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Holly Chalcraft

Crisis and Chimeras; an Anthropological investigation of the stories and lives of young, Greek professional migrants living in post-referendum UK

Abstract

This PhD thesis is based on my ethnographic study of Greek professional migrants living in London, England. Based on my ethnographic fieldwork between 2018-2020, using methods of participant observation and semi-structured interviewing, my thesis explores the stories and lives of Greek migrants living in London, in the context of the UK's decision to leave the European Union; a process known as 'Brexit'. My thesis explores the impacts of the financial crisis and Brexit on my informants' hopes for the future, which I explore through the lens of temporality and affect. In the context of financial crisis, some of my informants felt that life in Greece had become *miseri* (miserable); they felt that Greece's potentiality for modernist success had become a chimera- illusory and impossible to achieve. In my thesis I apply theories of crypto-colonialism to explore these informants' view of Greece as 'behind' the rest of Europe, and I argue that many modernists are now post-ambivalent in relation to the *disemia* (Eastern/Western sides) of Greek identity because they no longer consider Greece to be their home. In my thesis I explore emplacement and displacement beyond a spatial framework and contribute to anthropological understandings of the 'abject' and the 'uncanny'. I reform existing approaches to *xenitia* (misery and hardship abroad); I view *xenitia* as a trope rather than a topological register. Throughout my thesis I explore the affective, (micro)material and sensory aspects of migration and belonging and I demonstrate the value of a negative methodological approach.

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Crisis and Chimeras

an Anthropological investigation of the stories and lives of young, Greek professional migrants living in post-referendum UK

Holly Chalcraft

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Anthropology

Durham University

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Dedication

To ***Rachel and Rebecca****, my cousins, for inspiring my resilience and love of life*

Introduction

Setting the Scene

Based on my ethnographic fieldwork in London between 2018-2020, using methods of participant observation and semi-structured interviewing, my thesis explores the stories and lives of Greek professional migrants living in London in the context of the UK's decision to leave the European Union- a process known as 'Brexit'. My thesis is based on my ethnographic research with Greek professionals who moved to London after the financial crisis, between 2010 and 2020. Economic hardship has significantly impacted people in Greece. In 2013, the unemployment rate in Greece peaked at 27.5%, and for those under twenty-five years of age, the rate was 58% (BBC, 2018). Spending cuts, high taxes and cuts to salaries and pensions led some people to riot on the streets and "[a]t the height of the crisis some worried that the eurozone - the 19 countries that shared the euro - would collapse alongside Greece" (BBC, 2018). Since the economic crisis in 2008, more than 400,000 Greeks have left Greece seeking work opportunities in other European countries, including the UK. As young professionals who are educated to the level of masters or PhD, my informants form part of the recent wave of migrants that are referred to as Greece's 'Brain Drain'. The emigration of Greeks peaked in 2012 and 2015 (Papakonstantinou, 2021) and in London, the number of Greeks has been estimated to be 100,000 according to the data provided by the Bank of Greece.

History of Greek migration

Greece has typically been a migrant-sending country and Greek migrants have been said to have moved abroad for better employment opportunities, or to escape war, persecution, economic crisis and poverty. In contrast to today's emigrants, Greeks in the past were of comparatively low socioeconomic status. For example, in the 1890s, as a result of economic crisis in the kingdom of Greece, there was a great wave of emigration to the US that lasted until WW1 (Clogg, 1999: 13). The two significant waves of past emigration from Greece were between 1900 and 1917, to Australia[1], Canada and the US, and secondly towards mainly Germany and Belgium, after World War Two. Rural poverty

[1] Between 1947 and early 1980s Australia received a quarter of a million Greeks (Doumanis, 1999: 65)

and Greece's inability to absorb surplus labour also led Greek peasants to move abroad for better employment opportunities in Australia. As Doumanis writes: "Greek peasants had the chance to pursue aspirations for material well-being, long denied to them by small landholdings, rapacious landlords, volatile markets and scarce employment opportunities" (cf. Doumanis, 1999: 66-7). Forced displacement after the Civil War was another cause of migration to Australia[2]. Larger migrations also happened in the aftermath of the Asia Minor 'catastrophe' of 1922 (cf. Clogg, 1999). In England, arrivals of Chiot Greeks were prompted by the great massacre of Chios in 1822 (ibid: 12). For Pontiac Greeks in Southern Russia, deportations under Stalin's purge led to a "bleak exile" (ibid).

In Germany, many Greeks arrived to work as *Gastarbeiter*, or guestworkers, in order to send remittances back to Greece to help families struggling with the economic impact of the Second World War. These Greeks had temporary status as 'guest workers' in a system of 'rotation' whereby labour shortages were filled by rotations of migrants from abroad who would return to their country of origin after their contract ended. These policies were designed to prevent long-term integration of low-skilled migrants. Indeed, with little support to assist their integration into Germany, Greek *Gastarbeiter* spoke little German, which contributed to their sense that they were foreigners[3] abroad. At this time, Greece and Greeks were in a comparatively weaker position economically and strategically in relation to more prosperous European countries and these Greeks felt they were second-class citizens. They also experienced misery and hardship abroad from their sense of separation from their social and cultural communities in Greece.

In contrast to this labour migration, there has also been the tendency for wealthy Greeks to move abroad. Since the Orthodox Christian merchants born in now-Greek cities before the Greek state was established, wealthy Greeks of a more 'cosmopolitan' disposition have also established their success abroad. Wealthy shipping families settled in London in the 20th century, and the Greek diaspora has long been considered to be comprised of Greeks who 'do very well' abroad. During my fieldwork in London, I met many Greek

[2] Doumanis writes how "The Civil War had a polarising impact on Greek society, as did post-war purges which affected those associated with the Left during wartime. Numerous families were forced to leave, and those who found their way to Australia retained bitter feelings for the Greek state" (Doumanis, 1999: 67)

[3] The Greek word for foreigner is *xenos.* As I explain in this thesis, these experiences of *Gastarbeiter* workers abroad relate to what is referred to as *xenitia*- experiences of 'hardship and misery' abroad. I discuss *xenitia* at length in my second ethnographic chapter, where I consider the contemporary relevance of the concept.

tourists on the tube, who explained their perception that Greeks were 'all very successful abroad'. The perception that moving to London was an achievement seemed to be widely shared by my informants, and their contacts in Greece, often in ways which made it difficult for informants to convey the difficulties they experienced in London. Cities like London have traditionally been 'aspirational' destinations for Greek families to send their children. Many of my informants had family members who had, themselves, lived in London or other European cities in their past for studies abroad. Indeed, these family connections were often an encouragement for others in the family to make the move which demonstrates the importance of considering migration from a generational and familial perspective, not just from the perspective of the individual.

More recently the demographic of Greeks in London has come to include people of all socioeconomic strata who have chosen the UK as their destination because they were taught English in main school and in private afternoon language schools. Some of these more recent arrivals include the children of Greeks who went to Germany who returned to Greece with the money they had made abroad, only to see their capital lost as a result of the crisis. Their children tend to have higher educational status than their parents but are typically lower middle or upper working class in comparison with the middle-class 'returners' to the UK. In terms of migration theory, the concept of returning is important because it shows that people do not move randomly, nor do they move for reasons that states or natives sometimes presume to be the case- i.e. the welfare system and benefits in the UK. Many of my informants moved because they already had networks of friends abroad, job prospects, a knowledge of the local system, and a good fluency in English. Whilst my informants and their families have suffered financially from the crisis in Greece, they still have social and cultural capital and a good education.

In Greece, education has been a highly valued aspiration for Greek families since the early nineteenth century due to the association between education and better job prospects, i.e. higher income and better job security. In fact, compared to other states, primary and secondary education expanded rapidly in the 19th century in Greece which reduced levels of illiteracy (Kalyvas, 2015: 41). With respect to higher education, Greece had the highest proportion of university students across Europe, and this trend towards attending university has continued to the present day, including the tendency for significant numbers of Greeks to attend university abroad (Hellenic Republic). However,

despite the rising numbers of students entering higher education in Greece and the significant investment in state-funded education, some argue that Greece's labour market has not been able to 'absorb' many young professionals because of the slow response of the education system to the continually changing technological environment of the labour market (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 1997) (Saiti and Prokopiadou, 2008: 285). Given that the Greek education system tailors students towards a limited range of disciplines (medicine and engineering being particularly popular), Greece seems to have a 'surplus' of qualified people who cannot be easily 'absorbed' by their own or even other countries' job markets. As a result, some Greeks have felt 'driven out' (*ekso),* compelled to move abroad to find work, which many refer to as 'Brain Drain'.

In this thesis I critique the concept of 'Brain Drain' and contribute to anthropological research into the extractive dynamics of migration flows. Through the less common lens of the increasingly vulnerable professional managerial middle-class, I contribute to anthropological understandings of crisis, precarity and extractive economic dynamics. Throughout my ethnographic chapters, I highlight the tensions between my informants' conceptualisation of their migration as something they were forced to do, and simultaneously as something that they chose. I argue that my informants were neither 'transnational elites' nor what Panourgia calls the 'new-poor' (cf. Panourgia, 2018). Whilst my informants' families have lost money and their sense of economic security, they have retained their social capital and middle-class aspirations for the future. In London, most of my informants were employed in higher professional jobs which means they cannot really be considered exploited people, and perhaps not labour migrants either.

Whilst the rough definition of a labour migrant is someone motivated to move abroad mainly due to the prospect of employment in another country (cf. Bartram et al 2014: 91), usually labour migration refers to workers from poor countries who move to wealthier countries to work as 'guestworkers' (though their migration can also be permanent). The kinds of jobs that labour migrants do tend to be low-skilled, low-wage positions that the natives of the country do not want to do, such as cleaning or menial work. They may arrive with a work visa or arrive as undocumented, illegal immigrants. Whilst many of my informants felt somewhat 'forced' to move abroad, they did not

consider themselves to be forcibly displaced people, and they considered their migration to be qualitatively different to that of Greeks in the past who left Greece to escape poverty and persecution.

As I said above, many of my informants had studied in the UK before, and they had the skills, connections, and knowledge in order to enter the job market. These Greeks who had previously studied for a postgraduate degree in London or other places in the UK were from a more middle-class background, with parents who could afford to support their studies abroad. At times, my informants seemed to fit the description of an expatriate: as "people who have chosen to live abroad for some period, and who know when they are there that they can go home when it suits them…these are people who can afford to experiment…for whom openness to new experiences is a vocation, or people who can take along their work more or less where it pleases them" (Hannerz, 1990: 243). Many of my informants stressed that they would be able to 'live anywhere' in the world and added that they were able to regularly return to Greece to visit their family and friends. However, I argue in my thesis that these narratives of 'cosmopolitan' freedom seemed somewhat 'formulaic', as I discuss in my final ethnographic chapter. Whilst some might argue that transnationalism is the most pertinent framework to study contemporary Greeks in London, because these are people who are in London to fulfil their ambitions and life purposes, in this thesis I suggest that middle-class professionals might also be considered part of a 'precariat class' (cf. Schram, 2013; Standing, 2011).

Contemporary context

As I have said, since the economic crisis, it is no longer the case that the only Greeks one finds in London are either the long-standing Greek-Cypriot community and second-generation Greeks (many of whom belong to Greece's shipping families) or the Greek students who are the children of wealthy Greek families. Now, one is more likely to find a range of socio-economic backgrounds, and a greater range of motivations for migration among Greeks in London. In fact, my ethnography supports the view that there seem to be more 'rifts' between Greeks in London in ways which parallel society in Greece. The socio-economic backgrounds and 'mentalities' of Greeks in London is now considered more varied than in the past and Greek people's sense of community with others in London seem to be changing in ways which reflect emerging rifts within Greek and British society. At present over 100,000 Greeks are estimated to live in London. Since the 1990s

and early 2000s when the number of Greeks in London was comparatively smaller, the size of the Greek 'community' in London has dramatically increased to approximately 100,000 Greeks. Whilst in the past, Greeks have been said to maintain a strong sense of ethnic and cultural identity abroad through Greek churches and schools, my informants felt that since so many Greeks have settled in the city, there are now more divides between Greeks abroad. It seemed that the recent 'wave' of migration from Greece to the UK has changed the demographics of Greeks in London and challenged romanticised ideas of 'diasporic' identity abroad[4].

My thesis is particularly relevant in the context of the recent vote in December 2019 by 288 of Greece's 300 MPs to allow members of the Greek diaspora to vote remotely from their place of residence abroad, in Greek elections. Since 1975, only Greeks who are able to travel back to Greece for the day of an election have been permitted to vote. The recent call to extend the voting rights was supported in particular by the New Democracy Party in Greece who brought the issue to special committees based on the assumption that "the decreasing role of PASOK from the political landscape and New Democracy's more technocratic and conservative outlook would rally the biggest portion of the diasporic vote" (Papakonstantinou, 2021). The SYRIZA government at the time decided in the context of increasing support for New Democracy that they would have to make adopting this new law one of their principal priorities as the emigration of Greeks abroad had created an active political constituency that they could not ignore. In addition, parallel European elections in 2019 brought more "external (transnational) pressure on the issue, given that Greek citizens abroad were facilitated to vote in European elections in their place of residence but not for national [Greek] elections" (ibid).

[4] In my masters' dissertation I explained my informants' objections to the term 'diaspora'. Through cosmopolitan narratives that "we're all human beings", my informants objected to diaspora on the basis that it suggests that "you belong to a different group on its own" such that one does not 'come together' with others through a sense of 'one human community'. In this respect, I suggested that my informants felt that diaspora was a term which created 'group think' that hinged on ethnicity (Samers and Collyer, 2017: 363). I also explained how 'diaspora' is defined as the 'spread' or 'dispersal' of a population to other locations which "presupposes a centre" (Clifford, 1997: 269). I explained that diaspora seems to hinge on a 'bounded culture model' in which nation-states are naturalised as the units of belonging (Chalcraft, 2019). I explained that diaspora seems to contrast with Rapport's argument that "individuals are more than their membership of and participation in cultural collectivities" (Amit and Rapport, 2002: 139). In the context of Greeks abroad, diaspora does seem related to ideas of cultural collectivities. Diaspora is often associated with second and third generation Greeks- such as those in the US and Australia- who keep Greek traditions and 'maintain their identity in the host nation' so to speak through communities and associations (Clogg, 1999; Hirschon, 1999: 160).

As my discussion in my ethnographic chapters will show, my sample of Greek professionals who I met in London during my fieldwork reflect the expectations of the New Democracy party that the recent emigration from Greece is comprised of people who support their technocratic and conservative agenda. In this thesis, the narratives of Greeks in London that I present can be said to reflect a certain demographic of people with neoliberal and modernist aspirations and ideas about progress and success. In fact, given the trends towards modernist positionalities in the Greek diaspora, some Greeks in Greece consider those who have moved abroad to be 'traitors'. Some people in Greece feel that those who left Greece have subscribed to the neoliberal ideals of the very countries who they feel are responsible for the damaging effects of austerity which they feel were imposed on Greece by the countries who provided the bailouts.

In this thesis I explore these tensions from the perspective of Greeks living in London. My thesis builds upon Panourgia's comments that there is in Greece a "pastiche of identities, multifaceted and not always at ease with each other" (Panourgia, 1995: 48). I argue that we cannot consider there to be a stable sense of 'home' as understood as a national or cultural community whereby Greeks living outside the borders of Greece are considered to be 'estranged' and in 'exile'. In my thesis I argue that many modernists are now post-ambivalent in relation to the *disemia* (Eastern/Western sides) of Greek identity because they no longer consider Greece to be their home. My ethnography explores the rifts and tensions between Greek people and demonstrates that differences in 'mentality' were the most important basis for connection and community between the Greek people I met in London.

These *disemic* rifts and tensions between Greek people seem to have been intensified in the context of 'Grexit'. Many people thought that between 2010 and 2015, Greece would be forced to leave the eurozone and even the European Union. However, in 2015 the Greek government voted for Greece to receive the third bailout that "put Grexit to rest" despite the fact that 61% of voters in Greece voted against this deal. Many Greek people felt 'betrayed' by these politicians and the 'U-turn'. Particularly given the context of debates about 'Grexit' and the negative stereotypes of Greeks as 'lazy', some of my informants wanted to demonstrate that they rightfully belonged in Europe. As I explain in my thesis, Greece and Greeks have been portrayed negatively in the context of economic crisis; some commentators have located blame for the crisis in aspects of Greek

'culture' that they deem to be 'incompatible' with European modernist standards. For example, according to Knight, diasporic Greeks living in the UK feel that Greeks in Greece "are not even trying to change their lifestyles but continue to complain" (Knight, 2015: 121). Knight explains how these people remark that "'people endlessly complain and whine, but they still have great lives. They don't want to work and have had it too easy for too long'" (ibid). Onlookers outside of Greece have declared that "Greeks that continue to spend so much money on coffee, nice clothes, and vacations [and therefore] cannot truly pretend to be victims of austerity. Greeks, they argue, do not want to sacrifice some basic pleasures in life or to adapt to the new economic landscape" (Knight, 2015: 121).

In this thesis I explore these extractive dynamics and culturalist tropes about the causes of the crisis and relate them to the idea of crypto-colonialism. The idea of crypto-colonialism might be said to be a variation of the view that whilst Greece has retained political independence, this has come at the price of economic dependence on the more powerful states of Europe (Stewart, 2014: 10). In Herzfeld's work on crypto-colonialism, he explores how countries like Greece and Thailand, which have never been colonised, nevertheless seem to 'mimic' the norms and standards of more powerful countries, in Greece's case, countries in Western Europe. As Herzfeld and other post-colonial scholars have argued, the legacy of European intervention in Greece has created a situation in which Europe is often 'idealised' as the standard to which Greece evaluates itself and is evaluated by others. Herzfeld explains how "European culture is both a goal and an imposition, a dream of incorporation into the civilised West and a nightmare of cultural colonisation[5]" (Herzfeld, 1991: 25). Europe is both familiar and something to which Greece has been alienated and excluded (Herzfeld, 1989: 48).

Indeed, Herzfeld critiques how some people locate the cause of the economic crisis on Greek people's 'corruption'. Herzfeld argues that "[i]t is very convenient for the West to 'demonstrate' how corrupt [Greek] people are. You see how they [Greeks] are completely unable to live up to a Western story of morality" (Herzfeld, 2014). Herzfeld argues that those who construct the 'corruption index' are not necessarily people from Greece, and furthermore, "what one calls corruption now is a social system that has been facilitated

[5] This is an extension of Herzfeld's and others' argument that Greece's "core political and aesthetic value" of Hellenism is "a Western model formulated by European classicists and philhellenes and foisted onto Greece" (cf. Stewart, 2014).

partly by the actions of one's predecessors in the global power structure" (Herzfeld, 2014). In my thesis, I contribute to Herzfeld's ideas of crypto-colonialism in my discussion of moments from my ethnography where my informants spoke about Greece through developmental narratives in which they implied that Greece was 'behind' Europe. Comparing Greece to the 'benchmark' of Europe, some of my informants implied that Greece needed to 'catch up' with the UK and become more 'modern' and progressive. It seemed that these informants presented Greece as somewhat 'backward' and 'behind' in relation to other (Western) European countries. It seemed that some of my informants have internalised crypto-colonial expectations that Greece and Greeks should follow the modernist norms of European societies and adopt an individualistic view of the self.

In my thesis, I have been inspired by Stewart's arguments about the 'colonisation' of the mind, particularly with respect to "the sphere of ideas and aspirations" (cf. Stewart, 2014) and the trends towards more 'individualised psychologies' in Greece as he puts it. In his paper 'Colonising the Greek Mind?', Stewart explores the trends in Greece towards quests of 'self-understanding', "self-realization, individualization, autonomy and self-fulfilment" (Stewart, 2014; cf. Rose, 1998). Stewart discusses the interconnection between what he calls 'psy-ification' and globalisation (Stewart, 2014: 11), though he questions whether this could be referred to as a process of 'colonisation'. Stewart views these trends as part of "an ontological shift from the Orthodox anthropology of the person to a Western anthropology of the individual" (Stewart, 2014: 15). I agree with the clarificatory point Stewart makes that this shift towards a more individualistic view of the self is not mutually exclusive from feeling a sense of belonging to a group or a collective. In my thesis my contribute is to explore the modernist and neoliberal dynamics of these trends towards individualistic ideas of the self and situate them within the context of Greek people's aspirations to belong to Europe and the impact of this on their decision to migrate. In terms of the debates about 'colonisation' (or not), I would argue that the idea of crypto-colonialism is helpful to understand the neoliberal and modernist positionalities emerging in Europe. Before I explain my theoretical contribution and outline my ethnographic chapters, I will first discuss the methodology of my thesis, below.

Methodological Approach

Ethnographic fieldwork

The ethnographic chapters of this thesis are the product of conversations I had with over one hundred young Greek professionals who moved to the UK over the last decade, aged between 20 and 40 years of age, who have lived in the UK from in a range of few months to 10 years. Whilst my findings are based on the views and experiences of many people, I have chosen to discuss the narratives and experiences of a select few of my informants who best demonstrate the range of perspectives, experiences, positionalities, and opinions of Greek people I met in London. I introduce these informants within the body of my ethnographic chapters.

My participant observation approach follows the established trend in anthropology to live alongside one's informants, to take part in a variety of everyday activities, and often to simply 'hang out' with the people one is researching. In my research, such activities comprised eating and drinking- commensality- with my informants, as well as going shopping, walking with them, and spending time in their homes. Sometimes people wanted to arrange a more formal 'interview' at their work office. My participant observation also involved attending cultural and political events that were organised in London through such associations, which were advertised over the internet and social media. Once I had built relationships with my informants, I was also invited to other private events including a poetry performance, evening drinks, and dinners at informants' houses.

Between 2019-2020, I lived in North London from where I travelled to other parts of London to meet my informants. In contrast to common perceptions of migrant communities, Greek professionals who have recently moved to London did not tend to live in the same places in London. Of course, some of the older, more established Greeks in London have formed communities centred around the Orthodox Churches- particularly those in North London near Wood Green and Alexandra Palace; and Bayswater near Notting Hill- and many Greeks, especially those with families, prefer to live in those places. However, my informants lived in many locations all over London. I therefore found it useful to visit cafes where people of many professional and socioeconomic backgrounds would visit. To meet new people, I regularly frequented

popular Greek cafes in central London- near Bond Street, Angel, Leicester Square, Covent Garden, Piccadilly and Knightsbridge. I also went to Greek Orthodox churches in North and West London. In addition, I met participants through events in central London, such as talks organised by the Hellenic Observatory at the London School of Economics in Holborn- an established intellectual hub for London-based Greeks.

Much of my ethnography took place in Greek coffee shops in London, which I found to be useful 'hubs' for Greeks in London. The methodological advantage of coffee shops was my ability to blend into the environment and select opportunities to strike a conversation at a socially appropriate moment. There would usually be lots of people in the coffee shop, and I would make my order and choose a seat near enough to people who I suspected were Greek. I would listen out for people speaking Greek in order to sit close enough to strike up a conversation naturally and subsequently explain that I was doing research about Greek professionals living in London. People's curiosity about my interest in their lives and the focus on my project was a natural entry into conversation and I found meeting new people easy in these settings.

Of course, sometimes people were unable to speak to me for long, particularly during work-day lunch hours, and sometimes interactions were fleeting- if they were meeting old friends and wanted privacy. Of course, even when I was not talking to people, I was observing the aesthetics and materialities of the coffee shop environments, which has also been an important aspect of my research findings. Nevertheless, my research was also strengthened by the repeated visits to other informants' houses, and my invitations to social gatherings at people's homes where I had multiple hours to talk and observe, including whilst they were cooking and preparing for guests to arrive. Particularly over dinners in larger groups, it was easier to see the naturally occurring debates between people of different positionalities and views.

Active listening and intersubjectivity

During my research, I found the method of active listening useful to avoid rushing to conclusive answers or fitting data to my pre-existing ideas. My method of active listening was particularly useful to ensure that informants were able to raise and discuss topics most salient to them. By adopting the role of 'traveller' and not 'miner' (Kvale, 1996), I aimed to 'get out of the way' and let my participants talk (Bernard, 2006). In some respect

this approach is inspired by life history approaches, whereby participants can tell longer stories about their experiences with little prompt from the interviewer. Indeed, active listening requires "the least directive types of probes and prompts to facilitate the conversation" (ibid). For example, I used sensitive silence, repetition feedback (to facilitate the expansion of a topic) and nodding. To facilitate the flow of conversation and make my informants feel at ease, I let my informants fully finish their discussion of a topic and did not interrupt them. I then asked follow-up questions which built on what they had said, rather than changing the topic. I also checked my understanding of what they had said and clarified anything I had misunderstood. Whilst I was guided by my research interests and questions, I used the 'tell me more about' question style to avoid closed or leading questions. I asked questions concisely and clearly, avoiding 'questions within questions' or multiple-choice questions (which often confuse the researcher and informant) (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011: 152-3).

From my perspective, active listening provided greater space for meaning to be co-constructed in my research. By taking a more free-flowing approach, my informants felt comfortable asking me questions, and asking about my experiences. Sometimes these were on difficult topics relating to my own personal experience, but I found the honest interaction and equality of participation rewarding, fostering greater trust and rapport. In this two-way, open style of communication, the meanings produced in our conversations might be said to have been 'co-constructed' (Ellis & Berger, 2003). The conversations I had with my informants were intersubjective encounters which shaped us (Jackson, 1998: 28). My informants changed my perspective and approach in various ways, and the theoretical approach and arguments of this thesis that I have chosen are a product of this studying 'with' my informants.

Adopting Holstein and Gubrium's (2003) broad vision of reality as an ongoing, interpretative accomplishment (ibid: 73), my intention was to allow my informants to 'recount' their lives (cf. Arendt 1958) in an attempt to capture and appreciate the complexity and potential messiness of their narratives. In my participant observation at these different events, in different settings, I was able to consider the context of my informants' discourse and discussions. Methodologically I agree with Cabot and others that "[l]ife histories—both as narrative forms and, indeed, as the lives of particular people—are always contextual, taking shape within existing, though dynamic, webs of

human relationships (Arendt, 1958; Greenhouse, 1996)" (Cabot, 2013: 456). As Sutton (1998) highlights in his ethnography of Kalymnos, "different interpretations co-exist and are mobilised at different times" (Sutton, 1998: 141). He indicates this through an example of dynamite throwing on Kalymnos and how this practice is framed, variably, depending on the context[6].

Cabot (2013) similarly highlights the importance of context in understanding migrants' narratives[7]. In her research on asylum seekers, she explains how experiences are presented in a way that suits the audience. Cabot focuses on how asylum seekers "shift and adapt their own self-presentations depending on the interactional context" (Cabot, 2013: 456). Cabot reflects on her own positionality as someone who was perceived to also be an audience seeking a 'refugee story', and how this influenced the type of 'polished story' that refugees told. In my work I also reference my own positionality as a white British woman to consider how my ethnography was similarly "imbricated in the dialogisms of social aesthetics" (ibid). For example, given the precarity that they faced in the context of economic crisis and Brexit, I argue that my informants wanted to performatively establish themselves as 'good immigrants' who were not 'taking British people's jobs'. In my research, I draw on the insights of critical ethnographic methodology that allows for the acknowledgement of the researcher's own situatedness (Kirtsoglou 2004: 18) and provides space for reflexive awareness of the anthropologist's role in the research practice.

[6] Dynamite throwing had been practiced in Kalymnos since the Italian occupation in 1944. For many Kalymniots it reflected Kalymniots' resistance to outsiders and their characterisation of Kalymnian identity as an "unwillingness to bow down to any authority, whether foreign oppressors, the Greek state, the European Union or other outsiders" (Sutton, 1998: 76). However, Sutton describes another framing of Kalymnian identity: one of Kalymnians as law-abiding citizens of the Greek state. As Sutton explains: "Those most committed to the statist image of Greek identity, insisted vehemently that dynamite throwing was not a 'custom', but the insane practice of a few 'barbarians'" (Sutton, 1998: 72). Importantly, calling the practice of dynamite throwing barbaric is connected to the need to present a "respectful and 'civilised' face to the rest of Greece" (Sutton, 1998: 72). However, when these same critics of dynamite throwing wanted "to show the distinctiveness of Kalymnians, even they would praise a limited version of the practice" (Sutton, 1998: 72). Sutton's example of dynamite throwing on Kalymnos demonstrates how allegiance or opposition to dynamite throwing changes depending on the context of a discussion (Sutton, 1998: 62). "Different interpretations co-exist and are mobilised at different times" (Sutton, 1998: 141). Each position that may be taken allows for contrasting events to be recalled. Positively, one may refer to past Easter celebrations in which dynamite was thrown. In contrast, people may negatively recall 'the accident' in which a teenage boy was killed on a hillside when throwing dynamite which exploded and caused the hillside to collapse.

[7] "Life histories—both as narrative forms and, indeed, as the lives of particular people—are always contextual, taking shape within existing, though dynamic, webs of human relationships (Arendt 1998; Greenhouse 1996)" (Cabot, 2013: 456).

Fieldnotes

Because narratives are always linked to the context in which they are told, I kept detailed ethnographic fieldnotes in order to record the contexts in which my informants spoke and acted. During my participant observation, at (or as close to) the time of the event, I recorded short 'jot notes' in which I recorded what people were wearing, how many people were present, who was interacting with whom, who was doing the most talking, the ages of people present, the informality/formality of their language, body language, facial expressions, and emotional demeanour. In order to aid my ethnographic descriptions, I also would note down a description of the setting, including sketch maps- particularly of seating arrangements and layouts, any key words and phrases (particularly phrases which I wanted to quote verbatim in my written work), the details of conversation and topics covered, the time of day, length of event, and activities involved. I would also include some notes on how I was treated by informants in order to direct how I should behave in future interactions and how I should negotiate my identity in the field (Ruth Horowitz, 1996: 43, cited in DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011: 31).

At the end of each day of fieldwork, I spent several hours converting these jot notes into longer fieldnotes, which I recorded electronically. I titled these notes with the date they were created in order to create an organised record that I could navigate easily. It was from the longer fieldnotes that I developed my ethnographic vignettes which I have presented in this thesis. Passages that are marked '…' are paraphrased versions of informants' words and expressions, that are not exact verbatim quotations. In passages of narrative that are marked "…" in my ethnographic chapters, these are verbatim quotations. On occasions when my informants specifically requested it, I recorded audio and created transcripts of my conversations, keen to ensure that their views would be accurately recorded and kept in line with their ideas of what 'proper research' should be. Often, my methods would be directed by my informants as much as my own ideas about epistemology, and my efforts to follow their direction indicates my commitment to establish shared goals and practice in a co-constructed way.

In addition to my extended fieldnotes, I kept a personal diary to record my personal emotions and frustrations and to track the development of my understanding, which I kept separate from my log and analytical notes. In my diary I recorded some of my personal experiences and the more 'tacit knowledge' or 'headnotes'. Separate to the diary,

I recorded in my log activities of the day and expenditure records- such as my travel costs- in addition to unanswered questions which would inform my future days' fieldwork. I also included outstanding tasks and potential people to interview here in addition to notes and ideas from readings and references as well as methodological notes (cf. DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011: 168).

The analytical notes that I created were my record of my ongoing impressions, thoughts, concerns and explanations. I wanted to keep my speculations and inferences separate from my fieldnotes so that my fieldnotes only recorded the actual behaviour of my informants rather than my interpretation of that behaviour (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011: 167, 170). In this way I could allow my interpretation to change according to the data I collected over time and avoid the risk of inaccurate conclusions early on. At the same time, I recorded my initial interpretations and conclusions for reference. In my analytical notes I also recorded things that would require more explanation and research. These analytical notes were temporary and iterative, and helped me plan future research activities to ensure I filled any gaps in my record. By reviewing my fieldnotes regularly I made sure I could continually challenge my ideas and consider new questions. In this respect one might say that I was continually 'working from the middle' in my fieldwork; I tried to delay conclusions and endings (cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). At times when I felt overwhelmed by the complexity of my research, I took some days away from the field, to reflect on my data and my methodological approach.

Ethics

Practically speaking, all of my notes were electronic, except for the jot notes which I recorded in small notebooks that were easy to keep discreet. I did not want my jot note taking to interfere with the flow of conversation, nor hinder my participation. After each day of fieldwork, once I had recorded my longer fieldnotes electronically, I destroyed the jot note pages in order to protect against the risk that my data could be stolen or lost. As an additional measure I kept my jot notes free from personal information and tried to write in shorthand that would be difficult to be understood by others. All of my electronic notes and audio recordings were password protected at both the laptop level and the cloud storage level. I anonymised the names of my participants in all of my fieldnotes, using the pseudonyms which appear in this final thesis. To assist my own connections

between anonymous names and real informants for the purposes of fieldwork, I produced a separate password protected database with codes interpretable only to me.

In addition to my commitment to data protection, I abided by the AAA's and the ASA's ethical statements, and the policies of Durham University's ethics committee, from which this research received ethical approval and permissions. Throughout my research (not as a one-off) I negotiated informed consent, avoided undue intrusion and harm and protected my research participants honouring their trust (cf. Hertz, 1996). In each conversation I gave my informants the opportunity to ask as many questions as they wanted about my research. I was open to discussing my aims and interests and explained that my informants could withdraw at any time. I also wanted to ensure full disclosure of the purposes of my research to my informants and endeavoured to established shared goals with my informants as to the purpose and outcome of the research. I explicitly discussed my goals with my informants and tried to find ways in which the results of my research could be useful to Greek people living in London. As I will explain shortly, my theoretical approach to understanding migration has been a direct result of this commitment to make my research relevant and accurate to the experiences of Greek professionals living in London post-Brexit.

Of course, I did not necessarily share my specific hypotheses or conclusions of my research, because I felt this may 'shortcut' my process of coming to conclusions that were data-driven and based on extended participant observation in the field (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011: 48). However, now that my research is completed, and having stayed in contact with several of my research participants, I have offered to send my final thesis to each participant, should they wish to receive it. I have not wanted to 'take' their narratives for my own purposes without giving back. I hope my informants find what I write useful and interesting, and an accurate portrayal of their experiences. During my fieldwork, however, I took great care to ensure that I never shared information about my informants with other participants. Protection of confidentiality and data was my priority whilst the research was underway. In the case of sharing my own views, I was open and honest, but I also tried to put forward my opinions in a way that would respect my informants' potential disagreement or alternative viewpoints. I aimed to be an active listener in all circumstances, avoiding questions and comments that might provoke confrontation and

possibly cause harm. I hope that in this final work I have been respectful to all of my informants, respecting their differences and portraying their views accurately.

In the ethnographic chapters of this thesis, I have aimed to show the diversity and plurality of my informants' narratives and move away from "grand narratives and single, overarching ontological, epistemological, and methodological paradigms" for preference of a "humanistic commitment" to study the world from the perspective of my interacting coparticipants (Lincoln & Denzin, 1994). Rather than taking a naturalistic stance, I agree with other anthropologists that we need 'messy texts' (Marcus, 1994). Therefore, in analysing my data, I was not looking for a homogenous view, or consistent conclusive answers. My aim has therefore not been to depict the 'real' (Fischer, 1986) but "uncover the subjective, the particular and the experiential" (Kirtsoglou, 2004: 19). I felt my duty was to "reveal meaning without the error of defining it" (Arendt, 1973: 107). Rather than simplify my data and look for convergences, I experimented with a more abstract, messy, discussion which 'prolonged' and 'varied' the connections and explanations. I tried to make my work "susceptible to constant modification" (ibid: 12) and tried to perceive impasses not as something undesirable, but as opportunities to open up new 'lines of flight' to create assemblages, rather than conclusions.

Theoretical Approach

Extractive Economies and Migration

In this thesis, I contribute to anthropological discussions of the neoliberalisation of societies in Europe in relation to ideas of crypto-colonialism. Given my focus on young professionals from Greece, my work explores Pipyrou and Knight's view that there is a 'new south' emerging given "the emergence of tropes of colonization by the global North appearing in southern Europe (Pipyrou, 2014: 539). Pipyrou argues that in the context of the European economic crisis, people in Southern Europe feel that they are being colonised by flows of neoliberal business and finance directed from the centres of global power. The contribution of my thesis is to demonstrate how some Greeks who have moved toward these 'centres of global power' like the UK seem to have internalised neoliberal views of selfhood such that they do not frame their migration as part of an extractive dynamics of labour flows between Greece and Northern European countries. Instead, they emphasised that their migration had been their *choice* even if they had also felt somewhat forced to move abroad.

I argue that this shift of emphasis to framing one's migration one's *choice* is part of the shift towards individualistic and neoliberal perceptions of the self as fully capable of achieving social mobility. Rather than seeing success and failure as a result of unjust systems that force people to migrate in order to sustain themselves, the emphasis on the *choice* to migrate seems to suggest that success and failure are a result of one's individual efforts. As I said above, I have taken inspiration from Stewart's ideas about colonisation of the self and how trends towards "self-realization, individualization, autonomy and self-fulfilment" (Stewart, 2014; cf. Rose, 1998) are linked to globalisation, Europeanisation and- I would add- neoliberalisation and modernity. As I mentioned previously, my informants can be said to reflect a certain demographic of Greek people who have modernist aspirations and ideas about progress and success and in this thesis I argue that these 'modernists' moved abroad to achieve as individuals the kind of progress they felt they could not accomplish as part of the national collective in Greece.

My ethnography contributes to Lazzarato's discussion of neoliberal subjectivity and 'the indebted man' (cf. Lazzarato, 2012) who is "at once responsible and guilty for his

particular fate" (Lazzarato, 2012: 9). In this thesis I extend Lazzarato's work to apply it to the context of migration. My thesis supports the claim that "[b]ecoming a 'good migrant' is connected to the neoliberal vision of upward mobility through hard work" (cf. Erel et al, 2016: 1348) as well as the idea that migrants are expected to "transform themselves" in order to fit the society they have moved to (cf. Pedwell, 2012; Mahmood, 2005). The contribution of my thesis is to demonstrate the relevance of Greek migration and Greece's relationship with Europe to these ideas of indebtedness and Lazzarato's point that it is also "public debt that weighs, literally, on every individual's life, since every individual must take responsibility for it" (Lazzarato, 2012: 38). Lazzarato argues that "[i]t is debt and the creditor-debtor relationship that make up the subjective paradigm of modern-day capitalism, in which 'labour' is coupled with 'work on the self', in which economic activity and the ethico-political activity of producing the subject go hand in hand (Lazzarato, 2012: 38). In my thesis I therefore connect Lazzarato's ideas of indebtedness to the concept of the 'good immigrant'. I explore the ways in which my informants seemed to navigate the 'aesthetics of eligibility' (cf. Cabot, 2013) in post-Brexit Britain as I explain more shortly.

Linking indebtedness to the context of economic crisis the associated tropes of responsibility for this crisis, I demonstrate how my informants' migration and positionalities were related to these wider dynamics of indebtedness to creditors. Considering how Greece was made to be a 'debtor' in relation to the 'bailout' countries, these debtor-creditor relations were an important contextual backdrop to my study. Given the negative tropes of Greeks as 'lazy' and 'corrupt', my study (and the ethnographic contributions of Elisabeth Kirtsoglou and Daniel Knight) demonstrate how debt is not only economic but has a culturalized component and includes a "creditor's 'moral judgement' of the debtor, that is, a 'subjective' measure of value…not only are the skills and know-how of the worker evaluated, so too are the poor man's actions in society (social 'virtues', 'conduct', 'reputation', that is, his lifestyle, his social behaviour, his values, his very *existence*. It is through debt that capital is able to appropriate not only the physical and intellectual abilities the poor man employs in his labour, but also his social and existential forces" (Lazzarato, 2012: 59).

I argue that the 'good immigrant' persona that my informants wished to present was built on their self-perception as 'debtors' within the UK who were not only "expected to

reimburse in actual money [through tax contributions] but rather in conduct, attitudes, ways of behaving, plans, subjective commitments, the time devoted to finding a job, the time used for conforming oneself to the criteria dictated by the market and business, etc". In my ethnographic discussion I explore in detail how "debt directly entails life discipline and a way of life that requires 'work on the self', a permanent negotiation with oneself, a specific form of subjectivity: that of the indebted man. In other words, debt reconfigures biopolitical power by demanding a production of subjectivity specific to indebted man" (Lazzarato, 2012: 104). In order to demonstrate that they were not the kinds of Greeks that had caused the economic crisis, my informants seemed to stress that they were not 'lazy' or 'materialistic' but rather willing neoliberal citizens wanting to adapt to British society's capitalist aesthetics and norms.

In my thesis I explore Knight's comments that Greece has become "synonymous with uncertain development, unorthodox economies, poverty, and corruption. As 'southerners in the north' (Comaroff & Comaroff 2012: 4), Greeks feel displaced from the 'Euromodern' (Chakrabarty 2000: 7)" (Knight, 2015: 784). My thesis contributes ethnographic exploration of how some Greeks in London have internalised what Knight refers to as "a self-image of congenital corruption" which he argues has emerged in the "southern periphery" in the context of "fiscal meltdown and privatisation" (Knight, 2015: 784). According to Knight, new forms of neoliberalisation have created a situation whereby "the same 'politics of life' seen in the global South emerge on the fringes of Europe" (ibid). In this thesis I explore how the migration of highly skilled professionals from Greece to the UK might be considered a form of extractive economic dynamics between countries in Europe.

In this thesis I argue that the recent migration of middle-class Greek professionals seems to reflect an extractive economic dynamic between Greece and Europe which I explore in relation to Herzfeld's ideas about crypto-colonialism, as I introduce shortly. Whilst 'extractive economies' was previously applied to describe exploitative relations between colonial powers and the possessions of colonised countries (especially those in Africa), my work contributes to literature which explores extractive economic practice in crypto-colonies like Greece. For example, Argenti and Knight apply the term extractive economy to foreign investment in renewable energy initiatives in Greece. In their paper, Argenti and Knight explain how their informants viewed foreign multinational investment on

Greek soil as an extractive economic practice- an attempt to “export energy to northern Europe rather than assist local communities” thereby “harnessing local natural resources for the benefit of foreign corporations” (Argenti and Knight, 2015: 782). In my thesis I argue that the migration of Greek professionals can also be considered to be part of extractive economic practices.

In my thesis I explore ‘Brain Drain’ from two angles. Firstly, I consider Greece’s ‘Brain Drain’ from this perspective of extractive economic dynamics whereby the migration of Greek professionals can be understood as a form of movement of human capital from the South to the North. At the same time, I discuss the ‘Brain Drain’ of Greek professionals from the perspective of the ‘precarity’ faced by the professional managerial class and point out that my informants were neither ‘transnational elites’ nor what Panourgia calls the ‘new-poor’ (Panourgia, 2018). Whilst my informants’ families have lost money and their sense of economic security, they have retained their social capital and middle-class aspirations for the future. In London, most of my informants were employed in higher professional jobs which means they cannot really be considered exploited people, and in some cases perhaps not labour migrants either. Throughout my thesis I demonstrate that these different angles on the concept of ‘Brain Drain’ are not mutually exclusive; they can both be equally valid perspectives and true at the same time.

Indeed, throughout my ethnographic chapters I explore how my informants simultaneously conceptualised their migration as something they felt they had been forced to do, whilst simultaneously stressing the aspect of *choice* in order to demonstrate that they had taken personal responsibility for their situation and taken control over their fate as I explain more later. Before I situate my contribution in the context of theories of forced migration, I should also say that the concept of ‘Brain Drain’ often seems based on the idea of a ‘national self’, whereby people’s ‘brains’, skills, labour, and talents are considered to belong to nation-states. In my thesis I explore some informants’ views that their skills were being ‘harnessed’ to benefit countries in Europe rather than to help Greece. I critique their view that people have become resources exploited by foreign countries for their own benefit on the basis that it implies ideas of a ‘national self’. Some of my informants implied that their skills ‘belonged’ to Greece as nation-state in their comments about their ‘sadness’ that they should have been able to stay in Greece and contribute their skills in order to 'build a better future for their country’.

Forced Migration

In this thesis I explore how my informants felt forced to move to London, even if they cannot be considered to be 'forcibly displaced' people. As highly-skilled professionals who left Greece after the start of the financial crisis, I consider whether my informants' migration can be conceptualised as a kind of displacement and something that they felt forced to do. Overall, my contribution is to demonstrate the tensions between these two ideas about migration. Whilst my informants tended to emphasise that moving abroad had been their choice, the devastation brought by the economic crisis has also made them feel that they have been somewhat 'forced' to move abroad. As I explain below, my thesis contributes to anthropological debates about which kinds of migrant can be considered 'forcibly displaced'.

One definition of forced migration is "[m]igration that results from some sort of compulsion or threat to well-being or survival, emerging in conditions ranging from violent conflict to severe economic hardship" (Bartram et al, 2014: 69). In this thesis I explore the applicability of forced migration to my informants. I demonstrate how my research leads me to extend the forced migration concept and agree with scholars who no longer believe that the "conventional dichotomy between economic migrants and refugees is cogent or persuasive. 'Economic migration', rather than being entirely voluntary, is in many instances better understood as rooted in compulsion of various sorts – especially when the economic deprivation that constitutes its proximate cause is rooted in deeper socio-economic structures that are determined primarily by the decisions and activities of states, corporations and individuals elsewhere (e.g. in wealthier countries)…Instead of a binary opposition between refugees and economic migrants, then, we can perceive a continuum wherein compulsion plays a greater role in some migration flows and a lesser role in others" (Bartram et al, 2014: 69).

Until the 1980s, migrants seemed to be framed as economically deprived people who were considered to move abroad to seek better opportunities. Reflecting a kind of functionalist paradigm, migrants were said to move abroad because of what they 'lack' in their country of origin. Push-pull models dominated. Migration seemed to be viewed in a relatively on-directional lens with a focus on migrants' integration and adaptation to their 'host' country. The less functional reasons why migrants left their 'home' countries, and

the ways in which they remained connected to people there, did not seem to be a focus until the rise of transnational theories of migration. At this point, in the 1990s, academic discussion seemed focused on globalisation with an emphasis on deterritorialisation, interconnectedness, transnationalism and 'flows' (cf. Rockerfeller, 2011). Transnationalism theory has allowed scholars to discuss the increasing numbers of privileged people who travel abroad for education or 'new experiences' abroad (Ong, 1999; Werbner 1999; Bryceson and Vuorela 2002). These migrants have been "seen to enter a new country from a completely different social and economic vantage point" (Olwig, 2007: 88).

Based on my ethnography, I question the extent to which my middle-class informants can be considered a privileged elite who move freely in global 'flows' taking along their work where it pleases them. Though my informants presented themselves as productive, neoliberal citizens who were able to live and work anywhere, my contribution is to critically assess whether my informants can be considered to be 'transnational elites' (cf. Ong, 1999, 2006). I critique Olwig's claim that my informants- as comparatively privileged migrants- enter the UK from 'a completely different vantage point' to other kinds of migrant (Olwig, 2007). In my view, the vision of middle-class migrants as a privileged elite who move freely in global 'flows' taking along their work where it pleases them is perhaps obscuring the kind of precarity that they do face in the context of economic crisis and Brexit. In the context of Brexit, it is clear that the British state chooses who has the right to reside in the UK on the basis of who is most useful in terms of their labour and skills. It seems that EU migrants and non-citizens more broadly are "subject to conditions and controls on their mobility" (cf. Prabhat, 2018: 125).

In this thesis I demonstrate how Brexit has created precarity in my informants' lives and threatened their sense of belonging and rights to live and work in the UK. Whilst of course middle-class Greek professionals are relatively privileged kind of migrant, I agree with scholars who consider the extractive dynamics of migration 'flows' and agree that we should critique transnational approaches to migration to the extent that they obscure these hierarchies of deservingness and the fact that it is states who decide who is desirable and eligible for the rights to live and work in their country. Before Brexit, it seemed true that migration rules and political discourses favoured and praised the skilled and wealthy, including mobile EU citizens who possess marketable skills or are

economically self-sufficient. These people are usually perceived to be unproblematic from the receiving society's viewpoint (cf. Favell, 2008; King et al, 2000; Lafleur and Mescoli, 2018) whilst "the less-skilled, vulnerable, ethnically different and poor migrants" are relegated to be exploited in the informal sector (cf. de Haas, 2021: 7).

After Brexit, I suggest that the status of Greek professionals also became more precarious. With Brexit, my informants' capacity to control their lives and accomplish their ambitions was hindered. Indeed, their loss of the right of freedom of movement made some of my informants feel that they had become like other kinds of (undesirable) migrants rather than the highly skilled professionals that they felt should be desirable to the UK. Furthermore, with the diffusion of the demographic, many Greeks have found themselves deskilled in London. Whilst some of my informants had studied in the UK previously- their migration to London could be classed as 'return' migration- others found that they could not transfer their qualifications and work experience to their new setting. For example, several of my informants who had trained as lawyers in Greece had ended up working as baristas in the popular Greek coffee shops in central London. Despite the fact that they were qualified to practice law, their lack of British-based experience and UK-acquired qualifications hindered their ability to find work appropriate to their skill level. I also met several medical professionals who worked in nursing homes in jobs which were lower than their level of training.

Given this deskilling that some of my informants faced in London, my ethnography explores the increasing vulnerability of the professional class (cf. Schram, 2013) and the precarity they face. Whilst research tends to focus on the precarity faced by labour migrants and those of low socio-economic standing, the 'precariat' is considered a new class that transgresses the more traditional class boundaries that were defined in relation to the different relationships people had to the means of production. As Standing writes: "[t]hose in it have lives dominated by insecurity, uncertainty, debt and humiliation. They are becoming denizens rather than citizens, losing cultural, civil, social, political and economic rights built up over generations. The precariat is also the first class in history expected to endure labour and work at a lower level than the schooling it typically acquires. In an ever more unequal society, its relative deprivation is severe" (Standing, 2011: vii).

Post-colonial critiques

Whilst scholars have critiqued the negative impacts of inequalities through the lens of refugees and other forms of forced migration, it seems that the relevance of precarity in the study of middle-class migrants has been comparatively less of a focus. Broadly speaking, my goal is to critically review the value attached to different kinds of hopes and variant types of crises and to ultimately question the usefulness of so-called 'push' and 'pull factors' in explaining the desire and the decision to move socially and geographically. In fact, I critique the theoretical paradigm of transnationalism to the extent that it obscures the inequalities between different kinds of migrants and the increasing precarity faced by even the professional managerial class (cf. Schram, 2013).

In this thesis I consider the argument of Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris that "[t]he increasing restrictions placed on the mobility of certain people, but not on the mobility of capital or of the high-end professional-managerial class, are constituent factors of the modern condition of neoliberal capitalism" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris 2016: 221; cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; cf. Green 2013). I agree with Kirtsoglou's argument that "by focusing on the management of migration, analysis and accountability becomes lost in the folds of the cloak that covers the reasons behind the exodus of persons from their homelands. The multiple terms used to describe these subjects—refugee, migrant, irregular, clandestine, and so forth—lock any analytical attempt into an 'aesthetic of eligibility' (cf. Cabot, 2013) hindering the development of public critique of the role of the "Western great powers" of capitalism and imperialism in the global political and economic order (cf. Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2010: 108; Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2013)".

Speaking critically, Kirtsoglou explains her view that there is a "strict differentiation between 'refugees' who deserve international protection and 'migrants' who are regarded as deportable or used as a cheap and precarious labour force" (Kirtsoglou, 2018: 221). The different classifications of migrants as 'professionals', 'economic migrants', 'labour migrants', 'asylum seeker' and 'refugee' have been well documented in migration literature. The type of classification one is given fundamentally affects the potentiality of one's life abroad. In neoliberal societies, scholars argue that laws frequently facilitate and favour the immigration of well-educated, highly skilled people,

whilst "irregular migrants or asylum seekers are kept out through national security measures and treated as potential terrorists" (Prabhat, 2018: 16; cf. Meer et al 2010).

I expand upon Kirtsoglou's idea that the refugee and the professional are not contrasting dichotomies; these alternative forms of existence are not opposed to each other, but rather they "form a rhizome, a complex symbolic space where modern political subjectivities are produced and performed in *relation* to some imagined forms of radical alterity" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016: 8) as I explain more shortly. My work builds on literature which argues that the category of 'refugee' is "ultimately a legal construct that privileges a certain idea of what constitutes persecution" (cf. Rajaram, 2018). I agree that "migrants, working-class migrants, excluded or impoverished by global capitalist structures, and refugees are marginalised in similar ways. When we take the legal language out, there is little social, economic, or political reason to maintain strict differentiation between refugees and working-class migrants" (cf. Rajaram, 2018).

Of course, I must clarify that this comparison is not at the level of experience, but rather at the level of the root causes of displacement. Clearly, professional migrants such as my informants who are able to travel comfortably and with relative ease to those refugees and migrants on boats across the Channel and into Calais do *not* have the same experience by any means. My point here is rather that in all cases of migration- that of refugees, 'economic migrants' and middle-class professionals, people are simultaneously forced and also choose to move geographically in order to move from a position of precarity to safety and security. Of course, the precarity of refugees who fear for their lives as a result of violent conflict or of economic violence such as famine and hunger, is not the same kind of precarity related to standards of living. This said, I agree with scholars who deem that there is a structural similarity between these kinds of movement which reveals current conditions of structural asymmetry between the global North and the Global South. In this respect, we might say that middle-class migration is not exempt from the somewhat extractive economic dynamics between Europe's core and its periphery.

On the idea of rhizomes, briefly, I should say that some anthropologists are critical of Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic imagery (cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Some anthropologists critique how some scholars have adapted rhizomatic thinking in their focus on 'lines' and 'meshworks' (cf. Ingold, 2007), arguing that such approaches hinder

ethnographic depth or anthropological exploration of affect[8]. Whilst I agree that we should critique a focus on 'lines' (cf. Ingold, 2007), I find that rhizomatic imagery works well when applied metaphorically to understand the radical alterity between different kinds of migrants, and in particular, how neoliberalisation and crypto-colonial dynamics seem to underpin my informants' experiences of crisis and their decision to move to the UK. In my view, rhizomatic thinking does not preclude focus on affect, but actually aids it, as I explore later in my discussion of entanglement and assemblage in relation to the affective aspects of crisis and ruination.

The main contribution of Deleuze and Guattari's work, I would argue, is their critique of the 'arborescent form' of thought which encourages a topological and hierarchical view of the relationships between individuals, who each have an allotted place in a system of signification (cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 16). Their imagery of the rhizome is meant to capture the 'messier' reality of interconnections including 'off-shoots' and so on. Another point they make in their work is to make the difference between a 'map' and a 'tracing'. In their explanation, the idea is that tracings are more fixed, whereas maps are more of "a model that is perpetually in construction or collapsing" (ibid: 20). In my view, it is helpful to think in the rhizomatic way in order to understand how my informants, as middle-class migrants who are part of the professional managerial class, can simultaneously be at times affected by the precarity and extractive economic dynamics which more severely affect other 'kinds' of migrants' lives.

In my thesis I adopt Kirtsoglou's invitation to critically analyse the hierarchical dynamics which hide behind notions of 'global interconnectedness' and 'internationalisation' which appear in transnational theories of migration. Kirtsoglou makes the point that whilst both the refugee/migrant and the globalised subject (such as a tourist, an executive of a multinational corporation, and even an anthropologist) are 'deterritorialised' entities, "the former is perceived as distraught, the latter as accomplished" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016: 8). In this frame then, Kirtsoglou argues that the highly skilled professional is considered to be a kind of "globalized subject [who] embodies modernity and endorses consumption. She stands for progress (understood and deployed variously

[8] Another difference between my ethnographic exploration of the rhizomatic aspects of migration, and Ingold's ideas of 'meshworks', is that my thesis explores the political and affective dimensions of migration as I explore in part two of this chapter.

and differently) and is regarded as possessing the celebrated ability to think and exist beyond national boundaries and fixed categorical groupings" (ibid). "[H]er movement is seen as engineering capital, either directly, through consumption, or through internationalizing production, facilitating local and global entrepreneurship, disseminating ideas, images, science, or technology" (ibid).

As I said previously, Kirtsoglou's point is that other kinds of migrants are constructed as "matter out of state". As she explains: "Her alter-ego, the refugee, the migrant, the sans papier, is paradoxically denied this kind of mobility. She is constructed as clandestine and deportable (cf. De Genova 2010), what I call (with a nod to Mary Douglas) matter out of state, an excess and a violation of national and international law and order, a liminal being. In her liminality she comes to embody transgression and becomes the paradigm of perhaps the most radical form of alterity in the era of (post)modernity" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016: 3). As I said before, importantly, Kirtsoglou argues that the refugee and the professional are not contrasting dichotomies; these alternative forms of existence are not opposed to each other, she argues, but rather they "form a rhizome, a complex symbolic space where modern political subjectivities are produced and performed in *relation* to some imagined forms of radical alterity" (ibid: 8). Over the course of my thesis, I demonstrate how certain informants who fit this description of the globalised subject established this what I call modernist positionality by comparing themselves to other kinds of migrant, including other Greeks, particularly through their 'cosmopolitan' narratives as I explain shortly. In my thesis I explore how my informants' migration stories reflected these hierarchical dynamics of the 'aesthetics of eligibility' in terms of the way that they presented themselves and their reasons for moving.

'Aesthetics of eligibility'

The phrase 'aesthetics of eligibility' is taken from Heath Cabot's paper which focuses on how asylum seekers applicants in refugee camps narrate and perform their experiences in a way that is compelling for particular audiences. I have taken inspiration from this paper theoretically and methodologically. Theoretically, Cabot's paper extends Fassin's 'politics of life' theory to challenge the view of the aid candidate as a victim. Cabot argues that her informants did not just seek to 'fit' existing templates of victimhood and vulnerability, but rather actively participated in producing, resisting, and even reshaping

the pictures through which their eligibility is assessed. For example, Cabot describes how one informant presented himself as a vulnerable person in need of protection in front of adjudicators, whereas to Cabot "he highlighted his canniness, fluency regarding asylum law and its adjudicative demands, and his capacity to play with or even 'game' the system" (Cabot, 2013: 456).

