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# The European Refugee Crisis and Humanitarian Citizenship in Greece

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## ABSTRACT

Greece has been at the epicentre of two overlapping ‘humanitarian crises’: the economic crisis and the crisis of refugees. Since 2011, as austerity policies have hamstrung the Greek state’s capacity to meet the basic needs of citizens, long-term residents, and new arrivals alike, formal and informal humanitarian initiatives have sought to provide for diverse beneficiaries. Meanwhile, the ‘refugee crisis’ has opened up a booming humanitarian marketplace in Greece. This article draws on my long-term research in the field of asylum in Greece, and ethnographic data from research on ‘social solidarity clinics and pharmacies,’ grassroots initiatives meant to provide medicines and care to citizens and non-citizens in need. I argue that the Greek case signals the emergence of what I call ‘humanitarian citizenship’ on European margins: the replacement of both social rights (afforded to citizens) and human rights (afforded to refugees) with humanitarian logics and sentiments, positioning both citizens and non-citizens in a partially shared continuum of precarity.

**KEYWORDS** Humanitarianism; citizenship; precarity; Greece; crisis; refugees

Nizar is a Syrian refugee who had been living in Greece since Spring, 2016. When first I met him a year after he first arrived, he was housed at a camp (or ‘hospitality centre’) just outside Athens awaiting a decision on his asylum claim. For months he had commuted every morning, an hour and a half each way, to the abandoned airport on the other side of the city which, from Spring 2016–May 2017, served as a makeshift camp for asylum seekers not prioritized by the system, primarily Afghans. Nizar volunteered in a nearby warehouse: the basketball stadium from the 2004 Olympics repurposed to become a central hub for the distribution of aid supplies by both Greek and foreign volunteers. These supplies went not just to camp occupants, but also to organized squats in the city centre that house both refugees and *sans papiers*; as well as to neighbourhood networks that primarily assist Greek residents facing poverty. This redistribution warehouse was not run by a formal humanitarian organisation, however, but by those active in the Greek ‘solidarity movement,’ consisting of grassroots structures that have emerged in Greece since 2011 with the onset of economic crisis and

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then austerity (see Streinzer 2016; Douzina-Bakalaki 2017; Loukakis 2018; Henshaw Forthcoming). Solidarity initiatives seek to provide for the basic needs of Greeks, long-term residents, and migrants and refugees alike through horizontal modes of resource redistribution (Rakopoulos 2014; Theodossopoulos 2016; Rozakou 2018). They include soup kitchens, pharmacies and clinics (Cabot 2016; Teloni and Adam 2015; Bonanno in process), groceries, time banks, and even continuing education centres. Even though he was, himself, a recipient of humanitarian aid, Nizar was thus also engaged in informal humanitarian responses meant to assist both Greeks and fellow refugees.

In May 2017, we sat in a cafe in Piraeus (a short metro ride from Athens), and Nizar told me about his, overall positive, encounters with Greece and Greeks. He used to come to this cafe often, he told me; it is directly across from the port where, a year earlier, thousands of newly-arrived seekers of refuge established a massive informal encampment. There, they slept in tents until their relocation to formal housing centres, once they were finally built. He noted that, if he could, he would stay in Greece – the people had been so welcoming. But he hoped to relocate elsewhere in Europe because Greece was not able to provide the necessary resources. Then he added: ‘Greeks need help themselves – why do they have to help the refugees?’

Nizar’s comment gives testament to a slippage or overlap between the struggles of Greeks and refugees, which is also underscored – though in very different ways – in the case of Kostis, a Greek man also active in the solidarity movement. He is a long-term volunteer at an Athens-area ‘social pharmacy’. Much like the warehouse where Nizar participates, the social clinics/pharmacies seek to redistribute medicines and care to those who cannot access it otherwise (citizens, long-term migrants, and recently-arrived refugees alike). Indeed, Kostis sometimes seeks medicines for himself and his aging mother at the very pharmacy where he volunteers. He used to work as a delivery man and driver, but he has been unemployed since 2011, almost since the onset of the Greek debt crisis. In May 2017, however, he was employed for eight months in the registration centre of an Athens-area refugee camp, not unlike that where Nizar was housed. Since the ‘refugee crisis’ of 2015–2016 opened-up a veritable marketplace in Greece for goods and services related to refugee arrivals, it is not surprising that Kostis’s first job in six years was in the humanitarian field. This boom has since retracted as the numbers of new arrivals have dropped, owing primarily to the establishment of the infamous EU/Turkey ‘deal’ in March 2016;<sup>1</sup> Kostis’ contract position has not been renewed.

Middle-aged, with almost no knowledge of English, in one of our many conversations Kostis insisted that he never set out to ‘help the refugees’ in what he called the ‘circus’ of the humanitarian field (unlike the many over-educated, under-employed young Greeks who have actively sought out such work). Rather, his goal was simply ‘to get paid’. Nevertheless, when I pressed him a bit, he expanded a bit on his philosophy of helping, citing the famously untranslatable Greek word *filotimo* (usually rendered as ‘honour’), adding quietly that he hopes that he has a little bit of that quality in himself. He explained that he tries not to be ‘a jerk’ but to be ‘soft’ and kind with people

(*malokos, ohi malakas*) and simply to help: ‘Greeks or refugees, it does not really matter who’.

In this article, I will demonstrate that accounts such as those of Nizar and Kostis speak to an increasing confusion of the boundaries between citizenship and alienage in Greece as diverse populations face various forms of precarity. I will show that in a European Union (EU) characterized more and more through trends toward neoliberalisation – the support of finance capital, retractions of social programmes, privatisation, and austerity – humanitarian projects have, in part, come to stand in for the human and social rights of both citizens and non-citizens in Greece. Nizar and Kostis are in many ways opposites in their positionalities, legal statuses, and predicaments: one a citizen, one a refugee; one facing long-term unemployment and poverty, the other cross-border displacement and legal limbo. Yet they also share in certain overlapping struggles and projects: owing to calamitous events and structural factors much larger than their individual life trajectories, they have both become beneficiaries of humanitarian interventions meant to alleviate suffering and address basic needs. Moreover, they themselves are both active participants in informal humanitarian initiatives.

In just the past few years, Greece has become the site of two overlapping humanitarian ‘crises’: the economic crisis and the ‘crisis of refugees’ (Fernando and Giordano 2016). The refugee crisis of 2015–2016, and Greece’s emergence as the Euro-Western front-row in an unfolding humanitarian theatre, is unprecedented. Yet Greece had already become a topic of international interest and attention owing to its central position in the global financial meltdown, the ongoing struggles regarding its sovereign debt, and the stringent austerity measures meant to manage that debt (Dalakoglou and Agelopoulos 2017; Gkintidis 2016; Doxiadis and Placas 2018). Early discussions of the financial crisis in the international press described Greece’s (and Greeks’) lack of regard for paying taxes, reporting income, and managing funds. However, as the profound struggles of many Greeks to make ends meet came to the fore, accompanied by a highly visible spike in homelessness, addiction, and illnesses (including tuberculosis and HIV) (Basu, Carney, and Kenworthy 2017; Karanikolos and Kentikelenis 2016), the ‘Greek financial crisis’ also garnered increasing attention as a ‘humanitarian crisis’. In 2013–2014, articles began to emerge in the mainstream international press documenting the human costs of austerity and celebrating Greeks’ creative ways of surviving.<sup>2</sup>

As a double site of ‘crisis,’ this country on Europe’s geopolitical and moral peripheries now commands an important position in the ‘global hierarchy of value’ (Herzfeld 2004) of attention, interest, and care that shapes contemporary humanitarian imaginations. The ‘economic crisis’ is seen primarily to impact Greek citizens, whereas the refugee crisis is ascribed to those who hold the positions of ‘others’ or ‘aliens’ on European territory (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris 2016). Here, however, I approach these crises within a shared analytical frame to examine the emergent configuration of humanitarian regimes within European borders. I argue that the ‘European Refugee Crisis’ must be understood alongside an emerging crisis of European citizenship itself, and the radical precarisation of rights for both citizens and non-citizens on Europe’s Mediterranean margins.

