Crisis and Concomitant Forms of Collective Action: A critique of the Greek indignant movement
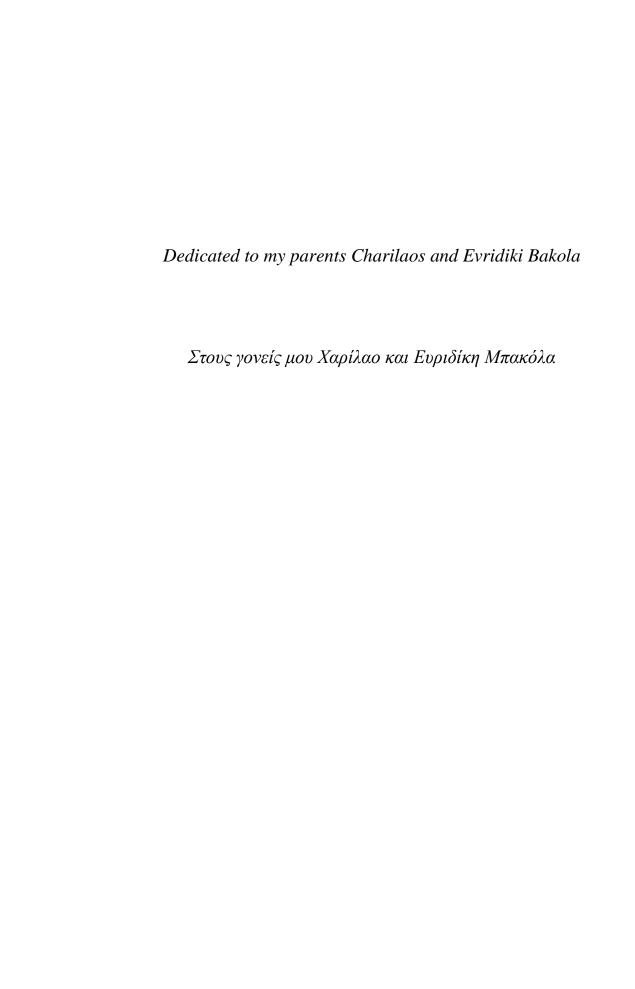
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Abstract

What can the Greek indignant movement tell us about the forces that shape political subjectivity and forms of collective struggle that can subvert and resist capitalist power relations? In this thesis I argue that Greek indignants' desire for autonomy and a more "ethical" politics contributed to the decline of the movement, perpetuating the global politics of austerity and a liberal understanding of politics after the crisis that feeds inequalities produced within capitalism. I seek to unravel the forces that contributed to the decline of the Greek indignant movement and the social, political and economic mechanisms that contributed to the production of political subjectivities within the movement. My examination demonstrates that there is a tension between how participants maintain the diversity of the movement and how they build the movement as one with collective political goals; between a desire for autonomy and a desire for a cohesive and effective political programme that has been devised in a collective way. I navigate this tension by examining the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivities in these times of crisis. I engage in a critique of Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri's theories on the mechanisms for the production of a collective political subjectivity. I critique their concepts of the "people" and the "multitude" and their assessment of the mechanisms for the production of a collective political subjectivity, bringing this critical analysis within my examination of the Greek indignant movement. I argue that emotion, ideology, culture and the economy bear upon the production of political subjectivities within the movement in important and significant ways. My critique of this theoretical debate provides a rigorous starting point from which to unravel the mechanisms of the production of political subjectivity. I continue with a close examination of the political processes that contributed to the rise and decline of the Greek indignant movement. I demonstrate how emotion and affect are key in the emergence of forms of resistance. In these forms of resistance emotion and affect are bound together with the embodiment of hegemonic ideologies that shape the actions of the Greek indignants contributing to the decline of the movement. I conclude by demonstrating that the Greek indignant movement, in spite of its failures, can still offer the basis for the beginning under which anti-capitalist politics can flourish and serve as an example for the forces that can contribute to building an emancipatory collective political subjectivity.

Dedicated to my parents Charilaos and Evridiki Bakola

Στους γονείς μου Χαρίλαο και Ευριδίκη Μπακόλα

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Contents

Introduction: Political subjectivity in times of Crisis

During the time from when I began my thesis to its completion, Greece has been transformed from a laboratory of hope to a cemetery of dreams. The Greek indignant movement briefly became the centre of resistance against the neoliberal politics of deregulation and privatisation in Greece. It inspired hope for the emergence of a movement within the age of austerity that can challenge and overthrow capitalism. To use the words of some of the participants in the movement, "it represented freedom of thought and expression", "it inspired hope for a better future, for a better society". But hope for what kind of society? What kind of future?

On Wednesday 25th of May, 2011, Syntagma square or Constitutional square, the square right opposite to the Greek parliament, was filled with thousands of different people. Many of them had never participated in a demonstration or a rally. People of different ages and income were congregating in small groups, talking to strangers as if they were old acquaintances; sometimes reluctantly, other times vociferously they would express their opposition to the politics of austerity. Syntagma Square was quickly transforming into a living organism. People were dancing, chanting, shouting mottos, eating and drinking together while artists would perform for the crowd gathered in the square. The informal discussions within the square were quickly transformed into a large group on the lines of the open assembly where every person had the opportunity to address the people and talk. As the people gathered in the square the crowd would not disperse, the occupation of the square was slowly becoming a reality. Thousands of people would volunteer to be part of the different groups, strong bonds were created and people kept joining.

I, like many of my friends and fellow activists, was taken aback by the emergence of such a movement. For people my age, the indignant movement was one of the largest protests experienced. I saw a popular movement protesting against the neoliberal politics of austerity and expressing similar emotions of outrage to those I experienced from all these years in anti-capitalist protests. I was excited to see people engaging in forms of self-organisation and a critique of the politics of austerity. I was beginning to wonder, as a participant of the movement did, *"have peoples' consciousness indeed changed in a day?"*

The Greek indignant movement was not a movement with clear goals and demands. It was a popular movement that encouraged every member of Greek society to join. So, can a movement like the Greek indignants produce emancipatory politics and a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism? The decline of the movement and extensions of austerity politics in Greece, even during the administration of a Left political party, answers the above questions with a resounding "no". The rise and decline of the Greek indignant

movement, and of movements around the world such as the Occupy movement in New York and the Spanish indignados that emerged after the Financial Crisis, makes the matter of studying the production of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalist relations of production a pressing matter. In spite of its inability to overthrow capitalism and the politics of austerity, the Greek indignant movement managed to mobilise thousands of Greek people against neoliberal politics of austerity. It offers therefore a rich site for the analysis of the production of emancipatory politics. My aim is to unravel the forces that contribute to the rise and demise of the Greek indignant movement. To unravel the mechanisms for the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity and the possibility for emancipatory politics.

The rise of the Greek indignant movement re-invigorated the academic debate between post-Marxist theories on the production of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. The desire for diversity and autonomous action, the moral outrage of participants and their mistrust of institutional politics, the emergence of a horizontal form of organisation and the emphasis given to emotion sparked a debate amongst academics upon the mechanisms for the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity. On the one hand, the argument for a collective political subjectivity that is produced through consent of different social actors towards building a counter-hegemonic block, on the lines proposed by Antonio Gramsci but within a world that is permeated by the constituent character of articulation and discourses as advocated by Laclau and Mouffe. On the other hand, a collective political subjectivity that is built upon a matrix of affects, formulated within forms of production, maintaining the diversity and multiplicity of subjectivities as advocated by Hardt and Negri. This thesis begins its inquiry informed by these debates.

The existing analysis of the Greek movement has been informed by this debate and approached the movement using these abstract concepts, which I demonstrate provide little critical engagement with the politics of the movement, instead these analyses argue for the revolutionary potential of the movement confined within the parameters of each theory. In the following sections I will introduce the problematic of approaching the Greek indignant movement by means of a critique of this theoretical backdrop and will highlight my contribution to the debate on the production of political subjectivity and summarise my argument. I will thus proceed to an introduction of Greek political culture and the political events that led to the Greek crisis and the rise of the Greek indignant movement. In the last section I will put forward my argument and introduce the organisation of this thesis.

0.1. Collective struggle in the age of austerity and key terms

Before I embark on a discussion of the problematic raised by the rise and decline of the indignant movement in terms of the production of a political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism I first need to address some issues that are important to understanding the character of the Greek indignant movement. The first issue rises with the very name of the movement. The movement was referred to as indignant by the media in terms of the relation between the movement in Greece and the Spanish indignados. Further, the first call for a protest against the politics of austerity was invoked under the emotion of indignation referring to those people that were going to gather as indignant citizens. Many academics in their analysis of the indignant movement refuse to refer to the movement as the indignant movement. Instead they refer to the outraged movement, arguing for a more exact translation, or the movement of Squares.[1] This I argue reflects the desire of some academics to eradicate from the movement the cultural characteristics that are tied to the emotion of indignation as it is shaped throughout Greek politics; this is part of an attempt to portray the movement as inherently revolutionary. Indeed many of the participants in the movement refrain from using the name indignant or insist on different names such as outraged or movement of the squares. However, I argue the name indignant is not a random characterisation of the movement; this name contributed to the mobilisation of thousands of Greeks, to the emergence of antagonisms within the movement and to how participants viewed themselves as political subjects. The emotion of indignation has particular cultural and ideological ties that should not be ignored because it is an emotion that might have been experienced more or less by some of the participants. To do so would be to ignore the political significance of emotions in general or some emotions in particular on the basis that they do not fit certain standards that would give rise to revolutionary politics. Instead, I reflect on the political contribution of the emotion of indignation and its importance and significance to emancipatory politics within Greek political culture. The reluctance of some participants to feel or acknowledge that they felt indignant, and to be part of a movement that is referred to as such, is a point that should attract analytical focus and not be brushed under the carpet. Furthermore, the name became one of the many points of discussion and debate among participants. To ignore this characteristic is to ignore a key feature that contributed to the popularity of the movement, the political processes developed within the movement and the importance of emotions in the production of political subjectivity.

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[1] S. Kioupliokis, 'Outraged Squares. Beyond the Banality of the Multitude?', *Synchrona Themata* 8-10 (2011). 113. (in Greek).; K. Douzinas. 'The Multitude in the centre of Politics (To Plithos stin Plateia kai sto Kentro ton Ekselikseon)', in C. Giovanopoulos & D. Mitropoulos, eds. *Democracy Under Construction*. (Athens: Α/συνέχεια, 2011). 135-142. (in Greek).

The second issue refers to the term contemporary form of collective action. It is a term I use frequently throughout the thesis and it has been used in the past to signify forms of collective action that are particular to a chronological period, reflecting certain cultural and economic characteristics of that period. By contemporary collective struggle thus I refer to collective struggle that emerged after the financial crisis of 2008 but has roots in a history of collective struggle.

Grasping however the forces that give rise to these movements and their ability to challenge capitalism is an endeavour that needs to begin by focusing on the concept of political subjectivity. I use the term political subjectivity in order to interrogate the political action of individuals and how this action is internalised and constituted by different social political and economic mechanisms. I use the term political to refer to the terrain of our lives as permeated by social struggles

With the rise of the Greek indignant movement a broad debate began to emerge among left scholars on the forces that contribute to the production of a political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. With the questioning of the proletariat as the universal category of anti-capitalist struggle, the concept of the multitude was met with widespread enthusiasm amongst those academics that envision the emergence of collective political subject that is built upon the diversity of its participants establishing their autonomy from existing forms of power relations.[2] For others, the Greek indignant movement was a popular movement building a collective political subjectivity within an articulation of different discourses. Within this process the Greek indignants constitute themselves as political subjects in order to form a collective subjectivity of the people which in turn will establish a counter-hegemonic bloc that will challenge the politics of austerity. [3] Both analyses attributed characteristics to the Greek indignant movement pointing to the production of a common political project against austerity and neoliberalism. Dominant literature on the Greek indignant movement was divided within these two approaches. These explanations of the Greek indignant movement left me unsatisfied because they see the political and social processes developed within the movement

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[2] Nikos Sotirakopoulos 'The Notion of the Multitude and lessons from the present cycle of struggles: the case of Greece' in Benjamín Tejerina and Ignacia Perugorría (eds) *From Social to Political: New Forms of Mobilisation and Democratisation*. (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco – Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea, 2012);
Sotirakopoulos, N. (2011), 'The *rise of the Greek Multitude* (and why we need to move a step beyond)', *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies*, *Blog* [accessed 15 September 2012]
htpp://www.criticalglobalisation.com/blogs/nikoss_rise_of_greek_multitude.html; Alexandors Kioupliokis and Giorgos Katsambekis (eds.) *Radical Democracy and Collective movements today: The Biopolitics of the Multitude versus the Hegemony of the People*. (Surrey: Ashgate, 2014)
[3] Chantal Mouffe. *Agonistics: Thinking of the World Politically*. (London and New York: Verso, 2013).107-127.; Alexandors Kioupliokis and Giorgos Katsambekis (eds.) *Radical Democracy and Collective movements today: The Biopolitics of the Multitude versus the Hegemony of the People*. (Surrey: Ashgate 2014).

as essentially and inherently revolutionary. At the same time the role of emotions within the processes of the movement has received little attention. Existing literature focuses on moral outrage in order to argue that the movement was either going to overthrow contemporary forms of democratic representation and pave the way for post-democratic politics or create a new hegemonic bloc bringing to power a socialist government. In both cases this moral indignation or moral outrage appears as the undisputable road towards overthrowing neoliberal politicises of austerity.

My doubts on the ability of the movement to produce a common political project in order to tackle the crisis and neoliberal politics of austerity were solidified a year after its decline. Within this year a newly elected coalition government led by the conservative party of Nea Demokratia had already implemented a series of austerity measures and restricted the public sector within a neoliberal model of politics. This attempt met little if any popular resistance, the different public assemblies established in various places in Athens and all over Greece during the summer of indignation disappeared, and other forms of self-organisation established before the rise of the indignant movement began to fade and lose their popularity.

While existing literature on the Greek indignant movement offered valuable insights into the mechanisms for the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity it provided little insight into the decline of the movement and the role of emotions within the processes of the Greek indignant movement. Their oversights and line of inquiry however offer a starting point from which I can begin to interrogate the forces that contribute to the production of political subjectivities within the indignant movement.

My key contribution to knowledge is to demonstrate the political significance of ideology, culture, emotions and the economy on the mechanisms that contribute to the reproduction of the neoliberal politics of austerity. I find that in spite of the popular resistance of the Greek indignant movement participants are unable to produce a common political project as a response to austerity. Participants are trapped between their desire for being a part of a diverse movement without alienating anyone and their need for a different political project to austerity.

My research makes a contribution to the project by focusing on a relatively unexplored arena of the political character of emotions within the Greek indignant movement, particularly in terms of the ability of emotion to confront or reproduce existing power relations. I find that the subjects are interpellated through a process of the internalisation of hegemonic frameworks and that emotion plays an important and significant role in this process. I do so

both by providing a critique of the debate among theories and by establishing an alternative approach in our understanding of the role of the Greek indignant movement by highlighting the importance of emotions within the processes developed in the movement. I argue that periods of crisis are important in the production of political subjectivities because within periods of crisis political subjectivity is constituted within a matrix of social antagonisms in which ideology, culture, emotion and the economy have a hold upon the production of political subjectivities.

I begin my inquiry by addressing the conceptual problems arising from the above theories and bringing this critique to bear on the politics of the Greek indignant movement. I begin with an inquiry of the importance of culture and ideology in shaping contemporary forms of political subjectivities by engaging with Laclau and Mouffe's theory on the importance of discourse and their re-examination of Gramsci's concept of hegemony. I argue that while political subjects are interpellated by discourses and constituted within social antagonisms Laclau and Mouffe's argument on the discursive character of political subjectivities within political hegemonies obscures the significance of the economy in the production of political subjectivities, erecting a theory that sees political subjectivities that reproduce existing power relations as inherently revolutionary. I argue that antagonisms are constituted within a relationship between politics and economics. I ground my argument within an empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement. I argue that the failed attempt of the Greek indignant movement to constitute a collective political project against austerity is rooted in the privileging of a liberal discourse of collective action and a neoliberal discourse on the responsibility of national debt.

Following my argument on the importance of economy in the production of political subjectivities within the Greek indignant movement I engage with Hardt and Negri's theory of anti-capitalist praxis. Hardt and Negri locate the production of political subjectivities within changes in the labour process which they claim shows that a revolutionary exodus from capital is immanent because these changes facilitate the diversity of different subjectivities. I argue for the impossibility of such a claim by grounding it in my empirical findings on the inability of the Greek indignants to act outside ideology and establish a collective political project within a process of horizontal organisation that fetishizes diversity. I argue that the inability of the indignants to establish a collective political project leaves them open to hegemonic discourses on austerity and to internalising national debt as individual debt. As such I find that Hardt and Negri's theory of the production of political subjectivity eradicates

its political character, reproducing a subjectivity that is unable to challenge capitalist power relations.

I continue my critique of the production of a revolutionary political subjectivity immanent within "affective" changes in production by focusing my inquiry on the political importance of emotions and of the concept of affect. I critically engage with arguments that see the production of revolutionary political subjectivities as immanent within affective intensities permeating the bodies of individuals. Within this argument I acknowledge that emotions are permeated by cultural and ideological characteristics; however their relation to this elusive concept of affect can absolve them from these cultural and ideological connections. I argue that such an assumption neglects the importance of the cognitive character of emotions and separates emotions from their political potential and their role in establishing a political praxis that can challenge existing power relations. I strengthen my argument with an examination of the inability of individuals to build a collective political subjectivity based upon a momentary stimulus. I argue that the intensities experienced by the indignants were not able to "purge" the emotion of indignation from its cultural and ideological roots as shaped within a history of struggles in Greece.

I continue by arguing for the political importance of emotion in mobilising and sustaining the action of the indignants and its significance in deciphering the processes in which the Greek indignants constitute themselves as subjects within their participation. I do so by engaging with Arlie Russell Hochschild's concept of emotion work. I argue that contradictory and unsettling emotions within periods of "organic crisis" can facilitate the emergence of a resistance and open up the possibilities for praxis. I also argue that emotions can contribute to the internalisation of hegemonic ideologies and as such have a key role in the reproduction of existing power relations. I argue that emotions cannot be viewed as axiomatic categories that prohibit or enhance revolutionary politics. Emotions instead are constituted within social struggles.

0.2. A brief history of the rise of neoliberal politics in Greece

Slowly but steadily, before and after its entry to the Eurozone, Greece adopted significant aspects of neoliberal politics. Greece participated in the global economy and the emphasis on finance given by the neoliberal project does not exclude Greece. Even though the Greek crisis was presented as a sovereign abnormality that needs to be resolved by further deepening of

neoliberal policies, this reasoning is contested by its connection to the Financial Crisis caused by the same neoliberal policies.[4]

The rise of neoliberalism within the western hemisphere coincided in Greece with the fall of the dictatorship and Greece's democratic transition. Within this context the political powers in Greece were divided into two camps. On the one side the socialist party of PASOK focused its political action on extending democratisation, by including social groups and trade unions into political decision making, creating a strong welfare state and regulating the economy.[5] And the neoliberal camp of the right wing party of Nea Demokratia that advocated the importance of neoliberalism, privatisation, minimal role of the state in the economy and a flexible labour market.[6] However despite the ideological differences between the two parties they shared a common ground, that of incorporating social groups and especially trade unions in the decision making process.[7] Trade unions in Greece therefore were separated as well and closely affiliated to political parties following strictly a party line.[8]

The party of PASOK governed for the longest period in post-dictatorship Greece, from 1981-2000, remaining faithful to an interventionist approach to the economy until the period of 1990-2000. Despite its programme for socialism, PASOK engaged in the liberalisation of capital and finance, particularly in the period 1990-2000.[9] This period is signified by Greece's entrance to the EMU, which demanded the implementation of a number of neoliberal policies.

According to Costas Lapavitsas, the Greek debt crisis is a direct consequence of the Financial Crisis and the structural characteristics of the Eurozone that are related to neoliberal policies that were implemented by all member states of European Monetary Union.[10] The representation of the Greek debt crisis as a solely sovereign problem certainly demands a careful re-examination; however a critical analysis of the Greek debt crisis should also incorporate Greece's structural idiosyncrasies. In order to acquire a deeper understanding of the emergence of political subjectivity it is important to formulate a better understanding of the impact of neoliberalism. Indeed, Greece's interventionist policies do not make Greece one of the leading neoliberal countries after the rise of neoliberalism and the emphasis on

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[4] Lapavitsas, et al., 'Eurozone Crisis: Beggar Thyself and Thy Neighbour' Research on Money and Finance occasional report March 2010; Chris Rogers and Sofia Vasilopoulou. 'Making Sense of Greek Austerity' *The Political Quarterly*, 83:4 (2012).; Georgios P. Kouretas. 'The Greek Crisis: Causes and Implications' Panoeconomicus 4: (2010). 391-404.
[5] George Pagoulatos. *Greece's New Political Economy: State Finance and Growth from Postwar to EMU*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003). 80-110.
[6] Pagoulatos *Greece's New Political Economy* 80-110
[7] Pagoulatos *Greece's New Political Economy* 80-110
[8] Pagoulatos *Greece's New Political Economy* 80-110
[9] Pagoulatos *Greece's New Political Economy* 80-110
[10] Lapavitsas *et al.* 'Eurozone Crisis'

monetarist policies; however Greece is located within a global economy and is subject to political and economic transformations. To ignore Greece's structural idiosyncrasies would also be to ignore the argument that the formation of political subjectivity is subject to historical processes. What is the impact of these neoliberal policies upon the production of political subjectivities within the Greek indignant movement?

