Title:

Greece: the self in transition, or maybe not?

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Abstract

The current economic crisis in Greece affects young people in many ways, concerning both the socioeconomic conditions and their sense of self, which seems to face its own crisis. The sociocultural values, deeply embedded in the Greek self, are challenged, too. Financial crisis has proved to cause crisis of the self; society is in a prolonged state of suffering where young people are trying to plan for their futures. The paper discusses some recent findings concerning young people and families in Greece. What are their thoughts about the current circumstances? How do they think they will overcome the constraints and develop their capacities? The second part proposes a psychosocial alternative for understanding the plight of young people of Greece and the role of the family for their future.

Introduction

Since 2008, Greece is experiencing a severe sovereign debt crisis and Greek people have become subjected to severest austerity measures. Secure anchors of social and economic stability seem to have vanished, with nothing replacing them. Austerity, as is well known, has resulted in increasing work precariousness, reduction of the minimum wage and social benefits, fewer jobs for young people, and so on. It has also had a serious impact on health, with an increase in depression, health inequalities, suicides, etc. (Alexiou, Economou, Madianos & Stefanis 2011; Economou, Madianos 2013). Within this context, young people are facing serious limitations in their journey towards their future. Their perception of and response to the crisis is an emerging research subject in various fields.

The first part of this paper discusses some recent research findings concerning young people and families in Greece. What are their thoughts about the current circumstances? How do they think they will overcome the constraints and develop their capacities? The second part argues that the research approaches adopted so far might not be the best possible ones for elucidating all the aspects of the problem and proposes a psychosocial alternative for understanding the plight of young people of Greece and the role of the family for their future.

Recent research

Using a Giddensian model of agency and reflexivity (Giddens 1990, 1991), Chalari argues that Greeks display a critical understanding towards both themselves and the situation they are in by acknowledging their own responsibility, whilst referring to specific mentalities that led to the present state of things, such as remaining passive and do nothing. They now

seem aware of the need to improve things themselves, without expecting solutions from external or foreign agents. The self becomes more reflexive, Chalari argues, as it leaves behind tradition, while facing more challenges and uncertainties. At the same time, some of the participants showed nostalgia towards certain values inherited from the previous generations and highlighted the importance of family, despite being critical about the mentality of their parents. Young people, Charali comments, experience disorientation, fear and anxiety while trying to create their own mechanisms to face the situation.

In another study, Tsekeris (2015) demonstrated the complex relationship between the individual and the collective suffering in the young Greeks' response to the crisis. The majority of them lack the resources to survive the crisis on their own and are dependent on their families. Tsekeris argues that the loss of the social imaginaries that was developed during the postwar period, namely of economic growth, occupational stability and representative civil democracy, caused existential anxieties which tend to 'dissociate the self'. Participants consider themselves as part of the collective suffering, which echoes the failure of social support systems; at the same time, they showed signs of resistance, viewing the current crisis as an opportunity to adopt more self-conscious ways of thinking and behaving, giving emphasis to reciprocity and more relational ways of being based on solidarity. However, although the wounded self looks for fellow sufferers to make sense of life, this relational turn is directed towards their significant others and loved ones (namely the family) rather than the wider social community and civic engagement, as this research shows. The same is shown in Chalari's later research (2016), comparing responses to austerity between UK and Greek participants. Chalari found that Greek participants related themselves to their loved ones, while UK participants related to the wider social group as well.

However, it would be totally incorrect to attribute this 'turn to the family' to the economic crisis. Family was always important in Greece. Young people in Greece develop their socialization within the nuclear family, with little civic engagement and participation in voluntary associations (Chtouris 2006). The family plays an important role in the welfare state of the young (Kretsos 2014: 110) and has always been a feature of the Greek economy. For instance, the family is expected to provide for the youth until the 'appropriate' job was found (Dendrinos 2014; Iacovou 2010). Small family businesses funded by members of the family or relatives are also supposed to offer support or act as social networks in finding a job (Kretsos 2014: 110), and university students are generally reluctant to combine studies with work, citing low attractiveness of precarious jobs or voluntarism and preferring to rely on the family. Dendrinos observes: 'it is obvious that apart from institutional factors that affect labor relations, we should also consider the sociocultural norms and discuss family ties, which also structure work attitudes' (Dendrinos 2014).

It could be argued that the greater reliance on the family is a Southern European phenomenon, as some evidence shows for Greece, Italy and Spain (Bettio & Plantenga 2004; Bettio & Villa, 1998; 1999; Bagavos 2001; Karamesini 2008, Teperoglou *et al*,). The increased of numbers of young adults residing with their parents in SE Europe has a negative long term effect in youth's employability as it postpones their transition to adulthood (Chtouris 2006; Kretsos, 2014). Until recently, young Greeks left the parental home at the age of 29 (Eurofound 2014). During the crisis independence is deferred for an indefinite future. Strangely enough, young people in Tsekeris' study (2015b) agreed that the "children need to stay attached to each other as much as possible", to take care of the family. Although not engaged in collective social action, they consider social transformation possible through "solidarity, cooperation and volunteerism". In the context of late modernity, it is often argued that people have to engage in new concepts of agency and subjectivity (Bansel & Walkerdine 2010) and individuals have the duty to construct their own biographies (Beck & Beck – Gernsheim 2009; Giddens 1990, 1991). This is and is not the case in Greece. Kesisoglou

(2016), examined how young people working in precarious conditions in Greece speak about their possibilities of emigrating as a path towards constructing their agency and subjectivity. They identified themselves as "effortful and resilient subjects", who rely on their individual effort and agency (Kesisoglou 2016). But this is by no means a universal trend.

