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Regulating Sexual Labour in Modern and Contemporary Greece

*State, governance feminism(s) and the sex
workers' movement*

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Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy for the University of London

February 2024

Declaration:

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own, except where explicit reference is made to the work of others. I also declare that a previous version of Chapter 3 can be found here: Journal of Place Management and Development (2023) 16(3) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/jpmd-12-2022-0118>>.

Athena Michalakea

Abstract

Although sex work is often referred to as 'the oldest profession', its nature as work is often questioned. State discourses and certain strands of feminism sustain an exceptionalist view of sex work, to the detriment of sex workers' status. This thesis investigates the historical origins of this exceptionalism and its effects focusing on the case of Greece. Drawing upon critical scholarship and through the lens of abolitionist feminism, it interrogates the similarities and synergies between state regulationism and the feminist rescue industry from the mid-19th century to the present day. The research builds on secondary and primary historical research, archival and oral testimonies of sex workers, employing the Critical Oral History method. History serves as a tool for critical legal analysis, unravelling the complex relationships between the state, feminisms and sex workers, silenced by mainstream discourses. With Greece situated in the sphere of Western influence, this thesis explores the manifold biopolitical aspects of law (spatial, hygienic, tied with the notion of productivity and with migration policy), and the penal-welfarist nexus established by the state in collaboration with domestic feminist philanthropy. These processes, unfolding in parallel, have placed the governance of sex work within a broader framework of the management and disciplining of the working classes. What is being argued is that the artificial separation of prostitution from other forms of female labour further entraps sex workers in a continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation. In contrast, situating sex work in a broader context of political economy and social reproduction illustrates the fallacious nature of this separation, but also, of other reductionist dichotomies (productive/reproductive, formal/informalised, victimhood/agency). The institutional recognition of sex work as work is thus brought back to the fore as a crucial issue that raises questions concerning the broader concept of labour under capitalism, and whether labour law can mitigate or perpetuate structural inequalities. Ultimately, the thesis contributes to addressing these new challenges and also takes up the opportunities for reflection on the operation of the law and the significance of practices of resistance and struggle outside the law's realm.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Sex work exceptionalism, regulationism, and the rescue industry

Is the 'world's oldest profession' a profession? Sex workers have had little say in definitively answering this question with a yes. The gaze on paid sex is often caught between social taboo, media sensationalism, the state's punitive apparatuses, and strands of feminism that embrace state oppression just as they insist on paternalistically signaling back to sex workers what is good for them. Meanwhile, in recent years, a neoliberal rhetoric that glorifies sex work as synonymous with women's empowerment has been gradually emerging, trivialising the class and economic aspects of this kind of labour. Ultimately, 'the world's oldest profession' remains the object of exceptionalism, an activity that is not examined or regulated through policies employed for all other forms of labour.¹

State regulationism has a cause-and-effect relationship with sex work exceptionalism since its multiple disciplines cut it off from other economic and social activities. This process was ultimately completed through the artificial separation of prostitution from other forms of women's work on behalf of the emerging 19th-century feminist philanthropy. The primary purpose of this thesis will emerge within this context to highlight a) the ways in which the parallel processes of state regulationism and feminist philanthropy have established, through their convergences and contradictions, sexual labour as a distinct category outside the notion of work and sex workers themselves as a special population to be managed, and b) the extent to which the governance imposed by both the state and private actors abandoned its purely administrative characteristics in favour of punishment, eventually embracing the criminal justice system.

But sex work *is* work within the inherently exploitative capitalist condition. Although sex workers remain trapped in a web of illegalisation/criminalisation and punitive care, thanks to the organised efforts of the state and the rescue industry that wish to save them from themselves, they continue to provide their (re)productive labour and to develop collective practices of resistance and struggle.

¹ Heather Berg, 'Working for Love, Loving for Work: Discourses of Labor in Feminist Sex-Work Activism' (2014) 40(3) Feminist Studies 693.

The primary purpose of this thesis is therefore to highlight firstly the ways in which these parallel processes, through their convergences and contradictions, have established sexual labour as a distinct category outside the notion of work, and sex workers themselves as a special population that ought to be managed. Secondly, it is to examine the extent to which governance practices imposed by both the state and private actors constitute in essence an embrace of punishment and repression, despite their *prima facie* purely administrative character. Regulationism's pillars reflect a set of cross-cultural fears such as 'the fear of the visibly queer or diseased body; the fear of migrancy; the fear of sexualised social contamination; the fear of disorderly, unsupervised women roaming freely in society or commanding economic power by organising their work among themselves'.² The majority are forced to work illegally under a 'legalised' regime and remain subject to many of the harms of clear-cut criminalisation.³ Regulationism veils its inherent carceral aspects, yet establishes a continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation.

The various techniques of control as applied to sex workers, manifested in different fields – namely urban planning, working classes' compliance with the ideals of morality, health and capitalist productivity, and border control – are also the foundational elements of Law 2734/1999, which currently regulates sex work in Greece. Therefore, my analysis aims to reveal the manifold techniques of social control imposed upon sex workers by regulationism, as well as by a broader penal-welfarist nexus of state and private actors, techniques that are exerted on the wider working strata.

The latter clearly indicates the necessity that the discussion surrounding sex work should not ignore questions of political economy. For this reason, the thesis will emphasise the importance of practices enforced by both state regulationism and feminist philanthropy in the form of a rescue industry for the disciplining of the lower classes, a process indispensable for the economic reconfigurations of capitalism. This thesis, therefore, wishes to refute this exact exceptionalism, and to discuss sexual labour as a profession, inseparable from a broader context of political economy and class. In this context, another question emerges: whether and to what extent the law can be manipulated on behalf of 'the working class and other marginal groups' in ways that promote their interests.⁴

Grounded in the Greek landscape yet resonating globally, the research picks upon strands of written and oral history critical literature. By employing a

² Molly Smith and Juno Mac, *Revolted Prostitutes: The Fight for Sex Worker's Rights* (Verso Books 2018) 178.

³ Ibid 181.

⁴ Paul O'Connell, 'Law, Marxism and Method' (2018) 16(2) tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique. Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society 653.

combination of both primary (archive, oral testimonies) and secondary historical research, examined through a variety of critical lenses, such as anti-carceral feminism, legal geography, medical humanities, critical anti-trafficking literature, critical labour law, and social reproduction feminism, I wish to unveil the entangled realities and limitations surrounding sex work regulationism and provide a comprehensive understanding of its historical, socio-political, and legal dimensions. Unpacking the history of Greek prostitution regulationism, feminisms, and the sex workers' movement, I wish to explore the exclusion of sex work from the broader conceptualisation of work, the targeting of the Greek penal-welfare state and rescue industry primarily on prostitutes, but also more broadly on the 'dangerous' working classes. Finally, I will highlight criminal law as the pinnacle of regulationism and its various aspects (urbanism, health and moral control, immigration, labour disciplining).

This chapter will provide an introduction to the study by first discussing the background and context, followed by the thesis outline, the theoretical framework, and the research methods. In the second part of the chapter, the literature review will be presented, as well as the contribution of this thesis to it.

Part 1

Background

In early 2018, following an internal study, the Greek General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GS) issued a Conclusion, in which Greece was strongly encouraged to adopt the so-called Nordic Model to 'reduce demand' for sexual services. This approach aimed at a 'structural and functional redefinition of the very notion of prostitution [...] not as a matter of "choice" but rather as a form of physical and psychological violence against women, and constituted an infringement on human dignity'.⁵ In reality, Greece was prompted to take measures that would criminalise the purchase of sexual services. This initiative faced strong opposition from sex workers' organisations, who complained that they had not been invited to participate in formulating the study upon which the Conclusion had been based, nor to the public presentation of its findings. Furthermore, in the final report there was not even a single mention of their expressed dispute. In the end, sex workers' reactions caused strong internal friction within the ruling party, Syriza, leading to the withdrawal of the proposal submitted by GS. Yet, this brief history unveils a long-running tendency that constitutes the main theme of the thesis: the interplay between the state and feminism at the expense of sex workers' needs.

⁵ GS for Gender Equality, *Porisma GS: Porneia- [Conclusion GS: Porneia]* (Ministry of Internal Affairs 2018) 5 <<https://isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Πόρισμα-ΟΔΕ-Γ.Γ.Ι.Φ.-Πορνεία.pdf>>.

One of the most intense conflicts is the one between a section of feminism, often involved in influencing key government decisions, and sex workers. This conflict, which was revived in public discourse in Greece just in 2018, is of course nothing new. It originates in the Feminist Sex Wars in the US during the 1980s, a series of intense debates between feminist activists and academics on a variety of issues in the realm of sexuality, with prostitution being at the forefront.⁶ With Andrea Dworkin, Catharine MacKinnon, Carole Pateman and Kathleen Barry as the main representatives of this current, prostitution became identified as an extreme form of gender violence and coercion. The most intriguing aspect of these feminists' agenda is the pursuit of close collaboration with state institutions to promote the criminalisation of prostitution despite fully acknowledging the state's male constitution.⁷ Through their efforts, they practically reinforced state power, especially its penitentiary system, claiming that this reinforcement would imbue feminist attributes to the system, ensuring women's safety from perpetrators.

The legacy of these feminists is a heavy one. In the decades that followed, laws addressing gender-based violence (a concept coined by these feminists) were strengthened worldwide. With the outbreak of the #MeToo movement, reports of sexual violence increased. Gradually, the laws on sex work in many parts of the world became equally strict. One such example is Ireland which in Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 included prostitution in its definition of gender-based violence, thus rendering sex workers consent to any exchange of sexual services for money practically irrelevant.⁸ In Spain, in 2022, the Socialist-Podemos government, praised for its feminist policies, voted in favour of adopting the Nordic Model. The same government had adopted a law on rape based on the logic of affirmative consent (Only Yes means Yes).⁹ Interestingly, according to the former Minister of Equality Irene Montero, both these legislative initiatives shared a joint reasoning: to halt female exploitation and gender violence. Attempts to ban sex work raised a huge wave of opposition from Spanish and European sex workers' rights organisations, but their demands have been disregarded.¹⁰ In a similar spirit, in September 2023, the European Parliament, with a non-binding resolution and with most MEPs abstaining, called on all member states to adopt the Nordic Model. The resolution has been introduced implementing a proposal by the European Women's Lobby, a second-wave

⁶ Katie King, 'Producing Sex, Theory, and Culture: Gay/Straight Remappings in Contemporary Feminism' in Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller (eds), *Conflicts in Feminism* (Routledge 1990) 84.

⁷ Jannet Halley, *Split Decisions* (Princeton University Press 2008) 47, referring to MacKinnon, *Signs* (1983) 644-45.

⁸ Ivana Bacik, '#MeToo, consent and prostitution – the Irish law reform experience' (2021) 86.

⁹ Guy Hedgcock, 'Spanish MPs back 'only yes means yes' sexual consent law' (*BBC News*, 26 May 2022) <www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-61591615> accessed 1 February 2024.

¹⁰ ESWA - European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance, 'Don't outlaw sex workers' consent! Policy Brief in Response to Law Proposal to Criminalise Sex Work & Calls for Abolition of Prostitution in Spain' (ESWA, October 2021) <www.eswalliance.org/don_t_outlaw_sex_workers_consent>.

feminist organisation advocating for the elimination of prostitution in the EU. Notably, this proposal was openly opposed not only by sex workers' organisations, but also by international human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, WHO, and Human Rights Watch.¹¹

Such initiatives have a long history, well before the Feminist Sex Wars. In the 19th century, prostitution emerged for the first time as a social problem (and not as a problem of Christian morality, as it was considered until then) – a problem that the newly founded feminist philanthropy undertook in order to manage and solve.¹² Bourgeois women, withdrawn to the domestic sphere and with only a few jobs deemed suitable for them, undertook the task of managing working-class women in general and prostitutes in particular. This early feminist philanthropy had two important characteristics. First, that apart from poor women, children and animals constituted the other objects of philanthropic concern. These three categories often merged in the discourse of philanthropy and bourgeois feminists.¹³ All of them were equally perceived as 'dumb creatures', with working class women often described as 'dumb beasts', in need of rescue by middle/upper class feminists who had a voice and humanity.¹⁴ Second, many of the practices of philanthropists were carried out in collaboration with the state, sometimes forming the basis of the later welfare state, and in any case, serving as the litmus test for various technologies of population control.¹⁵

Greece is a peculiar case in many respects, many of which go far beyond the scope of this thesis. As a newly established state in the 19th century, it sought to distance itself from the East and embrace trends dominant in heavily industrialised bourgeois Western societies, even if they did not fully reflect its own reality. This is evident both in its legal system, which was largely influenced by the German and the French. Philanthropy, emerging in the late 19th century, was also under the sphere of Western influences. Early civil society organisations directly communicated with their counterparts in Britain and other European countries. In this context, prostitution became one of the first subjects of regulation on behalf of the Greek state. Almost concurrently, the domestic bourgeoisie applied Western methods of disciplining working-class women. However, recent research has yet to scrutinise or even clarify the modalities of their interplay,

¹¹ "EU: Harmful 'Prostitution' Resolution Passes' (*Human Rights Watch*, 18 September 2023) <www.hrw.org/news/2023/09/18/eu-harmful-prostitution-resolution-passes> accessed 4 January 2024.

¹² Laura Maria Agustin, *Sex at the Margins: Migration, Labour Markets and the Rescue Industry* (Zed Books 2008) 100-106.

¹³ Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian society. Women, class, and the state* (CUP 1980) 129.

¹⁴ Joanna Bourke, 'Sex Work', lecture at Gresham College, 17th February 2022, 2, available at: <https://www.gresham.ac.uk/watch-now/sex-work> accessed 25 December 2023.

¹⁵ Agustin (n12) 96.

neither has the transnational context of these actions been clarified or scrutinised by recent research.

Contemporary Greek feminism is overwhelmingly in favour of a broader tightening of penalties for offences related to gender violence, but its perspective on sex work remains confused. The relationship between the sex workers' movement and the feminist movement varies from cautious to hostile, while the LGBT movement takes, even reluctantly, a clearer position in favour of sex work. This can be partially explained by the fact that the Greek sex work movement blossomed within the LGBT liberation struggle. In any case, however, the bid for a stricter punitive system, often adopted outright, has rarely concerned local feminists and queers about the extent to which it can fuel puritanism and state authoritarianism and act detrimentally towards the individuals it claims to protect. An event that decisively influenced the development of this research was the outbreak of the Greek #MeToo. In December 2020, Olympic champion Sofia Bekatorou publicly spoke out about the sexual assault she had suffered in 1998 by a member of the Greek Sailing Federation. Bekatorou's revelations were accompanied by a wave of approval and support, mainly through social networks and the media and, soon, by the government.¹⁶ In the first months of 2021, complaints followed from professional sportsmen and women, from journalists and politicians and finally from actors and, to a lesser extent, from male and female university students. At the same time, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis announced the creation of a state-sanctioned website, along with a Penal Code reform that would provide for stricter penalties for sexual offences. Simultaneously, the police bulletin began to broadcast news concerning femicides and sexual assaults against women (usually by immigrants), with increased frequency and intensity.

A few months later, in October 2021, the New Democracy government embarked on a comprehensive counter-reform of the Criminal Code in the direction of a broad tightening of penalties. The amendments were imposed against allegations that the leniency of the previous Syriza government had resulted in escaping punishment. However, it is worth noting that Michalis Kalogirou, former Minister of Justice with Syriza, denounced New Democracy for 'selective conservatism and penal populism',¹⁷ In his words the Criminal Code ratified by Syriza was 'stricter on issues of release and serving sentences'.¹⁸ The main political battle was chosen to be fought in the arena of criminal repression. For 'existence in late capitalism is a permanent rite of initiation. Everyone must show that they identify

¹⁶ See further Appendix 1.

¹⁷ 'Ποινικός λαϊκισμός και αντι-μεταρρύθμιση' (ΕΦΣΥΝ) <www.efsyn.gr/themata/thema-tis-efsyn/313930_poinikos-laikismos-kai-anti-metarrythmisi> accessed 3 January 2024.

¹⁸ <https://tvxs.gr/news/ellada/kalogiroy-pio-aystiros-o-neos-poinikos-kodikas-sta-zitimata-apofylakisis-kai-ektisis/>

wholeheartedly with the power that beats them.¹⁹ Consensus was reached a year later, when in November 2022, the two parties jointly voted to include in the criminal registry the mere prosecution of offences involving underage victims, a nod at the American institution of sexual offenders' registries. Perhaps one should not be surprised by Syriza's endorsement of such initiatives. The centre left internationally appears to be reaching out to society's most conservative segments, hoping to broaden its audience, and with tough-on-crime rhetoric being an essential ingredient in this broth. More interesting is the attitude of feminist organisations, which either explicitly advocated for stricter sentences or remained silent in front of these developments. Notable exceptions can be found among a handful of organisations affiliated with the anarchist-autonomous movement, such as *migada* and *autonome antifa*.

These events reveal the interaction between the repressive mechanisms of the state –the police and the prison system– and the media. Second, they serve as an *exposé* of how genuinely traumatic experiences become objects of exploitation by conservative politicians, transformed into moral panic and ultimately reflected in more authoritarian criminal laws. Third, they bear witness to the eclectic affinities between the state and strands within the feminist movement, who either actively fight for or tacitly endorse the toughening of criminal penalties. Clearly, the anger on the part of feminists is justified, as is the need to protect the most vulnerable members of the society. Violence against women persists and is perpetuated by state institutions such as the criminal justice system. To recall Audre Lorde, 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.'²⁰ Additionally, such punitive efforts 'end up idealising the nuclear family and motherhood and emboldening political conservatives.'²¹

Movements, nevertheless, are not characterised by internal homogeneity but rather by internal tensions and contradictions. Neither the feminist nor the LGBT movement are unified in their goals and methods—not even the sex workers' movement. Battles are sometimes fought in the realm of law and state institutions, but they also surpass them. The relations between feminism, prostitution, and the state, their various convergences, and conflicts, have not been adequately explored in the Greek context. The prevailing focus of the Greek literature on the administrative aspects of the regulatory framework overlooks the longitudinal contribution of bourgeois feminism in jointly imposing state

¹⁹ Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment. Cultural Memory in the Present*, (Stanford University Press, 2002) 124.

²⁰ Audre Lorde, *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House* (Penguin 2018).

²¹ Marie Gottschalk, *The Prison and the Gallows. The Politics of Mass Incarceration in America*, (Cambridge University Press, 2012) 163.

disciplinary mechanisms over sex workers. This collaboration traps sex workers in a vicious circle of illegalisation/criminalisation and punitive care.

Therefore, this thesis brings a novel approach to the existing literature by unveiling the direct and indirect ways of sex workers' illegalisation/criminalisation, from both the Greek state and private entities. It is situated within an international scholarship that demonstrates the limits of regulationism, the longitudinal relationship of carceral feminists and militaristic nation-state policies in shaping anti-trafficking measures, and critically examines the embrace of penal conservatism and the prohibition of prostitution. At the same time, it wishes to amplify the voices and ways of resistance of sex workers themselves, addressing both state restrictions, and feminist paternalism. Finally, it underscores the necessity for the debate around sex work to occur within the context of political economy and social reproduction. This involves reflecting on the nature and limits of the movement's demands through and beyond the law, and, ultimately, on the limits of law. The exploration of the law's stipulations and silences, and feminist practices will be enriched through the inclusion of sex workers' testimonies, employing the Critical Oral History method. Sex workers openly talk about the harms inflicted by the law upon them, yet they also view it as a tool for their social struggles. Their individual narratives and communal ways of organising reject both an inherently reformist approach that omits any possibility of questioning the status quo in the name of inclusion and treats institutional recognition as the cornerstone of every social battle, as well as *quasi*-nihilistic stances that treat every attempt of institutional recognition as inherently compromised and futile.

Finally, some necessary clarifications about the terms I use and their scope. The term sex work was coined by pioneering sex work activist, artist, author and performer Carol Leigh, a.k.a. Scarlot Harlot. According to her, this term 'acknowledges the work we [sex workers] do, rather than defines us by our status',²² is value-neutral, and united 'linguistically at least' sex workers with the broader labour movement.²³ For these reasons, the terms 'sex work/sex worker' are primarily utilised in this research, alternated with the term 'sexual labour', to align it closer to the broader labour movement. However, the terms 'prostitution/prostitute' are also included, due to their extensive historical use, as reflected in the relevant first and second-hand material examined in this thesis,

²² Carol Leigh, 'Inventing Sex Work,' in (ed. Jill Nagle) *Whores and Other Feminists*, (Routledge, 1997) 203.

²³ Melinda Chateauvert, *Sex Workers Unite: A History of the Movement from Stonewall to SlutWalk* (Beacon Press, 2014) 15.

and as the sex working movement has attempted to reappropriate and destigmatise them.²⁴

According to Ronald Weitzer, sex work is ‘the exchange of sexual services, performances, or products for material compensation. It includes activities of direct physical contact between buyers and sellers as well as indirect sexual stimulation.’²⁵ This study will focus primarily on sex for sale, because it has been a long-standing concern in Greek legislation as a taboo and subject of repressive regulation. However, it is recognised that sex work is an umbrella term that includes a wide range of activities, such as pornography, lap dancing, sex phones, sugar dating and others. This is partly because the workers in these sectors themselves recognise that they provide sex-related services, but also because in practice the same people engage in various types of sex work, leading to a blurring of the boundaries between them.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is developed in three parts. The first part, as it will be developed in chapter 2, offers a brief genealogy of the laws regulating prostitution from the founding of the Greek state until today, followed by a historical overview of the Greek feminist movement. Specifically, tracing the history of Greek regulationism in parallel with feminist endeavours against sex work provides the historical basis for this study. The state and feminist philanthropy together sought to separate prostitution from other forms of women's work and attempted to control working women, marking the rise of the social in Greece. Emphasis is placed on highlighting the parallel strategies of disciplining working-class women, especially prostitutes, through state and feminist philanthropy synergies, employing the analytical tool of femonationalism. Male prostitution is also examined here, although less extensively, accentuating its class components. Although men who sold sex remained outside feminist ‘rescue efforts’, paid sex was still perceived as a lower-class activity in need of constant police control. Additionally, it provides an example of the continua shaped between illegalisation and criminalisation, as, despite the decriminalisation of sodomy, informal police practices were employed to target homosexual activities—a reminder that law and governance practices do not always coincide.

²⁴ Sex workers attempt to reverse the derogatory connotations of these terms, and work towards destigmatising it. See further Pluma Sumaq, ‘A Disgrace Reserved for Prostitutes: Complicity & the Beloved Community | LIES Journal’ (*LIES*) <www.liesjournal.net/pluma-sumaq.html> accessed 28 August 2023, and Smith and Mac (n), where the term ‘prostitute’ is used alternatively with ‘sex worker’.

²⁵ Ronald Weitzer, *Sex for Sale: Prostitution, Pornography, and the Sex Industry* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group 2022) 1.

A brief reference to the feminisms of the Metapolitefsi era follows.²⁶ Official and left-wing historiography both emphasise the unity of the women's movement, and the sentiment of euphoria that followed the restoration of democracy. However, I bring to the fore aspects that challenge this perceived homogeneity. Readers are introduced to the internal class and political contradictions characterising social movements, many of which persist until today, focusing on the question of women's labour. Drawing on archival material, I intend to delve into the 1970s-1980s feminist perspectives on prostitution, a topic that will also be examined in chapter 5. The last section of this chapter deals with feminists' embrace of the punitive state, culminating in the 2018 and 2021 public interventions requesting the criminalisation of prostitution. This stance of governance feminists is part of a longstanding cooperation with the state, spanning over a century. Overall, the chapter is substantial for our understanding in the joint contribution of state regulationism and feminist philanthropy in separating prostitution from other forms of women's work. In contrast to a mere regulationist analysis, my research systematically unveils the contradictions and intersections between social movements and the state.

The second part focuses on the basic prohibitions-restrictions set by the laws around prostitution over time, reproduced in a repetitive way as taboos.²⁷ It is thus structured in three chapters dealing respectively with urban planning, the penal-welfarist complex of rehabilitation-through-punishment schemes and excessive health scrutiny, and migration. Chapter 3 discusses the spatial aspects of regulationism. Adopting a legal-geographical perspective, prostitution is assessed as an urban phenomenon, essential to the cities' function, yet pushed to their margins.

Blurring the boundaries between public and private, as will be discussed in detail in the respective chapter, prostitution and its spatial metonymy, the brothel, are pushed to the spatial, legal, and economic margins. This practice has a twofold purpose: to facilitate control over and on prostitution, and to discipline sexuality and its public expressions at large. These timeless patterns in Western modernity contributed to the choice of Law 2734/1999 to banish brothels from the urban fabric, which in practice becomes an unattainable task. The issues of the implementation of the law and the urban history of commercial sex in Greece are presented, among other things, through the testimonies of sex workers themselves. Spatial regulationism also has a criminological dimension. Brothels often appear in the literature as Unwanted Land Uses and NIMBYs (Not In My Backyard), while parallel connections can be drawn with the Broken Windows'

²⁶ See also Appendix I.

²⁷ See further Theodor W. Adorno, 'Sexual Taboos and Law Today' in Henry W Pickford (tr), *Critical models: Interventions and catchwords* (Columbia University Press 2012) 71-88.

theory. The feminist advocacy for the 'cleansing of the cities', and endeavours of community policing and vigilantism are frequently attuned to the dominant criminological discourse. Thus, the joint state and feminist endeavours to target prostitution emerge in the spatial field as well. Finally, the link between urban planning and public health is stressed. The marginalisation of what are perceived as infectious subjects contributes to the well-being of a healthy social body. As chapter 3 shows, the dual function of regulationism (control of legal workers, criminalisation/persecution of illegal workers) is primarily implemented through urban planning-related regulations and facilitated with the occasional support of anti-prostitution actions by institutional and grassroots feminist activist organisations.

The discussion is taken further into chapter 4 which explores the interplay between health, morality, and productivity. It unfolds the mechanisms of disciplining the lower 'dangerous' classes to which prostitutes belonged from early modernity to the present day. The regulation of prostitution is examined as state biopolitics, and indeed as a biopolitics of control, surveillance, and often punishment of both sexuality and poverty. Through the intertwining of health, morality, and labour discipline, the legal-medical discourses that targeted the working strata are demonstrated. Biopolitical technologies have been jointly imposed by both the state and feminist philanthropy, creating a penal-welfarist nexus manifested in a rehabilitation-through-punishment dogma. Dominant institutions in this process were the juvenile reformatories, where state agents and philanthropists collaborated with the aim of conformity through the compulsory confinement and forced labour of adolescents who did not conform to social dictates and traditional gender roles. Suspicion of prostitution was the main reason for imprisonment. Although child protection institutions have undergone strong transformations over the last four decades, there is still a punitive attitude towards adolescents who sell sex, as my interviewees' oral testimonies reveal.

The doctrine of welfare-through-work permeated the walls of reformatories, as historical research shows that it also took place in hospitals in the first decades of the 20th century. Close medical surveillance survives and also manifests in aspects related to mental health and drug use, removing from sex workers the possibility of acting as sane, agent subjects. Overall, hygiene scrutiny forms an essential component of regulationism, persisting to this day, but it becomes more prominent in times of epidemics, states of emergency, and the moral panics they trigger. This is particularly evident in the case of HIV. An overview of the health and moralistic implications of male prostitution, as well as the discourse on STDs developed by early LGBT organisations, show that homosexuals were also part of the risky classes, a reflex that emerged more strongly with the

outbreak of the epidemic. The moral panic surrounding the epidemic has, in the most recent history, had as its victims street prostitutes who were intravenous drug users, on the basis of protecting the health of the Greek family and the nation. Their pillory should not be treated as an oddity but instead read within the longitudinal medico-policial apparatuses of regulationism.

In sum, chapter 4 sheds light on the manifold institutions governing prostitution on the grounds of protecting morality and social health while actively imposing social control for the sake of productivity. It stresses, however, that these processes do not always manifest themselves in a linear or uniform manner. I situate the health-morality debate, dominant in the governance of prostitution, as part of the dominant capitalist ethos and the archetype of the moral, healthy, and productive subject. Thus, the governance of prostitution -especially as manifested in the penal-welfare complex created between state regulationism and the feminist rescue industry- is recognised as a component of the broader biopolitical technologies aimed at disciplining the working strata. Regulationism's elective affinities with the multiple facets of the punitive state perpetuates the vicious circle of sex workers' illegalisation/criminalisation.

Chapter 5 scrutinises the concept of trafficking from a critical anti-trafficking perspective, raising questions of border control and migrant labour policies on behalf of nation-states within globalised capitalism. It highlights the ways in which a) prostitution is conflated with trafficking, b) (migratory) labour exploitation under capitalism is omitted from discussions concerning trafficking, and c) how anti-trafficking policies historically served to criminalise both prostitution and migration. The joint contribution of state and governance feminists to shaping this discourse is emphasised. The chapter raises the problem of the legal definition of trafficking as well as the confusion caused by its vagueness. It also identifies the blurred line between smuggling and trafficking and the importance of these notions as tools of anti-immigration policy in the context of Fortress Europe. This instrumentalisation is not a contemporary phenomenon but rather inherent in the processes of the construction of white slavery and sex trafficking *per se*. The genealogy of the legislative arrangements presented here is quite indicative of this.

Chapter 5 also highlights the identification of anti-trafficking with anti-prostitution through the neo-abolitionist feminist discourse, which appears internationally and in Greece as well. Drawing from David Halperin's argument that the criminalisation of prostitution, among other sex-related activities, is a global phenomenon, but also an 'American export', as the US influence 'both through government programs and policies and through funding and NGOs, has had a worldwide impact,' this chapter also scrutinises the local anti-trafficking

interventions as part of a broader geopolitical strategy.²⁸ This discourse, which leads to the validation of militarised humanitarianism, carceral practices, and the sharpening of anti-immigration and anti-prostitution discourse, is examined within a framework of soft power imperialism, of which Greece is a recipient. The state-NGO's rescue industry involvement in the management of anti-trafficking and, ultimately, in the management of migrant labour is also studied. These practices are placed on the same continuum as the state-feminist philanthropist synergies that can be traced in Greece and elsewhere from the late 19th century. In sum, the chapter suggests that the phenomenon of trafficking be situated within the broader debate on migrant labour, exploitation, and sex in late globalised capitalism, beyond punitive solutions, by bringing labour law to the fore. Overall, this chapter condenses some of the main arguments of the thesis, namely the separation of prostitution from other forms of labour; the cooperation of the state, feminists, and NGOs in the elimination of sex work; how policies that are supposed to work to save vulnerable populations, when taken in the absence of the subjects themselves, end up severely damaging them; the necessity for any discussion of sex work to address the dynamics shaped by the capitalist economy, but also how the latter coexists with nation-state competition, imperialism and closed border policies.

This brings us to the last part of the thesis, discussing sex work as work. Chapter 6 emphasises sex workers' call for decriminalisation and labour rights' recognition, employing aspects of social reproduction feminism and Marxism. These analytical tools are of paramount importance in order to overcome the fictitious distinction between sexual labour and other forms of women's work and to reflect on the very notion of labour as well. Prostitution is thus placed in the context of both undervalued feminised labour and treated as intimate labour. In this context, the institution of sexual surrogates is also studied, not only because it forms an exemplar of the caring aspects of sex work but also to question its separation from the sex work umbrella, which is often imposed by state factors, thus posing as another means to reaffirm regulationism.

Analyses of sexual labour do not only occur in the field of gendered work but are situated within the sphere of political economy. This lens aids in transcending harmful dichotomies (e.g., victim/perpetrator, agency/victimhood), enabling a deeper exploration of the concepts of agency and consent in sex work within the capitalist framework. This approach also surpasses the rigid, criminal law-based definitions of these highly contested yet subjective terms, which are also embraced by anti-sex work feminists. It also allows for reflecting on the notion of work itself in the context of late-capitalist economies in general and post-

²⁸ David Halperin and Trevor Hope, 'Introduction' in David Halperin and Trevor Hope (eds), *The War on Sex* (Duke University Press 2017) 2.

memoranda Greece in particular. Thus, after a brief overview of the contemporary Greek labour reality, the relations between sex workers' organisations and the wider labour movement, as well as the latest proposals for the revision of the Greek legal framework on prostitution that have been made public, are discussed. The demand for decriminalisation is thus addressed, through a critical labour law and antiwork politics perspective, not as the final battle but as the beginning of a new cycle of struggles for sex workers' movements, within and beyond the law. In other words, it is necessary to acknowledge the limitations of legislative reform, especially in the context of sex work governance, as well as the relations between labour law and criminal law. For the critical approach to what work is under capitalism should be the beginning of the discussion regarding the institutional recognition of sex work as work. Sex workers' struggles and practices of resistance, beyond the realm of law, demonstrate that the negation of capitalist conformity embedded in labour law is equally important as the fight for legal recognition.

Theoretical Framework

The present analysis delves into the interaction between law and social movements, bringing law's socio-economic function to the fore. For this purpose, different theoretical traditions and schools of thought will be employed, a common practice within critical legal scholarship. This choice is reinforced by the fact that the contemporary literature on sex work draws its influences from broader critical traditions and a wider corpus of works. Yet, the main influence of contemporary sex work scholarship, and of this thesis as well, is abolitionist feminism. Although it bears the same name as the feminist movement for the abolition of prostitution, the two groups should not be conflated. For that reason, I use the term 'anti-sex work feminists' to describe the former, and the terms 'abolitionist/anti-carceral feminists' to describe the latter. Abolitionist feminism can be summarised as the understanding of the state and especially the penitentiary system as that which maintains the patriarchal, racist, and capitalist order of social control through the imposition of violence and punishment. Abolitionist feminists reject the carceral feminist approach that focuses on combating gender violence through the criminal justice system and seek the abolition of the police and the prison-industrial complex, as they believe that the various technologies of policing and incarceration exacerbate rather than resolve the economic and social problems for which they are presented as solutions. Instead, seeing interpersonal violence as an outgrowth of the broader capitalist system, they aim for a collective transformation.²⁹ A corollary of this approach is

²⁹ See further Angela Davis Y. and others, *Abolition. Feminism. Now.* (Haymarket Books, 2022); Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (Seven Stories Press, 2003); Sarah Lamble, 'Outrage: trans incarceration – Architectural Review' (*Architectural Review*, 29 March 2022) <www.architectural-review.com/essays/outrage/outrage-trans-incarceration> accessed 8 August 2023.

the abolitionists' rejection of the introduction of stricter laws for crimes motivated by gender, race, or sexuality, as they believe that they still do not address the systemic causes of violence, but instead mask and perpetuate it.

The term 'carceral feminism' is coined by the sociologist Elizabeth Bernstein, whose work is of paramount importance for the viewpoint of this research. Bernstein demonstrates that by advocating for increased policing and harsher sentences in response to feminist demands, oppressive state mechanisms are ultimately strengthened, not only within state borders but also on an international scale, revealing the correlation between imperialist war interventions and anti-trafficking activism, internationalising penal-welfarism.³⁰ Bernstein's work should be read alongside that of the social anthropologist Laura Agustin.³¹

Agustin's work is of equal merit for two reasons. First, because it vividly highlights the historical lineage of the synergies between the state and feminist philanthropy in the regulation/suppression of sex work as early as the 19th century. This process, she describes, occurred in parallel with the emergence of the new bourgeoisie, and the undertaking of activities falling within the scope of the 'welfare state' on the part of bourgeois women, with the rescuing of prostitutes (and its counterpart, the disciplining of working-class women) being one of their main tasks. Second, her empirical research is notable in overcoming simplistic dichotomies, highlighting the complex reality that characterises the lives of migrants who sell sex and who are, often unambiguously, labelled trafficking victims. Her findings suggest that people often move abroad and decide to sell sex due to a number of complex motivations, from survival and supporting their families to facilitating their own travel and pleasure, with these realities often intertwining. Both Bernstein's and Agustin's work significantly influence the approach of this study as they highlight the interplay between the state and feminists in national and transnational contexts, both in terms of the control of sex workers and in a broader context of penal tightening and imperialist hegemony, but also because they frame sex work as work in terms of political economy. However, it should be mentioned that the empirical part of their research at least, focuses on different geographical-social contexts,³² so no straightforward conclusions that reflect the Greek reality can be drawn.

³⁰ Elizabeth Bernstein, *Brokered Subjects. Sex, Trafficking, and the Politics of Freedom* (Chicago University Press, 2018); Elizabeth Bernstein, 'Carceral Politics as Gender Justice? The "Traffic in Women" and Neoliberal Circuits of Crime, Sex, and Rights' in Halperin and Hoppe (n28).

³¹ Agustin(n12); Laura Agustin, 'The Naked Anthropologist - Migration, Sex Work, Trafficking and the Rescue Industry' (*The Naked Anthropologist*) <www.lauraagustin.com> accessed 7 August 2023.

³² Bernstein's work focuses on North America and North Europe, and Agustin's in Latin America.

Carceral feminism is the offshoot of what Janet Halley had dubbed 'governance feminism', the feminism that 'moves off the streets and into the state'.³³ As Halley suggests, governance feminism is a broad category, encompassing highly heterogeneous elements; however, it could be summarised as the feminisms that contest and partake to get involved into state, state-like, and state-affiliated power.³⁴ Halley et al. do not wish to reject any embrace of feminists with the state. What they want is, first of all, to highlight that private actors such as NGOs -often feminist ones- that take on parts of state policymaking also practice governance; they also wish to resist the cult of the penal system and punitive state policies on the part of feminists, and to highlight the relationship between dominance feminism and imperialist state policies.

Halley's perspective provides a useful framing of this research, since, as her work reveals, social liberation movements in their attempt to implement their agenda embrace the state, eventually moving away from their original goals and compromising their radicalness. This legalist turn of the movements has been the main point of criticism of Brown, Halley et al. in the collective volume *Left Legalism/Left Critique*.³⁵ The authors' main argument is that the left can leverage the law, but with an awareness of its limits, understanding the 'neutrality of the law' [sic] as a liberal construction, as well as the decisive power of the state and the law in the construction of normative policies and regulations. This stance is linked to Halley's critique of governance/dominance feminism, and Wendy Brown's skepticism towards attempts to codify in law the language of resistance,³⁶ in a way that ultimately aligns with the liberal promises of individualistic empowerment.³⁷

In this direction, and focusing on the LGBT movement, Dean Spade's work invites us to think beyond administrative politics of punishment and/or inclusion that strengthen the state and focus on broader social transformation.³⁸ The usefulness of these theoretical contributions in the context of this research is twofold. On the one hand, in alignment with the criticism of carceral feminism made earlier, it refers to the tendency of hegemonic feminism to ally itself with the state or even become the state itself, stifling the voices of the most marginalised women it is supposed to represent and supporting policies that ultimately harm them. On the

³³ Halley (n7) 20.

³⁴ Janet Halley and others, *Governance Feminism: An Introduction* (University of Minnesota Press 2018) ix-x.

³⁵ Janet Halley and Wendy Brown (eds), *Left Legalism/Left Critique* (Duke University Press 2002).

³⁶ Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton University Press, 1995) 25.

³⁷ Wendy Brown, 'Suffering the Paradoxes of Rights' in Wendy Brown and Janet Halley (eds.), *Left Legalism/Left Critique* (Duke University Press 2002); Wendy Brown, "'The Most We Can Hope For...': Human Rights and the Politics of Fatalism' (2004) 103(2-3) *South Atlantic Quarterly* 451.

³⁸ Dean Spade, *Normal Life. Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*, (Duke University Press, 2015).

other hand, it is significant because all movements, including the sex workers' movement, adopt the demand for legal recognition and integration into state institutions, leaving behind 'an entire history of heterodox analyses, proposals and real-life experiences.'³⁹ This process does not happen in a unilateral or unidimensional fashion; legal recognition is not presented as the only movement objective and there are strategies that escape the sphere of the law, often within the same organisations. The prism of this critique remains, nevertheless, an extremely useful analytical tool, both for the history and the present of movements locally and globally. Overall, the tensions that arise among the state, the left, feminists, and the sex workers' movement pose urgent inquiries regarding governance, theory and praxis.

Additionally, Michel Foucault's writings on discipline, (bio)power and biopolitics will be utilised in the analysis of sex work regulation in Greece. In Foucault's view, law was but a partial manifestation of governmentality that coexisted with other powers, such as the sciences in modernity. Law was not a central concept in Foucauldian thought. Yet, its interplay with various forms of knowledge, techniques of power and social control, and political economy that jointly contributed to the formation of the 'carceral' society, constitutes the theoretical basis for the interpretation of various power technologies of modern states.⁴⁰ These technologies manifested especially in the medicalised, spatial, and juridical control of sexuality and 'abnormal' populations, prostitution being the point of convergence. Although references to prostitution itself in Western modernity are scattered throughout Foucault's work, he has signposted 19th-century regulationism as a typical illustration of administering and exploiting illegalities.⁴¹ Each invention of a new illegality produces a wondrous set of illicit economies:

Delinquency, controlled illegality is an agent for the illegality of the dominant groups [...] the existence of a legal prohibition creates around it a field of illegal practices, which one manages to supervise, while extracting from it an illicit profit through elements, themselves illegal, but rendered manipulable by their organisation in delinquency.⁴²

This reasoning is useful for understanding a stream of practices that run concurrently with the law, each of them playing an equally crucial role for the constitution of subjects—even in a state of marginalisation. Foucault has

³⁹David Kennedy, 'Law in Global Political Economy' in Poul F. Kjaer (ed.), *The Law of Political Economy* (Cambridge University Press 2020) 151.

⁴⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (Vintage Books 1995).

⁴¹Ibid 279.

⁴² Ibid 280.

extensively developed the fringe of 'abnormals',⁴³ which includes prostitutes, by biomedical-psychiatric discourse.

Abnormality was a necessary ingredient for the constitution of 'dangerous classes',⁴⁴ delinquents and the vulnerable, on whom a mixture of precautionary and repressive policies had to be applied, to save both themselves and society as a whole, from a moral and sanitary point of view. Poverty and promiscuous sexuality were seen as the very components of danger, which the law was called upon to tame. Sexuality would only be channelled into state-sanctioned brothels and psychiatric hospitals, and the reproductive context of the nuclear family.⁴⁵ As this research shows, also in the case of Greek regulationism, the law, along with disciplines such as urban planning, medicine and psychiatry, criminology, demography and family policies, formed a nexus of surveillance and control technologies imposed over prostitutes. Foucauldian tools enable our broader understanding of the policies applied on the basis of abnormality/illegalisation and shed light to what the law omits. This is why the oscillation from discipline/punishment to illegalisation/criminalisation which sex workers are subjected to is best understood within the broader context of this multifaceted nexus of power discourses.

The identification of the dynamics of discipline and control that ultimately result in repression and criminalisation is characteristic of modern societies, a process that has intensified with the passage to neoliberalism. In this direction, Foucauldian explorations are supplemented by the notion of penal-welfarism, which plays a crucial role in this thesis. The term was introduced by David Garland, belonging to the '70s and '80s revisionist current and whose studies on UK juvenile justice suggest that the penal system has evolved incorporating welfarism ideology, i.e. focusing on prisoners' rehabilitation.⁴⁶ Garland's analysis is useful in the present context as it presents the productive implications of the mechanisms of social control, and their coexistence with the repressive ones. Accordingly, Loïc Wacquant's studies on social policy in the US reveal welfare's punitive turn. Continuing the revisionist tradition and wishing to demonstrate the expansion of punitive and carceral techniques in post-Fordist economies, Wacquant's work sheds light on the ways in which the penal-welfare nexus targeted the poor, evident in the gradual reduction of social benefits and their reciprocal association with an 'appropriate', 'good' behaviour on the part of the

⁴³ Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the College de France, 1974-1975 (Lectures at the College de France)* (Picador 2004).

⁴⁴ Howard Crosby, 'The Dangerous Classes' (1883) 136(No. 317) *The North American Review* 345.

⁴⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction* (Pantheon 1978) 4.

⁴⁶ David Garland, *Punishment and welfare: A history of penal strategies* (Gower 1985).

beneficiaries.⁴⁷ Wacquant's analyses are understood as an extension and reinterpretation of the Foucauldian concept of 'disciplinary society', especially in a contemporary bourgeois and neoliberal context. In the conclusion of his book, he uses the example of France to argue that this neoliberal punitive⁴⁸ paternalism would come to Europe from the US.

The analyses of both Garland and Wacquant certainly concern legal systems and economic and social conditions different from the Greek one. Therefore, one must be quite critical as to how exactly they apply to the Greek context. Nevertheless, penal-welfarism is an extremely useful analytical tool for navigating the techniques of repression and rehabilitation of sex workers that are sometimes applied by the Greek state and, other times, by charities. It also reveals the broader dimensions of work and the welfare state today, through the gradual dismantling of public goods and the parallel intensification of punitive policies. Additionally, as Bernstein suggests, penal-welfarist techniques go in tandem with the carceral feminist paradigm. This is particularly demonstrated through anti-trafficking/anti-prostitution policies which consist of a combination of practices: economic measures -enveloped in humanitarian language- that aim at pulling women out of the sex industry leaving the issue of poverty or the exploitative capitalist condition unaddressed, and punitive measures in the form of law enforcement, either preemptively or as punishment.⁴⁹

Methods

This thesis, although predominantly situated within the framework of legal theory and critical criminology, engages with historical research. In attempting to contextualise present events within a framework of evolving state and social movements' practices, it was necessary to consult various primary and secondary historical sources. The primary ones involved archival research of legislations, hospital and police archives in the General State Archives of Ermoupolis, feminist journals and other publications (pamphlets, conference proceedings, etc.) dating from the early 20th century to 2005 held in the Library of the General Secretariat for Equality in Athens, as well as LGBT magazines from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s available in the Archives of Contemporary Social History in Athens. This historical research is moving along two axes. The first concerns the legal history itself in a broad sense, as it includes, in addition to the adopted legislation and

⁴⁷ Loïc Wacquant, *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity* (Duke University Press 2009).

⁴⁸ For more on the Foucault-Wacquant connection see also Sanford F Schram, 'Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity. By Loïc Wacquant. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. Pp. 408. \$89.95 (cloth); \$24.95 (paper).' (2010) 84(4) *Social Service Review* 685.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Bernstein, 'Carceral Politics as Gender Justice?', *The War on Sex* (Duke University Press) 297.

administrative decisions, the texts of other state bodies, ranging from the Scientific Committee of the Parliament to the Secretary General for Gender Equality, which relate to the law. The second concerns the wider social context and the social movements that develop alongside or in conflict with the law. The combination of these two axes allows the placement of legal history within a broader historical and social context. Thus, legal history is transformed into critical analysis of law.⁵⁰ Yet, dominant and linear narratives, whether by the state or by hegemonic movement voices, tend to erase the micro-histories of people and communities that escape the dominant narratives. This is the reason why the sex worker discourse is largely absent from all of the above publications, with the exception of trans sex worker writing in independent LGBT publications.

Generally, sex workers are one of the most discussed social groups in the media, legislative forums and academic research, but seldom is their own voice heard. The modalities of knowledge production, inextricably intertwined with social power relations, represent an epistemological problem. Hence, realising the implications of which questions are posed, to whom they are directed, and the potential for benefit or harm they bear, transforms research into *praxis*. Acknowledging the multifaceted reality of sex work and the diverse experiences of sex workers is the first step towards their recognition as autonomous and complex subjects, beyond the agency/victimhood dichotomy. Therefore, the inclusion of sex workers in both research and policymaking is essential to ensuring a comprehensive understanding of sexual labour. For this reason, to collect the contemporary stories of the workers, the Critical Oral History method was adopted. Critical Oral history is committed to documenting first-hand knowledge of experiences, contextualising stories to reveal power differences and inequities.⁵¹ By valuing historically marginalised communities' members' stories that are often unheard or untold, Critical Oral History can promote their agency and challenge dominant power structures. Drawing from the work of Maggie O' Neill, the inclusion of marginalised community members through radical and democratic ways of social research can produce 'knowledge as praxis'.⁵²

In this context, 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted from summer 2022 to spring 2023. The criteria for participation in the interview were that the individual be 18 years of age or older and work or have worked in the sex industry in general and, specifically, in prostitution. I was interested in people who were or had been working primarily in Greece. Two of the participants had worked,

⁵⁰ Markus D Dubber, 'New Historical Jurisprudence: Legal History as Critical Analysis of Law' (2015) 2(1) *Critical Analysis of Law*.

⁵¹ Christine K. Lemley, *Practicing Critical Oral History: Connecting School and Community* (Routledge, 2018).

⁵² Maggie O'Neill, 'Cultural Criminology and Sex Work: Resisting Regulation through Radical Democracy and Participatory Action Research (PAR)' (2010) 37(1) *Journal of Law and Society* 210.

apart from Greece, for short periods in Cyprus, one in Greece and the UK, and one exclusively in the UK. The latter was not excluded from the sample as he has been actively involved in activism for more than 40 years as an openly HIV-positive gay man as well as a founding member and spokesperson of sex worker organisations. Survey participants completed a consent form and were given the right to speak using pseudonyms, although some chose to use their real names. Of the participants, 5 were cis women, 6 were trans women, and 5 were cis men. Two of the individuals were migrants, and the rest were Greek. For ethical purposes, all participants were 18 years of age and older, but four had started selling sex as minors. One of the participants is a stripper; one currently exclusively sells content through online platforms, while the rest have worked in one or more versions of paid sex (escorting, brothels, street-work etc.). Of these, only one had worked legally, and only for a brief time throughout her 40 years in that job. All of them have or have had male clients and rarely heterosexual couples, except for one who performed exclusively lesbian escorting. My interviewees cover a wide range of sex work, as they come from different social backgrounds, and their CVs include transitions not only between different forms of sex work but also between prostitution and other 'legitimate' jobs.

Furthermore, the majority of respondents were unaware of the provisions of the law, with the exception of a few who were very active in organisations. Most believed that sex work is illegal in Greece, having clearly internalised both the stigma and the difficulties of working illegitimately. Moreover, most participants chose to focus our discussion on issues related to the nature of their work, i.e., how they present themselves within it and their relationship with clients, the relationships between sex workers and mainstream feminism, and the demand for legitimate work, rather than discussing themselves as a whole. This is reflected in the extracts, which will be presented later in the thesis.

I also conducted personal communications for research purposes with the former president of the Association of Prostituted Persons (APP), Demetra Kanellopoulou, who told me a few things about the first steps of the workers' movement, as well as with Dimitris - Spyros Zorzos, a sexual surrogate for people with disabilities in Spain, with whom we discussed this institution and the case and the conditions under which it could be introduced in Greece. These two individuals are excluded from the Ethics Committee format, as our brief discussions focused on very specific issues, leaving sensitive personal data relating to the job itself aside.

The participants were to be given a compensation of €40 for their participation in the research. I took the initiative of doing so on the one hand after long-standing complaints from older sex workers when I was still designing my research that they were giving up other jobs, and therefore day wages, in order

to participate in interviews and, on the other, because it is recommended as good practice. Specifically, according to the Sex Work Research Hub Ethical Guidelines, monetary compensation often decreases rather than increases sample bias against socially and economically marginalised communities; uncompensated surveys or studies of sex workers often skew towards more privileged and more politically engaged individuals than studies offering compensation.

A note on positionality

Alison Phipps invites young researchers who want to work with marginalised groups to first explore their motivations honestly, and to start from a bottom-up approach, collaborating with organisations.⁵³ I have worked for the left, feminism, sex workers' rights and migrants from various positions over the last decade. This thesis is written from the perspective of a person who has long worked on these issues, trying to avoid falling into the common trap of benevolent paternalism that makes decisions on behalf of those deemed voiceless, while refusing to actively listen to their perspectives and acknowledge their agency.

What I am bringing to the surface are the tensions that arise between the state and the movements, but also between the movements themselves, which are often silenced by the linear narrative. I am also part of this tension, as an active ally of sex workers' rights who is often called upon to take a position in policymaking processes, as a person who has gained internal administrative experience from the rigid state and European mechanisms, as a researcher committed to the critical tradition, and as a political subject on a constant journey of vigilance and reimagining our collective futures. The imprints of these dynamics will unfold throughout the research. Carrying different and clashing identities, mainly centered on my active defence of sex workers' rights, and openly adopting anti-carceral feminist positions, my confrontations with comrades and sisters were often fierce. My -perhaps harsh- critique of movement practices is not that of an outsider, nor of a turncoat. Rather, it expresses sincere concern for emancipatory projects that seem disoriented because of the exhausting conditions of survival we are called upon to contend with daily, but also because of the difficulty or refusal to adopt new tools of work. In the words of Wendy Brown, 'critique is not equivalent to rejection or denunciation, [...] the call to rethink something is not inherently treasonous but can actually be a way of caring for and even renewing the object in question'.⁵⁴ To a large extent, it is both a self-critique and an

⁵³ Alison Phipps, 'Research with marginalised groups: some difficult questions' (*Ali Phipps*, 29 September 2015) <<https://phipps.space/2015/09/29/researching-marginalised-groups/>> accessed 20 August 2023.

⁵⁴ Wendy Brown, *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics* (Princeton University Press 2005).

individual attempt at vigilance, reflecting personal and epistemological/ideological tensions and contradictions.

Ethical concerns and limitations

Shaver pinpoints three main challenges of engaging in ethical research with sex work populations.⁵⁵ These challenges are outlined below with additional notes from the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP)-USA, one of the biggest sex workers' rights organisations in the US.⁵⁶

- The size and boundaries of the sex work population are vast and unmeasurable; therefore, it is difficult to obtain a representative sample of sex workers.
- Sex work is highly stigmatised, criminalised, and is often a concealable stigma; confidentiality and privacy concerns are extremely important and difficult to navigate.
- Sex workers are not a homogenous population and should not be [mis]represented as such in research. It is important to distinguish between types of sex work in research (escorting, stripping, porn acting, professional domination, etc.). When making comparisons to the general population, use appropriate comparison groups.

As with any research that focuses on vulnerable subjects, the empirical research design was approved by the Law School's Ethics Committee, and participant compensation was further approved by the School Research Committee. Finding participants was achieved, as I mentioned in my application to the Ethics Committee, through sex workers' organisations or by snowball sampling, where in some cases an interviewee referred me to other people they knew. Contrary to the Ethics Committee's concerns regarding my safety, as I would be working with human subjects in marginal positions and certain vulnerabilities might arise, my long involvement with these organisations and coexistence with the individuals allowed for greater flexibility than the guidelines stipulated. Leading members of the organisations permitted me to request interviews directly, and individuals themselves approached me as they felt their experiences were worthy of sharing.

⁵⁵ Frances M Shaver, 'Sex Work Research. Methodological and Ethical Challenges' (2005) 20(3) *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 296.

⁵⁶ 'Research Statement' (*Sex Workers Outreach Project | Sex Workers Outreach Project*) <<https://swopusa.org/about-us/research-statement/>> accessed 2 February 2024.

The survey does not present any personal stories that are not the product of an interview, in accordance with the ethics process. I had the opportunity to indulge in ethnographic methods such as observation, but I refrained from doing so. This may deprive the research of certain elements, such as the immediacy of access to spaces often excluded from the research gaze. However, I appreciate that oral testimonies compensate for this by adding uniqueness and originality and, hopefully, avoiding the voyeuristic perspective that can characterise exploring 'fringe worlds'.

One gap in my sample that has been concerning since the early days of the fieldwork is the absence of migrant women working in brothels. The two migrants participating in my research, a gay cis man, and a trans woman, both perform escorting. It is known that, especially after Greece's economic crisis, wages in brothels have decreased considerably. These reductions do not necessarily correspond to the workload, which makes the women working there particularly vulnerable and precarious. I attempted to reach out to migrant women (and some men) who sell sex either on the street or in brothels through Red Umbrella Athens (RUA) and other participants. However, I quickly realised that distrust was strong, and I did not insist. Additionally, in the case of migrants, it is likely that language barriers may have been a concern. However, I hope that this gap is filled by the testimonies of the two migrant participants, as well as national interlocutors who have coexisted with migrant colleagues in work and activism. Additionally, a range of literature that has been engaging with these populations for extended periods provides valuable insights.

One of the biggest problems I encountered was safeguarding participants' privacy. To mitigate and help overcome privacy concerns, a participant-centred approach is needed. Anonymity and confidentiality should be highly evaluated and respected, as potential breaches could expose sex workers to arrest or public disclosure of a highly stigmatised and often criminalised identity.⁵⁷ Especially regarding migrant/refugee sex workers, considering their multiple vulnerabilities and potential exposure to state violence, confidentiality extends beyond the disclosed information concerning their profession, to include their migratory status. Thus, interview transcripts will be kept in the researcher's private archive, as respondents often unfold vulnerable personal stories that could expose both themselves and other individuals within small Athenian circles. According to Babbie 'a research project guarantees confidentiality when the researcher can identify a given person's responses but essentially promises not to do so publicly.

⁵⁷ 'Fact Sheet: Minority Stress and Sex Work – Understanding stress and internalized stigma' (*Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) USA*, 2017) <www.new.swopusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/FACTSHEET-MINORITYSTRESSANDSEXWORK-SWOPUSA-1.pdf> accessed 1 August 2023.

In an interview survey, for example, the researchers could make public the income reported by a given respondent, but they assure the respondent that this will not be done.⁵⁸ Excerpts from the interviews will be disseminated throughout the chapters of the thesis, as appropriate to their relevant themes.

However, as Berger and Guidroz point out, researchers focusing on sex work face a plethora of systemic obstacles in funding their research.⁵⁹ In my case, this was reflected during the process of remunerating the participants. Despite my efforts to maintain participants' privacy, this was not successful as the College's Finance Services required the disclosure of the participants' personal details. In the end, compensation was granted in a manner that would minimise the impact on participants' anonymity. However, it was a lengthy and stressful process for both them and me, as their trust was shaken until the issue was finally resolved. During this period, two participants refused to receive compensation. One declined because he considered himself quite privileged and believed that the money due to him would be better donated to someone else. The other declined partly due to the privacy issue and partly because she preferred to donate to the Sex Workers' Empowerment Network (SWEN). I believe that this case is worth mentioning here, as it is indicative of how bureaucratic, one-size-fits-all procedures end up further marginalising already marginalised subjects—an element also related with the function of law and to which I will return in chapter 6.

Part 2. Literature Review

The 'charmed circle' of regulationism

Legal studies around sex work usually start with a brief presentation of the legal models around the profession. However, as will be seen, despite their obvious differences, there are also several overlaps between them. Formally, the legislative models governing prostitution can be classified as follows:

Full criminalisation: The sex worker, the client, and third parties (such as managers, drivers, or landlords) are all criminalised. It is found in the USA (with the exception of Nevada), Russia, South Africa, China, Pakistan, Iran and elsewhere. However, in many cases the law is not implemented, with the result that street-work and red-light districts operate sometimes with the tolerance of

⁵⁸ Earl R Babbie, *The Basics of Social Research* (Cengage Learning 2016) 69.

⁵⁹ Michele Tracy Berger and Kathleen Guidroz, 'Researching Sexuality: The Politics of Location Approach for Studying Sex Work' in Carisa R Showden and Samantha Majic (eds), *Negotiating Sex Work. Unintended Consequences of Policy and Activism* (Minnesota University Press 2014) 19.

the authorities, sometimes at great risk, leaving workers exposed to police and state violence.

'End demand'/The Nordic Model: A legislative model that criminalises the purchase of sexual services, as well as the third parties involved in the sex trade, under the pretext of saving workers and reducing demand. It was first introduced in Sweden and has been implemented in Norway, Northern Ireland, France, Canada, and Israel, while in recent years there have been increasing discussions to introduce it in Italy, Spain, and Greece. Despite proclamations to reduce demand, prostitution continues to flourish in these countries, in a way that is unsafe for workers and not recorded in official statistics. As a French sex worker would state: 'Making something illegal cannot end demand for it. Drugs are illegal, but people still buy and use them.'⁶⁰ Additionally, under these laws, individuals who provide basic services for sex workers, their romantic partners or their family members can be charged as pimps. Sex workers often end up homeless, as their landlords also face arrest.

Partial criminalisation: A legal model where some aspects of the sex industry - often the most visible, such as street-based sex work- are criminalised. The acts of buying and selling sex are legal, whereas soliciting and kerb-crawling, indoors collaboration, or facilitating sex work remain criminalised. England and Wales are often referred to as typical examples of partial criminalisation.

Regulationism (also called legalisation, licensing, *réglementarisme*, *Prostitutionsgesetz*): Sex work is heavily regulated through this model, as it is legal only in certain venues, requires mandatory health testing and sometimes public registries. Sex workers who can't or won't comply with the various bureaucratic requirements, remain criminalised. Therefore, regulationism creates 'a two-tiered system where some sex work is legal and much is not; the state has drawn a *charmed circle* and most workers are not standing inside it'.⁶¹ Germany and the Netherlands are typical examples of this model, while Greece also adopts a similar framework.

Decriminalisation: The sex worker, the client, and third parties such as managers, drivers, and landlords are all decriminalised. The sex trade is regulated through labour law, while administrative sanctions apply when the law is violated. Decriminalisation is currently in force in New Zealand, New South Wales, Australia, and Belgium. It is also a universal demand of sex workers' organisations worldwide. However, often strict restrictions concerning

⁶⁰ 'NO Nordic Model' (*NO Nordic Model: Why real sex workers oppose the criminalization of clients*) <<https://nonordicmodel.com/>> accessed 2 August 2023.

⁶¹ Smith and Mac (n2) 179.

immigration, places where exchange sex takes place, or health provisions still apply at an individual or local level.

Greece has been part of the broader regulationist tradition since the mid-19th century, as will be analysed in detail. However, apart from the proclaimed differences between the different legislative approaches, one can see that there are several overlaps between them. For example, in Greek regulationism, soliciting as well as third parties are criminalised. In decriminalisation regimes, legalisation policies are often found, for example where zoning laws or provisions criminalising migrant labour are in place. These are indications that the law's regulatory role, which is grounded in broad categories and distinctions, often transcends state jurisdictions with shared characteristics. On the other hand, there is often a gap between the declarations of the law and their practical application. In regimes of official prohibition, it is not uncommon for subcultures and sub-communities to develop, even with the tolerance of the state authorities, leading to the formation of a parallel economy, as productive as the formal one.⁶² And vice versa, in typically permissive legal contexts, often, preemptive, sometimes stifling practices of surveillance and discipline are applied, reducing the legislators' declarations to a hollow letter. This does not diminish the importance of the existing provisions; on the contrary, they can be activated at any time when the state wishes to assert or expand its authoritarian tendencies. However, it does mean, that the modes of governance of the social phenomenon in question extend beyond the narrow confines of the written law and encompass a multitude of administrative practices that fundamentally, materially shape the lives of the governed subjects. The regular reform of prostitution-related laws in Greece, as will be detailed in the following chapters, was generally accompanied by a narrative of linear progress and liberalisation of the Greek state, but in practice the lives of sex workers were directly affected by police actions that varied little over the years.

Returning to the international context, the governance of prostitution, whether we talk about 'regulationism' or a different legal framework, has received prominent analysis from numerous legal and social science theorists. Emphasis will be placed on scholars whose analyses: a) extend beyond a strictly juridical approach; b) openly contest notions dominant in a significant segment of feminist thought. These ideas, directly or indirectly, attribute to the criminal law the role of an arbiter in dealing with what they consider 'the problem of prostitution'; c) sex work is perceived as work. Despite the individual differences between these works that will be analysed, it is the distancing from a formalistic legal approach on the one hand and from carceral feminism on the other, as well

⁶² Foucault (n40).

as the placing of prostitution in a wider context of class, labour, and political economy, that unites this body of work. These elements also communicate directly with the theoretical framework of this research, situating its scope.

Before this overview, however, it should be made clear which feminist conceptions this thesis opposes. Second-wave feminism, with prominent advocates including Dworkin, MacKinnon, Pateman and Barry and others, contended that prostitution is the exemplar of men's sexual entitlement over women. According to them, it represents the primary way in which men gain access to the bodies not only of prostitutes but also of other women. Pateman, for instance, wrote that prostitution ensured men's unlimited access to women's bodies, establishing male dominance, and monetising the female body.⁶³ For Pateman, defending prostitution as work is impossible because of the structural inequality between men and women. The paradox in Pateman's work is that she also refers to the structural inequality that exists in employment contracts yet fails to situate prostitution within a broader socio-economic context, hence as an ultimately unequal employment relationship. Similarly, Barry argued that sex workers' arguments are irrelevant, as, belonging in an oppressed class, they are compelled to 'consent' to their exploitation.⁶⁴ It was MacKinnon, however, who provided the broader theoretical argument that formed the basis for these conceptions. For her, gender inequality was translated into the institutionalisation of male violence and women's subordination, of which prostitution was an exemplar.⁶⁵ In 1983, MacKinnon, along with Dworkin, drafted the Antipornography Civil Rights Ordinance, proposing to treat pornography as a violation of women's civil rights. This work echoes their opinions on prostitution as well. For Dworkin, prostitution and pornography must be further recognised as parts of 'a male supremacist political ideology', along with sadomasochism, rape, and battery.⁶⁶

Apart from the identification of prostitution with female exploitation and male supremacy, the work of these theorists shows a few more convergences. First, while most of the second-wave feminists consider their analysis to be aligned with Marxist approaches, none of them has attempted an in-depth approach to prostitution situated within a broader class analysis in terms of political economy. Second, all of them have, to a greater or lesser extent, been involved in policymaking initiatives related to the eradication of prostitution, as will be discussed again in the chapter on trafficking. None of them, however, have sought to engage with sex workers' rights organisations. Instead, they claim to know their rights better than the workers themselves, asserting blatant

⁶³ Carole Pateman, *The sexual contract* (Stanford University Press 1988).

⁶⁴ Kathleen L Barry, *Prostitution of Sexuality* (NYU Press 1996).

⁶⁵ Catharine A MacKinnon, *Toward a feminist theory of the state* (Harvard University Press 1989).

⁶⁶ Andrea Dworkin, 'Prostitution and Male Supremacy' (1993) 1(1) *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law* 1.

paternalism. Thirdly, in their policymaking endeavours over time, they have defended, in the name of women's empowerment, the direct or indirect strengthening of the penal system. Absent from this framework is an in-depth reflection on the operation of the legal system itself and a question as to whether these proposals will reinforce punitivism and broader state authoritarianism, ultimately ending up being harmful to the social groups they claim to help. For these reasons, therefore, a return to the literature that brings these issues to the fore, part of which is this thesis, is essential.

The first analysis that provides several interesting insights into how prostitution is reflected in the law is by T. W. Adorno. In a 1963 essay bringing together law and psychoanalysis, Adorno criticised both sexual bourgeois values and sexual liberation for being hypocritical, focusing on the internalisation of sexual taboos by the law.⁶⁷ In this context and in a quite harsh tone, he argued that the continuous illegalisation/criminalisation of prostitutes, but also the moral crusades launched against them, leading, in different ways, to their physical extermination, reflect the hatred towards female sexuality and its recruitment for survival. Although Adorno's psychoanalytic-influenced perspective is beyond the scope of this research, the contribution of this short essay is crucial, as it vividly brings to the surface one of the main reasons why the various regimes governing sex work, even decriminalisation, place several restrictions on workers: the fear and disgust towards this particular type of work, and the (female) worker who carries it out. State regulation of prostitution echoes a 'state-enforced sexual morality'.⁶⁸

Adorno's psychoanalytical stance may seem outdated or even exaggerated, yet similar ideas have been developed in the context of the 1980s US Feminist Sex Wars. Gayle Rubin, in particular, moved in a parallel fashion to both Foucault and Adorno, highlighting the intersections between sexual deviances, taboos, and the law. Pioneering the feminist sex wars in 1980s America, Rubin argues that prostitution is both work and a political/sexual identity. Furthermore, she highlighted the hierarchy of sexuality in modern societies, stating that at the bottom of this pyramid are 'the most despised sexual castes' including 'transsexuals, transvestites, fetishists, sadomasochists, sex workers such as prostitutes and porn models, and the lowliest of all, those whose eroticism transgresses generational boundaries.'⁶⁹ Rubin's work is also emblematic as it reconstructs the history of anti-trafficking laws as essentially anti-immigration laws, with a deliberate targeting of sexuality, marking the onset of critical anti-

⁶⁷ Adorno (n27).

⁶⁸ Drucilla Cornell, *At the Heart of Freedom: Feminism, Sex, and Equality* (Princeton University Press 1998) 53.

⁶⁹ Gayle S Rubin, 'Thinking sex: Notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality' in Richard G Parker and Peter Aggleton (eds), *Culture, Society and Sexuality* (Routledge 2007) 151.

trafficking scholarship. In particular, this thorough research revealed the racist and deeply puritanical rationales behind anti-trafficking laws, and the ways in which they were directly linked to ideas of white supremacy and anti-immigration. In general, Rubin's stance, in conjunction with the sex workers' movement, came in response to second-wave feminists who were in favour of banning prostitution and pornography. Thus, gradually, an approach that sex work must be recognised as work began to emerge at the level of both activism and academia. Rubin's contribution is remarkable in this direction, as it brought to academic discussion a debate that had largely been conducted at the level of grassroots organising up to that point.

Rubin was not alone in this battle. On the other side of the Atlantic, as early as the 1970s, Social Reproduction Feminism, simultaneously in the streets and within universities, highlighted the connection between female/reproductive/invisible work and male/productive work. In this context, Silvia Federici's work is emblematic. Federici, adopting a Marxist analysis, speaks of the policing/regulation of prostitution as the dispossession of women's labour power and sexuality in early modernity, the era of primitive accumulation. That is, she situates prostitution as (re)productive labour, speaking of corporeality, economy, and multiple regimes of criminalisation.⁷⁰ She also rejects the separation of sex work from other exchange activities involving the body, such as any other form of labour, and marriage.⁷¹ Similarly, Leopoldina Fortunati,⁷² Mariarosa Dalla Costa⁷³ and Selma James,⁷⁴ all of them influenced by the Italian workerism movement and participating in the International Wages for Housework Campaign and in Prostitution Advocacy as well, stressed the fluid boundaries and affiliations between prostitution and other forms of reproductive labour, such as domestic work and marriage. Social reproduction feminists both denaturalised the division between production and reproduction, and deconstructed the false dichotomy between prostitution and other forms of work women traditionally perform. They situated women's reproductive labour at the centre of the capitalist economy contradicting the orthodox Marxist conceptualisation of wage labour as predominantly male and productive, and became actively involved with the sex workers' struggles, in opposition to the institutional feminists in Europe and the

⁷⁰Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch. Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (Autonomedia, 2014).

⁷¹ Silvia Federici, *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism* (PM Press 2020) 29 – 30.

⁷² Leopoldina Fortunati, *Arcane of Reproduction: Housework, Prostitution, Labor and Capital* (Autonomedia 1989).

⁷³ Mariarosa Dalla Costa, 'Capitalism and Reproduction (11-07-1994)' (2004) (N.8, Autumn/Winter) *The Commoner*, 1, <<https://libcom.org/article/capitalism-and-reproduction-mariarosa-dalla-costa>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁷⁴ Selma James, *Sex, Race, and Class—The Perspective of Winning : A Selection of Writings, 1952–2011* (Common Notions and PM Press, 2012).

US. Although the law has not been a central theme in their investigations, their worker-centred, feminist perspective is of great importance for the contemporary understanding of sex work.

Moving into the 21st century, Jane Scoular, having a legal background herself, focuses on the ways in which the law produces prostitution as a governance 'problem', the material and social impact of law in relation to prostitution, and the construction of the workers' subjectivity.⁷⁵ Governmentality discourse, emphasising the creation of 'populations' to be governed, eventually transforms legal power into mechanisms of governmentality, but also constructs prostitution as a distinguishing legal category, inscribing a disciplinary regime on prostitutes' bodies. Scoular also highlights feminism's contribution to the latter point. The emergence of the 'prostitute/victim' as a separate target of control and rescue on the part of liberal, radical and dominance feminists seeking to ban prostitution in order to rescue the former is another example of governance. Scoular also believes that sex workers can manipulate the law *in situ* to respond more effectively to their demands. She also contends that it matters *who* uses the law and *how*, and whether 'for example, the terms "sex worker" or "exploitation" are used to reify exclusionary forms of identity, and essentialist forms of citizenship while obscuring material conditions (thus supporting law's normalising power) or whether these terms can transcend binaries and give way to wider politics of resistance'.⁷⁶ She finally suggests that we should critically embrace the concept of rights, as part of a post-structural approach to law.⁷⁷

'Revolting Prostitutes' by prostitutes and advocates Molly Smith and Juno Mac argue for the need for sex workers themselves to be heard, as well as the need to transcend the reductionist binary between victimhood and agency. Using a Marxist-feminist and materialist framework, Smith and Mac transcend the naïve dilemma between the liberal narrative of 'empowerment', the maternalistic narrative of passivity and victimisation, and the conservative condemnation of 'sinful degradation',⁷⁸ reconstructing their experience as working subjects through a matrix of oppressions. The book links the history of sex work and border policing worldwide to sex workers' ways of resistance and participation in wider struggles for social liberation. At the same time, it contains a thorough analysis of legal models of governing sex work internationally, with examples from sex workers' lived experiences. In this context, they systematically expose the risks to

⁷⁵ Jane Scoular, *The Subject of Prostitution: Sex work, law, and social theory* (Routledge, 2017).

⁷⁶ Jane Scoular, 'What's Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work' (2010) 37(1) *Journal of Law and Society* 12.

⁷⁷ Scoular (n75) 88.

⁷⁸ Rhian E Jones, 'Book review: Revolting Prostitutes' (*New Humanist*, 28 November 2018) <<https://newhumanist.org.uk/articles/5391/book-review-revolting-prostitutes>> accessed 7 August 2023.

which the Nordic model puts prostitutes, exposing them to homelessness, police discrimination and poverty -problems that should be addressed structurally- and not through the criminal justice system. The writers advocate for the full decriminalisation of sex work as it can allow sex workers to access labour laws on minimum income, health, safety, and security. At the same time, they acknowledge the inherently exploitative nature of labour and the existence of class conflicts that no law can erase. Labour trafficking, migrant sex work, acts of survival sex are also approached through the lens of the exploitative conditions of capitalist economies and the policing of borders. Mac and Smith remind that ‘cops are not feminists’⁷⁹ and call for a decriminalisation of human movement as well, beyond the narrow penal treatment of trafficking.

Journalist and former sex worker Melissa Gira Grant, in her book ‘Playing the Whore’, the result of long-term experience of working, journalism and sex workers’ rights advocacy, attempts to deconstruct the myths surrounding sex work, addresses the fact of class differences among sex workers, criticises the working conditions within the sex industry, but also carceral feminists who promote the criminalisation of prostitution.⁸⁰ In particular, she situates contemporary efforts to restrict sex work within a continuum of illegalisation dating back to the 19th century and focuses on the unholy alliances between feminists and the police, the main enforcement apparatus of capitalist, racist states. Gira Grant also sheds light on some of the darker aspects of the ‘rescue/victim industry’, with ‘measures to tackle trafficking’ having a special place in these endeavours, such as brothel raids, the confinement of sex workers in rehabilitation centres for forced labour, and their sexual, physical and psychological abuse by their supposed rescuers.

Correspondingly, Aya Gruber has shown how the feminist war on crime, emphasising white female innocence and victimhood, makes already vulnerable women increasingly vulnerable, with prostitutes being a prime example. Gruber further explains how the expansion of the criminal definition of rape, the resurgence of ‘purity’ in contemporary feminist discourse, the emergence of the ideal of ‘enthusiastic consent’, whose absence is tantamount to rape, and the introduction of #MeToo in courtrooms has indirectly contributed to the further de facto illegalisation of sex work, stirring up a new moral panic and police raids on brothels. Listing several cases of raids on brothels in various US states under the initial pretext of trafficking, despite immigrant women working there willingly, Gruber examines in depth the legal aspects of the interactions between

⁷⁹ Smith and Mac (n2) 209

⁸⁰ Melissa Gira Grant, *Playing the whore : the work of sex work* (Verso 2014).

the state and feminists, intentional or not.⁸¹ This perspective offers extremely useful tools for understanding the mechanisms of this interaction and its consequences. However, due to the vast technical differences between the American and Greek judicial systems, it is difficult to draw safe analogies or conclusions. In the European context, particularly in the UK, Alison Phipps explores how mainstream feminism, despite its promises to tackle all women's problems, actually reinforces rather than challenges the racial and class structures of capitalist states and ultimately further marginalises women who do not fit into its ideal, enforcing 'political whiteness' through its embrace of the punitive state.⁸² In this context, Phipps elaborates how 'trauma capital' is structured by gender, race, and class, resulting to trans women, women of colour and sex worker's experiences of violence being taken less seriously than those of white, middle-class, cisgender women. Moreover, the latter often use their trauma as a pretext to form what Phipps calls an 'outrage economy' and campaign against trans and sex workers' rights. Phipps cautions that sexual violence outrages and punitive responses towards it distract from understanding and organising against structural violence.

Finally, the synergies between the state and NGOs, but also feminists and conservatives/Christians, as well as the association of rehabilitation with police violence and forced labour in other arduous and undervalued jobs have been vividly illustrated in the works of Elizabeth Bernstein, Laura Agustin, Elena Shih,⁸³ Kamala Kempadoo,⁸⁴ Jo Doezema,⁸⁵ and others.⁸⁶ Overall, this vast corpus of works forming Critical Anti-Trafficking scholarship, seeks to address the phenomenon of trafficking in the light of capitalism and migrant labour exploitation within it. It thus avoids separating sexual trafficking from other forms of labour trafficking and considers that the criminalisation of prostitution or restrictions on migration, often proposed as means of 'prevention', fail to address the conditions that give rise to coercion, rendering life more difficult for the subjects at greater risk instead. The contribution of this tradition, which is directly linked to anti-carceral feminism, is noteworthy, as it brings to the fore the

⁸¹ Aya Gruber, *The Feminist War on Crime. The Unexpected Role of Women's Liberation in Mass Incarceration* (University of California Press, 2021).

⁸² Alison Phipps, *Me Not You: the trouble with mainstream feminism* (Manchester University Press, 2020) 170-175.

⁸³ Elena Shih, *Manufacturing Freedom. Sex Work, Anti-Trafficking Rehab, and the Racial Wages of Rescue* (University of California Press, 2023).

⁸⁴ Kamala Kempadoo, Jyoti Sanghera, Bandana Pattanaik (eds.), *Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered. New Perspectives on Migration, Sex Work, and Human Rights*, (Routledge, 2011); Kamala Kempadoo and Jo Doezema, *Global Sex Workers. Rights, resistance and redefinition* (Routledge, 1998).

⁸⁵ Jo Doezema, 'Ouch!: Western Feminists' 'Wounded Attachment' to the "Third World Prostitute" (2001) 67(1) *Feminist Review* 16.

⁸⁶ For the intersections between white liberal feminisms and the carceral state, particularly within NGOs, see further Elizabeth Whalley and Colleen Hackett, 'Carceral feminisms: the abolitionist project and undoing dominant feminisms' (2017) 20(4) *Contemporary Justice Review* 456.

question of labour itself in capitalism, but also of migration in the context of antagonisms between nation-states. These perspectives are absent from the dominant discourses of states and NGOs that advocate for stricter laws.

The above literature review includes some of the most influential contributions to the literature around sex work today globally. The existing Greek literature, as discussed below, has not yet incorporated these global perspectives, as shown in the next section.

Sex work in Greek Literature

Discourse around sex work in Greece often veers away from academic analysis, instead portraying the subject as a taboo, wrapped in the realm of urban legends or exceptionalism. Prostitution is often approached through sensationalism and dominant cultural narratives rather than rigorous academic inquiry, portraying the working women simultaneously as victims and as public threats. It has therefore influenced several writers in Greece, most of them being outside the field of academic research and moving in the sphere between journalism, folklore, and literature. In terms of research *per se*, there are several notable studies, mainly coming from the field of social or cultural studies but remaining largely fragmentary. In the legal field, the studies largely concern the history of Greek regulationism, while sex work 'largely remains outside the main interests of Greek criminology, which focuses more on the technicalities of criminal justice'.⁸⁷ At the same time, the relationship between feminism and sex work remains an even bigger taboo, as it has so far not been the subject of any academic research.

In particular, the most recent overview of sex work in law is by Maratou-Alipranti and Rethimiotaki, presenting in detail the legal framework and the problems of its implementation, as well as the shifts in the attitude of Greek society towards men and women workers.⁸⁸ It also clearly emphasises that in public discourse there is often confusion between prostitution and trafficking, and/or STDs, while a description of sex workers' organisations is also provided, although their image has been altered since then. However, due to the brevity of this chapter -part of a collective volume focusing on policy evaluation- it is not possible to delve deeper into the issues raised. Almost 20 years earlier, in 2002, a two-volume work in Greek by the criminologist Grigoris Lazos titled 'Prostitution and Transnational Trafficking in Modern Greece' was published.⁸⁹ Lazos' study remains to this day the most influential on prostitution in Greece, partly because it contains a

⁸⁷ Georgios Papanicolaou, *Transnational policing and sex trafficking in southeast Europe: Policing the imperialist chain* (Palgrave Macmillan 2011) 173.

⁸⁸ Laoura Maratou-Alipranti and Helen Rethimiotaki, 'Greece', (eds. Synnøve Økland Jahnsen & Hendrik Wagenaar) *Assessing Prostitution Policies in Europe*, (Routledge, 2018) 356.

⁸⁹ Grigoris Lazos, *Porneia Kai Diethnikē Sōmatemporía Stē Synchronē Hellada [Prostitution and Transnational Human Trafficking in Contemporary Greece]* (Kastaniotis 2002).

thorough investigation of the preexisting laws, from the foundation of the Greek state until the end of the 20th century. Additionally, its sensationalised writing style and clear positioning next in favour of the popular demand for clients' criminalisation contribute to its influence. As Papanicolaou argues, Lazos reported shocking findings about the networks of human trafficking that allegedly were running rampant in Greece, as well as their victims' numbers, without ever being transparent about his research methods or his statistics.⁹⁰ Yet, anti-trafficking and anti-prostitution agitation was fuelled because of his research, dominating respective panels, forums and policymaking, from the Greek police to the General Secretariat for Gender Equality up to this day. Beyond this, Lazos' research seems to completely ignore the working subjects' point-of-view.

On a legislative course of action, at the end of 2022, a bill on decriminalisation of sex work and recognition of labour rights for workers, drafted by the late President of the Transgender Support Association Marina Galanou, under the supervision of jurist Vassilis Sotiropoulos, was published.⁹¹ The publication includes targeted empirical research on trans people, showing that for many of them sex work is essentially a one-way street. The legal commentary included focuses on the Court of Justice of the EU and the European Court of Human Rights case law, highlights the constitutional safeguarding of sex work through the free development of personal and economic freedom, and places particular emphasis on the future possibility of reporting gender identity crimes or human trafficking. Despite its important contribution to the trans issue and as a basis for possible future reform, the publication avoids placing the issue of sex work within the broader context of sex work and the political economy, as well as the punitive state. Instead, it remains locked into an identitarian logic, as well as sanitising the state's oppressive mechanisms. This should not alienate anyone familiar with the Greek reality, given that Galanou and Sotiropoulos in the last decade have spearheaded initiatives such as the aggravation of punishment for crimes with a racist and especially transphobic/homophobic motive, introducing a 'rainbow' carceral mentality, leaving their causes unaddressed.⁹²

In the field of social and historical anthropology, the studies of the late Liopi Abatzi and Kostas Yannakopoulos are a reference point. Abatzi, in her doctoral thesis -later published as 'A drink to keep company'- focuses on a very specific form of sex work, that of sexual distraction in pick-up bars, with the most

⁹⁰ Papanicolaou (n87) 170-173.

