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**The Gendered Impact of the Crisis: Struggles over Social
Reproduction in Greece**

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The gendered impact of the financial crisis: Struggles over social reproduction in Greece

Abstract

The global financial crisis (GFC) has triggered a dramatic transformation of employment in the weakest Eurozone economies. This is evidenced in deteriorating work conditions, limited employee negotiating power, low pay, zero-hours contracts and, most importantly, periods of prolonged unemployment for most of the working population, especially women. We offer a critical analysis of the boundaries of formal and informal, paid and unpaid, productive and reproductive work, and explore how austerity policies implemented in Greece in the aftermath of the GFC have transformed women's everyday lives. In contributing to critical discussions of neoliberal capitalism and recent feminist geography studies, our empirical study focuses on how women's struggles over social reproduction unfold in the public and private spheres. It proposes that women's temporary retreat to unpaid work at home constitutes a form of resistance to intensifying precarization, and, at times, contributes to the emergence of new collective forms of reproduction.

Keywords

Feminism, reproductive labour, unpaid work, unemployment

Introduction

The recent crisis of neoliberal capitalism (also described as the 2008 global financial crisis or GFC) is linked to a range of state policies that have intensified pre-existing gender inequalities, particularly in the European South (Gill and Roberts, 2011; Karamessini and Rubery, 2013; Hozic and True, 2016). Women are greatly affected by such policies, and by economic downturns more generally (Pollard, 2013). In Greece, for instance, recent evidence suggests that austerity has disproportionately affected women and the most vulnerable (Kosyfologou, 2018; Vaiou, 2016). Emerging research from other European Union countries somewhat less affected by the crisis, such as the UK and Germany, also indicates that, in addition to perpetuating and/or deepening gender inequalities in unemployment, cuts to public spending dramatically reversed gender equality gains (Annesley and Scheele, 2011). The policies' consequences of reduced wages and a shrinking welfare state impact negatively on women's ability to sustain themselves and/or their families through work (Fawcett Society, 2012); yet this crucial dimension is often overlooked. We address this gap by revealing struggles for social reproduction in Greece, the Eurozone country most affected by the GFC.

Drawing on prior work on feminist economics (Elson, 2017; Smith, 2016; Roberts, 2015; Pollard, 2013) and recent debates on social reproduction (e.g. Bhattacharya, 2017; Fraser, 2016; Hopkins, 2015), this article examines the

1
2
3 effects of the neoliberal crisis, and argues the importance of studying the
4
5 impact of austerity on women in terms of changing power relations at work,
6
7 in the family and beyond. Our starting point is that a full assessment of the
8
9 impact of the 2008 GFC on the gender division of labour must consider
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11 women's triple burden of care work, housework and paid work (Moser,
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17 1993).

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19 In particular, we focus on how 'Greek austerity' and three Economic
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21 Adjustment Programmes implemented between 2011 and 2015 have
22
23 transformed both productive and reproductive roles in women's everyday
24
25 lives. The personal narratives of Greek women in the wake of the GFC reveal
26
27 that the boundaries between production and social reproduction are being
28
29 reconfigured, potentially creating spaces to resist the capitalist crisis and
30
31 capitalism. In showing the tensions and struggles of unemployed (mainly
32
33 professional) women, we challenge the 'production-reproduction' binary
34
35 (Klausner, 1986; Dyck, 1990; Hierofani, 2016). Following the work of radical
36
37 Marxist feminists (e.g. Federici, 1975; Fortunati, 1995), we reiterate that the
38
39 'official economy' must include not only waged labour, but also productive
40
41 *and* reproductive work performed within the household, with its gendered
42
43 labour and familial mode of governance (Weeks, 2016). In stressing
44
45 interdependencies between 'private' and 'public' spheres, we also argue that
46
47 transformed gender relations and identities in households may
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3 counterintuitively signal the emergence of new potentialities to disrupt the
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6 gendered binary of productive and reproductive work.
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8
9 The article is structured as follows. First, it articulates the gendered
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11 outcomes of austerity, and discusses unemployment and public service cuts
12
13 in relation to social reproduction (Adkins, 2012; Fraser, 2016; Bhattacharya,
14
15 2017; Aruzza et al., 2019). We then describe the context of this research, and
16
17 discuss feminist arguments on social reproduction and the impact of
18
19 neoliberal reforms on women's roles within and outside the home. Employing
20
21 illustrative examples from our empirical research, we reflect on the GFC's
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23 impact on women's productive and reproductive roles, and particularly the
24
25 spaces being created for gendered forms of resistance to neoliberal reforms.
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32 33 **Austerity and the crisis of neoliberal capitalism: Feminist views** 34 35 36 37 **on social reproduction** 38

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40 In a special section in *Environment and Planning A* on the role and influence of
41
42 feminist work in economic geography, McDowell (2016: 2097) stressed that
43
44 'theoretical analyses that take gender difference into account must be an
45
46 essential part of an economic geographer's toolkit'. Feminist scholarship not
47
48 only contributes to 'the ongoing project of rethinking how economic
49
50 geography is conceived and practised' (Pollard, 2013: 403), but also prioritises
51
52 agency in the context of the recent crisis. In doing so, feminist geographers
53
54 stress 'how feminist (and other) work on subjectivities can revisit some
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3 familiar subjects in different ways that helps to repoliticise understandings of
4 financial markets' (Pollard, 2013: 417), thus offering better understandings
5 and formulating critical responses to the socio-economic effects of the GFC.
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10
11 Feminist economic geographers critically interrogate neoliberal
12 discourses and policies, demonstrating their implicit, normalised, gendered
13 assumptions and uneven outcomes (Elson, 2009; Nagar et al., 2002; Pollard,
14 2013). For example, in discussing structural adjustment programmes (SAPs),¹
15 Nagar et al. (2002) compare such stabilisation programmes, introduced into
16 struggling economies throughout the developing world by the International
17 Monetary Fund and the World Bank in the 1980s and 1990s, with 'capital's
18 first phase of primitive accumulation', when social reproduction was the
19 primary and 'fundamental terrain for the restructuring needed' (Dalla Costa
20 and Dalla Costa, 1993: 1-2). As neoliberal states withdraw their provision of
21 social services, women in the feminised spaces of household and community
22 assume a disproportionate role in caring and domestic work (Moser, 1987;
23 Nagar et al., 2002). Thus, women's gendered roles and identities as mothers
24 and housewives are reinforced by their increasing care responsibilities when
25 social forms of welfare provision are withdrawn (Roberts, 2004).
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52 Furthermore, since women constitute the bulk of temporary and contract
53 workers, jobs held primarily by women are the first to be cut (ITUC, 2009). In
54 2010, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on precarious women
55 workers, which highlighted women's overrepresentation in precarious work
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1
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3 as a key contributory factor to the gender pay gap. This overrepresentation
4
5
6 arises from 'the constraints they face because of child-care and domestic
7
8 responsibilities' (ITUC, 2011: 16), which force them to seek part-time or 'non-
9
10 standard' work, with the risks of short hours, low pay and limited access to
11
12 benefits. However, as Pearson and Elson (2015: 10) argue:
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17 In a crisis, existing gender norms may be reinforced, or they may
18
19 decompose, with individual men taking on roles normally associated
20
21 with women, and vice versa. Or they may be transformed through
22
23 deliberate collective action, by civil society groups, or by governments,
24
25 to overcome gender stereotypes.
26

