimed to ensure the balanced participation of men and women in decision-making procedures in the public administration, as well as in the entities of the private sector and in the local administration agencies of 1st and 2nd degree (municipalities). Its article 6[74] stipulates that the departmental boards throughout the public sector will be comprised to a minimum of 1/3 by members of each sex.[75] Moreover, Law 2910/2001 in its article 75 para 2 provides that the number of candidates of each sex in the local and

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[72] Article 141 para 4, Treaty of Amsterdam. As to the indubitable impermissibility of restrictive quotas under EU Law, Declaration No 28 on article 119(4) of the Treaty establishing the EC (annexed to the Treaty of Amsterdam), which authentically interprets article 141(4) [former 119(4)], reads as follows: "When adopting measures referred to in Article 119(4) [now 141(4)] of the Treaty establishing the European Community, Member States should, in the first instance, aim at improving the situation of women in working life".

[73] Law 2839/2000 was enacted by the Greek Parliament following a proposal of the General Secretariat for Equality, the competent government agency responsible for the implementation of programmes promoting gender equality (established by Law 1558/1985).

[74] Article 6 reads as follows: "a. In every departmental board of state organisations, of entities of the public sector and of local administration agencies, the number of members of each sex nominated by the Administration shall be equal to at least 1/3 of those nominated […]. b. In cases of appointment or recommendation by the public Administration to entities of the public sector or local administration agencies of members of the board or of other collective managing bodies of entities of the public sector or of local administration agencies, the number of appointed or recommended persons of each sex shall correspond to at least 1/3 of those appointed or recommended […]." Law 2839/2000 entered into force before the finalisation of the Constitutional reform.

[75] The scope of the provision also covers entities of the private sector, but only as far as appointments (or recommendations) made by the Administration are concerned.

regional elections (for the 1st and 2nd degrees of local administration) must be equal to at least 1/3 of the total number of candidates in each party list.

These developments have added significant weapons in the anti-discrimination and equality arsenal of the Greek legal system. They also confirmed the transformation of the socio-political climate and the commitment to a more substantial notion of gender equality that accepts the need for positive measures as means to this end. In this context, it is important to engage in a more detailed analysis of the afore-mentioned provisions and identify their position within the conceptual framework of positive action.

The aim of both pieces of legislation appears, prima facie, to be identical, namely to tackle the problem of under-representation of women in decision-making processes in the public sphere. A more thorough analysis, however, indicates that Law 2839/2000 is based on a straightforward rationale: The complete absence of women from decision-making bodies cannot be justified on account of their lesser merit in comparison with their male colleagues; hence, it must be attributed to gender discrimination. Introducing, then, a quota if favour of *fully qualified women*[76] seems a fair and modest way to cure an unjustified inequality in the relative situation of men and women in the employment field. In fact, this is a clear case of "soft positive action", operating largely as a tie-break rule among equally qualified candidates.

The Legal State Council has recently confirmed this interpretation of the said provision, ruling that all-male boards are lawful, insofar as there are not any fully qualified women employees in the relevant department.[77] Obviously, the quota's scope of application is narrower, in view of its proviso, than one might have hoped for. Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that positive measures of this type, apart from their undeniable practical significance, have the added advantage of being relatively uncontroversial. In this regard, they can play a cardinal role in the ideological transformation process towards a better understanding of the causal connection between

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[76] Article 6 para 1 of Law 2839/2000 includes a proviso that restricts the application of the quota only to departments employing an adequate number of fully qualified women.

[77] Legal State Council opinion 259/2004. It is logical to assume that in a department where fully qualified women are less than 1/3 of the members of the departmental board the quota will still apply, although the set minimum percentage would not be observed. In other words, if in a department serve three fully qualified women and the board is comprised by nine (or more) members, then all three women will have to be appointed to the board in compliance with the quota.

gender discrimination and under-representation of women in the higher strata of the employment pyramid.

Article 75 para 2 of Law 2910/2001, on the other hand, regulates an issue that features among the hottest topics of political and legal debate throughout Europe, as well as in the United States. In the justification report of article 75 the Greek legislator invokes the notion of substantial equality and proclaims the necessity of positive measures for its accomplishment. Moreover, it is made clear once again that positive measures do not constitute derogations from substantial equal treatment but a necessary means for its effective application. The quota in favour of female candidates in the regional and municipal elections is also in compliance with the obligations of the State arising from international conventions and from EU Law.

The quota in question is much more rigid than the one introduced by Law 2839/2000, because in this case there is not (and cannot be) a proviso limiting the scope of application. In other words, the political parties are under an *absolute obligation* to abide by the quota, on pain of nullity of their electoral lists. The issue of individual qualifications is here irrelevant, since the quota, on the one hand, does not correspond to a tie-break type of rule and the concept of merit, on the other, cannot resonate with political participation in the same way as in the context of employment.

Since the late 1990's most Greek political parties had already incorporated some form of quota in favour of women in their internal selection procedures,[78] following the trend in most EU Member States.[79] As a result, the implementation of the new provision did not meet with considerable resistance within the parties. The use of quotas, however, as a mechanism to remedy the problem of under-representation in the political field brings forth unresolved tensions with the fundamental democratic principles in representative democracy. What follows is an attempt for a brief analysis of the most controversial theoretical issues.

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[78] See M. Stratigaki, *"Ποσοστώσεις: Ένα αναγκαίο κακό"*, Κυριακάτικη Αυγή [newspaper], 16 July 2000.
[79] In the year 2000, fifty three political parties in the EU had specific policies in order to ensure stronger participation of women in their decision-making bodies and thirty one among them implemented specific quotas ranging from 20% to 50% (source: www.db-decision.de).

IV. Political under-representation of women and their status as a disadvantaged social group: Are quotas the remedy?

Throughout the literature on positive action the terms disadvantaged (or under-privileged) groups and under-represented groups are used interchangeably, in accordance with what seems to fit best in each particular case. This is understandable considering the diversity of the aims that positive action entertains, which range from providing a specific remedy for invidious race or sex discrimination to the more general purpose of increasing participation of excluded or visibly under-represented groups in important public spheres[80]. Disadvantage and under-representation, then, are understood as variations of the consequences than may befall upon social groups, which have been victims of direct or indirect discrimination. This interpretation, convenient though it may sound, fails to go past a superficial level of analysis and underestimates the complexity of the issues involved.

When positive measures taken in a specific area of law are unclear as to their rationale in targeting disadvantaged instead of simply under-represented groups or vice versa, the two obviously non-tautological terms seem to collapse into one another. The problems arising in this connection are not confined to academic concerns about theoretical clarity and consistency or linguistic accuracy. Apart from the obvious issue of accommodating competing claims from groups equally entitled in principle to special protection or preferential treatment, the lack of legal integrity in selecting beneficiaries imperils the legitimacy of positive action due to potential conflict with the underlying principle of equal treatment. What is more, when dealing with under-representation the theoretical validity of many traditional defence lines for positive action[81] becomes questionable, since they appear to presuppose some sort of tangible social disadvantage resulting from past discrimination.

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[80] See Fredman, supra n. 1, p.126.
[81] Especially in relation to arguments invoking compensation as a legitimate aim of positive action.

By and large, social disadvantage denotes a state of affairs in which the group is unjustifiably[82] deprived of rights or opportunities. To the extent that positive action is restricted within the normative framework of discrimination law, there should exist a causal link between the lower social position of the group and the discriminatory practices against it. In other words, entitlement to benefits is justified on the legal basis not only of disadvantage but also of its causes and, in fact, the latter consideration should be taken into account first in adjudication.[83] When it comes to under-representation, however, things become significantly more complex.

Tackling under-representation of women in the political sphere has been a primary concern in Europe for many years and is hailed nowadays as positive action's main goal.[84] The moral justification of such measures seems relatively straightforward, since social exclusion contradicts the fundamental precepts of the democratic polity. From a more pragmatic point of view, it is reasonable to assume that, statistically, talents and natural abilities are evenly spread across the populace[85], which renders the absence of certain social groups from employment areas irrational and counter-productive.

Confusion begins, however, when under-representation is used as a proxy to locate social disadvantage. Although the two are not mutually exclusive and, in practice, they often coincide or even causally relate to one another[86], under-representation does not necessarily entail disadvantage and vice versa. To mention but a simple example, the fact that there are more female than male nurses is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition to characterise men as a disadvantaged group in this specific employment area.

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[82] Prisoners, for instance, constitute the paradigm case of justified disadvantaged or social exclusion. On the contrary, discrimination against former convicts may be a legal basis for entitlement to positive action, depending on whether they qualify as a social group.

[83] The analytical process, then, comprises three stages, answering to corresponding questions: Which clusters of individuals constitute social groups? Which social groups are or have been discriminated against? Which of the latter groups are disadvantaged suffer from detrimental effects of discrimination)?

[84] For a comparative review of the situation in a number of European jurisdictions see M Russell and C. O'Cinneide, *"Positive Action to Promote Women in Politics: Some European Comparisons"*, ICLQ, 52, 2003, pp. 587-614. Also see N. Lenoir, *"The Representation of Women in Politics: From Quotas to Parity in Elections"*, ICLQ, 2001, 50, pp. 217-247, which focuses on the case of France.

[85] H. Hernes, *Welfare state and women power: Essays in state feminism*, Norwegian University Press, 1987; S. Helgesen, *The female advantage: Women's ways of leadership*, Doubleday, 1990.

[86] Groups that are excluded from decision-making processes or from certain areas of employment, either horizontally (total absence from certain areas) or vertically (absence from the higher ranks within a certain area), are inevitably more likely to suffer from relative disadvantages compared to the rest of the population, even if their exclusion per se is not regarded as such (which, of course, seems rather implausible).

The issue, then, is whether under-representation requires positive measures irrespective of its actual negative consequences for the affected group.

To come back to the view of under-representation as undemocratic and counter-productive, a further remark has to be made. The classical conception of positive action, contrary to the conclusion drawn above, seems to implicitly adopt an understanding of under-representation as amounting per se to social disadvantage. If the latter consists in the deprivation of rights and opportunities, under-representation falls comfortably within the scope of the definition. The argument, then, that rules out the absurd result of "disadvantaged male nurses" invokes that under-representation matters only insofar as it is not the outcome of free and genuine choice in a state of equal opportunities. In this respect, women's under-representation in Parliament constitutes disadvantage if and only if there are not enough female candidates in party shortlists, in which case the voters are presented with an unlawfully limited set of options that restrains their freedom of choice[87].

Individual choice is apparently instrumental to the liberal notion of equal opportunities, which dominates the discourse in the European legal order, and the emphasis on it is far from surprising. What is quite surprising, on the contrary, is the self-defeating nature of the relevant arguments in the context of positive action. If our primary legal (and political) concern is to provide citizens with the widest possible set of options[88], result-oriented quotas that secure a number of Parliamentary seats – or any other elected public offices in decision making bodies – for a specific group inhibit one's freedom to select one's representatives. Favouring members of under-represented groups may be to some extent a "legitimate sacrifice" of freedom of choice and, for this reason, the latter cannot be plausibly used as a justification for positive measures.

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[87] In the opposite case, when equal opportunities are ensured for all candidates and the widest possible set of options is provided to voters, a potentially unbalanced representation of social groups in Parliament reflects the democratically expressed choice of the electorate body and cannot be subject to further legal scrutiny.

[88] This is, by and large, the principle claim of liberal egalitarianism that appears to inspire much of the literature in defence of positive action. On the question how far does equality of opportunity require that the cultural values and commitments of different groups be taken into account when public policy on access to jobs, educational places and so forth is being decided see the debate between Brian Barry (*Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism*, Polity Press, 2001) and his critics (Paul Kelly ed., *Multiculturalism Reconsidered: 'Culture and Equality' and its Critics*, Polity Press/Blackwell Publishers, 2002).

The matter is quite different, though, when quotas apply to the selection of candidates for elected offices. Clearly, all-male shortlists affect substantially the outcome of the process and predetermine an uneven landscape in terms of representation.[89] Especially in an electoral system as in Greece, where MPs are elected throughout the country at large in proportion to the total electoral strength of their party and not by their particular constituency,[90] the legitimacy of quotas in the party electoral lists cannot be questioned from a perspective of democracy, except in extreme circumstances.[91]

The classical conception of positive action assumes that a group's under-representation entails its lower position in the social hierarchy. But whether preferential treatment to any one member of the group is the answer depends on the underlying understanding of representation and its functioning. The distinction between social representation and opinion representation[92] sets the tone of the discourse. The terms are self-explanatory and they have been omnipresent in the positive action debate, either explicitly or implicitly. Early feminists and civil rights activists dismissed the dilemma relatively easily by firmly supporting social representation as the only available way to end years of discrimination and oppression against women. Social exclusion was an apparent as well as appalling reality and positive action presented an excellent opportunity to deal with the situation effectively and immediately.

Historical experience, however, has been disillusionary, proving that the actual difference made by positive action programmes was nowhere near the initial ultra-optimistic predictions. More women (and minority members) were accepted in previously excluded areas and, if anything, this was a sign of progress. But the extent to which this change reflected to the group as a whole was significantly less than intended. The mere presence of women in positions of power does neither mean that they are on the same footing as men[93] nor that the former are willing and able to contribute towards enhancing

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[89] N. Kaltsoya-Tournaviti, *Υποαντιπροσώπευση γυναικών και δημοκρατία* [*Under-representation of women and Democracy*], A. N. Sakkoulas, 1997, p. 73 [in Greek].
[90] Yotopoulos-Marangopoulos, op. cit., p. 71.
[91] One may wonder what would happen in the case of an all-male political party campaigning for the rights of divorced fathers.
[92] J. Perkins and D. L. Fowlkes, *"Opinion Representation versus Social Representation; or Why Women Can't Run as Women and Win"*, The American Political Science Review, vol. 74, no. 1, Mar. 1980.
[93] B. Bergmann, *In Defence of Affirmative Action*, Basic Books, 1996, pp. 42-43.

the overall social status of their group[94]. By far the most eloquent example of the latter is the U.S. National Security Advisor, Condoleeza Rice, who recently backed the Bush administration in its campaign against preferential treatment for minorities in University admission policies[95], although she acknowledged that, in her opinion, race should be taken into account as a morally relevant factor[96]. Her reluctance to voice a strong dissenting opinion is rather ironic, considering that she publicly admits being herself a beneficiary of positive action when admitted to Stanford University[97].

This is not to argue that one's rejection of positive action as ineffective or even unfair signifies automatically the betrayal of one's allegiance to the disadvantaged group one comes from. The concept of representation in itself, however, requires a minimum degree of solidarity between the individual "representative" and the rest of the group. A reflection of this should be the existence of shared fundamental beliefs and interests; otherwise positive measures against under-representation would be pointless. To put it differently, commitment to the conception of social representation is inadequate to account for quotas in candidate selection for public offices, because it allows only for a superficial diversity of gender, race or ethnicity and not for a substantial and meaningful diversity in opinions, interests and ideas.

Many opponents of positive action falsely suggest that under-representation is not an issue as long as democratic institutions ensure in principle that all voices are heard. The very fact that specific social or ethnic groups have always been disproportionately represented in or completely absent from the higher ranks of the socio-political hierarchy, far from being coincidental, echoes the fundamental institutional deficit that reproduces a subtle pattern of discrimination, defying equal opportunities and equal treatment. The legal enquiry undertaken here is whether quotas insensitive to the beneficiaries'

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[94] Fredman (supra n. 1) contends that the position of many women in Britain declined during the premiership of Margaret Thatcher. The U.S. Secretary of State, Collin Powell, who incidentally has voiced publicly his disagreement with the White House's negative stance on positive action in University admission policies (see G. Younge, "Powell opposes Bush line on race" in The Guardian, 21/01/03), has been the target of similar criticism for his lack of support to the black community (see G. Younge, *"Different class"* in The Guardian, 23/11/02, where the singer and one-time civil rights activist Harry Belafonte is quoted to compare the Secretary of State to a "house slave, permitted to come into the house of the master").