This thesis sees the Greek debt crisis as connected to the Financial Crisis of 2008. The importance given to low sovereign deficits by the international markets is connected to the rise of neoliberalism and the importance given to finance and low public debt. However, before the solution to the Greek crisis was represented as a one way street, it had to become a sovereign specific problem, a subjective problem. This representation of the crisis as a local specific problem had an impact upon the rise of collective action in Greece and political agency.

0.3. Financial turmoil and the rise of the Greek indignants: the chronicle of a crisis

In late 2009 the Greek Prime Minister shocked everyone when he announced that the Greek debt had grown beyond control. In 2009 the government of PASOK was elected with a mandate to combat unemployment, increase wages and public spending all coined to the phrase "we have the money".[11] But to everyone's surprise within only a few months of his appointment the newly elected PM Giorgos Papandreou announced to the world that the Greek debt had grown to 120 % of the GDP. [12]

The representations of the Greek crisis articulated by global media, governments and the EU portrayed the Greek debt crisis as a structural problem inherent within Greek political culture and the character of Greek citizens.[13] In an unprecedented attack on the inherent failed nature of the character of the Greeks, austerity measures were not only presented as the only solution out of the Greek debt Crisis but also an attempt to "cure" its citizens and alter this apparently corrupt political culture.[14] The Greek crisis was presented as a failure of the Greek political culture and was accompanied by a narrative of need for "ethical" politics producing feelings of shame, guilt and lack of individual responsibility. How have those feelings informed the resistance and shaped the subjectivity of the participants? I argue that these feelings

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[11] Manos Matsaganis 'The welfare state and the crisis: the case of Greece', *Journal of European Social Policy* 21: (2011). 501.

[12] Manos Matsaganis The welfare state and the crisis: the case of Greece

[13] Yiannis Mylonas, 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU: The 'Culturalization' of a Systemic Crisis and Bild-Zeitung's Framing of Greece'*, TripleC*, 10:2 (2012). 646-671.

[14] Mylonas 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU'

accompanying neoliberal policies of austerity were articulated within the discourse of "moral outrage" and indignation of the Greek indignants. In chapters six and seven I show how participants interrogate these feelings through a process of emotion work.

The Greek debt crisis was presented by the mass media, the main political parties in Greece, i.e. New Democracy and PASOK, and the leading countries in the Eurozone – such as Germany and France – not as a direct consequence of the Financial Crisis but rather as an inherent structural problem within Greek politics.[15] Austerity measures in Greece were presented as the only way out of a crisis that was purportedly created by the political inefficiency of former governments in Greece, the increasing sovereign debt that was attributed to the swelling of the public sector and the increasing number of public servants, the corruption of Greek political parties and the rise in wages over the last few years, all of which resulted in a decline in global competiveness.[16] According to the prevailing argument, the Financial Crisis was not the cause of the crisis in Greece but rather the incident that accentuated these structural characteristics of the Greek political economy and therefore it necessitates a solution that is more compatible with the neoliberal paradigm in order for Greece to recover from the crisis and secure its economic and political stability. The reasoning therefore for implementing a strict austerity programme in Greece was based on the need for a response to Greece's structural idiosyncrasies which resulted to the debt crisis.

In an attempt to tackle the sovereign debt crisis in Greece in 2009 the newly elected government of the socialist party of PASOK announced the first series of austerity measures in order to appease the global markets and therefore to allow Greece to sustain its public debt.[17] The austerity measures, however, did not satisfy the markets; instead Greece's debt needs were increased.[18] The first reaction to the austerity measures came from the two big trade unions in Greece: GESEE – the trade union which organises the private sector – and ADEDY –trade union which organises public servants. Despite the growing unpopularity of austerity and the frustration of the Greek people the government of PASOK accepted a loan from the IMF in light of increasing sovereign debt and agreed on a "rescue package" from the IMF and the ECB (European Central Bank) that bound Greece to a strict programme of austerity measures for three years. The $110billion loan that Greece received from the IMF and the ECB is the largest credit a country has ever received, breaking the previous record

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[15] Kouretas 'The Greek Crisis' 391-404
[16] Mylonas 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU'
[17] Mylonas 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU'
[18] Lapavitsas et al., 'Eurozone Crisis: Beggar Thyself and Thy Neighbour'

loan to Brazil in 2002.[19] The goal of this "rescue package" according to the IMF is not only to avoid a Greek default but also to increase Greece's competitiveness in the global market by becoming more appealing to foreign investors and the private sector. These factors, it was claimed, would eventually lead to the "recovery" of the Greek economy.[20]

The first austerity measures imposed by the government of PASOK were introduced as the only way to avoid a bailout from the IMF and more austerity. When the first austerity measures did not resolve Greece's inability to pay its public debt then the measures were presented as necessary for Greece's "salvation", attributing the burden of the sovereign debt crisis to past political decisions and individual choices made by the citizens in their participation and collaboration in acts of political corruption.[21] This political argument is best reflected by a phrase that the vice-prime minister at the time used within the parliament to support cutbacks and layoffs in the public sector: "we ate together" , attributing the burden for the public debt not only to political parties and their mismanagement of public expenses over the years but also to every Greek citizen that encouraged and participated in clintelistic practices and practises of corruption within public services, making every Greek an accomplice to the crisis. Despite the political and economic instability and the political pressure brought by the rise of the indignant movement, the political forces in Greece showed no intention to oppose any austerity measures.

Citizens lost trust in the ability of political parties and trade unions to lead them out of the crisis and represent an alternative to austerity. The newly elected government of PASOK, instead of implementing a series of policies that would include a rise in wages and pensions in line with its manifesto, tried to "appease" the markets by implementing a series of austerity measures that were presented as the only way out of the crisis. While the dominant political parties seemed unable to suggest any alternative route as a way out of the crisis trade unions were organising demonstrations and calling for national strikes.

0.4. Crisis and the genesis of the Greek indignant movement

Within this environment of political instability a movement was born that insisted on its autonomy. The Greek indignant movement questioned existing power relations and the ability of existing forms of institutional representation to tackle the crisis. These diverse political

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[19] Lapavitsas *et al.* 'Eurozone Crisis'
[20] IMF, S., 2010. IMF Approves €30 Bln Loan for Greece on Fast Track : IMF. [Online]
Available at: http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2010/new050910a.htm
[Accessed 1 March 2013].
[21] Mylonas 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU'

actions, the cultivation of an extended climate of instability and crisis and the emergence of autonomous action demanding political change suggests the need for a careful examination of the importance of crisis in the formation of political subjectivity. The Greek indignants attempted to build a common political project within an emphasis on diversity and autonomy within a horizontal frame of organisation, focusing at the same time upon expressing shared emotions of outrage and indignation. What was the impact of such an attempt upon the production of political subjectivities within the movement? What can these processes tell us about the mechanisms that contribute to the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity?

 I argue that the fetishisation of diversity and the effort made by the Greek indignant s not to alienate any participant rendered the production of a common political project against austerity impossible. Participants' are caught within their need for autonomy and an autonomous form of collective action and their desire to produce an alternative to austerity. This left the indignants open to the interpellation of dominant discourses on austerity.

The solution to the Greek debt crisis was presented as a medicine for a very bad patient who refuses to take the doctor's advice. Dominic Strauss Kahn, the head of the IMF at the time, said "don't fight against the doctor. Sometimes the doctor gives you medicine you don't like, but even if you don't like the medicine the doctor is there to try to help you". The Greek prime minister at the time, Giorgos Papandreou, said "our country is in the ICU. The nation's fiscal deadlock threatens our national sovereignty for the first time since 1974."[22] This comparison of the crisis to a medical emergency that is objectively imposed upon the subject and deprives any notion of agency is used both by Habermas at the beginning of his book the *Legitimation of Crisis* and Gamble in his book *The Spectre at the Feast.* According to Habermas the patient is deprived of his agency at the moment his illness brings him to the expert hands of the doctor.[23] At this moment where the immune system of the patient is unable to cope with an external force – a contagious disease perhaps – in which the patient has no control over it and caused him his illness the doctor intervenes in order to save the patient.[24] This moment of objectification is also transferred to the patient's subjectivity and from a subject the patient is objectified and is deprived of power and influence over his condition. At this moment of crisis, from a matter of life or death, comes an opportunity for

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[22] Debtocracy. 2011. [Film] Directed by Katerina Kitidi, Aris Chatzistefanou. Greece: BitsBbyts.gr.
[23] Jurgen Habermas. *Legitimation Crisis*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988).
[24] Jurgen Habermas. *Legitimation Crisis*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988).

change: "…the crisis is a moment of danger but also of opportunity, the point in the progress of a disease when a change takes place which is decisive for recovery or death"[25]

The question of political change includes a variety of political actions and transformations. However when the demand for change is located within a specific historical period of a crisis of representation and austerity, within a moment of rupture, then this demand becomes radical, breeding the potential for a collective agency and the emergence of political subjects that can act together to achieve common goals. Crisis is a moment of instability but also a moment of opportunity for political and economic change. Gramsci characterized this period of crisis as an "organic crisis".[26] Within this period of crisis structures and practices that sustain the hegemonic order fail, facilitating the potential for the emergence of a collective action that seeks change. Crisis is the opportunity for agency and the potential for changing structures of power. The importance of crisis for the emergence of political subjectivity is built in the theorisation of action as signifying a moment of disruption that has the potential for achieving political change.[27] "If the ruling class has lost its consensus, i.e., is no longer 'leading' but only 'dominant', exercising coercive force alone, this means precisely that the great masses have become detached from their traditional ideologies…. The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.[28] What is the impact of the Greek crisis upon the emergent forms of resistance? What makes the Greek crisis brimming with revolutionary potential?

The case of Greece and the rise of the Greek indignant movement offers the possibility to explore this dual potential of the crisis. The indignant movement connected their pursuit of political change by simultaneously undermining existing forms of institutional representation and neoliberal ideology. The moment of crisis in Greece unravelled the connection between the state and mechanisms of institutional representation and the inability of existing institutional representation to oppose neoliberal ideology. This was manifested within an emotional crisis amongst the Greek indignants. Thus the formation of an autonomous movement such as the indignants within this political and economic instability provides an empirical opportunity to interrogate the problem of political change from its very genesis, the formation of the political subject within a period of crisis, and the role of emotions in emergent forms of resistance. I explore the empirical challenge of the Greek indignant

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[25]A Gamble, The Spectre at the Feast. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 2009) p. 38.
[26]Antonio Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks.* (London: Lawrence and Wishart 1971)
[27] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks*
[28] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 275-6

movement and bring my analysis to bear on theories for the importance of the crisis as a momentous period for the rise of political agency. In spite of the role of the crisis in unravelling the power relations that were challenged by the rise of autonomous action, these power relations persisted while the autonomous movement of the indignants withered away. This thesis argues that the representation of the crisis as a local specific problem and the solution to this crisis as a one way street had an impact on the political agency formed within the indignant movement that further undermines its autonomous character.

What are the reasons that led to the formation of the Greek indignant movement? What power relations can be identified that have been subject to an unravelling, metamorphosis or degradation as a result of the crisis?

The question of the emergence and formation of political subjectivity cannot however be confined within a specific time-frame of crisis, locating the emergence of political subjectivity within a time bubble and thus ignoring the impact of historical processes that shape and form the political subject. The rise of the indignant movement was the vehicle under which individuals emerged as political subjects in order to critique and challenge existing power relations. The articulation of these subjectivities was reflected in the need for forms of democratic representation that can echo an alternative route for an exit out of the crisis and an exit from the politics of neoliberalism. In order to understand the role of a crisis in contributing to the emergence of these political subjects and examine the political changes that a crisis can signify we need to have a better understanding of the power relations which the movement challenges.

0.5. Chapter Summary

I begin my analysis by discussing the methodological and epistemological foundations that inform my inquiry. I argue for the importance of a methodological synthesis of discourse theory and critical theory in the empirical study of the Greek indignant movement. In chapter one I examine the importance of the tools of discourse analysis as put forward in the theory of Laclau and Mouffe and of critical theory. I argue that discourse analysis can best map the meaning-making process within the Greek indignant movement and of the empirical data collected form my qualitative research of the Greek indignant movement. I argue that in spite of its benefits in deciphering the narrative of the Greek indignants Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is limited to a descriptive format. To overcome this I argue for a synthesis of Laclau and Mouffe's theory of discourse with critical theory and its core methodological tool

of immanent critique. I argue that immanent critique can address the epistemological limitations of discourse analysis, illuminate my theoretical inquiry on the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity and complement the interrogation of qualitative data. I conclude this chapter by discussing my method of semi-structured interviews in the qualitative study of the Greek indignant movement and proceed to a step by step discussion of my fieldwork research and data analysis.

This thesis is divided into two segments. In the first segment I engage in an immanent critique of theories that investigate the mechanisms for the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity. In chapters two, three and four I engage in a negative critique of the theories of Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri and problematize their theoretical efforts to account for the formation of contemporary forms of collective action. Chapters five, six and seven are informed by the above analysis and focus on an empirical examination of the political dynamics within the Greek indignant movement.

In chapter two I critically engage with Laclau and Mouffe's theory. I analyse key concepts within Laclau and Mouffe's thought in their understanding of antagonism and map the discursive practises within the indignant movement. I demonstrate how although Laclau and Mouffe capture the significance of social antagonism, culture and ideology in the production of political subjectivities their theory is limited by their understanding of the concept of hegemony as something that is purely constituted within the realm of politics, thereby neglecting the subjectivity shaping potential of the field of the economy. I solidify this critique by reflecting upon my fieldwork research and the inability of the indignants to form a counter hegemonic discourse and become the 'people', according to the lines proposed by Laclau and Mouffe.

In chapter three and four I critically engage with the theory of Hardt and Negri and the concepts of the multitude, autonomy and affect. In chapter three, I engage with Hardt and Negri's argument of a self-constituent labour force that manifests itself throughout society in the form of the multitude. I critically reflect upon the potential of the emergence of a revolutionary collective political subjectivity that is immanent within changes in the production process and can incorporate and maintain the individuality of its "revolting subjects". I challenge such a hypothesis by reflecting upon my fieldwork findings on the inability of the indignants to operate outside ideology and existing power relations.

In chapter four, I engage with the use of affect in Hardt and Negri's work and in terms of the arguments on an affective turn in understanding forms of resistance. I discuss the significance

of the concept of affect within Hardt and Negri's thought and proponents of such an affective turn such as Brian Massumi. I examine the significance of emotion and ideology in the production of political subjectivities by critically engaging with the political character of the concept of affect.

In chapter five I examine the political significance of emotion within periods of crisis. I demonstrate the importance of the concept of emotion work within periods of organic crisis can illuminate the potential for social change. I thus engage in a positive critique of Hochschild's concept of emotion work and Gramsci's concept of organic crisis. I demonstrate the significance of emotion work in challenging hegemonic ideologies and in terms of the inability of the Greek indignants to be moved emotionally by political parties, existing ideologies or the politics of austerity.

In chapter six I bring this analysis of emotion work to bear more directly on the Greek indignant movement. I demonstrate how through emotion work the Greek indignants manage to create a sense of solidarity in spite of their differences and maintain their action and occupation of Syntagma square. I demonstrate how through emotion work we can begin to unravel the dominant discourses and how they permeate the actions of participants.

In chapter seven I discuss the inability of the Greek indignants to form a common political project. I demonstrate that in their attempt to build a common political project participants are interpellated by different discourses and constitute their subjectivity amidst them. I map the dominant discourses on Greek Debt as articulated by the indignants. I demonstrate how economic behaviour shapes the production of political subjectivities within the movement and the role of emotion work in this process. I conclude this chapter by reflecting on the limitations of the Greek indignant movement and propose ways in which the processes developed within the movement and its failures can inform future praxis.

I conclude with a summary of the thesis and its contribution to the analysis of the production of political subjectivity. I proceed to a brief discussion on the character of contemporary forms of collective struggle and the political landscape as shaped by the Greek indignant movement and point to areas for future research.

Chapter 1

Theory and Method: Discourse Analysis, Immanent Critique and Qualitative Analysis of the Greek Indignant Movement

With the emergence of the Greek indignant movement emerged a mandate for the pursuit of social change and revolutionary politics. To better grasp the mechanisms of the production of subjectivities this thesis employs an interrelated method of discourse analysis, immanent critique and qualitative analysis of the Greek indignant movement. These three methodological approaches are not used separately but inform the parameters of the whole thesis. In this chapter I discuss each methodological approach and examine how the ontological and epistemological principles that are implied by each of these methods informs my inquiry. In the first section I discuss the advantages and limitations of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory as a method for the study of the Greek indignant movement. I reflect upon the epistemological assumptions that proceed from Laclau and Mouffe's theory and investigate how the method of articulation can help interrogate the narrative of the interviewees, map the emergence of the movement, and explain the dimensions of the attempt by the Greek indignants to build a movement that challenges the politics of austerity. I argue that although Laclau and Mouffe's approach can describe how power relations shape political subjects and the emergence of antagonisms, Laclau and Mouffe's methodological framework is unable to explain how mechanisms that shape political subjectivities remain unchallenged nor can it offer an explanatory formulation that may help us to think through questions regarding how collective struggle can challenge existing power relations. I discuss how their epistemological principles present a limitation upon an inquiry of the production of radical and revolutionary subjects. This lacuna indicates the need for a move towards critical theory and immanent critique, as a core methodological approach. In the second section I examine how immanent critique can be deployed so as to engage with an examination of dominant theories and concepts that address contemporary forms of resistance in relation to my empirical study of the Greek indignant movement. The third section of this chapter will discuss the methods I deploy in my empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement and how the above methodological synthesis informs my approaches to data collection and analysis. I close this chapter with some reflections upon issues on validity related to qualitative research methods.

Chapters two, three and four of this thesis bring the method of immanent critique to bear upon a set of theories that appear to be capable of illuminating the mechanisms of the production of the subject, and specifically the modes by which radical and revolutionary subjectivities form and fail. Chapters two, three and four thus focus upon an immanent critique of the debate dominating the literature on the emergence of collective forms of organisation after the 2008 crisis and the emergence of a collective political subjectivity that challenge capitalist power relations. This debate, as I discussed in the introduction of this thesis, is centred around Laclau and Mouffe's and Hardt and Negri's theoretical framework and their conceptualisation of a revolutionary collective political subjectivity in the form of "the people" and "the multitude". Therefore, from a methodological perspective, these concepts are used to describe the political potency of collective forms of resistance. I thus engage in an immanent critique with these conflicting frameworks that inform the discussion in the production of political subjectivity in relation to an empirical study of the indignant movement. By placing these concepts under the microscope of immanent critique a series of contradictions emerge that negate the claim for erecting a theory that can explain the totality of political action. I begin thus by engaging in Chapter two with Laclau and Mouffe's argument of an "epochal change" in collective action that is best captured by the concept of "the people". Reflecting upon Laclau and Mouffe's internal logic of a collective political subjectivity constituted in the interrelation of the concepts of "hegemony", "discourse articulation" and "social antagonism" I unravel its internal contradictions and limitations in capturing the emergence of a collective revolutionary political subjectivity. I relate my critique of these abstract concepts to the study of the Greek indignant movement. Chapters three and four follow the same methodological logic of immanent critique. Based upon a similar critical standpoint to the project to reconceptualise mechanisms of the production of political subjectivity, Hardt and Negri propose the concept of "the multitude" as an alternative to Marx's concept of class or Laclau and Mouffe's concept of "the people". In chapter three I bring the method of immanent critique to bear upon the central concepts of Hardt and Negri's theory: "autonomy" and "the common". I deploy a negative form of critique, focusing on the internal logic of Hardt and Negri on the production of political subjectivities within capitalism and transformation of struggle and antagonism. This critique identifies the inability of establishing a collective political subjectivity outside the power relations that contribute to its character. In chapter four I expand upon the internal contradictions of Hard and Negri's theory by focusing on the concept of "affect". I critically engage with the concept of "affect" and its relation to the argument on the production of an

"autonomous" political subjectivity. I further draw from the conclusions on chapter two and three and the key concepts discussed in order to build a theoretical basis upon the investigation of the forces that contribute in the production of contemporary forms of collective struggle.