27
28 According to McBride and Whiteside (2011: 60), 'austerity has been a
29
30 salient policy feature over the past thirty years, yet it has also been selective
31
32 ... it is also inexorably intertwined with growing affluence experienced by
33
34 those few who are most well off'. Whiteside (2016) explores how austerity
35
36 measures differentially affect economies in the so-called developed world
37
38 (e.g. UK, US, Canada and South Europe), and suggests that the GFC marked a
39
40 departure from the distributive or consumption-oriented welfare state, and a
41
42 modification of the neoliberal paradigm based on 'selective austerity'
43
44 (Whiteside, 2016: 367). Similarly, Baines and McBride (2015) discuss feminist
45
46 critiques of neoliberalism by rethinking and deconstructing the discourse of
47
48 austerity. McDowell (2014) writes about a new gender contract that reflects
49
50 the economic and social changes brought about by strict austerity regimes in
51
52 the UK and elsewhere. She agrees that this is not solely a consequence of crisis
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3 and austerity but is significantly exacerbated by them, yet she recognises that
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6 'the patriarchal bargain in which women exchanged independence for
7
8 support by men of their own generation is also increasingly irrelevant as the
9
10 basis for contemporary gender relations' (p. 35). Overall, eradication of the
11
12 patriarchal contract (Pateman, 1988) as the basis of the modern state has been
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14 due predominantly to a lack of secure employment, followed by a lack of a
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16 regular income, a home and a family.
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22 Previous research suggests that the production of crisis-induced
23
24 precarious subjectivities stems from the differential valuation of labour (see
25
26 Federici, 2004, 2009, 2012; Fraser, 1992, 2016). High unemployment and
27
28 precarious work conditions contribute significantly to the commodification
29
30 and exploitation of women's bodily capacities, as these are projected yet again
31
32 as 'untapped resources' (Roberts, 2015). This can be seen in the
33
34 circumscription of women's productive and reproductive powers and
35
36 abilities, whereby the household bears heavier adjustment costs, which fall
37
38 disproportionately on women, who thereby become more economically
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40 vulnerable.
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49 Through alienation of the proletarian subject from her body, capitalism
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51 has constructed the female of the gendered (men/women) binary as key in the
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53 atomisation and privatisation of social reproduction (Motta, 2013). Fraser
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55 (2016) argues that this is another manifestation of capitalism's inherent
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57 contradiction between economic production and social reproduction: of its
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3 dependence on reproductive labour, which it undercuts by lowering wages to
4
5 achieve maximum profitability. When household resources decline, women
6
7 become disproportionately burdened with various forms of reproductive
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9 labour, not only maintaining the family's food and health, but also providing
10
11 emotional support and taking responsibility for young, ill and elderly family
12
13 members (Peterson, 2005). This, we suggest, has a double effect: on the one
14
15 hand, it forces women back to their historical 'responsibility' for caring
16
17 activities; yet on the other hand, they turn to these consciously as a means to
18
19 resist the cheapening of their skills in the (public) marketplace.
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27 During the 2008 financial crisis, characterised by job scarcity and social
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29 welfare cuts (for example, in relation to childcare and care for the elderly),
30
31 women have yet again been constructed as more 'useful' back at home. Their
32
33 'return' to unpaid labour has a useful function at this stage of neoliberal
34
35 capitalism, and is framed as a helpful and unselfish family decision (Vaiou,
36
37 2014a, 2014b; Roberts, 2015; Worth, 2016). This is despite women already
38
39 performing various forms of reproductive labour. Women are still responsible
40
41 for unpaid work at home, and comprise a large proportion of part-time and
42
43 contract workers (IMF, 2013; Worth, 2016). For example, on average, in low-
44
45 and moderate-income countries, women spend twice as much time as men on
46
47 household work, and four times as much time on childcare (Duflo, 2012),
48
49 thereby 'freeing up time for male household members to participate in the
50
51 formal labour force' (IMF, 2013: 8). The household sector acts as a 'shock
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3 absorber of the last resort' (Elson, 2007, 2009), making the financial system
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5 more resilient. During times of high unemployment, employers seem to
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7 support male employment, even in traditionally female-dominated sectors
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9 such as education (Elson, 2009).
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14 Thus, neoliberal capitalism 'authorises finance capital to discipline states
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16 and publics in the immediate interests of private investors, not least by
17
18 demanding public disinvestment from social reproduction' (Fraser, 2016: 113).
19
20 In advocating a reduced state role in ensuring liveable standards and
21
22 protecting vulnerable sections of the population at times of capitalist shocks,
23
24 the neoliberal order reduces physical reproduction, while simultaneously
25
26 shifting various forms of reproductive work which was partly stabilised
27
28 through public provision to the private sphere. Unsurprisingly, women's
29
30 labour in social reproduction roles within and outside the house forms a
31
32 buffer at times of crisis, as women take on (additional) work to substitute for
33
34 services they can no longer afford to buy and/or that the state no longer
35
36 provides. As services that assist those with caring roles and provide for those
37
38 in need (childcare, social care services, etc.) are cut, women 'pick up the tab'
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40 and fill the gaps (Fawcett Society, 2012; Kosyfologou, 2018).
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51 52 **Analytical framework**

