

Uncanny companions

Kinship, activism, and public health as interdependent modalities of care provision under Greek austerity

Andreas Streinzer

Abstract. The anthropology of the economic crisis since 2007/08 analyses the emergence of solidarity practices among social movements, kinship, and friendship during austerity and the recession in Southern Europe. Analysing these practices alongside “resilience” allows to critically examine the interdependence of “variegated austerity” and the normative appraisal of solidarity networks and familial care practices. The article does so by proposing a 'social autopsy' of the configurations of care around an interlocutor who died in 2015 in a public hospital in Greece. It reconstructs the symbolic and material aspects of gendered obligations, alternative economies, and austerity in public health in how his daughter Kalypso organised care in his last weeks. This approach aims to contribute to foregrounding these uncanny companionships when analysing uncertainty and resilience.

Keywords: Care, Austerity, Solidarity, Resilience, Greece.

1. Introduction

Manolis¹ died in June 2015 in a public hospital in Greece, where he had been staying for 61 days following a stroke, and having been cared for by his daughter Kalypso, her kin, and her friends. Early 2015 was an especially difficult time in Greece to become sick and to arrange for the provision of labour, goods, and technologies to deal with a worsening health condition. For decades, the Greek government shifted responsibility for various forms

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of care from public health to either private healthcare or familial care. In the debt crisis, that reconfiguration exacerbated with deadly consequences [Stuckler, Basu 2013]. The public health system crumbled, and private medical assistance was too costly for most of my interlocutors.

At that time, the Greek crisis culminated in a stalemate in the negotiations between the Syriza-ANEL government and the Troika of lenders (ECB, IMF, EC) on the terms of a new bailout plan. The Greek government failed to make a €1,5 billion euro payment to the IMF and Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras announced a referendum on the bailout terms. The Greek government introduced capital controls and ordered all banks in the country to close. A catastrophic atmosphere prevailed, with widespread fears about the general supply situation [Streinzer 2019]. At that time, Manolis passed away.

Variiegated austerity, as a policy regime of reducing social welfare while prioritising economic growth and market logics [Bakker 2020, 167], reconfigures how people can access what is necessary to sustain their livelihoods. In the analysis of the Greek crisis in political and economic anthropological scholarship, a certain narrative about people's reactions to variegated austerity prevailed. Lack of access to public services, falling incomes, and rising prices were contrasted with a heroic depiction of those infrastructuring from below: robust families, insurgent movements, and solidaristic networks. The specific uncertainty of crumbling state and market paths of provisioning [Narotzky 2005] hence was juxtaposed with resistance and resilience [e.g. Rakopoulos 2016]. The rise and extent of various forms and networks of solidarity (*allilegits*)², often connected to left social movements, was specifically spectacular. In anthropology, a vibrant literature developed about these novel forms of economic sociality and support, often needed as carers of last resort [Cabot 2016; Rozakou 2016]. In the literature about the first years of crisis after 2009/10, the resistant and defiant dimensions of such forms of care provision dominated. For many critical and engaged intellectuals in Europe and beyond, the resistant resilience of Greek, and other Southern European and Mediterranean movements fed hope in social change and the overcoming of austerity. In later publications, anthropologists explored the relationships between 'society' and 'market' [Spyridakis 2018], or pointed out the ambivalences of solidarity as a combination of progressive politics and pragmatism [Papataxiarchis 2018].

Thinking in 2021 about futures of the Mediterranean, this aftermath of hope is the context to critically reflect other dimensions of variegated austerity and its uncanny companionship with resilience. For doing so, I

² The article is based on fieldwork in Volos from 2014-17. The necessity for mutual assistance was very present after the onset of economic crisis around 2010. As ethnographic strategy, I followed care provision to reconstruct the interdependence of various modalities from forms of solidarity, such as the TEM currency network, and how these interacted with everyday economic lives.

will employ a perspective from economic and political anthropology on the articulation between social organisation and social reproduction [Bear *et al.* 2012; Narotzky 2012; Thelen 2015]. Such perspective allows to de-exoticise resistance and/ or resilience [Abu-Lughod 1990; Theodossopoulos 2014] and to avoid the traps of conceptualising alternatives of care provision in capitalist societies as radical economic alterity [Narotzky 2012, 249]. I will develop this argument from a neo-substantivist economic anthropological perspective and bring in literature from social reproduction theory and social policy studies that helps conceiving of the interdependency of various modalities of care provision in austerity capitalism.