In recent research, Tsekeris (2017) discusses the phenomenon of Greek youth returning to the parental home after losing their jobs or finishing education and the disruption caused in their life-trajectories. They seem to maintain a traditional way of thinking about a linear life with financial and professional stability under the ''state protection''. Their discourses with fellow-sufferers support their belief that it was the institutional failure which led them to financial dependence on their families. Thus, it is difficult for them to acknowledge the situation as a regression to a more inwards-turn self and to transit into independence. On a deeper level, Tsekeris argues, this can be interpreted as a feeling of annihilation from an external enemy, from which they escape by denial or loss of motivation. Moreover, the return to the parental home creates problems for these young adults who need to renegotiate their status as adult and set their boundaries for privacy and independence.

An attempt towards a Psychosocial alternative

From the few examples we have discussed so far, it becomes obvious that the Greek youth experience is interpreted mostly on the basis of reflexivity which refers to the individual's ability to become critical towards themselves and society. Although social agents are indeed able to reflect on social change, this approach represents only one side of the story. In the case of the Greek society, it is also a matter of inherited systems and transmitted values especially within the family (Avdela 2002; Campbell 1964; Friedl 1962; Gallant 2001; Gallant and Honor 2000; Loizos & Papataxiarchis 1991; Paxson 1968) especially in terms of its location in a given culture (Collier & Yanagisako 1987; Kaftantzoglou 1977). At this point it makes sense to ask: if psychic investments are formed through discourses within the milieu to which one belongs how easy is it for these values to be altered? How can one negotiate or challenge the so-called 'individual responsibility'?

Greece is said to be a more collectivist society (Kafetsios 2006), characterized by strong in-group shared values which are used as behavioral guides (Kalogeraki 2009; Triandis 1988, 1989, 2001). This is corroborated by older sociological research (Dragonas 1983; Doumanis 1983). More recent studies found people still focused around national and religious homogeneity (Georgas 1997; Kalogeraki 2009; Kataki,2012; Triandis 1988, 1989, 2001; Voulgaris 2006). It is also the case that Greek family policy reproduces the ideological assumption that the family is the main provider of welfare in society (Papadopoulos 1998; Tsoukalas 1987).

One could argue that an alternative interpretation is necessary, focusing on the examination of the intensity of the attachment bonds which could explain the attachment to the family and the power relations in terms of their location in Greek culture.

One of the problems that Greece may face is 'the problem of abandonment of social responsibility'. Let's see how social responsibility can be explained through various psychoanalytic theories. In a Kleinian model, caring and concern for the other comes with the depressive position, from the reparative impulse to restore the fantasied destruction to the loved object, internal or external. In Winnicott's theory, ruthless love is represented by the attack of the baby to the breast while guilt is represented by the concern for the damaged caused by the ruthless attacks. In both theories, love and care is other-focused. With this relational context, there is a move towards transcending the individualism and the self-centered human motivation in favor of subjectivity in modern ''depressive society''. (Rudan

2016: 339). However, according to Giannaras, (1997: 27) Greeks have not really the ability to embody this modernity principle of the priority of the person, his rights and responsibility, the consciousness of Otherness – which also establishes democracy and neoliberal economy. He further argues that it is the Orthodox tradition that generated historical addictions and mentalities, incompatible with the European modernity.

The inability to bear depressive guilt and the psychic reality of loss gives space to defenses, like denial, to tolerate the pain. In relation to the function of capitalistic socioeconomic institutions as a system, we could speak of a sense of collective guilt emerging from group identifications that produce national feelings of pride or shame, common beliefs and fantasy relations around which members of groups are organized (Bion 1989). Future research could extend this idea to include manic defense behaviors on a wider group level that defend against or foreclose a sense of collective guilt.

Questioning the relationship between the 'manic defense' among an interpersonal relationship and the wider society, Altman (2005) argues that the 'manic defense' makes it difficult to care about others and therefore, it turns against social responsibility. In the case of a governing structure, the society's failure in containment of anxiety (Bion 1962) and social provision (Winnicott 1971) which may represent the provisions of the parental environment), generates losses to people as they feel less protected from the social environment; these losses are coming to terms people's own limitations that can signify a failure. The Greek self, experienced as a failed one, is in conflict with the culture's belief in its omnipotence and invulnerability, demonstrated in the need to seem as victorious and superior over other cultures (Peltz 2005).

