

“NEW” GREEK FOOD SOLIDARITIES (*ALLILEGGIÍ*)

Communalism vis-à-vis Food in Crisis Greece

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In this paper I extend the anthropological analyses of “new” solidarity (*allileggií*) networks or movements in Greece to rural regions and agricultural life as well as new groups of people. Food networks such as the “potato movement”, which facilitates the direct sales of agricultural produce, reveals rural aspects of networks that are thought to be simply urban phenomena. “Social kitchens” are revealed to be humanistic as well as nationalistic, bringing refugees, economic migrants, and Greeks together in arguably unprecedented ways. Through a review of such food solidarity movements – their rural or urban boundaries as well as their egalitarian or multicultural tenets – I consider whether they are thus more than mere extensions of earlier patterns of social solidarity identified in the anthropological record.

Keywords: solidarity, rural–urban dichotomy, ethno-national identity, globalization, food

“New” Greek Solidarity Movements

When I first began to reflect on the work I had conducted for my Ph.D. dissertation between 2008 and 2010¹ in the southern Peloponnesian prefecture of Laconia (which was primarily about Greek/non-Greek farmer relationships [Verinis 2015]), I sought to account for some statistical evidence that many non-Greeks had left Greece since the onset of the financial crisis.² Mainstream media has focused heavily on the rise of support for the Greek far right, particularly the now infamous neofascist party *Chryssí Avgí*, or Golden Dawn, whose members have been responsible for all sorts of brutal and illegal acts against individuals they deem unworthy of Greek identity. This data and media focus has somewhat overshadowed interest in solidarity movements as

well as the seemingly paradoxical evidence I had collected during my dissertation fieldwork – that many bonds between Greeks and non-Greeks in rural areas had strengthened since the early 1990s.³ What is more, to say that economic migrants are not simply exploited by neoliberalism is generally anathema to anthropology, despite its interest in data niches vis-à-vis qualitative approaches such as my focus on a certain relatively small group of economic immigrants. Nonetheless, inspired by the unprecedented achievements and future visions of certain Albanians, Moldovans, Ukrainians, Romanians, Bulgarians as well as farmers of other South-Eastern/Eastern European/Balkan ethno-nationalities whom I have had experiences working with in Greece, I remained convinced that certain forms of co-ethnic

rapprochement continue to grow roots in the country despite or perhaps because of the phenomena we call the financial crisis and austerity. I visited former fieldwork sites and interlocutors in 2016 in order to determine if this was true.

I had not yet begun to consider whether this rapprochement was a new form of solidarity per se. Yet one increasingly interesting line of inquiry in recent scholarship on Greece is in fact concerned with new forms of sociality and communalism emerging there, often between supposedly disparate groups of people in their joint attempt to survive socio-economic tumult. Consequently I have begun to see much of my former work in this light.

This special issue on resistance and change in Mediterranean Europe has asked contributors to consider the roles that persistent cultural patterns (Schönberger 2015) – such as those involving informal networks, family relationships and friendship-based coalitions – play in the formation of new collaborative communities. Works by John Campbell (1964), Evthymios Papataxiarchis (1991), Juliet du Boulay (1991), Michael Herzfeld (1992) and others who created the first ethnographic record of Greece highlight the historical particulars of friendship, sociality, and communalism in the country as basic processes we often still refer to when we speak of Greek national or cultural identity. Recent solidarity movements, or *kínisi allilegíi*, certainly build upon persistent cultural patterns or past relationships between the state and its citizenry. Yet, most contemporary Greek solidarity movements are forms of resistance to current, dominant, neoliberal political and economic structures in Europe and thus novel in this sense at least.

Kínisi allilegíi may not seem ideologically familiar either. Greek “solidarians” are a mix of anarchists, communists, supporters of the current coalition led by center left Syriza, urban globalists, the apolitical, and conservative ruralites as well. Scholars debate whether solidarity initiatives are the offspring of previous leftist political movements or whether they are wholly new (Cabot 2015). Some confusion is due to the fact that contemporary *kínisi allilegíi* are largely unofficial, as opposed to conventional

institutions and thus, to varying degrees, unobservable. As Castells, Caraça and Cardoso (2012) have pointed out, these “networked movements” lack an organizational structure and are characterized by a lesser degree of identification and fluid membership.

Right-wing affiliations are typically not represented in these movements; however, one can certainly find solidarity initiatives of other kinds, such as those less inclusive networks supported by Golden Dawn or the Greek Orthodox Church. Members of Golden Dawn set up their own “Greek only” soup kitchens, for example. Yet the solidarity movements in Greece I refer to provide an array of people with such essentials as medicine, health care, legal aid, food products and prepared meals. The “no middleman movement” or “potato movement” (*kínima tis patátes*), which facilitates the direct sales of agricultural produce, and solidarity health clinics are two such prominent movements or networks (Arampatzi 2016; Cabot 2015, 2016; Rakopoulos 2014, 2016a, 2016b). Heath Cabot’s account (2016) is noteworthy for her discussion of the involvement of non-Greeks in certain health clinics. In chronicling their active participation, Cabot describes non-Greeks as “deeply marginalized”. Presumably she means that this is the case outside of solidarity economies, as these older South-Eastern/Eastern European/Balkan migrants, as well as more recent migrants from Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East are arguably in more horizontal relationships with fellow care seekers, if not also with care workers, within new solidarity health clinic contexts (2016: 153). Notable also is the fact that one of the two clinics Cabot worked with had an even distribution of care seekers – half of Greek and half of non-Greek origin. Petros, an Albanian care seeker in this clinic, stands outside of neighborhood supermarkets every weekend collecting food for others in need. In this capacity Petros is arguably also a care provider. In all, this somewhat upended hierarchy or orientation to conventional understandings of marginalization and mutual aid is a crucial point that the study of food exchange (as well as new exchanges of other necessities of life) can make as part of an evaluation of “new” solidarities. Food in particular engenders certain behavioral

transgressions as well as holistic scholarly analysis, drawing together exclusive spaces such as the “urban” and “rural”, discrete ethnic groups, as well as the Global South and the Global North, as refugee food aid initiatives in Greece (a developed country with its own food crisis) have begun to show us.