⁹¹ Marina Galanou, *Ergasia Sto Sex. Nomiko Plaisio Kai Scholiasmos. Stochevmeni Erevna Se Trans Prosopa. Theseis Kai Protaseis [Sex Work. Definitions – Legal Framework and Commentary – Targeted Research on Trans Individuals – Positions and Proposals]* (Polychromos Planitis, 2022).

⁹² Cf. Spade (n38).

interesting element being that the data of her ethnographic research were derived through her own participant observation, as she worked from time to time in these bars.⁹³ As her book's introduction shows, Abatzi belongs to the sex-radical tradition, aligned with Rubin's theory. In 2008 Abatzi also authored a critical anti-trafficking study, situating the tense debate around coercion from the perspective of the trafficked subjects themselves, deconstructing the nation-state and closed border reasoning upon which contemporary anti-trafficking legislations are based.⁹⁴ Yannakopoulos, on the other hand, focuses on the ways in which commercial sexuality between men was considered a 'rite of passage' in both manhood and adulthood well until the 1970s, when identity politics arose in Greece. Until then, he argues, the purchasing of sex from/among male adolescents, with the exchange of money, food, or clothes, was considered natural, and much less taboo than female prostitution and female sexuality in general. According to Yannakopoulos, a clear distinction between masculine men (*andres*) who would engage in bisexual encounters adopting an active sexual role and feminine, passive men (*adelfes*), existed.⁹⁵ *Andres* usually sold their sexual favors for consumer goods such as clothes, while *adelfes* would have it as a more stable livelihood. Yannakopoulos' work is important in understanding that homosexual relations in the Greek society, even before the decriminalisation of homosexuality in the 1950s, where normalised, treated as an every-day phenomenon, even as a rite-of-passage to masculinity.

Some of the subjects of Yannakopoulos' research (based on oral testimonies) have in the course of their lives engaged in gender reassignment. However, their experiences are recorded as male homoerotic, spanning a time before gender reassignment. Trans women, despite being the most visible subjects in the public discourse who are professionally involved in sex, are largely absent from existing research. Apart from Galanou's recent book, evidence is rescued through their own autobiographies⁹⁶. Historian Nikolaos Papadogiannis recently indicated the entanglements between sex work, gender identity and spatial mobilities in the case of Greek trans sex workers. Starting from the assumption that sex work was

⁹³ Liopi Abatzi, *Poto Gia Parea: Sexoualiki Diaskedasi Sti Synchroni Ellada [A Drink to Keep Company. Sexual Entertainment in Contemporary Greece]* (Kedros 2009).

⁹⁴ Liopi Abatzi, *Proseggizontas to fainomeno tou trafficking [Approaching the phenomenon of trafficking]* (EKKE, 2008).

⁹⁵ Kostas Yannakopoulos, 'Gnosi Kai Exousia: Mystikotita, Ennoiologiseis Ton Andrtikon Omoerotikon Scheseon Kai Ena (Omo)Sexualiko Egklima Stin Metapolemiki Athina [Knowledge and Power: Secrecy, Conceptualisation of Male Homosexual Relations and a (Homo)Sexual Crime in Post-War Athens]' in Demetra Vassileiadou and Glauke Gkotsi (eds), *Istories Gia ti Sexualikotita [Histories about Sexuality]* (Themelio 2020) 178.

⁹⁶ Betty Vakalidou, *Betty: O kapetanios tis zois mou [Betty: My Soul's Captain]*, (Tipothyto, 2017); Anna Kouroupou, *Giati den echo san to diko sou mama? [Why Don't I Have One like Yours, Mom?]* (Potamos, 2011); Evi Koumarianou, *To taxidi tis zois mou [My Life's Journey]*, (Polichromos Planitis, 2012); Jenny Cheiloudaki, *I mavri vivlos [The Black Bible]* (Omvros, 2003).

often a one-way street within the labour market as well as for the process of gender transition, he examines mobility processes, as well as the fact that for many transgender women sex work was also a source of pleasure and affirmation.⁹⁷ The current processes of illegalisation, work precarity, exploitation and community building among Athens-based cis and trans sex workers engage Valentini Sampethai's research. Sampethai examines sexuality and gender as inseparable from class and material conditions, and concludes that the 'communities' built among illegalised sex workers, based upon grassroots strategies of surviving state violence and poverty, although 'by no means straightforward, harmonious, or free from instrumentalism', are interconnected with questions of political economy.⁹⁸ Sampethai's article is of paramount importance in grasping the realities of the illegalised Athenian sex workers' communities through the intersections of gender, race, class and sexuality. The article also makes clear how regulationism translates to a reality where direct criminal penalties coexist near a vast grey area of invisibility and illegalisation.⁹⁹

Moving to the field of sociolinguistics, Christos Sagredos examines the use of 'sex work' vs 'prostitution' in several Greek newspapers.¹⁰⁰ His findings reveal that the choice of the term on the part of each newspaper corresponded to its overall perceptions of sex work. The most conservative ones, repeating a discourse of victimisation of women and abolitionism, used the word prostitution, while the left-wing *Efimerida ton Syntakton* distinguished between voluntary sex work and trafficking, acknowledging the existence of male sex workers as well. He concludes that increased use of the term 'sex work' by the media could contribute to an overall change in public perception and ultimately shape a new legal framework. While there is indeed a consolidation of the notion that changing the use of discourse can lead to institutional and material changes, this is far from guaranteed. Language activism, although necessary, often remains at a discourse level, effecting no real change in the lives of the subjects concerned.¹⁰¹ This issue concerns broader epistemological and political debates, focusing on symbolic rather than material aspects, such as class oppositions, the gendered reality of work, corporeality, law's economic aspects etc.

Most of the studies that have been carried out in recent years concern the spatial aspect of prostitution, and each of them focuses on the study of a specific

⁹⁷ Nikolaos Papadogiannis, 'Greek trans women selling sex, spaces and mobilities, 1960s–80s' (2022) 29(2) *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 331.

⁹⁸ Valentini Sampethai, 'Workers, Migrants, and Queers: The political economy of community among illegalised sex workers in Athens' (2022) (19) *Anti-Trafficking Review* 28.

⁹⁹ *Ibid* 32.

¹⁰⁰ Christos Sagredos, 'The representation of sex work in the Greek Press' (2019) 8(2) *Journal of Language and Sexuality* 166.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Sumaq (n24).

geographic area. The authors -the majority of them architects/urban planners- use the Foucauldian concept of *heterotopia* to draw a parallel with the brothel. Themis Andriopoulos' research focuses on the streets with brothels in central Athens, specifically in Fylis Street and Metaxourgeio. In a somewhat romantic tone he tries to highlight the brothels as timeless elements of the urban fabric.¹⁰² Bournova and Stoyannidis, exploring the history of the working-class neighborhood of Gazohori from the late 19th to the early 20th century refer to prostitution as a vital function of the neighborhood, to the extent that the two became synonymous with each other.¹⁰³ Piraeus has been particularly fascinating, with the state-run brothel of Vourla and the later cabarets of Trouba. In her thesis, Vassiliki Roditi analyses Vourla through the prism of heterotopia and the panopticon, while the work is interspersed with numerous literary and musical references of the period.¹⁰⁴ Absent from the work is a demonstration of the relationship between law and geography, while prostitutes are largely represented as the ruins of society, reproducing the illustration captured in the poems, songs and police reports featured in the thesis. Roditi's work seems to be heavily influenced by Vasilis Pisimisis' study. An amateur himself, he has devoted 23 years to studying the history of Vourla and of Piraeus in general, collecting data from as early as 1840, as well as oral testimonies of the last Trouba workers.¹⁰⁵ He is mainly interested in highlighting the class and sexual relations of the 'underground' world of the city, without avoiding stereotypes of myth-making or victimisation of workers that appear interchangeably and constantly. His most important contribution is the reference to the dismantling of the Trouba red light district in the context of the gentrification imposed by the mayor appointed by the junta of the colonels in 1967. This history can provide a basis for reflection on contemporary urban transformation experiences.¹⁰⁶

Moving from architectural history to urban planning, the institutional framework and practices for the location and operation of commercial sex activities have also been addressed on a local level. Georgios Zafolias attempts to record both the legal framework and the existing brothels in Athens until 2019. Clearly influenced by Lazos' research, he advocates for the clients' criminal responsibility, adopts an end

¹⁰² Themis Andriopoulos, 'Brothels: houses which stood the test of time' (*Athens Social Atlas*, 2017) <www.athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/brothels/> accessed 5 August 2023.

¹⁰³ Evgenia Bournova and Yannis Stoyannidis, 'Gazochori: The History of a Neighbourhood (1857–1980)' (*Athens Social Atlas*, 2018) <www.athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/gazochori/> accessed 5 August 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Vassiliki Roditi, 'Peiraias. Apo Ta Vourla Stin Trouba. Synyfanseis Sexoualikititas Kai Kyriarchias Ston Astiko Choro [Piraeus. From Vourla to Trouba. Interweaving Sexuality and Domination in Urban Space]' (MA dissertation, University of Thessaly 2015).

¹⁰⁵ Vasilis Pisimisis, *Vourla-Troumpa: Mia Periēgēsē Ston Chōro Tou Perithōriou Kai Tēs Porneias Tou Peiraia (1840-1968) [Vourla – Trouba. A Tour in the Spaces of the Fringe and Prostitution of Piraeus (1840 – 1968)]* (Mov Publications 2021)

¹⁰⁶ Georgia Alexandri, 'Gentrification – Athens Social Atlas' (*Athens Social Atlas*, 2015) <www.athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/gentrification/> accessed 31 January 2024..

demand approach, and calls for greater policing against ‘delinquency’ in proximity to brothels.¹⁰⁷ On the contrary, Antonis Mpelis, studies a degraded area of Western Thessaloniki, where brothels were moved by a municipal decision in 2010. He concludes that the existence of brothels should not imply an area’s degradation, proposing mixed land use and, indirectly, a corresponding revision of the provisions of the law. These proposals are interesting, but do not depart from the framework of regulationism which provides only for licensed sites.¹⁰⁸ The case of Volos was dealt with by Constantinos Lalenis, Nicolaos Moschos, and Yannis Polymenidis. In their analysis they refer to brothels as Locally Unwanted Land Uses, and after discussing various local initiatives aimed at addressing this issue, both in Greece and on a global scale, they advocate for the inclusion of brothels as a conventional component of urban planning.¹⁰⁹ Drawing insights from the latter analysis, I argue that a link exists between regulationism and the criminological theory of broken windows, and highlight the need to move away from the regulated space of the brothel, through sex work decriminalisation.¹¹⁰

The link between prostitution and health, particularly venereal diseases, is often stressed. A typical example is Thomas Drikos’ study of prostitution in 19th-century Ermoupolis.¹¹¹ Highlighting the complex class and gender relations of the first modern, bourgeois Greek city, Drikos studies its General Hospital archives to reveal the identification between prostitution and venereal diseases. Despite the thorough presentation of medical records and the underscoring of the relationship between health and ethics, the analysis lacks a judgment on the control of women’s sexuality and labour through their compulsory hospitalisation, inherent features of 19th-century regulationism. Maria Korasidou describes the methods of establishing medical biopolitical practices in the Greek territory during the 19th century, highlighting synergies between medicine and police responses to sex work. According to her, prostitutes were primarily among

¹⁰⁷ Georgios Zafolias, ‘Thesmiko Plaisio Kai Practikes Chorothetises Kai Leitourgias Ton Drastiriotion Tou Agoraiou Erotas Stin Ellada. I Periptosi Tis Athenas. [Institutional Framework and Practices for the Location and Operation of Commercial Sex Activities in Greece. The Case of Athens]’ (MA dissertation, University of Thessaly 2019)

¹⁰⁸ Antonios Mpelis, ‘Anaplasti Kai Poleodomisi Tis Dytikis Eisodou Tis Thessalonikis: Mia Diaforetiki Parembasi [Regeneration and Urban Development of the Western Entrance of Thessaloniki: A Different Intervention]’ (MA dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki 2018).

¹⁰⁹ Constantinos Lalenis, Nicolaos Moschos, and Yannis Polymenidis, ‘Ta ‘Kokkina Fanaria’. Zitimata poleodomikou schediasmou kai thesmikou plaiiou stis zones agoraiou erotas: oikoi anochis ston Demos Volou [The ‘Red Lights’: Issues of urban planning and institutional framework in commercial love zones: brothels in the Municipality of Volos]’ (Paper presented at Panhellenic Conference of Urban Planning, Spatial Planning and Regional Development, Volos, September 27-30, 2018).

¹¹⁰ Athena Michalakea, ‘From the Margins of Law to the Margins of the City; a Legal-Geographical Analysis of Sex Work Regulationism in Greece’ (2023) 16(3) *Journal of Place Management and Development*.

¹¹¹ Thomas Drikos, *I Porneia Stin Ermoupoli to 19^o AIONA (1820-1900) [Prostitution in 19th Century Hermoupolis (1820-1900)]* (En Syro 2017).

the first to be subjected to strict state surveillance, in ways that promoted and secured the idealised triptych: public health-social morality-family.¹¹² Demetra Tzanaki's work moves in a similar direction. Tzanaki highlights the relationship between scientific and moral discourse and points out that 'normality' is cemented through exclusion. She contends that exclusion has been rooted in 'effeminacy', an idea associated with degeneracy, with prostitution becoming perhaps the most distinct expression of degeneracy.¹¹³ Her analysis successfully demonstrates how this new 'normal' morality worked to construct criminal subjects and control them, but again the link between health, morality and labour disciplining is missing. Furthermore, Tzanaki hints at the hegemonic relations that existed between bourgeois feminists and working-class women, especially prostitutes, in the interwar period, but she refrains from delving into this analysis. However, in a more recent text, she criticises the General Secretariat's attitude in favour of adopting the Nordic Model, considering the latter to be clearly liberal and an attack on the working classes.¹¹⁴

Feminist historian Efi Avdela presents an extensive work which focuses on the constitution of a 'juvenile offenders' category. She describes how the child protection system created in the interwar period was in fact based on the establishment of juvenile courts and reformatories. The main reason for the persecution and imprisonment of young girls and boys was non-compliance with gender roles, while prostitution was the most common accusation. However, as she points out, persecution overwhelmingly targeted working-class children, and children from communist families, whose incarceration in reformatories sought to transform them into productive citizens for the nation and its economy through compulsory work. Until the late 1970s, this system included both judiciary and preventative axes, i.e. it concerned both underage people who had committed an offence, and those who were perceived to be 'in moral danger of becoming anti-social persons or offenders. She also mentions the active role of bourgeois feminists in managing this 'unruly youth'.¹¹⁵

The synergies between bourgeois feminism and the state regarding the restriction of prostitution are further highlighted in the work of the historian Achilleas Fotakis. Studying the establishment of the City Police and the Vice Department

¹¹² Maria Korasidou, *Otan I Arrostia Apeilei: Epitirisi Kai Eleghos Tis Ygeias Tou Plithysmou Stin Ellada Tou 19^{ou} Aiona [When Disease Threatens: Surveillance and Control of Health Population in 19th Century Greece]* (Typothyto 2002).

¹¹³ Demetra Tzanaki, *Istoria Tis (Mi)Kanonikotitas [History of (Non)Normativity]* (Ekdoseis Asini 2016).

¹¹⁴ Demetra Tzanaki, 'Sex Work Is Work: Greek Capitalism and the "Syndrome of Electra," 1922–2018' in Jeremy Rayner and others (eds), *Back to the '30s? recurring crises of capitalism, liberalism, and democracy* (Palgrave Macmillan 2020).

¹¹⁵ Efi Avdela, "Neoi En Kindyno": *Epitirisi, Anamorphosi Kai Dikaiosyni Anilikōn Meta Ton Polemo [Youth in Danger": Surveillance, Rehabilitation and Juvenile Justice in the Post-War Era]* (Polis 2013)

as a separate administrative unit, Fotakis mentions several interactions, both on a theoretical level and in the field of action, between the police and bourgeois feminists, in a web of protection of morality, health, and women who were victimised, through crackdowns.¹¹⁶ These relations, however, for the period up to 1950, are described with unexpected intensity in the study of autonomous feminist groups entitled 'Nation, gender and women's movements in Greece'. Born out of collective study and writing, this publication is the most complete presentation of the contradictions, antagonisms and conflicts of the women's movements of the early 20th century, revolving around class, labour and racial/immigrant status.¹¹⁷ The first part of this thesis is largely based on this endeavor, which differs from the dominant left-feminist approaches to historiography only in that it does not adopt the narrative of the 'unbroken unity of the movement', without lacking in substantiation and profundity.

Turning to anti-trafficking literature, Georgios Papanicolaou's approach is of particular significance. Situated within a critical anti-trafficking scholarship, he assesses national and transnational anti-trafficking policies within a context of the transformation of capitalist nation-states (in this case Greece) and imperialism.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, in collaboration with Avi Boukli, they highlight the unreliability of the data on victims provided by the Greek police (including all migrants working illegally in sex work). They also pay attention to private actors' involvement in anti-trafficking programmes, especially in the context of the neoliberal Greek labour market; such schemes ultimately fail to provide real outlets for victims of coercion.¹¹⁹ Boukli has further shown the juxtapositions between punitive and victim welfarist anti-trafficking responses and the emergence of a 'victim industry complex' in Greece.¹²⁰ These contributions are of paramount importance for understanding the functioning of the contemporary local rescue industry and its communication with policing. In my final two chapters, I expand on these insights within the broader context of the economy and labour. Finally, Anna Agathangelou's contribution is noteworthy. Despite having a judgmental attitude towards prostitution -and, in some instances, equating forced labour with coercion-, her ethnographic research with migrant women in Greece, Cyprus and Turkey reveals the blurred, often indistinct

¹¹⁶ Achilleas Fotakis, 'I Dimiourgia Tis Astynomias Poleon Kai I Vretaniki Apostoli (1918 – 1932) [The Creation of the City Police and the British Mission (1918 – 1932)]' (PhDthesis, University of Athens 2016).

¹¹⁷ fight back!/antifa negative, *Ethnos, Fylo Kai Gynaikeia Kinimata Stin Ellada (1880 – 1949)* [Nation, Gender and Women Movements in Greece (1880- 1949)] (autonomous publication 2017).

¹¹⁸ Papanicolaou (n87).

¹¹⁹ Georgios Papanicolaou and Avi Boukli, 'Human Trafficking in Greece', *The Palgrave International Handbook of Human Trafficking* (Springer International Publishing 2019).

¹²⁰ Paraskevi S Bouklis, 'Trafficking and the "Victim Industry" Complex' in Georgios A Antonopoulos (ed), *Illegal Entrepreneurship, Organized Crime and Social Control Essays in Honor of Professor Dick Hobbs. Studies of Organized Crime (14)*. (Springer 2016).

boundaries that exist between sex work and other forms of undervalued female labour, primarily domestic.¹²¹ Her approach therefore comes from the perspective of social reproduction which proves particularly useful in understanding the gendered reality of work.

The literature that focuses on Greece covers many aspects but remains fragmentary and largely fails to read sex work outside the circumscribing boundaries of regulationism. It also disregards the elective affinities between regulationism and the criminal justice system. On the contrary, in this research, I adopt a comprehensive approach by synthesising the existing fragmentary analyses and adapting and contextualising critical insights that exist in the international context. This comprehensive approach is also achieved through archival research and interviews with sex workers with the aim of amplifying their voices and communal perspectives.

Beyond a reading of regulationism as a fragmentary form of sexual labour governance, this thesis aims to contribute to a broader understanding of the legal regulation of prostitution as a means of social control, a tool for the installation of broader techniques of surveillance of the working class and its women, of which prostitutes present an extreme version. This is achieved by studying the various interactions between the state and private actors, such as feminist philanthropy, but also the web of regulations and disciplines (urban planning, asylums/hospitals and reformatories, border control, wider regulation of labour) anchored in regulationism yet extending way beyond its restrictions. At the core of governing sexual labour lies a mixture of proclaimed protection and punishment, of fragmented labour rights and criminal repression: an ideology enforced jointly by the state and private organisations that tends to prevail universally within the concept of work, as will be examined in the last chapter. In this sense, the question that emerges is how and to what extent the law becomes a useful tool in the hands of sex workers and works to their benefit.

Moreover, although it is commonplace in the existing literature that Greece lies within the sphere of Western influence in ways that affect both institutions and laws, particularly in the legal regulation of sex work, the actual ways in which social movements (feminisms and the sex workers' movement) and private initiatives such as philanthropy are included in this sphere of influence have not insofar been thoroughly investigated. Even more so, the study of the relationship between domestic feminisms and their synergies with the state, influenced by patterns observed in global governance feminist discourse and the ways in which

¹²¹ Anna M. Agathangelou, *The Global Political Economy of Sex: Desire, Violence, and Insecurity in Mediterranean Nation States* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

some of its most militant sections internalise and reproduce the hegemonic discourse against sex workers, remains a taboo subject.

This thesis therefore sheds light on these obscured aspects by adopting a twofold perspective: by studying feminist practices through the filters of anti-carceral feminism, a project that is unprecedented in the Greek case, and by situating sex work in the wider field of political economy and class conflict, the latter often triggered by the alignment of dominant feminisms with the economic and political interests of the Greek nation-state. By reviewing the state-sanctioned and philanthropic practices of governing sexual labour through the modern history of Greece, the internal tensions and complexities of social movements emerge. I particularly identify these tensions by drawing on anti-carceral feminism, which disentangles the desire to assist vulnerable individuals from normative state strategies. Employing an anti-carceral analysis is pivotal in unveiling the penal-welfarist nexus intertwined with regulationism. The latter does not merely constitute a system of labour management, I suggest, but also a manifestation of the carceral state establishing and reproducing a continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation imposed on sex workers.

Part I.

Liaisons dangereuses; Greek feminist movements, the State, and
working - class women.

Chapter 2. State, bourgeois feminism and sex work in 19th and 20th century Greece

This chapter will demonstrate the parallel trajectories between state regulationism and 20th-century governance feminism practices and contrived sex work exceptionalism, a principle that still infuses the restriction of sex work, through a broader tough-on-crime agenda. It also brings to the fore the historical origins of the separation of sexual labour from other forms of labour, demonstrating how sex work constitutes both a labour issue and a sexual-offences-related issue, as recent feminist interventions against the decriminalisation of the profession illustrate.

The figure of the prostitute was consolidated through the synergy between the state and feminist philanthropy, as both a victim and a delinquent to be restrained. This dichotomy, eventually adopted by the left, was situated in the context of broader working-class struggles and moral crusades against delinquency. The state and early bourgeois feminists jointly carried out working-class management, in particular of the female workforce, which was called upon to conform to the capitalist ethics of productive labour and unpaid domestic work.

The outline of this chapter will unfold the linear historical course of events from the 1830s to 2021. The historical development of the law from the 19th century until the adoption of Law 2734/1999 (currently in force), and its impact to date will be examined thoroughly. First, I trace the roots of early regulationism in Greece, embodied mainly in the Vourla brothel. The interwar anxiety surrounding STDs and the establishment of the City Police and a Vice Department within it marked a shift towards intensified persecution and criminalisation of prostitutes. The next sub-section examines reports on prostitution under the Nazi Occupation, and the active role played by sex workers in the resistance, and their renewed persecution immediately after liberation and during the Civil War years (1946-1949) from multiple sides of the political spectrum. It was against this backdrop that neo-regulationism emerged, refashioning restrictions imposed on sex workers. In sum, different versions of regulationism survive, with modifications, to this day.

The chapter also considers the stance of dominant feminist organisations from the late 19th century to the interwar era when the nationalist ideology had reached its zenith. For this purpose, the analytical tool of femonationalism will be employed. I focus both on nationalist and centrist feminists' painstaking efforts to rehabilitate poor girls. These efforts merged with their liberal-nationalist agenda, aiming to model a generation of disciplined wives/mothers

and workers for the benefit of the nation and its economy. Furthermore, a short reference is made to male prostitution as a class issue that concerned the police yet remained invisible to bourgeois femonationalists who treated prostitution as a purely 'female problem'.

Although, feminist political initiatives subsided with the rise of the Metaxas dictatorship (1936), the post-war era saw various quiet transformations that resulted in leading members of old feminist organisations occupying state offices and running reformatories. The blossoming of social movements after the restoration of democracy in 1974 marked a feminist renaissance. Yet, the old-school mixture of punitive charity was not eliminated. Greek feminists failed to critically address their white-middle class origin in the years that followed, favouring the tightening of punitivism and the abolition of prostitution.

A meticulous examination of institutional and feminist discourses is essential in understanding the history of sex work regulation in Greece. A handful of historical studies around prostitution, while extremely useful, have proven rather limited, with even feminist scholars avoiding delving into the feminist stance against prostitution. This chapter supplements the existing literature by exposing the tensions and synergies among state institutions, proto-feminists, and working-class women that can be traced back to the early 20th century and survive to this day. My analysis illuminates the limits of the law and bourgeois feminism, the gendered-based and class injustices they bear, and their effect on sex work exceptionalism.

[A legal history of sex work in modern Greece \(1830s - 1990s\)](#)

[Adopting regulationism. State control of prostitution, discipline, and confinement](#)

The Kingdom of Greece was established in 1832. The establishment of a modern, Western state, directly influenced by occidental developments, prioritised the control of prostitution, which under Ottoman rule was illegal yet condoned. Consequently, specific legislations were formulated starting from the 1830s. From 1836, *réglementarisme* (or regulationism) set surveillance and confinement as the central guidelines for the organisation of prostitution laws. *Réglementarisme* was first introduced in France in 1800 and subsequently disseminated across Europe in the 19th century, recognised as the 'French System'. It constituted a moralistic and theoretical framework of ideas, principles, and perceptions that underpinned the regulation of prostitution, defining its importance and place in society. This system's objectives can be summarised in the triptych 'limitation of prostitution'

– ‘defending morality’ – ‘protecting the public health’,¹²² realised through state control of prostitution. This control was carried out by the *police des mœurs* (‘vice department,’ literally ‘police of morals’) created for this purpose.¹²³ The practical implementation of regulationism involved the creation of state brothels, the registration of prostitutes in official records, and their subjection to frequent medical checkups and police controls. The rules were focused on directly controlling and eliminating the liberties of the prostitutes, often by confining them in brothels, hospitals, and, at times, mental asylums, and prisons.¹²⁴

The concept of regulating prostitution through distinct legislation -a common feature of contemporary regulationist systems as well- was first implemented during the late 18th-century syphilis epidemics in Western Europe. In 1804, Napoleon ordered the registration and fortnightly health inspection of all prostitutes. State-sanctioned legal brothels, then known as *maisons de tolérance* or *maisons closes*,¹²⁵ started to appear in Paris and other cities and gained popularity. By 1810, Paris alone had 180 officially approved brothels, that had to be managed by a woman, typically a former prostitute. Prostitutes working in *maisons*, or any woman arrested twice for soliciting, were required to register as such. By the mid-19th century, almost every European country had adopted a version of regulationism. The French model continued to proliferate even after the Empire collapsed. The restored sovereign freely adapted it to their varied political systems, determining the allocation of authority (whether national, regional, or municipal). Geneva, then under French rule, established regulationism from the start of the 19th century, and Switzerland soon followed its example: public brothels were established (Zurich, 1840, Basel 1873), sanitary checks were introduced, and, although the act of procuring was rarely prosecuted,¹²⁶ sentences of four months in prison were handed out for the incitement to debauchery. Prostitution was under state control, legalised with specific provisions, while prostitutes were forced to remain in state-run brothels at all times; their right to exit was possible only on police authorisation.

Regulationism was introduced in Greece in the early 19th century. The system of regulated prostitution (*diakanonistikon*) was established in January 1856 through two regulative ordinances (2506 and 2057) issued by the Ministry of Internal

¹²² Lazos (n89) 61.

¹²³ Yannick Ripa, ‘Regulating Prostitution’ (*Encyclopédie d’histoire numérique de l’Europe*, 2020) <<https://ehne.fr/en/encyclopedia/themes/gender-and-europe/prostitution-1800-today/regulating-prostitution>> accessed 4 January 2024.

¹²⁴ Lazos (n89) 62.

¹²⁵ Houses of tolerance or closed houses.

¹²⁶ Ripa (n123).

Affairs.¹²⁷ However, during this century, prostitution was controlled through fractional provisions, primarily issued at the local administrative level. As such, the core principles of regulationism became more apparent and unified in Law 3032/1922. These included the official recognition of prostitution as a profession, the registration of the women who exercised it, the mandatory medical examination of registered prostitutes and the compulsory treatment and hospitalisation of those found infected.¹²⁸

The Legislative Decree of 31/12/1836, titled 'On the organisation of municipal police', stands as the initial attempt in Greek legislation to regulate prostitution. According to this decree 'the police should not be tolerant of common harlots and brothels, in order to obstruct the transmission of the abominable and abhorrent passions (i.e. the venereal diseases)' (para 42); 'soliciting prostitutes should be completely extinguished, the youngest of them should be placed in specific hospitals to receive treatment, while those who are incurable should be placed in other charitable institutions' (para 43); finally, according to paragraph 44, soldiers would be frequently tested for STDs, 'while the heads of foreign naval forces [were] strongly advised to dismiss troops who [suffered] from venereal diseases, as a result of frequenting brothels.'¹²⁹ Similar legislations followed, like the 30/1/1856-30/6/1856 and 11/4/1910 Regulatory Orders of the Health Minister 'On the prevention of venereal diseases', provisions that were repeated in Law 172/1910 and the 31/5/1911 Decree.¹³⁰ All of them constituted attempts of the newly formed Greek state to take prostitution under its complete control, as it treated the phenomenon of sex trade as a matter that primarily affected public hygiene. Control and the maintenance of public health would be guaranteed by the creation of state-regulated brothels. At this point, it should be underlined that protection of public health would become the dominant preoccupation behind sex work regulations across the 20th century. The state would unceasingly treat prostitutes as both perpetrators and victims, ill, contagious subjects who threatened the social body, but who, nonetheless, were in desperate need of treatment, both physically and morally, as will be thoroughly discussed in chapter 4. This *idée fixe* will appear continuously in various state practices and legislations.¹³¹ In 1873, the state-run brothel Vourla was established, forming a distinct feature of 19th century regulationism.¹³² Vourla constituted a

¹²⁷ Pothiti Hantzaroula, 'Prostitution in Athens' in Jean-Michel Chaumont, Rodriguez Magaly Garcia and Paul Servais (eds), *Trafficking in women 1924-1926: The Paul Kinsie reports for the League of Nations* (UN – United Nations Historical Series 2017).

¹²⁸ Zafolias (n107).

¹²⁹ Theodoros Vellianitis, 'Somatemporeia kai Kratikos Diakanonismos [White Slavery and State Regulationism]' 1925 *O Agonas tis Gynaikas* 7.

¹³⁰ Tzanaki (n113) 121-122.

¹³¹ See Appendix I.

¹³² An extensive analysis of the spatial aspects of state regulationism and the case of Vourla is included in the following chapter.

representative feature of the heterotopic function of brothels and prostitution itself;¹³³ an essential vice nonetheless, yet abolishable from city life. The modern brothel was, in fact, a noso-architectural project, ‘one among those practices of discipline and reclusion, slavery and subjugation’, as will be explored in the next chapter.¹³⁴

Prostitution in the interwar era: hygienic preoccupation and law enforcement

Legislative reforms of the interwar period bring sex and sexuality to the epicenter of legal and political discussions. Heteronormativity and reproductive sex, paraphilias, and the taboo of children’s sexuality dominated both the scientific and socio-political discourses, affecting the legal reforms of this period.¹³⁵ In this context, Law 3032/1922 ‘On measures against the spread of venereal diseases and on immodest women’ served as a gap-filling device in the hitherto existing framework of decisions concerning prostitution, giving the central administration for the first time authority to regulate ‘public morality and health.’¹³⁶ As Tzanaki notes, this regulation was partial and biased from the beginning, as it reproduced the prevailing perception that ‘immodest women’ were responsible for spreading venereal diseases.¹³⁷ Apart from its obvious preconceptions, Law 3032/1922 contained provisions that regulated the operation of brothels, and formulated the conditions for issuing operating licenses. The Committees Against Venereal Diseases were therefore established. They consisted of the Prefect, the Police Director and a senior Health Officer, and their main concern was to control ‘common women’, but not male subjects, to fight the spread of venereal diseases. Overall, rules were focused on directly controlling, surveilling, and eliminating the liberties of the prostitutes, who were either criminalised (if unregistered) or heavily supervised.

As feminist historians and journalists Angelika Psarra and Ida Florentine notice, what characterises the control on prostitution from 1836 to 1922 is the arbitrary and occasional regulation by circulars, ministerial decrees and other administrative measures.¹³⁸ These policies were often violated by police officers responsible for their implementation, who, in reality, exercised uncontrolled

¹³³ See further Ch. 3.

¹³⁴ Paul B Preciado, ‘Restif de la Bretonne’s State Brothel: Sperm, Sovereignty, and Debt in the Eighteenth-Century Utopian Construction of Europe’ (*South as a State of Mind*, 2015) <www.documenta14.de/en/south/45_restif_de_la_bretonne_s_state_brothel_sperm_sovereignty_and_debt_in_the_eighteenth_century_utopian_construction_of_europe> accessed 1 July 2023.

¹³⁵ Tzanaki (n113); Korasidou (n112).

¹³⁶ Angelika Psarra and Ida Florentine, ‘Porneia: Systimata Rythmisis Kai Katastolis [Prostitution: Systems of Regulation and Repression]’ (1980) (4) Skoupa. Gia to gynaikeio zitima [Broom. For the women’s issue] 17.

¹³⁷ Tzanaki (n114) 371.

¹³⁸ Psarra and Florentine (n136) 20.

power towards prostitutes, through often indiscriminate exemplary punishments.¹³⁹ What makes Law 3032/1922 important is that, according to its provisions, ‘moral issues’ were no longer regulated exclusively by the police, as hygiene mentality officially obtained a more controlling role. The fact that the doctor and police officer begin to cooperate closely under the law clearly displays the interdependence of scientific discourses and the state’s oppressive mechanisms, and the identification of immorality with illness.¹⁴⁰ Doctors and police officers worked in tandem under the supervisory body of the sanitary police. Thus, the regulation of sex work rested on one single authority, which was medico-policial.¹⁴¹

During the interwar era, regulationism faced harsh criticism from various sides, domestically and internationally. Criticism focused on the distance between the system’s manifested principles and its implementation, the inability to reduce and control the spread of venereal diseases, to suppress trafficking and restrain hidden prostitution. In addition, regulationism was ‘deemed worthless for a civilised (sic) world, as it was continuously violating basic principles of human rights.’¹⁴² Although the First World War contributed to the perpetuation of regulationism with the opening of military brothels exclusively reserved for soldiers, the French system gradually disappeared in the aftermath of the Second World War.¹⁴³

The creation of the City Police and the Vice Department

During the interwar years, the City Police, a key sector for the functioning of the modern state and the safeguarding of the monopoly of violence, was established, with the assistance of British officials. Within it, the Vice Department was created in 1920, with the main responsibility for the surveillance of brothels and their staff, and the prevention of venereal disease transmission.¹⁴⁴

This era was characterised by great breakthroughs and developments for the Greek society and state organisation. Greek irredentism came to an inglorious end with the end of the Greco-Turkish War (1919 -1922) and the Burning of Smyrna (1922). The state was met with a host of social, economic, and administrative challenges, including the management of a huge refugee flow. The Greek

¹³⁹ Tzanaki (n114) 371-373.

¹⁴⁰ See further ch. 4.

¹⁴¹ Korasidou (n112) 35-36.

¹⁴² Lazos (n89) 68.

¹⁴³ It was abolished in metropolitan France in 1946, but remained in use to control colonial prostitution, *ibid*; Yannick Ripa, ‘Abolitionism’ (*Encyclopédie d’histoire numérique de l’Europe*, 2020) <<https://ehne.fr/en/encyclopedia/themes/gender-and-europe/prostitution-1800-today/abolitionism>> accessed 21 August 2023.

¹⁴⁴ Fotakis (n116) 207.

bourgeoisie found itself amidst the unprecedented political and societal divide known as the National Schism or Great Division (1915 – 1922).¹⁴⁵ The divide highly influenced the military sphere, leading to short-lived military dictatorships throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Labour-capital relations were rearranged, while the working class was organised and radicalised through the formation and massification of trade unionism and the Greek Communist Party in 1918, as well as other communist organisations during the '20s. It was a time of augmented moral panic and fear against communists, now viewed as the 'internal enemies'. The City Police, as a body designed mainly for urban centers with a key role in the development of policing techniques was of paramount importance in disciplining the unruly masses. As Fotakis underlines, this newly-formed administrative body was called to balance and tone down these multilevel socio-political controversies, while becoming an early experiment in professional policing, as a contentious field between governing factions and other security bodies such as the military and the pre-existing Royal Gendarmerie.¹⁴⁶

In 1918, in the aftermath of almost a decade of unresolved political conflicts, known as The Great Division, and with Entente Powers prevailing WWI, the Greek government invited a police mission from Britain to introduce state-of-the-art police methods in Greek cities. The two countries soon signed an agreement of collaboration.¹⁴⁷ After long negotiations with Greek public administration officials, the British proposal for the formation of the new police force was largely incorporated in the existing scheme. This was not, however, accepted without objections; rather it was criticised as a 'result of the slavish imitation of Western standards'.¹⁴⁸ Nonetheless, the City Police were constituted successively in the cities of Corfu (1921), Patras (1922), Piraeus (1923), and Athens (1925).¹⁴⁹ It was in this context, that the Vice Department was founded in 1920. It was nevertheless re-established as a distinct police unit, the Vice and Clubs Departments early in 1926 under the administration of Aristotle Koutsoumaris.¹⁵⁰

The Vice Department had branches in almost every police department of the city but also in the central security service. It was created to supervise brothels and sex workers and the spread of venereal diseases. Moreover, it aimed to limit illegal gambling and fraud in the money market, along with vagrancy and beggary in public places. It is worth noting that the Department placed special emphasis on the gendered aspects of gambling, considering the presence of women in casinos as escapism and delinquency and identifying it with a hedonistic *mode-de-vivre*.

¹⁴⁵ See further Appendix I.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid 34-52.

¹⁴⁷ Fotakis (n116) 134.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ ibid 1.

¹⁵⁰ ibid 201.

Women of 'loose morals' could not change their place of residence or travel to another city without the written consent of the Vice Department. Its responsibilities also included the health inspection of licensed brothels, locating unauthorised brothels or 'dating' houses, the fight against 'white slavery and trafficking', the detection and prevention of sexual harassment in public or private spaces, and insults to public dignity, such as 'indecent exposure for the purpose of insulting females', and indecent behaviour in cafés and other places of public presence and entertainment.¹⁵¹ By the end of 1926, police editor Leotsakos reports that the Vice Department had licensed 74 brothels with 1,135 women working in them, as well as 107 additional women who had been identified as 'of loose morals'.¹⁵²

Koutsoumaris, as well as the two British officials, agreed that regulationism had proven severely dysfunctional. With a prostitution-tolerant state rendered as highly problematic, they started to form a new approach on prostitution: 'ordinary women' should be considered victims of exploitation, their exploiters should be prosecuted, and the state had to be persuaded to proceed to a serious reform of the legal framework.¹⁵³ For Koutsoumaris, especially the latter seemed a matter of time and persistence, since he considered it the only rational approach towards prostitution.¹⁵⁴ Respectively, other officers who were influenced by such opinions considered the impunity of the exploiters of prostitutes as state negligence. The collaboration between state officials and the City Police first emerged in the war against pimps and johns, who allegedly exploited women roaming in infamous neighborhoods and refugee settlements. Patrols were formed, prompting reactions from residents that led to police raids, often conducted with the assistance of feminist organisations.¹⁵⁵

Of course, operations conducted in the name of 'saving prostitutes', left them jobless and led to casual arrests. For those reasons, the women who ran the brothels also developed precautionary measures (cryptic jargon, cryptic door knocking, a new client would only come if accompanied by a trusted one, etc.). Houses or apartments were often equipped with holes on the walls, doors, or panels, so that in the first place there was a possibility of supervision in the client's waiting room or the hall through which a vice raid would proceed. In addition, a whole technology of hiding places had been developed for women and clients in

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid 217.

¹⁵³ Ibid 206.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid 216.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid 216 – 219.

cases of raids. Some of these secret spots were so elaborately constructed that they were even described in police manuals.¹⁵⁶

Sex work during the Occupation (1940-44) and Civil War (1946-49)

The occupation of Greece by the Axis Powers began in April 1941, after Nazi Germany invaded Greece to assist its ally, Fascist Italy, which had been at war with Allied Greece since October 1940, and lasted until 12th October 1944. During these years, the economy and infrastructures were ruined, and the population suffered horrific hardship. Over 40,000 civilians died in Athens alone from starvation, and tens of thousands more died from reprisals by Nazis and collaborators.¹⁵⁷ Unfortunately, sources from this period concerning sex work are limited, probably because it was considered an ultimate taboo across the political spectrum. The information we have is based on testimonies and later reportage, while none of the Greek scholars studying prostitution has references about this period. Nonetheless, we can deduce that transactional sex was rampant during the Occupation, occurring in different forms and levels of constraint.

Technically, Law 3032/1922 was still in force, yet, according to the post-war press, apart from professional sex workers, approximately 5,000 other women in Athens alone had followed this path to survive, with 'even high-school students from previously wealthy families among them.'¹⁵⁸ In one of the few published autobiographies of a cisgender sex worker active in Greece, Gavriella Ushakova documents that she worked as a registered prostitute during the German Occupation, and that regulation continued with medical and police supervision as before.¹⁵⁹ She also notes that many women engaged in sexual labour to combat famine, doing so casually, without registering.¹⁶⁰

The Vice Department, carrying on with their practice of persecuting sex workers during the interwar era, especially during Metaxas' dictatorship (1936-1941), was constantly after sex workers in central areas of the Greek capital, e.g., near Omonoia Square, in underground cabarets and hotels. Italian and German soldiers were not the only customers, as black-market peddlers, many of whom

¹⁵⁶ Ibid 220.

¹⁵⁷ Mark Mazower *Inside Hitler's Greece: The Experience of Occupation, 1941-44* (Yale University Press 2001) 155.

¹⁵⁸ 'I ekriksi tis porneias stin Katochi' [The Upsurge of Prostitution during the Occupation]' (*MHXANH TOY XPONOY*) <www.mixanitouxronou.gr/i-ekrixi-tis-pornias-sti-katochi-to-tmima-ithon-sinechos-kinigouse-tis-pornes-stin-omonias-sti-stoa-nikoloudi-se-ipogia-kampare-ke-se-megala-xenodochia-i-astinomias-tis-epiane-ke-i-nazi-tis-apelefth/> accessed 20 August 2023.

¹⁵⁹ See further Ch. 4.

¹⁶⁰ Gavriella Ushakova, *I Zoi Mou [My Life]* (Kaktos 1981) 199.

were also pimps, frequently visited the brothels.¹⁶¹ However, it was not rare for Nazi soldiers to appear in a police department and demand that the arrested girls are released, claiming they were their friends or fiancés.¹⁶²

The state brothel of Vourla was shut down in 1937. The buildings housing prostitutes were turned into prisons, and so the 'houses of sin' were moved to Trouba, where sex trade flourished, as paid sex could also be found in some hotels and cabarets. Vourla, like other areas near the port, was severely damaged by the Nazi bombings of Piraeus. Residents fled their homes in search of a safer place. However, sex workers remained there, resisting the conquerors in their own way whenever they had the opportunity. The withdrawal of healthy girls from work and their replacement by others, carriers of venereal diseases, was a frequent means of resistance in order to infect the soldiers they would sleep with. Doctor and member of the resistance, Costas Giannatos, describes this issue in more detail:

In two of the most decent brothels frequented by the Wehrmacht fighters, girls were divided into two shifts. The first shift was for healthy women who worked only a few hours twice a week when German doctors examined the 'staff' of the 'house'. In the second shift there were basically prostitutes who were ill. This strategy lasted for about a year (December 1941-February 1943), while the Greek Police helped by issuing fake IDs. In February 1943, the Germans found out and dismantled the organisation. Approximately twenty thousand German soldiers were infected with venereal diseases from this case. Who were they? In addition to local occupational units, there were also soldiers from the *Afrika Korps*. They stayed in Athens for months until a way was found so that they would be transferred to Africa. It is reported that Rommel complained they had been sending them 'rotten reinforcements'.¹⁶³

Moreover, many members of the resistance urged the professional sex workers to abstain from work in brothels -according to their own testimonies- so that Italian and German soldiers would resort to streetwalkers, the majority of whom had been suffering from syphilis. As a result, numerous soldiers were taken out of action.¹⁶⁴

When the Nazis became aware of this practice, they established two military brothels called *Soldaten Heime*, staffed with German prostitutes, who frequently

¹⁶¹ 'I ekriksi ...' (n158).

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ 'O pliromenos erotas stin ypiresia tis antistasis [Paid love at the service of resistance]' (*Protagon.gr*, 28 October 2011) <www.protagon.gr/apopseis/ideas/o-plirwmenos-erwtas-stin-ypiresia-tis-antistasis-9761000000> accessed 4 January 2024.

¹⁶⁴cited ibid.

underwent examination by German doctors. These brothels were located in Faliro, a middle-class area near Piraeus, and on the first floor of Palace cinema in Pasalimani, Central Piraeus. Entrance of German soldiers in these brothels was allowed via the use of tokens, redeemed every time instead of currency. However, some soldiers continued to visit Trouba's houses, despite the official order. Those who fell ill from STDs did not dare to visit the German doctors, because if found ill, they would be sent to the Eastern Front, where death was practically certain. Thus, they visited quack doctors to seek treatment.¹⁶⁵

It is difficult to speculate on the agency of the streetwalkers at that time, in the absence of evidence. As many women resorted to street prostitution to earn a living, one can reasonably assume that many of them were also active members of the Resistance, knowingly transforming their bodies into 'biological weapons', and that many others simply had no choice. On the other hand, it is recorded that many sex workers and famous cabaret performers (*artistes*) who worked in nightclubs frequented by German officers capitalised on their charms in order to extract information about the Wehrmacht's plans and warn the opposition fighters. As historian Iason Chandrinou notes,

[...]in the urban espionage networks, apart from the parents, siblings, wives, or mistresses of the organised fighters, included kiosk workers, drivers, night watchmen, students, and prostitutes. In Athens, the network 'Apollo/Yvonne' relied heavily on the unorthodox war waged by Beba Valsamaki and Dennis Costanz, nightclub performers who were easily connected to the SS investigators and contributed to the softening of their position. No less thanks to her allure and geniality, Margarita Zafeiropoulou -a German woman married to a Greek man- succeeded more than once in coming into possession of files of the Guard, of City Administration, and of the Military Guard. Everywhere (in Europe), prostitutes were suspected of participating in the Resistance.¹⁶⁶

These facts show that sex workers may have gained a new dimension as subjects of resistance against foreign occupation. However, the stereotype that they were bearers of disease was simultaneously reinforced. As Smith and Mac point out, during WWII, the disease-ridden prostitute was imagined as the enemy's secret biological weapon all over the world. 'Posters depicted her as an archetypal *femme fatale* -with a cigarette between her red lips, a tight dress, and a wicked smile- above slogans warning that she and other "pickups" were dangerous: traps, loaded

¹⁶⁵ 'I ekriksi...' (n146).

¹⁶⁶ Iason Chandrinou, 'Poleis se polemo: Evropaika astika kentra sti nazistiki katochi 1939-1945' ['Cities at War: European Urban Centers under the Nazi Occupation 1939-1945'] (Doctoral thesis, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens 2015) 263-264.

guns, “juke joint snipers”, Axis agents, enemies of the Allied forces, and friends of Hitler.¹⁶⁷ It also shows that the content of the concept of the prostitute had been expanded to other women, from communists who had participated in the Resistance to women suspected of being related to foreign soldiers. For instance, many women who were either suspected of sexual relations with the invaders or had fought as partisans, when arrested and court-martialed, were subjected to compulsory gynecological examinations to determine if they were virgins, and punished with head shaving, whippings, and disgrace ‘like medieval whores’.¹⁶⁸ In the same context, during the Civil War, the notion that ‘the communist doctrine of communal property had fostered free love in the trenches’ had turned the rape of female communist prisoners into a routine occurrence.¹⁶⁹

Overall, the extreme hunger and unequal access to subsistence goods contributed to an unknown number of women having to trade sex to secure necessities for themselves and their dependents. However, those who were branded as prostitutes were subsequently publicly shamed as unpatriotic traitors, even by their comrades and relatives. For example, Dimitris Glinos, a prominent politician who wrote the manifesto for the National Liberation Front (EAM) during the liberation struggle, explicitly refers to ‘the prostitution of women, which has assumed such an amazing and unexpected intensity in our land’.¹⁷⁰ He also offers suggestions about the appropriate treatment of women who trade sex, framing transactional sex as a practice that supposedly took place only between Greek women and foreign men:

Every woman who gives herself over to the foreigners is an informer and a traitor. [You are advised to] call them names, and make them know that after the war, a large Π [P] will be etched onto both their cheeks with indelible letters, which will mean ‘Prostitute’ and ‘Traitor’ [‘P’ stands for ‘porni’ and ‘prodotissa’ in Greek, respectively].¹⁷¹

In what was perhaps an attempt to present as morally pure against the accusations of their political enemies, the Greek Communist Party adopted a highly conservative stance regarding sexuality during the 1940s and afterwards. For example, a proclamation of the merchants’ members of the party reassures the reader that ‘the People’s Republic [...] won’t dissolve the family institution; on the

¹⁶⁷ Smith and Mac (n2) 24.

¹⁶⁸ fight back! (n117) 102.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Dimitris Glinos, *Ti einai ke ti thelei to EAM [What The National Liberation Front is and what it wants]* (1944), 26.

¹⁷¹ Ibid 60.

contrary, it will elevate and strengthen it, providing the means to live with love ... and eliminating girls' corruption. It won't dissolve religion'.¹⁷²

Women of the communist movement, whether they traded sex or not, thus experienced a double betrayal from both their comrades and the state. Victoria Theodorou, an exile between 1948 and 1952, wrote that women fought in WWII:

[...] to gain our independence from our fathers and brothers. To defend our honour. And not to suffer humiliation when we offered our bodies to our lovers. In some ways, they recognised our rights. But as soon as the liberating and social struggles were over, they disarmed us. We were again locked into the courtyards and homes. They no longer needed us to achieve their visions and ambitions for power.¹⁷³

During the Civil War (1946-1949), and especially in its final years when armed conflicts became sparser, welfare and charity were taken up by the state, the Palace, the Church, and foreign aid organisations. As the Greek Civil War, between communist guerillas and the national army, constitutes one of the first episodes of the Cold War, these interventions should be contextualised in terms of their operation as anti-communist tactics. Not only did the social policy of the time aim to punish or 'reform' those perceived as threats, but it also sought to address the unarmed populations of the civil war, whose support and control remained an important stake for both sides of the conflict.¹⁷⁴

Amidst the initiatives implemented in those years, especially relevant is the welfare-through-work program, which was essentially community work for the reconstruction of the Greek countryside, overseen by the state and the army. It primarily involved the construction of roads to facilitate access to mountain villages, typical guerilla strongholds, and, to a lesser extent, the repairs of some houses and infrastructure destroyed during the war. Designed during the Civil War upon the recommendation of a Welfare Mission from the United Nations, welfare-through-work programs were pitched as a way to offer work to unemployed internal refugees who had recently been repatriated to their destroyed villages. They began being implemented in late 1948, but participation was scarce; by 1949, it was reported that refugees 'refused to work', and so did people who could qualify for benefits as heads of households with many children; in reality, the wages and conditions offered were so bad that remaining on benefits

¹⁷² Christos Tyrovouzis, 'To EAM os koinonikos kai eksousiastikos synaspismos. Merika provlimata' [EAM as a Social and Authoritative Coalition. Some Issues] [1987] Θέσεις. Τριμηνιαία Επιθεώρηση <https://www.theseis.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=199%03Acategory-199&catid=94&Itemid=113>

¹⁷³ Cited in fight back! (n117) 116-7.

¹⁷⁴ Tasoula Vervenioti, *Oi Amachoi Tou Ellinikou Emphyliou: I Dynamiki Tis Mnimis [The Unarmed of the Civil War: The Dynamics of Memory]* (Koukkida 2021) 15.

made more sense for those who could claim them.¹⁷⁵ Those who did participate in community works upon return to their home villages in 1950-1, declared that ‘it wasn’t a real day’s wage, but we still fought over who would get it’, due to the extreme destitution and unemployment that followed the conflicts.¹⁷⁶ For this work, women were paid a day’s wage of 7 drachmas, about the cost of a packet of cigarettes at that time, and men of 11, currently equivalent to about 0.02 and 0.03 euro respectively.¹⁷⁷

In this context, impoverished women constituted a distinct target in and of themselves. For example, some welfare initiatives provided for their hospitalisation during pregnancy. Interpreting the striking numbers of women who gave birth in clinics rather than with the help of midwives in their communities, as was most common at the time, historian Tassoula Vervenioti refers to the creation of a camp for women who had gotten pregnant after falling victim to traffickers, from where some would then be recruited to work in registered brothels.¹⁷⁸ Unfortunately, there are no other references regarding this camp, and the extent of its use is unclear. In any case, the forced hospitalisation of these women must be understood in the light of the disciplining of the ‘dangerous classes’, as will be further developed in chapter 4. Additionally, as Federici documents, the social policy of regulationism prohibited prostitutes from becoming mothers already since the 19th century, while their children are transferred to ‘charitable caretakers in the countryside’.¹⁷⁹

This development is indicative of the separation between the domestic sphere and prostitution that was jointly promoted by the state and private charities alike. Sex work may have been considered one of the central pillars to maintain heteronormativity for centuries, yet the ideal of domesticity in the 19th century imposed distinct barriers between prostitution and other forms of reproductive work, such as motherhood and married life.¹⁸⁰ The current prohibition of the practice of prostitution by married persons in 21st century regulations should therefore be seen as a remnant of the complete separation of domesticity from prostitution; ultimately, the distinction of paid sexuality from that which is freely and unrestrictedly provided within conjugal relationships of marital status.

Prostitution in the post-war era: the introduction of neo-regulationism

¹⁷⁵ Ibid 583-4.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

¹⁷⁸ Ibid 451.

¹⁷⁹ Silvia Federici, *Patriarchy of the Wage. Notes on Marx, Gender and Feminism* (Spectre, 2021) 112.

¹⁸⁰ Agustín (112) 11-103.

After WWII, discussions of a broader reform of the previous legal framework, even a complete abandonment of *réglementarisme*, were front-page headlines. In 1953, Panayiotis Foteinos, Professor at the University of Athens, Director at the Hospital for Venereal Diseases ‘Andreas Syngros’ and member of the Supreme Health Council, recommended to the Secretary General and the Directorate General of the Ministry of Social Welfare the basic principles and conclusions of the 19th International Conference of the International Abolitionist Federation.¹⁸¹ Abolitionism was a European movement for the abolition of regulationism, which appeared in England in 1869. The movement united prohibitionists promoting the end of regulationism and the total banning of prostitution, and abolitionists were opposed only to regulationism and advocating for a legal framework that would offer greater safety to prostitutes.¹⁸² At the end of the 19th century, the movement expanded its targets to the struggle against ‘the white slave trade’, which often came to be identified with prostitution.¹⁸³ Local authorities and feminists developed strong ties with this movement.

Foteinos adopted the main principles of the abolitionist movement, arguing that they should be applied in Greece, to keep up with international developments resulting from the application of new social trends. The ultimate measure to be taken would be ‘the abolition of all brothel houses in Greece within 13 months.’¹⁸⁴ He also referred to measures concerning health and policing matters, such as the systematic monitoring and closure of secret houses, special medical examination of every prostitute, the establishment of a special Reform Center for every prostitute who did not have the resources to live or recover and, finally, the inclusion of female police officers in the Vice Department.¹⁸⁵

By the coming into force of Law 3310/1955 ‘On the Control of Venereal Diseases and Other Provisions’, regulationism had been reformed into a purportedly more liberal version, known as neo-regulationism; state brothels were abolished and the transition to privately owned ones took place. Interestingly, the Parliamentary discussion that took place presented this legislative reform as one that would

¹⁸¹ The International Abolitionist Federation - originally called the British and Continental Federation for the Abolition of Prostitution (IAF; French: *Fédération Abolitioniste Internationale*), founded in Liverpool in 1875, with the main aim of abolishing state regulation of prostitution. Within the organisation, various voices were advocating for different approaches, ranging from simply abolishing regulationism, to the total abolition of prostitution. The IAF promoted exiting prostitution through the provision of education that would prepare for ‘suitable work’ or marriage, and pioneered policies against ‘White Slavery’, being active in Europe, America, and colonial territories, ‘International Abolitionist Federation | UIA Yearbook Profile | Union of International Associations’ (*UIA | Union of International Associations*) <<https://uia.org/s/or/en/1100013182>> accessed 4 January 2024.

¹⁸² Ripa (n143).

¹⁸³ More extensive analysis on Ch. 5.

¹⁸⁴ Lazos (n89) 68.

¹⁸⁵ Panayiotis Foteinos, ‘Two International Conferences on Venereal Diseases and Prostitution’ (1953), 61-63.

completely abolish or, at least, severely restrict prostitution and eliminate brothels; in other words, as if it were a fight against prostitution. In fact, Law 3310/1955 prohibited group partnerships among prostitutes -in tune with an international direction that was supposed to curb exploitative relations within brothels- and criminalised the engagement of underage women in prostitution. Additionally, further to the previous law 3032/1922, women who were classified as 'harlots' or 'libertines' were under the obligation to present before the competent health authority each week and always carry an updated health or treatment card, signed by a physician or a state hospital.¹⁸⁶

Due to gaps in the 1955 Law, it was soon replaced by Law 4095/1960 'On Protection from Venereal Diseases and Regulation of Related Matters'. State-run brothels were not reinstated, yet the enhanced powers of the Police and Health Authorities were maintained. In fact, apart from the abolition of state brothels, the techniques of discipline and control of prostitutes were slightly modernised but remained the same at their core. Sex workers were not allowed to rent a room, an apartment, or a hotel room without authorisation from the local police department, which would decide on issuing the permit after having previously assessed the conditions of each geographical area. Approval by the City Police and Health Authority was also necessary if a prostitute wanted to change her legal residence.¹⁸⁷

The medicalised view on prostitution, which becomes obvious from the title of almost every piece of legislation which attempted to control it, reflects the general tendency of Greek society, and, most importantly, the Greek political system to confront prostitution as a matter of unhealthiness, illness, and infection, as I will further analyse on chapter 4. This tendency becomes apparent in the parliamentary discussions on the 1960 reform, where many MPs struggled to even pronounce words such as 'prostitute' and 'brothel', or, if they had to, they immediately tried to cover them with a heap of 'ethical' and 'hygienic' expressions.¹⁸⁸ This regime of collective censorship and self-censorship continued to exist for the next forty years and has not ceased to exist.

From 1960 to 1981, and especially during the military junta of 1967-1974, when the shutdown of the Trouba brothels and cabarets was decided, and even after the restoration of democracy, politicians continued to willfully ignore sex workers' rights and the broader social context of sex work. Lazos comments that the situation of prostitution in those years was 'stagnant' due to the brothels' closure and lack of official data. Yet, this argument does not seem convincing when viewed from the perspective of the subjects themselves. Numerous

¹⁸⁶ Psarra and Florentine (n136) 20-22.

¹⁸⁷ Zafolias (n107).

¹⁸⁸ Lazos (n89) 80.

autobiographical accounts of transgender sex workers refer to the 1960s-1970s;¹⁸⁹ it is known that male prostitution also flourished at that time, while cis women seem to have continued to face the same difficulties at carrying out their work.

The 1981 Law, introduced by Andreas Papandreou's social-democratic government, alongside other progressive reforms, such as the decriminalisation of adultery and the introduction of civil marriage and divorce by mutual consent, recognised prostitution as a social matter. However, neither the medicalised view nor the spatial limitations were abandoned or even altered. Amongst other provisions, the law prohibited the issue of more than 12 brothel installation permits for more than two years per area of police department control; it was provided that the working woman would obtain a permit of installation by the local police director, with the assent of a three-member committee constituted by the Prefect and composed by a physician, a social worker, and a civil servant, and that she should be over 21 years old and provided with an updated health booklet by the health service.

According to the Minister of Social Services who introduced the bill, its main objective was to ensure a balance between the protection of public health and individual freedoms. In the parliamentary discussions, the majority of the MPs expressed concerns about the spread of venereal diseases, drugs, the problems the family institution faced, the women's movement, sex education and the birth deficit phenomenon. They also seemed anxious about the masking of 'the venereal problem' in 'authoritarian eastern countries' in contrast to 'liberal Western countries.'¹⁹⁰

Law 1193/1981 was, in fact, a more complete version of neo-regulationism: control on 'common women' had been imposed under the light of the protection of public health, doctors co-operated with policemen to ensure its implementation, while police authority expanded. Once again, sex workers had to face a mixture of hostility and the philanthropy the state had adopted. Furthermore, the law was full of logical and legal discordances: although its goals were not stated, it intensified the stigma and marginalisation of female sex workers, *de facto* abolished medical confidentiality, punished the ill prostitutes who were unwilling to receive treatment, in other words, it continued the strict regulationist tradition.¹⁹¹ Repression was intensified through urban interventions and partial gentrification, while police controls were continuous and often led to abductions in detention centers, court and criminal sanctions, keeping of files and, finally, extensive control over sex workers' bodies. Sex workers lacked official channels to

¹⁸⁹ (n96).

¹⁹⁰ Lazos (n89) 80.

¹⁹¹ Ibid 71-77; The intersections between anti-trafficking migration policies, will be thoroughly studied in Ch. 5.

point out problems caused by the law, or to institutionally advocate for its reform in their favour.

By the late 1970's, the Greek Movement of Prostitutes had formed. Along with the newly formed LGBT movement -trans women back then were beginning to enter the profession *en masse*- the Greek Movement of Prostitutes actively opposed the bill on the grounds that it would prolong the dehumanisation of sex workers. However, as this part of history is barely explored by either historians or social scientists, my analysis in the next chapters will be based mostly on oral history and interviews with leading figures of these movements. Apart from the movement, the law was never truly accepted by either the opposition or the government. This indicates that sex work remained taboo across the political spectrum. Already in 1982, a tendency to create a new law emerged, which was emphasised by the government now and then in the context of parliamentary control. In reality, the introduction of a new law would take another 18 years.

The current law, 2734/1999, was introduced by the centrist government of Costas Simitis only five years before the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, out of fear that the city would become a sex-tourism destination. Soliciting was criminalised as it was deemed to provoke public morals. This criminalisation aimed at rendering prostitution invisible, provided an excellent opportunity for gentrification.¹⁹² The 'novelty' of the law was the replacement of the term 'prostitutes' with the gender-neutral term 'persons who trade sex for money'. The term 'persons' is used to refer to cisgender and transgender female sex workers,¹⁹³ whilst male prostitution continued to be invisible to the state. As stated in the Preamble,

[...] the 'profession' of the prostitute, inextricably intertwined and inherent in social life, and the operation of houses of tolerance are, despite moral disapproval, a universal and timeless reality which one cannot dispute or ignore. At the same time, no one can question or refute the simultaneously positive and negative, social and other consequences of the operation of these houses and the exercise of this activity by paid persons, to whom gradually have been added males who with the help of scientific-medical methods changed their natural sex.¹⁹⁴

Article 1 introduces the 'license of practice', as well as the governing body that issues it, the time of issue and the region of validity, the preconditions and time of its renewal, and the required supportive documents. Persons who sell sex are obliged to carry this certificate, which is issued by the Prefect, as long as they are qualified; more specifically, they need to be over 18 years old, unmarried, and not

¹⁹² See further Ch. 3.

¹⁹³ Law 2734/1999, Preamble art. 1.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

suffering from sexually transmitted diseases. Individuals from third countries must also have a permanent residence permit in Greece or another European country to obtain the certificate. The professional certificate is valid for three (3) years and only for the area of the relevant prefecture, and can be renewed for an equal period, provided that the conditions for granting it are maintained. In the next articles, a compulsory medical examination every 15 days is stipulated; it is also stipulated that brothel licences are valid for two years, while they should be practically located outside the urban tissue. Cooperation between two or more workers is prohibited in the same building, while the licence for the staff of brothels is issued by the Prefect and is given exclusively to people over 50 years-old—regulations that were introduced under the pretext of avoiding the creation of exploitative relations. Finally, criminal and administrative sanctions are provided for workers who violate the law, namely fines and imprisonment for up to two years (misdemeanours).

During the parliamentary sessions of 1999, the majority of MPs' speeches focused, once again, on statements concerning society's moral decay caused by the intense promotion of sex, the need to strengthen the Christian faith, the family institution, and so on. As with previous debates that took place in the 20th century, parliamentary debates focused on venereal diseases, health care, control, operation licenses, but also on matters of property values and land use (e.g., as the definition and method of calculation of the distance between one brothel from another, and, additionally, from churches, benevolent institutions, schools, athletic and cultural centers and cultural monuments). Finally, there were discussions regarding the restoration of historical Athenian buildings that had been used as brothels.¹⁹⁵

Most importantly, the debate closed the question/possibility of recognising and characterising prostitution as a profession, as it was accredited the status of a social activity the state tolerates if subjected to certain conditions.¹⁹⁶ It was estimated that this dilemma had important practical implications since, if prostitution qualified as a profession, persons who sell sex would be acknowledged as employees and granted the according employment rights accordingly. Finally, it was agreed that prostitution should be treated as merely a subsistence activity that is by no means a profession 'for the benefit of society', but also because terms like 'profession' and 'fixed hours' 'do not sound nice when connected to prostitution.'¹⁹⁷ Within this context, the parliamentary debate did not touch on the need for the establishment of the material conditions and legal

¹⁹⁵ Lazos (n89) 80-83.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Minutes of Parliamentary Discussions, Tuesday 13 April 1999 - Session I (Hellenic Parliament) [1999], 287-292.

framework that would at least ensure a decent life for sex workers. Even more, this legislative decision validated the oppressive century-long heritage of regulationism and the rescue industry.

As was noted in the Department of Legal Processing of Bills and Law Proposals Report, ‘the first general impression a reader of the bill gains is a sense of embarrassment of the legislator concerning the precise legal nature of the regulated activity.’¹⁹⁸ More specifically, it was questioned whether persons who sell sex do practice a profession, which may be ‘morally reprehensible’, or if they simply engage into an activity, which the legal order merely tolerates. It was stated by the Department that, in principle, ‘moral judgment does not fall within the competence of the legislator.’¹⁹⁹ It should also be noted that concerns have been raised from both the Department and the Greek Ombudsman regarding the prohibition of the possibility for married persons to exercise a profession, as it was considered contrary to the constitutional protection of the free development of personality.²⁰⁰ Additionally, it was stated that the law intrudes into an area of personal freedom by trying to regulate excessively the sexual life between married persons. It was recalled by the Ombudsman that the obligation for monogamy, which had been put forward as a justification in the explanatory memorandum to the provision in question, in practice meant a ban on bigamy instead of a control on the number of sexual partners of the spouses.²⁰¹ However, as was probably expected, neither of the two state institutions got to the heart of the problem, which was regulationism itself.

The inefficiencies of Law 2734/1999, and the practical dysfunctions it has caused became obvious in the first years of the 21st century. A need for legislative reforms has been sporadically expressed in both political discourse and the press without gaining momentum in Parliament. The most notable of these propositions of reform was the 2018 initiative of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality toward the adoption of a semi-prohibitionist framework, following the rationale of the Nordic Model. This proposal, reflected on the Secretariat’s 29th Finding ‘on the drafting of a national strategy to combat prostitution, the redefinition of the concept of prostitution, and the shaping of a new culture in Greek society’, caused a new round of extended discussions concerning the regulation of sex work. Sex workers’ organisations publicly denounced this initiative, referring to the negative consequences of the Nordic Model and accusing the General Secretary of lacking a culture of convergence and consensus. No sex workers’ organisation was invited to co-draft the conclusion, while at its public

¹⁹⁸ Department of Legal Processing of Bills and Law Proposals, Report on Law 2734/1999, 1

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ CED art. 5(1).

²⁰¹ Greek Ombudsman, Report 14667/03/2.1 (6 November 2003) 3-4.

presentation in April 2018, workers and their allies were treated as pimps. As a result, a rift was created within the government and the ruling party, leading to the formation of a committee formed at the end of that year, assigned with developing an alternative draft law.

Steps toward decriminalisation, a long-standing demand of the community, were taken in the Penal Code of 2019 (Law 4619/2019). The '(financial) exploitation of a prostitute' (art. 350) ceased to be classified as a crime as, according to the Preamble, the older provision had a 'deeply ideological character'. Criminalisation did not stem solely from the perception of prostitutes as vulnerable women in need of protection but, also, from 'negative assumptions towards a way of life considered deplorable, and an anthropological type considered disgusting.'²⁰² This reform did not imply that a sex worker could not make use of other provisions of both the Penal and the Civil Code to initiate legal proceedings against any individual exploiting them. It did allow them, however, to cooperate legally with sex services agencies, or trusted individuals, units that under the previous law were classified as pimps. Besides, this amendment occurred within the context of a broader decriminalisation of sexual practices, such as 'the facilitation of the contempt of others' (art. 348(1)) and homosexual activity between adolescents from 15 to 18 years old (art. 347).

The elimination of the above obsolete provisions aimed to abolish the presumption that any third party involved with a sex worker by providing services in exchange for money is a pimp. Pimping is conceptually related to trafficking or coercion in general. However, the sex workers' movement has been emphatically stressing for years that this is in fact an employment relationship, which should fall under labour law. Such conflation between abusive behaviours and the consensual cooperation between a sex worker and another individual who, for example, assists them with administrative issues, or provides them security to their appointments has greatly harmed the status of sex workers as autonomous subjects.²⁰³ Moreover, according to art. 1(1e) of 2734/1999, it is prohibited for a person who has been convicted of pimping or trafficking (legal categories which as will be discussed in chapter 5 are too broad and fluid) to legally sell sexual services, directly exposing sex workers to criminalisation. Therefore, this shift to decriminalisation, however marginal, could be considered a turning point towards a new perception of sex work by the Greek state. However, this reform was revoked only two years later, in 2021, after the petition of women's

²⁰² Law 4619/2019 Preamble, 65; cited in Nikos Paraskeuopoulos and Etychis Fytrakis, *Axiopoinēs Sexoualikes Praxeis: Arthra 336-353 Neou PK [Punishable Sex Acts: art. 336 - 353 of the New Penal Code]* (Ekdoseis Sakkoula 2021), 427-428.

²⁰³ *Pimps, Managers and Other Third Parties: Making Distinctions Between Third Parties and Exploitation* (Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform 2014) <www.safersexwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/PimpsManagersOthers.pdf>.

organisations. Paola Revenioti, a pioneer trans sex worker comments on these recent incidents:

What bothers me, and I see it in the left and among feminists is that they approach prostitution through Christian morality—even if they deny doing so. You can't advocate for women's freedom and tell them not to sell sex. If a woman indeed has freedom of choice, she should be able to engage in sex for money. And, if she likes certain clients, she can also enjoy herself.

For Paola, the queer community is not without responsibility for unfolding developments:

Until the beginning of 2000, there was a certain permissiveness. Afterwards, with the economic crisis, this came to an end. The young folks are more conservative as well. I feel that eroticism has been lost, and I can't explain why. The erotic discourse is missing, (self-)victimisation is prevalent. It's like teaching young people that they should be afraid. We don't teach pleasure, either to ourselves or to children. We have experienced the politics of desire, saying 'we'll screw you all', and we did it, and had a good time. People tell me we used to have a hard time; I don't agree. We weren't interested in assimilation; we were looking for the thrill.

These lines reveal precisely the internal tensions that exist within and among social liberation movements: integration vs. radicality, desire, sex, and victimisation. These tensions culminate in the discourse around prostitution, where there is frequent confusion between victimisation and agency, attempts to control workers through the law, but also contradictory (or complementary) strategies employed by workers, claiming both legal visibility and standing up to the law, as will be analysed in the last chapter. Paola's words also constitute an opportunity to reflect on the fact that, in principle, legitimacy often does not go hand in hand with liberation, as can be seen in the review of male homosexuality and prostitution in 20th-century Greece, to which I now turn.

Gay sex work

Related to the restriction of prostitution was the repression and arrests of homosexuals, not only of those practising undeclared prostitution, but also of those who, according to the dominant social norms, harmed public morality. This parallel activity of the Vice Department had been in force since its foundation in the 1920s until the decriminalisation of (male) homosexuality in 1951.²⁰⁴ According to Fotakis, the state, having forbidden the expression of sexual desires

²⁰⁴ Female homosexuality has never been criminalised but rather ignored by lawmakers.

of homosexuals, criminalised any person engaging in homosexual activities. In fact, for the majority of the law enforcement authorities, homosexuality was classified as a 'perversion' related to crime.²⁰⁵ Homosexual men selling sex in infamous spots (squares, parks etc.) were arrested and taken to the Syngros Hospital for compulsory treatment and were also identified with certain practices such as stealing from customers, known as *tzournó*.²⁰⁶

Given the effect that criminalisation of homosexuality had on the public, a considerable number of *tzournó* theft victims in bars and parks were reluctant to report the incidents out of fear of being targeted as sex offenders. It was indeed common knowledge that when such practices were reported to Vice, they stood as an affirmation of 'loose morality' and 'social degradation'. A police reporter, discussing homosexuals selling sex in his book entitled 'Effeminate' writes about 'one of the many carcinomas eating away the flesh of moral society' [...] that animate carcinoma which is devouring every notion of civilisation and male dignity'.²⁰⁷ He also observes that 'the [erotically associated with various thugs] mob of these effeminate and foolish youths has, by 1925, increased to a large and dangerous number'.²⁰⁸

In post-war Greece, when homosexuality was decriminalised (Penal Code of 1951), and at least until the 1970s, sexual behaviour and gender identity of both men and women was conceptualised based on the gender with which they identified, and not on that of the sexual partner of choice.²⁰⁹ More specifically, male bisexuality was widely accepted, even if tacitly. As Yannakopoulos argues, men were not broadly categorised as 'heterosexual' and 'homosexual' but as 'masculine' and 'feminine' (*andras* i.e. man – *poustis/adelfi* – faggot).²¹⁰ A 'masculine' man could have sexual relations with either a 'feminine' man or a woman without being stigmatised. Overall, in rural but also urban Greek sites, sexuality was perceived as a 'natural' action aimed at either reproduction or the satisfaction of the 'biological' needs of men.²¹¹ Avdela also argues that 'the purchasing of sex among male adolescents was seen as a kind of initiation ritual to manhood, and thus

²⁰⁵ Fotakis (n116) 221.

²⁰⁶ 'Tzournó' or 'tsournó' is a word of the Kalliarda that has been recorded by Elias Petropoulos and means stealing, for the realisation of which specifically usually required two persons, prostitutes or, more often, homosexual men, one of whom employed the victim sexually and the other would steal it, usually hidden under a bed. Petropoulos identifies the etymology of the verb 'tsoureiro' in the Romani language, and specifically in the word *čor* (*chor*), which means a thief, a robber. See Fotakis, (n116) 222, and Appendix I.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Yannakopoulos, K., 'Naked Piazza: Male (homo)sexualities, masculinities and consumer cultures in Greece since the 1960s', in Kostis Kornetis, Eirini Kotsovili and Nikolaos Papadogiannis (eds) *Consumption and Gender in Southern Europe Since the Long 1960s*, (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016), 173–190.

²¹⁰ Yannakopoulos (n95).

²¹¹ Ibid.

considered a natural part of the national construction of masculinity' until the late 1990s.²¹² However, male prostitution remains largely invisible to the legislators and women's organisations who treat it as 'a women's issue', a residue of second-wave feminism and of the 'social period' as Agustin has termed it, for reasons that will be exposed in the following sections.

Bourgeois feminists and proletarian women

Historiography has left women's history out of its canon for centuries. Greek historiography is especially characterised by a synthesis of Greek nationalist and patriarchal discourse.²¹³ In Greece, academic research avoided becoming involved with the intersections between female oppression and the history of (female) working classes, the historical construction of masculinities, and the role of the Greek Orthodox Church and Religion. The landscape began to change by the late '70s, when research focusing on kinship, motherhood, reproduction, sexuality, women's work and education appeared, bringing the need for *herstory* to the forefront. This turn, however, was not lacking in problems. As Joann Scott has pointed out, sometimes, evaluating positively anything women say or do can lead to misconceptions (e.g., related to their class, ethnic status). Additionally, isolating 'women' as a historical subject even if this derives from their exclusion as subjects of history, still contributes to their depiction in essentialist terms.²¹⁴ Moreover, middle- and upper-class women were the main subjects of academic research, as they had left their imprint on the public space and discourse. According to the historian Antonis Liakos, up until recently, research that delved into the gender-feminist perspective of history mainly focused on the writings and memoirs of women of the elite, namely Callirhoe Parren and her circle of nationalist feminists.²¹⁵ There, as much as the unequal statuses between men and women and experiences of female submission were highlighted in detail, the same did not apply to class-specific dynamics among women, for example, 'between the Ladies and their [female] servants'.²¹⁶

In Western Europe and the USA, the mid-19th century was marked by the surfacing of middle-class women into the public sphere.²¹⁷ Despite some undoubtedly

²¹² Efi Avdela 'To Kostos Tis Myisis: Omosexualikes Praktikes Anilikon Sta Dikastika Archeia Kai Ohi Mono 1940-1970 in ' in Demetra Vassileiadou and Glauke Gkotsi (eds), *Istories Gia ti Sexualikotita* (Themelio 2020), 141.

²¹³ E.g. Evi Avdela and Angelika Psarra, *O Feminismos Stin Ellada Tou Mesopolemou. Mia Anthologia [Feminism in Interwar Greece. An Anthology]* (Gnosi 1985).

²¹⁴ Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (Columbia University Press 1988) 20.

²¹⁵ Antonis Liakos, 'I Elliniki Istoriografia to Teleutaio Tetarto Tou 20ou Aiona [Modern Greek Historiography in the Last Quarter of the 20th Century]' (2001) 76-77 *Synchrona Themata* 72.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Smith and Mac (n2) 9.

liberatory aspects of this project (e.g., the legal right to own property, and the assertion of the right to vote), the establishment of professionalised caring roles, such as charities and social work, ultimately reaffirmed rather than disturbed gender roles, the ideal values relating to middle-class femininity and paid employment.²¹⁸ As Agustin describes, the bourgeois feminine ideal identified with domesticity and purity, in opposition to the lecherous and promiscuous proletariat.²¹⁹ The latter became an object of management, control and care on the part of the bourgeoisie, especially of its women. Such developments eventually, reasserted the class hierarchy of middle-class women over the heterogeneous working masses, whose demands had been silenced by the dominant state and philanthropist discourses.²²⁰ Working-class women and children had been targeted as the main recipients of care, which often took coercive forms.²²¹ A primitive form of feminism was thus formed by bourgeois women, through the formation of philanthropic organisations aimed at saving the working class from itself.

In Greece, during the interwar period and the 1940s, bourgeois feminist movements bloomed, often receiving state support. At the centre of their politics were issues such as prostitution and the management of women's labour more broadly, charity, the formation of children's camps (*παιδουπόλεις/raidouroleis* – 'children's towns'), and, finally, the vote. There was no longer only a small circle of women, rather, the internal National Schism was followed by a multitude of movements that reflected aspects of the central political turmoil, and intense mobility.²²² On the one hand, the royalists who came mainly from the Journal of Ladies, the National Council of Hellenes (*Ethniko Symvoulion ton Ellinidon* – *Εθνικό Συμβούλιο των Ελληνίδων*), the magazine *Hellenis* (*Ελληνίς*) and the Lyceum of the Hellenes (*Λύκειο των Ελληνίδων*), and on the other hand, the centrists, who rallied around the League for Women's Rights. During the same time, women of the Communist Party began to develop a rhetoric and action towards and for the proletarian women, which maintained distances from bourgeois feminism.

²¹⁸ Ibid

²¹⁹ Agustin (n12) 103-104.

²²⁰ Smith and Mac (n2) 9.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Tasos Kostopoulos, 'I alli katochi [The other Occupation]' (*Η Εφημερίδα των Συντακτών*, 11 October 2015) <<https://web.archive.org/web/20190723164615/https://www.efsyn.gr/themata/fantasma-tis-istorias/43944-i-alli-katochi>> accessed 4 January 2024.

On Greek femonationalism. Beyond ‘sisterhood’

In late 19th and early 20th century Greece, multiple philanthropic and feminist institutions flourished; heavily influenced by international trends on philanthropy and anti-trafficking, and having direct contact with international organisations, they took a keen interest in managing working-class women’s jobs. Ideas and practices traveled, although they did not always translate in predictable ways in each place. However, the role of feminist organisations in the regulation of sex work has been largely ignored by the Greek scholars, who focus almost exclusively on the existing legislations, or on attempts of understanding the nature of sex work—without resisting sex work exceptionalism.²²³

The starting point in the history of the Greek feminist movement is Callirhoe Parren’s ‘Journal of Ladies’ (*Εφημερίς των Κυριών*). Parren nowadays is presented in several tributes, articles and books with a quite positive outlook in terms of its contribution to the dissemination of feminist ideas in the country. In fact, she and the circle of women who surrounded her, apart from being feminists, were bourgeois and nationalists, fiercely supporting the expansionist war efforts of the Greek state.²²⁴ At that time, the Greek state attempted to double its territory through military operations in areas with populations of different religions and/or languages. In other words, the Parren circle operated in Athens, staffing bourgeois nationalists, supporting the effort to expand and homogenise the Greek state, completely dismissing the interests of the Jewish women of Thessaloniki, Macedonian Slavs, and the Turkish-speaking communities of Thrace—and apparently the proletarian women of Greece.

Modern Greek –even leftist– historiography has omitted the class aspect of this group, referring to the circle of the Newspaper simply as ‘educated women’, while the nationalist orientation is often ignored altogether. In the climate of national reconciliation that prevailed from the 1980s onwards, the nationalist references of the early Greek feminist movement have been underestimated or even silenced. Left-wing feminist historians present the combination of nationalism and feminism sometimes as mere political tactics, to promote women’s issues in the public sphere,²²⁵ and sometimes as a contradiction.²²⁶ What both of these concepts have in common is the descriptive rather than the critical approach, as

²²³ E.g. Eva Nicolaidou, *Sta spitia tis amartias [In the houses of sin]* (Kaktos 2022).

²²⁴ fight back! (n117) 10.

