"I don't need protection, I need papers": the Production of Normalized Violence

against Undocumented Immigrant Women in Greece

by

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ABSTRACT

For almost a decade now, the Greek economic crisis has crippled the Greek nation and its citizenry. High unemployment rates as well as increased levels of homelessness and suicide are only some of the social repercussions of the collapse of the economic system. While we know much about the impact of this crisis on Greek citizens, the literature surrounding the crisis lacks a full range of perspectives and experiences. This project works to fill-in the gaps surrounding the Greek economic crisis and the specific experiences of undocumented, immigrant, domestic workers. Looking at the ways in which these women exist in a constant state of violence, fear, and suffering I identify normalized violence in two main arenas: state/institutional and quotidian/everyday acts. Borrowing from Cecilia Menijvar's pillars of normalized violence (2011), this work identifies the ways in which state-sponsored bureaucratic violence leads to real suffering and fear exemplified in moments of quotidian violence. Understanding the unique experiences of these women, works to weave together a more nuanced understanding of the impacts of the Greek economic crisis. Along with these moments of violence, this ethnographic inspired project highlights modes of survival, resistance, and resilience employed by these women in response to their violent circumstances.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

On April 23, 2010, then Prime Minister of Greece George Papandreou issued a public statement officially requesting aid from European Union partners. This was in response to the newly termed and understood 'Greek economic emergency' (Athanasiou, 2014). This moment of official narrative construction surrounding the economic turmoil in Greece —up until that point unnamed—was a watershed moment not only for the Greek nation, nor only for its European partners, but for the whole of the global economy.

On a world scale, Greece—acting as an example for the other failing economies of the racialized European PIIGS nations (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece, and Spain)—was intended to be the primary scapegoat for the global economy's recession (Choupis, 2011; Galbraith, 2016). Most importantly, Greece was positioned to act as an example of the consequences of fiscally irresponsible nation states and indulgent, undisciplined social bodies (Carastathis, 2015). The disciplining of the Greek nation state and its (specific) citizenry came in the form of severe austerity measures. An ethic of globalized, neo-liberal capitalism, austerity measures respond to adverse economic conditions, in an effort to reduce budget deficit through a combination of spending cuts and increased taxes. In order to enforce these measures, the necessary manifestation of a normalized state of crisis as well as an authoritarian state emerged in Greece (Harvey, 2005).

A brief description of the economic crisis here will set readers up for a better understanding of the devastating conditions facing Greece at the moment. According to economic scholar George Pravopoulos (2013), Greece's fiscal deficit increased from 4.4% of GDP in 2001 to a staggering 15.6% of GDP in 2009. Further, the ratio of government debt to GDP rose from 103.7% in 2001 to 129.7% in 2009 (Pravopoulos, 2013). But what did this mean for the Greek people? Unemployment numbers and

descriptions of severe public health effects describe the every-day circumstances for the Greek polity.

General unemployment rates are at 27.6%, while for women rates increase to 31.6%, migrant rates are as high as 40.3%, and most alarming are the rates of almost 65% of youth unemployment (Galbraith, 2016). With these numbers, international NGO's, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), have declared Greece to be the site of "a humanitarian crisis with severe mental, physical, and public health consequences" (Kentikelenis et al, 2014). The Greek humanitarian crisis creates conditions for 1/3 of Greeks to be living in poverty, severe increases in homelessness that Greek state infrastructures cannot support, as well as a drastic increase in suicide rates (Pravopoulos, 2013). According to reports from the WHO, in 2007 suicide rates in Greece have increased faster than any other European nation reaching epidemic levels (Davis, 2015). Rising 43%, suicide rates in Greece are increasing while reliability, resources, and infrastructure of state-provided health care services, deteriorate to a "third-world status" (2015).

In the summer of 2015, after the eventual collapse of the Greek banking system, the impact of the economic crisis took on consequences that are perhaps more tangible for all individuals. Banks were forced to shut down for three-weeks and only reopened with initial daily allowances of cash withdrawals of 65 Euros per person, per day (Pravopoulos, 2013). While the bank restrictions manifested in daily allowances slowly rose to 400 Euros per person, per day (2013), current bank regulations (based on my observations the summer of 2016) do not allow individuals to start new bank accounts and further allows the Greek government to have access to all private accounts to pay

outstanding debts at any moment. With this brief landscaping of the economic crisis facing Greece, we see serious public health consequences to the fiscally irresponsible nation state. Further pushing this economic emergency into the realm of "crisis."

In a conversation between philosopher and queer theorist Judith Butler and Athenian scholar and philosopher Athena Athanasiou, the term "crisis" and the discourse surrounding was examined. Presented as a necessary governmentally produced and managed narrative.:"…[N]eoliberalism is not primarily a particular mode of economic management, but rather a political rationality and mode of governmental reasoning that both constructs and manages the realm to be regulated" (Butler and Athansiou, 2013). With this logic, the governmental reasoning that effectively (re)produces the crisis, further pushes it into the realm of normalization. As part of the production of the ordinary, Greek politicians—following the lead of Papandreou—swallowed the "bitter (but necessary) pill" of austerity measures dictated in the proposed bailout packages: in 2009, €110 Billion and then again in 2011 €130 Billion (Kallioras, 2014).

Papandreou's historic, international address explicitly emphasized the normality of Greece's state of crisis. With a backdrop of the tranquil, blue coastline of Greece, Papandreou's words of "necessary change" and "long roads ahead" lost their immediate sting. Pacifying social reactions to his proclamation and effectively normalizing the state of crisis in Greece, this visual juxtaposition did significant initial work to promote a theory of normalized violence. This theory is presented in Cecilia Menijvar's *Enduring Violence : Ladina Women's Lives in Guatemala* and will be the main theoretical framework that this project draws on (Menijvar, 2011). In her text, Menijvar structures an analysis of violence upon four pillars: structural, political, symbolic, and everyday.

Utilizing this multilayered assessment of violence, the author creates a striking theoretical framework that considers the enactment of normalizing forces within these acts of violence, as a way to suspend condemnation and resistance (2011). In this project, I will focus on two of Menijvar's identified pillars of violence: structural/institutional and everyday.

This centralization of normalized/quotidian violence and how it is supported by institutions and structures of the state, has been imperative in my own work to understand the unique experience of undocumented, immigrant domestic workers Ana, Maria, Mariam, Mounia, and Neli. This theory of normalized violence, acting to ensure the establishment of a state of crisis and consequently normalized state of violence, is central to my analysis of the experiences of the most marginalized bodies in Greece during this time of economic crisis.

Framing this crisis as a normal part of life for the inhabitants in Greece is crucial to forming a collective, national identity that works to both promote adherence to strict austerity measures but also works to normalize the violence experienced by those deemed at fault. This brings into play the questions that took me to Greece in the summer of 2016 in the first place: who is responsible for this crisis? Who is most impacted by this crisis? If undocumented people are not privy to the recognition of the State to begin with, how do they fit into the narrative of the crisis? And most central to my work: what does the Greek crisis look like for those who live and work in Greece but do not occupy citizenship status?

From the outset of former Prime Minister Papandreou's announcement, two interwoven forms of violence have shaped the social landscape of the Greek Nation.

Framing not only the crisis as a "normal part of everyday life" for the Greek public body, but also effectively normalizing the violence that is a direct result of the economic and political circumstances. Borrowing from Menjivar, I will locate the normalization of state/institutional violence as working hand-in-hand to normalize various acts of quotidian violence. I will be bringing special attention to those that warrant no public outcry as they are perpetrated against the most vulnerable bodies: undocumented, immigrant women. Although it is important to note as Menijvar does in her text: "the broader political economy does not *cause* violence directly," rather "…it conditions structures within which people suffer and end up inflicting harm on one another and distorting social relations" (Menijvar, 2011). These women's experiences do much to make this connection clear between institutional conditions contributing to an individual's motivations to enact violence and the suffering that ensues.

Therefore, this project works to expand the normative definitions of violence, to include moments of fear, suffering, and invisibility. As scholar Madelaine Adelman stresses in her work with domestic violence in Isreal, understandings of violence against women in transnational settings require special attention to culture and locality rather than assumptions that women facing violence in all contexts are intrinsically tied together to experience this violence in the same way (2017). Therefore, this project stresses the importance of cultural contexts when understanding violence against women and in this way the Greek crisis is a budding landscape to explore the circumstances of women and the violence they endure. The stories that I present here, exemplify this type of institutionally sponsored violence. Pushed past our classic understandings of violence, these women's experiences do much to extend notions of interpersonal violence and seek

to understand ways in which institutional blockades to citizenship create the conditions necessary for violence to ensue. Whether that is manifested in cuts and bruises or psychological trauma and suffering, the violence in these women's lives is real. Not only is it real, but it is manifested in perhaps unexpected ways, through their stories of forced immigration, state extortion, and fear as the new normal. The key to my analysis, is the understanding that systems that normalize fear, suffering, and, extortion are all avenues for producing a violent existence for undocumented, immigrant, domestic workers.