[95] See G. Younge, *"America is a class act"* in The Guardian, 27/01/03.

[96] See G. Younge, *"A supreme showdown"* in The Guardian, 21/06/03.

[97] See T. Phillips, *"More than skin deep"* in The Guardian, 18/08/03.

connectedness with their group are effectively canceling under-representation. And since it seems impractical to seek a metric system of "group loyalty", the solution might be found in rethinking how quotas resonate with the concept of representation in the democratic polity, with a view to making them more consistent with the theoretical premises of positive action, that encompass both disadvantage and under-representation, as well as more effective in achieving the expected results.

V. Conclusion.

During the last twenty years Greece has managed to improve noticeably its record on gender equality. From the first hesitant legal steps aimed at combating gender discrimination to the implementation of positive measures in favour of women in employment and in political representation, the Greek legal system has come a long way and is now oriented towards true and effective equality. In the general elections of 2004 a record number of 39 women were elected in Parliament, sending, thus, a powerful symbolic message that women are at last claiming their rightful place in the Greek polity of the 21st century.

Unfortunately, the atmosphere of optimism created by these developments is not entirely – if at all – justified. The Gender Gap Report, published by the World Economic Forum in May 2005, provides conclusive evidence that gender equality is a goal not yet attained. Greece has ranked as low as 50th among 58 countries in this study that measures the extent to which women have achieved full equality with men in five critical areas of the public and social life.[98] Quite unsurprisingly Greece falls far behind every other EU Member State – with the exception of Italy that takes the 45th place – performing particularly poorly on economic participation and on political empowerment.

These unflattering results must give cause for reflection and careful analysis, especially to the extent that they demonstrate that quotas in favour of women in party shortlists are insufficient to solve the problem of under-representation. Instead of congratulating ourselves on the success of having 39 female MPs, amounting to a meagre

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[98] The five areas are: Economic participation, economic opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment and health and well-being. For the full text of the Report see: www.weforum.org.

13% of the seats, we should rather try and answer why only 39 out of a total 309 female candidates were eventually elected. On an equally alarming note, women represent 65% of the Greek unemployment rate, according to the official data of the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAEΔ) in November 2004, which partly explains the conclusions of the Gender Gap Report as to the low participation of women in the economic life.

Arguably, the most important and difficult issue is that of *equality-awareness* within the Greek society. The phenomenal persistence of institutional discrimination and the magnitude of its effects are often underestimated. It is truly surprising that, after a series of decisions by the SAC and after the Constitutional reform of article 116 para 2, restrictive quotas become once again an issue of debate. A few months ago several municipal authorities in Northern Greece refused to appoint successful female candidates to the municipal police above a maximum of 15% of the total appointees, disregarding the explanatory report of the competent Ministry of Internal Affairs that authentically interpreted the provision as being a *minimum quota*. The inexplicable insistence of the local authorities, which has led the case before the SAC (still pending), may be an exception to the general feeling in the Greek public opinion, but must surely awake us to the fact that the battle for full gender equality is still on.

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Title: The concept of class in Modern Greek Sociology

Introduction

My main interest is in the role of education as a factor of inter- and intra- generational

social mobility in Greece.

More specifically, my interest lies in the exploration of the impact of educational

attainment in the lifachances and social positioning of people. This is connected with

the issue of openness or otherwise of the Greek education system over the last seven

to eight decades and the distribution of educational opportunities amongst all students.

It also aims to investigate the 'social fluidity' and the structures that enable or permit

movements of individuals and collectivities across the social hierarchy.

It should be noted that although educational provision has predominantly been

provided by the state and in this sense it has been uniform, my unit of analysis is not

Greece as a country but a small provincial town North West of Greece.

This particular focus is justified in three ways: in line with a common view within

Greek sociology (Lambiri-Dimaki, 1983; Mouzelis, 1986; Mouzelis and Attalides,

1971 etc) that Greek society (and its social structure) can be more effectively

conceptualised in a way that captures the significant qualitative variations between

rural and urban areas, different approaches have to be adopted for each one of these

settings.

Secondly, the specific locale (of where I will conduct my research) appears to have

some added complexity. In more detail, it is comprised of a diverse community

consisted of Roma people, Vlachs and the 'majority' group with their own variations

and particularities, as well as with Albanian immigrants and Albanian citizens of Greek origin, the 'Vorioepirotes'. Moreover, the specific area has gone through major economic, social and political transformations over the last three generations which have shaped considerably all aspects of its modern life.

Thirdly, crucial data for a nation-wide study, such as occupational turnover, income, educational attainment, sex segregation etc have never been systematically collected and therefore cannot be comparable.

Before I proceed, a caveat is necessary: the title of this presentation is somehow deceptive in relation to the actual endeavour that I undertook. That is to say, it promises to deal with the relevance of the concept of class in modern Greek sociology but as it will be made clear this is only one amongst many consideration of this paper. Indeed, when I set off to write this paper I intented to deal with the ways in which the concept of class has been utilised and approached in modern sociological writings in and on Greece, as I was aiming to demonstrate its relevance and utility in a social mobility study similar to which I will undertake. In the following lines, although the importance of a social class analysis will be still maintained, I will illustrate that the complexity of the issues involved may also call for an opening of the scope of the theoretical devices available. Some of these issues will be demonstrated through extracts of interviews that I conducted with residents of the locale while some others through the relevant literature.

Turning now to my main focus, the need for such an investigation was triggered by the existence of numerous Greek studies in sociology and especially in sociology of education, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, that deal with the description and

explanation of social reproduction and social inequalities within and through education (Gotovos, 2004) and less so with their analysis and exegesis. The ways in which these inequalities were produced in the first place and reproduced and the reasons for their emergence seems to have attracted less attention. By the same token, it is noteworthy and rather surprising that only a limited number of studies have appeared in Greek sociology that deal with issues of class structure and especially of social mobility. The reasons are manifold and here I will list a few if only indicative and with no intention to provide an elaborate account:

1. First reason to be identified is that the Greek society did not have an interrupted development in the post Second World War period. Soon after the termination of the War, a Civil War erupted which only ended in 1949 and left Greece a wreck, in economic, political and social terms. Moreover, the seven-year dictatorship, between 1967 and 1974, ceased any academic activity that was not complying with the regime's suppressive and authoritarian ideology. First prey to fall was freedom of thought and expression and academic activity was heavily censored and circumscribed.

2. Associated with the previous reason is the fact that many Greek intellectuals and academics flew abroad during this seven-year period in order to avoid censorship, persecution and, in many cases, incarceration. At the same time, Western European countries were shaken by the events of May 1968 in France which did not leave indifferent many progressive intellectuals.

3. A third reason has to do with the relatively recent establishment of sociology as a distinctive discipline in Greek universities (cf. Lambiri-Dimaki, 1983), that dates only as back as to the mid seventies. With such a short history in mainstream academia, the

major struggle for Greek sociology was to establish itself as a respectable and autonomous discipline rather than to develop all its fields of enquiry.

4. Linked with the development of Greek sociology is the fact that the other collaborating disciplines, such as psychology, political philosophy, economics, statistics etc, were also at an embryonic stage and could not support the development of branches of sociology which are closely linked to and, to an extent, dependent upon them, such as mobility studies.

Since for the study of the latter longitudinal, intergenerational data are required that span the life cycle of at least two adjacent generations, these data could not be collected in real time nor could they be provided in retrospect. Therefore, there is no tradition in Greek sociology dealing with issues of social mobility but only small-scale, case-studies which examined aspects of it (cf. Lambiri-Dimaki, 1983).

5. However, the aforementioned historical, social and political reasons may not be adequate *per se* to provide a full explanation of the lack of social structure and mobility studies in Greece. A fifth reason may also exist which refers to endogenous issues within Modern Greek sociology. It is postulated that the different approaches that have been developed in relation to social class analysis (Marxist, functionalist, Weberian), although they have enriched our sociological understanding and increased significantly our knowledge, with their limited and somehow eclectic scope, may have also deflected attention from ethnic, cultural, religious and gender considerations which shape a complex and somewhat unexplored reality.

For all the reasons stated above, the exigency for the investigation of such a politically loaded topic, such as the movements within social class and status

hierarchy of individuals and groups of people and their social mobility, is an audacious however challenging topic.

In the following section I will briefly present how some influential studies have dealt with the issue of social stratification in Greece and then I will try to sketch out some of their strengths and limitations in relevance to studies that deal with complex issues such as the social movement of heterogeneous groups of people.

Some issues relevant to the social stratification approach from functionalist approach

Lambiri- Dimaki (1983) in an impressive analytic manner, set off to deal with the equality of opportunity in Greek society which stemmed from her belief

'*in the need to further this ideal by uncovering, at the level of empirically rooted detail, the existing inequalities in Greek society resulting from differential stratum and class membership'(p. 2).*

Her interest was also motivated by a broader commitment to comparative sociology, through enriching the existing sociological knowledge on Greece which would allow for comparisons with other western countries. She held that, by uncovering features of social stratification in Greece '*which reflect in turn peculiarities of Greek tradition, modes of economic development, culture and structure*' (ibid., 3), stratification patterns in Greek society and their effects on life chances and lifestyles would become manifest and the differences of the Greek society with other European ones would be made evident. For her, one of these differences rests on the limited '*statuses'* that appear in the Greek context as opposed to other European countries

where a larger amount of 'statuses' are in play. To justify her point she argues that the Greek stratification system is less complex than the English, French and German one, due to the racial ethnic and religious homogeneity that was evident in that period (early 1908s) in Greece and due to the lack of an indigenous Greek aristocracy. This is a rather provoking point to which I shall return in the last part of this section.

Homogeneity and traditionalism is also observed by Lambiri- Dimaki within occupational '*statuses',* due to the low technological specialisation of the Greek working and the middle classes.

The second reason that differentiates Greece from its European counterparts, according to the author, is the means of status acquisition; in Greece status is achieved usually by achievement rather than by ascription which is a characteristic of European societies. The explanation lies again on the lack of racial, ethnic, religious and aristocratic status which would reward some people and therefore promote their class or stratum position. Instead, the type of status that is in play in the Greek society is '*status by maturation'.*

Lambiri-Dimaki also recognises the existence of a '*dual stratification system'* between rural and urban Greece which is of particular importance in the context of my study and to which I will also return in what follows.

The author also comments on the status of woman in Greece and her complex set of roles within a changing social structure, in which traditional values define her inferior position.

Finally, she points to the fact that although access to University education became more democratised (by the late seventies) and more open, this democratisation and openness does not correspond with '*a similar democratisation of access to higher occupational positions on meritocratic selection'* (ibid., 5).

Lambiri- Dimaki's contribution is valuable in that it takes into account the complexity of the Greek society and tries to explain its social formation through some of its most significant characteristics: status acquisition, educational achievement, regional differentiation, gender segregation and class position (usually based on occupational position).

Moreover, the empirical exploration of the dual stratification system, prevalent in Greece at least until the 1960s, adds to our understanding of economic and cultural inequalities between regions and families and their significantly different lifechances. Another strength of Lambiri- Dimaki's work is the fact that she gives considerable importance to the investigation of gender differences in relation to educational access and opportunities and that she stresses the role of occupational selection and differentiation in the lifechances of people of different gender, geographical origin, class and status group. Her exploration is revealing and it encompasses many aspects that had not been, thus far, empirically explored.

However, her analysis is based upon the unexplored assumption that Greece of this period is a racially, ethnically and religiously homogenous society. It is possible that this homogeneity reflects the methods with which this conclusion is reached rather than the variations and diversity of the Greek population.

Given that some minority groups were well established within Greece by that time, such as Pomacs, Muslims, Jews, Roma and refugees, it can be postulated that the low percentage quoted by Lambiri- Dimaki, only 3% of people of Jewish or Muslim religion, may not be an accurate representation.

In the same way, a widespread belief in the homogeneity of a society may have repercussions in the way people ascribe themselves into certain groups for research purposes which may not be in a position *per se* to say a lot about their actual group membership. That is to say, power relationships may exert significant influence on the shaping of group affiliation which can reinforce a 'false consciousness' or even a token membership. The latter can be based on issues that are out of the researcher's control such as 'need' for belonging to the majority group, concealment of identity etc, especially when the majority one, Greek in our case, comes with a set of privileges in relation to other, 'quasi' or 'inferior' Greek groups (for an extensive account on the 'hierarchy of Greekness' and concomitant issues related to group membership, such as privileges, legal rights and more, see Triandafyllidou and Veikou, 2002).

This was evident in a small scale research that I conducted in the aforementioned provincial town (North West of Greece) where people from the majority Greek society co-exist with other, minority groups, such as the Roma, the Vlachs and, since relatively recently, with Albanians and Albanian citizens of Greek origin ('Vorioepirotes').

Here I will only focus on the Roma group as they remain the main 'other' in the eyes of the majority group (and for most of the other groups) and due to the fact that they are found in larger numbers and they also have a very long historical presence in the area.

From the interviews that I conducted, it was typical for members of the majority group to locate the Roma people in the group of the 'others', often with derogatory connotation:

'They had what we had [in terms of land]. These are two separate issues [the fact that they are Roma and that they had land]………They would only marry amongst themselves. No young man from us would marry a Gypsy girl. It's only a recent thing that they got mixed [with non-Roma people] Not in our days, that would be a problem……….They [the Roma] would mainly become musicians; none, no young person would want to become a musician. These were hard times; people did not have enough to get by; they would do all sorts of jobs in order to survive; musicians and other jobs' (Non-Roma, male interviewee, Y.).

Another respondent, in an informal discussion we had just before the interview, commented:

'I've just been around to some friends of mine. They are Gypsies from here, although pretty descent people. Oh, they are so funny, you know! They've got their own habits and customs but they are ok [narrates a wedding between two Roma people that he attended a few days ago and refers to the Roma habits that struck him]' (Non-Roma interviewee, K.).

However, 'otherness' was viewed from a completely different angle by a Roma respondent:

At the moment no [I am not working]. Because of [bad] the weather [conditions] but also to take a bit of a rest. I have applied for unemployment benefits and we remain unemployed. There used to be jobs but what I can see is that they reached their limit. Now what it is to blame… it can be many things to blame but most of the blame rests with the foreigners; in the end,

they will cause us damage. Because, what I see at least, is that they came unskilled from over there and with the love that we showed them and the support that we gave them, we taught them how to work and they will reach [the level] where we are and we will reach where they are. We will be working for them! (Roma, male interviewee, M.).

In the account of the Roma interviewee it is manifested that the 'other' does not refer to a member of the majority group but to an 'inferior' other, the 'foreigners' as he calls them (referring mainly to the Albanians whose arrival in the early 1990s was heavily contested across Greece, in the media and in lay discourse, and was seen as a threat to the prosperity and cohesion of the country as well as the main reason for job loses). For him, the threat to the cohesion of society was the arrival of the 'foreigners'. His identity is inseparable from that of the majority group and his structural location is seen from within this wider group as opposed to the group of the newcomers, the foreigners.

