

# Neoliberal Psy-Practices in Greece

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## **I. In place of an introduction: The relationship between ‘psychology’ and ‘politics’ or the relationship of the ‘psyche’ with the ‘political’**

Approximately 100 years after the establishment and the organized consolidation of psychology, it has been constituted into a huge industry. The ‘psychology’ enterprise produces knowledge, interventions, and social outcomes. Knowledge production and its dissemination and psychosocial interventions and their effects are practices that are inherently political. Needless to say, just like any industry, ‘psychology’ through its practices impacts people’s everyday lives in many ways and the undisclosed effects and ramifications may warrant examination and be worth examining. In this chapter we will delve into ‘psychology’s’ relationship with politics, in other words, the psyche’s connection to the political by focusing on the different expressions or aspects of the relationship between psychology and politics. The other parallel path to such an investigation would have been the exploration of the ‘political’ as a subject, an issue or problem for the psyche: developmental requirements, the path toward developing understandings regarding ‘the social’ and participation in ‘the social’ way of (re)-producing knowledge. This second path to investigating the aforementioned relationship will have to remain unexplored for now.

There are many different facets of psychology’s connection to the political. This connection is touched upon in different ways and most of the time partially or only in random combinations. They include:

- Psychology and politics (themes include: personality and culture, personality and society, authoritarian personality, and more)
- The psychology of politics, psychology in politics (conflict resolution, political action and communication, conformity, citizenship and stewardship ... and so on)
- Political psychology (collectives/coalitions, social psychology, ‘masses and mobs’, political socialization or movement, community psychology, ... where the qualifier ‘political’ suggests, if nothing else, that there exists the a-political or an a-political psychology?!) )
- The politics of psychology, politics in psychology (positivism, de-contextualization, critical psychology variants...)
- Psychology as politics with other means, in other words: reflection on the political assumptions existing within our respective psychological theories and practices; the emergence of distinct subjectivities and subjects together with their individual points of view within psychological theory and/or practice; the emergence of distinct - explicit or tacit - interests of these subjects.

It is within this last domain that the example we will analyze falls. This chapter will focus on the “NGOisation” of psychological work in Greece. We dub this the new ‘third pillar’ in psychosocial service delivery.

## II. Neo-liberal societal transformations and reorganization of work

Some years ago we tried to study the organization and the (re)production of psychological service providers and the subjects of their professional practices in Greece (see Dafermos & Marvakis & Triliva, 2006). At that time our attempt led to what is known to those who use dialectical analysis: an impasse. This state of affairs was a consequence of a position that wants stagnation and the absence of political change equated to an expression of a ‘deficient’ or ‘delayed’ modernization. Three years later we approached the subject matter of psychosocial service delivery in Greece from an empirical perspective. We conducted research (Triliva, 2008) or reflected on our practice (Parsanoglou, 2008; Psaroudakis 2008; Dedes & Tsirtoglou, 2008) and presented our work in a symposium titled: *Agency for what? New forms of subjectivity within the transnationalised social policy project market*, at the “International Conference in Critical Psychology” held 2008 in Cardiff/GB.<sup>1</sup> The symposium addressed social scientists’ relationships with the ongoing neo-liberalisation of psychosocial services in Greece. The arguments put forth were grounded on our evaluation that the newly installed social policies had produced, at that time and are still producing now, a heavily contested regime, which in turn produces new forms of agency and subjectivity. Our line of argumentation included the three levels of analysis elaborated on below.

### 1. *Neo-liberalisation of social policy: spaces of production and production of spaces*

If social policy design and implementation used to be a part of a centralised welfare state it was becoming apparent as early as 2008 that there are obvious signs that the welfare state was rapidly deteriorating. The shift described here as *neo-liberalisation of social policy* is not only meaningful from a political point of view and from the perspectives of policy-makers (state, administration, relevant agencies, and stakeholders), it is also, and perhaps more fittingly, a question of methodology, in other words, a question of organisation: that is how and where social policy and particularly its outcomes are produced. This type of organisation of the spaces of production of social policy gives birth to several spaces where social policy as well as social research focusing on policy is *enacted*.