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55 Although gender is incorporated into many economic analyses, resistance to
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57 gender still prevails as an analytical category; hence, more work is needed to
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3 fully incorporate the theoretical implications of feminist scholarship into
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6 economic geography (McDowell, 1991; MacLeavy et al., 2016; see also
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8
9 Peterson, 2005). Whilst early evidence suggests that the GFC has exacerbated
10
11 pre-existing inequalities (Floro et al., 2010), little is known about how women
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13
14 have responded. This is surprising, given the rapid and dramatic reduction of
15
16 social care provision and intensification of precarious labour in post-2008
17
18 production and social reproduction (Standing, 2011; Federici, 2006).
19
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22 A recent collection of essays edited by Bhattacharya (2017) re-articulates
23
24 the importance of considering productive and reproductive labour as part of a
25
26 single integrated work process. Renewing interest in social reproduction
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28 theory in the 'shadow of neoliberalism', several feminist theorists (e.g. Aruzza
29
30 et al., 2019; Fraser, 2016; Federici, 2012; Bezanson and Luxton, 2006; Folbre,
31
32 2002) argue that the production of goods and services cannot be viewed in
33
34 isolation from social reproductive roles in the home and community.
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36 Reproductive labour has typically been conceived as reproducing the next
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38 generation of workers, ensuring the health, productivity and socialisation of
39
40 the current workforce, and caring for those (including the jobless) who cannot
41
42 support themselves. In the process of capitalist accumulation, women's
43
44 unpaid work and exploitation in the private sphere demonstrate how 'the
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46 degradation of women [and their bodies] are necessary conditions for the
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48 existence of capitalism in all times' (Federici, 2004: 13). Propelled by debt,
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3 neoliberal capitalism squeezes this reproductive capacity beyond breaking
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6 point by imposing austerity policies on indebted governments (Fraser, 2016).
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9 Previous research acknowledges that these changes have affected
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11 communities differentially (see Walby, 2009; Annesley and Scheele, 2011;
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13 Seguino, 2010). We join feminist approaches in critiquing the separation of
14
15 public (masculinised) and private (feminised) spheres, arguing that this limits
16
17 and devalues women's social power (Motta, 2013), and raises a barrier to
18
19 political action. Hence, we stress the importance of making visible women's
20
21 unpaid labour at home, and unveiling the historical experiences of the
22
23 oppressed as a means to critique capitalist political economy (Federici, 2014;
24
25 Motta, 2013). Research on such vital topics as interactions between paid and
26
27 unpaid work and the unequal conditions that render some bodies, workforces
28
29 and communities far more precarious than others (Meehan and Strauss, 2015)
30
31 may help us to develop frameworks to better understand how to counteract
32
33 such inequalities.
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44 To advance our critique, we turn to what Ferguson calls 'experience',
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46 which links the (conscious) self and society, and captures the dialectical
47
48 interplay between the subjective and the social. Accordingly, we reveal how
49
50 'distinct experiences or subjectivities are part of the same, over-arching set of
51
52 social relations' (Ferguson, 2008: 48). Drawing on Bakker and Gill (2003),
53
54 Ferguson brings the notion of labour back to the heart of social reproduction
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57 feminism. Work/labour are not abstract entities (like economies or
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3 households), but lived, creative experiences that incorporate 'survival
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5 strategies' outside formal paid labour (Ferguson, 2008). We argue that these
6
7 constitute a distinctive context for investigating alternative conceptualisations
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9 of organising working/non-working lives and ways of disrupting the
10
11 gendered binary separating productive and reproductive work.
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17 In particular, through illustrative empirical research, we demonstrate that
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19 housework and care in the private sphere are important strategies to
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21 counteract neoliberalism and structural adjustment policies (Federici, 2006;
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23 Peterson, 2005; LeBaron, 2010; Roberts, 2015). We also highlight how, in many
24
25 European countries, austerity has given rise to various solidarity economy
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27 initiatives, some of which are supported and strengthened through the
28
29 significant presence and activism of women (author/s, 2017; author/s, 2018).
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31 These initiatives, it is argued, may disrupt the gendered binary of productive
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33 and reproductive work, constituting spaces where women can resist further
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35 squeezing of their social reproductive capacities by participating in
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37 alternative ways of organizing their (working) lives.
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47 Overall, we stress the need to engage with such political forms, which
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49 may reveal women's significant involvement in various forms of resistance,
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51 and bring to the fore other ways of structuring reproduction. Hence, we
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53 demonstrate that, in assuming key positions in neighbourhoods and
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55 communities, women demystify capitalism in its gendered dimension, and
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57 exercise their politics in autonomous spaces where they can build new
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3 relations and take control of their bodies and lives (see Federici and Sitrin,
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5
6 2016; Motta et al., 2011). First, we discuss the 'Greek crisis' and the impact of
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8 the austerity regimes imposed on the country since 2010.
9

10 11 12 **Research context: The Greek crisis**

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15 In May 2010 Greece, the most indebted Eurozone country, agreed to the First
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17 Economic Adjustment Programme, also known as the first bailout package or
18
19 the first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The country received
20
21 financial support from Euro-area countries and the IMF on condition that it
22
23 slashed public spending. Between 2010 and 2012, disposable household
24
25 income per capita fell by 14% yearly, almost double the rate of GDP
26
27 contraction, and the total three-year loss was 38%. According to the MoU,
28
29 'cuts in average wages and pensions are therefore indispensable to achieve
30
31 the required adjustment, even considering the authorities' commitment to
32
33 reduce employment and control wage drift or freeze the indexation of
34
35 pensions' (MoU, 2010: 15). In July 2015 the third Memorandum was launched,
36
37 and Greece's commitments included further pension reforms and a
38
39 comprehensive review of its entire social welfare system. The income of the
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41 bottom 40% of households had declined by 41%, and rising unemployment
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43 had affected these households disproportionately (World Bank, 2015).
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55 The structural adjustment policies have transformed Greek labour and
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57 product markets. Abolishing workers' collective bargaining has made
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3 redundancies much easier, allowing employers to offer partial employment
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5 without benefits. Full-time contracts have been replaced with hourly-paid
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7 work, and minimum monthly salaries have dropped from about 750 to 400
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9 Euros. Austerity policies have significantly weakened organized labour and
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11 labour rights, shrunk the public sector, increased precarity and, crucially,
12
13 disrupted women's career paths (Simosi et al., 2015).
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19
20 In 2013 Greece had the highest unemployment rate in Europe (28%), with
21
22 youth unemployment at 60.5%. By 2017 it had undergone seven consecutive
23
24 years of economic contraction, shrinking by 26% between 2010 and 2016. Half
25
26 of small firms established before the 2008 crisis and many larger ones had
27
28 closed down. Unemployment had more than tripled, from 7.7 % in 2008 to
29
30 24.3% in 2012, and long-term unemployment reached 14.4% (Trading
31
32 Economics, 2017). Unemployment among women under 25 years of age
33
34 increased from 36.6 % in 2009 to 65.0% in 2013, while the equivalent figures
35
36 for men rose from 12.1% to 52.0% (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2009–2013).
37
38 These rates would have been much higher had not over half a million Greeks
39
40 (many of them highly educated) left the country since 2010. Spending on
41
42 healthcare fell below 5.3% of GDP in 2013, well below the EU average of 6.3%.
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44 Overall, the health budget was cut by about 40%. From 2009 to 2013, public
45
46 spending on education fell by 30%, and 14.5% of primary school units and 4%
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48 of secondary school units were merged. Finally, successive cuts reduced
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50 higher pensions by up to 60% and lower ones by 25% to 30% (Manganara
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3 2014). Drops in pension, healthcare and education further expose women to
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5
6 poverty. Austerity has also curtailed services designed to end violence against
7
8 women (VAW) and support victims of violence. In the UK, for example,
9
10 funding for VAW services was cut by 31% in 2010, and 9% of women seeking
11
12 refuge were turned away due to lack of space (Towers and Walby, 2012). The
13
14 European Women's Lobby reported that domestic violence cases had
15
16 increased in Greece and Portugal in 2012 (EWL, 2012).
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22 According to the OECD (2017), Greece also scores poorly on all three
23
24 indicators of labour-market inclusiveness. It has the second-highest
25
26 proportion of working-age people living on low income, after Spain; its
27
28 gender labour income gap is the fourth highest after Japan, Korea and
29
30 Mexico; and it has the second-highest employment gap between prime-age
31
32 men and disadvantaged groups, including mothers with young children
33
34 (OECD, 2017). Overall, women are worst affected by unemployment,
35
36 precarity, salary and pension cuts, poverty and deprivation, shrinking social
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38 rights and mounting everyday violence (Vaiou, 2014a, 2016), with the possible
39
40 exception of other marginalised populations such as migrants and LGBT+.
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50 **Methodology and research approach**