According to the criteria established in conventional methods of data collection, such as the census or large-scale surveys even within social stratification studies, whole groups of people like the Roma person that I interviewed would be normally categorised under a generic, all-encompassing category: Greek Orthodox or in case of a social stratification survey agrarian, working class and the like.

The experiences of the people themselves would either be 'objectified' and form the categories of the classificatory models while, in a similar manner, the structural location(s) of the same people would become invisible given that their experiences would be prioritised. That is, their social position is not only determined merely by

their economic position (usually based upon their current occupation) but dimensions that cut across all aspects of a complex reality interplay.

The hazard I am pointing to here is one emanating from the social stratification approach which can have a limited explanatory scope. For example, with such an approach we could view all members of this area who belong in the same social class as having the same access to (material and other) resources, the same opportunities for access to education, upward social mobility etc since it will appear that they share all other identities, be they religious, ethnic, national and cultural. Perhaps different status membership could explain a bit more of the variation in opportunities, access, rewards and mainly outcomes but this would suggest that membership, for instance in a cultural or ethnic group, is another form of status membership. In other words, the fact that the Roma people of this area were the only ones to work as musicians, a job nobody else would accept to do under the specific conditions, was because they belong to a group with inferior status in relation to the majority one. Valid as this may be, it does not explain the reasons for the emergence of such a difference in 'statuses' nor does it tell us anything about the ways in which it has been created.

As Mouzelis argued (1986), this sort of approach does not tell us

'*to what extent the characteristics which all members in a social stratum have in common are or could be the basis of what Giddens calls 'class structuration' or 'boundedness': the development of various degrees of class-consciousness and of organisational links between them' (p., 58).*

It is suggested that for the type of research that I aim to conduct, with all the complexities that is has, such as those highlighted above, these limitations have to be bore into mind.

The dual system of social stratification in Greece from a Marxist standpoint

In the relevant literature on Greece, it has been suggested that a dual system of social stratification exists which corresponds to the urban-rural dichotomy (cf. Mouzelis and Attalides, 1971; Lambiri-Dimaki, 1983).

According to Mouzelis and Attalides (1971) the main criteria upon which this dichotomy is based are education and property but a further differentiation based on power and prestige also operates.

In the '*larger village*' they identify three main strata: The upper stratum is represented by the most prosperous peasants, large storekeepers or merchants and professionals, like doctors, teachers, governmental officials etc.

In the middle stratum, there is to be found the bulk of farm owners, small storekeepers and a limited number of skilled workers who may also live in the village.

Finally, the lower stratum consists of the propertyless farm labourers and the 'outcasts' of the village (p. 183).

Even if the dual stratification system was kept in a Marxist analysis of the Greek social structure the aforementioned social strata would rather be dismissed. For it is not rare for Marxist authors to overemphasise the actions of social classes and present collective actors as the motivators of history. Their actions, choices and strategies would be in the centre of analysis which need not of any other explanations. For instance, in the case of the growth and development of rural Greece, a typical way of analysis would consist of the explanation of the role of the dominant class and the conflict emergent with the subordinate class. This conflict would be then explained in terms of the contrasting interests of the different groups (classes) and the incommensurate (and unjust) concentration of material resources to the few and powerful that generated such a conflict. Education would be consequently seen as

another dimension of privilege, which is in the hands of the dominant class, and prestige would most probably be underplayed or dismissed.

Milonas for example (1999), adopts the differentiation between rural and urban regions and maintains that the social, economic and cultural situation of the peasants has not been improved in the years after the War for Independence in 1821 and up to the end of the twentieth century. Moreover, he argues that the differences (and inequalities) between these two geographical areas (rural and urban) have been augmented rather than reduced (ibid., 261). According to him

> *'these populations [of rural areas] are the victims of an economy, which until recently was not a capitalist one (due to the lack of accumulated capital that would be invested in industry) nor a feudal one (agricultural reforms- continuous appropriation of large proportions of land), but rather a pseudo- bourgeois or rather a mechanistic one'.* (ibid., 261)

The explanation lies, according to the author, in the 'exploitation' of the peasants especially in 'crucial' moments, the latter being defined as the moments when the peasants appear to have an increased demand for education. This increased demand, Milonas claims (ibid.) has been obstructed due to the 'obstacles' that the peasants encounter in their way. This obstruction, is a 'rational' one: there are some people who act collectively since they happen to be organised in a social class, the members of which is expected to share the same interests and who raise these barriers in order to deny access to the underprivileged and subordinate peasants. In such a manner the dominant class, is presented as the 'key holder' not only to the social ascent of its members but also to the subordinate class, the peasants.

There are two kinds of problems with this type of analysis: Firstly, in a rather simplified way the geographical regions of Greece seem to correspond to two broad classes: the rural areas to the peasants and the urban regions to the bourgeoisie. Internal differentiations within these two areas seem to be of secondary importance. Group membership is exclusively based on regional criteria and we are left to assume that everyone who lives in a village has the same (limited) power, opportunities and resources available with everybody else. Likewise internal differentiations within the urban regions are not taken into consideration. Especially in big urban centres, such as Athens and Salonica, it is doubtful whether all students have the same opportunities for access to higher education and whether the lifechances of all residents are positively affected by the fact that they live in such an area.

To demonstrate this point it is worthwhile quoting an extract from an interview conducted with a female resident of a the locale I referred to above, who has herself been through vocational education:

> *'…The problem in my days was for women not for men. We, the girls, had huge problem in going to university because that was perceived as, hm, not suitable! Yeah, parents would be sceptical with a girl wanting to go to study in Athens for instance…my parents were[like that] and imagine, I'm one of the few in my generation to graduate from high school and go to do a course for another two years. Although I was keen in going to University, that was out of the question…I even had to fight for this two-year course [of vocational education]. But it was not the same with my brother: although younger and quite bright, my parents, especially my dad, were begging him to go to University, at any cost. He didn't want to but…'* (female interviewee, A.).

It is evident that there was a considerable gender dimension in relation to the value of education. This respondent was not the only one to convey the appreciation for education, at least within her family, but only of the few to point to the significant gender factor that ultimately constrained her choices. Of course, the issue of access to higher education is more complicated and depends on many factors that go beyond the mere desire of students and their families to achieve it. Structural, cultural, institutional and other explanations must also be considered. In support of this, it is useful to refer to some of the findings of two repeated studies that Lambiri-Dimaki conducted in the 1960s. The first of these findings, although based on a small case study of the number of students that entered the (most prestigious according to the author) University of Athens according to their place of birth, shows that only 39% of all students were born in any of the two big urban centres, Athens and Salonica[1], with the rest 61% coming from villages and small towns. And this is at the time when higher education was not free. Similarly, we learn that only 10 per cent of urban workers' sons attend university, in the same period, compared to 14 per cent of peasants' sons who register for university courses. Moreover, this finding is not at odds with the 'sex inequality' which is '*more pronounced in the agricultural class as compared with all other classes*' (Lambiri-Dimaki, 1983; 87).

A similar conclusion is drawn by Mouzelis and Attalides (1971) who argue that the

> '*values emphasizing the advantages of a large family as a source of a household labour gradually to give way to a preference for fewer children with the sons being educated to highest possible level*' (ibid, 188).

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[1] At the time of Lambiri-Dimaki's study, the population of both Athens and Salonica was more than one third of the population size of the country.

The fact that higher education became free after 1964 does not mitigate against the above findings; on the contrary, it gives good reasons to believe that one of the biggest hardships for children from peasant families, their financial ability to support their studies, is after 1964 removed[2].

The second shortcoming of those approaches that advance a parlance of dominant versus subordinate classes is the way in which such a representation is crafted. According to Mouzelis (1986), such approaches present the dominant classes as '*anthropomorphic deities controlling everybody and manipulating everything on the social science*' (p., 62).

For him, this kind of analysis '*leads to the reification of the concept of class*' and '*disregards conscientious research in favour of ready-made formulas and prefabricated answers to all problems of development*' (ibid.).

This is mainly due to the fact the all relations are reduced to exploitative and alienating ones. Even though it is hard to argue against the analytical strength of such a position, it is potentially risky to ignore the complexity of power relations by running into the pitfall of reifying them into a set of antagonistic and conflicting exploitative, class relationships.

Indeed, if one follows such an approach, runs the risk of equating the rural populations with a specific class, by virtue of some shared characteristics of a spatial nature which predefine the traits and associations of people within such groupings. The diversity that can exist within such heterogeneous groups disappears in favour of predetermined, *ad hoc*, classifications that group all member in the same social class position. Such a complexity was observed by another interview, when he was talking

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[2] Recent data on the effect of the free higher education attendance on students from all regions will be added to this section, at a later stage of my research.

about relationships in the 'large village' in North-West Greece mentioned in the previous sections:

'...well, we are friends with everyone here. We know them all. I go to everyone's house; be them a Gypsy, a Greek or whatever else......but as it happens, I tend to see people with which I work with, er, you know, have things in common. There is a group of people who live in the outskirts of our village, you can see their houses. These are of a different..., you know, how can I put it? They are nice and we know them but they don't associate much. They have progressed in life. Most of them are educated: doctors, lawyers, teachers...they have their own life..... but you can see that even Gypsies now have become doctors, teachers and they marry with us these days. Well, some have their own companies, lots of money, workers working for them.... He, and we...we're still getting paid day in, day out...It doesn't matter...' (male interviewee, F.)

If we tried to apply the concept of 'sameness', according to which everyone enjoys the same privileges and shares a common group identity according to their class membership (as defined in relation to the dominant = urban class), it is evident from this account that this would be futile and unjustified. Internal divisions operate between the inferior 'others' and the dominant 'us'; the former being members of 'low status' groups, such as the Roma, and the latter comprised of the members of the majority group. However, not even these groups are homogeneous: the Roma group has also its own 'capitalists' who stand above working class members of the majority group. Similarly, the majority group has its own relations of domination and a further

internal differentiation since not all of them are peasants or workers. There is the local 'intelligentsia', the stratum of the educated persons, who form a big part of the middle class and it is anticipated that there is also a group of people who own (some of) the means of production. Since there is labour to be sold, it cannot be assumed that it is exclusively 'exported' to the urban centres but the 'quasi-capitalist' centres, to use Milonas' terminology, have their own modes and relations of production.

The social stratification approach and beyond

Thus far I have attempted to demonstrate how two alternative but not contradictory approaches to social stratification may conceal some of the complexities that I encountered in a small-scale research that aimed to explore some aspects of the social structure and social organisation of an area that used to be based predominantly on agriculture. What is missing from this preliminary analysis is an historical account of the political, social and economic transformation of the region that dates as back as the origins of the formation of the specific groupings, classes and strata, that are found in this locale. This will enable me to understand the development of the social formation of the place and will shed light in all the concomitant dimensions. Most importantly it will enable me to investigate the ways in which the different social groups act and interact within their societal and institutional context. That is, apart from the formation of these groups and the their relationship to the modes of production, market capacity etc, the autonomy of the actors and the groups they form can be examined. These institutional contexts include the cultural, the religious, the political, the ideological sphere and are considered of great important in a any serious attempt to construct a valuable account.

In line with Mouzelis and Attalides' argument (1971) this can also help because

'some of the main features of the Greek class structure, which are constant throughout history, can only be understood by analysing their formation and persistence, i.e. by examining class struggles and developments during the Ottoman rule and the Greek War of Independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century' (p., 162).

Moreover, when multiple modes of social organisation and differentiation operate the preponderance of any of the approaches outlined here may not be in position to explain alone all the variation and diversity that exists within dynamic societies that constantly change. This change ought to be seen not merely as imposed on people as they also have the power to change society. Their actions and choices shape as much as they are shaped by societal norms, rules, responsibilities, constrains etc and it this dual process that needs to be recognised and elaborated. When for example we utilise a dual system of stratification in order to capture the regional variation between rural and urban areas, as it has been shown, we cannot demonstrate accurately the internal intricacies and complexities by the use of this concept on its own. If on the other hand, we try to explore this merely through an approach that prioritises a particular aspect of multiple and interrelated identities that people maintain, such as cultural or ethnic identity, then we run the risk of reifying and/or underestimating the importance of other concepts such as that of class.

In line with E.O. Wright's (2004) argument I would like to argue that the concept of class is still of relevance and usage in advancing our understanding of modern, dynamic and complex, societies. Such a usage of class analysis, though, cannot ignore

the fact that it operates in a politically and ideologically loaded area which calls the researcher to be clear about her agenda at least thus far as her epistemological (and ontological) position is concerned. In this light, it is interesting to return to the argument that E.O. Wright (2001) put forward 'in defence' of his commitment to class analysis:

> '*The commitment to class analysis, therefore, is also grounded in a scientific belief: the belief that class inequality constitutes the most important socially structured axis of inequality that a radical egalitarian project confronts. This is a very tricky claim, as are all social scientific claims that something is the "most important" (or even, simply, more important than something else). "Most important" here does not mean "most important for every question one might ask". What it means is that class inequality and the institutions which reproduce that inequality are deeply implicated in all other forms of inequality and that, as a result, whatever else one must do as part of a radical egalitarian political project, one must understand how class works' (2001).*

The crucial point here is that class analysis is useful not for every question one might ask although there are some questions that are addressed in the most effective way by the deployment of the specific type of analysis. It is evident that Wright does not aim to offer it as panacea for every kind of question that relates to the social organisation and differentiation of people. In a similar fashion, I want to argue that class analysis cannot but have a central position in studies like mine that deal with all dimensions of social inequalities: from their production to structures and institutions that reproduce them. And from these institutions and structures to the actors, collective or individual ones, who produce and reproduce them and they get also affected by their existence.

Moreover, my position is that, in respect to my research, other concepts and theories, such as theories of ethnicity and racism or theories of power relations, have also to be carefully considered and applied where they help us reach a deeper and broader understanding. There is no reason why one type of analysis should exclude another, as there is no reason why a researcher should have to measure the exact 'dosage' of each theory she used in her analysis. The claim is rather for clarity in the ways different concepts and theories are utilised and applied and readiness on behalf of the researchers to accept that any social research project operates in a dynamic and fast changing social reality.

It must have become evident by now that this paper is far from complete. In this space I have only dealt with some relevant to this stage of my enquiry concepts and gave some reflections about them. A lot more is to be done. The 'complexities' for example of the area of my research, to which I frequently referred to in the above lines, need to be 'unpacked' in a manner that takes into account the historicity of the place, the interrelated institutions and the people who inhabit it. Furthermore, these complementary theories to class analysis, the need of which I mentioned in the last part of this paper, have to be presented in order for this account to reach a higher level of rigour and analysis. Finally, it is anticipated that the empirical data that will be collected in the future will enable me to reach a better understanding of the processes pertinent to my investigation.

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Back to the future: exploring the political construction of social work in Greece.

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Introduction

This article offers an overview of Greek social work's historical and sociopolitical development. Social work as a product of internal capitalistic contradictions should be examined in a dialectical way. Moreover social work wasn't delivered from pathogenesis, but emerged to accomplish a concrete social and political mission. In Greece this mission was notoriously political. Though, nowadays this interaction is veiled under theories of neutrality and conciliation, the political context of social work is a crucial issue. In addition even neutrality connotes political orientation.

Trying to explore the nature of social work, isolated from its real societal environment, leads either to a dead end or to false conclusions. How can we examine social work mentality without considering its sociopolitical roots? How can we comprehend social work practice without bearing in mind the oppression social workers confront themselves? How can we demand a change within social work if we are unable to realize its relation with the wider social policy context? How can we justify the increasing employment of social workers in NGOs in contrast to the public sector, without considering the structural changes in the welfare state?