I have found these, as well as other scholarly accounts of emerging solidarity networks or movements essential to my reevaluation of co-ethnic rapprochement in rural areas. I suggest that rural co-ethnic cooperation and these movements have more than a few things to do with one another. Small-scale agriculture, family farms, the communalism of the Greek village, or *horió*, and the quality of rural life have become quite symbolic in light of the financial crisis. Largely unprecedented collaborations in urban areas such as Patras, Athens, and Thessaloniki aimed at safeguarding the most existential components of life rely quite heavily on these rural, traditional, historical, and ideological foundations. Novel networks that produce food and save and exchange seeds in traditional manners or with alternative ideological foundations have formed as resistant responses to neoliberal campaigns that intensify and commodify agriculture. They resist global agribusiness and financial austerity measures that have threatened family farms with extinction. Food networks – those interested in safeguarding biodiversity and small-scale production as well as direct channels of distribution and affordable access to meals – can be considered a certain category of networks or collaborations. While Greece has only recently become a country of immigration, the involvement of non-Greeks makes these collaborations arguably more egalitarian than their comparable predecessors as well. They certainly are more egalitarian than those political and economic forces they claim to resist.

In my research on Greek ethno-national identity and the incorporation of post-socialist immigrants into various components of Greek life in the early 2000s, I was led to study immigrant incorporation into olive economies in particular. As happens in countries with relatively poor neighbors, a reliance on labor-intensive industries (such as olive culti-

vation on sloping land), and an aging population, amongst other pushing and pulling variables, cheap and flexible labor finds its place. Yet immigrant incorporation develops in certain instances and not always in the same manner as elsewhere. Non-Greeks were in the process of becoming far more integral to rural Laconian communities in the early 2000s than as sources of cheap labor, as I will continue to describe. In crisis Greece, food and agriculture have regained significance and it is little wonder that in becoming integral to the survival of small-scale agricultural practices and traditional rural values, non-Greeks should be found at the heart of a variety of new Greek solidarity movements as well. It is also unsurprising that scholars have been led to consider *kinisi allilegii* that place food at the core of their ideological stances. It is for these reasons that I sought to revisit old topics and interlocutors, as well as new food sites such as those I have begun to describe here – so as to continue to illuminate the myriad socio-economic roles immigrants play in Greece and draw a portrait of some new roles food is now playing in Greek society.

Solidarity food markets, solidarity food grower networks, social kitchens (*koinonikés kouzines*), seed banks and exchange networks, food rescue movements, along with what I term “rural solidarity networks”, make up this current reflection on Greek ethno-national identity. Identity, resistance, and change vis-à-vis food is surely not a new idea, as articles such as Sutton et al. (2013) attest – regarding the relationships between food and contemporary protest movements during Egypt’s Arab Spring, New York’s Occupy Wall Street, and in Greece at the outset of the current financial crisis for example. Yet what, specifically, it is that food movements and networks provide residents with in order so that they now transgress conventional or traditional social and spatial divides in Greece remains largely unaccounted for.

Rurality, Cities, and Solidarity

To begin linking these movements or networks, I will briefly reiterate the current state of shifting affairs between urban and rural in Greece. Of course,

urban Greece (Athens and Thessaloniki primarily) has been the hardest hit by austerity and the consequent loss of wages and pensions. The rate of unemployment is markedly worse there. The degradation of the traditional safety nets of the family and the ancestral farm compounded by new medical, legal, and educational needs in the contemporary “developed” urban world makes surviving the crisis in these cities more difficult than in rural Greek areas. Consequently, Athina Arampatzi (2016) rightly speaks of specifically “urban” solidarity spaces where the exchange of essential goods takes place. Yet Chaia Heller’s work on the *Confédération Paysanne* (2013), one of France’s largest farmers’ unions, for example, encourages us to focus on solidarity food movements from the perspective of rural producers as well. In doing so we might look to evidence in support of a new “back to the land” movement in Greece (Al Jazeera 2012; Cockburn 2011; Donadio 2012; Kasimis & Zografakis 2012; Verinis 2015). We should consider the fact that the crisis benefits *laikés* – traditional open-air food markets – as opposed to comparably more expensive supermarkets or more generally encourages people to reinvest in rural Greek agriculture. We should consider reversions to traditional rural Greek menus in Athenian restaurants (Kochilas 2010) and on traditional Greek cooking television shows (Sutton 2014), and the ethical ramifications such a turn implies. In doing so, we become more interdisciplinary and nuanced in our approach to contemporary Greek ethnic identities or moral economies (Scott 1977; Thompson 1971). More specifically, we comprehend how the rural experiences crisis itself as well as how it is symbolized in more urban areas (Angelopoulos 2016). Nikos, one of the Greek olive farmers I worked with in Laconia, insisted in 2009 that his son Spiros, then nine years old, would do anything except farm olives as he grew older. Now seventeen and subject to new employment constraints as well as certain other reevaluations of the rural, Spiros plans to attend university to study agronomy and farm the olive fields that he has inherited from his grandparents. Repeasantization is now seen as a way through – if not also out of – the crisis.

As with the ecology of urban neighborhoods as proposed by the Chicago School (Park & Miller 1921, in Glick-Schiller 2008), life in now global Greek countrysides involves certain new ecological and migratory patterns that solidarity networks are enabling people to create. These new patterns between rural and urban places as well as between Greeks and new immigrants take symbolic as well as material form. As Cabot says (2016: 161), “There is more to explore here in terms of urban and rural aspects of memory and the question of what generates ‘political’ consciousness.” We were tactfully reminded of the complementarity of rural and urban aspects of Greek solidarity in 2011 when communist party MP Liana Kaneli brought a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk into a parliament meeting to decry the austerity-driven food insecurity that Greeks were suffering from. The ethics and values now espoused by “new” food movements thought to primarily exist in urban areas are increasingly echoed by ruralites (both Greek and non-Greek) in response to patents on genes and seeds, bureaucratic and corporate hurdles surrounding organic certification, international corruption, and global price competition.

There is state and EU support for a small percentage of traditional small-scale farms, yet the vast majority of Greek farming families are struggling to survive.⁴ Dutch rural sociologist Jan van der Ploeg is one rather clear voice on this; “[Food] empires proceed as a brutal ecological and socio-economic exploitation, if not degradation of nature, farmers, food and culture” (2008: 14). This kind of reaction to global agribusiness also emerges amongst what we might call a global Greek peasantry in new food solidarity patterns. As Greek residents weigh new shared threats, to food security perhaps most notably, new social movements now inspire rural and urban Greeks to cut across spatial and other domains of their lives. Social kitchens are one such manifestation of the inspiration to do so.