While there has been much literature surrounding the economic crisis in Greece, (Choupis, 2011; Kallioras et al, 2014; Knight, 2015; Galbraith, 2016) these analyses do not focus on social reactions to the crisis. Other scholars have indeed taken a more anthropological approach to the crisis (Kyriakopoulos et al, 2013; Theodossopoulos, 2013). Taking into account the suffering of the Greek people who are at the center of this European neoliberal experiment of punishment, is crucial to understanding the real-life implications of political and economic maneuvering. Further, various scholars have identified the different politics of austerity measures as they work to racialize and gender certain bodies (Athanasiou, 2014; Butler et al, 2013; Carastathis, 2015). This process of managing subjectivities has the ultimate goal of justifying violence towards certain bodies. Still others have explored the mass mobilization of the Greek polity to push back on austerity measures (Karyotis et al, 2013; Exadaktylos et al, 2014). Making the suffering of the Greek citizenry visible to the disconnected politicians, who agree to the austerity measures in the first place, creates a counter-narrative of the crisis.

Refer back to the opening vignette describing the official admittance of financial woes by Papandreou. His discursive attempts to make the economic crisis one of

collective responsibility clearly served neoliberal purposes. Creating a culture of acceptance for the Greek polity was always necessary for accepting strict austerity measures without severe repercussions against the state—public outrage, mass demonstrations, upheaval of current political systems, etc. (Harvey, 2005). However, a close examination of the years of national corruption, knowingly un-payable debts, and international attempts to take advantage of Greece's economic vulnerability, unmasks the true players of the crisis as being those with power and not those in the general population (Galbraith, 2016).

The narrative of collective responsibility is therefore challenged here as the true culprits scramble to explain their role in the face of a potential collapse of the Greek banking system. This mindset of escaping blame is supported by deputy Prime Minister Theodoros Pangalo's infamous statement that "together we ate them" [Mazi ta fagame], in reference to the €310 billion (almost $330 billion) public deficit facing Greece (Cheliotis, 2010). Attempting to distance himself from the corruption of the Greek government, Pangalo follows the lead of Papandreou to somehow reconfigure the government's decades long financial gambling into a national disaster rather than a political scandal (Galbraith, 2016; Theodossopoulos, 2014).

Most importantly, this collectively responsibility narrative, is upheld by international forces such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Commission (EC), and the European Central Bank (ECB)—referred to as the "Troika." This international "watch-group" had personal investments in avoiding the collapse of the Greek banking system since all European banks (especially the strongest French and German banks) were intimately tied to Greece's financial institutions after the adoption

of a single European currency in 2001 (Cheliotis, 2010; Galbraith, 2016). Therefore, abundant counter narratives that highlight the influences of risky international bank investments and lending, along with the mismanagement of the European single currency, push back on the collective responsibility narrative Papandreou proposed (Butler et al, 2013). This identification of international and national political and economic forces dictating the futures of so many people living in Greece complicates our understandings of a single, collective narrative of responsibility. It is from here that I will build a platform to discuss the experiences of those outside the collective and how they experience the economic crisis. Ultimately, focusing on the ways in which blame is passed around and finally placed on the most vulnerable bodies in Greece will expose the conditions necessary for violence to ensue.

The complexities of the routine, familiar, and commonplace acts of violence in one's everyday life is a visible gap in the literature on the Greek crisis, I hope to fill this gap with this project. As precarious subjects of the state, undocumented immigrants hold an interesting place within the public space, especially during times of economic crisis. Working in the shadow economy but also hyper-visible in public narratives of blame, undocumented immigrants give a nuanced understanding to the implications of neoliberal politics in action. For this reason, I believe my project contributes much to the conversation of the Greek crisis, as it highlights experiences that we do not often get the opportunity to consider. By not only addressing these undocumented, immigrant stories, but also including their actual voices within this text, provides a platform for new narrative construction: a new narrative surrounding the experiences of undocumented, immigrant domestic workers living through the Greek crisis.

The quotidian acts of violence tend to only be recognized as such in their observable instances of direct impact or agony. Manifested as suffering, the consequences of these acts of violence are only made visible when interrogating the lived experiences of the most marginalized groups. This distinction, so eloquently laid out in Menijvar's work, places a direct responsibility on scholars to acknowledge the normalized violence that marginalized bodies experience and uncover the mislabeling of this violence as normal and routine (Menijvar, 2011).

I utilize this concept of re-naming quotidian acts of violence as not normal and directly linked to structural inequalities and oppression in my own work with undocumented, immigrant, domestic workers in Greece. These women are at the intersection of various modes of oppression. Unable to access public and social services due to their undocumented status, many of these women have been in hiding for decades, actively participating in a thriving underground economy but living with constant fear and anticipation of deportation, arrest, injury, and even death.

One must look no further than the actions of various arms of the State to understand the immediate dangers that immigrants face in Greece. A brief discussion here of hierarchies of grief in the Greek social imaginary, will do significant work to demonstrate the exaggerated vulnerabilities certain bodies and social groups experience. It will also highlight the processes of racialization that occur in the biopolitical sphere of the Greek economic crisis. At the intersection of citizenship status, gender, and ethnicity, the narratives below show the realities of being faced with violence at the hands of both the polity and assorted agents of the State.

On December 22, 2008, Konstantina Kouneva, a Bulgarian migrant worker and union organizer was attacked by a man wearing a security uniform (Carastathis, 2015). She was doused in sulfuric acid and left for dead. This type of attack is crucial in understanding the gendered implications of violence in Greece. Those who carried out the attempted murder of Kouneva, deliberately chose this method [acid attack] for a reason. That being, that this method is intrinsically tied to transnational codes of the violent disciplining of the female body.

However, despite permanent internal damage, loss of vision and detrimental mutilation of her larynx, Kouneva survived (Kambouri, 2010). As a semi-prominent public figure, acting as the first migrant elected deputy secretary of the Panattic Union of Cleaners and Domestic Personnel (PEKOP), Kouneva's attack was met with a decent amount of publicity specifically from feminist circles in Greece which again highlights its gendered nature. Even with this visibility, Hellenic police forces diverted attention away from the true culprits of this crime. The attack was ultimately blamed on an imagined Albanian ex-lover of Kouneva's who was never identified or prosecuted. We know this narrative now to be untrue, even though it successfully distracted the public outcry (Carastathis, 2015).

Compare this to the violent murder of Pakistani immigrant Shehzad Luqman. Twenty-six year old Luqman was a legal immigrant who came to support his documented and legally residing parents in Greece as they were struggling to maintain their farm. On February 17, 2013, Luqman was stabbed seven times by avowed members of the Neo-nazi political group: *Χρυσή Αυγή* (Golden Dawn). He died minutes later in the streets of the migrant Athenian neighborhood of Petralona—the same neighborhood that Kouneva

was attacked in. Luqman's death received no media attention, as his social location did not hold any space within the public consciousness. Dissimilarly to Kouneva, who was a public actor in her role as a popular Union organizer.

Despite mass upheaval in the community, specifically within the confines of the Petralona neighborhood, police forces 'managed' the crisis and deemed it a normal component of anti-austerity demonstrations (Carastathis, 2015). Not only was the murder of Luqman disregarded by all public officials, and most of the Greek polity, but his death was also masked as a 'normal' part of public protest, despite the fact that the murderers— members of the political party Golden Dawn— publicly accepted responsibility for the attack.

Juxtapose these two violent, racialized and gendered crimes with that of publicly martyred Greek hip-hop artist and 'anti-fascist hero' Pavlos Fyssas. Fyssas was murdered by Golden Dawn supporters based on his continued public condemnation of the neo-Nazi group on September 17, 2013 (Carastathis, 2015). Although the Golden Dawn party publicly condemned the acts and claimed complete ignorance surrounding the event, Greek State officials arrested thirty-five party members, including the leader of Golden Dawn himself Nikolaos Michaloliakos. "After years of racist attacks on migrant communities—eighty-seven documented violent attacks just in the first nine months of 2012, and numerous fatal stabbings—it took the death of a Greek national to inspire the outcry of the Greek masses demanding an end to the impunity that Golden Dawn had enjoyed" (Carastathis, 2015).