One could argue that the problem concerning Greek 'parental environment' may not be that of the absence of the qualities of 'holding' and 'containment' but, instead, the over-holding, over-pampering and over-protecting familial environment. Along the same lines, it would be possible to say that Greeks have not overcome the libidinal com-position of the family. In "Mourning and Melancholia", Freud shows how people may never abandon the lost loved object, not even when a substitute is already beckoning to them"; the libido is withdrawn into the ego instead of being displaced to an Other 'object of love'. This 'regression to narcissism' could be one part of the explanation of the merging with the inwards oriented protected environment with shared in-group values and strong bonds in kinship systems. These notes may show that psychic investments and inherited values is not an easy task to be altered and that the intensity of attachment bonds may explain the adult attachment to the family. Since people ''may never abandon the loved object'', it is then difficult for them to care about others and therefore, it may show an abandonment of social responsibility.

One could say that this is a psychoanalytic assumption which may need strong clinical and cultural evidence if we wish to generalize for a whole culture. While this may be the case, we can initially ask, what is the element that differentiates Greece compared to other countries? Family dynamics may contribute to the maintenance of attachment styles from childhood to adulthood but I would argue that future research could focus on how the family system shapes the attachment styles of its members over time; the relationships between specific dimensions of family systems (family rules, behavioral patterns) and the attachment styles of young adults who are raised in those systems (Kiselica, M., & Pfaller, J. 1998). This question could find place if one investigates the historical evidence, which can better explain the so-called "collective force" or fusion.

Another avenue of research could be exploring the 'wider historical trauma' as Greeks may feel that the recent crisis has been a 'national disaster' embodied through the history of wars and upheavals in Greece during the last 150 years; a trauma which becomes personal suffering, persisting and returning through the intensity of strong attachment which intensify

the transmission of traumatic experiences. Frosh (2013: 120) views trauma as an unconscious form of ''haunting''; so, "we might have to see all identity construction as a mode of traumatic possession" (Frosh 2013: 120).

These events are traumatic in the sense that they are not recognized as such, so they become repressed, uncanny, yet continuing to operate in the psyche (Frosh 2013:45). Only what is repressed can return with the force required to ensure neurotic attachment to irrational ideas and can act like our Superego/ external authority internalized as a sense of guilt (Frosh 2013:133-134). ''Our parents and intimates, all with whom we struggle are the ghosts that pass on their desires and expectations, that 'haunt' us and from whom we are inhabited" (Frosh 2013: 140); they carry all this unmanageable stuff which is found in history, in culture, embedded in the social structure that maintain the status of its living through (collective) memories. Nowadays, as the structures collapse in Greece, the younger generation loses the traditional points of reference or inherits them as traumatic.

Conclusion

Greece is now a country "in the middle", maybe fighting between moments of leaving a self behind and following ''lines of flight'' in the process of ''becoming other'' (Tamboukou 2015). Time is necessary to come to a conclusion. But we can still search for the reasons, hoping to predict or enhance social action.

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Subjects in Crisis. On a Journey from Neoliberal 'Modernization' to the Radical Imagination of Syntagma Square.

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Abstract: This paper investigates the relationship between transformative experience in the 2011 occupation of Syntagma square and subjectivity within the context of neoliberal restructuring in Greece. Participants often describe their experience as inherently transformative, as one that 'changed' them for the better. Following participants' own narrative accounts by way of an interview-based abductive analysis, this paper examines what makes participants point to the transformative character of participation and what remains of this experience today. Syntagma in its spatiality signified a 'radical imagination' around such norms as solidarity, self-organization, direct democracy which can be viewed as a response to not only austerity, but also the societal everyday vis-à-vis 'modernization' prior to the crisis. The paper argues that participants' subjectivities are constructed in the 'spirit' of Syntagma, as the extra-ordinary spatiality of the square has been transferred into participants' quotidian activities and their actions in the solidarity movements. Yet, while these new subjectivities and spatialities are resisting or bypassing neoliberal statehood in Greece, they sometimes also unwittingly reproduce it.

Introduction

Participants of the Syntagma Square occupation of 2011 often describe their participation experience as 'magical', as one that made them 'more [politically] aware and active' and 'changed' them. What is it that makes participants point to the transformative character of participation? What do they distance themselves from? And what remains of this experience today? For starters, the paper assumes that it is "not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience" (Scott 1991: 779). In this sense, experience becomes not the origin of explanation, but rather that which needs explanation. Experience embodies both meaning and feelings and is illustrative of what individual subjects do. It reveals the conventional patterns of culturally learned and interpreted behavior that makes them understandable to others (Morris 1970; Abrahams 1986). A transformative experience, then, is one that challenges these conventional patterns. Here, as Turner (1986: 36) remarks, it "is structurally unimportant whether the past is 'real' or 'mythical', 'moral' or 'amoral.'" Rather, the point is whether meaningful guidelines emerge as subjectivity[1] in its demarcation from that perceived past.