This paper aims at outlining the development of Greek social work within the specific framework of Greek social policy. I am aware of the fact that the division of this process into separate periods (1949-1966, 1967-1990, and 1990 – nowadays) is artificial. However, such a periodisation assists this analysis by attempting to illustrate the continuity rather than separation of Greek social policy and social work. [*]

1. The historical appearance and development of Greek social work

The first recorded systematic activity of social workers in Greece coincides, not accidentally, with one of the most difficult periods in the country's contemporary history, the uprooting of the Turkey's Greek community. In 1922, more than 1.5 million Turkey resident Greeks were seeking settlement in the motherland as a result of the militaristic political choices of the Greek government. Deprivation, homelessness, unemployment, and absolute weakness to receive the refugees and help them integrate in the Greek society, constituted this chaotic situation. The fact that within a few days the population of the country increased by 1/4 illustrates the appalling condition in which the majority of the people were living (Castelan, 1991: 570, Svoronos, 1999: 124-127)). However, social workers at that time were included in the immediate humanitarian action, which was organized by international NGO's located especially from the United States. Ironically, foreign patterns of social work practice – mainly American- will remain dominant for the forthcoming decades, reminding us of the artificial and controversial development of the Greek social work. It is interesting to mention that during that period and until 1939 only two social workers practicing in Greece were locals, educated abroad and who accompanied the foreign charity missions (Stathopoulos, 1996: 157). Finally the initial attempt of the Greek state to educate professional welfare workers, following the American patterns, took place in 1937 but its ambitious plans were interrupted violently with the outbreak of the Second World War.

A. Post-war period, the emergence of domestic social work.

The roots of a perplexed welfare state

During wartime the only action, which had characteristics of "social protection",[i] was the well-organized effort of EAM[ii] to tackle starvation and deprivation within the areas of the country it could control (Collard, 1990:224, Zepos, 1945) Moreover, in 1941 the Regent founded the "National Organization of Christian Solidarity" aiming at the protection of the orphans (Stathopoulos, 1996: 164)). It is worth mentioning that the regent and pseudo-government were appointed by the Nazis conquerors.

After the withdrawal of the occupation forces Greece was literally in a state of devastation but the worse hadn't come yet. The return of the self-exiled, right wing government and the willingness of the western "allies" and especially U.K. and USA to uproot the communists from Greece steadily lead to a ferocious civil war (Tsoucalas 1969, Diamantopoulos 1997: 155-156). While the rest of Europe was being reborned from its ashes, in Greece an era of violence and partition had just begun. "*After the defeat in the late 1940s of the communists in the protracted civil war, the victorious coalition of nationalistic and pro-Western Greek forces established a regime of "guided democracy" in the country. It was "guided" in the sense that the throne and the victorious anti-communist army played the dominant political role – seting, in a clearly unconstitutional manner, strict limits to what was and what was not allowed to happen on the level of parliamentary politics.*" (Mouzelis, 2002:3)

Social work emerged under these extreme sociopolitical conditions. The emergence of social work in Greece occurred in circumstances totally different than in the other Western countries and this fact defines its features. "Pierce College" in 1945 and HEN[iii] in 1948 were the first schools in Greece whose graduates had officially the title of "social worker". These schools had a religious background and were funded from the Marshal plan under the "Truman doctrine". The Truman doctrine was significant not only for Greece but also for the whole world since the president of U.S.A. in 12/9/1947 declared the beginning of the cold war utilizing as an excuse the communist threat over Greece. This way USA succeeded U.K in the control of Greece over the possibility of revolution (Petropoulos, 2005:5). This control included significant economic and military help. The American generosity towards Greece-2 billions dollars were spent for this purpose-hadn't altruistic motivations but the AMAG (American Mission for Aid to Greece) involved literally the surrender of national sovereignty to USA (Giannoulopoulos, 1992: 270). Dwain Griswold, the leader of this mission, admitted "*I do believe that it was Congress's intention for this Mission to act instantly and dynamically in order to help the reconstruction of Greece and to control the communistic threat. Congress had also the intention –and the members emphasized on it- to apply strict control over the expenditure of American and Greek money. That means involvement in domestic issues and I cannot see the point of pretending that something else is happening...*" (Witner,1986: 93-94)

Moreover, the colonizer conditions of this agreement affected all the sociopolitical aspects including of course social welfare.

The American counsellors implemented the foundation of "Centers of Social Welfare" under the supervision of the Ministry of health and welfare. However, the construction of a welfare net similar to the American model and lacking consideration of the Greek society's particularities and the mentality of the local people was condemned to fail. The social needs of the Greeks were totally different than those of the American people. Greece was a deprived undeveloped country and its population was struggling to survive. Therefore, the transplantation of welfare ideas from a developed capitalistic country couldn't answer the particular needs of locals. Even the minister of health at that time, Andreas Psaras, admitted that the reconstruction of the social services was grounded on theories and practices unfamiliar to the Greek reality and potential. (Stathopoulos,1996: 164). Social welfare at that time was a part of the general political anomaly. Moreover it was reproducing features of inequality, oppression and exclusion. The perverse logic of institutionalized exclusion was epitomized by the use of "***certificate of national probity as a formal perquisite for access to all kinds of public resourses including public employment. To that should be added the systematically demeaning treatment of left-wing people by the authorities."*** *(Mouzelis, 2002:7)* Responsible authority for the provision of this certificate was the police. Moreover, the main conditions for this document to be provided were the defiance of communist ideas, faith in god and of course a "politically clear" record with the police. The absence of these "certificates" lead to the instant exclusion of all the state activities and especially employment and social security. Consequently, many communists and other progressive people were officially marginalized for decades.

Throughout 50s and 60s the main social problems were still rooted in the absolute disorganization caused by the extended war period of the past and current political instability. Because of the state's financial condition Greece could be considered as an undeveloped country without significant industrial activity, relying mainly on agriculture. The first signs of limited economic development appeared during the sixties as a result of massive immigration. During that period more than one million Greeks were forced to migrate to several destinations in Europe, Australia and America. Though this wave

relieved the national economy from considerable weights, it had a serious effect on the collective national feeling. This was well reflected in contemporary art such as songs and poems. Significant Greek poets, composers and singers expressed the pain and melancholy caused by the immigration and became very popular among the Greek struggling people (e.g. Ritsos, Theodorakis, Kazantzidis, Bithikotsis,).

The major pillars of social policy in that period continued to comprise the basis of the national social protection system until the 90's. A universal social insurance system (IKA) at least ensured pensions and low cost medical treatment to the workforce and their families-despite its deficits. This system was influenced by Bismarck's model in Germany, aiming to tackle the increasing and "dangerous" workers demands. The Bismarckian corporatist model is designed much less to reduce inequality than to maintain status. It is characterized by a concerted action between employers and trade unions, and is financed by contributions made by them. Welfare policies by the state uphold this arrangement, which is organized through social insurance. The welfare of the state depended on the welfare of individuals and vice versa (Moreno, Palier, 2004: 5, Stasinopoulou, 1990: 47). It was developed initially in Germany at the end of the 19th century when under the Marxist influence the workers started to organize themselves, demanding social change. The ruling class, as a result of the workers' pressures and in order to avoid socialist revolution, made these concessions. It is worth mentioning that nowadays, after the change of universal power correlations (the collapse USSR) and the consequent recession of the labour movement, all these concessions are undermined in the name of free market. Eventually, apart from the core of this effort, reactionary change is promoted even in a semiotic way. This explains for example the priority of the re-elected Greek Conservative Party in 2004 to rename the "Minister of Welfare" "Minister of Social Solidarity"

At that time spine of the Greek welfare system was made up of three major social agencies, a situation that remained untouched for decades:

- PIKPA, 1914 (Patriotic foundation for social welfare and understanding) aiming at protecting and covering the needs of the children.
- Centre for infants "MITERA", 1953, implementing the state's policy for adoption and tackling the high rates of infant mortality.

- Royal Welfare, 1947 (later-1970- renamed EOP- National Welfare Organization). This organization developed several initiatives such as "centres for children", "centres for family caring", vocational courses and urban community centres. The National Royal Foundation, which instituted one of the major schools of social work, was also established by EOP. These two charity organizations, founded by the King and Queen, had strong interlinks with the state to a point where it was difficult not to consider them as state services. This was not by accident, since the state was more than generous with the leader of these organizations, the King himself. Almost two decades later, Royal Welfare and renames and embodied in the state's social structure remaining the base of the Greek social services net. This organization was considered by the apologists as the most efficient welfare structure in Greece at that time. (Frideriki, 1971: 31). With a more penetrating insight into the term "efficient" we realize that its meaning was explicitly more political rather than scientific. "*Initial objective of this mechanism was to remove children from the war zones and protect them from the guerillas. Nevertheless, these children were practically walled in military like camps in order to maintain the political obedience of their families. This organization later developed more initiatives in other social aspects*" (ios, 2000: 2-5). The nature of these "centres" is being described in a crystal clear way in its propagandistic leaflet according to which the operation of the vocational programs focused on the "*education*" of the badly influenced "*youth guerillas*" and other antisocial juveniles (ios, 2000: 2-5). Additionally, part of the NRF's systematic effort to "adjust" dysfunctioned youths was severe psychological and physical violence. Group rapes, tortures and even executions that took place in these "centres" were kept secret until recently (for a detailed illustration and analysis of NRF's "child care polices" see Servos, 2001)

In addition, the activities of charity organizations were linked either to religious bodies or to major International NGOs such as the Red Cross. It is now proved that the latter organization knew of the inhuman and brutal treatment in the children camps we noted above, but tactfully avoided any reference to this situation. Both Greek Red Cross and the International Red Cross refuse to reveal or publish their records of these camps. (Servos,

2001: 562). The Greek also Church played an important role in this field, continuing its long term tradition of the past. Needless to say that these state and charity organizations had clear and often explicit political implications and purposes. Inextricably linked to the state apparatus, the welfare services contributed in the political propaganda against communism. The orientation of the Greek social policy was perfectly outlined by the Minister of Health and Welfare in 1960 "…*moreover the disastrous forces of violence and inhumanity, the forces of communistic totalitarianism, still exist. These forces, just few years ago, transformed the country into ruins and deteriorate the people's poverty into deprivation. Now, they try stubbornly to subvert the effort of national development, they try to destroy the environment of faith and optimism, which is necessary in order to accomplish this national mission. In order to overcome these obstacles and also to succeed in the absolute co-operation of the Greek people we need methodic and intense effort.*"(Conference on Community Development, 1960: 123). These words were part of the conclusion to the "Conference on Community Development" held in Patras in 1960 and all the experts in Greek social policy participated. It is worth mentioning that this conference was organized by the National Royal Foundation which, as we noted above, later established one of the major social work schools.

The political role of charity organizations will be discussed in a separate chapter, but at this point it is vital to point out the link between the Greek Church (Zografou, 1997: 212) and the Greek state. Throughout contemporary Greek history, the Church tried systematically to develop the concept of the Greek-Orthodox culture, as if these two elements were inseparable. Not accidentally this principle was in line with the states' theory of the national and political clarity (see Charisis, 2001). This theory was devoid of any mention of minorities in Greece and of course communists and socialists. The Greek Church and the state are still impossible to separate, in many aspects of political life. For example, until now the welfare map of the country is divided into parishes and many social departments still ask the priest of the local parish to conduct case reports, in order to provide services.

At this point in the analysis it is possible to develop some of the key issues in the following schema:

Foreign intervention (Marshal Plan)

Political instability/ violence, anticommunism

GREEK SOCIAL POLICY (1947-1967)

Deprived living conditions for the vast majority

Efforts for domestic reconstruction.

Impoverished welfare system

Unfamiliar patterns transplanted mainly from USA to Greece.

Social control and oppression. Large groups of the population were excluded for political reasons.

Social policy was grounded on vestigial financial benefits and informal welfare forms.

Amalgamation of weak agencies totally unrelated.

1. *Relation between the basic sociopolitical factors which influenced social policy and the main problematic aspects of the welfare system.*

The appearance of Greek social work

The previous description of the post war welfare system informs our attempt to reveal the political character of the Greek social work. Within this turbulent environment social work appeared not as a social necessity but was created from above almost as an experiment within the 1950s social laboratory. Its appearance does not coincide with a related popular demand.   This period could be argued as being of great importance in the development of Greek social work because it was during those years that it was legally defined and theoretically formed. Consequently, when we are investigating the "hidden" reasons which explain contemporary norms of social work practice, we should always refer to this period.

In the meantime, the development of the new –American inspired- social agencies formed the need for professionally trained welfare practitioners. Initially 4,500 welfare workers without qualifications were appointed. Nepotism was the main criterion and therefore they were more than professionally weak and corrupted to implement the welfare plan. After the state of corruption and insufficiency related to the first employees of these agencies, the necessity of producing qualified and educated welfare workers started to be materialized (Mastrogiannis in Stathopoulos, 1996: 164). As mentioned above the first two social work schools were founded in 1945 and 1948 but it was not until 1959 that legislation was passed concerning the legal definition of social work. (Dedoussi et all: 2003). Nonetheless, the first graduate social workers were immediately employed in the agencies. Additional need for more social workers emerged after the severe damages caused by series of earthquakes between 1953-1959.(Kallinikaki ,1998: 48). As a result of the increasing number of social workers, the National Association of Social Workers was founded in Athens in 1954. This association still represents scientifically and professionally Greek social workers and publishes the only scientific journal in social work currently[iv]. It is perhaps of no surprise given the character of social work development in Greece that NASW has never decided to go on strike or take any other forms of protest, though Greek social work was never devoid of problems and clashes. During an era of massive political struggles and fights the official syndicate of social workers never found a reason to protest, as if all the internal and general societal

problems were solved. However, this fact comprises another important piece of the sociopolitical puzzle.

During the period 1955-1966 several developments empowered the role of social work, in the arena of the antagonism between different professions, at least legally. Below we outline the basic facts:

- **1956**. The National Royal Foundation and HEN, in co-operation with the American "Unitary University Service committee" founded the Committee for Training in Social Work (SEKE). According to Kallinikaki, a dominant academic figure in contemporary Greek social work, this permanent committee made a significant contribution to the education of social workers (Kallinikaki, 1998). At this point we should remember the political and reactionary orientation of the NRF, we noted above. "The nationalistic education for teachers, police officers and social workers was one of the basic objectives of this organization" (ios, 2002: 2-5). These reports do not leave space for misunderstanding about the ideology of social work which had common roots with the ideology of the armed forces. Dimitris Servos in his recent, evidence based research on NRF reveals that apart from teachers and social workers, police officers (horofilakes) and soldiers were also involved in the "pedagogical" procedures of the Foundation (Servos, 2001:36).