Framing the violent crimes against Konstantine Kouneva, a Bulgarian migrant worker, Shehzad Luquman, a Pakistani immigrant, and Pavlos Fyssas, a Greek hip-hop

artist within the public imaginary presents an interesting opportunity to understand the

(re)production of "grievability." Philosopher Judith Butler argues that "the differential

distribution of grievability across populations has implications for why and when we feel

politically consequential affective dispostions such as horror, guilt, righteous sadism, loss

and indifference" (Butler, 2004). In Greece, this construction of worthy and unworthy

lives, largely regulated by the need for 'political order' (especially in times of crisis) is

enacted by the forces of the Greek State. This is carried out with action/inaction in

response to death and violence and is a central tenant of the State's overall reaction to the

economic crisis.

Put these instances of state-endorsed violence, in conversation with the five

Georgian, undocumented, immigrant domestic workers that I had the privilege of

working with this summer, and their words take on new meaning. Ana, Maria, Mariam,

Mounia, and Neli, were all at the receiving end of State sponsored and normalized

violence. These untold stories of crisis do much to shape the social landscape of Greece

for the most vulnerable bodies. Harken back to the question posed earlier: who is

included in the collective responsibility of the Greek economic crisis?

When globalized pressure funnels down to State politics and further to individual

social relations, we see an informal scapegoat of the crisis start to manifest. Anna

Agathangelou (2016) is a leading scholar in presenting the Greek crisis as a point of

global raciality and primitive accumulation. Agathangelou makes this point in her

analysis of the crisis as a site of necropolitics:

A politically qualified state of siege or a body politic in crisis opens up the space

to revoke all protections central to a democratic project. The production and

performance of an imagination, a social practice dividing the visionaries from the

swindlers of the global economy, enlist violence as the accumulation mechanism

to settle the boundary between legitimate and illegitimate subject production and

the economy. If the Greek body is a unit and a metonym for the swindler of the

resources of Germany and the larger European Union, the migrant turns into the

site of fungible property of a global order.

This manifestation of blame takes many forms, but for the purposes of this project, I will

focus on the blame aimed at undocumented immigrants and how this encourages a lack of

grievability. This lack of grievability, effectively enables violence perpetrated against the

most vulnerable people to be characterized as unremarkable, to be expected, and normal.

Foucault's notion of biopolitics and specifically biopower fits in nicely here (2004).

If biopolitics examines systems and mechanisms that manage regimes of authority

over bodies and subjectivities, then biopower illuminates the techniques utilized to

subject certain bodies to control and power (Foucualt, 2004). Placing grievablity or lack

thereof, in the realm of biopower, displays an interesting source of power to subject

certain bodies to violence without grief or even concern. Acknowledging the Greek state

and international Troika forces as the systems in place to dictate worthiness of

subjectivities in response to a national economic crisis, Greece then becomes a site of

biopower. Subjectivities deemed unnecessary or illegitimate to the state – undocumented,

immigrant, queer, etc.—are thus on the receiving end of biopower which in this context is manifested as normalized violence in the form of suffering.

The state then recognizes certain bodies' lack of utility as productive subjects, according to a very narrow capitalist definition, and thus undeserving of resources, rights, and even grief in the face of violence. Thus, state and international agents that make the economic crisis a problem for "everyone" also dictate the power of the political party Golden Dawn—that as of 2013 holds almost 15% of seats in parliament (Carastathis, 2015)—the Hellenic Police Force, and also the state-run media to normalize the violence perpetrated against undesirable bodies. This is done either through the ability to perpetrate violence with little to no consequences by Golden Dawn party members or the police force and also to not report on said violence by the state-run media. And as the quote above demonstrates, this form of biopower creating the subjugation of certain bodies, is not only enforced by social relations in Greece, but is also a part of a larger global, capitalist, patriarchichal social order. An examination of the harms inflicted on the poor, the undocumented, the most marginalized people, highlights how a political economy of inequality, borrowed from global neoliberal capitalism, directly promotes social suffering (Menjivar, 2011).

In the following pages, I will be highlighting the three key themes that I encountered in my fieldwork. Grounding my analysis in the lived experiences of the participants, I will center their words, in the hopes that this project will work to de-normalize their violent realities. I will start with the institutional conditions of normalcy, emphasized by the glaring inadequacies of State bureaucracy in the form of extortion or blackmail. Then, I will tie in the normalization of fear and violence in these women's

14

everyday lives to the systems that deny them citizenship and official recognition and protection by the State. All this is not to say, however, that these women lack the strength and resilience to still thrive in their own social circles. Therefore, I will end with the theme of survival strategies through informal support networks that these women employ to survive their violent circumstances.

METHODOLOGY

My project is couched in grounded theory, as I attempt to center the voices of five Georgian, undocumented women working in the domestic realm. Using personal narratives from these women who have been living and working in Greece between three and twelve years, creates a perfect timeline to understand the impact of the seven year ongoing economic crisis on this specific population.

This mixed methods project incorporates aspects of ethnographic work in the form of participant-observation, as well as semi-structured interviews and one focus group. The participant-observation occurred during our meetings outside of interviews/focus groups. This transpired in two settings, the first was at one of the women's employer's residence for a social, informal dinner gathering that I was invited to and the next was at the various coffee shop encounters that I had with women as I was making connections and preparing to conduct interviews.

I conducted 2 semi-structured interviews and one focus group. The interviews were 45 minutes and 90 minutes while the focus group lasted 120 minutes. All interviews, the focus group, and participant-observation took place in Athens, Nikia, and Glyfada Greece during the months of July and August 2016. My sample size was a total of five participants: see APPENDIX A for more information on participant demographics. The focus group and one interview were recorded for transcription purposes with the permission of the participants; the remaining interview was not recorded upon the participant's request.

The sample was convenience based, as this population remains largely underground due to their undocumented nature and thus is incredibly difficult to access.

16

The criteria for participation was very broad, with the only requirement being that these participants are undocumented, immigrants, and women working in Greece. It was pure coincidence that all of my participants were natives of the former Soviet Union State of Georgia.

The focus group and interviews were conducted in Greek and then simultaneously translated and transcribed into English. It is worth noting here that these women are not native Greek speakers. In all cases, they came to Greece without any former knowledge of the language and had to acquire these language skills while simultaneously working and surviving in a foreign land. Many of the women who I spoke with, did not have full acquisition of the Greek language, which made our communications even more interesting and nuanced. This contributes to the unique translations that were necessary to best encapsulate the meanings of various words that were used. While translating is already a difficult process, as many Greek words do not directly translate to English, this added element of non-native speakers created some further intricacies to the transcription process. These intricacies manifested in a creative translation and transcription process from my end, to appropriately capture the nuances of the stories they shared. What I mean by creativity here is the requirement to employ multiple English words to try to explain the single word utilized by participants. Also, my creative translation manifested in the insertion of clarifying language to create grammatically correct quotes and overall transcription texts.

As a final note, I want to reflect on my positionality in relation to these women. Being first generation American, my life was spent with one foot in the United State while the other was firmly planted in Greece. My entire extended family is overseas and

for this reason, I grew up speaking Greek as a first language and visiting Greece every summer with the occasional winter trip. This unique positionality frankly made this project possible, from the position of my short summer timeline, but also in regards to my ability to access these underground networks at all. Without my native Greek language skills, my personal/familial connections, and my cultural familiarity, my research parameters would have been increasingly narrower and my timeline in particular would have been almost impossible.

With this background of my social location visible, it is imperative to reflect on my position of power in regards to these women. As a feminist scholar trained in feminist reflexivity and accountability, I must account for the clear power dynamics that existed, especially considering the fact that I have known at least one of these women for a decade, through a family member who employers her. The acknowledgement of my position of power in relation to these women was constantly at the forefront of my mind, as I centered the importance of practicing a feminist epistemology in my project and did so to the best of my ability.

What I mean by this, is observing notions of radical reflexivity encouraged by a feminist ethics of care (Edwards et al, 2012). With this constant reflection, my meetings took on more nuanced meanings. I, to some degree, embedded myself within their social circles and was able to explore the realities they claimed from an internal position. Not only was my inclusion in the group crucial to my ability to collect extraordinary data, but also my position as a Greek speaker was largely meaningful. Particularly, it was my unique positioning, as Greek-American that allowed me access to their spaces.