²²⁵ Anna Michopoulou, ‘Από ἴγναικεῖο Σωματεῖο Με Εθνικούς Στόχους Σε Ἐθνικό Ἰ Σωματεῖο Γυναϊκῶν: ἡ Εθνική Πολιτική Του Λυκείου Ελληνίδων Από Την Καλλιρρόη Παρρέν Στην Άννα Τριανταφυλλίδου (1911-1940) [From ‘Women’s Association with National Goals to ‘National’ Women’s Association: The National Policy of the Lyceum of Hellenes from Callirhoe Parren to Anna Triantafyllidou (1911-1940)]’, *The Lyceum of Hellenes. 100 years*, 145.

²²⁶ Efi Avdela, ‘Οι Gynaikes Koinoniko Zitima [Women as a Social Issue]’ in Christos Chatziiosif (ed), *Istoria tis Elladas tou 200u aiona [History of 20th century Greece]*, vol 2 (Vivliorama 2002), 340-41.

well as the portrayal of the conjunction of nationalism and feminism as accidental or contradictory.²²⁷ Moreover, these approaches eventually trapped the discussion and the dynamics of feminism in a circle not only narrowly classist, but also narrowly ethno-racial, accepting that some women would never be recognised as 'subjects of the nation-state'—and perhaps would not be interested in being recognised as such themselves.²²⁸ Yet, approaching this matter from a critical stance requires reflecting upon the lasting ties among nationalism, the bourgeoisie's interests, and certain strands of feminism that form alliances with conservative political forces, and reject the idea that feminism cannot be nationalist.

This brings us to the notion of femonationalism. Introduced by Sara Farris, femonationalism explains how neoliberal and racist policies are implemented in the name of women's rights in contemporary Europe. Farris reads femonationalism as a symptom of neoliberal capitalism, an analysis of significant importance as will be further shown in chapter 5.²²⁹ Yet, such alliances between feminism and nationalism are nothing new. Angela Davis in her work 'Women, Race and Class' shows that late 19th – early 20th European and American feminist organisations were characterised by obvious racist and nationalist tendencies.²³⁰ Davis does not see this congruence as a contradiction, but rather as a manifestation of the ties between early women's movements and the 'national interest', contributing in turn to the suppression and marginalisation of those bodies they considered harmful to the national body. Moreover, femonationalism serves specific class interests, in a twofold manner. Firstly, by incorporating and reinforcing the dominant ideology of the nation-state and the bourgeoisie, which is rooted in racial and class exploitation. And secondly, by pushing working-class women into domestic/care work, to liberate themselves from this kind of work.²³¹ This was also the case with Greek femonationalism, as will be demonstrated in the coming lines.

Greek feminism of the early 20th century communicated directly with Western feminisms, reproducing their femonationalist views accordingly. After all, nationalism was far from a marginal ideology in a country built upon the ideas of national homogeneity and monolingualism. The women, who were excluded from the norm of Greekness, being refugees, members of ethnic minorities and/or working class, would begin to stand up by the end of 1910s – early 1920s, becoming

²²⁷ fight back! (n117) 39-40.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Sara Farris, *In the Name of Women's Rights. The Rise of Femonationalism* (DUP 2017)

²³⁰ Angela Y Davis, *Women, Race, and Class* (Vintage Books 1983), 47 - 52

²³¹ Cornelia Möser, 'The Scandal of Women's Emancipation. Femonationalism, Right-Wing Sexual Politics, and Anti-Feminism' (2022) 29(4) *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society* 1545.

in turn targets of discipline by institutional Greek feminisms.²³² The same fate was reserved for those who diverged from the norms of femininity, for having same-sex relationships, relations with men belonging to minorities, or for being prostitutes.²³³ The betrayal towards the nation and femininity was read in tandem, alongside the necessity of disciplining the working classes.

This period was characterised by class and national tensions. Greece, expanding into Macedonia, took under its control a series of minorities, who were presented with the dilemma of Hellenisation or extinction. At the same time, a large and noisy working class needed management. Some of the liberal feminists of the time will find themselves in the role of labour inspectors, while others will set up recruitment and training departments for minors under the pretext of training the female working class. In the 1940s, those women who experienced mass exit from the home would be confronted with the harshest face of state discipline, always with feminist support.

The nationalist views of Parren and her circle went hand in hand with their class position. Being pro-royalist themselves, the opinion pieces in the journal are proposals of pure political militancy. This is particularly evident when they speak of working-class women, with a blatant detachment and sense of superiority. For example, in a 1905 article, a 'strict but fair' administration of servants is promoted. It condemns both leniency as well as torture and beatings, and reminds that there is a possibility of selling the old servant and buying a new one.²³⁴ A few years later, along with the formation of the labour movement, the journal began to move in a more orderly direction, abandoning the aristocracy. It advocated the need to improve working conditions, but this would not be achieved through 'frequent strikes' and 'cheating the police' but through legislative intervention.²³⁵ Parren herself claimed that neither an increase in wages nor a reduction in working hours was important, considering the improvement of sanitary conditions in factories to be the central demand.²³⁶ As far as the means of struggle were concerned, the feminism of the journal did not share the action of the Suffragettes, which it considered extreme, nor, of course, the radical views of the socialists and communists at the time on women's work. Parren's 1913 article argued that the

²³² fight back! (n117) 31-42.

²³³ See further Tzanaki (n113).

²³⁴ Callirhoe Parren, Περὶ τῆς Διοικήσεως τῶν Υπηρετριῶν' [On the administration of servants] (805) (*Efimeris ton Kyrion*, 27 February 1905), cited in fight back! (n119) 36; it should be noted that at that time the maids were mostly minors, since there were no limits for underage work, and in 1910 the majority was 15 years old.

²³⁵ Callirhoe Parren, 'Ὁ Σύνδεσμος Ἐργάτιδων [The Female Workers' Association]' (1045) (*Efimeris ton Kyrion*, 15 November 1913), 2459 <<https://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/31852/?ln=en>>.

²³⁶ Ibid

conditions were not yet ripe to give women the vote, believing that she would achieve the aims of the movement by relying on a male-dominated parliament.²³⁷

The second pole is located around the League for Women's Rights (*Σύνδεσμος υπέρ των Δικαιωμάτων των Γυναικών*, 1920-1936) and its publication, *O agonas tis gynaikas* (Women's Struggle). There, pro-Venizelos, liberal and bourgeois feminists converged, and took up issues such as suffrage, women's and child labour, women's vocational and scientific training, and the abolition of prostitution; the publication features frequent reports from international women's conferences.²³⁸ The League undertook several important initiatives in the field of family law, and it had a strong repressive activity concerning prostitution in cooperation with police authorities. Significantly, after the Asia Minor Catastrophe, fearing that refugee women would become victims of trafficking, the Greek state, at the urging of the League, sought support from the League of Nations. In this context, the *Ethniki Stegi* (National Home) orphanage (1922) for refugee girls was founded, while Annie Baker, one of the leaders of the British anti-trafficking movement and a member of the British National Council of Women, arrived in Athens to help tackle 'white slavery'.²³⁹ In 1925 the Society Against Trafficking was founded.

A less prominent pole was that of the bourgeois socialists, who did not hesitate to coexist for a time with the pro-royalists because of the anti-communism of the Venizelist regime. The latter focused on the right to vote, the then pioneering introduction of civil marriage, the obligation of municipalities to maintain gynaecological clinics and maternity hospitals. Yet they demanded a legal ban on night work for minors and women.²⁴⁰

Until 1910, female students in Greece did not exceed 4% in secondary education.²⁴¹ However, in that decade women were becoming increasingly integrated into the workforce, resulting in their exit from the private sphere of the home. Beyond being farmers in the countryside and maids in the cities, women now became industrial workers, public servants, and freelancers. This caused intense social-

²³⁷ Cited in *fight back!* (n117) 38.

²³⁸ Included in Avdela and Psarra (n213) 161-168

²³⁹ Daniel Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (Cambridge University Press 2014) 73-75.

²⁴⁰ This development was parallel to the prevailing climate in the interwar ILO which discussed the prohibition of night work, mining work, and other work considered especially endangering for women and children for the sake of protection. The ban on night work, along with cross-border work, eventually prevailed, as it was easier for states to enforce it than the so-called 'positive methods of protection' requiring more effort: these included child welfare boards, government services to help migrants review contracts, and minimum wage and labour standard enforcement', Julia Laite, 'Between Scylla and Charybdis: Women's Labour Migration and Sex Trafficking in the Early Twentieth Century' (2017) 62(1) *International Review of Social History* 37-52.

²⁴¹ Eleni Varika, *I Eksegersi ton Kyrion: I Gennisi mias Feministikis Syneidisis stin Ellada 1833-1907 [The Ladies' Revolt: The Birth of a Feminist Conscience in Greece 1833-1907]* (Papazisi 2011) 136.

moral conflicts with the previous 'domestic ideal', and was therefore viewed with hostility by most men, regardless of their political affiliation. The prevailing view was that work made women immoral and alienated them from their nature. The state, however, wanted to throw women workers into the market as cheap labour, and presented it as a necessity because of the consequences of the war. In 1923, there were 500,000 farm women, 100,000 labourers, 37,000 domestic servants and 18,000 freelance workers.²⁴² Women's work was not only underpaid (wages equal to 1/2 or 1/3 of men's), but also a place where exploitation flourished. The female workers were usually 10-19 years old. The example of the thermal baths in Loutraki is typical, where in the 1930s during the summer season, 40 to 50 girls aged 16 to 25 were hired to clean the baths and offer water to bathers. Their shift started at 4:30 and ended at 21:30, and their only remuneration was the tips they received from customers.²⁴³

The Venizelist state during the 1910s would attempt a far-reaching plan to manage the working class through the infiltration of trade union structures and the mobilisation of mechanisms such as the labour inspectorate. Most interwar feminists, including communists and socialists, called for coordinated protected work for women, where after 15 years of work they received a pension, while the League for Women's Rights was the only organisation that supported full equality of wages and conditions with men, believing that selective protection of women's work would validate the inferior position of women.

From 1918 onwards, large strikes began to take place nationwide, in which women workers often took the lead, demanding the improvement of working conditions, an end to abuse by foremen, social security, the right to be registered as unemployed, etc. The State would respond to this wave of strikes with a law in 1920, that determined the legality of strikes only if they were called by trade unions, and by sending labour inspectors as mediators. In 1919, inspector Alexandros Svolos would be sent to Volos to appease the workers, stating publicly that he was surprised that a strike had been organised over such 'minor issues'. His future wife Maria Desypri-Svolou, also a labour inspector and a member of the League for Women's Rights, believed that the state was responsible and should have intervened to make the factory owners apply Taylor methods, which would be accompanied by technical training of the workers, wondering why the workers themselves did not ask for it.²⁴⁴ The feminists of the League actively or indirectly contributed to the implementation of anti-labour policies that largely targeted

²⁴² Avdela, (1115) 336-359.

²⁴³ Olga Pachi, 'I thesi tis gynaiikas stin Ellada tou Mesopolemou [Woman's place in interwar Greece]' (2013) 10(38) *Ανιστόρητον*, 4 <http://www.anistor.gr/greek/grback/ist2013_38_Anistoriton.pdf>.

²⁴⁴ timekeeping of movements, elimination of dead times, intensification of work; 'Oi Ergatries Sto Proskinio: Oi Aperiies Tou 1919 [Women Workers in the Forefront: The 1919 Strikes]' Migada feminist publication, Summer - Autumn 2015 25.

women workers. At the same time, they remained silent about the murders of the ‘unruly’ women workers protesting by the gendarmerie and the army who brutally repressed assemblies and attempted strikes that were deemed illegal, since 1924, and until Metaxas’ dictatorship in 1936.²⁴⁵

As the anarcho-feminist group *antifa negative* highlights, for two decades a critical mass of working-class women revolted, fell in love, broke the rules of public morality, read ‘lecherous pamphlets’, only to get trampled to death by gendarmerie horses; condemning them to oblivion, not a single mention was ever made by bourgeois interwar feminisms at the time.²⁴⁶

‘All work but sex work’

Work was, along with the vote, the great issue of interwar feminisms. In fact, work was applauded since it was considered a means of emancipation, while prominent feminists such as the writer and communist Galatea Kazantzakis consider the unemployed ‘parasites’, inadvertently echoing the ideas of the ‘dangerous classes’.²⁴⁷ ‘Right to all work’ and ‘equal wages for equal work’ were the main demands raised, followed by the protection of working mothers and the abolition of sex work. This demand, however, ignored the reality that the sex industry was, along with textiles, tobacco, and domestic work, one of the main areas of employment for working-class women. Three investigations by the Athens Security Police between 1926 and 1930 regarding the age, class origin and ethnic origin of sex workers, found that 86.8% were 15 to 23 years old, almost all of them were also maids, female workers, seamstresses, etc., with worker parents, while a third of them were also refugees.²⁴⁸

The dichotomy between slavery and labour came into play in the case of sex work, in a manner similar to that put forward by English proto-feminists in the 19th century. According to Svolou, ‘prostitution should be seen as the most degrading form of slavery’.²⁴⁹ In fact, through feminist discourse, a dichotomy emerges between honest breadwinners and lazy parasites, reflecting the already established notions of the ‘dangerous classes’, officially introduced by Honoré-

²⁴⁵ Alexandros Dagkas, *To Kratos Kata Tou Kommounismou: Syllogē Plērophoriōn Apo Tis Hypēresies Asphaleias, 1927 [The State against Communism: Information Gathering by the Intelligence Services, 1927]* (Epikentro 2011) 73-105.

²⁴⁶ fight back! (n117) 69.

²⁴⁷ Tonia Kafetzaki, ‘Gynaikeia Amfisvitsi Kai Feministiki Strateusi. Ergazomenes Gynaikes Se Mesopolemika Pezograpimata Kai Arthra Tis Galateias Kazantzaki [Women’s Rebelliousness and Communist Mobilisation in Interwar Galatea Kazantzaki’s Prose and Articles]’ (2003) 25 *Mnemon* 53

²⁴⁸ Kostis Charitakis, ‘O Antiafrodisiakos Agon Kai to Provlima Tis Katargiseos Ton Oikon Anochis [The Struggle against STDs and the Problem of the Abolition of Brothels]’ [1928] *Hellenis* 179.

²⁴⁹ fight back! (n117) 73.

Antoine Frégier. The Director of Police in the Seine area, in his report entitled 'On the Dangerous Classes of Large Cities and their Means of Improvement', exposed as 'dangerous classes' the gamblers, the street girls, their johns and pimps, brothel keepers, vagrants, swindlers, rogues, rascals, thieves and conspirators.²⁵⁰ Hard and disciplined work and the denial of all immorality was the proposed antidote to all kinds of degeneracy and sloth.

The Greek feminisms of the interwar period treated prostitution as an abnormality, an individual and social disease that needed treatment, failing to link it with issues of political economy and feminised work in general.²⁵¹ With the development of industrial capitalism in Western Europe, poverty was from the very beginning associated with uselessness and parasitism, danger and crime, the fear of rebellion.²⁵² It was in this context that the concept of the dangerous class(es) emerged, which was one of the most important and time-resistant mechanisms for the control of individuals, collectivities, and events considered at/of risk. As will be further explored in chapter 4, prostitutes were understood as the female equivalent of the criminal, even though prostitution was not considered a criminal offence, since they were seen as the lowest state into which a woman could fall.²⁵³ Greek bourgeois feminists focused their struggle on curbing prostitution and strengthening their counterparts: family life and motherhood. After all, these aspects were directly linked to the idea of homeland and the advancement of the nation state, the proclaimed priorities of 'gender patriotists'.²⁵⁴

Admittedly, the writings of feminists of the period on prostitution are scarce, and there are no recorded experiences of any sex workers anywhere. It is safe to conclude, however, that such discourses against prostitution started from an femonationalist point of view, and served both to construct the self-image of the virtuous woman and the neutrality of feminist politics, a feminism outside of ideologies, parties and class—even if this was done through the almost obsessive preoccupation or exclusion of these subjects.²⁵⁵ As will be shown in the next section, the maternalistic attitude of bourgeois interwar feminists was incarnated through the establishment of philanthropic institutions that mainly focused on saving working class women from prostitution, without leaving their labour force untapped.

²⁵⁰ Honoré Antoine Frégier, *Des classes dangereuses de la population dans les grandes villes et des moyens de les rendre meilleure* (Librairie de l' académie royale de médecine 1838).

²⁵¹ fight back! (n117) 78.

²⁵² Grigoris Lazos, *Taxistikes Theoriseis Gia Tis Ergatikes Taxeis Kata Ton 19o Aiona* [Class Theories on the Working Classes in the 19th Century] (Nomiki Vivliothiki 2011) 126, 143.

²⁵³ Joanne M Kaufman and Cathryn Johnson, 'Stigmatized Individuals and the Process of Identity' (2004) 45(4) *The Sociological Quarterly* 807.

²⁵⁴ fight back! (n117) 77-79.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

Disciplining women's labour force and the *Rise of the Social*

'The last female opposition to the spirit of male society is degenerating in a morass of trivial rackets, sects, and hobbies, is turning into the perverted aggression of social work and theosophical gossip, venting its petty rancor in good works and Christian Science'²⁵⁶

The early strand of upper-class feminism allied with the state, thus asserting their stake in the public arena, which was until then off-bounds. This was a process similar to what Laura Agustín has termed 'rise of the social',²⁵⁷ which she identifies as the origin of the rescue industry in different national contexts. Being part of the emergence of a newly empowered bourgeoisie set out new rules on how society and subjects should be governed, and 'our contemporary understanding of prostitution was fashioned and philanthropy was carved out as a women's sphere of work.'²⁵⁸ Women philanthropists, who gradually took a serious role in formatting state institutions such as social welfare, viewed prostitutes as 'a class of people with a mission to do something about it'.²⁵⁹ This development should be recognised alongside the implementation and expansion of regulationism, with prostitution now understood as a distinct object of control not only for the state, but also for feminist philanthropy.

By the late 19th century, the cult of domesticity, a synonym for the glorification of traditional gender roles, the nuclear family and 'true womanhood', gradually began to prevail.²⁶⁰ As Federici highlights, regulating housework would not be possible without regulating sexual work.²⁶¹ The patriotic and bourgeois feminine ideal was embodied in the preservation of the home and domestic confinement, as opposed to the dangers represented by movement in public space.²⁶² The woman in public became the symbol of lower-class sexual disorder, a threat to national and religious values, idealised ancestral customs and morals.²⁶³ The ideal of female virtue that was reserved until the mid-19th century for middle- and upper-class women had been extended to proletarian women. Sex ceased to be a legitimate source of both pleasure and money, as something that should be reserved for the creation of a family.²⁶⁴ Women's paid work and mobility were

²⁵⁶ Horkheimer and Adorno (n19) 208.

²⁵⁷ Agustín (n12) 96-133.

²⁵⁸ Ibid 96.

²⁵⁹ Ibid 97.

²⁶⁰ Demetra Tzanaki, *Women and Nationalism in the Making of Modern Greece: The Founding of the Kingdom to the Greco-Turkish War* (Palgrave Macmillan, in association with St Antony's College, Oxford 2009) 80; Agustín (n12) 98.

²⁶¹ Federici (n71) 92.

²⁶² Tzanaki (n113) 130.

²⁶³ Hantzaroula (n127) 20.

²⁶⁴ Federici (n70) 131.

subject to intense control. Female migration for housework from rural areas to the cities was considered the main factor of women's corruption, a pipeline to prostitution. The control of servants' sexuality became an important public concern, conjoined with the regulation of prostitution. The regulatory systems of both domestic and sex work attempted to construct an artificial separation between the two domains in the law. This involved efforts to break communities up by reifying sex workers as something to be kept apart, a risk. For example, 'under an 1870 police provision, if a female servant was seen once or twice in a brothel or had any relationship with prostitutes or madams, she would be expelled from the service trade.'²⁶⁵

Similarly, Julia Laite has described how 'porous and faulty borders were drawn between sex work, women's licit work, and their sexual exploitation and their exploitation as workers' in interwar Britain.²⁶⁶ In Greece, Pothiti Hantzaroula notes that as 'employment agencies in Athens and elsewhere were considered a hotbed of prostitution, several initiatives were undertaken by labour inspectors and middle-class feminists and philanthropists to find a substitute for them.'²⁶⁷ This was reinforced by the police, who decried the connections between domestic service and prostitution, when working and being in public space as a woman was in itself considered to pose a risk for 'falling into' sex work.

Panic about the sex-domestic work connection contributed to the entry of new private actors in the management of the female labour force. In 1905, a 'police provision granted a philanthropic institution, the Asylum of Saint Catherine, the responsibility of acting as a supplier of servants and providing homes for female servants in periods of unemployment.'²⁶⁸ This asylum was created by Parren in the 1890s, and provided shelter and food to girls who came from the countryside to find work in Athens, 'to protect them from the white-flesh trade rings that plagued the capital'. Parren founded many philanthropic institutions that promoted nationalist ideals along with specialisation in housekeeping, training in women's professions (seamstresses, cooks, milliners, etc.), and the rules of socially acceptable behaviour.

Such philanthropic initiatives constituted the beginnings of social policy, as well as a nascent, class-specific feminism in Greece. In time, feminists of the upper-middle classes became actively involved in shaping the public discourses on sex, taking over the institutions that targeted working-class women's labour and sexuality. They established asylums and vocational schools, bent on the task of reforming and disciplining their working-class counterparts. In reality, the binary

²⁶⁵ Hantzaroula (n127) 21.

²⁶⁶ Laite (n240) 41.

²⁶⁷ Hantzaroula (n127) 21.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

constructed between domestic work and sex work often remained porous. Rosters of arrests for sex work and other archival material illustrate how workers moved between these professions or complemented one with the other.²⁶⁹

Amidst such claims, many active feminists assumed roles as labour inspectors, while others set up institutions for the training of working-class youth. For example, the aims of the League for the Repression of Trafficking after its re-establishment in 1927 were both preventive-educational and repressive, e.g., proposing the foundation of an asylum for 'fallen' girls sponsored by the state. Apart from food and shelter, this institution would aim at their moral reformation, so that after leaving the asylum they could work in factories, and their presence would not endanger other women.²⁷⁰ The underlying assumptions and the class interests that shaped this feminism are obvious if one considers how, for example, the President of the League for the Rights of Women, Maria Svolou, not only worked as a labour inspector, but also campaigned against trafficking, joined the police in anti-prostitution raids, and founded vocational schools specialising in decoration and toy-making for refugee women and girls to save them from the dangers of harlotry.²⁷¹ In a 1924 speech, she argued that infamous gangs, tolerated by state authorities, were procuring 'the naive country girls who serve us [...] and refugee girls among them.'²⁷² For Svolou, fighting human trafficking and abolishing regulationism was the main feminist struggle, as 'the perception that feminism promotes moral turpitude must disappear.'²⁷³ On the contrary, feminists should fight so that 'no woman will consent to be bought and sold [...] in order to buy new fancy rags.'²⁷⁴

After the liberation from the Nazis, the main interwar women's organisations were reactivated, while new ones belonging in the communist tradition were also created, with their main demands being the protection of the mother and the child. It should also be noted that, during WWII and the Civil War, some of the women's organisations that had emerged in the interwar period remained active. Many philanthropist 'Ladies' continued to mobilise in a mostly nationalist sentiment, supporting soldiers and organising charity work for the poor. Some strands also forged connections with communist women, but on the eve of the Civil War all organisations linked with communism were discredited and outlawed, and the situation resembled once again the feminism-state nexus we saw in the 1930s.²⁷⁵ Simultaneously, as women of 'loose morals' were usually

²⁶⁹ E.g. Drikos (n111).

²⁷⁰ Ibid. 22.

²⁷¹ Avdela and Psarra (n213) 161.

²⁷² Ibid 163.

²⁷³ Ibid 164.

²⁷⁴ Ibid 165.

²⁷⁵ fight back! (n117) 80-82.

identified as communists, they constituted easy targets for the post-war right-wing state, once again with the support of bourgeois feminists and in the name of 'equality'. Tellingly, in 1947, Eleni Ourani (alias Alkis Thrylos), an old member of the League for Women's Rights, claimed that women's executions shouldn't stop, as 'women who vindicate the same rights as men must be determined to assume the same obligations'.²⁷⁶

Overall, interwar feminists were involved in the creation of the first women's prisons, the management of the girls' schools and asylums, as well as in the establishment of vocational training schools for women workers. In their fight against prostitution, they collaborated with the police, failing to take into account the opinion of working-class and ethnically different women for whom it was often the only means of livelihood. In other words, the bourgeois feminists of the interwar period took an active role in managing an unruly workforce.²⁷⁷ Metaxas' dictatorial regime and the material conditions of the war may have led to the collapse of the organisational structures of feminist organisations and their structural ideology of fatherhood-religion-family, but with the gradual resurgence of feminisms in the post-war period these elements would return, often through unexpected routes and allies. The parallel and often conflicting paths of feminists and sex workers will unfold next.

Thus, the French-inspired regulation system was proclaimed abolished in the name of anti-trafficking and public health. Police raids intensified, along with a focus on deregistering prostitutes from state registries, or not registering them at all, in order to encourage them to seek other employment or marriage. Upon commands from higher up, an effort was made by the Vice Department policemen to find other jobs for them.²⁷⁸ Fotakis cites a police report from 1926, according to which '84 women seem to have been given over to relatives or their parents, 67 were placed in other jobs, and one was given over to marriage'.²⁷⁹ In this *de facto*, though partial prohibitionism, explicit exiting schemes went hand-in-hand with mass brothel closures and raids, in which the Vice Department collaborated with the League for the Rights of Women. There was a direct pipeline between the police and feminist philanthropists, who were charged upon agreement to take in and house vagrant working-class and refugee girls in their asylums.²⁸⁰

As the synergies between bourgeois feminists and the state apparatus were consolidated, a more robust perspective about trafficking and the 'woman as victim' emerged. Since the police files of arrests for soliciting disclosed the class

²⁷⁶ Ibid 116.

²⁷⁷ Ibid 123-124.

²⁷⁸ Ibid 56-57.

²⁷⁹ Ibid

²⁸⁰ Ibid

and migrant background of the women that (allegedly or actually) sold sex, and documented that the vast majority had also worked as servants, seamstresses, factory workers etc., a minority perspective surfaced within the police that saw them not so much as criminals, but as morally and physically ruined, unprotected, victims of trafficking circuits.²⁸¹ Nevertheless, as the complete abolition of prostitution was deemed unrealistic, increased pressure on workplaces through raids and policing, combined with some sporadic social policy initiatives, was chosen as the way forward.

Greek feminisms during *Metapolitefsi*

Greek women finally acquired full political rights in 1952, while the first two women MPs were elected in the 1956 elections. In the 1960s, women's political and trade unionist organisation intensified, which was violently interrupted by the 1967 junta. Women were actively involved in the anti-dictatorship and student movements of the time. With the restoration of democracy in 1974, women's associations were re-established, such as the Women's Rights Association. The demand for 'work for women' became a central political issue of the period. Women's political party groups tried to push for women's issues to become central party policy, while at the same time, a multitude of autonomous feminist groups blossomed, in university faculties, neighbourhoods, provincial towns, etc.²⁸²

We can assume that the issue of sex work was not a major concern of Greek feminisms in the *Metapolitefsi* era, given the near absence of relevant texts in feminist publications of the time. But the hypothesis is also supported by the fact that, at a time when the demand for women's inclusion in the workplace was re-emerging as strong, feminists of the 1970s and 1980s chose not to stand by the struggles of sex workers for changes in the legislative framework and the destigmatisation of their work.

The autonomous magazine *Skoupa* (Broom), one of the publications that made the most important theoretical contributions at that time, and whose authors belonged to the New Left, delivered in its first issue in 1980 a first study on the systems of regulation and repression of prostitution, a text quite critical of Greek regulationism. The authors also referred to the prostitution movement that had appeared a few years earlier (1975) in France, stressing that they wanted to avoid idealising this work, though they concluded that they had no business talking

²⁸¹ Fotakis (n116) 54-55.

²⁸² Maria Repousi, Angelika Psarra, Anna Michopoulou, *O Feminismos Sta Chronia Tis Metapoliteusis, 1974-1990: Idees, Syllogikotites, Diekdikiseis [Feminism in the Years of Metapolitefsi. Ideas, Collectives, Claims]* (Hellenic Parliament Foundation for Parliamentarism and Democracy 2017), 25.

about experiences that were not their own.²⁸³ On the other hand, the magazine of the Autonomous Women's Group of Thessaloniki, *Katina* (Nosy Parker), in its first issue in 1987, published two texts, one against prostitution and one against pornography. It should be noted that in the same issue there is a review (translated from a Dutch newspaper) from the 'International Congress of Prostitutes' held in Brussels the previous year, at the end of which one of the magazine's editors comments that what was said by sex workers there does not reflect reality, and that it is impossible to consider prostitution as a job like any other. The article concludes by saying that the abolition of prostitution is a women's cause.²⁸⁴

When feminists embraced the punitive state

During the 1990's and 2000's the Greek feminist movement lay dormant. Apart from some institutional voices such as GS for Equality, as well as some autonomous groups with few members, there hasn't been any group that has made significant headway in influencing policymaking. Things began to change with the outbreak of the economic crisis in 2008, leading to an unprecedented prominence of feminist discourse at the start of what is referred to as the age of #MeToo in 2017. A series of highly-publicised femicides during the pandemic imbued feminist discourse with a sense of urgency.

A crucial development came about in 2019, following a widespread and impassioned feminist mobilisation. The legal definition of rape was revised on the basis of lack of consent.²⁸⁵ Since this celebrated reform, the Greek feminist movement has made increasing demands for a strengthening of criminal laws. Among these demands, the call to include femicide in the Penal Code as a distinct criminal category that would potentially prevent the consideration of mitigating factors during sentencing has been embraced by almost all left-wing feminist organisations; Syriza once again satisfied feminist sentiment by submitting the relevant legislative proposal in parliament. At the same time, certain practices considered sacrosanct by the left as *acquis* of the Enlightenment, were put into question. For example, the conditional release of sex offenders was now seen as too lenient and potentially threatening to victims. Similarly, an emerging debate surrounding sentence durations for these crimes was dominated by calls to further increase sentences even introducing a life sentence for rape of minors and gang rape. The left condemned extreme propositions that made their way into the

²⁸³ Psarra and Florentine (n136) 27.

²⁸⁴ 'International Congress of Prostitutes' [1987] *Katina* Issue 1, 18

²⁸⁵ Zoe Mavroudi, 'Φεμινιστική συναίνεση στη φυλακή: για την αλλαγή του Άρθρου 336' (*Pressenza*, 23 June 2019) <www.pressenza.com/el/2019/06/feministiki-sinainesi-filaki-allagi-arthro-336> accessed 20 August 2023.

public debate, such as calls for chemical castration for ‘child rapists’,²⁸⁶ but ultimately, it did not retreat from its expressed goal of ending impunity (*ατιμωρησία*) for gender and sexual violence, an indirect espousal of the right-wing tough-on-crime agenda.

Even some anarchist collectives have adopted punitive rationales, at times promoting actions aimed at cleansing neighbourhoods from rapists. These attitudes should be read in parallel with the history of the Greek feminist movement and its collaboration with the state. Undoubtedly, the contemporary Greek feminist movement argues on the basis of defending women's rights. It has, however, failed so far to dig deeper into a self-reflective criticism as to the extent to which prisons as institutions of white patriarchy fit in the vision of a holistic understanding of liberation, and, if such, they can be counted among the tools of a feminist struggle against the patriarchy. Without a clear stance against carceral solutions, the contemporary feminist movement remains constrained within the ideological boundaries set forth by early bourgeois feminism, even if it has foregone the most overtly nationalistic elements of that era in feminist discourse and action. The persistent tendency of 21st-century mainstream feminisms to embrace existing power structures, including the punitive state, must therefore be read within the analytical framework of carceral and governance feminism.

The lack of a specific position on prostitution on behalf of the mainstream feminist movement leaves a gap in feminist involvement in policy reform that is filled mostly by its more carceral actors. Most of them belong to older organisations and those with the most institutional representation are generally in favour of the abolition of prostitution. There are of course grassroots organisations who maintain closer contact with the LGBT community and are friendly towards sex workers. Overall, however, neither side takes an active stance in favor of sex worker organisations, while those appearing to be likely allies often unknowingly and persistently reproduce stigmatising discourse that draws from speculations about how sex workers exercise their agency (e.g., by constantly condemning pimps). Meanwhile, the Federation of Women of Greece, which consists of 43 women's groups and belongs to the European Women's Lobby (themselves advocates of traditional anti-sex work policies) has taken a progressively harsher stance, most notably by welcoming the tightening of the Criminal Code as well as the Code of Criminal Procedure in 2021. Additionally, the Federation has called for further criminalisation of gender and sexual behaviour, framing these calls as encouraging a preventive, instead of a repressive, function

²⁸⁶ ‘Επιμένει ο Βορίδης περί χημικού ευνουχισμού, τον ξεμπροστιάζει ο Φίλης’ (*ΕΦΣΥΝ*) <www.efsyn.gr/ellada/dikaiosyni/364010_epimenei-o-boridis-peri-himikoy-eynoyismoy-ton-xemprostiazei-o-filis?amp> accessed 6 January 2024.

of the law. Of particular interest is their demand for the rejection of all privileges to prisoners, their call for a mandatory incarceration instead of alternative sentencing through community service, and the insistence on the recriminalisation of prostitution-related activities that had been decriminalised in 2019.²⁸⁷ Whether framed as prevention of gender violence or as rightful punishment and isolation of perpetrators that keeps victims safe, these initiatives come as sheer contradiction to feminism's stated vision for women's liberation and the abolition of gender violence. By reinforcing the state's punitive agenda, mainstream feminisms fail to see women's liberation as part of a collective liberation that is antithetical to existing state structures, especially the criminal justice system.

Conclusion

This brief historical overview revealed that in Greece, both the state and institutional feminists primarily consider sex workers as both perpetrators and victims, shaping them as marginal subjects. My research on older legislations has revealed the state's hostile approach toward unruly women, which was boosted by feminists' embrace of nationalist and domestic ideals, reaffirming the distinction between virtuous and promiscuous women. I have also shown that the distinction between bourgeois femininity and prostitution and the subsequent artificial dichotomy between sex work and other forms of women's labour were part of a broader project to control the female proletariat. The embrace of criminal authoritarianism that contemporary feminists often engage in ultimately entrenches regulationism against sex workers. Regulationism's biopolitical manifestations -examined more thoroughly in the following chapters- go hand in hand with rescue industry initiatives in working-class management and, as a result, the disciplining of working-class women, especially sex workers, which early institutional feminism enabled under the pretext of fighting exploitation. Archive material included in this chapter restores the voices of the subjects harmed by these policies and systematically ignored by state and mainstream feminist discourse. The following chapter will examine the geographical aspects of regulationism and relevant feminist interventions within a broader 'law and order' schema.

²⁸⁷ Intervention at the public consultation stage, Ministry of Justice, *Amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure* (Draft law, 24 September 2021) <http://www.opengov.gr/ministryofjustice/?p=15352&cpage=2> accessed 2 August 2023.

Part II.

The Law. Regulating the dangerous classes

Chapter 3. From the margins of Law to the margins of the city; a legal-geographical analysis of sex work regulationism in Greece

By ghettoising the brothels, the state is monitoring [us], allowing the cops to do their pimping by controlling this situation and at the same time maintaining it. Pushing them outside the urban fabric is turning our bodies invisible. (Dimitris, 30, cis gay man)

Introduction – sex, spatiality, and power

At the core of this study lies the concept expressed by the geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore that ‘a geographical imperative lies in the heart of every struggle for social justice: if justice is embodied, it is then therefore always spatial, which is to say, part of a process of making a place’.²⁸⁸ As demonstrated in the previous chapter, regulationism has a strong spatial aspect. However, the regulation of space in the case of sex work is intertwined with the function of the carceral state. The spatial classifications produced and perpetuated through the law create a continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation, which becomes an inherent aspect of regulationism. My intention in this chapter is to step back from a traditional regulatory-focused analysis in order to highlight the association between urban space, bodies, sexuality, and criminal law more accurately. The approach I propose departs from the existing analyses, as it clearly illustrates the elective affinities between urban planning and the spatial aspects of regulationism with criminal law and the carceral state. Specifically, I argue that regulationism is not only an administrative system of managing bodies, sexuality, and labour power within the urban space, but rather constitutive of sex work exceptionalism, trapping sex workers in an illegalisation/criminalisation continuum. This is crucial, given that debates around the spatial aspects of prostitution are often restricted in the management of the existing framework, while lacking a historical and materialist perspective.

In Greek literature, studies on the spatial aspects of prostitution have focused on the confined and isolated space of the brothel, employing Michel Foucault’s analytical concept of *heterotopia*.²⁸⁹ Taking this body of analysis further, I demonstrate how the spatial restriction of the brothel is a historical feature within

²⁸⁸ Ruth Wilson Gilmore, ‘Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography’ (2002) 54(1) *The Professional Geographer* 15.

²⁸⁹ Michel Foucault, ‘Of Other Spaces’ (1986) 16(1) *Diacritics* 22.

Greek and European regulationism that has proven particularly damaging to sex workers' rights. The upcoming interview extracts will highlight this argument, alongside my historical exploration of Greek sex work geographies, suggesting that the extrusion of prostitution from the city centres and the public view in general, results from its framing as a deviation from the norms of capitalist production and the family institution.²⁹⁰ Prostitution straddles the boundary between private and public, visible and invisible labour. Its exclusion from the public eye explains the criminalisation of street prostitution.

The cornerstone of my argument lies in the concept that regulationism, as manifested in the shaping and management of space, directly entails disciplining and criminalising sex workers. While incorporating the analytical concept of brothel-heterotopia, I use it to interpret all sex-work spaces as heterotopias. This allows to delve deeper into the ways space interplays with broader biopolitical intentions reflected in regulationism. Space in prostitution is invented and reproduced not only by regulationism, but also through an interconnected nexus of urban planning schemes, gentrification projects etc., establishing a two-tier system of legality- illegality, ultimately criminalising the most vulnerable subjects. Contemporary feminist demands for 'clean streets', ultimately enhance carceral state's reflexes against sex workers. Excerpts from interviews with sex workers will be analysed alongside the prevalent in urban planning scholarship concept of 'Locally Unwanted Land Uses' (LULUs)²⁹¹ and the 'Broken Windows' theory,²⁹² to highlight the criminological dimension of spatial planning.

Current legal framework

Sex work in Greece is currently regulated by Law 2734/1999. Although the preconditions concerning the personal certificate of profession are already stringent, the following spatial provisions are particularly noteworthy. According to art. 3, sex work in Greece is legal only in brothels, while their very legality depends on a variety of factors. After a person is granted a professional certificate, they are obliged to obtain a permit for the installation and use of the premises where they will carry out their professional activity.

²⁹⁰ Ibid 27.

²⁹¹ Local Unwanted Land Uses (LULUs) is a term used frequently in urban planning literature to describe a use of land that notably downgrades a specific area due to potential health hazards, poor aesthetics, or increased criminality. Roger W. Caves, *Encyclopedia of the City* (Routledge 2004) 437.

²⁹² The 'Broken Window' theory argues that failing to treat misdemeanors can lead to more serious crimes. The metaphor represents any visible sign of disorder in an environment that might go untended. This may include small crimes, acts of vandalism, drunken or disorderly conduct, etc. See further James Q Wilson and George L Kelling, 'The police and neighborhood safety Broken Windows', *Social, Ecological and Environmental Theories of Crime* (Routledge 2017) 29.

Sex workers are not allowed to cooperate and share the same building or apartment—a provision dating back to the 1950s, found in other jurisdictions (e.g. England), and introduced as part of an international anti-trafficking campaign to curb exploitative relationships within brothels. When brothels are located in an apartment building, the consent of all co-owners and tenants is required. In practice, however, such use is prohibited by internal condominium regulations.

Moreover, listed buildings cannot be used as brothels—although this rule is repeatedly broken in many Greek cities with famous historical centers. For example, the Old Town of Rhodes and the Splantzia neighborhood in Chania are informally considered Red Light Districts. Additionally, many neoclassical buildings in central Athens have withstood the ravages of time, precisely because they have been used as brothels.²⁹³

Most importantly, the operation of brothels is not allowed within buildings that are within a radius of less than 200 meters from churches, schools, kindergartens, tuition centers, nursing homes, youth centers, sports centers, boarding schools, libraries, philanthropic institutions, as well as squares and playgrounds. By decision of the municipal or community council, the distances may be increased, and other buildings may be added in the previous list. The distances between brothels may also be increased.²⁹⁴

The permit is personal and cannot be shared between two or more people. It remains valid for two (2) years and is renewed for an equal period of time with the same terms and conditions of its initial issuance, unless in the meantime one of the above-mentioned buildings is created within the radius of 200 metres; in that case, the permit is not renewed.

Moreover, according to art. 3(3) of Law 2734/1999, municipalities and communities determine the number of such permits that may be granted in their region. These decisions are ‘based on the particular local conditions and needs, which are mainly related to their population and its composition, the existence of camps, ports and industrial units, as well as the development of commercial or other activities that require the employment or transit of people from other areas’—a provision that reinforces the marginal placement of prostitution.

Such legislative choices have rendered the law *de facto* inapplicable. For instance, according to the competent authority of the Municipality of Athens in May 2022, there is currently not a single legal brothel in Athens.²⁹⁵ In the rest of the country,

²⁹³Andriopoulos (n102).

²⁹⁴ Law 2734/1999 art. 3(3)

²⁹⁵Data provided upon personal e-mail communication from the Department of Licensing of Commercial Actions, Municipality of Athens to author on 25/5/2022.

on the other hand, 80% of the registered brothels held a relevant legal license, according to data provided by the Ministry of Citizen Protection in 2020. Illegal brothels are frequently closed down, and individuals working in them are caught and prosecuted.

Apart from brothels, sex is sold in the streets and in hotels, in studios, massage parlours and strip clubs, while a large part of the industry moves through formal and informal ads on the internet. Since selling sex in these areas remains illegal, sex workers are exposed to multiple forms of violence, and are deprived of their labour rights. As Phil Hubbard notes, brothels constitute marginal sites and, as such, act simultaneously as focus of fascination and fear, acting as sites of exclusion, perpetuating the social, economic, and political marginalisation of their inhabitants.²⁹⁶ Accordingly, prostitutes are both socially and spatially marginalised so as to maintain and legitimise the moral values of monogamy and the nuclear family.²⁹⁷

Spatiality as an analytical category has influenced 20th and 21st century academic thinking. Analysing space has a broadened interdisciplinary approach, by enabling scholars to produce a sophisticated understanding of political and socio-economic relationships. The relationship between law and space, in particular, has become more obvious since the 1980s by the legal geography movement. This emerging discipline explores how law, people and places are intertwined and, moreover, how they co-constitute the world we live in. Legal geography can be situated as 'a way of examining law's materialisation within space', how legal rules, practices and governance produce landscapes and places.²⁹⁸ Thus, as Blandy and Sibley have stated, 'law and space actively shape and constitute society, while being themselves continuously socially produced'.²⁹⁹ This spatial shift in legal thinking has enabled us to (re)consider subjectivity beyond liberal legalistic approaches that framed it as static and universal, and instead as a notion constructed within space and time.³⁰⁰

The geographies of prostitution have been thoroughly examined by Phil Hubbard, whose work has been pivotal in the writing of this chapter. As he notes, studies on the geographies of prostitution have been largely neglected; according to him, this lack of attention can be justified because 'until recently, there were few researchers in geography (or beyond) who appeared to give much credence to the

²⁹⁶ Phil Hubbard, *Sex and the City: Geographies of Prostitution in the Urban West* (Routledge, 2001) 64.

²⁹⁷ Phil Hubbard, *Cities and Sexualities* (Routledge 2012) 41.

²⁹⁸ Luke Bennett and Antonia Layard, 'Legal Geography: Becoming Spatial Detectives' (2015) 9(7) *Geography Compass* 409; Sarah Blandy and David Sibley, 'Law, Boundaries and the Production of Space' (2010) 19(3) *Social & Legal Studies* 278.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, *Spatial Justice: Body, Lawscape, Atmosphere* (Routledge 2015) 174.

idea that there is a spatial basis to sexuality.³⁰¹ During the last three decades, there has been a growing scholarly interest in the spatial expressions of queer subjects, especially gays and lesbians.³⁰² However, these approaches, conducted in terms of 'inclusion' or 'representation', avoid seeing the state's regulatory capacity and the convergence between urban planning and policing through the spatial control of sexually deviant subjects.³⁰³

Greek theory has dealt primarily with brothels, from the folklorist Elias Petropoulos and his iconic work 'The Brothel',³⁰⁴ to contemporary architects/geographers/urban planners,³⁰⁵ as well as scholars dealing with social and economic history.³⁰⁶ Two notable exceptions the works of the anthropologist Liopi Abatzi and the historian Nikolaos Papadogiannis. Abatzi's remarkable study has extensively researched "bars with women", while Papadogiannis offers a thorough examination of trans women's hustles.

Sex work in the city; challenging legal and spatial boundaries.

The modern metropolis has been described as the result of the dialectics between order and disorder, regularity and exception, rhythm and arrhythmia, above all, the result of the dialectic between general laws and local protocols of using public space.³⁰⁷ And prostitution is a paramount metropolitan experience. As Walter Benjamin notes, 'one of the most powerful attractions of prostitution appears only with the rise of the metropolis—namely, its operation in the mass and through the masses. It was the existence of the masses that first enabled prostitution to overspread large areas of the city, whereas earlier it had been confined, if not to houses, at least to the streets'.³⁰⁸

The prostitute, a figure of both desire and dread at once, has historically both legitimated and undermined the dominant moral and sexual order.³⁰⁹ Their placement in specific sites -which often functioned not only as brothels, but as prisons and/or asylums- had served as a constant reminder of their abnormality yet, simultaneously, of their appeal, as the negative pole of the heteronormative

³⁰¹ Hubbard (n296) 9.

³⁰² E. g. Larry Knopp, 'Sexuality and the Spatial Dynamics of Capitalism' (1992) 10(6) *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 651; Larry Knopp, 'Sexuality and Urban Space: A Framework for Analysis' in David Bell and Gill Valentine (eds), *Mapping desire: Geographies of sexualities* (Routledge 1994).

³⁰³ Hubbard (n297) 15.

³⁰⁴ Elias Petropoulos, *The brothel [To bourdelo]* (Nefeli 2010).

³⁰⁵ Lalenis, Moschos, Polymenidis (n11); Andriopoulos (n109)

³⁰⁶ Bournova and Stoyannidis (n103).

³⁰⁷ Andriopoulos (n102).

³⁰⁸ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Harvard University Press 2000) 354.

³⁰⁹ Bryan D. Palmer, *Cultures of Darkness: Night Travels in the Histories of Transgression from Medieval to Modern* (Monthly Review Press 2000), 149.

nuclear family.³¹⁰ Female prostitution has a highly symbolic presence in Western cities, exposing the limits of sexuality, mapping society's moral contours, and indicating the asymmetry of power relationships in a male-centred world.³¹¹ The masculine ideal of reason, logic, and temperance, seeking to conquer, subdue and suppress the 'natural', passion-driven and illogical female sexuality is reflected in the way Western cities are built.³¹²

It is often held that, by the mid-19th Century, bourgeois women gradually withdrew from the public sphere of the street and moved to the private sphere of the home.³¹³ This division is interdependent with the division between paid and unpaid labour, production and reproduction. As described by Silvia Federici, the division between private and public space went hand in hand with processes of capitalist consolidation in Europe. In the era of primitive accumulation, to which she refers, divisions that established class and gender power relations and shaped male and female subjects became all too clear.³¹⁴ In the past four decades, feminist planners and architects have scrutinised aspects of built form, such as urban planning, design, and architecture, including those related to domestic spaces and the home, to further elaborate on the divisions between masculinity/labour/public space and femininity/reproduction/domestic spaces.³¹⁵ Prostitution appears in the threshold between public and private, challenging not only gender and moral norms, but also the core of the aforementioned dichotomy of space—a dichotomy originating both from the division of labour and the concepts of modesty and patriarchal morality.

The idea of this strict separation between masculine/public and female/private spaces has not remained unchallenged. For example, historians have noted how private the early modern house really was.³¹⁶ Although it is often seen as the quintessential private space, largely associated with women and the protection of their honour, early modern houses were busy places: 'apart from sleeping and eating, people used them to conduct business, to work, and to socialise. Families often also housed others, including relatives, lodgers, servants, and apprentices. The extent of privacy was, after all, a matter of wealth, as the homes of wealthier

³¹⁰ Hubbard (n297) 45.

³¹¹ Ibid 94.

³¹² Ibid; On the dichotomy between the reasonable masculine subject and the fluid feminine subjectivity, see further Horkheimer and Adorno (n19) 57.

³¹³ Danielle van den Heuvel, 'Gender in the Streets of the Premodern City' (2018) 45(4) *Journal of Urban History* 693.

³¹⁴ Federici (n70).

³¹⁵ Linda Peake, 'Urban Geography: Gender in the City', in Rob Kitchin and NJ Thrift (eds), *The International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography* (Elsevier 2009) 321.

³¹⁶ E.g. Van Den Heuvel (n313); Lawrence E Klein, 'Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth Century: Some Questions about Evidence and Analytic Procedure' (1995) 29(1) *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 97; Ruth Gavison, 'Feminism and the Public/Private Distinction' (1992) 45(1) *Stanford Law Review* 1.

members of the urban population, who could afford to live in large townhouses or even palaces, had multiple rooms and layouts that enabled “public” and “private” functions to be separated’, in contrast with the domiciles belonging to the poorer residents of the cities.³¹⁷ Additionally, it is argued that domestic spaces cannot be seen as entirely female domains, because ‘male apprentices, servants, and lodgers shared living spaces with the mistress of the household, as well as with female co-workers and landladies’.³¹⁸

However, one should not disregard, as these accounts appear to do, two aspects concerning the issue of home as a private and female domain. First, the economic, class, and social differences between cities’ inhabitants; the inability of the lower classes to have house servants, resulted in the attribution of the unpaid housework to the female residents. Second, the change in the conception of privacy through the centuries; in a world where technology, stimuli, and, hence, human relations and mobility in space were radically different from ours, it is anticipated that privacy would be conceived and felt in quite different ways. What is crucial here is to reflect on how public expressions of femininity were perceived, their class significance, and how the figure of the prostitute embodied them.

Given that women in the public sphere were considered to be lewd, the prostitute, personifying modernity's anxieties over the dangerous classes and their unruly character, had to be put under restraint.³¹⁹ As Susan Buck-Morss writes, examining Benjamin’s approach to prostitution as an urban phenomenon and its relation to the concept of *flânerie*, ‘the politics of this close connection between the debasement of woman sexually and their presence in public space, the fact that it functioned to deny women power, is clear, at least to us’.³²⁰ *Flânerie* is the act of strolling without purpose, observing urban life for sheer pleasure. For Benjamin, the baudelairian *flâneur* stood out as the emblematic yet suspicious figure of modernity.³²¹ As Matthew Beaumont highlights -focusing on the figure of the Nightwalker, ‘if he has been scapegoated, historically, then his aimless activity is, potentially at least, the cornerstone of a different kind of society’.³²² Greater suspicion was reserved towards female strollers questioning not only the masculinist perception of the public space, but of labour division -which intended them for (paid or unpaid) domestic work- as well. Such anxieties also thrived in Greece, despite its slower industrialisation, since the woman in public was

³¹⁷ Van Den Heuvel (n313) 699.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Scoular (75) 25.

³²⁰ Susan Buck-Morss, ‘The Flâneur, the Sandwichman and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering’ (1986) (39 - Special Issue on Walter Benjamin) *New German Critique* 99.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Matthew Beaumont, *The Walker: On Finding and Losing Yourself in the Modern City* (Verso, 2020), 232.

considered a threat to the nuclear family and Christian tradition, as underscored in the previous chapter.

Returning to Benjamin, the street prostitute became emblematic of a woman in revolt in a civilised [sic] society.³²³ Walkowitz reminds us that one of the most visible forms of prostitution in the 19th century was that of the 'isolated activity of the lone streetwalker, a solitary figure in the urban landscape [...] emblematic of urban alienation and the dehumanisation of the cash nexus'.³²⁴ Guilianna Bruno also argues that both the Italian and the Neapolitan terms for prostitution of the 19th century literally mean female stroller (*passegiatrice*, *peripatetica*), a fact that, according to her, is indicative of the identification of the *flâneuse* with the prostitute.³²⁵ The female equivalent of the *flâneur* 'was made impossible by a division of sexual realms that restricted female mobility and confined women to the private space'.³²⁶ The prostitute, by sexualising and feminising public spaces, demonstrated to male authority that its control of the city was not as complete as presented; 'cut loose from the bounds of monogamy, productive labour, and religious asceticism, [prostitutes] were loose from the bounds of moralised space'.³²⁷

Unsurprisingly, a series of politicians, moral reformers, epidemiologists, and urban planners imposed on them a variety of discipline mechanisms, from spatial to bodily demarcation. As the boundaries between prostitutes and unruly women who worked or moved around in public were blurred, this system targeted the labour and sexuality of a much wider part of the female population than those who systematically exchanged sex for money.³²⁸ First of all, prostitutes did not share the same liberties with *flâneuses* within the city; instead, their movements and appearance were strictly controlled: by the mid-nineteenth century there were all sorts of laws in great European cities dictating where and between which hours of the day they could pick up men;³²⁹ they had to register with the city and visit the sanitary police at regular intervals; their clothing in general was strictly policed,³³⁰ and they were forbidden by decree to adopt aspects of virtuous women's appearance, such as wearing veils and jewellery.³³¹ This marking of the prostitute's body was not particularly exceptional in a society where almost

³²³ Ibid 174; Hubbard (n296) 75.

³²⁴ Judith Walkowitz, *City of dreadful delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London* (Penguin 1985) 475, cited in Beaumont (2020) 61.

³²⁵ Guilianna Bruno, *Streetwalking on a ruined map: cultural theory and the city films of Elvira Notari*. (Princeton University Press 1993) 50.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Hubbard (n297) 41.

³²⁸ Fotakis (n116) 64-65; Tzanaki (n113) 154-155.

³²⁹ Hubbard (n296) 87.

³³⁰ Lauren Elkin, *Flâneuse: Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice, and London* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017) 15.

³³¹ Ibid.

everybody wore a uniform of some kind to mark their profession. However, the fact that only Jews and prostitutes wore yellow connected these social groups on a symbolic level. Both categories were perceived as pestiferous and were kept in closed spaces under surveillance, constituting victims of both state violence and common prejudice and hate.³³²

Hence, despite the official legalisation of their profession, prostitutes were treated as sources of disorder and infection, representing a twofold menace: social and hygienic. Prostitution was directed against the new family ideal, which was being formed in the 19th century, and its fundamental institution, marriage. It was directed against the values on which, for the moralisers (of the time and beyond), the marriage bond should be based: 'female fidelity, devotion, self-denial, modesty, decorum, self-sacrifice'. This condition is supported by the simulation of extra-marital cohabitation with prostitution, which is contained in the 1849 police circular 'on common women'.³³³

This obsessive scrutiny of the habitats of 'fallen women' had redounded to the formation of the collective imaginary that turned the prostitute into 'the quintessential figure of the urban scene, the central spectacle in a set of urban encounters and fantasies.'³³⁴

Fantasies must, of course, be tamed in a rational society. This perhaps explains why in modernity, the project of regulationism of prostitution was in fact a project for the regulation of women's sexuality in general. The suspicion towards the female *flânerie* allowed a set of surveillance, control, and punishment techniques to be exercised by capitalist states,³³⁵ Greece included. The criminalisation of street prostitutes and of loitering, the state regulation of brothels, and the imposition of restrictions on freedom of movement, to a large extent, constituted some of these techniques. These measures aimed not only at the biopolitical regulation of commercial sexuality but, more importantly, at ensuring that moral women's sexuality remained within domestic boundaries, and their mobility under strict surveillance. Hampering street prostitution evolved to the new version of the 'impossibility of women to wander the streets alone.'³³⁶ Bourgeois feminists of the time largely embraced this tendency not only discursively -in newspaper articles, for example- but also actively, by promoting and reproducing

³³² Hubbard (n296) 68.

³³³ Korasidou (n112) 133.

³³⁴ Judith Walkowitz, cited in Hubbard (n296) 75.

³³⁵ See also The Street Offences Act 1959. According to section 1(1), '[it] shall be an offence for a person aged 18 or over whether male or female persistently to loiter or solicit in a street or public place for the purpose of prostitution.' The adoption of such measures in almost all European countries indicates the state's urge to expel prostitution from the public view and cleanse the cities.

³³⁶ Janet Wolff, 'The Invisible Flâneuse. Women and the Literature of Modernity' (1985) 2(3) *Theory, Culture & Society* 37.

the cult of domesticity in various philanthropic activities.³³⁷ Consequently, the once suspicious figure of the excessively visible *flâneuse* gradually transformed into the ‘invisible *flâneuse*’—an exploration of alternative ways in which women engaged with public space.³³⁸ This transformation coincided with the emergence of the brothel as a heterotopia, a concept I will now delve into.

Regulationism and the brothel as a heterotopia

As outlined in the previous chapter, one of the fundamental elements of the French type of regulationism, adopted, among others, by the Greek state, was the strict spatial separation of prostitution from other urban functions. This was made possible through the establishment of brothels under state management and the compulsory work of prostitutes within them, often through their confinement.

This has led many scholars to conceive brothels as *heterotopias*. Heterotopia has been a highly appealing concept, as it challenges the dominant modes of spatial ordering.³³⁹ Foucault defines as heterotopias the spaces that

[...] have a function in relation to all the space that remains. This function unfolds between two extreme poles. Their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space [...] as still more illusory. Or else, on the contrary, their role is to create a space that is other, another real space as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill-constructed and jumbled.³⁴⁰

Their functions are preserved over time, even if they change forms and shapes. They also have the structural ability to become isolated, yet at the same time they remain accessible. Foucault identifies as heterotopic spaces those who deviate the norm, are difficult to be located, yet continuously interact with the rest of the space. The brothel serves as a primary example of heterotopias and their functions, even within Foucault’s writing.³⁴¹ This analogy can be extrapolated to other prostitution-related spaces, and ultimately to prostitution itself, for reasons that will be explained in this section.

³³⁷ See further Demetra Tzanaki *Doula kai kyra. Opseis tou Ethnikismou. Roloï kai symperifores stin Ellada ton romantikon chronon 1836-1897* [Slave and Mistress: Aspects of Nationalism: Roles and Attitudes in Greece of Romantic Times 1836 -1897] (Savallas, 2007).

³³⁸ Wolff (n336).

³³⁹ Hubbard (n296) 193.

³⁴⁰ Foucault (n282).

³⁴¹ Ibid.

The heterotopic nature of sex work spaces lies in their positioning at the threshold between desire and deviance, private and public, intimacy and control. Placed in geographical and societal margins yet interacting with their centres, the multiple places of sex work bring together acts and practices widely regarded as immoral only to imbue them with qualities of acceptability and morality as they provide for alternative models of social and sexual ordering. As Hubbard notes, the concept of heterotopia enables an understanding of sex work spaces, not only as spaces on and of the margins, but as ‘anomalous, blurred spaces, which play an ambiguous role between the moral centre and the immoral margins (an ambiguity perhaps reflected in the varied moral geographies of exclusion which have characterised the history of sex workers in the urban West)’.³⁴² The acknowledgement of prostitution as an urban phenomenon furthers our understanding not only of its location in the urban space, but also of the according legislations and the gendered representations of sex work.

Moreover, heterotopias transgress spatial and epistemological dichotomies, such as the public-private distinction, and various governance technologies of both space and, in the case of prostitution, sexuality.³⁴³ As Hubbard points out,

The idea of heterotopia reminds us that marginalised groups continually (and inevitably) ‘speak back’ to dominant modes of power by being located in (and locating themselves in) spaces which mock mainstream society’s futile attempts at creating and policing boundaries, categories and partitions.³⁴⁴

Heterotopia as an analytical tool is valuable in examining prostitution as an urban function and as a disruptive force between the private and public realms. The brief historical retrospection that follows is essential for a better understanding of the heterotopic function of prostitution over time.

According to Ruth Mazo Karras, the medieval world had adopted a hydraulic model of masculine sexuality: ‘people believed that pressure builds up and has to be released through a safety valve (marriage or prostitution), or eventually the dam will burst and men will commit seduction, rape, adultery and sodomy.’³⁴⁵ Prostitution was seen as a ‘necessary evil’, a safety valve for built-up semen, a regulator of sex and order. Thus, the placement of prostitution in marginal spaces appears as a constant *leitmotif* in the Western regulation of prostitution, ever since the medieval ages.³⁴⁶ Brothels, a metonymy of prostitution, have been considered a heterotopia for the urban space both literally and metaphorically; an

³⁴² Hubbard (n296) 195.

³⁴³ Ibid. 186.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ruth Mazo Karras, *Common Women. Prostitution and Sexuality in Medieval England* (OUP 1998) 6.

³⁴⁶ Ibid; Hubbard (n296) 64.

essential component of the city's social functioning, but placed outside of it, both spatially and conceptually. This conceptualisation, which dates back to Saint Augustine was common across Europe.³⁴⁷

This analogy was not forgotten. For the most part of Western history, brothels have either been pushed outside the urban sphere, or continued to exist irregularly in the city centres, under the authorities' tolerance. In early modernity, prostitution emerged under the supervision of authorities, evolving into a biopolitics of female subordination.³⁴⁸ As Federici explains, prostitution was gradually institutionalised throughout Europe between 1350 and 1450 through the opening of municipal brothels.³⁴⁹ State-managed prostitution was considered a remedy against both homosexuality and the turbulence of proletarian youth, so that control over it, lost after the Black Death epidemics, could be regained.³⁵⁰ Such institutionalisation meant spatial segregation, in an obvious attempt to reduce disorder in the towns, limiting it to those sites which existed on the margins of the social and spatial imagination.³⁵¹ During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as sex work became the target of both purity campaigners, social reformers, and public health campaigners, as it was considered the main source of venereal disease, monitoring by municipal authorities was promoted as the most efficient means of supervision.³⁵² This pattern is repeated in the current Greek Law, however, it is pushed to an extreme level, making the installation of brothels in Greek cities impossible. Clearly, this was the case for female prostitution, as male prostitution was -and still is- always marginalised, due to prevailing patriarchal and homophobic perceptions.

In my view, it is exactly within this legal-spatial context as described above that it makes sense to address the system of regulationism here, to which I have only referred in the previous chapter, with regards to its spatial parameters and the significance it bears in shaping socio-spatial relations among sex workers, clients and the state. In Greece, for a long period of 120 years -between 1836 and 1955- *réglementarisme/regulationism (diakanonistikón)* set surveillance and confinement as the central guidelines for the organisation of prostitution laws.³⁵³ As previously discussed in chapter 2, regulationism constituted a moralistic theoretical framework encompassing ideas, principles and perceptions that formed the basis for regulating prostitution, delineating its significance and

³⁴⁷ Ripa (n123).

³⁴⁸ Tzanaki (n114) 367.

³⁴⁹ Federici (n70) 49.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Hubbard (n296) 84.

³⁵² Kristin Luker, 'Sex, Social Hygiene, and the State: The Double-Edged Sword of Social Reform' (1998) 27(5) *Theory and Society* 601.

³⁵³ Lazos (n89) 61.

position within society.³⁵⁴ The establishment of state-sanctioned brothels, the registration of prostitutes in official records, and their subjection to frequent medical check-ups and police controls were the main practical aspects of regulationism. Rules were focused on directly controlling and eliminating the liberties of the prostitutes, often by confining them inside state-sanctioned brothels. Urbanisation in Greece was a slow process, completed by the mid-20th Century. With few exceptions (such as Piraeus and Ermoupolis), in the 19th Century, most territories of the Kingdom of Greece were rural. Even in Athens during the 1830s, the population ranged from 4,000 to barely 5,000 people living in scattered settlements at the foot of the Acropolis, in the wider area that today constitutes the district of Plaka. The adoption of Western legislations by the regency council (1832-1835) and by King Otto himself (1835-1862) was, as expected, common in the process of the modernisation of the Greek state. We can therefore conclude that these laws not only regulated prostitution, but also constructed it as an urban phenomenon.

The spatial analysis of regulationism and prostitution in general is essential in understanding, firstly, that sex workers are not and by no means have ever been, a homogenous group, but are rather divided in social categories with different and asymmetrical attributes. Secondly, space itself, as produced by the law, functions as the immobilising factor of this classification. This becomes apparent by examining intertemporal patterns of Greek legislations. By 1894, prostitutes of the Athens-Piraeus district were divided into three groups: There were the first-class prostitutes, residing in separate houses; second-class prostitutes staying in 'houses of perdition' (*οίκοι ασωτείας*), brothels that is, established in locations which deemed suitable 'because of the multitude of residents and the influx of foreigners' and in accordance with the 1855 Order *On common women and houses of promiscuity* by the Police Directorate of Athens and Piraeus, reflecting characteristics of the port area; and, finally, there were the third-class prostitutes who lived in brothels 'close to the gasworks premises',³⁵⁵ near the Gaslight Factory in the Kerameikos area -known at the time as *Gazochori*- and in the state-run brothel of Vourla, in Piraeus. Working women were under constant threat of demotion that could lead to their deportation back to their hometown.³⁵⁶ These regulations directly eliminated the sex workers' freedom of movement and circulation within the public realm.³⁵⁷ They were repeated in later legislations and remained in force for more than a century. By the end of the 19th century, *Gazochori*, an area at the fringes of the city, would go on to become synonymous

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Bournova and Stoyannidis (n103).

³⁵⁶ Zafolias (n107) 26.

³⁵⁷ Cf. the analysis on the *flâneuse*.

with prostitution, to the point that in 1900 the press was referring to the neighborhood's prostitutes as 'the women of Gazochori'.³⁵⁸

There followed a tendency for brothels to be always concentrated in specifically designated areas, in order to be controlled more effectively. Either they occupied a whole district organised like a ghetto, or they were concentrated in huge groups of buildings away from the residential centres, like Vourla. After the Paris Commune, the Greek Kingdom was confronted with mass strikes, while anarchist and communist publications circulated widely.³⁵⁹ Under these circumstances, Vourla was built in the area of Drapetsona (on the north side of the inlet to the Port of Piraeus), 'to become the "topos" in which the Greek state was supposed to reform (and re-form) men's libido',³⁶⁰ to offer an outlet to the proletariat's impulses.

In 1870, the Municipality of Piraeus with the consent of the Medical Committee and following protests by residents, asked the government for permission to build a house and gather all the 'common women' there, to limit the spread of venereal diseases. The Minister of Internal Affairs contradicted the mayor's view on the grounds that, neither the municipality nor the government should accept and design such projects, which may be a social necessity, but must be exclusively carried out by private actors, with state institutions -e.g., the municipality and the central government- exercising supervision. In March 1873, following constant pressure from the municipality, the government granted a plot of national land in a place called Vourla for the construction of a brothel where all prostitutes of the port would be gathered.³⁶¹ Following the signature of the concession, the municipality issued a declaration for the construction of an eight-acre enclosed district for harlots, comprising three or four separate buildings. The aim was to extrude parts of the 'underworld' outside of the city, to confine prostitutes who would practice their profession and, at the same time, undergo medical supervision. According to the contract, police would not permit the operation of another brothel within the city of Piraeus, and no woman who lived and worked in Vourla would be able to work outside the district. The construction of the state brothel was completed on 1 January 1876 and consisted of three buildings with 66 rooms which hosted approximately 70 women. The buildings were fenced, and it was forbidden for prostitutes to come out. Police officers were stationed at the gate to prevent working girls from leaving.³⁶²

³⁵⁸ Bournova and Stoyannidis (n103).

³⁵⁹ Kostis Moskof, *Eisagogika Stin Istoría Tou Kinimatos Tis Ergatikis Taxis: I Diamorfosi Tis Ethnikis Kai Koinonikis Syneídisis Stin Ellada* [Introduction to the Working - Class Movement History; the Formation of National and Working-Class Consciousness in Greece] (Kastaniotis 1988) 162.

³⁶⁰ Tzanaki (n114) 369-370.

³⁶¹ Lazos (n89) 96.

³⁶² Lazos (n89) 100.

As I mentioned earlier, the Greek state has always attempted to place the governance of the issues concerning brothels and prostitution within a general context of public health policies through the establishment of *réglementarisme*, which would control the exercise of prostitution and allow the conduct of frequent medical examinations. In the context of regulationism, urban and regional planning policies started developing, which allocated prostitutes to secluded, remote parts of the city. As the cult of domesticity gradually gained prominence, concerns regarding the corruptive nature of brothels on women and children escalated, intertwined with anxieties about morality and hygiene concerns. In this context, brothels emerged as pivotal noso-architectural projects, as will be further explored next.

Deviance, discipline and punishment; the brothel as a Panopticon

Brothels have also been historically suitable places for the installation of panoptic techniques. As Foucault has indicated, private life although perceived in the realm of freedom, cannot be completely distinct from state power; thus sex, one of the most intimate activities between humans even if it happens in private is mediated through laws and policies, becoming a matter of public concern.³⁶³ Soon, urban planning would also be placed in the service of exerting population control processes. From the 18th century onwards, according to Foucault, a proliferation of scientific -mainly medical and juridical- discourses around sex has risen, while at the same time sex seemed to be repressed and controlled through state policies, becoming gradually privatised. This gradual privatisation of the sexual experience that happened in the 18th century, with the introduction of hygienic rules within the city, the house, the brothel and finally the bodies, resulted in the cleansing of public spaces from body fluids— derivatives of sexual intercourse and desire, or of public tortures and executions that gradually ceased to function as public spectacles.³⁶⁴ Surveillance and control over prostitution was deeply intertwined with this new spatial classification of desire and sexuality. As Paul B. Preciado argues, if the plague inspired the construction of the Panopticon, syphilis formed and consolidated the heterotopic space of the brothel.³⁶⁵

Vourla formed a typical example of the implementation of regulationism in Greece and was built according to the standard of Parisian *maisons closes*, firstly introduced in France, but rapidly expanding in many European countries. *Maisons* operated as public sex factories, where working-class poor women were seen as potentially syphilitic, as ill subjects threatening the healthy social body.

³⁶³ Foucault (n45).

³⁶⁴ Preciado (n134).

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

As Preciado argues, state brothels were characterised from a sense of spatial segregation of bodies, capital and pleasures: the building's sectionalisation reasoned and established 'differences between several types of *filles publiques* according to their biopolitical status—e.g., age, health, reproductive capacity, beauty, class, whether or not they were the “property” of a single client. Political differences were thus distributed and spatialised'.³⁶⁶

The Panopticon design of the Vourla brothel also established constant scrutiny over inmate prostitutes, under the pretext of the protection of public health. In 1976, Michel Foucault invented the term *noso-politics*, to describe the modern *dispositifs* (e.g., scientific discourses and practices, institutions, and architecture) by which the ill body of the population becomes the object of political management.³⁶⁷ Although this term was deployed to include the horizontal exponentiation of new social technologies to illness management, it exceeded the architectural boundaries of the hospital, as to include the policing of working-class families, the treatment of the poor or the orphans, and the monitoring of newly-introduced variables such as topography and climate.³⁶⁸ Following this rationale, the brothel could be defined as a *noso-architectural* project, 'one of the practices of discipline and reclusion, slavery and subjugation'.³⁶⁹ The architecture of the brothel and the position it acquires in the context of the bourgeois state, established social norms for male and female sexuality, forming the corridors where the surplus of the male libido was channelled. The geographical regulation of prostitution by the state and law is alluded to the production of a spatialised moral order that has been central to the preservation of Western heterosexual family values.³⁷⁰

This group of buildings comprising approximately 70 brothels operated between 1876 and early 1940 in the Drapetsona district of Piraeus. Due to its size, Vourla was also called the Greek 'Mecca of Harlotry'.³⁷¹ It was the main place where streetwalkers were concentrated after their arrest, and where any rebellious and sexually liberated women could be confined. Early 20th century governments and interwar dictatorships aimed to control not only the free movement of sex workers in the public space, but sexual liberation in general—a practice that wasn't completely abandoned by the post-civil-war state, as *libertinage* was often associated with communist ideology. A woman moving around with a man became a suspect, unless she could prove that she was his spouse or his fiancé. Otherwise, she was arrested and underwent a medical examination that would

³⁶⁶ Ibid

³⁶⁷ Ibid

³⁶⁸ Ibid

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ Hubbard (n296) 4.

³⁷¹ Lazos (n89) 96.

prove whether she was a prostitute or not. The mere absence of the hymen constituted a proof that she was a prostitute and had to be locked up in a brothel.³⁷² In other cases, promiscuous girls, even daughters of aristocratic families, could be incarcerated for a few weeks in Vourla, to be reformed. As the Athens City Police Director Aristides Koutsoumaris describes, the same procedure was repeated habitually every morning at the offices of the Police Directorate: 'the Service Officer presented the arrested women in groups to the Director, who, after a rough examination, usually ordered their confinement in a brothel. The youngest and the most beautiful were sent to Piraeus, to the infamous Vourla, a hub full of the worst elements of the capital, where beaus, stoners and criminals of any kind resided. He reminisced about the reactions that followed the announcement of the decision to lock them up in a brothel, and even more the certain brothel; each in turn and all together bursting into heartbreaking cries and lamentations; pulling their hair, tearing their clothes apart, begging the officers to show them mercy –all in vain.'³⁷³ Overall, Vourla constituted the centre of punitive correction of disobedient and promiscuous girls and women in late 19th – early 20th century Greece. A biopolitical site where medicine, state violence and surveillance techniques coexisted and collaborated to simultaneously control the channelling of male libido and the untamed, lustful expression of womanhood.

At this point, two conclusions can be drawn from the conflation of prostitution and illness: first, that the techniques of surveillance and discipline adopted by the state under the pretext of maintaining the health of the population can be reflected in urban planning and architecture. Second, that the geographies of prostitution manifest the formative power of both law and the sciences of urban space, especially through their similarities with other carceral architectures, such as asylums, hospitals, and prisons. The dispossession of prostitutes from their sexuality/workforce, the deprivation of their freedom of movement, and, finally, their incarceration within state brothels, mark the latter as sites where various biopolitical technologies are established. Moreover, Anthony Vidler suggested that these places should be treated as 'libertarian asylums', as carceral architectures aligned with a disciplinary program conceived not to produce pleasure, but to protect society from the chaotic desires of the people by limiting and controlling 'carnal impulses'.³⁷⁴

After Vourla closed, the sex trade was transferred in Trouba, in central Piraeus. Apart from Vourla, in the mid-19th Century, prostitutes were locked up in hotels or cabarets, and could only leave the premises upon permission by the police

³⁷² Ibid 98.

³⁷³ Ibid 98-99.

³⁷⁴ cited in Preciado (n134).

authorities.³⁷⁵ Lack of freedom was one of the main characteristics of last centuries' prostitution, as constant surveillance and restriction of movement were implemented in the cities' brothel ghettos and state-sanctioned brothels as well. Policemen and pimps held a central position in the layout of the buildings, controlling the number of customers and the invoice, and giving exit permission to the working women.³⁷⁶ The inspection was also conducted at the level of hygiene; the prostitutes were subjected to medical check-ups at regular intervals.³⁷⁷ The phenomenon of ghettoisation in such strict terms was associated with the state-sanctioned brothels, which were the only legal ones until 1955.

After a series of WWII bombings from both the Nazis and the Allies in 1941 and 1944, the former bourgeois neighborhood of Trouba was destroyed, and its residents abandoned their homes. Cabarets had already existed there since the 1920s; however, after the closure of Vourla and the influx of more women in prostitution during the war, the sex hustle flourished.³⁷⁸ These venues were usually visited by sailors, with those belonging to the Sixth Fleet of the American Navy being among the most frequent customers. In early 1960s, Trouba's population reached 500 women, with the number occasionally increasing when the 6th Fleet docked in Piraeus; then, young maids from Athens and prostitutes from the province went down to Piraeus for a good extra daily wage.³⁷⁹

Both heterotopia and the function of the brothel as a noso-architectural project are necessary analytical platforms for understanding the state regulation of prostitution in history. However, in the Greek case, they are not just memories of the past but a necessary condition for understanding the 'charmed circle' of contemporary regulationism as well. The empirical part of my research demonstrates exactly these shortcomings of regulationism. The current Greek law, which favours exclusively brothel-based sex work under extremely strict preconditions, creates a two-tier system between legal and illegal-illicit workers, as illustrated by the oral testimonies presented below.

Overlapping geographies: inventing, implementing and resisting the private-public dichotomy

³⁷⁵ Zafolias (n107) 55.

³⁷⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ Nikos Belavilas 'Trouba' <<https://docplayer.gr/45324534-Troympa-nikos-mpelavilas.html>> accessed 22 August 2023.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

In this section, I will demonstrate the ways in which the law consolidates the private–public dichotomy that emerged before the formulation of modern urban planning regulations and further deepens spatio-sexual segregation by specifically targeting street prostitution. Furthermore, regulationism targets any act of paid sex that falls outside the controlled, confined space of the brothel. For the brothel, in terms of capitalist exchange, standing at the threshold between the public and private realms ensures social order. Thus, practising prostitution outside the brothel upsets the boundaries of spatially confined sexuality. However, working subjects manage to find their way around subverting practices by taking advantage of the set of impracticalities the law itself entails. In reality, sex workers often operate in the most convenient locations for themselves, resulting in overlapping working geographies, such as those who work both at home and from home.

With the coming into force of Law 3310/1955, and the abandonment of strict regulationism, state brothels were abolished and the transition to private ones took place. The location of prostitution within the urban fabric now differs from its previous ghettoisation, however, it preserved a strict set of rules against sex workers, whose rationale still survives. According to this law, sex workers could not rent a house, an apartment, or a hotel room without the permission of the local police authority, which would decide on issuing the permit after having previously assessed the conditions of each geographical area. This provision would immediately target eliminating sex work outside of brothels while, at the same time, eliminating prostitutes' personal liberty.

With the transition to private brothels and the radical social changes that took place after the war, such as massive urbanisation, the decriminalisation of homosexuality, and the wider exit of women from the realm of home, new sex markets were created, contributing respectively to the change in the city's character, for example, with the closure of Trouba's brothels in 1967 by the Military Junta as part of a broader gentrifying project of Piraeus. The approximately 500 women who had been working there were left unemployed. Thus, they moved to Syngrou Avenue (that connects Piraeus with central Athens). From the late 1960s-early 1970s,³⁸⁰ trans women followed them, forming one of the greatest Athenian sex piazzas that exists until today. Today, Syngrou is famous for being home to the country's biggest strip clubs. The history of trans women in Athens is largely absent from official historiography but is preserved in their own testimonies. The examples of Anna Kouroupou, Betty Vakalidou and Jenny Cheiloudaki, who have published their autobiographies, are typical, while Paola Revenioti is a documentary filmmaker who has meticulously chronicled the evolution of LGBT

³⁸⁰ Papadogiannis, (197) 331-362,

hangouts in Athens and Thessaloniki, and how the movement changes lockstep with urban development.³⁸¹

Bars with women form a separate category that despite having existed from the early 20th century, flourished in the afterwar era.³⁸² Although these services also fall under the broad umbrella of sex work (even though the women there sell their image and chit-chat to customers for the purpose of drinking, rather than *sex per se*), they go beyond the purposes of this study in that they are not under a specific legal status and can be found even in middle-class neighborhoods. They largely share a common history with brothels, as they were equally targeted by the police and, at least in the case of Trouba's cabarets, they were based on the clientele of the 6th Fleet in Piraeus and the air base in Kalamaki.³⁸³ What is of interest, however, is the geographical history of prostitution that we are examining, before it began to take on its present form around 1980. *Consomatrices* working in Trouba were pushed either to the beachfront or to the centre of Athens after its closure. A crucial element regarding bars/cabarets, is that, even since the interwar period, they were places where homosexual relationships between both men and women and gender-bending flourished, as evidenced by both the only surviving sapphic novel of that period,³⁸⁴ and by a plethora of police bulletins concerning raids on such joints. Gradually, this libertarian character began to wane due to the successive dictatorships and the war. However, the bars, as mentioned in the previous chapter, remained places of resistance. In the post-war era, new venues began to emerge again, many of which would house male same-sex desire and early female transgender identity, whether love was paid or not.³⁸⁵ By the close of the 20th century, these spaces have been reduced to a purely heteronormative framework from which, as Abatzi describes, sex itself is often absent.³⁸⁶

Moving away from bars, from the late 1950s onwards, trans women, along with gay men, had been selling sex in leisure spaces: in nightclubs and sex cinemas, at parks, such as the Zappeion and the Pedion Areos in Athens; on the street, in the area of Syngrou and Omonoia in Athens; and at the working-class district of Vardaris in Thessaloniki (a bit further north from the former, now gentrified Red-Light District of Ladadika). Cis women also follow, but their number remains undetermined in the absence of public records. As can be drawn both from historical sources and my empirical research, street prostitution was synonymous with Syngrou Avenue and Omonoia Square, and a specific geography of these

³⁸¹ Vakalidou (n96); Kouroupou (n96); Cheiloudaki (n96); Paola Revenioti, 'The Orleanders' (2021)

³⁸² Abatzi (n93) 61.

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Dora Rosseti, 'I eromeni tis [Her girlfriend]' (1929, Metaichmio 2005)

³⁸⁵ Yannakopoulos (n209).

³⁸⁶ Liopi Abatzi (n93) 84.

areas was determined by street prostitution.³⁸⁷ Moreover, street-based workers actually sell sexual services across a variety of locations, hence their work should not be described as occurring 'outdoors,' nor as necessarily more dangerous than other forms of sex work.³⁸⁸

Gradually, the Red-Light Districts of Metaxourgeio and Fylis street formed in Athens' city centre, as specific areas where the installation of brothels would create a cluster. They had been operating, for the most part, in neoclassical, almost derelict buildings, contributing to the area's characteristic physiognomy.³⁸⁹ By the end of the 20th century, brothels began to proliferate and expand spatially, occupying various areas in the city centre, while simultaneously becoming less visible. In the absence of strict zoning regulations, brothels would often emerge in underprivileged neighbourhoods, facilitated by an informal tolerance - suspected to involve financial exchanges- on behalf of the police authorities.³⁹⁰

In Thessaloniki, by the decision of Mayor Yannis Boutaris in 2011, the brothels were concentrated in the area of the Old Slaughterhouses, a little north of the historic hustles, in a non-residential area whose land use was characterised as 'industrial or craft'. Apart from the clear separation of prostitution from the rest of the urban fabric brought about by this decision, the action was initially embraced by working women as they could now work legally. Today, however, as Western Thessaloniki is going through its own gentrification process, the neighbouring buildings are being bought or leased by large corporations, making the future of the brothels uncertain under the current law.

The location of sex work in fringe areas, even exclusively in the space of the brothel, has been long taken for granted. Yet, new spaces for sexual work have gradually appeared. Currently, it is widely known that in Athens and other Greek cities, sex work takes place in studios, massage parlours, strip clubs, hotels, or outdoors, while the internet plays a dominant role either by facilitating or constituting the main space of sex work. All these physical and digital spaces remain invisible to the law. As most of my interviewees have admitted, most sex workers in Greece work illegally. Specifically, only one out of 16 has ever worked legally, and not even for the whole time.