- **1957, 1960**. Social Work School of Deaconesses and EPAA (Society for the Protection of Children) founded social work schools, highlighting the importance of charity and religious involvement in social work education[v]. Given that these institutions were for many years responsible for the front line social workers' education, it is vital to make a brief overview of their features and philosophy, focusing on the triangle *curriculum- teachers- students*. Their ideology was an amalgamation of nationalistic, conservative and American inspired elements. During that period the state defined the content and limits of the social work education clearly. According to the 319/1962 Royal Decree "*Among the necessary requirements for access to the educational institutions are: pass in examinations consisted of written and oral tests…The oral test (interview) aims at the discovering of the candidates' applicability to work as*

a social workers, considering their gifts and talents…Since it is proved ,following the first year of the studies, that it is impossible for the student to adjust to the profession of social work and after the related decision of the Board of Studies, the student will be expelled." Needless to say that their attempt to create the "proper personality" of the social worker is not only pedagogically biased but strictly political. It was a permanent filter to avoid the entrance of "undesirable and profane" students. These "sterilized" institutions were also free of any kind of student unions or political activity. The fact that **only females** could have access to social work schools until the 70s defies equality and freedom by definition. At the same time it provides more evidence of the state's expectation for social work practice. Given the already unequal role of the women in the Greek society, social work was condemned to be an underestimated and expendable profession (for a literature review concerning the social and political position of women in Greece at that time see (Teperoglou and Psara, 2002). On the other hand the curriculum was more than problematic, embodying American patterns totally irrelevant to the Greek reality. Papadimitriou, the former Director of Patras Social Work Department (TEI Patras), describes humorously this situation *",In the insignificant social work literature, I have seen many times, cases (this powerful pattern of teaching) referring to the pure Greek social problems of Puerto Ricans, Afro-Americans and Miss Brown, inhabitant of an American city!"* (Papadimitriou, 1983:2). Moreover the lack of university level programmes and research blocked the development of original and applied knowledge.

Apart from the unfamiliarity of the content in these courses we should mention their theoretical direction. It would not be an overstatement to say that an extreme individualism with references to the medical terminology characterized the courses. Expressions like "sociopathology", "dysfunction", "problematic case", are common through the few available books and papers. Freudian influences combined with McCarthyian[vi] notions and embellished at the same time, with the proper GreekOrthodox adaptations comprised the curriculum of the Greek social work for many years. For example, "*the problematic clients come from families with low*

economical status … they are illiterate people, who have become poor socially and culturally…they balance between starvation and disappointment and feel away from the middle-class values, totally different from the rest of the society…social workers know these families but its difficult to handle them because the clients refuse to utilize the social sources. Hostility, between these two different environments exists" (Papadimitriou, 1983:2). These are some of the main guidelines for the future social workers. Needless to say that radical theory never appeared or even mentioned in these educational institutes. Even the teaching of community work had a very superficial approach *"in many occasions the roots of social problems can be found in the endemic, social informal stories (gossips) which some times can cause undesirable consequences"*[vii] (EPAA,1971: 65). Finally we should mention the poor academic qualification of the teachers; to be more accurate there were, hardly, any teachers with even a first level university degree. Most of them have graduated from this educational anomaly and continued to reproduce it.

- **1959, 1961, 1962 and 1963**[viii] *Legislative Decree concerning the institution of social workers, Royal decree concerning the social work practice, Royal decree concerning the education of social workers and a supplementary decree to the previous one.* This wave of legislative interventions declared the official recognition of the Greek social work by the state and defined its context in detail. In relation to the sectional interests these decrees were significant because social work was crystallized as an acknowledged profession for the first time. There were defined concrete qualifications needed for registration as a social worker; most important of which was the social work degree. The 1961 decree clarified in a more adequate way the process of registration, duties, obligations and ethical guidelines of the social work practice. Politically speaking these laws put social work in a plaster which wasn't removed until 1992 when the 1961 decree was replaced by a new more democratic legislation. For example the 1961 decree declared that" *social workers ought to abstain from events or ideologies aiming to change the current sociopolitical regime to*

act in away which can be interpreted as political propaganda" (RC 690/1961); this instruction wasn't removed until 1992.

- **1961** First National Conference of social workers. In this first conference social workers decided to defend their professional privileges. Hence, concerns which differ the official beliefs cannot be found in the records of this event
- **1965** social workers were recognized as first degree civil servants.

The developments illustrate in an analytical way the hidden relation between contemporary politics and social work. Despite the climax of the legislative interventions of that period, social workers were still few hundreds; a very weak female "league" unable to influence the welfare state more than simply serving it.

B. 1967-1974 *The crystallization of the disciplinary welfare state*

The generals' tyrannical prevail over the distorted democracy in 1967 was not a surprise. The increasing influence of progressive ideas within the popular strata, permanent imperialistic interventions from USA and the unstable financial conditions became mixed in an explosive cocktail. The junta, which was backed by both domestic reactionary forces and external factors, had as major objectives to "secure" –once again- the country from the communistic danger and also to smooth the way for financial deregulations to capital's benefit. This tactic is similar to the Chilean model and the disastrous economical experiment of the "Chicago boys" during Pinochet's odious regime.

The junta's financial policy can be characterized as neoliberal, accompanied by the destruction of every democratic element in society (Patronis and Liagovas, 2004:112). The absolute control of trade unions and the market liberation created a capitalistic heaven for multinationals and the Greek bourgeoisie. Moreover, the lack of any democratic accountability over the government's plans and agreements led to a massive

wave of corruption and also an unconditional surrender to major business figures. Motivations for competition, construction climax and acceleration of country's industrialization formed a fake sense of boom. This policy was just a continuation of previous administration's initiatives. Additionally, it is well known that the pseudo-government of 1967 utilized experienced technocrats from the previous administrations (Patronis and Liagovas, 2004:111).

With respect to social policy, the generals tried to face efficiently popular discomfort. The main welfare structure remained untouched, continuing its vestigial interventions. The Church's sociopolitical power was empowered and its reactionary orientation was now more obvious than ever. During the dictatorship the cream of the clerics had close relationships with the government. They even participated actively in the pre referendum campaign of the generals, calling them "people of God" (ios, 2002: 2-5). The idealistic charity of the church was upgraded since the pseudo-government believed that they could help in accomplishing the junta's piety mission. "*The line of our National Government is to materialize the Greek-Christian teaching"* and the military authorities were praising the church at every opportunity (Aggelopoulos , 1984).

The aim concern of the junta was to pretend social sensitivity through financial initiatives such as price freezing, creation of new jobs (related to the climax of civil construction initiatives), pensions increase and erasure of agricultural debts. On the other hand, ambitious plans for reforms in the fields of social insurance and the health system failed notoriously and lead to the resignation of their designers. "*Their social policy was paternalistic and eclectic, targeting the reproduction of the regime and the limitation of communistic influence. When they "left" in 1974 the welfare state was ruined, broken into pieces and unequal. The Welfare state they found was almost the same, but the main difference was that now the gap between rich and poor had been widened and the same happened between the big and small cities.*" (Patronis and Liagovas, 2004:112). It is worth mentioning that in 1973 a legislative initiative defined the context of institutional care and the protection of the elderly. This law comprises the basic framework of elderly care until now, showing the continuity of the Greek social policy and its political references.

The disclosed era of social work

After reviewing the social work literature in Greece, we reach the conclusion that this barbaric regime never existed or even if it had, it had nothing to do with social work! Surprisingly, only Stathopoulos (1996) and Papatheofilou (1977) refer to social work under the dictatorship, but in an epigrammatic and superficial perspective. *"The dictatorship created "stagnant water" because social work cannot grow up without freedom"* (Papatheofilou, 1977:123). First of all, this conclusion ignores that Greek social work was already under authoritarian limitations since its birth. Moreover it is not an overstatement to say that during this time social work had a privileged position on a professional level and its sectional status was empowered (see below). Of course this was not a consequence of Generals' social sensitivity but evidence of social work's totally alienated nature. Using the term "alienation" I refer to Marx's concept rather than the mainstream psychological one (for more discussion on the relation between alienation and social work see Ferguson and Lavalette, 2004). Under these conditions, Greek social work could never appear as a threat to the tyrannical regime. In addition it could be seen as a useful and faithful ally.

Unfortunately, this period is considered as taboo among social work practitioners and academics. The close relation between their Association and the junta remains undisclosed. However even a glimpse at the NASW's archives is enough for the researcher to ascertain a dangerous ideological alliance. During the second year of the totalitarian administration (1968), NASW's representatives met the leadership of Welfare's Ministry at least 5 times! It was the same year when the minister himself sent a letter titled "arrangement for social workers and professional utilization": "*a. The Greek government during the general ongoing labour reform will look after all the remaining social work demands.(...)* **On the other hand, we really appreciate social workers' contribution in the constructive implementation of our social programs.***(...) The ministry of social services will take all the appropriate measures for the advantageous and coherent organization of social workers in commission.*" (SKLE, 1968[ix])

NASW's response was on the same wavelength, reminding General Papadopoulos, the head of pseudo-government, that "*all of the 660 social workers are able to face and*

resolve issues of social adjustment" (SKLE, 1968). Meaningless to state that the junta in order to promote its "social adjustment" was utilizing, apart from brainwash as methods, violence, exile, tortures and executions. During a turbulent period, official social work ignored any progressive connotation. At the same time all over the world revolutionary movements were in their heydays and within this euphoria, radical social work appeared as a vibrant alternative. Nevertheless, this debate never emerged in Greece and it is vital to mention that even nowadays we can hardly find references to this alternative approach.

Within one of the final letters in the same year, NASW declared to the government that social workers "*are better scientifically equipped than teachers in preventing the social tribulations [in schools]*" (SKLE, 1968). This argument was employed while social workers demanded to pretend they were the junta's warders within the schools. As far as we know, this very demand never materialized but the generals rewarded social workers for their dedication. The Greek state cemented social workers posts within the ministries of justice and welfare (LD 1375/1973). Moreover, the number of social workers in the employment of the state reached its peak, while this process had begun from 1971 (Vouka et al 1981: 154). Finally, the last but not least dictatorial intervention was the shift of social work Education from the Ministry of Welfare to the Ministry of education under the form the Technical- Higher Education, schools of paramedical professions in Patras and Heraclion (LD 335/1973). This intervention by the junta was however ironical. For by seeking to raise the status of social work it also relocated it to an educational context which allowed for most academic freedom for the first time in social work's history. Moreover, social work education was emancipated from the Church's embrace and the "gate" opened for male access to the profession[x].

Finally, we come to the conclusion that during the Generals' era, social work's professional position was promoted, as a result of NASW co-operation with the state apparatus. Although this fact remains unrevealed it comprises a very important and definitive chapter in its development proving the close interplay between politics and social work in Greece. The acknowledgment of this dark era will help social work's self-examination and re-definition.

B. 1974-1990 "modernizing" the welfare state

The first after-junta government can be characterized as a transition one. The gradual restoration of capitalistic democracy was based on structural changes concerning the legalization of the Greek Communist Party, the establishment of liberal-democratic constitution and the attempts of active re-involvement in western international organizations such as NATO and EEC. The Karamanlis government adopted right-wing policies trying to encourage the free market and despite the extended anti-american and anti EEC atmosphere within the Greek people, Greece joined the European Community and became its tenth member in 1981.

In October 1981 PASOK was the first Socialist-oriented party to be elected as a government in Greece. "Change "was PASOK's slogan that inspired the vast majority of the voters. According to this radical slogan the party's policy would focus on social change, democratization, and protection of the national sovereignty and independent. PASOK's first administration led to gradual democratization of the state apparatus and the Greek society in general. Multiple legislative interventions were focused on the empowerment of civil rights, such as civil marriage, gender equality and religious tolerance (Stathopoulos, 1996: 178, Muzelis, 2002: 7-8). These reforms were the result of a growing demand of the Greek working class for real social change. PASOK's policy was not a "gift" to the Greek people but a mature result of its struggles. From this perspective we can evaluate this development as a "step forward", though weak and limited. Despite the ambitious intentions and declarations, soon enough political barriers and confines emerged, proving the limitation of Papandreou government, which transformed PASOK to a mainstream social-democrat Party. Bureaucracy, clientism, corruption and populism constituted the main features of the state apparatus under PASOK. (for further discussion see Venieris,2003, Sotiropoulos, 2004 Muzelis, 2002)

Concerning social policy PASOK attempted to create the "first Greek welfare state". This effort was based on cash benefits. Within 1981-85 salaries and pensions were significantly raised and the social expenditure as share of GPD increased from 14 percent to 20 percent (Sotiropoulos, 2004: 269). Once again the welfare policy was comprehended only in the narrow terms of cash provisions. On the other hand, the

existent welfare structures remained untouched prolonging their marginalized existence. However the cornerstone of PASOK's social and health policy was the development of the National Health System (ESY) in 1983. Theoretically it was the first time that all citizens had free access to good quality health care and pharmaceutical treatment. Alongside, health centres were created all over the country, which were supposed to assist hospitals' mission for the sufficient medical cover of the Greek population. PASOK's hesitation to promote unwavering social reforms combined with its horror-balance between progressive measures and free market policies lead to the failure of ESY. Free medical treatment was an illusion for the Greek citizens. The development of clientistic approaches promoted the black market and strengthened the private sector (Carpenter, 2003: 257-272, Petmetsidou, 1996:325, Sotiropoulos, 2004: 269).

During the second period of PASOK's administration (1985-1989) free market policies were more obvious. The financial deficit caused by the fragmented and disorganized expenditures lead to a stabilizing economical plan. In spite of the "euroscepticism" of 1981-85, the second administration was actively interested in the European integration. Nevertheless, this prospect was still very difficult to implement given the domestic resistance to hard neoliberal reforms. This effort will characterize the next decade resulting aggressive privatizations and structural changes.

Social work in transition.

Given that PASOK's social policy focused on cash benefits social work was largely untouched by the reforms. Social workers were still few and their work was bound on this economical nature. Stathopoulos estimates that during 1986, one social worker was responsible for 45,945 citizens and this situation was even worse in rural areas; for example concerning the central and western Macedonia this analogy was 1:70,655(Stathopoulos, 1996: 169).

In the post junta period, social workers started for the first time to express consciously progressive political approaches. Examples of this debate can be found in the records of the National Conferences in 1978 and 1985. Social change related to concrete political and ideological beliefs was at last at the centre of discussion. The time of this political self examination and collective euphoria about the future of social work as a mean of

social change lasted for less than fifteen years associated with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of triumphal capitalism and neo-liberalism.

The politicization of social work during these years reflected the overall current political mobilization, which led to the first ever "left-oriented" government in Greece. It is equally true that the democratization of trade unions as well as student unions strengthen this effort. In 1983 the education of social workers shifted to the national higher education system through Technological Educational Institutes (TEI). Although TEI were far more effective than the previous religious schools, the lack of university level education emerged as the main demand. TEI ensured the appropriate academic freedom and equality in access but as far as it concerns academic and educational research the quality was still very poor. Most of the academics had not adequate educational and professional qualifications (Zografou, 1995: 7-25).

Unfortunately this condition still remains problematic. According to research conducted by Zografou in 1995 in TEI Patras (one of three in Greece) only 6 teachers had at least university or TEI first degree, in a total 16. Hence the majority of the teachers had only degrees from the previous schools, which were acting outside the formal educational system under conditions I described above. The establishment of the first university level department of social work in 1996 was a result of social workers' effort throughout 80s and 90s. The creation of this department did not result in halting of insufficient non-university education but the problematic situation became more complex since this step was not accompanied by either the abolishment or the upgrade of the existent social work departments in TEI. Moreover social workers still graduate from institutions with different educational levels. The "pseudo" upgrading of TEI in 2002 (Aspragathos, 2002:57) did not remove this differentiation, which is most obvious at a professional level. The title "social worker" is held by professionals who graduated from both TEI and universities. At a professional level they have different salaries and prospects in the agency's hierarchy, although they have the same duties, they belong in the same trade union and also study equally for four years. Consequently, this contradiction has caused clashes amongst social work professionals. However this perverse logic was caused by the harmonization of the Greek educational system with the EU directives (see Bologna agreement),(Aspragathos 2002). "Divide and rule" is the philosophy, which is followed

from the Greek governments concerning policies in educational and labour issues. It would appeared that the more divided the professionals are the more controllable.