Being Greek-American was the key to my success, as my position in their eyes did not hold the power of a 'full' or native Greek, who could act as their employer or impose the types of violence they discussed. In this sense, I existed in a space that was not quite Greek enough, but also not immigrant enough, and looking back, this positionality did significant work in decreasing my potential threat to the group. I do not think I would have had such extensive access to their lives and social circles as a native Greek, nor as a full native-born American. Notably, most of the women saw my relationship to Greece as very similar to their own. They would make comments on my accent and enjoyed the moments where I fumbled on my Greek language skills. These transparent moments of my Greek 'privilege' slipping away from me, made my connection with the group stronger and more intimate.

 I spent many days with these women, meeting them for ocean side coffee, meeting in informal settings during their breaks, or even meeting at their employers' homes during group dinners. While my timeline was condensed to only a summer, I gained deep connections with these women that made my project even more meaningful than I could have ever imagined. I am acutely aware of the trust these women put in me; not only to protect their identities and not to expose them to the state, but also to share their stories with respect and accuracy. Pushing me to do these stories justice, the words that follow are written with tremendous thought and care.

In regards to care, I made every effort to protect the identities of these women. During one of our group meetings, when we were discussing the parameters of the project and going over specific ethical concerns, I mentioned the need to protect their identities through pseudonyms. Upon mentioning this, the group became confused and

seemed to dislike this note on 'protection'. This exact moment inspired the title of this project. I was struck by one of my participants' comments in response to my ethical concerns: *"I don't need protection, I need papers".* This was a moment that revealed a lot about these women, specifically as it relates to their understanding of where they faced the greatest 'risk.' It was this precise moment that shifted my thinking away from strictly interpersonal violence or domestic violence in these women's lives, and made me acutely aware of the state/institutional violence they experience and the potential hierarchy of their worries/fears.

While cognizant of their precarious positions, I hope to honor these women's resilience and not refuse them their desire to be visible. This is a tricky ethical concern of mine that has taken up residence in my mind as a persistent conundrum. However, in order to honor their wishes, I will be limiting the participants' names to their forename. Including their first names will not only contribute to the visibility of these women as active members of the underground economy in Greece, but it will also make visible the violence that they experience.

If the purpose of this project is to make normalized violence visible and coherent to readers, then it would do a disservice to the mission of this project to participate in the processes of invisibilization. With this in mind, and the sentiments surrounding this preliminary discussion with the participants that spurred the title of this piece, I hope to include a component of their identities within the text.

As a follow up to this project, I plan to share my findings with my participants this summer (2017) in Greece. Keeping their first names will allow them to visibly recognize their contribution, their narrative, and their stories as being central to this

project. Further, including their first names will be the first step towards creating

visibility for these women within a society that seeks to erase them.

CHAPTER 1:"There is no law that allows me to get papers. That is not right.": State Sponsored '*εκβιασμό'* (extortion)

It was a heartbreaking decision for Maria to leave her home in Georgia twelve and a half years ago in hopes of a better future for her family. As she showed me the picture of her son, now almost in his 30's and his daughter, Maria's first and only grandchild, I could palpably feel her sorrow. "Thirteen years to leave your family be away from your kid. At 15 years old, I left him and 12 and a half years I haven't seen him." This quote puts into perspective the action of leaving one owns family to care for the family or home of others. It is here that these women's journey begins. Somewhere between necessity, false choice, and dire economic realities, these women immigrate at the expense of their own right to social reproduction and nurturing, to in turn perform these tasks for other families.

The racial, class, and ethnic distinctions allow some women to escape domestic obligations by transferring these responsibilities to subordinate identity groups. In a globalized economy of domestic work, we see new hierarchies of international divisions of labor supported by state institutions. As scholar Maria Mies argues, it is upon the backs of poor, non-western racialized women, that white, western women are able to enter the capitalist work force as a productive unit (Mies, 1998). Immigrant domestic workers make major sacrifices to enable other women to access a recognized productive capacity within a global market.

Not only are these women sacrificing their own abilities to be productive subjects in the eyes of a capitalist economy, but they are also sacrificing the ability to care for and raise their own children "back home." This idea of transnational motherhood proposed

by Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo in her work "signals new international inequalities of social reproduction" and speaks to the experiences of the women I spoke with (2001). While these women utilize their own adult capacities to care for the children and homes of Greek families, they are ultimately subsidizing Greek women's careers and existence outside of the domestic sphere. Immigrant women perform these domestic duties at the expense of their own families and homes, which make the conditions of their immigration particularly precarious.

Other scholars who do work with domestic workers, such as Mary Romero (1997) and Deborah Stone (1998), have noted that this occupation often not even recognized as employment due to its taking place in the private realm of the home. Stone in particular further posits domestic work as precarious in comparison to other forms of labor as she defines this type of care-work as requiring much personal, emotional labor which is antithetical to our conventional understandings of paid employment (1998). For this reason, "the tasks that domestic workers do—cleaning, cooking, and caring for children—are associated with women's 'natural' expressions of love for their families," (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001) and thus domestic workers occupy a precarious position of applying this type of care-work for other children at the expense of their own kin (Romero, 1997; Stone, 1998).

This is the torturous reality for many people in Maria's native land of Georgia. Faced with the difficult "non-choice" of migration, Georgian women in particular are vulnerable to the devastating economic realities of their native land. Recent 2014 data collections by the National Bank of Georgia highlight the scarcity of decently waged employment in Georgia with an official unemployment rate of almost 13 percent. It is

estimated that Georgian employment produces a monthly income of roughly one-sixth of the average monthly income in Greece (Newstex, 2015).

This financial imperative to leave, is echoed by Neli, another women who participated in one of my focus groups:

> There is nothing there, no jobs, no house, how are you going to rent and pay for it? Many times when I was there, I didn't even have enough money to buy bread for my kids. Many times my son would cry, when he was 3 or 4 years old. "Please mom I'm hungry I want bread" and that's how he slept. There was a war, it was a very difficult life. There was no house, nothing.

Estimates of the National Bank suggest that Greece ranks second in remittances sent back to Georgia at $204.78 million in 2014. This estimate of officially declared remittances is only behind that of Russia, displaying the centrality of the Greek Euro to Georgian people's livelihood (Newstex, 2015).

Maria and Neli are one of thousands of undocumented immigrant workers that make up the underground economy of Greece, which is estimated to be responsible for a staggering 24 to 30% of the total economy (Fakiolas, 2003). Immigrants reach Greece from all over the World. Along with other Eastern European and Balkan nationals, Georgian immigrants make up about 22% of the immigrant population coming to Greece. Albanians [at 52% of the immigrant population] make up the majority of other immigrants, while immigration from Asia (14%), the Middle East, and Africa (12%) are also significant (Glysos, 2005).

According to a Newstex Global Business Blog, there were an estimated 250,000 Georgians living and working in Greece in 2015, transferring about $14.6 million per month to relatives back home. Understanding the economic realities of life in Georgia, provides insight into the rationale behind migration. However, migration to escape economic disenfranchisement comes with much personal loss.

Scholars Hofmann and Buckley's (2011) work speaks to the difficult decision Maria, Neli, and others make when pursuing the dangerous journey of immigrating without papers. Their fieldwork illuminates the serious tension between economic necessity for Georgian women to go abroad for work and the cultural norms that discourage women from leaving home, and more importantly, leaving behind children. Specifically, the framing of immigration as a necessity, not a choice, and the narrative construction around their immigration being understood as unique and exceptional, aligns with the feelings of the women who contributed to this project. Much like Neli's inability to feed her children motivating her migration, Maria felt no other choice than to leave her child behind:

> ….the salary was so little that you couldn't make it, so I had to leave. Because I had nothing. I didn't have a house, I was divorced with the child. I lived with my mom. At my mom's lived my brother, his wife, their kids. It was too much in a small apartment

This quote puts in perspective the paradox of European exceptionalism, and even Greece in particular, as a site of democracy, equality, and access to western "rights." Women

travel to EU member nations, as a necessity, with the ideological promise of all that the western world has to offer. However, as the narratives to follow suggest, this is not nearly the case.

This aspect of their immigration is crucial when discussing the barriers, suffering, and violence that plague unauthorized immigrant women's lives. Without other options to support their families, many made the decision to suffer the consequences of unwanted immigration, potentially aware of the repercussions they might face in one of the most immigrant-fearing nations in the European Union.

While the Greek constitution recognizes the equality of foreigners and does lip service to the freedoms and rights they possess in the Hellenic political landscape, in practice, these rights are not always afforded equally to that of the native population. "It appears that the historical culture of Greeks raise some barriers between 'Us' and 'Them.' And, as a general rule, the effort on any action concerning Them is to protect Us rather than converge the two sides" (Glytsos, 2005).