The neo-liberal transformation of Greek society, at that time, was being articulated in the shifting of responsibilities and powers/duties from the welfare state to different and ‘under-construction’ NGOs. This created new spaces and new workers-subjects in that the professionals who work in the provision of psychosocial services have more choices with regard to work spaces. Psychosocial service workers were no longer either public sector employees or private practitioners only; the choice of a new breed of workers had begun to be produced.

It has to be emphasized that these new spaces and the professional breed that serves them came about through NGOisation. This NGOisation is not a substitute for the public by the private, but the creation of a new whole regime of relationships between public and private. In this fashion the state is not just a mediator and a conduit to (re)resources but also acts as a certifier of subjects (both professionals and users of services). Via these certification practices, the consumers-users of services are labeled and branded. An obvious example of this double role of the state are the psychosocial services and initiatives for immigrants and refugees that could no longer be totally excluded from social support programs administered by the welfare system.

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<sup>1</sup> Much of what is expressed in this chapter is a type of meta-analysis of the talks, discussions, and collective outcomes of our collaboration: Fanis Dedes, Athanasios Marvakis, Dimitris Parsanoglou, Stavros Psaroudakis, Sofia Triliva and Giouli Tsirtoglou.

Of course, within this conceptualization of the state's centrality, NGOisation does entail extended changes in policy implementation and in the "societal logic" adhered to. So, the whole process of NGOisation could be conceptualized less as a simple implementation or taking over of responsibilities by specific NGOs and more as a 'methodology' with an internal logic which changes and transforms the functions of all its contributors, actors, constituents - that is, the NGOs themselves, the state, and the subjects who act under its auspices.

At this level of analysis we focused on the example of educational policy and practices that have taken place in the past 20 years in Greece in the sphere of 'special education' and psychosocial services in the schools. In terms of policy Law 1143/1981 ("Regarding special education, special vocational education and welfare of those deviating from normal people") had put into place the provision of educational services in special schools and classrooms. Assessment and diagnosis went part and parcel with the provision of such services as early as 1982, but it was not until the year 2000 when Law 2817/2000 established the "Centers for Diagnosis, Evaluation and Support" that 'official' services' were established and such psycho-educational praxis was established within the heavily centralized educational system. It is important to note that the 'Diagnostic Centers' were funded by European subsidies.

In an empirical investigation of how psychologists working in the 'diagnostic centers' talk about their work, we interviewed psychologists working there and thematically analyzed the interview protocols. The interviews focused on their experiences and their subjective accounts regarding their role and praxis. The 18 psychologists who were interviewed for the study used similar metaphors to describe their work. They used the following words and descriptions: "diagnosis industry", "industrial production of dyslexia labels", "processing and categorizing children like a factory processing a pre-prepared food", "pressure cooker", "manufacturer of WISC (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children) protocols" and "A technology for testing children, and now we get paid by the hour just like any worker in a factory." Another theme that came up in the interviews was that of professional ethics and deontological dilemmas. More specifically, all of the people interviewed mentioned that they were often confused and at odds with the requirement to diagnose learning difficulties without providing services or the supports necessary in coping or ameliorating the problems which were identified. The provision of diagnosis or "a label" as they called it without providing the supportive services the children may have needed went against what these professionals referred to as the "ethical principle of not harming others." Moreover, concerning diagnosis and the ethics of it, they mentioned that there was often "lots of pressure" to use specific diagnostic nomenclature in their reports.