Didier Fassin (2011) has shown that, in order to understand what he coins ‘humanitarian reason’ (the yoking of morals and sentiments to politics), scholars must examine attitudes toward both perceived suffering others far away and toward the poor and the marginalized *within* one’s society. In both of these contexts, however, those outside or at the margins of the socio-political body become the objects of humanitarian projects. Here, however, I argue that Greece – in its seeming exceptionality – indicates an intensification of humanitarian reason within European territory. This article tracks how Greek citizenship has been explicitly ‘humanitarianized’ (Gilbert 2016), impacting both citizens’ survival strategies as well as dominant notions of both deservingness and entitlement. I examine the emergence of what I call *humanitarian citizenship*, in which the rights and entitlements of citizenship, for wide swaths of the population, become increasingly codified through humanitarian logics and sentiments.

Humanitarian citizenship stands in stark contrast to the welfarist repertoires of citizenship that became so important throughout Europe following World War II and the fervour of labour mobilisations in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century – also in the European South. It indicates the precarisation of rights once seen to be part and parcel of Greek citizenship, which can be summarized in the words of Daniel Knight’s (2015) interlocutors as *psomi*, *padeia*, *eleftheria* (bread, education, and freedom) as well as – importantly – *ygheia* (health). Humanitarian citizenship recalls Adriana Petryna’s (2002) analysis of ‘biological citizenship’ in Ukraine after Chernobyl. While certainly less acute than in Petryna’s ethnographic context, demonstrable suffering is also a crucial ground for certain citizenship claims in Greece, sometimes functioning as a precondition for access to rights. Yet whereas Petryna emphasizes the role of biology, and physical disability and degeneration, my analysis links citizenship claims in Greece to the political-economic framework through which neoliberalism and humanitarianism work in tandem. Within this panorama, citizenship claims are not linked only to ‘biological injury’ (Petryna 2002: 7) but also to a widely-circulating repertoire of images, discourses, and practices attached to global humanitarian regimes. This clear use of humanitarian tropes for engaging with, and governing, citizens under austerity points to the limits of sovereignty in Greece, and of sovereign citizenship itself. The range of acceptable venues and discourses for claims-making have become more and more restricted, as rights – and the framework of sovereign citizens that they presuppose – have been subsumed not just in neoliberal projects, but in humanitarian agendas that work through and alongside them.

This article draws both on data collected through my recent research on social solidarity clinics and pharmacies in Greece, as well as observations and expertise acquired through my long-term work as an engaged academic researcher in the field of human rights and humanitarian aid to asylum seekers and refugees in Greece (since 2005). Since 2015, I have carried out 12 months of participant observation at two Athens-area social solidarity clinics/pharmacies, which I have complemented with site-visits to clinics/pharmacies around Greece (Cabot 2016). In addition to extensive day-to-day interactions and discussions with volunteers<sup>3</sup> and care seekers within the context of my participant observation, I conducted numerous semi-structured interviews with people active in the solidarity movement, and I constructed ‘illness narratives’

(Kleinman 1988) with thirty-seven care seekers. Many of those seeking care were citizens; others were long-term residents (primarily from Albania, having migrated to Greece in the 1990s); others were asylum seekers and refugees, some only recently arrived, some having arrived a number of years ago. In some cases, like Kostis, volunteers were also beneficiaries. In these interviews, I sought to situate somatic pathologies within wider economic and social struggles (see Davis 2015; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987). Toward the end of my first six months of fieldwork (Summer 2016), the numbers of refugees arriving in Greece hit unprecedented numbers, and new arrivals also began to visit the social clinics. Sitting on the governing board of a Greek humanitarian NGO, I also gained insights into the rapidly-changing context of refugee arrivals in Greece and the humanitarian responses they triggered. As refugees themselves became key targets of care also in solidarity initiatives, I tracked the overlaps and divergences in the treatment of citizens and refugees within the social clinics/pharmacies that served as my key fieldsites.

My analysis tacks between the macro-scale of Greek and European governance practices and a ground-level examination of how these interventions impacted both individual care trajectories and modes of resource distribution within the social clinics/pharmacies. I show that the emergence of humanitarian citizenship can be ascribed to both politico-legal interventions and attendant shifts in practice that accompanied the imposition of austerity and, later, the explosion of humanitarian projects during the 'refugee crisis' of 2015–2016. I close by asking what the emergence of humanitarian citizenship in Greece means for the salience of rights in Europe today, as neoliberalisation and humanitarianisation become even further entwined in the governance of European margins.

### **Deexceptionalizing displacement: a precarity continuum**

Within the liberal-Western framework of sovereign citizenship, scholarship has long emphasized a mutually constitutive, though diametrical, relationship between citizens and those who occupy the positions of 'aliens' in a national territory. Arendt (1976 [1951]), and later, Agamben (1998), argued that those cast out of the politico-legal protections of national membership expose what citizenship itself is truly made of: a sphere in which the capacity for thriving socio-political life is built on the backs of excluded others (Povinelli 2011). Scholars have explored the nuances and gray areas in the relationship between citizenship and alienage (Mountz et al. 2002; Ngai 2004); as well as the realms of illegality (Khosravi 2010) or legal 'non-existence' (Coutin 2000) where, for those occupying positions of alienage, access to rights and livable (let alone good) lives is extremely tenuous. Scholarship on the affective dimensions of belonging and citizenship has shown, of course, that irrespective of legal status, 'aliens' often engage actively and substantively as citizens (see Ong 2006a), while citizens themselves face their own experiences of exclusion. Nonetheless, as a politico-legal nexus of rights and life, the boundary between 'insiders' and 'outsiders,' citizens and aliens, while fluid, has long been constitutive of contemporary understandings of citizenship (Agier 2016 [2013]; Anderson 1993 [1983]).

However, increasingly visible forms of neoliberalisation, and attendant humanitarian projects that come to stand in for both human and social rights, have destabilized this assumed antinomy between citizenship and alienage. Key aspects of global trends toward neoliberalisation include policies and practices actively dismantling the social state, a rise in temporary and precarious work, and a concurrent decline in labour mobilisations. Anthropologists have studied how, under such conditions, citizens themselves increasingly become brokers for rights and services once taken to be the provenance of state/society relations (Allison 2013; Molé 2012; Muehlebach 2012). These shifts have led to forms of subjectivity shaped by moralized notions of individual responsibility and experiences of fragmentation and atomization (Greenhouse 2012; Gershon et al. 2011). As such, *precarity* has emerged as a concept that captures – for many scholars and political mobilizers alike – struggles for basic rights and livelihoods in contexts where politico-legal belonging is not, in and of itself, under question. In diverse national contexts, then, citizens themselves are increasingly facing the radical precaritization of rights, belonging, and *life* – a struggle that has often been ascribed to the domain of alienage.