In my work I similarly adopt Cabot's methodological approach to focus on how people "shift and adapt their own self-presentations depending on the interactional context" (Cabot, 2013: 456), and my contribution and extension of Cabot's work is to demonstrate the neoliberal and capitalist dynamics to the social aesthetics of the 'good immigrant' persona that my informants seemed to performatively establish. In addition, I reference my own positionality as a white British woman to consider how my ethnography was similarly "imbricated in the dialogisms of social aesthetics" (ibid). For example, given the precarity that they faced in the context of economic crisis and Brexit, I argue that my informants wanted to performatively establish themselves as 'good immigrants' who were not the same as 'other immigrants' who British people felt were 'taking their jobs'.

In my final ethnographic chapter, I explore how some of my informants performed 'formulaic' narratives of normative cosmopolitanism to prove not only that they were 'good immigrants' who should be acceptable to Britain, but also to assert that Greek people rightfully belong in Europe. As I mentioned previously, Greece and Greeks have been portrayed negatively in the context of economic crisis; many people thought that between 2010 and 2015 Greece would be forced to leave the eurozone and even the European Union. Some commentators located blame for the crisis in aspects of Greek 'culture' that they deem to be 'incompatible' with European modernist standards. In this thesis I argue that the expectations that Greece and Greeks should 'mimic' the supposedly more modernist norms of European societies is indicative of the crypto-colonial dynamics between Greece and Europe.

Ideas of belonging to and exclusion from Europe are of crucial relevance to migration theory. Many scholars have outlined the exclusionary bordering practices on the fringes of Europe. Some migration is deemed illegal, whereas other kinds of migration are positively encouraged. Of course, these classifications are fundamentally linked to the benefits that these people bring- economically speaking- to the countries within Europe. Some migrants are framed as a drain on resources whereas others are treated as

desirable productive citizens who consequently 'belong'. The social movement theory of migration problematises "the global inequalities and political processes that lead nations to define some persons as unworthy of rights in the first place" (cf. Jones and Wonders, 2019). This literature is critical of the way in which some people's mobility is criminalised and emphasises that "the border practices and policies of nation-states often *produce* migration, harm and violence" (ibid). In this paradigm, scholars critique how bordering practices limit the expansion of rights and protections for some of the world's most vulnerable people.

Some scholars are even critical of aid organisations who, according to Ticktin, do not always create radical change but often reinforce the 'established order'. As Cabot explains it: "Miriam Ticktin (2011:19) distinguishes "political" action, aimed toward radical change that disrupts the status quo, from the "antipolitics" of humanitarianism (see also Ferguson 1994; Fisher 1997). She argues, following Giorgio Agamben (1998) that, in claiming to stand outside politics through the moral imperative to offer care and support, humanitarian organizations reproduce structures of power and violence; the migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees they serve often remain caught within these dynamics of exclusion. Therefore, she argues compellingly, rather than enabling radical change, aid organizations often reinforce the "established order." My thesis builds on this critique.

Based on the way that my informants performatively established themselves as 'good immigrants' who were productive economic citizens, I argue that the criteria for acceptance and worthiness in contexts of migration are still very much determined by states and neoliberal and capitalist ethics and aesthetics. We might say that the dynamics of exclusion remain in place, and middle-class migrants' successful acceptance into societies does little to change the fundamental dynamics of the established order. Indeed, I am somewhat sceptical of framing even irregular migration as a social movement to the extent that migrants' movement is considered able to create significant social change. I would question the view that "the decision to cross a national border without permission challenges the historic portioning of the world into those who 'have'- simply because of the place of their birth- and those who do not" (Jones and Wonders, 2019).

Whilst some scholars argue that globalisation has marked the demise of the nation state and the advent of a new 'de-territorialised' paradigm of political existence (Hann, 2013), others argue that walls, borders and "the techniques to mark, maintain and control them

are proliferating" (Green, 2013: 355). Some forms of migration seem to become criminal and punishable, a violation of the territoriality of the nation-state- particularly when these migrants are considered to be racialised 'Others' (cf. Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris 2018). Of course, the hierarchies between different kinds of migrants are not only on the basis of skills, but also with regards to their origin. There is an aesthetic aspect to eligibility that is connected to the colonial histories of nation-states. In this respect, my informants- as Caucasian Europeans- would be considered a comparatively privileged kind of migrant.

Whilst my research is focused on people who are comparatively more privileged than other migrants whose rights are comparatively more constrained, my research still contributes to critically assessing the appropriateness of the social movement paradigm as a lens to understand migration. Of course, my informants- as middle-class Greek professionals- are not subjected to the same kinds of risks and obstacles in their migration journeys. Nevertheless, my work contributes to theories of how structures of power and violence are reproduced and how migrants- including middle-class migrants- are caught within these dynamics of exclusion. Many of my informants seemed to have internalised the hierarchical distinctions between different 'kinds' of migrants in ways which question the extent to which irregular migration has fundamentally challenged the neoliberalisation in Europe which determines who 'belongs' and who does not. As I mentioned previously, many of my informants can be said to reflect a certain demographic of people with modernist aspirations and ideas about progress and success. My informants navigated the 'aesthetics of eligibility' to establish their positionality as successful neoliberal citizens who have the right to reside and belong to Europe.

Cosmopolitanism, *disemia* and crypto-colonialism

For several decades, scholars have stressed the interconnectedness of people across the world and focused on the flows of people and goods in our globalised world. Some suggest that trends towards interconnection demonstrate that we all belong to 'one human community'. Cosmopolitanism has therefore become a popular focus of study. Some scholars have argued that the nation-state system is breaking down (cf. Grillo, 2007: 212; Benhabib, 2007) "to be replaced by more complex networks and identities of a diasporic, hybrid, crossover nature" (Grillo, 2007: 212). Such perspectives have emerged from critical and postcolonial theory which offers "a powerful critique of traditional

conceptions of culture, nation and identity" (ibid). In relation to anthropology as a discipline, scholars like Grillo see this "displacement and transcendence of boundaries" as something positive. "Pluralism, diversity and heterogeneity" are considered "solutions to the problems of essentialism in which nationalism, multiculturalism and even anthropology itself might be considered to have been stuck" (Grillo, 2007: 212).

This what I call normative version of cosmopolitanism seems directed towards creating the Kantian idea of an *ius cosmopoliticum* or 'one human community'. Such theories of cosmopolitanism seem evident in the work of Benhabib in particular. In many of her papers Benhabib has "documented the disaggregation of citizenships rights, the emergence of an international human rights regime and the spread of cosmopolitan norms (Benhabib, 2001, 2002, 2004a)" as she puts it (cf. Benhabib, 2007: 19) which in her paper, 'Twilight of Sovereignty or the Emergence of Cosmopolitan Norms? Rethinking Citizenship in Volatile Times' she suggests should motivate us to reconstitute citizenship and political action. In Benhabib's view, "[w]e are moving away from citizenship as national membership increasingly towards a citizenship of residency which strengthens the multiple ties to locality, to the region, and to transnational institutions" (ibid: 22), and she argues that "transnational migrations are both enabled by and contribute to the spread of cosmopolitan norms" and "a new institution of citizenship" (ibid). In her words:

> "This new modality decouples citizenship from national belonging and being rooted in a particular cultural community. Not only in Europe but all around the globe we see the rise of political activism on the part of non-nationals, postnationals, and ex-colonials. They live in multicultural neighborhoods, they come together around women's rights, secondary language education for their children, environmental concerns, jobs for migrants, representation in school boards and city councils. This new urban activism, which includes citizens as well as non-citizens, shows that political agency is possible beyond the member/non-member divide". (Benhabib, 2007: 30)

Globalisation has been understood as a force which will inevitably lead to a new cosmopolitan world free from the binds of nation-state borders and frameworks. Theories of transnationalism seem to sit within this cosmopolitan view of the world, aiming to demonstrate the interconnectedness between people and things across borders. Transnational theorists intend to move beyond methodological nationalism by "adopting an explicitly de-nationalized epistemological stance and concomitant

methodologies in order to investigate and theorize crossborder social phenomena by non-state actors" (Dahinden, 2017: 1482; Dahinden, 2009). In my thesis I agree with Friedman's observation that "[m]uch of the discourse produced in the cultural globalisation literature is saturated with a terminology of a trans-x and post-x sort. It is about transcendence of existing borders. A feeling of wanting to escape from all forms of fixed or grounded identities and a profound desire to belong to something higher and more expansive are a common characteristic of this discourse" (Friedman, 2004: 182). According to Friedman, this kind of discourse "divides the world into dangerous classes and locals, on the one hand, and liberal and progressive world citizens, on the other. This popular and proliferating discourse is not, [Freidman] suggest[s], an internal theoretical development within any particular social science. On the contrary it is the spontaneous self-understanding of those who occupy a certain position within the contemporary world-system in transformation" (Friedman, 2007).

In my thesis, I explore Friedman's comments in relation to the concept of cosmopolitanism and contribute to anthropological debates about whether cosmopolitanism is an elitist discourse of a 'transnational' class. As Wagner writes: "[t]he self-definition of a cosmopolitan ethos, which is common to both aristocratic and managerial groups, is an essential part of the self-understanding of transnationals. 'Curiosity, openness and tolerance are terms often employed to designate these qualities' (Wagner 1999: 142)" (Friedman, 2004: 190). Many scholars argue that cosmopolitanism is associated with the elite (cf. Hannerz, 2004: 73), and should be understood as such. In this thesis I explore these debates. According to Friedman, cosmopolitans situate themselves 'above the world' in a way that "creates an opposition to the local as something that is decidedly lower in status and conflates immobility with cultural poverty" (Friedman, 2004: 192). He argues that "the self-identification of cosmopolitans is a logical outcome of the nature of their social position within this system. The generalisation of cosmopolitanism to all domains of transnational connection appears in this light to express a kind of struggle for ideological hegemony" (ibid).

Building on this critique, my contribution in my thesis is to highlight the hierarchical dynamics of cosmopolitanism and challenge the way that transnational approaches seem to present an optimistic and emancipatory narrative of global 'flows' and 'unboundedness'. As Werbner candidly states: "[t]he notion of a borderless cosmopolitan

community seems inadequate in relation to the millions of refugees and migrants fleeing violence and poverty" (Werbner, 2016: 497). In my own research context of middle-class migration, it still seems important to recognise the ways in which my informants' alternative visions of humanity were considered inferior to the normative version of cosmopolitanism which those informants framed as more 'progressive', 'Western' and 'enlightened'. My work contributes to understanding the opposition between ideas of cosmopolitanism and tradition in Greece whereby the cosmopolitan orientation "emphasises development and modernisation and recommends the introduction and application of Western values, institutions and mentalities in order to 'catch up' with Westerners and/or align with them" (Papagaroufali and Georges, 1993: 236). As my ethnographic chapters show, many of my informants referred to the UK as a 'beacon' of a progressive cosmopolitan society and an example of what all nations could aspire to. Some of my informants seemed to employ formulaic narratives of a 'normative' version of cosmopolitanism in order to prove that they 'belonged' in Britain, given their view of the UK as a progressive, open-minded, multicultural society (at least before Brexit). However, I argue that whilst these informants presented themselves as cosmopolitans, they were actually more 'cosmo-nationalist' and idealised Greece's Classical past feeling that contemporary Greeks were a 'degenerate'[9] version of their Classical ancestors (cf Kirtsoglou, 2020: 17).

Disemia

In my thesis I explore cosmopolitanism through the lens of a concept from Greek studies: *disemia. Disemia* refers to the 'two-sides' of Greek identity based on the idea that Greece is in-between East and West (cf. Herzfeld, 1989). The Eastern, *Tourkokratia* or *Romeic* side of Greek identity refer to Byzantine and Turkish Christians and is related to that which is culturally intimate- that which is embarrassing to outsiders yet familiar and comforting to those within the group. On the opposite side are stereotypes of 'Hellenic' Greek identity in which *Ellines* are the idealised[10] Hellenes of the Classical past (Herzfeld,

[9] I use the term 'degenerate' as a reference to Kirtsoglou's paper (2020) 'Anticipatory Nostalgia and Nomadic Temporality: A case study of chronocracy in the crypto-colony' where she critiques the "series of moral statements about the Greeks as degenerate mutations of the ideal modern European citizen (cf. Herzfeld 2016a; 2016b; Knight 2013)" (Kirtsoglou, 2020: 17).

[10] As I mentioned previously, "[a]ccording to the independence-as-colonization theory, Hellenism, Greece's core political and aesthetic value, is to be understood as a Western model formulated by European classicists and philhellenes and foisted onto Greece" (Stewart, 2014: 10).

1989: 41). This side is considered more 'Western' because of the way that this Classical past has been considered the foundation of modern Europe. In my thesis I explore *disemia* in relation to cosmopolitanism to explore how Greek professionals navigate their identity and belonging and performatively establish themselves on the *disemic* spectrum of Greekness through various versions and visions of cosmopolitanism. Whilst some of my informants felt that the UK was a beacon of cosmopolitan and progressive society that was an 'example' to Greece, other informants felt that this version of cosmopolitanism was a rather inauthentic version of what they referred to as the quintessentially Greek value of 'humanity' (*anthropia),* based on a performative practice of empathy and care. In my thesis I explore these informants' view that British society was cold and robotic, lacking in warmth and humanity. As I explain later in this chapter, my contribution is to argue that despite the differences between these two versions of cosmopolitanism, both can be said to reflect neoliberal and colonised ideas of the self.

In terms of cosmopolitan theory, my discussion of the different versions and visions of cosmopolitanism is important in the context of anthropological debates about whether cosmopolitanism should be considered an elitist discourse[11]. In this thesis I consider Werbner's view that there are "many, different, cosmopolitan practices co-existing in late modernity, with their own historicities and distinctive worldviews" (Werbner, 2016: 497). In this thesis I consider how my own informants' alternative ideas about 'humanity' (*anthropia*) can be considered examples of what Werbner refers to as 'vernacular' or 'marginal' cosmopolitanisms. In my discussion I also consider Hannerz' point that there is the question of whether such 'bottom-up' cosmopolitans are "recognised as such" in their own environment (Hannerz, 2004: 77). In my ethnography, it seemed that my informants asserted their different versions of cosmopolitanism in relation to 'others' who did not share their 'mentality', who were on the 'other side' of the *disemic* spectrum of Greek identity. Again, I would argue that rhizomatic thinking is once again helpful to explore the *disemic* spectrum of Greek identity and consider how "these alternative forms of existence [or versions cosmopolitanism] are not opposed to each other" but rather "form a rhizome, a complex symbolic space where modern political subjectivities

[11] The challenge to the idea that cosmopolitans are necessarily members of the elite was first posed by James Clifford. Clifford proposed that 'the project of comparing and translating different travelling cultures need not be class- or ethno-centric' (Clifford, 1992: 107). The differential, often violent, displacements that impel locals to travel create, he says, 'discrepant' cosmopolitanisms (ibid: 108) (cf. Werbner, 2016: 498).

are produced and performed in *relation* to some imagined forms of radical alterity" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016: 8). Entangled within these narratives were neoliberal ideas of the self and crypto-colonial dynamics, as I explain below.

In my thesis I contribute to Herzfeld's ideas of crypto-colonialism in my discussion of moments from my ethnography where my informants spoke about Greece through developmental narratives in which they implied that Greece was 'behind' Europe. Comparing Greece to the 'benchmark' of Europe, some of my informants implied that Greece needed to 'catch up' with the UK and become more 'modern' and progressive. It seemed that these informants presented Greece as somewhat 'backward' and 'behind' in relation to other (Western) European countries. In my view, crypto-colonialism is a useful theoretical term for countries like Greece (and Thailand, as Herzfeld's work has shown) which have never been 'colonised' in the strictest sense of the term but have nevertheless seemed to 'mimic' the norms of other more powerful countries in a way that makes it seem as if they have been colonised. As Herzfeld and other post-colonial scholars have argued, the legacy of European intervention in Greece has created a situation in which Europe is often 'idealised' as the standard to which Greece evaluates itself and is evaluated by others. Herzfeld explains how "European culture is both a goal and an imposition, a dream of incorporation into the civilised West and a nightmare of cultural colonisation" (Herzfeld, 1991: 25). Europe is both familiar and something to which Greece has been alienated and excluded (Herzfeld, 1989: 48).

Of course, I agree with Stewart's conclusion that ideas of 'colonisation' are not simple in the case of Greece, because the unequal power relationships between Greece and other European countries has not always been 'coercive' nor 'evidently exploitative' (cf. Stewart, 2014: 28). Indeed, reflecting on the contemporary context of economic crisis and European Union membership, Stewart challenges the idea that Greece has been 'colonised', and prefers the category 'economic domination' and 'willing Europeanization' to describe the relationships between Greece and the more powerful Northern European countries. According to Stewart, 'colonization' can only be applied "in the weak metaphorical sense" (ibid: 29). As I mentioned previously, I am interested in exploring Stewart's comments about 'colonisation' in terms of the trends towards more 'individualised psychologies' or individualistic notions of the self. In his paper 'Colonising the Greek Mind?', Stewart explores the trends in Greece towards quests of 'self-

understanding', "self-realization, individualization, autonomy and self-fulfilment" (Stewart, 2014; cf. Rose, 1998). In my thesis I explore the modernist and neoliberal dynamics of these trends and situate them within the context of Greek people's aspirations to belong to Europe.

A crucial contribution of my thesis is to demonstrate how my informants seemed to have become 'post-ambivalent' in relation to the *disemia* of Greek identity because they rejected to such an extent what they considered not modern and not progressive about Greece that they no longer considered Greece to be 'home'. In my final ethnographic chapter, I propose my concept of 'cosmopolitan intimacy', which is my adaptation of Herzfeld's concept of 'cultural intimacy'. In Herzfeld's description, that which is 'culturally intimate' is somewhat embarrassing to outsiders but a source of familiarity and bonding for Greeks themselves. I would propose the term 'cosmopolitan intimacy' based on the fact that some of my informants seemed to 'perform' cosmopolitan narratives to outsiders, but in other contexts and between each other shared an 'intimate' sense of connection to an idea of the nation based on the legacy of Classical Greece.

In my conceptualisation of 'cosmopolitan intimacy', I argue that two important things have changed. Firstly, some Greeks in London seem to have become 'post-ambivalent' in relation to *disemia* such that they no longer consider themselves to be as attached to the traditionally 'culturally intimate' aspects of Greece's Eastern past. Many of my informants rejected so much what they considered 'backward', 'parochial' and 'unmodern' about Greece that they no longer seemed to share a 'cultural intimacy' with other Greeks about these aspects of Greek society. Given the transitions to cosmopolitan and neoliberal selfhood, it seems that the new form of intimacy shared with other Greeks is now the idealisation of Greece's Classical past. In the context of post-Brexit Britain, it seems that cosmopolitan narratives have become the 'outward facing' aspect (version presented to outsiders) as relationality seems to have shifted beyond communities in Greece to a more transnational form of neoliberal citizenship.

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Temporality, Affect and Materialities

In this thesis I also explore the migration stories and lives of young, Greek professional migrants who moved to the UK after the financial crisis through an affective and sensory approach. With a focus on temporality and affect in relation to crisis, I ethnographically explore the 'precarity' of my informants' lives, relating my discussion to Knight and Stewart's understanding of 'austerity' as different from "endemic underdevelopment and poverty" (cf. Knight and Stewart, 2016: 2). As Knight and Stewart explain, austerity "applies to situations where societies or individuals that formerly enjoyed a higher standard of consumption must now make do with less. It plunges societies into the converse of counterfactual history where one is invited to ask, 'what if the past had happened differently?' It is a counterfactual futurity approached with an entirely different level of investment and anxiety: what happens when (not if) the future does not take shape the way we expected and planned?" (ibid). In my thesis I explore the political and affective aspects of the impacts of austerity on my informants' lives and migration journeys. Following Knight and Stewart's approach to view austerity "not just as an economically constrained static circumstance", my thesis ethnographically explores what these authors call "the dynamics of reversal" and my informants' responses to these dynamics in their lives. My contribution is to explore how Greek professionals have coped with losing their assumed standard of living and explores their decisions regarding their "new minimum requirements for an acceptable life". As I explain below, my ethnography leads me to support Graeber's approach to understanding what it means to be 'middle-class'.

In this thesis I agree with Graeber's argument that 'middle-class' should not be understood in terms of income so much as in relation to the belief (as class-specific entitlement) that one can "project themselves forward in time with the assumption that… there is a social ground under their feet" (Graeber, 2014: 76). I agree with Graeber that 'middle classness' is primarily a social and political rather than economic category. As Graeber argues: "[w]hat being middle class means, first and foremost, is a feeling that the fundamental social institutions that surround one—the police, schools, social services, financial institutions—ultimately exist for your benefit. That the rules exist for people like yourself, and if you play by them correctly, you should be able to reasonably predict the results. This is what allows middle-class people to plot careers, even for their children,

to feel they can project themselves forward in time, with the assumption that the rules will always remain the same, that there is a social ground under their feet" (Graeber, 2014: 76).

To be middle class carries "the expectation of expectation: being able to await the future, rather than having always to anticipate it" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 70). In my ethnographic chapters I explore middle-class migration in relation to Bryant and Knight's concept of expectation which they define as a 'conservative teleology' because it is based on what the past has taught one to expect (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 58). Both Graeber and Bryant and Knight conceptualise 'normal life' as a situation where "one can expect to expect" (ibid). In my thesis I demonstrate how the middle-class expectation that one "should" and "ought" to be able to expect (ibid: 68) was challenged by the effects of neoliberalism and economic crisis. A central contribution of my thesis is to explore the effects of neoliberalism on the new 'professional-managerial class' (cf. Graeber 2014) and their efforts to preserve a middle-class identity through mobility.

To some extent, I have found it useful to adopt Hage's idea of existential mobility (cf. Hage, 2005) to explore my informants' ideas about their migration. Hage proposes that it is when people feel "that they are somehow 'stuck' on the 'highway of life', that they begin contemplating the necessity of physically 'going somewhere'" (Hage, 2005: 471). Geographical movement is considered necessary to give their life momentum. I agree with Hage that "life is not directionless. The positive sense of 'going somewhere' certainly does not include the sense of 'going backward'. Viability is associated with a forward movement in time" (Hage, 2005: 471). In this sense middle-class migration is a future oriented event (cf. Guyer, 2007; Fedyuk, 2011; Pine, 2014). In this thesis, I argue that ideas of 'existential mobility' must account for the political dynamics of migration. In this thesis I build on Bryant and Knight's discussions of 'orientations to the future' like expectation, anticipation, and hope (cf. Bryant and Knight, 2019) because their schema seems to more conducive to exploring the political dynamics of migration and specifically how ideas of 'progress', 'aspiration' and 'success' contain teleological impetus.

In this thesis I argue that Bryant and Knight's concepts of expectation and hope are a useful way to understand mobility and migration in contexts of crisis. Bryant and Knight conceptualise hope as "a form of futural momentum, a way of pressing into the future that attempts to pull certain potentialities into actuality" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 134).

Bryant and Knight explain how hope relates to "[w]ishful images [which] invite people to imagine not-yets from the potentiality of the present, providing momentum toward the actuation of aspiration" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 135). From their perspective, people's projections into the future through imagination and dreaming mean that "hope, like potentiality, is an overtly political orientation" (ibid: 137). In my understanding, the scholars consider hope to be a political orientation because the momentum it holds is "by definition teleological, i.e., it is always an impetus *toward* something" (ibid: 139). Whilst 'existential mobility' focuses on the (lack of) momentum in people's lives, I argue that Bryant and Knight's framework more effectively accounts for the *political* element of how momentum is underpinned by ideas about progress with teleological direction.

Indeed, my research builds on Kirtsoglou's discussion of Greek people's experience of 'anticipatory nostalgia' which Kirtsoglou defines as "a future-orientated affective state of longing for what has already been accomplished and at once yet to be achieved" (Kirtsoglou, 2020). Kirtsoglou uses her concept of 'anticipatory nostalgia' to explore how Greek people are nostalgic for what Greece has not yet become, because this vision of accomplishment has been so surely expected, demanded, and imposed by Europeans and Greeks themselves. The idea of 'falling short' emerges because of the eschatological idea of progress in which the future becomes predictable. The fact that progress depends on knowing what the future will look like therefore makes one able to be nostalgic for that future, because one knows it already. It has to be better than the past and the present. My research similarly demonstrates how teleological ideas about progress underpinned my informants' narratives about their decision to leave Greece. I argue that my informants' aspirational view of the UK was based on explicitly capitalist and neoliberal conceptualisations of progress which reflected crypto-colonial dynamics between Greece and Europe.

Based on my ethnography, my informants' migration seemed to be a phenomenon caught in the triptych of 'crisis, value and hope' (cf. Narotzky and Besnier 2014). Crisis, relates here to the Greek financial crisis as a 'critical event' (Das 1995) which I understand not only as technology of exception (cf. Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris 2016) but also as a structural process which denies social actors the feeling of control over their own life projects (ibid; Narotzky and Besnier 2014: S4; Graeber 2014: 76). Value is taken to mean a field (cf. Bourdieu 1990) of economic and moral relations of responsibility and

obligation towards one's own, preceding and succeeding generations (Kirtsoglou n.d.) vis-à-vis ideas of what is a "life worth living" (Narotzky and Besnier 2014: S5). Hope is taken both in the sense of a 'feature of imagination that stands for resources lacking in the present' (ibid: S11) and as a prefigurative political attitude (cf. Graeber 2014). My intention is to analyse migration into another country as an attempt to transform geographical mobility into social mobility (cf. Palomera 2014; Pine 2014) and a way that people attempt to reclaim control over their own lives and the lives of their significant others (cf. Kirtsoglou n.d.).

My thesis contributes to theories of crisis which consider how people experience disruption to this 'normal life' in which expectation is the norm. In my view, one of the weaknesses of historical-structural theories of migration is that they lack emphasis on how the 'regressions' and 'disruptions' to people's life projects in contexts of crisis *feel* to them. In my thesis I therefore focus on the affective and embodied dimensions of crisis and migration by taking a sensory and affective approach, as I explain more later. In addition, I explore the affective aspects of crisis in relation to temporality. In particular, my ethnography substantiates Bryant and Knight's theory of how uncanniness emerges in times where the abnormal becomes normalised (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 76). I agree with Bryant and Knight's description of 'normal life' as characterised by a "timespace in which predictability, foreseeability, and expectation are the norm" (ibid: 67). In this context of 'normality', the future seems stretched out in front of us, and we are able to 'expect that we can expect' things to continue in this 'normal' way indefinitely (ibid). In this respect, people's ideas about how things *ought* to be in 'ordinary' contexts is this "expectation of expectation", Bryant and Knight argue; of "being able to await the future, rather than having always to anticipate it" (ibid: 70). In contrast, when people's lives do not live up to what they thought an ordinary life should be, things feel 'uncanny' as people feel that their lives have 'regressed'.

Irene Sabate's study of the Spanish mortgage crisis is a good ethnographic example of how middle-class life projects have 'regressed' in the context of crisis, and the ways in which this has spread "confusion and anxiety" for those affected (cf. Sabate, 2016). In her discussion of home repossessions in Spain after the economic crisis, Sabate explores how people deal with the transformations brought by economic turmoil. Sabate's informants' "life-projects have imploded and people feel that their lives have 'regressed' in every

imaginable social and material way" (Knight and Stewart, 2016: 9). Sabaté discusses the disillusionment and frustration her informants felt as their homes were repossessed. "'Regressions' in the usual course of life projects have meant that people are going 'backwards' rather than 'forwards' in their life trajectories, spreading confusion and anxiety among those threatened by home repossessions. This line of enquiry invites contemplation on the potential future entanglement of moral economies with the temporalities of capitalist booms and busts" (Sabate, 2016: 107). Sabate argues in her paper that "[t]he current economic crisis has made people feel as though they have lost the futures promised to them through the years of financial prosperity. [Her] informants believe that the moral economy has been violated, promises broken, and their long-term life plans devastated. Many are now left with unpayable debts and feel disillusioned with and frustrated by capitalist credit–debt agreements that have sold-off their futures and left them tarnished by negative stereotypes. (Sabate, 2016: 108-9).

In my thesis, I explore these ideas of 'reversal', 'regression' and the 'uncanny'- which characterise crisis- through the lens of the everyday. I agree with Knight and Stewart's observation that we do indeed "tend to imagine that critical events are singular and enduring" (ibid). Whilst my informants of course viewed the financial crisis as a 'critical event' with an obvious start date in 2008, I have taken interest in my research in the ways in which crisis was also produced, felt or "woven into everyday life itself". In this respect, my approach follows that of Das and Cavell who explore "the kind of destruction that consists of small, recurring, repetitive crises" (Das, 2020: 7). For these scholars, "[w]hat is catastrophic is not a spectacular event but that which is happening repeatedly, undramatically, uneventfully" (ibid). In my work I argue that my informants faced both. The crisis was both a critical event which was catastrophic, as well as consisting of more repetitive, recurring and comparatively less uneventful aspects which equally created powerful affective and embodied responses.

In this respect, I suggest in my thesis the value of a 'negative methodological' approach to ethnography (cf. Navaro, 2020) which proposes that "the uneventful, the humble, and the diminutive might be brought forward on the philosophical stage" (Das, 2020: 7). The premise of a negative methodological approach is that ethnographers should not only pay attention to that which is visible, tangible and material but also that which is illusive and intangible. In my ethnographic chapters I explore the suggestion of Das, Cavell and

Donatelli that "what has formed me has been not events but precisely the uneventful, the nothing, the unnoted, that is happening, the coloration or camouflage of the everyday. The extraordinariness of what we accept as ordinary does not manifest its power over us until we are conscious at the same time of the ordinariness of the extraordinary. A stone on which this coupling breaks we might call a miracle or a holocaust, a departure from and within the ordinary that is not merely extraordinary, but irreversibly traumatic (Cavell, 2010: 61) (Das, 2020: 8). In my thesis I have adopted a negative methodological approach to explore the sensory, material and affective dimensions of crisis.

Crisis and *Miseria*

In this thesis I expand Knight's analysis of how crises have sensorial dimensions that imprint themselves in people's bodies and create affective, embodied responses. My work extends Knight's claim that "[m]emories of crisis are embodied and experienced to the core; they are not merely a reaction to or an analysis of a contemporary critical event" (Knight, 2015: 6). For example, my informants had similar experiences to Knight's informant Voula who told Knight how "[t]he haunting presence of the famine years was "engrained on her body" and 'felt on her skin' (Knight, 2015: 69). In my thesis I follow Knight's approach to link affect and temporality to explore my informants' experiences of crisis. In his paper, 'Temporal Vertigo and Time Vortices on Greece's Central Plain' Knight describes the affective sense of "exhaustion" and 'apathy' which young people feel after six years of crisis or 'structural austerity' as he argues it should be best termed. Knight describes how Greek people's imaginations of scenarios for a better future have been defeated as "interest in the post-apocalyptic is a bridge too far for exhausted people" (Knight, 2016: 35). Whilst many people had thought "the future was all about potential…for social and material progression, investment, accumulation" (cf. Bryant and Knight, 2019: 127), Knight explains that now resignation and helplessness are expressed across the generations. Through my focus on young Greek professionals in London, my work contributes further ethnographic exploration of how younger people feel a sense of "distrust, contempt and apathy" in relation to the future.

My extension of Knight's work is to discuss these affective and embodied aspects of crisis through the lens of the *miseria*- or misery- which my informants felt entangled with in Greece. As I explain in my fourth ethnographic chapter, *miseria* is a word in Greece which is associated with conditions of poverty and having little control over one's life. *Miseria*

captures the idea that one is stuck in pettiness or petty things and suggests that one does not leave an impression. It captures ideas of insignificance and limitations, as if there is a limit on what one can achieve or become. One cannot have big visions or big dreams. A job may be *misero* if it cannot be a career. The prospects of a country may be *misero* because of its comparative geopolitical weakness. In the case of Greece, the influence of other powers, including the EU, might be said to make Greece *miseri.* There is a sense of entrapment here. In the context of a country like Greece, *miseria* refers to theme of repetition- of the same histories, the same stories, the same problems, with no way out- a system which locks one in. In this respect my discussion of *miseria* extends Knight's exploration of the themes of repetition and entrapment in contexts of crisis.

The reason why *miseria* is relevant to anthropology more broadly is that it demonstrates what Miyazaki calls "dimensions of the negative effects of hope" whereby optimism can in fact "lead to paralysis" (cf. Miyazaki, 2006). As Miyazaki explains it "[o]ne can be so caught up in one's hope that one does nothing to prepare for its fulfilment" (Miyazaki, 2006: 148). My thesis demonstrates that *miseria* is relevant to wider anthropological studies of crisis and people's political responses to it. We might describe *miseria* as a local example of when 'resignation' becomes "a dominant mode of political action" (Benson and Kirsch 2010: 474) (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 95) and "potential is no longer a topic on which to speculate" (ibid: 96). In this thesis I explain how some of my informants felt that Greece's chances for modernist success had become a chimera- something illusory and impossible to achieve. These Greek people seemed to move abroad to achieve as individuals what they felt they could not accomplish as part of the national collective in Greece. Indeed, it was not only that their individual hopes to lead a middle-class life that had been disrupted by the economic crisis. Some of my informants with a modernist positionality felt that it was also Greece's progress, as a country, that was 'regressing'. Greece had not achieved the version of modernist success that they had hoped it would achieve. These aspirations had become chimerical.

In my thesis I explore these chimerical visions of Greece's modernist success through the lens of temporality and affect and demonstrate the relevance for anthropological understandings of the material dimensions of crisis and uncanniness. In my ethnographic chapters I explore how these affective and embodied experiences of crisis and ruination were discharged by the material and built environment. For example, in my ethnographic

discussion of *miseria,* I build on Navaro-Yashin's arguments that affect, or 'emotive energies' are generated by space and the non-human environment and consider the effects of these on subjectivity (ibid: 1). To understand *miseria,* I follow Navaro-Yashin's approach to her study of *maraz* (translated as deep melancholia) which was discharged by the left-behind homes of Greek Cypriots in Turkey, to consider how *miseria* was discharged by my informants' surroundings in Greece. I also explore the similarities between the materialities of my informants' homes in London and Navaro-Yashin's discussion of how her informants' houses felt like appropriated spaces to which they never warmed, nor felt that they owned (cf. Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 4). In this respect, my research is similarly relevant to anthropological interest in the 'abject' and the 'uncanny' from a material perspective.

In my thesis I contribute to anthropological understandings of the 'abject' and the 'uncanny' in my discussion of my informants' chimerical view of Greece, which I explore through an affective and sensory ethnographic approach. I explore Rebecca Bryant's work on 'uncanniness', which she discusses in relation to Freud's analysis of the etymology of the German word *unheimlich* and ideas of homeliness and familiarity (Bryant, 2010: 53). Bryant describes the homely as a space of longing and nostalgia, a place we belong and to which we are welcome, that which is intimate and excludes others from its scope, the place where we have a history and can assume a welcome as our right. In my thesis, I argue that this 'place' of familiarity and belonging was not necessarily in Greece for some of my informants who felt that their vision for modernist progress in Greece would not materialise. My ethnography has required me to challenge a spatial approach to emplacement and displacement, though I still explore the materialities of uncanniness, in relation to Navaro-Yashin's about the 'abject'.

My thesis contributes further ethnographic study of how subjective feeling and environmentally produced affect are intertwined (cf. Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 16). Like Navaro-Yashin, I explore the intersections between subjectivity and affect, and how affect is mediated through objects and non-human environments. In my ethnographic chapters I explore how objects and space, environment and atmosphere discharged affects of *miseria* onto my informants in London and Greece- exploring their migration and sense of emplacement and displacement both 'at home' and abroad. In this thesis I explore the relevance of my affective approach to understanding crisis and *miseria* to broader

anthropological issues of the self, and specifically the idea of the 'abjected self' or 'the abject inside the self'. In her paper on *marazi* (melancholia), Navaro-Yashin argues that "melancholy is the loss of the self to the self" which occurs when someone has 'interiorised' what is abject "to the point where the abject is normalised and no longer recognised as such" (ibid).

Navaro Yashin argues that "theories of affect and subjectivity, as well as of objects and symbolisation, demand to be merged. Social constructionism and an object-orientated approach, the linguistic and the affective turns may have been posed as antitheses of one another by the philosophers. But ethnography leads us to write against the grain of 'ruination' in being anti-, trans-, or multi-paradigmatic" (Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 17). My ethnography supports Navaro-Yashin's (in my opinion apparently rhizomatic) view of these interconnections between subjectivity and objects, the material and the affective, and the entangled interconnections between them. As I explain below, my engagement with Navaro-Yashin's ideas of the 'abject' has consequences for understanding displacement and emplacement in contexts of migration.

Negative methodology and ambiguous materialities

In my thesis I adopt a negative methodological approach to explore the 'ambiguous materialities' of presence and absence. Following Runia (2006), I adopt a broader view of 'presence' as "'being in touch'- either literally or figuratively- with people, things, events, and feelings" (Runia, 2006: 5). Essentially, objects, people and phenomena can be 'there' from an experiential perspective, even though they are 'not there' from a positivist perspective. In my thesis I respond to the question raised by Navaro (2020) and Bille et al as to why anthropologists focus on what is "visible, tangible and available" to the researcher instead of that which is "invisible, immaterial or absent" (Navaro, 2020: 165; cf. Bille et al, 2010). In my ethnographic chapters I demonstrate the usefulness of Bille et al's concept of 'ambiguous materialities' and a negative methodological approach (Navaro, 2020). I agree that there are not neat divides between what is tangible and intangible, material and immaterial. I consider there to be instead "a spectrum of material-ness and sensuous encounters" (Bille et al, 2010: 16-17) which demonstrate the entanglement of presence and absence (ibid: 14). In contrast to other studies, which focus on absence in the literal sense, in my work I focus on how affects of absence and

displacement can be triggered by the very presence of something- especially when this something is different, or chimerical.

Somewhat similarly to Ilaria Vanni's discussion of Italian migrants' interactions with the material culture of their new Australian homes, I found that for my Greek informants in London, things that should have been familiar seemed to "take on an estranged character" creating "an uncanny domestic geography" which contributed to feelings of 'unhomeliness' (Vanni, 2013: 161). Vanni explains how the Laminex furniture in Franca Arena's house abroad created "an uncanny domestic geography" which contributed to the feeling of *spaesamento* (Vanni, 2013: 161). As I explore more shortly, Vanni explains her interest in "thinking about the role of objects in creating geographies of home and mediating from *essere spaesati*, to be unhomely, to *sentirsi a casa*, to feel at home" (Vanni, 2013: 156). In contexts of migration, Vanni explores how objects brought from one's home country to a new place- enact geographies of the home and the unhomely (ibid: 151). My extension is to explore the micro-materialities of displacement and the 'uncanny'- such as the differences in the light switches and bathroom fittings which for my informant Costas triggered powerful affects of displacement and loss.

Elena Miltiades is another ethnographer who explores 'sensorial absence' through theories of affect, materiality and temporality. In one ethnographic vignette, Miltiades explains how "sensorial absence"- the confusion of not being able to touch or engage with objects that were still part of everyday life- triggered powerful emotions for the granddaughter of one of the museum donors, who "upon seeing her grandfather's furniture inaccessible behind a rope, burst into tears" (Miltiades, 2020: 257). Miltiades explains how the objects "represented sort of an oxymoron, as visitors experienced those objects as both being part of a museum and as being part of their homes. The materiality of the past and its tangibility are exacerbated by the fact that these objects belong to both realms, defying temporal boundaries. They are used or were used as everyday objects but are also located in institutions aimed at preserving them." (Miltiades, 2020: 257). In my thesis, I critique spatial framings of absence and 'emptiness' which focus on ideas of material lack. Whilst some scholars focus on how inaccessibility, separation, and absence in the literal sense trigger an emotional response, I focus on how it was precisely the act of touching, or direct engagement with something material and physical which triggered a (sometimes paradoxical) sense of 'absence' and 'unhomeliness' for my informants.

In my research I explore the concept of 'ambiguous materialities' to explore the entanglements between presence and absence. Through this approach I discuss my informants' experiences of displacement and loss in relation to 'uncanniness', 'abject' and the chimerical. For example, I discuss the 'ambiguous materiality' of video calling to explore how loved ones can seem both tangible and intangible, present and absent and relate my discussion to concepts of 'uncanniness', the 'abject' and the chimerical. As I explain in my ethnographic chapters, being 'in touch' with loved ones through video calling sometimes heightened my informants' sense of exile abroad and reminded them of the inaccessibility of things which should have been accessible and current. My ethnography requires me to critique the implicit assumption that globalisation and increased transnational connections- facilitated by cheaper travel and video calling technology- have reduced the sense of displacement that migrants feel. My ethnography requires me to challenge the idea that globalisation and modernity have made the pains of separation 'easier' for my informants, given my point that many Greeks feel that their hopes to live a life worth living in Greece had become a chimera.

Xenitia

In my thesis I demonstrate the relevance of the Greek word *xenitia* to understand displacement and emplacement in the contemporary context of Greek migration. As I explain in more detail in my second ethnographic chapter, *xenitia* is a culturally-familiar word in Greece which refers to the experience of hardship and misery caused by separation. *Xenitia* captures ideas of estrangement and exile, and is strongly related to ideas about death, as heard in laments sung at weddings and funerals. In both *xenitia* and death, separation causes a process of 'defamiliarisation' whereby "[e]yes that don't meet, soon forget each other" (Seremetakis, 1991: 185). The absent other becomes like water- an "irretrievable substance" which slips away. In this way, *xenitia* captures ideas of estrangement and exile. Through the lens of *xenitia,* the separation caused by migration becomes analogous to the separation caused by death. Indeed, as studies of the Greek diaspora in America and Australia indicate, for Greeks of the past, the primary cause of feeling *xenos* (foreign) and in 'exile abroad', seemed to have been a sense of cultural alienation in their new country due to a loss of their social networks. *Xenitia* also refers to an experience of estrangement or alienation from one's own being which includes a deterioration of one's cultural consciousness (cf. Kavouras, 1990: 142).

In this respect, I suggest that *xenitia* is somewhat similar to the Italian experience of *spaesamento* that Ilaria Vanni focuses on in her paper. *Spaesamento* literally means "without a village, without a country" (Vanni, 2013: 151), but Vanni explains that *spaesato* (feminine *spaesata,* plural *spaesati,* and *spaesate*), "encompasses further meanings of having lost familiar relations to things and places, being in an unfamiliar environment, being or feeling lost, having lost one's bearings, being displaced, being confused, being out of place" (ibid). Vanni explains how "[t]his loss of familiar signs leads to a progressive feeling of unhomeliness and panic, perceived as the loss of ability to read, speak and make sense of the world according to a common cultural blueprint" (ibid: 152-3). Again, my discussion of *xenitia* is a useful window to explore broader anthropological themes of emplacement and displacement in contexts of migration, from a material and sensory perspective.

My contribution is to argue that *xenitia* was more of a trope than a topological register. I argue that what it means to be *xenos* in the contemporary context is different to what it meant to be *xenos* for Greeks of the past. In the past, Greek migrants felt *xenoi* because they were treated as 'foreigners' and 'aliens' due to their economic position- i.e. as 'guestworkers' in Germany on a temporary labour rotation system. Today, I argue that 'the real *xenitia'* for many of my informants with a modernist positionality was actually in Greece rather than in London, because of their perception of life in Greece as *misero* and their hopes in Greece's modernist future an apparent chimera. This said, I do explore how some of my other informants did feel entangled with *xenitia* abroad because of their sense of cultural alienation and estrangement, as I explain below.

Sensory ethnography, 'senselessness' and 'tastelessness'

In my thesis I discuss the sensory and material aspects of emplacement and displacement in contexts of migration. Based on my ethnography of Greek Orthodox Churches, Greek coffee shops in London, and my informants' homes, my thesis contributes to anthropological interest in the role of food in contexts of migration, and the relationship between smells, tastes and textures of food and social memory in Greece (cf. Seremetakis 1994: 10; Sutton, 2001; Knight, 2015). In particular, I explore David Sutton's synaesthetic approach to the entanglement between food, memory, and the senses. Synaesthesia refers to "the synthesis or crossing of experiences from different sensory registers (i.e. taste, smell, hearing)" (Sutton, 2001: 17) and is another example of rhizomatic

phenomena (cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 15). In my ethnographic chapters, I extend Sutton's points that sensual landscapes serve as painful reminders and physical objects can be a tangible site for memory in contexts of disjunction (cf. Sutton, 2001: 77) to explore my informants' experiences of emplacement, displacement and *xenitia* in London. Through my ethnography, I consider Sutton's argument that "food from home becomes a particularly marked cultural site for the re-imagining of 'worlds'" in contexts of displacement (cf. Sutton, 2001: 102). I explore how in the context of an unfamiliar environment abroad, Greek products and dishes became an important embodied, synaesthetic, sensory reminder of Greece for some of my informants in London. Such products and dishes provided some respite from the pains of *xenitia* for these people.

At times, it seemed that my informants' practices of consumption and sociality in Greek coffee shops in London were an example of a 'banal nationalism'- exemplifying how "food is one of the mundane reminders that keep national identity 'near the surface of daily life' so that people do not forget their nationality (Palmer 1998: 192)" (Sutton, 2001: 84-5). However, in my thesis I frame this less as an example of 'nationalism' or 'returning to the whole' (as Sutton puts it) and more in terms of how these practices and materialities subverted what some of my informants perceived as the capitalist and neoliberal norms of society in London. As I explain in my ethnographic chapters, some of my informants felt that their Greek values of 'humanity' and 'sociality' were lacking in London. In my thesis I explore their perspectives through the lens of Seremetakis' (1994) and Hamilakis' (2013) discussions of the 'senselessness', and 'tastelessness' of modernity, as well as Muehlebach's work about the trends towards neoliberal ethics and aesthetics in Europe, which I introduce below.

As I said above, my thesis contributes to anthropological understanding of the neoliberalisation of European societies through a sensory ethnography. My work contributes to the theme of senselessness in anthropology, specifically Seremetakis' ideas of 'tastelessness' and Hamilakis' exploration of the Greek word *anaisthitos* (literally without senses, unconscious, callous and indifferent) (cf. Seremetakis, 1994; Hamilakis, 2013). Through the theme of 'tastelessness' (*ageustos/anostos*), Seremetakis explores the macro-historical, sociocultural changes in Greek society brought by the transformations of the EEC (Seremetakis, 1994: 3). Through a vignette of the disappearance of her favourite type of peach, Seremetakis argues that EEC markets have

caused a large scale "vanishing of tastes, aromas, and textures" in contemporary European margins. Speaking of the disappearance of her favourite peach, Seremetakis explains how "the new fruits displaced the *rodhakino* and together with it, a mosaic of enmeshed memories, tastes, aromas. The surrogate remains as a simulation with no model, emptied of specific cultural content and actively producing forgetfulness. A shift has been accomplished from sedimented depth to surface with no past" (ibid). She continues that the disappearance of her favourite peach is "not mere absence or void but rather material closure, a cordoning off of the capacity for certain perceptual experiences in such a manner that their very disappearance goes unnoticed" (ibid: 2-3). Through another example of 'sour grapes'[12], Seremetakis explores how regional products in Greece gradually disappear to be replaced by foreign foods and tastes such that the new 'strange fruits' and "whole epoch, the present, is characterised as *anosto"* (tasteless). She argues that "This EEC project implicitly constitutes a massive resocialisation of existing consumer cultures and sensibilities, as well as a reorganisation of public memory" (ibid).

According to Seremetakis, these neoliberal transformations and new European markets have 'altered social identities' on a regional scale because their 'sensory premises, memories and histories' have been 'pulled out from under them'. I agree with Seremetakis' point that cultural identities are formed through "material practice embedded in the reciprocities, aesthetics and sensory strata of material objects" (Seremetakis, 1994: 3). In my work I extend Seremetakis' argument that "[s]ensory changes occur microscopically through everyday accretion; so, that which shifts the material culture of perception is itself imperceptible and only reappears after the fact in fairy tales, myths, and memories that hover at the margins of speech" (ibid). In my view, Seremetakis' approach illustrates the importance of taking a negative methodological approach to understand the complex entanglement between presence and absence and the 'ambiguous materiality' of foods like Seremetakis' peach. In my work I therefore show

[12] "Not only have some foreign fruits arrived in Greek markets- it is no coincidence that in colloquial Greek a strange or weird person is referred to as 'a strange fruit' or 'a new fruit'- but also familiar fruits have made their timid appearance in fancy supermarkets at the 'wrong season'. For instance grapes, emblematic of the summer for Greeks, appeared in the winter under the sign 'imported from EEC'. Observing local women shopping, touching, picking and choosing, one notices that they pass them over as if they never noticed them, or commenting on how 'sour they look'. Sour implies not yet ripened, thus not in season, and so tasteless (*anosta*). And while the EEC in this case becomes identified with sour grapes, a whole epoch, the present, is characterised as *anosto*". (Seremetakis, 1994: 7-8)

the relevance of this exploration of taste and tastelessness in Greek ethnography to wider anthropological theory and methodology.

I also argue that 'senselessness' and 'tastelessness' are useful concepts to explore my informants' perceptions of the aesthetics of modernity in capitalist societies. I extend Hamilakis' comments about the *anaisthitos* nature of contemporary society[13] to explore how some of my informants felt alienated by the norms and rhythms of the 'sensescape' of London. For example, several of my informants felt alienated by the different patterns of work and social life in London which they found too 'scheduled' and 'programmatised', and they described people in London as 'cold', 'robotic' and a little *anaisthitos.* As Hamilakis explains, *anaisthitos* is a "derogatory term to describe a person who is harsh, who lacks affectivity, and who is seemingly inconsiderate of the feelings of the other, selfish, self-centred" (Hamilakis, 2013: 1-2). Someone who is *anaisthitos* is "someone who has lost his and her senses…someone who does not engage with others through his and her bodily sensory modalities" (ibid). My ethnography of Greek coffee shops in London also demonstrates "the fundamental importance of the multiple senses for human sociality, as well as the crucial link between bodily senses and affective and emotive interaction" (Hamilakis, 2013: 1).

My extension of Hamilakis' and Seremetakis' work is to explore how some of my informants subverted what they referred to as the 'cold' and 'robotic' aesthetics of capitalism in British society through a performative practice of what they perceived to be their quintessentially Greek values of sociality and humanity. However, in this thesis I argue that this 'resistance' to the lack of 'humanity' in London actually entailed a kind of compromise with neoliberal ethics (cf. Muehlebach, 2012). Even when some of my informants felt that they were resisting the transformations brought by neoliberalism through their 'vernacular cosmopolitan' practice of the quintessentially Greek value of 'humanity', I argue that these practices of care were entangled with a neoliberal ethics of

[13] For example, Hamilakis argues that "most Western, present-day people experience contemporary war and conflict through a TV or computer screen, and, of course, through the sanitised images and sounds that the captains of Western information networks allow. War, however, for its victims means bodily violence and pain, the sight of blood and of mutilated body parts, the smell of urine and excrement (generated out of fear and desperation), the odour of dead and decomposing bodies. This is the sensory experiential reality of war, and yet modern wars are perceived by most Western people today through the dusty lenses of cultural anaesthesia" (Hamilakis, 2013: 3). Of course, the topics that Hamilakis and I are discussing here are entirely different in their importance, and I of course use Hamilakis' words metaphorically to explore my informants' own sense of alienation in London.

care, building on Muehlebach's work: 'The moral neoliberal: Welfare and citizenship in Italy' (Muehlebach, 2012) that I introduce below.

Neoliberal ethics

Based on her ethnography in Italy, Muehlebach argues that there is a 'new logic of welfare' in neoliberal publics, given the production of a sympathetic citizenry and an increasingly dispassionate state (Muehlebach, 2012: 105). Supported by her participant observation of volunteer training classes in Italy which she attended in late 2005, Muehlebach argues that the Italian state "has fostered a legal, institutional, and affective environment within which feelings such as love and compassion come to be mobilised for the public good" (Muehlebach, 2012: 104). She argues that "the state directly or indirectly marshals what it imagines as the affective and empathetic stances of citizens. It thus puts 'emotion'- conventionalised, stabilised, and qualified sensibilities (Massumi, 1995)- to work" (Muehlebach, 2012: 104). Muehlebach argues that the sovereign state has been replaced with "the caring acts of the sovereign individual" and argues that whilst "society is still a site for rational and technocratic state intervention, this intervention is geared mainly toward its production as a site of conspicuous affective practice" (Muehlebach, 2012: 133). Muehlebach is critical of these transformations. She argues that the rise of ethical citizenship has meant that now "[t]o be truly human means to act in affect-laden ways, to be moved by visceral feeling…by wilful intuition rather than deliberation". She argues that there is an "emphasis on peoples' capacity to be touched by the suffering of others, and to connect to these others through a shared humanity". Muehlebach is critical of how the humanitarian public thus depends on "the fickle dispositions of individuals…rather than on universal law…on visceral feelings that wax and wane rather than on the sureties of social citizenship" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134).

In this respect, Muehlebach's critique is similar to that of Hannah Arendt who is "sceptical about passions as central to public practice" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134). Arendt has argued that "a public flooded with compassion is 'pre-political' because it is overwhelmed by cares and worries which belong in the sphere of the household" (Arendt, 2006 [1963]: 81). "It is non-public because the common good is recognised as being founded on nothing more than individuals' willingness to feel and act upon feeling- feelings that are by definition incapable of transcending individual will and predilection (Berlant 2004; Rutherford 2009). This public enjoins people in what appears as an unmediated, intense

space of cosuffering and affective communion. It encompasses them within a relationship that is not based on universalistic rights mediated by the state, but on voluntaristic, face-to-face action; not on a politics of equality, but on emotions and cosuffering" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134-5). Again, inspired by Arendt's work, Muehlebach reflects that 'there is a strange cruelty' to the feeling of pity- a feeling that can be 'enjoyed for its own sake' and will 'automatically lead to a glorification of its cause, which is the suffering of others'. The insertion of pity and compassion into the centre of the welfarist public is just that- cruel because it demands and indeed could not exist without the presence of misfortune…Put differently, pity is not invested in the overcoming of suffering or the production of equality. It revels in the status quo and locks those who feel pity and those who are pitied into an immutable, frozen embrace. In this sense pity is structurally equivalent with charity which, as Mary Douglas argued in her introduction to The Gift wounds so profoundly because it 'does not enhance solidarity'. Instead, it exists outside of any mutual ties and 'entails no further claims from the recipient' (Douglas, 1990: vii) (Muehlebach, 2012: 135).

Therefore, Muehlebach argues that "[i]n contrast to social citizenship, the highly moralised neoliberal public assumes bonds between citizens not because they are equal in status or because they inhabit the same public as irreducibly social citizens. Rather, the public is built through particular feelings of and acting upon suffering and thus between parties who are by definition unequal. Put differently, the rise of ethical citizenship is an instantiation of a more general trend toward a moralisation of a public sphere that modernist social ontologies used to think of in predominantly political and rational terms (Ticktin, 2006)." (Muehlebach, 2012: 133). In my final ethnographic chapter, I explore my informants' narratives in relation to Muehlebach's and Douglas' comments about solidarity. What was missing in my sample of Greek professionals in London was a truly leftist or Marxist version of cosmopolitanism as based on ideas of a class-based solidarity. My informants seemed to have internalised a neoliberal view of the self and of ethics such that their empathetic engagements with others in London seemed to be an example of a kind of 'gifting' that is based on a kind of 'pity' which 'does not enhance solidarity'.

In my view, this is where Muehlebach's comments resonate with Kirtsoglou's arguments that the refugee and the professional are not contrasting dichotomies; these alternative forms of existence are not opposed to each other, but rather they "form a rhizome, a

complex symbolic space where modern political subjectivities are produced and performed in *relation* to some imagined forms of radical alterity" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016: 8). My thesis demonstrates that these ideas can be applied to understand the 'aesthetics of eligibility' of migration. Highly skilled professionals do seem to be considered 'globalised subjects who embody modernity and stand for progress', who are "regarded as possessing the celebrated ability to think and exist beyond national boundaries" (ibid), whereas refugees seem 'pitied' in the media as the recipients of humanitarian assistance and charity and are anonymised through language of 'waves' and 'crises'. The contribution of my thesis is to explore these themes through the less common lens of middle-class migration and explore the neoliberalisation of European societies from the lens of people who have internalised modernist ideas of progress and success into their subjectivities and hopes for the future.

Ethnographic Chapters

1. Migration

In my first ethnographic chapter, I explore my informants' reasons for moving abroad and discuss how my informants considered their migration to have been their choice *and* something that they felt forced to do. As middle-class migrants with EU passports, my informants enjoyed the benefits of freedom of movement. However, I argue that to frame Greek professionals 'transnational elites' who are able to 'pop on a plane' whenever they want obscures the fact that states still choose who has the right to move freely to the UK. I argue that migrants' mobility is fundamentally connected to the comparative usefulness of their labour to the state. Indeed, I explore how Brexit made my informants feel more like 'aliens' who were only wanted and needed by the UK to the extent that their labour was useful. I argue for this reason that when my informants emphasised that their migration had been their choice and when they stressed their ability to 'live anywhere', this was an attempt to performatively establish themselves as 'good immigrants'. I argue that my informants wanted to prove that they were not 'misers' or economic migrants who desperately needed a job, but productive and successful neoliberal citizens who had accomplished appropriate 'work on the self'.