The psychologist who took part in the study described their everyday lives as "ruling by report writing and ruled by the numbers." They expressed "insecurity" regarding their work and its ethical ramifications in children's lives. On the other hand, they were pleased to be working in the "public sector" and "having interest" in their work and for some "having a permanent position." A few months later in October of 2008 both the "Special Education" and the "Diagnostic Centers" policy changed. Law 3699/2008 referring to education ("Special education and training of people with disabilities or with special needs") was implemented with special provisions for inclusion. Within this same law the "diagnostic centers" were renamed - "Centers for Differential Diagnosis, Diagnosis, and Support". Psychiatric opinion is now warranted for diagnosis and psychiatrists take part in the process of assessment and evaluation. Moreover, psychologists need to have more specialized training in order to work at the centers; they are hired on contract and even those with 'permanent positions' may be transferred to other agencies. Many fear being made redundant by the constant financial

restrictions in funding and the resulting cuts in budgets (Triliva & Georga, 2014). Austerity has fueled precarity into the lives of mental health professionals working in the public sector domain and the ramifications for both service providers and users are many (Triliva, Fragkiadaki & Balamoutsou, 2013).

## 2. *New working regimes within new forms of social research/inquiry production*

These processes of shifting and transmitting (NGOisation, EU as a source, new relations between public and private) have created a historically new and massive field of work for social scientists; that is graduates of higher education institutions that are also going through a neo-liberal transition. This means that the neo-liberal shift has opened up opportunities for precarious jobs in NGOs for social science graduates; jobs that consist of ‘hunting down’ (European) projects and grants in order to address social issues and problems.

But working in NGOs as a young social scientist is not only precarious it also produces a new work regime for psychosocial settings, a regime that is similar to those of high-tech settings. This includes traditional application of cutting-edge knowledge, well-honed abilities, and reflective practice, along with a concomitant and continuous production of knowledge, and learning. Moreover, these jobs require that the young social scientists maintain their keep; in essence, bringing in funds and grants that will allow them to draw a salary. Hence, these kinds of jobs are usually accompanied by increased demands and certainly ‘new forms’ of worker subjectivity.

At this level of analysis young social scientists who work in the newly founded NGOs reflected on their roles, jobs, and the demands placed upon them and the users of the services. Fanis Dedes and Giouli Tsirtoglou by reflecting on their work with high-risk communities illustrated how NGO “community work” in urban Greece, at that time, served as a vehicle for the neoliberalisation of welfare services and the precarisation of working conditions. As they reflected on their NGO assigned work they referred to some of the ways in which the lack of resources and clear frameworks result in a fragmented and unstable *modus operandi* for services provision. They drew from their personal experiences to reflect on the ways that “community work”, instead of a holistic and flexible problem-solving approach, turns into a pretext for abandoning both focused and person-oriented tactics and more radical and strategically social interventions. Moreover, they discussed how local authority and party-linked political informal networks and relationships based on clientelism raise obstacles to even highly motivated professionals and volunteers from fully serving real community needs and from focusing to the work with the community and for the community. The new working regime appeared to encompass management and organizational roles such as ‘project acquisition’ which is essentially ‘work acquisition’. Moreover, these roles and forms of work are part and parcel of being successful at work and, in this manner, the ‘customer’ or clientelism logic is recapitulated. Finally, as though they were ‘guessing the future’ Fanis Dedes and Giouli Tsirtoglou discussed how the situation may worsen if the people employed in this newly developed work sector do not pursue real community aims nor develop critical attitudes towards the project acquisition rat race.

## 3. *Agency for what? The limits of critical social theory and practice*

The rat race analogy used in describing how projects and funding are pursued can easily be applied to the endless work professionals have to put in just to apply. Oftentimes, professionals who engage in the funding ‘chase’ somehow feel that there is little purpose or reward in what they are doing and that ‘endless energy’ is usurped in trying to stay ‘afloat’

and not in confronting social problems with full force. In the neo-liberal regimes and through them a new transnationalized social policy implementation is realized. The central levers of power for this implementation are the myriad of NGOs and the precarious jobs they have to offer. The “contested practices” (Louw & Danziger 2007) and the new working regime, in turn, demand and produce new subjectivities and new forms of social practice.