Scholarship on refugees and humanitarian intervention has underscored the crucial distinction between a rights-based approach, based on entitlement, and a ‘humanitarian’ approach, grounded on unstable affective and attitudinal characteristics (Bornstein and Redfield 2011; Fassin 2005, 2011; Ticktin 2006). In a rights-based logic, a refugee is *entitled* to assistance and protection owing to his/her status as a human being whose life and liberty is under threat (Donnelly 2003); in a humanitarian logic, a refugee must also be deemed worthy, deserving, vulnerable, or sufficiently in need of that protection that was supposed to be guaranteed. In practice, of course, there has long been a blurring between rights and humanitarian logics. Indeed, asylum seekers and refugees often become subjects of rights only through their capacity to present themselves as ‘eligible’ or sufficiently vulnerable (Cabot 2013; Jacquemet 2012; Kobelinsky 2015; Ticktin 2006).

Increasing neoliberalization and precarity in Greece in the age of austerity has further enabled the encroachment of humanitarian logics onto the terrain of rights. Rights and services for refugees and many citizens alike in Greece have become dependent not so much on (shrinking) state agencies but on formal and informal humanitarian interventions. Moreover, in line with humanitarian logics, access to such services is often contingent on these groups’ capacities to present themselves as sufficiently in need, deserving, or vulnerable. While refugees are seen to be the victims of forced displacements entailing violence and migratory trajectories of flight *across* national borders, citizens are increasingly subject to political-economic modes of dispossession and displacement, through which social roles, obligations, entitlements, and sovereignties are turned upside-down (Ong 2006b). Anne Allison (2012) has coined the term ‘ordinary refugees’ to describe forms of social fragmentation that citizens themselves experience in neoliberal Japan. Similarly, some of my Greek field interlocutors have told me that, with austerity, Greeks have become ‘internal refugees’ (see also Narotzky 2016) – a statement that, while paradoxical in some ways, captures not territorial displacement (as with Internally Displaced People, or IDPs) but dislocation from the terrains of rights and livable livelihood. Such precaritization also entails the material displacement

of bodies and lives from homes and neighbourhoods (Adams 2013); and the erosion of networks and ties (da Cunha 2013) that keep individual, social, and political bodies intact and 'in place' (Douglas 1966). Meanwhile, related modes of precaritization have long been occurring in venues occupied by refugees and non-citizens, owing to state fragmentation and 'outsourcing' associated with neoliberalism (see Fassin 2005). Instead of emerging as an inverted image of the citizen, then, refugees may be said to inhabit a shared *precarity continuum* where many citizens also seek to make their lives.

This is not to say that the struggles of people displaced across national borders and those of citizens experiencing precarity, dispossession, and internal displacement are the same. The possibility of deportation, the struggle for the right to remain in a host country, and racialized forms of discrimination, violence, and exploitation are often specific to the politico-legal status (or lack of status) of refugees and other migrants (Drotbohm 2015; Coutin 2007). However, I do want to suggest that the double precaritization of social rights (afforded to 'citizens') and human rights (afforded to 'aliens') has given rise to an overarching context in which the very meaning of rights and entitlements in Greece is under threat for diverse segments of the population, transecting life trajectories and politico-legal statuses.

Long ago, Liisa Malkki (1995) wrote of the need for scholars to attend to the extraordinary diversity of 'refugee' subjectivities and experiences in order to deessentialize the category of 'the refugee'. The move I make in this article to analyse citizens and refugees in Greece within a shared continuum of precarity is directly in line with current key interventions in the study of mobility calling for the 'demigrantization' of migration studies (Dahinden 2016). Following the important groundwork laid not just by Malkki but also by Nina Glick-Schiller and her collaborators (see Wimmer and Schiller 2003; Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013), such arguments seek analytically to undo how scholarship on displacement and mobility often reifies and exceptionalizes the very categories that it seeks critically to contest. Janine Dahinden (2016) has suggested that, methodologically, one possible way forward in such a project is to 'move away from treating the migrant population as the unit of analysis and investigation and instead direct the focus on parts of the whole population, which obviously includes migrants' (11). Such an approach helps to deessentialize the migrant or refugee category and enables the study of connections between border crossers and less mobile populations; while remaining sensitive to features that may be (but also may not be) peculiar to cross-border forms of mobility and displacement (Nieswand and Drotbohm 2014). As 'precarity' has come to constitute what many scholars would describe as an underlying context of contemporary social life in an age of neoliberal capitalism (Tsing 2015; Ramsay *Forthcoming*) for many citizens and border crossers alike, scholars of mobility are increasingly looking at shared points of need and struggle between groups that have often been approached as distinct *a priori*.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, while often in different ways, border crossers and citizens alike face struggles in accessing healthcare, shelter, food, childcare, education, and the capacity to work (Drotbohm and Lems 2018). Further, such forms of material precarity have powerful ontological and existential dimensions in shaping individuals' capacity to hope or imagine stable futures (Ramsay 2017; Hage 2009). As they seek to access necessary services, citizens and border crossers also often come closely



into contact with each other such as, for instance, within the social clinics, where diverse populations meet in the attempt to access healthcare. My exploration of humanitarian citizenship in Greece is thus my contribution to this emerging field that seeks – analytically, methodologically, and conceptually – to deexceptionalize displacement (Cabot and Ramsay); demigrantize the migrant (Dahinden 2016); and ‘migrant-ize’ the citizen (Anderson 2017).

### ‘Hope is Coming’

In January 2015, after five years of increasingly stringent austerity measures, Alexis Tsipras, of the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza), was elected prime minister of Greece, amid jubilation for many on the Left throughout Europe and the world. On buildings and walls throughout Athens, a campaign poster of a blurred photo of Tsipras addressing his supporters was superimposed by the statement *I elpida erhetai* (‘Hope is coming’). Having begun research on social clinics/pharmacies the week preceding the election, I heard Tsipras’ campaign promise, ‘hope is coming,’ expressed numerous times in my discussions with volunteers and care-seekers during that winter and spring. This double delay of a hope still in the process of arriving captures the extraordinary precarity and yet excitement of that political moment, as well as the stakes of the election for many Greeks.

This sentiment is perhaps best captured in the account of Maria, a regular visitor to social pharmacies and a frequent interlocutor in my research. Like Kostis, while for most of her adult life she was on the lower end of the political-economic spectrum, until 2011–2012 she had been able to sustain herself and her two sons by working as a housecleaner. However, as the economic crisis worsened, and with the imposition of austerity (affecting pensions, taxes, and overwhelmingly restricting household incomes), her regular clients had to downsize: grandmothers moved in with children; working mothers lost their jobs; or, quite simply, households no longer could afford the luxury of a cleaner. In the meantime, she developed severe arthritis and chronic high blood pressure, making it even more difficult for her to engage in physical labour. She has skirted the edges of homelessness since 2011, and she has found herself unable to access care owing, in part, to limitations in the social insurance model in Greece (see endnote number 13). She cobbles together her medicines through visits to social pharmacies. She told me matter-of-factly that when the going gets particularly tough, or when the social pharmacies do not have the correct medicine, she sits outside the church and asks for money from passersby in order to buy it at a commercial pharmacy. With the election, however, she emphasized that she finally had some hope again. ‘I believe in Syriza,’ she nodded.

Over the next few months, however, such expressions of hope turned sour, as (between January and July, 2015) the Syriza government began negotiations over austerity memoranda with the ‘Troika’<sup>5</sup> and various EU powers, primarily Germany. Both austerity itself, and citizenship claims on the part of Greeks themselves, underwent a process of ‘humanitarianization,’ which a Andrew Gilbert (2016) describes as the ‘social and cultural work necessary to establish and maintain a humanitarian field of

action'. The Syriza government, both in its governance practices and engagements with European leaders, made strategic use of humanitarian frameworks that directly interpellated its citizens themselves as humanitarian subjects.