Social Kitchens

Koinonikés or *syllogikés kouzines*, ‘social’ or ‘collective kitchens’, have only recently emerged in Greece. They have developed in response to the contempo-

rary financial crisis as well as to the more hierarchical models of “soup kitchens” (Papataxiarchis 2016: 208). Immigrants, the homeless, the unemployed, the poor, and most recently refugees share food with one another in these places. The slogan for *El Chef* collective kitchen in Athens is “we cook collectively, we serve solidarity.” Interestingly, the inspiration for *El Chef*, one of the first social kitchens, begun in 2007, was to enact solidarity with migrants before the economic recession truly set in, which then encouraged them to extend their network to include Greeks as well.

Konstantinos Polychronopoulos, the founder of another prominent kitchen, *O Állos Anthrópos*, ‘the other person’ or ‘fellow man’, describes what distinguishes social kitchens from soup kitchens; “They took [the sandwiches] only when they saw that I also ate one. There was mistrust in the beginning. And I got into their shoes... I wouldn’t receive food if I hadn’t seen how it was made, too. So I started preparing food on the street” (Wanshel 2016).

As their slogans attest, social kitchens are indeed “open to all”. I was free to eat and socialize with whomever I chose whenever I had the opportunity to attend social kitchen meals. As I observed the goings on around the social kitchen *O Állos Anthrópos* in Monastiraki Square in central Athens one afternoon in the summer of 2016, I realized that part of what social kitchens signify is a lack of boundaries. For much of the time, I could not tell whether I was in the social kitchen or not. On that day, a homeless Greek man sitting next to me, presumably there to partake of the social kitchen, began to beg for some beer from a well-dressed Pakistani man sitting across from him who was there on a work break. A second Greek man, also well-dressed and also drinking beer then asked where the Pakistani man was from. At the close of a short exchange, the second Greek man contributed his own beer to the mix as the three toasted to each other’s good health – “*stin yíá mas*”. Where is the “real” social kitchen? In any case, there is something postmodern, if not entirely novel, in relation to the anthropological record about certain phenomena emerging in as well as around social kitchens.

Food Rescue and Laikés

Variations of “to whom” or “for whom” were responses I often heard from vendors at neighborhood food markets or laikés when, as a volunteer for *Boroúme* (“We Can”, a non-profit organization working to reduce food waste and combat malnutrition in Greece), I would ask if they had any portions of their produce to offer as a donation – *kamía merítha fagyótó xaméni*. Some vendors are indeed concerned that no refugees should receive food while Greeks remain hungry. While *Boroúme* does not discriminate, they do selectively reveal information so as to maintain relationships with participating vendors. While much of the produce *Boroúme* collects does go to church soup kitchens and boarding houses for the primarily Greek mentally ill, surplus often goes to refugee charities now as well. Of course, when social scientists like myself or the film crew from the Austrian organization *Wastecooking*, who filmed *Boroúme* at markets in June 2016, inquire in private about the different groups of people who might benefit from such food rescue endeavors, *Boroúme* is quick to point to all of them.

Resentment of EU austerity packages and the political presentation of them as “generous” has only furthered Greek distrust of any formal policy measures and emboldened ideological beliefs that preface solidarity activities as modes of sharing as opposed to giving, especially systematized giving. One afternoon, while the *Wastecooking* film crew was filming, a vendor asked me what they were doing. He protested against my explanation that they were documenting the need to combat hunger and malnutrition in Greece, insisting rather that he and his Indian co-worker were not hungry; “We’re not hungry here in Greece. We are *mánges!*” (*Then pí-name ethó stin Ellátha, eímaste mánges!*). A *mán-gas* is a “player”, someone with swagger, ego, and particular Greek pride in working-class values. The vendor then asked his Indian co-worker if he was hungry and, with the same obstinate and traditional Greek thrust of the chin to indicate no, the Indian man confirmed that he was indeed not.⁵ In this exchange the vendor drew a line around himself and his Indian co-worker, setting Greek resi-

dents apart from those who need charity as well as apart from the Austrian filmmakers, seen by him as representative of Northern/Central Europe and the *Troika* (the International Monetary Fund, the European Financial Stability Facility, and the European Commission) or the *Troikanoi* (Troikians) – the “real” foreigners.

Another vendor performed a similarly defiant reaction to the film crew’s presence on another occasion, insisting that food rescue volunteers (including me) “take more bags,” shouting “Take it! Everything’s free in Greece!” As we struggled to carry all of the food he was so “graciously” offering us, he tactfully shamed us into looking like thieves – just another group of people taking advantage of Greece’s excellent and cheap agricultural produce as well as its image of a nation that has so poorly managed its own resources and finances that it is up to the European Union, bankers, and charitable organizations to solve hunger there.⁶

Of course Boroúme is not so simplistic an organization as such reactions to their activities might lead us to believe. Along with a host of other initiatives, their “Gleaning Program” or *Sto Xoráfi* (‘In the Field’) brings volunteers to rural/agricultural areas serving Athens in order to help reduce food waste at the level of the farms and allow these urbanites to better understand food production regimes. Advocates of Spain’s own rising gleaning movement say that it not only feeds the hungry but also improves diets, reduces pressure on land use, restores lost aesthetic abilities to evaluate food, and provides work for the socially excluded (Nelson 2016). Boroúme has also begun a program called “The Field of Boroúme” in which they take advantage of under-utilized public farms owned by state municipalities (in Spata outside of Athens for example) to cultivate produce to distribute to residents there. They engage local schoolchildren in this program, planting potatoes, broccoli, and cabbages so as to restore interest in agricultural pursuits and donated close to one ton of produce in 2016. In so doing, as part of a larger solidarity movement which brings people together to meet each other’s needs, Boroúme programs become, as Boroúme co-founder Alexander Theodo-

ridis told me, a “meeting ground” between the urban and the rural.

As ideological lines become drawn out and contemplated in the process of sharing food, in certain “seams of empire” (Tsing 2012) such as Greece, relatively unprecedented alliances form. Existential crises have certainly helped social kitchens, food rescue operations, and solidarity food markets (to which I now move) emerge quite suddenly in Greece. What new thinking or discourses about food and solidarity, in light of the various tears in traditional Greek safety nets, have enabled these charitable organizations as well as others more focused on sharing economies – various new manifestations of civil society – to operate?