Within this framework of constraints and exercised autonomy a question is raised regarding the limits of critical social theory and practice. Even if someone demonstrates the best intentions, he/she cannot circumvent the contemporary systemic reality: *social problems are not to be solved but only to be relieved or ameliorated*. Thus, the innovative approach (one of the *sine qua non* elements for a viable project proposal) remains *individualized support* and the objective continues to be the *harm reduction* and *damage control*. This state of affairs brings to the fore a couple of essential questions: What is and what has happened with social transformation? And, are there new ways of defining or dealing with subjectivity?

At this level of analysis Stavros Psasoudakis and Dimitris Parsanoglou, the former reflecting on his work with young migrants and the latter on policy critic, that is the neoliberalization of the Greek welfare state. Stavros Psaroudakis’ ‘first-job’ as a psychologist was in the NGO migrant sector, at a juncture when Greece was considered a “New Migration” country. He outlined how the tasks expected from psychologists working in such NGOs require constant negotiation. As he stated, psychology’s and psychologists’ encounters with the young migrants involved precarious trajectories on both sides of the professional relationship, at the meeting context, the interaction field, and the counteraction of the detention space.

Dimitris Parsanoglou titled his presentation: “The good, the bad and the ugly: flexible governance, non flexible states, and flexible ‘beneficiaries’”. He explored the neo-liberalisation of social policy in European Union member states (starting with the example of Greece) through qualitative transformations concerning the main actors in social policy production and reproduction. Within the transnationalised social policy project market Dimitris Parsanoglou believes that three main groups of social actors perform:

- The *Good*, performed by flexible actors (decentralised authorities, NGOs, private institutions and organisations) who promote or more precisely design flexible governance structures and apparatuses;
- The *Bad*, performed mainly by the State, which either remain obsolete, insufficient and absent, or transforming itself and its operation in order to enter into the realms of flexibility;
- The *Ugly*, who at first sight are the beneficiaries of social policy projects (the so-called - by the European and national jargons - *vulnerable groups*).

Moreover, the script included and includes, as well, a massive (reserve?) army of (young) social researchers. Oscillating between the *Good* ones, where they actually work, and the *Bad* ones, to whom they address their research findings and policy recommendations (sic), young social researchers are experiencing a questionable existential condition (also in material terms). What kind of subjectivities and agencies are or can be deployed by this emergent social group? What margins of autonomy exist between the *illusion of social partnership* as a member/militant of the *Good* ones and the *realistic assertion of being captured* among the *Ugly* ones as a blatantly precarious and alienated (in the classic Marxian sense) worker? Finally, who are the real “beneficiaries” within the neo-liberal shift in social policy production? These were some of the questions raised at that time.

These were some of the points made and the questions raised back in 2008. Yes, perhaps neoliberal regimes were discussed at length. Yes, precarity in the realm of professional work

was mentioned. Yes, social transformation was lurking in the background of all the talks. Nevertheless, looking back now it seems that the unprecedented and massive “neoliberal experiment” (Kretsos, 2012) that was eventually installed by the Greek Government, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Central Bank was in no way even alluded to in our work. Kioupkiolis (2014) describes what has transpired in the country since the advent of the so-called ‘crisis’ and the severe austerity regime as being a ‘shock doctrine’, as he states, “logics and strategies of late capitalist bio-power which is driven by neoliberal fundamentalism and services financial markets” (p. 148).

### **Neo-liberal experimentation with daunting force**

The multitude of crises that have taken hold in Greece in the past 5 years have brought to the forefront lots of discussion and discourse on neo-liberalism. Moreover, the ‘crisis’ or ‘crises’ have legitimized the agenda that we had alluded to in our analysis in 2008, the agenda for ‘structural reforms’ in welfare services. Hence, we were literally forced to pick up the thread of our research and arguments where we left off 6 years ago. And of course, that thread, our subject matter, has not remained the same. Our first attempt at describing what was happening with regard to the delivery of psychosocial services ‘got stuck’ exactly at that historical moment when it was beginning to become more apparent that the concept, the context, and the discourse on ‘modernization’ and the possible or real delay in its development was becoming obvious, especially in how it can be applied to how welfare services can be organized under the rubric welfare state. The “modern Greek tragedy” as it has been referred to, brought and continues to bring many changes in the economic, social, and work lives of the people. According to Kretsos (2012)