After focusing my critique on the internal contradictions of these theories and their inability to explain important and significant aspects of the emergence, practice, and demise of the Greek indignant movement I turn my analysis to the concrete conditions of the movement. I bring my conclusions from chapters two, three and four to bear upon the importance of emotions in political action. In chapter five, the key vantage point of my critique is the contributions, the lacunae and the contradictions of the above theories in understanding the emergence of resistance to the politics of austerity, especially focusing on the role of emotions in this process. I thus engage in a discursive analysis of interviewees' narrative and bring to bear a positive critique of the processes that contributed to the emergence of the Greek indignant movement. I do so by reflecting upon my analysis on the concept of "organic crisis" as established in chapter two. I relate my analysis of the concept of "organic crisis" to Arlie Hochschild's concept of "emotion work" in order to grasp the mechanisms that contribute in the mobilisation of the Greek indignants. Chapter six highlights the importance of emotion in the construction of solidarity within the indignant movement. Following a critical engagement with the concept of affect, informed by the findings of chapter four, in chapter six I engage with the concept of "emotion work" in creating a sense of solidarity among the Greek indignants. I do so by engaging in a positive critique of Arlie's Hochschild framework and a critical engagement with interviewees' narrative in their ability to experience a connection and establish a sense of solidarity with the other participants. Finally chapter seven engages with the ability of emotions to shape political subjectivities and internalise ideological structures. In chapter seven I draw upon my findings from my previous chapters and interrogate interviewees' narrative reflecting upon these findings. I thus examine the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivities within the Greek indignant movement, as it has emerged from my theoretical critiques and empirical investigations and establish the parameters that contributed to the decline of the movement.

1.1. Discourse Analysis

In this section I discuss the contribution of discourse analysis in the study of the Greek indignant movement. I begin by introducing discourse analysis' ontological and epistemological foundations. I argue that Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis can provide the necessary methodological tools to decipher the large amounted of data collected from a qualitative analysis of the Greek indignant movement and shed light to the forces that operate in the production of political subjectivities within the movement. I thus examine Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis, its methodological advantages and limitations in the study of collective struggle and in the identification of the forces for the production of contemporary political subjectivity. I conclude this section by pointing to the methodological limitations of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis and the need of complementing it with the methodological approach of immanent critique.

I use the method of discourse analysis, as established by Laclau and Mouffe, as a tool to interrogate the data collected by my fieldwork. As Jorgensen and Phillips point out there are different approaches to discourse analysis, each approach composed by different "philosophical (ontological and epistemological) premises regarding the role of language in the social construction of the world „.., theoretical models,.., methodological guidelines for how to approach a research domain, and „.., specific techniques for analysis."[29] However, different approaches to discourse theory share a common understanding of the world, an approach to knowledge and common philosophical assumptions. According to discourse theory knowledge is a construct of our world.[30] A key epistemological assumption of discourse analysis is that any representations of the world and the knowledge we obtain do not reflect a reality that can be grasped using different tools.[31] Our knowledge about the world is historically and culturally "situated interchanges among people".[32] Thus, a key assumption of discourse theory is that knowledge about the world is culturally and historically contingent. The basic philosophical premise of discourse analysis therefore is that the world is constructed through different forms of action and it is therefore an anti-essentialist view of the world.[33] Discourse theory adheres to the paradigm of social

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[29] Marianne Jorgensen and Louise J. Phillips. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. (California: Sage, 2002). 4.

[30] Jorgensen and Phillips. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* 5

[31] Jorgensen and Phillips. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* 5

[32] K. Gergen, 'The social constructionist movement in modern social phycology', *American Psychologist* 40: (1985). 267.

[33] Gergen, The social constructionist movement in modern social phycology

constructionism in which language is fundamental in the social construction of the world and knowledge is created through social interaction in which we construct common truths and compete about what is true and false. According to Jorgensen and Phillips "discourse analytical approaches take as their starting point the claim of structuralist and structuralist linguistic philosophy, that our access to reality is always through language."[34] It is through language that, according to discourse theory, we construct our reality. Reality is not something pre-existing. It is rather constructed through meanings and representations. Physical objects are real as well, however they acquire their meaning through discourse.[35]

Laclau and Mouffe adopt a poststructuralist understanding towards the world and language. Thus for Laclau and Mouffe the social world is constructed through discourse and due to the instability of language, meaning can never be entirely fixed. For Laclau and Mouffe meaning is ever changing; no discourse is fixed or closed but it is always possible to change given its relation to other discourses. For Laclau and Mouffe the social field and all social actions are contingent upon the articulation of discourses and the struggle to establish a relatively fixed meaning within the social world; the process in which this struggle occurs Laclau and Mouffe call articulation. "We will call articulation any practise establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practise. The structured totality resulting from the articulation practise, we will call discourse".[36]

Laclau and Mouffe propose a set of methodological tools which can be deployed in order to unravel the struggle between the different discourses within the articulation process. For Laclau and Mouffe discourse has *moments* or signs which constitute part of a discourse and their meaning becomes relatively fixed around a nodal point or a *point de capiton*. The meaning of a discourse is constructed around this privileged sign. Moments as fixed signs in relation to other signs around a nodal point establish the totality of discourse.[37] However the social field is never fully closed. The discourses managing to fix meaning do so only partially, according to Laclau and Mouffe, in an open social world with different possibilities. Thus where there is a discourse which fixes signs and constructs a relatively fixed system of meaning there is also that which escapes that meaning; that which escapes meaning floats, according to Laclau and Mouffe, in the "field of discursivity" which feeds the articulation

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[34] Gergen, The social constructionist movement in modern social phycology 8-9
[35] Gergen, The social constructionist movement in modern social phycology 8- 9
[36] Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. (London: Verso, 1985). 105.
[37] Jorgensen and Phillips *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* 27

practise.[38] "The practise of articulation therefore, consists in the construction of nodal points which partially fix meaning; and the partial character of this fixation proceeds from the openness of the social, a result, in its turn, of the constant overflowing of every discourse by the infinitude of the field of discursivity."[39] That implies the exclusion of some signs from the field of discursivity which Laclau and Mouffe call elements. Within this process of articulation Laclau and Mouffe use the concept of 'elements' as a part of their understanding of partial fixity of meaning. As such, elements "are not discursively articulated" and their meaning is not fixed.[40] Instead a discourse attempts to transform elements into moments.[41] Within periods of crisis there is a struggle between different discourses to fix the meaning of floating signifiers or elements and transform them to nodal points. This logic of articulation can be best illustrated with an example. For the purpose of clarity I will use an example used by Zizek. To illustrate the method of articulation by Laclau and Mouffe, Zizek points to the ideological discourse of Communism and how floating signifiers such as democracy, feminism, class struggle, ecologism etc. acquire a particular meaning when "quilted" through the signifier of Communism.[42] In chapter two I examine the articulation process engaged by the participants in their attempt to establish a meaning of the Greek crisis around the nodal point of autonomy and autonomous action. I further investigate their failed attempt to form a counter-discourse to austerity "quilted" around the signifier of autonomy. While in chapter five I examine the key role of emotions in the emergence of the floating signifier that gave birth to the movement of the Greek indignants and became the point of antagonism.

Laclau and Mouffe do not apply their method of discourse analysis to empirical material. The complexity of their framework presents a challenge to the researcher however that does not exclude their use to empirical studies.[43] Indeed as Howarth points out there is a "'methodological deficit'…in the way discourse theory is applied to empirical objects of investigation".[44] In spite of its intrinsic complexity discourse analysis and the method of articulation offers an opportunity to examine the problematic of the formation of political subjectivities that can challenge capitalist power relations. According to Howarth discourse theory as a "problem-driven" method renders itself to the study of contemporary political and

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[38] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 113
[39] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 113
[40] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 105
[41] Jorgensen and Phillips *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* 26
[42] Slavoj Zizek. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. (London: Verso, 1989). 95-97.
[43] Jorgensen and Phillips *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*
[44] Howarth D. 'Applying Discourse Theory: The Method of Articulation' in *Discourse Theory in European Politics: Identity Policy and Governance* eds D. Howarth and .J Torfing (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). 318.

ethical problems "before seeking to analyse the historical and structural conditions which gave rise to them, while furnishing the means for their critique and transgression."[45] Driven by the problem of radical change and the emergence of revolutionary subjectivities mapping the process of articulation can help understand how participants engage with this problematic and constitute themselves as political subjects. Thus the method of articulation will help map the production of political subjectivities within the indignant movement and their ability to form a social movement with clear goals that can challenge the politics of austerity and the significance of the articulation of elements from within their social cultural and political environment to achieve this.

Furthermore Laclau and Mouffe's framework can illuminate the power of dominant discourses in shaping subjectivities. Throughout the thesis I examine how dominant discourses supporting austerity shape an ethico political approach to the crisis shaping the political subjectivity of the participants. Chapter seven shows how dominant discourses on austerity and the crisis impact upon the subjectivity of the participants and contribute in the decline of the movement.

The primary focus of this research is the political subject. The narrative of the participants is at the centre of my inquiry. Laclau and Mouffe's method put the subject and the articulation of meaning at the centre of inquiry. As I was transcribing the interviews it became obvious to me that focusing on the articulation of language of the participants was not enough. Their stories were filled with strong emotions and their need to articulate such emotions. It was slowly becoming obvious to me that emotions and feelings were the catalyst of the articulation process within Syntagma square and could not be disregarded from my inquiry. In chapters five, six and seven I examine how emotions inform the articulation process within the movement and are paramount in the internalisation of ideological structures.

Laclau and Mouffe's epistemological approach is based upon the principle of the contingent character of subjects and objects. This principle allows for accounting of endless potentials for any form of transformation and social change. However the endless possibilities of the social world pose a limit upon the inquiry of the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity and of an inquiry that can open the way to emancipatory politics.

The emphasis that Laclau and Mouffe give upon the "temporary fixation of meaning" in their attempt to avoid a "relapse into expressive totality" affirms that objects are discursively

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[45] Howarth D. 'Applying Discourse Theory: The Method of Articulation

constructed. [46] Within these discursive practises the relations of equivalence and difference are essential to the modification of discursive elements and therefore the emergence of new political subjects. The formation of discourses is constituted within equilibrium between the relation of difference and equivalence. To arrive at such equilibrium and retain the aspect of contingency Laclau and Mouffe argue that nothing can exist outside the text. Laclau and Mouffe's understanding of the world is based upon a practise of articulation that can "pierce the material density of the multifarious institutions".[47] Laclau and Mouffe's ontological maxim of the totality of the text produces an exegetic rather than explanatory frame of analysis, generating a number of criticisms based upon its ability to contribute to emancipatory politics.[48]

Even though Laclau and Mouffe distinguish between the relative stability of structure they remain trapped in a dead end set by their epistemological parameters in which they grasp and map the subject positions in the articulation process and its endless possibilities but not why some possibilities are less equal than others.[49] Their inability to see a referent not entirely covered by discourse leads to a "tautological entrapment in the world of social construction incapable of providing an account of the cause that governs the production of social constructions of reality"[50]

As Boucher argues even though Laclau and Mouffe try to address this entrapment by pointing to the field of discursivity for a "constitutive outside" to act as a "post-discursive referent" they still remain in a world defined by the endless possibilities of articulation as the field of discursivity is constituted by other discourses.[51] "Hence, for Laclau and Mouffe, there is no post-discursive referent whose properties do not endlessly dissolve once more into the labyrinth of signification".[52] I further engage with this problematic in Chapter two where I discuss Laclau and Mouffe's theory on the production of political subjectivity and examine the emergence of a nodal point or a *point de capiton* within the Greek indignant movement and the different discourses articulated. As I argue in Chapter two Laclau and Mouffe's framework points to the articulation of different discourses but does not explain why some

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[46] G. Boucher, *The Charmed Cycle of Ideology: A Critique of Laclau and Mouffe, Butler and Zizek* (Australia: Re-press, 2008).

[47] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* p. 109

[48] Boucher *The Charmed Cycle of Ideology*

[49] Lily Chouliaraki and Norman Fairclough. *Discourse in Late Modernity: Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999); Terry Eagleton *Ideology: An Introduction* (London and New York: Verso, 1991)

[50] Y. Stavrakakis. *Lacan and the Political*. (London and New York: Routledge, 1999). 67.

[51] Boucher *The Charmed Cycle of Ideology* 97

[52] Boucher *The Charmed Cycle of Ideology* 97

discourses are favoured than others by the participants or why participants engage in the articulation of particular discourses.

Laclau and Mouffe's theory provides the necessary tools to map and unravel the network of power relations but not explain how or why this network took this form. Chapter 2 further engages with this problematic in relation to the mechanisms for the production of subjectivity.

In spite of its limitations Laclau and Mouffe's framework offers some of the tools that can enable me to map the relevant articulation process within a social movement. That is, their framework illuminates part of the process in which meaning-making is possible and gives some indication as to how this impacts upon the production of political subjectivity. By deploying these specific methods I map the discursive mechanisms that contribute in the production of the political subject and examine how these discursive mechanisms interact with a wide range of non discursive mechanisms. However the problem still remains. This thesis enquires into the mechanisms of the production of contemporary form of political subjectivity in order to pave the way for the emergence of emancipatory politics. Laclau and Mouffe's epistemological parameters constitutes such an attempt futile, as I will further argue in chapter two. It is at this point I argue that a research driven by the search for social change needs to engage with the methodological principles of critical theory and the method of immanent critique. In the next two sections I discuss the methodological parameters of critical theory, how this informs my research and how these parameters can address the methodological limitations of Laclau and Mouffe's framework.

1.2. Critical Theory and Immanent Critique as a Method to study the Greek Indignant Movement

As a philosophical tradition that began at the University of Frankfurt in 1930s, Critical Theory was born from within a historical and political process for a re-examination of Marxist theory and the pursuit of social change. In the words of Horkheimer, critical theory turns its analytical and methodological focus upon "which interconnections exist in the economic process, the transformation of the psychic structures of its individual members, and

the totality of the system that affects and produces its thoughts and mechanisms".[53] Thus critical theory "never aims at an increase of knowledge as such. Its goal is man's emancipation from slavery".[54] The events after the 2008 financial crisis and the rise and decline of popular struggles across the globe carry a historical imperative for the re-examination of contemporary theories on the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity and the possibilities for emancipatory politics. The pursuit of emancipatory social change is at the centre of critical theory and therefore critical theory immediately appears as a necessary methodological approach to the study of social movements and popular struggle.

From its origin in the 1930s critical theory took many forms and as an "interdisciplinary method" had an impact upon the philosophical foundations of many other theories.[55] Critical theory's methodological underpinnings were often combined with those of other disciplines. Any attempt to define critical theory within a discrete school could fail to capture its varied contemporary forms.[56] However as R. J. Antonio argues "critical theory is not a general theory, but is instead a method of analysis deriving from non-positivist epistemology".[57] At the core of critical theory's philosophy lays the method of immanent critique rooted within Hegelian and Marxist thought. In this section I discuss how I deploy the method of immanent critique in my enquiry.

Critical theory strives for a critique of dominant views about the world. Critical theory seeks to unpack and deconstruct these ideas in terms of their connection to cultural, political, economic and social phenomena. Immanent critique therefore is the core methodological mechanism of critical theory because it reflects the relation between knowledge and emancipation by highlighting and seeking to confront injustice and mechanisms of subjugation. Critical theory aims to change society in a unification of theory and practice that proceeds by "detecting the societal contradictions which offer the most determinate

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[53] Max Horkheimer. 'The State of Contemporary Social Philosophy and the Tasks of an Institute for Social Research', in *Critical Theory and Society: A Reader*, edited by Stephen E. Bronner and Douglas Kellner. New York and London: Routledge, 1989). 25-36.

[54] Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

[55] Horkheimer wanted to make it that see quote on Critical Theory and the Crisis of Social Theory

[56] Joe L. Kincheloe, Peter McLaren, and Shirley R. Steinb 'Critical Pedagogy and Qualitative Research: Moving to the Bricolage', in Norman K. Denzin and Yiovana S. Lincoln (eds) *The SAGE Handbook Of Qualitative Research* (Los Angeles: SAGE). 163-178.

[57] R.J. Antonio 'Immanent Critique as the Core of Critical Theory: its origins and developments in Hegel, Marx and contemporary thought', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 32:3 (1981). 330-345.

possibilities for emancipatory change".[58] In this way, a critical researcher engages with dominant philosophical assumptions from "within" a particular historical moment.

As immanent critique engages with dominant theories of an age by "entering an 'interior dialogue' with its adversary", it engages in a critique of the object of its study from within and relates this critique to political praxis.[59] As Harvey argues,

> *"Critical theory cannot begin with an ex cathedra statement of its own principles and assumptions…Instead, it begins as little more than a need to resist the premature closing-off of the world from further practical action or reflection. Critical theory's resistance is actually achieved only when it enters into an "interior dialogue" with its adversary…As immanent critique, it then "enters its object", so to speak, "boring from within""[60].*

Thus immanent critique is not outside the social world but closely related to praxis. In many respects critical theory lays forward a path of critical inquiry towards highlighting forms of domination, by engaging with dominant theoretical approaches and empirical phenomena to unravel internal contradictions that can lead to emancipatory politics. It is this path that I am following within this thesis and in particularly in Chapters two, three, and four. In many respects the Greek indignant movement set to change forms of domination that led to the Greek crisis, this aim was echoed within the confines of the theoretical frameworks of Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri, two theories dominating the debate on the mechanisms for production of political subjectivities. Both theories begin from the premise that their theoretical framework on the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity corresponds to historical changes within capitalism, developing in many ways different approaches towards a political praxis. For Laclau and Mouffe political praxis is culminated within social antagonisms and in the articulation of different subject positions, within collective forms of organisation, forming a common discourse that can challenge hegemonic power relations.[61] As Laclau argues this collective political subjectivity is reflected in the concept of the "people".[62] Contrary to Laclau and Mouffe, Hardt and Negri argue that a

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[58] Antonio Immanent Critique as the Core of Critical Theory: its origins and developments in Hegel, Marx and contemporary thought .332
[59] David L. Harvey, 'Introduction: Critical Theory', *Sociological Perspectives* 33:1 (1990). 1-10.
[60] Harvey, 'Introduction: Critical Theory'
[61] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*
[62] Ernesto Laclau. *The Rhetorical Foundations of Society*. (London: Verso, 2014)

collective political subjectivity is not produced through consent and negation but autonomously, bringing together different individuals maintaining their diversity and captured in the politics of the "multitude".[63] It is the concepts of the "people" and the "multitude" developed within these perspective frameworks that I put under the critical microscope in order to discover their internal contradictions, always in reference to the collective struggle of the Greek indignants. I engage therefore with these theories "boring from within" and without affirming or rejecting their premises. Instead I seek to unravel inconsistencies and contradictions within their theoretical frameworks and the praxis of the indignants.

An important principle of immanent critique as a method used by critical theory is not only to engage to a critique of orthodoxy "from within" and to provoke a "conceptual collapse" of existing knowledge about the world; the method of immanent critique constructs knowledge of the world that paves the way to the next steps of inquiry. Critical theory deploys the method of immanent critique not in an attempt to disprove or verify the hypothesis of a theory but to build the epistemic terrain on which the next steps of inquiry can proceed.[64]

I bring this form of positive critique to bear in my analysis through chapters five, six and seven. In these chapters I explore the centrality of emotion and its significance in the production of political subjectivities within the Greek indignant movement. The centrality of emotion emerges from the internal contradictions I identify in the debate I construct between Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri's characterisation of the mechanisms of the production of subjectivity and my empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement. Through this analysis I produce a positive critique of Arlie Hochschild's concept of emotion work.[65] According to Hochschild "emotion work" is the work that people do when they shape, modify or supress their emotions and feelings.[66] I use the concept of "emotion work" to begin to explain the conscious or unconscious efforts by the Greek indignants to manage their emotions or the emotions of others.

Marx uses the method of immanent critique as a method to proceed to a critique of political economy in order to map the processes which can lead to the emancipation from the

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[63] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004).

[64] Harvey 'Introduction: Critical Theory'

[65] Arlie Russell Hochschild. *The Managed Heart: Commercialisation of Human Feeling*. (Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1983).