Another aspect of this perplexity is the fact that the lack of domestic reproduction of academic social workers prolongs the class discrimination in the education of social workers. According to the university regulations new academics should hold formal educational qualifications (postgraduate studies), but given the absence of postgraduate programmes for social workers in Greece, only the privileged have the ability to study abroad and gain the requisite qualifications. Automatically, this condition excludes social workers from unprivileged social strata. It is unrealistic to the majority of these academics to adopt a shared perspective with the working class social workers when approaching the nature of social problems and their possible solutions. This situation empowers the neo-conservative turn, which characterizes social work in the 90s as a reflection of the general conservative condition in contemporary western societies.

Discussion

Examining the evolution of Greek social work in a dialectic perspective and focusing on its political contradictions, we come to the following conclusions:

- Despite the fact that we can hardly find references to the relationship between Greek social work and politics, this relationship exists and defines social work practice.
- Greek social work appeared under a highly authoritarian and oppressive environment and it was artificially established "from above".
- In spite of its vestigial existence, social work was extremely and consciously involved in the oppressive nature and function of the authoritarian state.
- This period shaped Greek social work's ideology.

Alongside the continuation of the disciplinary state in Greece, official social work prolongs the unspoken alliance with it. Nowadays more than ever, social workers in Greece appear to have internal political conflicts. They are victims themselves of neo-liberally inspired, labour deregulations related to the European Union's free market

priorities. Promoting free competition and unrestricted capitalistic economy is one of the main values of the EU as they were crystallized after the Maastricht treaty (Maastricht treaty 1992:5). Economical integration is based on these principles and priorities. *"The union shall work for sustainable development based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a **highly competitive social market economy**... the **free movement of persons, services, goods and capital** and freedom of establishment will be guaranteed within and by the European Union"* (EU constitution 2004:15,16). These directives prompted a series of reforms in labour and welfare status in Greece such as labour deregulations, working flexibility, increase of productivity, "rationalization" of welfare, curtailments (for further discussion see Venieris, 2003:136-140). Consequently, as part of the popular strata, social workers, are affected dramatically. Job insecurity, underemployment, managerialism and low salaries comprise the working reality they confront. The first salary of a social worker working in NGOs is 622 Euros, slightly more than a non skill worker (FEK 1223 of 10/8/2004). At the same time more than 1,000 social workers (1/4 of the overall) are working under the fear of losing their job as a result of the short term and time limited EU's welfare initiatives under which so many social workers are employed(social worker, 2004 :1). Managers and technocrats supervise social work practice, promoting the market ideology within the welfare (P.C 2646/98).

On the other hand, social workers appeared to promote these policies materializing specific related directives. For example social workers working in the Promoting Labour Agencies (OAED) "help" clients adjust to the new labour deregulations, utilizing all the EU underemployment initiatives (e.g. STAGE vocational programme, part time jobs etc). Since social workers are victims of these reforms as we mentioned above, it is likely to find unemployed social workers among the other unemployed people seeking help from the social worker of OAED. Given the high rate of unemployment and the "expiry date" of working agreements, it is more than possible for the social worker to become a "client". I experienced, a year ago, this contradictory nature of social work by my self, waiting in the queue of OAED for the social worker on duty.

Moreover NASW is not a passive observer of the situation but an active apologist of these reforms. The President of NASW was a personal consultant to the Minister of

Welfare and also board members participated in decision making, scientific committees according the legislation act 1306/2003 topic 3. Alongside, the trade union de facto accepts the E.U. directives concerning welfare reforms by implementing per se E.U. initiatives (NASW is a partner in materializing aspects of the EQUAL E.U. initiative) (social worker, 2004: 13-15).

Despite the neo-liberal policies *"the final years of the 20th century and the opening years of 21st have seen a commitment on a mass scale, a reawakening of the realization that human action can challenge and change the structures which condemn millions to lives of drudgery"* (Lavalette, 2002:187). In Greece the massive working class mobilization in spring 2001 postponed the reform of the Greek National Security System according to the E.U. directives. The following years hundreds of thousands Greeks illustrated their anti-war, anti imperialistic feelings, in massive demonstrations. Within this revival of working class mobilization, social work can play an important role bearing in mind its commitments for social justice and equality. Social work cannot lead to a social change by it self but its contribution to this effort can be vital "*The need for social work committed to social justice and challenging poverty and discrimination is greater than ever. In our view, this remains a view that is worth defending. More than any other welfare state profession, social work seeks to understand the links between "public issues and "private troubles" and seeks to address both."* (Jones et a, 2003: 2) Since poverty remains the consequent outcome of the unequal distribution of wealth due to free-market policies, social work maintains *"its unique position within the panoply of state welfare services in being engaged with some of the most impoverished in society"* (Jones, 2002: 8). Having his engagement, social work can contribute significantly in the effort to develop an emancipatory perspective on social relationships which leads in the quest for concrete action for change.

For Greek social work, in order to explore ways of promoting social change and social justice, self-awareness is the first step. Demystification of the past and consciousness of the social work's political character is the painful but necessary procedure for its real development according to popular demands. "*Part of the current political struggle in social work is…how to remember the past.*" (Fisher and Karger in Reisch and Andrews, 2002: 9).

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[i] It is obvious that the purpose of this action wasn't to establish a welfare system but rather to empower and help the Greek people in order to continue the struggle for liberation and development of a socialist state.

[ii] National Liberation Front. It was a massive and popular resistance movement during the period of occupation. Apart from the military activities EAM established cultural, educational and solidarity committees initiating to combat deprivation, illiteracy and low morale.

[iii] Christian Union for young females.

[iv] From the 70s until the mid 90s a second journal appeared in this field. It was titled "EKLOGH" (choice) and produced by the association of university graduated social workers, sample of the sectional and elitist logic within Greek social work.

[v] Alongside these vocational institutes, limited postgraduate seminars organized within the theological university and Panteion School of social sciences.

[vi] *"In the McCarthy era, there were 212 separate pieces of repressive legislation being considered in congress. Although some were aimed explicitly at Communists the majority sought to abrogate labour rights. In USA during that time, liberal anticommunists, including the most of the mainstream leadership of the social work profession, were particularly strident in their attacks on the left. They equated Communism, the police state and the slave labour camp, and Capitalism with democracy… The personal consequences of McCarthyism for many social workers were both painful and long lasting"*. (Reisch and Andrews, 2001:113)

[vii] Course notes from the EPAA school of social work in community work, 1971

[viii] For a brief overview of the overall legislative interventions concerning the social work profession see Dedussi and al. 2003

[ix] Official correspondence of NASW. NASW records, First semester of 1968.

[x] Practically, Greek social work was never totally devoid of religious and conservative ideas and also the male contribution remains so far insignificant.

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Title: Within social and cultural practices of Greek society subjects negotiate a series of issues that are related to family and the complexities of it**.**

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Within social and cultural practices of Greek society subjects negotiate a series of issues that are related to family and the complexities of it.

Introduction

This presentation will focus on a variety of different photographs that subjects chose from their family albums; photographs that illustrate parades of national commemorations such as 25th of March and 28th of October, ritual ceremonies (particularly Easter), and other cultural and social practices such as marriages and funerals. It will closely examine how these practices obtain a meaning and constitute part of subject's identity within the family, and how families have actually been shaped and produced within these social and cultural practices. 'Families' have a great influence not only over how and why these practices are celebrated but also in the subjects' explorations and interpretations within their interviews of the kinds of themes-concepts and the 'ethical' values that they transfer to their children, and how these may become embedded as part of the self and national identity.

Moreover, what triggered my awareness and what further intensifies the social force that family has within Greek culture, is the emphasis that subjects place on lived and embodied experience when remembering their stories of national commemorations and other ritual and social events. These experiences find their reference either in particular figures like the grandparents and their role in relation to the preparation of, and the participation in, any sort of ritual and social event, or in the concept of death and mourning that emerged through and was prompted primarily by the ritual procession of Good Friday. The subjects expanded the idea of death by bringing me more

photographs of their own relatives who are not alive anymore and they talked in detail about the particular significance that death seems to hold in Greek social life. The concept of death acquires a complexity that, as subjects say, emerges from a rather 'confused' relationship between the position of their emotions in relation to the obligations and duties that this social practice requires. Within the process of mourning either on a collective or on a personal basis, subjects recognise that feelings of suffering and pain, when interwoven with emotions of guilt and obligation, affect the formation of their identities.

Taking this into account, it seems from another aspect of Greek culture that emerges especially within discussions of photographs of weddings and national parades the feeling of suffering is transformed or rather translated into a feeling of shame. Subjects expressed various emotions such as anger or regret in relation to certain expectations that family 'demands' in order to fulfil the above social practices. These emotions hide a sort of fear for the subjects in terms of failing at the social ideals that their parents and society expect them to fulfil in relation to these cultural practices. In this internal process, these kinds of emotions are covered by an overall feeling of shame. Shame appears as an emotion that has been created by the subjects in relation to others. "In shame, I expose to myself that I am a failure through the gaze of an ideal other" (Ahmed, 2004: 106). Like suffering, shame involves obligation and commitment; subjects adopted and adapted shame as part of their identity with and in relation to certain aspects and attitudes that have been constantly implanted from the family and become a very powerful embodied experience. " I am ashamed of myself as I appear to the other" (Sartre, 1996:2002). In order for the subjects to confirm their love

and devotion to the social ideals of their parents, they are willing to sacrifice many of their beliefs and prioritise the beliefs of their parents. This issue was expanded by the subjects in depth and it brought to the surface discourses of class and *social milieu* that the subjects seem to take very seriously. Therefore, I will ask to what extent the expression of subjects' emotions, which are based on particular social and cultural practices, can become a national shame or a national ideal. [s1]Based on the above accounts what I would like to emphasize is that apart from the social, political and even the psychological interpretations that these themes enable me to develop, they also leave me the space to question and re-evaluate the meaning of Greekness and what we refer to as Greek 'national identity'.

Grandparents as a fairytale symbol for cultural identity.

The religious or traditional meaning of the Easter ceremony or of a national commemoration in Greece seems to remain vivid because of the role of the grandparents, according to my subjects. For them, grandparents are the ones who make social and cultural practices happen; subjects participate and experience the historical, religious, or even social significance of these practices through the eyes of their grandparents. Subjects brought a series of photographs from Easter Sunday or from national parades and in most of them, the grandmother or the grandfather posed with her or his grandchild. Ho[s2]wever, even when grandparents were not in their photographs, in subjects' memories Easter and other social practices have a direct reference to them. Subjects acknowledge a sense of Greekness through the verbal and bodily language of their grandparents. For subjects it was not only the special nouns or adjectives that

grandparent put in their stories that absorbed their grandchildren but also the various gestures and facial expressions they made in their descriptions that made them appeal to the subjects. In this context, subjects' identification with these social and cultural practices has been imprinted in their minds as an unforgettable experience involving the presence of the grandparents. It is as if the grandparents constitute a vital part of the activation of all these social practices and traditions.

For example, Alexandros is showing me a series of family photographs from Easter. **'Pascha'** in Greek is the most sacred and celebrated of all Greek holidays. The word **'Pascha'** comes from Hebrew and it means 'pass over'. Easter for Alexandros means a family celebration. His photograph of Easter Sunday stands as a main prompt in order for him to explain why and how Easter has such a deep meaning and a direct link to the meaning of Greekness and family. The first thing that is observable in his photograph is a number of cooked lambs, one next to the other. Beside them, members of the family dance, eat, and enjoy this very traditional ceremony. Alexandros emphasizes that Easter Sunday has a very religious but especially traditional atmosphere that seems very Greek to him.

> **Alexandros (23 years old, Athens):**Here I am with my parents and my grandmother in the village where my father is coming from. As you can see we cook usually lots of lambs not only for the family but also for anybody else that wants to enjoy our celebration. In this photograph there are many activities that are taking place such as some people dance Greek traditional songs, some others eat the red eggs and lamb… I don't know, especially Easter is really linked to what we call Greekness and Greek tradition, and this is a feeling that I develop from my family and especially my grandmother. Especially my grandmother makes me feel and believe either within the process of the fast or with the whole

ritual in the holy week that this ceremony-tradition has something very religious and also very Greek.

Alexandros' experiences of Easter Sunday are embedded [s3]embeddedein his memory within the concept of family. His complete attachment to Greek Easter, which actually constitutes a part of Greekness for him, derives from the stories that his grandmother used to narrate to him. It seems that his Grandmother appears as an interpreter of the tradition of Greek Easter. The roasting of the Easter lamb and the hard-boiled red eggs, the traditional Greek dances, and even the process of fasting acquire a meaning for Alexandros through the presence of his grandmother. She is the one who creates and shapes a religious ceremony into an educational as well as a creative space that makes Alexandros participate and really enjoy it. His grandmother is the medium who is able to transmit to her grandson the celebration of Easter through various ways that seem to be very appealing to Alexandros' eyes; and these ways are the ones that make the difference in his memories and shape how he perceives and understands the Easter ceremony. For Alexandros, his grandmother represents the knowledge and meaning that Easter or even any other social ceremony involves; the knowledge or the transmission of knowledge is more 'convincing' because it is presented by his grandmother rather than any other educational institution.

Alexandros continues to express his feelings about his grandmother based on the same sorts of photographs from Easter ceremony.

> **Alexandros (23 years old, Athens):** Here I am with my grandmother holding the red eggs and we are ready to chink them. I feel so thankful to my grandmother. She was really the one who initiated me in this Easter atmosphere; I love every

single ritual of it. In a way I feel like having a role where I am acting very well. What I mean by that is that I see and experience the whole ceremony of Easter not as a beholder but as a person who participates and follows all the religious processes of it. For me Easter is not a superfluous ceremony but a ceremony with lots of serious and important elements. I don't know whether this is a real or an imaginary image of Easter but what really counts to me is that I feel completely absorbed by Easter especially Good Friday, Saturday, and Easter Sunday. Once more I am grateful to my parents and especially to my grandmother who managed to transfer and to pass this tradition to me.

Alexandros feels contentment at being able to know all the traditions of the Easter ceremony and the meaning of them. Alexandros appreciates and respects not only the traditional character of Easter but also the religious one. He has learned, adopted, and deeply believes in the significance of Greek Easter in relation to its religious context. Alexandros approaches such a state of being because of his grandmother. His fidelity to the Easter ceremony emerges from beliefs that his grandmother transmitted to him. Whether these images are real or not, as he said, is not important for him, but what counts most is that he is completely integrated into this ritual ceremony.

As with Alexandros, Xaralambos also puts his emphasis on to the role that his grandmother and grandfather play in terms of transferring the customs and the traditions of the Easter ceremony. His photographs depict the village of his father where he used to go when he was very young to celebrate a series of ritual ceremonies with his parents and grandparents.

Xaralambos (24 years old, Athens): This portrait of my grandfather and my grandmother, I really love it. These are the people in my life that I owe them a lot. Because of them I learned how to appreciate the meaning of Easter celebration

and how to respect every single commemoration that is part of my tradition. Although they didn't go to school as I did, I remember very vividly that when I was six or seven years old they used to tell me stories and fairytales from the war, and all the stories and the adventures of how they grew up and what they passed through. This is actually how I learned history.