Solidarity Food Markets

Solidarity food market initiatives in Greece, also known collectively as “the potato movement” or “no middleman movement”, make direct attempts to exclude middlemen (*mesázontes*) and merchants (*hondrempóroi*) who buy wholesale and then sell to individual food stores and chains in urban areas. They preface direct sales of agricultural produce to benefit small-scale, socio-economically threatened farmers as well as financially impotent urban and peri-urban consumers.

These initiatives originated primarily in and around the northern Greek cities of Thessaloniki, Preveza, and Drama, but have been spreading throughout the country, and countryside, as I argue. Despite the fact that solidarity food markets are much less visible in relatively conservative areas of Greece, such as Laconia prefecture (the south-eastern corner of the Peloponnese where I lived between 2008 and 2010), many farmers who participate in solidarity Athenian markets do in fact come from as far away as Laconia. They come for economic purposes but also because of new structural and ideological connections they now share with urban Greeks, from new roads to new alignments based on shared political opponents.⁷ *Agronaftes*, or Agronauts, a collective of small producers or solidarity growers from the Peloponnese primarily serving consumers in Athens, is similar in structure to Community Supported Ag-

riculture (CSA) programs that have been operating in the United States since the 1990s – members buy seasonal shares up front and thus absorb some of the farmer’s risk. However, solidarity growers are more overtly ideological. They share the perspective of care farming initiatives, such as Litsis Ecological Farms in Thessaloniki, for example, which reorients farms toward the inclusion of therapeutic care of vulnerable groups of people as a supplemental goal to food production. Agronauts is an example of “socially supported agriculture” in Greece, or “*koinoniká ypostirizomei georgia*” which incorporates goals that lie outside the context of conventional global agribusiness.

Agronauts was founded by a small group of farmers led by Vangelis Vlachakis, who left Athens when he became unemployed in the early years of the current economic crisis and returned to Laconia to cultivate his grandfather’s fields. The Agronauts’ network also includes other prominent members from Laconia, such as the food company Diamond House in Glykoverisi which produces pasta and biscuits for Agronauts as well as e-blocko.gr shops online and in e-blocko stores, specializing in traditional and local food products from all over Greece at producer prices. Agronauts work toward the maintenance of the social economy, or third economic system as members call it, which prefaces reciprocity as opposed to the first economic system (that which is private, oriented toward economic gain) and the second economic system (that of the state, oriented toward social planning). Agronauts also acts as a platform for small and organic farmers to meet and exchange information on sustainable cultivation, the expansion of smallholder activities, and particularly the cultivation of traditional varieties vis-à-vis Peliti, Greece’s most prominent seed exchange network, in response to the commercialization of diets, the intensification of agriculture, and environmental degradation.⁸

As one of many solidarity food market networks currently operating in the country, Agronauts is a specific new link between Athens and the rural Peloponnese as well as a general representation of new solidarity economies now emerging across the country and amongst new sectors of the population.

Food and Refugees

As with austerity, there has been almost no way for any scholar interested in any aspect of Greek society today to avoid thinking critically about the most recent global refugee phenomenon. As Papataxiarchis explains, “‘solidarity’ responses to the financial crisis have been extended into new fields of application – solidarity has replaced hospitality as the dominant mode of engagement with refugees” (2016: 208). Katerina Rozakou explains in some more depth:

The “needy” refugee, this classical figure of humanitarianism (Fassin 2007; Redfield 2005), has entered the sphere of solidarity. Despite the fact that, perhaps, only a minority of local people actively got involved in organised voluntary work with refugees, the accumulation and circulation of goods was massive. Even people who were sceptical of the newcomers and fearful of contagious diseases, contributed offerings. “Everybody gives,” solidarists noted, and added that the specificities of the Syrian refugee population mobilised these donations. “They are families, children and women,” they explained; thus, groups who are not only vulnerable in humanitarian terms and fuel typical portrayals of refugeeeness (Malkki 1996), but also culturally significant social categories (cf. Green 2012; Voutira 2003). Thus, in a context where kinship is highly valued, the view of families en route generated vast and, sometimes, unexpected local responses. (Rozakou 2016: 196)

Refugees were quickly thrown into solidary networks vis-à-vis their immediate needs for such things as food and clothing, things that had only recently become exchanged amongst Greeks and non-refugee migrant groups through social networks. A special issue of *Social Anthropology*, the journal of the *European Association of Social Anthropologists* in the spring of 2016, from which I quote Papataxiarchis and Rozakou, was organized to address this almost unbelievably coincidental need that many Greeks and the growing spectrum of non-Greeks now have for essential goods.

It is not the first time that people from Middle

Eastern or South Asian countries have made their way to Greece looking to move on to “Europe”. American-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 2000s brought young men escaping violence to Greece, searching for money to send to their families back home, even to remote villages in the Peloponnese like Goritsa where I lived at the time. Small in numbers as they were, some of the first non-Western people many rural Greeks had ever seen, these small groups of young men were rather feared in contrast to the refugee families described by Rozakou above. Despite the fact that Greek families typically made donations of old clothing and food to “their” Afghans in Goritsa, I was scolded by my Greek friends and family for associating with *Afghanoi* outside of work in the fields, especially when I was accompanied by my wife or would eat with them in the derelict village houses they occupied at the time.

Perhaps ironically, despite the influx of refugees in Greece, according to all of the residents of Goritsa I spoke with and based on my own observations in 2016, there are now fewer immigrants in Greek villages. There never has been any hard or reliable data on Afghans in mountain villages and the economic downturn has made them some of the first to lose employment there, as many Greeks return to farms and all seek to cut superfluous costs, such as for unskilled labor picking olives. Perhaps sentiments have indeed changed – as Rozakou’s interlocutors suggest, “everybody gives.” Perhaps that is a result of the demographic and other related changes in the refugee crisis; while South Asian and Middle Eastern refugees were once small groups of wandering young, primarily Afghan, men, there are now massive concentrations of refugee families in refugee camps, controlled areas on islands in the eastern Aegean Sea, and specific urban neighborhoods. In any case, the sharing of resources such as food and clothing, as well as medical care seems to have increased.