Therefore, I argue that middle-class Greek professionals are not exempt from the 'aesthetics of eligibility' which determine which kinds of migrant are considered desirable and undesirable to capitalist nation-states. I argue that my informants' migration reflected extractive economic dynamics between the UK and Greece, and I offer a critique of the 'Brain Drain' phenomena from this angle. I contribute to debates in anthropology over whether migration should be conceptualised as forced or as a social movement. I argue that whilst my informants were not forcibly displaced, they were somewhat forced to move abroad, due to their negative experience of life in Greece in the context of economic crisis.

2. *Xenitia*

In my second ethnographic chapter I explore the Greek word *xenitia*- which has been translated as the experience of hardship and suffering caused by separation from loved

ones. *Xenitia* is strongly associated with separation caused by death, but also applies to separation caused by marriage and migration. As I explain, *xenitia* was a prominent feature of the experiences of Greek migrants of the past who worked as 'Guestworkers' in Germany, recruited to temporarily fill labour shortages and treated as second-class citizens. In this ethnographic chapter I explore the resonance of *xenitia* in a contemporary context. I argue that *xenitia* did resonate with many Greeks in London, though not for the same reasons as Greeks of the past. I argue that what has made the resonance of *xenitia* fade in a contemporary context is the fact that Greece is now part of the European Union which has made Greeks feel that they have greater power and rights to live and work abroad.

In contrast to previous framings of *xenitia,* my argument is that *xenitia* should be understood as a trope rather than a topological register. I challenge the view of *xenitia* as an experience of pain caused by geographical separation and cultural alienation and argue instead that *xenitia* captures a broader sense of alienation and estrangement which some of my informants felt they experienced in Greece more than in London. In contrast to previous studies which locate *xenitia* as something which migrants feel when they are abroad, some of my informants felt that it was actually in Greece, in the context of economic crisis, that they felt more entangled with *xenitia.* Some of my informants with a modernist positionality felt that Greece had not achieved the kind of progress that they had hoped; their vision of modernist progress had become chimerical: illusory and impossible to achieve. As a result, they did not feel at home there anymore.

Building on anthropological theories of hope and expectation, I explore how my informants felt that their lives had 'regressed' and their hopes and expectations thwarted. In the context of crisis, it seemed that the prospect of creating a middle-class life worth living had become a chimera, and many of my informants were sceptical that they would be able to return to Greece. In the second part of the chapter, I relate my ethnography to the concept of 'the uncanny'. I discuss how some of my informants felt stuck 'betwixt and between' different hopes and desires. Whilst many of my informants struggled with the pains of separation from loved ones in Greece (the *xenitia* of life abroad), some of my informants felt that this pain was preferable to the painful alienation from their sense of self and hopes for the future which were tied to their modernist vision of progress and success. I argue that for these informants, the real location of *xenitia* was in Greece.

3. Materialities

In my third ethnographic chapter I explore the sensory and material aspects of the ways in which my informants felt 'in touch' with people in Greece. I argue that there were entanglements between presence and absence, which I connect to the concepts of *xenitia* and the 'uncanny'. My contribution in this third ethnographic chapter is to demonstrate the value of an affective, material and sensory approach to the study of migration: including people's sense of emplacement and displacement, their sense of home and belonging, their transnational connections, and people's reasons for moving and hopes (or not) for return. First, I discuss the rich mosaic of memory and sense 'present' in food, building on David Sutton's theories of synaesthesia. My contribution is to explore the concept of 'ambiguous materialities' which I argue can improve transnational theories of how migrants are connected to people and places across borders. In the second part of the chapter, I explain how certain informants viewed life in London as 'robotic' and 'automated' which I explore theoretically using Seremetakis and Hamilakis' theories of 'senselessness' in relation to modernity. I take a sensory and material approach to explore how my informants performatively established their values of humanity in Greek coffee shops in London. With a focus on the micro-materialities of consumption and sociality, I argue that coffee shops were spaces where some of my informants subverted the aesthetics of neoliberalism and capitalism and undermined and subverted the supposed 'superiority' of British societal norms. I explore these subversive practices more in the final ethnographic chapter of this thesis.

4. *Miseria*

In my fourth ethnographic chapter I unpack the affective dimensions of my informants' chimerical view of Greece through the lens of *miseria* (or misery) that some of my informants experienced in Greece when their hope in modernist progress was lost. I adopt the analytical framework of Navaro-Yashin to explore the discursive and material dimensions of the *miseria* that my informants experienced in Greece. My informants conveyed how *miseria* was discharged by the 'landscape of ruination' in Greece, such as abandoned shops and businesses, as well as something which emerged discursively from the collective performance[14] of suffering. Some of my informants felt that some Greek

[14] I use the term 'performance' in the anthropological sense of being 'performative' (cf Kirtsoglou, 2004)

people had brought *miseria* with them to London by 'whining' and 'complaining' about the negative aspects of life abroad. They were annoyed that these Greeks had not subscribed to their expectation that in London there should be a collective performance of success.

Indeed, these informants disliked how some Greeks formed 'Greek bubbles' in London and replicated the 'café culture' of Greece. Some of my informants felt that these things were *misera*- everything about Greece which they felt was holding it back from achieving their modernist vision of success. In my chapter, I relate my ethnography to Knight's work on solidarity and his discussion that his informants felt that continuing to live a 'normal life' (spending money on having a good time) in Greece was a form of resistance to the imposition of austerity by foreign powers who blame Greeks for the economic crisis. I point out the differences between the positionalities of Knight's informants and some Greeks I met in London. Some of my informants seemed to locate the cause of the crisis in terms of these culturalist tropes of Greeks as 'lazy' and 'materialistic'. I argue that some of my informants have internalised these negative tropes about Greece's responsibility for the crisis, which I argue reflects a crypto-colonial dynamic to the *disemic* tensions of Greek identity.

As I will explore more later, *disemia* is a term that Michael Herzfeld uses to discuss the 'two sides' of Greek identity- that which relates to Greece's Classical past- the Hellenic side- and that which is more Eastern- 'the Romeic' side. Herzfeld argues that the 'Romeic' side refers to that which is 'culturally intimate'- somewhat embarrassing to outsiders but a source of familiarity and bonding for Greeks themselves. The Hellenic side is the one that Greeks tend to want to present to outsiders, as it is Greece's Classical past which has been idealised by European countries and Greeks themselves. Indeed, Herzfeld explores how Greece's relationship to Europe is ambivalent, as it is something to which Greece has been excluded, due to narratives that modern Greeks are a 'degenerate' version of their ancestors. This is where I explore Kirtsoglou's concept of anticipatory nostalgia, as this is the state of being nostalgic for the future because one knows what it should look like- the past, this idealised view of Classical Greece.

In this ethnographic chapter, I therefore explore how my informants' comments about *miseria* in Greece were an expression of anticipatory nostalgia that Greece should become great again, based on their view that modern Greeks were a 'degenerate' version of their

ancestors because they were 'materialistic' and 'corrupt'. I suggest that this idea had a crypto-colonial dynamic because it was premised on the expectation that Greece should become more like (i.e. mimic) Europe. Indeed, I explain my view that this vision of success was explicitly capitalist and neoliberal. In fact, when my informants felt that Greece had become a chimera, unable to achieve this modernist vision of success and progress, I argue that they moved abroad to achieve as individuals what they could not achieve as part of the national collective in Greece. In this respect, my informants' migration seemed to reflect a rather neoliberal form of selfhood which was related to these extractive and crypto-colonial dynamics.

5. Cosmopolitanism

In my fifth ethnographic chapter I continue to explore *disemia* and the idea of European societies as a 'beacon' of modern, progressive society through the lens of cosmopolitanism. I explore how some of my informants expressed a normative version of cosmopolitanism that seemed Western and 'elitist' in the sense that it had a developmental undertone which viewed Greece as backward, not modern and not progressive. Greece was considered to be 'behind' Europe on certain issues like race and sexuality, and these informants implied that Greece should 'catch up' with countries like the UK. These informants with a normative version of cosmopolitanism wanted to use their experience of living abroad to change and develop aspects of Greek society. However, I argue that whilst these people struggled to look cosmopolitan, in reality they were more cosmo-nationalist. Their narratives still reflected the idea of continuity with ancient Greece. Therefore, I argue in this chapter that my informants' formulaic cosmopolitan narratives demonstrated neoliberal and colonised ideas of the self.

In part two of this final ethnographic chapter, I explore how some of my other informants 'resisted' this 'normative' version of cosmopolitanism which they felt was a Western ideology which they considered inferior to or less authentic than their own quintessentially Greek values of humanity. I explore how these informants subverted the idea that London was 'way ahead' Greece by performatively establishing values of *filoxenia* (literally 'love of strangers') and humanity which they conceptualised as belonging to the 'Eastern' side of Greek identity. My theoretical contribution to anthropology more broadly is to consider these values as an example of 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' because my informants felt they were subverting the capitalist norms

of British society. My contribution is to consider whether my informants' vernacular cosmopolitan ethics were truly subversive because they were based on a rather exoticizing view of Greek culture as hospitable and caring, and because my informants' practices of humanity seemed to reflect a neoliberal ethic of care (cf. Muehlebach, 2012). My contribution in this chapter is therefore to discuss vernacular cosmopolitan ethics in relation to my arguments about crypto-colonialism and the colonised self that I discuss throughout the thesis.

Migration

In this chapter I contribute to debates in anthropology over whether migration should be conceptualised as forced or as a social movement. I argue that whilst my informants cannot be considered to have been forcibly displaced, they were somewhat forced to move abroad due to their negative experience of life in Greece in the context of economic crisis. In this chapter I critique the view of Greek professionals as 'transnational elites' who are able to 'pop on a plane' whenever they wanted to. Whilst middle-class professionals are relatively more able to move freely, I argue that transnational theories of migration may obfuscate the fact that it is still the state which has determined who has the right to enter, live, and work in a country. In section one, I offer a critique of the 'Brain Drain' phenomenon from this angle; I argue that my informants' migration reflected extractive economic dynamics between the UK and Greece, and I explore how some Greek professionals have become 'deskilled' in London.

In section two, I argue that middle-class Greek professionals are not exempt from the 'aesthetics of eligibility' which determine which kinds of migrant are considered desirable and undesirable to capitalist nation-states. I explore how Brexit made my informants feel more like 'aliens' and that they were only desirable to the UK because their labour was useful to the economy, and I explore the precarity that Brexit brought to their lives. In the final part of the chapter, I explore how in this context many of my informants strived to establish themselves as 'good immigrants' by emphasising that they had *chosen* to move abroad and were able to 'live anywhere'. My interpretation of these narratives is that my informants wanted to prove that they were not 'misers' or economic migrants who desperately needed a job, but productive and successful neoliberal citizens who had accomplished appropriate 'work on the self' (cf. Lazzarato, 2012). Throughout my thesis I explore how my informants seemed to have internalised a neoliberal view of the self.

As I mentioned previously, my informants did not consider themselves to be forcibly displaced people; their migration is qualitatively different to that of Greeks in the past who left Greece to escape poverty and persecution. In contrast to Greeks who moved in the past, contemporary Greek professionals do not seem to fall neatly into theories of

displacement or forced migration, and they cannot be considered to be labour migrants. My informants can be considered a relatively privileged kind of migrant. Nevertheless, my ethnography supports the view that we should extend the concept of forced migration; I agree that the "conventional dichotomy between economic migrants and refugees is [no longer] cogent or persuasive" (Bartram et al 2014: 69). "'Economic migration', rather than being entirely voluntary, is in many instances better understood as rooted in compulsion of various sorts – especially when the economic deprivation that constitutes its proximate cause is rooted in deeper socio-economic structures that are determined primarily by the decisions and activities of states, corporations and individuals elsewhere (e.g. in wealthier countries)…Instead of a binary opposition between refugees and economic migrants, then, we can perceive a continuum wherein compulsion plays a greater role in some migration flows and a lesser role in others (Turton 2003; Richmond 1994)" (Bartram et al 2014: 69).

In addition, I demonstrate in this chapter how my research also contributes to theories of migration as a social movement. The social movement theory of migration aims to explore how migration and border crossing happens "in spite of heightened efforts to criminalise, control, and punish migrants" (cf. Jones and Wonders, 2019) in a way that problematises "the global inequalities and political processes that lead nations to define some persons as unworthy of rights in the first place". In this chapter I consider the argument of Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris that "[t]he increasing restrictions placed on the mobility of certain people, but not on the mobility of capital or of the high-end professional-managerial class, are constituent factors of the modern condition of neoliberal capitalism" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris 2016: 221; cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; cf. Green 2013). Put simply, social movement theorists argue that "[t]he term 'refugee' is ultimately a legal construct that privileges a certain idea of what constitutes persecution. Migrants, working-class migrants, excluded or impoverished by global capitalist structures, and refugees are marginalised in similar ways" (cf. Rajaram, 2018).

Of course, I clarified earlier that this comparison is not at the level of experience, but rather at the level of the root causes of displacement. Clearly, professional migrants such as my informants who are able to travel comfortably and with relative ease to those refugees and migrants on boats across the Channel and into Calais do *not* have the same experience by any means. My point here is rather that in all cases of migration- that of

refugees, 'economic migrants' and middle-class professionals, people are simultaneously forced and also choose to move geographically in order to move from a position of precarity to safety and security. Of course, the precarity of refugees who fear for their lives as a result of violent conflict or of economic violence such as famine and hunger, is not the same kind of precarity related to standards of living. This said, I agree with scholars who deem that there is a structural similarity between these kinds of movement which reveals current conditions of structural asymmetry between the global North and the Global South.

Therefore, whilst my research is focused on people who are comparatively more privileged in this system of rights and constraints on mobility, in this chapter I contribute to social movement literature and argue that the migration of Greek professionals still indicates how an 'aesthetics of eligibility' determines which kinds of migrant are desirable to capitalist nation-states. In fact, I argue in the following section that the migration of Greek professionals to the UK can be analysed as an extractive economic process, and I critique the concept of 'Brain Drain' from this angle. My contribution is to argue that whilst from one perspective my informants might be considered to be transnational elites, Greek professionals can also be said to have become productive (yet sometimes deskilled) labour in countries like the UK. I explore the idea that Greek professionals have become 'human resources' that are exploited by European countries like the UK.

Extractive Economies and 'Brain Drain'

In this section I argue that the migration of Greek professionals to the UK can be analysed as an extractive economic process, and I critique the concepts of 'Brain Drain' and 'Brain Gain' from this angle. During my ethnography, some of my informants expressed their view that Greek professionals' labour, skills and talents were being 'harnessed' to benefit countries in Europe rather than to help Greece. Several of my informants felt that Greece was 'exporting brains'. Their conceptualisation of 'Brain Drain' seemed to reflect this view of exporting a resource (in this case human not natural) for the benefit of foreign countries rather than locally. As I explain shortly, my informant Petal (a 28-year-old lawyer) felt sad about the 'Brain Drain' situation in Greece, and she felt upset that she was 'forced' to move abroad. Petal was critical of Tsipras' government and wished that she had been able to stay in Greece to 'help her country'. In contrast, people like my informant

Pancras were much more critical of the idea that they should return to Greece to 'help their country'. Pancras laughed at the idea of 'Brain Gain' because he did not think that it would be possible for him to return to Greece. Pancras and his friends were extremely sceptical of New Democracy's plans to 're-energise the economy', 'turn over a new page' and 'modernise Greece' (Smith, 2019), as I explain below through a vignette from my ethnography.

On a wintery day in January, I was having a conversation with my informant Pancras and his friends outside a popular Greek coffee shop in central London. Whilst we were catching up on each other's weeks, I mentioned that the day before I had attended a talk on 'Brain Gain' at a popular cultural centre- a 'hub' for intellectual Greeks in London where the narratives about Greece were extremely positive. The panellists were gathered to discuss how Greeks living abroad might be encouraged to return to Greece and reverse the 'Brain Drain' of the previous decade. They were discussing the government-sponsored initiative to offer bonuses and financial incentives to Greeks who were willing to return to Greece to find work. Despite the support for Kyriakos Mitsotakis' New Democracy's policies at the event I attended, Pancras chortled when I mentioned 'Brain Grain' and explained his view that 'Brain Gain' is a "joke". Whilst Pancras acknowledged that 'Brain Drain' was true- highly educated Greeks are leaving Greece- Pancras described 'Brain Gain' as something "made up by politicians as rhetoric to get votes". Pancras felt that 'turning drain into gain' was empty rhetoric that would fail to change anything. Pancras was critical of the New Democracy party and their optimistic attitude to encouraging young people to return.

The idea that financial incentives would make return to Greece an attractive prospect was laughable to Pancras. In Pancras' view, Greece has repelled investment and struggled economically because of 'corruption' and 'high taxes for businesses' which has made it difficult for start-ups to succeed. Pancras was disappointed that politicians had failed to address the systemic issues of 'corruption', high taxes, and poor infrastructure, and he added that Greece's industry is not productive and industrial, but rather based on services. Indeed, one of the effects of economic crisis in Greece has been large scale deindustrialisation[15]. Without industrial industry, Pancras did not think enough jobs

[15] As I explain more later in this thesis, the crisis left traces of ruination which were sensorially present to my informants in the materiality of abandoned factories and plants that created negative affects of *miseria* and

would be created. He expected the high levels of youth unemployment and the difficulties of finding a job related to what one had studied, to continue into the future. Pancras' friend Roxane similarly commented that the £3000 grants offered to businesses to recruit Greek talent from abroad ignored the structural problems with Greece's education system, which she felt tailored Greek students into a limited number of disciplines, which made it difficult for Greeks to find a job related to what they had studied.

Until my conversation with Pancras and his friends, I had not realised the different viewpoints on the subject of 'Brain Gain'. Pancras' chortle took place in an intimate situation of friendly conversation. It was not the kind of comment that I had observed at the event on 'Brain Gain', led by those in support of the official narrative that young Greeks should return to Greece to 'help their country'. It was through my ethnography of the coffee shop socialisation of Pancras and his friends that I was able to "penetrate the *disemic* screen" (Herzfeld, 1989: 149) and begin to see the challenges to official discourses of 'Brain Drain' and 'Brain Gain'. Through participant observation, I was able to observe the "space and tension between official discourse and social knowledge and experience" (Herzfeld, 1989: 152). I also began to appreciate the political divides between Greeks in London between those who were supportive of the New Democracy party and others who were more critical of their leadership. My conversation with Pancras helped me realise that some of the key 'hubs' for Greeks in London and the events that they organised were populated by Greeks with a certain kind of political positionality which contrasted with many of the informants that I met in the coffee shops around London.

Through my ethnography I began to realise that the use of a nationalist narrative to encourage the return of young professionals was frustrating to people like Pancras and his friends. As Greeks with a more 'liberal' mentality, they were critical of the idea that their skills 'belonged' to Greece as nation-state. As I mentioned above, the idea of 'drain' implies that migrants offer their skills to the benefit of other nations, at a cost to their own nation. As I said previously, the concept of 'Brain Drain' has negative connotations. The idea of drain implies a weakening of a nation or state as a result of the outflux of people who are highly skilled and well placed to contribute to economic growth. In this

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xenitia in Greece. Yannis Behrakis has demonstrated this deindustrialisation visually; his photographs have captured these haunting materialities calling them "ghost factories of Greece" (Behrakis, 2015)

respect, ‘Brain Drain’ is also linked to neoliberal framings of individuals as productive members of society who should make themselves able to contribute financially to a nation. It also seems to be an inherently nationalist narrative in the sense that members of a society are expected to remain within the borders of the state in order to contribute productively to the success of their nation. ‘Brain Drain’ seems to imply the idea of a ‘national self’ where people and their skills are considered to ‘belong’ to nation-states.

From my perspective, Pancras and his friends seemed to oppose this statist frame to their migration stories. Pancras and his friends seemed critical of the idea that Greeks should return to Greece for the ‘good of the nation’. They seemed annoyed that Greek politicians were calling for the return of highly qualified Greeks living abroad because, from their perspective, these politicians were refusing to accept that Greece’s trajectory towards modernisation, industrialisation and progress had not materialised. As I said above, Pancras felt that Greece was characterised by large scale deindustrialisation, ‘corruption’, and he lacked confidence that Greece would attract foreign investment. It seemed that Pancras had given up hope in the potential for Greece’s chances of modernist success. As I argue later, some Greek people seemed to have moved abroad to achieve as individuals what they felt they could not achieve as part of the collective- a modernist and neoliberal form of progress and success.

In contrast to Pancras and his friends, my informant Petal felt disappointed and somewhat guilty that she had been ‘forced’ to leave Greece, as she had wanted to stay and contribute to Greek society. Petal has completed two masters’ degrees and is qualified to work as a lawyer in Greece. In Greece, however, Petal could not find a well-paid job. She felt her only option was to move abroad to pursue better opportunities for her career in law. In the UK, Petal hoped to complete a PhD and begin an academic career. Currently, Petal works in an office with huge glass windows and modern furniture, which is where we met for our first conversation. As I explain more below, Petal would not have moved had it been possible for her to find a good position which matched her qualifications. The combination of the economic crisis, systemic issues, and the political leadership at the time interrupted Petal’s expectations that she could create a life worth living in Greece. Petal explained that her decision to migrate abroad was related to her “disappointment”

with the political leadership at the time and she had joked with her mum that when Tsipras left, she would go back to Greece[16].

On the one hand, Petal emphasised that she had chosen to move abroad to achieve her ambitions and life plans. She also conceptualised her migration as something she was forced to do because she was unable to find a job which matched her qualifications. Petal conceptualised her migration as being part of Greece's 'Brain Drain', understood as the situation where highly qualified people leave a country because of a lack of opportunity for employment; as a 'surplus' population, they move to fill a 'deficit'. Petal contrasted her own migration with that of other Greeks who migrated before the crisis. Petal felt that these people left Greece because they wanted a 'different experience in their life' and a 'better future'; they already had a well-paid job. The fact that Petal contrasted her own migration decision making in contrast to these Greeks suggests her view of her migration as something she had also been forced to do. Petal told me how

> "the situation is bad in Greece, so I don't want to go back home. There is no money, no jobs. I love my country. I would have never left. But when you've studied lots of years and cannot find a well-paid job, believe me you would think about leaving. Your hard work is not recognised, and you feel desperate. I think that the lack of hope for the future is one of the most important factors when you think of whether to leave or not to leave. There are no jobs, no money. You don't have any hope for the future. We watch the news every day and it's very disappointing. We don't know if we're going to be bankrupt. And when you don't know, you don't have any hope. There's no motivation at the moment. So I think you should leave the country" (Petal, 28, lawyer)

Based on my ethnography, I consider the Greek financial crisis to be a 'critical event' (Das, 1995) which denied my informants the feeling of control over their own life-projects (Narotzky and Besnier, 2014; Graeber, 2014: 76) and the lives of their significant others. In the context of economic crisis in Greece, I suggest that my informants moved abroad in order to preserve their middle-class identity and resist the precarity that they faced in Greece. As I have said previously, following Graeber, I understand 'middle-class' not in

[16] "In his firebrand rallies, the left-wing populist vowed to tear up Greece's bailout programme and end austerity…He led Greece into a referendum on rejecting Europe's budget cuts, despite warnings from its creditors that it was hurtling towards leaving the eurozone…he hopelessly overpromised. Under pressure from the EU, capital controls on its banks and the threat of "Grexit" - departure from the euro - he was forced into a humiliating U-turn, signing up to a third, €89bn (£80bn; $100bn) bailout, and more austerity. His support base began to ebb away" (Lowen, 2019 BBC).

terms of income, but in relation to the belief, or expectation, (as a class-specific entitlement) that one can "project themselves forward in time with the assumption that…there is a social ground under their feet" (Graeber, 2014). As David Graeber argues, "Middle classness" is not really an economic category at all; it was always more social and political. What being middle class means, first and foremost, is a feeling that the fundamental social institutions that surround one—the police, schools, social services, financial institutions—ultimately exist for your benefit. That the rules exist for people like yourself, and if you play by them correctly, *you should be able to reasonably predict the results.* This is what allows middle-class people to plot careers, even for their children, to feel they can project themselves forward in time, with the assumption that the rules will always remain the same, that there is a social ground under their feet" (Graeber, 2014: 76, *my emphasis*). For this reason, I argue that to be middle class carries "the expectation of expectation: being able to await the future, rather than having always to anticipate it" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 70).

In the context of crisis, Petal experienced an 'uncanny' situation of uncertainty, unpredictability, and crisis because her middle-class 'expectation of expectation' (cf. Bryant and Knight, 2019: 70) was interrupted. It was not only the high levels of unemployment which affected Petal, but the spending cuts, high taxes, and cuts to salaries and pensions which had decreased the stability and security of jobs that were once considered stable and prestigious. As Knight discusses in relation to Trikala, Greece, the long-held preconceptions of what constitutes a secure job have recently been challenged by the wide sweeping redundancies made as part of the economic austerity measures (Knight, 2015: 34)[17]. For people in Western Thessaly, Knight explains, futures once promised as a birth-right have been thrown into disarray (cf. Pryce 2012). (Knight, 2015: 99). In my ethnography, I gained a similar sense that the economic crisis has created precarity among those who once thought their jobs and career plans would be predictable and secure.

[17] As Knight's informant Vassilis, 43, a former office worker, explains: "Everyone in Trikala thought that they knew what a 'good job' was- a supermarket worker, a teacher or civil servant. The recent consequences of economic austerity have transformed the way we think about work. Nothing is certain anymore. Our lives have been thrown up in the air by people we have never seen and who don't care if we live or die. Our livelihoods have been stripped from underneath us- just ask any private business owner, public sector worker or farmer. And, worst of all, we have been offered no alternatives. Nobody has offered us a glimmer of hope for new secure employment. How will we feed our families?

Petal was upset that so many young people like her were leaving Greece to live abroad, hence they were unable to contribute their skills and experiences to 'help their country'. As she told me: "I think that highly qualified people leave Greece every day. It is not good for our country. Because our country spends lots of money for us, for our studies, because in Greece we study for free- the state pays for our fees. The state paid for us and now other countries get our work and knowledge. If Greece could offer jobs and opportunities, I think that all the highly qualified people could contribute to our country. People could stay and we could build a better future for our country because we have the skills" (Petal, 28, lawyer). Petal evoked a typical narrative of 'Brain Drain' that the loss of qualified people from Greece was damaging to the country (cf. Smith 2015). The idea of 'drain' implies a weakening of a nation or state as a result of the outflux of people who are highly skilled and well placed to contribute to economic growth. Indeed, Petal's narrative of 'Brain Drain' reflects the view of people's skills as belonging to nation-states; in her comments that 'Brain Drain' was 'not good for her country', Petal implied that she agreed with the expectation that people 'belong' to nation-states and should ideally stay in order to contribute productively to the economic success of their nation-state.

As I see it, functionalist theories of migration similarly imply a methodological nationalism in terms of how they consider it more normal for people to remain in their country of origin unless they are 'pushed' or 'pulled' away. In a push-pull model, Petal's migration would be framed as the direct result of the 'crisis'- those negative economic effects and issues like unemployment which would be considered the 'push' factors for her migration. These theories tend to say that migrants move abroad because they are attracted to the better job prospects and opportunities that are available in other countries. They move for a 'better life'. Of course, these things can be true. However, I would argue that these theories perhaps obscure the extractive economic dynamics of migration. As I said above, the alternative view of 'Brain Drain' is that it reflects an extractive economic dynamic between Greece and the UK whereby the UK is considered to be 'taking' resources from Greece in a way that is detrimental to that society.

My argument that the migration of Greek professionals to the UK can be analysed as an extractive economic process is inspired by Argenti and Knight's arguments about the extractive economic dynamics of foreign investment in renewable energy initiatives in Greece. In their paper, Argenti and Knight explain how their informants expressed "deep

concerns about foreign multinational investment on Greek soil designed to export energy to northern Europe rather than assist local communities" and they perceived these energy projects as "new forms of extractive economy, harnessing local natural resources for the benefit of foreign corporations" (Argenti and Knight, 2015: 782). The authors explain how

> "[s]uch beliefs are exacerbated by the current political and economic climate of enforced austerity and what is seen as foreign intervention in the democratic process. Above and beyond the immediate concerns they raise about the environment and about neoliberal exploitation, both of these projects have evoked very similar discourses of international conspiracy and interference, of foreign tutelage and intervention, and of national backwardness, disgrace, and humiliation. These wider concerns go beyond discourses of environmentalism or of extractive economies narrowly defined, and reveal a coupling of narratives of environmental degradation and neoliberal exploitation to long-standing ambiguities of Greek identity that go back to the foundation of the state. Narratives of exploitation directed at renewable energy initiatives therefore have a double valence in contemporary Greece: expressing, in the first instance, concerns with the immediate dangers of economic exploitation and environmental degradation, they are at the same time overdetermined as metanarratives of the crisis, in turn lending to the crisis itself a diagnostic, oracular potential" (Argenti and Knight, 2015: 783).

What Argenti and Knight are referring to in their comments here is the connection between the ideas of extractive economic practice, neoliberal exploitation, and crypto-colonial dynamics between Greece and Europe. The important point here is that extractive dynamics operate not only between colonies and their colonisers, but also in countries which can be called 'crypto-colonial'- those that have never been colonised, but which seem caught in colonial and extractive dynamics. Whilst the term 'extractive economies' was previously applied to describe exploitative relations between colonial powers and the possessions of colonised countries- especially those in Africa, Argenti and Knight clearly show in their paper how the concept of extractive economies applies to the context of Greece which I argue can be considered a crypto-colonial space.

These arguments are crucial in the context of my research and the concept of 'Brain Drain', because 'Brain Drain' was also originally used in the 1960s and 1970s to describe the loss/emigration of highly educated and highly skilled individuals from 'developing' countries to 'developed' ones. As scholars explain, it was the developed countries which

'won' here, gaining the human capital they needed to grow their "booming science and technology industries" (cf. Bartram et al, 2014: 23). As I will explore in this thesis, Greece is somewhat caught between this spectrum of 'developed' and 'developing' countries, as some people deem Greece to have 'failed' to be a modern, productive, and industrial country when compared to the benchmark of other European countries. Greece is often expected to mimic other European countries and 'catch up' with their modern and neoliberal ideas of progress. Of course, it is in the interests of other European countries to describe Greece in a critical and negative light because it supports the image of other European countries as an 'aspirational' destination for Greek people and their labour. In this respect, I would suggest that the migration of Greek professionals to the UK reflects an extractive economic dynamic between Greece and Europe, and that this is relevant to anthropology more broadly because it exemplifies the idea of crypto-colonialism and the effects of neoliberalism on the professional managerial class.

Precarity and Deskilling

My research contributes to anthropological understanding of the effects of neoliberalism on the new 'professional managerial class' (cf. Graeber, 2014) and their efforts to preserve a middle-class identity through mobility. I agree with Schram that precarity also applies to the professional class, who are becoming increasingly vulnerable and hence part of what he calls the 'precariat' (Schram, 2013). The 'precariat' is considered a new class that transgresses the more traditional class boundaries that were defined in relation to the different relationships people had to the means of production. As I explore more below, those in the 'precariat' "have lives dominated by insecurity, uncertainty, debt, and humiliation. They are becoming denizens rather than citizens, losing cultural, civil, social, political, and economic rights built up over generations. The precariat is also the first class in history expected to endure labour and work at a lower level than the schooling it typically acquires. In an ever more unequal society, its relative deprivation is severe" (Standing, 2011: vii).

As I mentioned previously, many Greeks in London have postgraduate degrees and even PhDs. In Greece, education has been an aspiration for Greek families since the early nineteenth century due to the association between education and better job prospects- i.e. higher income and better job security. Even before the economic crisis, Greek students have moved abroad to complete undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. As the

Hellenic Republic website notes, “Greece sends more students abroad to study, per capita, than any other country in the world…European and American Universities boast large numbers of students from Greece, many of whom achieve high academic success.” (Hellenic Republic). As Kalyvas notes, Greece has long had higher levels of literacy compared to other Balkan states and primary and secondary education expanded rapidly during the nineteenth century. “In the 70s, higher education was also expanded as part of Greece’s ‘modernisation’” (cf. Kalyvas, 2015: 106).

The idea of modernisation is important here. In some scholars’ accounts of Greece’s education system, they imply the negative view of Greece as ‘behind’ on its modernist trajectory of progress. For example, some authors argue that “in Greece, there has been a rise in unemployment which can, to a large extent, be attributed to the slow response of the education system to the continually changing technological environment of the labour market (Pesmatzoglou 1987; Saiti 2000)” (Saiti and Prokopiadou, 2008: 286). Despite the rising numbers of students entering higher education in Greece, these scholars argue that the labour market has not been able to ‘absorb’ them (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 1997) (Saiti and Prokopiadou, 2008: 285). The fact that the education system tailors students towards a limited range of disciplines without the job market to ‘absorb’ them seems to have created a situation where my informants’ aspirations could not be satisfied. Youth unemployment in Greece reached over fifty percent. New jobs have not emerged to absorb this highly skilled population. It seems that Greek young professionals might be considered a ‘surplus population’ (cf. Murray Li, 2010). “They are thus ‘surplus’ to the needs of capital, and not plausibly described as a labour reserve” (Murray Li, 2010: 66). We might say that Greece seems to have a ‘surplus’ of qualified people who cannot be easily ‘absorbed’ by their own or even other countries’ job markets.

Indeed, some Greeks in London seem to have become part of the ‘precariat class’, as many of them have experienced ‘deskilling’- at first in Greece, and then abroad in London. It is important to note that the class group Schram calls ‘the precariat’ are those who identify as failed neoliberal citizens. In my research, it was not the case that my informants identified in this way even if they had experienced deskilling and insecurity in Greece and the UK. However, rather than take this as proof that they are not experiencing precarity, I would argue instead that this was part of a performative strategy to appear to be a ‘good

immigrant' as I explain later[18]. Even though most of my informants did not identify as 'failed neoliberal citizens', I did encounter many Greeks in London who were working in positions that were well below their skill level and degree of education. This was the case at first for my informant Hilary, who eventually secured a job as a civil servant after several years of doing temporary low paid work in London. Many Greek professionals- like Hilary- have found themselves demoralised and deskilled after they moved to London. My ethnography has therefore led me to question the extent to which I can consider my middle-class Greek professional informants to be 'transnational elites'.

Hilary is a thirty-two-year-old woman with bright eyes, freckles, ginger coloured hair and a big smile. Hilary left Greece at the age of twenty-four with a bachelors and masters' degree, a teacher training qualification, and the aspiration to study for a PhD. Before her move to London, Hilary worked as a tutor in Greece at the same time as completing her masters' degree in social and economic history. In Greece she was 'struggling a lot' after her employer refused to pay her salary. Indeed, in 2012, Hilary explained that she had reached a 'deadlock'. Whilst Hilary had always hoped to move abroad and complete a PhD, she explained that it was her 'traumatic' experience of 'fighting to survive' in Greece which made her decision to move to London 'even more urgent'. Despite her relative privilege compared with other kinds of migrant and refugees, Hilary felt somewhat forced to leave Greece as a result of the precarity and uncertainty she experienced. In London, Hilary managed to eventually secure a job in the British Civil Service, and she has recently become a British citizen. At the same time as working for the British government, Hilary also managed to complete her PhD. When we spoke, Hilary was incredibly proud- though still modest- of her achievements.

Indeed, Hilary explained that initially, when she first moved to London, she had been unsure of what she could do in the UK and began working in low paid jobs as a nanny and coffee barista. Like other immigrants in capitalist countries, Hilary became 'deskilled' in London. In Greece, Hilary worked as a tutor whilst studying, and would have been qualified to teach in the UK had she realised that she was able to do so. However, Hilary's first job in the UK was as a nanny, and this job was low paid. Hilary explained that as an

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[18] In addition, I argue in my fourth ethnographic chapter that my informants were reluctant to identify their 'failures' to succeed, because in London it was considered unacceptable to 'perform *miseria'*- London was a place where one should be successful.

immigrant, she was not sure what she could do professionally in the UK, and she was not sure if her skills and qualifications from Greece would be recognised in the same way abroad. Hilary worried that her masters' degree would not be enough to get a job in the UK. She was unclear of how her previous experience of teaching in Greece would be recognised in a new professional context. Therefore, when Hilary first came to London she started working in low paid, temporary, part time positions. As she explained:

> "I started from scratch because I didn't know what I could do. I did not think my skills would be enough. When I came to the UK, I was so demoralised from the Greek job market and experience that I felt my masters was not enough to find a job…
>
> It wasn't easy for me to build my life in the UK. I started from scratch. I was getting very low salaries: I was doing a nanny job and then I was doing a coffee barista job for a few months. And then I joined a school, so I was a teacher for a few years- part time- then I was teaching at my university; then I found a job in the government. So I built up my progress" (Hilary, 32-year-old Civil Servant).

As I discuss later in this thesis, Hilary's experience of the job market in Greece had left her feeling demoralised[19]. Hilary arrived depressed and worn out from her experiences in Greece and she continued to feel anxious and stressed in the UK long after she had secured her Civil Service job. As her comments show, Hilary had found it difficult to find well-paid work in London when she first moved abroad. In this respect, Hilary's experience is similar to that of other immigrants. For example, in her paper 'Gender, work and migration: Deskilling Chinese immigrant women in Canada', Guida Man explains how employers' requirement for ''Canadian experience'' coupled with the "restrictive professional accreditation processes and the lack of recognition of immigrant women's foreign credentials and work experience" disadvantage highly educated and highly skilled Chinese women who immigrate to Canada such that they have become "deskilled workers or unemployed" (Man, 2004: 145). "The jobs they have obtained are often low-status, low-paid and part-time positions, which they may take up in order to meet their

[19] In the next chapters, I explore Hilary's feelings of depression through the lens of *xenitia* and *miseria*, taking an affective approach. I argue that in London the crisis in Greece still seemed 'proximate' to Hilary (cf. Knight, 2015). The negative affects of *xenitia* seemed to haunt Hilary abroad as she remembered the negative aspects of life in Greece. The chimerical sense that things were not as they ought to have been in Greece seemed to have embodied, long-lasting effects despite the fact that Hilary had 'escaped' from that situation. As I explore more in my later chapters, it seems important to study the affective and embodied aspects of people's migration journeys and their lives.

immediate requirements" (ibid). In Hilary's case, it was true that she had to take these jobs initially in order to afford her rental accommodation. However, similarly to Man's acknowledgment that her informants were not passive victims of such situations, Hilary asserted that she had 'built up her progress' in the UK. Whilst she explained that she had 'started from scratch' she stressed that she had worked hard to improve her circumstances abroad, and now holds a good role in the British Civil Service.

I would argue that Hilary had internalised a neoliberal idea of progress and success. As I said above, whilst people like Hilary might be said to be part of a 'precariat class' because they work in jobs that are at a lower level than their level of education and hence their "relative deprivation is severe" (Standing, 2011: vii), it was *not* the case that they identified as 'failed neoliberal citizens'. On the contrary, as I discuss more in section three, it seemed even more important for my informants to establish that they were on track to achieve their neoliberal ideas of progress and success. I argue that my informants' migration might be interpreted as a political act of resistance to a context of resignation and negative hope (cf. Miyazaki, 2006: 148) that seemed to threaten this neoliberal vision of progress and success. In this context of crisis, migration might be understood as a kind of 'political' act to regain control over one's life so that one can feel confident that one's expectations will materialise. We might say that "migration can be understood as a material projection into a future that is located somewhere else" (Narotzky and Besnier, 2014: 11). Throughout my thesis I argue that for modernists, this vision for the future was explicitly neoliberal and capitalist.

Hilary's narrative reflects the intersection between the impact of economic crisis in Greece and the wider context of immigrants entering the job market in capitalist countries. The idea that one country's 'brain drain' becomes 'deskilled labour' in the new country is something that has been observed in similar contexts of highly skilled migration (cf. Man, 2004: 145) as I said above. Of course, some Greeks in London had previously studied abroad and therefore had locally acquired qualifications that were more easily recognised by the British system. However, those who were arriving in London for the first time often ended up working in jobs that were much lower than their skillset could allow. It was not only Hilary who experienced this deskilling in London. Some of my other informants had also struggled to find a job in London that was relevant to their professional studies and experience from Greece. I met nurses and doctors who

were in precarious and low paid employment in care homes, and lawyers who became coffee shop baristas due to their lack of British-based experience and the difficulty to transfer their knowledge and qualifications into a different legal system. These more recently arrived Greeks experienced deskilling in London as well as deskilling in Greece. Therefore, I do not consider that middle class migrants are exempt from the capitalist and extractive dynamics of labour flows. My research leads me to critique the extractive dynamics of migration and challenge the view that middle-class migrants are transnational elites, as I explore more in the next section.

Brexit

In this section I critically assess the applicability of Olwig's claim that my informants- as comparatively privileged migrants- enter the UK from 'a completely different vantage point' to other kinds of migrant (cf. Olwig, 2007). In my view, the vision of middle-class migrants as a privileged elite who move freely in global 'flows' taking along their work where it pleases them is perhaps obscuring the kind of precarity that they do face. I argue that both the economic crisis and Brexit hindered my informants' capacity to control their lives and accomplish their ambitions. I discuss the increasing precarity of EU migrants and non-citizens more broadly, all of whom are "subject to conditions and controls on their mobility" (cf. Prabhat, 2018: 125). I argue that Greek professionals are not exempt from the 'aesthetics of eligibility' which determine who is desirable to capitalist nation-states, though I do acknowledge their relative privilege compared to other migrants.

As I discussed previously, the different classifications of migrants as 'professionals', 'economic migrants', 'labour migrants', 'asylum seeker' and 'refugee' have been well documented in migration literature. The type of classification one is given fundamentally affects the potentiality of one's life abroad. In neoliberal societies, scholars argue that laws frequently facilitate and favour the immigration of well-educated, highly skilled people, whilst "irregular migrants or asylum seekers are kept out through national security measures and treated as potential terrorists" (Prabhat, 2018: 16; cf. Meer et al 2010; Ong, 1999, 2006). Whilst some scholars argue that globalisation has marked the demise of the nation state and the advent of a new 'de-territorialised' paradigm of political existence (Hann, 2013), others argue that walls, borders and "the techniques to mark, maintain and control them are proliferating" (Green, 2013: 355). Some forms of migration seem to become criminal and punishable, a violation of the territoriality of the

nation-state- particularly when these migrants are considered to be racialised ‘Others’ (cf. Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2018). Of course, the hierarchies between different kinds of migrants are not only on the basis of skills, but also with regards to their origin. There is an aesthetic aspect to eligibility that is connected to the colonial histories of nation-states. In this respect, my informants- as Caucasian Europeans- are a comparatively privileged kind of migrant.

As highly skilled professionals, my informants had expected that they would always have the right of freedom of movement and the ability to live in the UK. They did not expect that the British state would have to assess whether they were ‘eligible’ or ‘desirable’ enough to keep their rights to reside in London. After Brexit, some of my informants consequently began to feel more like ‘aliens’ as they had to prove their right to remain. After Brexit it seemed that my informants felt that they were only desirable to the UK because their labour was useful to the economy, and this affected their sense of belonging. Of course, unlike ‘other’ kinds of migrants in London, my informants were comparatively more confident that they would be more protected from the anti-immigration sentiment of Brexit voters. As my informants explained it, they were not the ‘Eastern European’ immigrants that British people seemed to fear were ‘taking their jobs’[20]. Nevertheless, as I explore below through the lens of my informant Costas and his wife Ismene, Brexit made some of my informants feel more precarious, and created a sense of regression in their projects for modernist success.

Costas (36 years old) came to the UK when he was thirty after completing his undergraduate degree in theology. He moved to London with his wife Ismene, who works as a languages tutor. They live in a terraced home in North London, with their son Nikos who was born during my fieldwork. During my research, I met regularly with the couple, usually for dinner and coffees in their home. As I explain below, Costas and Ismene had struggled to make a life worth living in Greece. Before moving to the UK, Costas experienced deskilling in Greece as he struggled to find an academic position in his field of theology. Costa seemed to have become part of a surplus population, unable to find a job in a situation of high unemployment and due to the fact that jobs in his field did not

[20] For example, one of my informants described the attacks they had seen in their neighbourhood on the Polish community centre. They explained how some British people were angry that Eastern European labour migrants had ‘taken’ jobs and social housing which they felt should have been theirs.

exist. Costas had expected that working hard to become more qualified would have guaranteed him success. However, in the context of economic crisis and high unemployment, Costas had minimal job prospects in Greece.

Costas told me that whilst in the UK it is common to find a job perhaps only six months after graduating, "in Greece this never happens". Costas explained his view that "in Greece you finish your degree and know it will never be of use to you ever again". For example, despite Costas' background in theology, he was applying for jobs as a salesman and as a secretary, "even the simplest things: to hand out leaflets or work at McDonald's". In Greece, Costas had worked as a branch manager in sales, though he explained that in Greece "they hire you for one thing and you end up doing five different things because of the financial crisis and the lack of funding. They sack people and you have to do their job as well but for the same salary". In the end, Costas was working sixteen-hour days in his company, doing all the different jobs- on the phone, ordering products, doing the marketing, cleaning the store- with no overtime. He described the chance of finding a job in his field of theology as being at one percent, and even then, it would not be well paid.

Costas explained that he needed to find a well-paid job in order to start a family with his wife Ismene, who have been together for twenty years. Ismene had told Costas that their situation in Greece "could not go on", and that Costas needed to "do something to increase his employability". Costas decided that he should do a masters, which he managed to complete whilst working in his 16-hours-per-day job. As he told me: "when I finished it, I thought my employability prospects would be better- having work experience plus more degrees. I tried to complete as many qualifications as possible so that I had more chance of getting a job. But my prospects did not improve, and the financial situation of Greece became worse and worse. Ismene suggested that we go abroad and try our luck there. She believed in me and my skills" (Costas). As Costas' comments show, he and his wife Ismene were 'compelled to adapt their old modes of livelihood and create new ones' (Narotzky and Besnier 2014: 7); first, by working harder and obtaining more qualifications, and second, by their move abroad. In both cases, it was not that the economic crisis threatened their neoliberal idea of success and progress. As Costas put it: Ismene still believed in Costas' skills; she still expected that he would be able to secure a good job; they simply had to move abroad.

I would argue that Costas and Ismene migrated abroad because they wanted to take control of their lives and create a life worth living (Das, 1997; Narotzky and Besnier, 2014); they moved abroad to achieve their neoliberal ambitions that they felt were no longer achievable in Greece. In Greece, the economic crisis had made it difficult to afford to live together and start a family. If they had stayed, they would still be living with their respective parents despite being married because they could not afford their own house. Ismene had become frustrated with living separately. Migration offered Ismene the opportunity to materialise her hope and expectation to run her own household and have children. Indeed, despite others' perceptions of their decision, the couple's migration was primarily Ismene's idea. Costas explained that he was not usually willing to take 'big risks' in his life and had not previously thought about leaving.

During my conversation with Costas, he explained that their original plan had been that he would get his PhD abroad, funded by the Greek and British institutions, and then "take this knowledge and go back and find work in my field in Greece". Costas had anticipated that there would be positions available two to three years from the date that he left Greece. However, when the crisis came, these positions were no longer available. "Instead of creating new jobs, people were losing their jobs and there were no new jobs in the field". Given the situation, Costas felt that the couple would not be able to return to Greece even though this was their 'goal'. Whilst Costas felt that they would not be able to afford the same standard of living that they had in London, they still wanted to return for the sake of being with their family and friends. "But at the moment this is not a possibility", Costas explained. In London, Costas had managed to find a position where he could teach theology to university students. However, unfortunately Brexit created another layer of precarity and uncertainty which made the couple feel once again that their hopes for the future were under threat.

In the context of Brexit, Costas and Ismene felt a sense of return or regression back to circumstances that they had experienced in Greece. Similar to Sabate's discussion of how economic crisis created an implosion and sense of regression in people's life projects and trajectories, in my ethnography I observed a similar sense of regression after Brexit. In her article about home repossessions in Spain after the economic crisis, Sabate explores how people deal with the transformations brought by economic turmoil. Sabaté discusses the disillusionment and frustration her informants felt as their homes were repossessed.

"'Regressions' in the usual cause of life projects have meant that people are going 'backwards' rather than 'forwards' in their life trajectories, spreading confusion and anxiety" (Sabate, 2016: 107). Both Sabate's research and my own support Narotzky and Besnier's framing of crisis as encompassing a "breach of confidence in the elements that provided relative systemic stability and reasonable expectations for the future" (Narotzky and Besnier, 2014: 4). Indeed, both our studies contribute to theories of migration which consider movement not only geographically but temporally, as associated with ideas of momentum towards the future.

As I said above, Costas and Ismene anticipated that their migration abroad would create a better future. Their orientation to the future was anticipation more than expectation because it was an act of looking forward that pulled them in that direction and prepared the groundwork for that future to occur. As Bryant and Knight explain it: "[in expectation], the future remains at a distance, even if we are relatively certain of its approach. In anticipation, however, we not only ready ourselves but also press forward into the future, enacting it and thereby pulling the future toward the present" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 28). In this way, we might understand Costas and Ismene's attempts to secure employment abroad as their effort to enact or pull their future towards the present. In London, they had started to feel hopeful that they could achieve their desire to have a family and find good jobs. However, I would suggest that Brexit became a 'critical threshold' where the future was suddenly uncertain and unknown. In the context of Brexit, "[t]his was a present that suddenly seemed uncertain and anxious, determining the future rather than being shaped by its ends" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 44).

Costas and Ismene explained that the Brexit vote had made them feel fearful and concerned that they had become deportable. This uncertainty over their rights to stay in the UK made Costas feel worried that the life they had built abroad would be 'taken away'. Indeed, Costas explained that Brexit 'hurt them even more' because they had already experienced precarity and uncertainty in Greece. As I said above, in Greece Costas had struggled with the fact that he did not have a secure job and felt "constantly overworked without getting enough money". Even after they "took the decision to leave everything behind and make a new start", Costas and Ismene had suffered the first few years they were abroad because they were professionally and financially insecure and "had no friends" or "support mechanism". "We were on our own" Costa told me. Indeed, Costas

and Ismene had only recently begun to feel financially and professionally secure and settled in London. The fact that Brexit would potentially disrupt their lives came as an additional blow given that they had only recently 'found their feet' in the UK. Having only just begun to see the 'light at the end of the tunnel', the additional uncertainty and precarity brought by Brexit was particularly challenging and emotionally draining. "Now we've started to feel again that all these things will be taken from us- just because of a referendum. 'Leave' only won by a small margin" (Costas, 36, lecturer)

After Brexit, Costas and Ismene felt that their rights were not secured. They feared that the life they had built in London would be 'taken away' from them. Costas felt unwelcome and insecure, as he anticipated that he might be forced to leave. Brexit had also altered his perception of the UK as a welcoming nation for foreigners[21]. As he put it, "if you look at the rhetoric you will feel that the immigrants are not welcome here; that we have to leave the country, that we're used as bargaining chips; we've not secured our rights to be here even though we've been here seven years. You have the right-wing media saying 'go back to your land' and 'you came here to abuse the benefits system' and 'you exploit us'. We feel that all the things we've built here and contributed here will be taken away from us and that we'll have to leave. This is a big fear and concern for us. So this may give you the impression that Britain is one of the least welcoming nations for foreigners" (Costas, 36, lecturer).

Indeed, according to the BBC, in an article written in 2019, "Prime Minister Theresa May said one of the main messages she took from the Leave vote was that the British people wanted to see a reduction in immigration. She has insisted the UK government remains committed to reducing annual net migration - the difference between the number of people entering and leaving - to below 100,000" (BBC, 2019). Following the UK's exit from the European Union, free movement was set to continue until the end of the transition period in December 2020, after which point it was said that people from the EU would need visas to work in the UK. For my informants, applying for pre-settled and settled status was a way to ensure some protection against the risk of being deported. In

[21] As I discuss in my final ethnographic chapter, Brexit 'rudely repossessed' Costa's cosmopolitan imaginations for the future.

order to apply for settled status, one had to prove residence in the country, with caps on the time that one spent abroad.

Because Costas and Ismene had not quite lived in the UK long enough to get citizenship, their position was more precarious than some of my other informants who had already become British citizens. As other scholars also note, Brexit seems to have caused greater precarity and instability for migrants who have lived in the UK for shorter periods of time than those who have lived long-term abroad. Costas and Ismene knew that if they were to secure their rights to live in the UK permanently, they would have to fulfil the residency requirements set by the UK government. In order to secure their right to live in the UK after Brexit, they would have to show they had lived lawfully in the UK for more than five years[22] and prove that they had been "working and contributing to the state". They would also have to prove that they had not left the country for more than six months in each of those required five years. Whilst Costas felt that more than six months away would be 'too much', he explained that "now with Brexit we're not allowed to go to Greece as much as we want", particularly given that Ismene was pregnant at the time of this conversation.

Because Costas and Ismene wanted to become British citizens, to ensure that they would not be deported, they explained that they were only allowed to leave the UK for less than three months per year. Because of these requirements to prove their residency rights, Brexit affected Costas and Ismene in a practical and emotional way regarding their plans for Ismene's pregnancy. Costas and Ismene were not able to visit Greece in the way that they were hoping. Ismene had hoped to give birth in Greece and stay a few extra weeks to be with her family. However, the doctors and airlines would not allow Ismene to travel near to her due date, nor so soon after her delivery. If Ismene had given birth in Greece and taken some holiday time as they had intended, it would have exceeded the three-month limit that the government had set for applicants. Ismene explained that she "had no choice" but to give birth in London, because they would have lost the right to apply for

[22] Indeed, my informants felt that Brexit posed greater risks to EU citizens who had lived in the UK for less than five years- the requirement for settled status. However, even for those EU nationals who had lived long enough for citizenship, not all had applied, as was the case for the parents of my informant Peter (a trainee pilot) who had been putting off applying for British citizenship for years. As Prabhat explains, "[m]any EEA nationals have been present in the UK for years without seeking formal citizenship because, as EEA nationals, they were treated nearly the same as citizens for purposes such as entry, seeking employment and education, travel, bringing in family members and continuous residence" (Prabhat, 2018: vii). Now, they are unsure of what the future holds. Having assumed for so long that their position was stable, many EU nations were of two minds about becoming British given the precarity posed by Brexit (ibid: 4).

citizenship. Whilst the couple were happy that their baby would have the potential to naturalise as a British citizen and "make the baby's life a bit easier", it was clear that Brexit prevented Costas and Ismene from being able to fulfil their hopes for the birth of their first child.

Based on this example, I would therefore challenge the view that highly skilled migrants are transnational elites who are able to easily 'pop on a plane' without restrictions on their mobility. Clearly, in the context of Brexit and the new requirements for their application for residency had a big impact on Costas and Ismene's perceptions about their ability to travel and their freedom of movement. What Brexit has emphasised, in my view, is the truth that whilst migrants do choose where they move and travel, it is also ultimately the state that chooses who has these rights. As others have argued, not everyone has the same ability to be transnational, and in the contemporary context of post-Brexit Britain, it seems that even EU migrants are no longer as privileged in this respect[23]. The fact that EU migrants were now subject to a new 'points-based' system to determine their 'usefulness' or 'worth' to the UK after Brexit made many of my informants unsure of their status and rights to mobility after Brexit.

Of course, as highly skilled people, my informants' labour was comparatively more favoured than that of unskilled workers. The policy to rank immigrants with a points system might be said to have been put in place in order to restrict the mobility of the 'wrong' kind of migrant, and welcome- comparatively- the mobility and immigration of the highly skilled workers, such as the professionals from Greece that are the focus of my study. I must also say that Brexit has been more damaging for those people who do not have the bureaucratic knowledge to understand the requirements for residence, or who struggle to obtain the relevant information. Given that my informants were usually fluent English speakers and had a high level of cultural capital and resources with which to help them navigate the application process, it should be noted that other EU migrants have struggled more. Nevertheless, my research corroborates other scholars' observation that "[t]here is a deep sense of hurt and betrayal at the sudden turn of events after the referendum held on 23 June 2016…Despite repeated reassurances by politicians, it

[23] Of course, the freedom of movement which my informants could enjoy as EU citizens created comparative security, and greater mobility options which are denied to non-EU and low-skilled migrants. Non-EU workers require visas that are sponsored by their employers and given that this can be expensive for businesses, it is still often more difficult for non-EU workers to get a job.

remains to be seen whether EEA nationals will be able to retain secure statuses in the UK in the post-Brexit era" (Prabhat, 2018: 69).

As I explain below, Brexit made some of my informants feel more unsure of their 'worth' in a context where rights to stay had to be applied for. Several of my informants were troubled by the new restrictions on their mobility if they were to secure their rights to remain in the UK post-Brexit, and this affected their sense of belonging and homeliness in London. For example, according to my informant Harmony (an actor in her early forties who works at a gallery in London), European citizens living in the UK were becoming like 'aliens' because they were required to "track their movements". She explained how: "You have to send lots and lots of documents to prove that you have been in the UK five years, and that you have not left the country. You have to submit boarding passes as proof". Harmony was worried that she would have to remember the precise dates that she left the UK, as she often did not record these on her calendar. Brexit created uncertainty and precarity which made her feel *xenos*- alien or foreign[24].

My informant Pasha- a receptionist in her mid-thirties- was similarly upset with the message that Brexit sent to European citizens living in London. Pasha explained to me the sense of insecurity and betrayal caused by Brexit which she referred to as a 'slap on the face'. Despite her plan to apply for British citizenship, she explained that 'I don't want to be a British citizen if they don't want me here'. The fact that Brexit 'targeted immigration' also made Pasha feel unwanted and alien/foreign (*xeni*). She started to doubt that she wanted to become a British citizen. Pasha had already felt that in the process of applying to be a British citizen the state wanted to "find an excuse not to give you your citizenship". After Brexit she felt that the country had reached a point where they did not want any immigrants to live in the UK at all. Pasha felt that "Brexit means we don't want to be part of you, and we don't want you to be part of us. Nothing else".