The very first bill that the Syriza government passed, in March 2015, meant to augment social services in the face of austerity, was entitled 'conditions for immediate measures for coping with the humanitarian crisis'. The bill was explicitly aimed toward assisting citizens and long-term residents who qualified as living in conditions of 'extreme poverty' and was initially relatively modest in scope, though over the following months additional measures were added. The three key points constituting this first incarnation of the programme were: 1) Free electricity up to 300 kwh/ month for people living in extreme poverty. 2) A rent subsidy for 30,000 households living, again, in extreme poverty, with a priority given to households with children. 3) Food for people living in conditions of extreme poverty, either via food coupons or other electronic means, via 'existing structures' or new ones via 'development collaborations'. The third article in the bill thus underscored the extra-state apparatus of humanitarian assistance so crucial in austerity-afflicted Greece. Further, in its framing, the bill explicitly invoked humanitarian logics, focused on remedying exceptional and urgent cases as opposed to the increasingly chronic (Vigh 2008), generalized context of struggle in which many Greeks found themselves; and selecting families and children as particularly needy targets of assistance.

Members of Syriza coalition had, in fact, long sought to utilise the discourse of 'humanitarian crisis' to highlight the urgent human cost of austerity. As early as 2011, in a statement issued after a visit to the Greek office of Médecins du Monde (active in Greece since 1989), Tsipras declared that 'this that we are living is not an economic crisis, it is a humanitarian crisis'.<sup>6</sup> He emphasized the growing numbers living below the poverty line as well as their increasing 'exclusion' from what 'until recently we called the social state'. He cited issues of access to social services faced by increasing numbers of people in need, in both the provision of foodstuffs and health-care. This discourse of humanitarian crisis thus described the growing numbers facing conditions of extreme poverty, and a failure of the increasingly strapped social state to deliver the services it was supposed to render.

Médecins du Monde played an important role in disseminating the discourse of economic crisis and austerity as humanitarian crisis, specifically in the context of urban Greece – a trope that Tsipras and some of his colleagues evidently latched onto, and eventually made a key part of campaign discourse and even policy approaches.<sup>7</sup> Médecins du Monde has long had an active programme in Greece, playing a vital role in providing services to migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, specifically. In the early and mid-2000s, when I first began conducting research on asylum in Greece, their office, in the heart of what was then coming to be known as Athens' 'migrant ghetto,' was one of the few reliable places where migrants and asylum seekers (even those without papers) could find care and medicine. By 2011, however, Médecins du Monde had begun to notice a seachange in their clientele: Greek citizens and long-term residents had begun to seek assistance there. They organized a photo exhibition entitled 'Athens, a City in Humanitarian Crisis,' seeking to

document this emerging situation. In their announcement of the exhibition they stated the following:

The current situation in Greece and especially in Athens, presents all of the elements that constitute the definition of a humanitarian crisis, and often comprise the reason why Médecins du Monde, for all of these years organizes missions abroad. People homeless, unemployed or employed in modern slavery, malnourished children without access to health services.

The language was strong, and the message was clear: humanitarian ‘crises,’ so often defined as being ‘abroad,’ had come home to roost. Greeks themselves had become the objects of internal humanitarian sentiments and projects.

### **Citizens out of Place**

The language of humanitarian crisis was picked up by the popular media and in political discourse, illustrating how signifiers of ‘extreme’ poverty had become more visible and widespread. The term was used in the mainstream press, and on the political left and right.<sup>8</sup> Even as Syriza actively cited the language of humanitarianism in their advocacy against austerity,<sup>9</sup> Golden Dawn, the neo-Nazi party, also invoked this term.<sup>10</sup> In such invocations of humanitarianism, homelessness was often cited as a key factor, as were problems of food distribution and healthcare. But the visibility of homelessness in Athens captured popular imaginations for how it highlighted the ‘extreme’ effects of economic instability and austerity. A great number of news articles discussing ‘humanitarian crisis’ in Greece between 2011 and 2015 show images of homeless encampments; or of people phenotypically marked as Greek sorting through the trash.<sup>11</sup>

In Greece, I have often heard homelessness cited as an example of the ‘barbarism’ of North American society: where families do not take care of their own, and where the state also leaves people on the street. In contrast, Greece has long been characterized as having its share of difficulties, but where – so the dominant assumption goes – people most often receive what they need to live; first from family and friends and then, if need be, from the state. Greece has quite recent histories of extreme poverty and even famine: the Nazi occupation of Athens, and the Greek civil war. As Daniel Knight shows (2015), current struggles have conjured memories of these earlier times of scarcity, even while these memories were temporarily eclipsed as Greece attempted to become a contender in the European economy (Placas 2011). One of the oft-cited after-effects of Greece’s earlier difficulties has been what many have described to me over the years as a near-obsession, even among lower-middle-class Greeks, with acquiring real estate, particularly in urban areas, to complement property ownership in one’s village of origin. Anna, a long-time interlocutor, explained to me in 2006 that Greeks will always buy one house, two houses, or even three, to make sure that even if their children do not have a job, they will at least have a ‘tile over their head,’ to cite a common expression. However, with new property taxes attached to austerity memoranda, increasing taxes on ownership and inheritance, and the stagnant real estate market, property itself has become a burden. Homelessness in Greece thus illustrates wider anxieties not just about the failure of the social state but also the fragmentation and degeneration of Greek social and family ties in the age of austerity.

I have often heard images of Greeks sorting through the garbage cited as shocking for related reasons. A colleague, for instance, explained that despite his critical position as an anthropologist of Greece, he still could not help but be moved by such images, which illustrated, for him, the indignities to which Greeks had been reduced. This is also a form of subsistence that, in Athens especially, has traditionally been carried out in a more organized fashion by those long identified as ‘outsiders’ in Greek society. These professional scavengers include Roma, who expertly strip any valuable metal from discarded objects; and, more recently, South Asian migrants working in consortiums that collect aluminium and other metals. Under austerity, however, Greek grandmothers and grandfathers have often been noted as visitors to the rubbish bins on Athens street corners, usually in the very early morning or at night, to avoid visibility. And indeed, one increasingly finds small gifts displayed prominently beside rubbish bins: whether usable food items; clothing; or other things that can be reused, highlighting the care that now goes into considering what one throws away – and who, perhaps, might make use of it.

The ways in which economic downturn and austerity have brought disorder not just on the Greek social state but on social and familial networks of care are captured powerfully in the commentary of Giorgos, a seventy-five-year-old former house painter who suffers from severe respiratory disorders (which he attributes to his profession), and who himself struggles with homelessness. He is a long-term beneficiary of one of the social pharmacies where I have conducted my fieldwork. Divorced, with limited contact with his children, Giorgos mourned perhaps most strongly his lack of contact with friends, specifically the shared social world of other older men like himself. He explained that he missed going to the coffee shop (see Papataxiarchis 1992; Cowan 1991) where one day someone would treat him to a coffee, and where, ‘tomorrow or the next day,’ he could return the favour. The ruptures not just in his family circles, but also in these circles of reciprocity and friendship, have had, for him, calamitous effects.