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52 We draw on our ongoing ethnographic work in Greece (2012–2019), which
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54 employs a range of methods to capture the socioeconomic impact of and
55
56 citizens' responses to the crisis. Our analysis is informed by the full range of
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3 data collected over the last seven years, and our direct and sometimes activist
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6 engagement with organisations, movements and groups. Specifically, we
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8
9 have undertaken participant observations and unstructured interviews with
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11 workers' cooperatives (author/s, 2017), SSE initiatives (Gritzas and
12
13 Kavoulakos, 2016 author/s, 2018) and anti-extractivist women's movements
14
15 (author/s, 2017), and 60 semi-structured interviews with men and women
16
17 who had lost their jobs or could not find work due to the sustained period of
18
19 recession and austerity. Thirty-five interviewees were women university
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21 graduates, and almost half had postgraduate degrees (see Table 1).
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28 **[Insert Table 1 about here]**
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30 The women included in the semi-structured interviews had previously
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32 worked in precarious work positions, and had experienced repeated periods
33
34 of prolonged unemployment. While some had lost their jobs in 2011, shortly
35
36 after the First MoU was introduced (two subsequent MoUs were
37
38 implemented in 2012 and 2015), others had found it difficult to find
39
40 permanent employment since leaving university. As a result, they had
41
42 accepted low-paid, fixed-term contracts in the service sector (catering,
43
44 secretarial positions, babysitting), and in some cases informal and unpaid
45
46 work (volunteering or internships). Despite being educated to tertiary level
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48 (and some to postgraduate level), few had found work in their chosen
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50 profession, or even matching their qualifications.
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3 Our overarching research objective was to explore the impact of crisis-
4 induced unemployment and austerity on women's productive and
5 reproductive roles. Our analysis begins by identifying issues that appeared
6 significant to participants in relation to how they described themselves vis-à-
7 vis paid and unpaid work. We focus on these women's narratives of both
8 paid and unpaid labour, which enabled them to articulate who they were,
9 what they were doing and why. We examine their responses to the crisis,
10 austerity and unemployment, and their social identities and reproductive
11 roles. To achieve this, we analyse how they discursively constructed their
12 productive and reproductive roles and identities as women, daughters, wives
13 and mothers, and their social identities as employees and activists. This
14 allows us to discuss how women co-constitute and redefine contested spaces
15 in which they balance attempts to find work or resist joblessness during times
16 of high and persistent unemployment, with fulfilment of their reproductive
17 roles as they perceive them.

Findings

Returning to unpaid care work at home

18 Many of the women we interviewed had found it very difficult to get work
19 relating to their chosen careers, and had resorted to hourly-paid work, and
20 zero-hours and fixed-term contracts. Others had turned to the private sphere

1
2
3 because their skills were devalued in the public sphere. With little prospect of
4
5 finding full-time, paid work, they had decided to devote substantial time to
6
7 caring for the material, emotional and psychological needs of their families,
8
9 which became more acute in the crisis. This was apparent in Vagia's
10
11 discourse. She had tried to find work for almost two years before deciding to
12
13 work in catering to help her sister, both physically and financially: 'it's a good
14
15 thing I don't work in the mornings this period, so that I can be in my sister's
16
17 new flat when new furniture comes'. As 27-year-old Vagia contemplated:
18
19 'Now that my sister is getting married, it's time that I take care of my mum
20
21 who has been ill for a while and cannot be left home alone. I owe everything
22
23 to her (father died when I was young), and now it's time that I take care of
24
25 her.'
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36 In attempting to reconcile her career plans with care responsibilities at
37
38 home, Vagia hoped that her younger sister would take up her caring role in
39
40 the future: 'My youngest sister will soon finish high school. So I guess that
41
42 somewhere between her studies and her looking for employment, she can
43
44 take over from me and take care of our mum.' Ypatia (a 42-year-old designer)
45
46 had also decided to care for her mother after failing to find work and being
47
48 unable to obtain state support for health and social care costs:
49
50
51
52
53

54 We spent quite a lot of money that was saved for healthcare issues and
55
56 we can't find support anywhere. I had to look after her, take her to
57
58 specialists in Athens, and stay with her all through the night in the
59
60

1
2
3 hospital ward. My brother would come and visit but he did not stay ...
4
5 once we had my aunts staying, trying also to help, but I was there
6
7 every night.
8
9

10 Historically, the Greek welfare state was very weak, with the family
11
12 substituting for low welfare provision (Petmesidou, 2007). However, shortly
13
14 before the crisis, this gap had narrowed, with the proportion of GDP spent on
15
16 social protection rising to 29.1%, compared with the EU average of 30.2%.
17
18 Following the implementation of austerity policies in the aftermath of the
19
20 GFC, the need for a social safety net became greater than ever; yet provision
21
22 of social protection, including health and childcare, was cut significantly (by
23
24 22% in 2013 alone), and some benefits such as housing benefit were
25
26 completely abolished. Reductions in social spending outstripped reductions
27
28 in GDP (Matsaganis, 2013). Unsurprisingly, women's labour in social
29
30 reproduction roles within and outside the house forms a buffer in times of
31
32 crisis, as women take on (additional) work to substitute for services they can
33
34 no longer afford to buy and/or that the state no longer provides. This work is
35
36 invariably unpaid.
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47 In our study, women narrated their positioning inside/outside the labour
48
49 market. As Ypatia's account reveals, in times of austerity, the work women do
50
51 as daughters 'is often more important than the work they do in the labour
52
53 market in maintaining social hierarchy and the class inequalities that
54
55 underpin it' (Reay, 2005: 113–14). Unpaid care work creates an immaterial
56
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1
2
3 layer of social and cultural capital relations which, as Jarrett (2014) argues,
4
5
6 'does not have direct translation into the materiality of hard currency, factory
7
8 walls, or material good, but which is not separate from the structures of
9
10 economic exchange'. Such labour is involved in a process of production, yet is
11
12 only indirectly linked to capital.
13
14
15

16
17 This becomes ever more pronounced when earnings capacity is severely
18
19 curtailed in the labour market, as experienced by many women in post-crisis
20
21 Greece. For instance, Domna, a 40-year-old unemployed translator, explained
22
23 how being a single, unemployed female came with certain social expectations
24
25 that made her rather anxious: 'I can feel the responsibility of taking care of my
26
27 parents as the "daughter" of the family ... I will have to look after them.' This
28
29 account shows the multidimensional nature of women's traditional, never-
30
31 ending labour in the private sphere. Their experiences of embodied labour are
32
33 defined not merely through its monetary value, but in terms of producing
34
35 social relationships that maintain the social order (social, cultural or affective
36
37 capital).
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45 46 *Temporary retreat to the 'heteronormative home'*