This mindset is explicit in the legislation regarding citizenship that came after almost ten years of mass immigration to Greece. Pressured by international circumstances of war and tyranny, Greece needed to regularize the millions of immigrants entering into their domain. This came with the passage of Presidential Decrees (358 and 359) in 1997, ensuring immigrant rights be consistent with native rights, and then again four years later in 2001 with a second effort in the form of a law (2190) to provide viable paths to citizenship for immigrants (Glytsos, 2005).

The most recent 2001 law promises to move away from the previous 1997 legislation that held a law-enforcement orientation, and rather incorporate a guest-worker

integration policy. However, when discussing the process to apply for citizenship with the participants of this project, it is clear that the "path" to citizenship laid out in this legislation is simply unattainable. Rather, this legislation works unofficially to keep immigrants in a permanent state of illegality: jumping through hoops, paying for and obtaining documentation, only to be denied over and over again based on contradictory requirements. For example: the requirement to have proof of employment as part of the application for citizenship, directly contradicts the requirement for citizenship or work visas before obtaining formal employment in Greece (Glytsos, 2005).

This permanent state of illegality could be understood through the theoretical lens of Giorgio Agamben's "state of exceptionality" (2003). Gilberto Rosas utilizes Agamben's theory to understand the US/Mexico border as a space of constant exceptionalism subject to high intensity policing and surveillance (2006). I situate my understanding of normalized violence around the biopolitics present in this theory of exceptionality. When there is a state of exception, the state has the ability to exert form of biopower that were not previously available in times of non-crisis. Therefore, this theory of exceptionality and the biopower that in-turn possesses further authority in these times of crisis, are important to my work as they explain the conditions necessary for imposed surveillance and policing, for example. The women in my project described this specific heightening of surveillance and policing (a form of biopower), as they attempted to evade deportation forces and told stories of their friend who were indeed identified as undocumented, detained, and eventually deported.

This state of exception is to the declared rule of law that operates within any modern form of democracy to regulate the polity and maintain order. Utilizing this same

logic, Greece suffering the greatest economic depression of its modern history for the past decade (Galbraith, 2016), could warrant what Agamben calls a 'state of exception' (2003). When order is already at risk, the State declares a state of emergency, much like former Prime Minister of Greece George Papandreou did on April 23, 2010 (Athanasiou, 2014). The state of emergency then, justifies the use of exceptionalism, which empowers the state to act outside of the constraints of the law and adopt extreme surveillance and policing measures against those deemed outside of the protection of the law (Agamben, 2003).

Put Agamben's theory of exceptionalism in conversation with Achille Mbembe's theory of necropolitics and these precarious bodies, under a state of exception are subject to extreme violence and even death (2003). Exploring the convergence of Foucault's biopower, notions of sovereignty, and Agamben's state of exception, Mbembe seeks to answer the question of who exactly dictates who may live and who must die (2003). While Foucault makes the connection that oppression, specifically in the form of racism, is the power to let die, in the context of my project we see a more nuanced understanding of biopolitics. Similarly to how Rosas uses these theories in his work (2006), I too do not use exceptionality as a form of justification to necessarily kill, but rather as a subtle arrangement of the state of exception, that works to produce a normal state of violence. A form of violence that is only visible in the mundane, daily-lived experiences of racism, anti-immigrant discourse, and sexism that contributes to a constant state of suffering.

Therefore, I utilize Mbembe and Agamben as a site to locate the exceptionality of the state of crisis in Greece. Ultimately, making the connection that this state of crisis as exceptional produces the conditions necessary to implement consistent violence against

the undocumented, immigrant, domestic workers I became close with in Greece. A violence that is on the state/institutional level but also reproduced on an interpersonal level to manufacture a constant state of fear as the narratives of these women show.

With a brief understanding of Greece's bureaucratic process of attempting to access citizenship, along with the theorizing surrounding Greece as a site of exceptionality, necropolitics, and biopolitics, my conversations with Maria and all of the other women became even more important. Personal accounts of perceived extortion, pressures, threats, and blackmail from the Greek government encapsulated in the Greek term '*εκβιασμό'* (blackmail), shape the realities of normalized institutional/State violence in these women's lives and the contents of this chapter.

> Unfortunately, papers I do not have. That is my complaint. That right when I came to Greece, I was only 10 days without work, so for 12 years since then I have been working non-stop. But this is the problem. There is no law that allows me to get papers. That is not right

Here Maria mentions that there is no law in place to allow her to apply for citizenship. While this seems contradictory to the discussion of the 2001 law specifically passed to ensure a path to citizenship, a story she shared about one of her countless attempts to get papers, sheds light on the façade of access provided by this law. In this example, we see how the hope, promise, and frankly illusion of a viable path to citizenship— which she directly mentions as a "new law", assumedly the 2001 law—acts as a form of institutional/state violence in the form of '*εκβιασμό'*.

Maria: There has to be a change in the law. The law. Listen, I couldn't get

papers, when I got here. 1 year after I got here there was a law. And this is how

they responded to me, a Greek lawyer that I hired, with my friend. We gave her

2500 Euros to get papers. There was a law that had just passed that said, that if

you came with visas you could get papers. And we had come with visas. There

are women who come here without a visa…….

So a month went by, it was a little late, three months was the process of collecting

papers and then applying. So a few months passed, and the lawyer told us some

other papers were missing, so we found them and sent them to her. It was the last

day that we were waiting to get the papers and the last day she sent us everything

back and said that something was missing and we had been denied the papers. But

she kept the money. And my friend after two weeks, they found her, caught her,

and put her in jail. Poor thing. She was in jail for 20 days and then deported. It

was sad. A few times my employer called the lawyer and demanded for the

money back. So, slowly, little by little, she sent back money.

Through this account, Maria disclosed that the lawyer had actually been fully aware that

she would not be able to produce papers for Maria and her friend. Instead, the lawyer

had another form of motivation for agreeing to take Maria's money: her mother needed

immediate funding for an illness. This exemplifies the systems of exploitation, or

'*εκβιασμό*' that contribute to these women's realities. While Maria continued to explain

her circumstances, she noted unofficial contribution to the State, had she been recognized for the 12 years she had lived in Greece:

> *Maria*: Exactly! I've lived here for 12 years. How much money should the state have gotten from me? What can I say?

> *Viviane*: Well, why don't you think anything is changing?

> *Maria*: I don't know, what should I say. I don't know what they are thinking. Everyone knows that there are many undocumented women. But they think, if they don't give papers, they will leave. But they don't leave. They keep working without papers. Isn't it better for the state to get money from us? To give us papers so we can pay bills and taxes and be legal? I don't know how the administration works and thinks.

This excerpt provides a first-hand account of how immigrants are exploited in their attempts to apply for citizenship. However, it also shows immigrants' constrained choice to participate in the system of capitalist accumulation that inherently exploits them. This goes against the demeaning portrayals of immigrants as lazy, uneducated, and exploiting the systems of Greece's already strained social services, that largely exist in the Greek public imaginary (Carastathis, 2015; Theodossopoulos, 2013). This is an important point of distinction. While many Greek's perceive immigrants as removing some part of their privileged status, it seems possible that immigrants want to neither obstruct Greek nationals' privileges nor exploit the state, but rather be recognized as a worthy subject.

Worthiness could be prescribed as access to state sponsored protection and resources, or I would argue in the case of these women, as simply worthy of a life without fear, suffering, and violence.

Maria's story was very similar to the other women's attempts to become legally recognized and thus worthy of a life without fear and suffering. Mariam, living in Greece for almost 10 years had a similar account of the Greek State's '*εκβιασμό*' or blackmail, threats, and coercison.

> *Mariam*: They have done some stuff, when I came in 2006. Now they do something, I paid 300 Euros got a lawyer, but where is it? End of June, end of September, nothing. We will see. But you have to have certain papers, take tests here. I have done it. From 2006-2011 I have done the exams…….
>
> I've submitted all my papers and nothing. When I came here, I had my passport and a visa for 25 days. I submitted an application to get papers back in 2006 but they lost it all. My passport and all the papers I had. They lost them all……They stole everything. My passport and papers. Everything.

Much like Maria and Neli, met with the imperative to leave Georgia, Mariam assumed a universal diginity and respect from the Greek state in response to her immigration. Unfortunately, it seems the response was one of exclusion and violence. Even to the point of sabotaging future attempts to apply for citizenship by losing one of the only signifiers of political legitimacy: her passport.