Neo-substantivist economic anthropological perspectives, use an encompassing definition of 'the economy' as the organisation of social reproduction. They aim to understand the interdependence of various relational modalities such as state, kinship, solidarity networks, and capitalist economic relations in organising social reproduction. Neo-substantivism may be ordered into communitarian and critical approaches. Communitarian approaches posit a split between spheres of the 'market' and of 'society'. Society, the sphere of community, kinship, friendship and such, appears as a sphere of solidarity and reciprocity, a bulwark against capitalism or the state. Critical approaches stress the entanglement of configurations that are culturally understood as separate spheres. They understand contemporary thinking about society in 'dual spheres' in its European genealogy, often problematising its translation into concepts to analyse social reproduction³.

Critical neo-substantivist approaches, such as those proposed by Laura Bear and her colleagues in their *Gens Manifesto* [Bear *et al.* 2012], provide social anthropological perspectives to unpack how the generation and capture of value includes (not subsumes) modalities of economic relationality that attempt or are understood as being unrelated, outside, or other to capitalism. Such perspectives are akin to recent formulations of Social Reproduction Theory [Bhattacharya 2017; Bakker 2020; Mezzadri 2019] which also seek to overcome a dichotomic understanding of capitalist and 'other' forms of care. Instead, they point to the «value-producing nature of wagelessness» [Mezzadri 2019, 33] that allows thinking similarly about how the labour in/of resilience benefits from an understanding of the specific context of the social politics of austerity and crisis.

I situate my article within such approaches that focus on the interdependence of various forms of economic relationality in social reproduction [Narotzky 2012, 239]. They enable an understanding of how normatively loaded

³ The pointed emphasis on the difference between communitarian and critical approaches that I propose helps to explore tendencies and should not imply that these are actually sharply divided. Manos Spyridakis's volume *Market vs Society* and its contributions for instance discuss approaches combining ways of thinking with these concepts [Spyridakis 2018].

imaginaries - such as resilience - can be political technologies for assigning or conveying responsibility for labour in/of social reproduction. In the case of Greece, this is particularly important, since much of the money the government has saved by cutting back social and welfare expenditures has been used to service debt to financial markets. Variegated austerity shifts responsibility for care to cost-saving alternatives and uses freed resources to pay creditors. The austerity regime hence relied on 'society' in its various relational modalities, such the family or the community, as a means of resilience and to reduce the combination of increasing precarity and unpredictability that produces uncertainty.

'Resilience', as a cultural concept of strength, endurance, and defiance, can be analysed in relation to this process. The logic of sacrifice ingrained in it, holding together to go through difficult times, can be comforting and create a collective sense of defiantness. Yet, as Patrícia Alves de Matos and Antonio Pusceddu analyse for Portugal and Italy, this semantic is part of a common sense of austerity [Alves de Matos, Pusceddu 2021, 13]. Resilience might coat over aspects of human and societal fabrications of the situation that made people vulnerable in the first place [Barrios 2016, 34]. Yet acknowledging the interdependence of various economic relationalities and the potentially depoliticizing semantics of resilience, does not dismiss the attempts of my interlocutors to care for one another and to do so 'otherwise' by referring to solidarity and compassion. An economic anthropological account of the labour in/ of resilience can understand the symbolic and the material aspects of how people deal with vulnerability [Tucker and Nelson 2017, 169].

Similar to the accounts by other ethnographers of solidarity movements in the Greek crisis [Bonanno 2019; Douzina-Bakalaki 2017; Theodossopoulos 2014], my interlocutors felt an incoherence between being depicted as progressive heroes in the public and scholarly debates, and how they understood themselves: as lagging behind the ideal, as tragic and failing idealists [Streinzer 2018]. Exhausted, overworked, and unable to meet the ever-growing needs of friends and kin around them, scepticism turned into a dismissal of the heroic. As Anastasia, a long-term member and activist of the complementary currency scheme TEM⁴ put it: «They take your money, then take your insurance, then you hear how well Greeks support each other. Well what should we do, left on our own?» [Anastasia, June 2015, Volos]. It is this uneasiness with the sheer necessity of solidarity meeting praise for resilience that I will focus on more closely here. I will connect the political narrative of solidarity to the economic reconfigurations in which pragmatism [Papataxiarchis 2018], necessity [Narotzky 2012], and stuckedness [Hage

⁴ The TEM (*Topiki Enallaktiki Monáda* or Local Alternative Unit), established in Volos in 2010, is a Local Exchange and Trading System (LETS) in which members organise a currency to transact with other members [Author 2018]. My doctoral fieldwork, from which the data in this article stems, started with research among the activists.