³⁸⁷ Kate Kerkin, 'Discourse, representation and urban planning: How a critical approach to discourse helps reveal the spatial re-ordering of street sex work' (2004) 35(2) *Australian Geographer* 188.

³⁸⁸ Jason Prior, Phil Hubbard and Philip Birch, 'Sex Worker Victimization, Modes of Working, and Location in New South Wales, Australia: A Geography of Victimization' (2013) 50(6) *Journal of Sex Research* 583.

³⁸⁹ Andriopoulos (n1102).

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; In this context, the productive aspects of illicit economies that Foucault referred to become practically significant in relation to regulationism, Foucault (n40).

Anna is a trans woman who has been selling sex since she was a teenager, before her medical transition. Back in the 1980s, when she was working on the streets, she had to confront both police violence and other potential dangers posed by clients.

I count 148 arrests in flagrante delicto, sometimes for just standing on Syngrou Avenue. Two trans women around my age were hit by a car as they were running to escape the cops. Raids and beatings under the name 'Virtue Operation' were business as usual. And the lawyers who defended us back then were rapacious, they systematically gained profits from our plight.

After her medical transition and the legal change of her identity documents, she was finally able to obtain a licence and work in a brothel. 'I worked at Syngrou for 6 years. It was always very difficult there; it didn't suit me. The brothel was considered among us trans women an upgrade from the street, because then we would be considered "normal".'

For almost fifteen years she travelled around Greece for work.

Brothels are usually legal in the countryside, and this makes a huge difference for us. When I was working in Athenian studios, a cop disguised as a client would frequently come to arrest me.

At the onset of the 2010 economic crisis, after a brief comeback to Syngrou 'as many did back then', Anna opted to work as a freelancer in her own home. This allowed her to choose her clients more selectively and was aligned with her personality and the girlfriend experience she wanted to provide.

Zannette, a cisgender former sex worker from Thessaloniki, describes different workplace experiences. As she was a professional masseuse, she took a job in a massage parlour that offered sexual services on the side. Naturally, as the latter were illicit, they were not included in her contract. After almost three years in this studio, she decided to work as a freelance dominatrix, cooperating with other colleagues. Cooperation and professional cohabitation among sex workers are also prohibited in Greece. She continued this collaboration for almost 15 years, despite being officially classified as unemployed due to the lack of legal recognition for her labour. This is one of the main reasons she decided to give up sex work and enrol in a training programme of the National Employment Organisation.

This mixing of sex work related spaces and activities with other socio-economic functions of the city has rendered sex work almost undetectable. However, this reality remains invisible by the law, as sex work remains legal only in legal brothels

which, as already remarked, fall under extremely strict provisions of authorisation. As Hubbard and Sanders underline, in a process whereby social hierarchy is mapped onto the spatial hierarchy, ‘prostitution is, at least imaginatively, placed in a landscape physically distanced from the city’s more affluent suburbs.’³⁹¹ The institutionalised extrusion of brothels outside the urban fabric and the de-legitimisation of transactional sex in every other space can also be examined through the prism of the above-described transgressing of the division between the public and private realms. Urban planning, after all, serves as a broader governance tool for the negotiation between private capital and public welfare.³⁹² As one of the state’s main management instruments, urban planning comes to reconcile conflicting public and private interests. Nonetheless, under capitalism, it primarily functions as another tool for disciplining the working classes—as becomes apparent in the case of sex work, for instance. Yet, in the past decades, feminist planners and architects have scrutinised aspects of public and domestic spaces to elaborate further on the divisions between.³⁹³

The intertemporal legislative choices concerning the spatio-legal positioning of sex work within the Greek cities are characterised by taboos and fear of public-private binary transgression. Moreover, the exclusive recognition of the brothel as the only place where transactional sex can legitimately take place, perpetuates a heteronormative notion of sexual work, the one that comes with a male buyer and a female provider of the sexual service. Furthermore, as Melissa Gira Grant comments, the process of moving sex work into the private sphere can be mapped along broader trends toward sexual gentrification that culminated with the rise of the AIDS epidemic.³⁹⁴ Following the argument of Sarah Schulman, author and long-time AIDS activist, that ‘gay life was expected to take place in private’, Gira Grant notes how law enforcement and zoning laws were employed to both produce and justify ‘street sweeps’ during the process of gentrifying American cities—‘sexually oriented businesses have been isolated from “legitimate” businesses’.³⁹⁵ Such tendencies are reflected in the concept of Unwanted Land Uses, to which I now turn.

³⁹¹ Phil Hubbard and Teela Sanders, ‘Making space for sex work: female street prostitution and the production of urban space’ (2003) 27(1) *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 75.

³⁹² Stephen J Ramos, ‘The Body Politic: Planning History, Design, and Public Health’ (2021) 21(1) *Journal of Planning History* 3.

³⁹³ Peake (n315) 283-4.

³⁹⁴ Gira Grant (n80) 44-45. See also Phil Hubbard, Roger Matthews, Jane Scoular, Laura Agustin, ‘Away from prying eyes? The urban geographies of ‘adult entertainment’ (2008) 32(3) *Progress in Human Geography* 363.

³⁹⁵ Sarah Schulman, *The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination* (University of California Press 2013) 38.

Ghettoisation and Unwanted Land Uses

Since the mid-20th century, the term Locally Unwanted Land Uses also known as LULU's, is broadly used in urban planning terminology to describe the presence of brothels. As their presence causes controversy and reaction from some groups, they are also known in the international literature as NIMBYs-Not In My Back Yard.³⁹⁶ The concept of land uses is of paramount importance in urban planning, as it constitutes a practical depiction and tool for determining the appropriate utilisation of areas regulated by urban and regional plans. Moreover, it can reveal ideological stances behind urban planning that shape the cities' imagery. In principle, the classification of land uses contributes to 'a better understanding of urban space, but also may provide different ways of urban planning intervention. According to the legal dogma, the core idea behind classification and the subsequent separation of land uses is to avoid avoiding mixing incompatible or competing functions (e.g. residential with industrial areas), or, conversely, to facilitate spatial coexistence of activities whose functions are complementary (e.g. rural development and agritourism)'.³⁹⁷

The classification of land uses in Greek law is not based upon complete segregation, as in the case of zoning, which is primarily applied in the US. It rather suggests their integration, preserving the absolute character of some areas, usually because of their high natural or cultural value, or, in contrast, because they relate to activities such as mining and industrial activities. The preservation of the absolute character of some areas as residential, for example, is, in reality, influenced by economic, class-related, and social factors; instead, areas with mixed land uses are likely to go through gentrification. However, land uses' classification often implies a less obvious segregation, rooted in either class differences or moralistic rationales.

In the literature, brothels and other spaces used by the sex industry are usually treated as unwanted land uses, as they are considered to cause social disturbance, due to the attraction of various other additional uses in the same area, such as bars, accommodation for irregular migrants, and points of illegal drug trade.³⁹⁸ Yet, although land uses are described in detail under Greek Law, no specific use for brothels is provided. This paucity could be interpreted as rather intentional. As Foucault underlines, architecture can be read as a function of the purposes and techniques of governing societies, as a 'political literature' that addresses the question of what the order of a society should be, of how a city should be, given

³⁹⁶ Lalenis, Moschos, Polymenidis (n109).

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ i.e. Hubbard (n296) 141.

their prerequisites of maintaining order, as epidemics and uprisings should be avoided, as space should be given for the development of dignified and moral family life.³⁹⁹

In the first three decades of the 20th century, concerns about the protection of public health and the family institution intensified in Greece, along with the emergence of the bourgeoisie, and discussions about rationalism, science, Greekness, liberalism and socialism. Simultaneously, technological development advanced rapidly. Both the bourgeoisie and the workers began to develop a sense of class consciousness, while a series of wars, foundational for the Greek state, took place and modern cities were created.⁴⁰⁰ In the spectrum of the new socio-economic conditions, the question of what constitutes a city and how it is organised emerged once again. On one hand, the country held onto modernising and nationalist visions, while on the other, an imminent refugee crisis following the defeated army's retreat, and painted a bleak picture of reality, raising issues of coexistence.⁴⁰¹

In the 1920s, the term 'city' encompassed a broader definition that also included regulations regarding public hygiene, urban fauna, and living in the city itself.⁴⁰² Urban planners were preoccupied with making the city an environment that would promote hygiene, and they deployed methods such as zoning and building regulations in this direction. The functions of the modern city coincided with the administrative objects of the newly established City Police—planning was therefore a necessary tool of policing.⁴⁰³ The city of the interwar period in Greece is for several reasons an undoubtedly new place, which at the time of the establishment of the police was already in motion, in a continuous process of being configured. For example, in 1870 in Greece, there were only seven cities with a population of 10,000 inhabitants, while by 1907 their population had doubled in number.⁴⁰⁴ In addition, the change that came especially to the urban planning and architecture of the 1920s had sweeping features and can be summarised in the following two points.

The first relates to the material level and the expansion of the use of concrete, a cheap and easy way to use building material that allows the creation of mass housing. The second is related to the legal arsenal of the country, as in 1923 the first Building Regulation was issued; this law heralded the spirit of modern urban planning while providing that the newly formed refugee settlements would be

³⁹⁹ Michel Foucault, 'Space, Knowledge and Power', in: *Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Vol. 3 - Power* (The New Press 2000) 349-364.

⁴⁰⁰ The Balkan Wars (1912-1913), World War I (1914-1918), the Greek-Turkish War (1919-1922).

⁴⁰¹ Fotakis (n116) 67.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

developed extensions of the main cities. The areas where the refugee settlements were built initially were placed next to industrial units yet lacking other infrastructure, but they maintained contact with the city centres. During the same era, the newly formed City Police was established in the greatest Greek ports, in Patras and Piraeus, near refugee settlements, and in areas where prostitution was already flourishing.⁴⁰⁵

Moreover, the geographical restrictions imposed on sex workers throughout the history of the Greek state reflect that regulationism, as shown in spatial differences as well, creates a two-tiered system between legal and illicit workers, through classification and, subsequently, it perpetuates a continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation. In other words, as we have seen through the retrospection of the legislations and administrative practices, the Greek Law has already, from the very beginning, forged the subjectivity of the sex worker as *always already* marginal, while today seeks to regulate this exact precarious state that it has historically created. As historian Clare Sears elaborates, in the second half of the 19th century, emerging urban police forces took on the regulation of gender and sexual mores through street policing and vice operations.⁴⁰⁶ From its inception, the enforcement of prostitution laws evoked ‘spatial governmentality,’ requiring the removal from public spaces of individuals branded as signs of disorder.⁴⁰⁷ As we shall see in the next subsection, such beliefs have found indirect, unexpected accomplices within contemporary strands of the Greek feminist movement with a specific focus on the punitive-carceral system.

Feminist involvement in the ‘cleansing of cities’

As noted in the previous chapter, feminists have collaborated with the state to regulate sex work. Similar interventions on the part of feminists are observed with regard to spatial regulation. At the end of 2003, an attempt was made to reform the spatial location of commercial sex. The Minister of the Interior, Nikos Bistis, following the conclusion of the Citizen's Advocate regarding the problematic provisions of Law 2734/1999, in cooperation with the Municipality of Athens, proceeded to propose a regulation that allowed the legal practice of prostitution in hotels. The following period was followed by an intense public debate on this issue. Feminist and left-wing opinion-makers accused the government of wanting to turn Athens into a sex tourism destination in view of

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Clare Sears, *Arresting Dress: Cross-Dressing, Law, and Fascination in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco* (Duke University Press, 2014), 41-42, cited in Andrea Ritchie, *Invisible No More: Policing Violence against Black Women and Women of Color* (Beacon Press, 2017) 140.

⁴⁰⁷ Sears (n406) 67-69, cited in Ritchie, *ibid.*

the Olympic Games. A representative of sex workers complained that this regulation would favour those who only occasionally engage in the profession.

The amendment did not pass, and Article 49 of Law 4238/2014 explicitly prohibited the provision of sexual services in hotels. Apart from the fact that this particular story, especially if read together with the position of the workers' representative, shows the limits of regulationism, it is also revealing of the reflexes of the Greek left and social-democratic forces in relation to the issue of prostitution and its operation in the city.

The Independent Women's Movement calls for the immediate revocation of the municipality's decision. [...] amidst meetings and workshops [addressing] the problem [of prostitution], the municipality comes forward and leaves a back door for the sex industry. We have already informed the foreign networks fighting against trafficking and we will announce this development at the pan-European conference that will soon take place in Reykjavik' (1 June 2004).⁴⁰⁸

The European Women's Lobby considers prostitution as 'a form of violence against women', underlined Katie Paparriga-Kostavaras, coordinator of the National Observatory for Combating Violence against Women.

We plan to send a letter to the Prime Minister and his European counterparts, asking for an end to this whole Olympics business. We are concerned because this expansion equals bringing in new women. Greece has recently passed an anti-trafficking law. How is it possible to have such a law and at the same time allow the importing of women, trafficking? This is a sheer contradiction.⁴⁰⁹

'The Athens City Council has confirmed with its recent decision the hypocrisy of the state policy in this regard', note the women members of the Athens' Feminist Centre of (Initiative Against Forced Prostitution). They explain,

On the one hand, the coming into fore, just a few months ago, of the law on human trafficking, pending the issuance of a supplementary presidential decree for the assistance of victims of forced prostitution, and on the other hand, the encouragement of pimping circles through the expansion and upgrading of the prostitution market. The city council is not improvising. According to Sidney's tried and tested model, visitors to the Olympics are internationally regarded as prostitution clients who must therefore be catered for. Thus, prostitution is reduced to a social service—

⁴⁰⁸Olympiaki Porneia Stin Athina. Stadia Anochis Gia to 2004 [Olympic Prostitution in Athens. Stadiums of Tolerance for 2004]' (2004 -, 22 June 2003) <<http://www.iospress.gr/ios2003/ios20030622a.htm>> accessed 22 August 2023

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

one among many other services offered. As before, with the passing of the immigration law and the special, unacceptable paragraph on 'performers', we will now oppose the decision of the Athens City Council and fight against its implementation.⁴¹⁰

As becomes obvious, feminist organisations had persistently conflated prostitution and trafficking, disregarding both the recommendations of the Ombudsman and the needs of women (and men) who sell sex. The blocking of this particular revision proposal, which would solve a real problem for many sex workers, is in line with the history of bourgeois Greek feminism, which has shown a more aggressive attitude towards prostitutes under the pretext of saving them.

During the interwar era, in which, as mentioned in chapter 2, police raids in the brothels of big cities were daily, the largest Greek feminist organisations collaborated directly with the police. Feminist brochures of the time reveal perceptions that group prostitution thrives on the exploitation of girls who have gone astray, endangering public morals and public health. The 'Letter from Larissa' published by the local president of the *League*, Eleni Karakitsi, is indicative of this. The magazine of the *League* congratulates the contestants from Thessaly who managed to teach 'a lesson of civilisation'. The letter reads as follows:

'It is with special pleasure that today we announce the shutting down of a brothel in the Tabakika district of our city. If all these houses are a shame to our humanity, this house was a pure humiliation for it. That's why together with the whole neighborhood we fought and contributed to its closure. We, as members of the Association, have as one of our most sacred purposes the abolition of human trafficking. The honour belongs to you Mrs. Svolou, for extending your loving hand to these unfortunate women whom the world has learned to call sinners when they are simply the victims of state sin. [...] And best of all, in the place of these stinking houses there will now be a quiet working-class district. From the small workers' houses, a hymn to work will be wonderfully heard every day—the only true prayer, as Zola said—to replace the groan of the woman who had been rotting there and the Bacchic laughter of her Satyr exploiters. I shall stop here, with the wish that workhouses will quickly spread throughout Greece in these hitherto stigmatised places and that the affection and kindness of civilised people will extend to these women, both unhappy and stalwart.'⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Cited in *fight back!* (n117) 71-72.

As becomes clear from the quote above, interwar feminists sought to abolish not only state regulationism but prostitution in general, cooperating with the police and commonly sharing mutual understandings of morality. Furthermore, while the feminist representation of work was that of a morally uplifting medium, prostitution was equated with an immoral status, as it was not even considered work. This was justified by the feminists of the time, claiming that regulationism was a barbaric, Oriental remnant, despite its French origins. This claim, one among many, reaffirmed the middle-class feminists' perception of the 'dangerous classes'. Under the pretext of rescuing poor girls, mainly refugees, from the nets of trafficking, the harshest policies against the lower classes and working-class women were encouraged.⁴¹²

From 20th-century enablers to 21st-century vigilantes

If the interwar period seems a far distant past, social movements often unwittingly serve the state's most brutal agenda even today. In the spring of 2017, the activist anarchist collective *Rouvikonas* (which has a separate 'women's issues' section), held an 'Intervention in the Pedion Areos against the metropolitan misery of the state, the municipal authority and social cannibalism'. *Rouvikonas* is an Exarcheia-based anarchist collective known for its acts of civil disobedience and significant contributions to grassroots social solidarity efforts. Yet, this 'intervention' was nothing more than a whorephobic and homophobic night patrol with poles and flashlights in the park. In the video published by the group itself, its members can be heard asking the guard of the area if 'there are any gays here', that they had been 'looking for paedophiles', and that they are concerned 'if prostitution takes place in the Park'.⁴¹³ In their public statement they argue that:

The Pedion Areos offers, after hours when gates shut, this darkness. Next to the drug addicts and 'regular' prostitution, which traditionally constituted the 'junk' of the city, came the waves of refugees that the state consciously threw away. Every night, anyone can take a walk to witness it, amidst the impoverished landscape, amid the dirt and garbage, vultures roam—middle-aged, typically Greek men who eagerly purchase the flesh of children, often at bargain price. A new black market has emerged, offering anything to those who can afford anything they desire. [...] We decided to intervene in this tragedy that is happening a few hundred meters away from Exarcheia. We have no illusions. Our intervention is purely symbolic. Even if we could be there every night, even if we could

⁴¹² Fotakis (n116) 57.

⁴¹³ Rouvikonas, 'Παρέμβαση/Περιπολία στο Πεδίο του Αρεως' (11 May 2017) <www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcv40BAjrGA> accessed 31 January 2024.

choose to clash with these, this is not our job. Nor do we offer any solutions to the world, especially to these children. Our purpose is to shine a light in the darkness, to thwart the plans of those responsible for this outrage: the state, the cops, businessmen, mayors. Of course, we are not substituting the police[...].'⁴¹⁴

This was not the only such action undertaken by this group. A few months earlier, there had also been an attempt to 'clear the Exarcheia neighbourhood of drugs', which, as expected, ended in the beating of several users who occasionally sold drugs.⁴¹⁵ In the summer of 2022, a manifestation was organised jointly with feminist organisations to clear the same neighbourhood of rapists, following the sexual assault on a female journalist by a 26-year-old man of Moroccan origin (who was eventually sentenced to the longest possible sentence).⁴¹⁶ The last march was violently interrupted by the police, as part of the wider policing and gentrification of Exarcheia. Feminist and left-wing critics have rightly turned their attention to the orgy of repression that has been taking place in the neighbourhoods of central Athens in recent years, but they have avoided considering their own responsibilities in this context. Demands for 'clean neighborhoods' and vigilante patrols against minorities such as drug addicts, men who sell or buy sex and migrant 'sexual predators' do not challenge the status quo, but instead validate the dominant discourse by creating moral panics.⁴¹⁷ As Roger Lancaster has pointed out, the punitive state gains ground after massive social crises, especially when related to 'deviancy'.⁴¹⁸ Additionally, these actions are similar to what Elena Shih has framed as "Not In My Backyard Abolitionism", describing community policing ending up to vigilantism, under the pretext of saving trafficking victims.⁴¹⁹

In addition to the vigilante attack on one of the best-known male prostitution rings, sexual moral panic enriched with anti-trafficking concerns has a direct impact on the working-class neighbourhoods of Athens, and female sex workers. In the autumn of 2022, a serious scandal erupted over the pimping of a 12-year-old Romani girl from Kolonos, an impoverished Athenian district. Her mother was arrested and immediately taken into custody, while a scandalmongering public

⁴¹⁴ Ρουβίκωνας, Περιπολία στο Πεδίο του Άρεως, [Patrol in Pedion Areos] <https://athens.indymedia.org/post/1573234/>, accessed 2 July 2023

⁴¹⁵ Πως βλέπω την παρέμβαση του Ρουβίκωνα στο Πεδίον, ως πρώην χρήστρια.' (*Athens.Indymedia*, 13 May 2017) <<https://athens.indymedia.org/post/1573369/>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁴¹⁶ Newsroom, 'Εξάρχεια: Χειροπέδες σε 26χρονο για απόπειρα βιασμού δημοσιογράφου' (*Η ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ*, 5 August 2022) <www.kathimerini.gr/society/561987919/exarcheia-cheiropedes-se-26χροno-gia-apopeira-viasmoydimosiografoy/> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. The myth of the black rapist in Angela Y. Davis, 'Rape, Racism and the Capitalist Setting' (1978) 9(7) *The Black Scholar* 24.

⁴¹⁸ Roger Lancaster, *Sex panic and the punitive state* (University of California Press 2011) 30-31.

⁴¹⁹ Elena Shih, 'Not in My "Backyard Abolitionism": Vigilante Rescue against American Sex Trafficking' (2016) 59(1) *Sociological Perspectives* 66.

opinion focused on finding out which men had contacted the girl -or her pimp- on social media. A local assembly was set up to provide legal support and necessities to the girl and her siblings. However, there was no shortage of mishaps. A typical example is the raising of the banner 'In Kolonos we live as nationalists, hang the paedophiles' by the fascist organisation *propatria* in one of the first local solidarity marches. Moreover, in the highly sensationalist climate that prevailed in October 2022, the police took the opportunity to raid brothels in the Gazi district to 'expose the trafficking ring', despite strong speculation about links between these networks and the police themselves. This resulted in four immigrant sex workers being arrested for violating the law on prostitution and other charges unrelated to the case. These women lost their jobs and faced deportation. Their traces have vanished because no solidarity movement has been set up in order to support them: for bourgeois and activist feminism and much of the Left, they remained collateral damage in the battle against trafficking. This is a form of 'violence we can perpetrate in the name of fighting sexual violence', which heavily targets the already most vulnerable and marginalised groups.⁴²⁰

By analogy with Lorna Bracewell's analysis, such local movement initiatives to 'reclaim neighbourhoods', 'places virtually all responsibility for sexual assault on individual perpetrators and figures the carceral state as the guarantor of women's sexual freedom.'⁴²¹ The category of 'crime' is naturalised, and implicitly, policing, especially of deprived areas, is presented as a solution to tackling it. In this sense it is the analysis of space in relation to prostitution that reveals how these mechanisms of surveillance, urban hygiene, and even gentrification play their part in the legitimisation of the carceral state. This is further linked to the 'broken windows' approach,⁴²² which takes as a panacea to crime prevention the policing of all forms of small-scale delinquency, and which will now be examined.

'Broken windows' and contagious subjects

According to the 'broken windows' theory, visible signs of misdemeanours, anti-social behaviour and civil disorder create an urban environment that encourages contumacy and leads to more serious crimes; hence policing methods should target minor crimes such as vandalism, loitering, public drinking, jaywalking, and fare evasion to create an atmosphere of order and lawfulness.⁴²³ As Anne Gray Fisher points out, 'broken windows policing is a program that crowns officers as

⁴²⁰ Phipps (n82) 3.

⁴²¹ Lorna N. Bracewell, *Why We Lost the Sex Wars; Sexual Freedom in the #MeToo Era* (University of Minnesota Press 2021) 188.

⁴²² Ritchie (n406).

⁴²³ Wilson and Kelling (n292).

the arbiters and defenders of urban safety and order, as the ultimate solution to “problem bodies”,⁴²⁴ providing a “template for urban authorities to target a longer list of vulnerable city residents”.⁴²⁵ The presumed association between sex work, the drug trade, and violent crime is frequently used to justify sweeps of areas where prostitution is believed to take place.⁴²⁶ Additionally, vague definitions of quality of life and disorder ‘allow police officers considerable discretion when determining who is disorderly or what constitutes evidence of intent to prostitute’.⁴²⁷

Targeting people who sell sex and directly or indirectly outlawing their labour is a key point in the process of disciplining subjects constructed as *always already* deviant. Apart from the extrusion of brothels to the cities’ margins, the confinement of legal prostitution to the brothel, is combined with statutes policing behaviour in the public space, e.g., loitering for the purposes of prostitution, or concerning the insult of public decency. Practices such as buy-bust operations in which undercover officers lure targets into making agreements to trade sex for money in person or online, and vice raids of locations in which prostitution is believed to be taking place, form the grounds of the persecution of streetwalkers. Smith and Mac record that ‘it is in more exposed spaces, like the streets or conspicuous red-light establishments, that sex workers are most often perceived as being low-class, immoral, or simply a nuisance. This is also where they are seen to be the most victimised and exploited, which provides a convenient justification for ever harsher policing’.⁴²⁸ Gay and bisexual men, trans women and migrants have always been the main groups that sell sex in the streets; given that they are perceived as deviant subjects, they constitute targets of control and are vulnerable to persecutions, fines, and police violence.

All male sex workers I have interviewed have worked illegally, as there is no brothel with male sex workers anywhere in Greece. Current law may have in principle legalised male prostitution through the use of the gender-neutral phrase ‘persons who prostitute themselves’. However, they are practically excluded precisely through the linking of prostitution with specific, strictly predetermined physical spaces. According to Aris, a 28-year-old sex worker from Athens:

Men and boys have never worked in brothels and never will, and this happens due to both social and practical reasons. In a deeply homophobic

⁴²⁴ Anne Gray Fisher, *The Streets Belong to Us. Sex, Race, and Police Power from Segregation to Gentrification*, (The University of North Carolina Press 2022) 281.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ Ritchie (n4) 134.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Smith and Mac (n2) 75.

society, men who buy sexual services from other men remain deeply stigmatised. Sometimes they are married or famous, so they prefer to buy such services in discretion, in hotels or at their homes. This goes against the concept of the brothel as a *quasi*-public space. On the practical side, a man couldn't literally make more than three or four dates per day, for obvious physical reasons.

Vassilis, another interviewee in his early 30s, agrees. He began selling sex in the streets and in sex cinemas near Omonia Square when he was 16-17 and a year later he was arrested. After 3 years, he began cooperating with escort agencies and then worked as a freelancer through internet apps. He adds the parameter of safety in the workplace, as in his late teens he endured the fear of raids. He prefers to work in hotels, as they are more neutral spaces where privacy is also protected. However, he underlines that in a case where he must confront violent clients, he wouldn't turn them to the authorities, as he is afraid that finally prosecutions would be against him because he is working illegally. This is a common concern for all the sex workers who have talked with me.

Thus, sex work, in principle legalised but pushed to the margins of both the city and legality, becomes invisible. Sex workers' rights organisations and individuals have long rallied for legislative amendments that would facilitate their working lives, arguing that the existing spatial arrangement further marginalises them, perpetuating stigma, and violence towards them. In the public discourse, sex workers are continuously portrayed as vectors of disease who should be under constant medical scrutiny and spatial segregation so that they will not infect the healthy social body. The notorious 2012 case of massive arrests and the public shaming of HIV-positive women who allegedly were engaging in survival sex is revealing. This event, which will be thoroughly examined in the next chapter, is not situated in a historical vacuum. Rather, it appears in the linear course of action of the Greek state and allows for a wider retrospection concerning migration, borders, policies, rhetoric on human trafficking, and urban functions. A matrix of urban planning regulations, health directives, a war on drugs, and anti-immigration policies under the pretext of anti-trafficking was enlisted to eradicate prostitution from the city centre and, in the long run, gentrification.

Conclusion. Contemporary challenges and the demand for spatial justice

The novelty of this chapter is that it highlights the interplay between regulationism, urban planning, policing, and the carceral state. My historical overview and the testimonies of the interviewees about Greek-style regulationism and the synergies between the state and progressive movements

also reveal that an analysis that does not locate heterotopias within the broader functions of the city and the law, leaves certain spatial aspects of regulationism obscure. For this reason, adopting a spatio-legal lens allows for a broader understanding of the reproductive capacity of both space and law, of the ways in which the law produces and reproduces space, and, subsequently, space shapes sex work, interacting with and reinforcing the carceral system.

The ongoing violent gentrification of Athens raises questions about the future of sex work in the city. The housing crisis, the loss, to a large extent, of Athens' characteristic mix of uses and economic activities, the monoculture of tourism and leisure in large parts of traditional commercial areas and neighbourhoods, are all signs of urban restructuring that will eventually result in the displacement of residents, users and uses. Historical experience shows that in similar cases sex markets have either been concentrated in a particular part of the city to act as tourist destinations,⁴²⁹ or have been pushed even further into the private sphere in order to hide from the public eye.⁴³⁰ Neither of these two scenarios, however, is satisfactory for the future of sex workers. The first is unsatisfactory because it will reinforce their labour exploitation through the prevalence of large industries (as in every sector of the tourist industry), while it will reinforce a fantasy through the transformation of the sex industry into a spectacle instead of normalising sex work.⁴³¹ Legal status will remain unobtainable for the vast majority of workers, and the amount of illegal sex trade will continue surpassing that of the regulated sex industry; this two-tiered pattern is a universal feature -and deficiency- of regulationism.⁴³² The second scenario will continue to treat prostitution as a public nuisance to be mitigated, concerned primarily with police and regional and shadow economy priorities, rather than labour protection, health care and sexual citizenship of workers.⁴³³ In both cases, at the forefront of discrimination will once again be those who cannot work legally, especially migrants.

All my interlocutors agreed that an inclusive legal framework that would cover the real needs of the supply and demand of sexual services is needed. They all agree that a useful reform would move beyond the brothel's spatial constraint. 'The legal dissociation of sex work with the space of the brothel would facilitate the access of disabled people who desire to buy sexual services', according to

⁴²⁹ GJ Ashworth, PE White and HPM Winchester, 'The red-light district in the West European city: A neglected aspect of the urban landscape' (1988) 19(2) *Geoforum* 201.

⁴³⁰ Schulman (n395).

⁴³¹ Amsterdam Red Light District and Hamburg Reeperbahn are characteristic examples of 'sex markets as a spectacle', Hubbard (n297) 160.

⁴³² Smith and Mac (n2) 167-9.

⁴³³ Cf. Philip Howell, David Beckingham and Francesca Moore, 'Managed zones for sex workers in Liverpool: contemporary proposals, Victorian parallels' (2008) 33(2) *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 233.

Anna.⁴³⁴ This would also apply to disabled sex workers, Aris adds, who may have not only mobility issues, but generalised anxiety disorder or agoraphobia. Additionally, granting brothels a legal status can act as a barrier to the exploitation of workers by both clients and bosses.⁴³⁵ Ensuring good working conditions for brothel workers, the dispersion of brothels in the urban fabric and the decriminalisation of commercial sex from brothels could be the beginning towards depathologising it, challenging the dominant discourse that frames sex workers as ‘victims or vermins’.⁴³⁶ In that sense, legal geography and urban planning could play a key role towards the decriminalisation of sex work and full recognition of sex workers’ labour rights, and their full community citizenship as well.⁴³⁷ At the same time a large part of sex work has moved online, with new challenges opening up for this field.

My efforts in this chapter focused on making as clear as possible that any research so far that has failed to consider the spatial implications of regulationism is limited because it does not unveil the institutions and processes that come into play to push sex work at the margins. Most analyses fail to acknowledge the ways space is produced by social movements—in our case, the feminist movement. If space produced by the law and social relations reaffirms sex work exceptionalism and the illegalisation/criminalisation continuum, the carceral logic embraced by strands of the feminist movement further marginalises precarious subjects. Moreover, the spatial aspects of regulationism are intertwined with hygiene and capitalist productivity. The next chapter will focus on the relations between health, morality, ‘productivity’, and the violent disciplining of ‘immoral’, ‘infectious’, ‘unproductive’ subjects.

⁴³⁴ Further analysis on disabled clients follows in Ch. 6.

⁴³⁵ See also Penny Crofts, Phil Hubbard and Jason Prior, ‘Policing, planning and sex: Governing bodies, spatially’ (2013) 46(1) *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 51.

⁴³⁶ Susan Strega and others, ‘Never Innocent Victims’ (2014) 20 (1) *Violence Against Women* 6.

⁴³⁷ Alison Grittner and Kathleen C Sitter, ‘The Role of Place in the Lives of Sex Workers: A Sociospatial Analysis of Two International Case Studies’ (2019) 35(2) *Affilia* 274.

Chapter 4. Punishing the deviants; health, morality, and penal-welfarism

In practice, protecting populations in extreme risk goes hand in hand with their surveillance and control. Workhouses and the modern state brothel, enabled modern technologies of biopower, as states made room for so-called illegitimate sexualities.⁴³⁸

Introduction. Disciplining the ‘dangerous classes’

Geographies of regulationism exceed the space of the brothel, as it coexists with a parallel grid of architectural installations, technologies, and disciplines. For 19th century bourgeois thinking, a sum of undesirable populations constituted a criminal underclass, a residue of the city. Urban planners proposed 'modernisation' solutions, without necessarily answering the question of where to house the 'unwanted'.⁴³⁹ Urban design facilitated crime prevention and promoted the protection of public health, ultimately leading to a more effective management of disorderly crowds. Moving from the noso-architectural project of the brothel to more elaborate, literal, or symbolical carceral apparatuses, this chapter examines the location of state regulationism within a broader penal-welfare complex.⁴⁴⁰ Overall, this chapter aims to unveil the paternalistic interventions of both state regulationism and the feminist rescue industry towards sex workers, depriving them of the capacity to make decisions on their own, and entrapping them into a vicious circle of illegalisation/criminalisation-rehabilitation-through-punishment. By bringing together morality, health and productivity, these interventions reaffirm the ideological and class aspects of this penal-welfare complex, wherein productive labour emerges as the most prestigious and desired moral value within the capitalist economy.

The latter was based upon the synergy between the state and private actors, especially feminist philanthropy. This ongoing alliance ever since the 19th century, surviving to this day, has been aimed towards the disciplining of the promiscuous women and youth via three axes: health monitoring, rehabilitation through work, and a mixture of caring and punitive techniques. The desire for disciplining subjects subordinated to capitalist productivity pervades the penal-welfare complex and regulationism. Indicative of this is the persecution of sex workers under the pretext of protecting public hygiene and morality from contagion and

⁴³⁸ Foucault (n45) 4.

⁴³⁹ Lazos (n89) 265. This concept can be seen as a precursor to NIMBYs.

⁴⁴⁰ See further Garland (n46).

degeneration, which often led not only to forced medical surveillance, but also to their confinement in reformatory workhouses and/or hospitals where coercive, unpaid labour was glorified as a means of moral treatment. It was submission to this forced, uncompensated work towards one's own reform that forged and shaped obedient attitudes and prepared a cheap and adaptive workforce for the exploitative environment of both wage labour and the unpaid labour of married life, by extinguishing their 'unruly' character. In this context, scientific misogyny flourished and a 'science of prostitution' emerged, especially after the 1848 Revolutions – 'The Springtime of the People'.⁴⁴¹ Prostitutes were perceived as criminals and their moral reformation through compulsory work deemed urgent.

The interplay between illness, degeneracy and idleness -the polar opposite of capitalist ethics, namely health, normality and productivity- is rooted in the 19th-century conceptualisation of Honoré-Antoine Frégier regarding the 'dangerous classes'.⁴⁴² As the ideology of 'degeneration' expanded across the West, venereal diseases developed as an indicator of the level of a society's degradation, and a pretext for the uninhibited release of moral panics.⁴⁴³ Antonio Negri also argues that the 'dangerous class' as a coherent concept may have been formed in the 19th century, but in all periods of capitalism the poor have been both a dangerous enemy, and a necessity for the exercise of control and repression, and the legitimisation of the penal-welfare system.⁴⁴⁴ The radical reorganisation of social and class relations brought about by the industrial revolution, especially after the Paris Commune, reshaped the conceptions towards poverty and the working classes.⁴⁴⁵ Numerous groups and individuals such as the unemployed, vagrants (*flâneurs*), illicit workers and prostitutes became associated with practical or potential danger, parasitism, mass rioting, and criminal nature, positioned as antithetical to a sober, healthy and productive bourgeoisie.⁴⁴⁶

Moreover, the rise of industrial capitalism highlighted the workplace as the main mechanism of repression and discipline, a process aided by a nexus of state and private mechanisms, embedded in the fields of either health/psychiatry, or penitentiary charity. These institutions, together with urban planning, would constitute the long arm of the penal system for the suppression of the dangerous

⁴⁴¹ Scoular (n75) 34; See further Appendix I.

⁴⁴² Tzanaki (n114) 372.

⁴⁴³ E.g. in Britain, The Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 criminalised sexual acts between consenting male adults, raised the age of consent for girls from 13 to 16, and authorized the police to close brothels, Scoular (n75) 49-50.

⁴⁴⁴ Antonio Negri, 'The Poor: A Threatening and Indispensable Enemy' (*libcom.org*) <<https://libcom.org/library/poor-threatening-indispensable-enemy-negri>> accessed 2 February 2024.

⁴⁴⁵ Tzanaki (n114) n368.

⁴⁴⁶ Michaelis Lianos and Mary Douglas, 'Dangerization and the End of Deviance: The Institutional Environment' (2000) 40(2) *British Journal of Criminology* 261.

classes and the protection of the moral regime, as they aimed to prevent both biological and moral contamination.⁴⁴⁷ Under the ‘dangerous classes’ narrative, Jewish and Romani populations, non-Christian and non-white migrants, Black people, poor people, people with mental or physical disabilities, alcoholics and drug addicts, homosexuals, prostitutes, became the main targets of moral panics and hygienic campaigns resulting in their persecution, imprisonment and, often, in their extermination. The association of sexual freedom, non-monogamous practices and -above all- prostitution to venereal diseases had been established by the dominant eugenic discourse of the late 19th century, which reached its peak during the Interwar Era.⁴⁴⁸

However, similar practices of disciplining the proletariat and especially targeting prostitutes have a longer history. As Federici indicates, the establishment of wage-labour in the era of primitive accumulation (the 16th and 17th centuries) had been an extremely violent process.⁴⁴⁹ To create a disciplined workforce, a regime of terror emerged across Europe. Prostitution became illegal for the first time during this period, and many prostitutes were burned as witches.⁴⁵⁰ This direct attack on women’s reproductive rights, sexuality, and labour autonomy singled out prostitutes as embodying impurity, unproductive labour, and uncontrollable sexuality—the polar opposite of the newly emerging bourgeois feminine ideal. Furthermore, in early modernity ‘sex became a matter that required the social body as a whole, and virtually all of its individuals, to place themselves under surveillance [...] expanded along three axes: that of pedagogy, having as its objective the specific sexuality of children; that of medicine, whose objective was the sexual physiology of women; and last, that of demography, whose objective was the spontaneous or concerted regulation of births.’⁴⁵¹ These expanded further with the advancements of modern science that were employed by the nation-state to ensure more effective control of the populations.⁴⁵² This biopolitical discourse weaponised Law in reaffirming the segregation and classification between normal and abnormal subjects.

Centering on mechanisms of repression, Foucault states that the 17th century saw a turning point in the history of sexuality, characterised by ‘the advent of the great

⁴⁴⁷ Lazos (252) 193.

⁴⁴⁸ Georgios Kokkinos, ‘Axia’ Kai ‘Anaxia’ Zoi: *Eugoniki, Ekphylismos, Biopolitiki: O Giatros Sto Rolo Tou Koinonikou Therapeuti Kai Ethnikou Anamorphoti [Worthy’ and ‘Unworthy’Lives - Eugenics, Degeneracy, Biopolitics: The Doctor as a Social Therapist and a National Reformer]* (*Taxideutis* 2021) 32-33.

⁴⁴⁹ Federici (n70) 221; See further Appendix I.

⁴⁵⁰ Lady Stardust, *Burning Women: The European Witch Hunts, enclosure and the rise of capitalism* (Past Tense Publications 2007) 13.

⁴⁵¹ Federici (n70) 94.

⁴⁵² For the development of eugenic practices across the US, Europe and the Soviet Union see further Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent* (Penguin Books Ltd 1999), 50-51.

prohibitions, the exclusive promotion of adult marital sexuality, the imperatives of decency, the obligatory concealment of the body, the reduction to silence and mandatory reticence of language'.⁴⁵³ Concupiscence -the biblical idea of desire and lust- became gradually an entire discourse against non-marital sexual relations that penetrated the morals of Christian societies. By the end of the 18th century a completely new *technology of sex* emerged, that 'escaped the ecclesiastical institution without being truly independent of the thematics of sin'.⁴⁵⁴ Pedagogy, economics and medicine would soon turn sex not only into a secular concern, but also, a concern of the state.⁴⁵⁵ In turn, medical institutions of the state made a distinction between the medicine of sex and the medicine of the body. A sexual 'instinct' 'capable of presenting constitutive anomalies, acquired derivations, infirmities, or pathological processes' was thus identified. The highly moral charge of perversion was interwoven with a seemingly scientific discourse, wherein notions of sexual relations, venereal diseases, matrimonial alliances, and deviances emerged alongside a medico-political project concerning the administration of sexual relations, marriage and birth.⁴⁵⁶

Gradually, medical science functioned as a vector for the complicity between knowledge and power with disciplinary and regulatory implications.⁴⁵⁷ In this emerging sociopolitical landscape, The General Hospital of Paris, also known as *Pitié-Salpêtrière*, was founded in 1656, at the dawn of what Foucault describes as the Classical Age. Treatment in the General Hospital consisted of purification practices that posed as therapeutic methods for venereal diseases that were considered less a sickness than an impurity to which physical symptoms correlated.⁴⁵⁸ Despite the rational scientific approach to epidemics, sexually transmitted diseases and their vectors were ideologically charged. For the next two centuries, Salpêtrière would house beggars, fools, idles, harlots, insane men, and hysteric women. According to the hospital's Regulation, the Director had a life-term absolute power over the patients, and absolute jurisdiction over stakes, collars, and dungeons used within hospital facilities. This regime would soon be established all over France. The debate on the 'nature of the sexes' that began in the late Middle Ages re-emerged within these asylums. Starting in the late 17th century, the diabolical entity of the witch, whose body had been hanged or burnt at the stake for more than two centuries, was now being inherited by the hysteric, the epileptic, and the sexually promiscuous, who embodied the exception to the

⁴⁵³Foucault (n45) 115.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid 88.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶Demetra Tzanaki *Fylo kai Sexualikotita: Kserizonontas to 'anthropino'* [Gender and Sexuality: Uprooting the 'humane'] (Asini 2018) 26.

⁴⁵⁷ Steven Connor, *Madness of Knowledge: On Wisdom, Ignorance and Fantasies of Knowing* (Reaktion Books, Limited 2019) 274.

⁴⁵⁸ Michel Foucault, *History of Madness* (Routledge 2013) 83- 85.

productive, healthy masculine subjects.⁴⁵⁹ The ‘nature of the sexes’ discourse also delineated a divide between social and economic classes. The ‘lewd’ and ‘disorderly’ proletariat, a prevailing trope in Elisabethan literature became part of the new medico-psychiatric discourse of the effeminate lower classes.⁴⁶⁰

It thus becomes clear how the medical, psychiatric and scientific discourses of the time were laced with concurrent moral concerns.⁴⁶¹ The prevalence of syphilis and other venereal diseases constituted the ideal pretext for the understanding of prostitution as a contagious, dangerous and criminal activity and the prostitute was transformed into a new, specific anthropological type that concentrated all the vices of the *classes dangereuses*. The emergence of a rehabilitation-through-work ethic materialised in the newly established workhouses in alignment with the Judeo-Christian values that gradually became secularised and transformed into capitalist morality.⁴⁶² In the Greek landscape, emphasis was given to the secularised aspects of this process. Policies of punishment or reform applied to different contexts and were intrinsically connected to ‘moral regulation’ of the working classes. These patterns were adapted in mid-19th century Greece in the form of an entire scientific discourse on the connection between sex perversion and venereal diseases. They shaped a nexus between the bourgeois nationalist-feminists and the state. The prostitute was defined as a ‘distinct, ill female body’, which stood in the way of bourgeois womanhood in its pursuit of political rights.⁴⁶³ The figure of the prostitute embodied the *malaises* of both the proletariat and femininity.⁴⁶⁴

Post-war welfare mechanisms aimed at disciplining promiscuous women and working-class youth will be the focus of the first section of this chapter. After the Civil War era (1946-1949), the necessity of intensifying unpaid work for the reconstruction of the cities and middle-class restoration emerged.⁴⁶⁵ The first section delves into the public-private synergies that operated until the 1970s, and intervened to contain, control, and discipline the poor and working classes into desired ethics of labour, gender, and sexuality. Female promiscuity was punishable by forced labour, while venereal disease panics enabled welfare-through-work techniques and hygiene controls as juvenile and child protection services archives and interviews demonstrate. The social policy apparatus of child

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Federici (n70) 152

⁴⁶¹ Demetra Tzanaki (n114) 368.

⁴⁶² Weber Max, *Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism (Counterpoint)* (Routledge 1985).

⁴⁶³ Tzanaki (n114) 365-386, 368.

⁴⁶⁴ May-Len Skilbrei and Per Jørgen Ystehede, ‘Cultural Representations of Nineteenth-Century Prostitution’, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Criminology And Criminal Justice* (2017) 4.

⁴⁶⁵ miyaða, *To Soma Mas Pedio Mahis. Feministikes Theseis Enantia Stin Iatriki Eksousia [Our Body as Battlefield. Feminist Stances against Medical Authority]* (Arheio 71 2021), 186-87

protection and anti-prostitution reform was a cooperation of state initiatives and private charity, with feminist philanthropy, jurists, doctors, educationalists and state actors.⁴⁶⁶ My argument here is that workhouses had a twofold role: to prevent or correct the future criminal at the early stages of their lives; to discipline boys and girls as they went from unpaid, forced labour to compliant waged labour and/or marriage.

Penal-welfarism and its welfare-through-work ideology thrived in the neoliberal era as well, manifested in workfare through a combination of punitive and paternalistic policies, and with the health/hygiene discourse adapted to the new conditions.⁴⁶⁷ Consequently modern public health policy emerged as an appropriate vessel, in which surveillance and criminalisation of sex workers were consolidated in the Greek context. Prostitution regulationism consists of regular and mandatory health checks of the 'registered' prostitutes and persecution of those who pose a social threat by failing to conform. Subsequently, as I demonstrate, were monitored by medical and legal experts as well as the feminist bourgeoisie. Aspects of the conceptualisation of cleanliness, morality, and order within the prescribed historical context trace the emergence of the promiscuous, unhealthy figure of the prostitute. I describe how this ideal biopolitical subject shapes ideas about the person who seeks medical treatment.⁴⁶⁸ An entire lifestyle is being stigmatised, penalised and criminalised; yet, above all the persistence of experts to address subjects as less-of-a-person, fuels infantilisation, constructing them as unable to take responsibility for themselves. The latter is translated into enforcing punitive laws that fail to provide safety for sex workers.

The final two sections discuss the management of epidemiology during pandemics such as HIV/AIDS and Covid-19. Drawing on the concept of states of emergency and the moral panics they unleash, I highlight how the concept of public health was once again weaponised to promote extended suppression and policing.⁴⁶⁹ I argue that the prostitute constituted simultaneously an embodiment

⁴⁶⁶ Avdela (n115) 117-145.

⁴⁶⁷Loïc Wacquant, 'Bourdieu, Foucault, and the penal state in the neoliberal era', *Foucault and Neoliberalism* (Polity 2015).

⁴⁶⁸ This chapter mainly follows a Foucauldian reading of biopolitics and biopower, focusing on methods of governing populations. In particular, these management techniques over bodies and their lives were inextricably linked to the idea of productivity. Foucault, however, avoided addressing the question of 'class' directly - even though it pervaded his work - which appears strongly in this chapter (see further Pierre Macherey, 'The Productive Subject' [2015] Viewpoint Magazine, <<https://viewpointmag.com/2015/10/31/the-productive-subject/>>). The chapter will also make limited reference to Esposito's - related to Foucault - conception of biopolitics, through the notion of *immunitas* and the exclusions it produces. However, the multiple ambivalent meanings Esposito attributes to this concept are beyond the scope of this analysis.

⁴⁶⁹The concept of 'states of emergency' has been developed, apart from Benjamin, by many scholars, e.g., Agamben, Arendt, Derrida, Douzinas etc. However, here the reading of Benjamin is chosen for the following reasons. First, because it was the first critical reading of this concept, on which later

of intersecting vulnerabilities and a vector of contagion, and examine male sex work to posit that a spearhead for the criminalisation of the dangerous classes was the convergence of prostitution and homosexuality. The pathologisation of the latter was pivotal in the control of the working classes, which explained the spread of moral and epidemic panics. In the final section, I turn to the policing of seropositive, sex workers in 2012, many of whom were also intravenous drug users (IVDU), to show how the ill female immigrant prostitute was transformed through dominant discourses into a ticking *health bomb*, a supposed threat to the Greek family. This case allows me to draw parallels between the paternalistic attitude of progressive and radical activists -which ignored the realities of the people they sought to protect- and 19th-century feminist philanthropists. Throughout a century of reformative politics and policies, penal-welfarism and persecution of prostitution, very little has changed towards a holistic and destigmatising approach to sex work and sex workers in Greece.

Rehabilitation and punishment

After World War I, the need to expand the collaboration between the state and private institutions in order to combat the spread of 'disease' to the healthy parts of the society became all too clear. The discourse on the foundation of national healthcare systems across Europe revolved upon two axes: the protection of public health and the perseverance of social morality; the first is linked to panic over the rise in syphilis cases, while the second brings to the surface the issue of sexual relations and gender inequality in terms of accounting for the spread of disease.⁴⁷⁰ In fact, boundaries between health and morality were blurred, as hygiene and moral panics were intertwined. At the same time, as a framework of human and social rights began to take shape, health began to be seen as a public good for which public policies had to be formulated. The focus of health policies was on prevention built on the belief that combined state interventions could ensure social stability, through labour discipline.

interpretations (e.g. Agamben) were based. Second, because it is a consideration carried out within the framework of historical materialism, a doctrine compatible with both the (historical) method and the materialist orientation of this thesis. Third, because it allows for the possibility for rupture with the established norms and radical change. The latter is linked to Benjamin's conception of sex work as 'politically disruptive', since it is not merely 'objectified labour', but rather is endowed with the capacity for agency, denied by biological determinism biopolitics that imbued prostitution with the cult of domesticity of the bourgeois ethics. See further Andrew McCann, 'Walter Benjamin's sex work: prostitution and the state of exception' (2013) 28(1) *Textual Practice* 99; Esther Leslie, 'Ruin and Rubble in the Arcades', *Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project. Walter Benjamin Studies*. (Continuum 2006).
⁴⁷⁰ John Ashton, 'Public health at its peak— the interwar years', *Practising Public Health* (Oxford University Press 2019); Roger Davidson, 'Venereal Disease, Sexual Morality, and Public Health in Interwar Scotland' (1994) 5(2) *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 267.

In 1910, the ‘Andreas Syngros Hospital for Venereal Diseases’ was founded in Athens. Although a public hospital, it was bequeathed by the national benefactor Andreas Syngros and operated under the supervision of his philanthropist wife, Iphigenia. The establishment of Syngros Hospital serves as an example of the synergy between the state and philanthropy. According to the newspapers of the time, the ward was inhabited by compulsorily hospitalised women according to the model of Saint Lazare Hospital in Paris, while the ward for voluntary patients was built in the model of Saint Louis Hospital.⁴⁷¹ Syngros thus replaced the older contagious diseases hospitals housed near brothels (or in some cases, inside brothels) that were governed by a strict regulation on asylum standards and in which prostitutes were admitted exclusively on police orders.⁴⁷² Although the benefactor of Syngros wished the institution to be used solely for the treatment of ‘women suffering from venereal diseases’, in line with the classic paradigm of 19th-century hospitalisation, it soon became necessary to provide treatment to ‘male working-class patients’ who could be voluntarily admitted in the afternoons so as not to be deprived of their wages.⁴⁷³ Nevertheless, Syngros operated as a two-speed hospital: sex workers and those suspected of soliciting sex and diagnosed with STIs were forcibly hospitalised under different terms than voluntary in-patients.

Furthermore, Syngros established a mechanism of close doctor-policeman cooperation and the medicalisation of prostitution. The hospital’s operating regulations, drafted by Syngros Director and Greece’s first Professor of Venereology G. Fotinos (also a member of government committees drafting laws for the fight against STDs from 1915 to 1930) imposed compulsory treatment in special wards.⁴⁷⁴ Female sex workers were sent there by a health inspector and prohibited from leaving until the inspector had certified their cure.⁴⁷⁵ Proper attire and behaviour during examinations held in the hospital’s amphitheater, in front of medical students, were a condition of receiving further treatment. Prolonged confinement in Syngros, however, provoked resentment, and sometimes violent reactions from the women as well as their relatives. To avoid riots, kidnappings or escapes, the presence of a police force in the establishment was deemed necessary. Gavriella Ushakova records her hospitalisation at Syngros during the German Occupation. She writes that during her stay there she lived ‘as

⁴⁷¹ Christos Loukos and Vassiliki Theodorou, “Oikeia Voulisi Kai Kath’ Ypodeixi Proselthouses”; Apo Ta Mitroa Ton Asthenon Tou Nosokomeio Syggrou Stis Sexoualikes Symperifores Andron Kai Gynaikon Ti Dekaeitia Tou 1930 [Inpatients by Choice and by Suggestion: From the Patient Registers of the Syngrou Hospital to the Sexual Attitudes of Men and Women in the 1930s] in Demetra Vassileiadou and Glauke Gkotsi (eds), *Istories Gia ti Sexualikotita [Histories about Sexuality]* (Themelio 2020) 37.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

an inmate, [dressed] in prison robes' and that prostitutes were taken to the hospital in police vans and handcuffed.⁴⁷⁶ Compulsory treatment therefore escalated into veritable incarceration.⁴⁷⁷

As Agustin underlines, a 'principle of incarceration' underpins not only systems of state regulationism, but of rehabilitation as well.⁴⁷⁸ Forced labour within the hospital was celebrated as a way of offering prostitutes skills that were deemed appropriate for respectable women and which they could use when discharged.⁴⁷⁹ Although the specific practice is documented for the interwar period, it is unknown whether it was established during the hospital's inauguration. In any case, hospitalisation was accompanied by an attempt at prostitutes' moral reform. They were expected to leave sex work and lead a 'modest' life that would no longer threaten society through the spread of venereal diseases. Reformatory unpaid labour in various positions (tailors, cooks, cleaners) covered their treatment costs. Moreover, hospital archives, police circulars and testimonies of practices such as the casual arrest of 'promiscuous' women and girls suggest that pretexts of rehabilitation notwithstanding, forced confinement and labour in such institutions served as a constant threat against all 'women of loose morals', a means of disciplining workers and repressing female sexuality.⁴⁸⁰

This early Greek iteration of the penal-welfare complex was not confined solely to the rehabilitation and incarceration of adult women. Children's protection was also a feature of emerging policies on prostitution, family planning, medical systems and hospitals, and vocational training.⁴⁸¹ This was, of course, hardly a Greek peculiarity: the perception of dangerous classes in Western Europe also included urchins who commit petty crimes (and are considered future criminals). The debate on juvenile delinquency had begun in the mid-19th century, together with the expression of the need to establish detention centres specifically for adolescents. At the end of the same century, the issue of hygiene was raised, mainly in terms of the moral influence of the living environment on children's formative years, and consequently, of the suitability of parents. It was then that the state began to intervene removing children from families deemed unfit or dangerous.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁶ Ushakova (n160).

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ Agustin (n12) 122-125.

⁴⁷⁹ Psarra and Florentine (n136) 24-25.

⁴⁸⁰ Loukos and Theodorou (n471) 51-55.

⁴⁸¹ Avdela (n115) 30-40.

⁴⁸² Garland (n46), cited in Avdela (n115) 28-29.

Children and Workforce Discipline

These policies were connected, often in explicit terms, and through them arose direct or indirect ways of disciplining the working classes – what Alan Hunt calls 'moral regulation'.⁴⁸³ Western concerns over the protection of women and children were first expressed by the League of Nations. The first child protection programmes that were soon created in Europe included hygiene and child labour regulations and had a clear focus on children of the lower classes and specifically internal migrants.⁴⁸⁴ At the same time, associations sprung up that tried to support the education of the lower classes, with a strong moralistic bias. Greece was in synch with these international developments. The notion of childhood was brought into the foreground of Greek politics by the end of Balkan Wars (1912-13) when child labour intensified due to the conscription of men, and gained visibility due to El. Venizelos' labour laws (modelled on European legislation). Beyond setting age limits in the labour market and in specific jobs, a direct link between the health of children and adolescents and the health of the nation was established. These new laws deemed unregulated work as a possible obstacle to the normal development of children that could result in future generations of weak and incompetent soldiers.⁴⁸⁵

The above labour regulations were framed by scientific discourse, however, they were shaped by moralistic and religious beliefs. The child emerged as a symbol of innocence and sanctity, an image embraced by religious humanitarian organisations focused on children that had branched out in Greece following the 1922 refugee crisis (e.g., Near East Relief, Save the Children Fund). Of great concern were wandering children, who were considered vagrants, unclean, lazy, potential future villains—or future prostitutes.⁴⁸⁶ Apart from the League of Nations and other international organisations who were active in Greece the Greek state made this issue a key focus of their activities.⁴⁸⁷ In the Greek manifestation of the 'rise of the social', middle-class feminists like Maria Svolou contributed in the implementation of the said labour policies, through their direct collaboration with the Venizelist regime. It is in this context where child social protection firstly emerged -alongside the first juvenile courts.⁴⁸⁸ However, this emerging manifestation of the social did not lean toward childhood solely as a description of children and minors as an age-specific social group. It rather

⁴⁸³ Alan Hunt, *Governing Morals. A Social History of Moral Regulation* (Cambridge University Press, 2000)

⁴⁸⁴ Avdela (1115) 117-130

⁴⁸⁵ Emilia Salvanou, *Arrostia kai perithalpsi sti mikrasiatiki katastrofi kai tous prosfyges* [*Sickness and care during the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the refugees*] (Efimerida ton Syntakton publication 2022), 183-5

⁴⁸⁶ Avdela (1115) 30

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid 117.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

adopted the child as a symbolic subject that in practice would enable a near-totemic amalgamation of the future -and current- 'innocent adult identified with children'.⁴⁸⁹ This representative of 'infantile citizenship'⁴⁹⁰ would be pliable to moral education, and purification, and as a result, defenceless against his/her recruitment in the workforce. Incarceration in reformatories/workhouses would hold an integral part in disciplining this subject. In this sense, women and children were grouped together in certainly one of the manifestations of an early form of the rescue industry. Presented and treated as both victims and perpetrators and by procuring their innocence they formed the material of a nation's future, material which laid in the hands of the experts and the state to form the best of the future's triptych, mother-citizen-soldier and yet less likely in the present to resist its own reformation, to resist forced or coerced labour.

The first and most notorious such institution was the Embeirikion Asylum, founded in Athens in 1919. This charitable foundation was a Rehabilitation School for Minors, aiming to collect the wandering working-class children, and was established amidst the first steps towards a policy for 'children's protection'. Liakos describes Embeirikion as a 'disciplinary institution of the workhouse type', which initially housed 500 inmates, all of them girls.⁴⁹¹ The inmates were either sent by their families due to 'moral misconduct', or, more often, arrested by the police; the most common reason was actual or suspected prostitution— meaning instances of selling sex or simply being 'promiscuous'.⁴⁹² This was an indication that even though underage criminality was considered to be mostly a male issue, when it came to girls, it was consistently and almost exclusively tied to sex work. In this context, the differences between 'promiscuous behaviour' and prostitution, i.e. between the sexual activity of a girl and the systematic change of partners for money, are blurred. One seems to lead almost inevitably to the other, while the mediation of money is secondary. Prostitution became synonymous with 'becoming a fallen woman'.⁴⁹³ For girls, the 'propensity to prostitution' was the greatest moral danger.⁴⁹⁴ Yet, sex work was not considered a threat exclusive to girls. Boys who transgressed gender norms or were suspected of passive homosexuality and/or sex work were also targeted. Avdela cites cases where the mere suspicion of homosexuality was sufficient for long-term incarceration.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁸⁹ Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Duke University Press 2012) 28.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid 50.

⁴⁹¹ Antonis Liakos, *Ergasia Kai Politiki Stin Ellada Tou Mesopolemou: To Diethnes Grafeio Ergasias Kai i Anadysi Ton Koinonikon Thesmon [Labour and Politics in Interwar Greece: The International Labour Office and the Emergence of Social Institutions]* (Nefeli 2016), 287-288.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Avdela (n115) 251.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid 341; A tendency to vagrancy was the main reason for admission, while accusations such as immorality, delinquency, indiscipline petty theft, 'disorderly living', laziness and indiscipline, 'unlawful

Both female and male prostitution was considered a 'maximum moral danger and threat to public order and health'.⁴⁹⁶ Empeirikion functioned as a secularised version of the religious workhouses incarcerating women in Western Europe. According to its internal regulation, moral reformation would be achieved through forced labour. Meanwhile, correspondence was censored and visits by relatives were allowed once a month. Liakos documents that 'after their reformation, the inmates were given over to factory owners or other employers after a contract signed by the reformatory's director, who maintained custody of the juveniles in question'.⁴⁹⁷ Such reformatories also featured in later state projects for the discipline of youths to appropriate work and were an explicit part of exiting and rehabilitation schemes until the late 1970s.

Such rehabilitation schemes were broadly established with the compulsory law 2724 of 27 December 1940 'On the organisation and operation of juvenile reformatories'. Already from the 1950s there were three such institutions in Greece: two in Korydallos prison, for boys, and a girls' reformatory in Ambelokipoi, Athens, which would be moved to a specially designed wing of the *Sotiria* (Salvation) Hospital in Papagos in the 1980s. All these reformatories would be by Decree 180/1997 'per modern scientific and social concepts'.⁴⁹⁸ However, a system of custodial service would grow in the intervening years, which cemented the existence of professionalised field of intervention. As juvenile reformatories started being built in the 1950s, middle-class educated women escalated the mission they had undertaken during the interwar years, alongside probation officers who would now enforce state monitoring over underage people trapped in an increasingly robust penal-welfare complex.⁴⁹⁹ The 1950s and 1960s were a ripe ground for the exploitation of working-class teenagers who overwhelmingly took on casual, manual, unskilled, and badly or no-paid work and were often charged with the heaviest tasks.⁵⁰⁰ A probation officer's main role was to create a

cohabitation' and 'bad company', as well as 'unsuitable family living environment', disobedience, stubbornness, hubris and blasphemy, stealing [...], missing school or work, spending nights away from the family roof, begging, were also frequent. It is obvious that these accusations mostly targeted children from working-class families.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ Liakos (n491).

⁴⁹⁸ At present, teen girls are held in adult prisons together with women. The Volos Juvenile Reformatory for Males is the sole institution exclusively for teens currently in operation; Foteini Milioni and Vasiliki Milioni, *Mia Fora Kai Enan Kairo ...: Meletes Gia Ta Anamorfotiria Kai Tin Parabatikotita Ton Anilikōn [Once upon a Time... Studies on Juvenile Reformatories and Youth Delinquency]* (AΩ 2021) 98-99.

⁴⁹⁹ Avdela notes that, since especially in the first two decades after the war, the welfare state in Greece was underdeveloped, this custodial service operated as a quasi-welfare service that majorly targeted working-class children and their families, and instituted a dense web of supervision and control over them. During this period, many of the members of the Child Protection Committees must have been actively involved in the wide network created by Queen Frederica, and many of them - especially women, active members of women's organisations - took on the national education of the children of communists, or belonging in ethnic minorities, installed in the 'child cities'. Avdela, (n115) 182.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid 303-304.

link between labour stability and the custodial apparatus' disciplinary character. While a teenager's inability to settle on a job was a crucial point in the probation officer's assessment, 'behind this initial observation of labour instability hides the exploitation experienced by underage workers'.⁵⁰¹ It should be noted that well until the 1970s, children from the lower strata were either working or looking for work from a very young age, and even in very heavy manual jobs.

Thus, labour emerged as both a key stake in these state interventions and a reformatory measure.

More than just a measure against penury, work is considered a moralising factor, places a youth 'in order', disciplines him and makes him a 'good person'. [...] A big part of probation officers' activity consists of their efforts to place unemployed youths into some job, drawing from all the charity networks and the state institutions available to them, which are anyway limited.⁵⁰²

These attitudes belonged to a wider jointly state-sanctioned and philanthropic policy of the time and to the ways it targeted adults, as part of the wider rescue/punitive industry. For example, article 72 of the 1950 Criminal Code, which was in force until 2019, provided that, for people who were judged guilty of an offense that 'could be attributed to their idleness or tendency for disorderly life', the judge could order that after their incarceration, they be confined to a reformatory workhouse for one year minimum and five years maximum. If the person condemned was a repeat offender or a sex worker, their referral to a workhouse was mandatory. The extent to which this law was implemented and whether actual infrastructure for workhouses even existed remain questionable; official convictions under this clause were sparse, and the workhouse aspect probably took place within prisons, or, for younger convicts, in juvenile reformatories. In any case, this direct criminalisation of vagrancy, intensified with engagement in sex work.

The proclaimed reformatory aspect of compulsory work would save women from the corruption of prostituted life and prepare them for the exploitative environment of wage labour, or the unpaid labour of marriage which also constitute integral parts of capitalist production and state-imposed morality. Reformatory work as a preparation for a smoother transition into either the domestic sphere or waged labour should be read as an integral part of how the state operates, ensuring the functionality of its structures. Therefore, the

⁵⁰¹ Ibid 182.

⁵⁰² Ibid 304.

mechanisms through which normativity in gender and family roles, sexuality and work were imposed are not merely ‘incidental’ correlations, but rather inherent processes in maintaining the capitalist nation-state’s authority.⁵⁰³ This was also a hidden feature of 1950s neo-regulationism. The 1955 prostitution law provided for the de-registration of prostitutes who either breached the law or wished to leave the trade. De-registration was granted upon verification by police and medical authorities that the woman had, indeed, stopped selling sex.⁵⁰⁴ While this practice was not new, this law explicitly called for the ‘re-integration’ of those whose workplaces had been shut down due to its coming into force. Women could be sent back to their families and hometowns, to places of collective work, or even be put in the custody of ‘protective associations and organisations that aim at their social rehabilitation’ (Legislative Decree 4095/1960, ar. 8 para.6). The choice was made by the acting minister of Social Welfare, based on the report of a Medical Commission that consisted of priests, judges, the mayor, and others.⁵⁰⁵

Even though the institutions that constituted the material expression of this incantation of the penal-welfare complex would soon be abolished, as juvenile reformatories shut down, those spearheading reformative initiatives would inadvertently place ‘innocent citizenship’ (or citizen) into the new, progressive status quo. In 1977, following a riot of the inmates in Embeirikion Reformatory in central Athens, the autonomous feminist group *Κίνηση για την απελευθέρωση των γυναικών* (Movement for Women’s Liberation), published a manifesto against the system of reformation and detention. The members of the group, who were second-wave feminists, scathingly indicted the supposedly educational and re-integrative role of such institutions:

[...] this labour camp is called a school, even though a school is supposed to be an institution aimed at the intellectual development and perfection of a person. The duration of stay is in no case defined. [Inmates] stay until they are ‘set straight’. Supposedly, in there, they will teach the girls (who were ‘morally on the wrong course’ in terms by society’s standards) ‘honest’ professions like seamstress, servant, hairdresser. But reality presents us with the contradictions of the system -in this case, the penal system- in all their glory. These girls, in their vast majority, after their release will end up

⁵⁰³ See also Louis Althusser, *On The Reproduction Of Capitalism Ideology And Ideological State Apparatuses* (Verso 2014).

⁵⁰⁴ Kostas Katsapis, ‘Nears Ekdidomenes Kopeles Stin Athina Tou 1960: Stoicheia Koinonikis Istorias Gia Dystycheis Yparkseis [Young Prostitutes in the Athenian 1960s: Elements of Social History about Unfortunate Creatures]’ in Kostas Katsapis (ed), *Oi apeitharchoi: Keimena Gia Tin Istoria tis neanikis anaideias ti metapolemiki periodo [The Undisciplined: Texts on the History of Youthful Impudence in the Postwar Period]* (Okto 2018) 156.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

working according to the initial cause of their admission into the reformatory'.⁵⁰⁶

Here, the group's criticism correctly identifies 'reformation', 're-integration', and vocational training as means of discipline, which do not offer real or viable alternatives for the subjects caught in the penal-welfare complex. Indeed, women were released, further devalued -not to mention stigmatised and with a criminal record- only to encounter the same or worse economic options. However, feminist advocacy coincided with a novel manifestation of the rhetoric of victimhood and moral purification. In the press of that period, various scandalous pieces appeared about 'traffickers', a term attributed to men who reportedly posed as lovers outside Empeirikion, transmitting coded messages and setting dates with girls due for release; allegedly, when the girls showed up, they arranged their prostitution.⁵⁰⁷ Although it is unclear whether this was a media-orchestrated panic, several assisted escapes from the reformatory were thus attributed to normalising girls' confinement in the workhouse as a form of protection. Moreover, feminist silence in the face of this media rhetoric failed to recognise that the latter, functioning as a state ideological mechanism, ultimately contributed to the reinforcement of anti-sex work carceral policies. In the following years, yet, this silence would take the form of an active alignment with both the state and media narratives, in the form of anti-trafficking discourse, as will be shown in the next chapter.

Personal accounts of the post-war era found in inmate records testify to the class and social conditions that led girls into the system of juvenile detention. These accounts confirm the near inevitability of incarceration for girls who made survival choices as a result of poverty, or attempted to claim their agency and independence. The line between illegal and immoral was blurred to justify incarceration. For example, Hermione was admitted to the reformatory at the age of 15 in 1964, as she was a prostitute and 'promiscuous'. Her 'deflowering' at 13 years old, by another student was interpreted as a rite of passage into prostitution. Another inmate, Aphrodite was described as 'extremely naughty' at the same time as reformatory records state that her mother acted as her pimp. Girls could be incarcerated for being 'exploited' by a lover or exhibiting 'sexual deviations'. Athanasia was also admitted to reform school at the age of 15 in 1959 at her mother's initiative, as she had for a time been living illegally with a much older man -whom she later abandoned because he was a drunkard- and another couple. In her record she was described as 'withdrawn, reserved, profane and unclean' and exhibited bad behaviour. She was a frequent escapee and occasionally worked in

⁵⁰⁶ Cited in 'Psifides Mnimis: Gia Tin Apeleftherosi Ton Gynaikon. Paramorfotiria [Pieces of Memory: For the Liberation of Women. Deformatories' (*μυγαδα**, June 2015) 18.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

brothels.⁵⁰⁸ Positive STD status was another factor in this overreach of state discipline. The file of 13-year-old girl M.S., who was sent to Embeirikion reformatory in 1964 documents her ‘syphilis’ and sexual activity status as ‘not a virgin’.⁵⁰⁹ These historiographical testimonies, related to the specific processes and institutions like the ones described here, offer a lot more than merely anecdotal evidence; these cases have all undergone the various processes and steps required to become part of this complex mechanism to stand as valuable representations of it.

Contemporary Child Protection Programmes largely differ from the post-war reformatories complex. However, teenagers who sell sex remain (indirectly) penalised in the name of their protection—an aspect that becomes even more relevant in the light of the new Penal Code, submitted for voting in February 2024, under which minors will have criminal responsibility from 10 years of age. Penalisation and lack of legal status do not prevent minors from entering, or indeed, staying in sex work. My own sample of 16 interviewees included 4 individuals who entered sex work before the age of 18 (25%); the first survey of male sex workers in Greece showed a 31,6% of individuals started working as minors among a sample of 57 people.⁵¹⁰ Nicola Mai’s empirical research shows, third country minors prefer to sell sex than engage in other types of work.⁵¹¹ Furthermore, (former) teen sex workers offer credible testimonies regarding the punitive aspects of state protection. In his recent book ‘Chav Solidarity’,⁵¹² Dom Hunter, a former teen sex worker, describes how punitive state policies towards the poor and minority ethnic groups were exemplified by the removal of children from their homes. Although Hunter points out that these policies coincided with the intensification of neoliberalism with a penal-welfarist framework, he makes a point of also addressing how social liberation movements and the left often reproduce a paternalistic, hegemonic, privileged discourse around exploitative

⁵⁰⁸ Milioni and Milioni (n) 25-28.

⁵⁰⁹ Her statement upon her admission to Empeirikion reads as follows: ‘I stopped school at the 4th grade. I was 11 years old then. I came to Athens to become a servant. Stayed for a few days. I went to many houses in [different towns] but didn’t stick anywhere. I returned to Agrinio [her hometown]. Hanged out with boys, didn’t listen to my mum’s advice and that’s why she beat me and once she also cut my hair short. I learned to smoke. Last year I was corrupted by a young guy (now he is a soldier). We sued him. I frequented a coffee house. That’s where I met Vassilo. She was a madam. She took me in her house and sold me to various men. The police caught us. I was hospitalised in Syngros Hospital for three months because I have venereal diseases’, *ibid*.

⁵¹⁰ ‘Η Πρώτη Έρευνα Για Τους Άνδρες Που Ασκούν Σεξουαλική Εργασία Στην Ελλάδα’ (*t-zine.gr*, 17 December 2017) <<https://t-zine.gr/i-proti-erevna-gia-tous-andres-pou-askoun-sexoualiki-ergasia-stin-ellada/>> accessed 4 August 2023

⁵¹¹ Nick Mai, ‘Tampering with the Sex of ‘Angels’: Migrant Male Minors and Young Adults Selling Sex in the EU’ (2011) 37(8) *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 1237.

⁵¹² Dom Hunter, *Chav Allilengyi Apo Ta Ypogeia [Chav. Solidarity]* (Oi Ekdoseis ton Synadelphon 2022).

relations—an ‘internalised state discourse’. My own interviewees would complement Hunter’s arguments:

I started performing sex work at 17 out of a need to experiment, and to earn money through it. I come from a wealthy and happy family. When you're that age, you attract a lot of people. I guess it shouldn't happen, but it does. I started accepting the requests I received and making money from it. Today I cringe at the adults who want to do minors; but I fully understand underage people selling sex (Andri, 24, cis straight woman).

I come from a wealthy family. When my parents found out I was gay, they cut off my allowance. They vindictively gave me 5 euros for the whole week. I didn't have any money. But I found a way. I was at an age where I was experimenting, and I went to places where I could learn things about my sexuality. One such place was Omonoia Square. I went there mainly to find porn magazines, and people started approaching me to escort them for money. I would finish school and every afternoon go directly to Omonoia. I'd come home at 8 p.m. From 2 p.m. onwards, I worked. It was forbidden in the early days to enter a porn cinema because I was a minor, so I stood in the square. And other boys were doing the same thing. At one point, a 45-year-old man approached me and said 'you can't do this on your own, I will mediate, or you will leave the square'. He practically pimped me. Eventually he was arranging my appointments, and I was making 30 euros a day with about 2 appointments a day—I believe he was making more. This went on for about a year until the police found him. He was arranging appointments in nearby hotels for minors from 14-18 years old. Let me say that he was extremely strict regarding my security. If someone didn't want a condom, he would kick them out. If someone seemed violent, he'd kick them out. When he was arrested -he eventually went to jail- they took us to the police station too, called our parents, told them 'your son is a prostitute'. The cops were violent. In the Omonoia police station there were mostly Greeks, Albanians, and children from Bulgaria. These children were from troubled families struggling to make ends meet, and one day they found themselves handcuffed at the station. After the arrest however, things got very difficult with my family. They locked me up in my house, not letting me out for about six months. Forced to because I had no money, I dragged myself back into it; you know, prostitution. I was in constant conflict with my parents with whom I was living. I was working on the street. When the cops called my parents, it was a huge shock to me. I understand that the goal was to protect us, but we had chosen it. We could

have been asked whether we were working willingly or not. It was a very violent incident, and they would deport my migrant coworkers. Given that some people wanted to do this, whether immigrants or Greeks, we could have done it in protected spaces, without being in danger from clients, pimps, or cops. (Vassilis, 33, cis gay man).

Both Andri and Vassilis considered their entry into prostitution as a conscious personal choice and they still do after 7 and 17 years accordingly.⁵¹³ Agency in sex work is recognised as highly circumstantial, within a broader context of socio-economic dynamics, and as a rather counterproductive analytical tool as it carries the risk of perpetuating reductive dichotomies between coercion and empowerment, which are not found in the discussion of any other form of work, as will be discussed in chapter 6. However, it is worth noting that my interlocutors' experiences, both coming from wealthy bourgeois families, are different from the survival sex of Hunter's case. These testimonies declare my interlocutors' autonomy against a punitive state apparatus that wishes to erase their perspective. Their agency cannot be dismissed simply because they had not yet come of age by a few months, nor by the existence of a pimp in Vassilis' case, whose testimony describes being offered a choice -in the way the bosses pose dilemmas to the workers. As it is established in sex work activism and scholarship, the presence of a pimp does not remove agency but rather highlights exactly the power relations forged within sexual labour - that is just as much or as less of a choice as any boss or manager offers to any employee- moving beyond sex work exceptionalism.⁵¹⁴ Nor the cutting off of his allowance by his parents should be read as forcing him into prostitution for survival reasons, as they provided him with shelter, food and education. Both Andri and Vassilis emphasise the pleasure they gained from discovering their sexuality and gaining money for it. Reading pleasure along with these individuals' bourgeois background allows us to further reflect upon agency. Their entrance into sex work can also be interpreted as a rebellion against the norms imposed on them by the state and the family institution, an attempt to establish their own identity and demand certain rights.⁵¹⁵ Agency emerges through resistance, the reactive undoing of the norm.⁵¹⁶

The state's punitive response to this particular group of sex workers, exposes an inability to draw a line between protection and punishment. In other words, if

⁵¹³ On rationality and agency in sex work, see further Rhéa Jean, 'Prostitution and the Concept of Agency', in Heather Widdows and Herjeet Marway (eds), *Women and Violence* (Palgrave Macmillan UK 2015) 56.

⁵¹⁴ Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform (n203).

⁵¹⁵ Lois McNay, *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender, and the Self* (Northeastern University Press 1992) 39.

⁵¹⁶ Elena Loizidou, *Judith Butler: Ethics, Law, Politics* (Routledge 2007) 151.

minor sex workers are society's greatest victims, and if children are a nation's greatest hope, then their punishment and marginalisation are the ultimate manifestation of the state's monopoly of violence as an end in itself.⁵¹⁷ As Michael Denning has argued, it is not the child in the sweatshops but the child in the streets, 'alternately predator and prey' that emerges as the most characteristic figure of bare, superfluous life.⁵¹⁸ In the figure of the underage sex worker, the state projects collective concerns over morality, sex, labour, and sexuality itself. These concerns are alleviated with help from private actors, and media mediation, by the construction of a fantasy of innocence that becomes useful in the justification of the state's expansion and reinforcement of punitiveness against all types of sex work, through regulationism and its punitive aspects.⁵¹⁹ Perhaps an alternative reading of the aforementioned infantile citizenship could shed light on how this punitive paternalism that underage sex workers receive expands to all workers in the sex industry not only under regulationism but also in any other governance policy of prostitution applied under the inspiration and encouragement of the rescue industry, state-sanctioned and feminist philanthropy driven alike.

This is particularly evident in the protection-punishment relationship formed through health-welfare policing and the repetition of labour-productive disciplining which goes directly through hygienic control. In this section, I described the vicious circle of punitive welfare in terms of what has been also described by David Garland as the 'penal-welfare complex'.⁵²⁰ In approaching penal strategies as strategies of social regulation, Garland sees them as complementary rather than adversative to welfare institutions and practices, both included in the same process of regulating and disciplining disorder. He emphasised how the penal-welfare complex was linked to a growing number of professional experts on moral dangers who took on the task of mediating the synergy of the state with the private sector, thus rendering the public/private distinction more difficult to touch upon. In the next section I discuss how discourses shaped by the collaboration of legal and medical factors and institutions affect and construct initiatives of prostitution control in Greece in the crusade to protect the social body of 'the Nation'.

⁵¹⁷ On the fetishisation of the 'feminised infantile vulnerability' by the nation state and 'the political fantasy of the infantile citizen', see further Berlant (n518) 72, 57.

⁵¹⁸ Michael Denning, 'Wageless Life' (2010) (66, Nov/Dec) *New Left Review* <<https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii66/articles/michael-denning-wageless-life#:~:text=MICHAEL%20DENNING-,WAGELESS%20LIFE,-U>> accessed 10 January 2024.

⁵¹⁹ The fantasy of innocence is complemented by the wish to render adult sex worker's ability of consent irrelevant, e.g. in multiple definitions of sex trafficking, as will be shown in the next Chapter.

⁵²⁰ Garland (n46).

Protecting the national social body: juridico-medical discourses and control of prostitution in Greece.

To understand how these developments adapted to the Greek case, it is crucial to highlight that the above-mentioned continuum of surveillance and criminalisation of prostitutes was consolidated in the emergence of modern public health policy. A system of *réglementarisme* underscored mandatory health checks of registered prostitutes by law enforcement tasked with the persecution of those who harmed ‘public health, public order and decency’ that is, the ill and/or the unregistered.⁵²¹ By the 17th century, ‘fallen women’ were the most prominent group of inmates in not only hospitals but also, the first modern asylums, such as Magdalene Laundries of the UK and Ireland.⁵²² Regulationism relied on the interconnected spaces of brothels, hospitals and sanatoriums. Along with the gradual construction of the social policy apparatus, the control of prostitution became increasingly pervasive as vocational schools and reformatories started to make their appearance, in which women would be ‘rehabilitated’ or given training in alternative professions as mentioned in the previous section. In a fashion similar to Western European moral panics against the dangerous classes, the Greek state turned to syphilis as a useful driver of aggressive policy against prostitution.⁵²³

Already from the late 15th century, intermittent epidemics of syphilis, then known as the ‘Celtic disease’, appeared among Greek-speaking populations of the Ottoman Empire.⁵²⁴ It was not until 1848, when mandatory hospitalisation was introduced leading to the establishment of specialised public infirmaries and sanatoria. Medical expenses for the impoverished were covered by municipalities; wealthier patients covered treatment costs themselves.⁵²⁵ This inequity in medical treatment is indicative of the state’s reluctance to address syphilis as a matter of public health, but more of as a result of individual proclivity to debauchery.⁵²⁶ Previously, an 1834 directive from the Ministry of Interior introduced the measure of fortnightly medical examinations for prostitutes, with the penalty of loss of the

⁵²¹ Ripa (n123).

⁵²² Alison Phipps (n82) 154; Smith and Mac (n2) 26-27.

⁵²³ To understand the prevalence of this system, it is necessary to examine the position venereal diseases had in 19th century western societies. In the collective imaginary of pre-modern Europe, sexually transmitted diseases, especially syphilis, were associated with sin, punishment, and the threatening nature of dangerous classes and female sexuality. As prostitution has been considered the main mechanism of spreading of the STDs, ‘common women’ were found in the epicenter of public and medical discourses, scrutiny, and control. See further Luker (n352).