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48
49 Motherhood, another area of reproductive labour intertwined with the
50
51 financial and debt crisis, complements and maintains capitalist, patriarchal
52
53 modes of production by reproducing dominant, hierarchical power structures
54
55 and public/private gendered role divisions, for example in care work.
56
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59
60 Historically, motherhood was seen as having little or no value, even though it

1
2
3 was essential to the reproduction of these power structures and capitalist
4
5 accumulation (Mies, 1986). This was maintained through gendered
6
7 mechanisation of the female and/or feminine body, and exploitation and
8
9 commodification of the body as a site of reproduction under capitalism
10
11 (author/s, 2017; Motta et al., 2011). Katz (2018) argues that the vast majority of
12
13 children in the US are suffering the devastating consequences of
14
15 disinvestment in the public sphere, and the impact of precariousness
16
17 stemming from the financial crises of the past decade: 'In the domestic realm,
18
19 the middle-class family is [a] fortress – policed and policing the reproduction
20
21 of its members', but it must be 'managed and contained' (Katz, 2018: 726; see
22
23 also Katz, 2011).
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33 In our study, we noted that affective struggles over care were indeed
34
35 bound up in economic inequalities in family relations and class-based
36
37 economic restructuring and welfare reforms (see Haylett, 2003). Iris (30 years
38
39 old) had a BA in French literature and was living with her parents. After
40
41 working part-time as a private tutor, she had managed to secure an hourly-
42
43 paid job in a state school for a year. However, pay and working conditions
44
45 were very poor, so she had decided not to work there again. She was
46
47 considering 'becoming a mum and working as a manicurist or hairdresser
48
49 from home'. Similarly, having failed to find work as a teacher, Amalia (23
50
51 years old) had considered seasonal employment, but was now contemplating
52
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1
2
3 starting a family, and her strategically chosen profession (school teacher)
4
5
6 could be combined with motherhood and housekeeping:
7

8
9 No, I am not working at the moment. I would surely like to find a job
10 related to my profession; I will soon start thinking about having a
11 baby ... the work schedule in a school is convenient for a woman who
12 also plans to become a mum and look after a house (Amalia).
13
14
15
16

17 The study shows that despite its continued undervaluation, our
18 respondents withdrew to the private sphere to perform reproductive labour,
19 especially when work outside home was poorly paid or unavailable. This
20 suggests that they ascribed implicit value to such work, despite society
21 devaluing it. However, this also meant that they assumed a double-shift logic,
22 as confirmed by Lia, with a BA in classical studies, and Iris, with a BA in
23 French literature. Lia (28 years old) was expecting to work from home while
24 having a baby: 'Working from home is not that bad after all; I've started
25 enjoying doing it, plus it will enable me to complement my husband's income
26 while bringing up my baby.' Thus, despite rising de-sexualisation and de-
27 gendering of housework, most women undertook material and immaterial
28 reproduction, even when they had a second, albeit underpaid and insecure,
29 job (Federici, 2006).
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52 In addition to deteriorating economic conditions, such as reduced wages
53 and/or hours, research demonstrates that women face labour-market
54 vulnerability owing to gendered norms that view men as more 'legitimate' job
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1
2
3 holders when jobs are scarce (Ghosh, 2010; Seguino, 2010). Anneta (29 years
4
5
6 old with a BSc in communications) had worked for a couple of years in a
7
8
9 secretarial position in a private company, but had found no other work since.
10
11 This experience had led her to believe that the 'value' of any future income of
12
13
14 her own would be complementary to the work of child rearing: 'I have been
15
16
17 thinking about tutoring school pupils privately from home. This will enable
18
19
20 me to contribute to the family income ... while bringing up my own child,
21
22
23 when I have one.' Marian's dream of going abroad and working as an
24
25
26 architect had been put on hold. Tellingly, despite her partner's insufficient
27
28
29 income (they also received family support), they would not move abroad to
30
31
32 search for jobs unless her partner became unemployed:

33
34 I was thinking of going abroad ... then my parents provided a flat for
35
36
37 me to live with my partner who is currently working. He does not
38
39
40 earn very much, and paying no rent is a great help for us. If he loses
41
42
43 his job as well, though, we will seriously consider the possibility of
44
45
46 going abroad (Marian, 28 years old).

47
48 Similarly, Mina (29 years old) had studied fine arts, but had worked briefly as
49
50
51 a part-time cook. Since meeting her partner, she had stopped looking for
52
53
54 work abroad and accepted that 'John's work is very important to him and he
55
56
57 provides for both of us now'.

58
59
60 Such discourses of legitimacy, or whose career was prioritised, echo
previous findings that women are more likely than men to fit their paid work
around the needs of their partner, parents, children and other family

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2
3 members, or take career breaks, with significant implications (Moen, 2003;
4
5
6 Pixley and Moen, 2003; Mousli and Roustang-Stoller, 2009; Rusconi et al.,
7
8
9 2013; Baker, 2012). Gender intersects with crisis in complex ways, but a
10
11 common feature is the lesser value ascribed to women's work. Put simply, the
12
13 financial crisis is both gendered and gendering. Men continue to be
14
15 constructed as 'legitimate jobholders' whose careers come first, a condition
16
17 that seems to be intensified at times of high unemployment, precarious labour
18
19 markets and social and financial crises.
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25 Our respondents' references to both family and motherhood highlight
26
27 that reproduction takes place not just through labour processes, but also
28
29 through other channels such as marriage. The family is part of the mode of
30
31 production, and 'the very production of gender ha[s] to be understood as part
32
33 of the "production of human beings themselves", according to norms that
34
35 reproduce the heterosexually normative family' (Butler, 1998: 40). Although
36
37 the 'heteronormative home' (Oswin, 2010) does not seem to be essential to the
38
39 survival of capitalism, scholars argue that the heterosexual family has been
40
41 central to the production of hierarchies and state-building, and their
42
43 elimination is highly unlikely while capitalism persists (Peterson, 2005; see
44
45 also Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1981; Boyd, 1999). The reproduction of gendered
46
47 subjectivities depends on 'the social relation of the family and, indeed, on the
48
49 reproduction of the heterosexual family as a site for the reproduction of
50
51 heterosexual persons, fit for entry into the family as social form' (Butler, 1998:
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3 40). Research on how and whether these dynamics are manifested in non-
4
5
6 heterosexual and non-traditional families is scarce (for an exception, see
7
8
9 Rosneil and Budgeon, 2004). Our empirical illustrations focus predominantly
10
11 on 'traditional' households or families, that is, married or single heterosexual
12
13 women with or without children. However, the family is 'historically
14
15 contingent and, in principle, transformable' (Butler, 1998: 40).
16
17
18