To make sense of the relationship between subjectivity and transformative experience, the study follows 29 interlocutors who participated in the occupation. The research strategy is based on abductive analysis (Tavory & Timmermans 2014), which is a qualitative data analysis approach grounded in pragmatism and aimed at theory construction. Abduction here refers to the process of generating theoretical 'hunches' for unexpected findings and then developing these preliminary interpretations with a systematic analysis of variation (data set, over time, intersituational).

The paper illustrates the study's key findings and is divided in three parts. The first examines the ways in which occupation participants describe their societal everyday in Greece 'before'

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[1] Regarding the concept of subjectivity, I draw near the Foucaultian conceptualization (cf. Rose 1999: xii; Foucault 2008).

their participation in Syntagma. Here, they foremost point to Simitis' 'modernization' era. This section illustrates the ways in which privatization and deregulation provided conditions that contributed to molding a subjectivity that is, broadly speaking, structured around individualization, latent competition, and a consumerist lifestyle.

The second part examines the transformative experience of Syntagma. In short, it shows how participants' taken-for-granted norms (regarding e.g. consumption, work, authority) are put under scrutiny. The section argues that the transformative experience to which participants point can be attributed to the spatiality of the square occupation.

The third part addresses 'what remains' of the participation experience almost six years onwards. The section argues that participants' subjectivity is constructed in the 'spirit' of Syntagma and that solidarity groups mushroomed after the occupation. Yet, while these new subjectivities (and spatialities) are resisting or bypassing neoliberal statehood in Greece, they also unwittingly reproduce it by contributing to an imagination of the state that is no longer responsible for service provision.

'Modernization', or: 'Before' Syntagma

As Simitis took over leadership of PASOK from the widely popular Andreas Papandreou in 1996, he and the party's wing of 'modernizers' were on a course to transform the country dramatically. While PASOK never made the exact contents of their 'modernization' project explicit (Ioannides 2012: 49), what was clear from the outset is that 'modernization' really signifies *neoliberal* 'modernization'. That is to say that by way of a reform mix of privatization, deregulation, and (less so) fiscal discipline, a more orderly, open, and integrated capitalism was to be established in order to increase national competitiveness in line with the EUs neoliberal Zeitgeist. For Simitis, this was the strongest lever to "exit from a reality of developmental deficits and social *backwardness*" (as cited in Featherstone 2008: 177, emphasis added). Culturalist from the outset (cf. Said 2007) and supported by eminent scholars of the Greek academy (Diamandouros 1994; Mouzelis 1996), 'modernization' was to 'rationalize' Greece by way of creating conditions that rendered subjects self-responsible, calculating, self-interested, competitive, and appreciative of the consumerist lifestyle.

In this sense, neoliberal 'modernization' can be viewed as the "*pursuit of the disenchantment of politics by economics*" (Davies 2014: 4). By disenchanting politics by economics, neoliberalism reduces political metaphysics to physics. Politics is rendered merely as technical and administrative, as 'modernization' is presented as an ethically and politically 'neutral' project (cf. Tsakalatos 2008). This allows for viewing critique as 'irrational' or 'unrealistic'. Yet, rather than a *fait accompli,* neoliberal 'modernization' is limited through resistance and its own contradictions (cf. Laskos & Tsakalotos 2013).

Limitations aside, labor market reforms, financial deregulation and privatization created conditions of uncertainty that encouraged my interlocutors to an extent to behave 'as if' they were in a market.[2] Katerina, who worked at WIND (a company established as a result of the privatization of telecommunication) gives a good example:

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2 "The Simitis era was the nuclear physics of neoliberalism, [where] these phenomena were somehow forced upon the people as the 'new development of economy'" (Lukas, personal communication).

> The entire work – the tasks, the way they were structured – was entirely capitalist. '*You are responsible* for this. You need to sell this much. Your *targets* are these. Ohh, you missed your targets? Why did you miss them?' Bawling, bad mood, *pressure, stress* … And all that for little money" (personal communication).

Discourses of productivity and efficiency gains were only to disguise the transfer of risk onto the individual (cf. Bauman 2007; Dardot & Laval 2017). Passing responsibility and risk from the state downwards to the individual contributes to an entrepreneurial, calculating, self-interested subjectivity. 'Targets' and other benchmarking techniques seek to internalize norms of self-responsibility to increase profitability, efficiency, and personal performance. This also spurred competition.[3]

Financial deregulation too impacted my interlocutors. By removing consumer credit restrictions, responsibility of fiscal discipline was further individualized. In effect, this reinforces the calculative capacity of individuals through personal investment in the fashion of entrepreneurial self-management (Mirowski 2014).[4] Access to easy credit facilitated the transformation of Greece towards a consumer society (Lysonski et al 2004) with a more "hedonistic morality of consumption" (Economou 2014: 15).[5]

In sum, privatization and deregulation contributed to individualizing subjectivities,[6] a trend that resonates with studies in psychology proclaiming Greece's shift from a 'collectivist' to an 'individualist' society (Pouliasi & Verkuyten 2011).