[With the crisis] things were already difficult, and now they have gotten even more difficult ... At one time you had a person, a friend, to give you twenty euros, let's say, and the day after tomorrow I would pay it back. Or you would find something, a little bit of work – I don't I know. Now ... rather than being a liar, and having people look at me on the street because of this [unrepayed] ten or twenty euros ... I don't say anything and I pass on by ... And perhaps many others don't even have twenty euros or ten euros ... And they are married, have children, or a family, have expenses too ... so you bear your cross in silence until we die and no longer exist.

Giorgos' commentary highlights how once crucial (and also highly gendered) circles of assistance and reciprocity have been disrupted. He now has few options other than humanitarian and charitable initiatives, of which he only grudgingly makes use. He goes to the social pharmacy for his medicine, he told me, because it resembles a regular pharmacy and has an anonymity that he can bear. But he does not want to make use of other such initiatives, he explained, ‘because I am ashamed, I am ashamed. It's one thing to say let's got to my house and we will eat together, you

know. But to go now to a place like that [a charity] to say ‘may I have a little food,’ I don’t know – I would die [of shame]. I would rather die of hunger ...’

Other interlocutors of mine, like Maria, however, have regularly (if also reluctantly) made use not only of Syriza-sponsored social programmes, but also of private and informal humanitarian initiatives. She explained that if it were not for the food provided by the local solidarity network, she would not be able to eat; and without the clothing she found there, she would not be able to leave the house. In 2015, Kostis, himself preoccupied with gendered notions of honor and shame (like Giorgos), brought his electricity bill one day into the social pharmacy to demonstrate the decrease to his monthly costs, thanks to the ‘bill for addressing the humanitarian crisis’. He also regularly went to the local solidarity network to find food for himself and his mother. However, when he discussed this with his co-volunteers, he highlighted how once he gave his portion away to a young single mother. Even in his own demonstrable moment of need, he found a way to maintain a kind of distance from others needier than him, as well as a gendered responsibility and capacity to provide.

The discourse of humanitarian crisis, and the on-the-ground realities that it reflects, are associated with matter out of place, both literally and figuratively (Douglas 1966): in visible signs of poverty such as people on the street and sorting through rubbish heaps, but also in more subtly devastating accounts of the disintegration of informal circles of assistance. Crisis thus indicates not just economic collapse and human suffering but also the increasing cosmological disorder, as well as a fundamental reordering, of Greek society. Greek citizens, formerly assigned to homes, families, and friendship networks have been cast out, so to speak, occupying those spaces once reserved for those at the margins of the socio-political body, now becoming the targets and recipients – willing or not – of humanitarian interventions.

## **Humanitarian, not Sovereign, Citizens**

Since the revelation of government mismanagement and corruption in the making of Greece’s sovereign debt in 2010, the question of money – and Greece’s apparent incapacity to manage it in a manner appropriate to European membership – has been invoked to justify both tacit and explicit challenges to Greek sovereignty. Governing through debt and the logics of the common market have become crucial to the biopolitics of European membership. Ideas of ‘responsible’ monetary management, and the assumption that everyone must pay their debts, are foundational to austerity policies. They are also the conditions on which the Eurogroup extended credit to Greece as a stop-gap against a default (and the disaster that this would be to European and also global finance).<sup>12</sup> Such notions of (ir)responsible money management have also continued to shape attitudes toward the distribution of humanitarian funds in Greece to refugees, in which the Greek government has, again, been characterized as unable or unwilling to handle not just flows of people, but of monetary aid (see Howden and Fotiadis 2017).<sup>13</sup> Money seems to be Greece’s Achilles heel: the site where Greece’s sovereign body is most easily penetrated.

Back in Winter of 2015, the ascension of Europe as an increasingly market-driven union, and the palpable violence that austerity had wrought on the health of the Greek nation and the bodies of Greek people, were what the newly-elected Syriza government claimed that they would challenge. Tsipras, in his campaign speeches, emphasized repeatedly the importance of dignity (*axioprepeia*), figured in terms of self-determination, democracy, and sovereignty. Lobbying against austerity, in anticipation of a new set of debt negotiations, occupied the Syriza government's first spring in power (2015). However, the insistence of the Eurogroup on additional, even more stringent, austerity measures, led eventually to the referendum on July 5, 2015, in which Tsipras' government asked the people to vote 'yes' or 'no' to the new austerity memoranda, raising fears globally that Greece might choose a 'Grexit'. Greeks voted overwhelmingly *Ohi* (No) which, in the media especially, was rerepresented in the heavy symbolism of the Metaxas' historic 1940 *Ohi* to Mussolini's request to march through Greece during World War II. The 'No' vote had powerful nationalistic dimensions, characterized in the Greek press as an undeniable assertion of Greek popular sovereignty. At the victory celebration in Syntagma Square, leftists celebrated alongside members of the nationalist party, and even Golden Dawn marched in a martial formation in front of Parliament in approval of the vote. Nonetheless, less than two weeks later, Tsipras signed on to austerity memoranda that were even more severe, splitting the Syriza coalition irreparably.

Significantly, however, just three days after the referendum, when the response of the Greek government was still undecided, Jean-Claude Juncker (head of the European Commission) and other European leaders publicly asserted the need for 'humanitarian aid' to Greece, specifically if no agreement could be reached. 'We need to have humanitarian aid whatever happens,' stated EU Economic Affairs Commissioner Pierre Moscovici.<sup>14</sup> Blaming the 'annoying' antics of the Greek government (a characterization that depicts the referendum, and the Greek state, as small and insignificant), Juncker underscored the importance of 'not turning our backs on the Greek people,' even – so it was implied – if the Syriza government had gambled with their well-being. Media accounts immediately noted the contradictions that this promise of humanitarian aid signified for a state within the European Union. *Business Insider* reported: 'Humanitarian aid is typically mobilized in response to natural disasters or wars, and even then normally only for third world countries whose governments' are under resourced. But, then again, Greece is starting to look economically war-torn'.<sup>15</sup> Such coding of Greece in humanitarian terms at the European level thus positioned Greece not as a functioning democracy but as a country facing a 'state of emergency,' with an increasingly failed state.

Discussions of humanitarian aid were thus put on the table, even as the Eurogroup adamantly refused requests for debt restructuring. Humanitarian assistance was, in effect, some EU leaders' response to the assertion of Greek sovereignty evident in the referendum, framing Greece not as a state and people that had to be reckoned with, but as a population in need of emergency aid. This was also an opportunity for increasingly unpopular European leaders to present a benign face (Hann 2017). Of course, such characterizations were also met with counter-narratives in which Greece was

framed as a symbol of resistance against EU power players, specifically Germany. Yet the willingness of European leaders to engage with Greece on *humanitarian* terms, but not on *sovereign* terms, underscores the profound power asymmetries through which the emergence of this humanitarian discourse took shape. Greece could access relief through its role as a site of suffering, but not as a sovereign, if unruly, nation and people.

Such assertions also reinscribed the Syriza government's own coding of crisis and austerity in humanitarian terms; one could even interpret Juncker's use of the humanitarian lens as a kind of backhanded concession to Tsipras. Through their invocation of the humanitarian narrative Syriza had, in effect, played with fire, even as they carved out ways of addressing the human costs of austerity. In September 2015, just two months after Tsipras' capitulation – and his emergence in the aftermath looking docile, gray-faced, and broken – the EU released two billion euro from the EU Social Fund to assist Greece. But by that time the hundreds of thousands of refugees arriving on Aegean islands signalled a new humanitarian crisis in Greece that overshadowed, for the time being at least, the suffering of Greek people.