Once more grandparents appear in Xaralambos' mind as people with great wisdom and knowledge of what it means to be Greek and have a sense of Greekness. For Xaralambos, grandparents are people that we have to admire, respect and believe for all the things they know. In Xaralambos' ears whatever his grandparents have taught him, even about a dramatic event such a war, sounds like a fairytale. It seems that grandmothers have this capacity to transform even events such war and be able to transfer these to their grandchildren as mythical or a fantastical element of a family-tale. As Xaralambos emphasises, this is how he learned history. For him the definition of history either for the war or for the national commemorations emerges from the voices of his grandparents. The narratives of his grandparents stand as an accreditation [J4]for Xaralambos' knowledge. It seems that grandparents have the capacity to transform narratives of their everyday experience into an imaginary story through any of the senses. Whether their stories have a mythical and a real element, what counts as valuable in Alexadros' and Xaralambos' minds is that the history of their nation is constructed through the mundane and the everyday.

Therefore, one very strong aspect that makes the celebration of Easter important is the appearance of the grandparents. In my subjects' memories, grandparents are like figures that emerge from Greek mythology. They are able to create a social practice like a national commemoration or a ritual ceremony such as Easter in such a way that it attracts my subjects' interest and eventually they can extract

something valuable and meaningful from them. Through the presence of the grandparents, subjects experience and participate in the ceremony of Easter without seeing it as 'national duty' that they have to follow for the sake of their country. On the contrary, what remains alive in subjects' memories and gives 'life' to this cultural practice is all these small experiences such as the particular food of Easter and the whole atmosphere that comes into being through the presence of the grandparents. It seems that the actualisation and activation of this social and cultural practice happen through the mythical figures of the grandparents. I call them mythical because as my subjects say, whether their stories consist of something real or not, the outcome of it is what makes them attractive to them. Such an attitude makes grandparents symbols for Greek cultural identity. Taking this into account, another element that also becomes a symbol to bring the family together is the relationship between the participation and preparation of the Easter ceremony and the idea of food. Subjects' attitudes about sharing food allow us to understand the importance of Easter and other social events, which seem to construct a part of the national identity. As we will see below, food is a medium that signifies a sense of belonging as well as a metaphor [J5]that helps us to understand why families in Greece have such strong bonds that keep them together.

When food becomes as a symbolic medium for uniting family

Food in Greece is one of the most important elements constituting part of national identity. Attention to food is in almost every single social event that is organised either by the family or in the broader sense of a more formal institution. People in Greece pay particular attention to the preparation as well as the presentation of food on the table. Food stands as marker of the status of a family. It is a medium of

appreciation and respect in a Greek family. The family will put in great effort and will go through a whole discussion about what type of food has to be cooked, how it will be cooked, and why. In a way this is like a whole ritual, which has to be 'perfectly' presented in order for the guests not to say anything negative about the family. Political, social and cultural conversations will come to the surface in the process of eating. Eating and discussing issues of the political and social life can last for hours and hours. Food is a 'shared' experience in a Greek family that provides the opportunity for people to perceive the present event, for example Easter ceremony or a national parade, from another perspective. Within food ceremonies especially, the subjects explore the meaning of Easter.

Subjects' experiences focus on the traditional food that we eat, especially on Easter Saturday and Sunday, and not on the religious and ritual processes of it. Athena shows me a photograph from Easter Saturday and remembers what they usually eat by giving me a detailed description. The '*Anastasi*' resurrection of Easter Saturday is one of the most important days of the Greek Easter calendar. On Easter Saturday at midnight all the lights are extinguished in the church and the priest comes from behind the doors of the altar carrying a candle. He walks to somebody in the front row and lights their candle, and the light passes from candle to candle until it fills the church. The light is a symbol of the resurrection. Everyone kisses one another and says '*Christos Anesti*' Christ has risen, '*Alithos Anesti*' – truly He has risen. The candle is carried back home, taking care that the flame is not extinguished. At the house three crosses are made with the flame above the entrance door, in order to bless the house and its inhabitants by the light of Christ's resurrection. After that all

the family sit on the table and enjoy the Easter Saturday dinner, which is always started after midnight.

> **Athena (55 years old, Athens):** Here is a photograph from Easter Saturday, all the family again together on the table, eating a special soup and chant the red eggs after coming back from the church midnight. We usually cook this soup in the morning of Easter Saturday together with some other specialities and we even decorated with some red eggs and some sweet bread, everything has to be ready by midnight. I have to admit that we have to be very careful and everything has to be perfectly presented since we are expecting some relatives to arrive as well.

Athena's memories of Easter Saturday have a direct link to food. She remembers that night through the preparation of the food. The photograph with all the food in to the table and the way that Athena describes it leaves me with the craving to try them; I want to smell them and to see how they taste. Like Athena, I also understand what Easter Saturday means through the different dishes that have to be cooked. It seems that food has an extremely significant role in ways of remembering the celebration of such a ritual event. Moreover, food can also signify social aspects that characterise a Greek family. For example, when Athena says that everything has to be perfectly presented because her relatives are coming, she indicates the need that the family has to cook well in order to avoid criticism for the food not reaching the traditional standards. In this context, food becomes an important medium of Saturday Easter. It seems that cooking the special food of that day implies that you are following the tradition. Athena also describes Easter Sunday and how the lamb stands as a symbol bringing the family together and sharing their happiness and joy.

Athena (55 years old, Athens): Here is a photograph of the famous lamb that we cook Easter Sunday. That day usually my family go to church early in the morning, and then we participate in the preparation of the lamb. This is a day of happiness and joy that brings the family together as well as many other friends who come to share the lamb with us. The lamb is actually the medium that brings us all together. It has a very symbolic role. My father of course, the leader of my family is in charge, and goes and buy the lamb and Sunday very early starts the whole preparation. I helped him sometimes but usually it is the father who does the whole job. My mother on the other hand is in charge of doing the red eggs and preparing the table with different types of food that day.

Again, the food is a medium [J6]that creates happiness and serenity in the family but also is the way that family experiences and understands even the religious context of it. Religiously speaking, the lamb represents Jesus and relates his death to that of the lamb sacrificed on the first Passover. In this sense, it seems that my subjects feel the 'necessity' to be there for the preparation of this day as a form of sacrifice for the sake of Jesus Christ; [J7]It is a necessity in that each member of the family has to be there, to sacrifice any other sort of commitment in order to celebrate Easter Sunday with the rest of the family. In this case, it seems that the lamb stands as a collective and symbolic object. It is the medium that brings the family together around a collective activity. The whole family, as Athena describes, participates in the preparation of the lamb, and each of them is charged with doing different sorts of tasks. For example, the father is the one who goes to buy the lamb, lights the fire and makes the judgement about when it is ready. The father has the primary responsibility for the whole process of the lamb, and the rest of the members of the family prepare the red eggs and the additional food.

Sotiris brought me a photograph with him and his son posing in front of the lamb.

Sotiris (44 years old, Athens): "For me Easter Sunday is a very important day, because it is one more opportunity for the family to be together and to share this particular atmosphere that Easter involves. Here I am with my son. My son has the '*philotimo*' to stay with us every year and to celebrate Easter Sunday. We prepare the lamb and we are so happy. I love this photograph so much."

Once more Sotiris identifies himself with the importance of Easter Sunday within the concept of family and to an extent with the Sunday lamb. He is very proud that his son devotes himself to this family tradition. He characterises his son as having '*philotimo*' a Greek word that translates literally as 'love of honour', although '*philotimo*' is not captured adequately by any English word or phrase. It is a concept that refers to several aspects of Greek character and social relations. First is a sense of responsibility and obligation particularly to the family, second, it refers to appropriate behaviour within the in-group, and third it is strongly related to personal honour and self esteem (Broome, 1996: 66-7). All of these three explanations can be adapted to what Sotiris is actually expecting from his son. Characteristics such as responsibility, obligation, appropriate behaviour and honour are extremely important for the family as a social unit. So in such a significant ritual ceremony as Easter Sotiris is extremely happy that his son fulfils his expectations. It seems that the actualisation of Easter Sunday comes through the ritual of eating but on the other hand food brings the family together and also in this case brings to the surface aspects of Greek cultural identity such as '*philotimo*'.

In this sense I am questioning whether it is the family [J8]that initiates us not only to the historical and the social context of the above social practices but also becomes the means through which we conceptualise them. Is the family itself also formed by certain values within these social and cultural practices?

It seems to me that the cultural characteristics that emerge from these social practices such as this sense of obligation and responsibility to others on the one hand, and this sense of personal honour and self esteem on the other hand, are combined and constituted in Greek ways of belonging. This sort of attitude that emerges form the whole family behaviour and reaction to particular cultural practices constitutes one part of what we can call Greek national identity; therefore, in present situation subjects' identity is formed in and through relation to these (conscious and unconscious) cultural components, which seems to shape and compose part of what we refer to as national identity. I will explore this context further within the process of mourning, when the subjects express how psychological and social needs, which constitute part of their self-identity can be transformed into a social ideal that eventually is able to define what we call 'national identity'.

Taking this into account, another important aspect that came into surface within the photographs of Easter and especially of Good Friday is the concept of death and mourning in Greek society and the extent to which this shapes part of national identity. Subjects' photographs of Good Friday stand as a prompt but also explain certain cultural characteristics that demonstrate the importance of death. This became even more explicit when subjects brought photographs of persons they lost, and narrated a series of ritual processes that underline the 'need' to mourn for somebody in Greek society.

Mourning as a collective and personal cultural activity

When somebody dies in a Greek family the whole process of mourning involves a high degree of suffering and exhaustion. Each family member's mourning consists of a series of rituals like special food, special flowers, and particular songs that stand as an honour to the person she/he lost. This sort of attitude involves a series of mixed feelings; on the one hand all these gestures that I mention above are a means of expressing their love to that person and on the other hand they indicate a very important obligation and 'duty' that has to be done. Subjects describe this sort of reaction as being like a cathartic process for each family in order to be relieved of elements such as guilt and pain. By following all these rather typical though important procedure of how and why to honour the person they lost, they feel rather a superficial contentment I can call it; since I believe that the deep feeling of pain and suffering is somewhere there and is very hard and difficult to just cover it and express it with a series of ritual aspects that show this sort of respect and love to the person they lost. Taking this into account, it seems that there is something deep and complex in the whole idea of how and why Greek families mourn for somebody so much, which I think is worth looking at profoundly. Based on subjects' comments, the process of mourning either on a personal or collective level seems to have a great impact on the formation of Greek family and to an extent what sort of beliefs and values constitute part of our cultural identity. For example, Good Friday as a collective mourning activity not only brings the family together but also shapes a particular ground of how family itself is built within this ritual ceremony in relation to concept of death.

The whole ritual consists of a series of customs such as particular food, songs, clothes, that to a great degree not only affect but also shape the whole behaviour that family has in relation to death, on a personal and collective level. On Good Friday the way family members behave and interact with each other could easily be interpreted as that family mourning for a relative who passed away. There is something very melancholic and 'heavy' in the whole atmosphere in each family's house. Therefore, it seems that the process of mourning either in a collective or a personal basis can be characterized by the subjects by one word; 'suffering'. The feeling of suffering is quite complex as we will see below, so that it affects subjects' construction of identity on a conscious and unconscious level. This sort of attitude finds its origin and becomes part of two components that Freud called the 'id' and the 'superego', which in the present case play a vital role in subjects' identity formation. According to Freud the structural model of the mind consists of three parts: the *id or unconscious*, the *ego* and the *super ego.* In the id Freud located all the instincts and drives of which we cannot be aware. These drives and impulses were thought to be inborn and instinctive and to seek immediate satisfaction. Nevertheless these drives very often come into conflict with other, socially approved, learned behaviour and the general demands society makes upon us. At this stage ego and superego start to interfere and therein lies the friction between these two areas of the mind: the Unconscious pressing for satisfaction of its impulses, and a conscious, rational, socialised part of the mind that contains a critical agency which forbids the satisfaction of these wishes. We cannot observe unconscious wishes directly, but we can observe how the push the critical agency and manifest indirectly in our behaviour (Roth, 2001: 9). [J9]

In this context, subjects' emotions of suffering and pain have already become embedded as a part of their identity construction, tied in with obligation. In this sense, the process of mourning and suffering has an idealised role in terms of how the subjects conceive and experience it. This idealised meaning is not a separate component of subjects' identity; it is part of it, which I think is always re-created according to the certain values, and ideals that are given to subjects[J10]. Subjects' superegos already incorporate certain rules that their parents and society impose to them and eventually become a powerful force in the mind of the subjects. The power of the superego comes from its capacity to create guilt and the bad feelings connected with guilt, and it can dictate our behaviour and our thought. Thus, subjects' suffering cannot really be analysed in terms of the elements that comprise it; it does not seem to have a particular content. It is a feeling, which directs the subjects automatically to act in such a way. As Sara Ahmed underlines:

> The 'ideal self' does not have certain characteristics; the 'content' is in some way empty. Idealisation, which creates the effect of an ideal, is contingent because it is dependent on the values that are 'given to' subjects through the encounters with others. It is the gift of the ideal rather than the content of the ideal that matters. (Ahmed, 2004:106)

This sort of attitude underpins the fact that this idealisation of suffering does not consist of a particular descriptive element that allow us to see clearly why subjects react to mourning in such a way; on the contrary, it has a rather abstract character which nevertheless is able to provide an overall image that constitutes part of our national

identity. It seems that subjects are not really interested in seeing the different content of a collective and personal ceremony of mourning, but they put all of their energy [J11] to an emotional state of being.

In this context, the feeling of suffering for Jesus Christ or for a relative becomes a collective-social activity, which brings subjects together, and shapes a particular ground in terms of beliefs and values that construct part of our national identity. Moreover, there is a strong sense of attachment-identification to a person they mourn. As subjects say " On Good Friday I am always sad, and melancholic, it is like every year I mourn for somebody I lost", so that there is a strong feeling of admiration, respect, and extreme pain on Good Friday in mourning of the death of Jesus Christ. Their reactions are like mourning for their own relatives and not for an icon[J12] like Jesus Christ. On Good Friday evening the coffin of Christ is decorated with gold cloth and fresh flowers, where the faithful bow and stoop to kiss the symbolic body of Christ. After this follows the procession of the *'Epitaphios'* which is carried out of the church and paraded through the streets in a lengthy funeral procession.

It is [J13]as if Jesus Christ signifies people that subjects once lost or even only imagine could have been there. This absence of a loved object, Jesus Christ at that moment, creates emotional bonds of suffering and pain that glue together thousands of people, as subjects say. Athena explains below while describing her photograph of the Good Friday procession that this sort of reaction is a very strong characteristic that seems to constitute part of our identity.

> **Athena (55 years old, Athens):** Yes apart from the fanatically religious element, there is a very strong traditional one which is very vivid on Good Friday. In Good Friday, you and thousands of people hold their brown candles, mourn by singing the psalms and follow the shrine of Christ decorated with flowers in the church in

the morning of Good Friday. The procession of the shrine is a very collective religious ceremony and constitutes a very strong element of the sense of Greekness

Athena shows her strong admiration for the procession of Good Friday not only for the religious content of it but mostly for the traditional one. It seems to me a bit like a paradox; although Jesus Christ is a religious figure, Athena decides to give to him a more human dimension. She remembers the whole ritual process of Good Friday by focusing especially on small details like the brown candles or the psalms that create strong emotions of love and respect for that day. This sort of emotional and traditional atmosphere for Athena constitutes a very strong sense of Greekness.

Margarita also remembers this beautiful atmosphere of Good Friday by showing me a photograph with her family from Sunday Easter.

> **Margarita (39 years old, Athens):** Here I am with my family at Sunday Easter. I really love Easter in Greece, all the holy week in so beautiful, not for its religious context but mostly for its sentimental and social one. At Good Friday, when we go to the church to share the pain of Jesus Christ, to sing, cry, and at the same time socializing with our family and our friends. Easter for me is a very family ceremony, where there is a strong sense in the whole atmosphere between death and beauty.