The Radical Imagination of Syntagma

With regards to processes of subject formation, the occupation of Syntagma Square ought to be seen not merely as protest against austerity. At least for my interlocutors, Syntagma was also a radical demarcation from how they perceived norms and values of 'modernization'. This is reflected in how my interlocutors signify Syntagma as a 'waking up' from what was 'before' Syntagma.[7] I claim this transformative nature of the Syntagma Square experience my interlocutors point to can be attributed to the occupation's spatiality. In conceiving Syntagma in its dialectics as a structuring and structured structure, space is the product of agency. But it also shapes our practices and actions, which maintain and reproduce space (Foucault 1986; Lefebvre 2007). The extra-ordinary use of public space signifies a liminal, or anti-structural situation (cf. Turner 2008) in which doxic assumptions are raised to the level of discourse,

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3 "At work sometimes there was competition of the likes 'who's the best salesperson' and 'who hits the targets' and so on" (Katerina, personal communication).

4 "We had changed, man. How should I explain? We lived in houses with a mortgage, we lived with fake money. Others got vacation loans. Crazyness! (Maria, personal communication).

5 "There was a craving for consumption – not for accumulation or production. … If you don't have the money to consume, you get a loan" (Lukas, personal communication).

6 "Having been raised in this particular value system in principle brings out a lot of 'Ego'" (Aggelos, personal communication).

7 "We were sleeping a long time. As Greeks. The Greek people were sleeping. I told you: Bouzouki clubs, credit cards, Cafés, Television … Syntagma was a big bang inside the crisis, where many people woke up and decided to unite in order to change all that" (Maria, personal communication).

where they can be contested (cf. Bourdieu 2013; Crossley 2003). This allows for what I call the 'unthought-of' and has consequences for processes of subjectivation as normative expectations regarding e.g. work, consumption, authority or individualism are re-negotiated.

My interlocutors show that the 'spirit' of Syntagma (in a Weberian sense) was structured predominantly around norms of autonomy (from the state), self-organization, collectivity, direct democracy, anti-hierarchy, and solidarity.[8] Regarding the 'feeling' dimension of experience, Syntagma for my participants signified 'belonging', 'being among like-minded people' and 'not being alone' anymore[9] (see also: Papapavlou 2015).

Syntagma in this sense signifies 'radical imagination', or 'prefigurative politics': an experiment of living otherwise "for the generation of alternative relationships, subjectivities, institutions and practices that prefigure the world" (Haiven & Khasnabish 2014: 62). Here, "means and ends become, effectively, indistinguishable … in which the form of the action … is itself a model for the change one wishes to bring about" (Graeber 2009: 210).[10] At the same time, the experiences my interlocutors made with the state during the occupation were framed in exclusively negative terms. Police repression induced fear and anger[11], while the ways in which 'the measures' were railroaded through parliament made participants question (representative forms of) democracy[12]. Such experiences led to what my interlocutors call 'political maturation'.

In sum, I argue the transformative experiences of Syntagma can be attributed to its spatiality in a situation of crisis. As these experiences erupt from or disrupt routinized habits of thought and action and play out "with shocks of pain or pleasure" (Turner 1986: 35), they stimulate critique by questioning doxic assumptions. This allows for a 'radical imagination', which influences subjectivation.

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8 "There was a lot of love, a lot of solidarity. You understand? If you go to a small place/space [χώρο] and see a lot of people, gathered, working, communication, where there is solidarity, where there is self-organisation, where you can see basically what you can do with your own power: this is magical. The people see … that they do not need anyone" (Viktoria, personal communication); "[Before Syntagma] I functioned more in terms of the 'I', I would say. Whereas there [in Syntagma] I functioned more in terms of the 'We'" (Lukas, personal communication).

9 "They want me and I want them. And simultaneously they shape [συνδιαμορφώνουν] [Syntagma]. It's not something that was imposed from above. This … made you to see it, or experience it rather, … I don't know how to tell you: almost amorously. Almost like being in love" (Vasilis, personal communication).

10 "All the things before Syntagma were theory. Syntagma was practice. It showed what was possible" (Andreas, personal communication).

11 "When you followed the mass media, you would see a distorted picture of the events in Syntagma, where protesters were rioting and provoking violence, using drugs etc. But when I went to Syntagma I saw it was a lie! … The [police] violence angered me terribly. When I say it angered me, I mean I actually wanted to beat them. If f I had the strength, let's say. I wanted to treat them the same way. But when they throw teargas at you … you cannot stand [your ground]" (Kyriaki, personal communication).

12 [Refering to police repression]: I felt, that what I live is not something natural. And it reminds me a lot of the stories of my father from the Politechneion. I realise that what I live, this is not a democracy" (Katerina, personal communication).

'What Remains?'