One of the ways that violence manifested within these narratives of State exploitation was when these women required medical attention. Multiple women told stories of illnesses that could not be treated based on their undocumented status, as Greece has a system of socialized medicine (Levett, 2013). Maria particularly relayed a story of her struggle with uterine cancer and how her only ability to receive care, was through her employer's intervention. By providing doctors with an unknown amount of financial incentive, Maria's employer was able to secure her a hospital bed for one evening post operation; requiring her to leave her bed and make room for other [Greek] patients by the next morning. Even through this traumatic experience where the State refused her medical services, Maria was able to compare her experiences with fellow immigrants and find great solace in her ability to receive care:

I've gone through so many illnesses. Illnesses so strong that other women who had the same thing died because they could not get care. Both of them, [two of her undocumented, Georgian friends] they couldn't even keep working. They returned to Georgia, then came back to work and left again because they couldn't get better. And before a year one died and the other a year and a half. Yes, very serious illnesses. I was lucky.

Reinforcing the normalcy of immigrants being removed from access to the protection and services of the state can have deadly consequences as is shown in Maria's accounts of her two immigrant friends. When the prospect of citizenship is seemingly impossible,

33

women are further stripped of their agency and confronted with a new reality: fear, delegitimacy, and violence.

> Yes! The big problem is the papers. We don't have papers. Why isn't there one of those places, here in Greece, what is it called. So we can get papers. Why should we have fear on the bus? I mean, fear, I always have. A police officer or even not a police officer anywhere could stop you and ask, 'your papers'.

We see here that one's status of citizenship is an important axis of inequality. Interwoven with relations of race, class, and gender, we see that the undocumented nature of these women does much work to facilitate the exploitation against them. Not only is immigration status central to the discussion of state/institutional violence as has been laid out in this chapter, but it also works to normalize discourses of fear.

CHAPTER 2:"Why should we be scared all the time?": Fear as the New Normal

Ana was able to get a 30-minute lunch on this blistering Saturday in July. A full 10 minutes longer than her employers usually offer her, she proudly explained to me. She was able to justify her request of extra time by explaining she was meeting a close family friend. This family friend was me and even though I had just met Ana a few weekends before, she needed this legitimacy of relations if she was going to hope for the extra 10 minutes of off time.

Walking down the streets of Glyfadda, Greece, with Ana I felt a ping of guilt as shoppers zipped past us, carrying bags filled with their capitalist exploits. This affluent suburb of Athens, home to celebrities, diplomats, and Greece's "elite" has a diverse and juxtaposed population of an "owning" class and the (mostly undocumented) immigrants that work for them. Ana, my youngest participant, at only 32 compared to the other women who were all in their 50s, shared intimate details of her previous experiences in Georgia. Specifically, Ana explained the severe domestic violence that she endured for years with her husband, before he eventually fell victim to his alcoholism.

As she shared the details of his multiple attempts to drown her with her children's screams in the background, I could not imagine a topic that could dominate our conversation quite like that. That is, until she started to discuss the fears that she has living in Greece as an undocumented, immigrant woman. While all of the other women I interviewed shared instances of interpersonal violence they experienced at the hands of their partners in Georgia, this violence seemed a distant memory—or at least not an immediate threat— to the constant fear of daily life in Greece.

I want to take a moment here to note that these women did not explicitly make the statement that their previous instances of domestic violence did not currently haunt them. As a scholar and survivor of domestic violence myself, I understand the consistently intrusive memories and depictions of abuse that are difficult to expel from one's everyday routine. However, I believe that these moments of abuse and violence seem to mark a psychological split from understandings of suffering at the hands of partners back home in Georgia, and the current instances of mostly state-sponsored violence in Greece.

This notion of splitting the acknowledgment of suffering and violence between geographic and social locations is supported by their consistent use of "new life" and "start fresh" when discussing their immigration. Putting past suffering behind them and creating a mental barrier between their experiences in Georgia and in Greece, it makes sense that these women were much more interested in discussing their current realties. These conversations seemed of much more interest to the participants, rather than the suffering and violence that they seem to suggest they have escaped through their immigration. This would be an interesting point to expand on in future projects, but for now, I will focus on these women's current state of fear in the context of Greece.

The same mechanisms that sustain the institutional/state violence in the lives of Ana, Maria, Mariam, Mounia, and Neli support the violence that occurs in these women's everyday lives. Many of these women did not have personal encounters with violent state apparatuses or citizens, but the stories they told me of friends and acquaintances, justified their fear.

I argue that the Greek state sets the conditions for immigrants to internalize humiliation and legitimate inequalities and hierarchies of power. Then the state reinforces

these conditions through the public narratives of attacks on immigrants like that of domestic-work union organizer, Kouneva, mentioned earlier. Disseminated through the state-run media and reinforced through informal immigrant communication networks, these narratives work to actively normalize the expectation of fear and violence as a part of the new reality (Carastathis, 2015). "The routinization of everyday violence against the poor leads them to accept their own violent deaths and those of their children as predictable, natural, cruel, but all too usual" (Menijivar, 2011).

Reflect back to our discussion on Mbembe's necropolitics. Perhaps we could understand this new political order as 'ταλαιπωρία' politics or politics of suffering. This word 'ταλαιπωρία' was used by all women in multiple instances and special attention should be paid to the intricicies of this word. An interesting anecdote about language exists in scholar Nia Parson's work with gendered violence in Chile that could be helpful here. She notes, that ''Pain destroys language, but sometimes language to describe forms of pain simply does not exist and the failure to speak pain can have dire consequences'' (Parson, 2013). This reference to language as it relates to pain and suffering is largley relevant to this project. Parson argues that the use of language to highlight pain, suffering, and violence is part of the process of de-masking the violence of state institutions but also interpersonal violence. Specifically she argues, language works to identify the origins of the problem and leads to the willingness of individuals and institutions to hear this pain, recognize it as valid, and ultimately enact change to address it (2013).

Utilizing this understanding of the importance of languge to identify normalized violence speaks directly to these women's usage of the word: 'ταλαιπωρία' . Directly

37

translated to suffering, 'ταλαιπωρία' also has some casual references in colloquialisms of the Greek language. Casual in the sense that this word could also be used to describe an experience of 'annoyance' or unwanted/unexpected prolonging of a difficult process. Highlighting this use of specific language to describe their circumstances, indicates that these women are experiencing a form of violence that does not exist within their knowledge of the Greek language. Without a stronger word to describe their situation, these women risk further perpetuating the invisibility of their suffering.

This was particularly important in the framing of this violence as normal or an annoyance at best. This framing of a casual sense of violence was extrapolated directly from the women's use of language. This is particularly important as they understand their own circumstances as natural and although producing hardship, a form of hardship that is perhaps seen as an accepted annoyance. This interpretation would take a more linient approach to 'ταλαιπωρία' rather than something that is unacceptable to the conditions of basic human rights. We see this understanding of violence as normal, but expected even in regards to the in-action of potential sources of aid:

Nothing, they [Hellenic Police force] will put you in the car and send you to prison. And then can someone come help you? If they [employer most likely] can help, why would they? That's such a big problem. Such a big fear. A fear for 10 years! Can you believe that?

It is interesting here to connect the notion of 'ταλαιπωρία' as a normal form of annoyance produced by the Greek state and the assumption that no one will come to the aid of these

women. Understanding their lack of access to state resources, these women obviously cannot rely on the state for support in dire situtatons but they do not look to their employers or fellow immigrants for help either. This once again highlights internalized forms of oppression, as these women learn to accept arrest, deportation, and violence in general as a normal part of their existence outside the purview of even their most trusted social networks.

Along with the state of constant, normalized fear, some of the women highlighted instances of racialization that made them particularly vulnerable to possible search and deportation. When the country internalizes a narrative of crisis, a culture of terror is not far behind (Rosas, 2006; Butler, et al, 2013). With this excuse of confronting terrorism or managing the crisis, individual citizens and state officials become emboldened in their ability to detect "aliens."

> Most people. They say I look foreign. That I'm not Greek. I don't know. How am I supposed to know. HAHA, so that's what they do, check papers if you look different. On the bus all the time. And all the people on the bus. But me, I've never been stopped. Because I usually see it from far away. It's scary, you're walking on the street and you see the police and you look over here and over there to try to hide.

Processes of racialization shape the experiences of these women in all their encounters with the public sphere. Within a "state of exception", these processes of spotting difference take on a new imperative. Here we see biopolitics in action, as Maria notes

that many people identify her as "foreign." This identification process through racialization puts these bodies at more risk within the spaces they occupy in the public sphere. Operating within an exceptional state of crisis, Greece is able to justify the hyper-regulation of immigrant bodies.