Margarita also describes Easter and especially Good Friday as a day that will bring her family together when her family and her friends will share a 'common' pain and suffering of that of Jesus Christ. She is fully absorbed in this ceremony mostly because of its particular atmosphere, which involves strong emotions but is not necessarily related to the religious content of it. She perceives that day as a social

space where family and friends express strong emotions for somebody who died. It seems that the whole ritual of mourning and generally the concept of death for her is almost embedded in her daily life; it is like a 'natural' process, a continuation of life. She is also able to see the whole concept of death without pessimism; on the contrary as she underlines that 'there is a strong sense in the whole atmosphere between beauty and death'. Based on that comment it looks as if Margarita does not see death as something 'bad' or 'macabre'; instead there is beauty waiting to be recognised.

Alexandra shares the same perspective as Athena and she tries to express it by showing me a personal photograph of the tomb of her father.

> **Alexandra (40 years old, Athens):** Here is a very macabre photograph. It's the tomb of my father located in Mani (Southern Peloponnesian). The concept of death is very important in Mani. Around the tomb of my father there are many women dressing in black who mourn by singing special songs for the death of my father. In Mani the social events that are very important are the funerals and the Remembrance Day. Since I was a kid I remember my father bringing the newspaper in the house and the first thing that he used to read was the page of the funerals and the remembrance day in order to see whether there is a relative or a friend. A funeral in Mani is a social place of meeting and socializing with people. I also remember when my grandmother died women in the streets dressing in black to mourn with *moirologia*.

Alexandra seems very familiar with the whole idea of death. In the place that she was born funerals were one of the most important social events; she remembers also as a child that the idea of death and generally the whole process of mourning somebody was actually circulating and became part of her daily life within certain habitual

experiences of her father's, such as always reading the page where the funerals and remembrance days were listed in the newspaper. Another vivid experience of hers, which I think intensifies the importance of death, is when women dress in black and sing these particular songs: *moirologia. Moirologia are*[J14] a form of lamentation that has various aspects including: being an honour to the dead person, a sort of cathartic process for people not to feel guilt, and another way of expressing the destiny of that person. Taking this into account it seems [J15]that mourning in Greek society is so much embedded in our daily life that it becomes a state of being and constitutes part of our identity. The process of mourning forms part of our ego and superego. The former indicates our deep feelings that sometimes come into conflict with the latter which are all these moral values and codes that not only family but also the society we live in, have implanted in us. Nevertheless, both structures of our mind and the ego and the superego are responsible for the position that the concept of death and mourning obtains in our formation of our identity. Our respect for social relations, and law and order, is not simply imposed on us by the society we live in, but comes from a need that begins in infancy and early childhood: a need to obey, honour and maintain the social order in which we live (Roth, 2001: 14). [J16]Therefore, there is no line of demarcation between where the pain and suffering starts and where the obligation begins. [J17]

Taking this into account, it seems that a ritual ceremony like the mourning of Jesus Christ or of a relative contain such strong emotions of pain and suffering tied with guilt, that eventually simultaneously become a national pain and suffering and constitute part of their identity. What is also interesting is that although subjects sometimes avoid placing their pain and suffering into a religious context which it

also connects with, I think it is the strength and the power that religion has in Greek society which creates the confusion between pain, suffering, and guilt.

A Pride of Suffering…

The same sort of behaviour was recognised when the subjects brought a series of photographs related to public ceremonies like weddings and national commemorations. They expressed the idea that although their beliefs about these social practices were different to the ones that society and family has imposed to them, they reached a stage where they 'had' to fulfil expectations and commitments for the sake of their parents. In a way it is another form of suffering which is as important as mourning, since subjects really suffer in the idea that they have to go against their views and fall back into social ideals that they do not really support. Suffering here creates feelings of shame or regret for the subjects since they feel that they are trapped into not making a confession to their parents about how they really feel about these social practices.

Marriage in Greek society is a very old and very traditional ceremony, which involves lots of characteristics that constitute part of our national identity. Family has a great involvement not only in the preparation of the wedding but also with whom you are getting married in terms of his/her class, occupation and origin. In this context the whole process of marriage becomes not an individual but a family decision. This sort of attitude raises a big concern as subjects explore what their own emotional or psychological world stands for. It seems that not only for the idea of marriage but also for other kinds of social practices such as national commemoration or even more daily experiences like being a good student at school, subjects express feelings of shame and sadness related to how they feel about them

[J18]but without be able to transmit these to their parents. It appears there is a line of demarcation between of what parents feel and believe and how their children act upon those feelings and beliefs, disregarding or leaving aside their individual psychological world.

Mariana expresses the following opinion while she is showing me a photograph from her wedding.

> **Mariana (35 years old, Athens):** I don't believe in marriage as part of our tradition, something that has to be done. I believe more in the ritual context of it. Otherwise the concept of marriage doesn't say anything to me. Nevertheless I am willing to fulfil this imaginary commitment of my parents and of the parents of my boyfriend. What I mean is that I am ready to fulfil their wishes and their wanting, meaning to get married with a very traditional wedding as they want and to follow every single step of the whole process as part of our tradition. Although I believe that from all of our traditions we have to keep the ones that we feel completely identified with, I am ready to make this sacrifice for my parents and to go against my beliefs.

Mariana's reaction to what the whole ceremony of getting married means underlines a big compromise. On the one hand, she excludes marriage in terms of not seeing it as a vital ceremony that constitutes part of her tradition and on the other hand she acts in a completely opposite way; she is prepared to fulfil every single expectation of what her parents believe marriage is all about. It seems that her personal opinion comes second since she is ready to go against her 'real' ideas about marriage and to make, as she calls it, this ' sacrifice' for her parents. Sacrifice is a word with a very heavy meaning; Sacrifice has already constructed part of Mariana's identity which comes out in the form of experiences like the whole process of getting married and what means to her. Sacrifice stands [J19]as a conscious priority for Mariana

concerning her choices or rather her preferences particularly in relation to the concept of marriage and how she compromises herself for the sake of her parents. At this stage I am wondering what her identity consists of? If there is such a thing as self-identity, how, and in relation to what, has it been shaped? It seems that a big part of Mariana's identity is related to what beliefs and ideals her parents transfer to her, which in the end constitute and transform part of her identity. Therefore, to what extent do Mariana's experiences and emotions construct part of her identity, and where do these same experiences start taking the form of 'national duty', which eventually gives a more complex and coherent shape to what constitutes our national identity?

Athena shares the same opinion as Mariana but had a different experience, when she was about to get married:

> **Athena (55 years old, Athens):** Here is a photograph of my wedding. Now I am divorced but that time I was really very much in love and I loved him very much. But I remember that my father forced me to get married before leaving to UK with my husband, because he didn't want to leave stay with him without being married…I felt that I was very young to get married but I didn't have an alternative; I had to get married and I did it… I was so upset and sad...but I had to follow the request of my father. My father was so afraid of the social milieu, what people will say if they heard that my daughter is going to live with somebody without being married that yes I had to do it no matter what.

What is very interesting is that although Athena is quite happy showing me her photograph of her wedding, her memories have some bitter taste of how and why she got married. Her emotions at that time involve some sadness because she was not ready or simply didn't want to get married. Nevertheless, the decision of her father came first and

Athena followed it by actually repressing her own emotions. One of the reasons that she did it was not only to satisfy her father but mostly all the relatives of the family who were aware and knew her story. Therefore, although weddings as a ritual and social practice primarily involve the interaction of two individuals, in Greek society they tend to be a social event which automatically contain multi-dimensional meanings, where as Athena says words like 'request' or 'social milieu' prevail over the feelings. In this case, even if the whole process of marriage has a significance and is something that creates feelings of happiness, it seems that the way that it happened in Athena's situation automatically gave another shape to the whole ritual. That means that the wedding comes to be an obligatory action from which certain cultural characteristics emerge that show how the family comes together and at the same time how it is formed within such a social event.

In this context, I understand together with my subjects that although the materialisation of experiences, of suffering of shame, regret, and sadness have great validity, nevertheless when it comes to acting upon certain ritual and cultural practices which family as an institution dictates they become something else, something that takes the form of something big and national, a national identity which is very strong and powerful. This sort of reaction is due to different levels of identification that subjects explore at a very early stage of their lives with their parents. They learn from their parents specific codes of behaviour and how to act upon them on the level of social and cultural practices. Freud says that at the very early stage small children take inside themselves and identify with their parents' prohibitions. Their superego is like the voice of their parents inside themselves, sometimes praising them for 'good' behaviour, but sometimes

punishing them for what the superego feels is bad behaviour. This voice of authority that once belonged to the parents becomes part of the self, confronting the rest of the self (the ego) and making demands upon it (Laplanche&Pontalis, 1988: 145).

Although their *ego* consists of a series of psychological and social needs, when it comes to particular cultural practices their *superego* becomes a *social ideal*; this social ideal is like an extension of their superego, which is created in relation to the society we live in, so that is inter-related[J20]. Therefore, it seems that the feelings of pain, suffering of shame or upset can be integrated into the norms and values that society has already established and that eventually create what we refer to as national identity.

Taking this into account, as Aphrodite express, it seems that school as an institution underlines certain sorts of behaviour that the parents-family expects. It is very hard as Aphrodite says to express a psychic turmoil, which might happen in your daily life, which actually is opposed to what parents believe.

> **Aphrodite (42 years old, Athens):** I remember during the years of the dictatorship, I really hated the school. I used to have a teacher very politicised not against but for the dictatorship. This teacher was the witch of my adulthood years and she really made me hate the school. I never said anything to my parents how sad I was in my school, because my parents they have already built an image about me, what a good student I am, how disciplined, always getting very good grades, so I was very afraid and ashamed of telling them… I thought that I would ruin all this strong foundation that they have already had about me.

Aphrodite's experiences of school show a sort of ambivalence in terms of how she really reacted to it. On the one hand she was extremely sad and on the other hand she was presenting herself in front of her

parents as if nothing was happening in her psychic world. It seems that there is an inner struggle in Aphrodite's psyche; there is a conflict, as Freud would suggest 'between her psychic world and that of the ideal- that of social power, which eventually reflect the contrast what is external and what is internal, what is 'real' and what is psychical', and at the end fabricate part of her identity (Freud, 1923: 36). Therefore her psychic life is generated by all these constructed or rather social ideals and beliefs that seem to be so powerful as to conceal Aphrodite's feelings and emotions. In this context, Aphrodite's feelings of being ashamed and afraid of telling to her parents her inner worries related to an 'ideal' image that had already built her identity.

What is coming out here is that even under the context of mourning of Jesus Christ or in the social practices of weddings or commemorations there is a 'pride of suffering' that has been recognised by the subjects. Subjects express their common suffering through mourning for the death of Jesus Christ or of a close relative as well as when they try to fulfil the expectations and commitments of their parents for the sake of a social ideal. Moreover, I can say that on the one hand these ritual and social practices bring the family together, on the other hand I have also shown how several cultural characteristics have been shaped by and with the family. [J21]This pride of suffering is made feelings of shame, regret, sadness and guilt. It is with these particular emotions that subjects raised an ambivalent kind of reaction in terms of where or how their feelings are positioned or where they stand in relation to these rituals and practices, at the moment when subjects start seeing them as obligation. This sort of attitude seems to affect subjects' identity formation; they are in a constant struggle to integrate the social ideals that have been inflicted by their families or by religious

norms and values as part of their ideal-ego (superego). It seems that there is an inter-related [J22]relationship between subjects' identity and social ideals. Therefore, there is a very strong and dynamic relationship between the psychic life of the subjects and the social ideals, which comes through in this chapter in relation to the family as an institution. In this context, I am wondering, together with my subjects, whether words like 'sacrifice', shared 'pain' and 'suffering', and 'guilt' that were mentioned especially under the sections of mourning, weddings and other social practices compose, sustain, and preserve in some way what we refer to as national identity. Therefore the self is both individual and national at the same time.

Taking this into account what then is the actual role of these social and cultural practices in relation to the formation of families and to an extent to the identity of a nation? It seems that these practices have a dual role:

On the one hand subjects experience the ritual of Easter by trying to find a connection or a link with their history and tradition, through not simply the family itself but how they imagine the concept of family; this imaginary commitment came through the eyes of their grandparents. Grandparents represent for them a social, historical and a mythical symbol where Easter or a national parade becomes an unforgettable experience. Whether grandparents' stories and experiences are 'real' or not, what counts for the subjects is that this is what constitutes part of their belonging and of what they call their sense of Greekness. This sort of behaviour also emerges from the subjects when food becomes a means-medium with a sensory dimension that signifies a sense of belonging and shows several characteristics of the Greek nation that connect the past with the present. It is within food that subjects interpret and contextualise the

'beauty' and the 'imagined' atmosphere that Easter or the day of a national parade has. Even if subjects imagined a particular picture of Easter or a national commemoration in their mind, it is within these events that a series of cultural characteristics emerge, which confirm myth as a mode of belonging and remembering that eventually constitutes part of our cultural identity.

On the other hand these social and cultural practices acquire a particular power, which seems to have a great impact on the formation of families and how subjects' identity has been shaped by it. It appears there is a continuous struggle or juxtaposition between how subjects imagine and feel about these social and cultural practices and how these practices appear when they take the form of 'obligation' or 'duty'. [J23]I do not really see these as two separate positions; on the contrary they constitute part of subjects' identity construction which always has the capacity to be re-shaped because of this ambivalent conflict that exists in their (conscious and unconscious) world between their psychological and social needs. Somewhere in between these two positions is concealed what we call 'national identity' or a 'national ideal', based on subject's perceptions of how family, Greekness, belonging, and suffering have been understood and experienced within certain types of social and cultural practices[J24].

[s1]Paragraphs should always be at least three sentences long- you can't make a new paragraph which is only one sentence.

[s2]Avoid starting sentences with 'And' or 'But'.

[s3]This may slightly change what you mean, but it's unusual to say they are 'recorded within the concept'… but they could be 'embedded' within it.

Page: 8

[J4]How do they accredit his knowledge? Do they not form the basis of it (rather than confirming what he already knows?)

Page: 9

[J5]In what sense is food a metaphor?

Page: 12

[J6]It is a medium, or a symbol? I don't think it can be both.

Page: 12

[J7]I'm very unclear about what you mean here.

Page: 14

[J8]What do you mean by this?

Page: 16

[J9]?

Page: 17

[J10]Who is 'them' in this context? The subject, or the values/ideals?

Page: 18

[J11]What do you mean by this?

Page: 18

[J12]Icon?

Page: 18

[J13]'like' is too informal in this context

Page: 21

[J14]are (is it plural?)

Page: 21

[J15]How do they indicate this?

Page: 21

[J16]? You will need to explain where this need comes from.

Page: 21

[J17]?

Page: 23

[J18]In regards to what?

Page: 23

[J19]What does this whole sentence mean? It's very unclear.

Page: 26

[J20]Explain further how its creation within society makes it intersubjective. I think you are presupposing a particular view of society here…

Page: 27

[J21]By using 'although' you imply that the latter part of this statement is contradictory, but I don't think it is.

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[J22]Inter-subjective has to do with the relationship between subjects; so the relation between subjects and social ideals isn't really 'intersubjective' in my interpretation. They may be interrelated, but not intersubjective…?

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[J23]This is very repetitive of the line before.

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[J24]Something to lead into the next chapter would be nice here!