“sweeping austerity measures have resulted in the almost full commodification of labor and the upsurge of a serious humanitarian crisis in the streets of Athens. ... Most working people have seen their lives turned upside down in the matter of a few months. Homeless people were increased by more than twenty thousand; over 50 percent of young people and 25 percent of the workforce are unemployed; thousands of suicides for economic reasons took place since 2010; at least sixty thousand small companies closed; and thousands of workers are going unpaid for long periods of time.” (p. 517)

The crises’ impact on welfare expenditures was unprecedented and the spending cuts which ensued along with the constant changes in healthcare and welfare policies wreaked havoc for healthcare organizations, providers, and service users alike (Kondilis et al., 2013; Kyriopoulos et al., 2014; Reeves, McKee, Basu, & Stuckler, 2014; Simone & Koutsogeorgou, 2014). More specifically, in the mental health sector of services precarity prevailed (Anagnostopoulos & Soumaki, 2012; Christodoulou & Christodoulou, 2013; Triliva & Georga, 2014) amongst service users and providers. The fact that ‘pathologizing’ discourse prevailed (‘adjustment disorders’ of those who were already susceptible or vulnerable, Efthimiou, Argalia, Kaskaba & Makri, 2013) along with the fact that the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs wanted ‘to abide by the Children’s Rights and Disability Rights and Services international charters’ “Committees for Educational Diagnosis, Assessment and Support” were founded and networks for the provision of such services were installed. These installations included the placement of ‘unemployed’ psychologists in schools throughout the country (Government Gazette, Decision # 17812/Γ6, 12 February 2014). In addition, since the industrial enterprise of licensing psychologists at the Bachelor’s level without specialization and internship training (Potamianos, 2003) has been in full operation in Greece since 1998 (N. 2646/1998; ΦΕΚ 236 Α) there were many entry level and unemployed psychologists to choose from. Over a thousand psychologists were placed in

schools throughout Greece, most had no experience, only undergraduate training, and were placed in a precarious professional position. They were also on a short-term contract and were paid very little. Nevertheless, they were in schools providing support to ‘the needy children’ who were ‘diagnosed’ with some form of ‘adjustment difficulty’. Nobody took the time to investigate what exactly the school children were adjusting to and if the ‘psychologists’ had the sufficient and appropriate training to intervene in schools and in children’s lives. Essentially, this and other mandates became the avenue for the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to provide a resolution to the dual question: “what is the problem and who has a problem?”

Hence, the young and newly hired psychologists in schools, communities, and agencies were hired to diagnose, label, and prescribe ways to adjust to a deteriorating and dire social situation. Meanwhile, the young professionals joined the ranks of the “nouveau poor” (Kaika, 2012). It appears that the neo-liberal rearrangements taking place in Greece during the ‘crisis’ years pertain to the central coordinates of our societies and they put into place a series of regulations and regimes in motion:

- The model for the ‘normal’ person or subject
- Societies’ internal organization (functioning and functions of the state: organizing infrastructure and redistribution or guaranteeing profit margins for private enterprises)
- Paradigms regarding ‘statehood’ (e.g., borders, boundaries...)
- Political forms (e.g., social policies)
- The division of labor (e.g., professions and their subject matter)
- Relationships between social groups and individuals

The problematization that follows focuses on these fundamental changes that have impacted all aspects of society’s organization. They are changes that break down and degrade the mechanisms through which production and social structures have been organized for the greater part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (as it has become known from Gramsci’s concept: Fordism). Since this ‘problematization’ is beginning and has started due to the exigencies of the historic moment, it is hard to discuss specifics since everything is in flux.