As borders with the rest of Europe have become less and less permeable, many migrants and refugees have taken up residence in what are referred to as *domés allilegiés* or “solidarity structures” in cities. Having no name other than their addresses – a re-

flection of the absence of national histories and social hierarchies one feels within them – Notara 26 and Axarnon 78 are two such structures amongst the huge proportion of abandoned Athenian real estate resulting from the financial crisis.⁹ Through the settlement of derelict urban spaces by migrants and even the emplacement of refugees within them, these “refugee squats” become icons of the solidarity movement, spatially chastising what the financial crisis and fears of migrant “hordes” in other European countries with more closed borders have done to Greeks and refugees alike.¹⁰

As might be expected, the basic and essential issues of fundraising and food and clothing stocks are typically discussed in squat meetings co-organized by refugees and solidararian workers. Giorgos, one solidarity worker I occasionally spoke with in 2016, coordinated a covert donation to refugees by the baby food manufacturer he worked for. Obtaining food supplies in such ways, cooking and eating together has become a prominent way for relationships between diverse groups to develop. It has also become a way to advertise these relationships between refugees and Greeks in solidarity campaigns, on the internet as well as in other discursive formations. Notara 26 often displayed images of people cooking and eating together on their website at the time.¹¹

In such sites I began to see new coordinations, arguably novel or postmodern, between the survival strategies of the Global North and those of the Global South (Heller 2013: 2). My inclusion in weekly meetings at Notara 26 was through entirely horizontal channels; from Giorgos I was handed off to another solidararian, who brought me to my first meeting. No one sought to identify my role then, nor at subsequent meetings. At first I had little idea as to who was Greek and who was not. I spoke with solidararians and refugees often without knowing who was who, except for their proficiency in Greek or their accent in English. And as I departed from the field, there was no expectation as to what I would do with the information I had gathered. In this sense too, perhaps, some of us gazing in were also given somewhat unprecedented roles, as Papataxiarchis

says of international solidararian participants in refugee camps on Lesbos (2016).

Rural Solidarity Movements

I now double back to the rural settings I first encountered in the early 2000s. I propose that there too, “new” solidarity movements exist, often revolving around the beliefs and behaviors of solidarity growers such as Agronauts who are partly responsible for the emergence of the solidarity markets described above. They are focused particularly on safeguarding small-scale agriculture, other values inherent to traditional agricultural communities, and agricultural biodiversity. Yet there are specific links between rural solidarity movements or networks and social kitchens, solidarity food markets, and food rescue movements identified primarily in urban areas. These include a focus on such things as the amelioration of social conflicts between groups in everyday practices and strategies, sustainability, and the consideration of the marginal position of Greece in relation to the northern European core. Somewhat without formal networks, largely unobservable, and at risk of co-optation by conventional politics though they may be, the rural socio-ecological movements I describe in this section are future visions of food, agriculture, and communal life by a new collection of rural residents.

Adding rural solidarity movements to these other movements is perhaps somewhat arbitrary. That people need to collectively produce food and eat to survive wherever they are or share occupational practices whoever they are is arguably intellectually empty. Yet *paréa*, ‘company’, in the sense of people being together with other people – to share subsistence goods – is born in Greek meals. Many Greek cultural values, such as *paréa* have emerged from agricultural life. The contemporary socio-economic crisis in Greece has reinforced the family character of farms and inspired new cooperative strategies in the light of this particular cultural value (Ragkos et al. 2016). Greek masculinities and femininities are similarly engaged as women have begun to take places on farms again in response to joblessness (Petrou 2012). More to the point, the external environment

of the EU and globalized agriculture is largely seen as unfriendly in comparison to the internal environment or actors. Ethno-national and rural-urban hierarchies are being reconfigured as a result, in conjunction with such cultural values as *paréa*. Alternatives to EU bureaucracy as well as incentives to consolidate and scale up agriculture are sought from within the confines of local rural villages which now include many non-Greek residents.

Along with *paréa*, *allilovóthia*, ‘mutual aid’ or ‘other helping’, certainly part of a segmentary logic of traditional Greek life, remains a core component of rural commensality. This village or *horío* logic has been transplanted onto the frameworks of solidarity economies today, in urban as well as rural locations (Loizos 1975; Rakopoulos 2016b: 143; Vernier 1984). As Theodoros Rakopoulos points out, “the overall tendency [of solidarity work], including claims to the *horío*, temporarily tackles difference, and suggests similarity or assimilation” (2016b: 148). Whether these strategies be considered more specifically in the spirit of collaboration (Terkesidis 2015), *convivencia* (Suárez-Navaz 2005), endogenous development (Ray 2000), or some other theoretical proposition, agriculturalists in Greece of various ethno-national backgrounds have now long been taking advantage of new opportunities to establish solidarity with one another. Beyond the affordable labor that non-Greeks have provided Greeks with since the beginning of the post-socialist migrations in the early 1990s, they also provide the means for rural Greeks in an extremely expensive and bureaucratic EU to continue living in a manner consistent with the history of rural Greek livelihoods – by harvesting and selling animal manure (a cheaper alternative fertilizer), wild hyacinth bulbs (a traditional food Greeks seldom harvest themselves any longer), or producing homemade *tsípouro* (a grape pomace liquor as a means to reach *kéfi*, ‘good humor’ or ‘good life’, with others) for example (Papataxiarchis 1991).

The post-socialist emigration to Greece, primarily from Albania beginning in 1991, is now a key component of modern Greek history. The integration of Greek-speaking or Orthodox Christians from

the region of Albania Greeks refer to as North Epirus, people collectively known as *Vórieioépirótes* or North Epirots, along with many who were lumped in with this controversial group of people, has become manifest largely in terms of the traditional capabilities in stone construction and agriculture that they possessed. As global agribusiness trends continue to threaten the viability of relatively small-scale Greek agriculture, the costs of maintaining these sometimes ancient villages and agricultural spaces have become increasingly insurmountable.¹² Because of the lack of institutional support frameworks, local farmers have sought collaboration with new migrants on their own terms. These terms have of course been somewhat exploitative from the perspective of much work in political economy (Lawrence 2007; Petrou 2005). Numerous scholars have convincingly argued that Europeans have exploited migrants living in various states of precarity by excluding them from paths to citizenship and fair wages so as to safeguard their own diminishing shares of European economic wealth. Some, such as Cheliotis and Xenakis (2016) insist that Greek state policies that create arduous asylum procedures (or no procedures at all) for the regularization of illegal migration and migrant employment are part of a larger movement to provide the country with affordable labor. This is another form of resistance to the marginalization resulting from European neoliberalism, perhaps. However, given Greece's weak scalar positioning with regard to Europe and the absence of policy support for small-scale agriculture, it is hardly surprising that rural Greeks remain largely disinterested in policy reforms that have seldom benefitted them in any substantial way and would prefer to seek to ameliorate their situations in traditional terms they have some control over.¹³