19
20 Such transformation would require massive investment in socialising the
21
22 family and redistributing resources 'away from production toward the
23
24 reproduction (living standards) of those without access to the means of
25
26 subsistence' (Boyd, 1999: 378; see also Picchio, 1992). To address the need for
27
28 real change and Butler's call for 'expansion of the economic sphere' to
29
30 reproductive work, feminist economics has introduced 'an alternative
31
32 economic strategy that insists on the incorporation of reproductive and care
33
34 work into economic analysis and economic policies; a feminist Plan F, rather
35
36 than a Plan B' (Pearson and Elson, 2015: 9). Arguably, rather than attempting
37
38 to position women *within* the capitalist work system, this Plan F might
39
40 constitute a refusal to reproduce the capitalist order.
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49 *Women refusing precarity: From austerity to alternatives*

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51
52 Austerity measures and neoliberal reforms have severely undermined the key
53
54 pillars of familial welfare and have resulted in a political economy of
55
56 generalised insecurity (Papadopoulos and Roumpakis, 2013), particularly for
57
58 women. However, women are not merely passive recipients and victims of
59
60

1
2
3 the crisis. Our participants did not consider themselves to be victims and
4
5 were not powerless. In attempting to resist precarious work futures and
6
7 escape the cycle of exploitation and uncertainty, they had decided to return to
8
9 the private sphere and undertake reproductive roles or volunteer for
10
11 meaningful work. Alternatively, retreating to the domestic sphere may be a
12
13 conscious choice to return to the 'conventional' private sphere, rather than
14
15 becoming part of the growing precariat. Although neither motive promotes
16
17 social change and empowerment through women's participation in the labour
18
19 market, they do resist the neoliberal capitalist onslaught on living wages.
20
21 When real wages are low and workers must toil endlessly to support
22
23 themselves, they may choose to engage in reproductive labour, including care
24
25 and motherhood, and return to unpaid work at home to resist cheapening of
26
27 their work and retain their dignity.
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38 We show that this retreat to 'domesticity' or unpaid work is women's
39
40 way of resisting neoliberal precarity. This retreat, which may be temporary,
41
42 may also constitute what Weeks (2011) describes as active refusal to work in a
43
44 labour market that degrades paid labour through insecure work contracts,
45
46 low wages and poor working conditions. While working part-time to make
47
48 ends meet, some women had found time to do unpaid work teaching young
49
50 adults at an evening school: 'I enjoyed my voluntary experience so much
51
52 since I love my profession, and I'm thinking of doing it again even though it
53
54 is unpaid work' (Stella, 26 years old). In deciding to contribute freely to
55
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1
2
3 young adults' education, Stella rejected the cheapening and devaluation of
4
5 her skills in the labour market. Gradual rejection of conventional paid work
6
7 and precarious work identities was also observed in Elena's case: she would
8
9 try to find different work, rather than working for little or no pay. She
10
11 reclaimed her self-worth by advocating her reproductive role and refusing
12
13 precarious, low-paid forms of employment:
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19 I prefer to stay at home rather than work with little or no pay and at
20
21 the same time being overworked. I know people who work hoping
22
23 that they will get paid!! Don't get me wrong, I still want to find work
24
25 but not this kind ... there must be another way (Elena, 40 years old).
26
27

28 Veronica (with a BA in education) also expressed her dissent and
29
30 indignation about precarious forms of work. She had questioned her potential
31
32 working future following the labour-market structural reforms in Greece. In
33
34 engaging reflectively with issues of exploitation (such as being paid an
35
36 extremely low salary of 200€ gross per month), 23-year-old Veronica was
37
38 seeking ways to mediate the effects of the crisis, and proposed collective
39
40 organizing to restore dignity at work:
41
42
43
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46

47 Probably everyone feels trapped in a shell, because they have scared
48
49 us and persuaded us that we need to rely on these 200€. I think the
50
51 best way is organising in small collectives, which assert and protect
52
53 workers' rights in different sectors, social groups and social strata,
54
55 against the state.
56
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2
3 These narratives present a critique 'not of creative or productive activity,
4 but of the present configuration of the work society and its moralised
5
6 but of the present configuration of the work society and its moralised
7
8 conception of work' (Weeks, 2011: 32). These women had rejected the endless
9
10 search for work in a highly unstable and precarious labour market, and
11
12 sought what Gibson-Graham (1995: 275) calls 'the possibility of anti-capitalist
13
14 and non-capitalist economic interventions'. Some viewed precarious work as
15
16 unviable for securing their livelihoods, and were willing to explore
17
18 alternatives.
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25 In our work with alternative organisational forms, such as the Skouries
26
27 anti-extractivist movement (SOSHALKIDIKI) in Halkidiki (author/s), refugee
28
29 support groups, and the solidarity economy initiatives that are gaining
30
31 strength around the country (author/s), we have also witnessed women filling
32
33 gaps beyond the private sphere of the home and becoming active in the
34
35 public domain. They are running workers' cooperatives and engaging in
36
37 solidarity activities to resist the consequences of the crisis. In particular, we
38
39 have observed women actively participating in the establishment of solidarity
40
41 schemes in social grocery stores, pharmacies and clinics, as well as occupying
42
43 public spaces and participating in workers' collectives. Such initiatives
44
45 normally operate outside regulated market activities and attempt to re-
46
47 constitute social bonds, mainly through relationships of solidarity and
48
49 collective action (see also Mohanty, 2003; McDowell, 2004).
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2
3 For example, the Beaver café in Athens emerged under acute austerity,
4 and is solely owned and run by women. The café is 'open to people and
5
6 groups who find it otherwise difficult to "belong" somewhere, and that
7
8 would be also a fun hangout for us to meet. It was that concept that brought
9
10 all of us together and finally came to fruition in September 2013'. The eight
11
12 co-founders of the Beaver women's cooperative support:
13
14
15
16
17

18
19 ...the de-education from the capitalist mode of labour relations and
20
21 the cultivation of solidarity, comradeship and mutual understanding,
22
23 as opposed to individualism, the rationalism of achieving maximum
24
25 individual benefit, and individual solutions ... the need of creating
26
27 horizontal networks of cooperation, of abolishing the misconceived
28
29 notion of competitiveness, steering clear from the concept of
30
31 masters/bosses and other similar calamities
32
33 (<http://beavercafe.blogspot.gr/2013/11/p-margin-bottom-0.html>).
34
35

36 Their activities also include disseminating the idea of collectivism by building
37
38 solidarity networks with similar autonomous groups. As they explained, in
39
40 participating in these collective feminist groups, they try to give priority 'to
41
42 women's creativity' and raise 'awareness on women's issues', including
43
44 violence against women, which has increased during the crisis.
45
46
47
48

49 We see women attempting to resist by finding alternatives, and refusing
50
51 to become part of a ruthless, precarious labour market (author/s, 2017). As
52
53 recent research on alternative organisational forms (Gibson-Graham, 2006;
54
55 Parker et al., 2014) stresses, wider forms of economic activity are taking place
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1
2
3 beyond capitalism in the aftermath of the GFC, allowing us to see 'a plural or
4
5 heterogeneous socio-economic landscape as opposed to a homogenous one,
6
7 often prevalent in the current imagination' (Hesketh, 2016: 879). These forms
8
9 are supported and maintained mainly by women, who are often 'excluded
10
11 from "the market" but dynamically fighting back in private and public
12
13 everyday spaces' (Vaiou, 2014b: 536). Women are thus not merely docile
14
15 recipients of neoliberal policies; 'rather they challenge both the masculinist
16
17 exclusion of women's claims as citizens and the neglect of women's particular
18
19 concerns, such as the provision of social welfare' (Nagar et al., 2002: 264; see
20
21 also Lind, 2005; Bowlby, 2012).