In my view, these experiences of Costas, Ismene, Harmony, and Pasha resonate with Devyani Prabhat's analysis of British citizenship laws and her observation that many EEA nationals living in the UK are now "unsure of what the future holds" (cf. Prabhat, 2018: vii). Though EEA nationals have been treated similarly to UK citizens with respect to "entry, seeking employment and education, travel, bringing in family members and

[24] In the next chapter I explore the meanings of *xenos* (foreign/alien), and *xenitia* (hardship and misery abroad), which has been considered a characteristic experience for Greek migrants of the past.

continuous residence" (ibid), Brexit has suggested that these benefits are no longer guaranteed unless one seeks formal citizenship. As the example of Pasha shows, Prabhat's observation that "[h]aving assumed for so long that their position was stable, many EU nations were of two minds about becoming British given the precarity posed by Brexit" (Prabhat, 2018: 4) is supported by my ethnography. As I explore more in the next chapter, whilst contemporary Greek people have felt that it is their right to live in Europe and feel that Europe is a kind of extended neighbourhood or home, it seems that Brexit has challenged this feeling and threatened their cosmopolitan visions for the future[25]. Now, some Greeks in London like Pasha and Harmony feel that they are more like aliens or foreigners (*xenoi*).

In the next chapter I argue that what made the concept of *xenitia* less relevant in the contemporary context was the European Union, as membership of the EU gave Greek people the same rights as other Europeans. Unlike Greek labour migrants/'guestworkers' of the past, contemporary Greeks have not faced the same kind of everyday violence of being treated as second-class citizens. They have indeed been a more privileged kind of migrant. However, since the crisis and the intense discussion about Grexit, it seems that some Greeks in London feel like they are losing the entitlement to be part of Europe. Stereotypes of the 'lazy Greek' and the increased spotlight and attention upon Greek people seem to have threatened the sense of privilege that we might say applies to these highly skilled professionals. Now, it seems that Brexit and economic crisis have accentuated feelings of ambivalence in relation to my informants' positionalities vis a vis Europe.

In this context, some Greek professionals in London seemed anxious to prove that they 'belonged' in the UK and in Europe. I argue that, in the context of Brexit, it was even more important for my informants to 'prove' that they were 'good immigrants' who had moved to London by *choice* and not by necessity. Through my discussion of my informant Karan (an engineer) in the next section, I argue that this 'good immigrant' persona was based on an explicitly neoliberal conceptualisation of selfhood, progress, and success. My ethnography contributes to Lazzarato's discussion of neoliberal subjectivity and 'the indebted man' (cf. Lazzarato, 2012) who is "at once responsible and guilty for his particular fate" (Lazzarato, 2012: 9). My ethnography supports the claim that

[25] In my fifth and final ethnographic chapter I discuss my informants' versions and visions of cosmopolitanism.

“[b]ecoming a ‘good migrant’ is connected to the neoliberal vision of upward mobility through hard work” (cf. Erel et al, 2016: 1348) as well as the idea that migrants are expected to “transform themselves” in order to fit the society they have moved to (cf. Pedwell, 2012; Mahmood, 2005). In the next section I argue that in the context of Brexit, my informants seemed to want to performatively establish themselves as ‘good immigrants’- as productive and adaptable members of British society- to justify their right to reside in the UK.

‘Good Immigrants’- a neoliberal selfhood

An important contribution of my thesis is to demonstrate the relevance of Greek migration and Greece’s relationship with Europe to these ideas of indebtedness and Lazzarato’s point that it is also “public debt that weighs, literally, on every individual’s life, since every individual must take responsibility for it” (Lazzarato, 2012: 38). Lazzarato argues that “[i]t is debt and the creditor-debtor relationship that make up the subjective paradigm of modern-day capitalism, in which ‘labour’ is coupled with ‘work on the self’, in which economic activity and the ethico-political activity of producing the subject go hand in hand (Lazzarato, 2012: 38). In my thesis I connect Lazzarato’s ideas of indebtedness to the concept of the ‘good immigrant’. I explore the ways in which my informants seemed to navigate the ‘aesthetics of eligibility’ (cf. Cabot, 2013) in post-Brexit Britain. I argue that in the context of Brexit, my informants seemed to want to performatively establish themselves as ‘good immigrants’- as productive and adaptable members of British society- to justify their right to reside in the UK.

Furthermore, I link indebtedness to the context of economic crisis the associated tropes of responsibility for this crisis, I demonstrate how my informants’ migration and positionalities were related to these wider dynamics of Greece’s alleged indebtedness to creditors. Considering how Greece was made to be a ‘debtor’ in relation to the ‘bailout’ countries, these debtor-creditor relations were an important contextual backdrop to my study. Given the negative tropes of Greeks as ‘lazy’ and ‘corrupt’, my study (and the ethnographic contributions of Elisabeth Kirtsoglou and Daniel Knight) demonstrate how debt is not only economic but has a culturalized component and includes a “creditor’s ‘moral judgement’ of the debtor, that is, a ‘subjective’ measure of value…not only are the skills and know-how of the worker evaluated, so too are the poor man’s actions in society (social ‘virtues’, ‘conduct’, ‘reputation’, that is, his lifestyle, his social behaviour, his

values, his very *existence*. It is through debt that capital is able to appropriate not only the physical and intellectual abilities the poor man employs in his labour, but also his social and existential forces" (Lazzarato, 2012: 59).

In my thesis, I argue that the 'good immigrant' persona that my informants wished to present was built on their self-perception as 'debtors' within the UK who were not only "expected to reimburse in actual money [through tax contributions] but rather in conduct, attitudes, ways of behaving, plans, subjective commitments, the time devoted to finding a job, the time used for conforming oneself to the criteria dictated by the market and business, etc". My ethnography illustrates how "debt directly entails life discipline and a way of life that requires 'work on the self', a permanent negotiation with oneself, a specific form of subjectivity: that of the indebted man. In other words, debt reconfigures biopolitical power by demanding a production of subjectivity specific to indebted man" (Lazzarato, 2012: 104). In order to demonstrate that they were not the kinds of Greeks that had caused the economic crisis, my informants stressed that they were not 'lazy' or 'materialistic' but rather willing neoliberal citizens wanting to adapt to British society's aesthetics and norms. During my ethnography I noticed how my informants, as highly skilled professionals were keen to establish themselves as 'good immigrants'- successful neoliberal citizens.

For example, my informant Karan- a thirty-eight-year-old engineer- seemed to employ a narrative of 'deterritorialisation as accomplishment' in his promotion of the neoliberal aesthetic of being a productive individual. Karan is a driven, ambitious man in his late thirties who first moved to London in 2010 to complete a degree in engineering. Karan's first job was in the north of England, but since then he has returned to the south of England and has been living in London permanently for two years. Having qualified with a masters' degree in engineering, Karan currently has a full-time job working on the design of a prestigious brand of car. His partner runs a café, and they are hoping to buy a house in London and start a family in the near future. Though Karan expected that the expensive housing market in London would delay their plans to buy a house, he explained that his ambitions have not been affected by the difficulties of life abroad.

As I discuss below, Karan explained that he could leave London or the UK at any time if he wanted to. With two passports- a Greek and British one- Karan was even more flexible in his mobility, maintaining his right to freedom of movement in the EU as well as his right

to stay in the UK. In this respect, Karan argued that Brexit would not affect him at all. Karan claimed that he would be able to live and work 'anywhere' such that Brexit would have little effect on his life. Karan and I had met for brunch in a regenerated area of central London near a busy railway station. During our conversation we were discussing Brexit and the impact that it would potentially have given that 'leave' voters won the majority. Karan told me:

> "The raw reality is that Brexit has no impact on me at all. I have a British passport. It's not going to touch me by any means. It's not going to touch me even when things get really bad. That's what I said to you, I always have a plan. When I'm doing something, I'm doing it in a way that will be secure from every point of view. I'm in London because I want to, because I haven't finished with this place yet…And, I earned it [my passport] if I may. Through your laws and constitution. Also I paid my degree in full. I didn't burden your society or financial system even a little bit. I pay taxes in full. British people with benefits are eating from my taxes…Now I have an EU and British passport I can go back and forth with no problem whereas you might need a visa to visit Spain or Greece…So I got all the benefits from your country. I'm doing well and bringing money to the company and the country and then you're going to lose me taking away everything you've done" (Karan, 38, engineer).

As his comments show, Karan presented himself as a highly skilled professional who was able to choose where he wanted to live and work. He seemed to present deterritorialisation as a natural outcome of wanting to choose the best place to continue his career. On the one hand, Karan insisted that it was his choice to live and work in other countries, and that he 'always has a plan'. He felt that his labour was (or should be) valuable to the UK economy, and this contributed to his sense of confidence and self-esteem. On the other hand, it was clear in our other conversations that Karan's 'plans' might be interrupted and disrupted by the Brexit vote. He acknowledged that because he worked for a German-owned company, his situation might change. Whilst Karan felt confident that he could keep his job- he anticipated that the company may relocate their offices to another EU country. If this happened, Karan knew that he would be somewhat 'forced' to move abroad again. With a plan to buy a house in London and start a family this would of course be inconvenient and potentially disruptive to his personal life. In this respect, Karan was at least somewhat aware that it was only really his labour that was valued by the UK and his company; the effects of Brexit on his personal life seemed of

little concern. This said, unlike many of my informants who shared their worries and concerns about their status in post-Brexit Britain and the effects of this on their hopes and expectations for the future, Karan seemed confident and complacent in the face of these changes. Below, I argue that Karan's confident narrative was a kind of performative defence against the precarity and instability that he did in fact face.

As we can see from his comments, Karan was adamant that he had contributed to British society and that it would be a loss to Britain if he were to leave. Karan felt that he deserved his rights of residency because of his self-sufficiency and a lack a dependency on the state (cf. Lafleur and Mescoli, 2018). He had 'earned his passport', by contributing to British society. In this respect, Karan demonstrated that he was a 'good immigrant'. He was a productive member of society, not a financial burden. By presenting himself as self-sufficient and highly skilled, Karan seemed more able to assure me that he was not a 'miser' abroad, but a 'good immigrant' who was contributing to society. As I said previously, I agree with Kirtsoglou's conceptualisation of radical alterity as an essential part of the rhizomatic symbolic space in which people establish and perform their positionalities, facilitated by this kind of comparison to 'others'. During my fieldwork, my informants were keen to distance their own migration stories from those of 'economic migrants' such as those from 'Eastern Europe', as these were people that British people seemed to think were 'taking their jobs'. Many of my informants seemed keen to demonstrate through their narratives that they were not 'misers' who desperately needed a job.

I suggest that Karan's comments were a performative display to establish himself as an accomplished individual, a self-made man, and a 'good immigrant' given the context of precarity and uncertainty that he did in fact face. I do not conceptualise Karan as a 'transnational elite' in the way that Aiwa Ong might. Ong refers to her Chinese professional informants as 'world-class practitioners of self-sufficiency' (Ong, 1999: 1). She discusses how Chinese professionals hold a multiplicity of passports and seem "to display an elan for thriving in conditions of political insecurity as well as in the turbulence of global trade" (ibid). As 'transnational elites', Ong presents her informants as free to move wherever their work takes them. Ong seems to frame her informants more as 'expatriates' than 'migrants' in relation to 'deterritorialisation' which she seems to frame in a positive way.

In contrast to Ong's approach, I build on Kirtsoglou's point that whilst both the refugee/migrant and the globalised subject (such as a tourist, an executive of a multinational corporation, and even an anthropologist) are 'deterritorialised' entities, "the former is perceived as distraught, the latter as accomplished" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016: 8). Kirtsoglou argues that the highly skilled professional is considered to be a kind of "globalized subject [who] embodies modernity and endorses consumption. She stands for progress (understood and deployed variously and differently) and is regarded as possessing the celebrated ability to think and exist beyond national boundaries and fixed categorical groupings". "[H]er movement is seen as engineering capital, either directly, through consumption, or through internationalizing production, facilitating local and global entrepreneurship, disseminating ideas, images, science, or technology". Importantly, Kirtsoglou argues that the refugee and the professional are not contrasting dichotomies; these alternative forms of existence are not opposed to each other, she argues, but rather they "form a rhizome, a complex symbolic space where modern political subjectivities are produced and performed in relation to some imagined forms of radical alterity" (ibid).

Returning to Karan's narrative, we can see that Karan presented himself more like an expatriate than a migrant, as someone who could "take along their work more or less where it pleases them" (Hannerz, 1990: 243). Karan seemed to imply a view of deterritorialisation as the pinnacle of neoliberal individualism and success; he would be able to travel anywhere that his career took him, wherever there was a deficit in the job market. In this respect, Karan's narrative seems to illustrate those inequalities between migrants and refugees which Kirtsoglou critiques in her work. Whilst in both cases these people are 'deterritorialised', migrants like Karan are considered to be 'accomplished' whereas refugees are considered 'distraught'. As I have said, it seems important that transnational theories of deterritorialisation, internationalisation and interconnection should account for the neoliberal dynamics to migration. As I continue to argue throughout my thesis, Karan was one of my informants who had clearly internalised a neoliberal idea of the self. In all of our conversations, Karan presented himself as a highly skilled, self-sufficient, economically productive professional with the ability to shape his own destiny. Karan always wanted to present himself as a self-made individual responsible for his own fate. As he put it: "I always have a plan".

To understand Karan's narrative further, I would apply Pipyrou's discussion of '*bella figura'* in a metaphorical way (cf. Pipyrou, 2014). In her paper, Pipyrou explores how people in Reggio Calabria in South Italy attempt to maintain a *bella figura* (beautiful appearance) despite the negative impacts of financial austerity. With a focus on the introduction of second-hand clothing into the Italian marketplace, imported/donated from Northern Europe, Pipyrou explores the anxieties her informants felt at the prospect of using second-hand clothing which might threaten their ability to maintain a *bella figura.* Unlike the "nationwide craze" for "Bohemian, shabby-chic, and vintage style trends" in the UK[26], Pipyrou explains that in Italy, the origins of second-hand clothing must be concealed in order to create the appearance of luxury and '*bella figura'* (ibid: 533). For example, Pipyrou gives a vignette of charity shopping together with her informant Venere (a woman from Italy) in the north of England. Pipyrou describes how Venere found the opportunity to indulge in almost-new, often designer-label, clothes- the second-hand origin of which people in Reggio Calabria would not notice. They would only be able to notice the "certainty of her display of a renewed wardrobe, which would definitely enhance her reputation as one of the best-dressed women in the city" (ibid). Venere "decided to conceal the source of the branded clothes and create an alternative narrative of purchasing the clothes from expensive British boutiques" (ibid).

In my view, we can apply this example of Venere's second-hand clothing purchases in a metaphorical way to understand Karan's performativity of the 'good immigrant' aesthetic. In this metaphor, the second-hand clothes might be considered to be Karan's migrant status, and the '*bella figura'* might be the neoliberal value of the economically productive citizen. In particular, Pipyrou's comments about importation and anxiety resonate with my ethnography. As I said above, Pipyrou's Italian informants were anxious to conceal the fact that their clothes were second-hand. Secondly, she mentions how these clothes were imported/donated from Northern Europe into the Italian marketplace. I would argue that we can apply these ideas metaphorically to understand how my informants' desire to conceal their migrant status and assert their '*bella figura'* of a neoliberal form of selfhood were embroiled within the crypto-colonial dynamics between Greece and Europe. That is to say, my informants seem to have internalised neoliberal

[26] Pipyrou argues that in the UK charity shops are no longer stigmatized as the domain of the second-class citizen but are firmly placed within a growing meta-attitude encouraging originality, creativity, and individuality that embraces and celebrates all forms of social life" (Pipyrou, 2014: 533).

and modernist values in a way that supposedly 'mimics' those values of Western Europe in order to prove their belonging, yet this is linked to the fact that it is Europe that is 'donating' or 'importing' these ideas of how Greece should be and requiring that Greece meet this benchmark. Similarly, the (metaphorical) 'anxiety' in my ethnography might be that these neoliberal and Western positionalities relate to the *disemic* tensions of Greek identity, and the wider context of the critique of the Greek diaspora as neoliberal traitors by many Greeks in Greece. It seemed that my informants were anxious to avoid these crypto-colonial dynamics from seeming too obvious. As I explore below, Karan actually critiqued the deficiency of British people to live up to his neoliberal standards of selfhood.

Karan seemed to extend this neoliberal aesthetics of eligibility surrounding citizenship and rights to native British citizens. Karan implied that some British people did not even deserve the citizenship that they had acquired automatically by birth as much as he deserved the citizenship that he had acquired through hard work. Karan seemed to extend his application of this 'aesthetics of eligibility' a step further in his claim that British people were the ones 'eating' from *his* taxes; not the other way around. It was the native British citizen who did not 'deserve a passport' so to speak. It would seem that states distribute rights and benefits to people according to their marketable skills rather than according to their membership within nation-states (Ong, 2006). Indeed, scholars argue that "passports have become 'less and less attestations of citizenship, let alone loyalty to a protective nation-state, than of claims to participate in labour markets' (Anderson, 1994: 323)" (Ong, 1999: 2). In contrast to the idea of citizenship as based on the principle of *jus sanguini*- belonging by blood, Karan seemed to suggest that citizenship should be earned and 'deserved' through contributing economically to a society, rather than acquired simply through residency, especially rights to residency acquired by birth.

In my view, Karan's comments also illustrate Kirtsoglou's idea of the 'imagination of a form of radical alterity' in the way that he 'proved' himself to be a 'good immigrant' by including native British citizens within the 'rhizomatic symbolic space' in which his subjectivity was performed. It was in relation to British citizens that Karan also established his positionality as a 'good immigrant', which in this case was clearly about proving he was a good neoliberal citizen- productive and successful. By including British people within the rhizome, Karan could argue that it was the natives who should have

their mobility constrained because they were the ones that were not living up to his ideal of neoliberal selfhood. I would therefore suggest that Karan's positionality seems to demonstrate how neoliberal positionalities are being reproduced and that the dynamics of exclusion remain in place (cf. Ticktin, 2011: 19). Based on the way that people like Karan performatively established themselves as 'good immigrants', I argue that the criteria for acceptance and worthiness are still very much determined by states and neoliberal and capitalist ethics and aesthetics. In addition, I would argue that Karan's comments are relevant for theories of migration which consider how migrants want to 'adapt' and 'integrate' to their host country. Based on my ethnography, I would argue that some Greeks in London do not want to become British citizens because they see neoliberal deterritorialisation as the pinnacle of modernist progress and success and feel more of a sense of community with people who share their neoliberal mentality more so than any nationalist positionality.

In my subsequent chapters I continue to explain how many of my informants felt a greater sense of community with people who shared their neoliberal form of subjectivity and mentality than with those people who shared their cultural background as Greeks. In the next chapter I argue that for some Greeks in London, the sense of belonging, community and home has shifted beyond ideas of cultural community such that the location of *xenitia* (unhomeliness) has changed for them. As I explain, some of my informants no longer felt at home in Greece because Greece had not achieved the kind of modernist progress that they hoped that it would. For these people with a modernist and neoliberal positionality, 'the real *xenitia'* was felt to be in Greece rather than abroad. In my next chapter I argue that *xenitia* was more of a trope than a topological register. I argue that my understanding of *xenitia* as trope better suits the contemporary context of Greek migrants living in London.

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Xenitia

In this chapter, I explore the Greek word *xenitia-* which can be roughly translated as the experience of misery caused by separation. Previous ethnographers have described *xenitia* as an experience of pain caused by physical and geographical separation from loved ones, caused by death but also by migration. Indeed, *xenitia* was a prominent experience for Greek migrants in the past, who were forced to move abroad to escape poverty or persecution. In this chapter I explore how the contemporary experience of Greek migrants differs to that of Greeks of the past and consider the resonance of *xenitia* in the contemporary context. My ethnography leads me to challenge conventional understandings of *xenitia* as a spatial separation; I understand *xenitia* to be more of a trope than a topological register. In this chapter I argue that many of my informants felt that 'the real *xenitia'* was located in Greece rather than abroad, due to their perception that Greece has not become what it should- a modern European nation able to sustain their middle-class hopes for a life worth living. Their idealised modernist vision of Greece seemed to become 'illusory' or 'impossible to achieve'- i.e. a chimera.

In part two of the chapter, I explore this idea of chimera from a sensory and material perspective. I demonstrate the relevance of my discussion of *xenitia* (and *disemia)* to the concept of the 'uncanny' and the feeling of being 'betwixt and between'. Furthermore, I demonstrate my contribution to anthropological studies of materiality and negative methodology in my introduction of the concept of 'ambiguous materialities' (cf. Bille et al, 2010). I argue that there are not neat divides between what is tangible and intangible, material and immaterial. I consider there to be instead "a spectrum of material-ness and sensuous encounters" (ibid: 16-17) which demonstrate the entanglement of presence and absence (ibid: 14). In contrast to other studies which focus on absence in the literal sense, in my work I focus on how absence and *xenitia* are triggered by the very presence of something different or chimerical. In this respect, my work reforms existing approaches to the concept of *xenitia,* which I now introduce below.

Xenitia is a well-known word in Greece, which can be heard in songs and laments at weddings and funerals (cf. Panourgia, 1995; Seremetakis, 1991; Danforth, 1982). It is a culturally familiar word, imbued with emotional power, linked to the pain of separation

and distance (cf. Danforth, 1982: 75). Whilst death involves permanent separation from which no return is possible, *xenitia* is referred to as a living separation (*zondanos horismos*) with hope for return (Danforth, 1982: 94). *Xenitia* captures ideas of estrangement and exile, and through the lens of *xenitia,* the separation caused by migration becomes analogous to the separation caused by death. For example, in her work on Maniat funerary practices, Nadia Seremetakis describes the process of "defamiliarisation" associated with the experience of *xenitia*, caused by the fact that "Eyes that don't meet, soon forget each other" (Seremetakis, 1991: 185). "Both death and *xenitia* take one's eyes away" (ibid: 185) she explains.

In her exploration of the symbolic aspects of *xenitia* in Greek laments about death, Seremetakis points out the associations between death and migration whereby "[t]he road is the signifier of the nonsedentary, the unsettled, and the nomadic…the dead are confined to the road (Seremetakis, 1991: 197). Each inhabitant of the afterlife is "*atopos*, without place" (ibid). Indeed, *xenitia* has been associated with the loneliness of living "a life of exile" in foreign or distant lands and is considered the most profound condition of lack and separation. *Xenitia* has also been described as an experience of estrangement or alienation from one's own being which includes a deterioration of one's cultural consciousness (cf. Kavouras, 1990: 142). Historically, the experience of *xenitia* has therefore been a prominent theme in describing hardship and misery experienced by Greeks living abroad (Doumanis, 1999; Danforth, 1982: 90).

As Sultan notes, *xenitia* has been understood as "living apart from one's 'own'" (Sultan, 1999: 4). Many scholars frame *xenitia* as the structural opposite of home, whereby home refers to the comfort of having one's kin nearby, to look after you in life and death. This opposition is noted by Sultan in her book about heroic poetry as a distinction between *dromos* and *oikos* (road and home) (Sultan, 1999: 4). "The *oikos* is where the hero finds his 'family', those with whom he shares the closest bonds and social obligation. To fulfil his manhood the hero must reject the *oikos* and replace it with the *dromos*: the place of exile, the testing place, the place of dead ends. Here the hero is a *xenos* who has no familial support" (ibid: 4-5). As "a *xenitemenos*, a person who is dependent on unknown people (*xenoi*) for hospitality in a land that is not his own" it is expected, Sultan explains, "that one should expect this guest-host relationship to hold firm in *xenitia*, but rather, that one should assume it will break down. The traveller should always be one guard against ill

treatment" (ibid: 10). Though there are many good things to be had in *xenitia*, the price is high. All too often the quest for good things commonly brings disaster (ibid: 17).

For example, as Danforth explains in his analysis of a lament about *xenitia*, there is a fear that foreigners will not look after the person living in *xenitia,* as the following line shows: "I turn back to that desolate foreign land. I take foreigners as brothers, I take foreigners as foster mothers, and I take a foreigner as a foster sister to wash my clothes. She washes them once, twice, three times, five times, but then she throws them in the streets" (Danforth, 1982: 92). "In *xenitia* the place of his relatives is taken by *xeni* (foreigners, non-kin)…[he is] deprived of the care and the services his female relatives would provide were he living at home. 'Foreign' women are unwilling to fulfil obligations to him that only his family can properly fulfil" (ibid: 93). In Danforth's setting of Potamia, *xenitia* was a recurrent theme in his informants' conversations. Parents often discussed the difficulty of not having their children nearby. They feared that their children would die in *xenitia,* or that they themselves might die alone[27] in the absence of their relatives to 'weep' for them (Danforth, 1982: 91).

Other scholars, like Sultan and Sutton similarly note that *xenitia* means absence from the physical comforts of home: 'The woman will not be with her man in *xenitia* to cook his meals or serve his needs…[thus] he will experience hardship and isolation with his horse as his only companion. The analogy is to misery and death' (Sultan 1999: 48; Sutton, 2001: 77). Similar themes of sensory unfamiliarity are also captured in the opening line of Sultan's study of the poetic forms of *xenitia*: "Το ψωμί της ξενιτάς είναι πικρό, το νερό της θολό, και το στρώμα σκληρό, τα λεφτά που αποκτάς τα βλαστημάς, ύποφέρεις πονάς την πατρίδα ζητάς". "The bread of *xenitia* is bitter; Its water is cloudy, its mattress is hard. You curse the money that you earn; You suffer, have *ponos*, seek home" (Sultan, 1999: 1). In the next chapter I take a sensory, material, and somatic perspective to explore my informants' (transnational) connections to Greece through the lens of food, building on Sutton's theories of food and memory. Whilst advances in travel and technology have enabled contemporary migrants to stay more easily 'in touch' with people across borders, I explore the extent to which contemporary Greek migrants feel 'separated' from loved ones and the extent to which they feel 'culturally alienated' abroad. I argue that my

[27] Danforth and also Seremetakis both explain the desire among Greeks to achieve a 'good death'- the expectation that family show solidarity and support, care for the dying and the dead, perform death rituals properly and ensure a good burial (cf. Seremetakis, 1995: 74-80).

exploration of the resonance of *xenitia* in a contemporary context is of course relevant to transnational theories of migration in their consideration of how migrants experience emplacement and displacement in a globalised and more 'interconnected' world.

Locating *Xenitia* - Past and Present

At the time Danforth was writing, *xenitia* was a psychological and social reality in many parts of Greece as many Greeks had settled in the US, Canada, Australia, and Germany in search for a better standard of living (Danforth, 1982: 90). As I have said, these past Greek migrants were forced to leave their homes as a result of war, persecution, economic crisis, and poverty. In contrast to the middle-class Greek professionals of my study, Greek migrants in the past were of relatively low socio-economic status; they felt displaced and exploited, did not speak the language of their 'host' countries, and felt they were 'second-class-citizens'. These Greeks of the past felt in *xenitia* because they were estranged from their social networks in Greece and struggled to integrate into their new societies. As I discuss later, these Greeks relied on the direct support of other Greek people in order to build a surrogate sense of home and community, often established around focal points of institutions like Greek schools and Greek Orthodox churches. In contrast, as highly skilled professionals who were fluent in English, my informants have not faced the same kind of alienation and 'exile' as Greeks of the past.

Indeed, during my ethnography, many of my informants claimed that *xenitia* was an old-fashioned word which did not apply in the contemporary context. In contrast to Greeks of the past who were forced to move abroad, my informants emphasised that their migration was their *choice*. Many of my informants did not think that *xenitia* was an appropriate word to describe their experiences. For example, my informant Beryl- a Greek woman in her forties who works for the NHS- explained her shock that a famous Greek singer had performed songs about *xenitia* at an event in London she attended; she felt that the singer was "out of touch" and had seriously misread his audience. These songs about *xenitia* from the sixties and seventies were about immigrants who were forced to go abroad and had lost their roots, she told me. Beryl did not think her own experience compared to that of Greeks who had become 'miners in Belgium'. As she exclaimed: "I'm not here because I don't have anywhere to go. I'm here because I *chose* to come here" (Beryl, 42, healthcare professional). Beryl did not think that *xenitia* resonated with her migration journey and experience.

Of course, I also met some Greeks in London who felt that *xenitia* did resonate with their experiences. For example, my informant Jolan is a twenty-six-year-old secondary school teacher from a Pontic Greek family who were forced to flee the Black Sea region and had ended up in the Soviet Union. Under communism they were sent to Kazakhstan, which is where Jolan was born. In our conversation, Jolan reflected that her parents' experience of displacement and refugee status had affected her own relationship to Greece and her ideas about her roots. She explained that her family had always hoped to return to Greece, and because they were not able to, they had taught Jolan that it was important that her roots are Greek. Jolan's background made me consider how past cases of migration and displacement are embodied in the present and consider the usefulness of 'multitemporality' in understanding historically formed subjectivities. Indeed, Jolan expressed her feeling that the current economic crisis in Greece created a certain sense that history was repeating itself. Jolan told me that songs about *xenitia* from the 1960s were from the time when big waves of refugees left the country for a better life, and that they resonated in the contemporary context because- yet again- Greece was going through a phase of struggle. "It seems it's happening again now" she remarked, implying a sense of cyclical temporality where past events become proximate.

However, unlike Jolan, most of my informants felt that their experiences of life abroad were qualitatively different to Greeks of the past, and they argued that *xenitia* did *not* resonate in the contemporary context. For example, my informant Neander- a sports professional in his mid-thirties who has lived in London for two years- contrasted his own migration experience with that of his grandfather, who was a *Gastarbeiter* worker in Germany. As I explained previously, *Gastarbeiter* were migrants who moved to (particularly West) Germany to fill gaps in the labour force after the Second World War. The Greeks who moved to Germany during this period were attracted by the rising living standards in Western Europe, coupled with the difficulties of life in Greece in the context of negative economic effects caused by war and civil war (cf. Clogg, 2016 [1992]: 146). These migrants came to Germany to work on a contract basis. Once their contract ended, they were expected to return to their homeland. The idea of 'rotation'- that one worker would return to their homeland to be replaced by a new worker- was suggested as a policy that could mitigate the cost of supporting migrants' integration long-term (cf. Thomas, 1974: 349-350). Indeed, very few *Gastarbeiter* spoke German, and the idea that

these workers were ‘aliens’ seems to have been felt on both sides- the host society and the migrants themselves.

In my conversation with Neander, he argued that his own migration was not comparable to his grandfather’s experience. Neander explained that the poverty his grandfather faced in Greece was not comparable to the contemporary situation. Despite the lingering effects of economic crisis in Greece, Neander dissociated the past from the present in his comment that “things aren’t like this in Greece anymore”. Unlike Jolan, Neander seemed to imply that the past experiences of his grandfather did not form a ‘temporal assemblage’ with his current context (cf. Kirtsoglou, 2020; Knight, 2015). Indeed, Neander explained that his parents were in good financial form, and that in spite of the effects of economic crisis, both Neander and his family had retained their properties. He reflected: “maybe the world system will collapse, and the financial issues won’t die down; but I still have my property”. Neander asserted that “we [Greeks] are not these misers in the UK…I could live in Greece, but it was my choice”. Neander framed the contemporary Greek migration not as a matter of “life and death” but “to do with things you want” (Neander, sports professional, 35).

It seemed that Neander was another person (like Karan) who framed his ‘deterritorialisation’ as something positive- emphasising that he had *chosen* to move abroad and had found success. His deterritorialisation was not something about which he was ‘distraught’ (cf. Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016). Neander did not frame his migration as something he was forced to do to escape a position of poverty as had been the case for his grandfather. As I argued previously, my informants seemed to emphasise that their migration as their choice in order to performatively establish themselves as ‘good immigrants’ in order to ‘prove’ their right to live and work in London given the context of Brexit. In this chapter, I argue that some of my informants distanced themselves from the resonance of *xenitia* in their narratives and compared their own migration to that of Greeks in the past, to also prove that they were successful neoliberal citizens with the power to choose where they lived and worked.

In the contemporary context, Greeks in London do not seem to feel that *xenitia* resonates with their migration experience to the same extent as Greeks of the past. Whilst Greek labour migrants sought a sense of belonging to a national and cultural community of Greeks abroad, I argue that the nature of community has changed in the contemporary

context. As I explain more shortly, the influence of the European Union and modernisation in Greece seem to have led to a neoliberal form of selfhood among Greek professionals living in London and a sense that Europe is an extension of their 'home'. I have suggested that these transformations have intensified societal rifts in Greece, especially given some people's view that the new members of the Greek diaspora are 'neoliberal traitors'. As my subsequent chapters will show, my thesis builds upon Panourgia's comments that there is in Greece a "pastiche of identities, multifaceted and not always at ease with each other" (Panourgia, 1995: 48). For this reason, I argue that we cannot consider there to be a stable sense of 'home' as understood as a national or cultural community whereby those outside the borders of Greece are considered to be living in *xenitia.*

In this respect, my thesis reforms Seremetakis' binary framing of *xenitia* as movement from origin (self and clan) to *xenitia* (or *ta xena*) death and exile (Seremetakis, 1995: 92, 116). In Seremetakis' description, *xenitia* is about estrangement caused by "the movement from the inside to the outside, as well as contact and exchange between foreign domains, objects, and agents" (Seremetakis, 1995: 85). She argues that to speak of estrangement into "any social situation, life event, or discourse immediately organises the contingent into relations of the inside and outside, the same and the other" (ibid). To Seremetakis, *xenitia* is a foundational taxonomy. In my thesis however, I have found it more useful to adopt a rhizomatic approach to explore the contemporary experience of *xenitia* among Greek professionals living in London. My research requires analysis which moves beyond the purely spatial framing of *xenitia* which seems based on oppositions between centre and periphery. As I explain later, my research demonstrates the relevance of *xenitia* to wider anthropological debates about the role of culture and community in diasporic contexts.

In this thesis, I question Seremetakis' schema of 'inside and outside', 'centre and periphery' in thinking about my informants' belonging and experiences of *xenitia.* In Seremetakis' work as well as the work of Sultan and Sutton, *xenitia* seems to be framed as an experience where a part is separated from the whole. "[T]his removal of part from whole is experienced as burning pain and as an 'incurable wound' that leaves a gap, a rupture" (Seremetakis, 1995: 115). Given that the definition of *diaspora* in Greek is along the lines of 'dispersal' and 'scattering' of a population whose origin lies in another

geographic place, we can see how these framings of *xenitia* are fundamentally relevant to understanding diasporas. Diasporas seem to be conceptualised as a 'part' that has been separated from the 'whole'. Based on my ethnography, it seemed that the 'ruptures' and 'wounds' which my informants experienced were not necessarily caused by geographical separation from Greece but emerged from another kind of alienation. As I explain shortly, many of my informants with a modernist positionality had actually felt entangled with *xenitia* in Greece because they did not feel at home there.

Overall, my ethnography therefore leads me to suggest that *xenitia* was more of a trope than a topological register. My ethnography demonstrates that *xenitia* was not only about 'exile' abroad caused by a physical separation from one's home country and loved ones. Instead, I argue that *xenitia* has an existential dimension which is related to the *chimeric* sense that things are not as they ought to be. Therefore, I do not approach *xenitia* from a purely spatial perspective. I argue that absence and separation are not necessarily about being away from something literally, physically, or materially, but also related to a different kind of separation- that sense of alienation and estrangement from certain ideas, hopes for the future, and even one's sense of self (see part two of this chapter). In contrast to previous interpretations of *xenitia* as caused by physical separations and exile, in this chapter I discuss how *xenitia* emerged more out of a sense of unhomeliness and uncanniness which my informants experienced in Greece more so than London, due to their view of Greece as a chimera.

'The real *xenitia'* - Greece as a chimera

Some of my informants felt that 'the real *xenitia'* was in Greece, not in London because the version of Greece that these informants hoped for seemed to have become 'illusory' or 'impossible to achieve'- i.e. a chimera. These informants were disappointed that (from their perspective) Greece had not become the kind of 'modern' European nation that they wanted it to be. Their idealised vision of Greece was something which they could never catch. For example, my informant Theron is a geoscientist in his late twenties. During my research Theron and I met at his university where he was working as a PhD researcher. Sitting with our coffees looking out on the modern buildings and thriving campus life, Theron conveyed his views on what his career would look like if he were to have stayed in Greece and explained why he decided to leave Greece. Theron told me that he had hoped that he would be able to work in productive industries and advance his research

field. However, in the context of crisis, Theron explained that it would have been difficult for him to succeed in Greece. Theron had decided to leave Greece because he had been “working for free” and he did not feel valued there. “Moneywise Greece is deteriorating. There’s no motivation for young people to stay there. Nobody is offering you anything. Everything is very bleak” he told me.

During our conversation, Theron conveyed his view that Greece was failing to become a modern industrial and productive country. Greece could no longer be the place where he could fulfil his ambitions to create a middle-class life worth living and use his qualifications. As he put it “No matter what experience you have, you’re probably going to end up a waiter. Here you’re valued, you’re going to succeed”. Theron explained that “Greeks back in Greece feel very indifferent. They’re past the point of rebellion and protest. They’ve gone past that point to ‘yeah whatever’” (Theron, 27-year-old geoscientist). Given the context of economic crisis and high levels of unemployment in Greece, Theron began to feel that Greece was falling behind on its trajectory of modernist progress. Theron felt disappointed that Greece was ‘deteriorating’ and explained how young people had lost their motivation to stay. It seemed that the version of Greece that Theron had hoped for seemed to have become chimerical- ‘illusory’ and ‘impossible to achieve’.

As news reports have shown, the effects of the 2007/8 US financial crash and consequent global crisis has created significant effects in Greece. After the initial fall in GDP of 5%, in 2010 GDP fell again, and again in 2011. Whilst other countries started to recover, the damage in Greece continued. Economic decline resulted from the demands for Greece to cut back spending in order to reduce the amount Greece was borrowing. The BBC summarised the impact of the crisis as such: “For many Greeks - especially the young - the years of economic hardship were severe. People's despair turned into riots on the streets, as they suffered spending cuts, high taxes and repeatedly slashed salaries and pensions. More than 400,000 people emigrated and in 2013 the unemployment rate peaked at 27.5% - but for those under 25 it was 58%. At the height of the crisis, some worried that the eurozone - the 19 countries that shared the euro - would collapse alongside Greece” (BBC, 2018).

For Theron, this situation created a sense of “uncanniness” which emerged in the “friction between expectation and anticipation, or between the anchors of what we usually

describe as ‘normal life’ and the ‘normalisation’ of the abnormal” (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 76). In Theron’s comments that “you’re probably going to end up a waiter”, Theron implied that the once ‘abnormal’ situation of not being able to find well-paid work in your field had become the new normal for young people in Greece. The chimerical view of Greece seemed to be a product of this sense of ‘uncanniness’ which emerges when everyday life does not live up to what it ‘ought’ to have been (cf. Bryant and Knight, 2019: 70; cf. Kelly, 2008: 353, 371). In this context, Theron conceptualised his migration as a way that he could inject the potentiality into his life that he felt he was missing in Greece.

Theron framed his migration to London as a way that he could regain control over his life and escape a situation where “no-body is offering you anything” and “everything is very bleak”. Indeed, Theron felt that young people in Greece had reached the point of ‘apathetic’ acceptance of this difficult situation. As Knight similarly observes in his ethnography of Trikala in Greece: “‘[f]eelings of resignation and helplessness’ have ‘defeated the future of potential’ and “exhausted youngsters have written themselves out of the future, which they see as overpoweringly based on distrust, contempt, apathy (Knight 2016: 35)” (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 127). In my fourth ethnographic chapter, I discuss how my informants felt that Greece was no longer a motivating environment for young people. The desperation, lack of motivation, indifference, apathy (‘yeah whatever’) and pessimism[28] were the ‘real *xenitia’* faced by contemporary Greeks like Theron.

In contrast to Theron’s perception that Greece was ‘deteriorating’, Theron confidently stated that in the UK “you’re going to succeed”. Given that the UK has long been an aspirational destination for Greek families to send their children, it is not surprising that Theron viewed the UK as a place where he was guaranteed to succeed. I would also suggest that his comparison reflects crypto-colonial dynamics given that he compared Greece to the ‘benchmark’ of the UK’s level of modernist progress and success. Later in our conversation, Theron implied that Greece had ‘fallen’ from its position as a “proper European Western country” to a place where people were faced with crisis and debt, uncertainty, and worry. He explained that the contemporary situation of economic crisis

[28] In my fourth ethnographic chapter, I discuss this ‘atmosphere of pessimism’ more. I explore my informants’ descriptions of *miseria*- the misery of life in Greece which had affective, embodied, sensory and material dimensions. *Miseria* (translated as misery, but with richer meanings as I explain in the chapter) was a product of this sense of crisis and loss of potentiality and hope for the future- this view of Greece as a chimera- which I relate to broader anthropological theories of crisis and ruination.

and unsustainable debt had not always existed. Whilst Theron acknowledged that "behind the scenes" there has been "corruption" in Greece which people did not do anything to solve[29], he did share his view that before the crisis there was a more optimistic attitude in Greece. "We won the Euros in 2004, the basketball, Eurovision, the Olympics. We were like a proper European Western country, doing well, the economy growing" (Theron, 27, geoscientist). It seemed that Greece had not lived up to his expectations for modernist progress and success that would make it more like other Western European countries. After the economic crisis, people like Theron felt that Greece was 'lagging behind'.

As I have said, postcolonial literature has frequently observed how Greece has aspired towards "incorporation into the civilised West" (Herzfeld, 1991: 25), wanting to present itself as heirs to a Classical past and the founders of an Enlightened Europe. Europe is often 'idealised' as the standard to which Greece evaluates itself and is evaluated by others which has created a situation where "European culture is both a goal and an imposition, a dream of incorporation into the civilised West and a nightmare of cultural colonisation" (Herzfeld, 1991: 25). Europe is both familiar and something to which Greece has been alienated and excluded (Herzfeld, 1989: 48). As I mentioned previously, Herzfeld has argued that "[i]t is very convenient for the West to 'demonstrate' how corrupt [Greek] people are" because it serves Western European countries' interests. As I said before, Herzfeld notes that those who construct the 'corruption index' are not necessarily people from Greece, and furthermore, "what one calls corruption now is a social system that has been facilitated partly by the actions of one's predecessors in the global power structure" (Herzfeld, 2014). Herzfeld argues that in this crypto-colonial context, Greeks seem "completely unable to live up to a Western story of morality" (Herzfeld, 2014).

In my view, Theron's chimerical view of Greece reflected these crypto-colonial dynamics. On the one hand, Theron described how Greece had once been 'a proper Western European country', referring to Greece's success in sporting events and its growing economy in the 'pre-crisis' era, i.e. those aspects where Greece had aligned to the

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[29] Other authors would seem to agree: "Underneath the surface, however, things were far from perfect. Public opinion surveys indicated a growing malaise, expressing a combination of very low trust in most institutions and relatively low but persistent unemployment, especially among the country's youth. Social commentators were concerned by the spread of pervasive cynicism, crude materialism and rising corruption" (Kalyvas, 2015: 154).

'standards' of Europe. Simultaneously, Theron painted Greece as an Eastern country that 'behind the scenes' suffers from the effects of 'corruption'. Later in my thesis I explore Kirtsoglou's critique that the blame for the economic crisis has been placed on things like 'corruption' which are framed as negative aspects of Greek 'culture'. As I explore throughout my thesis, some of my informants seemed to have internalised certain standards and expectations that Greece should become more like European countries- successful, modernist, and industrial. In fact, my ethnography demonstrates the *disemic* rifts and tensions between Greeks in London. As I explain below, not all of my informants felt a sense of 'community' with other diasporic Greeks in London.

A diasporic community?

In this section I argue that the resonance of *xenitia* has faded in the contemporary context because of the influence of the European Union and modernisation in Greece which has given Greeks the same rights as other EU citizens and made them feel that Europe is an extension of 'home'. Since Greece became a member of the European Union in 1981, it seems that there have been trends towards cosmopolitan, modernist, and neoliberal positionalities which mean the location of *xenitia* has changed. In the past, *xenitia* was caused by migrants' sense of cultural alienation and geographical separation from Greece. For example, Greeks who moved to Australia, Germany and America did not usually speak the language of their host country, and felt they were in 'exile' abroad. To cope with the misery and hardship caused by their sense of isolation, these migrants established associations, schools and churches which could provide them with solace and support. Greeks of the past seemed to feel they belonged to a cultural and national community of Greeks, and felt they were away from 'home'. In the contemporary context, I argue that we cannot consider there to be a stable sense of 'home' as understood as a national or cultural community. As I said previously, my thesis builds upon Panourgia's comments that there is in Greece a "pastiche of identities, multifaceted and not always at ease with each other" (Panourgia, 1995: 48). For this reason, I argue that we cannot consider there to be a stable sense of 'home' as understood as a national or cultural community whereby those outside the borders of Greece are considered to be living in *xenitia.*

In contrast to Greeks of the past, I argue that the contemporary experience of *xenitia* for Greeks in London is different, because the basis of 'community' has changed. As I mentioned in my introductory chapter, the socio-economic backgrounds and 'mentalities'

of Greeks in London is now considered more varied than in the past and Greek people's sense of community with others in London seem to be changing in ways which reflect emerging rifts within Greek and British society. For example, below, I explain how my informant Hilary did not feel a sense of 'community' or 'comfort' from Greek Orthodox Churches. She was 'annoyed' that these Greeks wanted to 'preserve traditions' abroad and contrasted their 'parochialism' to her cosmopolitan positionality and her desire to 'integrate' into British society. As I explore more in later chapters, some of my informants were critical of what they felt was Greek 'parochialism' because they felt that this was what was stopping Greece from achieving the kind of modernist success and progress that they wanted it to achieve. As I said, my informants can be said to reflect a certain demographic of people with modernist aspirations and ideas about progress and success. Some of my informants did not like how some Greeks in London emphasised the positive aspects of Greek tradition and culture, because they felt that this obscured the negative reality of life in Greece after the crisis. As I have said, many of my informants feel that 'the real *xenitia'* was in Greece rather than in London, because modernist success in Greece seemed to have become a chimera.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Hilary had had a negative experience of living and working in Greece in the context of economic crisis, and in London she still felt depressed and demoralised from her "traumatic experience" of "fighting to survive" in Greece on a very low salary. During our conversation, Hilary therefore explained that she did not want to associate with other Greek people at her local Greek Orthodox church in London because it reminded her of her difficult experiences of living in Greece. As she put it: "My last years in Greece before I moved were very horrible. So, I didn't want to have any association with anyone, even if they were completely innocent" (Hilary, Civil Servant, 32). Given her negative experience of living in Greece, Hilary planned to 'integrate' in the UK and become a British citizen. Indeed, Hilary identified as an open-minded and progressive cosmopolitan with a pro-EU positionality. Given these aspects of her positionality, Hilary told me that she found the 'older Greek community' in London surprisingly and frustratingly 'closed-minded' in their focus on preserving their traditions. Hilary told me that she wanted to 'think outside this box' of Greek culture, to learn new cultures, 'open her mind' and 'challenge herself'.

Hilary was frustrated that the Greeks she had met at the church emphasised "the need to keep the Greek traditional life" by organising cultural and religious events in London. Hilary felt that it was as if these Greeks "were living in Greece in the countryside; like living a couple of decades ago". Given her modernist positionality, Hilary felt that these Greeks were somewhat parochial, and she did not feel a sense of community or connection with them. Hilary found it surprising that whilst the Greeks she had met at church had lived in London for many years, "they haven't taken anything from the society!". Hilary described the diasporic Greeks as "a very closed community" who only interact with people within their group, and not outside it. Hilary was frustrated that the Greeks she had met at church seemed to lack the desire to integrate into British society. Like many of my informants, Hilary was critical of the so-called 'Greek Greeks' in London who were said to maintain 'Greek bubbles' in London by only hanging around with other Greek people and doing everything the 'Greek way'. For these reasons, Hilary decided that she no longer wanted to attend any more church services in London. It would seem that her experience indicates a change in the role of The Greek Orthodox Church for young professional Greeks living in London.

Scholars have noted that The Orthodox Church has been an important source of community life in social and spiritual terms (Hirschon, 1989: 195). In other migration contexts too, religious institutions have been said to provide migrants with opportunities to create support networks and assist with their integration into their new societies (Gans, 1994: 583; Patillo-McCoy, 1998; Levitt, 2004; Foley and Hoge, 2007; Levitt, 2007). Scholars have argued that religious congregations can provide a psychological and cultural 'refuge' for newcomers by providing space for migrants to socialise with co-ethnic counterparts (Chong 1998; Leon, 1998) and may even function as alternative families for members (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000; Cadge and Ecklund 2007). When Hilary first moved to London, she had initially attended her local Greek Orthodox Church in London for this reason- in order to avoid feeling lonely, as she did not know anyone in London when she first moved there. However, Hilary explained that she left feeling "disappointed" each time she went because of the nature of the conversations she had with people there, as I said above. In the contemporary context it seems that many Greeks in London do not feel a sense of community with other Greek people in London, because of negative experience of the economic crisis which has made them feel that Greece's trajectory of modernist progress has become a chimera.

For this reason, it would seem that churches do not always generate "group cohesion and shared values" (Durkheim, 1915) in diasporic contexts. In diasporic contexts, religion has been considered a way that immigrants 'preserve' and 'reproduce' their sense of national identity and ethnicity (Waters, 1991; Mantzarias, 1999: 129; Kunkelman, 1990: 94), enact their 'imagined groupness' (Mitchell, 2006: 1144) and generate "group cohesion and shared values" (Durkheim, 1915). Diasporas are often defined as a "dispersed people sharing a common religious and cultural heritage" (Vertovec, 2007: 129). According to other scholars, Greek Orthodox religion remains "a badge of ethnic group identity" (Mitchell, 2006: 1142), a kind of synecdoche: a symbol of an integrated set of 'Greek' cultural attributes (Vertovec, 2011: 249). According to Moskos' study of Greeks in America, for example, Orthodox affiliation rather than Greek language has become "the defining trait of Greek ethnic identity" (Moskos, 1999: 107; 112). In other studies of the Greek diaspora, it has been noted that Orthodox religion and the church have been considered to have played an important role in sustaining a "strong ethnic group consciousness" over time and across borders (Moskos, 1999: 107, 112; Vournelis, 2013: 136)[30].

In my view, these ideas of diaspora do not seem to capture the emerging rifts and tensions between Greeks in London in the contemporary context. Whilst of course some Greeks in London do attend the Greek Orthodox Church for these reasons, my ethnography certainly demonstrates that Greeks abroad are not a homogenous community, and my research leads me to challenge conventional understandings about the role of 'culture' and 'community' in diasporic contexts. Whilst Greeks of the past felt alienated from their cultural identity as Greeks and wanted to recreate this abroad, my research demonstrates that not all Greeks in London wanted to be reminded of their life in Greece. Therefore, whilst previous scholars have framed *xenitia* as part of the diasporic experience where 'a part is separated from the whole', I would argue that the contemporary experience of

[30] Like the Waqaxi' B'atz' New Year ceremonies among American Mayan communities, Greek Easter provides a recurring opportunity for Greeks to gather and practice religion collectively which perhaps reinforces an identity based on a sense of shared values, knowledge and subjectivities (Delugan, 2010: 91). Even for non-religious people, such events may be considered to 'strengthen' their identity: i.e. 'symbolic religiosity' (Gans, 1997: 585-6). Like the idea being Jewish by blood (ievrey-Hebrew) but not Jewish by religion (iudey-Jewish), perhaps one can maintain Greek ethnic identity through Orthodox Christianity without having religious belief (Raijman and Pinsky, 2013: 1694). The popularity of Greek Easter may suggest that Greeks are maintaining their diasporic identity as a "dispersed people sharing a common religious and cultural heritage" (Vertovec, 2007: 129) despite their mobility.

xenitia is more rhizomatic (cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Below, I explore these rhizomatic ideas of entanglement and assemblage, ruptures and fissures in relation to *xenitia* in the contemporary context of Greek migration. As I said above, I critique Seremetakis' ideas about estrangement as a movement from 'inside to outside', from what is familiar to what is foreign. In my view, rhizomatic imagery is more helpful for thinking about my informants' experiences of emplacement and displacement and their feelings of belonging and home, particularly those moments when my informants felt the 'uncanny' sense of being caught 'betwixt and between' different aspects of their self and hopes for the future.

'Betwixt and between' and 'the uncanny'

In this section I explore my informants' entanglements with *xenitia* from a sensory and material perspective, relating my discussion to wider anthropological literature on materiality, negative methodology and absence. In this section and the next chapter, I respond to the question raised by Navaro (2020) and Bille et al (2010) as to why anthropologists focus on what is "visible, tangible and available" to the researcher instead of that which is "invisible, immaterial or absent" (Navaro, 2020: 165; cf. Bille et al, 2010). As I explain in this section, my ethnography demonstrates the usefulness of the concept of 'ambiguous materialities' (cf. Bille et al, 2010). I agree that there are not neat divides between what is tangible and intangible, material and immaterial. I consider there to be instead "a spectrum of material-ness and sensuous encounters" (ibid: 16-17) which demonstrate the entanglement of presence and absence (ibid: 14). In contrast to other studies which focus on absence in the literal sense, in my work I focus on how absence and *xenitia* are triggered by the very presence of something- especially when this something is different, or chimerical.

In relation to *xenitia,* my work builds on Danforth's observation that being in touch with something comforting can paradoxically trigger more pain. For example, in his description of women's practices of visiting their husbands' graves, Danforth explains how on the one hand pain (*ponos)* generates hope, comfort, solace (*parighoria*), and relief and "gives a woman the courage and the fortitude to continue caring for the grave of the deceased long after his death. In this sense, then, *ponos* is a desirable emotion. It is a positive expression of an emotional tie to another person" (Danforth, 1982: 142). On the other hand, Danforth explains how despite the women's initial eagerness to visit their

deceased partner's grave, upon contact with the grave "the full impact of the death is driven home once more. This is the nadir of their emotional experience…On their way back to their homes they feel exhausted, worn out, and bitter (*maramenes, komenes, pikramenes*)". Indeed, Danforth explains how "[o]ne woman compared her visits to the graveyard with the experience of going eagerly to the village store to talk by telephone with her children in the US. After these conversations, her excitement and anticipation were transformed into sadness and pain, because she realised even more fully than before how far away her children really were" (Danforth, 1982: 149). In the following examples, I describe moments where my informants felt estranged from others and explore the consequences for thinking about separation and connection in contexts of migration.

Secondly, I explain the relevance of my ethnography to Bryant's conceptualisation of 'uncanniness' in her book 'The past in pieces: belonging in the New Cyprus'. In her work, Bryant describes the 'strangeness' that her Turkish Cypriot informants encountered when they 'returned' to places that had once been familiar. She describes several informants' refusal to accept the changes that they saw, describing how there was something 'strange' and 'freaky' about the signs, music, and people which created a sense of unhomeliness or unbelonging (cf. Bryant, 2010: 51). Bryant describes how when her informants returned to their old neighbourhoods, they encountered a sense of "unfamiliarity, a sense that the places they visited both were and were not their homes…This strangeness, this unfamiliarity of what should have been familiar, defied expectations and brought many people into visceral contact with another world, another narrative of the past that differed from the one they knew" (ibid). As Bryant explains: "Many Turkish Cypriots visited their former homes in the south and found Greek Cypriot refugees living in them. Others found their homes in ruin, or were unable to find them at all. The many people who returned to their homes experienced crises…Many people phoned to describe welcome encounters, but just as many described anger at what they found, or simply a sense of strangeness—that everything had changed, that nothing was as they remembered it" (ibid: 52-53).

In her discussion, Bryant uses Freud's concept of the 'uncanny' as derived from his analysis of the etymology of the German word *unheimlich* (Freud, 2003). As Bryant writes, *unheimlich* is the opposite of *heimlich.* The *Heim* is the home- that which is

familiar, that which makes us feel safe, and that to which we always want to return. The sense of *heimlich* is "not only a space of longing, or even a space of nostalgia, but is a place to which we believe that we belong, a place where we are welcome", Bryant adds (Bryant, 2010: 53). In my view, *heimlich* has similarities to the concept of *disemia* that I have discussed previously given that "Freud lingers on the duality of the notion of *heimlich,* as that which is familiar and that which is secret" (ibid). Bryant compares *heimlich* to the Turkish words *mahrem* and *harem*- the former refers to that which is confidential and intimate, and the latter refers to a space where others are excluded from its scope. Of course, we can see how *disemia* and 'cultural intimacy'[31] are similar to *mahrem* and *harem*. However, in this section, I argue that my informants' experiences of *xenitia* and uncanniness do not neatly fit Freud or Bryant's conceptualisation of 'homeliness' as based on that which is familiar- that to which people are nostalgic and 'always want to return'. As I explain through the following examples from my ethnography, many of my informants seemed caught 'betwixt and between' different sources of *xenitia* and ideas about home, and some of my informants had even become 'post-ambivalent' in relation to *disemia* as I explain more shortly.

Again, I return to my informant Hilary as she felt torn between what she called the 'two parts of herself' which created a sense that she was 'betwixt and between'. On the one hand, Hilary experienced the conventional form of *xenitia*- the painful separation from loved ones due to physical distance- given that her partner Pearce had to stay behind in Greece to complete his military service. On the other hand, Hilary felt that the more challenging kind of *xenitia* would be that caused by her alienation from her sense of self as a high achieving career-orientated woman. She explained that her professional success was the most important thing for her and that she was willing to sacrifice anything for that, including her relationship. Again, Hilary ultimately felt that 'the real *xenitia'* was in Greece, where in the context of economic crisis her hopes for professional success seemed to have become a chimera.