In their indifference to EU bureaucracy or in keeping with the segmentary logic of traditional Greek reciprocal relationships with "others", Greek farmers have indeed sought to take whatever advantage they can from positions that are superior to those of non-Greeks. Nonetheless, from the outset, and increasingly as Greece's relationship within the EU has become more tenuous and subsequent

migration waves from Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East inform reactions to the earlier migrations (Papadopoulos & Fratsea 2013), we see ethnic rapprochement that I now consider part of a rural solidarity movement, one that puts local residents of multiple ethnicities in more horizontal relationships with one another. Solidarity networks in small cities like Sparta and the surrounding countryside in Laconia, as opposed to [global] cities that have a critical mass of migrants or more absolute breaks in socio-economic safety nets (such as that between urban Greeks and their agricultural pasts), exhibit diverse hierarchies and forms of identification with and incorporation of immigrants. A shared familiarity with certain aspects of the Mediterranean landscape, climate, fruits, and soils is being discovered, for example. Rural Greek villages and landscapes are being reterritorialized or reappropriated by this quasi-coalition to reestablish *convivencia*. In other words, rural solidarity movements, while never so egalitarian, contest the simplistic view of migrant exploitation. The case of Lurka D. related by Vassilis Nitsiakos (2003), a portrayal of an Albanian man who has become "like a son" to a man whose own son has emigrated abroad, or the many accounts that I have made of non-Greeks who have become farmers in their own rights (Verinis 2015), some of whom I revisit below, are testimonies to this.

One of the ways that I came to realize this coalition or movement, albeit inherently quasi or informal (not easily identified as Castells, Caraça and Cardoso put it, 2012), was through the process of evaluating the potential during fieldwork in 2016 for official state rural development policy to address the incorporation of immigrants in rural development programs as has happened in the USA for example. All local Greek farmers, non-Greek farmers, Laconian municipal agronomists, and officials from rural development programs such as the Greek Young Farmer Program I spoke with, along with the secretary general at the Greek Ministry of Rural Development and Food in Athens himself (a well-known rural sociologist), deflected, seemed bewildered by, or just plain ignored my queries about the potential for such policy initiatives. My exasperation eventu-

ally gave way to a realization that, for all parties, the point is to avoid official policy. In light of the fact that EU or state politics are not seen as capable of addressing the difficulties small-scale farmers face or the plight of immigrants, let alone simultaneously, it is better to simply avoid policy approaches altogether. This resistance is hardly a neat opposition, in *medias res* perhaps, but it is ubiquitous.

As with the seemingly arbitrary nature of food movements or rural networks, to label this significant resistance might seem like somewhat of an academic stretch. Papataxiarchis (2016) asks us to consider the irony of identifying a set of “solidarity” movements in a place traditionally segmentary, its people in generally agonistic if not altogether antagonistic relations with one another. Agricultural cooperatives that dominated the social, political, and economic landscapes of rural Greece between the Ottoman period and the 1990s have become largely ineffectual except for a few cases such as the fruit cooperative of Naoussa in northern Greece or the cooperative of olive oil producers in Kritsa, Crete. Similarly, successful small anonymous corporations (S.A.s) such as Kefalas Sparti and Bläuel Greek Organic Food Products, both of which produce primarily olives and olive oil in Laconia prefecture, are relatively few. In the absence of any formal or even traditional way to align horizontally with anyone in particular so as to withstand global economic forces that threaten the survival of small and cooperative endeavors (threats in the form of rural stigma and depopulation as well as cheap Argentine lemons or high quality olive oil from California), alternative relationships develop between Greeks and long-standing non-Greek residents, as they become kin through marriage and baptism, engage in reciprocal relations, and share community life in general. As Greeks and non-Greeks participate alongside each other in these agricultural endeavors, in the *agonia* or struggle of contemporary rural Greek life, they share and exchange sensual relationships which enculturate, reevaluate, and reposition them as participants in the production of new memories.¹⁴

Visiting with some of my most evocative non-Greek farmer interlocutors in Laconia in 2016

strengthened my convictions that food and agriculture continue to bring Greek residents into such significant relations with one another. Of course immigrant residents in Greece have certainly fallen on hard times. Stefanos and Fotini, Bulgarians who have lived in Skoura – a village less than ten kilometers southeast of Sparta – for decades, have given up running the *kafeneion* they had run during the years of my dissertation fieldwork, that which had placed them at the center of village life. Their two children have also since moved back to Bulgaria despite having spent most of their lives in Greece. Yet Stefanos and Fotini refuse to leave their adopted home and have consequently put all of their energies into their beekeeping and olive farming endeavors. In these hard times, they have reinvested in traditional small-scale agriculture much like their Greek neighbors.

Albanian Lefteris is in a comparable position. Noteworthy are the ways he now conspires with local Greeks in order to frighten neighboring Roma away from his fields, in the Laconian village of Asteri, by allowing the Roma to think, as the police suggested to him, that he is a “dangerous Albanian”.¹⁵ While this tool is a by-product of an exploitive relationship in which Lefteris would normally suffer, Albanians such as Lefteris now wield some of these conspiratorial tools along with Greeks for their own benefit. What is more, the conspiracy is arguably reminiscent of traditional Greek agonistic relations between segmented groups. All of this complicates a standard political economy approach to Pierre Bourdieu’s “flexploitation” (1998: 85).¹⁶

Mitsos continues to farm olives in nearby Zoupena with the same fervor since first arriving from Albania more than twenty-five years ago. As with Lefteris and other “non-Greeks” I farmed with between 2008 and 2010, Mitsos’ children were born in Greece. Despite the fact that Mitsos is not generally considered to be *Vóreoépirótis*, his exceptional charm and extended family ties (through baptisms in the Greek Orthodox church necessitating Greek godfathers and godmothers, school friends of his children, and so on) have helped him to participate in all sorts of collaborations with local Greek fami-

lies. He continues to sell his olives directly to merchants at the Greek supermarket chain Promitheftiki. In a somewhat uncanny way, Mitsos displays the kind of Greek hospitality or *philoxenia* that ethnographers of Greece have long written of, showering other members of his *paréa* with copious amounts of coffee and cigarettes (as always, he insisted I take *tenakéthes* – 17 liter tins – of his olive oil home with me after my last visit in 2016). While this can be seen as mere mimicry of Greek mannerism, it disrupts as much as it reinforces traditional segmentary reciprocal relations.