⁵²⁴ Kostas P. Kostis, *Ston Kairo Tis Panolis. Eikones Apo Tis Koinonies Tis Ellinikis Chersonissou, 140s-190s Aionas [In the Time of the Plague. Images from the Societies of the Greek Peninsula, 14th-19th Century]* (Panepistimiakes Ekdoseis Kritis 1995), cited in Korasidou (n112) 104.

⁵²⁵ Loukos and Theodorou (n471) 37.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

right to practice and the risk of imprisonment in a reformatory. This measure - except for the penalty of imprisonment- is still in force today, under the 1999 law. In general, in every relevant legal text of the 19th century, venereal diseases in general and syphilis in particular, are ascribed to lower-class individuals leading squalid lives.⁵²⁷ Specifically, legislation of the time explicitly linked prostitution with infection, while doctors and policemen worked together as the *sanitary police*; the management of sex work rested on one single *medico-policial* authority.⁵²⁸ In this context, 19th and early 20th century medical and legal studies on the treatment of venereal diseases constituted the grounds upon which the idea of deviant sexualities as a public threat was based, linking the need to control feminine sexuality with the preservation of public health and moral atonement of Greek society.⁵²⁹ For example, Angeliki Panagiotatou (1858-1954), the first woman to graduate from the Medical School of the University of Athens, together with Anna Katsigra, the first female lecturer at the same school, identified health with morality.⁵³⁰ This sciencey discourse formed the core of the methods of moralising Greek society—a task that philanthropic feminists would largely undertake. For example, the St. Catherine's Asylum founded by Parren in 1892 aimed at the 'moral treatment' of domestic servants inmates through forced labour.⁵³¹

The 1834 directive also provided for the obligation of the owners of brothels to subject the women workers to a daily examination and, if they were found to be infected with a venereal disease, to take them to the public hospital and a competent doctor. Meanwhile, doctors were obliged to compile and forward to the police authorities a daily report of the prostitutes sent for hospitalisation, alongside other hospitalised patient information. The prostitutes' work license could be revoked if not renewed every month, or in case they visited a doctor outside the hospital in charge, or in case they did not report a possible infection. Moreover, for the maintenance of hospital facilities, individuals had to pay a monthly sum of 5 drachmas.⁵³² Brothel owners were obliged to pay the same amount for every person they employed (a measure applied in Bicêtre and Salpêtrière since the late 16th century).⁵³³ Any client believing himself infected by a prostitute had a right and indeed a duty to anonymously report the name and address of the prostitute to the police. The same circular also provided for the criminalisation of street workers. The pre-modern fear of the witch, the promiscuous woman who would hide her pregnancy or kill her spawns,

⁵²⁷ Korasidou (n112) 122-130

⁵²⁸ Ibid 35-36.

⁵²⁹ Tzanaki (n113) 120.

⁵³⁰ Ibid.

⁵³¹ Tzanaki (n456) 282-283.

⁵³² Korasidou (n112) 125-126.

⁵³³ *ibid.*

warranting execution, was being reshaped into a fear of the fallen woman who would infect the healthy social body.

In 1849, through a police circular, further control of prostitution is attempted. Its supplementary directives required compulsory medical examination for sex workers travelling to another city.⁵³⁴ If found to be infected, prostitutes, their cohabitants or servants were immediately transferred to a sanatorium, a specialised clinic established by municipalities, or to separate rooms and wards of already existing hospitals. This new regulation also introduced a health booklet every prostitute has to carry, issued and signed by the secretariat of the local police Directorate, and in which the health status of its owner is noted twice a week by the responsible doctors.⁵³⁵ Finally, for more than a century (1835-1937) an infirmary was functioning within the state-sanctioned brothel of Vourla, where a doctor examined the inmate prostitutes daily.⁵³⁶ Despite legalisation of their profession, sex workers would continue to represent a social and hygienic menace—to be restricted, accordingly, by a twofold power: law enforcement and medicine. From the citation of the above legislations emerges prostitution as a necessary yet perilous social function, to be tolerated yet controlled to hamper any extravagance.⁵³⁷ What is less obvious is the construction of the doctor, as a figure who stands next to the policeman, within the system of surveillance of prostitution. The doctor was declared the supervisor of the health not only of the sex workers but implicitly of the whole of the population who must be kept healthy and sane—a prominent feature in the preservation of moral values and the health of the nuclear family and society. His position made him responsible for deciding whether a sex worker would lose her ability to work legally or to move outside the city, would go through an obligatory hospitalisation or, worse, would suffer corporal punishment or incarceration.⁵³⁸ Prostitutes, along with workers and maids, were potential sources of turmoil, therefore subject to constant and systematic medico-police controls aimed at dampening their risk-bearing behaviour and preserving social stability. The biopolitical hygienic/ethical/work-related surveillance matrix towards the dangerous classes expanded in 1872, as health booklets became compulsory for registered prostitutes, as well as for maids and factory workers.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁴ Ibid 127 – 128.

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Lazos (n91) 64.

⁵³⁷ Korasidou, (n112) 130.

⁵³⁸ Lazos (n89) 64.

⁵³⁹ Tzanaki (n456) 284-285.

Moreover, this version of unyielding, old-school regulationism, reflected a collusion between medicine and morality that unfolded in two stages.⁵⁴⁰ Firstly, through the close monitoring and the policing of the usual suspects (prostitutes), which signified a need for the constant presence of health monitors and the development of an entire surveillance network where state police and medicine are closely intertwined.⁵⁴¹ Secondly, through the coercion and the use of violence against those who refused to consent to receiving treatment involving forced confinement and/or isolation in a specialised hospitals. The use of violence coexisted with the mechanisms of surveillance, alternating in their efforts to deal with the major evil represented by disease. Taking into consideration that a new imaginary of family life, the nuclear family and the institution of the modern marriage were gradually constructed in the 19th century, drawing upon the ideals of loyalty, discipline, modesty and self-sacrifice, the root cause of loathing the prostitute, i.e. the embodiment of female promiscuity, becomes clearer.⁵⁴² Through the lens of this ‘cult of domesticity’, the regulation of prostitution was part of a broader biopolitical organisation and management of life. In corroboration, Korasidou argues that the early royal ordinances about sex work constituted the first pieces of family policy in Greece.⁵⁴³ Specifically, the 1849 circular, draws a direct link between concubinage and prostitution; in an era of a triumphant supremacy of the institution of marriage, any alternative practice was judged as morally scandalous, illegal, and synonymous with corruption and prostitution.⁵⁴⁴ For at least 50 years since this directive was issued, the police engaged in a persistent investigation of extra-marital relations.

Simultaneously, a biopolitical set of recommendations and rules came to complete the violent repression of disturbing societal elements, and finally, to establish a hygienic moral ideal that would deeply influence Western societies until today. As early as the beginning of the 20th century, venereal diseases and the ‘modern plague’ of syphilis, were considered to be an enormous social injury that could lead to the degeneration of the nation and the race.⁵⁴⁵ The late 19th-century Pasteurian discoveries and the spread of social hygiene had already declared ‘cleanliness’ as ‘a pledge of morality and a guarantee of order’⁵⁴⁶. A new

⁵⁴⁰ Foucault (n45) 85.

⁵⁴¹ Korasidou (n112) 134-135.

⁵⁴² On a historical overview of the multiple ways and levels in which femininity was shaped by the cult of domesticity and vice versa during the Victorian Age in Britain see further Martha Vicinus (ed.), *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age* (Routledge 2014).

⁵⁴³ Ibid. 132-133.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶ Georges Vigarello, *To Katharo Kai to Vrōmiko: I Somatikī Ygieinī Apo Ton Mesaiona Os Sīmera [The Dirty and the Clean - Physical Hygiene from Middle Ages until Today]* (Aleksandreia 2000) 231.

biopolitical subject was emerging, one that assembled the qualities of family, wellness, and morality as polar opposites to the deviant subject of the prostitute.

Hygiene mentality as Rule of Law

When I first started working legally, I went through medical exams twice a week, i.e. 8 times a month. The year was 1989, a year and a half after I had the gender-affirming surgery. And it was terrible. I was nervous because I was 25, not 15, and I felt like I had just earned what I had always been, that I had finally become myself. In the countryside, while it was legal to run brothels, there was a nasty sense of pimping by the doctors. Especially in Chania I remember the prefectural doctor was all-powerful: if he didn't like you, he wouldn't stamp your booklet. Of course, there was a man who, with five thousand drachmas from each of us, would collect our booklets. I had had an outbreak of hepatitis in the past and because that was on the record, they would give me a hard time and wouldn't sign it. But every town is a different state. Even if prostitutes were operating within a legal framework, everyone did what they wanted with us. In Larissa, the houses were downtown, they didn't have permits, but nobody ever chased us, there was a lot of tolerance. In Volos it was legal. In Rhodes, the doctor in charge was a very nice man, as in Attica. But as a role, he was like a pimp upon your pussy. To be away for 2 weeks in the summer, you had to get permission from the sanitary authority. And this went off the rails when we started giving money to the police. When that ceased because of the financial crisis, the doctors started checking up on us again. Mandatory testing was a burden that we inherited from the past and we didn't even think it needed to be changed, we were happy to be tested. But there is a deep authoritative privilege behind it. You know, you're falling into the need for an expert with authority. We all respected doctors too much, while they were just doing a bureaucratic, repressive job. (Anna, trans woman, 58)

Starting in the 1950s, the neo-regulationism established by Law 3310/1955 adopts a highly medicalised view, as indicated by the law's title 'On the control of venereal diseases and other provisions'. Under it, women classified as 'prostitutes' or 'libertines' had the obligation to appear in front of the competent health authority each week with an updated health or treatment card, signed by a physician or a national hospital. The following decade saw Law 4095/1960 – 'On Protection from Venereal Diseases and Regulation of Related Matters' conceding further excessive powers to the police. A common feature of all these legislative reforms, apart from their obvious fixation with STDs, was a persistent scrutiny of 'undeclared' prostitutes who evaded medical check-ups.

Greek legislations and juridico-medical surveillance of prostitutes are, and always have been, an attempt of classification of their bodies on the grounds of health and illness, productivity and unproductivity, normality and abnormality. This regime placed workers in a limbo between legality and illegality. After Foucault, the body can be perceived as a battlefield, as the *topos* where every political difference is materialised; every politics is body politics. Preciado states: 'The very task of political action is to fabricate a body, to put it to work, to define its modes of production and reproduction, to foreshadow the modes of discourse by which that body is fictionalised to itself until it is able to say "I".'⁵⁴⁷ The ideal of the modern subject by the capitalist, patriarchal and colonial Western democracies from the 18th century onwards was constructed not only as a white, male, heterosexual *homo oeconomicus*,⁵⁴⁸ but also as a healthy, immunised body.⁵⁴⁹ Body immunity is not only a biological fact. Rather, as Emily Martin argues, is shaped through social and political criteria that produce sovereignty or exclusion, protection or stigmatisation, life or death.⁵⁵⁰ Hence, one may conclude that immunisation as a twofold discourse of both the self and state is always already constructed in relation to *otherness*, how it produces a conflict between immune, healthy subjects and foreign, contagious corporealities.⁵⁵¹

Additionally, as Roberto Esposito underlines, the law has an intrinsic immunological function, as its role is to ensure the survival of the community, protecting and prolonging life. The nature of immunisation lies at the heart of contemporary biopolitics, paradoxically functioning to incorporate within the body (individual and societal) exactly foreign elements and external entities that threaten its existence.⁵⁵² Legislations regulating sex work enlighten exactly this immunological nature of law, which produces marginal, incomplete subjects. Even more, hygienic provisions produce these subjects. These perceptions are also reflected in doctors' individual behaviours. In the 2023 documentary 'Mirrors', filmed at the initiative of SWEN, sex workers testify about experiences of

⁵⁴⁷ Paul B. Preciado, 'Learning from the virus' (*The online edition of Artforum International Magazine*, May -June 2020) <www.artforum.com/print/202005/paul-b-preciado-82823>accessed 10 January 2024.

⁵⁴⁸ Horkheimer and Adorno (n19) 168.

⁵⁴⁹ Roberto Esposito cited by Preciado (n547).

⁵⁵⁰ Emily Martin, *Flexible bodies: Tracking immunity in American culture from the days of polio to the age of AIDS* (Beacon Press 1994), cited in Preciado *ibid*.

⁵⁵¹ These narratives have served to further legitimise the control over racialised minorities and migrant populations, under border regimes and militarised strategies deployed, for example by ICE at the US-Mexico frontier and by Frontex to defend the Schengen Area, *ibid*. For the interplays between border control, capitalism, and militarised humanitarianism see further Ch. 5.

⁵⁵² Cited in Michael A Peters and Tina Besley, 'Biopolitics, Conspiracy and the Immuno-State: An Evolving Global Politico-Genetic Complex' [2020] *Educational Philosophy and Theory*.

exclusion and prejudice in accessing health services. Kate, one of the individuals who shared their experience, says:

As soon as they hear what you do for a living, their whole impression changes; they see you as less of a person. So, I'm afraid to share my problems that might be work-related, and that are physically draining. I can't discuss them with a physiotherapist, for example. The same goes for gynecologists. I hesitate to seek medical advice even if I have an urgent need for it, for fear of experiencing discomfort or slut shaming'.⁵⁵³

When Kate speaks of feeling as 'less of a person' she implies that her body as an object of medical care is perceived as unhealthy precisely because her subject is designated to the category of 'the unhealthy'. Drawing from Susan Sontag, I argue that the body of the sex worker is constructed as an *a priori* a topos of abnormality on the basis of its lifestyle –in the case of the prostitute as a promiscuous, oversexed body –before the medical eye, and therefore all attitudes toward it reflect the idea of a punishment for that promiscuous lifestyle. In this sense, sex-work becomes a metaphor for the unhealthy person –always already something less of a person.⁵⁵⁴

As previous legislations, Law 2734/1999 treats sex work through a highly medicalised lens. According to article 2, any individual who wishes to obtain a license to sell sex legally, must 'not suffer from a sexually transmitted or other infectious diseases' (para. 1c), nor from 'any form of mental illness', and must not be a drug user (para. 1d). The STDs and other infectious diseases referred in para. 1c are, according to the Law, determined by a Decision of the Health Minister. In addition, in ar. 1 para. 5 it is determined that the issuance of a health booklet competent Health Service of the relevant Prefecture is obligatory for any person who obtains the license. Moreover, the Law provides that every holder of the license is obliged to undergo a complete medical examination every 15 days 'for the care of the health services of the Prefectures'. According to the relevant Ministerial Decision,⁵⁵⁵ sex workers must be screened once a year for TB and chlamydia, and have a smear test. Every 3 months they should undergo a blood test for HIV, every month for syphilis, and every 15 days for gonococcus, trichomoniasis and syphilis, whereas vaccination for Hepatitis B is advised. The result of each medical examination is recorded in the health booklet (ar. 2 para. 1). If the persons referred to in the preceding paragraphs are found to be suffering

⁵⁵³ Christos Sagredos, Joanne David, Dimitrios C. Masouras, SWEN - Sex Workers' Empowerment Network, 'Mirrors' (2023)

⁵⁵⁴ Susan Sontag, *AIDS and its metaphors* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1989), 25-26.

⁵⁵⁵ Gazette B' 198/22.2.2000

from a sexually transmitted or other infectious disease, they shall be treated until the disease is cured. During treatment, they must abstain from work. The treatment is provided free of charge by the state nursing institutions, but it can be provided at working individuals' own expense and by private doctors, according to the provision of par. 2 of article 2 of law 1193/1981. This requires an application of the interested party to the competent health service of the Prefecture and its approval. The cure for the disease is confirmed by a relevant document from a state hospital.

Any individual who engages professionally in sex work without being subject to the relevant controls (art. 5 (1a)), or does not undergo the treatment provided in art. 2 para. 3, or stops receiving treatment before the ultimate cure of the disease (art. 5 para 1e) faces criminal penalties. Specifically, any person who sells sex 'knowing that they suffer from a sexually transmitted or other infectious disease, is punished with imprisonment of up to one (1) year unless the act is punished more severely by another provision' (art. 5 para. 2). Finally, according to art. 6, if any individual violates the above provisions, the installation permit of the brothel in which they work will be revoked for a period of one to three months and in case of recurrence up to six months. The manifested aim of these provisions is the protection of both public health and the health of sex workers. However, major concerns have arisen, concerning both the frequency and mandatory character of medical examinations. Such a strict legal framework, as was the case in old-school regulationism, prohibits any individual who wishes to engage occasionally in sex work from doing so, and hereby enters the (not so old) fear of the 'undeclared' prostitute, the one eluding state control.

These provisions have been largely criticised by sex workers, civil society organisations and state agents. The Scientific Department of Legal Processing of Bills and Law Proposals argued that art. 2 allows for 'excessive state interference into the personal life of the individual, lacking any safeguards'. The Department also questioned the state's ability to prove that a sex worker indeed has sex with an indefinite number of clients, further suggesting that an official registry for both legal and illegal prostitutes would be the only reliable source 'of both tracking their health status and the protection of public health'.⁵⁵⁶ Of course, registries are an extension of state control that penetrate further into the freedom of workers. In a similar line of expanding medical surveillance was the Ombudsman's recommendation for broader gynaecological screening 'to protect the prostitutes themselves'.⁵⁵⁷ Therefore, the critique of the aforementioned state institutions

⁵⁵⁶ Hellenic Parliament, Directorate the Scientific Department For The Legislative Drafting of Bills and Legislative Proposals Report On The Draft Law on "Prostituted persons", 9/7/1999, 3.

⁵⁵⁷ Opinion of the Ombudsman, 6/11/2003, Protocol No: 14667/03/2.1, 5.

against law 2734/1999 has been based on its perceived inapplicability, calling for far more austere measures than the ones currently in force, serving as a vocal, even stricter reaffirmation of regulationism, whose harms would doubtfully be mitigated by the implementation of 'safeguards'. Records for both legal and illegal prostitutes, under the pretext of protecting public health, impose an even stricter framework and perpetuate harm.

People in the community have a different perspective regarding their protection from disease: that it cannot be achieved through extensive surveillance and criminalisation. Sex worker testimonies shed light on a rigid regime of control and a continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation that targets not only sex workers' physical health but also their mental health, as well as individual activities such as recreational drug use.

'Controlling STDs is something that falls under the individual's personal responsibility. I may have lice in my hair, will they check me for that too? Before I get married, will I be tested to make sure I don't have HIV, I won't infect my wife, and we won't give birth to an HIV positive child? However, the law should allow me to be tested as often as I want for free. If I want it every month, I should not be told that I am not entitled to it. Also, free access to treatment, prophylactic too, not just curative. PREP, HPV vaccines, contraceptives. And that should eventually be something the entire population should be entitled to. It's not about the treatment *per se*, not about professional rights of ours, but about the social right to health. It may well be that a sex worker has less sex than a non-professional. And of course, all this should be optional, not compulsory. And what do we mean by mental disorder? Who doesn't have generalised anxiety or mild depression? Also, does neurodiversity come under this umbrella? Because if so, it's even more problematic: I've heard from colleagues who are on the spectrum that because of that they are more professional. Because they are more easily distanced emotionally, and they are more punctual with time. I also don't see why if I'm depressed or even schizophrenic and getting screwed it's the legislator's business', Aris, a founding member of SWEN argues.

Nina concurs on the psychiatric aspect:

Personally, as a person with mental issues, albeit passing as neurotypical, my paperwork, my medication, my past, would not allow me to work legally. And I also have absolutely no trust in the state because I would have to choose between working legally or getting free medication. Plus, I

personally can't hold down a 5-day/8-hour job, and that was one of the reasons I chose to do this for a living. Because it takes me a lot of time to do certain things, more than neurotypical people need, in order to have flexibility and study at the same time. To be able to say that in 2 days I'll see 10 clients, and then I'll spend time just studying.

Gregory Vallianatos, communications consultant of the Greek Association of People Living with HIV, 'Positive Voice', and one of the pioneers of the Greek LGBT movement and sex worker organisations, summarises the punitive aspects of the law that involve physical and mental health and drug use:

The World Health Organisation's guidelines emphasise that there should be no employment discrimination against seropositive people, no obligation to be tested to work, because science today enables them to continue their lives without any obligation to disclose their status. On the contrary, anyone who forces them to declare their status is harassing them and must be prosecuted. In this case, the state. And the 15-day-checkup story is completely ridiculous and again serves only to stigmatise the whores and queers. There used to be medical tests for other professions (e.g., waiters), but now they are not obligatory, as you can get infected the next day. As for the ban on working on drug users, it strikes me as unthinkably vindictive and immoral, lacking any scientific basis. Likewise, the moral panic surrounding chemsex. These are outdated arguments: that people who take drugs are immature, just like people who have unemotional sex.

Sex workers who make use of drugs are subject to a twofold criminalisation, both as sex workers and as drug users.⁵⁵⁸ As Mac and Smith argue, criminalising drugs 'not only creates even more risk of police attention and a criminal record, it also makes them illicit and therefore dangerous'—ending the war on drugs is a sex workers' issue.⁵⁵⁹ Although delving deeper into discussion regarding harm reduction approaches to drug use goes beyond the scope of this thesis, it is necessary to acknowledge that the criminalisation of drug use intersects with and further deepens the illegalisation/criminalisation continuum inflicted upon sex workers.

Aris emphasises:

⁵⁵⁸ Smith and Mac (n2) 93-94.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

Rehabilitation facilities require urine tests. Similarly, they could perform toxicology tests on us along with the STD tests. This is a weapon in the hands of any government and against us. And we are talking about a condition where drugs are either a form of currency for many, or the client brings them in to get high themselves. I choose not to do drugs when I'm on the job, but other people do. And I personally don't find anything problematic about it, other than deep taboo, and I don't understand why it's the legislator's business. Thus, we have a framework that stigmatises various identities in multiple ways, whether it is by undermining their mental health, their STD status, or drug use, something that doesn't happen in any other business.

Aris' observations point toward an implicit link between the urgent need to decriminalise drugs and the need to decriminalise sex work and de-attach it to health control. It is also evident that Aris articulates an empowering counter-discourse that exposes the state's attitude towards sex workers as irresponsible and unable to control themselves. Against this state-imposed infantilisation, subjects project the image of a society that takes responsibility for providing access to safer laws and comprehensive healthcare while at the same time acknowledging the right to free will that should apply to every citizen. The state's punitive treatment of behaviours in which individuals may find themselves simultaneously, conjecturally, or permanently, in practice makes them more vulnerable and marginalised, rather than providing them with safe solutions. This becomes clear through the history of epidemics, as shown in the next section.

This is the Law of the Plague. Epidemics, moral panic, and the enemy within

greedy and deceitful men shall be exposed as vermin
and their days as iniquity.⁵⁶⁰

When clients showed up, they demanded a health screening much stricter than with other people they met, because there was a prejudice that as a sex worker I would meet too many people. And that affected my personal relationships as well. Since I needed to work for a living, my flatmate would be somewhat critical of me. I was constantly questioning myself about whether I would make an appointment to avoid hearing criticism—

⁵⁶⁰excerpt from Leviticus, Ch. 15, Psalms 22, 58 and 59, and text by Diamanda Galas, *This Is The Law Of The Plague*, Plague Mass.

questions that are not asked of other workers. (Nina, 35, cis woman, queer)

State politics on controlling infectious diseases reveals the dominant forms of biopolitical management that were already operating over sexual, racial, or migrant minorities before the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, we may notice that during health crises, the state reproduces pre-existing social segregations, while the dichotomy between healthy and potentially infectious subjects deepens. On that note, it is essential to remember Walter Benjamin's conceptualisation of 'states of emergency'.⁵⁶¹ According to him, 'the tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule'.⁵⁶² Drawing upon this idea, I suggest that we shall consider the weaponisation of epidemics, from syphilis to HIV and Covid-19, as a means of discipline, in a way that turns the very notions of 'crisis' and 'emergency' vague: crisis becomes a norm through the imposition of laws that prolong the marginalisation towards 'dangerous' minorities and question their humanity. For example, the Covid-19 pandemic was weaponised by the Greek government to promote measures of extended suppression and policing instead of enhancing the national health system. From spring 2020 to summer 2021, a total of 11 months of lockdown and 8 months of curfew after 9 p.m. had been imposed, accompanied by harsh fines and police violence. Through these practices that turned a 'state of exception' into prolonged normality, the most marginalised groups, sex workers among them, were exposed to multiple risks, from direct criminalisation and state violence to starvation and, in some cases (reported by fellow sex workers on social media) death.

The abovementioned normality unfolded a 'seamless web of restrictions'⁵⁶³ whose seams soon started showing. Brothels were forced to shut down, as a measure of limiting the spread of the virus and the majority of sex workers, employed either in illegal studios, in the streets or as escorts were left without benefits, despite a measure that awarded brothel owners compensation. Migrant sex workers, especially those considered illegal immigrants, were targeted with increased strictness. In April 2020, at the beginning of the Pandemic, the media accused some young female refugees living in the Kranidi camp of the transmission of coronavirus, and illegal prostitution. Titles such as 'Alarm for migrant prostitutes

⁵⁶¹ Walter Benjamin, 'Frankfurt School: On the Concept of History/Theses on the Philosophy of History by Walter Benjamin 1940' (*Marxists Internet Archive*) <www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1940/history.htm> accessed 11 January 2024.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Evangelia (Lilian) Tsourdi and Niovi Vavoula, 'Killing me Softly? Scrutinising the Role of Soft Law in Greece's Response to COVID-19' (2021) 12(1) *European Journal of Risk Regulation* 59.

in Kranidi’, ‘Foreign prostitutes suspected of spreading the virus’ headlines appeared everywhere for a couple of weeks.⁵⁶⁴ However, the media coverage was soon set aside as the Ministry of Tourism 2020 Campaign aimed to present Greece as a Covid-free country.

An early indication of how prostitutes and free sexual activity would become among the primary targets of consecutive epidemic-related moral panics could be traced back to 17th-Century Venice. In his memoirs on the 1630 plague epidemic in Florence, Giovanni Baldinucci described the penalties imposed by Sanità, the city’s health board, for those who would break curfew. Punishment targeted specifically the poor, ‘constitutionally incapable of acting in the greater interests of the city’, and ‘physically culpable, their bodies frustratingly vulnerable to disease’ according to Sanità officials.⁵⁶⁵ Apart from the poor and Jews (remaining locked in the ghetto), prostitutes, were treated both as victims and perpetrators: defenceless against the disease yet especially contagious.⁵⁶⁶ As ordinary expressions of intimacy were being prohibited, prostitution, where sex also constituted a livelihood, became synonymous with contagion. The prostitute’s bodily ‘excessive heat’ generated from sex, was deemed a cause of infection.⁵⁶⁷ From the plague to syphilis, HIV/AIDS to Covid – 19, the prostitute has constituted an embodiment of intersecting vulnerabilities and a vector of contagion. Such specters would haunt Greek society long after the interwar period and before the HIV crisis. The persecution of male prostitution played out on the margins of female prostitution, however it was obscured by rampant moral panics, to which I now turn.

‘Proudly being the Nation’s shame’. Male homosexuality in post-war Greece

The gradual emergence of the nuclear family as a dominant productive and economic unit within the capitalist system from the 17th-18th centuries⁵⁶⁸ and its final consolidation in the 19th century and the construction of ‘marriage for

⁵⁶⁴ Miss Behave, ‘Η Φυλετικοποίηση Της Σεξεργασίας: Μια Μετάφραση, Το Κρανίδι Και Ο Λόγος Αλληλεγγύης Στις Στοχοποιημένες Μετανάστριες [The Racialisation of Sex Work: A Translation, Kranidi, and Solidarity Discourse towards Targeted Migrant Women]’ (*Miss Behave*, 1 May 2020) <<https://imissbehave.wordpress.com/2020/04/28/η-φυλετικοποίηση-της-σεξεργασίας-μια/>> accessed 11 January 2024.

⁵⁶⁵ John Henderson, *Florence under Siege: Surviving Plague in an Early Modern City* (Yale University Press 2019) 11, 76.

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid* 231, 284-285.

⁵⁶⁷ Erin Maglaque, ‘Inclined to Putrefaction: In Quarantine’ (2020) 42(4) *London Review of Books* <www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v42/no4/erin-maglaque/inclined-to-putrefaction> accessed 11 January 2024.

⁵⁶⁸ Friedrich Engels, ‘The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State - 1884’ (*Marxists Internet Archive*) <www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1884/origin-family/index.htm> accessed 11 January 2024.

love'⁵⁶⁹ -inextricable with the ideal of domesticity- led to the concurrent outlawing of non-productive sexualities. Its final consolidation in the 19th century would lead to closer scrutiny of both prostitution and homosexuality. Prostitutes and homosexuals were seen as traitors to a sexual economy that produced the nation-state population, and the future workforce. At the same time, with the introduction of Malthusian economics and ethno-demographics, states began to encroach more and more on the private sphere.⁵⁷⁰ A politico-economic distinction emerged, one between productive/legal and non-productive/illegal sexualities,⁵⁷¹ reflected within the law through the categories of idleness and debauchery. The terror of the disorder the working classes would generate, established the reasons for the criminalisation of the unlawful, dangerous classes, in collaboration with the scientific discourses of criminology and medicine/psychiatry, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. At the cutting edge of this reasoning was found the convergence of prostitution and homosexuality. As the boundaries between morality, health, and productivity have been long surpassed, these categories became gradually intertwined both within the law and scientific discourse. The pathologisation of prostitution and homosexuality has been essential in penal-welfarist efforts to control the working classes, especially through the instrumentalisation of epidemic-related moral panics.

The outlawing of sodomy in the first Greek Criminal Code of 1834 -specifically, 'sexual intercourse against nature' as it was standardised (i.e. anal sex between men was singled out for punishment amongst homosexual sexual activities)- was linked to the rise of pseudo-scientific pronouncements about genetically determined criminal behaviours. According to historian Demetra Tzanaki, relevant laws were applied shortly after the Paris Commune, at which time the bourgeoisie attributed the class war to racial and psychopathological causes, highlighting the 'degeneracy' of the lower social strata.⁵⁷² At the same period, negative connotations regarding 'homosexuality' and 'lesbianism' were introduced in Greek scientific medical and legal literatures/discourses. Later, in the interwar era, they became official state discourse, especially due to the influence of doctors who had studied and worked in Europe and were involved in state institutions in Greece. Achilleas Georgandas and Simonidis Vlavianos were typical examples. Both of them embraced 19th century international literature, to

⁵⁶⁹ See further Luc Ferry, *La révolution de l'amour* (Plon, 2010).

⁵⁷⁰ See further Agustin(12), Tzanaki (n113) etc.

⁵⁷¹ Demetra Vassileiadou, Yannis Giannitsiotis, Androniki Dialeti, Giorgos Plakotos, *Andrismoι: Anaparastaseis, Ypokeimena Kai Praktikes Apo Tē Mesaionikē Mechri Tē Synchronē Periodo [Masculinities. Representations, Subjects, and Practices from the Middle Ages until Today]* (Ekdoseis Gutenberg 2019) 55-56.

⁵⁷² Tzanaki (n114) 373.

link crime with various 'perversions' that flourished among 'genetic degenerates, anarchists, artists, prostitutes, and sexual deviants' in Greek society.⁵⁷³

In the case of Greece, public order rhetoric and practices flourished during the interwar period. It could be argued that this era marked Greece's unofficial entry into modernity. A modernised police force would soon be patrolling working class quarters in the newly constructed Greek cities. There, queer men (*kínaidoi*) were arrested in the context of prostitution, whilst newspapers ran a major scandal story about high-society men's participation in private orgies, or the occasional arrest of a rich man with one or two 'faggots'.⁵⁷⁴ Salacious scandalmongering enabled police authorities and journalists to collude in the outing or blackmailing of high-profile persons linked to homosexual prostitution. Completing the triangle of collaboration in linking criminal behaviour to degeneracy were doctors who cooperated with the police, or saw their presumed findings on 'perverted sexualities' make headlines.⁵⁷⁵ All these factors -enjoying significant control over the body and at least a semblance of morality to say the least- exercised power and control that had political effects over the social construction of the 'enemy within'. As experts and as guardians of public health and safety, as intellectual administrators of public opinion and the 'truth', they stood as representatives of science, law and vox populi.

'Degeneracy' as a pretext to unleash moral panics had very practical implications: young, working men, were restricted from 'roaming the streets without purpose' (loitering) and engaging in activities deemed harmful to the state and unhealthy for them—thus becoming illegal. To put it briefly, 'the problem of homosexuality' was treated both as a problem of male prostitution and its concomitants (of theft, blackmail, drugs, etc.), as well as a problem of public order, policing, and spatial restriction of a section of the working class.⁵⁷⁶ Labelled counterproductive for the nation and the economy, homosexuality therefore became part of a broader context of repression of the dangerous classes, similar to prostitution, vagrancy, and drug use. Social control extended to the bourgeoisie who mingled with the lower classes while 'settling scores' against bourgeois men 'corrupted' by the lower classes, carried the symbolic weight of what it meant to transgress class boundaries.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷³ Ibid.; During the Nazi occupation, Vlavianos would become the leader of the nationalist-socialist organisation ESPO, Fotakis (n116) 230.

⁵⁷⁴ 'kínaidos', 'poniros', 'adelfi' etc (queer, faggot, sissy, pansy) were the standard terms used both by the media, as well as by the medical-police authorities during the 1950s-1960s. after the 1970s, these heavily moralistic terms were replaced by the medical term 'homosexual'.

⁵⁷⁵ Fotakis (n116) 227 – 228.

⁵⁷⁶ 'Omofylofilia, Kratos Kai Taxeis Sti Metapolemiki Ellada (1950 - 1990), Meros A' [Homosexuality, State and Class in Post-War Greece (1950-1990), Part A] [2022] 151 25

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

Soon enough, liberal reform was adopted, endeavouring to rehabilitate the semi-fascist Greek regime's damaged profile in the eyes of European and American allies and their critics. The 1950 Penal Code decriminalised male homosexuality and would now only prosecute homosexual relations involving minors (and would as such until 2015), or sex in the context of 'exchange relationships'.⁵⁷⁸ Thus, despite proclaimed decriminalisation, the persecution of working-class homosexual and male sex workers continued if not escalated. Thousands of men involved in homosexual relations were hunted in public urinals, and brothel districts, as evidenced in newspapers and police publications of the time.⁵⁷⁹ The decriminalisation of homosexuality validated an informal status quo that distinguished between lower-class and bourgeois homosexuals. The former remained in the grip of the law, often subject to murky, criminal provisions on vagrancy and prostitution, and suffered beatings, arrests, humiliation in the courtrooms, confinement in prison or reformatories, and, in some cases, exile.⁵⁸⁰ The latter could exercise caution and leverage connections with state and police officials to evade stigma in heterosexual circles, unless the system opted to eliminate them -with tabloid newspapers' assistance.

The argument that the decriminalisation of homosexuality validated an informal status quo that distinguished between lower-class and bourgeois homosexuals holds merit. The former remained in the grip of the law (often by way of murky, criminal provisions on vagrancy and prostitution) and suffered beatings, arrest, humiliation in the courtrooms, confinement in prison or reformatories, and, in some cases, exile.⁵⁸¹ The latter could apply caution and take advantage of state and police acquaintances to avoid stigma in heterosexual circles—unless the system decided to eliminate them with help from tabloid newspapers.

It is worth noting that the legal definition of prostitution, introduced in 1949 by the Director of the Police Criminal Investigation Department and the first Professor of Criminology at the University of Athens, Konstantinos Gardikas, did not include gender discrimination.⁵⁸² The hunt for 'homosexuality' and

⁵⁷⁸ Efi Avdela, 'To Kostos Tis Mysis: Omosexualikes Praktikes Anilikon Sta Dikastika Archeia Kai Ohi Mono 1940-1970 [The Cost of Initiation: Juvenile Homosexual Practices in Court Records and beyond 1940 - 1970]' in Demetra Vassileiadou and Glauke Gkotsi (eds), *Istories Gia ti Sexualikotita [Histories about Sexuality]* (Themelio 2020) 148.

⁵⁷⁹ 151 (n576) 26.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.; Kostas Yannakopoulos, 'Via kata ton thiliprepon andron sti metapolemiki kai synchroni Ellada [Violence against effeminate men in post-war and modern Greece]' (2021) 150-152 *Synchrona Themata* 126, <www.synchronathemata.gr/via-kata-ton-thilyprepon-andron-sti-metapolemiki-kai-sygchroni-ellada-1/> accessed 11 January 2024.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid.

⁵⁸² Ioannis Vergopoulos, 'O Etairismos Kai o Nomos 3310/1955 [Prostitution and Law 3310/1955]' [1956] *Poinika Chronika* 414, cited in 151 (n576).

prostitution before 1970 must therefore be examined within the wider post-war economic context, beyond or perhaps because of gender-driven roles in an internal migrant working class. The young, unskilled proletariat of mostly rural origin, whose 'hardened' young bodies were now more openly idealised (most notably, by poet Dinos Christianopoulos and painter Yannis Tsarouchis) satisfied a workforce demand for the country's newly erected urban centres and could not be distracted by pleasure pursuits or subsidised by transactional sex.⁵⁸³ Still, economic and sexual exchange would soon take the form of a more explicit prostitution, at specialised -naturally illegal- brothels/bars, and the so-called molly-houses (κωλοχανεία).⁵⁸⁴ Homoerotic male material exchanges allowed both for free expression of sexuality and paying for rent and other basic necessities. Yet, it coincided with a surge of arrests of working-class gay men engaging in public sexual activities, a practice of choice for those living with their families in other western countries as well.⁵⁸⁵ In Greece, despite a lack of formal records on what is anecdotally reported as a wave of arrests, the immediate post-civil years cemented an understanding of homosexuality as 'criminogenic', and of poor faggots as deserving imprisonment, even when not directly involved in criminal activities.⁵⁸⁶ This perception was enhanced by the scientific discourse of the era as well. In 1957, Professor of Forensic Medicine Gregorios Katsas wrote that 'homosexuality, both active and passive, is of great interest to society, as it offers the occasion for various crimes'.⁵⁸⁷ Ten years later, in 1967, Georgios-Alexandros Mangakis, assistant professor of Criminal Law at the Athens Law School and a living symbol of the anti-Dictatorial democratic tradition, concurred that 'homosexuality, as a social phenomenon, breeds around it an underworld of social parasites, who act as criminal hotbeds'.⁵⁸⁸

With the Restoration of Democracy in 1974, the Greek state would repurpose post-war era tools to deepen the class gap. As early as 1977, the right-wing government of Konstantinos Karamanlis introduced a bill 'On venereal diseases

⁵⁸³ Ibid 24-26.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid 88.

⁵⁸⁵ For example, Stephen Maynard's works demonstrate how in early 20th- century Canada sex in homoerotic male relationships constituted a commodity for the working-class queers, to secure rent and other basic necessities, as well as homoerotic environments were transformed into 'chosen families', allowing for the free expression of sexuality. They also demonstrate that the total number of arrests, according to police records, targeted working-class men who had either been selling sex, or had been engaging in public sexual activities, as they lived with their families; see further Steven Maynard, "'Without Working?': Capitalism, Urban Culture, and Gay History' (2004) 30(3) *Journal of Urban History* 378, <<https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.bbk.ac.uk/10.1177/0096144203262814>>; Steven Maynard, 'Through a Hole in the Lavatory Wall: Homosexual Subcultures, Police Surveillance, and the Dialectics of Discovery, Toronto, 1890-1930' (1994) 5(2) *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 207.

⁵⁸⁶ Fotakis (n116) 228-230.

⁵⁸⁷ Cited in 151 (n576) 29.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid; Reference to the junta's punitive attitude against prostitution and homosexuality has been made in chapter 2.

and other related matters' which threatened with imprisonment (and even exile) cisgender and transgender women and homosexual men 'roaming in public places to attract men'.⁵⁸⁹ It was a characteristic example of the forthcoming shift from moral condemnation to medical surveillance. Under the pretext of eradicating venereal diseases, both bills aimed at policing and criminalising sex workers, homosexuals and transgender individuals in private and public spaces, as well as abolishing medical confidentiality through the mandatory medical examination. The state's intent was explicitly described by the Minister of Inner Affairs who stated that the bill 'intends to prosecute marginalised groups.'⁵⁹⁰

Anticipating the bill's potential implementation as repressive against both female prostitution and male gay and transgender way of life, the newly-established Gay Liberation Movement of Greece (AKOE) laid the foundations of a radical gay organisation for the first time in the country's history. AKOE led protests against both the 1977 bill, and a subsequent proposal in 1981, highlighting their authoritarian texture. Outside the Greek parliament, the shaming of arrested trans and gay male sex workers was commonplace. On 25 April 1977, AKOE together with prominent trans activists, such as Aloma and Betty Vakalidou, gave a speech in front of journalists.⁵⁹¹ Soon after, demonstrations outside Greek embassies and memos to the UN, the WHO and Amnesty International compelled the Health Minister to withdraw the bill, while a powerful demonstration by LGBT activists and sex workers outside the house of the new Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou led to the withdrawal of its revised version, in 1981.⁵⁹²

The movements spawned under pressure from these legislative attempts were largely cooperative and sometimes interconnected. AKOE in 1978 started publishing the magazine AMFI ['Bi' – 'alluding to the Greek words for bisexuality and doubt' (*αμφισβήτηση* in Greek), according to its editor-in-chief, Loukas Theodorakopoulos]. AMFI was intensely critical of psychiatry, a potential tool of oppression, rooted in state-capitalist ideology. Instead, they attempted to resist the medicalisation of homoerotic experience, prioritising the 'politics of desire'.⁵⁹³ Additionally, they tried to establish a network of communications with working-class gays.⁵⁹⁴ Paola Revenioti, trans activist, sex worker and anarchist, started publishing the magazine '*Kraximo*' ('Gay Bashing') in 1981. The

⁵⁸⁹ Loukas Theodorakopoulos, *'Amfi' Kai Apeleutherosi [Amfi' and Liberation]* (Polychromos Planitis 2005) 18-19.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid 27-39.

⁵⁹² Ibid 40.

⁵⁹³ Ibid 15.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid 233- 274.

magazine's cover featured the slogan 'Every job for profit is prostitution', and her manifest entitled 'Me, the Prostitute', encapsulating a class-driven perspective. As she told me: 'I started publishing "Kraximo" because I wanted to prove that a society that sees me as trash is trash itself. And it started when I became conscious of my class background.'

Both AKOE and Paola and her *Kraximo* circle represent a twofold momentum in the domestic LGBT movement. Through an unprecedented synthesis of class radical politics with the politics of pleasure and desire, trail-blazed both the queer and the sex-working movement. Both at that time and today these movements were characterised by internal contradictions, tensions, and conflicts, rather than by homogeneity, as previously noted in chapter one. Their most important legacy is the dialectics of the friction between assimilation and its limits on the one hand, and the practices of resistance that transcend the confines of the law on the other, a point to which I will return in chapter 6.

Returning to the *Metapolitefsi* era, in the 1980s, after PASOK's victory in the national elections, the narrative of progress and the cross-political and moral consensus underwent a transformation as labour discipline through repression and political persecutions began to relax. While workers' struggles contributed to wage increases and a post-junta twenty-year period of relative prosperity, the semi-public homosocial purlieus of working-class gays was losing its vitality, and urban presence. In parallel to what Schulman has described as the privatisation of gay life with the outburst of the AIDS crisis mentioned in the previous chapter, desire became gradually gentrified and subject to newly emergent rules of consumption.⁵⁹⁵ Porn cinemas and public urinals in downtown Athens gave way to coastal pubs filled by tourists, and discos and bars in Gazi and Metaxourgeo where new gay haunts popped up. At the same time, Mykonos became an international hub for cosmopolitan bourgeois gays.⁵⁹⁶ In this social context, a new generation of gay men began constructing an identity in an effort to dilute class boundaries. PASOK was perceived as the agent of change for the LGBT community, starting from the withdrawal of the venereal diseases bill, and a consequent discursive de-medicalisation of homosexuality.

However, the recording of the first two cases of AIDS in Greece in 1983 once again placed homosexuals at the center of public discourse about public health risks. As mandatory reporting of cases began in July of that year, followed by the establishment of the National Scientific Committee for AIDS Control,

⁵⁹⁵ Schulman (n395).

⁵⁹⁶ 'Omofylofilia, Kratos Kai Taxeis Sti Metapolemiki Ellada (1950 - 1990), Meros C' [Homosexuality, State and Class in Post-War Greece (1950-1990), Part B] [2023] 151 16

homosexuals were branded as a 'high-risk group' and medical warnings were issued about the dangers of promiscuity.⁵⁹⁷ AIDS acted as a code of shame for those violating reproductive (and nationally beneficial) heterosexual monogamy, at a time when homoerotic sexuality existed in the public sphere, transgressing the boundaries of social tolerance towards 'deviant' sexual behaviour. The 'AIDS crisis' reinforced the view that gays were dangerous from a medical point of view instead of exclusively a moral one. Since dying of AIDS was not a natural or neutral event, the way one died now imposed a negative stamp on how one had lived.

In the following decades, the AIDS epidemic became the pretext for the state's ever-expanding repressive policies and police operations against those most affected by it. Among the most egregious examples, are the so-called 'Virtue' operations, during which police stormed and made arrests at gay and sex-worker haunts. The operations took place intermittently throughout the '80s, continuing a practice that was rampant during the junta years. Despite an appearance of progressive reform, no government after PASOK's 1980s hegemony ended these operations—which were now recorded simply as raids.⁵⁹⁸ Raids persisted in 2003, as Greece readied to host the 2004 Olympic Games. Sex workers, drug users, homeless, and migrants were arrested and pushed to move away from the tourist areas of the center, in an attempt to 'improve the image of the city'. In the most publicised 2003 raid police invaded the 'Spices' gay bar in Athens. Eleven men were arrested under charges of pimping, illegal distribution of paedophilic pornographic content via the internet, possession and use of drugs, unnatural lewdness, and indecent publications. Their names, professions, and personal status (one of them was married to a woman) appeared in the press. Media talked of 'homosexual monsters', and the 'duty' of healthy citizens to prevent the contagious disease of abnormality from spreading. Homosexuality, along with the offer of sexual services, was criminalised through media discourse. As Bouklis notes, one of the detainees committed suicide, hanging himself while in custody. 'The suicide was presented as a plan for redemption and the media representations almost sighed with relief at the thought that the 'repentance monster' had decided to eliminate the traces of his immoral and infectious existence.'⁵⁹⁹

Matthew Weait echoes Bouklis' observations when he says that the fear of AIDS is innate to the Western fantasy of death—the ideal that wants us to live to a very long healthy old age and then die in our sleep.⁶⁰⁰ The fear that the virus will escape

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid 18.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid 19-21.

⁵⁹⁹ Paraskevi S Bouklis, 'Precarious faces' (*Ruins Documentary Blogspot*, 26 October 2013) <<https://ruins-documentary.com/en/p-s-bouklis-precarious-faces/>> accessed 21 August 2021.

⁶⁰⁰ Matthew Weait in 'Ruins - Chronicle of an HIV witch-hunt' documentary dir. by Zoe Mavroudi (2013)

from a socially marginalised minority (consisting of sex workers, drug addicts, men who have sex with men, sub-Saharan migrants, or migrants from other areas where AIDS was endemic) and harm the healthy Western subjects operates as a pretext for the indirect criminalisation of the HIV+ status.⁶⁰¹ Paul Preciado adds: 'AIDS reconstituted and remodeled the colonial control grid of bodies and updated the surveillance techniques of sexuality that syphilis had initially woven together.'⁶⁰² Greece's colonial control grid would soon tighten. As more migrants from Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa came to Greece, they would enter this list of police targets and would soon be described as 'hygienic bombs', threatening to infect the traditional, heteronormative, healthy family, the backbone of the Nation. The hygienic bomb rhetoric would culminate in the 2012 mass persecution of seropositive drug addict sex workers, an incident that sensitised the Greek society and human rights organisations, partly due to its media coverage and mainly because of the devastating economic crisis pervading Greece during the turbulent decade of 2010s. This persecution and the outcry it caused before elections has become paradigmatic of a new series of modern witch hunts that a state in serious political crisis unleashes in search for scapegoats in critical times amidst scandals, crisis and the rise of far-right.

On modern witch hunts. The 2012 pillory of HIV+ women

In the early hours of May 1, 2012, less than a week before the General Election, a series of police raids were launched in the area of Omonoia, in central Athens, during which hundreds of women underwent forced HIV blood tests.⁶⁰³ A few hours later, in a van of the National Public Health Organisation (at the time known as KEELPNO), police authorities announced to thirty of them that they had been found HIV positive—a process that consisted a violation of the legal procedures for examination and communication of the diagnosis. These women were charged with the felony of serial grievous bodily harm, and the misdemeanour of illegal prostitution. During their initial hours of the sweeps, many remained unaware of why they were being detained; others suffered opioid withdrawal symptoms.

Meanwhile, the charges against them gave impetus to an unprecedented political and media campaign of stigma and misinformation. Mugshots of the 'prostitutes with AIDS' were broadcast on news bulletins and were flooding dozens of internet sites just as the women were moved from police stations to a basement ward in the Korydallos prison, isolated from other female detainees. While the evidence

⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

⁶⁰² Preciado (n547).

⁶⁰³ See Appendix I.

was under examination by the authorities and the media, a health bomb narrative (a term employed by Andreas Loverdos, Health Minister and PASOK MP, who spearheaded the health branch of the operation) was being fed to the public. Mayor of Athens George Kaminis addressed the legal status of brothels in a statement, referring to the potential endangerment of ‘thousands of our fellow citizens’. The allegation that HIV was endemic in the brothels of Athens was spread without evidence in epidemiological data and would be followed by an increase of such raids within the next two years that included thousands of arrests and forced examinations.⁶⁰⁴ At the time of writing, eight of these women are dead, either by suicide, or due to inadequate antiretroviral treatment.

The 2012 case encompasses not only the predictability and ease with which the ‘unhealthy’ can be criminalised in times of crisis but, also, what Weait describes as the ‘long and ignoble tradition of locating the source of STIs in women in general, and female sex workers in particular.’⁶⁰⁵ The female HIV positive body becomes a paradigmatic locus of repression and control, an ideal object for the punitive state’s response. If the victims of the witch-hunts in early modernity were women who were forced to emigrate as their land had been rendered useless due to the reorganisation of class-economic relations,⁶⁰⁶ the victims of this defamation were HIV-positive drug-addicted sex-working immigrant women, enemies of the Greek family and the nation. Even though no formal investigation was launched into the 2012 case (state perpetrators were either reinstated or quietly resigned) the mass hysteria around the women’s supposed intentional transmission of HIV (unproved in the courts), mobilised prejudices concerning prostitution—prejudices that beget misconceptions about public health. These misconceptions are encompassed in faulty laws that toe the line between prevention and punishment. The poorly written Health Decree 39A which formed the legal basis for the 2012 operation, for example, contained only vague reference to the need for police intervention in the event of an ‘indication’ of infection. Given the near impossibility of enforcing such intervention on the basis of real cases of infection, *en masse* prosecution became the state’s sole claim to regulating and containing an epidemic, a health decree’s stated aim.

Yet, one thing the Greek state managed to do with 39A was to reinforce the medicalised approach towards prostitution embedded in regulationism— an amalgam of care and repression.⁶⁰⁷ The vulnerability of sex workers is not a ‘state

⁶⁰⁴ ‘Ruins’ (n629).

⁶⁰⁵ ‘Greece: Matthew Weait on the moral panic over the mass arrest of female sex workers with HIV’ (*HIV Justice Network*, 3 May 2012) <www.hivjustice.net/news/greece-matthew-weait-on-the-moral-panic-over-the-mass-arrest-of-female-sex-workers-with-hiv-2/> accessed 11 January 2024.

⁶⁰⁶ Lady Stardust (n477) 6.

⁶⁰⁷ Athena Michalakea, ‘This Is the Law of the Plague. Ygeionomikes Kriseis, Nomos Kai Ergasia Sto Sex [This Is the Law of the Plague. Sanitary Crises, Law and Sex Work]’ in Pola Kapola, Gerasimos Kouzelis

of emergency', but rather a norm, as long as the law's hygienic morality persists. In other words, the regulatory frame that sets licensing and frequent medical check-ups as legitimising prerequisites of professionally engaging in sex work, criminalises sex workers *prima facie* and *de facto*. Back in 1987, Carol Leigh had warned that AIDS served as the ideal pretext for a further marginalisation of sex workers and particularly HIV-positive ones through punitive laws and mandatory testings but added that such legal measures provided a false sense of security and discouraged safe sex practices.⁶⁰⁸ In a similar vein, Weait introduces the concept of 'unsafe laws' concerning HIV,⁶⁰⁹ laws that fail to protect against transmission yet at the same time contribute to the stigma and discrimination against people living with the virus.⁶¹⁰ He argues that, as sex and injection drug use can be safe, safer laws beyond punishment can also exist, focusing on harm reduction.⁶¹¹ Expanding on this argument, a complete reform that would cease to treat sex work as a potential threat to public health, decriminalise sex work, and allow undocumented migrants and refugees -sex workers or not- to have free access to National Health Services, would be the only tangible solution in both protecting public health, and in ending stigma against sex workers and people who live with AIDS or STDs.

The ill body of the female immigrant prostitute was thus transformed through the dominant political and scientific discourses into a ticking 'health bomb', threatening the institution of Greek family, its male head, and the masculine construction of the Greek nation itself. For instance, Loverdos, back in 2011 warned that 'the biggest problem in the city of Athens is undeclared prostitution and its relation to AIDS. The trafficked migrant who sells sex contaminates the Greek client, and therefore the Greek family'.⁶¹² Order 39A sought not only to control the health of immigrants, but also to establish legal conditions for their residence, harmonising medical examinations and police controls and eventually bringing about an amalgam of care and repression,⁶¹³ an aim manifested in regulationism. Therefore, this event allows for a wider retrospection concerning migration, borders, policies and rhetoric on human trafficking. Although trafficking, as will be analysed in the next chapter, is largely about the management of workforce and border control on the part of capitalist nation-

and Orestis Konstantas (eds), *Apotyposeis se stigmes kindynou [Imprints in moments of danger]* (Nissos 2020) 539-544.

⁶⁰⁸ Carol Leigh, 'Further Violations of Our Rights' (1987) 43 - AIDS: Cultural Analysis/Cultural Activism October 180.

⁶⁰⁹ Matthew Weait, 'Unsafe law: health, rights and the legal response to HIV' (2013) 9(4) *International Journal of Law in Context* 535.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹¹ Most of the arrested women were injecting drug users.

⁶¹² Preciado (n547).

⁶¹³ Bouklis (n599).

states, the confluence of health and anti-immigration discourses has been consistently observed over the last century in anti-trafficking discourses.⁶¹⁴

Returning to the story of the pilloried HIV-positive women it reveals an interesting consensus among strands of the feminist movement regarding medical control. It was no surprise that the General Secretariat for Equality did not denounce the health order, or call for it to be repealed, but only asked the following (rhetorical) question: ‘if these women are being prosecuted as carriers of the virus, why are their clients not also being prosecuted?’ However, this position was ironically echoed by groups critical of the operation as well. For example, both the autonomous-feminist collective *migada*, and the left-leaning second-wave feminist organisation *To Mov* called ‘Greek punters and their state protectors’ ‘a terror threat’ and respectively called for the prosecution of clients.⁶¹⁵ Although they are easily understood from an emotional point of view considering the media landscape at the time, these protests ignored the realities of women who engage in transactional, casual survival sex, among other things to subsidise their drug use, and contravened the position of a large swath of sex workers’ movements internationally that targeting punters is unsafe for sex workers. The paternalistic attitude of progressive and radical spaces is especially interesting not only for anecdotal reasons but because it highlights how movements proclaiming support for vulnerable, marginalised groups often undermine the people they wish to protect. The feminist organisations of the last decade that have actively supported persecuted HIV-positive women unfortunately largely reproduced the paternalistic schemes of the feminist philanthropists of the previous century, who undertook to rescue ‘fallen’ or ‘at risk’ women as shown in the previous sections of this chapter and chapter 2. Even more, this rhetoric reproduced an even stricter logic of health surveillance, reaffirming not only regulationism, but mechanisms of the punitive state in general.

Conclusions- Salvation through punishment

In this chapter, I tried to show that the continuum between policing and criminalisation, medical control and penal-welfarism and labour discipline or reformation, despite the changes in legal, reformatory, and medical systems,

⁶¹⁴ See further Eric Berkowitz, *Sex and Punishment: Four Thousand Years of Judging Desire* (Counterpoint Press 2013) 354-384.

⁶¹⁵ ‘Επικίνδυνες δεν είναι οι πόρνες, είναι ο εκφασισμός της κοινωνίας | ΜΩΒ ΚΑΦΕΝΕΙΟ’ (ΜΩΒ ΚΑΦΕΝΕΙΟ, 20 May 2012) <https://mwvkafeneio.squat.gr/2012/05/20/%CE%B5%CF%80%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B4%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B5%CF%82-%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BD-%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B9-%CE%BF%CE%B9-%CF%80%CF%8C%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B5%CF%82-%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B9/>> accessed 11 January 2024.

persists to this day. From a variety of punishment methods and the ostracisation of ill subjects to the persecution and imprisonment of the most vulnerable members of society, a common thread can be observed. The state, despite and due to its proclaimed protectionist intentions, in collaboration with experts, philanthropists, and activists, continues to marginalise and punish the subjects whose very 'salvation' is at stake.

These subjects have been perpetually conceptualised, and in more concealed ways, they are still cast as the dangerous classes. Historically and discursively, they have been defined by the moralistic, (bio)medical and legal-penal discourse as enemies of the nation, enemies from within. Although well-aligned with Christian ethics and morality, it must be made clear that these ideas about prostitution -and moral danger in general- far transcended the notion of morality. In the modern age, as unfolded in this chapter, morality and its identification with health had a clear ideological and class connotation: the disciplining of the lower strata and the emergence of productive labour as the highest moral value within the capitalist economy. Sex work, excluded from the context of the idea of productivity and institutional legitimacy, was fully identified with immorality, crime, and disease. Consequently, sex workers over the centuries have been caught in the threefold control of (pseudo)scientific discourse, state control, and private individuals acting as handmaidens to punitive state apparatus. As members of the non-productive classes, sex workers occupy a binary as both victims and vermins that is materialised and perpetuated through regulationism. Regulationism, as I have highlighted, does, however, work in partnership with private charities to rehabilitate and punish these criminogenic victims. Under this penal-welfare nexus, workhouses (state-sanctioned or forming part of the bourgeois feminist rescue industry) form the ideal *loci* where work emerges as a form of purification or rehabilitation. Even more, these environments require the production of a fully obedient and adaptable workforce to the discipline of the waged labour.

Furthering this argument, the construction of the sex worker as the female or effeminate equivalent of the (male) criminal mobilised an entire nexus of medicalisation-treatment through forced labour and a penal-welfare system in collaboration with law and medical experts, employed to control them and further restrict their bodily autonomy, and their autonomy as working subjects. As this chapter has shown, this penal-welfarist nexus, apart from disciplining sex workers, has further established their infantile citizenship, depriving them of the capacity to make decisions for themselves attributed to sane, logical beings. As concurrent victims and vermins/perpetrators, sex workers never quite fit the ideal of the free citizen, rather embodying the ultimate threat to it. Furthermore, the

association of prostitution -performed either by women, or effeminate men- to disease, both mental and physical, enabled collective fantasies of danger and the spread of moral and hygiene panics that put the entire nation's continuation, especially in times of crisis, at severe risk. Immunisation emerges thus as a twofold discourse of both the self and state. As such it is always already constructed in relation with otherness, producing and maintaining a conflict between immune, healthy subjects and foreign, contagious corporealities.

Finally, what becomes clear, especially through the interviews, is that sex workers themselves articulate their own counter-discourse as a direct critique of paternalistic rehabilitation and the penal - welfare nexus, one that exposes the vicious circle of victimisation and criminalisation in which state legislation constantly entangles them. Subjects emphasise the optional character of medical examination as not only a matter of personal responsibility but also a matter related to the right to public health, highlighting the need for free, unhindered, and destigmatised access to health care for all. These arguments reveal a keen understanding of society and how it should be organised, in sheer contrast to the medico-policial model. The optional against the compulsory character of these provisions is also stated as an understanding of the self as being able to make these decisions self-consciously. By introducing the concept of 'unsafe laws' concerning HIV and drug use, the failure of laws to protect against transmission is exposed, as is their contribution to the stigma and discrimination against people living with the virus and/or using drugs. Safer laws beyond punishment, focusing on harm reduction that can render sex and drug use safe procedures for all parties, can also exist. A complete reform that would cease to stigmatise sex work as a potential threat to public health, that would aim to decriminalise sex work, and that would provide all undocumented migrants and refugees free access to National Health Services emerges as a viable and realistic holistic approach to public health protection for sex workers and non-sex workers who live with AIDS or STDs, are drug users, deal with mental health issues, or are homeless.

In sum, the extensive hygienic scrutiny of legal prostitution and the constant persecution of illegal prostitution on the basis of illness/contagion was and is a foundational pillar of regulationism, through which the continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation is reiterated, and within which working subjects are trapped. Regulationism interweaves state authorities (e.g. police, medical and legal authorities etc.), but also interacts with non-state institutions aiming at the physical and moral treatment of sex workers, namely the rescue industry. The latter bears a significant cross-border dimension in the form of anti-trafficking

policies, materialised to what Elizabeth Bernstein has termed as ‘militarised humanitarianism’, as will be shown in the following chapter.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹⁶ Elizabeth Bernstein, ‘Militarized Humanitarianism Meets Carceral Feminism: The Politics of Sex, Rights, and Freedom in Contemporary Antitrafficking Campaigns’ (2010) 36(1) *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 45.

Chapter 5. Crossing Borders. Trafficking, migration, and exploitation

Discussions about prostitution often culminate in the heated topic of sex trafficking. Trafficking is often treated through a sensationalised lens and conflated with sex work. Yet, trafficking as a juridical construction communicates directly with state regulationism, reinforcing this continuum through border control and management of the migratory workforce. Intertwined with legal regimes of prostitution regulation (not *stricto sensu* regulationism), trafficking constitutes the cornerstone of controlling state-sanctioned and charitable penal-welfarist techniques discussed in the previous chapter. Trafficking is grounded upon sex work exceptionalism and the illegalisation/criminalisation continuum, which further expands through the ‘salvation-through-punishment’ dogma enforced upon the ‘victim and vermin’ prostitute.

By adopting a critical anti-trafficking perspective, this chapter examines sex trafficking as an issue tied to capitalist-imperialist structures⁶¹⁷ and “philanthrocapitalism”,⁶¹⁸ materialised ‘both through [US] government programmes and policies and through US funding of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs)’ and colonising a great part of the world.⁶¹⁹ Anti-trafficking agitation unites Christians, conservative politicians, bourgeois feminists,⁶²⁰ NGOs, and even parts of the (European) left, wishing to separate the sex industry (and exploitation within it) from other forms of labour exploitation, disregarding the material conditions of capitalist labour. On the contrary, arguing that exploitation within the sex industry is inseparable from other forms of labour exploitation under capitalism,⁶²¹ I will unpack trafficking as a tool of capitalist nation-states -in partnership with dominance feminists- to discipline the migratory labour force through anti-migration and anti-sex work policies and legislations. My approach puts the enduring governance feminist practices explored in chapters 2 and 4 in a global context. In this sense, I argue that trafficking must be addressed as less of a matter of exploitation and/or abuse and

⁶¹⁷ See further Papanicolaou (n87) 55.

⁶¹⁸ Kamala Kempadoo and Elena Shih, *White Supremacy, Racism and the Coloniality of Anti-Trafficking* (Routledge 2022) 5; On the perpetuation of colonial/capitalist-imperialist structures through international organisations, see further Silvia Federici, ‘From Reproducing Labour Power to Reproducing our Struggle: A Strategy for a Revolutionary Feminism. Second Annual Lecture in the Laws of Social Reproduction, 13 July 2021’ (2023) 12(2 / Social Reproduction) *Feminists@law* 12.

⁶¹⁹ Halperin and Hoppe (n28).

⁶²⁰ Ronald Weitzer, ‘The growing moral panic over prostitution and trafficking’ (2005) 30(5) *The Criminologist*. The Official Newsletter of the American Society of Criminology 2, 3.

⁶²¹ Rutvica Andrijasevic and Nicola Mai, ‘Editorial: Trafficking (in) Representations: Understanding the recurring appeal of victimhood and slavery in neoliberal times’ (2016) (7) *Anti-Trafficking Review*.

therefore of eliminating illegal sex and more as a matter of border control and restriction on migrant mobility.

Mainstream anti-trafficking discourse, namely academic, activist, and political, has insisted on equating sex work with trafficking. It has been made far easier for the state to both exacerbate sex trafficking and further restrict immigration flows. My standpoint by no means denies the precarious and exploitative condition of sex workers. It rather seeks to address the ways in which labour exploitation is framed as victimization, while certain aspects that involve migrant women's labour and migratory processes remain obscure. One of them is that sex work facilitates migration. Exploitation and/or abuse in sex work don't occur because of a by default precarious, gendered 'nature' of sex exchange; rather, they are fuelled by anti-sex work and anti-migratory policies disguised as anti-trafficking, undermining the bargaining power of workers and criminalising them.⁶²²

One of my interlocutors, Nina, active in autonomous feminist collectives, reveals these aspects when she criticises these strategies and discourses:

The migrant sex worker, in our view, at best is a little helpless, at worst a victim of extreme exploitation. All these discussions are based on dichotomies: either the empowered escort or the completely abject immigrant woman who has no other choice. I get very angry at the way this conversation is being carried out because there are so many immigrant women who come here legally and work in very poor and exploitative conditions either in clothing manufacturing or elsewhere, but we focus on the 'rings' and the 'pimps' instead of addressing the lack of real opportunities provided by the state. And then the state comes to 'set them free', but we never discuss what kind of freedom is this, whether they will be deported, whether they will be pushed into some other undervalued job. And it goes without saying that, when using the term 'trafficking' completely unchallenged without considering its implications, feminism is also part of the problem.

This extract lays out the two fundamental problems of sex trafficking responses: (a) failure of the state to provide equal opportunities to all, and (b) feminists' complicity, alongside the state and other actors, in failing to fully understand the consequences of the rescue campaigns they promote.

⁶²² Agustin (n12) 5-6.

I address these problems by highlighting the historical connection between anti-trafficking and the counter-migration law and observing how this connection is depicted in the present, particularly in the context of Fortress Europe and the affirmation of Greece as its Southeastern frontier. Moreover, I deconstruct the distinction between prostitution and other forms of work as artificial and fallacious, disregarding the inherently exploitative conditions of (migratory) devalued labour under capitalism. The context of (migrant) workers' exploitation under capitalism is, thus, taken into serious account.

This chapter unfolds in four separate subsections. In the first, I provide an overview of the institutional definitions of sex trafficking that have shaped ideas around the circulation of migrant bodies and subjects across borders. In the second section, I argue that conflating trafficking and sex work serves primarily as a matter of border regulation and restriction of migrant mobility for work in globalised capitalism. Then, I delve into the historical construction of sexual slavery and prostitution as an inherently coerced condition, portraying the prostitute as both a victim of illegal circuits and a criminalised subject. I reiterate the argument that the international and domestic feminist rescue industry excludes sex workers from being recognised as 'real' workers. The panics around white slavery reveal a shift towards the idea of the prostitute as a victim, which the influx of Asia-Minor refugees in the 1920s enabled, channelling girls and women directly into the lower tiers of manual labour on the basis of the salvation-through-work dogma. The fourth and last section elaborates on Nina's above remark. I argue that both the rescue industry and anti-trafficking agitation entrap exited sex workers into devalued forms of wage labour.

Lost in definitions.

In this section, I will examine the institutional definitions of sex trafficking. Analyses of the overlaps between migratory and sex-working subjects are often oversimplified, erasing the nuances of their lived experiences. As Alison Phipps notes, trafficking becomes 'a blunt instrument to describe the complex relationships between migrants, people who sell sex (and people who fit both these categories) and the various people who facilitate their travel and work. Nonetheless, the falsehoods endure, and the agitation swells'.⁶²³ There are theoretical and conceptual positions that interplay in construing all sex work as

⁶²³ Phipps (n82) 147- 148.

trafficking,⁶²⁴ jurisdictions where all migrant people count as trafficked,⁶²⁵ and others where all undocumented migrants are considered trafficking victims, as they can't sell sex legally. The latter, which confines migrant sex workers into a false dichotomy between victimisation/criminalisation, is an intertemporal pattern of state regulationism, and of the anti-trafficking penal-welfarist approach as well, as will be shown in the next sections. In sum, definitions of sex work, trafficking, and migration fluctuate internationally, causing confusion around who is regarded as a victim and who isn't.

Academic research, often supported by state and international institutions and NGOs, has its part in this confusion.⁶²⁶ Sex trafficking, often described as 'modern slavery', mobilises a body of political initiatives, from state and non-governmental actors, as well as academic research, with questionable methods, filled with 'sloppy definitions, unsupported assertions, and outlandish claims.'⁶²⁷ As Weitzer highlights, most academic publications on trafficking not only leave the -highly dubious- dominant discourse shaped by governments and NGOs, but reproduce it almost uncritically.⁶²⁸

'Anecdotes masquerade as evidence: writers typically recount horror stories about victims, to provoke the reader's abhorrence of prostitution. The most disturbing instances of abuse are presented as typical. Counterevidence is routinely ignored. [...] Prostitutes do not necessarily see themselves as "prostituted", but rather as working women or sex workers',⁶²⁹Weitzer continues.

Social science research has been outpaced by legislative initiatives and law enforcement, leading to a formulation of domestic and international policies lacking any credible evidence basis.⁶³⁰ This is not a mere coincidence, as the researches and publications Weitzer mentions are often funded by the US government or the EU, which explains the euphemism 'industry'.⁶³¹ This stance

⁶²⁴ For example, the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women considers all forms of sex work as trafficking, focusing especially on migration facilitated by sex work, see further: 'Ending Human Trafficking & Sexual Exploitation - CATW' (CATW).

⁶²⁵ In New Zealand, for example, where is illegal for all migrants to work in the sex industry.

⁶²⁶ Sheldon X Zhang, 'Beyond the 'Natasha' story - a review and critique of current research on sex trafficking' (2009) 10(3) Global Crime 178.

⁶²⁷ Gayle S Rubin, 'Misguided, Dangerous, and Wrong', *Deviations* (Duke University Press 2012) 280.

⁶²⁸ Weitzer (n620).

⁶²⁹ *ibid*

⁶³⁰ Ronald Weitzer, 'Human Trafficking and Contemporary Slavery' (2015) 41(1) Annual Review of Sociology 224.

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*; Weitzer points out that among 1600 academic articles and diverse publications on human trafficking, only one-third reported empirical research findings (the remainder were overviews and commentaries) and most of the empirical writings were based on either convenience samples or unidentified samples, recapitulating the assertions of government agencies and global organisations, even though these bodies had consistently failed to reveal their sources or methods. Likewise, a content

leads to reductionism and erasure of the diverse structural and experiential dimensions of forced labour, sex slavery, sex work, and the process of labour migration and the working conditions of migrants more generally. An increasing amount of money is, therefore, distributed to ‘tackle trafficking and slavery’, both domestically and internationally.⁶³² Another key issue, which surpasses the scope of this research yet is important in understanding how the political economy of anti-trafficking is influenced by political or cultural frames or interests, is to observe how the rescue industry expands, through ‘the funding preferences and practices of major anti-trafficking donors, including national governments, supranational institutions, development agencies, philanthropic foundations, private individuals, businesses, and religious organisations, and the implications of these preferences.’⁶³³ The discourse on ‘modern slavery’ dominates both governmental policies and NGO proposals in Greece and worldwide, as ‘trafficking with the purpose of sexual and financial exploitation is considered one of the most lucrative businesses in the world, after the guns and drug trade.’⁶³⁴ It becomes steadily clear the definitions move to more and more insinuations that the sex trade is one more link – among other criminal acts, namely the gun and substance trade.

The key international trafficking convention is the 2000 UN Trafficking Protocol (also known as the Palermo Protocol) defines trafficking in persons as

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery, or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.⁶³⁵

analysis of 41 recent books on sex trafficking found that most of them cited arguably flawed sources without questioning them, some ignored qualifications that were offered in the sources, and only a few contained any original research findings, Lisa Fedina, ‘Use and Misuse of Research in Books on Sex Trafficking’ (2014) 16(2) *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 188.

⁶³² Weitzer (n620).

⁶³³ ‘Call for Papers: “Following The Money II” - Special Issue’ (*Anti-trafficking Review*, 7 March 2023) <<https://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/announcement/view/39>> accessed 22 August 2023.

⁶³⁴ Weitzer (n620).

⁶³⁵ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children art. 3(a)

The definition is adopted by the 2011/36 / EU Directive of the European Parliament and Council of Europe. In the United States, the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act defines trafficking as the recruitment, transport, receipt, or harbouring of a person that involves (a) the use of “force, fraud, or coercion” over an adult or (b) any recruitment of persons under age 18 irrespective of whether coercion or deception are involved.⁶³⁶ The overlap between these definitions is not a coincidence. The US has emerged as a ‘global enforcer of human trafficking standards via economic sanctions on nations noncompliant’ with these standards.⁶³⁷ These economic aspects will be further addressed in the following sections. However, it is important to stress the Americanocentric perspective of morality and work that shapes the mainstream anti-trafficking discourse.

Remarkably, in both definitions, the key terms are ‘exploitation’, ‘abuse of power’, ‘vulnerability’, and ‘control’ are left undefined. Vagueness of definitions is one of the main factors that plague discussions over trafficking, as it allows judges and policymakers to interpret multiple behaviours as exploitative, erasing nuances, personal experiences, and political differences. Ultimately, vagueness becomes a tool of repression. Is transiting from one place to another a prerequisite for human trafficking? What is the line between smuggling and trafficking? Is trafficking a synonym for slavery and/or bonded labour? These questions traverse the analysis of trafficking, yet the debate often highlights merely the existence of sex trafficking, leading to a conflation with sex work.

One of the most striking aspects of the Palermo Protocol is that, in art. 3 (b), renders the consent of the trafficked persons irrelevant if any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used. Moreover, the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person under 18 years old ‘shall be considered ‘trafficking in persons’ even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a)’.⁶³⁸ Lack of consensus, along with the provisions of the subparagraphs (b) and (c) of art. 3 of the Protocol has led to a broad perception of trafficking, which may include all unauthorised assisted migration for purposes of obtaining work, irrespective of whether the individual consented or was aware of the type and conditions of work at the destination.⁶³⁹ This definition is adopted by the 2011/36 / EU Directive of the European Parliament and Council of Europe. In the United States, the 2000 Trafficking Victims

⁶³⁶Weitzer (n630) 225.

⁶³⁷Laura Shoaps, ‘Room For Improvement: Palermo Protocol And The Trafficking Victims Protection Act’ (2013) 17(3) Lewis and Clark Law Review 935.

⁶³⁸ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children art. 3(b),(c)

⁶³⁹ Weitzer (n630) 225.

Protection Act defines criminal trafficking as the recruitment, transport, receipt, or harboring of a person that involves (a) the use of “force, fraud, or coercion” over an adult or (b) any recruitment of persons under age 18 irrespective of whether coercion or deception are involved.⁶⁴⁰ Remarkably, in both definitions, the key terms ‘exploitation’, ‘abuse of power’, ‘vulnerability’, and ‘control’ are left undefined.

A counter definition, proposed by the Human Rights Caucus organisation during the Protocol negotiations, attempted to highlight violence and/or deception as an essential element of the definition of trafficking for all forms of work without making a specific reference to sexual labour. It recognised that men, women, and children are trafficked for forced labour in a wide range of sectors of the economy, such as domestic work, agriculture, and the fashion industry, and expressed concerns about the potentially repressive effects of the Protocol in terms of both prostitution and migratory process.⁶⁴¹ Yet, this approach remains marginal. Sex trafficking remains highly distinguished from labour trafficking and labour exploitation in general, formulating public policies. However, the rather vague official definitions are among the main factors that plague discussions over trafficking. Is transit from one place to another a prerequisite of human trafficking? What is the line between smuggling and trafficking? Is trafficking a synonym for slavery and/or bonded labour? These questions traverse the analysis of trafficking, yet the debate often highlights merely the existence of sex trafficking, leading to a conflation with sex work. Some governments engage in this conflation as well, equating human smuggling and trafficking, or trafficking with slavery, in their official statistics, in official discourse, and legislation.⁶⁴² This conflation often evolves into a crucial issue in Greece, as will be discussed next.

The blurry line and closed borders

Scholars and national and international legislations make a distinction between ‘smuggling (in which someone assists a consenting person to illegally cross a national border and where the two parties have relatively brief contact with each other) from trafficking (in which at least some deception or coercion is involved in recruitment or transit and in which the person may have protracted ties to the

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ Jo Doezema, ‘Who gets to choose? Coercion, consent, and the UN Trafficking Protocol’ (2002) 10(1) Gender & Development 20.

⁶⁴² See further the case of Brazil, in Thaddeus Gregory Blanchette and Ana Paula da Silva, ‘On bullshit and the trafficking of women: moral entrepreneurs and the invention of trafficking of persons in Brazil’ (2012) 36(1-2) Dialectical Anthropology 114.

trafficker).⁶⁴³ Yet, this distinction is not always clear-cut, e.g., in cases where a person first enters into a voluntary agreement with a smuggler but later their debt increases, and they engage in prostitution to pay it off, with or without the smuggler's encouragement. In such cases, the smuggler becomes a trafficker.⁶⁴⁴ In this section, I examine these 'blurred' distinctions around the idea that trafficking and the discourse that conflates it with sex work is an issue that touches primarily on borders and the management of migrant (labour) mobility within globalised capitalism.

Nevertheless, the way these discussions are conducted by international organisations, states, and most NGOs attributes both victimisation and criminal activity to individuals, ignoring the context in which cross-border movement of people takes place. A reality shaped by centuries of economic dispossession of the global south from the West, but also by neo-colonial schemes of domination, either in the form of 'humanitarian interventions' (i.e., war) or economic sanctions.⁶⁴⁵ Leaving the false dichotomy between refugees and 'economic migrants' ('on their way to steal your jobs and your benefits') aside,⁶⁴⁶ the adults and children who embark on this long and precarious journey to the West today, wish to migrate. It is the absence of legal and safe ways that can ultimately trap them in exploitative and abusive situations.⁶⁴⁷ Even more so, under the current legal framework, the binary *raison* of criminal law and right-wing governments looking for scapegoats, migrants often end up being accused as smugglers or traffickers, a process that goes hand in hand with increasingly harsher legal and political measures.⁶⁴⁸ At the same time, scapegoats as such are surrounded by a loosely-constructed narrative regarding the criminal character of 'smugglers/traffickers', serving as the *par excellence* ideological device that legitimises attacks against the working classes in the metropolises, in general. The current legal framework as well as its practical enforcement instead of protecting the rights of

⁶⁴³ Ronald Weitzer, 'New Directions in Research on Human Trafficking' (2014) 653(1) *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 6.

⁶⁴⁴ Smith and Mac (n2) 62-63.

⁶⁴⁵ See further Pardis Mahdavi, 'Trafficking, Terror and their Tropes' in Kamala Kempadoo and Elena Shih (eds.), *White Supremacy, Racism and the Coloniality of Anti-Trafficking* (Routledge 2022) 33.

⁶⁴⁶ 'The false dichotomy between 'economic migrants' and refugees | IOM Blog' (*IOM Blog*) <<https://weblog.iom.int/false-dichotomy-between-economic-migrants-and-refugees>> accessed 10 July 2023.

⁶⁴⁷ 'Twisting the 'lessons of history' to authorise unjustifiable violence: the Mediterranean crisis' (*openDemocracy*) <www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/twisting-lessons-of-history-to-excuse-unjustifiable-violence-mediterranean-refugee-c/?fbclid=IwAR24PKAlwqzCvyhKH3QC5MoJlotYfmm5TYwUPTQozFNbEdPBNUb4BcPkM> accessed 10 July 2023; see further Luke De Noronha and Gracie Mae Bradley, *Against Borders. The case for abolition* (Verso Books 2022).

⁶⁴⁸ Shahram Khosravi and Mahmoud Keshavarz, *Seeing Like a Smuggler: Borders from Below* (Pluto Press 2022) 5.

migrants and asylum seekers criminalise them and expose them to long prison sentences.⁶⁴⁹

According to a 2023 study by Borderline Europe, in Greece at least 1374 people were arrested for smuggling in 2022. On average, trials last for 37 minutes, which drops to 17 minutes in trials with state-appointed lawyers; the shortest trial documented lasted 6 minutes. Trials lead to an average prison sentence of 46 years and a fine of 332.209 Euros; 52% of all convicted people are serving a prison sentence of 15 years to life; as of February 28, 2023 there are 2154 people who are detained in Greek prisons with charges of smuggling (which remains the second largest group per crime); nearly 90% of them are third-country nationals (1897). Arrests and preliminary investigations are riddled with gross human rights violations, including: arbitrary arrests, violence and coercion, little to no access to interpretation or legal support, as well as problems in accessing the asylum procedure during detention, etc.⁶⁵⁰

These lines are written a few hours after the murder of a 20-year-old Syrian refugee by a policeman in Larissa. The 20-year-old had stolen a car but abandoned it and attempted to flee on foot when he was fatally shot in the neck. This incident is of interest to us here as we may not yet know the name of this victim of police brutality, but the police bulletin was quick to inform us that he had been released from a juvenile detention centre a few months earlier for illegal migrant smuggling and illegal entry into the country. Only a few weeks earlier the Pylos shipwreck, considered the most massive state murder by the Greek authorities, occurred.⁶⁵¹ On 14th June 2023, a trawler carrying migrants from Libya to Italy was spotted by authorities 47 nautical miles off Pylos, in Southwestern Greece. That night the 'trawler capsized' leaving behind 500 people missing and only 104 survivors.⁶⁵² The majority of the missing people were women and children. Some of the shipwrecked survivors are facing smuggling charges, through the slanderous

⁶⁴⁹ 'Study: A legal vacuum - the systematic criminalisation of migrants for driving a boat or car to Greece' (*borderline europe - menschenrechte ohne grenzen e.v.*, 4 July 2023) <www.borderline-europe.de/unsere-arbeit/studie-ein-rechtsfreier-raum-die-systematische-kriminalisierung-von-gefluechteten-fuer?l=en&fbclid=IwAR3znUPMCbCZIQmYoncV7MrBW2AJIMsHCBS9umvRkw_jcADswtCl2WDN4EQ> accessed 10 July 2023.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁵¹ 'Investigation of the Pylos Shipwreck' (*Forensis*, 7 July 2023) <<https://counter-investigations.org/investigation/the-pylos-shipwreck>> accessed 7 July 2023.