[31] As I mentioned previously, Herzfeld refers to the 'Eastern' side of Greek identity as part of that which is 'culturally intimate'- somewhat embarrassing to outsiders but a source of familiarity and bonding for Greeks themselves. As I said, 'cultural intimacy' relates to Herzfeld's idea of *disemia*- that there is a Western side of Greek identity linked to the Classical past- the version presented to outsiders and the 'standard' or 'benchmark' to which modern Greece is often (negatively) compared, and that there is an Eastern side referring to aspects which are referred to as 'a little backward'.

One day during my fieldwork I met Hilary in her favourite coffee shop near Whitehall where she works. During our conversation, we shifted to the topic of long-distance relationships and Hilary reminisced about the time when she flew back to Greece to visit Pearce at a café near his base. As Hilary was talking, her eyes welled up with tears and she explained that she still gets emotional when she thinks about this time. In that whole first year of living in London, Hilary had only seen Pearce once, and he only had a few hours to spare. Hilary explained that though they had been a couple for seven years at this point, "it was like speaking to a stranger" because she had not seen him face to face for six months. "I remember touching him because I had even forgotten parts of his face" she told me.

At the time of my fieldwork, Hilary and Pearce were living together in London. However, Hilary explained that whilst they were long-distance, they had reached a turning point in their relationship; they had to decide whether or not to split up. Hilary explained that they were "working on the prospect of him moving to the UK", and Hilary spent lots of time searching for flats that they could rent together in London. She explained how this kept them motivated and kept the relationship moving. However, she explained that she had struggled a lot with the lack of communication with Pearce. "We couldn't even video call because he only had a basic phone with him; it was just a voice on the other line". Given that Pearce had a busy schedule, and Hilary was equally preoccupied with finishing her PhD, she explained her sense that they were "losing track of each other".

The fact that Hilary felt she and Pearce were 'losing track of each other' and the fact that she had to 'touch parts of his face' which she had forgotten seems to illustrate Seremetakis' description of distance and loss in relation to *xenitia.* As Seremetakis explains, *xenitia* is closely related to Greek ideas about death; both "take one's eyes away" (Seremetakis, 1991: 185). In both *xenitia* and death, separation causes a process of 'defamiliarisation' whereby "[e]yes that don't meet, soon forget each other" (ibid: 185)[32]. The absent other becomes like water- an "irretrievable substance" which slips away. In this way, *xenitia* captures ideas of estrangement and exile. "The concern and fear of 'those

[32] "To see is to exchange. Eyes interiorise. As the saying goes 'Eyes that don't meet, soon forget each other'. Death and xenitia take one's eyes away. Vision, memory, recognition, and identity are intertwined. The loss of vision is the loss of memory and is equated with death; for death is the loss of time. Vision is continuous with hearing. It, too, is a form of witnessing. 'Listen to see' as they would say when demanding your attention in everyday conversation" (Seremetakis, 1991: 185)

left behind' about those who 'left for *xenitia'* focuses on the degree of the latter's defamiliarization. When they return, the search of the senses for recognisable traces begins" (ibid: 188).

My extension of Seremetakis' theorisation of *xenitia* is to indicate the entanglements of presence and absence. For example, Hilary explained how the material and physical separation from Pearce was heightened by the fact that when they did speak, it was only the sound of his voice that was present to her. Pearce was both present in the call, yet also absent given that "it was just a voice on the other line". Later in this chapter I continue to explore absence in relation to virtual materialities in my discussion of my informant Miles (a lawyer, 42) and his experience of video-calling his one-year-old son. I question the extent to which 'being in touch' over virtual technologies truly reduces the pains of separation that my informants felt from their loved ones. Whilst the improvements in travel and technology have made the experience of *xenitia* qualitatively different for contemporary Greeks compared to Greeks of the past who felt 'in exile' abroad, I would still say that the pains of separation are acutely felt by many Greeks living in London. Nevertheless, as I have said, Hilary felt that ultimately the worst kind of *xenitia* was in Greece, due to the fact that her hopes for the future there had become a chimera. As our conversation progressed, it was clear that Hilary felt 'betwixt and between' two senses of 'home'.

For example, Hilary explained that on her journeys between Greece and the UK she experienced a "weird feeling" that she was "cut in two pieces". As she explained, "every time I had to come to the UK it was like leaving a part of me behind; I felt very sad every single time. But then when the plane was approaching Gatwick or Heathrow, I felt that I was coming home". Hilary told me: "my personal life was in Greece, but my future was here; I was very excited about what I was doing in London" (Hilary, 32, Civil Servant). Based on these aspects of Hilary's narrative, I would extend Seremetakis' idea of separation as entailing "the mutual divesture of self and other". According to Seremetakis, "the self disappears with the absent other" as the 'other' moves into *xenitia*-estrangement, exile). In Seremetakis' ethnographic context of Inner Mani in Greece, Seremetakis explains how separation and loss are signified by water. For example, she explains how the separation of *xenitia* is like "water slipping off your hands, irretrievable substance". Seremetakis describes how separation causes "personal dissolution" or a

“liquefaction of the self” at the moment of separation because ‘the self’ shares substance with the absent other. “

> “Personal liquefaction is absence doubled. The estranged other becomes the foreign part of the self. *Xenitia* is formed by detached parts of the self. These externalised parts, the exiled artifacts of interiority and ‘collective flesh’, demarcate this world from the other, this place from the space of estrangement, and in turn make *xenitia* an unending interiority. Old women are frequently found staring at the mountains whose horizon surrounds the Maniat cosmos. This is the gaze of *xenitia*” (Seremetakis, 1991: 216)

In my view, Hilary’s separation from Pearce exemplifies Seremetakis’ comments framing of *xenitia* as a process of ‘detachment’ and liquification of parts of the self as the estrangement from an ‘absent other’ takes hold. As Hilary explained, when she left Pearce behind in Greece, she felt that she was “leaving a part of herself behind” too. In this respect, Hilary’s experience on the plane journey from Greece seems to be a moment of “personal dissolution, the liquefaction of the self at the moment of separation”, evoking her “shared substance with the absent other” in her comment that Pearce was a “part of her”. At the same time, Hilary’s narrative also indicates how “the estranged other becomes the foreign part of the self” (Seremetakis, 1991: 216). That’s to say, Hilary explained that on the plane she also had the “weird feeling” that she was “coming home” when the plane approached the airport in London. Therefore, Hilary’s entanglement with *xenitia* was two-fold. Indeed, she felt “cut in two pieces”; “torn” between two parts of herself. There was the part of Hilary that wanted to be with Pearce, and the part of Hilary that felt ‘at home’ in London because this was the space where she could “really see her future” and felt “excited” at her prospects for professional success.

Indeed, Hilary explained how she had asked herself at one point during their separation: “‘what’s more important Hilary; you need to decide’”. Hilary told me that she had been willing to sacrifice her relationship for the sake of developing in her career, as without this progress she felt she would ‘struggle’. If Hilary had moved back to Greece, she would have been able to see her partner more often, but she was not prepared to go back to “fighting and working for a very low salary” in Greece. Hilary felt that the real *xenitia* would be not to develop her professional achievements and prospects. Hilary conceptualised her decision to leave Greece both as something she felt she had been forced to do, as well as emphasising that moving abroad had been her choice, based on

her positionality as a certain kind of Greek woman with a certain kind of mentality. Indeed, later in our conversation, Hilary compared herself to her Greek friend Lydia who chose to follow her partner back to Greece because she preferred the 'quality of life' and the more relaxed working environment. Hilary summarised that I would encounter two kinds of Greek women in London- "women like me and other women who are going to say: 'I'm going to follow my partner; I'm going back'. So it's like the two edges really" (Hilary, 32, Civil Servant).

As I explore more in my fourth ethnographic chapter, in my view these 'two edges' might be conceptualised as the 'two edges' of *disemia*. I consider the tensions between what my informants described as the quintessentially 'Greek value' of family and the alternative (more neoliberal) positionality and value of being a hard-working 'self-made' individual. In my fourth ethnographic chapter I explore in more detail where my informants aligned on the *disemic* spectrum of Greek identity. I extend my argument that Greek people's sense of connection with others seems to be increasingly based on mentality rather than shared nationality or culture. My ethnography suggests that the location of 'home' seems to be changing for some modernist Greeks. Indeed, I argue that some Greeks in London have become 'post-ambivalent' in relation to *disemia.* That's to say, some modernists have rejected so much what they consider to be un-modern and un-European about Greece that they no longer consider Greece to be their homeland.

Below, I explore these shifts in relation to my informant Miles' ideas about 'home', emplacement and displacement, and separation. I explore the rhizomatic entanglements with *xenitia* that Miles and his wife Tassia faced given their differing opinions on where to raise their baby. I argue that Miles felt an 'uncanniness' not because he had moved from 'home' to 'away' but rather because he was caught 'betwixt and between' different senses of belonging and home. As I have said, my research reforms Freud's conceptualisation of the duality of *heimlich* and *unheimlich* upon which some anthropological conceptualisations of the 'uncanny' are built (cf. Bryant, 2010) and leads me to question the spatial framing of displacement and emplacement. In the contemporary context, *xenitia* seems more of a trope than a topological register, particularly for Greeks who seem post-ambivalent in relation to the *disemia* of Greek identity.

Miles is a 42-year-old-lawyer who works at a top firm in London. Miles left Greece as a teenager and has lived in several countries in Europe. Miles has lived in London for three

years and owns his own flat. Miles explained that he had worked hard to ensure that his wife Tassia could move in with him in London and start a family together. During my research, Tassia became pregnant, and the couple were deciding where she would give birth. Miles explained that he and Tassia were having problems in their relationship because Tassia was struggling to adjust to life in London; she felt in *xenitia.* Miles explained that 'in her head' Tassia was still in Athens. Despite her 'physical presence' in London, Tassia was not 'present' in the sense of 'being in touch' with London (Runia, 2006). Tassia was nostalgic for aspects of life in Greece and wanted to raise their baby there. However, Miles valued what he referred to as the progressive, open-minded professional environment in London and being surrounded by other people who shared his kind of ('cosmopolitan') 'mentality'. In addition, Miles explained that he had worked hard to fulfil his hopes to have a family in London and a good job and as the 'higher earner' he did not want to be the one to sacrifice his career.

Miles seemed to present his migration as a kind of 'heroic journey' into *xenitia,* at the end of which he had expected to find his 'home' and 'family' (cf. Sultan, 1999). However, Tassia decided to return to Greece, and this created a sense of regression in Miles' plans to achieve his plan to have his family all together in London. Whilst Miles expected that his journey into *xenitia* would end in him finding his *oikos* (home)*,* Tassia's decision to return meant that Miles was once again in a situation where he had no familial support. However, Miles did not feel in *xenitia* in London; it was in London that Miles actually felt more at 'home'. Miles seemed to have become post-ambivalent in relation to the *disemia* of Greek identity; it seemed that he no longer considered Greece to be his homeland. Miles was not willing to return to Greece, even if it meant he would have to cope with the painful separation from his new baby. During one of our regular brunches, Miles told me that Tassia and her family had struggled to understand Miles' choice to remain in London after Tassia had moved back to Greece. During our conversation, I had actually asked Miles whether he would be willing to move back to Greece for a few years. His eyes widened in shock, and he laughed. Whilst Miles explained that of course he could technically be the one to 'make the sacrifice' in his career and return to Greece, he felt that this was not an option because of his view that a modernist version of success in Greece had become a chimera.

In fact, Miles faced a double chimera given that he wanted two things at the same time. On the one hand, Miles wanted to be a 'good father' and be physically present for his child's birth and upbringing. At the same time, once Tassia decided to return to Greece to give birth, Miles faced the realisation that his hope to have a family in London had also become a chimera because he did not want to return to Greece permanently. Miles' experience of displacement, separation and loss was not simply spatial, caused by geographical separation from his son. More specifically, it was the 'distance' Miles felt from his ability to be the 'good father' that he wanted to be. Again, I would argue that Miles' experience of *xenitia* was not simply the product of spatial separation and geographical distance but emerged from his chimeric sense that things were not as they ought to have been. Seeing his son on the screen made Miles realise even more how his hopes to have a family in London had become a chimera.

Though at first Miles was happy to see his son on the screen, he explained that his happiness soon became sadness and pain as he realised that he was not present to watch his child grow up. As I said above, Miles thought it was important to be physically present for his son's birth; to 'be there' physically was an important performative demonstration of fatherhood and a sign of his commitment. Miles was frustrated that he could not be the kind of father he wanted to be. Though Miles was able to watch his son learning to walk, he explained that he had missed his first steps. Whilst to some extent Miles could see his son's development, he felt that he was missing out on key moments, and this heightened his sense of absence and separation from his child. He explained that his son's life felt like a 'parallel movie' going on without him. Whilst Miles' attention was elsewhere, his son's life had developed without him, and he had missed a few things. Whilst the video-call technology improved Miles' ability to 'see' his son to a certain extent, it seemed that his son was only partially 'present' and accessible to him and this accentuated his sense of separation and displacement from his ideal scenario of being a good father to his son.

My interpretation of *xenitia* demonstrates the value of a more nuanced approach to understandings migrants' experience of separation and displacement that is not based on topological framings. Usually, within a transnational approach to migration, scholars stress how globalisation has made people more interconnected and in touch with people across borders. My ethnography leads me to challenge the assumption that this transnational interconnection necessarily reduces feelings of alienation and

estrangement. Whilst of course my informants were more easily able to visit Greece and stay in touch with their loved ones through video calling, my informants still experienced a sense of alienation, estrangement and *xenitia*. Miles' video-call with his son exemplifies the concept of 'ambiguous materiality' and the 'entanglement of presence and absence'. On the one hand, the video-call allowed Miles to 'see' his son, and this made his son 'present' to him. At the same time, seeing this through the screen of the phone also reminded Miles that he was also absent. He felt alienated and estranged from being able to have the kind of relationship he wanted with his son. Whilst Miles could see and hear his baby, the images and sounds coming from his phone seemed to have a haunting or unhomely sense to them because they heightened Miles' awareness of his absence. It seemed that the video-call triggered a sense of inaccessibility of something which should have been accessible and current.

Miles' experience of video-calling his son holds parallels with a vignette from Miltiades' work (2020) where she describes her informants' reactions to seeing household furniture displayed in a museum exhibit. Miltiades explains how the granddaughter of one of the donors had burst into tears when she saw her grandfather's furniture in the museum, "inaccessible behind a rope" (Miltiades, 2020: 257). Miltiades explains how the objects "represented sort of an oxymoron, as visitors experienced those objects as both being part of a museum and as being part of their homes. The materiality of the past and its tangibility are exacerbated by the fact that these objects belong to both realms, defying temporal boundaries. They are used or were used as everyday objects but are also located in institutions aimed at preserving them" (Miltiades, 2020: 257). Miltiades explains how this "sensorial absence"- the confusion of not being able to touch or engage with objects that were still part of everyday life- triggered powerful emotions for her informants. Whilst Miltiades focuses on objects in museums, I would extend her comments about affective charge and material presence to incorporate virtual materialities.

In my thesis I explore the idea of 'ambiguous materialities' and the entanglement of presence and absence. I critique the spatial framing of terms like absence and 'emptiness' as referring to a physical or literal lack. Many scholars focus on how inaccessibility, separation, and absence in a literal and physical sense trigger an emotional response. Below, I explore how it was precisely the act of touching, or direct engagement with something material and physical which triggered a (sometimes paradoxical) sense of

absence and 'unhomeliness' (Vanni, 2013). For example, next I explore the micro-materialities of Costas and Ismene's experience of living in London and explain how the small material differences triggered powerful affective responses and the chimerical sense that things had not turned out as they ought to have done. In my discussion, I build on Vanni's discussion of Italian migrants' interactions with the material culture of their new Australian homes. I too found that for my informants in London, things that should have been familiar seemed to "take on an estranged character" creating "an uncanny domestic geography" which contributed to the feeling of unhomeliness (*spaesamento* in Italian, *xenitia* in our case) (Vanni, 2013: 161). As I have said, my contribution to these ideas of the 'uncanny' is that 'uncanniness' was the product of my informants' perception that creating a life worth living in Greece had become a chimera.

Unhomeliness: micro-materialities of distance and loss

In the next chapter and my discussion here, I take an affective and material approach to explore how material reminders of life in Greece triggered feelings of unhomeliness, pain and *xenitia* for my informants. Below I explain how my informants Costas and Ismene were nostalgic for aspects of life in Greece that they missed. To some extent Costas and Ismene wanted to return to Greece. However, it was not really this kind of nostalgia (understood as a desire to return to one's country) which produced their feelings of *xenitia.* Rather, I argue that Costas and Ismene felt the 'uncanniness' of *xenitia* because they knew that they simultaneously did *not* want to return to Greece, because they felt that their hopes to create a life worth living there had become a chimera. In this respect, Costas and Ismene also seemed caught 'betwixt and between' different ideas of home and belonging, different kinds of nostalgia, and different forms of *xenitia.*

Costas and Ismene found that various material and sensory aspects of life in London triggered nostalgic memories of life in Greece, and this created entanglements with *xenitia.* It was not that *xenitia* emerged as a result of 'emptiness' in the sense of an absence of things that were literally missing. Rather, Costas and Ismene's entanglements with *xenitia* seemed to emerge when aspects of life abroad were different to what they expected, or different to what they had experienced in Greece. For example, whilst Costas and Ismene had expected that church services in London would give them a comforting sense of familiarity, they left feeling disappointed. They explained how they felt sad when attending services in London because the church, the priests and the language were all

different, even the tone of voice, the melodies. It was difficult for Costas and Ismene to establish a continuity between the performative and sensorial aspects of their religious practice in London, and the subtle differences between the services in Greece and London made them feel unsettled rather than comforted.

During our conversations, Costas and Ismene described many examples of how the material environment abroad seemed 'strange' to them. Even the sun did not have the same warmth as it did in Greece; the sensation of heat which Costas would have expected on a sunny day did not materialise in the same way abroad. The sun was the same 'object' literally, but at the same time it was not the same; it lacked the heat that Costas had expected based on his memories of Greece. Indeed, I would suggest that life abroad sometimes seemed a 'faded' version of what my informants had loved from Greece. A kind of 'ghostliness' emerged in everyday objects and experiences of life abroad. Costas explained how the feeling was similar to when one has broken up from a romantic partner; "It's like when you see someone who looks like them and you get fond memories, even though you no longer have any pictures of them on your desk". With respect to these faded versions of things, I would suggest there was both an immaterial and material, tangible and intangible, element. There was a kind of 'ambiguous materiality' to the sun in this case, linked to a sense of incompleteness and lack rather than an absence of any heat whatsoever. A subtle difference seemed to be blown up into a larger sense of chimera, as I explain later.

Whilst Costas and Ismene had tried to replicate aspects of their Greek home in London, the materiality of their house abroad reminded him that "everything is different from Greek houses". As he explained: "The bathtub has two taps. It's outrageous not having a mixer. There's a cord for the light, not a switch. So everything here reminds us that we're not in Greece". Abroad, even the bathroom fixtures seemed to carry an unfamiliarity which created a sense of disappointment for Costas. The micro-materialities of distance and loss were evident in the bathroom fittings. It was not the 'absence' of familiar fittings in his home per se that created entanglements with *xenitia* for Costas. It was perhaps the sense of "the incomplete" as Bille et al frame it: "a defective continuity, something that is in need of completion or from which parts are missing" (Bille et al 2010: 12). Or, as I prefer, a kind of 'unhomeliness' (cf. Vanni, 2013) as I explain more below. This kind of 'emptiness' or 'absence' was not so much what was missing, as the fact that what was

there was different, unfamiliar and hard to explain. It was not that Costas' bathtub lacked a mixer tap that upset him. It was the fact that the alternative- having two taps- did not make practical sense; "it was outrageous" as he put it. And, it was not that there was no light switch per se, but rather that the way to turn the light on and off was with a cord- again, something different and a material reminder of the 'unhomeliness' of his space abroad.

I use the word 'unhomely' based on the parallels between my ethnography and that of Ilaria Vanni, who has similarly focused on the material dimension of the feeling of *spaesamento*- an Italian word which has similarities to ideas of *xenitia*. Vanni explains her interest in "thinking about the role of objects in creating geographies of home and mediating from *essere spaesati,* to be unhomely, to *sentirsi a casa,* to feel at home" (Vanni, 2013: 156). Her focus on objects in the context of migration is therefore on how objects (which one brings from one's country to the new place) enact geographies of the home and the unhomely (ibid: 151). In my view, there are aspects from Vanni's ethnography which are relevant to understanding Costas' entanglements with *xenitia.* Through Vanni's discussion of her informant Franca Arena- a young single woman from an educated family in Italy, who moved to Australia- Vanni explains how Arena arrived in "an unhomely geography of things that should be common but that take an estranged character: the smell and texture of food, the bedroom in the hostel that is both a refuge and a threat, the sameness of the landscape." (Vanni, 2013: 165). She explained how Arena thought her apartment 'fine' except for the Laminex furniture which was a 'shock', and something which did not suit the antique objects that Arena had in her 'beautiful' house in Italy. As Vanni explained, the Laminex furniture created "an uncanny domestic geography" which contributed to the feeling of *spaesamento* (Vanni, 2013: 161).

Other informants similarly described how their houses in London created entanglements with *xenitia.* For example, my informant Pasha described her rented room in London as simply 'a place she goes' so that she does not sleep in the streets. Pasha's rented room seemed foreign and impersonal. It seemed almost placeless, or *atopos*- themes which are associated with the afterlife, death, and *xenitia* in Greek ethnography (Seremetakis, 1991: 197). In contrast, Pasha described home as a place where her 'heart exhales'. In contrast to her home in Greece, Pasha's room in London produced completely different affects. Navaro-Yashin's questions about affect and environment resonate here. Specifically,

Navaro-Yashin's comments that her informants' houses felt like appropriated spaces to which they never warmed, nor felt that they owned (cf. Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 4) seems particularly relevant to Costas' experiences of *xenitia* in the materiality of his own home, and Pasha's comments about her rented room in London as 'just a place she goes'. In the same way that Navaro-Yashin has studied how *maraz* (a deep melancholia) is discharged by the left-behind homes of Greek Cypriots in Turkey, we might ask how *xenitia* is an affect entangled with the environments that my informants encountered in London. We might ask how the environment 'engendered subjective feeling' (of *xenitia*) in my informants (Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 4).

In Navaro-Yashin's approach, it seems that unhomeliness is emitted from the foreignness of the landscape. It is not the self which is projecting onto the landscape; rather, the feeling of unhomeliness comes from the left-behind homes, or in my research it would be the rented room and the light switch. Navaro-Yashin therefore prompts anthropologists to reflect on the agency of persons and things. What I would argue in relation to these anthropological debates over the agency of things, is that materiality acts as a 'cue' for affects and memories[33]. In the following discussion, I explore the interrelationships of materiality and affect from the perspective of entanglement, as I would argue that the entanglement concept, which links also to assemblage[34], can allow us to explore how the material and sensory triggers for affect can be temporary as well as permanent.

In contrast to Navaro-Yashin's context, it seemed that in the case of my informants the connections between materiality and affect were not always permanent. Rather, in my view, the cues[35] and connections between material things and affective responses and

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[33] In the final chapter of the thesis I explore this more in relation to food and Sutton's ideas on synaesthesia and memory.

[34] As I explore more later, Hamilakis' idea of 'sensorial assemblage' (Hamilakis, 2013: 127) has been a useful way for me to think through the instances in which my informants were reminded of certain people and places in Greece. I explore how the imagery of the rhizome helps us to see how 'sensorial assemblages' can be "temporarily territorialised in specific locales, and later dispersed, de-territorialised, and re-assembled (re-territorialised) elsewhere" (Hamilakis, 2013: 126).

[35] My use of the word 'cue' is taken from Sutton's ethnographic discussion in 'Remembrance of Repasts: an anthropology of food and memory'. Reflecting on the relation between smell and memory, Sutton discusses how the emotional charge created by an engagement with something material- like food- can often "revive memories that are 'more captivating than the smell itself, more insistent than the original desire one had to identify it'" As Sutton explains in reference to one of his informants, Yiannis: "this gives us a context to understand the bag of apricots with which Yiannis began his story of forty years ago that so puzzled me, since it was not at all about apricots. The apricots provided the taste and smell that could continually **cue** for him all the local knowledge of time of year, of places on Kalymnos where apricots could be found, and that unlocked a vaster structure of recollection of different times on Kalymnos" (Sutton,2001: 90).

memories seemed fleeting. It was not necessarily the case that affects lingered in objects, or that objects became permanently imbued with a kind of 'spirit' or affect in the same way that other anthropologists have explained gifts or non-human objects/beings in other societies. In Mauss' work (1954) the gift is imbued with the spirit of the giver, and this is a long-lasting thing. In my research, I was also interested in how something triggered an affective and memory response suddenly, quickly, and fleetingly, in ways which did not necessarily last beyond a particular moment[36]. As the example of Costas and Ismene shows, affects of *xenitia* seemed to be discharged strangely, unexpectedly and fleetingly by everyday objects and sensations. From the light cord and mixer tap in the couple's bathroom of their rented house, to the feel of the sun on their skin, life abroad did not feel the same.

My contribution to the concept of unhomeliness would be to suggest that aspects of life abroad became a faded or 'ghostly' version of what my informants had experienced in Greece. I would suggest that there was a spectral or haunting quality to the affects of displacement and loss which created the material and sensory dimensions of *xenitia.* My argument is that we should consider 'ghostliness' to be a material dimension of failed expectations, and the sense of life as a chimera. The affects of *xenitia* were not so much about emptiness in the sense of absence, of things that are missing. Rather, Costas and Ismene's entanglements with *xenitia* seemed more about how things abroad were different to what they expected, or different to what they had experienced in Greece. Indeed, when Costas and Ismene had tried to seek out things that they thought would provide a comforting sense of familiarity- such as the performative and sensorial aspects of church services at their local Greek Orthodox Church- they were left feeling disappointed.

Costas explained that he and Ismene felt sad and nostalgic when they attended church services in the UK. Though the couple had not attended regularly in Greece, they were both very familiar with the music and language of the services in Greece. When they moved abroad, they found that "the tone of voice is different, the melodies are different". Costas and Ismene found that the things they liked about Greek Orthodox religion were missing in London, and they had not attended services in the UK for three years as a

[36] This said, there were other kinds of objects and materialities which did seem to have a multi-temporal dimension, as I discuss in the following section.

result. The disappointment that the couple felt when they realised that what they found was different to what they expected made them feel nostalgic. It was the same with food, Costas explained- "at least food we do not prepare ourselves" (see next chapter) such as pizzas which in the UK were not topped with as many ingredients as in Greece. Therefore, even that which was somewhat familiar, was not exactly what Costas and Ismene were used to. Speaking again of the church services Ismene spoke of her experience: "Even though I don't consider myself a very religious person…we really have perfect memories of attending church and hearing the hymns, and when we tried doing that here it was not the same. So we kind of missed that and yeah (*sigh*) this is something that we can't actually replace. But yeah, at least I'm happy that I got to live it there [in Greece]." (Ismene).

In the case of Costa and Ismene we can clearly see how attending church abroad did not create a comforting sense of familiarity but actually made them miss Greece more. It was not so easy to establish a continuity between the performative and sensorial aspects of religion in Greek Orthodox Churches in Greece and in London. The subtle differences between services in Greece and services in London were unsettling rather than comforting from their perspective. Costa and Ismene became entangled with *xenitia* because what was once familiar appeared unfamiliar abroad. Through a metaphor of food, Costa explained how the differences between his expectations and the reality he encountered created nostalgia and sadness. Ismene's expectations had also not materialised as she thought they would. Whilst Ismene suggested she was "happy" that she had positive experiences from Greece, her embodied sense of exhaustion due to failed expectations[37] (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 19) was evident when she sighed. She could not replicate or replace the 'perfect memories' the couple had from Greece. In this respect, the nostalgia Costas and Ismene felt was negative rather than positive. Their positive memories of life in Greece often increased the couple's sense that a good life in Greece had become a chimera.

On the one hand, Costas and Ismene missed many irreplaceable/irreplicable things from Greece- the heat of the sun, the church services, the fixtures and furnishings of their Greek

[37] "[w]hile orientations entail planning, hoping for, and imagining the future, they also often entail the collapse or exhaustion of those efforts: moments in which hope may turn to apathy, frustrated planning to disillusion, and imagination to fatigue" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 19).

homes. On the other hand, Costas explained how their nostalgia for these things- an 'idealised image' of Greece as he phrased it- obscured "the reality of life there". As Costas' narrative unfolded, this view of Greece as a chimera became stronger. Despite relaying the positive aspects of life in Greece, Costa concluded that the idealised image one has of Greece makes one forget the "hell that the average Greek person goes through every day". As I explained previously, Costas and Ismene knew of the difficulties of the working environment in Greece, and their difficult financial situation which prevented their ability to establish a home to build their family. These were things which would make them want to "scream and run away" if they were to return to Greece. Indeed, Costas explained that "when we actually go back to Greece, I don't want to be there". In relation to the idea of 'ambiguous materiality' then, we might say that when abroad, this reality of life in Greece became less tangible. The lines between reality and imagination seemed to become blurred. As Costas put it: one would need to be in a 'solid state of mind' and have a 'good memory' to recall the reality of life in Greece, where he felt the 'real *xenitia'* would be.

As I said, it seemed that Costas felt such 'perfect memories' of Greece could easily lead one to hold what he referred to as an 'idealised version of Greece' which would obscure the more 'accurate' or 'real' perception of Greece as a chimera. Over our dinner Costas explained to me how he and Ismene "miss Greece every single day, every single moment; every little thing we see makes us miss home"; but, he stressed that they try to "be happy with the things we have" in London. Like many other informants, Costas explained that when he goes back to Greece "I don't want to be there". Whilst Costas missed the good moments and the sun, he explained that the working environment and the government made him want to "scream and run away". Costas explained that living in London, "in a country that supports its citizens", made him forget about the bad aspects of Greece. Costas reflected: "you need a good memory and be in a solid state of mind to know the true image of Greece". Now that Costas and Ismene live and work in the UK, they have money to spend in Greece and "don't have to go through the hell that the average Greek person goes through every day", he told me. "The real version of Greece" according to Costas was "not having enough money to support ourselves" and being "subject to corrupt officials". "Maybe it wouldn't be a bad price to pay to be close to friends, but then our friends in Greece are too busy to see each other because they're trying to make ends meet". "We miss an idealised version of Greece" Costas summarised; "you have to find a way not to miss Greece too much and enjoy your life here".

According to my informant Jason, a consultant in the music industry, distance from Greece makes one "see things with rose-tinted glasses". Like Costas, Jason felt that within a few months of return to Greece he would "want out" again. This said, Jason reflected that *nostos*- which he translated as 'longing for your homeland', was true for his experience. "It's a word that they used in Homer; it was what Odysseus felt for ten years when he was wanting to go back to Ithaca…*Nostos* is the feeling. The feeling that I want to be back, touch this place again. It's a very primal thing". My informant Nectarios, a lawyer, explained *xenitia* in a similar lens- as one of the most powerful words that exists in the Greek language which means to be taken away from your roots to become *xenos*- a foreigner. Nectarios reflected on the sentimental nature of *xenitia* and explained that it does not simply mean that you're not in your home country anymore. "It's a word that comes with pain" and is associated with the word nostalgia- "a desire to return to the motherland". Nectarios reflected on his personal experience: "I certainly feel that; it's a word that certainly characterised my life. Because there's a difference between choosing to go to a different place and knowing that you can always come back and create average life conditions; it's a different thing to know that if you chose to go back it wouldn't be easy" (Nectarios).

As we can see from their comments, Nectarios and Jason's experience of *xenitia* was linked with their nostalgic desire to return to Greece in which they expressed a sense of longing or yearning for what they could not have. Nectarios' narrative suggested a simultaneous desire and uncertainty about the prospect of his return to Greece, as he knew that in Greece it "would not be easy" to create even 'average life conditions'[38]. Like my other informants, Nectarios and Jason had found that Greece had become a context for 'exhaustion' as expectations did not materialise. Their experience of *xenitia* were connected to their chimerical version of Greece as they felt that life in Greece could no longer be a viable space to create a life worth living. Many of my informants had felt entangled with *xenitia* in Greece as a result of the fact that Greece had not become the place that they wanted or hoped it would be. I have argued that my informants'

[38] As I explain in the next chapter, many of my informants consequently tried to actively resist feeling negative (or *misero*) about the negative aspects of life abroad, because they did not want to be tempted into a nostalgic state of missing Greece; this might make them feel tempted to return, which from their perspective would entail a 'regression' to this state of *xenitia*.

experiences of *xenitia* and their motivation to move to London were fundamentally related to their vision of Greece as a chimera.

Materialities

In this chapter, I focus on the materialities of my informants' lives in London and their connections to Greece. I take a sensory, affective and material approach to explore the ways in which my informants felt 'in touch' with people across borders and I continue to demonstrate the usefulness of the concept of 'ambiguous materialities' and the idea of entanglements of presence and absence to explore migrants' transnational connections to others in Greece. In the first section, I explore the entanglements between identity, food, and memory, building on David Sutton's work. I refine Sutton's approach to *xenitia* which he frames as an 'absence from the physical comforts of home' and I critique his idea that migrants' consumption of food from home is a way to reconstruct a cultural 'whole' in contexts of alienation abroad (Sutton, 2001). I explore how some of my informants felt their practices of consumption and commensality in Greek coffee shops in London were subversive of the 'cold', 'robotic' and 'automated' aesthetics of neoliberalism and capitalism in London that they disliked. In this chapter I discuss the sensory aspects of these informants' experiences of *xenitia* and relate my discussion to anthropological theories of nostalgia. In particular, my work extends Seremetakis' work on 'tastelessness' (cf. Seremetakis, 1994) which she uses as a lens to explore the changes brought by modernisation and 'Europeanisation' into Greece, and Hamilakis' arguments about senselessness and the word *anaisthitos,* which can be roughly translated as 'insensitive' or lacking in feeling (cf. Hamilakis, 2013).

Feeling 'in touch'

Transnational approaches to migration focus on the ways in which migrants are connected to their homelands and other people across nation-state borders. In this chapter I contribute to transnational approaches which consider the role of materiality, and especially food, in facilitating those connections. David Sutton is one anthropologist who explores the "vast array of transnational odorific and gustatory travelling companions" which migrants bring with them- or have sent to them- abroad (Sutton, 2001: 74). According to Sutton, the significance of this has only recently been explored by anthropologists, particularly the implications for identity. As I mentioned above, Sutton is also interested in Greek migrants' experiences of *xenitia,* which he frames as

"absence from the physical comforts of home" (ibid). Sutton explores how *xenitia* encompasses a "longing for home" that is experienced as a "physical and spiritual pain" as I discussed in the previous chapter. In this section I explore Sutton's argument that for people entangled with *xenitia,* there is a "need to have some physical object carried along or sent as a tangible site for memory" (ibid).

> Now that I leave for foreign lands, and we will be parted for months, for years, let me take something also from you…Earth scented by the summer seasons, blessed earth, earth bearing fruit- the muscat vine, the yellow grain, the tender laurel, bitter olive…' (Sutton, 2001: 77-8 citing the poet Dronisis).

Building on Sutton's work, I discuss the role of food and materiality in my own informants' experiences of connection to Greece and people who they had left behind. I consider Sutton's points that sensual landscapes serve as painful reminders, and I consider how physical objects can be a tangible site for memory in contexts of disjunction (cf. Sutton, 2001: 77). Building on my discussion from the previous chapter, I continue to explore 'ambiguous materialities' (cf. Bille et al, 2010) in relation to the idea of 'presence'. Following Runia (2006), I adopt a broader view of 'presence' as "'being in touch'- either literally or figuratively- with people, things, events, and feelings" (Runia, 2006: 5). Objects, people and phenomena can be 'there' from an experiential perspective, even though they are 'not there' from a positivist perspective. I suggest this has implications for studies of transnationalism which seem to focus more on literal absence and spatial separation. As I explore in this section, food is a good example of the entanglement of presence and absence (ibid: 14), particularly in its relationship to memory. When food is consumed, smelled and tasted, memories are evoked; and- I would say- people and places and memories *made present* as I explain through the following ethnographic vignette of my dinner with Costas and Ismene below.

At the end of one of my meals with Costas and Ismene, they invited me to try a traditional Greek 'sweet' called *ypovrihio* (literally meaning 'submarine') flavoured with *mastiha* (*μαστίχα υποβρύχιο)*[39]. When I agreed to try some, Ismene excitedly ran up the stairs to

[39] "The *ypovrihio* which literally translates into "submarine" is made of only three basic ingredients: water, sugar, and confectioner's glucose. The ingredients are combined in a mixer resulting in a light and fluffy sugary paste. That's the base. Most water sweets or "submarine" sweets are then flavoured with natural or artificial flavourings. The most classic flavours are vanilla and *mastiha* (mastic gum). You take a spoonful of the water sweet and dip it into a glass of cold water to chill. The longer it stays, the colder and softer it gets. You then take it out of the water, put the whole spoonful in your mouth. Then you return the spoon back into the cold water

dig out the tub from her suitcase still waiting to be unpacked after their recent trip to Greece. Back at the table downstairs, Ismene opened the tub in front of my nose and demanded I smell it. She was right that the smell was distinctive. Ismene explained that whilst *mastiha* is easy to buy in Greece, it is actually only made in a particular place in Greece- from the sap of trees on the island of Chios. Ismene explained how they had brought this *mastiha ypovrihio* from Greece, in their suitcase, having bought it at the supermarket rather than the duty free. The tub was half full, and Ismene remarked to Costas that they would have to bring more back with them next time they visited Greece. Before I tasted it, Costas described how "it's like melted marshmallow with flavour of vanilla and *mastiha*. When you take it from the box it's thick and hard. In cold water it starts melting and it becomes like a chewing gum". Not only did Costas and Ismene share knowledge of the origins and production of *mastiha* in Greece- such as the specific trees in Chios that it comes from and how they process the tree sap to make it; it seemed that the *mastiha ypovrihio* was also imbued with the presence of Costas and Ismene's grandmothers as they narrated their memories of being given *ypovrihio* as children as a treat in summer. The taste of *mastiha* evoked childhood memories of spending time with family in Greece.

Below – Costas and Ismene's tub of mastiha ypovrihio, mixed with water to soften (my photos)

to cool again. You repeat this until the water sweet has vanished. To finish, you can drink the sweet and flavoured water afterwards" (Greek Magazaki: https://greekmagazaki.co.uk/products/mastiha-water-sweet-ypovrihio-400g).

In my analysis below, I build on Sutton's ethnographic approach to the sense of taste and smell, following his call to see eating as 'embodied practice' (cf. Sutton, 2001). In particular I focus on Sutton's idea of 'historical consciousness'- the idea that food "permeates memory" and that memory is "sedimented in the body" (ibid: 12). This is also an idea that Seremetakis puts forward in her work. As the example of *mastiha ypovrihio* seemed to show, "The awakening of the senses is awakening the capacity for memory, of tangible memory; to be awake is to remember, and one remembers through the senses, via substance…Memory is stored in substances that are shared, just as substances are stored in social memory which is sensory." (Seremetakis, 1993: 4). Both Sutton and Seremetakis stress that "food's memory power derives in part from synaesthesia, which I take to mean the synthesis or crossing of experiences from different sensory registers (i.e. taste, smell, hearing)" (Sutton, 2001: 17). Seremetakis describes the synaesthetic aspects of memory in her work as such: "[t]here is also a tactility of smells. Each smell generates its own textures and surfaces. No smell is encountered alone. There are combinations of smells that make up a unified presence, the grandma's house: the garden aroma combined with the animal dung; the oregano bunch hanging over the sheep skin containing the year's cheese; the blankets stored in the cabinet which combine rough wool with the humidity of the ocean; the oven exuding the smell of baking bread and the residue of the ashes, the fresh bread in the open covered with white cotton towels." (Seremetakis, 1993: 5).

Seremetakis' comments resonate with Hamilakis' concept of the 'sensorial assemblage'. Whilst Seremetakis speaks of combinations of smells that make up "a unified presence" of the grandma's house, I would suggest that we understand these combinations as something more rhizomatic. Hamilakis describes this sensorial assemblage or rhizome as "the contingent co-presence of heterogenous elements such as bodies, things, substances, affects, memories, information, and ideas." (Hamilakis, 2013: 126)[40]. The reason why I prefer a rhizomatic framing of synaesthetic experiences is that it captures more effectively the way in which my informants' memories were triggered unexpectedly by certain materialities and sensory engagements in London. I find Hamilakis' idea of temporary assemblages to be a useful way to understand many of the instances in which

[40] "Deleuze (2007: 176–177) notes that '[i]n assemblages you find states of things, bodies, various combinations of bodies, hodgepodges; but you also find utterances, modes of expression, and whole regimes of signs'". (Hamilakis, 2013: 126)

my informants were reminded of certain people and places in Greece, including this example of Costas and Ismene's consumption of *ypovrihio*. As I explain below, Hamilakis describes how there are two kinds of sensorial assemblage- ones which are temporary, and others (like the grandma's house in Seremetakis' description) that can be more permanent (ibid: 127).

Hamilakis discusses how sensorial assemblages can be temporarily territorialised and then "later dispersed, de-territorialised, and re-assembled (re-territorialised) elsewhere" (Hamilakis, 2013: 127). Hamilakis focuses on archaeological architecture in his work and gives the example of a block from the Sanctuary of Poseidon to illustrate his point about sensorial assemblages at different moments. To illustrate the temporary sensorial assemblage, Hamilakis describes the moment where visitors in a tour group were gathered around the block to discuss its history, as well as to touch the stone and "trace the inscribed names and dates with their hands" (ibid). In this moment, Hamilakis argues that the group "produced a sensorial assemblage which included the stone block, the embodied presence of visitors and guides, the conjuring up of the memories of the children who created the graffiti, the tactile experience of the stone, and even the various photographs produced at that moment" (ibid). In contrast to this temporary sensorial assemblage, Hamilakis argues that a permanent sensorial assemblage would be produced if this site had been made 'permanent' through the addition of information panels, fencing and a path "which would have regulated bodily movement" (ibid). According to Hamilakis, this would have "laid out the conditions for the regimentation of specific sensorial and mnemonic experiences" necessary to create a permanent assemblage (ibid).

In addition to this embodied and synesthetic view of food and memory, I would also suggest the resonance of "Maurice Halbwachs' view of memory as working by drawing on external stimuli which helps us to renew past experiences: 'We remember when some new memory helps us to piece together small, scattered, and indistinct bits of the past' (1982: 258)" (Sutton, 2001: 9). To continue with my ethnographic vignette, it was not only memories of *mastiha ypovrihio* that we shared together at the dinner table. When Costas and Ismene were telling me about their memories of looking forward to the treat of *mastiha ypovrihio* at their grandparents' houses in summer, I was reminded of my own visits to my grandma's house. The first thing that I would do would be to run to her 'cake

cupboard' to see what treats she had bought especially for me. I remembered the disappointment of finding a Battenburg cake, and the joy of finding French Fancies and I remember my mum would be embarrassed that I was more interested in the cakes than saying hello to my grandma first.

Based on my ethnography, it was not only our narratives, but our memories, that were intersubjective and co-produced at the table as we each remembered comparable examples of eating sweets at our grandparents' houses. Indeed, hearing my own memories of eating sweets at my grandma's house, Ismene told a similar anecdote of being 'spoilt' by grandparents, which we agreed might be a universal trait of these family members. Ismene explained how her grandfather used to buy her loads of treats like crisps and chocolate. He would buy her everything she wanted from the little off-licence shop. As a result, Ismene would not eat her dinner and her mother would become annoyed at her grandfather for buying the treats. Costas then added his own anecdote of sugary disappointments- of expectantly opening biscuit or cake tin at one's grandparents' house, only to find a sewing kit inside. We all laughed at the familiarity of this example which seemed to surpass cultural contexts as we joked about our embarrassingly childlike disappointment, even as adults, when this happened. In the moment of consumption then, the *mastiha ypovrihio* seemed to "resonate with affective charges and sensorialities" (Hamilakis, 2013) that were culturally proximate to both Costas and Ismene, but which also triggered similar memories of grandparents for us all despite the novelty of the *mastiha ypovrihio* to me.

Costas and Ismene's experience of eating *mastiha ypovrihio* demonstrates the anthropological idea of connective histories and connective materialities- the idea that certain narratives connect in ways that are immediately understandable to those who have shared similar experiences. Whilst the bath taps that I discussed in my second ethnographic chapter were more of a material 'cue' (cf. Sutton, 2001: 90), it seemed that with *mastiha ypovrihio* there was a different kind of entanglement with affect that relates to ideas of entanglements between food and social memory. I would argue that Costas and Ismene's experience of eating *mastiha ypovrihio* illustrates the entanglement between the senses- i.e. the smells, tastes and textures of food- and social memory which ethnographers have discussed in relation to Greece. Seremetakis and Sutton both explore the entanglements between food and social memory, exploring how food can provoke the

"emergence and awakening of layered memories, resulting in a recollection of past events and feelings" (cf. Seremetakis, 1994: 10; Sutton, 1998: 200; Knight: 2015: 82). Food acts as a sensory reminder such that "shared histories and perceptual topologies that transcend time and space are formed (Bloch 1998: 120; Seremetakis, 1994: 11).

According to Serres (1995: 58) and Seremetakis, food is "transmitted as a cultural code, as a 'constant contemporary', assembled at each moment according to the continuous social fluctuations in the process of time. Concepts relating to food stand against onrushing changes brought by the time that has percolated: food remains 'an island of historicity' (Seremetakis, 1994: 12)" (Knight, 2015: 82). In my view, this approach to food is useful in relation to 'foods' like *koliva* that for Greek people is strongly associated with death and burial. *Koliva* can be understood as a kind of 'food' which connects with history in this multi-temporal way. *Koliva* is a 'food' served at Greek Orthodox Christian memorial services for the dead; it is made from barley and pomegranate seeds. During my ethnography in Greek Orthodox churches in London I observed several memorial services for people who had passed away, which took place at the end of regular services. At the front of the church there would be one or two tables with dozens of breads and *koliva*. The breads were large and circular with thick white candles in their middles. People would move to the front of the church with their candles, which they would light in the adjacent shrine to the funeral tables. They would then gather together there for the remaining part of the service. The priest would also read the names of other members of the community who had died, as the custom is to remember the dead forty days (and nine months) after their passing. After the service, people would collect bags of *koliva* to eat immediately after the service, or later- perhaps after adding sugar to sweeten the taste as several of my informants liked to do. There were multiple occasions during my ethnography and participant observation at church services when *koliva* was distributed among the congregation. In addition to the people who had attended a memorial service only for the occasion of remembering their loved one, koliva was also given to other members of a service, including myself.

Theoretically speaking, the consumption of *koliva* at Greek Orthodox Churches illustrates Seremetakis' point that commensality cannot simply be spoken of in terms of social organisation and rules, nor "reduced to food-related senses of taste and odour" (Seremetakis, 1994: 37). I agree with Seremetakis' definition of commensality as "the

exchange of sensory memories and emotions, and of substances and objects incarnating remembrance and feeling" (ibid). Of course, *mastiha ypovrihio* seemed equally as powerful as *koliva* in this respect; it is not only foods eaten in remembrance of the dead that seemed to carry this practice of remembrance. As I discuss in this chapter, certain foods were a particularly powerful medium for my informants to be 'in touch' with their families and their ancestors and ancestral lands. As I explain below, specific tastes and their association with memory indicate the micro-materialities of emplacement and presence which contributed to these positive feelings of nostalgia for my informants abroad. Like *mastiha ypovrihio, koliva* was a 'food' which triggered emotional and affective responses and memories of life in Greece.

Based on my research, the 'tastiness' of *koliva* seemed part of a 'culturally intimate' experience for some of my informants in London. Whilst to admit that one enjoyed eating a food that was associated death might seem strange and somewhat embarrassing to an outsider like myself, it was clearly the case that the positive memories of eating *koliva* and enjoying the taste as a child were shared by many of my informants. As children, many of my informants remembered enjoying *koliva* more than they remembered the actual people who they were supposed to be remembering through the practice of eating it. For example, as a child, Hilary admitted that she had not made the connection between *koliva* and funerals. Rather, she associated *koliva* with her grandmother, who used to make it. Hilary remembered asking her grandmother to make some for her one time, because Hilary found it tasty, but her grandmother had explained to her that you cannot just make *koliva* any time- only on special days. Abroad, when Hilary ate *koliva,* she remembered her grandmother for this reason. In this respect, eating *koliva* did not only conjure memories of Greek people who had recently died; for Hilary, *koliva* allowed her to be "in touch" with her grandmother whose 'spirit' so to speak was imbued in the *koliva* when it had the right kind of flavour.

Below: bags of *koliva* next to the basket of communion bread (my photos)

My informants' feelings of emplacement were strongly connected to specific tastes and textures of foods like *koliva,* and also the smells of the church with respect to the incense and smell of candles*.* I would argue that *koliva* should be understood through the lens of synaesthetic entanglements between food and memory. In addition to *koliva*, my informants found the food made and served by older ladies[41] after church services to be another powerful reminder of home for several of my informants. For example, Petal explained that attending Orthodox Churches was a reminder of family life in Greece for her, as it is a place where "grandmothers cook proper Greek food. It's the centre of the community. Church plays a very important role in meeting Greek people…You feel at home away from home. This is nice and very important" (Petal, 28, lawyer). Particularly given the limits of virtual communication as I discussed previously, it seemed that food was an important way that my informants could feel 'in touch' with people from Greece.

For Ismene, cooking Greek food at home was an important way in which she maintained connections with her relatives despite their geographical distance. Ismene explained that she skyped her relatives often (sometimes three times a day) for cooking instructions

[41] Indeed, the roles in Greek churches abroad were gendered and related to age. Older women were responsible for the serving of drinks and foods, as well as for leading the Sunday School, and organising flower arrangements for the icons. The priests, altar boys and cantors were all men. The church helpers were both men and women- i.e. sorting candles, programmes, collections of donations, and cleaning of the church.

and advice. Cooking was still a joint effort despite geographical separation. Nevertheless, Ismene commented on the 'weirdness' of video calling and the sadness of not being able to touch or hug her loved ones. For Ismene, video calling had the paradoxical effect of making her feel more separated from her family in Greece even though it facilitated regular conversation. Despite their virtual presence on screen, this presence was entangled with absence and a greater sense of disconnect because "at some points you want to hug them and you can't" (Ismene). As I argued in my second ethnographic chapter, technology had its limitations for the expression of love and care which actually heightened the sense of alienation and ambiguity caused by separation for many of my informants.

Ismene felt more 'in touch' (Runia, 2006) with her family when she was cooking with *ingredients* that they had given her from Greece. For example, during the dinner Ismene explained that the basil she had used in one of the dishes was "straight from Greece, from my aunt's garden". Ismene's aunt had given Ismene the basil when Costas and Ismene last visited Greece. Among my other informants, it was common that their families would send them 'care packages' with herbs and other ingredients that they had missed from home. In my view, this role that food plays in connecting people across borders also has much to offer studies of transnationalism. My contribution is to stress the affective and micro-material aspects of everyday mundane practices like cooking which contribute to these feelings of connection and disconnection. Following Runia's concept of 'presence' as 'being in touch', I would suggest that Ismene's relatives were present through her use of herbs from them, despite their physical absence. Ismene's aunt was 'there' from an experiential perspective, even though she was 'not there' from a positivist perspective. We might say that the basil was somewhat imbued with Ismene's aunt's 'spirit' and her memories of time together in Greece when Ismene had been given the herb to take back with her. Building on long-standing work in anthropology into the 'spirit' of the gift, I would suggest that objects become imbued with 'spirits' and memories, even when those people are no longer touching the object. Food seemed to bring Ismene 'closer' to her loved ones. I therefore argue that food is a good example of the entanglement of presence and absence (ibid: 14) and the important role that taste plays in migrants' experiences of emplacement, displacement and connection.

Taste and Tastelessness

During my ethnography, Ismene explicitly mentioned the role of taste in her feelings of connection to Greece whilst living abroad. Ismene clearly explained that she only liked to use products which were of Greek origin in her cooking. She explained that she was very happy that she could find authentic Greek products ("straight from Greece") whilst living abroad. The Greek origin of the products was very important to Ismene because she could taste the difference between those from Greece and those that were not. Indeed, as I explain below, there seemed to be micro-materialities of food and taste which were so subtle that only Ismene was able to be attuned to them. For example, Ismene critiqued the taste of supermarket jam. Importantly, this critique was not explicit but rather somewhat 'hidden' in her preference for her homemade jam which Costas mentioned in our conversation. He was explaining that unlike Ismene, he was happy to eat products produced in other countries. As he explained, "this is to do with my tastebuds; they're not so developed to tell the difference between the Greek products and the non-Greek products". Costas explained that "for Ismene it doesn't taste the same; she has to bring the Greek products from Greece so that she can use them in her cooking". The couple joked that Costa couldn't tell the difference between Ismene's homemade jam, and the supermarket version. According to Ismene, the supermarket jam was inferior to her homemade version, because it was not so sweet. She described the 'brilliance' of the sweetness of her homemade version, compared to which the supermarket jam was characterised by an apparent 'tastelessness'. I would argue that Ismene's comments about her preferences for the sweetness[42] of the homemade jam in contrast to the perceived blandness of the supermarket version links to Seremetakis' comments about 'tastelessness' (cf. Seremetakis, 1994) and absence, as I explain below.

In her book 'The senses still: perception and memory as material culture in modernity', Seremetakis offers a vignette of her own love for a particular kind of Greek peach, the *rodhakino*- fondly named 'the breast of Aphrodite'. To her dismay this peach had 'disappeared' and was replaced by new varieties that had only some semblance to her beloved original. Through the theme of 'tastelessness', Seremetakis explores the macro-

[42] Interestingly, ethnographers working in Greece have noted the gendered dimensions of tastes like how "women are taught, in the Greek context, to consume sweet things as part of learning their 'sweet' gendered disposition...(Cowan, 1991: 181)" (Sutton, 2001: 6).

historical, sociocultural changes in Greek society and asks "at what experiential levels are the economic and social transformations of the EEC being felt" (Seremetakis, 1994: 3). She questions whether the disappearance of her beloved peach is an idiosyncratic event. Seremetakis argues that "The vanishing of tastes, aromas, and textures are being writ large in contemporary European margins with the joint expansion and centralisations of EEC market rationalities." (ibid). Through her discussion of 'sour grapes'[43], Seremetakis explores how regional products in Greece gradually disappear to be replaced by foreign foods and tastes such that the new 'strange fruits' and "whole epoch, the present, is characterised as *anosto"* (tasteless).

Seremetakis argues that the EEC has changed existing consumer cultures and sensibilities and reorganised public memory (Seremetakis, 1994: 3). She argues that memories and histories are being stripped away by these changes with effects on people's ability to reproduce their social identities. In my view, Seremetakis' comments on these changes indicates the value of a negative methodological approach, particularly her argument that these changes indicate the extent to which cultural identity is created through material practices which are "embedded in the reciprocities, aesthetics, and sensory strata of material objects". It is only when something is missing or 'tasteless', she implies, that we realise this importance of the material in relation to consumption, but also production. Seremetakis also argues that such "[s]ensory changes occur microscopically through everyday accretion; so, that which shifts the material culture of perception is itself imperceptible and only reappears after the fact in fairy tales, myths, and memories that hover at the margins of speech" (ibid).

In my ethnography, I extend Seremetakis' ideas methodologically in my focus on the 'microscopic' (micro-materialities) and the 'everyday'. Seremetakis' comment that memories "hover at the margins of speech" also demonstrates the value of a 'negative methodological' approach, as I said above. My contribution in this chapter is to

[43] "Not only have some foreign fruits arrived in Greek markets- it is no coincidence that in colloquial Greek a strange or weird person is referred to as 'a strange fruit' or 'a new fruit'- but also familiar fruits have made their timid appearance in fancy supermarkets at the 'wrong season'. For instance grapes, emblematic of the summer for Greeks, appeared in the winter under the sign 'imported from EEC'. Observing local women shopping, touching, picking and choosing, one notices that they pass them over as if they never noticed them, or commenting on how 'sour they look'. Sour implies not yet ripened, thus not in season, and so tasteless (*anosta*). And while the EEC in this case becomes identified with sour grapes, a whole epoch, the present, is characterised as *anosto*". (Seremetakis, 1994: 7-8)

demonstrate how Seremetakis' vignette is indicative of the 'ambiguous materialities' concept, particularly when she discusses how "[p]eople only alluded to the disappearance of the older peach by remarking on the tastelessness of new varieties, a comment that was often extended to all food, 'nothing tastes as good as the past'" (Seremetakis, 1994: 1). I would argue that this example of the peach indicates that there are not neat divides between what is tangible and intangible, as the taste of the 'old peach' was only made tangible through the tastelessness of the new varieties. I would argue that this shows the usefulness of the 'negative methodology' approach put forward by Navaro (2020). Seremetakis' vignette of the peach surely indicates that we should focus on what is "invisible, immaterial or absent" (Navaro, 2020).