2009] might better explain the syncretism between need and defiance in which my interlocutors ambivalently framed their solidarities.

I aim to combine a critical appraisal of the labour of kinship, friendship, and social movements to close «infrastructural gaps» [Dalakoglou 2016] with a discussion of recent literature that problematises warm and progressivist notions of care and solidarity. Although ambivalent, anthropologists can support movements as critical friends, as sharing a certain analysis of social reproduction, yet cautioning against simple readings of resistance or solidarity that underestimate their entanglement with other modalities of provisioning in capitalism [Bodirsky 2018; Narotzky 2012].

2. *Allilegíi! - Care and solidarity during the Greek crisis*

The political-economic processes after the 2007/08 financial crisis turned sovereign debt crisis were devastating for large sections of the Greek population. Among my interlocutors, drastic imageries of rupture and catastrophe prevailed. The numbers of people losing jobs and incomes rose, as exemplified in the thousands of excess deaths caused by the defunding of healthcare [Kentikelenis *et al.* 2014; Stuckler and Basu 2013]. At the same time, the burden of labour in/of social reproduction was ever more quickly outsourced from the welfare state and capital interests, to those who already had several burdens on their shoulders [Douzina-Bakalaki 2016; Fraser 2016, 115f]. Media and scholarly accounts were full of im- or explicit praise for those, in many cases women, who stepped in to provide care in myriad forms from lowering household expenses to helping to deal with mental stress, and to dealing with sickness and death. In crisis Greece, hard-working fathers and hard-caring mothers were the heteronormative cultural heroes of common-sense debates that linked productivist and reproductivist ideas of deservingness to familial roles and responsibilities.

The importance of the imaginary of familism [Tronto 2017, 33] as a relational modality responsabilised in neoliberal reconfigurations of welfare states [Cooper 2017], and as a normatively charged form of social organisation in Greece [Loizos, Papataxiarchis 1991], was particularly obvious. When employing the anthropological framework of Tatjana Thelen on care as social organisation, the scholarly analysis of care can go beyond the «historical entanglement of social theory and idealized care» [Thelen 2015, 500].

More surprising for Mediterraneanists than familist care, were the many solidaristic actions organised all across Greece by various networks of NGOs, citizen or volunteer organisations, and the solidarity networks of the movemental left. These have inspired a growing literature on anti-capitalist provisioning networks [Agelopoulos 2018; Rakopoulos 2016], urban commons and squatters [Dalakoglou 2016], social clinics [Cabot 2016],

social pharmacies [Bonanno 2019], refugee support networks [Rozakou 2016], alternative currencies [Sotiropoulou 2012], and soup kitchens [Douzina-Bakalaki 2017].

The rapid impoverishment and consequences of failing attempts at orchestrating capital accumulation and growth led to protest and struggle, and to the 'agonistic pragmatism' that Papataxiarchis describes as the driving force of many of these emerging forms of provisioning [Papataxiarchis 2018]. 'Agonistic pragmatism' as form of care understands itself as a form of struggle against power, while practicing an ethics of support and a subjectivity oriented towards the needs of others. This composite concept allows for the disentanglement of the forms of power to which people are subject and against which they direct their actions. Among these are accounts of «gendered agonistic engagements» [Athanasiou 2014, 8] of inequalities related to patriarchal forms of power, or the struggles against racialisation and racialised inequality, or their entanglement [Carastathis 2016].