The processes of racialization here are unique to the ethno-nationalism that exists in Greece. Consider the political power of the Neo-Nazi group "Golden Dawn" and Greece becomes an interesting experiment of unique racialization processes that speak to a long history of homogenous populations that were "disrupted" by mass refugee migrations (Tziampiris, 2015). Following mass migrations throughout the 20th century, ideas of Greek nationalism took on new forms and led to the enforcement of strict citizenship regulations, requiring some sort of Greek genetic lineage (Gkintidis, 2014). This focus on proof of Greek lineage became a pillar upon which immigrant groups became even more vulnerable to processes of racialization that seek to identify them for the purposes of enacting violence upon them: whether that be physically or through bureaucratic processes of detention or deportation.

This state imposed and socially upheld state of assumed immigrant criminality is reflected in the almost 50% occupation of Greek prisons by immigrants (Antonopoulos, et al. 2008). Further, the continual expansion of migration regulation budgets [even within a state of economic crisis] and the reality that since the 1990s Greece has expelled almost 3 million undocumented immigrants (Fakiolas, 2003), provides rationale for the fears these women posses. The fear of being "discovered" is mirrored by an equal fear by the citizenry to not be fooled by immigrants, producing an imperative to "unmask" them. When fear is established as a normal part of life, social suffering reaches maximum

40

levels. "It is through this normalization and misrecognition that dehumanization becomes possible and suffering becomes a part of life" (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001;Menijvar, 2011).

Although this violence is normalized, these women continue to push back on their circumstances, questioning the realities that they are forced to accept. Questioning why they must experience this type of dehumanization. Questioning why they must live in a state of constant fear. Even questioning how their economic services are not providing them more legitimacy, recognition, and value to the state apparatus. We see this line of questioning in Mounia's comments about her constant state of fear:

> But it's just ridiculous to think about. If you've been here for years, and you work for the same family, why shouldn't you have papers? Why should you be scared all the time? Why should you be scared to go outside for a police officer to stop you? Why? To get arrested and have to get a lawyer. It's hard to live like this.

Relearning fear, as a normal part of everyday life is a severe form of violence manifested as constant suffering. However, it is important to consider that this suffering is only building upon the extreme personal loss these women confront as they decide to immigrate. Immigration as a normalized strategy to withstand the socioeconomic inequalities exacerbated by neoliberal reform does not come without any consequences to the immigrant (Menijvar, 2011). Compound this with the inability to get papers, and the disconnect these women feel from their support systems, family, and native community is profound as Neli mentioned at one of our encounters: "Excuse me, but the papers. But to

do papers here. It would be so much easier to go back. One time. One time in the year, to go home and see my children. That's all I'm asking."

Leaving everything behind in order to find economic opportunities elsewhere is not only a culturally difficult decision for women, as mentioned above with the case study of Hofmann and Buckley (2011). It is also a decision that comes with deep emotional loss and pain. Immigrants must now live with a normal sense of personal loss, as they remain separated from their families without any opportunity to reconnect outside of modern forms of technology. In the following chapter, I will discuss more how technology is used as a survival strategy for these women. However, here I will briefly touch on the emotional suffering compounding the daily fears of existing as an undocumented person in Greece.

> You can't live there (*Georgia*). We left our families and came here. I haven't seen my children in 10 years! Because we are trying to help, my dear. If I work here, okay I'm a woman, something I want to buy for myself, but its hard work, but I have to do it. You came here. Why did you come here (*asking the other women*)? To work, right? But the thing is I send all my money back, but it isn't enough. How am I going to be able to buy a house? I can't buy a house. My family in Georgia still suffers. And I hurt here too.

These two chapters have attempted to make the connection between private fear and expectations of violence with the more overt forms of violence through state extortion, threats, or *εκβιασμό*. Relying on undocumented, immigrant women's own words to shape

their everyday experiences these women do the initial work to uncover the processes of normalized and silenced modes of suffering. Questioning their violent realities as normal while also weighing the impossibilities of their cirrcumstances, as the above quote does, Ana, Maria, Mariam, Mounia, and Neli are all pushing back on this state of normalized violence.

CHAPTER 3:"I have good relationships with my friends and they love me a lot....":
Survival Strategies and Informal Support Networks

As I entered the one-bedroom apartment, where Neli has been working and living

for the past five and a half years, I could not help but notice her makeshift bed directly to

the right of the front door. This cramped apartment could not have been more than 300

square feet and acted as both a place of residence for Neli and her employer. This tiny

space had been transformed into a makeshift hospital for her 92-year-old employer who

had just suffered a stroke and was on an IV, breathing apparatus, and catheter. Luckily,

Neli had been trained as a nurse in Georgia and was able to care for the ever-changing

needs of the woman who employed her.

Neli brought my attention to a display of icons, crosses, and other religious

symbols in the kitchen: see APPENDIX B. It seemed a sort of shrine. I noticed the

differences between the Greek Orthodox icons and the Georgian Orthodox icons.

Noticing my observation, Neli mentions that the two religions are almost identical with

the exception of language and then goes on to explain her daily moments of prayer and

veneration as bringing her strength to persevere through these difficult days.

Like Neli, many of the women found strength and resilience in their faith during

these times of crisis and violence. In regards to religious institutions, Menijvar draws

attention to the ways in which religious participation can be both a source of solace and

comfort but also central to sustaining the internalized dispositions and frameworks that

lead to the toleration of suffering and violence (2011). While this is noteworthy, it seems

these women did not have the opportunity to practice their faith in spaces outside of their

domestic confines. At home, veneration and worship could be seen as more of a personal

survival strategy, perhaps tempering some of the institutional influences of the physical space of the church.

For example, Greece has a long history of entangled church and state relations. Highlighting the importance of the sanctity of marriage, the Greek Orthodox Church places high stakes on women to preserve their marriages, no matter what (Chatzifotiou, 2003). Community networks of shaming through kinship networks specifically established by the church to maintain the sanctity of marriage, work to prevent women from reporting instances of abuse. Establishing such high-stakes around marriage, the Greek Orthodox Church positions women as solely responsible for maintaining the sanctity of their marriage.

This mindset is largely present in current laws surrounding domestic violence in Greece. With an emphasis on repairing familial relations, "The Confrontation of Intra-Family Violence" law passed in 2006 in response to the UN resolution "Effacement of Domestic Violence Against Women." This resolution required all U.N. member states to adopt legislation aimed at providing legal protection against domestic violence (Ph, 2008). However, the foundation of this law is to encourage reconciliation between partners to maintain the family unit, not necessarily to ensure the victim/survivor's safety (Gavrielides et al, 2012). This is upheld through three conditions: 1) a verbal agreement by the offender to not commit any future instances of domestic violence 2) participation in a special counseling/therapy program for domestic violence perpetrators 3) and reparations to the victim, *whenever possible* [emphasis mine] (Giovanoglou, 2008). This brief overview of the 2006 Greek law addressing domestic violence, suggests connections between the Greek Orthodox Church's initiatives to maintain the sanctity of marriage

through the (in)action of the woman. More importantly, it also illustrates how church supported cultural understandings of gender roles impact legal policy.

Despite this example of how religious institutions can tolerate suffering, the women in this project tended to identify religion as a source of strength. Maria also stressed the importance of her faith as a way to endure: "Yes, very much it helps me. Because, because I see that even though I have a lot of difficulties in my life, I know that God protects me. Always, he protects me. And is always with me."

Here, Maria points out the ways in which she views her faith as a form of protection. Another form of protection that these women create for themselves, are informal systems of support and communication with other immigrant women. These systems, usually heavily underground and kept in secrecy, did not come up much in our conversations. Only Maria explicitly laid out how the communication might unfold between immigrants when attempting to dodge officials checking papers:

> Many times my friends have called me and told me: listen, today, one of our friends, got stopped on the bus, they do a lot of checking at the bus, on the bus, at the stop, and she told me not to leave the house, because they are checking. So I didn't. There are also times when I'm in Athens, and I see from far away that the police are just stopping people and checking papers. Just on the street. Randomly. They stop you and ask you: show me your papers.