The inferiority of the supermarket jam from Ismene's perspective seemed related to what Seremetakis calls a 'double absence'. As I explain more shortly, Seremetakis describes the disappearance of her favourite peach in Greece and how "the new fruits [brought by modernisation] displaced the *rodhakino* and together with it, a mosaic of enmeshed memories, tastes, aromas. The surrogate remains as a simulation with no model, emptied of specific cultural content and actively producing forgetfulness. A shift has been accomplished from sedimented depth to surface with no past" (Seremetakis, 1994: 2-3). Seremetakis argues that the disappearance of her favourite peach is "not mere absence or void but rather material closure, a cordoning off of the capacity for certain perceptual experiences in such a manner that their very disappearance goes unnoticed" (ibid). In my view, these comments apply to Costas and Ismene's differing perceptions of the taste of the jams. It seemed that Costas lacked the capacity to experience the value of the homemade jam; to him the disappearance of its sweetness went unnoticed. For Ismene however, it was clear that the supermarket jam was 'empty' of what Seremetakis refers to as the 'mosaic of enmeshed memories, tastes and aromas'. It seemed that the supermarket version lacked more than just flavour and sweetness; it was devoid of cultural content and perhaps 'actively produced forgetfulness' of these tastes and memories.

Seremetakis' concept of tastelessness is also fundamentally connected to her explanation of nostalgia. Seremetakis compares the Anglo-American understanding of nostalgia to the Greek verb *nostalgho* (a composite of *nostos* and *alghos)* in order to stress the entanglements between taste, travel and time which make nostalgia a painful experience.

As Seremetakis explains it, *alghos* refers to a pain and aching in one's soul and body- a burning pain (*kaimos).* Seremetakis explores the sensory aspects of nostalgia and explains how exile and estrangement are understood through the lens of bodily and emotional pain. In addition, Seremetakis explains how nostalgia is related to taste given that *nostos* means the return and the journey whereas *a-nostos* means without taste:

> "*Nosto[s]* means I return, I travel (back to homeland); the noun *nostos* means the return, the journey, while *a-nostos* means without taste…The opposite of *anostos* is *nostimos* and characterises someone or something that has journeyed and arrived, has matured, ripened and is thus tasty (and useful)…[*Nostalghia*] evokes the sensory dimension of memory in exile and estrangement; it mixes bodily and emotional pain and ties painful experiences of spiritual and somatic exile to the notion of maturation and ripening. In this sense, *nostalghia* is linked to the personal consequences of historicising sensory experience which is conceived as a painful bodily and emotional journey" (Seremetakis, 1993: 4).

According to Seremetakis, the Anglo-American understanding of nostalgia is a kind of 'romantic sentimentality' which 'confines the past' and removes "it from any transactional and material relation to the present". In contrast, Seremetakis argues that "the Greek etymology evokes the transformative impact of the past as unreconciled historical experience" (Seremetakis, 1993: 4). Based on my ethnography, I would agree that "the capacity to narrate history" is definitely very much "tied to the senses" and "stored in specific everyday items" that "create and sustain our relationship to the historical as a sensory dimension" (Seremetakis, 1994: 2-3). In the following section I therefore explore the materialities of emplacement, and critically assess Sutton's comments that food can be "the part that holds the key to re-vivifying a whole structure of associations" (Sutton, 2001: 83).

Materialities of Emplacement

Drawing on Proust, Sutton describes "the power of sensory parts to return us to the whole" and "the emotional charge of the moment of consumption for keying, involuntarily, these associative memories" (ibid: 84). In contexts of *xenitia,* Sutton argues that migrants "need to have some physical object carried along or sent as a tangible site for memory" (Sutton, 2001: 77-8). Sutton argues that food and physical objects brought

with migrants from Greece are a way that migrants reconstruct their 'worlds' abroad. Like Ismene, Sutton too notes the importance of basil, describing the case of a migrant from Greece who smelt a pot of basil and longingly exclaimed: 'It really smells like Greece!'. Sutton describes the associations of basil in Greece beyond that of its use in dishes, describing also the association of basil with church and the smell of basil in Greek kitchens, and he refers to another ethnographer's example of how Greek immigrants in America would breathe in the scent and utter '*Ach, patridha, patridha* [homeland, homeland]' (cf. Sutton, 2001: 74).

Sutton's discussion of basil and other "transnational odorific and gustatory travelling companions" (ibid) is related to his idea that migrants 'reconstruct wholeness' abroad. Sutton argues that "the experience of food in Greece is cultivated synesthetically and emotionally, so that eating food from home becomes a particularly marked cultural site for the re-imagining of 'worlds' displaced in space and/or time…But the union of the senses is not only a metaphor for social wholeness…it is an embodied aspect of creating the experience of the whole. Food is not a random part that recalls the whole to memory. Its synesthetic qualities, when culturally elaborated as they are in Greece, are an essential ingredient in ritual and everyday experiences of totality. Food does not simply symbolise social bonds and divisions; it participates in their creation and recreation" (Sutton, 2001: 102).

This idea of 'returning to the whole' is an important aspect of Sutton's analysis and is inspired by Fernandez' work on religious revitalisation movements in West Africa (cf. Fernandez, 1982). Fernandez argues that among the Fang of Gabon, the revitalisation movement (Bwiti) "is seen as a response to the alienation and fragmentation brought on by 'the agents of the colonial world and simply modern times' (Fernandez, 1982: 562). In the face of these radical changes in their society, Fang use Bwiti to reintegrate the past and the present, to 'recapture the totality of the old way of life' (ibid: 9). Thus, as against the celebration of fragmentation in post-modern analysis, Fernandez provides an analysis of some of the ways that those whose worlds are being rent asunder attempt creatively to reconstruct them." (Sutton, 2001: 75). Sutton argues that "Fernandez's approach is potentially applicable to many sorts of alienation, from that of victims of war, to that of refugees, migrants, downsized workers, those caught in major political shifts such as the fall of Soviet socialism, and all those who in the midst of change 'are looking

for firm ground under their feet' (Thomassen 1996: 44)." (Sutton, 2001: 75). To some extent, I would agree.

In the context of an unfamiliar environment abroad, some of my informants found the affects conjured by Greek products and dishes to be an important embodied, synaesthetic, sensory reminder of Greece which provided some respite from the pains of *xenitia* that they experienced in London. For example, my informant Helios described how drinking a specific kind of cold coffee in London triggered a positive experience of nostalgia which helped quell his feelings of being in *xenitia.* Helios was one of my youngest informants (only twenty-one) from a rural area in Northern Greece, born to Albanian parents who migrated in the 1990s. Helios moved to London to pursue his ambition to become a graphic designer, but given the high rents in London, he worked full time at a touristy restaurant in Piccadilly Circus for the duration of my fieldwork. Whilst Helios had planned to move to Italy to join his girlfriend who had found a new job there, this fell through because he was the victim of a scam where he paid tax to what he thought was HMRC, and he lost the money that he had saved for his flights.

Particularly given Helios' negative experiences of loneliness and struggling financially in London, Helios explained that the specific type of milk used at his favourite Greek café in London was comforting and familiar given that it reminded him of the milk in Greece. The kind of milk he referred to was full-fat UHT milk which had been frothed into a gloopy texture which resembled the kind of semi-solid cream characteristic of ice-cream[44]. Helios explained that drinking that same milk in London made him 'feel more at home'. His consumption of this particular cold coffee- with its specific textures and tastes- in London seemed to be a purposeful practice of feeling at home. To resist the hauntings of *xenitia* in his life and give him comfort in the context of his difficulties, Helios seemed to engage in sensory practices of consumption- a kind of performative emplacement- to prevent himself from feeling *xenos* abroad.

[44] Indeed, my informants frequently ranked the Greek cafes in London in terms of their skill at creating the certain texture of milk characteristic of cold coffees in Greece, as well as the other metrics for a good quality, strong cold coffee such as its wateriness and richness.

Fredo *espresso (no milk, but still with foamy layer)*

Below: gloopy milk before coffee added

Below: fredo *cappuccinos with layered milk (my photos)*

Through my participant observation of Greek cafes in London, I saw the popularity of sharing *spanakopita, tiropita, galaktoboureko, baklava, kataifi* and cold coffees at Greek cafes (see photos below). Indeed, when I would first meet participants at the coffee shops it was usually one of the first things I was told: that I would be able to identify who were the Greek people by the kind of coffee they were drinking, and what foods they were eating and sharing together (i.e. that in the photos above). It was a point of humorous 'cultural intimacy' that Greeks drink so much cold coffee. In this respect, I observed a kind of reference and deployment of what "Palmer, drawing on Billig's concept of 'banal nationalism' argues: [that] food is one of the mundane reminders that keep national identity 'near the surface of daily life' so that people do not forget their nationality (Palmer, 1998: 192)." (Sutton, 2001: 84-5). Indeed, I found it funny that one coffee shop I visited regularly had absolutely all of its products sourced from Greece, including the bottled water! As I mentioned earlier, Sutton uses the idea of 'wholeness' and 'returning to the whole' to describe the associations between food, culture and community. Sutton argues that "there is an imagined community implied in the act of eating food 'from home' while in exile, in the embodied knowledge that others are eating the same food. This is

not to deny that real communities are created as well…But even in this case of shared consumption, a wider community of homeland is being referenced in the act of eating 'food from home' (Sutton, 2001: 84).

(below) tiropita

(above) galaktoboureko

(above) spanakopita

(left) baklava

(right) two types of kataifi

To some extent, my ethnography supports Sutton's view that when societies become 'fragmented' and people feel a lack of coherence between different domains of experience, they attempt to 'return to the whole'. That's to say, people search for shared sensory experiences- hearing, seeing, touching, tasting- in groups, families and associations (cf. Sutton: 2001: 76). According to Sutton and Fernandez, the symbolic restoration of the 'integrity of a shattered geography' is through a coherence that is created through a ritualised component, the performance of which creates a 'compelling whole'. When applied to understand Greek people's participation in consumption and commensality in Greek coffee shops in London, we might say that the 'ritualised' practice of drinking cold coffee with friends multiple times a day after work, was an example of such 'returning to the whole'. To some extent it seemed that consuming Greek products and dishes with others in London "evoked a whole world of family, agricultural

associations, place names and other 'local knowledge'" (Sutton, 2001: 82-3) which was particularly comforting to those Greeks who felt nostalgic for aspects of life in Greece, and who felt entangled with *xenitia* in London.

Karan's homemade bread in one of the 'Greek inspired' dishes of his wife's café (My photo)

This said, my ethnography challenges the idea that Greeks abroad are a homogenous diasporic community. Whilst some of my informants felt 'at home' in Greek cafes in London, others who seemed to have internalised a neoliberal subjectivity expressed their desire to 'integrate' in British society and wanted to avoid these 'Greek Greek' places in London. During my fieldwork, these informants spoke negatively about Greek people who wanted to create 'Greek bubbles' abroad. They felt that these Greeks who felt in *xenitia* abroad had a *miseri* mentality[45] and were 'bad immigrants' for not wanting to adapt to life in London. Indeed, when Karan was explaining to me the inspiration behind the dishes at his partner's café in London (see photo above), which were all based on Greek *mezedes,* he was keen to stress that the 'Greek inspiration' for the dishes was not an example of them making Greek food for Greek people in London. Karan explained that he is "not a nationalist" and argued that their café was not a Greek place, or only for Greeks. Karan felt that creating a 'Greek bubble' abroad was something *misero,* because it meant one was probably not making the most of the opportunities for success that

[45] I explain the meaning of *miseria* and a *miseri* mentality in the next chapter.

London had to offer. In contrast to Karan, some of my other informants felt that replicating these aspects of 'café culture' in Greek coffee shops in London was a way that they could resist and subvert the aesthetics and norms of neoliberalism and capitalism which they did not like in London.

Greek Coffee Shops in London

Some of my informants seemed to recreate a 'coffee shop culture' in London as a response to "the alienation and fragmentation" they felt in relation to their values of humanity and sociality that they felt were lacking in London. Some of my informants felt alienated by the sensescape of London, which they described as 'cold' and 'robotic'. It seemed that referring to life in London as 'robotic' was an emic way that my informants expressed their dissatisfaction with neoliberal and capitalist aesthetics and rhythms[46]. In this section I explore the sensory and material dimensions of these informants' feelings of emplacement and displacement in London and explore the role of Greek coffee shops as comforting and familiar places which helped quell these informants' feelings of *xenitia* abroad. It seemed that these Greeks in London felt that their performative practice of humanity and sociality in Greek coffee shops was *subversive* of what they perceived as the 'senselessness' of the aesthetics of modernity in London.

Broadly speaking, my ethnography contributes to understanding how "divergent sensory structures and commensalities can come into conflict with each other, and some are socially repressed, erased or exiled into privatised recollection and marginal experience" (Seremetakis, 1994: 37). I agree with Hamilakis that "we rarely reflect seriously" on the importance of the senses. In his work, Hamilakis critiques some people's view that "people in the West today live under conditions which can be described as a state of cultural anaesthesia" (Hamilakis, 2013). As he explains: "this is a state where the material world, other people, place, time, and history are experienced in a highly regulated bodily manner; where the affective import of sensorial experience is tightly controlled; where a seemingly autonomous vision acquires primacy; and where other sensory modalities are permitted only in certain contextual situations and are channelled to produce certain experiential effects, often linked to the market and to capitalist commodification" (ibid:

[46] Later, I explore how these informants felt that they were subverting these neoliberal norms through their coffee shop sociality, and practices of humanity and care. In my final ethnographic chapter, I critique whether or not these practices were truly subversive however, building on Muehlebach's work on the neoliberal ethics of care (cf. Muehlebach, 2012).

2). Hamilakis argues that this view is "generalising and not devoid of deliberate exaggeration" (ibid). Nevertheless, it seems helpful to consider the aesthetics of modernity, neoliberalism and capitalism.

My contribution is to explain the *disemic* dimensions to my informants' sensory experiences in London to explore the extent to which they wished to 'adapt' to this new 'sensescape' of London (cf. Low, 2015). The rhythms, sounds, and tactility of London (i.e. its 'sensescape') was sometimes alienating to my informants when these aspects contrasted to what they had valued and been used to in Greece. In this context, I discuss how Greek coffee shops became spaces where those 'lacking' aspects of life London could be performatively established. For example, as I explain below, the seating arrangements/layouts of Greek cafes, and their late closing times were considered to facilitate conversation with strangers and offered the opportunity for customers to socialise late into the evenings in ways which were reminiscent of life in Greece. For Greeks who felt alienated from certain 'quintessentially Greek' practices (such as socialising until late after work), Greek coffee shops in London thus offered a sense of emplacement which helped them quell their feelings of *xenitia* abroad. It seemed that Greek coffee shops in London were 'prefigurative political spaces' where people acted in accordance with their positionality on the *disemic* spectrum of Greek identity.

It seemed that these Greeks wanted to subvert and resist the negative aspects of neoliberalism and capitalism in London, which they labelled as 'modern' and 'alien'. For example, my informant Ezio conceptualised Greek cafes in London as 'warm' spaces which were positively associated with humanity, sociality and 'life'. People like Ezio conceptualised the robotic, mechanical, 'automated' nature of life in London as a 'coldness' which signalled a lack of humanity and sociality, whereas 'warmth' was associated with humanity, sociality and 'life'. This warmth was not purely a remark about temperature, but a metaphorical expression of the perception of Greek cafes as more conducive to sociality than other spaces in London. Indeed, I was able to meet Ezio for the first time because when I turned round from my seat, Ezio and his friend were only half a metre away. The close proximity of the tables made the space 'warmer' from Ezio's perspective, making it feel cosy and comfortable. In contrast, he described other cafes as more 'clinical', with seating that was more spread out. Indeed, it seemed to be these 'cosy'

cafes which were more popular with Greeks in London, as they were more conducive to conversation.

The close seating arrangement of the café where Ezio and I met for the first time. When we met, I was sitting where the lady in red is sitting, and Ezio and his friend were seated behind me. As you can see, the distances between us were very small. (My photos)

In contrast to the photos above we can see how this second Greek café (photo below) differed to the one where I met Ezio. Though the tables are still in close proximity in this café, the layout was not as conducive to interactions with others as the first café where I met Ezio. Rather than the tables being all together in the centre, or circular arrangement, the tables were around the edges of the room, like a square. (My photo)

In this café (photo above, my photo) we can see the more 'clinical' set-up of the furniture. There is much greater empty floor space, and the tables are far away from each other. The floor space/area of the café was very large, and much greater than that of the café where I met Ezio. Conversation with strangers was much more difficult to make in this café.

From this photo we can also see the differences in lighting between the cafes. I believe the lighting affected the extent to which a café was considered 'warm and cosy'. The brighter lighting of this café seemed more clinical in contrast to the 'warm' glow of the yellow lighting of the first café. Similarly, the

type of material of the furniture seemed to affect the 'warmth' of the space. For example, in the café where I met Ezio, the furniture was wooden, and golden. In other cafes the furniture was black or in dark colours and it was made from leather rather than wood.

The fact that Greek cafes were conducive to interactions with others was crucial for people like Ezio for whom the whole point of going to a café was to socialise with others, even people one did not know. Some of my informants felt that British people in London were 'cold' and 'reserved' because they would sit next to each other in cafes and not interact. Some of my informants were confused to see that people went to cafes with their laptops because they felt that working on a laptop cut one off from socialisation with other people- especially if one faced a wall or window (see photo below). In contrast to the view that technology facilitates social interaction, some of my informants seemed critical of its role in society as a facilitator of human connection. My informant Eloisia told me that she found it particularly difficult to meet new romantic partners in London because here "everyone is behind their phones". In Greece, Eloisia explained that coffee shops are a place one goes to meet potential partners. She had expected men to come up to her and express romantic interest, however, in London, it seemed that people were 'behind their phones' which prevented this kind of interaction.

People using laptops would often choose the window seats and face away from other people. As this photo shows, the women on their laptops were faced away from the centre of the café. Though this photo is taken at a quiet time, I observed the same patterning of people with laptops when the rest of the café was full (My photo)

Materialities of Displacement

As I explore more below, I argue that some of my informants' view of life in London as 'robotic' should be understood through the lens of the word *anaisthitos.* As Hamilakis explores, *anaisthitos* is a "derogatory term to describe a person who is harsh, who lacks affectivity, and who is seemingly inconsiderate of the feelings of the other, selfish, self-centred" (Hamilakis, 2013: 1-2). As I explore more shortly, some of my informants felt that people in London either were already or would become this way[47]. Hamilakis' translation of the word *anaisthitos* is 'insensitive'; however, he acknowledges that there is greater richness to the word that needs to be explored. Whilst the literal meaning of the word is as "someone who has lost his and her senses…someone who does not engage with others through his and her bodily sensory modalities", he explains that "at its core, this expression reveals both the fundamental importance of the multiple senses for human sociality, as well as the crucial link between bodily senses and affective and emotive interaction, implying that the person who is incapable of sensorially affective communication is, in a sense, handicapped" (Hamilakis, 2013: 1).

From Eloisia's perspective, it seemed that this 'senseless' use of technology in cafes created a feeling of 'unhomeliness'- "a progressive feeling of unhomeliness and panic, perceived as the loss of ability to read, speak and make sense of the world according to a common cultural blueprint" (Vanni, 2013: 153). However, this is not to say that Eloisia was unable to adapt. On the contrary, Eloisia had started to use online dating instead of meeting people naturally at coffee shops or events because of these cultural differences, showing her desire to adapt to the different way of life abroad. Though online dating was 'strange' for her, she knew that it worked for people in London, and was happy to change her behaviour. In the context of our conversation, it seemed that Eloisia was keen to prove that she was a 'good immigrant', adapting to the norms of British society. However, Eloisia did add that she had met her current boyfriend at a *bouzouki* club in London. Whilst Eloisia had adapted to the different way of life in London, it was still the case that she went to Greek spaces in London like coffee shops and clubs. Eloisia both adapted to and subverted certain aesthetics and norms of life in London.

[47] For example, in the final ethnographic chapter I explain my informant Kassandra's disappointment at how uncaring people in London seemed to be; they just walked by people who were in need on the street like the homeless woman that Kassandra herself chose to help.

According to my informants, Greek cafes in London offered the opportunity to interact with others as one would in Greece. Many of the cafes had seating on pedestrian streets, similar to the set-up of cafes in Greece. Not only did this style of seating allow one to smoke with one's coffee- a common cultural practice for Greek people; it also allowed one to interact more easily with other people. Indeed, Eloisia explained that it was not unusual in Greece to talk to strangers at a café. People would not be afraid to start a conversation with someone they didn't know. "This isn't weird in Greece" she explained. Eloisia pointed out to me her dad, who was visiting her in London from Greece and had arrived that afternoon. She laughed as she pointed at him, explaining that he was doing a typically Greek thing of talking to people he had just met. The fact that Eloisia laughed about her dad's behaviour at the coffee shop links to the idea of 'cultural intimacy'. Whilst the sociality of Greek people like Eloisia's father might seem strange or embarrassing to 'outsiders' such as myself, Eloisia explained that it is a familiar practice among Greek people to talk to strangers.

Another culturally intimate joke was with respect to the late opening times of cafes and long time spent socialising with other Greeks. My informants linked these patterns of socialisation to Greek culture. As Litsa explained it: "There is a different mentality in Greece. In Greece things are more relaxed and casual whereas here everything is more arranged and automated. In Greece you'll work hard but after work you'll go for coffee. Here you go to work and then you go home" (Litsa). For some of my informants, the more 'relaxed' pace of life was something negative about Greek society which they contrasted with their own preference for a 'challenging job' or a more ambitious personality. Of course, this view is not unrelated to the perception/labelling of Greeks as 'lazy', and the way that the economic crisis has been blamed on aspects of Greek 'culture'[48]. In my thesis I argue that these critical tropes of Greece and UK society were related to my informants' positionalities on the *disemic* spectrum of Greek identity. Those with a modernist positionality framed café culture as something *misero* whereas those who valued what was quintessentially Greek seemed critical of the British society- calling it 'robotic' and 'automated'.

[48] As I discussed previously, these tropes of Greeks as 'lazy' and having a 'poor work ethic' are related to narratives which blame Greece/Greeks for the economic crisis.

Many of my informants explained their perception that British people lived a 'robotic' existence of going straight home from work rather than socialising with others in coffee shops as they did. Whilst my informant Venedictos understood the tendency to 'go straight home' to be more associated with 'city life in general', other informants associated these differences between people's humanity, claiming that they "had no life". For many informants, sociality was the essence of humanity. To go to work and then straight home suggested one lacked sociality, hence one was like a 'robot' or a 'machine'- not human. As my informant Neo put it: "Life here is so robotic. People just go to work and come back. Greeks are more human. People here will walk past someone down and not care. In Greece they will ask you if you're okay. They'll ask 'how are you? How are your family?' They'll go deep. Here people are more formal. They'll ask you how you are, but they'll not care or mean it" (Neo). As I explain below, some of my informants felt that kindness towards strangers, humanity, sociality, empathy, and care all seemed to be lacking in London. Relationships in London were considered to be 'transactional', and British people were considered to be 'fake' because relationships and communication did not seem genuine.

For example, my informants explained that there seemed to be little long-term stability or depth to the relationships they had made in London. People in London were considered to only speak to each other if they wanted something. For example, Miles- a lawyer for a large firm in London- explained how in his working environment in London relationships with clients seemed rather transactional because people are "dropped" when they are no longer useful. Miles explained that the transactional style of relationships in the UK company contrasted to his experience as a lawyer in Greece where professional relationships are built on an interpersonal rather than transactional basis. As Herzfeld and Sutton explain, establishing long-term reciprocity is central to exchange relations in Greece, and become a means to create friendships (cf. Sutton, 1998; Herzfeld, 1991). Miles' comment that clients are "dropped" when they are no longer useful or relevant to the company suggests that Miles felt these client-lawyer relationships were 'transactional' because they were not necessarily based on a shared desire to establish long-term reciprocity or connection. The lawyer's services receive immediate payment which effectively terminates the connection. As I discuss more in my final ethnographic chapter, long-term reciprocity is connected to Greek ideas about 'humanity', which depends on people playing down the hierarchies associated with giving and receiving (cf.

Kirtsoglou, 2018: 138). By allowing for the delay of a payment, reward, or return of an exchange, one plays down the hierarchy of giving and receiving. In this way, to establish long-term reciprocity is an expression not only of sociality in the building of friendships, but also an expression of humanity.

This lack of long-term reciprocity was also considered to be a feature in social settings. Many of my informants were surprised that their interactions with people in London did not materialise into sustained social relationships. For example, Ozias- an entrepreneur- told me about a time that he had gone for drinks with people in London; they had bought each other drinks and chatted lots but "the next day they didn't speak to me". Confusingly, the reciprocity of buying each other drinks did not materialise into a lasting relationship. Ozias expressed that this contradictory behaviour led him to think that the person was 'fake' during the drinks. Ozias explained, "If I speak to you, it means I'm interested in knowing you and helping you". From Ozias perspective then, if that person did not speak to him the next day, then surely the person must not have been interested in knowing him or helping him in the first place. Whilst Ozias felt that it was easier to know people's intentions in interactions with other Greeks, he felt he did not know where he stood with British people. "They might fake interest in you", he explained. The changeability was difficult to understand. In both cases, my informants' experiences had shown that their familiar ways of making relationships with others did not fit their new cultural, professional, or social contexts in London. Again, it seemed that some of my informants felt a sense of 'unhomeliness'- "a progressive feeling of unhomeliness and panic, perceived as the loss of ability to read, speak and make sense of the world according to a common cultural blueprint" (Vanni, 2013: 153).

Indeed, I would argue that this idea of 'unhomeliness' is a more effective analytical concept than that of 'emptiness'. For example, in her ethnography of rural Latvia, Dzenovska describes how her informants' lives became 'emptier' as a result of a 'dispersal' of social relations and a loss of "thick networks of friends and neighbours" (cf. Dzenovska, 2019: 4). In Dzenovska's context, the emptiness of life in Latvia was characterised by empty buildings, and the loss of the local population as they migrated away from rural villages. In my research context, the 'emptiness' of life in London was almost the opposite. In my ethnography, it seemed to be the very fact that London was teeming with people which created the affective experience of *xenitia* for my informants.

As I have said, whilst traditional studies present *xenitia* as a state of exile from one's social networks, I suggest that contemporary experiences of *xenitia* cannot be conceptualised through this spatial lens of 'emptiness'. In my research context, it was that there were far too many people- and far too few who truly cared- which created the sense that one was *xenos.* The crowded streets and spaces in London were not comforting but alienating. They were spaces populated by strangers who did not seem to care about you. As I explain shortly, some of my informants found the neoliberal patterns of life in London alienating and unsettling.

Therefore, I would argue that 'emptiness' is not as useful a term as 'unhomeliness' or uncanniness in relation to my informants' experiences of life in London. Following my commitment to the idea of 'ambiguous materialities', I consider 'emptiness' to have a conceptual weakness when applied to my research context, as it seems that 'emptiness' implies an opposition between the material/immaterial and presence/absence. As I have said, my aim is to demonstrate that *xenitia* cannot just be located spatially, or with reference to things which are literally or physically lacking. Rather, I conceptualise *xenitia* as a wider experience of alienation and estrangement that is both material and immaterial. It was not as if things were literally missing from London; rather, it was the sense that things were not as they should be. As I explore below, for some of my informants, the loneliness of life in London, and consequent resonance of *xenitia*, was ironically the result of too many people, too many strangers, and too few who truly cared. Feeling *xeni* was not just about feeling foreign in London. It was about feeling estranged and alienated from a sense of care and support- the characteristics of 'home' and neighbourhood that my informants had experienced in Greece.

For example, my informant Harmony works in a gallery in London and is from a rural area in Greece where ideals of neighbourhood are still strong. Harmony found aspects of life in London alienating, particularly the differences in the pace of life and patterns of socialising compared to her hometown in Greece. Harmony explained her view that "in London you have to schedule and 'programmatise' everything. If you want to meet a friend in Greece you can message someone on the same day, and they will come. In London you can't just ring and ask to meet for a beer that evening, or on the same day. You know people are busy, so you don't even bother asking anymore. In London you wouldn't even think to do it because people have busy schedules. People are so focused

on their own lives; they're in their own little zones" she explained. In my view, Harmony's comments illustrate how the "sensuousness" of the city's rhythms and norms seep into bodies and alter subjectivity (cf. Low, 2015: 300), altering sociality as a result. It was not that Greek and British people were fundamentally different. According to Harmony, even Greek people in London would stop thinking so much about others after they had lived abroad- they would become more independent and self-centred. In London it seemed that one would become less available to support and care for one's friends. Therefore, Harmony's experience of displacement and alienation were more to do with the context of transitions to a more neoliberal pattern of work and social life- what she referred to as 'city life'[49]. In London, time was no longer something which one 'passed' with friends; time was something which one 'used' and 'budgeted'[50].

In the next chapter, I discuss how new boundaries seem to have been established in ways which have challenged traditional ideas about appropriate behaviour. It seems that there is increasingly a feeling that one must respect people's private lives and leisure time such that relations become more officialised. In the next chapter, through a vignette of Karan and his friend Peter, I consider the divides between Greek people in London based on the extent to which they had adopted and internalised neoliberal ideas of the self and patterns of life. As I explain, Karan fell out with his childhood friend Peter because, from Karan's perspective, Peter had not properly 'adapted' to the neoliberal rhythms of life in London. Karan was angry that Peter felt in *xenitia* abroad, and when Peter decided to move back to Greece, Karan felt he could 'no longer relate'. Through this example of Karan and Peter's (broken) friendship, I continue to explore the *disemic* rifts between Greek people in terms of their priorities in life, and their ideas about the extent to which one should 'adapt' to neoliberal and capitalist norms and rhythms of modern city life. As I

[49] It should be noted that "after 1961 and for about a decade, massive migration took place both internally, from villages to cities, and externally toward Western Europe…during the 1960s the country was transformed economically and socially and Greece was effectively 'modernised'" (Kalyvas, 2015: 106).

[50] According to Mead's summary of Greek culture in 1955, "it is distasteful to Greeks to organise their activities according to external limits" of time (cf. Mead, 1955: 71). She argued that clocks are for reference rather than shaping household life and that in their social life, Greeks "ignore time" and "refuse the need to hurry", though "in the United States, Greek businessmen had to adapt their business life to 'clock time'" (ibid). Mead explains how in the city, Greeks "find the need of hurry entering their lives" (ibid). However, the author explains that "[e]ven in the cities, people are called 'Englishmen' when they turn up on the dot at meetings or appointments" (ibid). The label 'Englishman' or 'English one' was sometimes used by my informants in reference to other Greeks in London in instances when they seemed to act in ways which were not considered 'quintessentially' Greek. In the next chapter I consider the divides between people based on the extent to which they had adopted and internalised neoliberal ideas of the self and patterns of life.

have said, it seems that Greeks with a modernist positionality are now post-ambivalent in relation to *disemia* and some no longer consider Greece to be their homeland.

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Miseria

In this chapter I unpack the affective dimensions of my informants' chimerical view of Greece through the lens of *miseria* (or misery) that my informants experienced in Greece when their hope in modernist progress was lost. I adopt the analytical framework of Navaro-Yashin to explore the discursive and material dimensions of the *miseria* that these informants experienced in Greece. As I explore here, these informants explained how this *miseria* was discharged by the 'landscape of ruination' in Greece, such as abandoned shops and businesses, as well as something which emerged discursively from the collective performance[51] of suffering. In addition, some of my informants were annoyed that some Greek people (in their view) had 'brought *miseria* with them' to London by 'whining' and 'complaining' about the negative aspects of life abroad. These informants felt that in London there should be a collective performance of success. They disliked how some Greeks formed 'Greek bubbles' in London and replicated the 'café culture' of Greece, because to these informants these things were *misera-* aspects about Greece which they felt was holding it back from achieving their modernist vision of success. Indeed, I relate this discussion to Knight's work on solidarity and austerity and culturalist tropes of Greeks as 'lazy' and 'materialistic'. In their narratives about *miseria,* it seemed that some of my informants in London seemed to have internalised these negative tropes of Greece, which I argue reflects a crypto-colonial dynamic to the *disemic* tensions of Greek identity.

Understanding *miseria*

Put very simply, *miseria* can be translated into English as misery and being 'miserly'. In in Greece, *miseria* has many meanings and uses, only some of which I will mention here. Firstly, something that is *misero* can mean something that is insufficient, not enough, underwhelming, or not living up to an occasion or leaving an impression. Someone's clothing might be referred to as *misero* if it is not smart or dressy enough for an important event for example. Secondly, *miseria* can be used to describe a kind of attitude that might in English be referred to as pettiness, being pedantic, focused on the little things or tiny details, being a nit-picker, to not see the bigger picture, or someone who lacks

[51] I use the term 'performance' in the anthropological sense of being 'performative' (cf Kirtsoglou, 2004)

perspective. *Miseria* is linked to the idea of stinginess or a lack of generosity, both in a material way by not giving or sharing what one has, but also in the way that someone treats others in their words and actions, perhaps in English what we would call unforgiving or miserly. Therefore, someone who is overly critical- of someone or something- is said to be *miseros.* Thirdly, *miseria* is strongly associated with *grenia*- meaning whining or complaining. That's to say, someone who is *miseros* is said to focus only on the negative aspects of a situation, about which they complain. Someone who is *miseros* will not look forward to things, they will lack optimism, and be overly pessimistic, critical and negative. As I discuss later, several of my informants felt that many Greeks had brought *miseria* to London, and their *grenia* was something which they wished to avoid and distance themselves from because it dragged them down.

Fourthly, *miseria* is associated with poverty, and *miseria* can be used interchangeably with the word for poverty (*ftócheia*, *φτώχεια*)- someone who 'counts the beans'. Indeed, my informants referred to Greek migrants of the past as *miseroi* because they had moved abroad to escape conditions of poverty in Greece. In the past, Greeks emigrated to Western Europe to escape the "ravages inflicted by war and civil war on the economy" (cf. Clogg, 2016: 146) which had created a low standard of living. My informants therefore considered these Greeks to be *miseroi* because they had been forced to move abroad and consequently had little control over their life or fate, another meaning of *miseria*. As my informant Nectarios explained: "*Miseria* is very characteristic of the Greek society. The idea that we have no control over our lives. That fate is written by God or foreign powers. That you can have little or no effect on what is going to happen. This plays a role on how they integrate into society. Greeks go abroad and have the idea that life is unfair. And they'll blame others for their losses and failures. There is a lack of responsibility for their fate." (Nectarios, 41, lawyer).

As I discussed previously, most of my informants emphasised in their narratives that their migration was their choice. They wanted to show that they had taken responsibility for their fate; that they were not *miseroi.* As I have said, many of my informants distanced themselves from the resonance of *xenitia* which they described as an 'old fashioned word' which did not resonate with their experiences because 'times had changed'. As my informant Lois, a 29-year-old psychology professional told me: "*xenitia* is mostly used when people feel they were uprooted, and they went abroad against their will; but they

had to do it to survive and send money to their families; and it feels like they didn't have any other options" (Lois, 29, psychologist). As I explained previously, in the contemporary context, my informants framed their migration as a choice rather than a necessity to escape a *misero* condition of poverty. For example, Neander (a sports professional in his early thirties) claimed: "we are not these misers in the UK" (translating as *miseroi).* Neander described his migration as something to do with what he wanted out of life, rather than a necessary choice to escape poverty.

Linked to these ideas of poverty, someone who is satisfied with little can also be referred to as *miseros.* What we might say is that *miseria* is the opposite of being 'larger than life'. *Miseria* captures that which is mundane, insignificant, and negative. Indeed, someone who is stuck in a monotonous routine may also be considered *miseros,* and the routine itself something which is *misero. Miseria* is also connected to the sense of being stuck and dragged down by something. In this chapter I explain how my informant Stamos, an IT professional evoked the sense that his life in Greece had been *miseri* in these ways. In addition, I explain some informants' view that there was a 'collective performance of suffering' in Greece which they felt 'dragged them down'. Importantly, this sense of being stuck and dragged down does not apply only at a personal level; the prospects of a country can also be called *miseres*.

Generally speaking, *miseria* captures ideas of insignificance and limitations, as if there is a limit on what one can achieve or become. To be *miseros* means one cannot have big visions or big dreams. At a personal level, a job may be *miseri* if it cannot be a career. Similarly, several of my informants described Greece as *miseri* because of the country's comparative geopolitical weakness. They felt that the influence of other powers, including the EU, had made Greece *miseri* in this way. *Miseria* captures ideas of entrapment and refers to theme of repetition- of the same histories, the same stories, the same problems, with no way out- a system which locks one in[52] (cf. Knight, 2015). As I discussed previously, these were aspects of my informants' view of Greece's modernist trajectory as a chimera. Several of my informants felt the real *xenitia* was in Greece because Greece had not become the modern and successful country that they had hoped

[52] As I discussed in my first ethnographic chapter, I would argue that it was for this reason that Pancras' laugh about 'Brain Gain' initiatives seem illustrative of this aspect of *miseria*. In Pancras' view it seemed that there was no tangible way for problems to be improved.

it would be. In this chapter I therefore explore how *miseria* was a characteristic of this chimerical view of Greece. *Miseria* emerged when hope was lost.

In order to understand the concept of *miseria* and give it analytical power I follow the approach which Navaro-Yashin takes in her analysis of *marazi* (Navaro-Yashin, 2009). In her article 'Affective spaces, melancholic objects: ruination and the production of anthropological knowledge', Navaro-Yashin analyses *marazi* from an affective and material perspective. She explores the emotive energies discharged by objects and the environment and proposes a theory of affect based on ethnographic reflection on 'spatial and material melancholia'. Melancholia is the English translation that Navaro-Yashin offers for the word *marazi* or *maraz,* which in the Turkish-Cypriot dialect and usage "refers to a state of mental depression, deep and unrecoverable sadness, and dis-ease" (Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 4). *Marazi* is also a word which people use in Greece, and *marazi* can be considered another aspect of *xenitia* along with *miseria.* However, my intention is not to compare *miseria* and *marazi* so much as explore Navaro-Yashin's analytical approach, which I have adapted to my own exploration of *miseria* in this chapter.

In her paper, Navaro-Yashin is interested in how *marazi* is discharged by the environment in which her informants live. Specifically, her focus is on "how it feels to live in an appropriated house, how the objects and spaces left behind by Greek Cypriots exude various affects and engender emotion in the Turkish Cypriots who appropriate these dwellings and objects" (Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 4). Navaro-Yashin's ethnography focuses on Turkish Cypriots who "having been dispossessed of their own belongings and finding themselves in a new spatial zone and political contingency, assumed, out of will, circumstance, or coercion, the properties and belongings of another community officially construed as 'the enemy'" (ibid: 3). In this respect, Navaro-Yashin explores political systems, conflict, crisis and ruination, but through a different methodological approach which changes the way that anthropologists have thought about affect. Navaro-Yashin explains how her focus on the role of the environment in producing emotive energies and affects leads her to "reflect critically on the "object-centred philosophy of Actor Network Theory and on the affective turn in the human sciences after the work of Gilles Deleuze" (ibid). In thinking about whether affect emerges from the environment or the self, Navaro-Yashin puts forward an interesting argument about the materiality of abjection which I find relevant to my ethnography.

In this chapter, I take Navaro-Yashin's approach to study "the abject quality of ruination as distinct from its aesthetics". To explain what she means by this, Navaro-Yashin gives the example of how "[a] clean item of clothing left in a Greek-Cypriot wardrobe (a 'ruin' of war) feels 'dirty' (what I study as 'abject') to the Turkish-Cypriot who is to wear it because of the knowledge that it has been misappropriated (and is classified as 'loot')". Navaro-Yashin therefore explains her informants' comments that such linen is 'dirty' is, in Navaro-Yashin's view, "a self-reflexive and conscientious moral commentary on the status of the person who uses things which belong to others" (Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 5). Therefore, methodologically, Navaro-Yashin takes the approach to explore "two things at once: one, the subjectivity of Turkish-Cypriots inhabiting expropriated dwellings, and the emotions engendered amongst the Turkish-Cypriots in living in such properties; and, two, the affect generated by the assumed objects, appropriated dwellings, and the broader post-war environment itself" (ibid: 4).

Therefore, Navaro-Yashin argues that "[o]bjects and dwellings left behind by the Greek-Cypriots have been assigned and ascribed, in my interpretation, an abject quality by the Turkish-Cypriots" (Navaro-Yashin, 2009: 5). Navaro-Yashin theorises this abjection not as "an exteriority against which subjectivity and sociality are to be defined (challenging the order from without), but fundamentally an interiority: what is internally generative of a political system or what is intrinsic to the system in and of itself. So, in place of Kristeva's proposition 'the abject is that which is not me', reflecting on my Turkish-Cypriot informants' positionality, I would change this as follows: 'The abject is so much inside me now that I don't know who I would be without it'" (ibid: 6). With this understanding of abjection and how it is produced, Navaro-Yashin explains how her informants say that "the Cyprus problem was the condition which produced '*maraz'* in them, historically locating or situating their state of inner lack of calm and happiness. As context for their feelings of '*maraz'*, they referred specifically to their state of confinement in Northern Cyprus with checkpoints closed and access to the south denied, the economic blockade and political stalemate, as well as the lack of resolution of the Cyprus problem (cf. Navaro-Yashin, 2003). This was a historically specific and subjective interpretation of an inner state of being and feeling" (ibid: 4). In this chapter then, I aim to follow Navaro-Yashin's approach to my own analysis of *miseria,* to consider what it was which produced *miseria* in my informants. As I have said, I find that it was my informants' view of Greece

as a chimera, due to their loss of hope that Greece would become modern, which produced *miseria* in them.

Like Navaro-Yashin does for *marazi*, I am also interested in understanding *miseria* "not only as an expression of the inner worlds of my informants, but also as the mark of the energy (the affect as I will call it) discharged upon them" by materialities and the environment (Navaro-Yashin, 2003: 4). In Navaro-Yashin's work, it is the dwellings which her informants live in which she focuses on. For example, she mentions one Turkish-Cypriot lady who had 'never warmed' to the house which she had been allocated to live in thirty years ago. Navaro-Yashin explains how this family have never felt that the house was theirs. "'This space feels melancholic', my informants often said, referring to the rusty and dusty surfaces of buildings left unkempt and un-maintained in Northern Cyprus since 1974. They were naming the feeling which their environment inflicted upon them" (ibid: 4). My contribution is to explore the micro-material dimensions of my informants' environments to expand Navaro-Yashin's approach of exploring "the affects generated by space and the non-human environment", "the role of the outer environment in engendering subjective feeling" and the ways in which subjectivity and affect are intertwined (ibid). My contribution in this chapter is therefore also to discuss the material aspects of *miseria* that my informants had encountered in Greece. By adopting Navaro-Yashin's analytical approach, I demonstrate how *miseria* was something affective and embodied as well as something which was invested in the landscape and emitted as an experience of ruination.

Materialities of *miseria*

In this section I explore the affective, sensory, embodied and material dimensions of crisis and ruination which were related to some of my informants' view of Greece as a chimera. Taking Navaro-Yashin's affective and material approach, I explore where *miseria* came from and what it was in Greece which these informants felt was *miseroi*. As I show through the following discussion of my ethnography, *miseria* was invested in people, attitudes, and materialities and had both a practical and discursive component- both a material and intersubjective dimension. Below, I illustrate this discursive component of *miseria* through the lens of my informant Hilary, a thirty-two-year-old civil servant for the British government. Hilary felt that the crisis had changed the 'vibe' of Greek society

due to a pervasive atmosphere of *miseria* that she felt had 'grown deep roots' in the society. Hilary explained that 'everyone was moaning all the time' and that everywhere she went she could hear people talking about the crisis, about 'how bad things were'. "It was a very depressing atmosphere that was growing roots deep in the society". Hilary explained how hearing other people's expressions of upset about their situation made her feel upset as well. Hilary felt that Greece was "not a healthy environment" for her to live in. "I was trying to fight my way out" she told me.

Hilary told me that even if she had not wanted to always study abroad for a PhD, she would have "found a way out" of what she felt was a miserable situation in Greece. It was not only Hilary's financial struggles or the precarity that she faced in Greece which contributed to her decision to move abroad. In addition to the financial difficulties caused by her employer's refusal to pay her because of the economic crisis, Hilary felt that the environment in Greece was not one in which she wanted to "grow her mind and develop". What annoyed Hilary the most, she told me, was "the changing vibes of the society"- the atmosphere of *miseria*- misery, suffering, negativity and pessimism- which became prevalent in Greece after the economic crisis. This society-wide feeling of entrapment, *miseria,* was an important reason why people like Hilary wanted to leave Greece. In Hilary's view, the atmosphere of *miseria* was caused by the fact that one could always hear people talking negatively about the crisis; that "no-one enjoyed life anymore" and "everyone was very miserable".

As I mentioned previously, *miseria* is also closely related to the word *grenia*- roughly meaning 'complaining' or 'whining'. As another informant, Clematis- a 29-year-old architect- explained, "Everywhere you walk, everywhere you sit, you always hear about the crisis, about the pensions being reduced, about people starving, being dead, all the misery, all the complaints. That does affect you even if you don't have a problem" (Clematis, aged 29, architect). Whilst Clematis had well-paid employment in Greece, she felt alienated from those around her who were complaining about the negative impacts of crisis on their lives. Clematis felt more *xeni* in Greece because she was (comparatively speaking) doing well whilst other people were suffering. All these complaints created a pervasive atmosphere of pessimism and *miseria* which created long lasting negative affects inside my informants. People in Greece seemed to have been 'infused' by the

atmosphere of *miseria-* or misery- which fed back to create more of a sense of crisis. As Hilary put it, *miseria* was 'growing roots' deep in the society.

Based on my ethnography, I do not consider 'the crisis' in Greece to be a single 'critical event'. Rather, crisis seemed to be produced through 'everyday' or ordinary things with embodied effects. My approach to understanding crisis here is inspired by the volume *Textures of the Ordinary* which suggests that we should not only focus on "catastrophic events" but also the "routine and repetitive" violence within everyday life (Das, 2020). In this respect, whilst we might locate 'the crisis' in time with a particular start date, it seems that the pervasive affects of crisis- i.e. *miseria-* were located in the materialities and discourses of everyday life. From the perspective of Hilary, it was the collective performance of suffering and *miseria* that had pervaded Greek society which had created long lasting embodied effects. Hilary described how the depressing atmosphere of *miseria* made her feel 'worn out' and 'upset' and based on her body language in our conversations, it seemed that these affects of ruination and *miseria* had 'followed her' abroad. Hilary's narrative of her migration story was emotional and complex. At many times during our conversations, Hilary became teary, and I felt moved by her experiences. The negative aspects of life in Greece seemed to haunt Hilary's narrative as she conveyed her experiences of life in Greece and her decision to move abroad.

Hilary explained that she would never be able to forget the year 2012, which she described as "very traumatic" for her. After this "crazy" experience of trying to make a living in Greece, Hilary described the "huge respect" she felt for what she has accomplished in London, and "what this country has offered to me", as she put it. Reflecting on her current role in the civil service, Hilary told me that she had "never expected to be in a position in government". In Greece, Hilary had become so stressed that she her "body was trying to find a way out". Her periods stopped for a few months because she was "overwhelmed" with the stress of applying for a PhD, not getting paid by her employer, and trying to pay her bills and rent in Greece with no income. "I took it inside me", she told me. The negative aspects of life in Greece clearly had significant consequences for Hilary's health, and she clearly experienced both physical and emotional entanglements with *xenitia.* Hilary's sense of ruination, repetition and entrapment was clearly an embodied experience which made her feel exhausted and worn out. In this respect my ethnography supports Knight's view that "[m]emories of

crisis are embodied and experienced to the core; they are not merely a reaction to or an analysis of a contemporary critical event" (Knight, 2015: 6).

Indeed, Hilary's experience seems similar to that of Knight's informant Voula for whom "[t]he haunting presence of the famine years is "engrained on the body" and can "never be shed…I feel it on my skin" (Knight, 2015: 69). Knight describes how the repetitive cycle of 'crisis, emergence, crisis, emergence' has made people feel dizzy and nauseous. Indeed, his informant Vaso described the "physical feeling of repetition": "It makes you dizzy, gives you palpitations" (cf. Bryant and Knight, 2019: 128). Like Knight's informant Voula, Hilary also evoked the sense of repetition that she felt every time she visited Greece. She told me how she encountered the same situation that had made her want to leave: "It was very miserable, stores were shut, there was a high rate of unemployment. It was very depressing even going back to see my parents; I didn't enjoy it. When I was going back in the airplane I was thinking 'Okay, I'm going to a safe space now'" (Hilary).

Taking Navaro-Yashin's approach to move beyond aesthetics to think about how the abject quality is part of wider positionalities and political contexts, I would argue that my informants found in their environment proof of their perception that Greece had become a chimera. There was a material element to their ruined image and dream of modernist Greece and their hope that Greece would become like other European countries. Based on my ethnography, I would suggest that there was a material aspect to *miseria* in Greece which was 'discharged' by the environment. My informants described how abandoned and empty stores and businesses- sometimes rows of them- which owners could no longer afford to maintain, the shut stores, unwashed cars and reduced traffic all seemed to produce or 'discharge' *miseria* onto them. It seemed that there was a material manifestation or reflection of their sense that things had not materialised as they ought to have done. There was a material dimension to their chimerical view of Greece as having failed to modernise and be successfully industrial.

For example, Rihardos, an IT professional in his early thirties, also explained that Greece "feels different. It's not only that my friends are not there. The stores, everything, looks a bit neglected. It looks abandoned, like everyone stopped caring. And then you think 'do I really want to come back?' It kind of ruins the image that you have" (Rihardos, IT

professional, 32). In this way, crisis had an image of ruination[53] but also a material aspect, as the materialities of my informants' environment took on an 'abject quality' (cf. Navaro-Yashin, 2009). For Rihardos, it seemed that there was a material dimension to the *chimeric* sense that Greece had not become what it should have- a prosperous country with thriving businesses that would enable him to create a life worth living. There seemed to be a parallel, or reflection, or 'abject' quality to the neglected looking businesses (the material things) and his 'ruined' image or dream of modernist Greece. As Rihardos explained in his narrative, the reality he encountered in Greece contrasted with the positive image of Greece that he once had. Indeed, this 'ruination' of potentiality for a life worth living in Greece meant that Rihardos did not want to return. His image of Greece had been 'ruined'. And this ruination had an affective dimension as things "felt different" from before.

In fact, it was not only the empty stores and abandoned businesses which produced these feelings in my informants. My informants also related the atmosphere of *miseria* to the continuation of 'café culture' in Greece, and the numbers of people who, despite the crisis and their financial difficulties continued to spend money on cold coffees and enjoy the sun. Some of my informants perceived Greece's café culture to be *miseri* because it was related to the fact that many young Greeks who were unemployed had little else to do other than enjoy the sun, the nice climate, and the affordable coffee. Some of my informants felt this was another discursive and material aspect to the landscape of ruination after the crisis, and a sign that Greece had become a chimerical space. In fact, some my informants became similarly frustrated with those Greeks in London who had brought this café culture into their lives abroad. The coffee shop culture in London was also something which the informants that I describe in this chapter found frustrating, because to them it was something *misero*, and something about Greece which they had wanted to escape from through their migration. It seemed that aspects of what these 'Greek Greeks' in London felt to be 'like home' was what my informants with a modernist positionality felt was *misera.* It seemed that to repeat aspects of life in Greece abroad was something *misero,* because it was a sign that one had not widened one's horizons nor taken advantage of the opportunities that living in London had to offer.

[53] The photographer Yannis Behrakis has demonstrated this deindustrialisation visually. His photographs in his article "ghost factories of Greece" demonstrates these haunting materialities (Behrakis, 2015).

In this respect, my ethnography demonstrates the alternative perspective/angle compared to Knight's informants who felt that continuing to frequent bars and cafes was an act of "resistance to the foreign occupiers (Troika) and apathetic politicians" (Knight, 2015: 127-8). Knight's informant Apostolis "enjoyed the fact that these activities would 'piss off' the Germans. As Apostolis expressed it: 'No matter how much we are punished, demoralised and beaten into the dirt, we will rise above adversity and enjoy life. We are triumphant in our solidarity and stubbornness in the face of external attempts- by Troika, puppet politicians, the capitalists- to obliterate the very fabric of life. 'You are someone' and you must demonstrate this in public' (Apostolis, 36, Trikala)" (Knight, 2015: 128). Another of Knight's informants- Haris, a man from Trikala in his forties- explained to Knight his efforts to continue to live his life as normally as possible. Haris was adamant that Greek people should not just "stay at home and abandon our culture". For Haris, drinking coffee with friends allowed him to share his pain and escape the stress of life. "Every week there is a new government austerity policy, a different foreign economic bureaucrat visiting Athens to tell us how to live our lives. But I cannot die of stress…I cannot lose all self-worth or I will end up committing suicide…by gathering outside we tell Troika and other politicians that they will not break us. It also shows them that we, the Greeks, are together in our defiance of their laws" (Knight, 2015: 129).

As I have said, my ethnography demonstrates that some Greeks living in London have different perceptions and experiences of where *xenitia* and *miseria* are located. Many of my informants felt that 'the real *xenitia'* was in Greece. Indeed, these people were frustrated that some Greeks in London would moan about the negative aspects of life in London and reminisce about things they missed from Greece. Some of my informants argued that if someone wanted to whine, then they should return. 'Why don't you go back then?' was a common (accusatory) question asked of Greek people who were considered to be performing *xenitia*, *miseria* and *grenia* abroad. 'Whining' and 'complaining' were said to be part of a 'bad mentality' (*kaki/lathos nootropia)* which my informants felt was caused by someone failing to take responsibility for their situation. Based on my ethnography, it seems that it was important for my informants to performatively establish and reinforce these performative borders between Greece and the UK. Through accusations and criticisms of certain Greeks abroad who complained, the version of the UK as a place of success and happiness seemed to be reinforced.

For example, Rihardos (IT professional, aged 32), told me that *xenitia* resonates with a lot of Greeks in London, but usually he does not get on well with these people and tries to avoid them. Rihardos disliked how these Greeks he had met would complain constantly about the weather, or British people's habits- such as the drinking culture. As he told me: "it's like everything is hell for them and someone forced them to be here". Rihardos felt that "no matter the reason you're here", one should try to see something positive. My informant Lotus, a thirty-four-year-old languages tutor who moved to London to join her fiancée in one of London's banking districts, agreed. She explained that many people are not happy with their lives in London and "haven't accepted that it's their choice; they think they were forced to come here". Whilst Lotus acknowledged that she could not know everyone's reasons for moving to London, she argued that "you have to support your choices if you want to be happy". Speaking about such Greeks she had met in London, Lotus told me: "You cannot complain all the time- for the weather, for the underground, for the salaries, for whatever, for the food, for the people, for the Oyster card, for the cost of living. You can't complain about everything. If you have a negative approach to your life, you won't be happy anywhere. No matter where you are, you will complain". Lotus located others' *miseria* in their mentality; "it's their way of thinking" she told me.

Based on my ethnography, it seemed that there was a desire among many of my informants to create a 'collective performance of success'. As I have said previously, some of my informants viewed the UK as a beacon of modernist and progressive society and a place where one was "guaranteed to succeed". In contrast, Greece was often portrayed negatively, as a bleak chimera where young people lacked motivation and hope for the future- i.e. where there was an atmosphere of *miseria.* Whilst in Greece it may have been acceptable to create an atmosphere of *miseria,* in London it seemed that the collective performance of suffering was no longer considered by these informants to be appropriate or desirable. Given their view of the UK as an aspirational destination, my informants with a modernist positionality framed the UK as a place of success where they felt it was only acceptable to be positive and happy. For this reason, some of my informants wanted to distance themselves from other Greeks in London who seemed to be performing *miseria* abroad.

People like Rihardos, Lotus, Hilary and also my informant Clematis found it annoying that some Greeks would moan about life in London and seek comfort in the Greek coffee shops

in London. Clematis did not like how other Greeks looked nostalgically back at certain aspects of life in Greece- the weather, the food, the drinking of cold coffees by the sea. To her, these things were part of the ruinated landscape of Greece after the crisis and ignored the reality of high unemployment and financial difficulties. Though Clematis enjoyed these positive aspects of life in Greece and missed them too, she felt that it was not worth having these things because in Greece she felt stuck, with little opportunity for progression in her career as an architect. In London she had been able to design an entire airport and felt that she had more opportunities for the future. Referring to her conversations with *miseroi* Greeks in London, Clematis exclaimed emphatically: "I don't want to hear how much you miss the sun; I miss the sun too- but I miss having a job more!" (Clematis, architect, 27). Clematis felt that the collective performance of *miseria* was stopping Greece from improving and getting out of the situation of economic crisis.

Similarly, my informant Romanos (a twenty-six-year-old IT professional) explained his view that people in Greece had become *miseroi* after the crisis because they could not see how to 'improve their lives for the better'. As I said at the beginning of this chapter, *miseria* is also related to the idea of being satisfied with little, of being the opposite of 'larger than life' and associated with a reluctance to change a situation. Romanos framed his migration as an act of resistance to *miseria.* He intended to challenge what he referred to as the 'stale' environment of life in Greece. It seemed that he wanted to use his own experience of moving abroad as an example to inspire others to inject potentiality into their lives and escape *miseria.* He wanted his migration to be a 'message' which would inspire others to be motivated to go abroad and feel that this was actually a possibility for them- not just a product of their imagination. Romanos wanted to demonstrate to others that "if you try hard" you can "make your own luck". He explained how he wanted to help people in Greece to "focus on how to change their lives for the better" and "make them more active".