Focusing through a wide lens one can surmise that in Greece the disputes, negotiations, and controversies that have ensued following the installation of the neo-liberal transformations focus upon and target a new class compromise in between the new opportunities which are opened by the productive forces and the new limits imposed by the conditions of production. The neo-liberal transformation in and of itself constitutes a project of the ruling classes to overcome the actual crisis of accumulation of capital. It constitutes a political imperative in order to avoid the transition to a new historically strong level of social organization and, simultaneously, avoiding the restrictions of the previous level of social organization. At the same time, this political project attempts in every way to exploit as much as it is possible people’s creative potential and production. Nevertheless, this historic compromise is a complicated enterprise which simultaneously unfolds in each and every social field and sphere of people’s lives, transforming meanings and relationships. Undeniably, the effects of the ‘crisis’ are many and multifaceted. Kiouпкиolis (2014) writes: “Greece has witnessed a transition from a ‘post-democratic’ condition in the 1990s and the early 21st century to a regime of ‘post-political biopower’ in 2010–12 that can bid democracy farewell.” (p. 144)

As social subjects young psychologists were hired in schools to ‘diagnose’ and ‘ameliorate’ children’s, adolescents’ adjustment, and change organizational ills. Concomitantly, however, severe and punitive austerity policies reverberated in their everyday lives and created a “crisis of democratic governance in Greece” (Popescu, 2012, p. 342). This loss of freedom and democracy is described by Kristijan Kotarski (2012) as:

“An increase in state power has always been the inner logic of neoliberalism, because government needs to be highly intrusive in order to inject markets into every corner of social life. Neoliberalism has created a market state rather than a small state. Shrinking the state has proved politically impossible, so neoliberals have turned instead to using the state to reshape social institutions on the model of the market.” (p.9)

In this instance, the Ministry of Education in a rather ‘inexpensive’ fashion infiltrated its power using psychological diagnosis, intervention, and means in schools all over Greece. Children’s every day school lives were impacted and all this in the guise of a ‘social justice’ agenda regarding children’s needs.

The argument here is that working men and women are called upon to deal with new precarious conditions at work or learning environments/contexts. They have to confront new subject matter in both learning and work. The fluidity and flexibility of the both the context and the content of work do not only involve the usual requirements regarding demands and opportunities (professional) but also to the general coordinates in organizing work. Moreover, the separation, the boundary between work and leisure which existed traditionally has now been all but eliminated and professionals are working many hours at both home and in work spaces and, in this way, ‘work’ and ‘private’ life are no longer divided and they interface greatly. In addition, other boundaries that become blurred include ‘the ethics’ of the worker/employee and ‘the ethics’ of the employer / organization / agency / government. In this insidious fashion people’s subjectivities have been colonized.

### **III. Precarious agency regimes: shifting (political) subjectivities in Greece and the (re)distribution of the psychological**

In Greece (just like in other countries around the world) new work regimes are being established. In these regimes and through them a transnational implementation of social policies is being carried out and performed. The main driving force of this implementation and the subsequent performance are the numerous NGOs and the precarious jobs that they usually offer young professionals. In order to be offered such a position one usually has to possess an ever-growing number of qualifications, titles, and degrees. Such competition and demands for an entry level position are contested practices (Louw & Danziger & 2007). It is these competitive, professionally challenging and precarious work regimes that are producing new worker subjectivities and new forms of social practice which incapacitate and usurp people’s agency.

The NGOisation of the work of psychologists and other social scientists is not particular for what is happening in Greece at the moment. It is a common practice in other European countries and across the globe. Whatever ‘national’ differences and particularities exist, they are grounded in the variant preexisting social policy regimes. On such a basis, what we have to address and reflect on the *modes of instrumentalization* of subaltern subjectivities by multiple centers of power which, despite their phenomenal split, remain very effective in the diffusion and wielding of governance/power on different social actors/agents. Stavros Psaroudakis (2008) prophetically described the situation as a “symbiosis of precarities” - that is, a pattern of convergences (which is inescapably also a pattern of mutual subjectivation processes). He worked for an NGO for refugees who were unaccompanied minors. In his line of work since 2008 the neo-liberal developments have brought more work for social scientists and concomitantly strengthened the ‘exclusion’ by creating the intervention inappropriately dubbed “Xenios Dias” (Xenios Zeus). The intervention is named after Zeus the patron of hospitality and those who are guests is always avenging any wrong committed to those who