During those early years of the crisis, the movemental left became a European symbol of defiance and resistance to market fundamentalism [Athanasiou 2014; Markantonatou 2018; Vaiou and Kalandides 2016]. Among those scholars interested in the critical potential of the Greek moment was myself, and I received a grant to study the alternative currency TEM in the city of Volos. A few weeks after my arrival, I was challenged by Yannis, a TEM organiser, to tell him my view of the work that they were doing. My nervous and rather diplomatic answer was that they were organising a kind of real utopia, a pre-figurative politics of distribution, and it did not satisfy him at all [cf. Streinzer 2018]. Yannis wanted to know how I understood the challenges of the network. He said he was fed up of the affirmative reporting from local newspapers and political institutions⁵, and was disappointed by social science literature that they had consulted to find out about the problems they experienced in their everyday work.

His disappointment was based on a specific ambivalence arising from the simultaneity of the economic problems of members and their attempts at prefigurative economic practice. Provisioning (as a pragmatics of accessing necessary goods and labour) and solidarity (as a normative conception of their actions) were in constant tension in their everyday politics [Streinzer 2018]. What made the self-organised form of provisioning so full of tensions was, among other reasons, the impossibility of practically disentangling the solidaristic aims of TEM with the lived realities of members struggling to get by in a capitalist society.

In writing about these tensions, I aim to understand how normative conceptions of resilient socialities, specifically where they are conceived of

⁵ They had been even invited to the European Commission to talk about their success as example of civil society taking care of itself.

as outside of capitalism, clash with everyday realities of provisioning. This aim is not without ambiguity, as Katharina Bodirsky acknowledges in writing about the commons:

My concern here is how to do justice both to a (Leftist) “social imaginary” of the commons that “carries a definite political argument, most typically an argument against commodification, privatization, or enclosure and in favor of egalitarian, grassroots approaches to resource management” (Wagner 2012: 620) and to an analysis of “actually existing commons” (Noterman 2016: 435) that might deviate more or less considerably from this ideal [Bodirsky 2018, 122].

As Bodirsky writes, the tension between actually existing forms of politicised practice and their political imaginaries is a difficult scholarly topic. The struggle of attempting to do 'otherwise' in rather difficult circumstances [e.g. Kadir 2016] is ambivalent and hence may be captured by a poly-semic analysis of solidarity and its aspects for interlocutors and social reproduction [Narotzky 2020]. I aim to do so with a methodology inspired by Eric Klinenberg's study of how institutional failure lead to a high number of excess death during a heat wave in Chicago, which he called a «social autopsy» [Klinenberg 2015, 23]. Alongside the reconstruction of Manolis's death, I aim to show various interdependent modalities of care provision and their ambivalent politicisation at a time and milieu of very narrow economic autonomy.

3. Manolis – the circumstances of various infrastructural failures

I never met Manolis, but in early 2015, he was often mentioned as *o pappoús* (the grandfather) among my activist interlocutors who were involved with the alternative currency TEM in Volos. Manolis was Kalypso's father, and Kalypso was a key figure in the TEM. She was born abroad in the mid-1970s, where her mother was working as an undocumented migrant. As a child, Kalypso was sent to Greece to be raised by her aunt in a village near Volos. As an adult, Kalypso became an entrepreneur: she owned two shops with a mixed range of goods (*bakálíka*) in central Volos, where she met her future husband Dimitris in the mid-2000s. Dimitris was divorced (with a daughter, Antigone, born in early 2000), and operated a construction company with his father. Their main business was building and refurbishing homes in the Pilio area, where many wealthy Athenians and other Greeks had weekend or holiday homes. Kalypso and Dimitris were among those that benefitted from several decades of economic development.

Manolis suffered from diabetes and Kalypso kept a vigilant eye on the condition of his health. She described his health as generally stable, but

from time to time he needed immediate support. Caring for her pensioned father usually involved organising caregivers and helping with his groceries. Kalypso did these small shopping and food exchanges in between her work duties, or Dimitris helped as he was driving around in his car for his business. Manolis's basic medical needs were covered by his insurance: a nurse would visit him infrequently, and he received treatment in the hospital in Volos or by visiting local doctors without incurring major expenses.

As Kalypso and Dimitris had time-demanding professions, Dimitris' ex-wife usually looked after Antigone. When Antigone stayed with Kalypso and Dimitris in Volos, she was looked after by a neighbour, or a migrant caregiver that they employed irregularly, or sometimes by Kalypso's mother. Kalypso became pregnant and in 2007, Anastasia was born.