[66] Arlie Russell Hochschild. 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure', *American Journal of Sociology* 85: (1979). 561.

domination of capitalist power relations. Drawing from Hegel, Marx argues that immanent contradictions within the capitalist mode of production will inevitably lead to an emancipatory telos of capitalism driven by the class struggle found within the historical processes that gave rise to capitalist division of labour. In that way immanent critique within a Marxist thought moves away form an idealist conception of the world found in Hegel to a materialist understanding of the social world. Critical theory appropriates the method of immanent critique from within Marxist thought extending to all forms of life, stressing the importance of historical contingent character of Marxist concepts of analysis.[67] Even though critical theory approaches the universalistic characteristics of Marxism as a theoretical orthodoxy and proceeds to a critical engagement of Marxist concepts, it affirms the necessity to impart its core values of emancipation from capitalist forms of domination grounded within a critique of political economy.[68] In *Materialism and Metaphysics* Horkheimer argues for the need for a materialist critique of the social world that acknowledges its historical contingency.[69]

Critical theory thus embraces a materialist understanding of the world as a representation of reality not as an "indubitable knowledge" but as a step towards emancipatory politics and puts forward a dialectical conception of the world that does not operate under a clear cut distinction between object/subject but stresses "the relative autonomy of thought, culture and all other "superstructural" phenomena in a process of reciprocal interaction with a socioeconomic "base"".[70] In the words of Horkheimer,

> *"…a dialectical process is negatively characterized by the fact that it is not to be conceived as the result of individual unchanging factors. To put it positively, its elements continuously change in relation to each other within the process, so that they are not even to be radically distinguished from each other. Thus the development of human character, for example, is conditioned both by the economic situation and by the individual powers of the person in question. But both these elements determine each other continuously, so that in the total*

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[67] Douglas Kellner, 'Critical Theory and the Crisis of Social Theory', *Sociological Perspectives* 33:1 (1990). 11-33.
[68] Kellner Critical Theory and the Crisis of Social Theory
[69] Max Horkheimer. *Selected Essays* trans. Matthew J. O'Connell and others (New York: Continuum, 2002). 10-46.
[70] Kellner 'Critical Theory and the Crisis of Social Theory' 18

> *development neither of them is to be presented as an effective factor*
> *without giving the other its role".[71]*

In many ways critical theory does not reject Laclau and Mouffe's premise of the contingent character of the world and the power of discourse. However it affirms that discursive practises inform and are informed by material elements and political structures. Critical theory's approach to Marxism addresses the methodological limitations founded in Laclau and Mouffe in their inability to see anything else outside the text. Critical theory can thus guide this research in mapping the non-discursive practises that are not subjected to a process of articulation but are nonetheless susceptible to change and at the same time impact upon the production of political subjectivities. With this synthesis my research can account for knowledge outside the purely subjective experience put forward by Laclau and Mouffe.

I argue that a critical researcher has an imperative to not stand idly by behind a veil of allegedly scientific neutrality but to aspire to a radical change of society and make a contribution to emancipatory politics. The key focus of this thesis is not only to unravel the epistemological contradictions within contemporary theories on the formation of radical political subjects and the contradictions emerging from within the praxis of the Greek indignant movement in a subjective reproduction of the world but also to pave the way towards future forms of collective action in the project for our emancipation from capitalist forms of domination. In this way, critical theory can be seen to carry the unfulfilled imperative set by the Greek indignant movement in the pursuit of social change through a critique of dominant approaches for the production of revolutionary subjectivities. This imperative is brought to bear in my concluding analyses.

Finally the drive to formulate a theory that will contribute to the emergence of emancipatory politics and the very character of immanent critique as a critique from "within" suggests that the researcher is not producing a critique as an outsider and does not relate to the object of study as a neutral observer but is rather invested and enmeshed *in* that object and as part of the social world she studies and seeks to transform. Paramount for carrying the emancipatory task of immanent critique is the process of reflexion.

My decision to examine the Greek Indignant movement was not arbitrary and is not just based on academic curiosity. It emerges from my experiences as an activist and student of politics. It is the culmination of a long experience within the student and anarchist

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[71] Horkheimer cf. Kellner, 'Critical Theory and the Crisis of Social Theory' 28

movements and from the questions these movements pose. In a way, using immanent critique as a method of my inquiry on the emergence of radical political subjects is not an alien process to me; from the moment I began to participate in collective movements questions such as how can we change the world and how can we come to form a revolutionary movement against capitalism guided and defined my actions as an activist and as a researcher. As an activist within the student and anarchist movement the opportunity to focus my study upon the emancipatory possibilities of our world was too tempting. How could I resist? After all, the process of critical inquiry resonates within me from the first time I read Marx and joined a march. I do not attempt to study the Greek indignant movement detached from my experience as an activist, on the contrary this thesis is informed by my experience on political praxis and my desire for emancipation from capitalist power relations.

Critical theory addresses the limitations of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis put forward in the previous section. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis and immanent critique as a methodological synthesis represent the core methodological approach of this thesis and pave the way in my inquiry on contemporary forms of collective action. In the next section I introduce the method used of my empirical study of the Greek indignant movement as informed by the methodological parameters set in the previous sections.

1.3. Studying the Greek Indignant Movement: Data collection and analysis

In the previous sections I discussed the ontological and epistemological foundations of my research. These principles inform the method used for my fieldwork analysis of the Greek indignant movement. The centre of my analysis is the subjective experience of the members of the indignant movement. Therefore it is imperative to have a first-hand understanding of those experiences as lived by the people participating in Syntagma square. To that end my research proceeds to a collection and analysis of qualitative data of the Greek indignant movement based on semi-structured interviews. In this section I discuss how this method of data collection offers descriptive data that allow me to map the articulation process within the Greek indignant movement and proceed to an in-depth analysis of the narrative of the interviewees to unravel any contradictions and patterns and thereby inform my theoretical critique of the mechanisms of the production of political subjectivity. I will illustrate how this method of analysis also unveils the motivational characteristics that led to the formation of the movement and acquire a better understanding of the power relations that contributed to

the emergence and the withering away of the movement. I will then engage in a step-by-step discussion of my fieldwork research and data analysis, indicating how it is grounded in the methodological synthesis that I outlined in the previous section of this chapter. I conclude this section by reflecting upon the problems I faced while conducting my empirical research.

1.3.1.   Why use semi-structured interviews?

I use semi-structured interviews in order to probe the production of political subjectivities within collective organisation in periods of crisis and to examine the forces that contribute to the emergence of a revolutionary collective subjectivity. I use semi-structured interviews to gather descriptive data of individual perspectives and understandings from the point of view of the interviewees by allowing the participant to expand on her experiences. Semi-structured interviews are widely regarded as valuable for research that aims to understand social movements.[72]

I use semi-structured interviews to draw upon connections between the participant's actions and experiences of the crisis and provide understandings of the organization and structure of the movement, all of which will enrich the arguments of the thesis and illuminate the ways political subjects are formed and act within a period of crisis. A key aim of my research is to examine the social conditions that surround the emergence of forms of collective, emancipatory action that are constituted by different subjectivities; therefore it is imperative for me to establish how these diverse subjects come together in these ways. The technique of semi-structured interviews allows participants to expand on their answers thereby providing me with the matter for a better insight into individual and collective emotions, expectations, and motivations for participating in collective action. In her study on the formation of subjectivity among women within revolutionary movements in Italy, Passerini used semi-structured interviews to acquire a better understanding of women's "illusion of a free and adventurous life" when participating in these movements.[73] Passerini was then able to unravel contradictions within the narrative of the interviewees and identify mechanisms that still

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[72] K.M. Blee & V. Taylor, 'Semi-Structure Interviewing in Social Movement Research' in B. Klandermans & S. Staggenborg, eds. *Methods of Social Movement Research. (*Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). 92-117; H.J. Rubin & I.S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data. (*London: Sage Publications Inc. 2005).; V. Taylor. 'Feminist Methodology in Social Movement Research', *Qualitative Sociology* 214 (1998).

[73] L. Passerini 1992. Lacerations in the Memory: Women in the Italian Underground Organisations. In B. Klandermans & D. P. Donatella, eds. *International Social Movement Research.* (Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 161-212.

contribute in the subjugation of women. Semi-structured interviews can thus provide an important method for research driven by the methodological principles of critical theory.

The name of the Greek indignant movement suggests the importance of emotion in collective action. By giving voice to members of the Greek indignant movement semi-structured interviews can facilitate my aim to examine personal experience, allowing the participant to become the subject of study and elaborate on their understandings and perspectives of emotional motivations for the formation of political demands within the movement. Semi-structured interviews can reveal the subject's voice limiting that of the researcher addressing the lacuna on existing research of the Greek indignant movement which focuses mainly on the use of auto-ethnographic method of analysis.[74] Semi-structured interviews can illuminate participants' motivations for the emergence of a movement, as well as acquire a broader and diverse perspective on participant's beliefs and actions.[75] Existing research on social movement activity has shown that this sort of in-depth analysis provided by semi-structured interviews can achieve more nuanced understandings of the emergence and formation of a collective political subjectivity within social movements.[76] This deeper investigation and understanding is based on the character of the semi-structured interviews which, in comparison with structured interviews, resembles more of a conversation.[77] Semi-structured interviews have a more informal character allowing the interviewee to expand on her answers. However, this less informal character should not be confused by the researcher as involving less preparation. This line of interviewing might resemble a discussion but it is a structured discussion nonetheless. It is important to prepare a line of questions or topics under which the discussion will be structured in order for the interview to be conducted according to the focus of the research and not lose sight of the main research questions.[78] The line of my questions is thus guided by the methodological parameters of my research and my aim to capture the narrative of the interviewees and so examine the mechanisms that contribute to the production of political subjectivities from this perspective.

[74] Christos Giovannopoulos and Dimitris Mitropoulos *Democracy Under Construction (*Athens: Α/συνέχεια, 2011) in Greek; Costas Douzinas *Philosophy and resistance in the Crisis* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).
[75] K.M. Blee and V. Taylor. Semi-Structure Interviewing in Social Movement Research. In: B. Klandermans & S. Staggenborg, eds. *Methods of Social Movement Research.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). 92-117.
[76] V. Taylor. 'Social Movement Continuity: The Women's Movement in Abeyance', *American Sociological Review* 54:4 (1989). 761-775.
[77] H.J. Rubin and I.S. Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data.* (London: Sage Publications Inc., 2005).
[78] Rubin and Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data.*

Within this structured discussion, semi-structured interviews can provide data that are not restricted to a specific moment in time. Research on social movements using semi-structured interviews can acquire longitudinal understandings of social movement activity.[79] Taylor's use of semi-structured interviews in his research on the US feminist movement in the 1970s allowed her to acquire a better understanding of how the movement mobilised members and how membership was sustained in periods of inactivity.[80] The Greek indignant movement managed to mobilise thousands of Greek citizens. However, just five months later the movement almost disappeared. Semi-structured interviews can shed some light upon the popular character of the movement and the forces that contributed to the decline of the movement.

Due to this semi-formal character the interviewer can connect with the interviewee creating a friendly environment, allowing the interviewee to feel more comfortable and expand on her answers, including details and information that otherwise would be difficult to elicit.[81] Thus the interviewee is able to expand her opinions and elaborate on different issues, giving greater detail on which to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of power structures upon the formation of the political subject that can challenge, clarify, support or generate understandings for the formation of political subjectivity and inform a dominant critique of Laclau and Mouffe's and Hardt and Negri's theories on the production of political subjects. [82]

Semi-structured interviews can provide an insight to social movements that lack a clear organisational structure – making them difficult to locate – and so can illuminate dynamics within the movement that were previously unseen.[83] The Greek indignant movement is a relatively recent movement with an open character of mobilisation. The use of semi-structured interviews can therefore provide data that were ignored by previous researches and shed some light on the importance of the organisation of the movement and clarify the ambiguity of its membership.

Semi-structured interviews can provide rich descriptive data and offer the potential for in-depth analysis. This follows from the relation between the personal connection of the

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[79] Taylor 'Social Movement Continuity' 761-775.; F. Passy and M. Giugni. 'Life-Spheres, Networks, and Sustained Participation in Social Movements: A Phenomenological Approach to Political Commitment', *Sociological Forum,* 15:1 (2000). 117-144.
[80] Taylor 'Social Movement Continuity'
[81] Rubin and Rubin *Qualitative Interviewing*
[82] Taylor 'Feminist Methodology in Social Movement Research'
[83] Blee and Taylor 'Semi-Structured Interviewing in Social Movement Research' 92-117; S. Roy, S., 2007. 'The Every day life of the Revolution: Gender, Violence and Memory', *South Asia Research*. 27:2 (2007). 187-204.

interviewer and the interviewee and the open character of the line of questions. Within this relation participants can be encouraged to provide a narrative of their experiences, enabling the researcher to acquire more information about the motivation, beliefs and actions of the members of the movement, information that is impossible to acquire through "the discrete statements and categorical answers generated by structured interviews or questionnaires". [84] Polanyi stresses the importance of an interview to facilitate narrative stories in which the interviewee can expand on her life experiences allowing the participant "to make a point, to transmit a message…about the world."[85] Semi-structured interviews can allow the interviewee to open up and not hesitate to provide rich descriptive data by encouraging "them to take responsibility for the meaning of their talk" providing the potential for the research to proceed to a more in-depth analysis of the data collected.[86] In this way the data collected can unravel aspects within social movement organisation that could have been ignored by the researcher.[87]

I use two types of semi-structured interviews, Oral History Interviewing and Life History Interviewing, which allow me to draw different narratives from members of the Greek indignant movement.[88] Key focus of Oral History Interviewing is to elicit information about a social movement's activity in the past from the perspective of its members.[89] Blee's research on women of the Ku Klux Klan based on oral history interviews revealed the importance of the women's role in the movement, a role that was ignored by previous research.[90] In contrast to Oral History Interviewing, the focus of Life History Interviewing is the participant herself. Where in oral history interviews the participant is regarded as an observer of events, in Life History Interviewing the observer becomes the subject of study.[91] This type of semi-structured interview encourages participants to engage in a long narrative which can elicit information and unravel mechanisms on the production of political subjectivity that were previously ignored. Hart uses life story narratives in her research and identified the impact of

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[84] Blee and Taylor 'Semi-Structured Interviewing in Social Movement Research'

[85] L. Polanyi. *Telling the American story: A structural and cultural analysis of conversational storytelling*. (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1985). 12.

[86] Polanyi *Telling the American Story* 12

[87] S.E. Chase. 'Taking Narrative Seriously: Consequences for Method and Theory in Interview Studies', in Y. S. Lincoln & N. K. Denzin, eds. *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief*. (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2003). 274.; T. Wengraf. *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic Narrative and Semi-structure Interviews*. (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2001).

[88] Blee and Taylor 'Semi-Structured Interviewing in Social Movement Research'

[89] Blee and Taylor 'Semi-Structured Interviewing in Social Movement Research'

[90] K.M. Blee. *Inside Organized Racism: Women in the hate movement*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[91] Blee and Taylor 'Semi-Structured Interviewing in Social Movement Research'

popular myths and stories in forming political subjectivity within Greek resistance groups against the Nazi occupation and their impact upon political and social change long after WWII was over.[92] Both types of semi-structured interviews provide rich descriptive data that can map the different discourses articulated within the movement, examine the impact of this articulation upon the subjectivity of the participants, probe abstract concepts on the production of political subjectivity and inform future praxis.

In addition to the subjective elements that I discuss above, my research aims to examine the organisational characteristics of the movement, such as the potential for the formation of alliances of the indignant movement with other movements, trade unions or political parties, the open character of the movement, the existence of any internal alliances within the movement, the importance of the role of different thematic groups and any potential divisions within the movement. However, I do not view the participants as mere observers of events, but rather try to understand how events within the movement and also other events in their lives impact on the formation of a collective political subjectivity. Even though I use Oral History Interviewing I do not regard the narrative of the participants as an objective means of documentation of the activities of the movement. Instead I use Oral History Interviewing to elicit information on the organisational characteristics of the movement as a subjective experience, information that has not been provided clearly by previous research on the movement.[93] The use of both types of semi-structured interviews therefore can offer valuable data not only on the organisational characteristics of the Greek indignant movement but also offer nuanced understandings on power relations that impact upon the production of political subjects.

1.3.2. Research Setting and Data Gathering

I began my fieldwork research on June 2013, almost two years after the decline of the Greek indignant movement. From the beginning of my research I was faced with the problem of locating access to a field that is no longer there. My previous experience as an activist was useful in establishing a network of people with previous experience in political activism that participate in the activities of the movement. However I soon discovered that the data I was

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[92] J. Hart. 'Cracking the Code: Narrative and Political Mobilization in the Greek Resistance', *Social Science History Association* 16:4 (1992). 631-668.
[93] Giovanopoulos, and Mitropoulos *Democracy Under Construction*

gathering reflected only a particular part of the movement. A great part of Syntagma square was filled with people that had rarely or never joined a protest in the past. For many people being part of a movement and engaging with different people and activities within the movement was a new experience. Many of the participants had condemned such forms of protest in the past yet they were at Syntagma, engaging in protest. For my research it was these people that presented the most interesting part in exploring my problematic of the production of a revolutionary subjectivity. In theory, acquiring interviews from participants in the indignant movement with no previous experience in political activism did not seem to present such a challenge due to the popularity of the movement. People from all social strata participated in the movement at least one time.

But I was faced again with yet another obstacle. How do I define membership in the indignant movement given its popular character? And how do I locate these people given that they had no ties to existing networks of political activism? Fortunately, in my hour of despair, I was able to resist the temptation of randomly stopping people on the street and asking them if they had participated in the movement. Instead I developed a more systematic approach to gathering data after carefully reflecting upon existing literature.[94] As the organisational form of the movement did not reflect the form of any other movements locating "gatekeepers" in the sense advocated by existing literature was not possible. The Greek indignant movement did not have a central representation, unlike most other movements its organisation was based upon a horizontal form of decision making through the open assemblies and different working groups rather a vertical form of organisation found in existing social movements and trade unions.

Key characteristics of the indignant movement are its popularity, and its open and fluid structure. It is these characteristics that make the Greek indignant movement such an interesting object of study. As a popular movement it is difficult to define the parameters of membership as set by previous social movement research. Membership in social movements is loosely defined through its registered members and people identifying with the moment through active participation.[95] Membership within a social movement is often open and fluid however it is easily defined as social movements through their historical development mobilise participants and recruit members under clear goals and demands over an extended

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[94] Rubin and Rubin *Qualitative Interviewing*
[95] D. Della Porta and M. Diani. *Social Movements and Introduction*. (Maiden, USA: Blackwell, 1999).

period of time.[96] However, the indignant movement lasted only a few months and its demands and goals were unclear, so identifying members in that sense is problematic. Membership within the indignant movement had a much less structured understanding. The dominance of emotional characteristics within the Greek indignant movement and its popular character make it difficult to establish a more structured understanding of membership. However, a distinction needs to be made between people that responded to a call for protest and participated in the movement and those that felt indignant. The Greek indignant movement had a fluid organisational structure in which everyone was welcome to participate and provide input; from the public assemblies to the everyday activities of the movement, its open character blurs the boundaries of membership.

In that sense I do not view my interviewees as members of the indignant movement but rather as participants. I define participation as a willingness to practically engage with the movement and be a part of its established processes. This includes people that attempted to engage and were disappointed after a couple of days to people that were present from the first day of the movement until the last. I began by distinguishing three different categories of participation: active participants of the movement, non-active participants and gatekeepers. These three groups were divided in participants with a long standing history on political activism and participants that were introduced to political activism through the indignant movement. I gave emphasis to participants that did not have any experience on political activism before the indignant movement. I further address the issue of membership in Chapter six in which I discuss the identification of the participants with the movement and their ability to establish forms of solidarity.

Taking the open character of the movement into account, it was difficult to access this wide range of participants especially in light of the absence of identifiable gatekeepers. Gatekeepers are considered the people that without their approval and help the researcher cannot acquire access to the field.[97] In social movement research gatekeepers are usually identified as the leaders or organisers of a movement, lacking however an authoritative relationship over the members of the movement.[98] Their role is crucial in helping the researcher getting access to the field and gaining the trust of the interviewees. I discovered that in spite of the absence of gatekeepers in the traditional sense there were participants that

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[96] C. Offe. 'New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics', *Social Research* 52:4 (1985). 817-868.
[97] Rubin and Rubin *Qualitative Interviewing*
[98] Rubin and Rubin *Qualitative Interviewing*

could help me establish a network and gain the trust of the interviewees. To gain access to the field I relied upon participants that occupied identifiable positions within the movement such as participants in different committees, working groups with an online profile or academics that joined the movement as researchers or merely as "indignants". Thus a large part of my sampling was based on the process of "snowball sampling".[99]

The research took place in Athens Greece and was conducted within the period of three months. The interviews were taken in person, recorded by a tape recorder and lasted approximately 50-60 minutes. I collected 51 interviews in total. The interviews took place mainly in different cafés in different areas in Athens. The interviews were conducted in the participants' native language, Greek, and were transcribed in Greek. I translated the quotes I use in the thesis and anonymised the interviewees.