⁶⁵² Katy Fallon, 'Greek shipwreck: hi-tech investigation suggests coastguard responsible for sinking' (*the Guardian*, 10 July 2023) <www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jul/10/greek-shipwreck-hi-tech-investigation-suggests-coastguard-responsible-for-sinking> accessed 7 January 2024.

mediation of the Greek authorities.⁶⁵³ Accordingly, the specialised anti-trafficking measures are part of the wider Fortress Europe mechanism.⁶⁵⁴

Such practices though don't operate in a vacuum. Migration is treated as a crime, and modern technological military surveillance apparatuses and manpower are mobilised at land and sea borders to prevent these people from entering Europe, often leading to their deaths. Greece is acting in the interest of the entire EU and its aspiration to limit migration through 'a system of "hard" border protection measures, policing and militarised borders, bio-metric and technological surveillance, procedural hurdles in the asylum process, detention, lowered protection standards, increased deportations, pushbacks, and outright state neglect.'⁶⁵⁵ Symbolically -or not- the Greek representative to the Commission Margaritis Schinas has taken over the portfolio 'for Promoting our European Way of Life' since 2019.

In 2020, after -another- shipwreck with dozens of victims in the Ionian Sea, the Minister of Development and Vice President of the ruling party, Adonis Georgiadis, declared: 'We have fallen victim [sic] to a concerted effort to taint the country'.⁶⁵⁶ This proposal echoes the conspiracy theories of Great Replacement or White genocides, weapons of the international far-right, reflecting the entrenched ideologies of the Culture War, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism, and advocating tougher anti-immigration measures.⁶⁵⁷ At this point, it is interesting to study the historical distortions that led to the 'defence of the European way of life', the institutional racism of Fortress Europe and the discourse around 'white slavery'. Attempts to crush the human movement with military force 'is not to take a noble stand against the evil of slavery, or even against 'trafficking'. It is simply to continue a long tradition in which states, including slave states of the eighteenth

⁶⁵³ By Nick Beake, BBC Verify correspondent & Kostas Kallergis, senior Europe producer, 'Greek coastguard 'pressured' disaster survivors to blame Egyptian men' (*BBC News*, 13 July 2023) <www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-66154654> accessed 13 July 2023.

⁶⁵⁴ Paraskevi S Bouklis, 'Imaginary Penalties: reconsidering anti-trafficking discourses and technologies' (Doctoral Dissertation, LSE 2012) 13.

⁶⁵⁵ Wasil Schauseil, 'The consolidation of Europe's border regime in Greece' (*ROAR Magazine*, 19 March 2022) <<https://roarmag.org/essays/greece-europe-border-regime/?fbclid=IwAR2ing8suZ-C6BMksRfAGwaJdhd-raKJcGY2Elyl8FjCwcFB3fWuY4DQyIo>> accessed 10 July 2023.; Dimitris Koros, 'Pushbacks In Greece: State Crime, Denial and the Struggle Against Impunity' (*Blog Homepage | Oxford Law Blogs*, 12 April 2022) <<https://blogs.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/centre-criminology/centreborder-criminologies/blog/2022/04/pushbacks-greece>> accessed 10 July 2023.

⁶⁵⁶ 'Ο «καθαροαίματος» Άδωνις την ώρα που πνίγονται άνθρωποι' (*ΕΦΣΥΝ*, 11 January 2020) <www.efsyn.gr/politiki/paraskinia/226377_o-katharoaimos-adonis-tin-ora-poy-pnigontai-anthropoi> accessed 9 January 2024.

⁶⁵⁷ Makis Malafekas, 'Plythismiaki Antikatasatasi. Mia Theoria Synomosias Stin Kardia Tou Systemikou Logou [The Great Replacement. A Conspiracy Theory at the Heart of Systemic Discourse]' (*Jacobin Greece*, 25 May 2023) <<https://jacobin.gr/plithysmiaki-antikatastasi/?fbclid=IwARoidoaRWWCIKH-7HWqXNRQR-d-xOG090679jofyE7NBNU-xURJ4IWkGcl>> accessed 10 July 2023.

and nineteenth century, use violence to prevent certain groups of human beings from moving freely.’⁶⁵⁸

The expansion of the Greek economy in the Balkan area, along with the country's accession to the EEC, and the consolidation of the ‘European frontier’ on the Greek borders, which dates long before the refugee crisis of 2015, are all processes that reproduced the capitalist hegemony of Greece in the Balkans and constituted Greece as a ‘satellite’ imperialist power, as member of the EU and the NATO.⁶⁵⁹ In this national and international context, the complex of discourses and policies around trafficking acted as a catalyst for the reconfiguration of the interests of domestic capitalism *vis-à-vis* migrant labour.⁶⁶⁰

It is only fair to say, that the migrant experience in Greece during the 1990s remains a largely unexplored topic. Before the 1990s, workers arrived in Greece mainly from Pakistan and Nigeria, while Philippine women were employed as domestic workers, all under inter-state agreements. However, after the collapse of the Eastern bloc, the first massive flow of Albanian migrant workers arrived in Greece, causing a tremendous panic in the Greek society instigated by the media of the time; Albanian migrants were perceived as violating both national- ethnic borders and the normality of social life.⁶⁶¹ Migrants arriving from Balkan countries or Eastern Europe were detained in police stations and various kinds of improvised dungeons in border areas; this strategy, apart from being extremely aggressive, was forged by the rules of ‘supply and demand’, as it channelled migrant workers directly to employers across the country. The reception of Albanian migrants would, in reality, become a litmus test for the Greek migration policy to this day. In the 1990s, the Greeks were eager to exploit the hard work of the Albanians, whom they treated as invaders, resulting in frequent abuse against them and even murders. The media sustained the myth that all immigrants from the neighbouring country were potential criminals. Nationalist attitudes and imperialist aspirations in the wider Balkan region contributed to this scenario. This process ultimately allowed Greece to reorganise its economy by exploiting a new, cheaper proletariat and to develop jingoism in foreign policy.⁶⁶² Employment opportunities particularly in the low-skill, labour-intensive sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, manufacturing, or construction, were fuelled by the availability of this cheap migrant source of waged labour.⁶⁶³ The police gradually

⁶⁵⁸ *openDemocracy* (n647).

⁶⁵⁹ Papanicolaou (n87) 197.

⁶⁶⁰ Rubin (n69) 157.

⁶⁶¹ ‘O Ratsismos Kai i Metanastefsi. I Paranomimopoiisi Ton Metanaston Ergaton Stin Ypiresia Tis Ethnikis Symfiliosis. [Racism and Migration. Illegalisation of Migrant Workers in the Service of National Reconciliation]’ 151 (Athens, Summer-Autumn 2022) 8.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶⁶³ Georgios Papanicolaou and Georgios Antonopoulos, ‘Migration, Trafficking, and the Greek Economy: A comment on ‘the trafficker next-door’ (2022) (18) *Anti-Trafficking Review* 175.

emerged as the main regulator of the new working class, in ways reminiscent of the aggressive policy of the post-Civil War state against the 'enemy within'. Greece also gradually became a destination or transit country for people migrating primarily from Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.⁶⁶⁴ However, the 1991 migration law provided for extremely strict border and residence permit controls and aggressive police action against 'illegal immigrants.'⁶⁶⁵

Things became more complicated with the Afghanistan and Iraq wars in 2001 and 2003, respectively. Millions of people migrated to the West to escape the 'humanitarian' bombings the West was carrying out in their countries. During the same time, the EU migration policy toughened and Greece, being on the Eurasian border on the one hand, and a member of the EU and Schengen Treaty on the other, was called upon to play the role of a cannula for the whole of Europe.⁶⁶⁶ Greece received harsh criticism from humanitarian organisations for applying a doctrine of zero tolerance, was accused of brutal repression acts, of granting asylum to only three out of 10,000 refugees, and of being responsible for several shipwrecks, murders, and mine injuries at the Evros border and across the Mediterranean.⁶⁶⁷ A few years later, in 2007, Illegal Migrant Accommodation Centres were established in Samos and Evros, with the full cooperation of the UN.⁶⁶⁸

The first Temporary Reception Centres (TRCs) were established in 2010. After that, no matter where a migrant was arrested, they would be transferred to one of those, where they would remain incarcerated for up to more than a year. In 2011, the Greek government proceeded to create 29 such centres. Thus, forgotten containers from the 1990s were turned into 'dormitories', cots of the detention facilities of the police stations were renamed 'ergonomic beds', and policemen were transformed into 'security guards.'⁶⁶⁹ These establishments were invested with a 'charitable' spirit, which dictated that the detention of immigrants was

⁶⁶⁴ Papanicolaou and Boukli (n119) 3.

⁶⁶⁵ Law 1975/1991.

⁶⁶⁶ *The Dublin II Trap Transfers Of Asylum-Seekers To Greece* (Amnesty International, 2010) <https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/library-document/dublin-ii-trap-transfers-asylum-seekers-greece_en#:~:text=The%20Dublin%20Regulation%20is%20an,upon%20arriving%20in%20the%20EU>.

⁶⁶⁷ 'Human Rights Watch World Report 2002: Europe & Central Asia: Greece' (*Human Rights Watch | Defending Human Rights Worldwide*) <www.hrw.org/legacy/wr2k2/europe10.html> accessed 7 January 2024.

⁶⁶⁸ The European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals, the European External Borders Fund, the European Return Fund and the European Refugee Fund. These funds for the period 2007-2013 had a joint budget of EUR 4 billion, and approved the sum of EUR 148 million, with the Financial Directorate of the Hellenic Police as the beneficiary; 'Apo tous aristerous patrones stis protes MKO. To deytero miso tis dekaetias tou 2000 [From the left-wing patrons to the first NGOs. The second left of the 2000s]' 151 (Athens, Winter – Spring 2023) 11.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

necessary for their self-protection until they were deported.⁶⁷⁰ It becomes quite clear that the Greek state resorted once again to the all-familiar protection-through-punishment doctrine that successfully had imposed on the ‘dangerous classes’ in the past, as shown in the previous chapter. The benefit of this choice on behalf of the Greek state was twofold: beyond the management of migrant labour that was achieved internally, it consolidated the border spectacle disciplinary regime, which functioned as the watchdog of ‘illegal’ -as it was represented-migration.⁶⁷¹ The Greek authorities have been invoking ‘migration crises’ and a ‘state of emergency’ since the early 1990s and would continue to do so in the decades of 2010 and 2020. With the gradual collapse of public services since the 2010 crisis, the management of migrant populations in the camps will be entrusted jointly to the police and private initiatives, in the form of NGOs. This contract will be formalised in 2016 when the pact signed between the EU and Turkey stipulates that European funds for the ‘refugee issue’ will be channelled through NGO funds. Lately, the legal provisions against smuggling and trafficking have been instrumentalised by the Greek government to hold volunteers and NGOs accountable for assisting the so-called migration ‘invasion’. However, the foundations of these legal categories do not seem to be questioned by NGO agents, who rather treat their imposition as malpractice on behalf of the Greek state.⁶⁷²

The overview of the context of migration policy in Greece is pivotal in understanding why trafficking becomes an issue after the 1990s. During the same period, the country gained unprecedented economic and political influence in Southeastern Europe. Lazos’ study was fundamental in consolidating the perception that Greece was not merely a migratory destination, but rather a hotbed of sex trafficking, claiming that in 2000, 80% of women working in the sex industry were victims.⁶⁷³ In contrast, Psimmenos presented a more nuanced perspective, according to which the globalised economy created migrant communities bound by their origin, labour, and migrant status, which, combined with poverty and unemployment, often suffered conditions akin to forced labour.

⁶⁷⁰ See further Vasilis Georgakopoulos, ‘Epikindyna Somata Stin Krisi. Analsi Logou Sti Dioksi Ton Orothetikon Gynaikon [Dangerous Bodies in Crisis. Discourse Analysis Focusing on the Seropositive Women Persecution]’ (MA Dissertation, University of Athens 2017).

⁶⁷¹ Blanca Garcés Mascareñas, ‘The Border Spectacle’ [2019] CIDOB opinion <www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/opinion/migraciones/the_border_spectacle> accessed 22 July 2023.; On the death of refugees as a spectacle for consumption and the simultaneous perpetuation of necropolitics see also Yasmin Nair, ‘On Titan, Migrants, and Mourning’ (29 June 2023) <<https://yasminnair.com/on-titan-migrants-and-mourning/#more-17549>> accessed 8 August 2023.

⁶⁷² On the internalisation of the dominant anti-trafficking discourse by NGO workers see further Kostoula Maki, ‘Kataskevazontas Emfyles Tautotites: I Ritoriki Tou Fylou Sto Logo Ton Ergazomenon Se MKO Gia Ti Diakinisi Kai Tin Emporia Gynaikon [Constructing Gender Identities: The Rhetoric of Gender in the Discourse of Workers in Non-Governmental Organizations on Women’s Trafficking]’ (Doctoral thesis, University of Ioannina 2014)

⁶⁷³ Cf Papanicolaou (n87).

At the centre of this process were women who had been pushed into the most undervalued sectors of production, such as domestic and sexual work, and within these sectors immigrant labour occupies the bottom of the hierarchy.⁶⁷⁴ While the extensive mainstream literature on globalisation in the 1990s insisted that borders had become less relevant as obstacles to the cross-border mobility of persons, the renewed emphasis on cross-border crime, and sex trafficking, in particular, is an apt reminder that borders are key to the creation and maintenance of social hierarchies based on class, gender and race within the capitalist nation-state and across the international system of nation-states.⁶⁷⁵ But while the criminalisation of migrant sex work is an extension of exceptionalist views of sex work, already well-established within nation-states, the specific concern with the migrant sex worker takes place alongside the historical construction of the sex slave, to which I now turn.

Constructing the sex slave

To understand how prostitution came to be considered inherently coercive, it is useful to turn in this section to the historical parameters that connect it to the (sex) slave trade. It is necessary though to stress at this point that feminist philanthropy at the onset of the 20th century, encouraged the rise of the cult of domesticity, and it was in this context that worked towards promoting it to the West. The same example was followed by the Greek feminists. Around 1900, 'trafficking' was used more or less interchangeably with the terms 'white slavery', 'white slave trade', or 'white slave traffic'. These terms were, along with 'social evil' and 'immoral purposes', codes for prostitution as well as rhetorical vehicles for denouncing prostitution. The language of the white slave traffic first emerged in the context of British activism around prostitution in the late nineteenth century.⁶⁷⁶ As Gretchen Sonderlund argues, it was William Stead who, in his internationally resonant campaign against child prostitution in 'modern Babylon', transformed the notion of 'white slavery' from a 'polysemic term that encompassed several meanings' (polygamy, indentured servitude, wage slavery, the working conditions of factory and shop girls, the southern pro-slavery mindset, etc.), codifying it around 'forced domestic and international

⁶⁷⁴ Iordanis Psimmenos, 'The Making of Periphractic Spaces: The Case of Albanian Undocumented Female Migrants in the Sex Industry of Athens' in Floya Anthias and Gabriella Lazaridis (eds), *Gender and Migration in Southern Europe* (Routledge 2020) 81-85.

⁶⁷⁵ See further John Milios and Dimitris Sotiropoulos, *Rethinking Imperialism: A Study of Capitalist Rule* (Palgrave Macmillan Limited 2009).

⁶⁷⁶ Gayle S Rubin, 'The Trouble with Trafficking: Afterthoughts on "The Traffic in Women"', *Deviations - A Gayle Rubin Reader* (Duke University Press 2012) 68.

prostitution.’⁶⁷⁷ Peck argues that the concept was ‘feminised’ in this period, moving away from its connections with labour and becoming more firmly associated with exploited prostitution.⁶⁷⁸ During the Progressive Era in the United States of America, there were fears that prostitution was not only a growing industry of sin, but that women were being coerced into becoming prostitutes. This so-called ‘white slave’ traffic was the forerunner of the modern-day sex traffic.⁶⁷⁹ This discourse was embedded in assumptions about appropriate female behaviour and the construction of a Victorian ideal of white femininity.⁶⁸⁰ After the abolition of chattel slavery in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a class, race, and gender-based moral panic thrived in Europe and North America. These mobilisations shaped policies, legislations, and concepts that remain vigorous today.

By the late 19th and early 20th century, poor and working-class women began migrating *en masse* across borders to pursue a better life, even outside traditional marriage structures, and may have engaged in sex work in order to achieve it. Consequently, the immigrant woman was branded as ‘coerced, deceived, lured, trapped, kidnapped, and forced into prostitution’ which was used to explain the supposedly sexually deprived ‘and uncivilised character of immigrant communities.’⁶⁸¹ This imagery was used to justify anti-immigration policies, often in the guise of anti-trafficking policy, in a bid to prolong racial segregation in Europe and North America. The moral panic over migrant women and human trafficking took on a different kind of racialisation in 19th century narratives of the *White Slave Trade*, where migrant men from the Global South residing in the Global North were allegedly enslaving white Western European and North American women into prostitution.⁶⁸²

The moral imperative of Victorian ethics -largely endorsed by the emerging Greek bourgeoisie- insisted on viewing not just prostitution, but all work for economic survival performed by women as a rather unfortunate option, a resort for those middle-class dames that had failed to ensure a good marriage for themselves, those fallen in desperation due to family economic bankruptcy. For the working classes, it was destiny.⁶⁸³ For one to resort to prostitution as an ‘option’ even for survival, was seen as an ‘insane’ option, closely related to madness or sickness, as thoroughly analysed in the previous chapter, and therefore invariably involved

⁶⁷⁷ Gretchen Soderlund, *Sex Trafficking, Scandal, and the Transformation of Journalism, 1885-1917* (University of Chicago Press 2013) 3.

⁶⁷⁸ Laite (n240) 43.

⁶⁷⁹ Erin Gallagher-Cohoon, ‘The Dirt on “White Slavery”: The Construction of Prostitution Narratives in Early Twentieth-Century American Newspapers’ (2014) 5(1) *Constellations*.

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid* 39.

⁶⁸¹ Kempadoo, Sanghera and Pattanaik (n84) xii.

⁶⁸² *Ibid*.

⁶⁸³ Vicinus (n542) ix-x.

enforcement or fraud. After all, why would a sane, moral, healthy woman resort to prostitution unless it was imposed on her by external forces? This explains perhaps why the campaigns around white slavery were shaped by the rampant Victorian postulations that prostitution could never be a rational work-related choice and that it was inherently malicious. Reformers also seized upon 'migratory prostitution' as what they considered 'the worst form of an inherently exploitative business.'⁶⁸⁴ Thus, the language used to describe 'white slavery' fused different elements, such as opposition to prostitution, as a cause-effect result, the assumption that prostitution invariably involved coercion, and some kind of movement across a national border or internal boundary; the term 'traffic' itself connoted commercial activity and geographical mobility. As Rubin emphasises, racism and anti-semitism -although not in the scope of this section, yet, with these populations constituting parts of the 'dangerous classes'- were also frequently part of the brew.⁶⁸⁵ In Greek reality, this was reflected in the extreme disciplinary attitudes Greek bourgeois women had against the poorest of minority women, as discussed in chapter 2. In what follows there is a brief discussion on the issue across the Atlantic.

In the United States, the panic was sparked by a 1909 exposé in *McClure's* magazine which accused 'immigrant Jewish "scum" (among other groups) of 'cruising' the American heartland looking for innocent girls then plucking them up for deposit into a 'closely organised machine of sin from which there was no escape.'⁶⁸⁶ Shortly thereafter, President William Howard Taft started giving speeches about the 'urgent necessity for additional legislation and greater executive activity to suppress' the trade. In the bundles of literature that amplified the general alarm, the responsible parties were repeatedly characterised as foreign, particularly 'Jew traders' and 'typical Jew pimps', the 'outcast filth' who fed corruption and immorality in the cities. The legislative result of the panic was the Mann Act of 1910, an initiative its sponsors said was necessary for a trade 'more horrible than any black-slave traffic ever was' to flourish.⁶⁸⁷ The law created 'a new form of criminal: one who knowingly transport[s] in interstate commerce [...] any woman or girl for the purpose of prostitution or debauchery, or for any other immoral purpose, or with the intent [...] to induce, entice, or compel any female to do something immoral.'⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁴ Edward J., Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (Schocken Books 1983) 39-40.

⁶⁸⁵ Gayle Rubin (n69) 69; for an in-depth analysis on how antisemitism comes into play with misogynistic sentiments to form the idea of the *pariah* and a detailed feminist -theoretical analysis of the philosophical and historical premises of such ideas see further Eleni Varika, *Les rebuts du monde: figures du paria [Oi apovlitoi tou kosmou: morfes tou paria]* (Plethron 2013) .

⁶⁸⁶ Berkowitz (n614) 383.

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid 384.

As Eric Berkowitz highlights, ‘the law could not have had a broader reach’: the term “immoral purpose” could cover almost every action that fell outside conservative morals of the era. Berkowitz also narrates the history of Jack Johnson, a black prizefighter who was convicted under the Mann Act for his multi-state relations with a white woman. Crowds were shouting for a lynching, and the Chicago district attorney called for a tough sentence ‘to set an example to Johnson’s race’. He fled the country, but he returned in 1920 to serve a year-long prison term.⁶⁸⁹ Moreover, according to Rubin, after the elimination of most of America’s old red-light districts during the First World War, Mann Act prosecutions shifted toward nonmarital sex. The language of ‘immoral purposes’ was successfully construed more broadly to mean non-commercial sexual activity outside of marriage when travel between different states was involved. Women as well as men were liable under the Act for transporting other women; they also could be, and often were, prosecuted for conspiracy to aid males (such as their boyfriends and lovers) with their own transportation. Additionally, many women were subjected to federal charges for traveling voluntarily with men to whom they were not married. Between 1927 and 1937, some 23% of the female prisoners in the federal prison in Alderson, West Virginia, were incarcerated for violations of the Mann Act, almost none of them prostitutes. Presumably, they had violated the provision prohibiting travel for other ‘immoral purposes.’⁶⁹⁰

In contradiction with older legislations, the Mann Act federalised the crimes,⁶⁹¹ setting a precedent for both federal and international legislations. Yet, attempts to control both prostitution and migration were not new in the US. In the 19th century, migrant women constituted a big part of the sex trade population. The demand for commercial sex was inexhaustible, and for unsupervised factory girls living in boarding houses, the temptation to make extra money was fervent, although the working conditions in brothels were sordid.⁶⁹² Red-light districts were often tolerated but were always illegal and subject to police raids. Doctors and politicians alike characterised sex-trade zones as ‘venereal swamps’ where immigrant women spread sexual infection.⁶⁹³ For example, the American Medical Association studied whether Chinese prostitutes were poisoning the American bloodstream.⁶⁹⁴ Apart from urban planning and health regulations of limited geographical scope of the 1850s -doubtlessly racist and oppressive for Chinese workers- in 1875, Congress passed the Page Act, which barred entry into the US of

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁹¹ Rubin (n676) 74.

⁶⁹² Berkowitz (n614) 381.

⁶⁹³ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid 382.

all Asian women brought for 'lewd and immoral purposes'.⁶⁹⁵ The act theoretically allowed genuine Chinese wives to immigrate while keeping out only sex workers, but in application it barred almost all Chinese women from entering the country. The process for exiting the Chinese border contained long interrogations, photographs, and examinations looking for traces of immorality in women's bodies and clothes. A negative report on any of these factors was taken as a sign of a woman's intention to work in the sex trade.⁶⁹⁶ This is rather evident of how regulationism shapes directly the image of sex workers towards society as well as the self-image of the sex worker to themselves, the ways in which it constructs and construes them as subjects oscillating between victimhood and criminality, confining them in the continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation.

The Page Act, crystallising racialised moral panic around 'yellow slavery', is the first anti-immigration and anti-trafficking legislation enacted.⁶⁹⁷ In the UK, white-slavery legislation passed between 1885 and 1912 'created provisions to monitor and restrict the migration of women'.⁶⁹⁸ The United Nations was one of the first global powers to adopt a policy intended to curb 'white slavery,' and it established the International Agreement for the Suppression of the 'White Slave Traffic' on May 18, 1904. The Agreement referred specifically to women and girls and mandated that governments survey transportation for trafficking victims and their traffickers and repatriate foreign prostitutes to their home countries.⁶⁹⁹ As Rubin highlights, the increased immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, was met with a nativistic defence of northern European Protestant supremacy against groups seen as socially and racially inferior.⁷⁰⁰ This led to an anti-immigration agitation, resulting in the establishment of the federal United States Immigration Commission (popularly known as the Dillingham Commission, after the senator who was its chair).⁷⁰¹ The Commission formulated a series of legislative reforms, culminating in the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act, which virtually stopped the flow of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe by establishing quotas based on national origin.⁷⁰² Volume 37 of the Dillingham Report includes a section on 'Importing and Harboring of Women for Immoral Purposes' tucked in between sections on steerage conditions, immigrant homes and aid societies, and immigrant banks. The mobilisations against prostitution and white slavery were thoroughly entangled with the debates about race and

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁷ *Sex Work & Racism: Historical Overview of Racism in Anti-Sex Work, Anti-Trafficking and Anti-Immigration Legislation in Europe* (ESWA Community Report #1, 2022) 7 <www.eswalliance.org/sex-work-racism-first-community-report>.

⁶⁹⁸ Smith and Mac (n2) 71.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid 9.

⁷⁰⁰ Rubin (n676) 78.

⁷⁰¹ ESWA (n698) 9.

⁷⁰² These restrictions were only relaxed in 1965, *ibid*.

immigration.⁷⁰³ The Dillingham Report focused on prostitution among immigrant women, yet much of the white-slave literature warned of the ostensive dangers of immigrant men.⁷⁰⁴ The alleged procurers were assumed to be disproportionately drawn from the racially suspect populations whose immigration threatened to undermine the ostensibly virtuous native-born population. The enslaved girls were generally depicted as white and native-born, while the slavers tended to be, by contrast, alien, dark, and swarthy men, ‘in a typical melodramatic formula.’⁷⁰⁵ This representation of victimhood stands out repetitively as a trope that echoes the argument made in the introduction of this chapter; that trafficking as a juridical construction is in parallels with state regulationism in constructing the continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation, and sex workers as victims *and* perpetrators. Towards this direction also aims to examine how panics regarding white slavery – intensified by the influx of Asian-Minor refugees in the mainland- contributed to the historical construction of these dichotomies.

White slavery panics in early 20th-century Greece

These legislative moves did not leave the legal orders of states beyond the Anglo-Saxon world, including Greece, unaffected. The Greek 1920s were marked by a mass influx of refugees from Asia Minor. The military defeat resulted in huge damage to both Greece’s economy and national imagination. At the same time, the first anti-immigration legislation was introduced in Greece; a few months before the Asia Minor catastrophe, Law 2870/1922 prohibited the disembarkation of immigrants without papers under the pretext of the protection of public health against the spread of infectious diseases. Although Law 2870/1922 wasn’t directly connected with prostitution, it is useful to read its coming into force within a broader political climate, that of an internationalised panic regarding migration, infectious diseases, and the sex of the ‘dangerous classes’ to which refugees were added—as a cohesive bond. It is also worth noting that this law came in the same year as the first comprehensive legislation on prostitution and STDs (3032/1922) and the first Building Regulation, while the City Police took its first steps.

At this time, by the massive influx of refugees, the synergies between feminist philanthropists and the state apparatus were consolidated, and a more robust perspective about trafficking and the ‘woman as victim’ emerged. Callirhoe Paren, who is often described as the first Greek feminist but remained a royalist and

⁷⁰³ Rubin (n676) 72.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

nationalist, had already established several philanthropic institutions, aimed at the professional training of impoverished women and the propagation of national traditions and values, that would now be filled with refugee girls under the threat of becoming prostitutes.⁷⁰⁶ For example, liberal centrist Maria Svolou applied methods of labour discipline as described in the second chapter, in the asylums and factories, but also directly opposed prostitution for fear of the loss of female workforce. This early strand of upper-class feminism allied with the state, asserting thus their stake in the public arena, which was until then off-bounds. This was a process similar to the rise of the social, identified by Laura Agustin as the origin of the rescue industry in different national contexts.⁷⁰⁷ Being part of the emergence of a newly empowered bourgeoisie set out new rules on how society and subjects should be governed, 'our contemporary understanding of 'prostitution' was fashioned and philanthropy was carved out as a women's sphere of work.'⁷⁰⁸ Women philanthropists, who gradually took a serious role in formatting state institutions such as social welfare, viewed prostitutes as "a class of people" with a mission to do something about it.⁷⁰⁹ In other words, part of the process of the formation of the feminist movement at its first steps was the maternalistic imposition of one class of women- the bourgeois- over another – those of the working class.

In 1925, a report by the League for the Repression of Trafficking presented the outbreak of the sex trade that occurred in Greece after World War I and the Asia Minor Catastrophe.⁷¹⁰ The relationship between regulationism and trafficking was considered obvious, and a hygienic reform was promoted as a necessary step towards state modernisation.⁷¹¹ At the same time, the perception that prostitutes were victims of society, and their exploiters should be punished developed within the Athens police. What had started as a crusade against impurity and disease, soon with the influx of migrants turned into a salvation crusade of vulnerable women-pray to unscrupulous pimps. The police, on the orders of Commander Koutsoumaris, unleashed patrols and raids in working-class districts, usually inhabited by refugees, where many brothels were concentrated. Police reports of the time record the raid in the Asyrmatos area near Philopappos Hill, during which a curfew was imposed, all houses were raided, and all adults were arrested, while all women were taken for a compulsory medical examination. This was

⁷⁰⁶ Angelika Psarra and Eleni Fournaraki, 'Parren, Callirhoe (born Siganou) (1859–1940)' in Francisca de Haan, Krassimira Daskalova and Anna Loutfi (eds), *A Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements and Feminisms; Central, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries* (Central European University Press 2006) 402-7.

⁷⁰⁷ Agustin, (n12) 96-133. See further Ch. 2.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid 96.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid 97.

⁷¹⁰ Hantzaroula (n127) 22.

⁷¹¹ Lazos (n89) 67-68.

followed by the arrest of 20 men for drugs, trafficking, and assorted misdemeanours.⁷¹² It is noteworthy that Koutsoumaris, himself participating in raids, worked closely with organisations such as the League for Women's Rights, which called for the state to take measures to eradicate prostitution, considering it a necessary measure to protect the 'unprotected girls from the refugee settlements' who ended up in the net of prostitution. The police and women's organisations submitted to the Ministry of Health a draft law providing, among other things, for the *ex officio* prosecution of pimps, the establishment of special clinics for the examination of prostitutes, and the creation of workhouses for their 'rehabilitation'.⁷¹³ All these efforts to combat trafficking, echoed the salvation-through-punishment doctrine as the hegemonic discourse that justified anti-trafficking measures throughout the time at scope.

The bill was rejected, and the project of rehabilitation -often accompanied by forced entry into other forms of devalued labour- was taken up by feminists of the bourgeoisie. Many active feminists assumed roles as labour inspectors, while others set up institutions for the training of working-class youth. For example, the aims of League for the Repression of Trafficking were both preventive-educational and repressive, e.g., proposing the foundation of an asylum for 'fallen' girls sponsored by the state. Apart from food and shelter, this institution would aim at their moral reformation, so that after leaving the asylum, they could work in factories and their presence would not endanger other women.⁷¹⁴ These practices made possible the channelling of working-class women to other forms of cheap, productive labour, in domestic or factory work through vocational schools. However, this did not resolve class exploitation but rather enhanced it; in case girls refused to discipline they were shown the way to the reformatory. The underlying assumptions and the class interests that shaped this feminism are obvious if one considers how, for example, the President of the League for the Rights of Women, Maria Svolou not only worked as a labour inspector, but also campaigned against trafficking, joined the police in anti-prostitution raids, and founded vocational schools specialising in decoration and toy-making for refugee women and girls to save them from 'the dangers of harlotry'.⁷¹⁵ In a 1924 speech, she argued that infamous gangs, tolerated by state authorities, were procuring 'the naive country girls who serve us [...] and refugee girls among them.'⁷¹⁶ For her, fighting human trafficking and abolishing regulationism was the main feminist struggle, as 'the perception that feminism promotes moral turpitude must disappear'.⁷¹⁷ On the

⁷¹² Fotakis (n116) 211-212.

⁷¹³ Ibid 217.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid 22.

⁷¹⁵ Avdela and Psarra (n213) 163.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid 164.

contrary, feminists should fight so that ‘no woman will consent to be bought and sold [...] in order to buy new fancy rags.’⁷¹⁸

It can, therefore, be remarked that it was the intention of interwar bourgeois liberalism, expressed jointly by both feminist philanthropy and the state, to keep the working classes under their eye, especially the immigrant population of women. In reality, under the pretext of anti-trafficking, they ultimately demanded the abolition of prostitution. Their actions, in which the exception of prostitution from other forms of labour took root, and, more importantly, their rhetoric, would find their continuation in the later 20th and early 21st-century dominant feminisms, as explored later in this chapter. The next section will elaborate on exactly this issue.

Neo-abolitionism: loathing against prostitution meets militarised humanitarianism

In the words of Gayle Rubin, the Mann Act's official title -the White Slave Traffic Act- embodied an enduring legacy of these early crusades, a rhetoric in which nuances distinguishing coercion, immorality, prostitution, and border transgressions are obscured, incorporating a great deal of not abusive sex – and even nonsexual activities.⁷¹⁹ The contemporary anti-trafficking movement does not use the term ‘white slavery’ any longer to describe trafficking. It rather focuses on the abuses of the national and transnational sex trade, removing attention from abuses in domestic labour, factory work, marriage, or other ostensibly ‘non-immoral’ purposes.

The moral panic over sex work and human trafficking somewhat subsided during World War II, when many women in Europe and North America were pushed back into the home, while many other women across different class backgrounds worked in production and services since men had been away serving the country. It re-emerged again during the 1970s and the 1980s with the so-called ‘sex- wars’ that broke out among feminists.⁷²⁰ After the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, panic over ‘white slavery’ emerged once more,⁷²¹ when borders opened, and many women sought opportunities to survive the poverty-stricken regions of eastern Europe and the former USSR they had fled from. By 2000, ‘sex trafficking’

⁷¹⁸ Ibid 165.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid 76.

⁷²⁰ See further Lynn Comella, ‘Revisiting the Feminist Sex Wars’ (2015) 41(2) *Feminist Studies* 437.

⁷²¹ Lorelei Lee, ‘The roots of ‘modern day slavery’: The Page Act and the Mann Act’ (2021) 52(3) *Columbia Human Rights Law Review* 1203.

had become the new buzzword.⁷²² Worldwide, media reports, policymakers, and law enforcement also focus on the sex trade, especially lurid or disturbing cases of ‘sex slavery’ with women and minor girls as victims, presented as typical or at least indicative of the universal experience of commercial sex. This discourse typically accentuates lurid or disturbing cases of ‘sex slavery’ and presents them as representative and abundant.⁷²³ These sensationalised portrayals blur the complex lived experiences of involved subjects while being used as a pretext for the prohibition of commercial sex in general.⁷²⁴ Such claims evoke the early 20th-century frenzy, except that now the typical victim is poor, migrating from the Global South or Eastern Europe. During both eras, ‘a litany of wild claims contributed to a moral panic.’⁷²⁵

The Bush administration (2001-2008) argued that sex trafficking was the most prevalent and damaging type of trafficking. In 2002, George Bush signed a directive on trafficking that defined prostitution as ‘inherently harmful and dehumanising’; The State Department declared in 2005 that ‘the majority of transnational victims are trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation.’⁷²⁶ In 2010, under Obama’s presidency, it reversed itself and proclaimed that ‘the majority of human trafficking in the world takes the form of forced labour,’ citing an ILO estimate that there are nine times more victims of labour trafficking than of sex trafficking worldwide.⁷²⁷ Nevertheless, the State Department’s annual reports on trafficking as well as US prosecutions of trafficking cases continued to focus more on sex trafficking than labour trafficking.⁷²⁸ In 2018, Public Law 115-164, known as FOSTA-SESTA was introduced under Trump’s administration. Its stated goal was to tackle human trafficking by amending Section 230 of the ‘Communications Decency Act’ and holding Internet platforms accountable for the content their users’ post. Apart from increasing internet censorship overall, the communities that it directly affects state that it has left them even more exposed to violence. Many saw this as expansion of the ‘prohibitionist anti-trafficking movement’s attempt to eradicate all forms of sex work with no regard for the safety of the people doing it.’⁷²⁹

This last sentence encapsulates a poignant truth. In the last four decades, there has been an attempt to equate sex work with trafficking in a fashion similar to that

⁷²² ESWA (n698) 8.

⁷²³ Carol S Vance, ‘Thinking trafficking, thinking sex’ (2010) 17(1) GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies 135, 139.

⁷²⁴ Ibid.

⁷²⁵ Weitzer (n620) 5.

⁷²⁶ Weitzer (n630) 228.

⁷²⁷ Ibid.

⁷²⁸ Ibid.

⁷²⁹ Danielle Blunt and Ariel Wolf, ‘Erased: The impact of FOSTA-SESTA and the removal of Backpage on sex workers’ (2020) (14) Anti-trafficking Review 117.

of the early 20th century, without any real concern on the part of leaders of the anti-trafficking movement about how women sex workers, or victims of coercion, will be affected by their actions. Second-wave feminism, with Dworkin, MacKinnon, Pateman, and Barry being prominent, argued that prostitution is the archetype of men's sexual entitlement over women, the primary way in which men gain access to the bodies not only of prostitutes but also of other women. From Pateman, who explicitly disagrees with the argument that sex work is work, seeing prostitutes as sex slaves,⁷³⁰ to MacKinnon, for whom prostitution bears the stigma of female sexuality constituted as the property of male desire, the prostitute is unable to choose.⁷³¹ She becomes an object, devoid of subjectivity—hence the incapacity for consent. They are therefore de facto victims of coercion, and the lines between prostitution, migration for (sex) work, and trafficking are erased.⁷³²

After all, MacKinnon and Dworkin proposed in 1990 that Sweden should adopt a law to criminalise the market for sexual services.⁷³³ Often described as a 'feminist victory', the law finally introduced in 1998 equates all clients with rapists, all workers with victims of trafficking, and third parties -often even unemployed family members or sexual partners of workers- with traffickers. In addition to attempting to eliminate sex trafficking, the Act also hoped to limit the presence of migrant sex workers.⁷³⁴ As a result, non-EU migrants, many of whom are racialised and comprise the majority of sex workers in Sweden, can be denied entry and deported if suspected of engaging in sex work.⁷³⁵ The Swedish model has since been established in Norway, Iceland, France, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Canada, and has also been encouraged by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Additionally, Barry founded the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), with which MacKinnon actively collaborates. During the negotiations on Palermo Protocols, CATW argued that the concept of trafficking should include all cases of women being smuggled (across and within borders) for the purpose of prostitution, no matter if violence, threats, or deception took place.⁷³⁶ CATW has also not hesitated to propose measures to restrict the migration of women, both

⁷³⁰ Pateman (n63); Barry (n64); Dworkin (n66).

⁷³¹ MacKinnon (n65).

⁷³² For a critical approach to MacKinnon's positions see also Brown (n36) 41-43.

⁷³³ Max Waltman, 'Prohibiting Sex Purchasing and Ending Trafficking: The Swedish Prostitution Law' (2011) 33(1) Michigan Journal of International Law 137, <<https://repository.law.umich.edu/mjil/vol33/iss1/507>>.

⁷³⁴ ESWA (n698) 9.

⁷³⁵ Fuckförbundet, *Twenty Years Of Failing Sex Workers: A community report on the impact of the 1999 Swedish Sex Purchase Act* (2019) 5 <www.nswp.org/resource/member-publications/twenty-years-failing-sex-workers-community-report-the-impact-the-1999> accessed 8 January 2024; see further Niina Vuolajärvi, 'Governing in the Name of Caring—the Nordic Model of Prostitution and its Punitive Consequences for Migrants Who Sell Sex' (2018) 16(2) Sexuality Research and Social Policy 151.

⁷³⁶ Doezema (n641) 21.

internal and external, by promoting the criminalisation of those who provide them with assistance,⁷³⁷ as well as measures of forcibly exiting prostitution, which have been implemented in Thailand, Cambodia and elsewhere, providing for compulsory work in sweatshops⁷³⁸ or confinement in reformatories.⁷³⁹ For anti-prostitution feminists and the anti-trafficking lobby, 'demand for commercial sex' is framed as the cause behind trafficking.⁷⁴⁰ The response of unionised sex workers was 'Save us from saviours'.⁷⁴¹

Apart from the deterministic re-inscription of the category of woman as an essentialised category premised on injury,⁷⁴² the pretext of rescuing victims by activating the human rights discourse has functioned as a vehicle for the consolidation of carceral rationales and their internationalisation, and the distinction between sexual labour and other sectors of work. Actions by organisations such as those mentioned above seem to tacitly encompass notions that women are only meant for domestic work (definitely not for moving around on their own) and harsh anti-immigration positions, often promoting, more or less consciously, the respective border agenda of nation-states.

Returning to the current policies in the European context, Miriam Ticktin -whose recent anthropological research has focused on the politics of immigration and care in France- has placed the French policies on both the ban of the hijab and prostitution within this exact narrative. Significantly, a 2003 French law claiming to protect migrant women from trafficking, targeted 'passive soliciting', granting the police a blank cheque to act against street prostitutes, on the grounds of active 'exhibitionism' that harms public order and security, with President Sarkozy explicitly declaring that migrant women are the primary targets of this law.⁷⁴³ Even in the Netherlands, where sex work has been legalised since 2000, the prostitution policy is entwined with anti-immigration rules, and highlighted concerns over foreign women attracted to the Netherlands for its 'reputation for tolerance'. In establishing legalisation, the Dutch government made it illegal for people from non-EU and non-EEA countries to legally sell sex, subjecting them to the Law Regulating Work for Aliens, the Criminal Code Trafficking Clause, *et al.*⁷⁴⁴

⁷³⁷ Abatzi (n93) 4.

⁷³⁸ On the connection between sweatshops and confinement see also Angela Y Davis, *Abolition democracy: Beyond empire, prisons, and torture; interviews with Angela Y. Davis*. (Seven Stories Press 2006) 26.

⁷³⁹ Asia Catalyst and Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice, *A Legal Review Of Detention Centers For Sex Workers In Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, And Vietnam* (2018).

⁷⁴⁰ Gira Grant (n80) 42.

⁷⁴¹ Chateauvert (n23) 17.

⁷⁴² Brown (n36) 81.

⁷⁴³ Miriam Ticktin, 'Sexual Violence as the Language of Border Control: Where French Feminist and Anti-immigrant Rhetoric Meet' (2008) 33(4) *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 866-7.

⁷⁴⁴ ESWA (n698) 9.

The rescue industry expands in two different yet overlapping spheres. Agustin has framed it as a network of NGOs composed mostly of middle-class Western women who undertake to rescue poor immigrant women often involved in sex work as a step in gaining financial stability. Such initiatives have deep roots back in the 19th century, when feminists, Christians, moral reformers and public health inspectors united in order to do ‘something about the problem of prostitution.’⁷⁴⁵ Bernstein frames the contemporary allyship between evangelicals and feminist anti-trafficking activists, ‘fuelled by a shared commitment to carceral paradigms of social, and in particular gender, justice’ as carceral feminism, enforced by the state in the form of militarised humanitarianism.⁷⁴⁶ Transnational anti-trafficking policies such as increased border policing with large penalties for the *sans-papiers*, limiting visas to women from trafficking-origin countries,⁷⁴⁷ boarding bans based on racial profiling and appearance surveillance (in a manner reminiscent of the 19th century) are manifestations of militarised humanitarianism on the international stage. This is also reflected through carceral policies that are diffused through activism at the national and transnational levels as well. The ways in which Christian and feminist organisations cooperate with the police to enter brothels incognito, arrest suspected traffickers, and ‘rescue’ trafficking victims, often through the criminal justice system, forced rehabilitation programmes, or humanitarian deportations, are revealing.⁷⁴⁸ These policies often end up punishing the people who most need protection from the exploitative conditions they face both in the process of migrating and as workers in a devalued and criminalised sector.⁷⁴⁹

As early as the 1980s, Judith Walkowitz had cautioned feminists to be watchful of moral crusades against prostitution ‘who are only too delighted to cast women as victims requiring male protection and control, and who desire to turn feminist protest into a politics of repression’, as they were a tool of the New Right.⁷⁵⁰ The New Right of course is no longer new, while over the decades, its ideas have gained enormous resonance. Even parts of the Left have internalised its arguments in the form of the prevalence of ‘moral superiority’. In February 2014, ‘the European Parliament voted in favour of a nonbinding resolution on prostitution and sexual exploitation [...] that encouraged member states to adopt laws criminalising the purchase of sexual services.’ That same year, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe established the ‘Prostitution, trafficking and modern slavery in

⁷⁴⁵ Agustin (n12) 105-110.

⁷⁴⁶ Bernstein (n645).

⁷⁴⁷ Ticktin (n743) 288.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁹ See further Aya Gruber, Amy J Cohen and Kate Mogulescu, ‘Penal Welfare and the New Human Trafficking Intervention Courts’ [2016] SSRN Electronic Journal.

⁷⁵⁰ Jane Caplan and Judith R Walkowitz, ‘Male Vice and Feminist Virtue: Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain’ (1982) 13(1) History Workshop Journal 90.

Europe' resolution, which incites members to implement the Nordic model, as it is claimed 'to have a positive impact on diminishing trafficking', despite research showing that it puts people in more vulnerable and violent situations.⁷⁵¹ These motions were also supported by the Socialist and Left groups in the European Parliament.⁷⁵² Over the decades, its ideas have gained enormous resonance both at the level of legislation, local, state, and supranational, and in the realm of political debate. Yet, as Laura Connelly argues, despite their ostensibly benevolent motives, [anti-prostitution feminists] eventually act as 'the handmaidens to the neoliberal, neocolonial state apparatus'.⁷⁵³ Additionally, as anti-trafficking organisations receive funds from transnational institutions and nation-states, the collaboration among them in a globalised capitalist economy creates an international penal-welfare nexus.⁷⁵⁴ This process moves in parallel with the transformation of 'traditional forms of colonialism into capitalist types of imperialism',⁷⁵⁵ crystallised in the form of the global anti-trafficking governance.⁷⁵⁶ As Greece remains in the sphere of Western influence, it reproduces the neo-colonial anti-trafficking apparatus not only discursively, but also due to its participation financial dependence on transnational institutions such as the EU fund and the USAID TIP-tier mechanism. The analysis of the rescue industry in the international and European context is of paramount importance, as it decisively shapes the parameters of the Greek rescue industry. I will delve into this issue in the section that follows.

Between salvation and law enforcement; the Rescue Industry in contemporary Greece

With the restoration of democracy in 1974, feminism, which had been lying dormant since the end of the Second World War, returned both on an institutional and an activist level. Prostitution was one of the main focal points of Greek governance feminism, with feminist groups and publications of the time taking a clear stand against it. Specifically, the feminist press of the period tends

⁷⁵¹ ESWA (n698) 9.

⁷⁵² 'MEPs water down proposals on sexual exploitation and prostitution' (*GUE/NGL*) <<https://left.eu/meps-water-down-proposals-on-sexual-exploitation-and-prostitution/>> accessed 14 July 2023.

⁷⁵³ Laura Connelly, 'The 'Rescue Industry': The blurred line between help and hindrance' (2015) 11(2) *Graduate Journal of Social Science* 155.

⁷⁵⁴ On the EU funds to combat human trafficking see further 'New EU funding to combat trafficking in human beings' (*Migration and Home Affairs*, 17 February 2022) <https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/new-eu-funding-combat-trafficking-human-beings-2022-02-17_en> accessed 9 January 2024.

⁷⁵⁵ Ellen Meiksins Wood, *The origin of capitalism: A longer view* (Verso 2017) 33.

⁷⁵⁶ Nada DeCat, 'The Aesthetic of Migrant Sex Work' in Kamala Kempadoo and Elena Shih (eds.), *White Supremacy, Racism and the Coloniality of Anti-Trafficking* (Routledge 2022) 229.

to reproduce stigmatising stereotypes against sex work, identifying it with the worst expression of women's exploitation and rape, often denying sex workers their agency, in alignment with their interwar predecessors.

For example, *Katina*, one of the most popular feminist magazines of the 1980s, published by the Autonomous Women's Group of Thessaloniki, in its first issue in the autumn of 1987, hosted an article entitled 'International Congress of Prostitutes'. The article commented on the sex workers' international conference in the European Parliament in 1986 as follows: 'Although [the conference] gathered as many people as only Reagan had managed to gather' the views expressed [by the sex workers] there, 'had nothing to do with reality'.⁷⁵⁷ It further argues that prostitution as a profession is a male conception to justify 'the worst form of exploitation against women', and that its reproduction is nothing but a way 'that makes it easy to survive in the workplace, but also shows that these women have unconsciously accepted their role as women'. It comments that 'physical and mental fatigue does not stop', and it concludes that women's demands should be towards the abolition of prostitution, not its liberation.⁷⁵⁸ Critically, the article presents statements not only from European and American sex workers, but also from Lebanon, Thailand, and elsewhere, lending an anti-colonial perspective to their positions on the criminalisation of prostitution in their countries. The editorial team of the magazine has avoided any commentary on the subject, possibly because of the confusion in the Greek world about the country's geographical and geostrategic position. The next article of the same volume echoes the anti-pornographic positions of second-wave feminism, even strongly criticising women who enjoy pornography, without a single mention of women workers in the porn industry. The article closes with phrases such as 'prostitution stifles us and traps all women under the possession of men' and 'we need to demand that pornography cease to exist'.⁷⁵⁹ *Katina* journal, nonetheless, was not alone in this crusade as more feminist media followed suit.⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵⁷ 'Synedrio Pornon' ['International Congress of Prostitutes'] (1987) 1 *Katina* 18.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid., 26; The second issue of *Katina* magazine was published in winter 1987. In the opening article it denounces the 'Cicciolina phenomenon' and the 'pornography of politics', commenting that 'sexual freedom for the Left means the unrestricted and uninhibited use of women as a commodity for public consumption. [...] In the case of Cicciolina, the model of the prostitute-woman, the free public woman who fascinates because she has turned sex into her flag and proudly proclaims her shameless availability, was sold by the Left', 'To fainomeno Cicciolina' ['The 'Cicciolina phenomenon'] 2 (*Katina*) 3.

⁷⁶⁰ Similar ideas were also reproduced in more institutional left/feminist publications of the time, such as: 'Piso apo ta kokkina fanaria [Behind the red lights]' 28 (*Synchroni Gynaika (Modern Woman)*, March - April 1983) 38; "Kampania kata tis pornografias" ['Campaign to tackle pornography]' 33 (*Synchroni Gynaika (Modern Woman)*, January - February) 34; "Pornografia se anodo ["Pornography on the rise]" 56 (*Synchroni Gynaika*, March- April 1988) 28; The magazine of the PASOK-affiliated Women's Union of Greece, *Anoihto Parathyro (Open window)*, even featured an eight-page feature entitled 'Prostitution

These analyses reveal the deep-rooted attitudes of the Greek feminist movement, which can be traced back to Svolou's time and survive to the present day. Libertinism is condemned, the prostitute can only be understood as a victim, and someone must take it upon themselves to save her from her burdensome fate. A close look into other articles of similar logic -even in the same issue- reveals feminist standpoints on the matter that vary as to the degree of defence they exhibit towards sex workers. They are also quite indicative of the multiplicity of discourses within which they tend to reproduce assumptions of 'respectability' around which types of work performed by women are socially acceptable and which are not.⁷⁶¹ It is precisely this distinction between acceptable women's work, even if it points to clear exploitation, and sex work that is being cultivated by anti-prostitution rhetoric, not only at the level of discourse, but also institutionally. It is no coincidence that 'the social reintegration of prostitutes' was one of the first issues opened by the newly established General Secretariat for Gender Equality, through the pages of its periodical publication, which expressed the official government policy on gender equality. 'Policies towards women immigrants' and cooperation between Europe and 'Third World countries' were also discussed in a common context.

The General Secretariat was established in 1982 as an independent service under the Ministry of the Presidency of the Government. Notwithstanding the expected differences that depend on the positioning of the ruling party on the left or right of the political spectrum, the General Secretariat has over time been the embodiment of governance feminism, promoting policies of formal equality and ignoring the needs of women of the lower social strata. For historical reasons, and as the General Secretariat was the administrative unit that would enshrine PASOK's strategy for gender equality as a state strategy, it is worth mentioning that for the Social Democratic Women's Federation, prostitution -and pornography- has been presented since the 1980s as 'the unpleasant side of sexuality' alongside rape and incest.⁷⁶² These views were also adopted by the PASOK women's group, which recommended, in addition to strict legislation on pimps, the creation of a special department in the welfare services that would deal with 'the case of problematic people who are in danger of ending up in

or sexual slavery?', opening with a full-page photo of K. Barry, 'Porneia i sexualiki sklavia? ['Prostitution or sexual slavery?'] 39 (*Anoihto Parathyro*, May-July 1989) 4.

⁷⁶¹ In the same article, there is a brief mention of a woman who, in order to be employed as a cleaner in the Parliament, submitted a false criminal record, since she had previously been convicted for prostitution - although not clearly stated in the article, but only hinted at- following a furore that was caused by the revelation of the fact. The magazine defends her without mentioning anything regarding her past; even more so, the cleaning woman's work is described in a non- derogatory, non- victimising way, contrary to the article's overall tone regarding prostitution. The cleaner's profession is thus represented as respectable, while the prostitute's is not.

⁷⁶² 'Apeleftheroste ton Erota. Protasi gia ena programma sexualikis politikis [On the liberation of love. Proposal for a programme of sexual politics]' 29 (*Anoihto Parathyro*) 12.

prostitution'.⁷⁶³ Following the example of their pre-war ancestors such as Svolou and Parren, or their post-war descendants, they formed the ideological basis of modern state feminism, which is summed up in the treatment of women as victims, the criminalisation of their 'exploiters' and institutional intervention to channel their labour power into a dignified, but also productive, sector of the economy.

The Secretariat was renamed after several rearrangements in 2019 to 'General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality' and was placed under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In 2021 it would also include demographic policy among its duties. After the national elections in June 2023, its responsibilities were transferred to the newly created Ministry of Social Cohesion and Family. All these developments following the second victory of the right-wing party of New Democracy directly targeted any 'socialist' leftovers of the Secretariat regarding gender equality and established a clear-cut conservative turn towards traditional, hetero-normative concerns, which, clearly, if not excluded from the agenda, marginalised the issue of sex work even further.

The Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI) has argued in brochures since the mid-1990s that 'the sex industry thrives on the purchasing power of customers'.⁷⁶⁴ Equating prostitution with trafficking once again, in line with the GS, which also informs in brochures that the client is 'equally responsible for the perpetuation of trafficking, by making use of their services, KETHI also forms and 'end-demand' rhetoric. According to them, the client must be aware that what these women do is not a choice, but they are forced into a status of slavery. By taking part in such activities, clients help trafficking networks prosper'.⁷⁶⁵ In 2018, the General Secretariat officially supported the adoption of the Nordic model by Greece, claiming that a new culture must be formed in Greek society that will not treat prostitution as a choice, but as a form of violence -in all its forms- on the body and soul of women and as a violation of human dignity.⁷⁶⁶

The fundamental principle that the body is not a 'commodity' and therefore cannot be exchanged for money, is the basic parameter that determines that prostitution cannot be considered a profession or an activity of 'free choice'.⁷⁶⁷ This proposal was adopted as a measure to curb 'both prostitution and trafficking',⁷⁶⁸ while expressly stating that these two constitute 'issues that cannot and should

⁷⁶³ '2^o Panellinio Synedrio Gynaikon: Pornografia, Porneia, Oikogeneiakies Sheseis kai Narkotika[2nd Panhellenic Women's Conference – On pornography, prostitution, family affairs and drugs]' 38 (*Anoighto Parathyro*) 20-21.

⁷⁶⁴ 'Research Centre for Gender Equality' (*Κέντρο Ερευνών για Θέματα Ισότητας*) <www.kethi.gr/en/profile> accessed 9 January 2024.

⁷⁶⁵ Archive of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality

⁷⁶⁶ National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2020 (NSDEF) 5.

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid 6.

not be separated'⁷⁶⁹ and should therefore be equally opposed. There is not a single reference to migrant women in the Conclusion (apart from the three references in the annexes-citing other legislative frameworks existing). Immigration and the work of migrants and migrant women is an issue that probably did not concern the left-wing feminists who formed this working group. The fact that sex work is legal for immigrant women only if and for as long as they reside legally in the country leaves a number of people outside the law who make their living this way, and who are considered victims of trafficking by the dominant feminist-NGO discourse, or often declare themselves victims of trafficking when caught, to avoid arrest, criminal penalties and deportation -something that is common knowledge in the Athenian hustles. On many occasions, any indication that women and men who sell sex are foreigners or migrants allows to unquestionably be cast as 'victims of trafficking'. This idea further allows foreign sex workers to be perceived and treated as trafficking victims.

Yet, as Agustin has shown, the Rescue Industry is not carried out by the central government alone, but by a complex of state agencies and private stakeholders. In early 2002, the Galatsi Group, an initiative consisting of several NGOs, and different activist fields (public health, human rights, women's movement, and religious groups), whose common interests intersected somehow in the question of the sex industry, was formed, as the main platform for anti-trafficking activism.⁷⁷⁰ The group included organisations with very different views, from the Centre for the Support of the Family (KESO), established by the Archdiocese of Athens and the Church of Greece and concerned about the 'crisis of the Greek family, the foundation of the conservation and growth of the Nation' and the 'biological annihilation of the Greek nation', all the way to the Greek Helsinki Monitor (GHM), known for defending the rights of ethnic, religious and sexual minorities.⁷⁷¹ This group received material support and publicity from various sources, such as the General Secretariat for International Relations and Development Cooperation (YDAS) of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A key contingent of Galatsi Group took part in the StopNow project; launched in December 2001, its discourse was 'a fine specimen of the new slavery discourse in Greece', highlighting both the human-rights and the law enforcement aspects, along with the 'client as a perpetrator of human misery trope'.⁷⁷² It also supported academic research addressing prostitution and trafficking (e.g. Lazos).⁷⁷³ The prevalent 'modern slavery' discourse came to erase, even if only temporarily, the differences between the groups that participated together in these actions. This is

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid 9.

⁷⁷⁰ Papanicolaou(n87) 163-4.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁷³ Ibid.

something that should be assessed in relation to the country's external political influences and its position on the international geopolitical map, as will be shown next.⁷⁷⁴ The coalition between secular and religious organisations continued after 2010, and especially after the latter ones' involvement in the management of the refugee 'crisis' in 2015. A prominent example of faith-based projects is *Nea Zoi* (New Life), a Christian organisation founded in 2006 that seeks to rehabilitate “all people in prostitution”, since what “often begins as trafficking ends as ‘choice’”.⁷⁷⁵ Similarly, the NGO *Solidarity* of the Church of Greece, played a prominent role in the area of victim services.⁷⁷⁶ Among the services provided was victims' repatriations secured through a MoU with Aegean Airlines in 2015, also supported by the IOM;⁷⁷⁷ 'repatriation' is however sometimes a euphemism for deportation. Another example of a fully US funded anti-trafficking NGO is the Thessaloniki-based A21. The organisation, which has been operating in Greece since 2011, works under strict victim protection protocols and offers shelter, vocational training, and legal support to sex trafficking victims. It is directed by the Evangelical Christine Caine,⁷⁷⁸ maintains ties to the Evangelical Church and, although its campaigns push forward an apolitical approach, there is no attempt on behalf of the staff to conceal their religious connections. Neither the fact that the organisation enjoys the political support of the US Democratic Party and the US Embassy in Greece is something their members -or US political factors- keep secret.⁷⁷⁹

Back in 2003, when Greece held the Presidency of the European Union, a two-day conference entitled 'Combating Domestic Violence and Trafficking in Women' was organised in Athens under the auspices of the General Secretariat. The objectives set were to jointly address trafficking with EU institutions, states, and NGOs, as well as international organisations, and the need for Greece to adopt a

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ Bouklis (n120) 17.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid.,

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁸ See further: 'Home - Christine Caine' (*Home - Christine Caine*) <<https://christinecaine.com/>> accessed 9 January 2024, 'Christine Caine | The A21 Campaign - End Slavery Now' (*End Slavery Now | Resources to End Human Trafficking - End Slavery Now*) <www.endslaverynow.org/blog/articles/christine-caine-the-a21-campaign?fbclid=IwARiBLdngSqvZh4MorMAijcpGqmF3JCyL23GT9Xr1QQ7wZB3boF22oeN8FdQ> accessed 9 January 2024.

⁷⁷⁹ Philip Hyldgaard, the European Operations Manager of the anti-trafficking in persons (TIP) A21 Campaign was recently honoured by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for his work to end trafficking. Under his leadership, A21 established a national 24-hour toll-free hotline '1109; to provide support to TIP victims, record TIP incidents, and educate the general public about modern-day slavery. See further: 'A21 | A21' (*A21 | A21*) <www.a21.org/index.php> accessed 9 January 2024, <https://www.a21.org/content/newsroom/grcjc>, last accessed 20/ December 2023, U.S. Department of State, 'U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton honors Phil Hyldgaard of Greece, a 2012 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report Hero' (20 June 2012) <https://www.facebook.com/statedept/photos/a.10150881939576074/10150881940571074/> accessed 9 January 2024.

corresponding legal framework. Of course, this recommendation was not made in a vacuum. As Papanicolaou argues, it is possible to evaluate the impact of the transnational interconnectedness of the local anti-trafficking campaigners, along with the role of international actors that interfered, particularly US pressure.⁷⁸⁰ As early as 2000, the US, with the Federal TVPA,⁷⁸¹ had already extended its global anti-trafficking campaign beyond its borders, in what resembles to be an exercise of soft power imperialism. For example, the USAID program has funded 88 countries and regions with over \$370 million since 2001, maintaining a tiered rating system.⁷⁸² Greece belongs to the ‘second tier’ countries because it is making ‘significant efforts’ to make progress.⁷⁸³ TVPA solidified the perception of police mediation in the battle against trafficking, and as documented in its twenty years of implementation by women workers in the US, it has had devastating effects on their work and personal lives, as it further exposed them to systemic police violence,⁷⁸⁴ as they are frequently prosecuted as suspected sex traffickers.⁷⁸⁵

In 2004, the State Department ranked the country among those ‘neither able nor willing to effectively address the problem’—even though Law 3064/2002 ‘On Combating trafficking in human beings, crimes against sexual freedom, child pornography and, more generally, the economic exploitation of sexual life and providing assistance to the victims of such acts’ had been introduced two years earlier.⁷⁸⁶ The Report insisted on the need for special legislation dealing with trafficking, complementing the requirements by ‘the demand for numbers of arrests, prosecutions and convictions,⁷⁸⁷ tangible proofs of the government’s ‘vigorous’ effort to suppress and eliminate trafficking.’⁷⁸⁸ The additional evaluation criteria were related to the degree of involvement of NGOs in the implementation of the state anti-trafficking agenda.⁷⁸⁹ Overall, the Report and the abolitionist, anti-client Greek campaign were on the same line.

⁷⁸⁰ Papanicolaou (n87) 163.

⁷⁸¹ The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA)

⁷⁸² USAID, Countering Trafficking in Persons, <https://www.usaid.gov/trafficking#:~:text=Since%202001%2C%20USAID%20has%20provided,interagency%20and%20multiple%20external%20stakeholders>, accessed 15 July 2023

⁷⁸³ State Department Report (2022), Trafficking in Persons Report: Greece <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-trafficking-in-persons-report/greece/>, accessed 15 July 2023

⁷⁸⁴ e.g. Christa Marie Sacco, ‘Victim-Defendant: Women of Color Complicating Stories about Human Trafficking’ in Natalie West and Tina Horn (eds), *We Too. Essays on Sex Work and Survival* (The Feminist Press at the City University of New York 2021) 85.

⁷⁸⁵ Ben Chapman-Schmidt, ‘Sex Trafficking’ as Epistemic Violence’ (2019) (12) *Anti-Trafficking Review* 175.

⁷⁸⁶ ‘Olympiaki Porneia ...’ (n408).

⁷⁸⁷ Finally accomplished through an amendment of the relevant articles of Law 3064/2002

⁷⁸⁸ Papanicolaou (n87) 165.

⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

Carceral humanitarianism meets devalued labour markets

After the 2010s, the Greek state decided to address the State Department's directives more thoroughly. Through a mixture of penal-welfarist policies enforced jointly by state and private actors, fight against trafficking gradually became a central topic in the local political arena. For example, in the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2025 we read that 'it is envisaged that actions be undertaken in order to prevent and address trafficking, prostitution and survival sex' (package with the review of Law 2734/1999).⁷⁹⁰ It is stated that:

the aim is to provide alternatives as a means of preventing 'survival sex' through the promotion of employment, access to the labour market, and the development of voluntary vocational training, apprenticeship, and vocational guidance programmes. [...] Campaign to prevent, combat, and eradicate trafficking in human beings for sexual and labour exploitation in mobile populations (migrant women, refugee women). Campaign to inform mainly foreign populations about the risks of 'survival sex' and to inform them about the bodies to which a person can turn.⁷⁹¹ Carry out of a pilot study on the extent of 'survival sex' in Greece among refugee and migrant populations, in the Athens area. Meetings with Civil Society organisations working with populations that are pushed into 'survival sex'.⁷⁹² These actions will be carried out in collaboration with the Greek Police.⁷⁹³

In a similar vein are the declarations of the former National Rapporteur on Trafficking, the now Secretary General for Vulnerable Citizens & Institutional Protection, Hercules Moskov. Stressing the link between trafficking and refugee issues and pointing out the dangers of survival sex, Moskov has for years advocated what is now being adopted as a national strategy, namely the exit of these subjects from the sex industry through special programmes and their entry into other devalued economic sectors. He is also committed to engaging with private stakeholders to offer 'out of the box' solutions,⁷⁹⁴ linking anti-trafficking, active labour market policies, and the need for low-cost labour. For example, in 2019, in the context of the Walk for Freedom campaign, as a National Rapporteur, Moskov supported the action of the A21, and 'Soffa - Social Fashion Factory'. Founded in Athens in 2017, the latter claims to employ only refugees and former trafficking victims, giving them 'a second chance to reintegrate', producing

⁷⁹⁰ [National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021 – 2025 (NSDEF)] 22.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid 66.

⁷⁹² Ibid.

⁷⁹³ Ibid 24-5.

⁷⁹⁴ Bouklis (n120) 10.

sustainable fashion. According to the company's founder, working with social enterprise has offered her a way 'to revive without a budget' her father's old shoe-making brand, which had presumably collapsed alongside many other Greek textile and clothing manufacturers.⁷⁹⁵

Such proposals form a mild form of exiting, operating alongside familiar tropes of slavery, freedom, and rehabilitation through entry-level work.⁷⁹⁶ Although exiting, as the provision of resources to workers in order to leave the sex industry is inherent in regimes that criminalise all or part of sex work, as it is a key concern of anti-sex work campaigners, it can be identified in rescue projects internationally. Bernstein and Shih have shown how such schemes proposed by Evangelical Christian and secular feminist NGOs have proclaimed to get women 'out of slavery and into the free market',⁷⁹⁷ in a way similar to early exiting interventions that sought to get women 'out of brothels and into kitchens'.⁷⁹⁸ Similarly, New York Times commentator on women's rights and global affairs Nicholas Kristof, 'as early as 2004 was avidly endorsing the construction of what he openly termed "sweatshops" in the developing world as an antidote to sex trafficking', Bernstein notes.⁷⁹⁹ Such policies Peck argues have contributed to the construction of 'a new category of forced labour, compelled to accept low wage work',⁸⁰⁰ and they are accordingly approached as a design 'for changing the rules that govern the lower tiers of the labour market'.⁸⁰¹ The female migrant workforce from the Global South is treated as 'a regular army of extremely cheap labour'.⁸⁰² This process is reinforced by the state and certain feminisms, operating under the umbrella of femonationalism, which proves instrumental in reconfiguring the welfare state, as mentioned in chapter 2. 'Migrant women become the target of a deceptively benevolent campaign in which they are needed as workers, tolerated as migrants, and encouraged as women to conform to Western values'.⁸⁰³ It is thus normalised for migrants to work in the sweatshops of Europe for starvation wages, thereby rejuvenating the economies of the states. Women migrant workers

⁷⁹⁵SOFFA: *Social Fashion Factory* (European Commission; European Website on Integration) <https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/integration-practice/soffa-social-fashion-factory_en>;

⁷⁹⁶ See further Shih (n83).

⁷⁹⁷ See further Bernstein (n32) 19; Elena Shih, 'The anti-trafficking rehabilitation complex: commodity activism and slave-free goods' [2015] OpenDemocracy <www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/antitrafficking-rehabilitation-complex-commodity-activism-and-slavefree-goo/>.

⁷⁹⁸ Phrase by historian April Haynes, quoting J. Laite in The New School, 'Troubling Terms and the Sex Trades' (25 November 2020) <www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qb3uSoRj0bg> accessed 29 January 2024.

⁷⁹⁹ Bernstein (n30) 33.

⁸⁰⁰ Jamie Peck, *Workfare States* (Guildford Press 2001) 188.

⁸⁰¹ Jane L Collins, 'The Specter of Slavery in Jane L Collins, Micaela Di Leonardo and Brett Williams (eds), *New Landscapes of inequality: Neoliberalism and the erosion of democracy in America* (School for Advanced Research Press 2008) 150.

⁸⁰² Farris (n229) 183.

⁸⁰³ Ibid 195.

constitute a distinct class of social reproduction.⁸⁰⁴ Femonationalism has close ties with anti-sex work feminism as well. For example, as Doezema highlights, the construction of the ‘third world prostitutes’ in need of salvation ‘is part of a wider Western feminist impulse to construct a damaged ‘other’ as justification for its own interventionist impulses.’⁸⁰⁵ In other words, such developments show that the rescue industry and anti-trafficking agitation in practice immure sex workers into precarious, devalued, and exploitative works in the formal sector of the economy, under the threat of state sanctioning.⁸⁰⁶ The emergence of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation as distinctive from the broader understanding of labour exploitation and capitalist relations, fails to offer people who leave the sex trade with real alternatives. Ultimately this serves the interests of the domestic capital through the channelling of sex workers to other devalued yet productive sectors of the economy.

The recent State Department Report (2022) reaffirms this typical mix of carceral humanitarianism, combining harsh carceral policies with concern for ‘cooperation of victims with the authorities’ and their reintegration, presenting some useful points to consider. To begin with, it criticised the decriminalisation of ‘pimping’ in 2019 -a term used by police officers and prosecutors for raids on brothels- but praised its criminalisation anew in 2021 with a minimum sentence of 18 months’ imprisonment and a fine.⁸⁰⁷ As noted in the introduction, this was at the request of women’s organisations, and despite opposition from sex workers’ organisations who point out that these moves discredit their work and ultimately criminalise them.

The 2022 report praises NGOs for continuing to report ‘good cooperation with law enforcement and excellent cooperation with ATU’. Additionally,

Refugee and migrant women, especially those living in the island RICs, are highly vulnerable to trafficking. NGOs report rapes of migrant women in migrant and refugee camps and allege that organised criminal groups in camps use tents and shipping containers as brothels. Most migrants and asylum seekers are believed to rely on smugglers at some point during their

⁸⁰⁴ Katie Cruz, ‘Beyond Liberalism: Marxist Feminism, Migrant Sex Work, and Labour Unfreedom’ (2018) 26(1) *Feminist Legal Studies* 65; Enrica Rigo, ‘Mobility, Social Reproduction and Exploitation: A Critical Legal Perspective on the Tension between Capitalism and Freedom of Movement’ (2023) 12(2 / Social Reproduction) *Feminists@law*.

⁸⁰⁵ Doezema (n641).

⁸⁰⁶ Different sanctions apply to different states, ranging from incarceration, as seen in Cambodia, to administrative sanctions that take the form of benefit deprivation removal from the employment registers, which apply in Greece.

⁸⁰⁷ 2022 *Trafficking in Persons Report* (US Department of State, Office to monitor and combat trafficking in persons - July 2022) <www.state.gov/reports/2022-trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

journey and in some instances are forced into exploitation upon arrival in Greece.⁸⁰⁸

Once again the lines between smuggling and trafficking, between rape and prostitution are blurred, while the male refugees living in the camps are indirectly accused of being abusers, from whose grip the white middle-class workers in the organisations have to save the women, always with the blessing of the American state.⁸⁰⁹ The fear of white slavery and the black rapist reawakens.⁸¹⁰ We can also read in the Report that

traffickers operating in Greece are primarily Greeks and other Western and Eastern Europeans, but some are also from the Caucasus and Central Asia. Traffickers subject some women and children from Eastern and Southern Europe, South and Central Asia, Cameroon, Georgia, Iraq, Nigeria, and Russia to sex trafficking in unlicensed brothels, on the street, in strip clubs, in massage salons, and in hotels. Victims of forced labour in Greece are primarily children and men from Africa, Eastern Europe, South Asia, and Syria. Traffickers exploit migrant workers from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, and Pakistan to debt bondage and forced labour in agriculture. Traffickers force marginalised Romani children from Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania to sell goods on the street, beg, or commit petty theft. Unaccompanied children, primarily from Afghanistan, engage in survival sex and are vulnerable to trafficking.⁸¹¹

Solutions to these issues include the implementation of strong procedures to control migration flows, increasing preventive controls in order to identify victims, tightening penalties for traffickers, reducing the length of judicial proceedings, etc., while adopting a victim-centred approach. Of course, Greece already has such practices in place: it has tightened its criminal framework for traffickers, their trials last a few minutes, and crossing borders has become a lethal activity. If exploitation is not dying out, it is not because the police-carceral complex is not being properly reformed to make it more punitive and more effective, as a frankly well-meaning reformist feminist critique would have it. It is due to the mechanisms of the imperialist states and the capitalist economy itself that the war machine drives people from their homes, indirectly leads them to destitution, and subsequently tries to discipline them through punitive or superficially humane policies.

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁹ See further Lily Lynch, 'How Nato seduced the European Left' [2023] Unherd <https://unherd.com/2023/05/how-nato-seduced-the-european-left/?fbclid=IwAR1hYo6HKcruQqwpzuYViPBO_5YEUUVpFy9QvEgn83fy6seWRAxgbxVY8HU>.

⁸¹⁰ Angela Y Davis, 'Rape, Racism and the Capitalist Setting' (1978) 9(7) *The Black Scholar* 24.

⁸¹¹ Ibid.

In recent years, the scandals of sexual coercion that captured the attention of Greek media and public opinion, and have sent feminists rallying, have a common thread, the active involvement of the police in the exploitation circuits. Calls for either strict enforcement of the law by the courts, or for a shake-up of the police force to effectively protect the weak -in this case weak women- from the perpetrators of violence and tend to overlook the intrinsic relationship between the institution of the police and masculinist/colonial violence. The latter has not only been widely articulated by a number of Black activists and scholars,⁸¹² but also vividly illustrated by the frequent criminalisation of the victims of coercion themselves and by its long-term consequences.⁸¹³ Yet, as Nina explains in her own words in the introduction of this chapter, mainstream feminists' fixation on trafficking discourse both reinforces the punitive state, further marginalising sex workers and victims of exploitation, and fails to provide them with better opportunities.

The prevalence of both punitive and victim-welfarist responses,⁸¹⁴ along with the predominance of sensationalised narratives of sexual exploitation, erases the reality of forced labour in other sectors of production. 'Sex sells social problems as efficiently as it sells cars, beer, and televisions; "sex slaves" sell far more newspapers than do workers coerced into making sports shoes or cleaning toilets.'⁸¹⁵ Even more, the current juridical conceptualisation of trafficking fails to address the issue of exploitation in and beyond sex work through the frame of political economy, grasping the reality of migrant labour in a context of racialised, carceral neoliberalism.⁸¹⁶

Conclusions - Trafficking discourse and imperialist neoliberal hegemony

In this chapter, I have argued that the discourse about trafficking is historically shaped by bourgeois feminists and the conjoint interests of the domestic capitalist class and the nation-states to ensure border control and further keep the mobility of the working classes restricted. It must, therefore, be addressed as a matter of

⁸¹² e.g. Davis, Dent, Meiners, and Richie (n31); Mariame Kaba, 'Yes, We Mean Literally Abolish the Police' (*The New York Times*, 12 June 2020) <www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/opinion/sunday/floyd-abolish-defund-police.html>.

⁸¹³ Cf. K Mogulescu and L Goodmark, 'Surveillance and Entanglement: How Mandatory Sex Offender Registration Impacts Criminalised Survivors of Human Trafficking' [2020] *Anti-Trafficking Review* 125.

⁸¹⁴ Bouklis (n120).

⁸¹⁵ Rubin (n676) 80.

⁸¹⁶ At the same time, the strategic tightening of both national and European immigration policies go hand in hand with the increase and intensification of undervalued migrant labour in conditions resembling actual slavery. Alongside the solidification of Fortress Europe, the Greek state officially exploits migrant workers living in camps -with the blessings of the left-wing opposition -see further Appendix I.

political economy that links to the wider exploitation of migrant labour that takes place within globalised capitalist economies. By doing away with the traditional class vocabulary that names these capitalist relations precisely as relations of labour exploitation, and by rendering sex work as an exception from labour, it makes it all too easier to penalise both sex work and the migratory process. The state, through its migration policy, allows for the exploitation of the surplus value of migrant labour.⁸¹⁷

In this context of highly scrutinised migratory process and labour, undocumented migration and the undocumented migrants' participation in the labour market are sometimes taken as a general indication of trafficking. Specifically, foreign women's -and more recently, young men's- presence in the sex trade industry, is perceived as an indication of trafficking. As a result, foreign sex workers are treated by definition as trafficking victims. This oversimplified portrayal of migrant sex work ignores the complex trajectories and lived experiences of migrant subjects in the Greek economy and society.⁸¹⁸ Nevertheless, anti-trafficking -and ultimately anti-prostitution- ideology masterfully avoids addressing the Greek state's responsibility for the racist policies of the last 3 decades, and evades an analysis grounded in political economy. This ideology, reinforced by the rescue industry, conceals not only the role of migration policy in criminalising subjects, but also the isolation of sex work from the broader notion of capitalist exploitation.

To conclude, any anti-trafficking discourse that frames the issue through sex exceptionalism⁸¹⁹ casting outside the spectrum of the analysis questions of political economy, the role of borders in globalised capitalism and of migrant labour and mobility, conceals the reality of devalued labour in a neoliberal economy.⁸²⁰ Such perspectives suggest that the problem will be combated by the 'criminal justice system and global capitalists, working in tandem.'⁸²¹ In sum, 'trafficking has to be seen as a feature of a neo-liberal capitalist market, which has created a demand for cheap labour, de-regulation of working practices and malleable precarious workers.'⁸²² The adoption of a labour rights approach towards trafficking presupposes the re-conceptualisation of trafficked persons as

⁸¹⁷Agathangelou (n121) 3.

⁸¹⁸ Papanicolaou and Boukli (n119).

⁸¹⁹ Aya Gruber, 'Sex Exceptionalism in Criminal Law' [2022] SSRN Electronic Journal.

⁸²⁰ Elizabeth Bernstein and others, 'The Productive incoherence of "sex trafficking"' in Elizabeth Bernstein and Janet R Jakobsen (eds), *Paradoxes of Neoliberalism* (Routledge 2021), 110.

⁸²¹ Ibid 114.

⁸²² Inga Thiemann, 'Human Trafficking as a Migration Crisis – Gender, Precariousness and access to labour rights' in Cecilia Menjivar, Marie Ruiz and Immanuel Ness (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Migration Crises* (OUP 2018).

workers and subjects with both rights and agency.⁸²³ In the next and final chapter I will incorporate this approach into an analysis of sex work as work, and particularly as reproductive work, to trace the limits inherent in labour law and the claims around it.

⁸²³ Ibid.

Part III.

The Challenges. Playing with the Law

Chapter 6. Sex work as work. Claiming institutional recognition and its limits under neoliberal markets

Prostitution is neither terrible nor awful. Some aspects suck, some aspects are awesome. (Nina)

When people ask you why you entered sex work, they expect to hear some horrible story of abuse or misery. An answer such as ‘I like sex, I’m good at it and I want to earn money that way’ is unimaginable. (Aris)

After studying the various state and feminist practices that isolated sexual labour from the notion of productive and institutionally recognised work, ultimately criminalising sex workers, this final chapter will return to the core argument of this thesis: to subvert sex work exceptionalism by situating sex work within a broader labour analysis. In acknowledging the nature of the capitalist economy,⁸²⁴ and the exploitative ‘structural conditions that define the labour process,’⁸²⁵ I employ aspects of Marxism and social reproduction feminism, as well as insights from interviews. Building on the scholarly and activist consensus, sex work is approached beyond reductionist and harmful dichotomies (victimhood/agency, prey/perpetrator, productive/unproductive) that serve as weapons of the penal-welfare nexus and the rescue industry in punishing sex workers.⁸²⁶ Claiming that sex work is work does not recognise sex work as *per se* emancipatory, as a popular, apolitical /neoliberal argument suggests. Work, understood as ‘the economic and moral obligation to sell your labour to survive,’⁸²⁷ is never emancipatory but rather a ‘foundational violation’⁸²⁸ —as suggested by the labour reality in post-memoranda Greece presented in this chapter.

The caring and intimate aspects of sex work, emphasised by the interviewees, will be analysed through the prism of social reproduction feminism. Thus, the boundaries between informalised, feminised types of labour are brought to the fore and the demand for institutional recognition of sexual labour as labour emerges. This demand, for both organisations and scholarship focused on sex

⁸²⁴ Berg (n1).

⁸²⁵ Annie McClanahan and Jon-David Settell, ‘Service Work, Sex Work, and the “Prostitute Imaginary”’ (2021) 120(3) *South Atlantic Quarterly* 494.

⁸²⁶ Giorgia Serughetti, ‘Rethinking force and consent, victimisation and agency: a feminist approach to prostitution policy = Repensando sobre consentimiento y fuerza, victimización y agencia: una aproximación feminista a las políticas de prostitución’ (2018) 3(2) *FEMERIS: Revista Multidisciplinar de Estudios de Género* 79.

⁸²⁷ Laurie Penny, ‘Let’s not abolish sex work. Let’s abolish all work’ (*libcom.org*, 5 August 2016) <<https://libcom.org/article/lets-not-abolish-sex-work-lets-abolish-all-work-laurie-penny>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸²⁸ Sophia Giovannitti, *Working Girl. On Selling Art and Selling Sex* (Verso 2023) 58.

work, seeks both to secure sex workers' rights deriving from legal recognition and to directly confront a paternalistic, puritan, and anti-sex work feminist logic that dismisses sex worker agency, equating employment with coercion. In this context, a dialectic emerges concerning the sexual surrogate institution: by conceptualising sex work as care work, would a separate legal framework of regulation prove advantageous, or would it merely rearrange regulationism and the two-tier system between legality and illegalisation?

Considering the gender, class, and racial characteristics of sex work, the vulnerability of sex workers, the violence they are subjected to, and the relation between waged labour and enslavement, the labour recognition debate brings attention to the problematics of exploitation, work, and corporeality in neoliberal economies.⁸²⁹ The second half of the chapter addresses the inherent coercion of labour under capitalism. This notion is disregarded by anti-sex work (feminist and state-sanctioned) rhetoric, but is ultimately reproduced by labour law itself—even if the law ultimately serves as a tool for (sex) workers to advocate for their rights. Simultaneously, institutional recognition is desired for the workers to ensure even a minimum of rights, along with the practices of resistance employed by sex workers outside the realm of the law.