Kalypso and Dimitris sometimes quarrelled about who saw the signs first: the signs of the beginning of a radical transformation in their lifestyle and livelihood. Dimitris' business was affected first. After the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, the construction sector was slowing down. It became more difficult for clients to secure mortgage credits, especially for second homes, but Dimitris did not worry too much at first. Soon after the international financial crisis of 2008/ 09, the sector grinded to a halt and so did their small construction business. Kalypso's retail business deteriorated in 2009 as costumers became reluctant to spend money in the atmosphere of the dramatic scenarios that were evoked by the Eurozone negotiators, the enormous sums of credits and liabilities, the cuts, and the demonstrations and clashes between unions, demonstrators, anarchists, and police that were reported from Athens. Kalypso shared the lingering fear that led people to cut down on purchases: «I can't blame them. I bought less and less often myself. It was a time when you were hesitant and started thinking what you needed and what was an extra» [Kalypso, June 2015, Volos].

Whether due to the decline in larger investments in housing or everyday shopping expenses, both Kalypso and Dimitris had to close their businesses and sell off their stocks. Kalypso recalls that time as a hectic scramble to sell off their supplies, visits to different kinds of state agencies to close her business, negotiations with former suppliers over outstanding debts, and chasing the repayment of informal shop credit (*veresé*) that she had allowed long-standing costumers to accumulate. The hectic swarm of decisions alternated with times that felt «like in a vacuum» [Kalypso, June 2015, Volos], as she and Dimitris spent silent hours at their home, not daring to speak of what they should expect from the future. After a few months, Dimitris secured a job as a firefighter at the municipality. For the couple and many other former middle-class Greeks of their generation, the economic uncertainty of these months and years were unprecedented. After decades of leading their aspirational lifestyles of growing businesses, the prevailing uncertainty about

livelihoods and lifestyles seemed too difficult to endure, so Dimitris gave up his entrepreneurial expectations about himself in return for a public sector job.

Kalypso stayed at home with her mother and the infant Anastasia. Her neighbour and her mother would take care of the child when needed, but it was mostly Kalypso who spend time with the children and cared for her father when he needed support. She set up and ran an income pool for the family, using some of her business skills to organise the family's shrinking budget. One of the measures she took to reduce expenses was to tell the migrant caregiver that they could no longer afford her services. I met the family soon thereafter for the first time in late 2014, and Kalypso became one of my main informants.

The lives took a drastic turn at the end of April 2015, when her father suffered a stroke and was treated at the municipal hospital. The hospital treated him for the stroke and the complications that followed - the amputation of a leg and subsequent surgeries. Manolis spent several days in the intensive care unit after the stroke, which was covered by his insurance. A gap in professional care by the hospital staff opened when he left the intensive care unit.

Kalypso's father needed almost 24-hour care in the hospital at that time. In Greek public hospitals, as documented since the 1980s [Sapountzi-Krepia *et al.* 2008], increasing austerity led to severe understaffing, with an increase in informal and unpaid care by relatives in hospitals, specifically during night shifts. At the time, the Greek government, under pressure from the Troika, had again lowered healthcare personnel's salaries. According to Kalypso, a conflict was raging between the nurses and the hospital management. While the management sought to reponsibilise nurses into taking on an increasing number of tasks while receiving less pay, the nurses refused. In this situation, the around the clock care of Kalypso's father was precarious, and Kalypso had to decide how to organise it.

The nurses offered that Kalypso could employ them for 40 euro per eight-hour shift to professionally take care of her father. When I met Kalypso as she was organising caregivers, she was very ambivalent about the nurses' offer. While understanding their refusal to accept the deteriorating work conditions, she felt she had lost more in the crisis than the nurses had, and that it was a privilege even to think about striking while having a regular income. She likened the offer to the practice of *fakeláki*, the everyday forms of offerings in the grey zone between petty corruption, private payment for public service, and gifts expected by doctors and nurses [Knight 2018].