Romanos evoked the sense that people in Greece were *miseroi* because they were passively waiting for something to change. Romanos did not think this was the right thing to do; he felt that people need to be more dynamic and change their way of thinking to change their reality. "Be it in Greece or abroad I'm hopeful that things will change in their minds first of all and then in a culture as well" Romanos concluded. Romanos wanted to 'inject potentiality' into his friends' futures, by setting the example to demonstrate to his

friends in Greece that they could change their lives for the better. In fact, Romanos did not only want to change the mentalities of his friends, but change "the culture in Greece" as well. Later in this chapter I explore the crypto-colonial dimensions to my informants' narratives about Greek 'culture' as something *misero.*

After the crisis, Romanos felt that people in Greece had become more pessimistic and passive, feeling that they had to 'get through the situation' of crisis in Greece and "wait for something to change". Romanos' narrative evoked Knight's comments that some people in Greece seem "happy to remain with the current status quo" due to their 'exhaustion' and "inability to project imaginations for potential futures" (Knight, 2016: 40). Knight argues that for his informants this "has bred a kind of Stockholm syndrome, an uncomfortable comfort with the present and a fear of what lies over the threshold" (cf. Knight, 2016: 40). Knight argues that people in Greece "have become overfamiliar with the idea of emergence and no longer anticipate it" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 128).

Romanos felt that Greeks who had stayed in Greece were *miseroi* because they were 'doing nothing to prepare for the fulfilment of hope' (cf. Miyazaki, 2006: 148). It seemed that that the potentiality of their lives remained 'dormant' and 'unrealised' (ibid: 108). My thesis demonstrates that *miseria* is relevant to wider anthropological studies of crisis, as it is an example of when 'resignation' becomes a "dominant mode of political action" and where "potential is no longer a topic on which to speculate" (cf. Bryant and Knight, 2019: 95). Romanos explained his view that people in Greece were *miseroi* because of their view that their fate was determined by external forces. In contrast to them, Romanos asserted that his migration demonstrated how hard work ('trying hard') allowed him to "make his own luck". As I explore in the next section, it seemed that some of my informants had internalised neoliberal ideas of progress, success and the self which affected their perceptions of what was considered to be *misero* and where *xenitia* was located.

A 'bad mentality'

In this section I explore the tensions which arose between my informant Karan, an engineer, and his childhood friend of twenty years, called Peter. Through the lens of his falling out with Peter, I argue that Karan had internalised a neoliberal idea of 'work on the self' into his subjectivity, and his narrative reflected the neoliberal ideals of managing

one's own capital and resources. Karan lives in a wealthy area in London and owns a café with his partner. Karan's friend Peter had also moved to London, but unlike Karan, Peter had struggled to find a well-paid job in London. Karan told me that Peter had expected to find a job with a starting salary of above £30,000 after graduating from his postgraduate degree. Karan had explained to Peter that he would need to be patient and gain some work experience (perhaps working for free) before expecting to integrate into the UK job market. Despite Peter's claim that he "deserved" a highly paid role straight away, Peter ended up deciding to return to Greece "for a lot less money to live with his mum and dad". Karan explained his view that Peter's decision was "unacceptable" and that he "could not relate". Karan lost respect for Peter and felt that they were two "completely different characters". Karan described Peter's choice as *miseri.* Karan seemed to contrast his own 'go-getter' mentality with Peter's lack of tenacity or resilience, such as his inability to endure the struggles of the job application process. Karan felt that Peter was *miseros* because had not presented himself as 'larger than life' and above his circumstances, nor had he demonstrated an appropriately neoliberal form of selfhood I would add.

What Karan and Peter's friendship breakdown shows, I argue, is the different opinions Greek people have about these neoliberal transformations in society and their ideas about the extent to which they should adopt this kind of subjectivity. Based on my ethnography, it seems that on the one hand, some Greek people view neoliberalism as a corrupting force, which is threatening to the quintessentially Greek values of family and community. On the other hand, neoliberal subjectivities are considered an essential part of modernisation and people's aspirations for Greece to become a 'proper Western country'. Some people see the value of individualism and being a good neoliberal citizen as something which Greeks 'should strive for' in order to modernise and become more like European countries. Of course, it is important to note the crypto-colonial dynamic here. The fact that Greek culture has been considered to be incompatible with modernisation projects is, in the opinion of scholars like Kirtsoglou, yet another example of an orientalising discourse about Greece. Kirtsoglou argues that:

> "Greek cultural difference…has been persistently presented as an irreconcilable eccentricity that underpins the Greek inability to follow 'European' political projects" and notes how this discourse is even observable among Greeks themselves. For example, she notes how "Even Douzinas, a professor of Law at Bribeck and later an MP of the SYRIZA government, who –alongside all other SYRIZA party members and supporters– defied the

> theory of 'Greek exceptionalism' as a cause of the Greek crisis, wrote in 2013: 'Modernization was a mechanistic importation of Western models without consideration of anthropological [sic] differences. *The habits, conventions and values that support the Greek economy differ from those of the West.* Identities and social bonds are based on family, friends and the community… the attempt to introduce the *European model of socialized individualism* failed…*The Greek ethos, with its mild nationalism, secular religiosity and familial base*, remains one of the strongest in Europe. In its corrupted version it promotes neoliberalism; it is also the most powerful force for resisting it. It became the first target of austerity measures" (Kirtsoglou, 2020).

In my view, people like Karan seem to have internalized these crypto-colonial expectations to become more like other European cultures such that they have become post-ambivalent in relation to *disemia* and no longer consider Greece to be their homeland. Karan described Peter's choice to move back to Greece to live with his parents again as *miseri.* Not only did Karan feel that Peter was *miseros* for not taking proper responsibility for his situation in London- i.e. putting in the effort to get a good job- but Karan felt that Peter's move back to Greece would be a regression- a return to that which Karan felt was *misero* about Greece. It seemed that Karan was post-ambivalent in relation to *disemia* whereby he viewed Peter's family values as something which was hindering him from achieving the modern European aspirations for (capitalist/neoliberal) success. What Karan referred to as *miseroi* about Peter, was everything that was considered to be unmodern and un-European, or rather, everything that he considered to be incompatible with the pursuit of success in London. In other words, it seemed that my informants referred to everything that did not fit their modernist vision of Greece as *misero:* the performance of collective suffering, the familial focus of Greek culture- things which other ethnographers have presented as the cultural particularities and characteristics of Greece.

As I discussed previously, Karan felt that the real *xenitia* was in Greece, rather than abroad, due to his sense that Greece had become a chimera. Karan could not imagine returning to Greece, because he felt that Greece had failed in its trajectory to become a modernist nation where he could fulfil his personal and professional ambitions. Consequently, Karan could not understand Peter's decision to go back to Greece. He described their mentalities as completely different. For example, Karan was critical of Peter's expectations to socialise in the same way as they had in Greece, and he described

Peter as "not independent". Karan explained that in Greece Peter had lived in the same building as his family, and his friends were 'always there'. In London Peter felt in *xenitia* and since Karan had been his best friend in Greece, he had tried to "attach to him" in London. However, Karan explained that he "had my own life to deal with" and was trying to "survive financially" without needing to ask anyone for money or help. Karan seemed to have internalised an individualistic and capitalist idea of the self.

In relation to his social relationships in London, Karan explained how his mentality differed to Peter in this respect as well. Karan told me that at the end of a day he would be so tired that all he wanted to do was relax on the couch. Karan expected Peter to respect the new boundaries between his work and leisure time in London. Karan had warned Peter that they were not going to click together anymore if he did not adjust. Neither Peter nor Karan wanted to adapt to the other's way of doing things, however, and their friendship broke down as a result. As I said previously, these changes relate to the neoliberalisation of society where there seems to be a feeling that we ought to safeguard and respect people's private lives and leisure time, where relations seem to become more officialised. As I mentioned previously, some of my informants disliked the perceived loss of spontaneity and the changes to patterns of socialisation- such as sending a message before meeting a friend, or instead of picking up the phone.

Karan and Peter seemed to have different opinions about whether one should adapt or not to this new environment due to their different valuation of the role that family and friends should have in one's life. Instead of prioritising success in the capitalist system in London, Peter chose to prioritise his family in Greece. During my research, I was told that in Greece 'families want to provide everything for their children' and it is not uncommon for young people to live with their parents into their thirties. Previous ethnographers have also argued that in Greece "There is no virtue in being self-dependent in relation to one's family". Asking for help from one's family is not an example of "dependence", but rather the natural consequence of "one's rightful place within a structured balanced whole" (Mead, 1955: 75). In this frame, Peter's decision to return to Greece to live with his family would not be viewed negatively. However, Karan explained that his move abroad had been part of his effort to live more "authentically" and be able to "make his own choices" in his life. Karan told me that he wanted to "take the noise" of others' opinions "out of his head", including those of his family who still live in Greece. During my

fieldwork, Karan consistently presented himself as a 'self-made' individual who did not want to be seen to be relying on family for financial or social support.

I would argue that when speaking about himself and about Peter, Karan reflected the "existential condition of the indebted man, at once responsible and guilty for his particular fate" (Lazzarato, 2012: 9). As Lazzarato explains: "To make an enterprise of oneself (Foucault)– that means taking responsibility for poverty, unemployment, precariousness, welfare benefits, low wages, reduced pensions, etc., as if these were the individual's 'resources' and 'investments' to manage as capital, as 'his' capital" (Lazzarato, 2012: 51). A good neoliberal citizen is an "entrepreneur of the self who is at once responsible for 'his' capital and guilty of poor management" (Lazzarato, 2012: 52). Of course, these values behind the good neoliberal person/worker are not unrelated to the idea of the 'good immigrant' who is not a burden on the state and takes responsibility for his own situation, as I have mentioned previously in my thesis. What connects the idea of the 'good immigrant' and neoliberal subjectivity, I would argue, is Lazzarato's idea that social rights have been transformed into debts and beneficiaries. In this model, "the beneficiary as 'debtor' is not expected to reimburse in actual money but rather in conduct, attitudes, ways of behaving, plans, subjective commitments, the time devoted to finding a job, the time used for conforming oneself to the criteria dictated by the market and business, etc. Debt directly entails life discipline and a way of life that requires 'work on the self', a permanent negotiation with oneself, a specific form of subjectivity: that of the indebted man" (Lazzarato, 2012: 104).

Next, I continue to explore this idea of neoliberal selfhood, and explore further the tensions and rifts in Greek society through the lens of my informant Stamos, an IT professional in his thirties. Continuing to focus on temporality, affect and materialities, I explore Stamos' experience of crisis and *miseria* and I explore the *disemic* tensions present between Stamos and his ex-girlfriend, housemates, and friends. Like Karan, I argue that Stamos displayed a neoliberal subjectivity, which I explore in relation to crypto colonialism. I also explore the consequences of understanding *disemic* tensions in terms of thinking about people's connections across borders and I explain the tensions between diasporic Greeks and those in Greece. I explain the view of diasporic Greeks as neoliberal traitors and explain the relevance for anthropological understandings of solidarity, building on the ethnography of Daniel Knight.

Stamos' story

Stamos is a thirty-four-year-old Greek man who has been living in London for four years. Since his first job in London, working as a waiter for a year and a half, Stamos has found a well-paid job in his field of IT. On this occasion Stamos was running late, having almost forgotten that we were meeting for coffee, and finding himself having to rush out of the barbers to meet me. Stamos was wearing his typical outfit: a hat and loose-fitting jeans and a t-shirt which gave him a grungy looking appearance. In Greece, Stamos explained how he had looked like a typical Greek- wearing chinos and a shirt. He felt that his true personality and sense of style had been 'repressed' there. Stamos described himself as having been a very conservative person in Greece, stuck in his ways, socially closed, and stuck in a bubble of the same people sharing the same opinions for fifteen years. In fact, Stamos had felt depressed in Greece. He had struggled to find any inspiration or motivation to try new activities or have anything to do. Stamos had been confined to his bedroom where he used to do a lot of gaming on his computer. He considered his life to have been *misero,* stuck in the same mundane, insignificant routines.

Stamos felt that his life in Greece was 'stale' and 'samey' and produced a sense of stagnation which had affective and embodied effects; he was depressed and overweight. Even the environment, the weather, was something which Stamos found oppressive rather than positive, as I explain more shortly. "I would literally melt away in my bedroom. I couldn't find interest in doing any kind of activities even though there was a lot to do. It didn't feel like home somehow" he explained. Stamos described *miseria* as a kind of oppression which felt like 'melting away' from life. It seemed that Stamos experienced an embodied state of ruination and inertia which became depression. Stamos' experience demonstrates further the sensory and affective aspects of crisis and ruination. In Greece Stamos had been depressed and unable to enjoy life; he did not feel that he was "going anywhere". As he explained: "I was piling up on my rent. I had no purpose in my life". In Greece, it seemed that the potentiality of his life lay dormant (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 108). It was only when Stamos moved abroad that he realised the potentiality for existential mobility and his ability to create a life worth living.

Indeed, Stamos described the moment when he arrived in the UK: "When I arrived in London and went out the airport door and I was outside smelling the air and everything, I kind of felt like home. I felt like finally I was here". Through a metaphorical and sensory

contrast between the climate of the two countries- the smell of the air- we see the micro-materialities of Stamos' feelings of belonging and home. In our conversations, Stamos framed his life in London as providing a source of freedom, existential mobility, individualism, experimentation, and happiness. Stamos explained how he had fallen in love with London, and the mentality of people- that "everyone is here for a reason- to build a career, to study, to rebuild themselves, to discover life, to meet people". Stamos liked the fast pace of life, that everyone was "open to experiences" and "experimenting in every aspect of their life" which he found "amazing". Since moving to London, Stamos felt that he had managed to "set goals and achieve them". He explained that he had found motivation to improve himself in lots of ways. Stamos described his migration abroad as a transformative experience which made his "soul feel very free".

Stamos explained how his migration had enabled him to escape what described as the 'judgemental' and closed-minded nature of society in Greece and provide him with greater freedom to make his own choices and live an authentic life. Indeed, Stamos explained his view that his mother had "forced" him to remain in Greece due to her desire to keep her children together. Like my other informants, Stamos' mother had hoped that he would live in the same house as his family. Particularly given the poor health of his grandmother, and his mother's caring responsibilities, Stamos' mother had hoped to keep her son close. Stamos found his mother's "dream to have one house and live happily ever after" to be suffocating and oppressive. Whilst many of my other informants described these strong family bonds as a positive aspect of Greek society, Stamos described his mother's expectations negatively, as something which had produced guilt and a sense of suffocation, entrapment and *miseria* in his life. Stamos felt that his mother had made him "afraid of life" which had made him miserable and unhappy.

Indeed, when Stamos moved out of the family home in Greece, his mother did not speak to him for six months and called him "a traitor", saying that he was "abandoning them". Even though Stamos had only moved down the road, and was still able to help out, he explained that he still felt 'guilty'. Given this context, Stamos described London as a place where he felt 'relief' and a sense of freedom from others' negative judgements about him and his decisions. Whilst some Greeks in London felt entangled with *xenitia* because they missed their families, Stamos felt that the real *xenitia* was in Greece, because he was unable to pursue his individualistic visions for success. In our conversations, Stamos

expressed an individualistic narrative of success; he explained that he was enjoying being by himself for the first time in his life and felt that London was the "perfect place" for him to experiment and "do anything" he wanted to. Stamos described his migration as 'spreading his wings' given how trapped he felt in Greece.

I would say that Stamos moved abroad to inject potentiality into his own future given that he was depressed and 'going nowhere' in Greece. Geographical movement to London became a way that Stamos could 'pull the potentiality' of the future into the present. Stamos' migration story seems to fit Hage's theory of migration as linked to existential mobility; that it is when people feel 'stuck' on the 'highway of life'- that they begin contemplating the necessity of physically 'going somewhere' to give their life momentum (Hage, 2005: 471). I agree with Hage that "life is not directionless. The positive sense of 'going somewhere' certainly does not include the sense of 'going backward'. Viability is associated with a forward movement in time" (Hage, 2005: 471). Migration is of course linked inextricably to ideas of the future, and I would add, ideas about progress. It certainly seemed that Stamos presented London as a place of progress which he contrasted with his version of Greece as a chimera. As I explain below, I would suggest that this idea of progress was fundamentally neoliberal.

Modernist progress and success

In my view, Stamos' narratives- particularly those about his housemates which I present here- indicate a neoliberal and capitalist idea of success and progress. Stamos' description of his housemates' trajectories in London illustrate Stamos' modernist positionality. Stamos' four housemates had all moved to London at a similar time to him. Two of the four had come to pursue a career in computer animation. According to Stamos, neither had put in any effort, and both had ended up working in low-paid jobs, one as a coffee shop barista and the other in retail. Stamos explained how these two would constantly complain about how 'London is shit'. Despite having only handed their CVs to five places, they felt disappointed that no-one was begging them to work for their company. They were constantly disappointed and after a day's work would stay at home and play computer games, just as they had done in Greece. The other two of the four had experienced a similar start when they came to London. Both of them initially also had to work in hospitality. However, after two years, Giorgos had got a 'proper position' as a

data analyst, and Eleni had 'fucking nailed it' as Stamos put it, having become the EU director for a company.

Stamos described Eleni as "the prime example" of what one can accomplish in London. As the only child from a poor family with "no fancy educational background", Stamos described how Eleni had 'nailed it' and he said how proud and impressed he was of her. "She came here because she was tired of being miserable (*miseri*)" Stamos told me. Since moving to London, Eleni has become "so successful" Stamos told me, having met the director of her company, famous people, even the mayor of London. Stamos described Eleni as ambitious and successful, and explained his respect for her. "I cannot keep up with her success, but I find this inspiring; I really appreciate that she is trying to improve herself for herself", Stamos told me. Stamos' comments about Eleni seems to indicate an idealisation of a neoliberal success story of someone who, through hard work and perseverance, can secure a good job, even if they have come from a relatively poor background. The fact that Stamos idealised Eleni's journey yet blamed the others' experience of deskilling on their own mentality and efforts indicates how he has internalised this neoliberal view of the self- that people are responsible for their circumstances. Indeed, he praised how Eleni had 'improved herself for herself'- i.e. not for anyone else, reflecting quite an atomised and individualistic view of success. Therefore, I would argue that Stamos' negative portrayal of his other 'deskilled' housemates reflects his internalisation of these neoliberal ideas of the self.

In contrast to Eleni, Stamos explained how his (now ex) girlfriend had 'failed' to do the appropriate 'work on the self' to get a good job in London. Stamos expressed his view that he and his girlfriend had different mentalities and attitudes towards life in London. Whilst he had moved abroad with his girlfriend to create a better life together- to find jobs and a home and be 'peaceful and happy'- Stamos decided after a while that their relationship was no longer viable. In the end, Stamos felt that they "wanted different things in life". Stamos wanted to "grab the opportunity" to find success in London. Stamos felt that his girlfriend had not taken responsibility for her situation and had not worked sufficiently hard to achieve success abroad. Stamos felt that his girlfriend had a 'bad mentality' (*kaki/lathos nootropia)* - of being *miseri*, of not accepting control over her own fate- and this made him want to break up with her. As I explain below, Stamos' portrayal of his girlfriend as "not ambitious or strong" links to ideas of *miseria* and *grenia*- the idea that

you can't dream big and have ambitious, the idea that there is a ceiling and the theme of insignificance, whining and complaining. Stamos disliked how his girlfriend 'whined' and complained about her situation.

Stamos told me that his girlfriend "carried the Greek mentality with her; being miserable, being bored, not being ambitious or strong". Whilst Stamos had spent eight months job hunting and perfecting his CV, going to agencies, and being rejected many times, his girlfriend had not been willing to do the same for herself. She had complained that she "could not do it", that she was "bored" of trying, and had asked Stamos to sort her CV for her. She had felt pessimistic, that employers would not hire her. Stamos became very frustrated and had spoken to her many times about these issues before the couple broke up. Stamos reflected "She's Greek. I'm not Greek unfortunately. I feel like I carry the Greek legacy and heritage, I really respect it. I don't speak badly about Greeks usually; I try to communicate the best aspects about us, otherwise it's not fair. You can't say to people who've never been to Greece that it's shit. No, I really like that people actually admire the Greek culture" (Stamos, 34, IT professional).

As we can see, Stamos framed his girlfriend's mentality as characteristic of Greek people in his comment that "She's Greek. I'm not Greek anymore unfortunately". Stamos had an ambiguous relationship to the idea of Greekness. Whilst he really respected his Greek culture and heritage, Stamos concluded simultaneously that he was "not Greek anymore". Rather than a complete rejection of his Greek identity, I would argue that Stamos was frustrated with Greece's trajectory in relation to his expectations for modernist progress. In my view, Stamos' comment that he was "an exile" from Greece was not so much about cultural exile, but rather an exile that was related to and caused by his view of Greece as a chimera. Indeed, Stamos simultaneously explained that he still had "a lot of Greek habits" and described his love of Greek cuisine and his recent efforts to learn how to cook Greek food in London. He explained how he drinks coffee and smokes, and likes the fact that people see him as Greek. "I try to honour the Greek legacy. I put Greek music on sometimes. I try to show the good things about Greece because I want people to see Greece in a good way. I'm not whining about things" he told me. Whilst Stamos appreciated the positive aspects of Greek culture, however, he did not believe that these positive cultural aspects like food and music should obscure the need for Greece to

improve and move away from what he felt was a negative trajectory away from his modernist dream for the country.

In my view, Stamos did not deconstruct the stereotypical versions of what it means to be culturally Greek. He preserved many Greek habits in London. What Stamos did feel, was that contemporary Greeks had lost a lot of what used to be good about Greece. Stamos felt that Greece had not become what it should have and felt to an extent that contemporary Greeks were a 'degenerate' version of their ancestors[54]. Stamos felt that Greeks had "lost their roots" and felt that in Greece everything was 'corrupt'. Stamos explained his dissatisfaction that whilst people in Greece want change, they are unwilling to change their own behaviour to achieve change. In his reflections about the crisis, Stamos was disappointed that "we still have the same politicians ruling; everything is corrupted". As he told me: "I feel heartbroken and disappointed. I'm actually trying to make a change, not sitting back and whining. You can't change things there. Everything is so stale. There is corruption. No-one wants to advance or change. They want to go to work, do nothing, get paid and have a fancy life. I respect the old Greek culture; I don't like the modern one at all. I'm trying to stay as far away as possible from it" (Stamos, 34, IT professional).

Based on our conversations, Stamos certainly seemed nostalgic for what Greece had once been. He felt the *kaimos* (long standing pain) that the *yenos* or *ethnos* of Greece had not accomplished what it should have. In my view, Stamos' apparent rejection of his Greek identity was related more to his view of Greece as a chimera and what Kirtsoglou refers to as the subjective condition of 'anticipatory nostalgia' which has emerged in Greece. As I have mentioned previously, 'anticipatory nostalgia' is defined as "a future-oriented affective state of longing for what has already been accomplished and at once yet to be achieved" (Kirtsoglou, 2020). The premise of Kirtsoglou's concept is that people in Greece are nostalgic for what Greece has not yet become. The feeling is one of nostalgia because what Greece should become has been so surely expected (or demanded/imposed) by Europeans, and Greeks themselves; it is an aspiration and expectation within and outside

[54] As I mentioned previously, I use the term 'degenerate' as a reference to Kirtsoglou's paper (2020) 'Anticipatory Nostalgia and Nomadic Temporality: A case study of chronocracy in the crypto-colony' where she critiques the "series of moral statements about the Greeks as degenerate mutations of the ideal modern European citizen (cf. Herzfeld 2016a; 2016b; Knight 2013)" (Kirtsoglou, 2020: 17).

of Greece that the country will modernise to be a 'proper' part of Europe. Therefore, it is when this expectation of modernisation and development does not materialise- i.e. it is when Greece 'falls short'- that people become nostalgic for what should have been.

As I explain below, I would argue that there is a crypto-colonial dynamic to the way that Greek people seem to have internalised these critical views of Greeks as a 'degenerate' version of their ancestors. As I have mentioned previously, it seems that Europeans and Greeks themselves idealise Classical Greece and consider it to be the foundation of Europe whilst criticising Greeks for failing to live up to this glorious past in the contemporary context. The fact that people like Stamos located *miseria* as an aspect of Greek *culture* seems to suggest that some Greek people have internalised and embodied this crypto-colonial view of Greece whereby the economic crisis has been blamed on certain negative 'cultural' aspects of Greece like 'corruption', and the 'laziness' of Greeks. According to Kirtsoglou, these negative narratives about Greece were used to justify the implementation of harsh austerity measures. As Kirtsoglou argues, "[c]risis as a state of emergency did not only produce fiscal austerity but highlighted the urgency of catching up with Europe in all matters political, cultural, and institutional (cf. Douzinas 2013; Gropas et.al., 2013)" (Kirtsoglou, 2020: 8). Kirtsoglou argues that "[t]hrough an emphasis on Greek anachronism and dubious moral standards the crisis was not presented simply as an economic or a fiscal event, but as a proof of the Greek people's moral and cultural lag (cf. Gkintidis 2018; Rakopoulos 2019;)" (Kirtsoglou, 2020: 8).

In this respect, Kirtsoglou reminds us of Graeber's (2011) argument that debt is not actually an economic but a moral statement (cf. Sabate 2016; Narotzky 2016; Athanasiou 2014: 7 and Lazzarato, 2012). Kirtsoglou argues that the way Greece's debt was handled "constitutes a particular facet of chronocracy that served to deny the Greek people moral (as well as cultural and historical) coevalness with the rest of Europe" (Kirtsoglou, 2020: 17) "In this framework, the allegedly 'enlarged' and 'expensive' public sector was presented as a by-product of 'clientelism', which was in turn explained in terms of a backward ethos of 'amoral familism' and Greek 'collectivism'". She argues that "[t]he stereotypical narrative of presenting Greek cultural exceptionalism as incompatible with Western values and models is…a deeply orientalist idea (cf. Said 1978)". Greek cultural difference, Kirtsoglou argues "has been persistently presented as an irreconcilable eccentricity that underpins the Greek inability to follow 'European' political projects. The

ensuing 'urgency' to become European, or to catch up with Europe saturates public, political and intellectual spheres in Greece since time immemorial (cf. Gropas et.al, 2013). It encapsulates the perceived incongruence between the country and Europe, which is itself a variation of the theme of discrepancy between Modern and Classical Greece". (Kirtsoglou, 2020: 8)

In the following section I expand upon Kirtsoglou's arguments to explore how my informants expressed 'ideological notions'[55] of how they felt Greeks should respond to austerity and the impacts of crisis through their commentaries on *miseria* and *xenitia*. Some of my informants felt that Greeks had not accepted responsibility for their part in the economic crisis and argued that they had a 'bad mentality' (*kaki/lathos nootropia)*. These people felt that Greece itself was responsible for its economic fate, given the systemic issues with the job market, education system, and 'cultural' issues of 'corruption' and nepotism. Of course, these informants were those who were more likely to support New Democracy's conservative and technocratic agenda. On the other hand, other Greeks have felt that the crisis was more the result of the austerity measures imposed on Greece by foreign powers and was not so much Greece's fault. The contribution of my ethnography is to explore these rifts and tensions not only as they appear between Greek people in London, but also between diasporic Greeks and those back in Greece. Through the lens of Stamos and his friends in Greece, I explore how some people perceive those who have moved abroad to be 'neoliberal traitors' who are no longer in 'solidarity' with Greeks in Greece. My ethnography demonstrates that trends towards neoliberal subjectivities seem to have created rifts between Greek people which challenge conventional understandings of community and belonging in diasporic contexts. Indeed, as I have said, some of my informants have become 'post-ambivalent' in relation to the *disemic* tensions of Greek identity that they no longer consider Greece to be their homeland.

Diasporic/Homeland tensions

In this section I discuss the tensions which arose between Stamos and his Greek friends in Greece. As Stamos explained it to me, he and his friends had fallen out because they had become 'annoyed' at his happiness and success. As our conversation progressed,

[55] This idea to consider something ideologically and not literally is the approach that Herzfeld takes to analyse hunger (cf. Knight, 2015: 73). Perhaps we might view *xenitia* in a similar way.

Stamos began to share his view that Greeks in Greece were perpetuating the atmosphere of *miseria* and crisis because of their 'bad mentality' (*kaki/lathos nootropia)*. Stamos argued that Greek people rarely admit when they are wrong and always have someone to blame- it is never their fault. Stamos explained that he could "no longer stand" this *miseri* mentality because it hindered the potential for change. Stamos felt that people in Greece do not try to improve themselves to be better than others; they would rather sabotage others to be worse than them[56], which "creates a very stale mindset; there's no creativity". Stamos told me that he avoids hanging out with any Greek who has a *miseri* mentality- anyone who is unwilling to improve their life.

Indeed, Stamos had become frustrated with his friends in Greece, and no longer wanted to spend time with them because he sensed this *miseri* mentality among them. As I said previously, Stamos felt that life in Greece was 'stale', stagnating rather than progressing, which was linked to his sense of anticipatory nostalgia or chimerical view that Greece had not become the modernist nation that it should have. During our conversation, Stamos explained how every time he spoke to people in Greece it seemed that nothing had changed; he would ask them what was going on in their lives and they would say "the same. I'm bored, still living with my parents", "No, no, no!" Stamos exclaimed. As I mentioned previously, Stamos felt that being stuck in the same mundane activities and routines was something *misero.* The fact that his friends were still living with their parents in Greece made Stamos feel that they could not see the opportunities that migration had to offer. Stamos felt that his friends were focusing on the *misero* things rather than being focused on pursuing the bigger vision of what would make Greece great again.

> "I don't find any interest on actually spending more time than I should with my friends in Greece. I really care about them, they're my friends, we can catch up but I don't feel we have anything to say. I will only meet up with them for a coffee a couple of times, I will not hang out with them. Because my life is totally different. And I have noticed a lot of times

[56] Stamos told me the parable about the neighbour and the goat to illustrate his opinion that Greeks will prefer to sabotage others' success rather than take responsibility to improve their own lot. "We have this Greek saying: there are two neighbours, one of them has a goat and the other guy is very jealous of the other guy having a goat. And at one point a magical genie appears to the guy with no goat. And he says why are you miserable, he has a goat, you don't have a goat, what do you want from life? And he's like I want his goat to die. He will not ask for goat himself, he just wants the other person not to have a goat. There is this kind of mentality in Greece where people; they're not actually trying to improve themselves to be better than others; they're just trying to sabotage others to be worse than them" (Stamos).

> after chilling with friends, Greeks, they get annoyed with my level of happiness. They say I'm getting arrogant, I'm being a douche, 'who do I think I am?'. 'I'm just working and doing things in London; why the fuck is this a bad thing for you?'" (Stamos, 34, IT professional).

To understand the tensions between Stamos and his friends, we might turn to a scene from Daniel Knight's ethnography- that of the queue at a petrol station in Trikala, during the economic crisis in 2010. Narrated by Knight's informant Dimitra, a mechanic's secretary, 'the queue' presents a scene of competitive suffering in the context of economic crisis in which one woman became the focus of derogatory abuse (Knight, 2015: 79). The woman in question went home to cook dinner for her husband and children rather than staying in the queue for petrol in the hot sun like the other women. When she returned, the other women mocked her for trying to 'play the good housewife' (*noikokyra*) (ibid). Because the other women too considered themselves good housewives, they were insulted that this woman had appeared to be too busy to wait in the queue like themselves. "[B]y prioritising her work in the home the other women were put in a 'subordinate position' concerning their ability to be an effective housewife (Hirschon, 1989: 101-2; Kirtsoglou, 2004: 108)" (Knight, 2015: 79).

In the context of my research, Knight's vignette offers an interesting analogy. One might say that the petrol queue stands for life in Greece. The scorching sun might be the context of *miseria* and economic hardship that my informants struggled to bear. The woman who left the queue to cook for her family would therefore be my informants, and those left in the queue their friends in Greece. Particularly for Stamos, who framed his migration as a 'project' for self-improvement and success, we can therefore see how others might critique him for being 'the good migrant/person/worker' whilst the others appeared to be in a subordinate position for not doing the same but remaining ('waiting in the scorching sun' so to speak) in Greece. Whilst Stamos' friends were well aware that Stamos was not to blame for the problems they continued to face in Greece, this did not prevent their annoyance at his arrogance, as if he had "outsmarted" them by moving abroad. It seems that they felt Stamos' arrogance was implying that they were in a subordinate position to him- that Stamos' success in London had made their choice to stay in Greece seem *miseri* (insignificant, petty etc) in comparison.

Another layer to this interpretation, which relates to this analogy with Knight's ethnography of 'outsmarting' others, is to relate Stamos' conflict with his friends to the

idea of *philotimo*. I would suggest that Stamos' friends' perception that he was being 'arrogant' was related to their impression that Stamos was 'boasting' of his progress in such a way that was 'exposing' the negative aspects of the situation his friends continued to face in Greece. For this reason, it seems they felt that Stamos lacked *philotimo* because he was 'boasting' of his progress in a way that 'exposed' the comparative hardship of people in Greece. To embarrass or 'shame' aspects of oneself, family, or country, has been said to make one lacking in *philotimo*. Scholars have argued that negative aspects should not be considered a result of personal failure or Greek inadequacy" but as 'acts of God', or fate (Mead, 1955: 61). Indeed, given the context of crisis in Greece in which there seemed to be a collective performance of suffering, it is not surprising that Stamos' friends felt annoyed. In the context where everyone is struggling, it perhaps becomes inappropriate to demonstrate one's wealth or success. I would stress the performative dimension to the material aspects of ruination. Even for those people that are comparatively well off, conspicuous consumption and display can sometimes in such contexts be considered insensitive and even provocative.

Overall, I would therefore suggest that Stamos' friends were frustrated with him because they perceived his actions to have threatened their sense of solidarity. Knight argues that solidarity and collective suffering depend on their communal element of performance. The expression of public unity, reference to common experiences and collective histories creates 'a community of pain' in order to protest and resist economic hardship or a difficult event. The aim is to offer others mutual support and advice (cf. Knight, 2015: 131-2). Indeed, collective suffering is about finding narratives which resonate beyond the individual in order to create a sense of 'comradeship' which is important to the collective well-being of the group (cf. Dubisch, 1995: 213-5; Turner, 2008: 96; Kirtsoglou, 2004: 106-7; Knight, 2015: 132). In contrast, as I have said, some of my informants did not like to hear people 'whining' and 'complaining' about the negative aspects of life in Greece, or life in London, as they felt this created an atmosphere of *miseria* which they felt prevented people from taking action to improve their lives and Greece's modernist trajectory.

In contrast, as Knight explains, the performance of collective suffering is seen by many people in Greece to be an act of solidarity and resistance against neoliberal reforms, austerity measures, and the "enforcement of northern European ideals upon Greek ways of life" (cf. Knight, 2015: 129). Knight argues that the economic 'rescue packages'

"orchestrated from the major epicentres of political power" have promoted models of 'ideal economic practice' based on neoliberal ideals (Knight, 2015: 131). Knight argues that these restructuring initiatives have not only been to encourage enterprise, risk-taking, and entrepreneurship, but have been framed in terms of needing to create cultural change by remodelling 'lazy' and 'backward' Greeks" who had "got their priorities wrong" (Knight, 2015: 129). In response, Knight explains how "[e]veryday people openly resist cultural change and display their repulsion of the measures through continuing to participate in activities deemed inappropriate by foreign eyes (cf. Theodossopoulos, 2014).

Knight explains how his informants' public displays of consumerism were a strategy of resilience in order to demonstrate to foreign bureaucrats and fellow citizens that the economic crisis had not destroyed sociality or their social status (cf. Knight, 2015: 129). As his informant Haris said to Knight: "'The occupiers, the foreigners, the Merkels of this world, denounce us for not staying in our homes and crying, but we will not give into them…Greeks have always fought for their culture'". Whilst some might regard Greek people's decisions to spend money in restaurants or on holidays as 'illogical' economic behaviour, Knight explains his informants' view that "such activities constitute a form of solidarity and collective resistance to impositions by European economists" (Knight, 2015: 129).

To some extent my ethnography supports Knight's comment that some diasporic Greeks living in the UK echo the view that Greeks in Greece "are not even trying to change their lifestyles but continue to complain" (Knight, 2015: 121). Knight explains some people's remarks that Greek people "endlessly complain and whine, but they still have great lives. They don't want to work and have had it too easy for too long'" (ibid). Onlookers outside of Greece have declared that "Greeks that continue to spend so much money on coffee, nice clothes, and vacations [and therefore] cannot truly pretend to be victims of austerity. Greeks, they argue, do not want to sacrifice some basic pleasures in life or to adapt to the new economic landscape" (Knight, 2015: 121).

Building on Knight's work, my ethnography raises the question of who is considered 'foreign' here. For Knight's informant Haris, those 'foreign eyes' comprised of "the occupiers, the foreigners, the Merkels of this world". In my ethnography, it seemed that people in Greece like Stamos' friends viewed members of the diaspora to be these

‘foreigners’, or ‘the Other within’ (Knight, 2015: 133). It seemed that Stamos’ friends felt that he had let them down- or ‘betrayed’ them- by moving abroad to the very countries that they felt were responsible for the *miseria* of economic crisis in Greece. Whilst Stamos felt that the best option in the crisis was to move abroad and pursue individualistic success, other Greeks like his friends perhaps felt that his actions validated the rhetoric of ‘foreigners’ that it was Greeks themselves who were responsible for the crisis- that Greeks in Greece like Stamos’ friends were either ‘lazy’ or had “got their priorities wrong” (Knight, 2015: 129).

In summary, my ethnography demonstrates the different opinions Greek people have about the impacts of neoliberal transformations in Greece and Europe. As I discussed, some Greek people view neoliberalism as a corrupting force, which is threatening to the quintessentially Greek values of family and community. Others consider adopting a neoliberal subjectivity- a sense of personal responsibility and work on the self- to be an essential part of what is needed to modernise Greece and allow it to become (again) a ‘proper Western country’. These people tended to locate the cause of the economic crisis in aspects of Greek ‘culture’ that they felt were *misero*. Of course, I explained the crypto-colonial dynamics to these culturalist tropes of Greeks as ‘materialistic’ and ‘lazy’, as it seems that some of my informants have internalised orientalising tropes of Greece as ‘backward’ and ‘not modern’ to the extent that they do not feel a sense of community with other Greeks in London who do not share their ‘modernist’ positionality.

Indeed, I argued that for this reason, the nature of *disemia* seems to have changed. Based on my ethnography it seems that the split of Greek identity is no longer simply between East and West. It seems that in the contemporary context, the *disemic* split has become so vast that there are people in Greece who do not feel at home there anymore if Greece does not perform to the idealised modern European standard. In the past, it seems that *disemia* was considered to be about ambivalence- where Greeks felt torn between their value for what is quintessentially Greek, a little backward and a little Eastern, and that value for that which is modern and European. Based on my ethnography, it seems that some Greeks in London are now ‘post-ambivalent’; they seem to have rejected this ‘other’ (Eastern, backward, and un-European) side of Greece which remains culturally particular that they referred to it as *misero.* In the next chapter I explore this idea through the lens of cosmopolitanism. I explain how some of my informants with a modernist positionality

adopted a 'normative cosmopolitan' positionality and distanced themselves from the *miseria* of Greek parochialism by claiming to have a more 'progressive' and 'open-minded' mentality to other Greeks. My contribution in the next chapter is to argue that in both the normative cosmopolitanism and what I call the vernacular version of cosmopolitanism, both versions were underpinned by neoliberal ideas of the self which I would suggest indicates that neoliberal ethics are increasingly dominant in European societies.

Cosmopolitanism

In this chapter I demonstrate the relevance of my ethnography to theoretical debates about cosmopolitanism building on my previous discussions of *disemia* and crypto-colonialism. In part one, I explore some of my informants' formulaic narratives of a 'normative' version of cosmopolitanism. This normative version of cosmopolitanism seemed Western and 'elitist' in the sense that it had a developmental undertone which viewed Greece as backward, not modern, and not progressive. In part one, I argue that whilst these people struggled to look cosmopolitan, in reality they were more cosmo-nationalist. I argue that for both neoliberal and anti-nationalist cosmopolitans, both reflected a move away from Greek parochialism and both exemplified neoliberal and colonised ideas of the self and the idea that Greeks are a 'degenerate' version of their Classical ancestors. In part two of the chapter, I explore other informants' 'vernacular' version of cosmopolitanism which was based on quintessentially Greek ideas of humanity and care. Some of my informants felt their vernacular version of cosmopolitanism was subversive of the 'normative' version which they felt was a Western ideology. However, I argue that this 'vernacular' version of cosmopolitanism was based on a rather exoticizing view of Greek culture as hospitable and caring. In addition, I argue that my informants' practices of humanity seemed to reflect a neoliberal ethic of care (cf. Muehlebach, 2012). My contribution in this chapter is therefore to discuss cosmopolitan ethics in relation to my arguments about crypto-colonialism and neoliberal ideas of the self that I have discussed throughout my thesis.

In part one, I explore how my research corroborates Papagaroufali and Georges' claim that the cosmopolitan orientation "emphasises development and modernisation and recommends the introduction and application of Western values, institutions and mentalities in order to 'catch up' with Westerners and/or align with them" (Papagaroufali and Georges, 1993: 236). As I said above, some of my informants expressed a normative version of cosmopolitanism that seemed Western and 'elitist' in the sense that it had a developmental undertone which viewed Greece as backward, not modern, and not progressive. For these informants, it seemed that moving to London was a way to achieve as individuals the Europeanisation that they could not accomplish in Greece. Greece was considered to be 'behind' Europe on certain issues like race and sexuality, and these

informants implied that Greece should 'catch up' with countries like the UK. Indeed, some of my informants with a normative version of cosmopolitanism wanted to use their experience of living abroad to change and develop aspects of Greek society. To some extent, my research supports Vertovec's (2009) ideas about 'normative transnationalism': that migrants affect the value systems and worldviews of people who have never themselves moved.

Indeed, it is a common theme in anthropological literature on migration to say that migration enables and contributes to the development of cosmopolitan norms. Globalisation has been considered a force which will inevitably lead to a new cosmopolitan world free from the binds of nation-state borders and frameworks. Scholars like Benhabib and Ong have argued that the boundaries of the political have shifted beyond the nation-state and that belonging is no longer rooted in particular cultural communities but rather in transnational institutions such that a kind of 'flexible citizenship' is taking hold (cf. Ong, 1999; Benhabib, 2007; 2005). Benhabib's work considers the potential for cosmopolitan norms of govern international relations and she argues that "[g]lobal human rights and cosmopolitan norms establish new thresholds of public justification for a humanity that is increasingly united and interdependent" (Benhabib, 2007: 33). Benhabib's work seems to reflect the Kantian ideal of creating 'one human community' based on ideas of world citizenship. These authors seem optimistic about the possibilities for humankind to strive towards universal human dignity, to recognise the duties they have towards self and others. Nigel Rapport is another scholar with the aspiration for there to be a universality to ideas of human ethics, though for Rapport this universalism should be borne out of the prioritisation of the rights of each individual. Rapport argues that his 'cosmopolitan project' is about affording "Anyone the space to live according to the fulfilment of his or her capacities to author an individual life – individual world-views, identity and life-project – and the right and encouragement so to do; the right to be universally recognized and engaged as himself or herself, and not merely as a member of a social category or class". Rapport refers to cosmopolitanism as "a philosophy of freedom" (Rapport, 2012: 5).

It seems that cosmopolitanism is a philosophy which encourages people to look beyond their own situation to embrace the 'other'. For example, Nussbaum discusses cosmopolitanism as comprising how 'a love for humankind takes priority over a love for

one’s own nation’; Waldron discusses cosmopolitanism as defined by hybridity and fluidity; and Habermas, Held and Bohman discuss how cosmopolitanism can be a way to bring universal ethics beyond the confines of nation-states. Within the context of globalisation, theories of transnationalism have emerged with the intention to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the world and move beyond methodological nationalism by “adopting an explicitly de-nationalized epistemological stance and concomitant methodologies in order to investigate and theorize cross border social phenomena by non-state actors” (Dahinden, 2017: 1482). In the context of migration literature, cosmopolitanism has frequently been discussed from a transnational perspective which focuses on how migrants are ‘cosmopolitans’ because they form and maintain connections between people, places and institutions across borders. Often the focus of transnational theories tends to be on interconnection, with associated ideas and imagery of ‘flows’ and unboundedness (cf. Rockefeller, 2011).

My contribution in this chapter is to explore cosmopolitanism from a different angle. I agree with Friedman that “[m]uch of the discourse produced in the cultural globalisation literature is saturated with a terminology of a trans-x and post-x sort. It is about transcendence of existing borders. A feeling of wanting to escape from all forms of fixed or grounded identities and a profound desire to belong to something higher and more expansive are a common characteristic of this discourse” (Friedman, 2004: 182). I agree with Friedman’s point that this kind of ‘transcendental’ discourse “divides the world into dangerous classes and locals, on the one hand, and liberal and progressive world citizens, on the other”. In Friedman’s view, cosmopolitans seem to situate themselves ‘above the world’ in a way that “creates an opposition to the local as something that is decidedly lower in status and conflates immobility with cultural poverty” (Friedman, 2004: 192). He argues that “the self-identification of cosmopolitans is a logical outcome of the nature of their social position within this system. The generalisation of cosmopolitanism to all domains of transnational connection appears in this light to express a kind of struggle for ideological hegemony” (ibid). An ideological hegemony which serves the elite, we might say. Ironically, for a discourse that claims to promote respect for difference, “it is rather difficult to ‘have any respect for human diversity and expect everyone to become cosmopolitan’ (Appiah: 2007: xx) (Kirtsoglou, 2013: 169-170).

It is not a new argument that cosmopolitanism is a worldview that is associated with the elite. In her paper on vernacular cosmopolitanism, Werbner outlines the history of challenge to the idea that cosmopolitans are necessarily members of the elite- from James Clifford's idea of 'discrepant cosmopolitans' (Clifford, 1992: 108)[57], to Homi Bhabha's coining of the term 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' (Bhabha, 1996). Werbner's aim in her paper is to probe the conceptual boundaries of cosmopolitanism and consider its usefulness as an analytic concept. She explains that there are many different cosmopolitan practices co-existing in late modernity, with their own historicities and distinctive worldviews, and that this has led to an exploration of marginal cosmopolitanisms within academia. The academic exploration of marginal cosmopolitanisms is important because it challenges the idea of the self as being at the centre, with universal liberal values privileged above family, ethnic group or nation (Nussbaum, 1994). Scholars have proposed concepts of 'rooted cosmopolitanism' and 'cosmopolitan patriotism' to try to contradict the individualistic focus of cosmopolitan theory and more accurately represent how people maintain a love for and connection to their home culture whilst being open to other cultures. The crucial point here however is, as Werbner puts it, that "[t]he notion of a borderless cosmopolitan community seems inadequate in relation to the millions of refugees and migrants fleeing violence and poverty. Drawing on Appiah's vision, Bhabha proposes a 'cosmopolitan community envisaged in marginality', a border zone which he terms vernacular cosmopolitanism (Bhabha, 1996: 195–6)".

Kirtsoglou and others have illustrated the relevance of Greek studies and migration to these debates. In *United in Discontent: Local Responses to Cosmopolitanism, Multiculturalism and Globalization,* Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos explain how their Greek informants resisted cosmopolitanism both as an ethical and as a political project (cf. Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos, 2010)" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2018: 1885). They explain how such people believed that "cosmopolitanism is a Western ideological product, designed to serve particular political interests", such as how their Greek informants who were "concerned with the power of some to create cosmologies that

[57] The challenge to the idea that cosmopolitans are necessarily members of the elite was first posed by James Clifford. Clifford proposed that 'the project of comparing and translating different travelling cultures need not be class- or ethno-centric' (Clifford, 1992: 107). The differential, often violent, displacements that impel locals to travel create, he says, 'discrepant' cosmopolitanisms (Clifford, 1992: 108).

serve their own interests and then to hegemonically extend those cosmologies to the rest of the world in a naturalised fashion" (ibid). In the concluding chapter of the volume, Kirtsoglou argues that discontent with globalisation and cosmopolitanism are not a sign of nationalism, closure and backwardness[58], but "an alternative form of globalised thinking, produced by disenfranchised subjects who are concerned with political and ideological hegemony" (Theodossopoulos and Kirtsoglou, 2013: 169). During my fieldwork, I also observed some Greek people's resistance to cosmopolitan ideas. My research differs to that of Kirtsoglou, however, because I did not encounter a Marxist version of cosmopolitanism based on ideas of class solidarity among my informants. Nevertheless, my thesis contributes to anthropological understandings of neoliberalism in relation to cosmopolitanism, as I explain in part two.

In part two of the chapter, I explore how some of my informants subverted the idea that London was 'way ahead' Greece by asserting their view that Greek people were more 'caring' and 'human' than people in London. These informants seemed to consider the normative version of cosmopolitanism to be a Western ideology which was a less authentic practice compared to their quintessentially Greek value of 'humanity' (cf. Kirtsoglou, 2018). This idea of 'humanity' was based on what my informants felt were the quintessentially Greek values of care and hospitality which belonged to the 'Eastern' side of Greek identity. In her work 'The role of affect in makeshift camps: assemblages of care, solidarity and humanity in Greece', Kirtsoglou explains that "humanity in the Greek context is performatively established in practical terms through one's behaviour at an everyday level (cf. Kirtsoglou 2018b). To be a human (*anthropos*) and to have humanity (*anthropia*) means to engage others in their capacity as human beings and not as members of any other category, including gender, race, religion or nationality (ibid). To some extent, this conceptualisation of 'humanity' seems similar to Rapport's cosmopolitan vision that 'Anyone' would be afforded "the space to live according to the fulfilment of his or her capacities to author an individual life- individual world-views, identity and life-project- and the right and encouragement so to do; the right to be

[58] Kirtsoglou points out how "nationalist expressions' in the non-Western world are treated as pathological anomalies". "Discontent with cosmopolitanism has frequently been mistaken for nationalism (see also Cheah and Robbins 1998), as a pathology (Gellner 1997) 'of non-Western, primordial, irrational and backward Others' (cf. Wang Hornglueen 2004: 30; Gledhill 2000: 14).

universally recognised and engaged as himself or herself, and not merely as a member of a social category or class" (cf. Rapport, 2012: 2).

However, I argue that my informants' ideas and practices of 'humanity' should instead be conceptualised as an example of vernacular cosmopolitanism, which Bhabha and Werbner define as "alternative, particularly non-Western, forms of cosmopolitan ethics, defined broadly as an openness to difference, whether to other ethnic groups, cultures, religions, or nations" (Werbner, 2016: 223). In this chapter I frame my informants' ideas and practices of 'humanity' as an example of a vernacular or marginal form of cosmopolitanism because of the way in which they seemed to subvert or resist the elitist version of cosmopolitanism that they considered to be more of a 'Western' ideology. I respond to Werbner's call for anthropologists to study the "ethical dimensions of vernacular forms of cosmopolitanism" (Werbner, 2016: 239) in order to analyse not simply cosmopolitan practice and performance but the way that ethical ideas and concepts are formulated in local, vernacular terms" (Werbner, 2016: 239). In part two I explore how some of my informants framed their practices of care and empathetic engagements with others to be an example of the quintessentially Greek value of 'humanity' which they seemed to frame as a kind of resistance to the 'cold' and 'robotic' neoliberal and capitalist aesthetics and ethics they encountered in London.

This said, I argue that whilst certain informants seemed to 'resist' 'Western' ideas of cosmopolitanism, they did so through a rather exoticizing or orientalising view of Greek culture as hospitable and caring. Furthermore, in my discussion of my informants Jason and Kassandra in part two, I argue that vernacular cosmopolitan ethics and practices were entangled with neoliberal ethics of care and colonised ideas of the self. As I explain later, my ethnography supports Muehlebach's arguments about the rise of ethical citizenship whereby "to be truly human means to act in affect-laden ways, to be moved by visceral feeling" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134). In this chapter I demonstrate how my ethnography supports Muehlebach's framing of this as "the humanitarianization of the public sphere- a process whereby depoliticised forms of sympathetic action become paradigmatic acts of citizenship" (Muehlebach, 2012: 133). My contribution is to demonstrate the relevance of these arguments to anthropological theories of cosmopolitanism. I argue that whilst my informants' practices of vernacular cosmopolitanism were intended to be subversive, in actual fact my informants' resistance

contained a kind of compromise. I argue that my informants' practices of humanity were still embroiled within neoliberal ethics of care.

Normative cosmopolitanism, developmental narratives and *disemia*

In this section I demonstrate how many of my informants' cosmopolitan narratives seemed to have a developmental and normative slant whereby they were critical of certain aspects of Greek society that they felt were 'inward-looking' and not 'modern'. According to these informants, other Greeks were 'closed-minded', 'nationalistic' and 'intolerant of difference'. Based on my ethnography, it seemed that narratives of cosmopolitanism were another way that my informants critiqued that which they felt to be un-modern and un-progressive in Greece. This 'normative version' of cosmopolitanism seemed linked to ideas of 'transcendence' and 'enlightenment' which were framed in opposition to Greek parochialism and those who created 'Greek bubbles' abroad. In fact, it seemed that there were several common topics that were used to make such comparisons: which included sexuality, gender, race, religion and so on. It seemed that when speaking about these topics, my informants felt that they could 'prove' (or performatively establish) that they were more 'open-minded', 'progressive' and 'modern' than other Greeks.

For example, Stamos- who I introduced in the previous chapter- disliked what he referred to as the homophobic, sexist and racist mentality of many Greek people in Greece, and in London he wanted to avoid people who he felt had carried this 'closed-minded' mentality with them. As I discussed in previous chapters, Stamos conceptualised London as a space for development and transformation. He conceptualised his migration as a move away from the backwardness of Greek parochialism toward a progressive, cosmopolitan positionality. There was a teleological direction to Stamos' ideas of progress, which mapped onto Greece and the UK geographically through his migration. It was not only that London was a beacon of modern society from an economic and industrial perspective. Stamos also considered London to be a 'beacon' of cosmopolitan attitudes towards social justice issues like race and sexuality.

In one of our conversations, Stamos explained to me that he decided to distance himself from friends who were teasing and mocking him for attending the PRIDE parades in

London. Stamos painted a picture of Greece as somewhere where people do not accept difference but rather "judge you behind your back". Stamos described London as a place where he could be free to experiment and express himself the way that he wanted to. Stamos conveyed a strong sense that his migration had changed his perspective- that moving abroad had enabled him to develop a cosmopolitan positionality. Stamos explained that in Greece he too had been homophobic, or simply afraid of the unknown. As he put it "I was avoiding these people because I didn't know how to treat them". In London, Stamos had found that people were more "openly gay" and Stamos described how he is now "very supportive of these things". "I understand the mindset; I really like it. I like how London is teaching me how to be a person of the world and not just a Greek" (Stamos, 34, IT professional).

Another informant, Aphrodite, similarly described how living in London had made her become more 'cosmopolitan', as a result of the greater opportunity to interact with a more diverse range of people. Aphrodite is a twenty-five-year-old Greek woman from Patras who works in marketing for a large cosmetics company in London. In Greece, Aphrodite explained that she had come from a city that was predominantly white, with very little cultural or ethnic diversity. When Aphrodite had lived in Greece, she used to be shocked and scared to encounter people of colour who had a different cultural background to her. Aphrodite explained that living in London had changed her. Whilst in the past Aphrodite would have never gone to sit next to a person of colour on the tube, she explained that "now I would go and sit next to them just to give the good example. I want the others to change so I set the example when I am in Greece". Indeed, Aphrodite explained that by sharing her experiences with her family and friends in Greece, they too had started to see differently "through her" and change their behaviour. Aphrodite was proud that her experience could "help people learn".

To some extent, Vertovec's points about 'normative transnationalism' resonated with my research in terms of how 'migrants abroad are even more closely aware of what is happening in the sending context and vice versa' (cf. Vertovec, 2009). Even though Aphrodite's family had not moved abroad, they had been affected by her experiences or 'the events, values and practices among their transnationally connected relatives and co-villagers abroad' (cf. Vertovec, 2009). Of course, it seems more accurate to say that these changes were more a deepening of existing processes of transformation in Greece.

Aphrodite implied that exposure to alternative viewpoints about racial difference would happen eventually, and she did not judge or blame people in Greece who were racist, she told me.

Aphrodite explained that she too had been racist before she moved to London and that this was "not a fault of mine; it was a fault of my school". Aphrodite explained how her teachers at school had told the students that 'being black is bad' and that these people should not attend Greek schools. "When you are a child growing up in an environment like this you might adopt it. But going away from my city showed me that there is no reason to be afraid. I'm very grateful that I had the chance to live in other countries and meet people from all around the world". Indeed, Aphrodite wanted to make sure that her future children would not grow up in the same kind of environment that she had; she wanted them to be exposed to people with different cultures, colours and ethnicities and be 'open-minded'. In addition, Aphrodite was happy that more immigrants were arriving in Greece because she hoped that this would prompt the change as well. She hoped that seeing people of colour would become a normal thing like it was in London.

Many of my informants corroborated Aphrodite's comments about how attitudes to people of colour differed between Greece and London. I was told that in Greece people of colour would usually be in low paid agricultural jobs, or begging, whereas in London people of colour would be managers. It seemed true that that in Greece migrants have been "condemned to a 'perpetual status of allochthony (foreignness)' and remain 'marginalised along class [and] racial lines'" (Silverstein 2005, 366). As Aphrodite explained it: "It's still very conservative. It's getting better but much slower; London is way ahead. In London you meet so many other people. I might have friends from Indian and Pakistani backgrounds. In Greece it would be much more difficult to do that because it's not as diverse and there is no mechanism in Greece to absorb refugees and find jobs for them. So they're kind of isolated. So you're even afraid of them because they might be criminals. There's that phobia still there. When I initially came to London, I wasn't as open minded as I am now…living and working in a multicultural environment, it [becoming open-minded] just happens" (Aphrodite, 25, marketing professional).