## The Refugee Crisis Arrives

Before the Referendum and its fallout, in spring of 2015 the numbers of refugees arriving in Greece had skyrocketed – though most of the rest of the world had yet to pay attention. From my vantage point in Athens, Omonia Square and its environs – long a central meeting point for new arrivals – was peopled by men, women, and children with overstuffed suitcases and belongings packed in plastic bags. During an early summer trip to Lesbos, the Aegean island long a site of border crossings, I saw multiple boatloads of people dragged into Mytilene harbour each morning by the coastguard, amid the growing presence of Frontex ships. After I left Greece to return to the US for the start of the academic year in late August 2015, colleagues and friends were sending daily reports of an unfolding humanitarian emergency. A groundswell of local solidarity networks initially mobilized resources and labour. On Lesbos, locals fished people out of the water and opened their cars and homes to new arrivals, despite the very real danger of being charged with human smuggling (Rozakou 2016). Others spearheaded the response in Athens, assisting the thousands encamped in the city centre park, the Pedion tou Areos, in the sweltering August heat. By mid-fall, the situation in Greece dominated the newspapers and the airwaves also globally, with images of boats, lifejackets, and bodies superimposed on the backdrop of sun and sea. The 'refugee crisis' had arrived on Europe's Aegean shores, and Greece was now soundly positioned on the global geography of humanitarian disaster.

This transformation of Greece into a humanitarian venue of global significance was reflected also in the materialities and socialities of an emerging humanitarian marketplace. Evthymios Papataxiarchis (2016) describes how the village where he based his doctoral fieldwork in the 1970s, Skala Sykamnias (on the north of Lesbos, just a few kilometres from the Turkish shore), became the point of arrival for over 500,000 refugees. He highlights the extraordinary emotional and material excess of this humanitarian

landscape, overlaid on longstanding practices of village life. The activities of solidarity initiatives were later supplemented and, in part, eclipsed by international organizations, national and international NGOs, and charitable and religious groups from throughout Europe and the world, which established or increased their presence in Greece, primarily in the Aegean. International volunteers arrived – self-funded, supported by friends and family, or via crowd sourcing – at a level that was also unprecedented.<sup>16</sup> Young people from the European North and North America thus also found purpose in exhausting work alongside Greek compatriots as the winter arrived, and casualties mounted.<sup>17</sup>

When I returned for fieldwork in March 2016, I found my key fieldsites – two Athens-area social clinics/pharmacies – navigating the challenges of the refugee crisis the as it intersected with the long-term crises of economic downturn and austerity. One of these clinics, in the Athens city centre, had, as early as 2014, identified refugees and *sans papiers* as key beneficiaries of their work. Individually and collectively, volunteers were highly active in offering assistance at both the camp at Elliniko (where Nizar later went to volunteer) and at the encampment in Peiraeus, among other sites of refugee habitation. My other key fieldsite (where Kostis is active) is smaller, in a suburb of Athens, and works mostly at the neighbourhood level, so they were less explicitly engaged in outreach toward refugees. Yet they too negotiated dilemmas posed by new faces at their doorstep, some of whom were recent arrivals sent there by formal NGOs which lacked the necessary medicines.

In this article, I have consistently located solidarity initiatives amid overarching trends toward humanitarianization in Greece. However, I must make clear that the characterization of solidarity initiatives as ‘humanitarian’ diverges from dominant emic accounts of the meaning and practice of solidarity within the solidarity movement. This tension illustrates an important internal contradiction evident in both my research and in the solidarity movement itself (see also Theodossopoulos 2016). Katerina Rozakou (2017) has recently explored what she calls the ‘paradox’ of ‘solidarity humanitarianism’: ‘that participants in self-defined solidarity groups strongly differentiate themselves from large-scale and professional humanitarianism’. Also in my fieldsites, those engaged in solidarity work emphasized their grassroots, informal, non-professionalized character, over and against what many described in often blanket terms simply as ‘NGOs’: what many assumed to be institutionalized, well-funded, well-resourced organizations functioning on professional, paid labour.<sup>18</sup> Further, they emphasized solidarity’s horizontalized character, and how they sought to bridge hierarchies between giver and receiver, which many find to be endemic to charitable and humanitarian work. One of my interlocutors, for instance, described traditional humanitarian aid as being about elevating oneself while reducing the other to an ‘object’. Humanitarianism, another explained to me, is based on a ‘gap’ between the one who offers care and the one who receives it. Some describe traditional humanitarianism as being about ‘people in Africa’ (see also Pipyrou 2014) – people who Greeks feel are far away and thus unlike themselves. In contrast, solidarity is often said to be about creating forms of sharing that transect intersubjective borders (Rakopoulos 2016).



And yet, solidarity initiatives, not unlike traditional humanitarian work, are indeed subject to a paradox: they too provide often urgently needed resources to people in need, and they thus often become mired in the difficult, exclusionary forms of decision-making that accompany the distribution of scarce resources (Bobbitt and Calabresi 1978; McKay 2012). Moreover, with the flood of humanitarian aid that entered Greece with the refugee crisis of 2015–2016, solidarity initiatives often found themselves working alongside, and even in reluctant collaboration with, traditional humanitarian institutions. As such, even as solidarity clinics/pharmacies sought to provide material forms of assistance to many, they also often participated in instantiating hierarchies of ‘deserving’ or ‘needy’ persons and populations. Such frameworks of deservingness were highly fluid and yet, perhaps not surprisingly, they often revolved around the nexus of citizens/non-citizens (specifically refugees) as key categories of beneficiaries who are coded as distinct, yet who also negotiated overlapping forms of vulnerability and precarity.

Activists founded the first social clinics in 2011, in Crete and Thessaloniki respectively, to assist migrants who did not have papers (and thus no access to the health system). But with economic crisis and austerity, the fifty-plus social clinics/pharmacies founded since then have focused on serving people ‘in need,’ irrespective of citizenship, legal status, or country of origin. The refugee crisis, however, introduced a new discussion within the social clinics regarding who – citizens and/or refugees – were to be primary recipients of care. Each social clinic/pharmacy has its own practices (formal and informal) to determine who receives assistance. Some operate on ‘good faith’ but nonetheless encourage citizens to make use of faltering state services, to create pressure on the state to follow through on its responsibilities.<sup>19</sup> Some have more formalized registration requirements. For instance, the small social pharmacy in the suburb of Athens where I have done extensive fieldwork does not even have a bank account of its own, but it has a highly bureaucratized registration procedure, demanding from citizens and long-term residents a tax statement certifying zero income; though the ultimate decision of when to distribute medicine lies with individual volunteers. *Sans papiers* are most often granted assistance. However, at both of my primary fieldsites, asylum seekers and refugees are regularly redirected to NGOs on the rationale that the work of solidarity is not meant to ‘fill in’ for the paid work of formal humanitarian assistance.