Intertwined with both the exploitative capitalist condition and the informalisation and casualisation of multiple forms of labour is the question of the sex workers' unionisation and overall collective demands. In this context, both the history of these demands and of sex workers' organising, including current mobilisations in Greece will be briefly presented. A separate sub-section is devoted to the positive aspects and limitations of legislative proposals on sex work in recent years. Limitations are examined within the broader capitalist context and the role that labour law plays in the maintenance of capitalist structures, ultimately linking into the demand for the negation of the exploitative capitalist condition of labour through its recognition. This demand comes into direct conflict with both anti-sex work feminists, and law-reform-centered advocacy, as reflected in Federici's statement from the 1975 'Wages for Housework' campaign: 'to say that we want wages for housework is the first step towards refusing to do it'.⁸³⁰ To these common struggles of domestic and sexual labourers within the premise of social reproduction I now turn.

⁸²⁹ See also Kathi Weeks, 'Life Within and Against Work: Affective Labor, Feminist Critique, and Post-Fordist Politics' (2007) 7(1) *ephemera | theory & politics in organization* 233, <<https://ephemerajournal.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/7-1weeks.pdf>>.

⁸³⁰ Silvia Federici, "'Wages Against Housework'" from *Power of Women Collective and Falling Wall Press, 1975.* (*caring labor: an archive*, 15 September 2010)

Women's work and intimate businesses

Prostitution as a special form of livelihood for working-class women, subject to separate legislation and charitable management, began to take shape in the 18th-19th centuries, according to Agustin. While women engaged in sex work in the past, during this period, prostitution gradually was separated from other forms of women's work. Prostitutes were increasingly perceived as deserving special treatment and objects to be rescued.⁸³¹ With the parallel emergence of the nuclear family as a given and as an object of scientific knowledge (through medicine and demography), and of the ideal of female purity, bourgeois women, on one hand, were confined to the home, and on the other, they considered it their duty to transmit these ideals to working-class women.⁸³² As mentioned in the first chapter, women in public became a constant source of moral panic. Their movement in public space was indicative of their social status, with their mobility heavily scrutinised, along with their paid work and their relationships with men. The modern subjectivity of the prostitute was constructed as the polar opposite of the bourgeois female subject. The latter defined itself through the rejection of what is seen as inferior and therefore dirty, noisy, repulsive, and infectious.⁸³³

All this eventually resulted in a deliberate erasure of sex work as women's work and of its position within the informal global economy.⁸³⁴ Workers selling sexual services were rapidly isolated as outcasts through legal reforms that systematised their work and subsequent police prosecutions.⁸³⁵ Laite, describing the false dichotomy between sex work and other forms of women's wage labour, refers to an early British feminist postcard, where 'the working woman' is trying to navigate between the 'Scylla of White Slavery' and the 'Charybdis of sweated labour'.⁸³⁶ This speaks volumes about how prostitution was inseparable from women's labour in general, despite the bourgeois feminists efforts to distinguish between these two forms of (re)productive labour, as has already been exposed in previous chapters.

Similarly, in Greece, middle-class women were only allowed to work as teachers, whereas poor women worked as servants, washers, and cleaners in upper-class households, frequently without pay in exchange for hospitality, or as sex

<https://caringlabor.wordpress.com/2010/09/15/silvia-federici-wages-against-housework/>
accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸³¹ Agustin (n12) 192.

⁸³² Hantzaroula (n127) 21.

⁸³³ Abatzi (n93) 33.

⁸³⁴ Laite (n240) 45.

⁸³⁵ See also Rubin (n69) 157.

⁸³⁶ Laite (n240) 41.

workers.⁸³⁷ Gradually, they would become employed as factory workers in various industries such as textile and clothing, in the tobacco industry, and in artisanship.⁸³⁸ The links between domestic and sexual work reinforced by feminist charitable organisations and the police, as highlighted in chapter 2, subjected women's wage work to a broader moralising discourse and higher levels of surveillance. The 1870 police provision which punished female servants for having relations with prostitutes, igniting the sexual-to-domestic-work-pipeline panics, contributed to the entry of new private actors in the management of the female labour force, in the form of charity. The regulatory systems of both domestic and sex work eventually constructed an artificial separation between the two 'domains' in the law. Notwithstanding these efforts, the binary constructed between domestic work and sex work often remained flimsy.

Laite further illustrates how anti-trafficking ideology and exiting schemes redrew the borders between prostitution and state-approved mobility and work.⁸³⁹ Connecting these processes to contemporary perspectives on sex work and migration, she argues that they

were not just about denying that prostitution was work: they were as much about constructing a discourse that denied the possibility, widely recognised in earlier periods, that state-approved work could be exploitative. Ideas about 'free' and 'unfree' labour was recodified in the twentieth century through the discourse of trafficking and – in the twenty-first century – 'modern slavery'.⁸⁴⁰

Until today, sex and domestic work 'promise quick infusions of cash into the household, the family and the larger community,'⁸⁴¹ and people, especially women, migrate to participate in these productive sectors, often simultaneously.⁸⁴² The marriage-prostitution comparison can be traced back to the 18th century. However, with the prevalence of the cult of domesticity, bourgeois feminism gradually moved away from the idea of abolishing marriage and focused on a discourse of claiming more rights for married women, who were the opposite extreme of the prostitute.⁸⁴³ On the counterpoint, Emma Goldman, speaking from an anarchist-feminist viewpoint, wrote that 'the economic and social inferiority of the woman is responsible for prostitution,' equating it with

⁸³⁷ Maria Karamessini, *Gynaikes, Fylo Kai Ergasia Stin Ellada [Women, Gender and Labour in Greece]* (Nissos 2021) 35.

⁸³⁸ See further Zizi Salimpa, *Gynaikes Ergatries Stin Elliniki Viomechania Kai Sti Viotechnia: (1870-1922) [Women Workers in the Greek Industry and Artisanship (1870-1922)]* (Kentro Neellenikon Ereunon EIE 2002)

⁸³⁹ Laite (n240) 61-2.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁴¹ Agathangelou (n121) 11.

⁸⁴² Ibid; Agustin (n12) 17-40.

⁸⁴³ Thierry Schaffauser, *Les Luttes des Putes [Poutanes ston agona]* (Topovoros, 2023) 133.

marriage—while also being critical of the bourgeois feminists’ campaigns against ‘white slavery’.⁸⁴⁴ For Goldman, therefore, marriage is inseparable from prostitution since women are dependent financially on the men they are married to. Leopoldina Fortunati further elaborated on the similarities between sex work and domestic work/marriage, as forms of reproductive work. Fortunati understands the disjunction between production and reproduction as a capitalist fiction: production generates value, whereas reproduction appears naturalised, belonging to the realm of ‘non-value’.⁸⁴⁵ Interestingly, Fortunati considers prostitution, namely the emotional and sexual services provided by sex workers, equally essential to the reproduction of labour power as marriage and domestic labour. In a similar vein, Mariarosa Dalla Costa contends that the emotional and sexual services provided by both sex workers and married women are crucial for maintaining workforce, yet she further emphasises the inherently exploitative aspects of this process.⁸⁴⁶ Finally, Selma James, a scholar and spokeswoman for both the Wages for Housework Campaign and the English Collective for Prostitutes, argued that ‘hookers and wives are the only categories excluded from institutional protection.’⁸⁴⁷ More recently, Prabha Kotiswaran reminds us:

What is reproductive labour for the middle-class family is productive labour for women working in the satellite economies. Meanwhile, stigmatised reproductive labour like sex work, stripping, erotic dancing, egg donation, massage or surrogacy which seems only tangentially related to this middle-class household is rendered exceptional on registers of violence or exploitation, especially by ‘radical’ feminists. In theorising social reproduction, we need a non-exceptionalist account of reproductive labour that does not render marriage special and recovers the critique of marriage, a key insight of second wave feminism.⁸⁴⁸

Reproductive workers are therefore denied institutional recognition and their labour-time is conceived as a personal service ‘offered’ (or paid when commercialised) in a social relation of private exchange.⁸⁴⁹ This is sharply illustrated in the case of Law 2734/1999, which classifies prostitution as an ‘economic activity’ but not as employment. Yet, as Alessandra Mezzadri highlights, workers under capitalism exist only through their use-value, by selling

⁸⁴⁴ Emma Goldman, ‘The Traffic in Women, 1910’ (*Marxists Internet Archive*) <www.marxists.org/reference/archive/goldman/works/1910/traffic-women.htm> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸⁴⁵ Fortunati (n72); Alessandra Mezzadri, ‘A Value Theory of Inclusion: Informal Labour, the Homeworker, and the Social Reproduction of Value’ [2020] *Antipode* 3.

⁸⁴⁶ Dalla Costa (n73).

⁸⁴⁷ James (n74) 114.

⁸⁴⁸ Prabha Kotiswaran, ‘Social Reproduction, Feminism and the Law: Ships in the Night Passing Each Other’ (2023) 12(2) *Feminists@law* 13.

⁸⁴⁹ Mezzadri (845) 3.

their labour power which, in turn, regenerates. Reproduction also produces value, and it is central to the ways in which labour is organised and experienced.⁸⁵⁰ In addition, since reproduction occurs primarily in the realm of the body, sex work should also be examined as somatic work, especially in its intimate form.

Nuances emerge between various forms of work traditionally framed as feminised. Apart from reproductive work, essential for sustaining the family institution and the capitalist economy through the maintenance of labour force, subsets arise, including care work, service work and intimate labour. Care work extends beyond mere nurturing and tenderness, encompassing a spectrum of emotional, physical, and cognitive tasks aimed at supporting others' wellbeing (including childcare, eldercare etc.). Intimate labour is characterised by the depth of emotional engagement and connection involved in various occupations, such as such as sex work or certain forms of therapy. Service work, spanning multiple industries such as hospitality, retail, and healthcare, focuses on providing diverse services to individuals, differing from intimate labour's deep emotional engagement. These classifications, while interconnected, portray the multifaceted nature of labour, emphasising the diverse roles and complexities evident, especially within the nuanced realities of sex work.⁸⁵¹ Additionally, the overlaps between these sectors, considering both the physical and emotional aspects of work, along with a multitude of empirical studies showing that often the same subjects - predominantly women- are employed in more than one of these sectors, serve as an interesting field of analysis, blurring the boundaries between production and reproduction.⁸⁵²

The body: sex, care, and consent

I usually say jokingly that I charge 100 euros for a psychotherapy session, and I offer sex as a gift (Aris)

I think we should get a degree in psychology for working in sex. If you have a grasp of psychoanalysis, though, you understand why it lacks physical contact—it makes it even more difficult to distance yourself and maintain your boundaries.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁵¹ On these nuanced distinctions see further Eileen Boris and Rachel Salazar Parreñas, "Intimate Labors: Cultures, Technologies, and the Politics of Care—'Introduction'", *Feminist Theory Reader* (Routledge 2016).

⁸⁵² E.g. *ibid*; Agathangelou (n121); Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild, eds., *Global woman: nannies, maids, and sex workers in the new economy* (Metropolitan Books, 2003); Sara L. Friedman and Pardis Mahdavi, eds., *Migrant encounters: intimate labor, the state, and mobility across Asia* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); LM Agustin, 'A Migrant World of Services' (2003) 10(3) *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 377.

However, the emotional labour in our job often outweighs the physical labour.
(Nina)

The clients are trauma-dumping like crazy, oversharing. Suddenly they start unravelling a family drama, about their brother who nicked their inheritance, about their child not doing well in school. Professional drama; sports drama, when their favourite team loses. We need to turn into psychologists, which I personally don't do very well. I respond quite sharply 'wow, that's a shame, terrible' etc. And in other jobs I've done, as a salesperson or receptionist, you hear crap that you have to put up with. (Andri)

The notion that we sell our bodies firstly sanctifies the body and sexuality, secondly it ignores how the body functions in the system of capitalist labour in general. This never comes through a conversation with sex workers but as a hypothesis in the absence of experience. I, working in the restaurant industry, have felt my body ache like in no other job I have ever had. When in focus I must put on an act both emotionally and physically as much as anywhere else, in sex work, it takes less. Pretending during sex work can at least give you some pleasure, that the other person is being satisfied. In other jobs, I think emotional labour comes from dozens of sides: bosses, coworkers, clients, underpayment etc. In sex work at least you see the result of your work directly -the satisfaction of the other person- and you don't get paid badly. (Dimitris)

Dimitris brings to the fore the somatic and caring aspects inherent not only in sex work but also in various types of wage labour. This also applies to the emotional labour required on behalf of the worker, as well as the pleasure the sex workers can get from their job. On the counterpoint, anti-prostitution feminists often claim that sex trade turns the body into an object, a commodity, and argue that paid sex is tantamount to rape; according to them, this is what makes sex work a completely different form of labour.⁸⁵³ However, such claims ignore the lived experience of sex workers, the complex labour processes, and eventually tend to justify the actual rape of sex workers. As Gira Grant vividly illustrates, if men can do whatever they want when they buy sex, the rape of sex workers as lacking the capacity to consent, seems inevitable, a part of the job.⁸⁵⁴ Sex workers' lived experiences prove the falsity of this claim. 'The first and only time I opted out of a date was with a guy, who insisted on doing it without a condom,' Georgia would tell me.

At the core of equating prostitution with sexual abuse is the notion that if an individual is paid to do something they would not do for free, this constitutes

⁸⁵³ E.g. Pritchard, Pateman, cited in Gareth Dale and Xanthe Rose, 'A response to the sex work debate • International Socialism' (*International Socialism*, 25 June 2010) <<https://isj.org.uk/a-response-to-the-sex-work-debate/#127dale11>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸⁵⁴ Gira Grant (n80) 91.

‘coercion’ or even ‘violence’: a ‘no’ is turned into a ‘yes’ through money. Nevertheless, all work is -or at least should be- done in exchange for money. An outgrowth of this concept is the Nordic Model, which outlaws the consent of sex workers. Similarly, Ireland, in 2017, criminalised the purchase of sexual services by introducing it into Part 4 of the Criminal Law Sexual Offences Act, as part of its rethinking of the concept of consent under the #MeToo boom.⁸⁵⁵ Spain in 2021 and 2022, in the same bill that acknowledged that ‘Only Yes means Yes’, tried to pass a provision that would criminalise the client, even outlawing the consent of sex workers.⁸⁵⁶ This attempt failed after strong opposition from sex worker organisations at national and European levels. Dominance/carceral feminism is thus resurfacing to dictate to sex workers whether they can consent to their work or not. The intense feminist critique, which has rightfully focused on whether consent to sex work is formalised with a ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ and whether the criminal justice system can effectively resolve these complex gendered and racialised social issues, has been extensively addressed in literature.⁸⁵⁷ Overlooked, however, by the feminists leading such initiatives is that consent to sex work is not just consent to sex, but to an economic relationship.

Addressing consent in sex work raises a far more complex issue, one that surpasses the dichotomy between choice and coercion. Consent to work within the *a priori* coercive capitalist condition is shaped by factors such as gender, race, class, etc. The same applies to the question of agency. Although an extensive study of the construction of agency exceeds not only the scope of this research but also the epistemological boundaries within which this multifaceted issue operates, it is necessary to note that agency emerges within complex socio-economic mechanisms.⁸⁵⁸ Sex workers movements and many critical studies on prostitution have long shown the trivial dichotomy between ‘free’ and ‘forced’ prostitution.⁸⁵⁹ Pluma Sumaq writes:

There is a tendency to simplify the motivations behind entering the sex industry, insisting upon a strong distinction between people who enter consensually by ‘choice’ and those who are ‘forced’. While it is true that working in the sex industry is a choice that many women have made for themselves, it is equally one that (like most other economic choices) is largely circumstantial. When we fail to see the complexity behind this

⁸⁵⁵ Bacik (n8).

⁸⁵⁶ ESWA (n10).

⁸⁵⁷ E.g. Janet Halley, ‘The Move to Affirmative Consent’ (2016) 42(1) *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 257; Judith Levine & Erica R. Meiners, *The Feminist and The Sex Offender. Confronting Sexual Harm, Ending State Violence* (Verso 2020); Joseph J. Fischel, *Sex and Harm in the Age of Consent* (University of Minnesota Press 2016); Tanya Serisier, *Speaking Out: Feminism, Rape and Narrative Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan 2018).

⁸⁵⁸ Serughetti (n826) 93; Scoular (n 75) 112.

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

choice we run the risk of denying, neglecting, and erasing the inequalities many women of color continue to experience after they have made the empowered decision to survive.

This static dichotomy apart from failing to capture the complicated power dynamics and material experiences lived by prostitutes, serve as means of legitimisation of state intervention, giving room to bureaucratic power and surveillance in regimes of legalisation.⁸⁶⁰ The anti-trafficking regime as discussed in the previous chapter is the strongest illustration of this trend. However, regulationism itself inherently carries this rationale; through the multiple restrictions it poses to the workers, it aims to prevent them from making a 'circumstantial' choice—an element that is not present in other kinds of work, albeit devalued within the capitalist system.

A common accusation hurled by anti-sex work feminists against sex workers who stand against the criminalisation of their work is that of 'false consciousness', as they behave in a way that benefits the patriarchy,⁸⁶¹ disregarding the fact that false consciousness is embedded in capitalism.⁸⁶² No labourer is required to love their job, let alone constantly demonstrate it and never express discontent with it. Only in sexual labour, however, is the slightest expression of dissatisfaction on the part of workers is interpreted as evidence of its abusive nature. Apart from the fact that such objections ultimately attempt to silence the very women directly involved, by reproducing the timeless patterns of bourgeois feminist philanthropy, they fail to acknowledge that sexual labour is different from sex itself.⁸⁶³ As sex worker Shane writes at the blog 'Tits and Sass', introducing the term 'unenthusiastic consent', there is a huge difference between the times she has agreed to (undesired) sex with clients, and the times she hasn't agreed to certain types of sex with clients—'labelling all those experiences "rape" erases my truth, my reality and my agency.'⁸⁶⁴

The fact that desire differs from consent may seem complicated, yet it is common in various interpersonal relationships (for example, in married life), and also lies in the heart of the notion of work itself. Elizabeth Bernstein categorises sex work as a form of emotional labour, specifically stating that workers provide a form of 'bounded authenticity,' physical and emotional.⁸⁶⁵ This authenticity varies

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid 93.

⁸⁶¹ Victoria Bateman, 'How Decriminalisation Reduces Harm Within and Beyond Sex Work: Sex Work Abolitionism as the "Cult of Female Modesty" in Feminist Form' [2021] *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* 830.

⁸⁶² See, e.g. among others, Georg Lukacs, 'History & Class Consciousness (1920)' (*Marxists Internet Archive*) <www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/lukacs3.htm> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸⁶³ Gira Grant (n80) 90.

⁸⁶⁴ Cited *ibid* 93.

⁸⁶⁵ Elizabeth Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours Intimacy, Authenticity, and the Commerce of Sex* (Chicago University Press, 2007) 6.

according to the time and place of service provision; for instance, the few-minute appointments in Athenian brothels do not lend themselves to emotional conversations, unlike the experiences of phone sex or escorting. However, the manufactured 'authentic' experience of pleasure and intimacy is innate in paid sex, as all my interviewees, regardless of their status, emphasise.

Two clarifications are necessary here. The first one concerns the very notion of care. As Nancy Fraser points out, care consists of a matrix of benefits and interactional relations that produce and sustain social bonds and, ultimately, the capitalist economy, even though it is not attributed a monetary value and is treated as if it were freely available.⁸⁶⁶ Already since the industrial age, care work in capitalist societies, which is social reproductive work, has been separated from productive forms of work, under the pretext that the women who usually perform it are rewarded with 'love' and 'virtue', and not with money. The cult of domesticity and the 19th-century ideal of bourgeois femininity, which sought to rescue their 'fallen sisters' through philanthropy, was rooted in this ideology.⁸⁶⁷ Therefore, it is essential to understand here that care is not synonymous with tenderness, but is conceptualised as a category of female, reproductive labour, forgotten by capitalist -but also by the dominant communist- discourse, with an expectation for it to be offered without pay.

The second clarification concerns different perceptions regarding the 'prostitute's imaginary,' a discourse 'driven by both fantasies and fears about sex and the value of human life,'⁸⁶⁸ as Gira Grant notes. The figure of the prostitute encapsulates modernity's concerns about morality, health, threats to family and nation cohesion, and the perceived appropriateness of women's work, as the previous chapters explored. The responses from sex work activists often emphasised the empowering and pleasurable aspects of the job. For instance, COYOTE, a pioneering sex workers rights organisation that emerged in the early 1970s, has long praised the erotic and emotional facets of prostitution.⁸⁶⁹ Yet, this stance has faced criticism coming from within the movement. Mac and Smith, for instance, argue that sex positivity is actually a counterproductive strategy for talking about sex work, as it erases the very reality of the work and, to a certain extent, reaffirms patriarchal stereotypes, such as the perception of prostitutes as always available.⁸⁷⁰

⁸⁶⁶ Nancy Fraser, 'Contradictions of Capital and Care' 100 - July 2016 New Left Review <<https://newleftreview.org/issues/i100/articles/nancy-fraser-contradictions-of-capital-and-care>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸ Gira Grant (n80) 4.

⁸⁶⁹ Cited by Bernstein (n865) 167.

⁸⁷⁰ Smith and Mac (n2) 12.

Indeed, reproducing the ‘happy hooker stereotype’ [sic] in a vacuum would obscure the fundamental fact that women workers have different interests from clients.⁸⁷¹ The worker engages in this line of work for financial gain, material interest entirely separate from the client's pursuit of casual sex and entertainment. The perpetuation of the stereotype of the autonomous escort who always enjoys sex ultimately conceals both structural violence and the complexity of the job, this portrayal acting as the inverse image of feminists fighting prostitution. Sex work is not free from the power dynamics inherent in all aspects of socio-economic life and labour relations, intertwined with factors such as gender, race, class, and disability. Power dynamics are indeed embedded within the very notion of work, and they are exacerbated by the criminalised nature of sex work and the sexist and racial stereotypes that largely govern the sex industry.⁸⁷²

However, the ‘Happy Hooker’ has not become a dominant counterpoint in Greece so far, as a couple of my interviewees pointed out.⁸⁷³ Therefore, it is entirely reasonable for sex workers who openly discuss their profession to articulate their experiences in terms of liberating desire. While all my interlocutors mentioned having had bad experiences with clients, these encounters did not dominate the tone in their interviews. Instead, the recurrent theme was the multitude of ways in which sexuality, fetishes, and the desire for a simple touch manifest.⁸⁷⁴ An example of how this is articulated by my interlocutors can be found in the words of Georgia.

Georgia, with a background in early childhood education, shares that during her time working as an escort, she was very popular because she was very caring.

I would give a kiss or a hug. It was impulsive for me because I would see them huddled together and scared. I would reassure them that I was there willingly, and we would have a fun time. I employed the teacher's style of ‘okay we'll talk about money later, let's sit down and relax first,’ and then they would write in the reviews that they had fallen in love with me. The clients knew I wouldn't stay at work for long and that brought in an extra sense of romance. I was told by the agency manager that if I worked for years I wouldn't be able to stand doing this, I would work more mechanically. I don't know if he's right, however, I remember a colleague telling me that she worked in a brothel because it suited her that in 15

⁸⁷¹ Ibid 32.

⁸⁷² It is worth noting that a comprehensive exploration of power dynamics within sex work could benefit from client-based empirical research, potentially extending beyond the scope of this particular study. For further insights into this aspect, see Michael Patrick Vaughn, ‘Client Power and the Sex Work Transaction: The Influence of Race, Class, and Sex Work Role in the Post-Apartheid Sex Work Industry’ (2019) 23(3) *Sexuality & Culture* 826.

⁸⁷³ Reference to Xaviera Hollander's book, *The Happy Hooker: My Own Story* (Harper, 2002)

⁸⁷⁴ For a different perspective on how sex workers talk about pleasure and intimacy also see Berg (n1).

minutes the maid would knock on the door and the appointment would be over. I was impressed by that. I was putting my heart and soul into it, doing exactly what I would do in my relationships. This offered me an outlet from my own emotional dead ends, it really helped me decompress. And, of course the fact that I felt so desired, that the other person would seek me out again and again was tremendously flattering, at one point it became like a drug. Sex assured me that I was alive, even when it was for money. I realised, of course, that if I continued doing it for years it would not be possible to put in so much energy, it would burn me out.

I asked Georgia more specifically about clients.

There were some who didn't understand anything, they acted like animals, they were kind of comical though. I was thinking that they're the classic assholes who swear at you in the street or on Facebook, even some fascists, but I got to see them naked too. On the other hand, I remember quite fondly someone who wanted to lie in my lap so that I would sing to him. I did it and he was very happy about it.

Reflecting on this last client is that he would not be able to satisfy this desire in any other relationship context if it were not for the anonymity, emotional distance and pecuniary mediation inherent in sex work. The same applies to clients whose fetishes lie in the realm of BDSM. All my interlocutors told me that the majority of clients want to be dominated by sex professionals. It is understandable why men with submissive tendencies turn to sex professionals, as virility, often equated with sexual dominance, renders these tendencies unpalatable to their partners. Sex workers adeptly navigate the complexities of client desires by curating non-judgmental spaces that honour and prioritise consensual engagement, and that applies to the clients wishing to express dominant tendencies as well. Performing intimacy requires the development of certain strategies. This setting it apart from non-professional sex. Sex work, to a great extent, is 'a performance, it is playing a role, demonstrating a skill, developing empathy within a set of professional boundaries'.⁸⁷⁵

Zanette, initially working as a studio masseuse and later as a freelance dominatrix with a specific clientele, describes a somewhat different experience, attributing it, in part, to being 'one of the few fatties' in the profession.

I was lucky because over the years I had some regular clients who eventually became friends who helped me in challenging times. I became friends with the clients because we also had conversations, I listened to their psychological issues, besides sex, and we went out for a drink or two,

⁸⁷⁵ Gira Grant (n80) 90.

so they have remained loyal through the years. Singling it out is easy because it's work, you can put emotion into it only if you want to. I met my partner in my work for example, and I went through the process of pursuing him.

Although there is a clear spatio-temporal distinction between escorting and the brothel and this exact distinction involves different types of intimacy, the boundaries between the professional and the personal are still maintained. Sex workers often adopt different names and appearances, not only to preserve their anonymity, but also to create a distance between their personal lives and their work; what is sold is not the 'real' self but an enactment.⁸⁷⁶ There is a debate on whether such performances and disengagement are indicators of professionalism, or reflect the psychological distress caused by sex work. And, it can indeed be both at the same time: work is alienating by nature, yet one should consider the demands for performing expressions or emotions to induce a specific emotional state in another person, a requirement that inherently exists in other forms of emotional labour. Professions such as au pairs, maids, nurses, masseuses, domestic and social workers, teachers, hairdressers, and nail artists involve high-touch, personal-interaction service work traditionally coded as women's work and associated with caring, while remaining underpaid.⁸⁷⁷

Most of us coming into this business don't like all our clients, we don't always have a choice. But if you like sex it transforms you and you can always find ways that are efficient and, you'll have a good time too, like a performance you're getting into. (Ivy, 43, trans woman)

I've had my best hookups at the brothel, and in retrospect, my best flings. The label, the role: it gives you a release. Most of us folks in the business get into a role. I didn't do it for protection at the time, but out of need. I embodied my own romantic ideal in relationships: I was a sweet little girl. At work, I was liberated from that. In any job, we all get into a role of course. And I automatically separated my personal life from my work. The brothel during the good times was so busy that a date might last 5–10 minutes, and yet he was the love of your life for those minutes, and you were his. Even if you never saw him again. If the Nordic model is applied though, the client, even the best in the world, will take advantage of it. In my career, everyone knew when I was the weaker one in this relationship. And I say that having known both assholes and wonderful clients. And I've seen that people are in dire need of connection. You're a bit of a whore chick for some people after four or five times. You may be bored during sex, but there's safety and

⁸⁷⁶ Dale and Rose (n853).

⁸⁷⁷ Nancy Folbre, *Who Cares? A Feminist Critique of the Care Economy* (Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung NY 2014) <www.rosalux.de/fileadmin/rls_uploads/pdfs/sonst_publicationen/folbre_whocares.pdf>.

intimacy, and I've had countless times with steady clients on dates where I haven't even had sex. I was of course playing my part there too, but we were talking or lying naked in each other's arms. (Anna, 58, trans woman)

In addition to the eloquent description of the caring aspects of sex work that Anna gives above, she provides another important insight. Vulnerabilities and risk, whether related to financial/class issues, immigration status, or the current legal regime around work, affect the ways in which women workers act, shaping the margins within which they can negotiate for services and payment.⁸⁷⁸

Additionally, as Barbara Brents and Teela Sanders write, 'highly skilled mainstream jobs such as nursing already require bodily and sexual labour.'⁸⁷⁹ There are somatic and even erotic aspects in multiple forms of care work, and vice versa. The connection between nursing and prostitution is not new: nurses have always been required to touch men's naked bodies, and before Nightingale's reforms, the women who commonly fulfilled this role were often destitute, homeless, and engaged in a combination of nursing and prostitution in order to survive.⁸⁸⁰ In the 1980s, philosopher Lars Ericsson wrote that they 'both help satisfy important human needs, and both get paid for doing so.'⁸⁸¹ Women migrate to work in the sex or care sectors under globalised capitalism,⁸⁸² and engage in a broad spectrum of intimate work 'including psychotherapy, therapeutic massage, bartending, hairstyling, and escort work.'⁸⁸³

Dignified whores

We have been discussing sex and accessible brothels with disabled people's organisations since the 1990s. Unfortunately, in this country, too many disabled people are trapped in an infantile and almost incestuous state instead of releasing their sexuality socially. Many sexual surrogates also think they are nurses when to me they are clearly goddamn whores. (Greg, 67)

⁸⁷⁸ Gira Grant (n80) 93.

⁸⁷⁹ Barbara G Brents and Teela Sanders, 'Mainstreaming the Sex Industry: Economic Inclusion and Social Ambivalence' (2010) 37(1) *Journal of Law and Society* 56; for the sexualisation of other professions and performance in sex work see also Teela Sanders, 'It's Just Acting': Sex Workers' Strategies for Capitalizing on Sexuality' (2005) 12(4) *Gender, Work and Organization* 319.

⁸⁸⁰ Brian Abel-Smith, *A History of the Nursing Profession* (Heinemann 1960) 10,17; Madelaine Healey, 'Regarded, paid and housed as menials': nursing in colonial India, 1900-1948' (2010) 2(1) *South Asian History and Culture* 55; Cecil Woodham-Smith C, *Florence Nightingale, 1820-1910* (McGraw-Hill, Forgotten Books 2015) 51.

⁸⁸¹ Lars O Ericsson, 'Charges Against Prostitution: An Attempt at a Philosophical Assessment' (1980) 90(3) *Ethics* 342.

⁸⁸² Ehrenreich and Hochschild (n882).

⁸⁸³ Agustin (n12) 385-386.

By highlighting the connections between sex work and care work, the discussion inevitably turns to sexual surrogates. Sexual surrogates are defined by providing sexual services -ranging from simple touching of erogenous zones outside the genitals to a complete sexual act- to individuals with physical or mental disabilities (able to consent) or those experiencing sexual trauma,⁸⁸⁴ either independently or in collaboration with a therapist.

Overall, the concept of a sexual surrogate may seem nice and simple, but upon closer inspection, problems become obvious. In 2022, the neoliberal New Democracy government informally announced its intention to institutionalise sexual surrogates, following the establishment of personal assistants for disabled people. This move should not be read in isolation from the broader context of the dismantling of the National Health System and the -albeit meagre- benefits handed out to all vulnerable groups, nor from the simultaneous announcement of a reform of Law 2734/1999, which grants more power to the police and essentially denies labour rights to sex workers. As a first observation, then, these government initiatives appear to treat sexual surrogacy as a medical process detached from sex work. This reproduces the medical model of disability, which in turn medicalises disabled bodies once again, while framing sexual surrogacy as a dignified version of sex work.

All my interviewees reported that they had served clients with disabilities, and some had regular disabled clients. While they look very favourably on the existence of sexual surrogates, they fundamentally disagree with the institutional separation of their work from their own. None of the workers had received special training, although they wanted to, and appointments were arranged in homes or hotels as most brothels are housed in old buildings with reduced accessibility. Moreover, the vast majority of clients were men, although disabled women do request sexual services, as reported to me by both the only participant in the survey who provided lesbian sex work and Dimitris, a sexual surrogate in Spain for nearly two decades. The following quote from Aris encapsulates some of the arguments: 'We whores also perform a service. Let's talk about cases of teenagers with disabilities who are 15, 16, or 17 years old. Minors, but sexual beings. Parents can't take on the responsibility of jerking them off all their lives. But I get angry that we must go to such extremes to understand that sex workers are actually useful; the simple request for pleasure should be enough.'

Eventually, although the institution of sexual surrogates could be used as a starting point to see the caregiving aspect of sex work, the medicalisation pretext and the absence of a demand for universal access to pleasure as posed by the state

⁸⁸⁴ Numerous definitions can be found online, however this one comes from personal communication with long-time sexual surrogate Dimitris Spyros Zorzos (June 2023).

are ultimately damaging for both the workers and for those who employ their services. Matthias Vernaldi, a disabled activist, says that he fights for the right of disabled people to turn to sex workers if that is the only way to experience the pleasure of sexual intercourse. Yet he would not want the state to pay for such an experience because it would further entrench society's view that disabled people are flawed creatures. In a world striving to eliminate all kinds of inequalities, a disabled person should not have to pay for companionship anyway, let alone be paid for that companionship by the state. 'It would be better to allocate this money to sex education in order to teach everyone without exception about the diversity of human bodies, identities and sexual expressions.'⁸⁸⁵

Further questions arise regarding the criteria for determining eligibility for sexual surrogate services, who undertakes the evaluation of individuals entitled to the assistance of sexual surrogates, and what kind of diagnoses will suffice.⁸⁸⁶ Additionally, Lawrence Shapiro, points out that the opportunities for disabled people to become sexual surrogates themselves are in fact very limited.⁸⁸⁷ The stereotype of disabled people depending on able-bodied people is therefore reinforced.

To return to the question of work, one of my interviewees raised the following crucial point: 'You clearly need more specific knowledge when there are disabilities, physical or mental, but it's like you want to idealise it when you separate it from sex work. It may even come with a lower salary because it's still considered charitable work. I don't know why fellow workers would ask for this.' (Nina, 35). Such a distinction, if officially endorsed, would widen the gap between legal and illegal sex work. It would constitute a regulationism within regulationism, where police involvement may be absent, but medical surveillance would be in full force and would be both internalised and reproduced by workers in this industry, thus accentuating some of the initial concerns of this chapter. Does the state intend to financially support sex work businesses? If so, would this pave the way for the labour rights of all people working in the sex industry, or only for those 'specially trained in disability issues'?⁸⁸⁸ In reality, this classification is another version of regulationism. The question becomes even more pressing in the not-unlikely scenario where the state's institutionalisation of sex workers coincides with further legal restrictions on prostitution. These constraints could range from a complete ban (as in some US states) to variations of the Nordic

⁸⁸⁵Cited by Vassiliki Lazaridou, 'Sexualikoi Voithoi (Ti Einai Pali Ayto?) [Sexual Surrogates (What Is This?)]' [2022] *Yusra* 76

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁷ Lawrence Shapiro, 'The disabled sexual surrogate' (2017) 25(50) *Reproductive Health Matters* 134.

⁸⁸⁸ Lazaridou (n885) 76.

Model (as seen in Israel⁸⁸⁹), or strict regulationism (e.g., as proposed by New Democracy, which would also incorporate many elements of prohibitionism).

Christina, 40, is a transgender lesbian and the only person in the sample who has worked with female clients as a freelance escort.

Escorting was another way to celebrate my new pussy -which I was already doing, sleeping with the whole lesbian Athenian community- and at the same time make some good money, since I was just starting my career as an illustrator, which is my profession. I had transitioned so I didn't disclose I was transgender primarily so as not to confuse the clients, and for self-protection to a lesser extent. I had discussed it with some who were aware and interested. It was very interesting that in the context of that work I experienced the cis privilege.

She describes a very wide spectrum of experiences from her work. Clients range from women with very specific fetishes who avoid any other sexual activity, to those seeking companionship on dates or in bed, others desiring a homosexual experience, disabled women, those who have been sexually traumatised or have never had an orgasm, and 'those who were curious about sex work itself who just wanted to have a drink and talk without even touching, and some consciously horny women who knew they wanted to pay for sex.' This variety in female clientele in sex work may seem out of place in a section on sexual surrogates.⁸⁹⁰ In truth, however, the institution of sexual surrogates could be the starting point for a demand for universal access to the right to pleasure, instead of another indirect form of medicalisation and control: a way to broaden the understanding of sex work and its usefulness. 'I'm thinking that just as women are gradually claiming things for our sexuality, we can possibly claim access to pleasure in the same way' Georgia told me.

Returning to the concept of intimate labour, it derives primarily from social reproduction feminism and Viviana Zelizer's analysis of 'connected lives,' investigating the boundaries between the economic and intimate spheres, through a meticulous examination of court cases and secondary sources. Zelizer notes, 'In all social settings, intimate and personal alike, social ties and economic transactions mingle, as human beings perform relational work by matching their personal ties and economic activity.'⁸⁹¹ Monetary exchange lies in the core of many relationships, such as marriage, prostitution, compensation for a partner's death,

⁸⁸⁹ See further 2020 Israeli Abolition of Prostitution Consumption Law; 'How sex surrogates are helping injured Israeli soldiers - BBC News' (*BBC News*) <www.bbc.com/news/stories-56737828.amp> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸⁹⁰ More about this issue in Sarah Kingston, Natalie Hammond, and Scarlett Redman, *Women Who Buy Sex: Converging Sexualities?* (Routledge 2020).

⁸⁹¹ Viviana Zelizer, *The purchase of intimacy* (Princeton University Press 2007) 14-15.

childcare, and more. Zelizer suggests that these interactions are morally neutral, constituting mere facts of life. Indeed, the offer of any service for a short or lengthy period within an exchange framework cannot be assessed as unethical. Yet a necessary complement to this analysis is the economic function of the rule of law itself, and the ways in which legislations and courts recognise certain intimate jobs as legitimate, while others remain invisible or face persecution. More profoundly, the ways in which the legal-economic system consolidates gender, class, and racial relations through the grid of invisibilisation and criminalisation bring us back to social reproduction feminism. Zelizer's commentary is in fact closer to Marxist approaches than one may think. For example, Karl Polanyi's concept of *embeddedness* illustrates that economic transactions permeate various social and cultural practices, affecting societal norms and dynamics.⁸⁹² For Polanyi the logic of monetary exchange in capitalism subsumes all other relationships within it. Prostitution is a characteristic example of embeddedness, as an economic transaction tied to societal norms, cultural perceptions, and the interplay between economic and personal relationships, existing on the periphery in terms of integration.⁸⁹³

Social reproduction feminism came to oppose narrow Leninist approaches to work. Indicatively, in post-revolutionary Russia, both Lenin and Alexandra Kollontai were strongly opposed to prostitution, attributing it to the spread of venereal diseases. They advocated for the cultivation of 'a good socialist sexuality' grounded in 'the abandon of young love, or by fervent passion or by a blaze of physical attraction or by a soft light of intellectual and emotional harmony.'⁸⁹⁴ Sex should be treated as 'a duty to the community',⁸⁹⁵ promiscuity and 'sexual laxity' were to be eschewed as symptoms of bourgeois degeneration,⁸⁹⁶ and sex workers' organisation was dismissed as a 'morbid deviation'.⁸⁹⁷ Beyond health, morality and family reproduction as biopolitical paradigms, the condemnation of prostitution was to a great extent depended upon whether it could be perceived to its purely economic-labour dimension, its input into production. Prostitution was seen as work avoidance, harmful for 'the national economy and hindering the further development of the productive forces'.⁸⁹⁸ Economic stability and industrial progress, according to this perspective, can only be achieved 'if we harness the

⁸⁹² Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Beacon Press 2001) xxiii.

⁸⁹³ See also Meiksins Wood (n755) 6.

⁸⁹⁴ Cited by Thierry Schaffauser, 'The sex work debate—a response to Jess Edwards' (*International Socialism*, 13 December 2010) <<http://isj.org.uk/the-sex-work-debate-a-response-to-jess-edwards/>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸⁹⁵ Cited by Dale and Rose (n853)

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁷ Clara Zetkin, 'Lenin on the Women's Question - 2- (An Interview with Lenin on the Woman Question)' (*Marxists Internet Archive*) <www.marxists.org/archive/zetkin/1925/lenin/zetkin2.htm> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁸⁹⁸ Schaffauser (n894).

efforts and energies of the workers and if we organise the available labour power of both men and women in the most rational way.’⁸⁹⁹ Kollontai emphatically concludes ‘Down with the unproductive labour of housework and child-minding! Make way for work that is organised and productive and serves the work collective!’⁹⁰⁰

Additionally, such notions deepen the exploitation of reproductive workers and wilfully ignore the fact that sex work, even illicit, produces surplus value.⁹⁰¹ On the contrary, as Mezzadri argues, recognising the latter as workers can help us ‘rethink crucial Marxist terms such as value, class (composition), the working day, the work floor and, on the other hand, reimagine crucial Marxist organising tactics such as the strike, the union, the party and so on.’⁹⁰² Gira Grant also highlights how the bargaining power of sex workers, whether in terms of pay, security, or performing things they normally wouldn’t, is directly related to their economic/class status and immigration status. This analysis posits the issue of sex work in a wider class-labour approach. The more precarious their position and the wider the network of oppressions they suffer, the less bargaining power they have and the less they are able to consent to things they would otherwise reject.⁹⁰³ Desire industries, even in the form of shadow economies, reaffirm the productive dynamic of reproduction.⁹⁰⁴

In sum, social reproduction ‘denaturalises the separation between production and social reproduction as well as the devaluation, invisibilisation and immiseration of different forms of racialised, gendered and classed forms labour.’⁹⁰⁵ Beyond the distinction between productive and reproductive labour, however, the analysis of sex work as work should be set within a more general framework of what work is today, what are the working conditions in Greece in general, but especially in the most undervalued sectors of production/economy, to which I now turn.

The emancipatory nature of labour under capitalism

⁸⁹⁹ Cited by Dale and Rose (n853).

⁹⁰⁰ Alexandra Kollontai, ‘Prostitution and ways of fighting - Speech by Alexandra Kollontai to the third all-Russian conference of heads of the Regional Women’s Departments, 1921.’ (*Marxists Internet Archive*) <www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1921/prostitution.htm> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹⁰¹ George Caffentzis, ‘Freezing the Movement and the Marxist Theory of War’, *In letters of blood and fire: Work, machines, and the crisis of capitalism* (PM Press 2013) (PM Press 2013) 213.

⁹⁰² Alessandra Mezzadri, *Marx in the Field* (Anthem Press 2021) 198.

⁹⁰³ Gira Grant (n80) 93.

⁹⁰⁴ Agathangelou (n121) ix.

⁹⁰⁵ Donatella Alessandrini, ‘International Economic Law and the Hidden Abode of Social Reproduction’ (2023) 12(2) *Feminists@law*.

As noted in the previous chapter, informal, atypical forms of labour exist worldwide, outnumbering formal wage work, which remains the dominant paradigm.⁹⁰⁶ As Mezzadri highlights, across the whole planet in fact -the labourforce is greatly informalised. According to the ILO (2018), 61 percent of the whole world labours informally -in women, this percentage reaches 80%; 69% of the Global South population works informally as well. In informalised labour contexts, production and social reproduction are particularly intimately connected, and the boundaries between production and reproduction and legitimate and informalised labour blur.⁹⁰⁷ Thus, an understanding of work that acknowledges the validity of only formal, contracted, legal forms of employment is a largely outdated conceptualisation rooted in the symbolic legacy of the welfare nation-state, which has very little to do with the complex realities formed in the contemporary transnational, globalised, capitalist economy. It is in this context of perpetuating dichotomies between formal/informal and productive/reproductive labour that sex work faces exceptionalism and criminalisation.

Friedrich Engels, in his landmark writing on the 'Conditions of the Working Class in England', extensively described how working conditions in Victorian era 'tend to destroy the worker body and soul'.⁹⁰⁸ He portrays the male factory worker in an 'unnerved, uncomfortable, hypochondriac state of mind and body arising from his unhealthy condition, and especially from indigestion, is aggravated beyond endurance by the general conditions of his life, the uncertainty of his existence, his dependence upon all possible accidents and chances, and his inability to do anything towards gaining an assured position.'⁹⁰⁹ The extent to which working conditions have changed over the last two centuries goes far beyond the scope of this research. However, starting from Engels, two hypotheses that will be analysed in this section can be marked. First, the claim of anti-sex work feminists that prostitution cannot be a result of free choice is rendered meaningless when considering that work in the capitalist economy is in itself coercive. Second, that within the notion of labour itself, especially in the lowest sectors, multiple forms of violence can be identified.

⁹⁰⁶ Alessandra Mezzadri, 'The Social Reproduction of Value, Body Depletion, and Wages for the Wageless across the Global Social Factory' (2023) 12(2) *Feminists@law* 5. See further Alejandro Portes, Manuel Castells and Lauren A Benton (eds), *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries* (The Johns Hopkins University Press 1989); Surbhi Kesar, 'Labour, Work, and Informality: Global South-centric perspective' 7 <www.exploring-economics.org/media/uploads/2022/08/24/labour-and-work_south-centric-perspective_surbhi-kesar.pdf> accessed 21 January 2024.

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁸ Friedrich Engels, 'The Condition of the Working Class in England (1844-1845)' (*Marxists Internet Archive*) 96 <www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/condition-working-class/> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid 87.

Pluma Sumaq, in her iconic text 'A disgrace reserved for prostitutes,' poignantly states that:

When we isolate prostitution as problematic relative to other jobs and other forms of sexual contact, we miss an opportunity to understand all forms of wage labour as exploitative and minimise the extent to which all women have been confronted (at one time or another) with the choice to leverage their sexuality in order to gain access to resources... There is a tendency to simplify the motivations behind entering the sex industry, insisting upon a strong distinction between people who enter consensually by "choice" and those who are "forced." While it is true that working in the sex industry is a choice that many women have made for themselves, it is equally one that (like most other economic choices) is largely circumstantial.⁹¹⁰

The above quote brings into focus the false dilemma between choice and coercion. Coercion is inherent in the very nature of work, and since prostitution is a solution to secure livelihood needs, it qualifies as labour. None of the interviewees in my research did sex work as their exclusive job, except for Anna during the period before her transition, where she was indeed forced to sell sex due to pervasive transphobia restricting her to work elsewhere, and the period when she worked in brothels, holding a professional licence. All interviewees alternated between sex work and other, more or less poorly paid jobs, ranging from education to the entertainment industry and from the service and tourism industry to traditional care work such as massage and child and elderly care. They all acknowledged that sex work was a casual job similar to the others, albeit more stigmatised (leading them to often conceal it from their close relationships), but no more exploitative than the other low-status jobs they were forced to work in.

'When I work as a waiter and break my back for 5 euros an hour, I feel like I'm experiencing modern slavery, even if the narrative wants me to be a slave when I sell sex', Dimitris notes. Similarly, Aris recalls the times when he worked in large hotels on a Greek island for 15 euros a day, in a regime where he was essentially forbidden to leave the hotel and he undertook heavy physical labour around the clock. He also added that at the time he started selling sex, he was also working both as a waiter for 3 euros an hour to secure social insurance and as an at-home foreign language tutor for 2.75 euros an hour. 'So many sex workers are doing a legitimate job that pays little in order to stay insured and justify their income to

⁹¹⁰ Sumaq (n24).

the taxman, but they make their serious money from sex work.’ Georgia describes to me a series of chronic workplace frustrations in her field.

I was told I'd get 500 euros per month, take it or leave it. In the agency I went to work with as an escort I found more respect, and the atmosphere was unexpectedly more nurturing than anything I had encountered in childcare. I was told from the start that the job wasn't ideal, and I didn't idealise it either, but at least I felt that their priority was us and not the clients.

The purpose here is not to glorify the sex industry, another industry within capitalism. As in every sector, workers have conflicting interests with employers as well as with clients, e.g. in terms of pay and working hours. Marx employed prostitution as both a metaphor and an example of the general selling of labour power by wage workers.⁹¹¹ ‘But there is no pure proletarian subject rushing forward to save us from the abjection of labour under capitalism.’⁹¹² Yet, sex work activists claims for equal treatment of sex work as ‘any other profession’ seem to overlook that the socioeconomic transformations of the last 30 years have destroyed much of the negotiating power of the working classes against the sweeping forces of neoliberal capitalism, as more and more types of labour become or emerge as invisible.⁹¹³ In countries of the European South such as Greece, these transformations have been rapid and violent.

The financial crisis of 2008 hit Greece in 2010 and was characterised by the country’s agreement with the IMF for financial assistance. The assistance ‘came with the kind of conditionalities that developing countries that have had to access IMF loans have long been used to: austerity measures to cut fiscal deficits and debt ratios, privatisation, labour market ‘reforms,’ reducing pension entitlements, shrinking the public sector and so on.’⁹¹⁴

Despite strong social reactions, Greece experienced the ratification of three Memoranda of Understanding in 2010, 2012, and 2015, transforming it into a modern laboratory of neoliberalism and causing an ever-deepening social and humanitarian crisis. In 2015 unemployment exceeded 25% and among young people, it reached 50%. Greece needed to become ‘competitive’ by creating a

⁹¹¹ ‘Prostitution is only a specific expression of the general prostitution of the laborer, and since it is a relationship in which falls not the prostitute alone, but also the one who prostitutes—and the latter’s abomination is still greater—the capitalist, etc., also comes under this head.’ Cited by McClanahan and Settell (n825) 493. They note: ‘According to the edition published on Marxists.org, “This note is given by Marx on page v of the manuscript where it is separated by a horizontal line from the main text.” It does not appear in Penguin Classics edition [of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*].’

⁹¹² Ibid 509.

⁹¹³ See further Marion Crain, *Invisible Labor: Hidden Work in the Contemporary World* (University of California Press, 2016)

⁹¹⁴ Christos Boukalas and Julian Müller, ‘Un-doing Labour in Greece: Memoranda, Workfare and Eurozone ‘Competitiveness’’ (2015) 6(3) *Global Labour Journal* 391.

'flexible' labour market with reduced costs, enhancing 'productivity' and its 'entrepreneurial environment'.⁹¹⁵ This required 'drastic reforms' in both the public and private sectors, a wage freeze for over a decade, accompanied by a parallel increase in taxes and contributions. At the same time, public goods and infrastructure were gradually devalued or sold off, in a still ongoing process. In this neocolonial condition, the country's labour force was subjected to various forms of subjugation. Among others, Law 4093/2012 (a.k.a. the 2nd Memorandum) marginalised collective bargaining and promoted individual contracts and arbitration against the workers.

Legal protection of workers gradually disappeared, as allegedly responsible for hindering competitiveness. Hence, precarious and flexible forms of employment emerged.⁹¹⁶ After a decade of crisis, Law 4808/2021 abolished the eight-hour workday in principle, leaving the 9th hour of work to the discretion of the employer, and introduced compulsory time-keeping through the work card. This law, which has been described as 'Thatcherite policies on steroids',⁹¹⁷ in effect ratifies in a neoliberal context the Taylor methods which, it is recalled, had been introduced in Greece by Maria Svolou. Additionally, in late August 2023, a new labour bill was submitted for voting, bringing about the most sweeping changes since the Metapolitefsi. Among its provisions, the bill legalises 13-hour work across two employers (8 hours full-time for one employer and another 5 hours part-time for another), limits the probationary period to 6 months without altering the minimum requirement of 12-month service as a condition for redundancy pay, and introduces a minimum of 6 months' imprisonment, plus a €5,000 fine for strikers who prevent other employees from working. According to Labour Minister Georgiadis, working for multiple employers 'strengthens the employee's bargaining position,' while 'anyone who has a second job and pays more in contributions will eventually receive a higher pension. The payment of the contribution is retributive. It will not be counted as extra time for the insured to retire earlier. But it will be measured in the amount of the pension.' 'This bill is nothing more than a reflection of reality in a legal text, half of which is a European directive,'⁹¹⁸ he continued.⁹¹⁹

⁹¹⁵ Ibid 393.

⁹¹⁶ Ibid 395.

⁹¹⁷ Helena Smith, 'Controversial new labour laws set to shake up working life in Greece' (*the Guardian*, 17 June 2021) <www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/17/greece-controversial-new-labour-law-reform-shake-up-working-life> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹¹⁸ 'Αδ. Γεωργιάδης για 13ωρη εργασία: «Όταν δεν εξαρτάται η ζωή και ο μισθός σου από έναν εργοδότη, διαπραγματεύεσαι καλύτερα» - The Press Project - Ειδήσεις, Αναλύσεις, Ραδιόφωνο, Τηλεόραση' (*The Press Project - Ειδήσεις, Αναλύσεις, Ραδιόφωνο, Τηλεόραση*) <<https://thepressproject.gr/ad-georgiadis-gia-13ori-ergasia-otan-den-exartatai-i-zoi-kai-o-misthos-sou-apo-enan-ergodoti-diapragmatevesai-kalytera/>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹¹⁹ According to the PD 88/1999, which transposes the European Directive 93/104/EC, the minimum time for rest is set at 11 hours.

Concurrently, a workfare framework was set up, specifically targeting the unemployed population with the aim to forcibly integrate them into the labour market, turning their entitlement to unemployment benefits conditional on their acceptance of work placements. The 2022 changes in the structure of *OAED* (renamed *DYPA* in 2022, i.e. Public Employment Service) further bolstered the organisation's role as a 'springboard toward precarious employment'.⁹²⁰ For example, the 'Jobs Again' bill introduced in 2022 predicts the deletion of unemployed workers from registries for two years if they refuse three consecutive job positions; to become, in other words labour supply according to shifting demands of different economic sectors. I have already demonstrated in chapter 5 how such policies have contributed to the construction of 'a new category of forced labour, compelled to accept low wage work',⁹²¹ and have also appeared for the re-integration and training of victims of trafficking, in collaboration with *OAED* and NGOs, but it remains unclear to what extent these were used.⁹²² For Wacquant, these initiatives constitute 'a punitive form of public policy, applying to both social welfare and criminal justice, [that] partakes of a political project that responds to social insecurity and its destabilising effects in the lower rungs of the social and spatial order.'⁹²³

These legal reforms effect material impact through their provisions and their silences. In an increasingly impoverished Greece, more and more people are working in 'flexible', precarious, and dangerous work conditions, with workplace accidents making headlines daily. According to official data from the Federation of Associations of Employees of Technical Enterprises of Greece a rapid increase in workplace accidents was recorded in 2023, with the total number of fatalities reaching 147 and serious injuries 229 by October 2023.⁹²⁴ From Cosco dockers with daily contracts, uninsured deliverymen who die working during the heatwaves or flash storms, train workers or fire brigade pilots working in antiquated trains and vessels for meagre wages, doctors and nurses working three-day night shifts, and workers in countless other sectors, a new, exhausted proletariat comprising both natives and immigrants has emerged in Greece. This reality of 'labour accidents,' probably more aptly described as corporate and state murders, allows reflection upon how the body at work, especially under miserable conditions, always becomes an object, but also upon the punitive aspects of labour, and social movements demands for law reform. In the context of this shattered reality of

⁹²⁰ Wacquant (n47) 11.

⁹²¹ Peck (n800) 188.

⁹²² Bouklis (n120) 6.

⁹²³ Loïc Wacquant, *Prisons of Poverty* (University of Minnesota Press 2009) 172.

⁹²⁴ Based on the same data, the death toll in 2018 was 46, *ot.gr*, 'Σοκάρουν τα στοιχεία για τα εργατικά δυστυχήματα στην Ελλάδα – Ραγδαία αύξηση το 2023 - Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος - *ot.gr*' (*Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος - ot.gr*, 8 October 2023) <www.ot.gr/2023/10/08/epikairothta/koinonia/sokaroun-ta-stoixeia-gia-ta-ergatika-dystyximata-stin-ellada-ragdaia-ayksisi-to-2023/> accessed 31 January 2024.

labour rights the demands for the statutory protection of sex work have intensified, of which an overview will now follow.

Organisation, trade unionism and demands

We do not believe our liberation will be reached through a permanent position within capital, to then be exploited in more efficient ways. We do not want to be legalised. The regulating role of the state will always include policing workers on the job and off-work, and prosecuting criminal activity in all aspects of workers' lives. Work is not something that confines us solely as we labour in a building or room. Work orders the rest of our life: our mornings, our vacations, our purchases, what we read, our care, our sex and pleasure, our home, the night. The more legitimised our labour becomes by the state and capital, the more we are forced to work. We want an end to criminalisation, an end to work, and also an end to capitalism altogether. [...] We are against both economic exploitation and state regulation of economic exploitation. Because of this, we are necessarily for our own autonomy. This is something we must develop together. Let's evaluate the limits of reform and assimilation while honouring the legacies of sex worker struggles, and move beyond the more institutionalised sex worker activism.

(Other Weapons- 'Sex Workers Against Work')⁹²⁵

Sex workers organising now has a history of five decades. From the outset, they partnered with Wages for Housework to highlight the common oppressions and common demands among domestic and sex workers. For example, the English Collective of Prostitutes and the US Prostitutes Collective held the status of autonomous organisations within the Wages for Housework Campaign, while the US-based sex workers' group COYOTE allied with it as well.⁹²⁶ The demands were not always uniform, but the common thread of all the organisations was the recognition of their work, the cessation of police violence and policing of their bodies and lives in general, and the possibility of taking action against their clients in case of non-payment, violence, etc. Over the years, a wide network of organisations has developed locally and internationally that converge on the demand for labour recognition and decriminalisation, while they also significantly differ among them.⁹²⁷

In Greece, there are currently two sex workers' rights organisations, RUA and SWEN, while the Transgender Support Association also deals with sex workers

⁹²⁵ Other Weapons, 'Sex Workers Against Work' (*Industrial Worker*, 17 December 2020) <<https://industrialworker.org/sex-workers-against-work/>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹²⁶ Wages for housework, "Ménagères et putes solidaires [Housewives and hookers come together]", in Maria Nengeh Mensah, Louise Toupin and Claire Thiboutot (eds.), *Luttes XXX: Inspirations du mouvement des travailleuses du sexe* (Éditions du Remue-ménage 2011) 182.

⁹²⁷ See further Kate Hardy and Katie Cruz, 'Affective Organizing: Collectivizing Informal Sex Workers in an Intimate Union' (2018) 63(2) *American Behavioral Scientist* 244.

and can even be considered responsible for the introduction of the term 'sex work' in Greek. Sex worker organisations have existed since the late 1970s, when trans women took the lead, while a few years later the Association of Prostituted Women, later the Association of Prostituted Persons (active until 2019) was formed.

Among my interviewees, four out of sixteen had no contact with any of these organisations. Among the remaining twelve, some have been involved with more than one of them. One of the questions I asked in all the interviews was what they expected to get out of participating in these organisations. 'Community' was the unanimous answer. 'A place with people who understand me, where I can speak freely, where I'm not afraid of being stigmatised.' Immediately following this was a demand for a change in the legal framework. 'I would like to be able to work legally, to know that I can get a pension from this job, that I won't be in danger of being arrested.' These answers were regularly repeated. 'And how do you see the participation of sex workers' organisations in the wider trade union movement?' I would then ask. There, the responses were overwhelmingly negative, ranging from indifference, to sentiments such as 'let's get our work recognised first, and then we'll see', to the understandable concern of 'how will the trade union movement deal with us?' Nina gave me an extremely interesting answer:

In Greece there have not been any movements of sex workers in the way that there have been in other countries. In many organisations there are people who are sex workers, but at the same time they are bosses, they own brothels. Employers and workers do not have the same interests, even if we agree that brothels should exist. The bosses want to suck us dry. Also, until recently there was no community. In England, our self-determination as workers has been significantly influenced by the presence of trade unionism, the labour rights movement, and all these things. There are unions and there is no shame in bearing a working-class identity, and sex workers have unions as well, there are specific labour struggles, and communication and support across trade unions. This is very different in Greece, because the sex worker 'movement' here was born along with the queer movement—which did not have strong class/worker references. It deals in purely identitarian terms and has not emerged out of workspaces. That's the reason why within the same organisations you see workers and ex-workers who have become bosses, on the basis of the agreement on decriminalisation, but lacking any substantial labour-related demands.

This passage captures several uncomfortable truths that often constitute taboo subjects, even within the movement spaces and the left. The division between the labour movement and sex workers, as rightly and eloquently described by Nina, is

of course a two-way street. And it could not be otherwise. Suspicion towards sex workers is as old as the labour movement itself. For instance, the CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail) in 1910, opposed the introduction of a health booklet for workers and peasants, arguing that the bourgeoisie wanted to equate them with prostitutes.⁹²⁸ Today, the labour movement and the left in Greece, at large, perpetuate a white saviour rhetoric and find it hard to consider prostitutes as an integral part of their groups, trying to dispel the interwar stigma of the communist-whore identification.

‘There are pervasive anti-sex work rationales. There is very much the white saviour logic, that we prostitutes should be liberated from this terrible devaluation. And there are other discourses, within radical leftist and anarchist spaces, whose focus is on the “bad clients”. It’s an equally problematic logic too, as it doesn’t place the agency of the workers at the forefront, but once again prioritises that of men. They talk about “punters” and focus on female subordination, but the workers, who should be placed at the centre of this discourse, are completely absent. Slogans such as “Against patriarchy” are completely abstract. And there are also left-wing carceral tendencies of the GS-type. Yet, some people see sex work in a positive way but through an alienated discourse; it’s like saying “solidarity with migrants” but without building a human relationship with them. What is the daily life of these subjects, what are their problems, their needs? These things are often excluded from these representations. The latter is the only political space from which I have expectations, but again, everything is moving very slowly’, Nina continues.

In addition, it is true that, for the time being, sex workers’ claims are trapped either in a depoliticised framework of communal coexistence (whose necessity cannot be denied), or in the rationale of assimilation by the state apparatus, in a way reminiscent of the governance feminists, without questioning how this will happen, or what comes next. Indeed, the sex workers’ movement has been articulated in identitarian terms, sometimes internalising that the subjects themselves are in a state of exclusion, and very slowly trying to approach the labour strand. As Gall indicates, it is not rare for sex worker advocacy groups to ‘concentrate on the civil, political, and human rights claims of sex workers rather than their economic rights,’ ending up being ‘the opposite of labour unionism.’⁹²⁹

In this context, these organisations often receive funding for their activities from entities that may simultaneously finance anti-trafficking actions, being part of the

⁹²⁸ Korasidou (n112) 131.

⁹²⁹ Gregor Gall, ‘Collective Interest Organization among Sex Workers’, in Carisa Renae Showden and Samantha Majic (eds), *Negotiating Sex Work: Unintended Consequences of Policy and Activism* (University of Minnesota Press 2014) 227.

penal-welfarism apparatus. An indicative example, though not the only one, is the RUA project ‘DANA - Empowering sex workers’, funded by the Bodossaki Foundation and the Active Citizens Fund. These institutions have also funded numerous anti-prostitution actions such as A21’s actions for ‘potential trafficking victims.’⁹³⁰ Both activists and scholars often argue that this kind of funding, whether it comes from the state or the private sector, is not a compromise, since the money is funnelled to sex workers, an already marginalised community that needs these limited opportunities of institutional recognition (given that this is how their aims for legislative changes can be realised) as well as additional resources to improve their well-being.⁹³¹

On the other hand, such grants have been criticised by grassroots sex workers and feminist organisations. For example, ‘contributors to the volume *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* (INCITE! 2007) critique what they call the “non-profit industrial complex,” arguing that state and foundation funding has depoliticised feminist social movements.’⁹³² Scholars, meanwhile, have argued that ‘reliance on external funding can detract from broader social movement goals by forcing social movement-borne, community-based organisations with oppositional values to walk a “political tightrope”’,⁹³³ as such grants turn them into ‘surrogates of the state.’⁹³⁴

The discussion may seem trivial or purely academic, but the demographics of the people at the forefront of activism and decision-making speaks volumes. In particular, the organisations do not actively involve migrants or people at the lowest levels of the sex industry, except as recipients of occasional services, when and if they are offered.⁹³⁵ However, the organisations have not yet managed to include them as equal partners. My interlocutor Yasmine confirms this:

I was involved in an organisation that I initially felt to be supportive but ultimately I wasn't. I didn't see support in practice. They provide some

⁹³⁰ ‘A21 – Social Dynamo’ (*Social Dynamo*) <www.socialdynamo.gr/en/hosted_group/a21/> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹³¹ Sarah Beer and Francine Tremblay, ‘Sex Workers’ Rights Organizations and Government Funding in Canada’, in Carisa Renae Showden and Samantha Majic (eds), *Negotiating Sex Work: Unintended Consequences of Policy and Activism* (University of Minnesota Press 2014), 301-304.

⁹³² *Ibid.* 299.

⁹³³ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁵ Although it is possible to make assumptions about this sensitive issue based on personal experiences, conversation with activists and sex workers who do not participate in organisations, there are two main reasons that cause it. The first relates to the fact that the most marginalised people involved in prostitution often see this job as casual rather than constitutive of a labour/political identity capable of engaging them in activism. This is related to the deep social taboos surrounding this activity, but also to the effect of increased casualisation and informalisation. The latter has also affected workers in multiple sectors, leading to a broader decline of trade unionism. The second reason relates to the - frequent- phenomenon of members with the highest social capital shouldering the bulk of the work/social exposure, which while entirely expected creates unequal power dynamics.

services for free and that's good, but on the immigration/prostitution part I feel they are being patronising. I used to hear a lot that immigrants don't sell sex willingly, or, on the other hand, that they degrade the profession because they get paid less than Greek women. Of course, the need for money is very important, but it is not only foreigners who need it, nor only those who do this work. There are choices, to a greater or lesser extent conscious ones. I think there is ignorance and racism here, which needs a lot of work. I myself am an immigrant that came here lawfully, more privileged than others, but in any case, I have received similar feelings from other people I have spoken to. There is no equality within these organisations.

What the interviewee brings to the discussion may well serve as a good starting point to reflect on the internal ambivalences and conflicts organisations are frequently facing. While they consist mainly of highly marginalised subjects whose rights they wish to push forward, it is quite common that when it comes to policymaking, they tend to tone down their advocacy in ways that leave many sex workers in a compromised position against the law. This is also often reflected in the legislative proposals embraced by of sex workers' organisations.

Mock paper exercises? Legislative proposals for sex work in the 2020s

The production of legislative proposals to reform the sex work landscape has intensified in recent years. From the GS Equality proposal in 2018, which sparked the thesis inquiries, to the piecemeal decriminalisation attempts in 2019 and their withdrawal two years later, the public debate in recent years has been simmering. These proposals simultaneously represent main points of rupture and occasional convergence between sex workers, feminisms, and the state.

Moreover, they raise questions that have been central to not only this chapter but to the entire thesis. For example, what will institutional labour recognition mean for the intensity of compulsory medical examinations, which no Greek government has so far had the will to remove from the relevant law? What about the places where commercial sex will take place? Will these be chosen freely and without surveillance, or will they be subjected to strict regulation and police controls? What will happen to people who will be unable to work legally, either because of their young age or illegal immigration status, and who are de facto the most vulnerable? Will they be treated as the most vulnerable workers in need of solidarity, or will the familiar mix of penal-welfarist policies be applied to them? How is it possible to talk about sex work without at the same time talking about the inherently dire condition of wage labour, especially in a late-capitalism

environment and in an increasingly impoverished country where neo-colonial financial policies are implemented against its population? What role can labour law play in this context, and to what extent? Does it provide meaningful protection to the worker, or is it basically a tool for disciplining the worker in order to keep money flowing? Not all these questions have answers, at least not easy ones. Yet, I deem them necessary for understanding current and future challenges.

For example, the inequalities between migrant and local workers, who are members of organisations mentioned in the previous section, often lead to their non-inclusion in legislative initiatives, ultimately folding up the anti-trafficking rescue industry exposed in the previous chapter. A similar issue applies to age limits. Although many of the members of the sex worker organisations have also worked as teenagers, in cases of minors selling sex, reactions range from embarrassment to the reproduction of the anti-trafficking moral panic. Whereas for both employment as well as consent to sex the legal age is 15, it is worth mentioning that in the Report drafted in the summer of 2020 at the initiative of the Ministry of Civil Protection, there was a recommendation to raise the legal age for sex work from 18 to 21. This proposal was welcomed by RUA and APP members, who participated in the Commission, drawing parallels with the feminist philanthropists' rescue missions. In fact, the legalisation of underage sex work would have been an *a priori* controversial proposal indeed; yet the increase in the age limit for legally working in sex would outlaw and thus criminalise even more subjects, rendering them even more vulnerable. The -urgent- institutional recognition of labour rights therefore bears the risk of overshadowing the material conditions and interests of the most marginalised subjects in the name of assimilation. This risk is rooted in the innate function of law, based upon broad categories, discrimination and exclusion. Yet, extending the discussion of agency and consent that preceded this chapter, it is observed that the exclusion of certain population groups from the enjoyment of labour rights 'may only foster the inclusion of a small elite, who are mainstreamed into an existing sexual or economic order, reifying, rather than challenging, bureaucratic structures of control'.⁹³⁶

In this conclusion, the general approach was to adopt a German-Dutch model of regulation 'with elements from the Nordic model,' yet it calls the activity 'sex work'. Without being able to provide all the details concerning the conclusion, as it is an unpublished document, it is noted that in it is proposed:

- to remove the restriction for married people;

⁹³⁶ Scoular (n75)130.

- to clarify the provisions on drugs and mental illness in order to allow people who are in rehabilitation or are 'receiving their treatment' to work;
- to review the time interval between medical examinations.

The explicit link between work and brothel work remains, while work in hotels is mentioned as an issue 'for further investigation' and as 'suspected human trafficking.' At the same time, there is explicit criminal and administrative liability for the client in the event of accepting services in an unlicensed place. There is also a specific reference to 'end demand' as the spirit of the report, proclaiming that the aim is to facilitate the work of the authorities in controlling and addressing the 'facilitation and procuring of prostitution and the prevention of trafficking'. The conclusion closes by stating how important it was to bring together different approaches 'in a spirit of consensus' in order to 'create an environment of protection for workers' while 'it is important to avoid any terminology that may stigmatise'. It is also stated that those persons not included in the new provisions of the law 'and belonging to the most vulnerable groups' will be directed to specially designed programmes, i.e., exiting, while the campaign 'against sexual exploitation' is encouraged.

Moreover, the field of online sex work is left completely unregulated, although a considerable number of individuals work in the industry. At present in Greece, people who produce and post material on the Internet are obliged to register as freelancers, bearing the full burden of contributions for their health care and insurance, without being entitled to social benefits. The situation is burdensome for all freelancers in the country, especially after the reforms of the last fifteen years, but online sex workers constitute a special class of 'gig economy workers',⁹³⁷ exposed to a significantly heightened degree of precarity, facing stigma and structural discrimination.⁹³⁸ It is therefore not surprising that most of them work illegally, taking the risk both of having their material made public (over which they have no control) and of being prosecuted for tax evasion.

This Conclusion, coming from the Minister responsible for Law 2734/1999, which is highly likely to become law with minor amendments within the next few years, will be a major counter-reform. The 'convergence of views' between regulation and neo-abolitionism referred to is a false one, as has been shown many times in this thesis, especially when reviewing the twenty-year history of sex worker

⁹³⁷ Gwyn Easterbrook-Smith, 'OnlyFans as gig-economy work: a nexus of precarity and stigma' [2022] *Porn Studies* 2.

⁹³⁸ On gig economy workers' precarious rights, see further: *Independent Workers Union of Great Britain v Central Arbitration Committee and another* [2023] UKSC 44. See also 'No collective bargaining rights for Deliveroo drivers' (*UK and International Law Firm | Penningtons Manches Cooper*, 21 November 2023) <www.penningtonslaw.com/news-publications/latest-news/2023/no-collective-bargaining-rights-for-deliveroo-drivers> accessed 31 January 2024.

organising. Additionally, it forms a typical example of appropriation of the movement discourse by the state, turned into euphemism: sex work will be called thus, but the worker will be subject to even stricter police control, under the pretext of their salvation, along with their partners and clients. This is a kind of reformism investing in language, promising that its function would help overcome material differences and structural violence.⁹³⁹

The Conclusion was publicly criticised by SWEN, while other organisations refrained from commenting on it. In the fall of 2022, the proposed legislation drafted by the late TSA President Marina Galanou was made public. Galanou had also contributed to the drafting of laws such as the Legal Recognition of Gender Identity and the Anti-Racist Legislation (establishing hate crimes-racist/transphobic motivation) and was considered a privileged institutional interlocutor for all governments. Her proposal explicitly differs from the aforementioned Conclusion, as it is much closer to the demands of the sex worker movement, embracing decriminalisation. Already in the first article, it is stated that sex work is a category of service provision with hygienic aspects and falls within the concept of a profession, with the obligations, rights, benefits, and privileges of labour and social security law, as well as the application of equal treatment without discrimination. The draft law advocates for the abolition of compulsory medical examinations. There are also provisions -in favour of the worker- for refusal of service in case of coercion, etc, a provision against police arbitrariness, and an explicit prohibition on removing child custody from sex workers solely justified on their work, and provision of obligation of non-termination of employment due to previous engagement in sex work, though there is in fact no practical way of proving such discrimination on the part of employers. The compliance check to the legal requirements will be entrusted to a special legal entity, consisting of doctors, psychologists, labour inspectors, psychologists, human rights lawyers, and members of the Economic Crime Investigation Unit. However, issues such as space, or immigration status remain untouched.

It is also, therein, explicitly stated that it is not possible to require sex workers or the managers of their premises to undergo any kind of health examination, as sex workers are not in any way suspected of transmitting infectious diseases or of offending public morals. There are clear provisions against workplace coercion, such as the obligation to stay in the workplace, the provision of non-consensual services, the use of threats or drugs/medicines without consent. There is also an explicit prohibition on removing child custody from sex workers solely justified on their work. The compliance check to the legal requirements will be entrusted

⁹³⁹ Cf. Emiliios Christodoulidis, *The Redress of Law* (Cambridge University Press 2021) 451.

to a specially formed body, consisting of medical doctors, psychologists, labour inspectors, psychologists, human rights lawyers, and employees of the Economic Crime Investigation Unit. There is also a clear provision to stop police arbitrariness, and a stipulation for the legal employment of legal migrants, and for those who are granted international protection status.⁹⁴⁰

It is clear that Galanou's proposal is much closer to the demands of the sex worker movement. By approaching decriminalisation, while retaining some elements of regulationism such as the special control body, it echoes proposals originating within the community itself. In the coming years, which are expected to be followed by intense debate and 'attempts at compromise', sex workers and their allies are anticipated to advocate a plan similar to the second one, aiming to push for further decriminalisation. Reactions from various quarters -whether from neocons and neoliberals seeking to erode labour rights and dismantle public goods, feminist philanthropy, or even from a puritanical left reluctant to recognise sex workers as precarious workers- are expected to be as intense as they are currently, with differences emerging. However, it is uncertain if decriminalisation would apply to the most marginalised sex workers, for example irregular migrants and minors, or those unable to pay for their taxes and social security (and those with intersecting vulnerabilities—subjects that would probably be outside the scope of any law). The compelling question remains: where does this struggle end—within the realm of law or beyond it?

The limits of inclusion. Sex work against work

Decriminalisation won't pay my contributions or my taxes. Perhaps it will bring wider social acceptance, and I won't be that afraid of the cops—yet I'm not sure of the latter. I believe that decriminalisation resembles legal recognition of gender identity or same-sex marriage. It will be mainly used by richer people, and it won't bring any substantial societal change. Just as judges can deny you a change of gender identity if they don't like your face, similarly no one can guarantee that if sex work is formally recognised as work I will not be abused by the police or the judiciary. A legal reform alone doesn't say much; it would require a massive social struggle. (Veronica, trans woman, 26)

Many of the problematics that have been presented in the previous chapters are embedded in the very demand for legal recognition. The latter implies regulation, which is desirable in a deregulated economy where the majority of

⁹⁴⁰ Galanou (n91) 90-100.

workers work under appalling conditions. However, when it comes to populations that are systematically targeted and outlawed, regulation often goes hand in hand with repression. On almost all occasions that I represent SWEN as its legal advisor, whether in the media or in meetings with state bodies, it is to advocate for the decriminalisation of sex work and its recognition as work. For, institutional recognition would grant sex workers fundamental labour rights (holidays, health care, social security, pension), as well as trade union rights, sex work legislation compliance with labour legislation, and the control of its violations through the Labour Inspectorate. Indeed, these global demands of sex workers' unions and their allies are extremely important in terms of establishing and securing workers' rights, as shown in the previous section.

The interview with Veronica, who has been producing exclusively online material for the past four years after a short stint in escorting, echoes some of the very crucial impasses faced in Greece -and not only Greece- by both the LGBT community and sex workers, condensed in the politics of inclusion. Dean Spade, a trans activist and academic, in his book 'Normal life', tried to bring trans politics back to its critical traditions, criticising assimilationist policies. He argues that the desirable proclamation of any legal reform must go hand in hand with a critique of the legal system and capitalism.⁹⁴¹ Subjects who do not fit into administrative systems will face exclusion, violence, and even death. The same dialectic can be applied to the case of sex workers' demands.

Yet, 'we cannot eschew law'.⁹⁴² Munro and Scoular have long argued that sex work regulation produces forms of legitimation, citizenship, and subjectivity.⁹⁴³ Indeed, law bears a material impact through its implementation and does not remain at the level of an idealistic declaration. Law shapes systems of governance both in its absence and in its continuous expansion. Returning to the demand for institutional recognition, sex workers demand to be granted labour rights, a victory that would reduce their vulnerabilities. In this spirit, Anna Kouroupou, a famous trans sex worker activist, comments:

The role of the police is to suppress—that will not change. I hope that if the regulations around our profession are changed, police violence and arbitrariness against us will be reduced. I would settle for a better law than the one we have now, even if it's not ideal because some girls will be saved. I look at it in terms of harm reduction.

⁹⁴¹ See also Spade (n38).

⁹⁴² Scoular (n75) 122.

⁹⁴³ Vanessa E Munro and Jane Scoular, 'Abusing Vulnerability? Contemporary Law and Policy Responses to Sex Work in the UK' (2012) 20(3) *Feminist Legal Studies* 189.

Ivy, a trans woman in her 40s and a sex worker for over 15 years, adds that 'the law covers the most privileged workers and will probably continue to do so,' but she too is fully in favour of changing the law and especially the Galanou proposal:

Inspections will not be carried out by the police but by a worker-friendly body. There's a perception that the whole sex and porn industry exists by men for men, to a certain extent it's true, but so many of us work there willingly, and it's unfair to be second, and third-class workers compared to other jobs because the state makes it so difficult for us. Think of how many people have postgraduate degrees and wrap souvlaki for a living, yet there is a framework that protects them. I want the same for myself.

Anti-Slavery International, in a 1997 Report, defined sexual labour as 'the negotiation and performance of paid sexual services with or without the intervention of a third party, where such services are advertised or generally identified as being available in a particular place, where the price of the services reflects the bid-ask relationship'. As Abatzi points out, this report was based on research that men and women working as prostitutes do not face conditions of slavery, but are subjected to abuse similar to that experienced by others working in low-status jobs in the informal sector of the economy.⁹⁴⁴ The marginal status of sex workers excludes them from the international, national, and customary protections enjoyed by other working citizens, which leaves room for the police and others to harass them. Legal recognition may provide a method of harm reduction, but subsequent tensions and struggles will continue to be fought in the field of work. In this sense, decriminalisation will not be the end of their demands, but another restart. Even the provisions of the law that explicitly prohibit discriminations against (former or current) sex workers -so that this status is not a reason for dismissal or non-recruitment- in reality remain only at the level of a declaration, since there is no practical way of checking the intentions of employers, nor is the stigma of sex work so easily eliminated.

Decriminalisation is a really important step but not the end point, as exploitative relationships can be intertwined with the law. In many countries and by changing the legal framework the most privileged are favoured, while when the others remain in a grey area and the most vulnerable are further exposed to criminalisation. We cannot leave immigration, poverty, or the welfare state out of the debate; we must talk about everything. Any institutional victory in a hostile environment can be damaging. There is a tension between the legal/institutional and the socio-political. There is also a disjuncture between the letter of the law and governance practices through policing or other control mechanisms. It

⁹⁴⁴ Abatzi (n94) 46-7.

may be that where certain practices are legalised, surveillance is increased, while elsewhere, where typically there is a ban, tolerance prevails. (Nina)

The demand for more rights contains the paradox of both the intensification of state power and the establishment of a 'protective principle' against state and other forms of arbitrariness.⁹⁴⁵ Labour law especially has emerged as a result of class struggle, in order to protect workers against employer arbitrariness and to bring about 'compromises'. However, formed within the context of a capitalist economy, these compromises are products of historical class, gender, and race antagonisms. These divisions are inscribed in labour law and perpetuated, not contested by it.⁹⁴⁶

Accordingly, through the formation of labour laws and the maintenance of labour markets, the state 'becomes the means of the extraction of surplus value of labour, and thus emerges as a site of racialised, gendered and class struggles.'⁹⁴⁷ Class struggle both shapes and is shaped by legal instruments, as law is immanent to the sociolegal order.⁹⁴⁸ As Zoe Adams points out, one should critically reflect 'the limits of labour law as a means for structural emancipation'.⁹⁴⁹ These points are often highlighted in Critical labour law scholarship. Yet, one aspect that remains somewhat neglected is the relationship between labour law and criminal law.

Indeed, labour law has productive and not only oppressive aspects, and can be used for the benefit of workers, unlike the clearly repressive nature of the criminal system. Yet, the boundaries between legal fields are artificial: legal systems are characterised by unity, and any contradictions within them must be resolved.⁹⁵⁰ Secondly, the commodification of labour power, operating as part of a broader movement 'to expunge, to expel, to reproduce and to regulate',⁹⁵¹ realised through labour and migration laws, recalibrates the carceral state. The reactivation of private accumulation in neoliberal markets requires regimes of flexible and cheap labour, the interplay between national security and casualised jobs, 'neoliberal racial and security regimes,' of which the carceral state is a central component,⁹⁵² besides imprisonment and prison labour (forming a profitable complex itself) that remain central. The new Penal Code reform announced by New Democracy

⁹⁴⁵ Costas Douzinas, *The end of Human Rights. Critical Thought at the Turn of the Century* (Hart 2000) 375; Brown (n37).

⁹⁴⁶ Diamond Ashiagbor, 'Race and Colonialism in the Construction of Labour Markets and Precarity' (2021) 50(4) *Industrial Law Journal* 506.

⁹⁴⁷ Agathangelou (n121) ix-3.