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30 Furthermore, solidarity initiatives provide women with alternatives to
31
32 precarious forms of employment, and re-embed them in spheres of political
33
34 activism and resistance to neoliberal capitalism (see Gonick, 2016). Although
35
36 some initiatives existed previously, the financial crisis profoundly influenced
37
38 their growth and radicalisation. Straddling the public-private and formal-
39
40 informal economic spheres, they co-constitute community spaces for care,
41
42 empowerment and social justice (Staeheli, 2003). This is also evidenced in
43
44 women's participation in self-organised initiatives to resist the neo-extractive
45
46 industry's activities in rural Greece, which have been enabled by the financial
47
48 crisis since attracting investment 'at any cost' has become imperative for all
49
50 Greek governments (author/s, 2020). Such instances of care for the
51
52 environment, promoted by women's organising, support Federici's argument
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3 that 'the question of reproduction is ... central to any true revolutionary
4
5
6 process – that is, any process of genuine transformation of society' (Federici,
7
8
9 2014).

10 11 **Conclusion**

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15 The 2008 GFC instituted a new period in the evolution of employment
16
17
18 relationships, towards growing precariousness, but also produced a new
19
20
21 conceptualisation of how people define themselves in relation to work,
22
23
24 organisations and society. In this article, we argue that the connection
25
26
27 between capitalism and the gendered division of labour should be
28
29
30 acknowledged, as a test case for feminist economic geographers and other
31
32
33 scholars concerned with the gendered consequences of the crisis. In so doing,
34
35
36 we focus on instances of resistance to austerity regimes and intensifying
37
38
39 precarisation, and alternative modes of organising work.

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41
42 This article highlights the gendered impacts of the GFC, and how
43
44
45 austerity policies have transformed the productive and reproductive roles of
46
47
48 the female workforce in Greece. Our study's elucidates various forms and
49
50
51 causes of respondents' refusal to participate in the formal labour market,
52
53
54 which degrades and diminishes their work, and their conscious retreat to
55
56
57 various forms of reproductive care. While not arguing for the naturalisation
58
59
60 of housework as a female vocation, we refuse to ignore the emancipatory
potential of domesticity (Federici, 2019), especially when this is rendered

1
2
3 public and common (Kouki and Chatzidakis, forthcoming). We demonstrate
4
5 the importance of holistic, grounded accounts of 'economy' that resist
6
7 attempts to separate the formal and informal, the paid and unpaid, the
8
9 productive and reproductive (Nagar et al., 2002). Capitalism is predicated on
10
11 separating social reproduction from economic production, by associating the
12
13 former with women and obscuring its importance and value, despite
14
15 economic dependence on these disavowed processes of social reproduction
16
17 (Fraser, 2016).
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25 Neoliberal financialised capitalism exposes these contradictions by
26
27 causing a crisis of social reproduction, where productive work cannot sustain
28
29 social reproduction. We demonstrate that women are aware of this and find
30
31 ways to oppose it, even if they do not self-identify as feminists. Taking care of
32
33 their families and communities, and concentrating on these reproductive
34
35 forms of labour infuses their lives with meaning, as they refuse to participate
36
37 in neoliberal capitalism's cheapening of their labour. Such actions might
38
39 represent forms of resistance to financialised capitalism, thus responding to
40
41 the present crisis of social reproduction originating from it. The very limited
42
43 support gained from paid work prompted our participants' different choices.
44
45 As Federici (2012: 7) puts it: 'Reproductive work is undoubtedly not the only
46
47 work where the question of what we give to capital and "what we give our
48
49 own" [citing bell hooks] is posed.'
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3 This study also extends theorisation in feminist economic geography by
4
5 showing how women appropriate their reproductive labour to resist
6
7 precarisation of their bodies and lives, thus demonstrating the importance of
8
9 'unvalued' and unpaid care labour as a mode of resistance. Specifically, we
10
11 highlight a return to the private sphere, which paradoxically contributes to
12
13 the anti-capitalist goals of the feminist project by empowering women, as a
14
15 way to counteract the acute alienation of capitalist commodification and
16
17 marketisation. Feminist scholarship has long struggled to establish gender as
18
19 an analytical category in macroeconomics and, crucially, to conceive of the
20
21 economy so that the mutually constitutive links between private, state and
22
23 household outputs become visible (Elson, 2007). With a plethora of possible
24
25 trajectories and life choices, the women's stories cannot easily be ignored or
26
27 treated as homogeneous, as they are caught up in power relations and policy
28
29 frameworks implemented on urban, national and European/international
30
31 scales (Smith, 2013).
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44 This reinforces the importance of exploring the formation of new
45
46 gendered subjectivities and geopolitical economic moments when gendered
47
48 subjectivities are reconfigured and renegotiated for different ends (Pollard,
49
50 2013). As Mohanty (2003) argues, we need to explore what and how new
51
52 femininities are being produced in debates about global capitalism and
53
54 feminist solidarity. Using the case of Greece, as the weakest Eurozone
55
56 member most severely affected by the financial crisis and ensuing austerity,
57
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60

1
2
3 we borrow from ideas developed by postcolonial transnational feminists
4
5
6 (Mohanty, 2003). We draw attention to the intricate relational geographies
7
8
9 that constitute financial globalisation, with rising incomes for some and
10
11 financial crises for others (see, for instance, Wright, 2006, cited in Pollard,
12
13 2013), and use the least developed Southern European country to illustrate
14
15 how similar logics may, at times of capitalist crisis, be applied to the Eurozone
16
17 itself. Until 2006, Greece was a model country growing at an average of 5%
18
19 per annum (peaking at 5.8% in 2003 and 5.7% in 2006), but it is now one of the
20
21 most indebted countries in the world, with a debt-to-GDP ratio of 190%.
22
23 Following a series of failed bailouts administered by the troika of lenders (the
24
25 European Commission, the European Central bank and the IMF), it has now
26
27 become the 'feminised other of the advanced economies' of the Eurozone
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36 (Nagar et al., 2002: 265).