Vangelis, a longterm interlocutor (and a founding member of the small social pharmacy), underlined what he saw as the key distinction between Greek citizens and refugees and migrants. Foreigners, he explained, ‘have no one;’ Greeks, he clarified, usually have family and friends who can help them. Vangelis’s analysis is commensurate with that bifurcated vision of liberal citizenship (vs. alienage) that I outlined earlier, which reflects the dominant presupposition that refugees, as ‘foreigners,’ were necessarily positioned at the outsides of a discrete social and political body comprised of citizens. Scholarship has, however, shown that in practice things are quite a bit more muddled: migrants and refugees often have robust social networks in host countries, which are often crucial to survival (Menjivar 2000; Stoller 2002) while, as I have already discussed (following Giorgos), many Greek citizens experience increasing social fragmentation

and atomization. Nevertheless, the mass arrival of refugees, a population assumed by many to be particularly vulnerable, introduced a new framework of need into the panorama of solidaritarian assistance. Encounters with refugees at the social clinics variously reinscribed and reconfigured this dominant cleavage between citizens and aliens; and at key moments, new conceptions of need, deservingness, and vulnerability emerged.<sup>20</sup>

A founding member of a social clinic in Northern Greece told me in May 2016 that ‘when the refugees came they gave us a reason to continue our work’. The small social clinic where he was active was within driving distance of Idomeni, where thousands of refugees camped in the mud in early Spring 2016, waiting to achieve passage to Northern Europe. Previously, he recounted, his small social clinic/pharmacy had focused on serving locals and also on making a political statement: it was organized by professionals and retirees angry at the retraction of pensions, livelihoods, and especially, the limited possibilities available to their children. However, the numbers of local beneficiaries had decreased to the point that they had been reluctantly discussing whether to close. With the arrival of refugees *en masse*, however, they were needed again: they organized trips to provide food; and even after the camp at Idomeni was disbanded by Greek and European authorities, they assisted refugees with not just medicines but also food, housing, and other necessities. Refugees, then, constituted for many solidarity initiatives particularly needy recipients of care.

Nevertheless, heated debates also emerged at my fieldsites regarding the positions of Greek citizens vis a vis these new arrivals, attesting to changing understandings of the relationship between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’. A number of my interlocutors drew explicit parallels between refugees and citizens, often through invocations of Greece’s refugee history (see Cabot 2017): the many Greeks from families forcibly relocated during the 1923 exchange of populations with Turkey (Hirschon 1989).<sup>21</sup> Christos, a volunteer from an Asia Minor refugee background, explained to me that Greeks, having suffered displacement in their recent history, are particularly able to connect with displaced populations. Other Greek interlocutors highlighted the overlapping struggles of poor Greeks and refugees, captured perhaps most strongly in the expression ‘internal refugees’ (referenced earlier). At the general assembly of another solidarity initiative, for instance, one woman stated that ‘the refugees are in the worst situation, but this is everyone’s struggle’.

The refugee crisis has, for some active in the social clinics, even more strongly underscored the difficult positions of many Greek citizens. In May 2016, at a general meeting at the clinic in the Athens city centre, some emphasized that the primary focus would now have to be refugees, because they were in the greatest need. But others were uncomfortable with the idea – as one woman put it – that they would ‘abandon’ fellow citizens. Danaë, a longtime volunteer, told me in an interview that ‘of course we have to help the refugees,’ but that they should continue to assist Greeks, partially to combat racism. She emphasized that it was particularly difficult for Greeks to seek help at solidarity initiatives. In a comment that recalls Giorgos’ discussion of shame, she added that someone who has come to a social clinic has *lost his or her self-respect*; and so, she added, *we must treat them with respect – respect for what they have undertaken*. Implicitly, then, Danaë suggests that loss of self-respect is particularly acute for those citizens for whom

citizenship has, in a sense, failed. Another volunteer, Evi, made an even stronger point. She explained to me during a lull in the workflow that, in her view, Greeks were perhaps even more in need than refugees: *With refugees there still seems to be hope that things will get better; but with poor Greeks it is like looking into a tunnel without a bottom – nowhere to go but down.*

For those active in the social clinics/pharmacies, the project of defining who is in need, between different needy populations facing sometimes distinct, and sometimes overlapping, forms of precarity, has centred precisely on the fluid distinction between two categories framed as credible recipients of care: refugees and citizens. The arrival, *en masse*, of refugees in Greece introduced complex dynamics into the, already paradoxical, work of solidarity. For some, like Vangelis, who invoked the long-standing relationship between citizenship and alienage inscribed in liberal formations of national membership, refugees constituted needy subjects *par excellence*, owing to their assumed positions outside the national body and attendant frameworks of community and social support. Evi, however, emphasized a reconfiguration in her understanding of the social and political body of Greece. She highlighted the abject position of citizens who find themselves facing an empty tunnel, so to speak, signalling (in her view) a radical degeneration of the position of the citizen. The implicit logic in Evi's comment might also be rendered in this way: For refugees, precarity and vulnerability may be, in a way, understandable (if not acceptable); there is the 'hope' that, eventually, with the bestowal of legal status and incorporation in communities, this precarity might be remedied. Yet for her, precarity becomes most crushing in the face of the humanitarian citizen, the one for whom no 'hope is coming:' for whom legal status and access to social ties are not presumed to be in question, but who, nonetheless, gazes into a tunnel without a bottom.

My research at the social clinics thus highlights the destabilizing of long-standing notions of the relationship between citizenship and alienage, and the emergence of new categories of needy subjects amid the entwinement of humanitarian and neoliberal logics under austerity. Importantly, such troubling of the ground of citizenship – and how research participants themselves understand their struggles – does not necessarily entail the negation of key forms of difference (legal and political) between the precarity faced by border crossers and by less mobile populations. Nevertheless, the humanitarianization of refugees and citizens alike, and the emergence of overlapping areas of suffering and struggle between these groups so often assumed to be distinct, attests to a shift in how sovereign citizenship is conceived and practiced on Europe's margins. Such shifts speak to the limits of citizenship in contexts of neoliberal governance. They also, perhaps, point to new sites of connection, and shared struggles and socialities, as diverse groups seek to face the challenges of precaritization (Butler 2009).

## **Conclusions: Citizenship at the Margins – Citizenship at its Limits?**

The refugee crisis has catapulted Greece into the global humanitarian imagination, yet there has been significant inattention to Greece's emergence as a double humanitarian landscape, where citizens themselves have become targets of humanitarian projects.

Specifically, the recoding of citizenship in humanitarian terms attests to a precaritization of both national sovereignty and sovereign citizenship, and the frameworks of civil rights that these presuppose. This precaritization can be viewed in the cobbled-together livelihoods and care-seeking strategies of Greeks like Kostis, Giorgos, and Maria; as well as in the difficult work of those active in solidarity initiatives, who have become brokers of resources and services necessary for livable livelihood to both citizens and non-citizens. Finally, as Nizar's comments highlight, these shared modes of precarity may also be evident to refugees on the receiving end of humanitarian projects in Greece: Greeks, he emphasized, 'need help themselves'.

Earlier discussions of citizenship underscored how 'the refugee' functions as the limit-point of citizenship: the antithesis of the citizen who, in being cast out of the national body, makes visible an endemic violence in the framework of sovereign citizenship itself, and the limited possibilities of rights in the age of national membership. However, in contemporary Greece rights have become increasingly precarious for both citizens and non-citizens in ways that blur and reconfigure the distinction between citizenship and alienage. Refugees have often emerged as particularly notable targets of care, owing to their assumed positions outside the socio-political body. And yet, as shared forms of precarity have come to the fore, citizens themselves – not just refugees – have also come to expose the limits of rights on Europe's margins.

If the humanitarian citizen is the one for whom, essentially, no hope is coming, what does this leave us with regard to the meaning of citizenship in Europe today? In a talk he gave in Thessaloniki shortly before the inauguration of the Eurozone, Étienne Balibar (2004) made the compelling observation that core power relationships become most visible at the margins of things. Across Europe, and also in many parts of the globe, there is talk of the dismantling of rights and attendant modes of membership that might herald imaginable futures. In the context of Europe, discussions of austerity and economic struggle may be most dominant in Greece, but the effects of precaritization are evident not just in other European margins but also in the centres of power. A key irony, however, is that the rights so deeply challenged through precarity are part and parcel of the very framework of national membership that has, for so long, rendered 'the refugee' alien. The precaritization and desacralization of citizenship, then, has thus also been accompanied by new projects through which health, membership, and belonging are being reimagined. The social clinics and pharmacies are just one venue in which such reimaginings are taking shape, with their many ambivalences.