Asked what remains of the Syntagma experience, my interlocutors point to how Syntagma 'changed' them, turned 'theory' into 'practice'[13], and left behind the mushrooming solidarity movement.[14] Broadly speaking, I claim my interlocutors constructed their subjectivity in the 'spirit' of Syntagma, partly as a response to the individualisms of 'before'. Their self-proclaimed 'political maturation' shows in their active participation in the solidarity movement. I claim these groups (e.g. Trapeza Xronou, Athens Integral Cooperative), which either originated in Syntagma or shortly after, signify an attempt to transfer the extra-ordinary spatiality of Syntagma into interlocutors' everyday. This shows in the organizational principles of these groups as self-organized, autonomous, direct democratic, solidarity-based structures. In that sense, they too are constructed in the 'spirit' of Syntagma.

These subjectivities and spatialities can therefore be viewed as resistance to the neoliberal status quo, or at least as a way of 'getting by' in times of crisis in the sense of a 'quiet encroachment of the ordinary' (Bayat 2009). However, norms of self-organization, self-responsibility, or autonomy are also guiding principles of neoliberal reason (cf. Hayek 2005). While it is true that interlocutors' activities are guided by solidarity, rather than competition, the self-reliant and latently entrepreneurial forms of conduct come at a cost. As Boltanski & Chiapello (2007: 29) remark, "the price paid by critique for being listened to, at least in part, is to see some of the values it had mobilized to oppose the form taken by the accumulation process being placed at the service of accumulation."

So while these new subjectivities and spatialities are resisting or bypassing neoliberal statehood in Greece, they also sometimes unwittingly reproduce it by contributing to an imagination of the state that is no longer responsible for welfare provision. Similarly, interlocutors' talk of 'efficiency', 'best practices', 'evaluation', or 'self-improvement' are all references to market-based (or market-derived) forms of economization, calculation, and measurement.[15] What such techniques do is reproduce and foster a disenchantment of politics by economics in ways that contributes to reproducing deeply rooted everyday forms of neoliberalism. Arguably, for these new subjectivities and spatialities to serve the function of a critical 'public pedagogy', they must be more explicitly anti-neoliberal in their ontological layout.

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13 "Then it was a theory entirely. Now I know it. I saw it. And I also saw it after Syntagma, because this is how the whole thing went on. Groups of self-organization and eco-communities mushroomed after Syntagma" (Viktoria, personal communication).

14 "Of course my life changed. Also through 2008 and so on. But there [in Syntagma] I started being in collectives, solidarity economies, the time bank. The first network of social solidarity was born in Syntagma, as most of us know. And it continues until today" (Marili, personal communication).

15 "We are looking into best practices … different organizational models and want to evaluate them, trying to find the most functional one" (Panagiotis, personal communication).

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Littoral practices and seaside architecture around Athens

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Abstract:

The research focuses on how and when the human need of escaping the metropolis of Athens and the urban building environment was born. How was the Right to Sea established to such an extent, that today we consider coastal vacations as a "must do" almost every summer? What does the beach tell us about our society? The research aims to investigate how summer vacations were promoted as a crucial desire and what kind of means were used in order to build the dream of enjoying the sea and even better acquiring a vacation home. A comparison between "vacations for all" and "vacations for few", will be achieved. The project is based on three parts, the synthesis of which is aiming to describe the littoral practices and seaside architecture around Athens: A. Summer vacations as an institution, B. Summer vacations as a product and C. Summer vacations as an architectural project.

A. Summer vacations as an institution.

The crystallization of summer vacations images in our conscience, make them take for granted in a natural way, as if they have been definitively frozen throughout the centuries and have always been like this (Bourdieu and Passeron 1970). Nevertheless, in the eve of twentieth century, observing the photographs which had been taken during summer from a beach you may be surprised to see women with long dresses and men in evening suit. The idea of engaging with the water was tolerated in the case of children, but there were few adults committing such a thing. No more than a decade later, the taboo no longer exists.

During the 1920s and the 1930s, although the sea is appreciated as a recreational place, the first baths belong to the aristocrats which spend their time in luxurious resorts. Gradually, the gap between entitlement and access to vacations narrowed. This is a result of politico-economic changes which led for the first time to the emergence of more reasonably priced accommodations and resorts that helped the working class to abandon the metropolis. The turning point is the legislation of paid vacations in France in **1936** by **Léon Blum**. The famous prime minister coming from the Popular Front, enacts the "**congés payés**" (paid vacations) as a part of a new social contract. Politics of labour fortified 40 hours per week and 15 days of paid vacations. It is a milestone in the history of vacations, since it is the first time where workers and salaried employees stopped working for a particular period of the year. In the context of an emerging welfare state, the democratisation of leisure is a fact: **the right to Sea is ensured**.

Following the European reforms on labor law, the first provisions establishing paid leave, were adopted in Greece in 1945 for employees in the private sector and in 1955 for the public sector respectively. Greek vacations were **established as a political right in the 1950's**, but only after the recovery of the war wounds people could gradually afford **their departure from town**. Tourist industry as we know it today

did not start immediately its practices. In the first decades of the 20th century, tourism in Greece was synonymous for the locals with the healing tourism that cities such as Loutraki or Edipsos offered, while on the contrary it was identifiable for foreigners with antiquities. At the archaeological sites of the Acropolis, Delphi, Olympia and Epidaurus, foreigners were seeking the ancient Greek spirit. The Mycenaean and Minoan civilisations, the sites of Marathon and Thermopylae, in combination with byzantine and post-byzantine monuments, completed the poles of historical attraction.