⁹⁴⁸ Marco Goldoni and Emiliios Christodoulidis, 'Marxism and the political economy of law' in Emiliios Christodoulidis, Ruth Dukes and Marco Goldoni (eds), *Research Handbook on Critical Legal Theory* (Edward Elgar Publishing 2019) 18.

⁹⁴⁹ Zoe Adams, 'Labour Law, Capitalism and the Juridical Form: Taking a Critical Approach to Questions of Labour Law Reform' [2020] *Industrial Law Journal* 434.

⁹⁵⁰ e.g. Kennedy (n39) 132.

⁹⁵¹ Jon Burnett, *Work and the Carceral State* (Pluto Press 2022) 3.

⁹⁵² *Ibid* 4-7.

at the end of 2023 will introduce mandatory imprisonment for misdemeanours, many of which are related to debts owed to tax and social security funds, remaining tied to the concepts of labour and class. This development, which will further harm sex workers, vividly highlights the carceral aspects of labour.

As shown in the previous chapters, the carceral state beyond the prison walls, penetrating various policies and entities in the case of Greece as well; punishment and recognised productive work for the national economy were linked through penal-welfare nexuses. In a similar vein, focusing on sex work, exiting schemes, constituting part of the rescue industry, emphasise law enforcement and labour surveillance while offering minimal prospects for the well-being of workers who are expected to leave the sex trade. For example, such logic prevails in exiting schemes designed to channel former sex workers into other lower sectors of production in order to benefit the economy rather than the individuals themselves.

Sex work is not ‘a job like any other’ because it is marginalised and criminalised. The struggle against the owner’s class, e.g., bosses and managers, as well as clients who share different economic and class interests with the workers goes on, but within a criminalised context that decreases the workers’ bargaining power. All jobs differ from each other in some respects (e.g., incorporating labour processes, producing different use values), but they are jobs precisely because they integrate such processes.⁹⁵³ Work that is placed under the umbrella of sex work, although legally recognised as something different, such as lap dancing or creating porn on internet platforms, for example, faces similar precariousness despite their formal protection. Elena who works in one of the big strip clubs in Athens tells me that for three nights of work per week she is insured with half a stamp in her social insurance booklet. But this reality, as analysed in previous sections, is also reflected in other sectors, making it imperative to take a comprehensive look at the concept of labour, and the possibilities of collective intervention.

Highlighting the relationship between the criminal justice system and labour regulation is of multidimensional importance. On the one hand, in the field of sex work, it is important to recall that decriminalisation itself is a necessary yet insufficient demand. In New Zealand, where it was first implemented, people of immigrant status are prohibited from working in the first place,⁹⁵⁴ a move interpreted as ‘clear discrimination both against migrants and the sex industry’.⁹⁵⁵

⁹⁵³ Dale and Rose (n853).

⁹⁵⁴ ‘Prostitution Law Reform in New Zealand - New Zealand Parliament’ (*home page - New Zealand Parliament*, 10 July 2012) <www.parliament.nz/en/pb/research-papers/document/ooPLSocRP12051/prostitution-law-reform-in-new-zealand> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹⁵⁵ Mildred Armah, ‘Migrant sex workers ‘afraid’ of reporting abuse, citing fears of deportation from New Zealand’ (*Stuff*, 6 August 2023) <www.stuff.co.nz/national/132514928/migrant-sex-workers-afraid-

Decriminalisation aims to remove criminal sanctions from people who work in sex work, however administrative sanctions (excessive fines, withdrawal of professional licence or use of professional premises) remain in force. Decriminalisation also contains components reminiscent of regulationism. Sex workers are formally recognised as workers, but neither a subversion of their class position nor a rupture in the dominant prison complex and its extensions such as anti-immigration and the rescue industry is challenged. In practice, it remains to be seen whether spatial arrangements that validate logics such as broken windows and health practices that reinforce sex workers as contagious are consolidated. Administrative sanctions function in practice as penalties, and this is also the case in regimes where sex work is decriminalised; transgressors may not be threatened with imprisonment, but the poorest workers are again squeezed out financially. In Greece, with the entry into force of 2734/1999, criminal offences are considered misdemeanours, which in practice means that people suspected of selling sex are again sentenced to fines, which over time and with frequent convictions reach exorbitant amounts that essentially bind them for years. Moreover, the new Penal Code introduced in early 2024 provides for mandatory imprisonment for misdemeanours, many of which are related to debts owed to tax and social security funds -remaining tied to the concepts of labour and class. This development, which will further harm sex workers, vividly highlights the carceral aspects of labour.

Returning to Wages for Housework, the campaign has been characterised as ‘a reformist project with revolutionary aspirations.’⁹⁵⁶ The recognition of domestic work as labour was only a first step towards its denial. In a similar way, the recognition of sex work is an opportunity ‘to build a true opposition to the liberal politics,’⁹⁵⁷ a stage for the struggle against racial capitalism, the criminal justice system as inherently racist and sexist, the liberal notion of rights that rhetorically converts them into ahistorical, depoliticised, individualised injuries and entitlements.⁹⁵⁸ In the words of Morgane Merteuil, ‘to affirm that “sex work is work,” and that sex, waged or not, *can* be work, must open the possibility for a process of dis-identification’, as workers ‘have the power to refuse it, within the framework of a broader struggle for the refusal of work and a radical refoundation

[of-reporting-abuse-citing-fears-of-deportation-from-new-zealand?fbclid=IwARoliySvHkiFCiqYnoOOU3bCuSVfMippTUxiFlyMV-cmrowU4OrIVusFeEg](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/31/new-zealand-fbclid=IwARoliySvHkiFCiqYnoOOU3bCuSVfMippTUxiFlyMV-cmrowU4OrIVusFeEg)
accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹⁵⁶ Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork politics and Postwork Imaginaries* (Duke University Press, 2011) 136.

⁹⁵⁷ Morgane Merteuil, ‘Sex Work Against Work’ (*Viewpoint Magazine*, 31 October 2015) <<https://viewpointmag.com/2015/10/31/sex-work-against-work/>> accessed 31 January 2024.

⁹⁵⁸ Brown (n36) 124.

of society and its dynamics of reproduction', offering a new momentum to the struggle against the appropriation of labour.⁹⁵⁹

The latter calls us to reflect upon broader antiwork politics. Antiwork politics can be summarised as 'an exit from the coercion of a work ethic that 'renders subjects supremely functional for capitalist purposes'.⁹⁶⁰ Conceptually, antiwork challenges the exploitative nature of capitalist work ethics and regulations. In the context of sex work especially, antiwork framework is beneficial in transcending the simplistic binary between coercion and empowerment. Even more, an antiwork lens allow us to think and act alongside and beyond labour rights claims and its limitations, beyond the legal and financial structures of patriarchal racial capitalism. Sex work is intertwined with livelihood strategies that 'impoverished, landless people use to survive, all over the world',⁹⁶¹ people compelled to devise multiple tactics to evade border and police violence, losing custody of their children or being fired from other jobs if their engagement in sex work is revealed, exclusion from political organisations, poverty, and sexual violence. Communal practices of resistance in which sex workers engage, forming networks where they share strategies for survival from state institutions or tactics for avoiding troublesome clients, or providing resources to each other in times of need,⁹⁶² constitute, as Carlisle argues, spaces 'rife with personality conflicts, political differences, and struggle, and they are also hotbeds of creative imagining, for ways to live with and outside the dominant culture of work'.⁹⁶³ These strategies of survival, express precisely the desire to be recognised not just as workers but to transcend the concept of the worker, i.e. the productive subject for capitalism.⁹⁶⁴

Conclusions

This chapter framed sex work as work, specifically as informalised and traditionally coded as feminised work, employing aspects of social reproduction feminism. Sexual labour was assessed as care work, both through a body of literature and through the oral testimonies of the interviewees, to highlight the caring and intimate aspects of this work, often neglected by the dominant feminist and institutional discourse. Sex workers' accumulation of multiple skills further demonstrates the reproductive aspects of this work. Social reproduction

⁹⁵⁹ Merteuil (n957).

⁹⁶⁰ Weeks (n986), cited by Vanessa Carlisle, "'Sex Work Is Star Shaped": Antiwork Politics and the Value of Embodied Knowledge' (2021) 120(3) South Atlantic Quarterly 573, 584.

⁹⁶¹ Svati P Shah, 'Impossible Migrants: Debating Sex Work and Gender Identity amid the Crisis of Migrant Labor' (2021) 120(3) South Atlantic Quarterly 515.

⁹⁶² Examples of such communal practices are discussed by Sampethai (n98).

⁹⁶³ Carlisle (n960) 586.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid 589.

feminist insights were also employed in order to critique Leninist appropriations of prostitution, and raise the question of how prostitution is treated as labour from a class perspective and as part of the labour movement, overcoming the productive – reproductive and the agent – victim dichotomies. In this context, my analysis involved a critical elaboration of the concepts of consent and agency and how they are instrumentalised by states to facilitate ‘liberal technologies of agency (which utilise regimes of licencing and rights) or to advanced liberal authoritarian techniques (which combines criminal sanction and welfare-inspired exit models).’⁹⁶⁵

The ambivalent relationship between trade unions and workers' movements largely sets the tone for contemporary workers' rights mobilisations by sex workers. No discussion around sex work can be detached from a broader analysis of wage labour under late-stage capitalism. However, the material conditions, particularly of the most vulnerable workers, are often overlooked in the process of shaping a new legal framework for the governance of sex work. This is not only on the part of the state or carceral feminists, but sometimes also on the part of sex workers' rights organisations, as recent law proposals appearing in the Greek public sphere show. Their examination partly shows that governance logic prevails to a certain extent within sex workers' rights organisations, whose compromises leave vulnerable subjects excluded from legal protection. Such tendencies transform vulnerability into ‘a leverage for increased control rather than for increased social justice.’⁹⁶⁶ They also allow for some critical questions:

Is it possible for legal sex work governance to refrain from reproducing the internal discriminations of regulationism? Can law end the two-tier workers' status or transcend the victim-perpetrator dichotomy? Are there alternative ways to construct a discussion around work regulation that moves beyond these tropes? Is it possible for labour regulation to be free of punitive and disciplinary mechanisms? Ultimately, can recognition through labour law mitigate not only capitalist brutality, but also the brutalities of regulationism and the rescue industry, or will it inversely perpetuate them? These questions concern the function of law as a whole. The law can become a field of action on the part of marginalised groups by acting towards their inclusion. Nevertheless, and despite the proclamations of the liberal doctrine, the law never acts as a neutral arbiter⁹⁶⁷ It entangles class, racial and gender differences, (re)produces social and economic relations, and at the same time controls and represses. Furthermore, techniques of governmentality under neoliberalism intertwine with the law, transcend it and

⁹⁶⁵Scoular (n75) 152.

⁹⁶⁶Ibid.

⁹⁶⁷ Ibid 120.

instrumentalise it.⁹⁶⁸ A radical reassessment of sex work governance need not constitute an utter rejection of the law but instead, focus on struggles beyond the boundaries of legal recognition, and eventually outside the capitalist productive subject paradigm. Institutional recognition is necessary, yet not the ultimate battle.

⁹⁶⁸ Emiliós Christodoulidis, 'Strategies of Rupture' (2008) 20(1) *Law and Critique* 3, 22.

Discussion

In this thesis, I have attempted to highlight state regulationism and the paternalistic, punitive practices of governance feminists as parallel projects and key elements of sex work exceptionalism, which refuses to recognise sex work as work, focusing on the Greek context. This study was prompted by my own active participation in the domestic sex workers' rights movement, as well as the intense processes that have been taking place in Greece in recent years regarding the amendment of sex work's regulatory framework. These processes have brought to the fore the intense conflicts and convergences between sex workers, feminists, and the state.

I have adopted a comprehensive approach by synthesising the existing fragmentary analyses and also by adapting and contextualising critical insights that exist in the international context. This thesis therefore attempts to shed light on these obscured aspects by adopting a twofold perspective: by studying feminist practices through the filters of anti-carceral feminism (a project that is unprecedented in the Greek case), and by situating sex work in the wider field of political economy and class conflict, the latter often being largely triggered by the alignment of dominant feminisms with the economic and political interests of the Greek nation-state. Finally, in the light of penal-welfarism, I have located regulationism and the continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation it imposes on sex workers within a broader analysis of the carceral state aiming at disciplining the workforce.

In order to provide an in-depth analysis of these processes and their evolution over time, I employed critical scholarship and historiographical research methods. I have thus demonstrated how class conflict and sex work exceptionalism are triggered by the alignment of dominant feminisms with the Greek nation-state, confining sex workers in a continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation that emerges through the nexus of regulationism and the rescue industry. My comprehensive approach, synthesising existing fragmentary analyses through critical lenses, especially abolitionist feminism, is notably absent from literature on sex work and feminisms in Greece.

In methodological terms, secondary and primary historical research was carried out, with both holding equal and complementary importance. As the histories of marginalised subjects, such as sex workers, have been deliberately excluded from official narratives, state narratives, and mainstream feminist and leftist analysis, it was necessary to critically read existing documentation and conduct both archival research and interviews adopting the critical oral history method. Oral testimonies are of paramount importance, functioning both as documentation

of recent and contemporary events for whom no records exist and as a platform for the subjects directly involved to narrate their experience and raise their voices, remedying (even to a small extent) a systemic injustice. The reconstruction of these micro-histories that accompanies all the chapters of the thesis allows, to a greater or lesser extent, the placement of legal history within a broader social, political, and economic context. Thus, history itself becomes a tool for critical analysis of the law.

This is evident in both the first and second parts of the thesis, but it is the foundation of the first part/chapter 2. The overarching points of my thesis emerge here through an overview of Greek laws around prostitution as well as Greek institutional feminisms, highlighting the 'dangerous liaisons' between them. Having situated Greece in the sphere of Western influence, as illustrated in the legal system and policies such as regulationism, I have underscored how this influence is also reflected in the elective affinities and interactions between domestic and European politicians, scholars, and feminists. I have also highlighted the historical origins of sex work exceptionalism, based on the joint endeavours of the state and feminist philanthropy. Early versions of regulationism, established in the mid-19th century, sought to isolate prostitution from other social functions through its manifold facets.

The rise of the social in Greece, which allowed bourgeois feminists to undertake social policy tasks, also greatly contributed to dissociating prostitution from other forms of women's work. Moreover, as the cult of domesticity increasingly prevailed, a distinction between the ideals of bourgeois femininity and prostitution became part of a broader project to control the productive power of the female proletariat. Vocational schools were set up by feminist philanthropists with the explicit aim of rescuing girls from prostitution and preparing them for married life and productive labour. At the same time, bourgeois feminists took action to repress the newly formed labour movement -particularly its women- in collaboration with nationalists and liberal politicians and the newly formed City Police, imposing a suffocating regime of control over both sexual and domestic workers. Early Greek feminisms focused on vigorously disciplining working-class women, especially sex workers, under the pretext of fighting against their exploitation while promoting nationalist and capitalist ideals. The synergy between the state and femonationalists framed the prostitute as both victim and perpetrator, which must be saved through its suppression and punishment, at the centre of a web of policies and practices. The cult of domesticity also penetrated the communist discourse, eventually leading to the ostracism of prostitutes from this political space, despite their cooperation and active involvement in the Resistance during the Occupation. The exclusion of prostitutes by both feminism and the left is ongoing, as reflected in the initiatives

of these political spaces that focus on tightening working conditions for sex workers. The broader tendency to embrace the punitive state, through the embrace of a tough-on-crime agenda, leaves sex workers exposed to multiple forms of state violence and silences their voices.

I have also unpacked that the artificial separation of sexual labour from other forms of work is perpetuated through a matrix of criminal and administrative sanctions and measures embedded in regulationism. This matrix bears obvious biopolitical manifestations, namely the spatial and hygienic management of the domestic and migratory workforce through punitive-rehabilitative schemes and border controls, as shown in subsequent chapters. These are unfolded upon three axes: the management of urban space; the management of 'degenerate' individuals through the carceral technologies of welfare-through-work and excessive health surveillance; border control; and the management of the migrant labour force. Dominant feminisms also contributed to the implementation of these technologies.

My analysis of law's manifestations has begun with the highlighting regulationism's geographical aspects. I have shown that the law pushes prostitution to the margins of urban space, framing sex workers as marginal subjects and entrapping them into a vicious circle of illegalisation/criminalisation. The association of urban space, bodies, sexuality, and criminal law opens up a space for prostitution to be produced and reproduced not only through regulationism, but also through an interconnected web of policymaking. These include urban planning schemes, gentrification projects, etc., that solidify hierarchical categories of sex workers within a two-tier system of legality—illegality that afflicts particularly the most vulnerable subjects, ultimately criminalising them. I have argued that prostitution functions as a heterotopia that breaks down the boundaries between the public and private spheres. For that reason, the state wishes to control it by confining it to brothels and specific geographical areas. In this context, the criminalisation of street prostitution must also be acknowledged, with the streetworker embodying a female counterpart of the *flâneur*, marginalised for disrupting the narrow boundaries of the modern city. I demonstrated that the spatial regulation of the prostitution process runs parallel to urbanisation in Western societies and Greece as well. The adoption of the Building Regulation in 1923, which radically changed the image of Greek cities and marked an indirect entry of the Greek state into modernity, came a year after the consolidation of regulationism through a single piece of legislation. The relationship between space and the governance of prostitution naturally preceded it, as illustrated by the characteristic example of the state-sanctioned brothel of Vourla, a structure that

encapsulated the elements of heterotopia, the panopticon, and carceral architectures.

Regulationism and regulation of space remain intertwined to this day, in ways that are reflected in the law and seek to keep prostitution restricted in the space of the brothel, away from the private sphere of the home and the gaze of the public in the street. Brothels are considered Locally Unwanted Land Uses (LULUs), and, according to the Broken Windows theory, criminogenic. By synthesising these analytical tools, I emphasise the criminological dimension of spatial planning, which renders sex workers into perilous, marginal subjects. Calls for ‘streets clean from criminals,’ endorsed by contemporary, dominant strands of feminist movements, enhance the legitimisation of the carceral state’s reflexes against sex workers, leaving them exposed to criminalisation and multiple forms of violence. In contrast, the extracts from the multiple and disparate oral testimonies advocate for the dispersion of brothels in the urban fabric, and the decriminalisation of street and in-home prostitution. These measures would challenge the dominant ‘victims or vermins’ discourse, ensure their labour rights, and reject sex work exceptionalism.

With the rise of industrial capitalism, multifold biopolitical technologies - interconnected with urban planning—aimed at disciplining the unruly, unhealthy, unproductive, and dangerous masses emerged. As prostitution was considered an unproductive and harmful activity, prostitutes were placed at the centre of these disciplinary technologies. Various carceral architectures were developed for their rehabilitation, designed jointly by the nation-states and private philanthropy, both within regulationist framework and beyond it. The intertwining of state policies and the rescue industry has resulted in the establishment of a penal-welfarist nexus, characterised by the fusion of charitable and punitive approaches. The main illustration of this nexus can be found in juvenile reformatories, institutions designed upon a welfare-through-work and a ‘rehabilitation and punishment’ dogma. Prostitution was the main reason for the detention of both young boys and girls. Compulsory confinement was considered necessary for the salvation of promiscuous youth, and forced labour within reformatories was celebrated as a means of turning them into useful and productive subjects, prepared for entry into wage work or the unpaid labour of marriage. Although child protection institutions have undergone significant transformations over the last four decades, there is still a punitive attitude towards adolescents who sell sex, as my interviewees’ oral testimonies reveal. I appreciate that this punitive attitude extends to adult sex workers, who get infantilised by the state as not mature enough to make decisions for themselves. This is reflected in the multiple prohibitions it places on them regarding physical and mental health and drug use.

Written testimonies and historical research reveal that forced labour was also a part of prostitutes' hospitalisation during the first half of the 20th century. Although these structures have evolved and the practice of forced labour by inmates has been abandoned, health surveillance remains a pillar of regulationism to this day. Law 2734/1999 reflects the regular compulsory full medical examination of all legally employed persons, as well as the prohibition of work in cases of psychiatric diagnosis (without any further clarification) and drug use. As my interviewees pointed out, these provisions deprive sex workers not only of working legally but also strip them of their agency since they are not recognised as rational subjects, infantilising them once again. The state's aggression towards sex workers becomes more evident during epidemic crises, unleashing moral panics. This is predominantly the case with STDs; for example, HIV formed an ideal pretext for the persecution and public humiliation of street sex workers/intravenous drug users in 2012.

The history of various punitive apparatuses and policies implemented jointly by the state and feminist philanthropy was orchestrated to discipline the dangerous classes, especially prostitutes, in alignment with the capitalist ethics of productivity, sanity, and health. This further underscores the continuum of illegalisation/criminalisation created by regulationism and feminist philanthropy, one that exposes sex workers to multiple forms of repression and violence, ultimately reinforcing sex work exceptionalism.

I then proceeded to critically examine the anti-trafficking regime from a critical anti-trafficking perspective, as a grid that encapsulates spatio-geographical segregation, health control over populations, moral reformation through punishment, border and migratory flow control, and economic aspects of sex work governance. Anti-trafficking is featured as an issue closely related to the management of borders and migrant labour on behalf of nation-states within the capitalist imperialist regime. This further highlights Greece's position within the sphere of Western influence. Intertwined with legal regimes of prostitution regulation (not *stricto sensu* regulationism), I demonstrate that trafficking constitutes the cornerstone of controlling state-sanctioned and charitable penal-welfarist techniques. The rich archival material as well as the quotes from an interlocutor (eloquently summarising concerns expressed by other interviewees) emphasise the commitment of multiple strands of feminism, institutional and radical ones, to rehabilitation-through-punishment dogma and to the carceral state. Once again, the vocal denunciations of anti-trafficking policies by sex workers are ignored and silenced.

Anti-trafficking emerges as intertwined with regulationism, the two-tiered system it establishes between legal and illegal prostitution, and the consequent entrapment of subjects in the illegalisation/criminalisation continuum. The

construction of trafficking as well as the early white slavery construct were based on exceptionalist perspectives on prostitution and its relation to other kinds of devalued labour. Blurred and vague definitions of sexual trafficking perpetuate this exceptionalism and at the same time are instrumentalised by both states and private philanthropy in order to eliminate legal prostitution.

Blurred and vague definitions of sexual trafficking perpetuate this exceptionalism and are simultaneously instrumentalised by both states and private philanthropy to eliminate legal prostitution. This is supported by both the historical construction of 'white slavery' and the more modern and contemporary trends of the rescue industry. Anti-trafficking also becomes a weapon to criminalise immigration, serving as a pretext for increasingly strict border policies—something that becomes particularly significant within the context of Fortress Europe. In fact, as freedom of movement and crossing borders is criminalised and impeded through the installation of military surveillance apparatuses, states are inventing new techniques of exploitation of migrant labour. This conclusion is drawn through a brief historical overview of Greek immigration policy, particularly in the last 30 years. Thus, in the context of the continuous flow of migrant labour capital, the domestic rescue industry assumes the responsibility of saving alleged trafficking victims from prostitution by channelling them into other devalued yet productive jobs. The way this is implemented follows the time-honoured penal-welfarist formula, a mixture of charitable and punitive means. Beyond this, the question left unanswered by anti-trafficking policies concerns working conditions and coercion into jobs beyond prostitution, and whether these policies form indeed real alternatives for the subjects or even a way of entrapping them.

Having highlighted the state and philanthropic mechanisms that reinforce sex work exceptionalism, I return to discussing sexual labour as labour. I position sex work within the very notion of work, beyond reductionist and harmful dichotomies (victimhood/agency, prey/perpetrator, productive/unproductive) that are weaponised by the penal-welfare nexus and the rescue industry to punish sex workers. Specifically, I establish sex work as a form of care/reproductive work, as suggested by my inclusion of sex workers' testimonies and the analytical tool of social reproduction. The latter brings to the fore the negation of labour rights for both domestic and sex workers, thus highlighting global sex workers' demands to institutionally recognise sex work as work.

Yet another issue that emerges here concerns the broader nature of labour in late-capitalism economies. The post-memoranda Greek landscape has revealed the grim conditions of both informalised and institutionally recognised forms of labour. The role of labour law as an arbitrator of labour relations comes into play within the broader context of a globalised, racialised and gendered economy.

Globally and locally, sex workers are demanding the decriminalisation of their occupation, its legal equation with other professions, and the recognition of labour rights. Sex workers' movements also adopt governance tactics, attempting institutional inclusion. These demands, however, seem to ignore the fact that, to a large extent, work today entails controlling or even punitive implications, and that labour law does not play a neutral role but reflects and perpetuates class oppositions and antagonisms. Even more so, because of the inseparable character of law, labour law is interwoven with other legal disciplines, such as administrative and criminal law, reinforcing control and criminalisation over the working classes.

Additionally, the material conditions of the most vulnerable sex workers are often overlooked in the process of shaping a new legal framework for the governance of sex work. This framework is advanced not only by the state and carceral feminists but occasionally by sex workers' rights organisations, as evidenced in recent law proposals that have emerged in the Greek public sphere. A look at these proposals reveals that governance logic has infiltrated activist organisations, resulting in strong compromises that leave the most marginal subjects excluded from legal protection and undermine attempts of inclusive social justice struggles. The domestic and global debates surrounding the recognition of sex work as work prompt the immediate question of whether legal reform can serve as a remedy, or if it will instead reinforce discriminations and state and economic violence.

This question, both practical and epistemological, goes to the heart of law's functions, and the extent to which legislation and state institutions can be manipulated by oppressed groups. Moreover, it will further deepen as long as the state strengthens its authoritarian and punitive reflexes, unleashing them against its timeless targets -a process that goes hand in hand with the crises of neoliberalism. The multitude of heterodox analyses, lived experiences and multifaceted strategies of survival and solidarity that the working class, especially its most marginal and oppressed subjects, employes, represent a legacy of resistance. In that sense, the urgent negation of sex work exceptionalism and the subsequent safeguarding of labour rights should not be the end, but rather mark the beginning of new challenges, new considerations, and new struggles.

Appendices

I. Historical context and definitions

- Footnote n. 16: In early 2021, Sofia Bekatorou met with the President of the Hellenic Republic, Katerina Sakellaropoulou, the Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis. According to the latter: ‘Sofia Bekatorou’s decision to boldly denounce the sexual violence she suffered as a teenage athlete is an act with a heavy social burden. It is a consciousness-raising act that sets a positive example and mobilising the sensitivity of progressive forces in our country. The state possesses the legal arsenal of the Rule of Law, and it must exhaust it. It also has structures to help close the wounds of such crimes.⁹⁶⁹ In February 2021, a state-sanctioned #MeToo website, metoogreece.gr, was created. ‘If you have suffered sexual or authoritarian violence. At work. In sports. In culture. In education. In the family environment. TOGETHER WE BREAK THE SILENCE.⁹⁷⁰ Silence protects the perpetrators. You are not alone. We are all with you’, the website reads. Mitsotakis also announced that ‘the statute of limitations will be extended for offences against minors and suspended until the victim comes of age’. In addition to the online portal, he announced the establishment of a special register for all professionals who work with children and adolescents. ‘This register, which all serious countries have, will operate in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, the Greek Police and police authorities.’ At the same time, the prosecution the against the actor and friend of the Prime Minister, Dimitris Lignadis after rape allegations, would be of great concern to public opinion and the media.
- The National Schism (Εθνικός Διχασμός, Ethnikós Dichasmós - footnote n. 145), or The Great Division, was the splitting of society, political order, governing & military powers of Kingdom of Greece during the period of 1910–1922 between two radically opposed political camps which supported the respective parties of World War I: the western Allies of Entente versus the German-led Central Powers, headed by Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, and the King Constantine I respectively. Venizelos

⁹⁶⁹Βουλή - #metoo: «Πυρά» Μητσοτάκη σε Τσίπρα για αναρτήσεις βουλευτών του ΣΥΡΙΖΑ - Κατηγορείτε την κυβέρνηση ότι καλύπτει παιδεραστές; | LiFO' (LiFO.gr) <www.lifo.gr/now/politics/boyli-metoo-pyra-mitsotaki-se-tsipra-gia-anartiseis-boyleyton-toy-syriza-katigoreite> accessed 3 January 2024.

⁹⁷⁰metoogreece.gr: Άνοιξε η διαδικτυακή πλατφόρμα κατά της σεξουαλικής κακοποίησης - «Σπάσε τη σιωπή» | LiFO' (LiFO.gr) <www.lifo.gr/now/greece/metoogreecegr-anoixe-i-diadiktyaki-platforma-kata-tis-sexoyalikis-kakopoiisis-spase-ti> accessed 3 January 2024.

wanted Greece to join the war the soonest on Entente's side and claim any new territories won. The pro-German King wanted Greece to remain neutral, which would limit Entente's mostly naval forces to attack Central Powers in the Eastern front, prospecting for Germany's protection of Greece's newly won territories in the Balkan Wars a couple of years earlier, should the Central Powers win. The conflict caused an extremely deep rift in Greek society, which touched for the first time the military ('Epistratoi'), paving the way for the interwar dictatorships (the coup of Pangalos, the dictatorship of Metaxas) and the Junta of the Colonels. Some of the aftermath of the unprecedented, in Greek terms, the brutality of the Novembrians in the political arena indirectly marked Greek society for many decades later).⁹⁷¹

- **The metapolitefsi** (literally 'polity change' – footnote n. 26) of 1974 was the foundational moment of the Third Greek Republic. It starts from the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974 and, while there is no scholarly agreement as to when it ends, conventionally in historiography and political science it is defined as the fall of the Eastern bloc and the simultaneous period of gradual neoliberalisation into which the country entered. Metapolitefsi is deemed to be synonymous with multiple transformations that took place in Greek society, the main ones being the legitimisation of communist parties, the flourishing of new social movements, the country's entry into the EEC and the unprecedented prosperity and upward social mobility experienced for the first time by large sections of society.
- **Establishment of the Kingdom of Greece:** It was internationally recognised by the Treaty of Constantinople, which also secured Greece's full independence from the Ottoman Empire. From 1832 to 1843, Greece was an absolute monarchy, under king Otto.
- **On early Greek regulationism** (footnote n. 131): In 1833, only three years after the establishment of the Greek state, the building of stone houses which would function as brothels started in Hermoupolis, one of the few Greek cities with a distinctive bourgeois character and, therefore, obvious class divisions. One year later, brothels settled in booths in Piraeus, one of the biggest industrial areas in the country, and one of the largest ports in

⁹⁷¹ Kostopoulos (n222).

the Mediterranean Sea as well. In early 19th century, prostitution in Hermoupolis was taking place in private houses at the edge of the city, in a district called Kalyvakia, which were reconstructed in 1833 as their condition was considered bad and unsanitary. These first houses, usually consisting of a single room, accommodated not only the professional but also the housing needs of the prostitute, and sometimes the housing needs of other people, e.g., their relatives. Yet, apart from private houses, prostitution throughout the 19th century was largely housed in Hermoupolis hotels, usually located in the center of the city, at the market or next to the large main square.⁹⁷²

- **Degeneracy and Science of prostitution (footnote n 441):** The dominant European biomedical discourse of early 19th century, under the influence of Malthusian economics, attributed to a specific part of the population characteristics such as disobedience, defiance of class and gender boundaries, excessive sexuality, and passion. Emerging modern science that addressed issues in terms of physical and moral pathology reimagined society and cities as diseased organisms. Crime, as a by-product of urban life, became associated with the sewers and their metaphors. In 1837, Parent-Duchâtelet, in the introduction to his study of prostitution, stated that 'I had to burrow into the sewers [...] in what is the most shameful and repulsive of all human gatherings, in order to approach a sewer even more filthy than the others'.⁹⁷³ The theory of degeneration, developed by the French psychiatrist Augustin Morel in 1857, defined the idea of the existence of a human subspecies referring to the morbid, physical and moral deviation from a human archetype; in other words, Morel described an innate predisposition among the lower social strata to moral paranoia, delinquency, violence, excessive sexuality, disease and violent mortality, dictated by libidinal instincts. This explained why these individuals led an immoral life, enmeshed in poverty, violence, disease and mortality. Kraft-Ebing in his 1886 book *Psychopathia sexualis* approached the phenomenon of prostitution through a massive subsumption of prostitutes under the clinical category of nymphomaniacs.⁹⁷⁴ The correlation between medicine and sex became obvious for the first time in Heinrich Kaan's *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1846): the old moral categories of debauchery and excess were replaced by the notion of perversion.⁹⁷⁵

⁹⁷² Drikos (n11) 17-34.

⁹⁷³ Cited in Lazos (256) 244.

⁹⁷⁴ Tzanaki (n456) 215-216.

⁹⁷⁵ Ibid 118.

Lombrosian criminology treated the prostitute as the female equivalent of male criminals, arguing that they shared besides common physical and psychological characteristics, a 'hereditary disease' effecting their demise. Thus, sex workers became associated with disease and consequently criminalised to the point where they were conceptualised as internal enemies. Lombroso and Ferrero advanced the eugenic theory of a supposed innate inclination towards prostitution among some women. This pseudo-scientific claim of prostitution as an inherent vice was based on the supposed racial, biological and anatomical morphology of some women as reflected on the shape of their skull and their facial characteristics. Mastriani (1897) further claimed that whorish behaviour can be ascertained through a combination of inherited or acquired characteristics in a female, such as grey eyes, a hoarse voice lacking musicality etc. On the same line, Otto Weininger introduced the theory of the twofold nature of womanhood: the sacred role of mother and its polar opposite, the prostitute. Such was the need to tame the 'effeminate dangerous classes' that in the Greek peninsula during the 19th century the Ottoman Penal Codes enacted regulations to punish rape, seduction of a minor, adultery, thus codifying criminal control of sexual life similar to the one being cemented in Western Europe. And just as the newly founded Greek state moved from Ottoman to Bavarian influence, similar patterns of governance began to appear in line with the European regime of policing women's everyday lives, limiting their sexual autonomy - and labour autonomy as well.⁹⁷⁶

- As Federici describes (footnote n 449), 'Bloody laws' punishing beggars and idlers with imprisonment, compulsory work, public torture and humiliation, even death, proliferated across Europe.⁹⁷⁷ The introduction of a public welfare system in England in the mid-16th century 'turned the state into a central factor of control and regulation not only of labour, but of almost every aspect of life, through the demographic records concerning deaths, marriages, births, etc.'⁹⁷⁸ In 1556 France, a decree aimed to control birth rates, punished women who didn't declare pregnancies or those who delivered stillborn infants, as murderers. A similar law was passed in Scotland in 1563. Capital punishment was also introduced for adultery in England, during the Protectorate.⁹⁷⁹ Even the act of hosting an unmarried

⁹⁷⁶ Nikos Paraskeuopoulos, *Erotas Kai Timoria Stin Ellada: Syntomi Historiki Eisagōgi [Love and Punishment in Greece: A Short Historical Introduction]* (Savvalas 2011) 48-49.

⁹⁷⁷ Federici (n70) 221.

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid 88.

⁹⁷⁹ Ibid 214.

woman became illegal, as this meant she might elude surveillance,⁹⁸⁰ while midwives were gradually replaced by doctors⁹⁸¹, and the rape of a prostitute was decriminalised.⁹⁸² Female prostitutes, and vagabonds, caught sleeping in the streets or under the *porticos* of the town in Madrid, were punished with ‘a hundred lashes’, had their heads and eyebrows shaved, and were ostracised for six years.⁹⁸³ Elsewhere, prostitutes were subjected to the *acabussade*⁹⁸⁴ and the branding of the forehead with hot irons.⁹⁸⁵

- The communities of homosexuals and of male and female sex workers had developed, as a defence, the linguistic variety called **Kaliardà** in order to communicate without being understood by the police (footnote n 206). Kaliardà, Liardò, or Dura Liarda comprised at least 5,000 words. It appeared in early 20th century and developed further in the interwar and post-war periods. The difficulty for police officers to understand conversations between sex workers and the ease with which sex workers themselves could escape police raids with warnings in ‘secret language’ are also described by the police editor Leotsakos. Leotsakos describes this jargon as ‘Lubinistic’ -the secret language of brothels, attributing it its origins to Romani of the Middle Ages, ‘when prostitutes were mostly gypsies’ -although there is no significant evidence to substantiate this claim.
- Footnote n.603. The 2012 national elections were considered particularly critical. The country was found amidst a deep economic and social crisis - a state of emergency- and the left-wing Syriza party was gaining rising popularity, flirting with the likelihood of ascending to office. This was unprecedented in Greek political history. Although the sweep operation described here did not determine the election result, it was operated as part of a broader stealth campaign that would caress the reflexes of the most conservative voters. Although it is difficult to assess whether it was effective, its protagonists are still active politicians, albeit with decreased popularity.

⁹⁸⁰ Ibid 88.

⁹⁸¹ Ibid 214.

⁹⁸² Ibid 94.

⁹⁸³ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁴ Ducking stool torture, *ibid*.

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid*.

- Regarding the solidification of Fortress Europe and forced migrant labour, on 18/9/2022, Alexis Tsipras stated that ‘We have built some huge detention and internment structures for immigrants. At the same time, wherever you go in the countryside and in the urban centres, there is a great shortage of working hands in villages. In jobs that Greeks are not interested in doing. If we understand that there is no alternative way to deal with immigration, and Europe says [to migrants] ‘you're not crossing’, we can tell them ‘you have two choices if you come here. Either you go back, or you integrate along the terms of the Greek state, i.e., enter a productive process and fill the countryside with agricultural workers—don't hang around waiting for benefits. This is a taboo that must be broken and also has to do with demographics. It's a problem you can't sweep under the rug. After all, we know that the decline in flows is due to the pandemic and lockdowns: migration flows will go up and we need to have a coping strategy’; Αλέξης Τσίπρας I Alexis Tsipras, ‘Συνέντευξη τύπου στην 86η ΔΕΘ’ (18 September 2022) <www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPHr133XLeg> accessed 29 January 2024.

II. Ethics Materials

Ethics Application Form

LAW/E1	ETHICAL APPROVAL - RESEARCH WITH ETHICAL ISSUES
Updated: October 2021	
<p>Due to the continuing repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, the College advises that research involving interaction with human participants should be undertaken by remote methods where possible and practical.</p> <p>For the academic year 2021-22, students on taught programmes in the School of Law should continue to use remote data collection methods only, or adopt an approach that does not entail direct interaction with human participants. In-person data collection by students on taught programmes <u>may be permitted in exceptional circumstances</u>, with written approval by the relevant subject Assistant Dean.</p> <p>Applicants for approval for in-person data collection should complete additional section 19 of this form. Applicants for approval for remote data collection should complete additional section 20.</p>	
1 APPLICANT'S NAME AND EMAIL	
Athina Michalakea, athinachristin.michalakea@gmail.com	
2 STATUS	
Postgraduate student	
3 Choose an item. IF A STUDENT: PROGRAMME OF STUDY	
Research - PhD	
4 DEPARTMENT	
Law	
5 TITLE OF PROPOSED PROJECT	
Legal Frame and Cultural Representations of Sex Work in Modern and Contemporary Greece [working title]	
6 FUNDING SOURCE <i>Please advise if you have or intend to apply for external funding for this research, and the name of the funder concerned.</i>	

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7 ATTACHMENT[S] <i>Please check the relevant box for each item submitted with this form</i> If your research involves the collection of data, please attach the draft research instruments you propose to use, and a data management plan. Sample consent form and data management plan are available on Moodle. The data management plan should state what data you will collect and in what forms; whether and how any personal data will be anonymised; how the data will be stored and its security ensured; arrangements for archiving data [if applicable]; any other arrangements relating to the management of your data.			
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ✓	FOCUS GROUP TOPIC GUIDE <input type="checkbox"/>	QUESTIONNAIRE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OTHER RESEARCH INSTRUMENT 1 <input type="checkbox"/>
INFORMATION SHEET <input type="checkbox"/>	CONSENT FORM <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OTHER RESEARCH INSTRUMENT 2 <input type="checkbox"/>
8 DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE OF PROPOSED PROJECT			
<p>The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the subjectivity of sex workers is constructed through the law in modern and contemporary Greece. Adopting the Foucauldian understanding of power, i.e. that the latter is produced through interdependent scientific discourses, I examine how the law incorporates tools from other fields, such as human geography, urban planning, medicine, and psychiatry, in order to create a regulatory nexus concerning sex work, and how this nexus eventually affects the subjective and civilian status of sex workers. Most importantly, I aim to highlight how the law has formed sex workers' subjectivities so far, and in which ways. Secondly, cultural representations of sex work will be explored in investigating how visual culture along with the law both reflects and produces sex work as a social phenomenon, also shaping the collective understanding the sex workers' subjectivity. The thesis employs an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach; aspects of legal geography, history of medicine and psychiatry, history of sexuality, migration policies and humanitarianism, queer and disability studies are discussed through the lens of sex positive, anti-carceral feminism. In this context, critical introspections on the notion of labour, as well as feminist debates on sex work and the state policies they produce, are critically investigated in relation to their approach on sex workers' subjectivity.</p> <p>Interviews are an aspect of paramount importance in this research. To fully understand how sex workers' subjectivity is constructed, it is necessary to take into consideration their own lived experience and worldview. Moreover, the researcher, recognising her positionality and her limitations, wishes to give space to such a marginalised community which is constantly patronized, repressed, even abused, to express its own voice, as it considers its members them subjects with full agency. Overall, the sex workers' experience will be treated as an equal historical source, a central factor in re-shaping our collective mentality concerning the multiple realities of sex work.</p>			
9 METHODS <i>Please advise how the data will be collected and analysed</i>			
This thesis aims to expand on the existing literature of sex work in Greece, by using Critical Oral History Method. Hence, I aim to conduct interviews in order to address my research questions			

through a more holistic approach, while providing the marginalized an opportunity to express their voice. Critical Oral history is committed to recording first-hand knowledge of experiences with the additional goals of contextualizing stories to reveal power differences and inequities in order to promote transformative justice that leads to emancipatory change. Critical Oral History engages processes and practices that promote agency and value historically marginalized community members' stories that are often unheard or untold, in order to validate and act on these stories in meaningful ways that counter dominant power structures.

Sex workers' personal narrations will be analysed along with other primary sources (historical and legal archives etc) as well as secondary sources (documentaries, reportages etc) to gain an understanding and insight into the history of sex work in modern and contemporary Greece.

10 PARTICIPANTS

If your research involves a survey, interviews, focus groups or other direct interaction with participants, please detail: who they will be; the target number; any inclusion or exclusion criteria; how they will be identified and recruited; how you will obtain informed consent; and if you will provide any feedback to them and how.

- *If you propose to undertake data collection which involves in-person interaction with participants, please additionally complete section 19 of this form.*
- *If you propose to undertake data collection which involves remote interaction with participants, please additionally complete section 20 of this form.*

I plan to undertake 10-20 semi-structured interviews from Athens-based (former) sex workers. I have developed a guide that I can refer to during the interview, containing the topics I wish to cover during the course of an interview. It should be underlined that the list of questions is not exhaustive, rather contains points that I hope to cover within a 60-90 minute-discussion. However, as the primary goal of in-depth interviews is to hear what the participants believe, it is important to let them narrate their own story.

My aim is to gather interviews from individuals of every gender (cis and trans, women, men and non-binary individuals) and ethnicity, who engage in different forms of sex work (streetwork, brothel-based, escorts etc) offering sex in exchange for payment, and who are at least 18 years old, which is the legal age for selling sex in Greece (the age of consent is 15 years old). As I have been working with sex workers' rights organisations at a voluntary level, participants will be identified and recruited through them, by using snowball sampling.

Currently, there are two active Sex Workers' Rights Organisations in Greece: the Sex Workers' Empowerment Network - DES and Red Umbrella Athens (RUA). The Sex Workers' Empowerment Network (DES - <https://linktr.ee/desgr>) is a non-governmental association that consists of and is managed almost entirely by sex workers. The Network's main object is to fight against the stigmatisation of sex workers (regardless of gender, nationality, sexual orientation, etc.) and to defend their human rights. Red Umbrella Athens (RUA - <https://redumbrella.org.gr/>) was created on the initiative of the Greek HIV+ Association "Positive Voice", the Prevention and Screening Centres "Checkpoint" and the Association of Greek Liver Patients "Prometheus" and operates under the scientific supervision of the Department of Psychology of the National and

Kapodistrian University of Athens. It aims at promoting health, ensuring the rights of sex workers, informing and raising awareness, as well as providing empowerment services contributing to the social integration of sex workers in Greece.

I will obtain informed consent by obtaining the subjects' voluntarily agreement to participate in the research, giving the participants adequate information concerning the study (providing a translated summary, explaining them the research scope), offering them adequate opportunity to consider all options, responding to their questions, ensuring they have comprehended any information needed and continuing to provide information throughout the interview process if asked. In this context, I will provide the participants feedback by the research completion.

Sex workers are a vulnerable group of the population, at risk of being subjected to violence, detention, arrests and harassment by the police, while they are generally stigmatised by society. They generally feel disempowered. I acknowledge that my position as a researcher, may be viewed as a powerful position. The consent forms, clear explanation of the research and interviews' scope, and feedback, will ensure the interviewees that they are empowered and respected.

Additionally, according to the Sex Work Research Hub Ethical Guidelines (<https://www.swrh.co.uk/ethical-guidelines.html>), monetary compensation often decreases rather than increases sample bias against socially and economically marginalized communities. In other words, uncompensated surveys or studies of sex workers often skew towards more privileged and more politically engaged individuals than studies offering compensation. For these reasons, I am considering offering interviewees a small compensation for their time, using my PhD allowance, while an application to the SRC might also be necessary. The amount of the compensation will be approximately €40, according to the European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance Commission Decision of 10 April 2019 authorising the use of unit costs for declaring personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or a work program (C(2019)2646) (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1005GNi-YxjgzR2_ul6mtUh2FHmP8NWXILYLR8jDcfXs/edit).

In case an interviewee is triggered by the procedure, I would direct them to the Sex Workers' Empowerment Network and Red Umbrella Athens counselling services, that offer free sessions to sex workers, or the Transgender Support Association, a voluntary non-governmental organization that specializes in transgender issues, in which operates a psychological support team both at group and individual level in both Athens and Thessaloniki providing free counselling (<https://tgender.gr/>), or the 24/7 helpline 197 by the National Centre for Social Solidarity, which provides free counselling as well as information regarding welfare issues at a personal, group and community level (<http://www.ekka.org.gr/index.php>), or the Orlando LGBT+ organization, a scientific body which specializes in the protection of LGBT+ individuals and offers free counselling sessions (<https://orlandolgbt.gr/>). Specifically, in case I sense that an interviewee feels uncomfortable, I would pause the recording and ask them if they would prefer to stop the interview, reassuring them that their decision will have no consequences (legal, regarding their compensation, etc.), as well as that unfinished interviews will not be used in my research. If the interviewee wishes to drop out of the research, I will contact the aforementioned counselling services to guide them, and I will check on them after 3 and 7 days to find out if they feel better. The decision whether they want to continue the interview is entirely theirs and is left to their own initiative. The same procedure applies to the event a participant mentions that they wish to harm themselves.

11 TIMETABLE <i>Please advise the date the project started or is due to start; the proposed start date of data collection; and the date by which research will be completed.</i>
1 st June 2022 (at the earliest opportunity as soon as the form gets approved) – 30 th September 2022 (with the possibility of extension until 15 th October in case of unforeseen circumstances)
12 DOES YOUR RESEARCH INVOLVE AN EXTERNAL BODY IN YOUR DATA COLLECTION OR TO GAIN ACCESS TO YOUR PARTICIPANTS? <i>If YES, please advise the name of the body (and its nature, whether it is a company or a charity etc.) and whether it has its own ethical approval process. If it does, please advise at what stage your project is in that process</i>
<p>Access to the participants will be facilitated through two sex workers' organisations, the Sex Workers' Empowerment Network and Red Umbrella Athens, with which I collaborate on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>Both organisations have already been informed about the research and are happy to support in the manner proposed. Although these organisations do not have specific ethical approval processes, a passive recruitment approach is preferred, as active recruitment methods are considered more intrusive and power relationships are more likely to emerge, especially in research interviews with highly vulnerable individuals.</p> <p>Specifically, calls for recruitment will be posted/ distributed online with the aim of attracting potential participants to contact the researcher for more information and for consideration of enrolment. For this, I will, through formal correspondence, inform the directors of the two Sex Workers' Rights Organisations, in which I will explain the goals of my research and I will seek the administrators' permission prior to posting a call, in which I will be explaining what my study is about, the eligibility criteria for participation and contact details, thus operating as an open call for sex workers to contact me, if interested. Calls for recruitment will be disseminated/posted only after I have gained permission from the sites' administrators. Contact details for those interested will include my email address and a phone number, and those interested in participating in my study will be encouraged to either send me an email or use the phone number to leave a message on WhatsApp.</p> <p>All participants will be given up to seven days to decide if they wish to take part in the study. A participant can withdraw from the study within 12 weeks from the date of the data collection. To do so, the participant should let the researcher know that they wish to withdraw by email or any other form of written message (e.g. on WhatsApp) and they will not have to provide any reasons for their decision to withdraw. In addition, participants will be provided with an email address through which they will be able to contact the researcher within 12 months upon withdrawal for any questions or concerns that may arise after completing/withdrawing from the study. As soon as a participant withdraws from the study, all data collected from this participant will be destroyed permanently and irreversibly within 7 working days after the announcement of the withdrawal.</p>
13 DO THE PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS? <i>If YES, please outline their vulnerability and what safeguards you will introduce.</i>
Yes, as my participants will be former or current sex workers. A number of ethical dilemmas are inevitable and are thus there by default, concerning research governance, representation and interpretation. The key risks identified in researching the sex work population are the exacerbation of

minority stress experienced by sex workers, and breaches in confidentiality which may expose sex workers to arrest or public disclosure of a highly stigmatized and often criminalized identity.

Shaver (2005)⁹⁸⁶ articulates three main challenges of engaging in ethical research with sex work populations. These challenges are outlined below with additional notes that SWOP-USA finds necessary to include.

- ◆ **The size and boundaries of the sex work population are vast and unmeasurable; therefore, it is difficult to obtain a representative sample of sex workers.**
- ◆ **Sex work is highly stigmatized, criminalized, and is often a concealable stigma (Link & Phalen); confidentiality and privacy concerns are extremely important and difficult to navigate.**
- ◆ **Sex workers are not a homogenous population and should not be [mis]represented as such in research. It is important to distinguish between types of sex work in research (escorting, stripping, porn acting, professional domination, etc.). When making comparisons to the general population, using appropriate comparison groups.**

The research will focus on people who exchange sex for payment, as under the Greek Law, only this specific activity is considered sex work; the exclusion of professionals in other sections of the sex industry is inevitable. However, the participation of sex workers of different social and racial backgrounds, of different genders and sexual orientations and who engage in different types of sex work is necessary, in order for the research sample to be more inclusive, and for more groups to gain representation. It should be noted, however, that it may be more difficult to find migrant sex workers willing to participate in the research, as they bear intersectional vulnerabilities and may fear to offer sensitive information. The participation of those who are not fluent in Greek will be facilitated either by conducting the interviews in English, or with the assistance of interpreters who work in Red Umbrella Athens (see question 10 for further details on the organisation's status and aims). The interpreters working for RUA have already gained the trust of the people who will be my potential research subjects, have supported them in multiple other occasions and have expertise in providing assurance of confidentiality.

To mitigate and help overcome privacy concerns, a participant-centred approach is needed.

Anonymity and confidentiality should be highly evaluated and respected (with the exemption of prominent sex workers' activists who may want to share their viewpoints publicly), while it is important for the researcher to identify "sex work" as a revenue generating activity rather than an act of deviance or crime.

14 DOES THE RESEARCH POSE ANY RISK TO PARTICIPANTS OR THIRD PARTIES? If YES, please describe these risks and how they will be addressed.

The key risk identified in researching the sex work population are potential breaches in confidentiality which could expose sex workers to arrest or public disclosure of a highly stigmatized and often criminalized identity. As sex workers do not conform to societal norms and are subject to high rates of discrimination, violence, and rejection related to their work, they often experience minority stress, as sex work bears a *stigma*, that may need to be explicitly (or implicitly) disclosed in order to be recognized. This type of stigma is under-researched and less understood compared to visible stigmas. (SWOP USA - Fact Sheet | MINORITY STRESS & SEX WORK - <https://swopusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FACTSHEET->

⁹⁸⁶ Shaver, F.M., "Sex Work Research: Methodological and Ethical Challenges", *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 2005; 20; 296, DOI: 10.1177/0886260504274340

Individual sex workers may face higher rates of violence, discrimination, and legal repercussions due to the stigma and de facto criminalization of sex work. Due to these vulnerabilities, and as sex work is a sensitive topic and, in some cases, an illegal activity, the maintenance of anonymity, the guidance and support of the sex workers' community and the assistance, if needed, of counselling services are key to my empirical research. Hence, all participants will be pseudonymised, topics or references that could expose themselves, their colleagues or their relatives to the police or to other members of the community would not be included in my research, while individual narratives can be mixed, so that participants won't be identifiable by their peers or authorities.

Researchers have the same legal obligations as citizens or legal residents. As a private member of society there is no general legal obligation in the United Kingdom or in Greece to report to the relevant authorities all illegal activity that one observes or learns about. Both in the UK and in Greece, the duty to disclose confidential information is limited to child protection offences, such as physical or sexual abuse of minors below 15 years old, physical abuse of vulnerable adults, money laundering and other crimes covered by prevention of terrorism legislation. These obligations are concerned primarily with serious and immediate harm to others. Upon participant recruitment, as soon as participants are provided with research information sheets and informed consent forms, I will make clear to participants that confidentiality may have to be breached if they disclose information that relates to the crimes outlined above (i.e. in case someone discloses having committed or intending to commit a crime related to terrorism, child sexual offences or a violent crime). In addition, participants will be reminded of the cases in which confidentiality may have to be breached prior to any recording. In the unlikely case that someone discloses having committed or intending to commit a crime related to terrorism, child sexual offences or a violent crime, I will initially discuss the case and the seriousness of the disclosed information with my supervisors, who will help me evaluate a) if it is indeed a disclosure worth being reported, b) which local authorities need to be contacted on the basis of the nature of the disclosure and c) how participants will be informed that I am obliged to breach confidentiality.

In the event an interviewee discloses their own victimisation or harm, I will pause the recording and ask them a) if they would prefer to stop the interview, as described in Section 10, and b) if they wish to contact the Red Umbrella counselling services to guide them to reporting the incident to the Authorities. However, it is known that, as the vast majority of sex workers works illegally due to existing juridical limitations, they rarely report crimes related to their labor, as they face severe risks of persecution, incarceration and, in the case of migrant sex workers, deportation. Moreover, the Greek Penal System incorporates a statute of limitations, which applies to all crimes and varies from 5 to 20 years after the crime is committed. Specifically, the statute of limitations for rape is 15 years and for sexual harassment is 10 years. That means that, if an interviewee discloses a sexually related harm they had suffered more than 15 years ago, no criminal proceedings can be initiated. Additionally, no general legal obligation of notifying the Authorities for crimes that have already happened emerges from the Greek Penal Law. In any case, I will give the participants the opportunity to decide on whether I should publish such sensitive information in my Research, and as a mitigation strategy I will mix the narratives so that the interviewees will not be identified. Finally, if a serious crime is revealed to me by a victim, I will disclose this information to my supervisors, albeit whilst maintaining the anonymity of the interviewee. To mitigate the risk of secondary trauma, I will follow the procedure described in

the next Section (15), while access to the College counselling service as a broader support may be needed.

Particularly in regard to migrant/refugee sex workers, taking into account their multiple vulnerabilities and potential exposure to state violence, confidentiality refers not only to the disclosed information concerning their profession, but also to their legal migratory status.

Finally, as this research focuses on sex work, I will inevitably have to collect data about my participants' sexual life and their political views vis-a-vis sex work (e.g. regulatory legislations). However, as participants will be asked to select the data they wish to make available to me and will voluntarily participate in semi-structured interviews, I am confident that there will not be any ethical issues besides what has been already discussed in this application.

15 ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO YOU OR OTHER RESEARCHERS? *If YES, please describe these risks and how they will be addressed.*

As the interviews will take place in safe spaces, namely spaces that are neutral and public (SWR organisations' offices), and the interviewees will participate voluntarily, through a framed and circumscribed process, while measures against Covid transmission will be undertaken, I do not consider any risks to personal safety associated with in-person interviews. In terms of maintaining my privacy, I will contact the participants via my professional phone number, which is already published in the lists of the Athens Bar Association of which I am a member.

Any potential emotional impact of working with the participants' personal accounts will be firstly discussed in my private therapy sessions. Yet, given the potentially emotionally disturbing content of the interviews, a fieldwork protocol shall be put in place. Specifically, I plan to check with my supervisors at regular scheduled points during the fieldwork period, e.g., after each interview, and each time a participant contacts me before or after the interview. Thus, in the event of any concern or anxiety I may have, I will be able to get support and be signposted to any additional support if that is needed at that juncture. For that reason, my supervisors have already made available to me their contact numbers. Furthermore, access to the College counselling service as a broader support may be needed.

16 DOES THE RESEARCH RAISE ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST? *If YES, please describe how they will be identified and managed.*

To my knowledge, no conflict of interest is raised by this research.

17 IS THERE AN INTERNATIONAL ELEMENT TO THE PROJECT [e.g. collaboration with researchers based overseas; collection of data from other jurisdictions]? *If YES, please describe what [if any] additional ethical issues this raises and how these will be addressed.*

The fieldwork will be conducted solely in Greece, yet private communications with Sex Workers Organisations and/or activists across Europe and in the UK, or the European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance (ESWA) may need to take place in order to ensure a more holistic approach concerning issues such as unionisation, campaigning for law reforms etc. Such communications, however, will not raise any additional ethical issues, as the representatives of the organisations will provide me with official information which will not interfere with personal stories of potentially vulnerable individuals.

18 ARE THERE OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES RAISED BY YOUR RESEARCH? *If YES, please describe these issues and how you will address them. Please read the College Guidelines on Research*

with Ethical Implications to gain an understanding of the issues which might apply to your research.

Besides what has been already discussed in the previous sections of this application form, I am confident that no other ethical issues are raised by my research.

19 ADDITIONAL SECTION FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING IN-PERSON DATA COLLECTION FROM HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

- a. **Please tick box to confirm that you have read the latest College guidance on Covid-19 and the implications for research activities, including the latest notification on 'Research involving face-to-face participant interaction and Covid-19' and 'Appendix A: Plan to resume in-person data collection'; both available at <https://birkbeckuol.sharepoint.com/sites/cn-coronavirus/SitePages/Research-information.aspx>'**
- b. Please detail what measures you will put in place to mitigate any health and safety risks to the researcher and participants.
- c. If the re-introduction of social distancing restrictions in the research site(s) rules out in person data collection, how will you adapt your methods to allow for this?
- d. **For students on taught programmes only: please explain why face-to-face data collection from human participants is essential to the research, and why remote data collection or alternative methodology is not possible.**
- e. **For students on taught programmes only: Please confirm that written approval for in-person data collection has been obtained from the relevant subject Assistant Dean.**

b. While I plan to conduct most interviews online, in some cases this may not be possible. In the event that a sex worker feels either uncomfortable or is not capable of being interviewed online, I will interview them in person. However, to mitigate any health and safety risks, my research will be conducted in the spring, when in-person interviews can take place outdoors - for example in private balconies of sex workers' organisations' offices to ensure the privacy of the interviewees. Both the researcher and the participants will practice social distancing and will be wearing face coverings and gloves, while all surfaces and equipment used by the researcher to collect the data and all surfaces touched by the participants will be disinfected.

20 ADDITIONAL SECTION FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING REMOTE DATA COLLECTION FROM HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

- a. Please detail what platform you will be using for remote data collection.
- b. Please detail how the privacy and confidentiality of participants and their data will be ensured during and after remote data collection. (This should include consideration data security features of the platform to be used).

- a. I will be using google meet, that requires no inscription and has no time limit;
- b. I will conduct my online interviews through my personal computer that is locked with a password. Participants will be informed of steps they can take to protect privacy (e.g. closing their web browser after interview completion, avoid using shared devices, finding a private location to complete interviews, etc.).
Separate participant contact/identifier information from data, or link indirectly via codes and the key linking identifiers and data will be stored in a secure location separate from the data. Participants will be encouraged to use nicknames of their choice.

21 FOR APPLICATIONS FROM STUDENTS ONLY:

AS THE SUPERVISOR OF THE APPLICANT, I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE REVIEWED THE FORM.

SUPERVISOR NAME, SIGNATURE & DATE:

Dr. Elena Loizidou, 24. 5. 2022

Dr. Maria Tzanakopoulou, 24.5. 2022

22 SUPERVISOR COMMENTS [OPTIONAL]

We are grateful to the committee's comments regarding Athina's interviews. Athina has taken into consideration the comments, reflected on them and is resubmitting her ethics form for approval. I believe that the relevant ethical questions have now been considered. I want to bring to the panel's attention nevertheless, that Julia Laite who acted as examiner to Athina's upgrade, clearly stated during the upgrade that Athina's project was original in bringing theoretical and empirical questions around sex work (and not trafficking) together in her study of Greek sex workers. The project is described as follows by Laite and Aristodemou in the post-upgrade report: 'The project is an ambitious as well as strong attempt at a practical as well as theoretical analysis of contemporary Greek law on sex work and its impact on the subjectivity of sex workers.' – which further demonstrates its originality.

E. Loizidou

Thank you to the committee for its useful feedback. Upon reviewing the form, I am also satisfied that Athina has addressed all of the committee's comments as outlined in the relevant feedback email. Two further comments I wish to make relate, first, to harm reduction strategies and, second, to the committees' reservations about the characterisation of Greek literature on the matter as 'limited, obsolete, and treating the subject from a criminological point of view.' With regards to the first matter, references to harm reduction strategies have been removed. Harm reduction is a strategy pertaining to collaborative approaches and methodologies, which are not relevant to the present research. The reference to it was made in error. With regards to the second matter, I am in a position to know that Greek literature is indeed limited and partly outdated. To my knowledge, the only relevant work produced in the past decade is L Maratou-Alipranti's and E Rethimiotaki's, 'Greece', published in S Økland Jahnsen's and H Wagenaar's *Assessing Prostitution Policies in Europe* (Routledge 2019). As a matter of fact, Dr Julia Laite, whom the committee advises Athina to contact, has confirmed the above both during Athina's upgrade viva in June 2021 and in private correspondence that they have had with one another since.

M. Tzanakopoulou

23 COMMITTEE REVIEW, DECISION AND CATEGORISATION OF PROJECT	
CATEGORISATION: Choose an item. Choose an item.	
REFERENCE NUMBER:	
TO BE REVIEWED BY SCHOOL /COLLEGE ETHICS COMMITTEE [delete as appropriate]	
OUTCOME: Approved	
Choose an item.COMMENTS:	
DATE APPLICANT ADVISED OF DECISION:	
TIME FRAME FOR RESPONSE [if applicable]:	
24 DATE APPLICANT ADVISED OF FINAL DECISION	26/05/2022

Data Management Plan

Existing data

The research objectives require qualitative data that are not available from other sources, as the existing literature concerning sex work in Greece is extremely limited, mostly covering the issue from a criminological point of view, whereas there are very few sex workers autobiographies. The existing data, mostly modern historiography, and legal archives, can be used to situate and triangulate the findings of the proposed research. However, they are insufficiently detailed and do not address the research questions properly. Existing public data and data collected from the proposed research will supplement each other, providing to the researcher and the reader a more complete insight into the research subject.

Information on data

For these reasons, the research project involves the following primary data collection: 1) public data, and 2) semi-structured interviews:

1. *Public data*

Where possible, I will use online and electronic archives, such as interviews, documentaries, historic and legal archives etc. This will involve extracting and processing qualitative data, including participants, objectives and outcomes, that shape the history and material reality of sex work in Greece.

2. *Semi-structured interviews with individuals*

In phase 2, I anticipate to undertake 10-20 semi-structured interviews. Data will be collected and stored using digital audio recording (e.g. MP3), preferably remotely, although in-person interaction may be considered necessary in some cases (in the event a participant feels either uncomfortable or is not capable of being interviewed online). All transcripts will be in Microsoft Word. As the interviewees are considered highly vulnerable subjects and their anonymity and confidentiality must be protected, transcripts will be kept in the researcher's private archive. According to Babbie "a research project guarantees confidentiality when the researcher can identify a given person's responses but essentially promises not to do so publicly. In an interview survey, for example, the researchers could make public the income reported by a given respondent, but they assure the respondent that this will not be done".⁹⁸⁷ (for more details see section: *Ethical Issues*)

⁹⁸⁷ Babbie, E. *The basics of social research*, Thomson – Wadsworth, Belmont, CA, 2005, p.69

Quality assurance

The Researcher will be responsible for overall quality assurance. Quality will be assured through routine monitoring and periodic cross-checks against the protocols. While interview protocols are being developed in Phase 2, standards and systems for note-taking, recording (if possible), transcribing and storing visual data from participatory techniques such as drawings, photographs and video, will also be defined.

Backup and security

All data will need to be backed up regularly, both in an external u-disk and online (in Dropbox). There are some potential sensitivities around some of the data being collected, so the project will establish a system for protecting data while it is being processed, including use of passwords and safe back-up hardware. All data will be securely stored for up to 7 years.

Ethical issues

Data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). A letter explaining the purpose, approach and dissemination strategy (including plans to share data) of the research, and an accompanying consent form (including consent to share data) has been prepared and translated into the relevant languages. A clear verbal explanation will also be provided to each interviewee. Commitments to ensure confidentiality will be maintained by ensuring recordings are not shared and that interviews will be anonymized, transcripts will be kept in the researcher's private archive, while details that can be used to identify participants will be removed or concealed in write-ups. As the highly focused nature of the research means that many participants may be easily identifiable despite efforts to ensure anonymity or confidentiality, where there is such a risk, participants will be shown sections of transcript and/or report text to ensure they are satisfied that no unnecessary risks are being taken with their interview data. Interviews with prominent activists will not guarantee confidentiality unless this is requested, as interviewees may wish to speak in their official capacities or institutional roles. However, as is often the case, interviewees may be more comfortable if some sections of their interview are not recorded or made public. Under such circumstances, recording will be paused or sections of text will be expunged from the final research, and a note will be made that this is the case. Pseudonymised

data may be shared outside of the EU for the purpose of publication in international journals and participation in international conferences/workshops. In this case, research participants will be unidentifiable as all data will be pseudonymised prior to being shared. If recordings need to be played in a conference or workshop, voices from interviews will be changed using voice changer software.

Expected difficulties in data sharing

Collected information will be shared through synthetic narrative and thematic analysis. No major difficulties in data sharing are expected.

Copyright/Intellectual Property Right

The data controller for this project will be Birkbeck College, University of London. The institutional partners will jointly own the data generated. Online and archival sources will be cited and clearly acknowledged in the database and research outputs. Permission will be sought from secondary sources to share the findings of the research on public websites.

Responsibilities

The Researcher commits to direct the data management process overall, ensuring metadata production, day-to-day cross-checks, back-up and other quality control activities are maintained. She will also collect and transcribe the interview data, undertake the data extraction and inputting process. The Researcher will be finally responsible for dealing with quality and sharing and archiving of data.

Information Sheet for Participants

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Title of study

Regulating Sexual Labour in modern and contemporary Greece. State, Governance Feminism(S) And The Sex Workers Movements

Invitation Paragraph

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project which forms part of my PhD research. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to examine how the Law has affected the sex workers in modern and contemporary Greece. To gain a broader understanding of the history of sex work in modern and contemporary Greece, and the lived experience of sex workers as well, I aim to conduct interviews.

Why have I been invited to take part? (eligibility criteria)

You are being invited to participate in this study because you are or have been involved in sex work in Greece and you are over 18 years old

What will happen if I take part?

- If you choose to take part in the study, you will be asked to take part in one audio-recorded interview (up to one hour)
- In the interviews you will be asked to comment on law's impact into your everyday life as a sex worker, as well as your opinions about the recognition of sex work as labour.

Example questions:

-If you work / have worked legally, what difficulties did you face?

- If you work/have worked illegally, what difficulties have you encountered?

- Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your professional life? In what ways?
- You may also be asked to reflect on your sexual/erotic life. Example questions referring to your sexual/erotic life may include:
 - Does your professional life affect your personal life? In what ways? (Do you think it is possible to separate labor from your private sexuality?)
 - What are your experiences with your clients? What is their attitude in general?
- Participation in interviews will take place electronically via video-calls or in person
- All interviews will take place within 12 weeks after consent form is signed and will be audio-recorded
- You will be encouraged to invite any trusted friends or colleagues who might also be interested in taking part in this research. You can only invite other people to take part in this study if you are sure that they are over 18 years old. You can do so by sending them a digital *information sheet* that will be made available to you. Please note that you should exert no pressure on them for participation in this study. If anyone is interested in participating, they will need to send a WhatsApp message or email to the researcher, so that the goals of the study are explained in detail, and informed consent is obtained.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is entirely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in anyway. Once you have read the information sheet, please contact me if you have any questions the answers to which may help you make a decision about taking part. If you decide to take part, we will ask you to sign a consent form and you will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks for you in case you participate in this study and the researcher will ensure you are not asked any stressful or upsetting questions.

However, if you do not wish to answer a question, you may skip it and go to the next question, or you may stop immediately. Also, if you become upset or

distressed as a result of your participation in the research project, you can pause your participation or even withdraw by sending an email to the researcher (amicha15@mail.bbk.ac.uk).

In the unlikely event that you should need to seek psychological or other appropriate support by qualified staff as a result of your participation in this study, you are advised to call the Red Umbrella Athens Counselling Services (<https://redumbrella.org.gr/>), or the Transgender Support Association, a voluntary non-governmental organization that specializes in transgender issues, in which operates a psychological support team both at group and individual level in both Athens and Thessaloniki providing free counselling (<https://tgender.gr/>), or the 24/7 helpline 197 by the National Centre for Social Solidarity, which provides free counselling as well as information regarding welfare issues at a personal, group and community level (<http://www.ekka.org.gr/index.php>), or the Orlando LGBT+ organization, a scientific body which specializes in the protection of LGBT+ individuals and offers free counselling sessions (<https://orlandolgbt.gr/>).

Please also note that researchers as all citizens in Greece and the United Kingdom are obliged to disclose confidential information relate to child protection offences such as the physical or sexual abuse of minors, the physical abuse of vulnerable adults, money laundering and other crimes covered by prevention of terrorism legislation. These obligations are concerned primarily with serious and immediate harm to others. You will also be reminded about the cases in which confidentiality may have to be breached prior to any recording. If you disclose having committed or intending to commit a crime related to terrorism, child sexual offences or a violent crime, I will initially have to discuss the case and the seriousness of the disclosed information with my supervisor in order for us to evaluate a) if it is indeed a disclosure worth being reported to local authorities, b) which local authorities need to be contacted on the basis of the nature of the disclosure and c) how you will be informed that I am obliged to breach confidentiality.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Each interviewee will be granted a remuneration of €40 for their participation in the study.

Moreover, participants will be given the chance to make themselves heard. This is especially important given that sex workers' own accounts are rarely taken into account. Giving to a long-silenced, marginalised community the opportunity to be heard may give participants the feeling that their voices, views and accounts matter.

Finally, participants may feel that they contribute to the advancement of science and take an active role in the production of social scientific knowledge about sex work.

Data handling and confidentiality

Your data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). More specifically:

1. All data will be analysed from a synthetic narrative and thematic analysis point of view. In that way, both life experiences and personal theories people construct around them including their own explanations and argumentations will be taken into account.
2. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, all data will be pseudonymised with a view to making research participants non-identifiable.
3. No sensitive data (e.g. participants' names, age, place of work/residence/origin, biographical narratives and other potentially identifiable information) will be published
4. Sensitive/identifiable data will only be shared with my supervisors/research team, and this will only be done with participants' consent.
5. Pseudonymised data may be shared outside of the EU for the purpose of publication in international journals and participation in international conferences/workshops. In this case, research participants will be unidentifiable as all data will be pseudonymised prior to being shared.
6. If recordings need to be played in a conference or workshop, voices from interviews will be changed using voice changer software.
7. All data will be securely stored with Birkbeck College, University of London, as well as in my password-protected laptop, in password protected files and I will ensure that the password I will be using is appropriately protected too.
8. To further ensure that the data are properly protected (and avoid accidental deletion), data will also be stored in secure (password-protected) online repositories, in the form of password-protected files.
9. All data will be securely stored for up to 7 years.
10. Confidentiality may have to be breached if you disclose having committed or intending to commit a crime related to a) terrorism, b) child sexual

offences or c) a violent crime. You will be reminded about the cases in which confidentiality may have to be breached, prior to any recording.

Data Protection Statement

The data controller for this project will be Birkbeck College, University of London. The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. The legal basis for processing your personal data for research purposes under GDPR is a 'task in the public interest'. You can provide your consent for the use of your personal data in this study by completing the consent form that has been provided to you. Your data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). If you would like more information about how your data will be processed in accordance with GDPR please visit the link below: <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/policies/gdpr>

What if I change my mind about taking part?

You are free to withdraw at any point of the study, without having to give a reason.

Withdrawing from the study will not affect you in any way. You are able to withdraw your data from the study up until 12 weeks after consent form has been signed, after which withdrawal of your data will no longer be possible as the data will have been pseudonymised, transcribed and analysed or committed to the final report. If you choose to withdraw from the study, we will not retain the information you have given thus far.

As soon as a participant withdraws from the study, all data collected from this participant will be destroyed permanently and irreversibly within 7 working days after the announcement of the withdrawal. If the data from a participant are part of their participation in an audiorecorded group discussion, these data will not be destroyed.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results of the study will be summarised in my doctoral thesis and may be published in research journals or other academic publications (e.g. contributions to edited collections, monographs, etc.). If you so wish, you will be sent a copy of the published data by the researcher.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact me using the following contact details:

Athina Michalakea

amicha15@mail.bbk.ac.uk

+30 6946900225

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?

If this study has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the study, you can contact Birkbeck College, University of London using the details below for further advice and information:

Dr. Elena Loizidou

e.loizidou@bbk.ac.uk

Reader in Law and Political Theory

Assistant Dean, Law

Birkbeck College, Malet Street WC1E 7HX, London

Dr. Maria Tzanakopoulou

m.tzanakopoulou@bbk.ac.uk

Lecturer in Law

Birkbeck College, 12 Gower str, WC1E 6HE, London

**Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in
this research**

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read and understood the research summary and agree to be interviewed.

I understand that my participation in the study is completely voluntary. I understand that I am free to end the interview at any time, and do not need to answer all the questions, and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any point before publication of research findings?

I am happy for the interview to be recorded, and for the interview to be transcribed by the Researcher. I understand that the interview recording will be deleted when the project is completed and that my name, or any other details that could identify me, will not be included in the interview transcript.

I understand that my name and contact details will be stored securely and separately from the interview transcript, and will be deleted on completion of the project.

I understand that the interview is confidential. The Researcher will not include any details that could identify me in any report or other output of the research that is made publicly available.

I understand that if I disclose confidential information related to child protection offences such as the physical or sexual abuse of minors below 15 years old, the physical abuse of vulnerable adults, money laundering and other crimes covered by prevention of terrorism legislation, concerned primarily with serious and immediate harm to others (e.g., having committed or intending to commit a crime related to terrorism, child sexual offences or a violent crime), confidentiality may have to be breached, as the Researcher may have legal obligation.

I understand that **anonymised** data from this study will be deposited in the researcher's personal data archive after completion of the study and will be held by Athina Michalakea for at least five years. I understand that these data may be used in other research studies and publications, but there will be **no possibility**

of identification of me or other individuals in any further such use of the data.

Signature Date

Qualitative research interview guide

UNIT 1 – SELF IDENTITY, BACKGROUND

1. How do you define yourself in terms of your gender and sexuality?
2. Where / when were you born?
3. Where did you grow up?
4. Do you work / have you worked in sex before? At what age did you start?
5. Do you work / have you worked legally (in brothels), illegally, or both?

UNIT 2 – LAW'S IMPACT INTO SEX WORKERS' EVERYDAY LIVES

6. What do you know about the current legislation affecting sex work?
7. If you work / have worked legally, what difficulties did you face?
8. If you work / have worked illegally, what discouraged you from working legally? Have you ever thought of working legally?
9. If you work/have worked illegally, what difficulties have you encountered (e.g., police repression or/and violence, fines, detention, deportation etc.)?
10. What do you think about the prohibition of granting a service provider's license to married persons?
11. What are your thoughts about the legal provisions regarding the creation and function of brothels?
12. What do you think about the compulsory medical examinations every 15 days in order to keep the employment license? What are your views on the ban on licensing sex workers who may be suffering from sexually transmitted disease or infectious disease in general?
13. What do you think about the ban on licensing people suffering from any form of mental disorder (e.g., depression, anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress, etc.)?
14. Has the Covid-19 pandemic affected your professional life? In what ways?
15. What legislative improvements do you think could be done in order to improve the daily life of sex workers?

UNIT 3 – SEX WORK AS WORK

16. Many people believe that sex work and human trafficking are the same thing. What do you, as a sex working person, think about it?
17. Does your professional life affect your personal life? In what ways? (Do you think it is possible to separate labor from your private sexuality?)
18. What are the best and the worst parts of your job?
19. According to some feminist approaches, sex work is synonymous with violence against women. Such opinions have contributed to the formulation of certain laws that criminalize customers (e.g., in France, Sweden, etc.). What do you think about these views and laws?
20. Have you encountered violent behaviors in your professional life?
21. Are your customers more often men, women, couples?
22. What are your experiences with your clients? What is their attitude in general?
23. Have you heard about the sex surrogates institution? (These are professionals who support people with disabilities in discovering or regaining their sexuality, often by providing sex themselves.) What do you think about it? Do you think it is similar or different to sex work? In what ways?
24. Are there any networks of support for sex workers that you are aware of and consult?
25. Do you think that sex work should be recognized by the State as work and given the possibility to form a trade union?
26. How do you imagine the future of sex work in general?

SRC Funding Application

LAW/R1	APPLICATION FOR SRC GRANT 2021-22
	Choose an item.
<p>GUIDANCE: <i>This form is to be used by academic staff and postgraduate students to apply for grants from the Law School Research Committee (SRC), to fund activities which support the School's research culture. The completed form should be sent to the SRC secretary s.quarrelle@bbk.ac.uk. This form should be read in conjunction with SRC Grants Application Guidance Notes 2021-22.</i></p>	
<p>20 APPLICANT NAME AND EMAIL</p> <p><i>Choose an item. If you are a Law School postgraduate student, please include your student number and the name of your supervisor(s). You should discuss this application with your supervisor before you submit it.</i></p> <p>Choose an item.</p>	
<p>Athina Michalakea</p> <p>Dr. Elena Loizidou, Dr. Maria Tzanakopoulou</p>	
<p>21 PURPOSE OF GRANT</p> <p><i>Choose an item. Please advise how you propose to spend the funds requested. If for an event, please include proposed or confirmed dates and also answer questions 2a – 2d. Otherwise please go to question 3.</i></p> <p>Choose an item.</p>	
<p>Financial remuneration of interviewees for the empirical part of my research. The working title of my thesis is “Legal frame and Cultural Representations of sex work in modern and contemporary Greece” [working title]. This thesis aims to expand on the existing literature of sex work in Greece, by using Critical Oral History Method. Hence, I plan to conduct approximately 15 – 20 interviews. According to the Sex Work Research Hub Ethical Guidelines (https://www.swrh.co.uk/ethical-guidelines.html), monetary compensation often decreases rather than increases sample bias against socially and economically marginalized communities. In other words, uncompensated surveys or studies of sex workers often skew towards more privileged and more politically engaged individuals than studies offering compensation. For these reasons, I am considering offering interviewees a small compensation for their time.</p> <p>The empirical part of my research got ethical approval on May 26.</p>	
<p>2a EXPECTED AUDIENCE</p> <p><i>Please advise to whom the event is targeted, and whether this includes non-academic delegates. Please give an estimate of the size of the audience.</i></p>	
<p>Choose an item. 15-20 (former or current) sex workers based and having worked in Greece. The amount of the compensation will be approximately €40, according to the European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance Commission Decision of 10 April 2019 authorising the use of unit costs for declaring personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or a work program (C(2019)2646) (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1005GNi-YxjgzR2_ul6mtUh2FHmP8NWXILYLR8jDcfXs/edit) .</p>	

2b THEME OF THE EVENT

Maximum 300 words. Please comment on the timeliness, relevance and importance of the theme.

Choose an item.

-

2c SUGGESTED SPEAKERS INCLUDING AFFILIATIONS AND WHY CHOSEN

Please advise whether the speakers have already confirmed their availability to participate. Please consider the diversity of speakers when you are planning your programme to avoid all white, all male panels.

Choose an item.

-

2d IMPACT POTENTIAL

Please advise if outputs (e.g. publications or further events) will be produced for the public, practitioners, policy-makers, lobbyists, the media or any other stakeholders. The School's Impact Officer, Louise Ross (louise.ross@bbk.ac.uk) can offer advice and assistance to design an impactful event.

Interviews are an aspect of paramount importance in this research. To fully understand the law's impact into sex workers' lives, it is necessary to take into consideration their own lived experience and worldview. Critical Oral history is committed to recording first-hand knowledge of experiences with the additional goals of contextualizing stories to reveal power differences and inequities. It engages processes and practices that promote agency and value historically marginalized community members' stories that are often unheard or untold, in order to validate and act on these stories in meaningful ways that counter dominant power structures. Sex workers' personal narrations will be analysed along with other primary sources (historical and legal archives etc) as well as secondary sources (documentaries, reportages etc) to gain an understanding and insight into the history of sex work in modern and contemporary Greece. Overall, the sex workers' experience will be treated as an equal historical source, a central factor in re-shaping our collective mentality concerning the multiple realities of sex work. Moreover, as a researcher I wish to give space to such a marginalised community which is constantly patronized, repressed, even abused, to express its own voice, as I considers its members as subjects with full agency.

22 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Please advise how this proposed expenditure will benefit the School's research activities, culture or relationships.

Choose an item.

As this thesis aims to expand on the existing literature of sex work in Greece, by using Critical Oral History Method, I expect strong PhD research outcomes. This will enhance the School's extroversion, along with its commitment to critical jurisprudence tradition, by providing a highly marginalised community an opportunity to be heard, gaining a broader insight on law's impact upon them, and even offering a prospect of change.

4a AMOUNT REQUESTED [Funds received must be spent by 31 July 2022]

Please give a breakdown of your intended expenditure, and the source of your data for estimated costs. Advise if you have sought or intend to seek other funding. Please refer to the accompanying SRC Grants Application Guidance Notes for more information about costs.

Choose an item.£300

£37,5 (approximately €40) for the compensation of 8 interviewees

4b OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

Please advise if you have sought or intend to seek other sources of funding; and when a decision might be expected for pending applications.

I have submitted an application for receiving my annual allowance (£400) for the compensation of 11 interviewees. I expect a decision within the next two weeks.

TO BE COMPLETED BY LAW SCHOOL: Choose an item.	DATE RECEIVED Choose an item.	07/06/2022	DATE APPLICANT ADVISED Choose an item.	21/06/2022
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5 SRC COMMENT

6 [If appropriate: PGR Administrator - please file this form on the student's file.]

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