Unable to afford to pay for the professional care, Kalypso and her female kin in the extended family had to step in with their bodies, time, and unpaid labour to fill the gap left by the failing infrastructures of care [Dalakoglou 2016]. Increasingly, she had to take most shifts as she felt she could not rely on her relatives to show up on time or stay until the end of their shift. Some

of her female kin sometimes showed up late or left earlier than they had agreed, or did not come at all. For Kalypso, this proved to be a source of permanent pressure as she could not know who would show up when. Her labour in/of resilience is a crucial instance of the necessary infrastructuring, both in the labour of care for her father and the organisation of other carers. As an entrepreneurial woman uneasy with the conservative ideals of domestic femininity, Kalypso was also uneasy with the gendered expectation that it was her responsibility to engage in the labour in/of resilience. This uneasiness was even more pronounced as she cared for her father in an institutional setting where professionalised care was all around her.

She was squeezed between searching for jobs, coordinating the care of her daughter (partly in her home village, partly by her husband and friends), other obligations in organising volunteer activities for solidarity groups, and caring for her father. The pressure on Kalypso increased during the 61 days of Manolis's hospitalisation as she was coordinating her kin's more or less reliable commitments to supporting her in the responsibility which, she said, «was only because no one else was willing to do it» [Kalypso, September 2015, Volos]. The nurses helped here and there, but in a covert manner in order not to appear to soften their refusal to engage in professional labour in their workplace without being paid for it.

In late May 2015, Phaedra and her friend Aleka approached Kalypso at the TEM market. They had known her for a year or so as regulars of the Network for Solidarity and Exchange in Magnesia, a network of activists and volunteers who administer the TEM currency as a means to trade without euros. Both came from rural Greek backgrounds, and they had worked in domestic work such as cleaning, elderly care, and childcare before the crisis, but only occasionally in the years thereafter. They knew about Kalypso's restricted budget and Manolis's difficult health condition. Having experience with intensive care, they offered to help Kalypso. She knew that they supplemented their income loss by rearing animals, engaging in petty trade, and offering services for TEM members. Their partners were both unemployed. Hence, Kalypso did not want to ask Phaedra and Aleka to work as a favour, and she offered to pay them for it. As she told me two weeks after they had come to an agreement, she was happy to have people with professional experience who were reliable.

They agreed on a mix of euro (40%), and TEM (60%; the TEM currency is pegged 1:1 to the Euro) as payment, and the sum to be paid in instalments. For each shift of five hours (mainly at night), they would receive three euro and four TEM per hour. Giannis and Stathis from the TEM network, who had lived for some time on the TEM premises, also helped to care for Manolis in the hospital. For the first two weeks, they took turns doing shifts, while being paid in TEM from the accounts of Kalypso, her mother, and Dimitris. This

allowed for the semi-professional care of Kalypso's father by an extended network of caregivers through a combination of friendship and mediation via money-as-euro and money-as-alternative currency. Care thus became once again a money-mediated work relation between Kalypso and paid caregivers and mediated by a solidarity network of volunteers only partly paid in the official currency.

In June, Manolis suffered several strokes, and the amputated leg became infected:

It was on his wound on the leg and it went green ... Actually, he should have had surgery on Monday on his leg, but the doctors were on strike and on Tuesday, he died. It is ridiculous, what a joke! For him, it did not matter, and it was better like that. But imagine someone who could live. And dies because of all this... [Kalypso 29.6.2018, Volos].

Manolis's case demonstrates how care provision, and especially healthcare, was rearranged during the post-2010 austerity regime: as a rupture, but also as a continuation of longer political-economic processes that can be traced back to at least the early 1980s. Then, the introduction of variegated austerity met with an expansion of the public sector [Spourdalakis 1985, 253], eventually leading to a combination of overfunding and understaffing. The situation is well documented in the nursing literature, with an increasing number of kin infrastructuring to compensate for nursing shortages [Sapountzi-Krepia et al. 2008, 1288]. In the first configuration of care provision that I described, such informal infrastructuring from Kalypso and the family is present, but does not appear problematic for them or Manolis's health. While organising two family businesses, Kalypso and Dimitris managed to organise care for Manolis and the children, aided by the health insurance paying for medical expenses to a large degree, and the labour of Dimitris's ex-wife, a neighbour, and an occasional unpaid caregiver.