1.3.3.   *Data Analysis*

The analysis of the qualitative data can be at times a daunting task for the researcher. In this section I discuss the process in which I engaged with the data collected from participants in the Greek indignant movement. Literature on qualitative data analysis point to the difficulty of handling the large amount of data gathered in semi-structured interviews.[100] Discourse theory offers a path towards analysing this vast amount of data, however, as Potter and Wetherell point out, "much of the work of discourse analysis is a craft skill, something like bike riding or chicken sexing, which is not easy to render or describe in an explicit codified manner."[101] Indeed, as I first engaged with the raw data I found the process intimidating while Laclau and Mouffe do not offer any indication on how their tools can be used on empirical analysis. As mentioned above the inability of Laclau and Mouffe to introduce how their specific tools for data analysis can be used on empirical research renders the task of data analysis even more difficult.[102] Even though existing literature on social movements that use Laclau and Mouffe's framework of discourse analysis provide some guidance towards their

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[99] Carl F. Auerbach and Louise B. Silverstein, *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding Analysis,* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2003). 31.
[100] A. Bryman and R.G.Burgess (eds). *Analysing Qualitative Data.* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
[101] J. Potter and M. Wetherell. 'Analysing Discourse' in *Analysing Qualitative Data* eds. A Bryman and R.G.Burgess, (New York: Routledge, 1994). 55.
[102] Jorgesen and Philips *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*

strategies of data analysis, a more detailed account is warranted. I was faced with a similar challenge in my data analysis guided by the principles of immanent critique.[103]

Sara W. B. Boon tries to address this problem by proposing a six step method towards data analysis based upon Laclau and Mouffe's framework to assist research in the field of organisation and management. [104] Boon's six step method offers a clarity to the inherently complex method put forward by Laclau and Mouffe. Each step is conceptually tied to Laclau and Mouffe's framework presented in a way that will guide the researcher towards analysing the vast amount of data.[105]   I put forward a step by step process in my data analysis influenced by the six step approach to data analysis based upon Laclau and Mouffe's methodological framework as developed by Boon and use it to analyse the raw data of my fieldwork. I engage with this step by step approach to Laclau and Mouffe and appropriated to address a data analysis that is based upon semi-structured interviews and is also informed by the methodological principles of immanent critique.

As Boon points out, the use of Laclau and Mouffe's framework is valuable when it comes to analysing the data collected that focus on conflict. Drawing from Boon I engage with my data through an outline of events in which I can frame my analysis.[106] This chronological approach proved very useful in mapping the key events of the movement and situating these events in the narrative of the interviewees given the length of time mediated between the time I conducted the interviews and the emergence and dispersal of the movement. This linear approach to the data also informed the interviews, as interviewees found it easier to recall events and experiences. This approach also proved valuable in my data analysis given that I could easily locate a narrative tied to a particular time period within the movement and map the event of disruption and the emergence of the floating signifier. The emergence of the indignant movement was not an immediate response to the Greek crisis. Instead the Greek indignants were formed almost a year after the Greek crisis. To locate therefore the floating signifier and the dislocation of meaning around which informed the conflict I had to engage with text used within dominant discourse on the Greek crisis. I engage therefore with existing research that focused upon the analysis of dominant discourses within media and

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[103] Eric Mykhalovskiy *et al*. 'Qualitative research and the politics of knowledge in an age of evidence: Developing a research-based practice of immanent critique' *Social Science & Medicine* 67: (2008). 195–203.
[104] Sara Walton and Bronwyn Boon. 'Engaging with a Laclau & Mouffe informed discourse analysis: a proposed framework" *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal* 9:4 (2014). 351-370.
[105] Walton and Boon. 'Engaging with a Laclau & Mouffe informed discourse analysis: a proposed framework'
[106] Walton and Boon. 'Engaging with a Laclau & Mouffe informed discourse analysis: a proposed framework'

governmental speeches in relation to the narrative of the interviewees. I take a chronological approach to this analysis of the events as examined through existing research and the narrative of the interviewees. The next step after identifying the point of conflict in the dislocation of meaning was to map the articulation process and the conflicting discourses that constitute this conflict.

The second step of data analysis was to dig deeper within the realm of conflict by identifying the conflicting discourses within the narrative of the interviewees. This step proved to be most challenging as I begin to identify within the narrative of the interviewees the point of reference around which they tried to articulate a counter-discourse to austerity. Within this step of my data analysis I continued to engage with text produced by dominant discourses within the media, the Greek government, the EU, Greek political parties, foreign media and other European political parties that support austerity as analysed by existing research and in relation to the narrative of the interviewees. However unlike Boon's research, in which she identifies two clear antagonistic discourses, within the context of a popular movement such as the indignants conflicting discourses were numerous and the distinction was not as straightforward. The Greek indignant movement was not a movement with clear goals from the beginning, it was a popular movement that included people from different social strata and its main aim was to form an alternative to austerity as the only response to tackling the Greek crisis. The focus of this research is the attempt of the indignant movement to construct an antagonistic discourse to that of the dominant discourse of the crisis and produce a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. To capture this I map the articulation process within the movement in the attempt of the interviewees to establish a meaning and a response to the Greek crisis.

In the next step of my analysis I engaged with the text produced from the interviews conducted with participants in the movement. Within Laclau and Mouffe's framework subjects are produced and mobilised within the articulation process; political subjectivities emerge from within a battle of meaning.[107] As noted, Laclau and Mouffe's reduction of the mechanisms of the production of subjectivity solely to the text offers a descriptive rather than explanatory account of the production of political subjectivities. In light of the epistemological parameters I set out above, I engage in an in-depth analysis of the data

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[107] David Howarth and Yiannis Stavrakakis 'Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis' in David Howarth, Alletta J. Norval and Yiannis Stavrakakis (eds). *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities Hegemonies and Social Change* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000). 1-25.

through the theoretical lens of the immanent critique. I focus on how existing power relations impact upon the production of political subjectivities. I bring this analysis to bear by reflecting upon the data gathered within the contours of an immanent critique of Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri's theories on the production of political subjectivity. I operationalise this in my data analysis in the following ways. First, I focus upon the emergence of patterns or internal contradictions within the narrative of the interviewees. Second, I relate this analysis to the internal contradictions within the logic of the mechanisms of the production of political subjectivity of Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri, and in particular to their abstract concepts of the "people" and the "multitude" which attempt to conceptualise the potential for the emergence of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalist power relations. This analysis does not attempt to proceed to a verification of the respective concepts and theories but to build towards a critique of these theories that will inform and provide the foundations for praxis.

The goal of the research and data analysis is to get behind the discourse of the interviewees, to unravel patterns, contradictions and paradoxes and to understand and explain their meaning through the reality of their words. It is not to discover which of their statements are right or wrong but to "work with what has actually been said or written, exploring patterns in and across statements and identifying the social consequences of different discourse representations of reality"[108]

1.3.4. Problems during the empirical study of the Greek indignant movement

The first problem that I was faced with before I conducted my fieldwork research was the time difference between the emergence and dispersal of the movement and the time the interviewees took place. I conducted the interviews two years after the dispersal of the movement. By the time the movement had dissolved two different governments had taken power and many of the interviewees lives had changed dramatically. For many of the interviewees their lives reflected the failure or success of the movement. It could be argued that their narrative was "tainted" by their experiences, mediated during the time the movement dispersed, while their memory of their experiences of the movement was not as strong. I tried to address this problem in the structure of my questions in which participants were given the opportunity to recall and reflect upon their current experiences and their

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[108] Jorgensen and Philips *Discourse Analysis* 21

experiences before and during their participation of the movement. Importantly, this time difference allowed me to collect longitudinal data.

The second problem I was faced with was earning the trust of the interviewees. In spite of the help of gatekeepers and the already established network of interviewees in many cases participants in the research were finding it difficult to trust me. Collins stresses the importance of the interviewer and the interviewee sharing a common standpoint before the interview in order for the researcher to collect in-depth data based on the trust created by the participation of the researcher in the movement.[109] This is achieved when the researcher is identified as an insider by the members of the movement.[110] The trust of the interviewees was an important element in acquiring in-depth data. Even though the line of questions included some that required the interviewees to provide a description of the movement and remember particular events, the questions focus on the experience of the participants, how they as political subjects engaged within the movement and how the crisis affected their lives. Given the personal character of the line of questioning and the focus of the research in exploring potentials for revolutionary praxis I aimed to have interviewees engage in intimate and personal discussion. However, given that I was not a part of the movement, some of the interviewees saw me as an outsider in spite of me being Greek and sharing a cultural environment. I found it difficult when I was designated as an outsider to secure the trust of the participants and to create a level of intimacy that made it easier for the participants to proceed to an in-depth narration of their experiences. Many of the interviewees appeared distrustful and sceptical about how I am going to use their stories and whether my politics were aligned with theirs. I found that the only way to address this issue and make them feel comfortable enough was before we begun the interview to discuss the parameters of my research and provide some personal information such as my experience as a PhD student living in another country, information that would not attempt to lead the interviewee towards a particular frame of response but begin to create a comfortable and more relaxed atmosphere. Furthermore I found that opening the interview with questions that focused on a description of the movement and their first impression of their participation allowed interviewees to feel more comfortable and slowly open up approaching a place in which they could share their very private thoughts.

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[109] Patricia Hill Collins. 'Learning From the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Theory', in M. M. Fonow and J.A. Cook eds. *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Experience.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991). 35-59.
[110] Hill Collins 'Learning From the Outsider Within 35-59

In most cases interviewees would want to continue the discussion even after the interview ended. Interviewees would expand on issues they felt they did not expand enough or were not included in the interview, but in most cases interviewees wanted to engage with me and ask for my opinion and in many cases advice as a researcher for the politics of crisis and methods to resist neoliberalism. I found difficult to engage in such a discussion even though it could be argued that is within the parameters of a critical inquiry to inform and engage with emancipatory struggles as my research was incomplete.

Finally, a problem I faced during my fieldwork research was trying to be seen as an expert on my field by male interviewees. I was frequently met with scepticism as to whether I should be involved in the particular field of study and challenged on several points of my research especially by male interviewees with experience on political activism. Often male interviewees would be motivated to participate in the study based on my looks rather their interest on my research. For example a male interviewee was using my looks as an incentive when trying to convince his male friend to participate in my research. While a few times I was asked for a drink even in the middle of the interview. I address this problem, as I believe any woman would when attempting to become an expert on a field of study, with aggressive professionalism and a calm engagement. I would make clear to interviewees challenging my knowledge on the field, without trying to guide them or alienate them that I know what I am talking about establishing my epistemic authority. Often I had to screen prospective interviewees if they indeed had participated in the movement before make an appointment to conduct an interview. I would often had to set clear boundaries of conduct with male interviewees and return the focus on my research. A process that was emotionally exhausting and frequently required a detachment from my personal emotions.

1.4. Validity of the research

In this chapter I have set out the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of this research. I presented a step by step approach to my empirical analysis of the indignant movement that is informed by a discursive method of data collection, based on Laclau and Mouffe's method of analysis, and semi-structured interviews conducted with the members of the Greek indignant movement. I further illustrate how the limitations founded within Laclau and Mouffe's framework are addressed by the philosophical underpinnings of critical theory

and its method of inquiry of immanent critique. I would like to close this section with some reflections on validity.

My research is predicated upon an ontological approach that views the world as open and changing. The method of immanent critique permeates the analytical imperatives of this research and holds it within particular ontological and epistemological commitments that were laid out in the previous sections. This guides the methodological grounding of this research and the analysis and gathering of data. As such, I do not approach the data collected from my empirical study as irrefutable facts in an attempt to reach some objective truth. I treat participants' narratives not as facts of reality but rather an expression of their reality. As Kincheloe points the researcher approaches her findings from her own perspective which is conditioned upon the researcher's own ideological position.[111] As such my approach to the object of my study as a cultural insider raises empiricist or positivist claims to knowledge issues on the validity of my research. Rubin and Rubin stress how approaching a research based on semi-structured interviews as a cultural insider can assist the research to gain access to the field and gain the trust of the interviewees however it does not address some issues raised on the validity of the research.[112] I address those issues by referring to two different processes that contribute to the validity of this research: reflexivity and catalytic validity.

Existing research points out on the importance of the reflexivity of the researcher when conducting a fieldwork research but also to the approach of the data analysis.[113] The researcher is not an outsider, a bystander to an event that she can judge objectively, she is judging the world around her long before she begins her research.[114] Within the parameters of a critical research the researcher engages into an interpretive act of existing theoretical perspectives and personal experience. For a critical research underpinned by the principle of political emancipation this characteristic is perceived as strength rather than a limitation as it allows the researcher to engage from within the theoretical paradigm it studies with reference to the potential of emancipatory praxis.

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[111] Kincheloe, McLaren, and Steinb 'Critical Pedagogy and Qualitative Research'

[112] Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*

[113] Douglas Macbeth. 'On "Reflexivity" in Qualitative Research: Two Readings, and a Third' *Qualitative Inquiry* 7:1 (2001). 35-68.; Eric Mykhalovskiy *et al*. 'Qualitative research and the politics of knowledge in an age of evidence: Developing a research-based practice of immanent critique' *Social Science & Medicine* 67: (2008). 195–203.; Wanda S. Pillow. 'Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in Qualitative Research', *Qualitative Studies in Education* 16:2 (2003). 175–196.

[114] Mykhalovskiy *et al*. 'Qualitative research and the politics of knowledge in an age of evidence'; Kincheloe, McLaren, and Steinb 'Critical Pedagogy and Qualitative Research'

A research's validity therefore according to Kincheloe and McLaren is to expose forms of domination and help those affected to transform their world towards an emancipatory project.[115] This "catalytic validity" is consistent with critical theory's drive for political emancipation.[116] As Lather points the "catalytic validity" of a research resides to its ability to emancipate and empower the subjects under research and help them transform the power relations that oppress them.[117] Focus of this research therefore is not only to highlight the contradiction of a theory of political subjectivity within contemporary forms of collective action but also to pave the way into new forms of praxis that will challenge existing power relations.

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[115] Kincheloe, McLaren, and Steinb 'Critical Pedagogy and Qualitative Research'
[116] Patti Lather 'Research as Praxis', *Harvard Educational Review* 56:3 (1986). 257-278.
[117] Lather 'Research as Praxis'

Chapter 2

Hegemony, Antagonism and the Political Subject: A critical analysis of Laclau and Mouffe's "New Political Logic" in light of the Greek indignant movement

In the previous chapter I examined the philosophical challenges in the study of the Greek indignant movement. In this chapter I focus my inquiry in the importance of discourse and the process of articulation in the production of a collective political subjectivity. I argue that participants are unable to articulate a counter-discourse to austerity and preserve the diversity of the movement. In this chapter I examine the process of articulation of different discourses within the movement.

Interviewees' narratives testify to the importance of discourse in shaping their actions and those of the movement. Interviewees were eager to discuss their excitement when they engaged for the first time in political discussions with strangers, or addressed the crowd by participating in the assembly. The open assembly became the centre point of articulation of different discourses within the movement. The participants describe how from the assembly they could articulate their thoughts and engage into a discussion in order to build a movement that incorporated their individuality and resisted the politics of austerity. The open public assembly was an attempt to establish a set of common goals that would inform their collective action. Indeed participants engaged in a process of articulation of different discourses in order to shape their actions.

In the previous chapter I discussed the methodological advantages and limitations found within Laclau and Mouffe's theory on the inquiry of the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity by studying emergent forms of collective action. In this chapter I further engage with Laclau and Mouffe's framework and my analysis in the previous chapter. I argue that even though the method of articulation provides a valuable analytical tool and that discursive articulations inform the actions of the participants, political subjectivity is not just a discursive construction within the "realm" of politics as argued by Laclau and Mouffe. In this chapter I will demonstrate that what Laclau and Mouffe call the realm of the economy is the bedrock of discursive articulations and hegemonic power relations. I critically reflect upon Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical framework with reference to the Greek indignant movement in order to demonstrate the interrelation between the political and the economic rather than the primacy of the one over the other. I examine the importance of such

interrelation in the study of concomitant forms of collective struggle in order to inform the inquiry of this thesis on the mechanisms that shape contemporary political subjectivity.

In the first section of this chapter I critically engage with the internal logic of Laclau and Mouffe's concepts of discourse, hegemony, the people, social antagonism and radical democracy. The way in which these concepts interrelate in Laclau and Mouffe's theory point to the inability of the "people" to act as collective agent of radical change and challenge capitalist relations of production. In the first section I further explore this interrelation within Laclau and Mouffe's thought by empirically relating this critique to the Greek indignant movement. In the second section I identify the point with which the indignants attempted to provide meaning to the Greek crisis in order to form a counter-hegemonic discourse to austerity. I discuss the significance of the notion of autonomy and autonomous action within this process and how participants defined autonomy. I focus on the importance given by participants to individuality and diversity in building a collective political subjectivity that can challenge the politics of austerity and the inability of Laclau and Mouffe's framework to grasp the importance of such a desire. In the third section I engage with the different discourses articulated in the attempt of the movement to build a chain of signification for the Greek crisis and a counter-discourse to austerity. I identify the inability of the indignants to build a common meaning of the Greek crisis and unravel the problematic of perceiving every discourse articulated within a popular movement contributing towards the emergence of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalist relations of production. I conclude this chapter by drawing from the findings of the sections to point out the limitations of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory in explaining the totality of social relations.

In their theory of discourse, as developed in their book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe begin from the premise that a historical shift has occurred which bears upon the emergence of struggle within society. They agree with New Social Movement theorists that empirical evidence suggests a significant change within collective struggle that cannot be ignored and cannot be understood by Marxism. Instead they engage with the idea of the emergence of New Social Movements and argue that the 'plurality of struggles' is important to a theory of radical politics.[118] They embrace, therefore, the dominant academic discourse of New Social Movement theory which argues that we have entered into a new era in which the proletariat as the "traditional" subject of resistance is

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[118] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*

giving way to new forms of struggle.[119] However, Laclau and Mouffe do not throw Marxism in the dustbin of history. For Laclau and Mouffe the proletariat may no longer be the subject of history but it does not disappear. Instead, according to Laclau and Mouffe, the proletariat exists and articulates its subjectivity within popular movements and does so among and with different subjectivities in a democratic process.[120] They begin therefore from the premise that even though the realm of the economy cannot incorporate different subjectivities the realm of politics can and that subjectivities produced in the realm of economy can be articulated among different subjectivities in the political domain. Laclau and Mouffe are maintaining here that there is a clear distinction between politics and economics, arguing at the same time that although the two are interconnected the political realm is the field in which struggles take place[121]. Laclau and Mouffe put forward their theoretical framework by turning our attention in the importance of the plurality of struggles inherent within liberal democracy.

Laclau and Mouffe try to conceive a universal theory that creates at the same time an abundance of possibilities for political agency. Tiptoeing between Marxist tradition and postmodernist epistemological insights, Laclau and Mouffe conceive "universality as a political universality" in which Marxism provides an "anchorage" for understanding contemporary struggles which at the same time allows them to build their new project of radical democracy upon a postmodern epistemology of discourse.[122] To do so Laclau and Mouffe begin their "contaminated universality" with the deconstruction of the Marxist concepts of "overdetermination" and "hegemony".[123] Gramsci's concept of hegemony is at the centre of their framework but only after being detached from its fundamental epistemological ties to Marxism. Laclau and Mouffe fuse the concept of hegemony with a discursive understanding of the formation of the social world. For Laclau and Mouffe, the political subject is not constructed within an "objective" understanding of history informed by capitalist relations of production but rather upon the contingent character of the discursive field and the antagonisms formed within it. Those antagonisms are formed within hegemonic relations which, they argue, are inherently political. Laclau and Mouffe argue that the ability of their discourse theory to encapsulate the multiplicity of the social world and provide an order within a "chaotic flux" lies between the relation of logic of equivalence and logic of

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[119] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 87
[120] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 87
[121] Laclau and Mouffe Hegemony and Socialist Strategy 70-98
[122] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 3
[123] Louis Althusser in Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar. *Reading Capital* (London: New Left Books, 1970); Antonio Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971).

difference.[124] It is by establishing a chain of equivalence in which this plurality of struggles can come together and create a popular struggle around a common discourse permeating their subjectivities and divide the hegemonic space into two opposing camps that initiate the articulation of a counter-hegemonic discourse and the emergence of new political subjects. [125] The two concepts are tied within the epistemological framework set by Laclau and Mouffe and are introduced in order to eradicate from Gramsci's concept of hegemony his assumption that "there must always be a single unifying principle in any hegemonic formation, and this can only be a fundamental class."[126] Laclau and Mouffe replace Gramsci's historical priority of class as the agent that articulates social forces with a prioritisation of the articulation of multitudinous identities without prioritising a particular agent. Laclau and Mouffe reshape the concept of hegemony within the epistemological parameters set by their theory of discourse, which is predicated upon the "open" discursive character of the social world.