Mitsos admitted that some Albanians have left as the economic downturn has become a true crisis over the last few years. Yet, as he told me, not one of the dozen or so Albanians that I had worked with and whom Mitsos knew well have left their respective homes in Laconia. And while Mitsos did agree that it has become harder to buy land from Greek landowners, he had recently bought more in order to reinvest in his farm operations.

As had been the case in previous years, Greeks would often go out of their way to explain to me how they knew Mitsos in 2016. One morning an older Greek man from Zoupena named Pandelis proudly pointed out that he has known Mitsos since the day he arrived from Albania. Pandelis made sure to explain to me in a *kafetéria* one afternoon what an exceptional “Albanian” Mitsos is. Critical analysis may normally interpret this descriptor as divisive. Using the phrase *o Alvanós mou* (“my Albanian”) has been a common exclusionary strategy for decades now, but it also sets a kinship boundary line between one family’s “Albanian” (worker or *koumbáros* [relative through baptism or marriage]) from the “hordes” of Albanians that “poured” through the borders in the early 1990s. Pandelis’ description is hardly inclusive of Albanians in one sense. And yet, in keeping with traditional Greek agonistic relations between family farms, it is quite inclusive indeed.¹⁷

Another window deeper into the relationship Mitsos and Pandelis share opened during a discussion that followed. In response to Mitsos’ questions about the old man’s overall wellbeing, Pandelis began to describe recent problems he had had in pass-

ing a kidney stone. Mitsos instructed him, in some detail, how to make a tea from the stomach of a chicken so as to facilitate relief. As Albanians have long had less access to Western biomedicine, Greeks now rely on Albanians for alternative therapies during these desperate financial times. Beyond the obvious depth of their relationship, the exchange of this traditional rural remedy is indicative of a larger set of responsibilities to share essential goods that rural Greek residents of various ethno-nationalities now feel toward each other. Pandelis complained about how long it would take to get an appointment to see his doctor as well as the “useless” pills that he had already been given and listened intently to the young Albanian’s prescription.

Individual rural families and business-owners are incorporating non-Greeks of myriad ethno-national backgrounds into their personal and professional lives in the abovementioned ways. They become godparents of immigrant children and sell local non-Greeks portions of their farms, as opposed to Athenians whom they essentially see as absentee landlords, so as to establish sustainable face-to-face socio-economic safety nets in local terms. These Greeks and non-Greeks are in a somewhat novel relationship, to the extent that they conspire to benefit each other for the first time in modern Greek history. And yet the ways that they conspire are historically particular and local. At times now it can be a non-Greek who facilitates or conjures the Greek senses of *philoxenia*, *paréa*, *allilegíi*, and even *philótimo* – the dominant Greek value of experiencing and valuing oneself as part of a system of group relatedness. Whether it is considered a solidarity network or movement, these new rural relations have much to do with other communitarian coalitions that have garnered the attention of social scientists in the past few years. They revolve around many of the same ethical dilemmas that urban solidarians have concerned themselves with and are predicated upon many of the same beliefs and practices that food solidarity movements are predicated upon – mutual subsistence, the sharing of responsibilities, a reformulation of social hierarchies, and resistance to neoliberal Europe.

Conclusion

New solidarities are inherent to capitalist procedures in difficult financial periods. Of course the new solidarities I discuss in this paper – forms of reliance on kin networks, neighbors, neighborhood, or village – are reminiscent of many forms of reciprocal relations in the Greek past. Yet a culture of indifference and cynicism with regard to the bureaucracy of EU technocracy has grown since the state's incorporation in 1981 into the EU federation (Herzfeld 1992). Reliance on each other has taken on sometimes uncanny forms in order to fulfill social as well as somatic needs. The financial crisis has encouraged this reliance on historical, cultural patterns as well as a new collection of participants.

The relationship I describe between various kinds of food movements is also a proper Greek *topos*. Yoghurting, a form of public critique born in the 1950s – throwing sheep's milk yoghurt on people, typically politicians in order to shame them for being corrupt and the antithesis of the “honorable” Greek peasant – has again become a form of critique of urban (read non-Greek) values (Sutton et al. 2013). An academic consideration of yoghurting, or the networks and movements described in this paper, not only draws together the Greek urban and rural in ideological as well as materialistic ways. It brings to light the expanded significance food now enjoys vis-à-vis EU austerity, global migration patterns, the refugee crisis, technocracy, concerns about bioengineering, and other “trouble spots” particular to the twenty-first century.

In these different solidarity food movements we see networks emerge around one group, be they migrant non-Greeks or disenfranchised Greeks or refugees, and inevitably they have come to include others, as in the case of the social kitchen El Chef (initially focused on Greek relationships with migrants) and O Állos Anthrópos (which has recently extended itself to the island of Lesbos or Mytilene to commune with refugees there). Instances of rapprochement, between Greeks and non-Greeks, rich and poor, and producers and consumers crystallize as people share food and drink at social kitchens, conspire together to support each other's traditional

rural ways of life, or share pride in being able to provide each other with food and thus without the need for charity in traditional food markets.

Historical as well as present-day ethnic entrepreneurship should certainly be considered (Dimen-Schein 1975; Glick-Schiller 2008). Mark Granovetter (1973) argues that communities that continue to rely upon strong ties of kinship and ethnicity will lock themselves in economically stagnant enclaves. This prognosis, in the light of a crisis of capitalism as well as a global migration crisis, invites scholars to investigate supposed “weak” ties of friendship and trust – how and when they might become extended or “strong”, even transcending social hierarchies and expectations of reciprocity. As we speak of flex-exploitation but also begin to think about the myriad other opportunities that also emerge in the form of new social flexibilities to recapture social capital, we should consider whether or not this is “our father's” ethnic entrepreneurship. Ethnic entrepreneurship includes the exploitation of others but can also include significant co-ethnic rapprochement. Kin and ethnic boundaries reveal themselves as having quite a few permutations in some cases. Possibilities for social development that focuses on this “new” Greek social capital as opposed to financial capital may become more visible if ethnic entrepreneurship is considered for all that it is. Otherwise we not only reify ethnicity as something beyond the tool that it is, as Dimen-Schein warns, but we lose opportunities to use it in order to socially organize in a diversity of ways.