In the second configuration, they suffered from a drop in income due to the closing of the two businesses. Kalypso takes care of the new-born child, her father, and increasingly larger parts of the family by organising time-consuming activities such as budgeting and shopping. Manolis's condition continued as it was, and they were managing to access necessary medical supplies. The increasing labour of finding jobs, taking care of kin, lowering expenses, and providing healthcare was a clear instance of "resilience", with Kalypso responsibilised into making ends meet.

Following Manolis's stroke, the important differences between the earlier, pre-crisis configuration and the emergent one become apparent. Manolis was hospitalised, several surgeries lead to difficulties, the hospital is in turmoil over the labour conflict between nurses, doctors and the management about cost reductions and labour shortages, and the health insurance system is increasingly dysfunctional. Manolis's care is organised by Kalypso, who feels

bitter about this gendered familial obligation, but nevertheless took on the labour of providing care for Manolis for the 61 days between the stroke and his death.

In this third configuration, the public hospital provision crumbles, with the hospital housing Manolis's sick body without providing care for him. It is rather family and increasingly members of the alternative currency network who care for Manolis, after Kalypso's labour in/of resilience was not enough for the increase in his needs. Kalypso was squeezed between at least four sets of obligations herself: childcare, job hunting, solidarity activism, and caring for Manolis. Finally, it is her earlier work for the TEM network that allows her to pay for the care of her friends Phaedra and Aleka.

This embedding of the solidaristic into the crumbling health system shows the interdependency of these modalities of care for social reproduction. Phaedra and Aleka, members of the solidarity economy, step in to fulfil needs that arose from state austerity. The labour in/of resilience organised around caring for Manolis orchestrates kin and alternative forms of provision in critical times, yet needs to be understood in the specific reconfigurations of social reproduction at the time.

4. Family, solidarity, and guilt - caring in entangled relational modalities

Although at unprecedented levels, I argue that the Greek crisis is a continuation of processes of rearrangement that began decades before the first Memorandum with the Troika in 2010 [Markantonatou 2018, 146; Spourdalakis 1985]. A perspective on Greek government austerity as a continuing process allows central themes in the anthropology of the Greek crisis to be addressed, such as infrastructural gaps [Dalakoglou 2016, 823], and the rise of 'solidarity' movements [Rakopoulos 2016] as recurring manifestations of the rearrangement of care provision, without reproducing a simple juxtaposition of the public and the private, the redistributive and the accumulative, or the solidaristic and the utilitarian.

I have employed a relational perspective on care as structuring social organisation [Thelen 2015] that allows for an understanding of the very practices of care (such as the support for Manolis, the budgeting, the organising of carers, the negotiations with nurses and doctors), and their modalities (such as the welfare state, the private insurance, the family, and the activist network), and those configurations in which these play together. The context of austerity capitalism is key. The transformations of the Greek welfare state, justified by common senses of austerity [Alves de Matos, Pusceddu 2021] and stabilised by the Memoranda with the Troika, essentially

inscribing the necessity to save on the «left hand of the state» [Bourdieu 1998] to pay creditors.

It is this context, in which the public health system does not or cannot afford to pay the nurses and doctors properly, Kalypso and many others had to pay themselves or care themselves, and the TEM provided a way to infrastructure so that Manolis would be washed, clothed, and cleaned. The normative appellation of kinship and friendship support, from this perspective, might be seen as the normative stabilisation of a certain kind of austerity that pushes social welfare on domestic, familial, and friendship relations. A social autopsy of Manolis's death shows how problematic the transformations of care configurations are – especially since the cuts in social welfare spending took place at a time of severe recession and income loss. The ongoing self-blaming and guilt among Kalypso and others who spent endless hours trying to provide for their family and friends is a stark reminder of how deep the responsabilising narratives of the resilient family and the solidaristic community go.

As shown in the ethnographic example, the provision of care requires a complex social infrastructure of labour, responsibility, and access to resources such as healthcare technology. When following care, it became obvious that several entangled modalities regulate that provision. In all of these, kinship or friendship plays an important role, and in some of them, this role was part of a context of austerity, where the family did not always feature as the heroic guarantor of Greek social organisation. Hence, the understanding of configurations of social relatedness as the backbone of provisioning needs to be critically examined in of the context of its political-economic background [Papadopoulos, Roumpakis 2013]. With regards to the TEM and the element of solidarity in my example, the analysis of the work of activists in the alternative currency showed how important this complementary provisioning strategy is for resilience. It is in the interstices between the normative mobilisation and the labour of the solidaristic that the tension lies for myself and many of my interlocutors.