The Greek indignant movement immediately presents the same tendency for the creation of common ground between the diverse people and different political groups that came to Syntagma Square. In spite of the diversity of the protesters the indignants were unable to form a common ground, what Laclau and Mouffe call a chain of equivalence.[127] Protestors were suspicious towards any other discourse articulated in the Square but their own, the discourse that they were invested in; they saw in the public assemblies an inability to act on any collective decisions made while many of the protestors viewed the attempt to construct a counter-hegemonic discourse against austerity as unable to incorporate their individuality and the diversity of the movement.

This chapter is informed both by this apparent centrality of discourse and hegemony within Laclau and Mouffe's theory and also by the centrality that members of the movement placed on their attempts to form a collective movement that will challenge the politics of austerity. I argue that Laclau and Mouffe's framework views the formation of new political subjects only in terms of equivalence and difference and the boundaries in which their theory of discourse has created. To unravel therefore the mechanisms that build contemporary political subjectivity, and focusing upon the processes of contemporary collective struggles, it is imperative to further investigate these boundaries. The importance given by the Greek indignants to the plurality of the movement and the need to maintain this plurality, while at

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[124] J. Torfing. *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau Mouffe and Zizek.* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd). 95
[125] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 137
[126] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 69
[127] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 137

the same time attempting to form a more coherent and homogenous movement cuts across the framework put forward by Laclau and Mouffe. An analysis of the Greek indignant movement and the ability of the movement to form (or not) a logic of equivalence will in fact unravel the limitations of Laclau and Mouffe's theory and challenge existing analysis on the Greek indignant movement that ascribe on discourse a key role in understanding the formation of contemporary political subjectivity.

Beginning my inquiry into forms of collective struggle and the mechanisms that shape them by a critical engagement of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is not accidental. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, in spite of their limitations to a descriptive method of inquiry Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory can provide the tools not only to map the attempt of the indignants to build a collective political subjectivity and an alternative to the politics of austerity but also to engage with a number of questions emerging from that attempt, questions that arise due to the descriptive nature of discourse theory put forward by Laclau and Mouffe. I intend in this way through my critical engagement with Laclau and Mouffe's theory to open up the field of inquiry to a world that is not constituted purely within a logic of equivalence or difference but put emphasis upon the constituent character of the production of political subjectivity.

2.1. Crisis, Collective Struggles and the Political Subject in Laclau and Mouffe's Thought

Laclau and Mouffe begin from the premise of a distinction between politics and economics based upon a critique of Marxism to explain contemporary forms of collective struggle without being determined "at the last instance by the economy".[128] Instead they propose a project of radical democracy that, as they argue, overcomes such limitations. In this section I engage with this argument by focusing on the internal contradictions within Laclau and Mouffe's thought in their attempt to build a framework towards the production of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalist power relations.

To cement an understanding of history not driven by class struggle but still preserving the character of conflict as the driving force of history, Laclau and Mouffe build in their book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* a complex theoretical framework based on the premise that

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[128] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 99

the subject, like the social world, is discursively constructed.[129] Subjects and objects are constructed through the articulation of "a series of contingent signifying elements available in a discursive field"[130]. Laclau and Mouffe argue that their theory does not slide into a structural understanding of the subject nor ignore the importance of stable structures that play an important role in shaping the identity of the subject. In Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory the contingent character of identities and a partial fixation of meaning forms the character of objects. In this way Laclau and Mouffe argue that they provide a theory of the social world that accounts for social change without resorting to what they argue is historical essentialism and at the same time allowing for the relative stability of meaning.

For Laclau and Mouffe this social and political space in which identities are formed is discursively constructed. The social field is discursively constructed, constituted upon the articulation of meaning and elements of signification. Nothing exists outside discourse. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and the basic concepts used for the articulation of discourse indicate the formation of subjects and objects within the social world through this process of articulation. They propose that "we will call articulation any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulation practice"[131].

In developing their theory of discourse and their critique of Marxism, Laclau and Mouffe deconstruct Gramsci's concept of hegemony. Where Gramsci develops the concept of hegemony as a dialectic relationship between the political and the economic, Laclau and Mouffe argue for a primacy of politics in understanding hegemony.[132] Laclau and Mouffe argue that power is hegemonic, however, by pointing to the social world as discursively constructed. In doing so they negate the objectivity of the economy and the determination on the last instance of social relation by "the logic of the mode of production".[133] Therefore change, and the reproduction of meaning, operate within the field of politics and hegemonic relations. Objectivity takes place within hegemonic power relations. However, emphasising its contingent character, Laclau and Mouffe argue that objectivity is achieved when a discourse is established within existing power relations in such a way as to appear stable and

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[129] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 93-148
[130] David Howarth and Yiannis Stavrakakis. 'Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis' in David Howarth, Alleta J Norval and Yiannis Stavrakakis (eds). *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities Hegemonies and Social Change*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000). 7.
[131] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 105
[132] Ernesto Laclau. *New Reflections on the Revolution of our Time*. (London: Verso, 1990). 33.
[133] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 100

unchangeable.[134] Reality is therefore constructed through hegemonic struggles over the stability of meaning. Within this world social actors are interpellated by discourse, and hegemonic struggles for the stability of meaning.[135] For Laclau and Mouffe this process of interpellation is not tied to the field of economy but the constituent character of discursive articulation and the realm of politics.

> *"To be capable of thinking politics today, and understanding the nature of these new struggles and the diversity of social relations that the democratic revolution has yet to encompass, it is indispensable to develop a theory of the subject as a decentered, detotalized agent, a subject constructed at the point of intersection of a multiplicity of subject-positions between which there exists no a priori or necessary relation and whose articulation is the result of hegemonic practices."[136]*

Subjects are interpellated by discourse and constituted in this articulation process.[137] For Laclau and Mouffe the subject is never whole and is striving to become complete.[138] In his later work after *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* Laclau further developed this idea of how individuals allow themselves to be interpellated by discourse, by integrating Lacanian theory and the role of the unconscious within this process.[139]

Within Laclau and Mouffe's theory social change is possible in the contingent character of the social world taking place within periods of crisis. Elements of signification or signs have a relative stable meaning within a discourse however their meaning can be contested within periods of crisis in which their meaning becomes unstable. Thus within a crisis, signs once stable within a discourse become unstable and acquire a floating character.[140] Laclau and Mouffe point to periods of crisis as moments in which elements become "floating" and understand Gramsci's organic crisis as "a conjuncture where there is a generalised weakening of the relational system defining the identities of a given social or political space, and where, as a result there is a proliferation of floating elements" suggesting the contingency of the

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[134] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 100; Chantal Mouffe 'Politics and Passions: The Stakes of Democracy' *Ethical Perspectives* 7:2-3 (2000). 147.
[135] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 115
[136] C. Mouffe & P. Holdengraber. 'Radical Democracy: Modern or Postmodern?' *Social Text* 21: (1989). 35.
[137] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 105-145
[138] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 127ff
[139] Ernesto Laclau. *On Populist Reason*. (London: Verso, 2005). 102-115.
[140] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 105

emergence of a negative identity, social antagonisms and the production of new political subjects.[141] Laclau and Mouffe borrow Gramsci's concept of organic crisis in order to "radicalise" it and produce an understanding of the emergence of new political subjects that can question existing hegemonic power relations and pursuit social change. They do so by arguing that an organic crisis indicates a crisis in the "relational system defining the identities of a given social or political space" rather than a crisis situate within a dialectic relationship between the political and the economic.[142] They are modifying Gramsci's concept of "organic crisis" in order to account for the emergence of antagonisms over signification and the possibility of social change located in the battle of discourses in fixing the meaning of "floating elements".

In his research of the Green movement Stavrakakis shows how within periods of crisis elements within any discourse can become floating and appropriated by different discourses changing their meaning. [143] Stavrakakis shows how the environmental crisis resulted in the articulation of pre-existing elements (such as direct democracy) changing their meaning and structure what we know as "Green Ideology". [144]

It is within this unravelling of a limit point within hegemonic discourse "in which social meaning is contested and cannot be stabilised" that antagonisms emerge.[145] Social antagonisms are the cornerstone of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory as they present the possibility for change within society and the ability for the formation of a historical agent that for them, is not given a priority but is contingent upon the field of articulation.[146] Social antagonisms represent the opening act for the formation of a new political subjectivity, they reflect the point of pure negation in which hegemonic practises are contested. Laclau and Mouffe see in the concept of hegemony the epitome of political activity which can bring together different subjectivities under a common project. They reshaped the concept of hegemony in such a way as to become impossible for a discursive field to dominate the social field.[147] Hegemony therefore reflects the temporary unification of a discourse from a variety of discourses being articulated in the social field. According to Laclau and Mouffe this can

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[141] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 136
[142] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 136
[143] Y. Stavrakakis. 'Green Ideology: A Discursive Reading', *Journal of Political Ideologies* 2 (1997): 259-297.
[144] Stavrakakis 'Green Ideology' 259-297. See also Y. Stavrakakis. 'Green fantasy and the Real of nature: elements of a Lacanian critique of Green ideological discourse', *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society,* 3 (1997).
[145] Howarth and Stavrakakis 'Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis'9.
[146] Howarth and Stavrakakis 'Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis'
[147] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*

only become possible when a relational field of equivalence and difference is formed among *points de capiton* or nodal points which capture the floating elements and fix their identity in a chain of equivalence. [148] The logic of difference expands any existing differences and dissolves any chains of equivalence formed.[149] The emergence of a new political subject therefore comes from the amalgamation of difference around a specific point of meaning or a nodal point as occurred by a process of pure negation, that was revealed in times in which meaning is contested within society. Within this process the "people" emerge in the form of this new universal political subject that links different demands in a series of equivalence establishing a hegemonic bloc.[150]

Essential therefore for the formation of a hegemonic bloc is the notion of a social field which is driven by crisis and antagonisms in which there is a place for the emergence of a pure negative identity – which in turn can challenge existing hegemonic discourses by articulating those crisis-driven "floating elements" around a stable point that can create a chain of equivalence, binding them together.

According to Laclau and Mouffe, a popular movement breeds the potential for the emergence of a revolutionary collective subjectivity that can challenge neoliberalism through the democratic articulation of different subject positions.[151] Different social actors by engaging in a process of articulation within popular struggles manage to cooperate around a fixed point or nodal point dividing the social field in two antagonistic camps with two contesting meanings.[152] Laclau and Mouffe's reconceptualization of the concept of hegemony aims to universalise the particular, i.e.: identities or individual struggles, without the need for "a universal class" as perceived within the Gramscian understanding of hegemony.[153] The political subject for Laclau and Mouffe is not predetermined by existing structures found in the realm of economy but is contingent and structured within the realm of politics and, specifically, in liberal democracy.

 Laclau and Mouffe, within their "political theory of discourse," see the impact of neoliberal ideology and liberalism upon the subject as something integral to the process of the formation of a revolutionary subject and of an alternative form of democracy, a radical democracy. [154]

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[148] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 105-114
[149] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 127-134
[150] Laclau *On Populist Reason*
[151] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 149-194
[152] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 127-145
[153] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 127-145
[154] Howarth and Stavrakakis 'Introducing discourse theory and political analysis,' 9

"The alternative of the Left," they argue, "should consist of locating itself fully in the field of the democratic revolution and expanding the chains of equivalence between the different struggles against oppression. *The task of the Left therefore cannot be to renounce liberal-democratic ideology, but on the contrary, to deepen and expand it in the direction of a radical and plural democracy*."[155] Laclau and Mouffe believe that in the same way the meaning of liberal democratic ideology can be informed by elements found within conservative discourse it can allow the articulation of discourses that "accentuate the democratic movement".[156] It is hard to ignore however the equal possibilities of a conservative discourse with a left discourse shaping the meaning of liberal democracy within Laclau and Mouffe's "political theory of discourse" and how this liberal democratic ideology can indeed produce the "people" as a political subject that can challenge capitalist power relations.

This political subject is not constructed outside existing ideological discourses but through the articulation and the changing of the meaning of existing ideological discourses. Laclau and Mouffe see the liberal democratic subject as a potential activist citizen who could engage and identify with a process of radical democracy, leaving behind and changing the meaning of all the different subject positions occupied within a liberal democratic discourse. It is difficult to see how this subject would overcome her liberal self and bourgeois civic activism produced within liberal democracy, and form a radical political subjectivity. [157] One of the key sources of antagonism within the Greek indignant movement, as I will discuss below, was the tension between participants that refused to compromise their material interests. In their attempt to address the ability of social change upon the contingent character of political subjectivity, Laclau and Mouffe overlook the ability of material interests and financial restrains to shape political subjectivity.

Laclau and Mouffe see liberal democracy as the stepping stone to their project of radical democracy. Radical democracy for Laclau and Mouffe can be produced only from within from the antagonisms produced and facilitated within liberal democracy. For within liberal democracy, Laclau and Mouffe argue, the processes of articulation is equally distributed and contested. Existing forms of representation within a state-regulated system of struggles are therefore welcomed as the stepping stones for the formation of antagonisms in which chains

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[155] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 176 (their emphasis)
[156] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 176
[157] G. Boucher. *The Charmed Cycle of Ideology: A Critique of Laclau and Mouffe, Butler and Zizek* (Australia: Re-press, 2008). 118.

of equivalence are expanded and hegemonic blocs are created. Social transformation is achieved, they argue, when these blocs and the new political subjectivities created are integrated within this state-regulated system of struggles, thus furthering the possibility of the radical democratic project which will eliminate sources of inequality, be they economic or political. Their theoretical argument is built upon an analysis of different popular struggles mainly, as mentioned above, during the 1970s, and examinations of the success of those struggles and identities to be recognised and integrated within the state apparatus. Laclau and Mouffe on the one hand argue for a discursive reality resulting in an equation of subject positions and social structures, in which any popular struggle can result in radical social transformations, and on the other hand they ascribe a fundamental role to the existing state-centric forms of representation for the emergence of new political subjects. This apparently falls into the structuralist trap they aimed to avoid. Furthermore these popular struggles divide the social field into two antagonistic camps. As these two antagonistic camps of "us" and "them" are formed within social antagonism through the process of articulation, it is difficult to distinguish between struggles that can lead to emancipatory change or ones that will reproduce existing power relations. As Douzinas notes, "Laclau's generalisation covers every type of politics, making it difficult to distinguish between, say, the progressive Latin American populism of national independence and social justice and right-wingers using similar methods".[158] This makes it impossible to study contemporary forms of collective action in an attempt to build an understanding towards emancipatory politics

Laclau and Mouffe, in their attempt to establish the contingent character of the formation of political subjectivities in their theory of discourse, see the liberal subject as inherently radical and fundamental to the "new project of the radical left", ignoring the importance of other characteristics that contribute to the character of its own subjectivity as well as the potential for diverse forms of struggle. In the case of the Greek indignant movement these limitations are evident when the movement is unable to establish a chain of equivalence. This is obvious when we begin to explore the different discourses articulated in the Square, the inability to form a stable point of "indignation", how different discourses within the Square articulate these "floating elements", and the struggle to invest with meaning and the privilege of particular discourses within this unstable point of being indignant.

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[158] Costas Douzinas. *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis*. (London: Polity Press, 2011). 117

2.2. The Call of Indignation

Even though at a first glance indignation appears to be the point of reference on which participants could, according to Laclau and Mouffe, establish a chain of equivalence amongst the different discourses that could challenge the politics of austerity, a closer look at interviewees' narratives reveals that participants attempted to articulate a counter-discourse to austerity, not on the shared feeling of indignation, but under the referent of autonomy and autonomous action. The need for autonomy became the central point in which participants attempted to build a discourse against austerity and resist neoliberal politics. In this section I examine how participants define autonomy and how this nodal point drove the articulation process within the movement. I argue that the failure of the indignants of establish a chain of equivalence between them and divide the field into two antagonist camps emerges directly from their attempt to do so around this notion of autonomy.

> *"… I don't usually go to protests, 'cause they are being appropriated[159] by political party puppets and are being steered by centres of power and they also have a homogenizing character which I despise; I like it when a person can express himself individually. I thought that it was an opportunity and an obligation for those people that do not participate in protests to express their opposition and their indignation."[160]*

For Christos, a young unemployed musician, existing forms of collective organisation could no longer represent him. He felt that he could not change their discourse. Instead, he was of the view that his participation in any of these existing forms of collective organisation would require that he change himself in order to accommodate the action set by these movements. He was longing to be a part of a movement that would accept him as himself, an unemployed musician who had recently left music school and was outraged by the implementation of austerity, rising unemployment, the corruption within Greek political culture and the struggle he was facing to find *any* job, not just a musician. He found the idea of being part of a movement that it is "new" in every sense of the world highly appealing, and believed that he would be able to mould this movement as an individual.

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[159] The word used here is kapelono; the exact translation would be to put a hat on/ capping. The word is used to describe the intention of a political party to appropriate an independent movement.
[160] Christos S. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 16 July 2013

Based on my interviews with members of the movement participants felt that their individual identity and the discourse articulated within political parties did not represent them. Following Laclau and Mouffe the Greek crisis could become an opportunity for the articulation of elements which their meaning was perceived as fixed and therefore an opportunity for collective struggle to change the existing hegemonic discourse. Indeed, the rise of the indignant movement resulted from the estrangement of the participants from existing political parties. Interviewees identified political parties as those responsible for the crisis and unable to provide a solution to the crisis that could represent the majority of the population. The crisis unravelled the limitations of hegemony and the incompleteness of the hegemonic discourse to provide a satisfactory account of the crisis and therefore the inability of Greek citizens to identify with the hegemonic discourse. It was this point in which the elements of democratic system of representation, the Greek crisis, austerity, social justice, the welfare state, public spending, the EU as articulated by the dominant discourse became "floating" and opened up the possibility for the articulation of a counter hegemonic discourse by the protestors around the need the nodal point of indignance, while their need for individual expression and autonomy became the empty signifier.

However, it was not just a crisis of representation that drove participants to join the indignant movement, but rather a need for individual empowerment and autonomy from existing forms of political representation.

On the 25th of May 2011 an invite on Facebook for a peaceful demonstration outside Syntagma Square received an unprecedented response. The invitation called everyone who felt indignant to express their feelings peacefully against the crisis and "against all that brought us here. Spontaneous, with no parties, groups or ideologies."[161] The invitation clarified that the movement had no goals, just a general disagreement to the crisis and welcomed everyone who wished to participate and shape the movement. "The word indignants does not wish to steer or show the way of action. On the contrary, we declared from the beginning that we want to gather spontaneously and peacefully. Without a plan or course of action in mind. Just to show our peaceful protest."[162]

The invitation does not set any restrictions as to who should or not join this protest or what they can contribute to the protest. Everyone was welcome to participate. In spite of the vague

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[161] G. Mitropoulos and D. Giovanopoulos. *Real Democracy Now*. (Athens: A/Synexeia, 2011). 278. (In Greek) My translation.
[162] Mitropoulos and Giovanopoulos. *Real Democracy Now*.

character of the invitation to protest and form a movement there were some distinct moments in the discourse of the invitation that interviewees found appealing.

The first identifiable moment is the emphasis given to the peaceful character of the protest "against those that brought us here."[163] For many of the interviewees this was an indication of the independent character of the movement and that the movement was not organised by an anarchist group. "We all gather together wearing white t shirts" stated the invitation on Facebook, to further illustrate that there is no connection with the anarchist movement/black bloc. For many, the black bloc movement was no different from a terrorist group and so would negate the open and inviting character of the movement. The second moment emphasises the individual and individual empowerment by urging people to act against government policies for tackling the crisis and to participate as individuals in a movement that would empower them and accept their individuality. The third moment points to the independence of the movement from political parties, trade unions or other forms of collective organisation. Interviewees reveal that these three moments played a key role in motivating them to go to Syntagma Square and join the protest.

Interviewees' narratives reveal that processes of articulation began to emerge from these identifiable moments in the invitation on Facebook. The moments of individual empowerment and independence were incorporated around the meaning of autonomy. Autonomy became the central moment within the indignant discourse.

The formation of the movement and the attempt by its members to articulate their differences is based on this understanding of autonomous action. Protestors articulated their need for autonomy in the first few days of the movement in order to create a fixed understanding of autonomous action in which they could articulate their subject positions in order to form a counter-hegemonic discourse. Participants focused upon the role of trade unions and political parties as a form of power within which hegemonic discourses are articulated. Participants saw in these hegemonic discourses a specific understanding of the crisis that necessitated the implementation of austerity, maintaining at the same time the power of "those that brought us here" such as the Greek government, existing political parties, the EU and capital. This understanding of autonomy was used as a point of reference for the articulation of subject positions that could create an alternative discourse to the crisis.

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[163] Mitropoulos and Giovanopoulos. *Real Democracy Now*.