Importantly, I would argue that Aphrodite implied that there was a difference between the migrants in Greece and the people of colour in London who had successfully found jobs. Based on my ethnography, it did not seem that Aphrodite demonstrated a sense of

solidarity with these people, as if she felt that they shared a status as migrants. Rather, Aphrodite seemed to express a kind of 'pity' for these people in Greece, who (due to Greece's lack of an effective job market) could not find work like her in London. In this respect, from a political perspective, we can see how people like Aphrodite were not expressing a Marxist version of cosmopolitanism based on ideas of class solidarity, but rather more of a neoliberal version. In this respect Muehlebach and Douglas' comments about 'pity' resonate: "pity is not invested in the overcoming of suffering or the production of equality. It revels in the status quo and locks those who feel pity and those who are pitied into an immutable, frozen embrace. In this sense pity is structurally equivalent with charity which, as Mary Douglas argued in her introduction to *The Gift* wounds so profoundly because it 'does not enhance solidarity'. Instead, it exists outside of any mutual ties and 'entails no further claims from the recipient' (Douglas, 1990: vii)' (Muehlebach, 2012: 135).

In addition, Aphrodite implied that Greece's progress towards a cosmopolitan future was 'slower' than London which she referred to as 'way ahead'. Aphrodite's view of London as a beacon of cosmopolitanism seemed linked to her chimerical view that Greece had failed to modernise to the same extent as other European countries like the UK. As I have suggested previously, this idealised and aspirational view of the UK seemed underpinned by an 'orientalising' view of Greece. Such informants' cosmopolitan narratives had a normative dimension and a developmental slant whereby Greece was presented as backward and needing to change to be more compatible with Europe. Aphrodite's comments that London is 'way ahead' seemed to be based on her comparison of Greece to the 'benchmark' of Europe.

Given her view of London as a beacon of 'progressive' society, it seemed that Aphrodite also wanted to performatively establish herself as a cosmopolitan in order to prove that she belonged and was a 'good immigrant'. I would suggest that Aphrodite's comments that she had 'changed her mentality' and become more cosmopolitan reflected a neoliberal ethic of work on the self. It seemed that Aphrodite wanted to demonstrate to me that she was a 'good immigrant' who was willing to change her behaviour to suit the norms and values of the UK. Indeed, Aphrodite compared herself to her other Greek friends who had established 'Greek bubbles' in London, and who were shocked at her decision to find housemates who were not Greek. In this respect, I would add that

Aphrodite wanted to demonstrate that she had moved away from Greek parochialism in her assertion that she had a more open-minded and cosmopolitan mentality.

Performative cosmopolitanism

In this section I argue that my informants' cosmopolitan narratives seemed to be a performative practice which reflected neoliberal ideas of the self. In my first example, I discuss how Costas presented himself as a cosmopolitan in order to demonstrate that he was a 'good immigrant' who belonged to what he perceived to be the liberal and multicultural nature of British society. I explore how Brexit challenged Costas' vision of the UK as a beacon of cosmopolitan and progressive society and explain how in response to the precarity Brexit that Brexit caused him, Costas asserted that he was still taking 'personal responsibility' for his fate. In this respect, I argue that Costas' cosmopolitan narratives were linked to a neoliberal idea of the self and a modernist vision of progress and success. Secondly, I explore the formulaic cosmopolitan narratives of my informant Romanos who strived to performatively establish himself as successful and cosmopolitan despite the precarity he faced in London, yet who also expressed nationalist sentiments linked to an idealised view of Greece's Classical past. I argue that whilst people like Romanos strived and struggled to appear cosmopolitan in order to appear 'Western' and successful, in reality they were cosmo-nationalist, and in the case of Romanos and my informant Priam, their narratives reflected an idealisation of Greece's Classical past and ideas of continuity with ancient Greece.

The Time of Brexit

Costas was one of my informants who viewed the UK as a beacon of cosmopolitanism and progressive society. However, Brexit disrupted Costas' image of the UK as a welcoming nation for foreigners. My research corroborates Daniel Knight's view that in "the Time of Brexit" "[s]ome people's authorship, ownership, of the future was rudely repossessed in a single referendum. A once unyielding version of Britain's future is now past, or at least on hold: a future tied to a particular kind of European cosmopolitanism, involving closer cultural integration, freedom of work and movement, tariffless trade, and imaginaries of boundless socioeconomic prosperity (Knight 2017a: 238) (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 89-90). Before Brexit, the vision of Britain as a welcoming, multicultural and cosmopolitan nation was assumed to be commonly held. In 'the Time of Brexit' (cf. Knight, 2017),

however, imagined futures of 'borderless communities' seem to have been 'rudely repossessed' (ibid) as tensions between cosmopolitanism and what seems like a revival of the nation-state in Europe have been brought to the fore. Since the UK's vote to leave the European Union, futures tied to a certain vision of cosmopolitanism have been challenged (cf. Knight, 2017), creating a new sense of alienation and estrangement for many Greeks abroad. Brexit interrupted Costas' hopes and imaginations of the future in ways which created new entanglements with *xenitia*. As he explained to me over dinner at his house:

> "The main reason that attracted us here is that for the first time in our lives we had the opportunity to come to a country where we would be judged for our qualifications and what we have to contribute. Not how we look, not our colour, not our race, not our religion. So this is something that saddens us- that the only country we could use as an example of what the future could be- a big community of different nations without any borders; Britain fulfilled that to a certain extent and that was very nice for us to be here and feel welcome here. And what we're afraid of is that the shiny beacon of what your country was- a very good example of what every country should look to for what to become; now it's starting to look more like the countries that are more nationalistic, more isolationist, and yeah this is what saddens us. But still I don't think you've reached the point that is the average for European countries and non-European countries" (Costas)

As the narrative excerpt above shows, Costas had viewed Britain as a "shiny beacon" of cosmopolitanism. In contrast to the nationalistic, isolationist countries elsewhere in Europe, Britain had been "an example of what the future could be- a big community of different nations without any borders". Costas' vision of the future seemed to suggest a version of cosmopolitanism as a normative project, directed towards creating the Kantian idea of an *ius cosmopoliticum* or 'one human community' (Appiah, 2007; Benhabib, 2007). As I explained previously, this version of cosmopolitanism seemed to be framed in a developmental narrative whereby Greece was seen as comparatively 'backward' and 'behind' compared to other countries like the UK. As Costas put it, the UK was a 'shiny beacon', "a very good example of what every country should look to for what to become". Therefore, with Brexit, it seemed that this version of the UK as an aspirational cosmopolitan destination was damaged; Costas' cosmopolitan vision for the future became another chimera. It seemed that Brexit created a movement back in this developmental trajectory of nations becoming cosmopolitan hubs, and the UK began to

"look more like the countries that are more nationalistic, more isolationist". Brexit created the sense that the UK was becoming more like Greece, which saddened people like Costas who had hoped that Greece would become more the UK.

Though Costas had thought that he was escaping what he perceived as one of the more nationalist, isolationist countries of Europe, he found himself suddenly in a country where he began to feel *xenos* (foreign and unwelcome). The anti-immigration, nationalist, xenophobic narratives of Brexiteers and right-wing discourse presented challenges to Costas' cosmopolitan vision for the future. Though Costas did not think the majority of British people supported the anti-immigration sentiments associated with the Brexit vote, Costas had observed that the Prime Minister at the time- Teresa May- had supported the voice of isolationists in a way which threatened 'a future tied to cosmopolitanism' (cf. Bryant and Knight, 2019: 90). Costas felt that Teresa May had spoken critically about 'citizens of the world' and had implied that the "British here need to strengthen their national identity and send away the cosmopolitans". Costas felt that Teresa May had implied that a cosmopolitan person was "someone who doesn't have a country, who is not interested in anything greater than themselves other than their pocket and the money they receive". Costas felt that Brexit and the Conservative policies were "fighting against the people who are too liberal" on the grounds that these people don't have a religion, a nation, and are only interested in themselves. "These people who voted for Brexit were afraid of moving towards a goal that would strip them of their identities- that they would lose this national identity. This is what they were fighting against. But this is not what Britain used to be" (Costas, 36, lecturer)

Indeed, Costas did not agree with the version of cosmopolitanism that he felt Teresa May had implied in her speech at the conservative party conference. Costas disagreed with her view of cosmopolitans as people who 'do not have a country' who are 'not interested in anything greater than themselves' or who only care about money. In actual fact, Costas felt that nations are "very good and useful in giving many people an identity" and can be "very useful to defend your own country". Whilst Costas aspired towards a cosmopolitan future and hoped that one day there would not be any borders dividing people, he felt that creating a 'common government' would be more difficult in practice. Costas felt that if everyone was a cosmopolitan, then there would not be a strong sense of identity which would "bind them together as a group". Costas told me that people would not feel

motivated to defend their country in the case of an invasion, from Russia for example. Costas argued that if cosmopolitans felt that they could easily move to Germany or France they would 'simply leave' rather than stay to fight and sacrifice their lives and never see their loved ones again.

Without national identities, Costas argued that people would be stripped of "the one thing that can bind them together like glue"; you would just have individuals. Costas seemed to critique Benhabib's idea of transnational communities in his comment that creating community through sports teams, parliamentary parties or political opinions would be limited in their potential to create a sense of 'community' and 'unity' between people. Overall, it seemed that Costas was a 'rooted cosmopolitan'- someone who appreciated the benefits of national identities and who strongly valued the positive aspects of Greek society and culture. At the same time, Costas was critical of the negative and "dangerous" aspects of national identities like "jingoism". He explained that when people believe their nation is superior to another, they may exploit others and cause wars; people can be persuaded to attack another country. After Brexit, Costas felt that British people were fighting against liberal ideas. He was disappointed that Britain was no longer such a 'shiny beacon' of progressive society that he had hoped it would be. Even if the government allowed immigrants like him to stay in the UK, Costas explained that "the voice of isolationists, the voice of the racist, the voice of the jingoist has become too loud and now the prime minister feels they need to represent them".

Costas' narratives implied that "[t]he projects, actions, and ends which it is now acceptable to pursue have changed. A range of discourses on immigration, nationalism, and sovereignty have come to the fore in public debate, and leaving the European Union is now a goal toward which the British government is headed. As a result, something has changed; as an epoch of affective time, Brexit Britain undoubtedly feels different than before" (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 104). Just as a life worth living in Greece had become a chimera for Costas, Brexit created another layer of uncanniness and *xenitia* because things had not turned out as they should have. The vision, or promise, of Britain as a beacon of modernity and cosmopolitanism seemed to have been let down by the Brexit vote. Without physically moving, Brexit seemed to create a confusing sense of shifting geographies and temporalities for Costas and his wife Ismene. Whilst Costas and Ismene had moved West towards what they perceived to be a modern, cosmopolitan, liberal

reality; Brexit suddenly created the sense of shift back (East, towards Greece) towards a familiar reality of xenophobia and nationalism without them physically moving. As I have argued previously, it seemed that my informants considered their migration to London as a 'forward' movement, a move away from Greek parochialism and the *miseria* they felt living there. After Brexit, Costas and Ismene again felt the sense of 'regression' in their lives as their cosmopolitan vision of the future also seemed chimerical- illusory and impossible to achieve.

Nevertheless, Costas asserted that he refused to be negative about the situation by maintaining his faith that he could still shape the future. As I have argued in previous chapters, it seemed that my informants often engaged in a kind of 'heroic performance' whereby they wanted to assert their responsibility for their circumstances in order to resist *miseria* and performatively establish themselves as 'good immigrants'. It seemed that Costas possessed what Bryant and Knight refer to as a 'state of confidence' which can emerge among people "in which we assume that a state of affairs will continue, even though our experience tells us that it probably won't" (Seybold 2018) (Bryant and Knight, 2019: 91). According to Bryant and Knight, when expectations become futile, speculation flourishes. In moments of crisis, speculation seems to be a "type of self-deception about possible futures" (ibid: 101). In other words, we might say that people try to convince themselves that the futures that they hope for are still possible, despite the fact that their experience is telling them otherwise.

Indeed, whilst Costas felt that Brexit had disrupted the potential for a cosmopolitan future, he still maintained a sense of 'confidence' that he could help achieve his cosmopolitan vision for the world. He tried to not let Brexit and the jingoist mentality affect his desire to help others (especially his students) to create a better community- "better for Great Britain, better for the European Union, better for the whole Western, global world in the future". Costas acknowledged that this would be 'challenging' and hoped that he would still be given the opportunity to accomplish this cosmopolitan aspiration regardless of the challenges. As I explore below, Costas stressed the importance of adopting a 'good mentality' of taking responsibility for one's life prospects despite external setbacks. Whilst Brexit created new layers of precarity and uncertainty, Costas stressed that he and others must take personal responsibility for their situation.

For example, Costas told me that he was "responsible for trusting that we will have a better future here". If Costas ever returned to Greece, he anticipated that the gap in his employment record in Greece as a result of his migration to the UK might make it more difficult for him to be hired. Equally, the couple would have to take responsibility for their decision to leave their families behind. Costas stressed that he and Ismene will be "responsible for our actions and our decision to leave our country and come here and build a new family" just as "Britain will be responsible for the fate of its own citizens". Speaking of the impact of Brexit, Costas stressed that British people would have to face the consequences he expected they would face: the higher inflation rate, the loss of immigrants (and consequent loss of taxes), the higher rates of taxation, and the increased closed-mindedness of the society, the increasing struggle for people on benefits who will not have enough funding due to lost contributions from immigrants. Costas concluded: "everyone is responsible for their actions. We only hope that everyone will learn their lesson and take personal responsibility".

Indeed, Costas emphasised that despite his expectation that Brexit would bring negative effects, he and Ismene would still take responsibility for their decision to migrate. Of course, Brexit was not something which Costas and Ismene could influence; "we were not even given the right to vote even though we contribute financially to this society" he reminded me. Nevertheless, though Brexit was something over which he had no influence nor control, Costas claimed that he did not want to adopt the mentality that "many Greeks and Brexiteers have" to blame other people for their circumstances. Costas reiterated that his migration was ultimately his decision and responsibility, and he would not blame any problems on other people. Costas articulated a very neoliberal view of the self in his comments about the importance of 'personal responsibility'. It seemed that by 'taking responsibility' for his circumstances and not 'blaming others', Costas could assert that he was a 'good immigrant' in London.

Whilst some might argue that the rise of right-wing politics and anti-immigration sentiment might be posing a threat to the normative cosmopolitan vision, people like Costas have confidently clung to their hope for a cosmopolitan future in order to prove that they have moved away from Greek parochialism and achieved neoliberal success. Costas seemed to stress his continued confidence in the cosmopolitan norms that he still hoped underpinned British society. He still seemed to view the UK as a beacon of

modernity and progressive society. Though Brexit had seemed to challenge the viability of the cosmopolitan project, Costas still implied that he was more 'developed' and 'enlightened' than other Greeks in Greece because of his progressive cosmopolitan worldview. This said, below I critique some of my informants somewhat 'formulaic' narratives of cosmopolitanism and question the extent to which they can be considered truly cosmopolitan.

Cosmo-nationalism and the Classical Past

In this section I argue that my informant Romanos, a 24-year-old IT professional, employed formulaic narratives of cosmopolitanism as a way to assert his success despite the precarity and financial insecurity that he faced in London. Building on my previous discussion of *miseria* and collective suffering, I argue that Romanos used cosmopolitan narratives in order to performatively establish himself as a 'good immigrant' who was able to contribute to a 'collective performance of success' in London. However, I argue that whilst Romanos struggled to look cosmopolitan, he simultaneously demonstrated a nationalist positionality in the sense that he felt a sense of continuity with his 'Classical ancestors' and a sense of 'shared birth' with other Greek people. By situating Romanos' cosmopolitan narratives in the wider context of our relationship and his migration story, I intend to demonstrate the performative dynamics of formulaic narratives of cosmopolitanism and what this tells us about the colonised self.

> "Everyone being Brit or American or Greek or French or whatever. It's the same. We're all human beings. Why just set tags in groups where we cannot blend together and come together and be one…I don't care if you're black, I don't care if you're white, I don't care if you're pink, blue, red or whatever. You're a human being. We're the same and we're different in unique ways which my goal is to explore and learn from them" (Romanos, 24, IT professional).

During my participant observation, it was common for me to hear formulaic narratives of cosmopolitanism as being 'progressive' and 'open-minded'; that one was 'open' to cultural difference and that 'we are all human beings'. Taking his comments (above) at face value, we might say that Romanos felt that people should be valued as individuals irrespective of their belonging to any cultural or social collectivity. This is what Rapport refers to as the 'cosmopolitan project' of anthropology (cf. Rapport, 2012). We might consider the parallels between Romanos' call to 'not set tags' but 'blend and be one' and

Rapport's desire that 'Anyone' would be afforded "the space to live according to the fulfilment of his or her capacities to author an individual life- individual world-views, identity and life-project- and the right and encouragement so to do; the right to be universally recognised and engaged as himself or herself, and not merely as a member of a social category or class" (cf. Rapport, 2012: 2). Romanos' comment that people should not 'set tags' but 'come together and be one' seems similar to Rapport's 'cosmopolitan project' in this respect. However, in my discussion below I unpack Romanos' cosmopolitan comments within the wider context of his migration story to make my argument that his narrative implied colonised views of the self.

Romanos is an only-child of a Greek family who live in Sparta in Athens. Romanos is bilingual (Greek and English) and also speaks Spanish. Before moving to the UK, Romanos studied in the United States. He chose the UK and London because he speaks English fluently and he felt that this would make his immigration as smooth as possible. When I first met Romanos he had been living in London for two months. We had initially made contact through the Greek professionals Facebook page which Romanos had joined prior to moving abroad, in order to ask practical advice from other Greeks who had already migrated so that he could be more 'prepared'. Indeed, he had found his rental housemates through this group. However, on the whole Romanos had not made many arrangements prior to arriving in London and he arrived in London unemployed and with no friends or connections at all in the UK. As a recent graduate of IT, Romanos' first job in London was his first full time role. Having just completed his military service in Greece, Romanos explained that he was completely focused on his professional life. It took Romanos a month and a half to find a job as a maintenance repair associate. Whilst Romanos was a bit unhappy that he could not find a more challenging role, he was relieved to have found something because he had been unemployed since he initially made the move to London. When we first spoke, he had only spent one day in his new workplace.

For the first year that I spoke with Romanos, he only talked about the positive aspects of life in London. For example, in our first conversation he described his decision to migrate as stemming from his desire to "go abroad and start something new, to experience a new culture, to see how things work, how people behave and try to adapt to a new situation". It was only a year later that Romanos began to share with me how hard the initial experience of living in London had been to him. At this point, Romanos explained how he

had been living in government-owned, subsidised accommodation which had been mouldy, leaky and infested with pests. This was not something that he shared with me when we first met. At that first meeting, Romanos had described his migration as "turning a new page in his life book" and something which he chose to do for "the experience". As he put it: he wanted to experience a "whole new perspective of going abroad and starting life anew; the whole experience was what made me go for it". At the time it did strike me as unusual that Romanos was so positive about life in London, particularly when he described the meaning of *xenitia* as a positive experience of the unknown. Romanos completely obscured the negative connotations of the word. "I love exploring and I love adventure" he told me; "this is what *xenitia* means to me" he added. Of course, as I discussed previously, *xenitia* is more commonly understood as a painful experience of alienation and estrangement as a result of separation from one's home culture and loved ones, particularly the separation caused by migration abroad. Clearly, Romanos framed *xenitia* very differently in his early conversations with me, and this was another indicator that his narratives were sometimes formulaic and performative.

Throughout my fieldwork period, Romanos performatively established himself as a risk-taking individual who loved adventure. Romanos described himself as someone who loves to experience the "unknown, the risky, the dangerous" and explained how being stuck in the "status quo" of what you have been born into was not his way of thinking. In terms of Romanos' future plans, it remained the case throughout my fieldwork period that he wanted to continue to travel abroad and experience different cultures and countries. Romanos described how he did not want to be "stuck in a specific environment" but rather encounter different cultures and mentalities to feel motivated and interested in life and "become better as a human being". As I mentioned in my previous chapters, it seemed that the narratives of people like Romanos reflected a neoliberal view of the self. For example, Romanos described how he was always striving to 'improve' himself and 'become better'. He described learning to interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds as something which 'made him stronger' as a person- particularly given that in Greece he had spent his "entire life" living on his own in a room in his parents' house. In my view, Romanos' formulaic cosmopolitan narratives were part of this neoliberal and colonised view of the self. I would argue that Romanos wanted to prove that he was capable of moving away from the 'closed-mindedness', parochialism and *miseria* which he associated with Greece.

However, whilst Romanos said that he wanted to move away from the 'closed-mindedness' of Greece, beneath the surface of his formulaic narratives of cosmopolitanism I observed a kind of nationalist sentiment and a narrative of continuity with ancient Greece. Whilst Romanos struggled to look cosmopolitan, I would therefore argue that he was actually more cosmo-nationalist as he carried a strong sense of heritage and belonging to Greece. Based on our conversations it was clear that Romanos valued his Greek heritage and felt a sense of ethnic community with other Greeks abroad. For example, Romanos had taken part in a heritage programme for second generation Greeks living in America who would come to Greece to explore their Greek 'culture' and 'roots'. He described how he had led the group round the Acropolis, Hydra, Aegina and the museums in order that the Greek Americans get in touch with their roots and heritage. Romanos described how he was surprised that these Greek Americans who had lived abroad their entire lives felt at home when they visited Greece. He explained how they were "screaming and yelling as a typical Greek person does when they're having fun". He described how the group went to parties and traditional dances and how they "felt as one". Romanos felt like these people were "old friends" and told me that "from the very first time we met we felt like a community". Romanos described his perception that the group had things in common even before they spoke to each other. The group had discussed their shared Greek heritage and how they were "potentially born together at the same place". Romanos described how he felt a sense of belonging 'in his heart' which could not be described logically. It was a sense of past heritage and community.

To some extent Romanos might seem to fit the persona of a 'cosmopolitan patriot' (cf. Werbner, 2008). Werbner uses this term to describe people who value their own culture at the same time as wanting to learn from other cultures and become more 'open-minded'. However, I argue that this analytical term does not seem to accommodate the performative dynamic to my informants' cosmopolitan narratives which relate to neoliberal and colonised ideas of the self. Instead, I would propose the term 'cosmopolitan intimacy' based on the fact that some of my informants seemed to 'perform' cosmopolitan narratives to outsiders, but in other contexts and between each other shared an 'intimate' sense of connection to an idea of the nation based on the legacy of Classical Greece. My term 'cosmopolitan intimacy' is derived from Herzfeld's term 'cultural intimacy' (cf. Herzfeld, 1997). In Herzfeld's description, that which is 'culturally intimate' is somewhat embarrassing to outsiders but a source of familiarity and bonding

for Greeks themselves. Herzfeld's term 'cultural intimacy' is related to his concept of *disemia* which refers to the 'two sides' of Greek identity- that which relates to Greece's Classical past- the Hellenic side- and that which is more Eastern- 'the Romeic' side. Herzfeld argues that the 'Romeic' side refers to that which is 'culturally intimate' whereas the Hellenic side is the one that Greeks tend to want to present to outsiders, as it is Greece's Classical past which has been idealised by European countries and Greeks themselves.

In my conceptualisation of 'cosmopolitan intimacy', I argue that two important things have changed. Firstly, some Greeks in London seem to have become 'post-ambivalent' in relation to *disemia* such that they no longer consider themselves to be as attached to the traditionally 'culturally intimate' aspects of Greece's Eastern past. Many of my informants rejected so much what they considered 'backward', 'parochial' and 'unmodern' about Greece that they no longer seemed to share a 'cultural intimacy' with other Greeks about these aspects of Greek society. Given the transitions to cosmopolitan and neoliberal selfhood, it seems that the new form of intimacy shared with other Greeks is now the idealisation of Greece's Classical past. In the context of post-Brexit Britain, it seems that cosmopolitan narratives have become the 'outward facing' aspect (version presented to outsiders) as relationality seems to have shifted beyond communities in Greece to a more transnational form of neoliberal citizenship.

Like Romanos, my informant Priam- a secondary school teacher aged 37- idealised Greece's Classical past and expressed the view that contemporary Greeks were a 'degenerate' version of their ancestors. During a conversation over a drink at our local pub, Priam expressed his critique of the way that a high-achieving Albanian girl had been treated, as she had been denied the opportunity to carry the national flag at a parade as per the Greek tradition that marks Greece's defeat of the Italians. Whilst to outsiders Priam's narrative (below) might seem to reflect cosmopolitan aspirations for the integration of immigrants, it is clear that the 'insider' view demonstrates a strong critique of Greeks themselves as a 'degenerate' form of their Classical ancestors. Therefore, I would argue that Priam's anti-nationalist stance is another example of the crypto-colonial dynamics of Greek people's view of contemporary Greeks as a 'degenerate' version of their ancestors.

> "On the news they reported that an Albanian girl got the best mark in her school. There's this tradition in Greece that whoever gets the highest mark gets to carry the flag in the march marking the defeat of the Italians. The Albanian girl was asked to carry the flag. Greece gave her a home. The church was bitching and moaning. The right-wing conservative politicians were bitching and moaning, extreme nationals were bitching and moaning. I said 'no, she should carry the flag. She's doing far better than the average Greek little shit who just wants to live off his mum and dad, go to beach, go to rave parties. She has top grades in Ancient Greek, history, and literature… She should carry it with pride, she should'. That's when I fell out with the nationalist cause, big time. It was very stupid. She's Albanian. Good for her. We should be looking up to her. You get these Greeks on the island who grow up doing nothing. They inherit their businesses from their parents; they don't do anything. They have no education or aspirations, they just run their summer businesses so they can go on holiday and come back and say 'awh I'm a Greek'. I don't accept that. To me a Greek has gone down in history for being a warrior, a philosopher, someone who aspires. We colonised, we marched, we were thinkers. Being a Greek meant we had those values." (Priam, 37, teacher).

To some extent, Priam's call for a more 'inclusive' attitude towards Albanian immigrants in Greece might seem to reflect the desire to create 'one human community' and fulfil a Kantian ideal of cosmopolitanism. However, I would suggest that cosmopolitanism was more of an 'idiom' through which Priam expressed 'ideological notions' of how people should behave in the context of economic crisis (cf. Knight, 2015: 121). During our conversation, Priam expressed his frustration at previous generations of Greeks who Priam felt were partly responsible for the economic crisis in Greece. He suggested that people of his father's generation had overspent on material goods, borrowing more than what they could afford due to the increase options to buy with credit. Priam explained what he referred to as a 'Neo-Greek' mentality- a derogatory insult which implies that someone produces nothing and does nothing. Priam was critical of Greek people who go to parties, inherit their parents' businesses, and do not have 'aspirations' as he put it. Priam was angry that these Greeks were not treated as badly as immigrants in Greek society, such as the Albanian girl who was not permitted to carry the Greek flag at her school.

As his comments show, Priam was critical of this 'Neo-Greek' mentality and Priam was nostalgic for the kind of values Greeks had in the Classical past. "To me a Greek has gone

down in history for being a warrior, a philosopher, someone who aspires, we colonised, we marched, we were thinkers. Being a Greek meant we had those values". Priam wanted Greece and Greeks to return (in the future) to what Greece once was. Of course, this is another example of Kirtsoglou's term 'anticipatory nostalgia' (cf. Kirtsoglou, 2020). His sense of progress was nostalgia because he knew what this future should look like (it should look like the past). It was because Priam felt that modern Greeks were a 'degenerate' version of their Classical ancestors that he 'fell out with the nationalist cause'. Therefore, whilst on the surface Priam's narrative might imply a cosmopolitan positionality, it seems more important to say that his view reflected a crypto-colonial view of modern Greeks as a 'degenerate' version of their Classical ancestors who had lost touch with their ancient Greek values.

Vernacular cosmopolitanism, resistance, and neoliberal ethics

In this next part of the chapter, I discuss the 'Eastern side' of the *disemic* spectrum of Greek identity. Some of my informants felt that the normative version of cosmopolitanism was a Western ideology which was inferior to or less authentic than their own 'quintessentially Greek' values of humanity and care. On the one hand, I consider these informants' value of 'humanity' as an example of a 'vernacular' or 'marginal' form of cosmopolitanism which to some extent subverted the dominance of the more 'elitist' version of cosmopolitanism. However, I argue that these informants seemed to 'resist' the supposedly 'Western' ideas of cosmopolitanism through a rather exoticizing view of Greek culture as hospitable and caring. Furthermore, I argue that this resistance contained a kind of compromise because my informants' ideas and practice of 'humanity' were still embroiled in neoliberal ethics of care. In this respect I contribute to Muehlebach's work 'The Moral Neoliberal', and her arguments about the rise of ethical citizenship whereby "to be truly human means to act in affect-laden ways, to be moved by visceral feeling" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134). My contribution to theories of cosmopolitanism is to demonstrate that vernacular and marginal cosmopolitanisms may be conceptualised as "an alternative form of globalised thinking, produced by disenfranchised subjects who are concerned with political and ideological hegemony" (Theodossopoulos and Kirtsoglou, 2013: 169); however, this resistance was also a kind

of compromise in that such 'vernacular cosmopolitan' ideals of humanity were embroiled within neoliberal ethics of care.

Jason is a thirty-six-year-old consultant from Athens who has lived in London since 2016. Ten years before moving to London, Jason moved to Scotland to study for a postgraduate degree. He described his initial decision to study abroad as "a moment where the road branches out and you think 'what if'". Since then, Jason and all of his friends have left Greece to migrate to Europe. Jason explained that he moved to London because he was "frustrated with the *miseri* situation" in Greece. Indeed, Jason was one of my informants who felt that Greece's modernist success had become a chimera. He disliked that to get a job in Greece you had to "rely on favours" or "who you know". In Greece, Jason had been offered a job with no contract because "they were more like a family than a company; it was more a collective or a socialist kind of thing rather than a modern company" he explained. As a consultant, Jason would have only received a cut, with no guarantee of income. He described that in Greece he would be "working for nothing" unless he found his own clients, in which case he might receive ten percent commission. Jason told me this was "a very Greek way of doing things; nothing on the table, nothing concrete, everything is fluid". Jason explained that he preferred his job in London, with a guaranteed payment at the end of every month. Jason was 'grateful' that the UK offered him the opportunity to work in a 'meritocratic system' as he put it.

At the same time, Jason felt that he was 'building on sand' in London because he felt caught in a 'betwixt and between' position of wanting to return to Greece but knowing that this was not possible. Whilst Jason thought the 'real *xenitia'* would be in Greece, he still felt entangled with *xenitia* in London. Compared to my other informants, Jason appeared to be quiet and shy. He explained that he had struggled to make friends with people in London and found that the pace of life meant that no-one had time to socialise because they were always 'on the run' to and from work. Jason felt that society in London lacked humanity because of these capitalist rhythms of work and social life. To some extent he was nostalgic for life in Greece. He explained that sometimes he wanted to go to Greek coffee shops in London because it was a "very familiar picture". Indeed, it reminded Jason of how he and his friends had socialised in this way in Athens when they had lived in Greece. In London, Jason explained that he had not made friends with Greek people. Jason felt the Greeks he had met were 'snobby'. He explained that Greeks in

London would make judgements about people based on how much money they make and where they live. Jason was disappointed that his 'countrymen and women' were making fun of him, and he was upset that he felt he could not join the social scene with other Greeks in London. As I explain below, Jason was nostalgic for the positive aspects of Greekness which he located on the 'Eastern' side of the *disemic* spectrum of Greek identity.

During one of our conversations Jason explained in his own words what Herzfeld refers to as the *disemia* of Greek identity- that there was a "deep side in the east" which includes "many good things like opening your arms to strangers". Jason explained how 'opening your arms to strangers' and offering 'hospitality' were part of the ancient Greek value of *filoxenia,* which literally translates to 'friend of a stranger' and according to Jason was a fundamental aspect of 'Greekness'. According to Jason, Greece is a 'peculiar' country because it has "one foot in the east and one foot in the West". Jason explained that in Greece "there are many varieties. People are balancing between these two sides, and you don't know where the balance will actually stop. So, there are many Western people and many Eastern people and people in between. So, you don't know what you'll expect" (Jason, 36, consultant).

Later in our conversation, Jason explained how the 'two sides' of Greek identity were visible in people's comments on the Facebook group for Greek professionals in London. On the one hand, there were "people bickering about the smallest thing; they're petty and they're cruel". On the other hand, there are "people that go out of their way to do everything to help you" and who say "very touching things" about wanting to help people who are struggling with loneliness living in London. Jason explained his view that Greeks have "a dark side and a very bright side". In relation to his own positionality, Jason explained that there were aspects of Greek society which he did not like- the 'corruption', the 'inability' of Greek people to 'properly' queue and wait their turn, and so on. At the same time, Jason felt that Greek people could be incredibly empathetic and kind towards strangers (some Greeks still demonstrated the ancient Greek values of *filoxenia*) as he communicated through a story of his recent flight to Greece.

Jason explained that six Greek people at the airport had pushed in front of him at the check-in desk when he had to remove some items from his bag. He found this annoying, and explained how he had become used to 'the Gatwick thing'- i.e. the British way of

queuing. In this story, Jason positioned himself on the 'Western' and 'European' side of the *disemic* split of Greek identity and joked about the aspects of Greek society that were 'culturally intimate'- somewhat embarrassing to outsiders but a source of humour among Greeks themselves. As Jason put it: "I enjoy some things that work. I enjoy driving and not actually having road rage because no one's out there to kill you. I enjoy waiting in lines and no one actually cutting in line". At the same time, Jason explained how later on his journey, during the descent before landing in London, there was a lady in front of him who was afraid of flying. Whilst Jason had previously been annoyed at how the Greek people had pushed in front of him in the baggage queue, he also conveyed to me how kind Greek people could be to strangers in need. As he explained it:

> "twenty minutes before landing there was a woman who was very afraid of flying. She was in the back and moved forward to sit next to me. And the steward said she couldn't do anything for her. The woman who was afraid was Greek. The woman in front of her was also Greek and overheard her distress. She turned back and started talking to her. Then she held her hand- they were complete strangers- and spoke soothingly. She held her hand for twenty minutes until they landed. I thought this was very nice, very touching. Ok, we may cut in line but we're also capable of this as well" (Jason, 36, consultant).

Whilst Jason respected the ancient Greek value of *filoxenia*, Jason was self-conscious about demonstrating this value in London. It seemed that this 'bright side' of Greekness was that which was 'culturally intimate' as he was somewhat embarrassed about wanting to connect with other Greek people in London in this way. He explained that "one part of me wants to talk to other Greek people, and another part of me says that these people don't want a stranger to come up to them; it's a very small-villagey kind of thing to do. But I would so enjoy having a neighbour who was Greek". Indeed, Jason seemed caught 'betwixt and between' the two sides of his Greekness, and during our conversations he continually reflected on his positionality and whether he was doing enough to emulate the positive aspects of Greekness that he valued. For example, Jason reflected critically on his more 'introverted' personality, which he seemed to feel made him less able to demonstrate *filoxenia*- the ability to show care to strangers. Jason explained that it was not easy for him to reach out to others, even in moments where this would be the best thing. For example, Jason described how one day he was on a packed train and a girl in front of him started crying for twenty minutes. "My instincts were to talk to her, to ask her if she was alright, to offer her a tissue or some water". Jason explained how he was

trying to decide whether or not to say something and felt angry that he may have made the wrong choice given that he chose not to act.

I would argue that Jason's reflections illustrate Muehlebach's arguments about ethical action as linked to introspection and public display. Jason's experience seems to demonstrate how "proper ethical action" requires people to "recognise the suffering of others" and then "listen to their innermost selves" for emotions like anger, compassion, or pity (Muehlebach, 2012: 120). In her ethnography of volunteer training groups in Italy, Muehlebach explains how the volunteer-students' attention was attuned toward "deciphering one's innermost thoughts and feelings "that otherwise remain hidden; a care of or 'worry about' the self whereby one's soul is put under constant scrutiny and then disclosed (Foucault, 1997: 223). The self here became 'something to which one relates', and a site through which interior and exterior domains were crisply distinguished from each other (Matza, 2009: 498-499). Yet crucially, this hermeneutics of the self or *souci de soi* could only be triggered by the recognition of others' suffering, a *souci des autres"* (Muehlebach, 2012: 120)*.* After "tuning in to" and "scrutinising" the "stirrings of their hearts", the students engaged in a self-conscious articulation of their feelings through writing and quasi-confessional speaking. Muehlebach explains how in their class the volunteers attempted to combine their intentions with action (cf. Foucault, 1997) in order to "ideally, be translated into publicly valuable unwaged labour" (Muehlebach, 2012: 120). Indeed, Muehlebach explains how the aim was not for volunteers to 'see with their eyes' but rather, "through a fine-tuning of one's senses and sensitivities toward one's interiority" one would 'see with the heart". This was "a different register of perception and action altogether", Muehlebach notes; one that was "based on a conception of will not as rational, utilitarian, instrumentalist, but as empathetic and desirous of social relations" (Muehlebach, 2012: 120).

Muehlebach's ethnography and Jason's narrative also indicate Arendt's argument that "value is something that a thing can 'never possess in privacy but acquires automatically in the moment it appears in public' (Arendt, 1958: 164, cited in Muehlebach, 2012: 132). In Muehlebach's discussion of ethical citizenship among volunteers in Italy she argues that *"*only through such a public appearance could the value of social solidarity be produced…All classes were exercises through which 'the greatest forces of intimate life, the passions of the heart, the thoughts of the mind, the delights of the senses' were

brought into a 'reality where they are seen and heard' (50). These forces would not be real until transformed into shapes that fit public, standardised expectation" (Muehlebach, 2012: 132). Based on my ethnography, I would argue that Jason felt similarly about the need for him to express his values in public. It seemed that he always regretted not *doing* something to express his values. It seemed that he was critical of his lack of action, as it did not do enough to demonstrate that he *felt* anything at all towards people who were suffering in London. Unlike my informant Kassandra, who I discuss shortly, Jason seemed to have 'failed' to transform his affect into a pragmatic form of empathy and hence successfully illustrate his ethical citizenship; it seemed that Jason had not achieved the state of co-suffering that was visible and public.

Neoliberal ethics of care

Muehlebach's book 'The moral neoliberal: Welfare and citizenship in Italy' (Muehlebach, 2012) is based on Muehlebach's participant observation in volunteer training classes in Italy in late 2005 and her conversations with volunteers, volunteer leaders, and religious leaders. In her chapter 'The Production of Compassion', Muehlebach describes a moment in her fieldwork when she was attending a volunteering training class offering by a Catholic organisation in Milan. She opens her chapter by describing the comment that a lady sitting next to her said about a nurse and the way that she was treating patients 'very badly'. The lady told Muehlebach that for this nurse, "this is just a *job.* She doesn't care at all" (Muehlebach, 2012: 103). In her chapter, Muehlebach argues that the Italian state "has fostered a legal, institutional, and affective environment within which feelings such as love and compassion come to be mobilised for the public good" (Muehlebach, 2012: 104). She argues that "the state directly or indirectly marshals what it imagines as the affective and empathetic stances of citizens. It thus puts 'emotion'- conventionalised, stabilised, and qualified sensibilities (Massumi, 1995)- to work" (Muehlebach, 2012: 104).

In her book, Muehlebach discusses what she refers to as the 'new logic of welfare' in neoliberal publics. She argues that "[t]he production of a sympathetic citizenry is, in short, accompanied by a corollary process whereby the state…makes itself appear dispassionate" (Muehlebach, 2012: 105). Through her ethnographic vignettes, Muehlebach argues that the sovereign state has been replaced with "the caring acts of the sovereign individual" and argues that whilst "society is still a site for rational and

technocratic state intervention, this intervention is geared mainly toward its production as a site of conspicuous affective practice". Muehlebach argues that "[i]n contrast to social citizenship, the highly moralised neoliberal public assumes bonds between citizens not because they are equal in status or because they inhabit the same public as irreducibly social citizens. Rather, the public is built through particular feelings of and acting upon suffering and thus between parties who are by definition unequal. Put differently, the rise of ethical citizenship is an instantiation of a more general trend toward a moralisation of a public sphere that modernist social ontologies used to think of in predominantly political and rational terms (Ticktin, 2005)." (Muehlebach, 2012: 133).

Muehlebach is critical of these transformations. She argues that the rise of ethical citizenship has meant that now "[t]o be truly human means to act in affect-laden ways, to be moved by visceral feeling…by wilful intuition rather than deliberation". She argues that there is an "emphasis on peoples' capacity to be touched by the suffering of others, and to connect to these others through a shared humanity". Muehlebach is critical of how the humanitarian public thus depends on "the fickle dispositions of individuals…rather than on universal law…on visceral feelings that wax and wane rather than on the sureties of social citizenship" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134). In this respect, Muehlebach's critique is similar to that of Hannah Arendt who is "sceptical about passions as central to public practice" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134). Arendt has argued that "a public flooded with compassion is 'pre-political' because it is overwhelmed by cares and worries which belong in the sphere of the household" (Arendt, 2006 [1963]: 81). "It is non-public because the common good is recognised as being founded on nothing more than individuals' willingness to feel and act upon feeling- feelings that are by definition incapable of transcending individual will and predilection (Berlant 2004; Rutherford 2009). This public enjoins people in what appears as an unmediated, intense space of cosuffering and affective communion. It encompasses them within a relationship that is not based on universalistic rights mediated by the state, but on voluntaristic, face-to-face action; not on a politics of equality, but on emotions and cosuffering" (Muehlebach, 2012: 134-5).

Muehlebach reflects that "[t]here is a strange cruelty to this project, one that Hannah Arendt commented on when she wrote about the cruelty of pity- a feeling that can be 'enjoyed for its own sake' and will 'automatically lead to a glorification of its cause, which

is the suffering of others'. The insertion of pity and compassion into the centre of the welfarist public is just that- cruel because it demands and indeed could not exist without the presence of misfortune…Put differently, pity is not invested in the overcoming of suffering or the production of equality. It revels in the status quo and locks those who feel pity and those who are pitied into an immutable, frozen embrace. In this sense pity is structurally equivalent with charity which…wounds so profoundly because it 'does not enhance solidarity'. Instead, it exists outside of any mutual ties and 'entails no further claims from the recipient' (Douglas, 1990: vii)" (Muehlebach, 2012: 135).

As I mentioned in the introductory chapters to this thesis, my research contributes to Muehlebach's and Douglas' comments about solidarity, given that what was missing in my sample of Greek professionals in London was a truly leftist or Marxist version of cosmopolitanism as based on ideas of a class-based solidarity. As I explain below, my informant Kassandra's empathetic engagement with a homeless woman on the street can be considered to be an example of a kind of 'gifting' that is based on a kind of 'pity' which 'does not enhance solidarity'. I would suggest that my research demonstrates that neoliberal ethics of care are at work in British society. Even when some of my informants felt that they were resisting the transformations brought by neoliberalism through their 'vernacular cosmopolitan' practice of the supposedly quintessentially Greek value of 'humanity', I argue that these practices of care were entangled with a neoliberal ethics of care.

Kassandra is a young woman (26 years old) who works in the performing arts industry in London. I first met Kassandra in a coffee shop close to the Mediterranean deli where she works part-time. Kassandra was at the coffee shop with two friends who also work in theatre. Kassandra and I met up on another occasion for one-on-one drinks in a gentrified area of London in a smart cocktail bar with marble floors and velvet seats. After ordering our drinks we chatted about how our week had been. Kassandra told me that she had had a really intense week at work. She was feeling very tired because she had to step in for a colleague which meant she had worked a 15-hour day. Kassandra explained how she does not get lunch breaks at work and has to stand up for the majority of her shifts. Whilst Kassandra liked her job and her colleagues, she told me over our drinks that she had experienced some problems in her personal life; she had split up with her partner. Kassandra explained that she had been under a lot of stress because her partner

had moved out of their flat and had left her with the entirety of the rent to pay. However, Kassandra explained that she did not want to move out of the flat because she liked having her own bathroom. Indeed, when Kassandra first moved to London, she was shocked to discover that she would have to share a house with other people. She joked that this was something she had expected in "communist Russia, not London".

As a result of the difficulties in her personal life, Kassandra explained that she was experiencing health issues which she described as "my body's way of telling me to stop"[59]. Indeed, Kassandra was suffering from irregularities with her heart and issues with her blood count. She recently gave blood as part of a clinical trial to explore these issues. Kassandra explained that she had felt very exhausted and unwell afterwards and made sure that she went to get a sandwich and a cake from a coffee shop to help her feel better. On her way out of the coffee shop, however, Kassandra noticed an old woman in her eighties who was homeless. Kassandra noticed that everyone else was walking past her and ignoring her. "Of course, I gave her my sandwich and cake", Kassandra explained. After Kassandra gave her food, the woman kissed her hand out of gratitude. Kassandra told me that she had thought to herself at the time, "don't kiss my hand, I'm twenty-six, and you're eighty; I should be doing more, this is nothing".

Kassandra took responsibility for the woman's situation despite her own need for food after giving blood. Kassandra's empathetic engagement with the homeless woman in London seems to illustrate Kirtsoglou's comments that "humanity in the Greek context is performatively established in practical terms through one's behaviour at an everyday level and that "Greek people tend to feel responsible for what they do and for what they let happen to others" (Kirtsoglou, 2018: 140). In her paper, Kirtsoglou discusses the importance of empathy upon which humanity depends- the idea that one can recognise the position of the other and imagine oneself in that position in order to appreciate their current problems and conditions (Kirtsoglou, 2018: 141). In fact, Kassandra thought she should have done even more to help the woman. In this respect, I consider that Kassandra's actions might be interpreted using Herzfeld's comments about *philotimo* in Greek society- ""an important component of which is the ability to recognise one's social 'obligations'" (*ipohreosis*) (Herzfeld, 1987: 80).

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[59] As I explained in my third ethnographic chapter, my informants conceptualised such health issues as an embodiment of *miseria.*

In his ethnography, Herzfeld writes how one demonstrates one's *philotimo* by "insisting on doing what one can" and acting according to "the social expectations commensurate with one's presumed wealth, education, and status" (Herzfeld, 1987: 80). The social value of generosity is a balance of the material value of what is given, against one's presumed level of wealth. To some extent, we can consider Kassandra's decision to give her food to the homeless woman after giving blood as an example of Herzfeld's description of *philotimo*. I would argue that when Kassandra mentioned that she had given blood and was feeling faint and unwell, she demonstrated that "she still insists on doing what she can" despite being in a kind of 'poverty' of energy. It seems that we can consider Kassandra's anecdote to have the "same rhetoric of *exaggeration by inversion"* (ibid) where she implied that the homeless woman matched Kassandra's own social worth in her comment that she "should be doing more". It seemed that Kassandra wanted to 'match society's best expectations' of her as Herzfeld phrases it.

This said, I would argue that Muehlebach's ideas are a necessary extension to these concepts of *philotimo* and humanity. Whilst these concepts from Greek studies still fit Kassandra's experience, I would argue that more needs to be said about the crypto-colonial and neoliberal dynamics to Kassandra's empathetic engagement with the homeless woman in London. My contribution is therefore to extend Herzfeld's comments about 'matching society's expectations' by considering how these expectations have a neoliberal dimension. I therefore suggest that Kassandra's resistance to the 'uncaring' and neoliberal nature of British society still seemed entangled with neoliberal ethics of care. Whilst Kassandra felt that she was practicing a quintessentially Greek value of 'humanity', which I conceptualise as a form of 'vernacular cosmopolitanism', her actions seem to reflect Muehlebach's comments about co-suffering, spontaneous action and the 'new logic of welfare' in neoliberal publics.

I would argue that Kassandra's experience supports Muehlebach's observation that "the state has attempted to produce a compassionate citizenry willing to carry the burden of care" (Muehlebach, 2012: 110). Below, I explore Muehlebach's points about cosuffering, spontaneous giving, and the 'new logic of welfare' in relation to my conversations with Kassandra. As I explained previously, Muehlebach argues that there is a 'new logic of welfare' in neoliberal publics whereby the state withdraws and becomes dispassionate, and, in its wake emerges a sympathetic citizenry motivated by their affective and

empathetic stances to take responsibility for the welfare of others. As I said, Muehlebach describes the transformations towards an affective ethical citizenship whereby feelings such as love and compassion are "put to work", to be 'mobilised for the public good' (Muehlebach, 2012: 104).

One of the ways in which these affective dispositions are fostered is through co-suffering, which for Muehlebach's volunteering leaders was a means to help students "cultivate the feeling of pain both as a prerequisite to ethical citizenship and as a form of productive agency in itself" (Muehlebach, 2012: 121). I would argue that Kassandra's interaction with the homeless woman in London is also an example of this 'technique of cosuffering' given that Kassandra chose to go without the food she had bought despite the fact that she was feeling faint and unwell after giving blood. It seemed that Kassandra wanted to "share" the homeless woman's "state of suffering"- to offer not only material support but moral support. Like Muehlebach's informants, Kassandra seemed to "co-endure" a kind of pain that was not "a distanced attempt" but more of a "personal attempt at consoling and curing (that is, inhabiting a social relationship) (Asad 2003: 48)" (Muehlebach, 2012: 121).

Another similarity between Kassandra's actions and those of Muehlebach's volunteers seems to be the idea that action is based on "strong motivations that were properly grounded". Kassandra appeared to have made, like Muehlebach's informants, an "explicit and conscious choice to act…the choice to gift and to give (*regalare e donare*) to others" and to engage with those in need with "humility (*umilita),* maturity, and an acute consciousness of why we were committing to volunteering [or helping] and what we had to offer" (Muehlebach, 2012: 124). In addition, Muehlebach explains how this motivation to give was expected to be 'spontaneous' and 'personal'. In her conversations with volunteers at the Humanitarian Society, Muehlebach explains how her informants described volunteering as a "function of pure, selfless giving" and "something that arose from a desire and will to do good"; it was something that "comes from the heart" and "something you believe in" (ibid).

Indeed, Muehlebach describes how her informants had "perfectly internalised the ideology of gifting. They presented themselves as sovereign subjects and their activities as rooted in the realms of unmediated, autonomous affect. Thus, though these women and men had shown that the production of seemingly private and unmediated affect and

action can become a site for politics of insubordination ('I am not ready to fill the holes produced by a retreating public sector! I'm not ready to work for free when I should be paid!') they simultaneously also presented themselves to me as having thoroughly submitted to the legal-theological inscription of their ethical practice as pure, unmediated, and untouched." (Muehlebach, 2012: 131).

In a similar way to how Muehlebach's informants were critical of the fact that they were 'filling the holes' produced by others' inaction, Kassandra expressed her critique of the way that homeless people were treated in British society. Kassandra was shocked at how many homeless people she encountered in London. She had expected London to be 'better' than Greece in this respect, because of her aspirational view of London as 'progressive' and economically successful. Whilst Kassandra knew there were homeless people in Greece, she explained that these people were primarily illegal immigrants who did not have papers to allow them to work. Kassandra had not expected to see so many homeless people in London, nor had she expected that she would think of British society as 'uncaring'. In contrast to her expectations about London, Kassandra felt that the poor treatment of homeless people in Greece was inevitable and more understandable because of the large numbers of illegal immigrants who had settled in the country with few prospects to enter the job market. In London- with its supposedly better infrastructure, job market and economy- Kassandra had not expected to find British people on the streets, and especially not an old woman who would have been someone's grandmother as she put it. Indeed, Kassandra could not understand how British people could 'let one of their own live on the streets', and she was shocked to find that people walking by had found it so easy to ignore this homeless woman.

After this incident, Kassandra started to critique the hierarchical dynamics between Greece and the UK in our conversations. Kassandra began to question the supposedly 'cosmopolitan' and 'progressive' nature of British society and the supposed 'backwardness' or 'inferiority' of Greece. Kassandra seemed to subvert the benchmark for 'progressive' society by suggesting that it was her Greek values of humanity and care which were the more 'progressive'. Rather than compare Greece to the 'benchmark' of the UK, it seemed that Kassandra flipped the comparison, to compare the 'lack' of care in London to the 'benchmark' of her Greek value of humanity. However, as I have said, whilst Kassandra felt that she was subverting the hierarchical relationship between Greece and

the UK, it seemed that she was still caught up in neoliberal ethics of care. Kassandra seemed to have reflected these values of spontaneous and personal action in her decision to give away her food and drink. It seems that Kassandra's practice of humanity was motivated by affect which arose 'from the heart' and which therefore implied a neoliberal ethic of care as personal responsibility. For this reason, I would argue that Kassandra's resistance to the 'uncaring' and neoliberal nature of British society still seemed entangled with neoliberal ethics of care. Kassandra's resistance entailed a kind of 'compromise'.

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Conclusion

This thesis has focused on the lives and experiences of young, Greek professional migrants living in London. Based on my ethnographic fieldwork in London between 2018 and 2020, I have explored my informants' migration journeys, and the effects of the UK's decision to leave the EU on their lives and hopes for the future. In my first ethnographic chapter, I approached the recent 'Brain Drain' of young professionals from Greece to the UK as an example of extractive economic dynamics between Europe and its periphery. In my focus on the migration of the increasingly vulnerable professional class and their efforts to preserve a middle-class life through mobility, my thesis complements critiques of neoliberalism which have focused on refugees and labour migrants. In my thesis I have agreed with Kirtsoglou that the refugee and the professional are not contrasting dichotomies; rather they "form a rhizome, a complex symbolic space where modern political subjectivities are produced and performed in relation to some imagined forms of radical alterity" (Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris, 2016: 8). I have discussed the 'aesthetics of eligibility' which determine which 'kinds' of migrant are able to 'belong' in Europe. Particularly given the context of Brexit, my work has highlighted the neoliberal basis to the criteria of desirability to British society. From the perspective of my informants, I have explored the precarity that Brexit has caused, but also explained many of my informants' confidence that as successful neoliberal citizens they would retain their rights to live and work wherever they wanted.

In this thesis my approach has been to stress the extractive and crypto-colonial dynamics of my informants' migration from Greece to the UK. I also explored cosmopolitanism from this angle. In my final ethnographic chapter, I explored different versions and visions of cosmopolitanism, and contributed to anthropological debates over whether cosmopolitanism is necessarily an elitist discourse. I explored how some of my informants painted Greece as backward, not modern, and not progressive, and I argued that for both neoliberal and anti-nationalist cosmopolitans, both reflected a move away from Greek parochialism and both exemplified neoliberal and colonised ideas of the self and the idea that Greeks are a 'degenerate' version of their Classical ancestors. Secondly, I contributed to anthropological theories of vernacular or marginal cosmopolitanisms and considered the extent to which my informants' alternative visions of 'humanity' were

subversive of the normative version of cosmopolitanism. I argued that this 'vernacular' version of cosmopolitanism was based on a rather exoticizing view of Greek culture as hospitable and caring, and I built upon Muehlebach's work to suggest that these informants' practices of humanity seemed to reflect a neoliberal ethic of care.

Throughout my ethnographic chapters, I argued that my informants' narratives reflected neoliberal ideas of the self. I also explored how ideas of moral and financial debt were internalised in my informants' subjectivity. Building on the work of Lazzarato and Graeber, I argued that my informants wanted to assert that they were 'good immigrants' who were productive, neoliberal citizens, not only to prove their right to live and work in the UK after Brexit, but also to distance themselves from the negative stereotypes of Greek people as 'corrupt' and 'lazy'. I explored how some of my informants seemed to have internalised the crypto-colonial expectations that Greece should 'catch up' with countries like the UK, and I built on anthropological critique that such culturalist tropes of responsibility for the economic crisis have undertones of orientalism. At the same time, I explained that my sample reflects a certain demographic of people with modernist aspirations and ideas about progress and success. I discussed the tensions between these informants and others (particularly my informants' friends still in Greece) whose ideas about solidarity challenged this neoliberal view of success and progress. Some of my informants lost friends as a result of differences in their mentalities, which I explored in relation to ideas of *disemia*- the 'two sides' of Greek identity.

An important contribution of my thesis has been my argument that the nature of *disemia* has changed to a state of post-ambivalence for many Greeks with a modernist positionality who no longer see Greece as 'home'. My work does not only impact Greek studies and the concept of *disemia* but speaks to wider discussions of how we think about culture and community in diasporic contexts. As my ethnography has shown, 'mentality' was clearly a more important basis for my informants' relationships with others than any idea of shared culture or nationality. As I have explained throughout my thesis, it is no longer the case that Greeks abroad can be said to form a homogenous community. Indeed, my thesis contributed a reformed understanding of *xenitia,* which I have argued was more of a trope than a topological register. I argued that we cannot consider there to be a stable sense of 'home' as understood as a national or cultural community whereby those outside the borders of Greece are considered to be living in *xenitia*. On the contrary, my

ethnography has shown that many modernist Greeks in London considered the 'real *xenitia'* to be located in Greece, which I explored through the lens of *miseria*. In my ethnographic chapters, I contributed the argument that some of my informants perceived their hopes and visions that Greece would accomplish a particular modernist trajectory of progress to have become a chimera- something that they considered illusory and impossible to achieve. Through this lens of the chimerical, I explored the impacts of crisis on my informants' lives and migration journeys, taking an affective and sensory approach.

In my thesis I also suggested that transnational approaches to migration should focus more on the affective, sensory, and temporal aspects of migration. In my thesis I linked together theories of affect and temporality to understand my informants' migration journeys and their hopes and expectations to create a middle-class life worth living. My work contributed to theories of crisis, regression, and ruination. In particular, my discussion of certain informants' chimerical view of Greece's modernist progress extended anthropological understanding of the 'abject' and the 'uncanny' in contexts of crisis. My contribution was to explore the micro-materialities and ambiguous materialities of this chimerical view of Greece. I also explored the rhizomatic assemblages and entanglements between materiality, subjectivity, and the environment to understand the 'abject' and the 'uncanny'. In my view, the 'abject' and the 'uncanny' have the potential to be understood even more fully from a wide variety of ethnographic contexts and angles, particularly when approached through a negative methodological approach and a focus on the sensory and affective aspects of experience.

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