These are the potentialities in Anna Tsing's “seams” or “patches” of empire. People seek to survive certain unprecedented and destructive forms of modernity. Alliances that may seem incidental to larger forces must be investigated. As Anastasia Karakasidou has written: “In the new millennium, it is certain that cancer strikes Greeks and Slavs, Vlachs and Gypsies, Christians and Muslims indiscriminately” (2011: 396). Fertilizers, mono-cropping, and pesticides have made whole swaths of enemies, regardless of their ethno-national identities, religions, and political statuses. Resilience, in ecological, social, economic, cultural, and even in evolutionary

terms, is now sought in emergent solidarities – sites of new belonging and ethical concerns (Bourdieu, in Vidali 2015: 195). Though hardly utopic, these are ubiquitous beginnings in the amelioration of socio-economic problems that all kinds of people currently face.

One set of destructive forms of modernity is made up of contemporary problems many Greek people face in growing, distributing, obtaining, cooking, and eating food. I believe that identifying a set of food solidarity movements or networks has the potential to address these problems and contribute to broad theories of Greek “solidarity” as part of a postmodern or post-colonial Greek history as well as anthropological theories of the European Mediterranean, which is increasingly affected by global migrations. In the case of my fieldwork amongst Greek and non-Greek farmers begun in 2008 as well as in this more recent fieldwork period, a motley crew of Greeks increasingly seem to share *kéfi* with one

another. *Kéfi*, which again is ‘good humor’ or ‘good life’, is premised on a disregard for social hierarchies and actions that might be in any way construed as gifts (Rozakou 2016). *Kéfi* evolves outside of official political policies and capitalist markets. The world of obligations in traditionally agonistic Greek life also gives way in *kéfi* to other forms of sociality, expanding other culturally specific notions such as *philoxenia* or *paréa*. As Greek residents, including even some relatively recently arrived economic migrants and political refugees, attempt to reconstruct the village or *horió* or some other form of community, in urban as well as rural places, the transcendent *kéfi* is at play. Non-Greeks such as Mitsos have done a great deal to reinvigorate this specific form of solidarity. He and other non-Greek farmers I have worked with have now also become key to my thinking about new exchanges of essential goods taking place in new food solidarity movements that complicate the rural–urban and Greek–non-Greek dichotomies. Is *kéfi* a way for scholars to comprehend relationships in Greece that do not technically exist? That question is perhaps best discussed over a meal.

Notes

- 1 Fieldwork in 2016 was funded by an Engaged Anthropology Grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation.
- 2 The Greek Statistical Service (ELSTAT) reported that 133,787 Albanian nationals left Greece in 2011–2012. Similarly, the Greek Social Security Fund (IKA) reported that the number of Albanian nationals insured in 2009 reached 121,902, while at the end of 2013 the number decreased to 85,893.
- 3 The post-socialist 1990s ushered in the first pronounced immigration to Greece in nearly seventy years, since over one million Greeks from Asia Minor had been repatriated in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne.
- 4 A 1991 Commission of the European Communities (CEC) paper entitled “The development and future of the Common Agricultural Policy,” insists that despite abandonment, agriculture remains highly significant in a number of ways; “Sufficient numbers of farmers must be kept on the land. There is no other way to preserve the natural environment, traditional landscapes, and a model of agriculture based on the family farm as favored by society generally.” Yet things have not borne out in ways reflective of this policy. A study conducted by the Technical College of Agricultural Engineers in Madrid found that the smallest olive plantations in the



Ill. 1: A contemporary collection of Greek residents conspire to subsist in central Athens. (Photo: James Verinis, 2016)

southern EU member states, those which were the most favorable to the health of local ecosystems, suffered a net annual loss of 402.50 euro per hectare while the farms that had the most negative impact had an annual profit of 1,378 per hectare (Euromed 2008).

- 5 Daniel Knight has written that Greeks now flock to cafés and restaurants in a defiant refusal to play the role of the downtrodden poor (2015: 121–131, in Herzfeld 2016: 202).
- 6 Dimitris Theodossopoulos (2016) explores ideological dispositions toward such charitable organizations in the contemporary Greek context, particularly amongst members of the communist party – the KKE – in Patras.
- 7 While it takes only 2.5 hours to get from Athens to Sparta today, it was close to double less than ten years ago.
- 8 Peliti, Greece’s most well-known exchange network of landrace, indigenous, and unmodified seed, launched its first “Solidarity Caravan for Seed” across Europe in the Spring of 2016 to help establish an association between cultural and seed diversity.
- 9 Axarmon 78 is also sometimes referred to as the Athens City Plaza Hotel. As a former hotel, it is remarkable that it is now a refugee squat, but also remarkable is the fact that it is not dilapidated like other squats in the city. This contributes to the fact that it has retained its former identity to an extent.
- 10 A social geographer named Thomas Maloutas at Harokopeio University in Athens has developed a new social atlas that, amongst other things, overlays homelessness with vacant buildings scattered all over the city in keeping with solidaritarian ideals.
- 11 On August 24, 2016, Notara 26 was burned beyond repair by arsonists with incendiary devices.
- 12 Greek agriculture, along with other Mediterranean countries, does not fair relatively well in comparison to the intensive production regimes of more central and northern European countries such as the Netherlands (Van der Ploeg 2003, 2008).
- 13 Laconia is a particularly peripheral Greek prefecture, one of the least favored areas (LFAs) in Greece. It consistently has some of the lowest national rankings in such terms as unemployment, savings, and income (Verinis 2015: 187). Its relationship to other Greek prefectures is reflective of Greece’s relationship to other EU member countries.
- 14 Nadia Seremetakis (1994: 144) describes such sensorial relationships as “exchanges of feeling”, which are more than merely secondary to Raymond Williams’ “structures of feeling”.
- 15 See Bakalaki (2003) on the origins of an “Albanophobia”, which emerged as the borders between Albania and Greece opened in 1991.
- 16 That Lefteris and his wife Dora have become Greek

citizens since I last saw them in 2012 is beside the point perhaps, yet this does also complicate simplistic understandings of ethnic marginalization in recent social science literature on Greece.

- 17 That [rural] Greece does not subscribe to the exact kinds of political correctness typically found in the [urban] United States with regard to talk about race or ethnicity is certainly an important point to consider. In reminding me how to get to his house, Stefanos suggested with no hint of sarcasm that I simply ask where Stefanos “the Bulgarian” lives. In fact, like all the non-Greeks I knew, I referred to people’s ethno-nationalities after their first names beside their phone numbers in my mobile phone.

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