The need for autonomy or autonomous action was what the protestors were looking for when they decided to participate in the movement. It reflected the need of the protestors to reclaim power as individuals and to form a collective action that could channel their individuality into overthrowing hegemonic politics for tackling the crisis. Autonomy therefore had a double meaning for the protestors. First in terms of organisation, the power of every individual to shape the movement and second in terms of a course of action that is not influenced by existing power relations, that functions outside existing ideologies creating a movement that is completely novel. This need for autonomy was the empty signifier. Autonomy was much more than a fixed meaning in which protestors could articulate a counter-discourse to austerity.[164] It reflected for many of the protestors the inability of existing forms of democratic representation to empower them and the impossibility of the Greek government to project their individuality – an interruption of the meaning of democracy as such.

For the protestors, their autonomy is not only framed within their ability to claim power without mediation/representation, but also in their ability to articulate counter-hegemonic discourses by overcoming any previous ideologically interpellated positions. Autonomy is not only understood as autonomy from political parties or trade unions but also as autonomy from existing ideologies as articulated within political parties. Participants in the movement expect the formation and articulation of counter hegemonic discourses to occur through autonomous subjects. Despite the invitation on Facebook calling for a gathering of different people with different ideological backgrounds, participants expect each other to overcome their ideologically interpellated positions and contribute in the articulation of an autonomous discourse. [165]

However, the need to form a discourse without utilising tools of critique forged within centuries of struggle and a discourse "outside" any ideological discourses is a provocation to the idea of Laclau and Mouffe. Protestors were faced with the impossibility of critique of neoliberal politics without any of the ideological tools that were imprinted within the culture of Greek politics. The next section further explores this impossibility as well as how this impasse faced by the protestors challenges Laclau and Mouffe's framework.

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[164] Ernesto Laclau. *Emancipation(s)*. (London and New York: Verso, 1995).
[165] Giovanopoulos and Mitropoulos *Real Democracy Now* 227

2.3. Autonomy and the Battle of Discourses within the Greek Indignant Movement

Interviewees' narratives testify to a battle of discourses in their attempt to maintain their autonomy and that of the movement. Interviewees refer to different experiences within the movement that highlight the importance they placed on the discourses articulated in the Square and their significance in shaping the subjectivities of the protestors (and theirs) and the character of the movement. This battle of discourses was always present, according to interviewees, and was taking place either in the open assembly or in small discussions amongst participants. This battle was informed by the nodal point of autonomy or autonomous action. In this section I engage with the indignants' attempt to build a counter-hegemonic discourse to austerity, and discuss how the nodal point of autonomy influenced this attempt.

Protestors found themselves in a struggle between their need for autonomy, diversity and preserving individuality, and their need to create a movement with clear goals articulating an alternative to austerity. The emergence of the open assembly in the lower part of Syntagma Square was a direct response to that need. The open public assembly in the lower part of Syntagma Square was not created immediately after the gathering of the protesters in the Square. Participants in the first few days congregated in small groups discussing what they thought was important and articulating their understanding of the Greek crisis and the politics of austerity. As these small groups grew they merged into a large group, giving birth to the open assembly. The assembly was the subsequent product of the need of the protestors to articulate their subject positions.

Every protestor could participate in the open assembly and contribute to the formation of a common set of political demands, the articulation of an alternative discourse as to the cause of the crisis and an examination of the political paths that can lead to an exodus from the crisis and suggest new topics for discussion. The open assembly was located in the lower part of Syntagma Square and different groups with a variety of responsibilities emerged quickly at that part of the Square. Those groups could also pose different subjects for discussion in the public assemblies. The issues for discussion in the public assembly were organised by the "general committee". Anyone could join the general committee which was formed by different people, some with little or any experience on political activism. The general committee was also responsible for writing up the demands or proposals of the movement as voted for by the assembly and for the formulation of the topics discussed in the assembly.

The committee operated in such a way as to include suggestions from everyone. Anyone could write a couple of sentences on a piece of paper and give it to the committee. The committee was responsible for creating topics for discussion from the suggestions which the public assembly would discuss and vote upon. In order to include as many suggestions as possible, the committee would group the suggestions coming from the "indignants" into different categories, excluding some suggestions that would not fit in any of them, and later formulate a text which would include the above categories. The committee was also responsible for any alterations on the text as suggested by the assembly. The role of the committee was to transform the diversity of the discourses articulated into a more coherent and homogenous discourse that would represent the participants and become the voice of the movement; to transform the diversity of the movement into a united front against the politics of austerity.

The power of the general committee was recognised among the protestors as potentially threatening to the diversity of the movement and its autonomy. Many Interviewees criticise the attempt of the general committee and its power in shaping a discourse that was supposed to be the voice of an autonomous movement and reflect the individuality of their participants without reflecting their own. Meanwhile others feared that the power of the committee left the movement vulnerable to existing ideologies appropriating the movement and threatening its autonomy. Participants acknowledge a form of power in the general committee and many were threatened by the ability of the committee to shape and homogenise the discourses articulated. Many of the interviewees perceived the general committee as a group that could threaten the overall character of the movement, given its key impact upon the ability to form a homogenous discourse and influence the formation of political subjects within and outside the movement. According to Fotis, a participant of the movement and also a member of the committee:

> *"There was a battle* [within the committee]*, let's say; a battle of words. A battle first as to how the suggestions under discussion would be formulated, who was going to be in charge for the topics the assembly would be discussing....and that's where there was an issue with my political group. They were trying agonizingly to approve topics for discussion that had a content which not everyone could follow. A classic example was an obsession to write (in every topic for discussion) right next to "Troika", "EU, ECB, and IMF". There was an attempt to steer*

>   *the movement towards their agenda. That could not happen, those who*
>   *tried to do this 'broke their faces'"*[166]

The autonomy of the movement and the monitoring of the power of the committee were secured for the protestors as a result of the diversity of the members participating in the committee and the diversity of discourses articulated in the Square, such that no particular ideological discourse dominated the discussion or the decisions taken within the assembly. This diversity was reflected by the "neutral" or "everyday" language used within the Square; any hint of a word that could be associated with what is referred to as "wooden speech" would cause intense objections by the members of the indignant movement and the person using these words would be isolated. For example, if someone was using the words *capitalism*, *bourgeoisie*, and *class struggle* when addressing the assembly or other participants it was an indication that this person was articulating the discourse of the Greek Communist Party (KKE). The use of "wooden speech" reflected any elements or nodal points that occupied a historical significance in the discourse of specific political parties and ideologies or elements that were articulated at the time by the dominant discourse.

However, for many of the protestors the assembly did not manage to preserve its autonomy and for some was never autonomous. The protestors were unable to articulate a discourse outside existing ideological discourses. This inability negated the main character of the movement. The protestors could not build a discourse that could bridge the diversity of the movement without them losing the sense of autonomous action built in the first few days.

The more competing discourses were articulated in the public assembly and outside the assembly, the more participants felt that their individuality was threatened, seeing in every participant a possible enemy for the movement. As Telis says:

>   *"After a while I brought a friend over at the committee, he was not*
>   *really politically active, but he stuck at Syntagma, so I asked him to*
>   *join the committee so I can have someone I trust and anyway we were*
>   *fighting giants, it's just, the others were very experienced…."*[167]

Telis tries to convey how important discourse was for him in shaping the character of the movement. He feels threatened by the diversity of the participants and the attempt of different discourses trying to shape a counter-hegemonic discourse to the crisis. He engages in a battle

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[166] Fotis B. Interview conducted in Person, Athens, 3 July 2013
[167] Telis T., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 28 June 2013

over meaning even within the general committee in an attempt to safe guard the infiltration of conflicting discourses within the committee. He believes in the autonomy of the movement however he felt threatened by its diversity and engages in a battle for the meaning of their resistance.

> *"I remember this guy he was wearing the Greek flag as a cape. He came by the committee to make some photocopies for free and as he was waiting he took with him a flyer with the resolutions voted in the assembly. I didn't like him, the whole flag thing really annoyed me. I saw him the next day he was not carrying with him the flag and a couple of days later participating in the assembly. And I remember telling to myself that there is still hope to change people. Someone might come here with a few stereotypes in his head and after engaging with the people around him see life in a different way. There's an interaction."[168]*

Telis was excited by the popularity of the movement and the attempt to form a movement around a model of direct democracy. He saw the movement as a radical form that had the potential to overthrow neoliberal politics and implement a form of direct democracy. As an anarchist Telis found this prospect exciting and joined the movement in the hopes to be a part of this radical movement. However during his participation he slowly discovered the diversity of the participants and the difference between them. His participation was soon transformed into a battle of words to convey his understanding of the crisis, the limitations of liberal democracy, and the need to implement a form of direct democracy that would empower every individual and challenge capitalism as well as point out the problems of thinking within the confines of national sovereignty. He particularly despised any discourse of the crisis articulated around the need for national sovereignty and was struggling to "make them understand" that a nationalist discourse will not provide a solution to the crisis and will only encourage a rise of the party Golden Dawn.

The following floating elements located in the narrative of the interviewees were articulated within the movement and around this central moment of autonomy. "Anti-austerity", "The Greek crisis", "corruption", "the welfare state", "national sovereignty", "the role of political parties", "social justice", "political responsibility", "direct democracy" and the "role of the

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[168] Telis T., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 28 June 2013

EU and Germany" were all elements articulated around competing discourses trying to capture them and acquire a meaning in order to constitute the indignant discourse.

Almost every interviewee would articulate these elements in a different way and believe that they do so autonomously, without being influenced by existing ideological discourses. At the same time when these elements were articulated around a different discourse by other participants or when they would prioritise an element, turning it into a central moment, then participants disagreeing with that discourse would trace these elements into pre-existing moments within existing ideologies. They would thus proceed to a critique of this articulation based on the lack of its autonomy from existing ideologies and would dismiss it as an effort of a political party, or a particular ideological discourse to appropriate the movement, threatening the autonomy of the movement.

Interviewees understand their experiences as their own and as only slightly influenced by existing ideologies, some, and especially activists, tried not to articulate words or moments that would portray them as interpellated by a particular ideology. Participants, in the spirit of autonomous action, were avoiding using words and phrases commonly used by specific political parties. Participants using phrases and expressions coined by political parties or else "wooden speech" were immediately raise a hostile attention by their fellow indignants and would be painted as operatives of political parties trying to infiltrate the movement. Charis, an experienced activist, remembers the importance of using "every-day" words when talking to people in Syntagma Square so he would not alienate them. Being an activist and member of a left collective organisation (with no ties to political parties), Charis tells me proudly that he respected the autonomy of the movement by trying to confine his politics to himself so as to not influence the direction of the movement. He wanted to be a part of the movement but he feared that his involvement would unintentionally try to impose his politics and views which reflected most of the framework of his collective organisation. For him the only way to do so was to avoid engaging to any important discussions but also to avoid using what was framed as "wooden speech", as discussed above. Charis remembers how discussions outside and inside the assembly focused on appropriate phrases and how people affiliated with a political party insisting on using particular words and language in order to influence the discourse of the movement and control the movement.

Charis describes some of the heated discussions in the assembly in a nostalgic tone. He was clearly enjoying the ability of people to articulate different opinions and arguments and

mould them into a discourse that was autonomous of existing ideologies and could challenge the politics of austerity. It was the first time Charis saw so many people being interested in politics and coming together in order to change the world. Charis, in spite of his year-long experience as an activist, saw in the indignant movement for the first time *"a real possibility"* in challenging capitalism. He felt that he could finally be a part of a collective organisation that had a real possibility in achieving radical social change and which could mobilise thousands of people towards that goal. For Charis, the crisis was a direct product of the contradictions of capitalist accumulation and the only way out of it was to wage a class war against capital, a violent confrontation that would bring a socialist government into power. He hated what he regarded as the corrupt and unethical politics of neoliberalism and was excited to see that everyone else was as outraged as he was. However he found himself struggling not to interfere with the attempt of the indignants to shape a counter-hegemonic response to the crisis and respect the diversity and autonomy of the movement.

In all his years of political activism Charis had never experienced such a potential for change and for that he was willing to *"respect"* the rules of the movement and keep his politics to himself. Babis recognises that his ideology was shaped by his yearlong participation in his group and he did not want to influence the movement and tamper with its autonomous character. His attempt to compartmentalise himself was a conscious attempt and he engaged in this process from the beginning of his participation in the movement. He takes pride in his ability to restrain himself from trying to impose his politics upon the movement. He recalls a number of incidents where his role was limited to *"giving an extra hand when needed"* without dictating or suggesting a course of action. For Charis, his role *"was limited to posing questions for discussion"*. After a moment of pause Babis reflects on the answer he gave me about his role in the movement. He now acknowledges that even posing a question could influence the discourse articulated in the Square. This contradicted both the notion of autonomy and autonomous action of the movement, and also his effort to remain impartial and not let his activist self shape the movement. But he continues by arguing that that was a small interference without much consequence. The more Charis continues his description of his role in the movement the more he is faced with his inability to successfully compartmentalise himself. Faced with this apparent contradiction in his own narrative Charis pauses for a few seconds. After a moment of reflection Charis acknowledges now that in spite of his efforts he could have never managed to keep his own subjectivity and ideological convictions outside the movement and not influence his fellow indignants. But he takes

solace in the idea that no human being could achieve this. He now compares his actions to those undertaken by some of his comrades, who attempted to impose verbatim the ideological framework of their group upon the movement in an attempt to shape the people gathered in the Square and appropriate the moment. Charis's attempt to restrain himself from interfering in the political process of the movement and in the shaping of political subjects, respecting the need for an autonomous action, was present in the narrative of many of the interviewees who had a past in political activism.

Interviewees with experience in political activism and members of political parties such as Charis admit that they had to restrain themselves from interfering with the autonomy of the movement, trying to compartmentalise themselves into two; the one before and the one during the movement trying not to let their activist selves interfere with their actions as members of the indignant movement. However many soon saw that that was an impossibility, either at that time during their interaction with the movement or later after reflecting upon their actions. Their attempt to compartmentalise themselves does not suggest that the movement was not open to activists. Everyone was welcome to participate and some activists would not hide who they were. Even though the movement was open to everyone, even to activists and members of political parties, their participation came with some restrictions, that they would join the movement as themselves. Any participant using "wooden speech" or the discourse articulated by specific parties was no longer viewed as a member of the movement but a representative of a political party trying to steer the movement. According to interviewees when a person was identified as such she or he would be usually encouraged to either speak for herself or leave the Square. At that point people would no longer see them as individuals but as structures, mouthpieces of a regime that was no longer representing them and therefore were resented and marked as unwanted in the movement.

But as long as people were using an everyday language, the same or similar language that everyone else did then that was an indication that, in spite of their past as activists and party members, they were not trying to undercut the autonomy of the movement and were welcomed into the movement. They were expressing their individuality just as everyone else in the movement was. Sometimes other participants would intervene when they thought that someone was repeating the political positions of a movement and discipline that person (this form of discipline was not only limited to the discourse articulated but also, as will be discussed below, to specific forms of action). Pavlos recalls a number of incidences in which people would jump and discipline those participants that were trying to argue in favour of a

party or use this wooden speech. *"People were not censored. Just if someone said I'm a voter of SYRIZA or SYRIZA said this we would just give them a friendly notice and say my friend we are not interested here on what SYRIZA says, we are interested on what you say. And the guy would stop there. The word party was forbidden".[169]*

Pavlos was a member of the communications team and was one of the people responsible for the official website of the movement. He had no previous experience in political activism. He joined the movement before it moved to Syntagma Square. Pavlos was unemployed for some time when he decided to join the movement. He believed that the crisis was a direct product of corrupt politics and that even though he was ready to make *"sacrifices"* he was not ready to accept the authority of existing political parties. He felt the same sense of anger and indignation towards existing political parties and corrupt government officials as everyone else and he was convinced that the movement was the only form of resistance against the *"unfair politics of austerity"*. To do so the movement had to maintain its autonomy. The autonomy of the movement was imperative for Pavlos. It was the very idea of autonomous action that contributed to the popularity of the movement and he was exceedingly proud of being amongst the first people who realised the importance of such a form of action. *"When you have a fresh idea and this idea does not belong somewhere ideologically, it's something new then it's popular. Besides isn't everything that is independent, that is autonomous always the best? You have seen in Greece what the right and the left are like; and so many other ideologies. No one ends up being happy. People were hungry for something new. They were not hungry for ideology they were hungry for dreams and something new and they still are."[170]* Pavlos saw participants without any experience in activism as "pure" while those with experience were tainted by ideology. He saw himself amongst these pure people that were striving to create something new outside ideology.

Words that carried a historical weight within Greek political culture were deemed "tainted" and excluded from the articulation process as a means to dictate and influence the indignant discourse. If a speaker at the public assembly used repeatedly words such as capitalism, the bourgeoisie, class struggle and advocated that the movement should work with trade unions that person would be immediately portrayed as part of a left ideology possibly a supporter of SYRIZA or of the Greek Communist Party (KKE). Her suggestions would be categorised as

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[169] Pavlos D., Interview conducted in person, Athens , 12 July 2013
[170] Pavlos D., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 12 July 2013

an attempt of a political party to steer the movement and appropriate it in order to gain power and perpetuate existing regime of power relations and political corruption.

"I heard some very interesting things in the assembly", Dimitris, a young unemployed man who joined the movement a few times, told me.

> *"There were people saying nice things but when I saw someone talking, who I knew what he was all about* [member of a political party],*I begun to be more sceptical about the assembly. When that guy was addressing the crowd it wasn't easy to understand his political convictions, unless you knew his past. He was using words that made it difficult to understand where he was coming from; and there were nice words that could convince someone but not me. Because I knew him and what he stands for, his words couldn't convince me. There were people talking at the assembly that said nice stuff but from that moment on I was very critical about what they were saying and how they were saying these things."* [171]

For many participants such as Dimitris, who felt that their autonomy was threatened by the process of the open assembly, the only way to maintain their autonomy was not to participate in the assembly and instead focus on emotional expression. It was ithin this activity that many interviewees said they felt free individuals. In spite of the struggle between different discourses within the movement and the articulation of the floating elements in a particular way, interviewees' narratives point to a privileging of a discourse around the crisis. For many of the interviewees the Greek crisis is as an ethical failure of political parties and a lack of responsibility by people in power and by the Greek citizens. Falling to assume responsibilities and thinking only for their personal benefit and individual empowerment and that of their party contributed to establishing a corrupt political culture. I will further discuss this understanding of the crisis and its impact upon the movement in Chapter 7. For many of the interviewees, the only efficient way to communicate their opinion about the crisis autonomously was by expressing their outrage and indignation against "those that brought us here"; a phrase commonly used by the interviewees. Emotions were frequently compared by the interviewees with the "tainted" character of words indicating that a collective action based on the expression of individual emotions was a "pure" form of action.

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[171] Dimitris L. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 22 July 2013

2.4 The Limits in the Logic of Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory

If we are to interpret the indignant movement through the prism of Laclau and Mouffe the indignants were unable to become the "people". They were unable to "enter into equivalence with one another and…divide the political space into two antagonistic fields"[172] proceeding to the formation of a counter hegemonic discourse to the crisis and so move from "a strategy of opposition" to "a strategy of new order"[173]. Any attempt for consensus or compromise threatened their individuality and was not consistent with the mandate for individual empowerment and inclusion/acceptance of difference. The fixed point of autonomy and autonomous action under which the indignants attempt to construct an alternative to austerity and try to fix the meaning of crisis is defined by participants as independence from political parties, trade unions and existing forms of collective organisation, individual empowerment and multiplicity of participants, individual expression and articulation of thoughts and emotions outside existing ideologies.

Laclau and Mouffe's framework offers tools to understand how the indignant movement dissolved and the impact of the discourses articulated within the movement in the production of political subjectivities. Laclau and Mouffe, and later Mouffe, emphasise the significance of the construction of a new political subjectivity within a liberal democratic project in which everyone had an equal voice and every discourse articulated can shape a "Left project". These conditions reflect the process under which the indignants attempt to form a counter-discourse to austerity. Laclau and Mouffe see the potential within these neoliberal subjects for the rise of a revolutionary subject, however they fail to grasp the limitations of such a potential due to their inability to see the importance of non-discursive influence in the production of political subjectivities. Laclau and Mouffe's belief in the discursive character of political subjectivities will allow a popular movement to articulate the appropriate elements in a chain of equivalence that will overthrow capitalist relations of production and give rise to a form of "radical democracy". But what if within the articulation process, politics that reproduce capitalist relations are privileged; how then can we distinguish them from revolutionary politics? What if, as we saw in the case of the indignants, participants reject existing tools in the critique of capitalism and then engage in the articulation of elements that favour a nationalistic or a neoliberal discourse?