are visiting. Ironically, the Ministry of Justice's intervention was implemented in order to take and hold in "detention centers" all refugees and asylum seekers found in the streets of Greek cities, mostly Athens. Hospitality was considered and continuous to be considered a virtue, yet this initiative of the Ministry of Justice has literally led to thousands of arrests and detentions of people who have not committed any crime other than to be seeking refuge or asylum. People's rights have been violated by what human rights organizations say is a discriminatory policy (Human Rights Watch, 2013). The suicides and the suicidality in the detention centers along led the Ministry to hire psychologists to provide their services to the 'detainees'. Both the young professionals and the asylum seekers experienced daunting and traumatic circumstances. Stavros Psaroudakis (2008) raised the following questions regarding the mutual precariousness of both the social scientists/workers and their subjects: "But beyond the discourses that legitimize the praxis, what are the latter's effects on the subjects involved, on subjectivities and intersubjectivities? To address this question I use (in search of better term) the notion of 'symbiosis of precariousness' to refer to the strong interdependency between those (and not only those) forms of precarious agencies." He went on and explained,

"NGO psychosocial praxis in Greece: disperse, yet systematic encounters between 'native' young psycho-social scientists, working under severely devalued terms of employment on the one side, and people from 'vulnerable social groups', themselves dealing with extremely harsh terms of living on the other. ... What has also to be noted, is that these interdependencies take place within fields undergoing significant transformations and de/re-regulations within the Greek society: the neoliberal regulation of psychosocial welfare services, under which NGOs competing within the EU project market gain relevance; the professionalization of civil society initiatives and solidarity actions, as well as of fundamental supportive social relationships under the banner of empowerment; the proliferation and precarization (or if you want the 'democratization') of psychosocial education and professions within the Greek society since the early 1990's; the strengthening of psychologisation/victimization discourses within migration and youth regimes - within antiracist movements as well -; the rise of security state policies and discourses etc. My professional praxis as a whole of course speaks of all these developments, that reflect effectively on welfare services work regimes and the range of phenomena trivially called 'social exclusion'."

Echoing the same sentiments, Eva Cossé who monitors Greece for Human Rights Watch and is author of the report *Unwelcome Guests: Greek Police Abuses of Migrants in Athens* stated more emphatically:

"Instead of focusing on discriminatory sweep operations like Xenios Zeus, stigmatizing migrants and asylum seekers, Greece should invest more in stemming the tide of anti-immigrant sentiment in the country and showing migrants and asylum seekers the true meaning of Greek hospitality" (Cossé, 2013).

Both the neo-liberal economic 'experiment' and Operation Xenios Zeus continue to this date (autumn 2014) and just a few weeks ago the Bertelsmann Foundation in its annual report titled: *Social justice in the EU: a cross national comparison* (Schrand-Tischler & Knoll, 2014) vividly and unmistakably substantiated that social injustice prevails in crisis-battered European countries, most notably Greece. The social injustices described in the report are an outcome of these new regimes and the re-distribution of the psychological. Greece ranks last on a social justice scale assessing the performance of all European Union states. The report states,

"Greece suffers from a youth unemployment rate of almost 60 percent now, a rapid increase in the risk of poverty, not least among children and adolescents (from 28.2

per cent in 2007 to 35.4 per cent in 2012), a health system that has been hard hit by austerity measures, discrimination towards minorities due to increasing radical political forces and a huge mountain of debt as mortgage for future generations” (Schraad-Tischler & Kroll, 2014, p. 9-10).

Indeed, young professionals are working under very precarious conditions and their praxis renders them and their beneficiaries even more vulnerable. They now share precarious positions in an ever changing and challenging landscape.

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