In raising these questions, I aim to contribute to the recent literature that analyses politicised social imaginaries and their actually existing forms [Bodirsky 2018]. Conceptually, my contribution builds on the insights of neo-substantivist economic anthropologists. Scholars such as Laura Bear and Susana Narotzky understand 'the economy' as social reproduction: the practices and relations through which society sustains itself. This perspective enables to analyse actual livelihoods such as Kalypso's and then reconstruct the practices and relations through which they are organised. Rather than following a communitarist reading of the case, I follow Thelen's critique of blending idealizations of care with analytical concepts [Thelen 2015, 500], as the idealisation of certain forms of (nonstate and nonmarket) care

underestimates the normative importance of such an idealisation for material processes of social reproduction.

In the early years of crisis, the burgeoning Greek solidarity movements argued for their political and economic importance in protesting against austerity and prefiguring ways in which society could be organised otherwise. Much of anthropological literature stressed the efforts of solidarity movements to mitigate the effects of austerity and to mobilise a counter-narrative of mutuality and horizontalism [Rakopoulos 2016]. The literature was especially influential in the first years of the crisis and culminated between 2014 to 2016, the time of the electoral success of Syriza, a party that championed 'solidarity' as its slogan and understands itself as a coalition of social movements. It is unfortunate that this literature seems to slowly fading out as the contradiction of solidarity become apparent. Still, some nuanced accounts of soup kitchens, social pharmacies, and other volunteer associations were published that stressed ambivalence and volunteers' attempts to stabilise familiar frames of reference, such as the household, the shop, or the pharmacy [Douzina-Bakalaki 2017].

As Papataxiarchis suggests, it makes ethnographic sense to keep «a safe distance from the 'romance of solidarity'» [Papataxiarchis 2016, 209]. The call to de-romanticise solidarity can be extended to a critical account of resilience, as a discourse that stresses the strength and endurance of communities and kin under conditions of uncertainty and economic crisis. A deep sense of the crisis as a rupture and a radical shift was mainly experienced as a rapid deterioration of livelihoods [Knight, Stewart 2016; Tsoukala 2014]. Yet, in the analysis, the language of 'crisis' risks obfuscating complex and multi-causal processes by overstating distributed agency, and the naturalisation of political-economic processes by metaphors of catastrophe. Emphasising resilience in such atmosphere of catastrophe and crisis might be seen as a normative responsabilization of relational modalities such as families, communities, or alternative networks to infrastructure [Alves de Matos, Pusceddu 2021]. Situated in this political-economic conjuncture, support and solidarity play on an ambivalent mix of coping and doing otherwise, attempts at being resilient and solidaristic.

Austerity has been ongoing in recent decades, its acceleration to be seen for example in the defunding of public health. Resilience as a narrative is key as a background for the shifting responsibility for social reproduction from paid and professional care to unpaid and familial care. The uncertainty that accompanies this process is normative but also a matter of labour. The consequences are illustrated by Manolis's case, with an exacerbation of the workload and stress on female kin who face ethical and financial dilemmas in fulfilling familial obligations while needing to contribute to the household income.

One strand of literature emphasises the role of the heteronormative family and strongly gendered forms of (unpaid) labour in taking over duties, which are no longer provided for through social transfers or social insurance. As Kalypso's case shows, such obligations are not to be romanticised or understood as free of domination [Fraser 2014]. Indeed, the problematic neo-communitarianist familism often implied in heroic accounts of resilience in crisis can be countered by «familism as a policy choice, one that was developed and consolidated through a multitude of legal and regulatory choices» [Tsoukala 2014, 5]. The normative affirmation of resilience, familism, and in some instances also alternative or solidarity economies, alongside the actual retreat of former forms of provisioning and social security, needs to be critically examined. From the vantage point of an economic anthropology of southern Europe, the analyses of such normative and material aspects of how people deal and dealt with uncertainty and possible futures is a crucial contribution of contemporary studies in/of the Mediterranean to other fields in and beyond anthropology.

5. References

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