As E.Hobsbawm observes characteristically: *To go to the Mediterranean in mid summer, without looking for artistic and architectural monuments, was considered to be madness, until the first decades of the 20th century, which brought with them the adoration of the sun and of sun-tanning* (Hobsbawm 2000). In the 30's, interest is emerging for seascapes and after World War II the demand for littoral recreation and entertainment becomes crucial. The idea of "Greek coastal summer" in a combined product with classical antiquities was proclaimed as a national source for identity, economy and culture.

Although the **"Greek National Tourism Organisation"** was founded in 1929, in the beginning it only funds some tourist kiosks at various archaeological sites. *At the dawn of post-war reconstruction, the planning of Greek tourism evolved gradually, constituting a significant part of the Marshall Plan* (Vlachos 2015). In the '50s, tourism in Greece exists under state tutelage, which undertakes, either through the GNTO, or through its key banking pillar –the National Bank of Greece– to organize its tourist offering. The fruits of those efforts are to be seen in the **"Xenia" chain of hotels** and the units of the **"Astir" corporation**. (Nikolakakis 2015)

The period that the research focuses on, is the post-war decades in Greece, **from 1950** onwards. The selected period coincides with the emergence of a mass consumption society, with the consolidation of a welfare state and with the development of escapism in the consciousness of the inhabitants of big cities. "Vacations for few" and "vacations for all" coexist only after the second world-war since mass tourism as a phenomenon started in the mid-twentieth century. The time period where **both models of vacations can be detected** is essential for the research.

B. Summer vacations as a product.

Vacations are not restricted to the political context, as further investigation into the question forms a themed theoretical discourse around the origins of human need to escape, seen through psychoanalysis and philosophy. In parallel with the development of metropolises in the 20th century, a simultaneous need for escaping from them is born. *Escapism* in psychoanalytical terms is a diversion to retreat from unpleasant realities through diversion or fantasy. Vacations residences are spaces of enclosure where people can retreat from their mundane and conventional lifestyles by immersing themselves into an ideal experience far away from the urban. The dominant social movement of the period is that of retreat, a notion theorized by Lefebvre and Castoriadis under the concept of *privatisation*. The consumer fantasises about his personal vacations home and his private transportation mean. Going on vacation in one's car enacted a cultural convergence: *both vacations and cars could signify mythic escape, personal autonomy and displacement in time and space.*

(Avermaete 2004). Natural landscape is the perfect site to establish a second home which remains in an open dialogue with the apartment in town. The man of modern times is increasingly detached from the natural environment. However, in these terms, natural does not exist, it has never existed. Nature is not natural, it is historical, it is a cultural construction for consumption.

The first postwar decades, consumerism increased dramatically forming a model which favored the growth of vacation products and infrastructures. In the 1960s a new social norm dictated to leave your home and if not, it was a sign of social maladjustment. The norm of vacationing quickly became an obligation. This is the time period where the tourist industry blooms. As a consequence, summer accessories are highly demanded and hotels or holidays house complexes are massively constructed. In France for example:...*only 5 to 10 percent went on vacation in the mid-1930s, by the 1980s over 60 percent set off the beaches, countryside, or their second homes during the summer vacation season.* (Furlough 1998).The aristocratic era when only wealthy leisured elites sojourned in grand hotels, is over. Everyone has henceforth access to the consumption of the coastal fantasy.

The present work attempts to investigate and analyse the escapism opportunities afforded by the consumption of summer products and the purchase of a second home. Marketing strategy has canalised vacations to a product oriented experience. *Peoples' motives for shopping are a function of many variables, some of which are unrelated to the actual buying of products*. (Tauber 1972) In this context, the purchaser does not buy just a second home for holidays, he buys the whole idea of escapism that comes with it. Escape is the main theme, from everyday routine to a space which is a genuine break from paramount reality. The research reveals how modern advertisers enact fantasy experiences of a primitive alternative reality for vacationers within the bounded ritual space of a second home by the sea.

Participation in this fantasy world offers a special opportunity for transformative play, while reinforcing a romanticized set of beliefs. Brand images of summer destinations are formed by tourist agencies. Such images tend to have been formed over a long period of time and result from exposure to communication processes largely outside marketing's core sphere of influence such as education, literature and art.

Mass circulation magazines and films help the research to visualise the norms of vacations of each era and decode them. The proliferation of cultural representations of the vacations can be found for example to Jean-Luc's Godard, "Les Vacances", 1967, to Jacque Tati's "Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot" 1953, to Roger's Vadim, "Et dieu créa la femme", 1956, to Jules's Dassin, "Never on Sunday", 1960, to Michael's Cacoyannis, "Zorbas the Greek", 1964 etc. Films exert seductive power within the social imagination. Touristic imaginaries have become transnational and have been empowered by imagined vistas of mass-mediated master narratives. Vacations commodification was realised by advertisements of every kind promoted through press, television, radio, films as well as architectural magazines (Partir, L'Humanité / Architectural Record, Architectural Review etc.) which can help the researcher to index the consuming ideal. A comparison between the architectural discourses of each period and the relevant pictures that can be detected in Greek and European mass consumption journals is used as methodological tool. This helps the research to identify whether a standard holiday residence was promoted in Athens or not.