We see here an acknowledgment of formal systems of communication to alert undocumented people of potential danger. While this was not explicit in my

46

conversations with the other women, attending a dinner gathering hosted by Neli, including Mariam and Mounia, showed signs of a network of support that these women shared. These dinners acted as a safe space for the women to speak their native tongue, enjoy Georgian cuisine, and escape if only for a moment from their violent realities. It is through these moments of belonging, that I believe the women employ networks of support to survive their circumstances. Sitting in on a handful of these gatherings, I witnessed a drastic shift in their attitudes; it was as if in these spaces, the women were temporarily free from the politicization of their bodies and the fear that was prescribed to their existence. Instead of the usual fear and stress of their circumstances, these brief moments of togetherness were filled with joy and laughter.

Covering shifts, sharing recipes, and tips for evading authorities, were all topics of discussion at the gatherings and suggest that these women can rely to some degree on their new friends to temper some of the experiences of suffering and violence. This process of forming groups to counter normalized violence, in and of itself pushes back on the normalization of violence: as it sees an opportunity to alleviate some of the suffering of every-day life.

Through these moments of community building and cultural belonging, these women begin to do work in kinship formation. Interestingly enough, two of the women where indeed related. Neli and Mariam found each other after their immigration to Greece because of their relations as in-laws. Their married children, still living in Georgia, created a connection that perhaps eased the transition of immigrating to Greece for these women. As a potential future site of inquiry, it would be fascinating to further

47

explore ways in which kinship formation between these women alleviated some of the suffering they experience.

These moments of resistance raises questions as to where their stories fit in the larger narrative of resistance in Greece. On the one hand, these small-scale acts of protest are very different from the modes of resistance employed by the rest of the Greek polity: usually taking the shape of anti-austerity protests. However, on the other hand, even though these modes of resistance are unique, it is still amazing that these women's perseverance is cradled in a culture that has a historic inclination to resist forces of oppression. According to a study done by Karyotis et al. (2013) in 2010, 30% of the entire Greek population had participated in some sort of anti-austerity protest or demonstration. This marker of 30% is the highest statistic of protest participation amongst any other European nation.

Of most interest, this new wave of demonstrations has expanded to include all identity markers. Increasing levels of women participants, and working-class people, as well as the inclusion of protestors of all ages, is a staggering new trend in the protest culture responding to the neoliberalization of Greece (Karyotis et al. 2013). The inclusion of new, diverse bodies to politically perform in protests against the state and the larger global actors of the Troika (International Monetary Fund, European Commission, and European Central Bank) can be interpreted as a subversive counter to the racialized and gendered violence in Greece.

Place the actions of these women in the historic context of mass mobilization in Greece and their acts of resistance could carve out a space for alternative narratives of resistance in Greece. While it is not a surprise that anti-austerity protests are abundant in

48

an atmosphere of economic crisis, the unique history of resistance in Greece is worth noting. Throughout modern history, the Greek people have resisted foreign occupation and domestic dictatorship with determination and sacrifice. To further this point, Greece is the only Western nation that proudly celebrates two Independence days, as an indisputable sign of Greek perseverance and historical stamina. The first being March 25, signifying the start of the 1821 revolution against the Ottoman Empire and the second being October 28, commemorating the decision of the Greek nation to resist invading Nazi forces during World War II, otherwise known as OXI Day—'No' Day (Tziampiris, 2015).

Connecting historical trends of protest in Greece, one can easily trace an impressive lineage of resistance to suffering and violence in Greece that these women's resistance now becomes a part of. Making history as they go, these women create social support networks that allow them to employ a variety of survival strategies: whether that be faith, cultural gatherings that allow them to stay in touch with their ethnic roots, or the imperative phone-trees that keep immigrants safe from officials checking papers.

These modes of survival bring about an interesting question of how these women fit into the historical landscape of resistance in Greece. Reflecting on the experiences of these women and the survival strategies they employ, it would be irresponsible for me as a feminist scholar to assume and impose a notion of resistance on these acts. It is difficult for me to believe that these women would see taking an extra ten minutes on a break as a form of resistance when they exist in a culture of fear and violence.

Perhaps an appropriate way to discursively articulate these moments of pushback on power structures would be to understand their existence as resistance. Existing within

a system that actively works to invisiblize the suffering, violence, and subjectivity of a person—or group of people—seems to be an appropriate site of finding resistance in these women's survival strategies. However, these moments could also be encapsulated in the realm of resilience. Resilience to endure circumstances that are unimaginably traumatic and violent, returns much of the power lost to state-sponsored and quotidian acts of violence (Menijivar, 2011). Whether it be resistance or resilience, these women employ a multitude of different strategies to pushback on their circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Couching my analysis of Greece as a case study for neoliberal punishment—
specifically as it manifests against undocumented, immigrant women— Menjivar's
theory of normalized violence has been very useful in recognizing moments of suffering
but also resistance and labeling them as abnormal. Acknowledgment of a country's
reliance on the social collective's normalization of violence to continue the
implementation of various forms of institutional violence and further, to justify violence
perpetrated against 'non-Greek' bodies makes the economic crisis Greece is facing even
more complex.

Overall, the connections made above between institutional/state violence in the
form of a faulty at best and non-existent at worst, path to citizenship, suffering in
everyday life as a norm, and lastly the amazing resilience and persistence of these women
to alleviate at least some of this suffering leaves me awestruck. As the reader attempts to
digest this and understand its implications outside of this specific setting, I hope the
words of these women resonate with you. Harken back to the central question posed at
the beginning of this project: what does the Greek crisis look like for those who live and
work in Greece but do not occupy citizenship status?

I hope that this project answers this question to some degree. However, there are
still so many questions left to answer. While the scope of my project was limited, some
future opportunities for research could highlight more of the nuanced experiences of
undocumented, immigrant domestic workers in Greece. The small sample size, limited
time, and difficulty to access underground communities restricted my project in many
ways.

Including a larger pool of participants could provide more insight into the challenges facing undocumented immigrants in Greece. It could also provide some better understandings of potential solutions to the violence I described above. Throughout this project, I felt wary of making generalizations based on the findings of five participants. However, I negotiated this concern by focusing on the individual stories of these women and highlighting how, while they might not speak for all experiences, their value is still inherent in a feminist epistemology. Finding value in knowledge production that exists outside of our traditional understandings of who creates knowledge is useful to all of us, especially scholars who adopt such feminist methodologies. Therefore, these women's stories are necessary and valuable for understanding how all bodies in Greece experience the economic crisis. Screaming into the abyss of Greek literature surrounding experiences of immigrants during the economic crisis, these stories do much work towards a more complete and holistic understanding of the nuances of the crisis for non-citizens.

In terms of my time constraints, I am confident that if my project spanned a longer timeframe, I could have expanded both my participant pool and my themes of violence and resistance. Specifically, I was particularly interested in the underground networks of support and care that these women briefly mentioned. I would have liked to explore this section of my project further, as it focuses on the modes of resistance and resilience these women employ in times of crisis and suffering. Perhaps this could be a focus for future projects of mine. However, I do feel it is necessary to mention that accessing these underground networks was particularly difficult and extra time would have ensured a more sustainable connection with communities members.

With this limitations in mind, I hope this research will inspire others to continue on this path of unmasking violence in the lives of the most vulnerable bodies. Reimagining an economic crisis from the position of those who work in the shadows, adds a new perspective to the discussions of blame, suffering, and violence that can shape our future efforts to address and prevent these crises. Most people do not consider the implications of an economic crisis on those that do not formally participate in the economy and perhaps this is another process of normalizing the violence and suffering they experience. Speaking to this, I will end with some words from Maria, claiming stake in the pains of the crisis and forming a new understanding of its impact on immigrant workers:

> The crisis, yes just like it hit everyone else, it hit us. It hit us hard. First of all, its hard to make money, and the Greeks have cut a lot, they can't pay….do you know how many women they have fired from their work? Because they can't pay them. And they left them. What are we supposed to do? You tell me, when even Greeks can't survive, how do we?

In conclusion, I pose this question to the reader. If the Greek population is struggling to survive this economic crisis of the 21st century, imposed with all the interlocking circumstances of oppression laid out throughout this project, how then do immigrants survive?

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

NAME	AGE	EDUCATION LEVEL	DEPENDANTS BACK HOME	RELATIONSHIP STATUS	YEARS IN GREECE
Ana	32	High School	2 children	Widowed	5
Maria	53	University (philologist)	1 child	Divorced	12
Mariam	54	University (Russian teacher)	2 children	Married (partner in Georgia)	10
Mounia	55	University (Culinary Arts)	4 children	Married (partner in Georgia)	3
Neli	57	University (Nursing)	2 children	Widowed	5 years and 7 months

APPENDIX B

DISPLAY OF ICONS, CROSSES, AND OTHER RELGIOUS SYMBOLS