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38 Hence, in our analysis, we do not seek to erase the historical and cultural
39
40 contexts in which these women are situated by constructing them as a
41
42 homogeneous group based on their shared experiences. Although our
43
44 analysis did not directly elaborate on the distinct social and cultural factors
45
46 that affected Greek women's responses to the crisis, we recognise that cultural
47
48 dynamics and patriarchal structures specific to the Greek political economy
49
50 do shape how social reproduction is organized and the extent to which it is
51
52 valued. We thus acknowledge that divisions in the labour of social
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54 reproduction should be theorised through culturally-specific logics of gender
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3 practices that configure their political and social meanings and socially-
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6 situated activities in different historical contexts. Yet, 'underlying much of the
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9 commitment and passionate engagement of transnational feminist
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11
12 movements, indeed what brings feminists together, is the imperative of trans-
13
14 forming patriarchal institutions in all their manifestations—from violations of
15
16 intimate relations to the discriminatory and inequitable gender norms of
17
18
19 political, economic, social, and cultural institutions' (Baksh-Soodeen &
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21
22 Harcourt, 2015: 29).
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26
27 Crucially, a feminist social reproduction analysis enables us to go beyond
28
29
30 notions of gender and class, to articulate and explain the differentiated-yet-
31
32
33 unified experience of multiple oppressions created and deepened by
34
35
36 neoliberalism (Ferguson, 2016), not only for women but also for entire
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38
39 countries, regions and continents. As McNally and Ferguson (2015) explain,
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41
42 through the interconnection of waged and unwaged work, social
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45 reproduction feminism presents us with a complex, differentiated yet unified
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48 understanding of social totality:
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3 Yet, there is a 'dialectical interplay between the subjective and the social'
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5
6 (Ferguson, 2008) – a '*dialectical* relationship between the capitalist whole and
7
8 its differentiated parts' (Ferguson, 2016: 38). With our empirical study of
9
10 Greek women's experiences, we offer a starting point for the study of
11
12 'nexuses of oppression' in austerity politics, not only in terms of contingent
13
14 economic and cultural forces, but also in 'the embodied nature of that activity,
15
16 the biophysical differentiation and spatial location of the labouring body'
17
18 (Ferguson, 2008: 55). Our findings overwhelmingly demonstrate that women
19
20 are disproportionately affected by financial crises, and that the macro-
21
22 economic patterns of inequality alluded to above are gendered (Pollard, 2013).
23
24 Women thus continue to bear the brunt of high unemployment and
25
26 retrenched public services arising from the GFC. However, they deploy
27
28 different strategies, involving the appropriation of various forms of
29
30 reproductive labour, to retain control and oppose the cheapening of their
31
32 work under conditions of neoliberal crisis. Uncovering these strategies, as
33
34 Mohanty (2003) rightly stresses, reveals women's agency, power and
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36 resistance.
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15 Notes

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18 ¹ Structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) consist of loans provided by the IMF and World Bank to
19 countries experiencing economic crises. In order to obtain new loans, the two institutions require
20 borrowing countries to implement certain policies. These programmes aim to reduce borrowing
21 countries' fiscal imbalances and/or adjust their economies to long-term growth. The IMF usually
22 implements stabilisation policies, and the World Bank is in charge of adjustment measures. In the case
23 of Greece, the European Central Bank and the European Union were also responsible for executing the
24 Memoranda.
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Table 1. List of Female Interviewees

Name	Age	Education & Biographical details	Employment history/status
1. Lia	28	B.A. in Classical Studies, Married	Part-time private tutor She works as a manicurist at home
2. Niki	28	B.A. in Nursery Education, Married	Part-time babysitter; Part-time tutor Immigrated with husband to Canada. Just opened a small nursery.
3. Loukia	27	B.A. in Classical Studies; Recently married	Part-time private tutor; also did voluntary work.
4. Fran	32	B.A in Culinary Arts Recently married and mother of two.	Unemployed
5. Vaso	26	M.Sc. in Media Studies, Long term relationship; lives with partner	Voluntary work
6. Nefeli	24	B.A. in Sociology; In a long-term relationship, lives with parents	Part-time sales occasionally but currently unemployed
7. Zoe	25	M.Sc. in Media Studies; Moved from rural Greece - where she lived with parents - to Athens; Single, now she lives alone.	Long periods of unemployment; Part-time waitress, now salesperson in a bookshop, contemplating doing another Master's degree or PhD.
8. Mitsi	30	M.Sc. in Media Studies Lives with partner	Unemployed
9. Elli	32	B.A. in Tourism Lives with partner; recently mother of two	Unemployed
10. Mary	24	M.Sc. in Communication Single, lives with her mother	Part-time work in an online newspaper
11. Stella	26	M.Sc. in Education; Single, lives with parents	Long periods of unemployment; now works as a part-time secretary
12. Anneta	29	B.Sc. in Communication; Lives with family	Unemployed; Worked for a couple of years in a private company in a secretarial position; she has not worked ever since.
13. Effie	25	M.Sc. in Communication; Recently moved in with partner	Unemployed (worked in phone sales, part-time secretary, estate agent)
14. Mina	29	B.A. in Fine Arts; Lives with partner	Part-time tutor; Part-time cook; Now unemployed
15. Katerina	26	B.Sc. in Medicine; Lives alone	Voluntary work
16. Thaleia	31	B.Sc. in Accountancy; Married; No children	Unemployed
17. Vali	31	B.Sc. in Accountancy; Lives with partner	Part-time secretary
18. Afodite	24	B.A. in Psychology; Lives with parents	Unemployed
19. Fotini	24	B.A. in Primary Education; Lives with parents	She has worked one year as a temporary teacher in state school. Now unemployed

20. Amalia	23	B.A. in Primary Education; ; Lives with parents	Part-time school teacher
21. Vagia	27	B.Sc. in Marketing; Lives with parents	Part-timer in law firm
22. Marilena	27	B.A. in Biology; Lives with parents	Part-time private tutor She did only unpaid internships; few months in an internet provider company in sales.
23. Myrto	30	B.A. in Shipping; Lives with parents	Unemployed; Two secretarial positions (1st for 2 years; 2 nd for 6 years; then unemployed)
24. Filio	24	B.Sc. in Business Administration; Lives with parents (after graduating)	Part-timer in coffee shop Internship; she was then offered 6 months job in the same company; paid her only for 2 months before becoming unemployed again.
25. Iris	30	B.A. in French Literature; Lives with parents	Unemployed For a short period, she was a private tutor in a private school. Then, limited hourly-paid private tuition.
26. Melina	32	B.Sc. in Economics; Married; No kids	Part-time private tutor Many mini-jobs with long periods of unemployment in between. Unemployed for the last 3 years.
27. Nantia	27	M.A. in Political Science; Lives with her mother	Part-timer in communication department; Shop sales assistant; Few months in political campaign.
28. Lila	25	M.A. in Law; Lives with parents	Unemployed; Worked for short periods in a couple of law firms ('low-paid jobs'). She was made redundant due to downsizing.
29. Domna	40	B.A. in Humanities; Single	Lives alone. Unemployed for a long period if time (has been considering self-employment)
30. Ypatia	42	B.Sc. in Art and Design; Lives alone	Contract work as a teacher; unemployed throughout the Summer term.
31. Apostolia	52	B.A. in Law; Divorced, two children	Worked in bank; Got voluntary retirement earlier.
32. Toulia	30	B.Sc. in Art and Design; Lives with partner	Unemployed most of the time; Casual work occasionally.
33. Elena	40	Medical School; Single	Member of a social pharmacy and clinic.
34. Veronica	23	BA in Education; Single	Unemployed; Hourly-paid teacher, fixed term.