C. Summer vacations as an architectural project.

The **CIAM-V** (Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne) is, in architectural terms, the reference point of the present research as it coincides with the legislation of paid vacations. It focused on dwelling and recovery and it took place in 1937 in Paris under the motto ***Logis et Loisirs***. The house was examined as an inseparable issue of **leisure**. Another issue that was crucial was the design of the territories outside the metropolis, called the **extra-urban**. *In the minutes of CIAM V the "rural" and the "natural" do not figure as anti-modern, but are understood as loci for the modern practice of mass leisure and tourism* (Avermaete 2004). Architects illustrated how the countryside became constructed as an (urban) infrastructure that should be for a large part of society, a leisure scenery. Natural landscape was conceived as unspoilt by the ongoing development of the metropolis and architects were hoping to re-design the urban condition under new premises.

Established mostly ex-nihilo, seaside areas in Greece have been places of freedom, both for vacationers and for architectural creation. They have given rise to a great deal of research in town planning and architecture, have offered new atmospheres and ways of life that literature or cinema have immortalized. A privileged way of life where the local and international urban elites discover the benefits of good sea air and heliotropism in Greece. In the '50s tourism infrastructures were mainly constructed in Rhodes, Corfu and Athens and were linked to **the country's industrialization**. Towards the end of the same decade, the emphasis was given on prominent luxury structures such as **the Athens Hilton, Mont Parnes, or the Golf court in Glyfada.** The policy to showcase the country's cultural reserves led to projects such as **the archaeological site in the broader area around Plaka and the Acropolis**. In the '60s, the first post-war generation, sailed to the Aegean Sea with cruise ships, featuring new tourist destinations such as **Mykonos and Hydra**, which are not linked for the first time with archaeological remains of the Antiquity. After the fall of the military dictatorship, state decided to demolish all the arbitrary buildings within the shoreline zone and a new shift in tourism policy is attempted with the launch of the **programme for traditional settlements** of the GNTO (1975-1992).

Greece joins the European Union in 1981. In the context of balanced regional development, the **Mediterranean Integrated Programmes** are approved in 1985 by the European Commission. At the same time the programmes of **social tourism** are established, which until that time was the privilege of only certain employees of major state-owned enterprises. The 1990s mark internationally the spread of post-Fordism expertise in tourism offering. As a result, the **Integrated Tourism Development Areas (ITDA)** are set up. The 2004 Olympic Games in Athens redirects state planning towards the renaissance of Attica as a tourist destination. In parallel, large chains are emerging through mergers and acquisitions, such as the case of Grecotel and Lampsa Hellenic Hotels SA. This tendency of concentrating ownership of the country's hotel capacity is leading to "all-inclusive" hotel units.

Focusing on Athens and faced with the requirements of national and global real estate market, bathing town-planning becomes a laboratory for experimentation. Famous architects got involved with state projects on mass tourism but at the same time they were called to realize private resorts for exceptional clients. The Astir Facilities (Vouliagmeni, Glyfada), the Green Coast Sounion bungalows designed by

Aristomenis Provelengios, tourist kiosks, motels, organized beaches and Greek National Tourism Organisation's camping could provide a reference concerning public spaces for summer holidays. On the other hand, the residence of T.Zenetos in Athens-Kavouri (1959) and Glyfada (1961), the holiday home in Anavissos (1961) by Aris Konstantinidis and the summer house in Anavissos by Nikos Valsamakis could be some architectural examples of private coastal residencies.

In order to draw reliable conclusions a comparative approach is used. The research investigates the dipole of mass tourism versus individual vacationer. This approach compares large infrastructural scale to small human scale dwellings. Comparing for example cheap hotel chains or mass housing complexes with private seacoast resorts and villas, a researcher has to give prominence to architectural features linked with social distinction and cultural difference. The categorization is not obvious since the architectural forms incorporate symbolism through which the utopia of experiencing an environment of higher social class is feasible. For example in a world where free time is synonym with wealth, utopia allows to people to pretend behaviors which belong to another class.

The dream of a second home materialized either for the few (with a renowned architecture signature) or for the many through welfare policies or arbitrary structures, is the genetic material of the research. An attempt to systematically record the common characteristics of the above-mentioned architectural manipulations is conducted in order to ultimately bundle them in a group of different residence which seek the initial condition of human creativity and endeavor to implement a "constructed heterotopia". The paper aimed to an interdisciplinary communication of politics, economy, philosophy, sociology, advertising and architecture under the title of **littoral practices and seaside architecture around Athens**. Coastal vacations and relevant dwellings from the aforementioned perspective form a complex skein that must be unravelled.

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