## Notes

1. In March 2016, a 'statement' was signed between the European Union and Turkey to return 'irregular migrants' and less vulnerable refugees back to Turkey. This controversial decision has further reinforced the marginality of Greece even as it has altered the territorial profile of Europe by extending bordering practices not just to the edges of Greece but to Turkey itself.
2. See, for example, 'After Crisis, Greeks work to promote 'Social' Economy,' *NY Times* January 24, 2014. 'Greece's Solidarity Movement: it's a whole new model-and it's working,' *The Guardian*, January 2015; and Greece: 'the Crisis has brought out solidarity, love and collective action,' *The Guardian*, June 22, 2015.

3. A note on terminology: at one of my primary fieldsites, the term ‘solidarian’ (*allileggios*) was used to refer to those who offered their time and labour. “Solidarian” (as odd in Greek as it sounds in English) is in common in many parts of the Greek solidarity movement and serves to distinguish the work of solidarity initiatives from other traditional ‘voluntary’ structures (which may include philanthropic and humanitarian work). At my other key fieldsite, however, the term ‘volunteer’ was used very unproblematically. For the sake of clarity in English, I will retain the term ‘volunteer,’ but also here recognize that this term is problematic for many active in the solidarity movement.
4. See for instance the recent work of Catherine Besteman on relationships between Somali refugees and poor Mainers in a deindustrialized town in the Northeast of the United States (Besteman 2016); the important work of Engin Isin on ‘decolonizing mobile people’s’ (Isin 2018) which deconstructs the concept of “mobility” as a production of the idea of sedentariness embedded in the concept of the nation state. Heike Drotbohm’s (2016) current research on Brazil examines how seekers of refuge and poor Brazilians encounter each other in sites where they are often thought to be in competition (such as the assignation of shelter, or through the provision of childcare). Melanie Griffiths’ current work looks at the shared positionalities of recent migrants and refugees in Britain alongside British citizens looking for social rights such as housing and shelter.
5. The European Commission, European Central Bank, and the International monetary fund
6. <http://www.voria.gr/article/tsipras-i-ellada-antimetopizei-anthropistiki-krisi>
7. It is also worth noting that Médecins du Monde (MDM) and Syriza had, and still have, very close ties, perhaps most visible in the promotion of a founding member of MDM in Greece, Yiannis Mouzalas, to the position of Migration Minister in August 2015.
8. <http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=296010>
9. <http://www.voria.gr/article/tsipras-i-ellada-antimetopizei-anthropistiki-krisi>
10. <http://www.xryshaygh.com/enimerosi/view/h-oikonomikh-krish-echei-metatrapei-se-anthrwpi-stikh-krish>
11. Lifo.gr, 3/2/2015, News 24/7, Greece, 4/20/2015; The Guardian UK, February 11 2013.
12. In August 2019, the last eurozone ‘bailout’ program for Greece came to an end. Some data suggests an economic resurgence in Greece (see, for instance, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/greece-eurozone-bailout-programme-end-alexis-tsipras-euro-europe-debt-austerity-a8498501.html>). Nevertheless, the country will likely be working for decades to pay back its 322 billion euro debt to its creditors. Further, the deleterious effects of austerity on the Greek population—particularly the middle classes and those at the lower end of the political economic-spectrum—will likely be felt for years to come.
13. For example, a recent article in *The Guardian* (September 2018), written by a former voluntourist on Lesbos and recent Kennedy School graduate now working for Gordon Brown (and who grounds his expertise on having ‘spent the summer volunteering’ in a refugee camp in Lesbos) opens with the sensational subheading: ‘Overcrowded, violent and awash with human sewage, Moria camp may be the world’s worst refugee facility – yet Greece has failed to make the available funding count’ (<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/sep/13/greece-refugees-lesbos-moria-camp-funding-will>).
14. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-07-08/eu-floats-humanitarian-aid-as-possible-salve-to-greece-euro-exit>).
15. <http://www.businessinsider.com/europe-humanitarian-aid-greece-grexit-2015-7>
16. See Kantor, Jacqueline. ‘The Hidden Costs of Volunteering in Greece’ <https://psmag.com/the-hidden-costs-of-volunteering-in-greece-7fe7248b15e4#8f73nba32>.
17. Even as the urgencies of the ‘refugee crisis’ have faded from public view, both formal and informal initiatives remain active on Lesbos (Rozakou 2017), as well as more grass-roots responses by refugees themselves (De Graaf 2018).
18. As an ethnographer also of NGOs, I must emphasize that, in practice, NGOs are themselves diverse and rife with external contradictions .

19. Importantly, in April 2016 the Syriza government introduced, formally, at least, universal public healthcare with no copay to all those who have a tax ID number. The details of this change, while deeply relevant to the topic at hand, deserve much greater space than I can grant them here. When I began my fieldwork in January 2015, social insurance (and access to public healthcare) with no fee or copay was dependent upon employment; healthcare was also granted to those navigating extreme poverty. For the many unemployed during the crisis but above the extreme poverty line, however, healthcare thus proved to be extremely difficult to access, and this was a crucial gap that the solidarity clinics/pharmacies sought to address. The effects of the shift introduced in April 2017 are a topic of great discussion in the social clinics. I have data that attests to the importance of this change in enabling access to healthcare for some. However, implementation of the change has been uneven, and the faltering health system is, by many accounts, struggling to provide acceptable care to all. Moreover, certain pharmaceuticals have remained too expensive for many, primarily owing to the copays for certain medicines that remain quite high for many care-seekers. (Those qualifying formally as being below the poverty line can access medicine without a copay).
20. As noted earlier, my current research on the social clinics does not approach ‘refugees’ as a distinct group and, rather, takes the clinics as sites of encounter and connection between diverse segments of the population struggling with access to healthcare. My earlier research (conducted between 2005 and 2013) on asylum and refugees in Greece entailed long-term fieldwork with lawyers, police, bureaucrats, asylum seekers, rejected asylum seekers, and legally recognized refugees. In my earlier work (Cabot 2014), I demonstrated how the legal process of asylum did not simply ‘cast out’ asylum seekers but, in fact, served as a site of encounter where the boundaries between citizenship and alienage were negotiated, primarily through affective ties, ethical decision making, and socialities. Further, I demonstrated that the acquisition of refugee status did not overcome the challenges posed by poverty, ill health and other struggles to survive. The current context in Greece has, of course, changed. There are formal camps in which many border crossers are housed, and the law is exclusionary in new ways. Yet emerging scholarship has shown the law to be powerful but also non-determinative in terms of social ties and political-economic formations and that, in ‘crisis’ Greece, there are many rich sites of overlapping struggle between refugees and diverse groups of citizens (Rozakou 2016; Cantat 2016). The numerous asylum seekers and refugees I have met living independently outside of camp contexts and developing close contact with Greeks attest to the ongoing fluidity of these boundaries between citizenship and alienage.
21. See also John Borneman and Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi’s (2017) recent article on how Germans have also recently invoked their even more recent refugee history in terms of displacements from the former east in the wake of the resettlement of over a million refugees since 2015.

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