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[172] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 131
[173] Laclau and Mouffe *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* 188

Interviewees' narratives point to a discursive battle within the movement in their attempt to establish a common action towards a resistance to the politics of austerity. Within this discursive battle participants were trying to exclude existing discourses that were rooted within a history of collective struggle in Greece. Tools of the critique of capitalism were not privileged in the articulation process and labelled as "wooden speech". Wooden speech is a form of discourse used to portray the attempt of existing political parties and collective organisations to recruit members, a form of language that was used in the past to deprive them of their individuality and could no longer capture reality, a relic of a different era that played its part in the emergence of the Greek debt crisis. Participants with experience in activism engaged in this battle but found themselves without ammunition. They were trying to respect this mandate by modifying their language however they were struggling to put forward a critique of capitalism. The subject positions that are being welcomed in the practice of articulation are at the same time blocked as "carriers" of ideological discourses that can infect the movement. At that moment the category of dislocation disappears and "the foundation on which new identities are constituted" is eliminated. [174]   The indignant movement managed to successfully mobilise thousands of Greek citizens against the upcoming political decisions on the politics of austerity. The discourses articulated were multiple; however the differences within those discourses were unable to "collapse into" a chain of equivalence around the empty signifier of autonomy. Instead the new coalition government managed to incorporate these differences and continue the politics of austerity.

A reading of the indignant movement through the theoretical lens of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis maps the different processes in the movement in which ideology and culture shape political subjectivity. However Laclau and Mouffe's framework is unable to fully grasp the mechanisms of production of political subjectivity outside the political hegemony of discourse. Laclau and Mouffe's attempt to reintroduce Gramsci's concept of hegemony depriving it by its relationship to the economy leads to the erection of a framework that is unable to explain why some discourses are privileged than others within the articulation process and why the Greek indignants did not manage to form a collective political subjectivity. For Laclau and Mouffe every discourse is articulated equally and can contribute to the production of revolutionary politics. Thus for Laclau and Mouffe, a discourse articulated by a member of the Golden Dawn party or a middle class man who

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[174] Ernesto Laclau. 'New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time', in *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*. Ed. Ernesto Laclau. (London: Verso, 1990). 39.

welcomes "some aspects of austerity" within the Greek indignant movement contributes equally to the production of a collective political subjectivity to a left discourse that critiques capitalist power relations.

The indignant movement managed to mobilise thousands of Greek citizens against the politics of austerity. The people who gathered were from a broad range of the social stratum. To maintain protest by establishing a common ground amongst their difference, in a way that would inform their resistance to austerity, participants engaged in a process of articulation and an emotional expression of their individuality. These practises were informed by the nodal point of autonomy and autonomous action. However this desire for autonomy and autonomous action was not just an expression of a crisis of hegemony in a battle to fix the meaning of the Greek crisis and a response to the politics of austerity. This desire for autonomy is rooted in the importance participants place upon their individuality and their attempt to maintain this individuality within a form of collective action. The Greek indignants were unable to form a collective political subjectivity based upon a consensus of the different discourses articulated in the movement linked in a chain of equivalence and constitute the people. In spite of their inability to come together and form a common set of goals and demands that would inform the actions of the movement and divide the social field into two antagonistic camps interviewees narrative indicates that they had a sense of an 'us' and a 'them'. Emotions and a process of a horizontal form of decision making and self-organisation appear to have a key role in the production of this sense of solidarity. Laclau and Mouffe's framework cannot grasp this. This ability to create a sense of solidarity in spite of the internal contradiction within the movement warrants further investigation. To that end I turn my analytical focus in the next two chapters upon Hardt and Negri and their concept of the "multitude" and "affect" in order to critically engage with the participants' desire for autonomous action, fetishisation on maintaining the diversity of the movement, and their ability to establish a sense of solidarity in spite of their differences.

Chapter 3

Autonomy and diversity in the Greek indignant movement: A critique of the politics of the multitude and the production of political subjectivity in Hardt and Negri's thought

In the previous chapter I demonstrated the inability of the Greek indignants to come together under common demands by focusing on their desire for autonomy and individual empowerment. In this chapter I examine further this problematic by engaging with Hardt and Negri's argument for the production of a collective political subjectivity that is autonomous and established within a horizontal form of organisation.

In this chapter I argue that the Greek indignants in spite of their desire to maintain the diversity of the movement they begin to see it as a restriction upon their attempt to increase their power as individuals and influence the politics for tackling the crisis. A cursory reading of the Greek indignants' mandate for autonomy, autonomous action and a horizontal form of organisation within the movement in the form of public assembly was an indication for many scholars for the emergence of a new revolutionary subject, the multitude, which claims its autonomy from existing power relations.[175] In this chapter I examine how the Greek indignant movement confirms or challenges some of the assumptions made by this body of work focusing on the work of Hardt and Negri.

As Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri begin from the same premise for a re-examination of Marxism in light of the need of a democratic project that will address contemporary forms of oppression; a democratic project that, in the case of Hardt and Negri, can be realised by the collective political subject of the multitude.[176] However where Laclau and Mouffe stress the importance of politics in the production of a collective political subjectivity Hardt and Negri stress the importance of the economy in shaping a collective political subjectivity pointing to the inability to divide the "economic" aspect…from other

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[175] Costas Douzinas. *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013); Nikos Sotirakopoulos. 'The Notion of the Multitude and Lessons from the Present Cycle of Struggles: The Case of Greece', in Benjamín Tejerina and Ignacia Perugorría (eds) *From Social to Political: New Forms of Mobilisation and Democratisation* Conference Proceedings (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco – Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea, 2012).

[176] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri '*Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: The Penguin Press 2004). xi-xviii.

social domains."[177] Thus where Laclau and Mouffe see the defeat of labour after the 70s in the rise of New Social Movements and the inability of the concept of the proletariat to address new forms of collective struggle, Hardt and Negri argue for the need of a concept that will expand the characteristics of the concept of the proletariat and replace it in order to incorporate the internal differences of social actors within a model of direct democracy. For Hardt and Negri the multitude is an autonomous political subject. The autonomy of the multitude is established in "the common", a connection of the diverse characteristics of social actors found in their communicative and collaborative network necessary for the production of value within contemporary capitalism. In this chapter I critically engage with the concepts of "the multitude" and "the common" two key concepts in Hardt and Negri's theories on the production of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. I investigate the internal contradictions in Hardt and Negri's theory for mapping the mechanisms of the production of contemporary political subjectivity. I examine how this abstract understanding of the formation of a collective revolutionary subjectivity relates to praxis by relating this critique to the processes developed within the Greek indignant movement. I argue that the model of direct democracy put forward by the Greek indignant movement, even though inspired and admirable in forming a process of resistance towards the politics of representational democracy, proceeded within a mandate of all-inclusiveness and acceptance of diversity which limited their ability to form a collective response to austerity and resist neoliberal politics.

Hardt and Negri view struggle as the ongoing attempt of capital to limit the revolutionary potential of labour.[178] What made Hardt and Negri's framework so appealing to contemporary thought was their attempt to formulate an all-inclusive class concept addressing the limitations of the concept of the proletariat in Marxist though by turning the defeat of the working class in the mid '70s to an important step towards a socialist world.[179] To do so Hardt and Negri reintroduce Spinoza's concept of the multitude while exploring the relevance of Spinoza's work with changes made in the deindustrialisation of production after the 1970s. Hardt and Negri in line with other "post-operaist" introduce a number of concepts which hope to provide a theory that might finally unite the masses. Many of the concepts

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[177] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri '*Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* xv
[178] Werner Bonefeld 'Human Practise and Perversion: Beyond Autonomy and Structure' in *Revolutionary Writing: Common Sense Essays in Post-Political Politics*. ed. Werner Bonefeld (New York: Autonomedia, 2003). 73.
[179] George Caffentzis. *In Letters of Blood and Fire: Work Machines and the Crisis of Capitalism* (Brooklyn, New York: Autonomedia, 2013); Bonefeld 'Human Practice and Perversion'

introduced or reintroduced by Hardt and Negri address changes in production that in turn have an impact upon the production of subjectivity that would eventually lead to the autonomy of individuals from capitalist domination.

The 70s crisis for Hardt and Negri did not only unmask the limitations of the concept of the proletariat as the agent of historical change but also the emergence of changes in the mode of production; changes that where established within class struggle.[180] In many ways these changes for Hardt and Negri also pointed to the limitations of thinking of the proletariat as the subject of history.[181] They argue that the concept of the proletariat is based on exclusion and refers only to industrial labour.[182] By highlighting this exclusion Hardt and Negri introduce the need to readdress the production of political subjectivity taking also into account changes in the mode of production. Hardt and Negri argue that a new political subject arises from these changes, the multitude. Influenced by Spinoza's theory of affect, contemporary enquiries into the mechanisms for the production of the political subject argue that there is a collective political body that can unify a multiplicity of individuals without them compromising or losing their particular characteristics.[183] This resurrection of Spinoza's work is combined with Foucault's concept of Biopolitics by Hardt and Negri in order to create a new revolutionary Spinozist theory that will, for Hardt and Negri, address a change in the mode of production to post-Fordism and go beyond the ability of orthodox Marxism to examine these changes.[184]

I examine Hardt and Negri's characterisation of the field of the production of subjectivity as one in which the political is not separate from the economic. I examine their argument that stress the importance of changes in new forms of labour upon the mechanisms of the production of political subjectivity and the need to formulate an understanding of political subjectivity that does not treat politics as a separate field from the economy. However I argue that the mechanisms for the production of subjectivities within capitalist relations of production continue to operate within the Greek indignant movement. The internal contradictions found in Hardt and Negri's argument of a "common" that is somehow outside the power relation that contributes to its character can be best illustrated in the problematic

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[180] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[181] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[182] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[183] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[184] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri *Commonwealth* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2009).

that arises from a fetishisation of diversity within the Greek indignant movement to establishing a common action against the politics of austerity.[185]

For many of the protestors the first days of the movement are imprinted in their memory as the days of outrage. The call for indignation facilitate the need of the protestors to express their emotions and individuality. This plethora of people and diversity of expression for the protestors was an attempt to establish an autonomous movement, a movement that is not just independent from any political party, trade union organisation or other existing collective organisation but also valued them as individuals and facilitate what they regarded as their right to be in a collective movement while also maintaining their individuality. The first few days the indignant movement appeared as an ideological catharsis, people from the far left and right were under the same banner of indignation. Any attempt to provide a clear ideological content to the demonstration was met with the disapproval from the crowd as it would alienate other participants and contradict the open character of the movement. Mottos which were historically defined as right wing were used by left activists and songs that were written and sang during the dictatorship and define the left were sang by right wing people. A mandate for autonomy and autonomous action permeated the participants' actions within a movement that aimed to be new in every sense of the word as it renounced any ties to existing forms of power relations (cultural, historical, ideological) by reflecting the individuality of every participant. Dimitris values his individuality and autonomy, he wanted to be a part of a movement that would allow him to express himself without restricting who he was, a quality that Dimitris shared with every participant in the movement.

> *"It was something spontaneous. My original suspicion wasn't confirmed, that the movement might be directed by someone. I saw people of different ages and mentality. I'm not saying that that was good or bad but it was spontaneous. I could not identify with any of the existing political parties. So when I went to Syntagma square I felt free. I wasn't wearing a "party hat" and I could defend my own interests but at the same time someone else's interests too."[186]*

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[185] According to Jason Hickel this problematic is also evident within the Occupy Movement in New York. Jason Hickel. 'Liberalism and the Politics of Occupy Wall Street' *Anthropology of this Century* (2012) (accessed online, November 2015 http://aotcpress.com/articles/liberalism-politics-occupy-wall-street/)

[186] Dimitris G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 20 September 2013

Marina Prentoulis and Lasse Thomassen draw upon this theoretical argument between horizontality and verticality by discussing the organisational characteristics of the Greek and Spanish indignants.[187] However, I argue, this debate extends more to a mere difference on the basis of collective movement organisation. It is rooted within an understanding of power and emancipation and the production of political subjectivity within contemporary forms of domination. I first engage with Hardt and Negri's theory of the autonomous subject of the multitude and argue that even though Hardt and Negri's argument of the importance in the shaping of subjectivities located in the labour process is paramount in building an understanding on the mechanisms that contribute to the rise and demise of the Greek indignant movement their theoretical argument on the production of a collective political subjectivity makes politics unthinkable. I will explore the limitations of the concept of the multitude to produce a politics that can challenge capitalism in its ability to form an autonomous common ground within a horizontal form of decision making. While on the next chapter I will explore the impossibility of the autonomy of the multitude with regards to its affective capacities.

In the first section of this chapter I critically engage with Hardt and Negri's theories on changes in the mode of production and how they bear upon concomitant forms of struggle. The second and third sections relate the critique of the inability of the multitude to become autonomous from the power relations that contribute to its character. I do so by examining first the tension within the movement between forming a common set of goals within a model of direct democracy and the desire to maintain the diversity of the movement. I examine further the inability of the movement to create "the common", as defined by Hardt and Negri, and the divisions formed within the movement evident in the use of language, symbols and expressions of the body. I conclude by arguing that the Greek indignants could not escape the idea of individualism and liberal politics rooted within capitalism and so I challenge the ability of Hardt and Negri's framework to capture the emergence of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism.

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[187] Marina Prentoulis and Lasse Thomassen. 'Political Theory in the Square: Protest, representation and subjectification', *Contemporary Political Theory*. 12:3 (2013). 166-184.

3.1 Hardt and Negri on the Production of Subjectivity

Hardt and Negri explore the revolutionary potential within Spinoza's theory and his concept of the multitude and in doing so they formulate an all-inclusive class concept: the multitude. With the concept of the multitude Hardt and Negri seek to account for the formation of multiple subjectivities within a collective political form that can lead to the formation of a revolutionary subject. They argue that the concept of the proletariat is based on exclusion and refers only to industrial labour[188]. By highlighting this exclusion Hardt and Negri introduce the need to readdress the problematic of the production of subjectivities by taking into account changes in the mode of production.[189] To proceed to a critique of Hardt and Negri's theory on the mechanisms for the production of a political subjectivity it is important to clarify how this political subject in the form of the multitude is produced within contemporary forms of power and how the multitude can become autonomous from the power relations that contributed to the character of its own subjectivity. In this section I therefore locate the internal contradictions within Hardt and Negri's framework on the revolutionary character of the multitude.

Hardt and Negri argue that in late capitalism labour and production have taken an immaterial turn.[190] Production is focused on immaterial goods such as ideas, knowledge and forms of communication.[191] This transformation resulted in a change in the form of production. In post-Fordism a worker's value is determined by her knowledge and ability to affect.[192] Workers today must be able to have a vast range of knowledge, from mastering evolving technologies and foreign languages to emotional and affective skills.[193] Emotions have been commodified.[194] For Hardt and Negri these changes in production positioned immaterial labour at a hegemonic place.[195] This as Hardt and Negri argue does not mean that industry and agriculture have been abolished but rather that they have slowly embraced the characteristics of immaterial labour.[196]

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[188] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[189] Antonio Negri. *Reflections on Empire*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).
[190] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[191] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[192] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[193] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[194] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[195] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[196] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*

Unlike industrial labour immaterial labour is not bound within the factory, instead it produces "forms of life" and directly engages with culture, society and politics.[197] Immaterial labour turns ideas, thoughts and emotions into commodities. Therefore the production of value escapes the confines of the factory and enters into "forms of life", making "the production of economic value … increasingly indistinguishable from the production of social relations."[198] Labour time enters leisure time, the worker tries to improve her skills constantly regardless of whether she is working full time, part time or is unemployed.[199] The development of a communicative and a collaborative network between immaterial labour is paramount.[200] This kind of collaboration is characteristic to the nature of production in Post-Fordism which they call biopolitical.[201] Hardt and Negri use Foucault's concept of Biopolitics in order to provide the basis for the emergence of a political subject that does not exclude the realm of the economy from that of politics. "we will call this kind of production "biopolitical" to highlight how general its products are and how directly it engages social life in its entirety……biopolitical production is,.., immanent to society and creates social relationships and forms through collaborative forms of labor"[202]. The biopolitical turn in the mode of production therefore limits any clear distinction that could be made between the economic, political, cultural and social.

Within this terrain of biopolitical production workers need to establish a form of communication and collaboration in order to produce value.[203] This collaborative network within biopolitical production is based upon the ability of workers to come together and work as individuals, competing each other in developing their cognitive skills.[204] This collaborative network brings together different individuals. "Certainly, each form of labor remains singular in its concrete existence, and every type of worker is different from every other – the autoworker form the rice farmer from the retail salesperson – but this multiplicity tends to be inscribed in a common substance."[205] Hardt and Negri borrow this philosophical understanding of the ability of singularities to come together from social anthropology[206]. For Hardt and Negri every person within society is singular and remains that way; capital has no

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[197] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[198] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 239
[199] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth*
[200] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth*
[201] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth*
[202] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 94
[203] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 135-137
[204] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 135-137
[205] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 94
[206] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 128-129

intention to unify the singularities of the workers.[207] I will not expand on the philosophical dimensions of the concept of singularity but I will, however, offer a critical account of how Hardt and Negri see in the concept of the multitude the ability of these singularities to unite.

These "singular figures of postmodern labor" in order to produce need to communicate and collaborate. [208] To do so they need to form a common base under which this collaboration can be facilitated, they need to act in common converging to "a common social being", the multitude. [209] "Singularities interact and communicate socially on the basis of the common, and their social communication in turn produces the common. The multitude is the subjectivity that emerges from this dynamic of singularity and commonality."[210] The multitude is thus a product of the subjectivities produced within this new form of exploitation of the common.

The multitude as the alternative to class encompasses the whole spectrum of working and non-working/unemployed and the poor, reproducing itself and reproducing capitalism. The common ground under which this collaboration is based is located in the production process and also in the reproduction of labour. It includes the whole fabric of social life because the form of production is biopolitical. Hardt and Negri argue that what is important for the production of immaterial goods is important for immaterial labour to organise itself. Unlike industrial labour where one of the key roles of capital and key mechanisms for the exploitation of labour in the production processes is to organise workers and "enforce their cooperation", Hardt and Negri argue that "in biopolitical production [,…,] capital does not determine the cooperative arrangement, or at least to the same extent. Cognitive labor and affective labor generally produce cooperation autonomously from capitalist command."[211] The creativity needed by immaterial labour to produce requires, for Hardt and Negri, a level of autonomy in terms of the organisation of work time and the cooperation of individuals. Unlike industrial labour, where capital had to impose strict mechanisms of control over the labour process and organising productive cooperation, Hardt and Negri argue that in immaterial labour individuals must have a level of autonomy and freedom in order to be productive and creative. It is thus left upon the workers to organise their time and their form of cooperation, establishing a horizontal form of collaboration necessary for production of

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[207] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 128-129
[208] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 159
[209] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 159
[210] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 198
[211] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 140

immaterial goods and innovations. Creating thus a common which capital seeks to expropriate.[212]

For Hard and Negri the multitude does not function within "the capitalist body".[213] In essence Hardt and Negri see the formation of a common which is external to capital which seeks to expropriate its value. "biopolitical labour is increasingly autonomous. Capital is predatory […]in so far as it seeks to capture and expropriate the autonomously produced common wealth"[214]. Capital is trying to control labour through different mechanisms, "hovering over it (the multitude) parasitically with its disciplinary regimes, apparatuses of capture, mechanisms of expropriation, financial networks, and the like"[215]. A contradiction arises at this point for Hardt and Negri, a contradiction that gives birth to the revolutionary potential of the multitude in the attempt of capital to control an already free and autonomous political subjectivity. As I will argue bellow this argument is permeated by a number of problems, especially when related to contemporary forms of collective action.

> *"Capital fails to generate a vicious cycle of accumulation, which would lead from the existing common through biopolitical production to a new expanded common that serves in turn as the basis of a new productive process. Indeed, each time capital intervenes to control biopolitical labor and expropriate the common, it hampers the process, forcing it to limp along, handicapped."[216]*

A mechanism for controlling the common is for Hardt and Negri to subject the multitude to a vertical hierarchy of management contradicting the already established horizontal form of organisation that is the basis for the autonomy of the multitude. Thus the multitude grows indignant towards the mechanisms that try to control it.[217] Hardt and Negri see in the action of revolution the exercise of an individual's freedom. For Hardt and Negri the autonomy individuals manage to exercise within the power relations of the production process culminates in an act of rebellion against power. "Power can be exercised over free subjects, and thus the resistance of those subjects in not only posterior to power but an expression of their freedom, which is prior. Revolt as an exercise of freedom not only precedes but also

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[212] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 137-149
[213] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 165-178
[214] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 142
[215] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 142
[216] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 149
[217] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth*

prefigures the forms that power will take in reaction"[218]. The organisational structure therefore of the multitude is such that enables the multitude to exit existing power relations, create an autonomous political subject and is not controlled or anticipated by Empire.[219] This organisational framework can emerge only if the revolt is based on indignation "expressed by subjects in the face of the unfreedoms and injustices of power, the severe forms of control and hierarchy, and the cruel forms of exploitation and expropriation in the disordered world of global governance."[220] Hardt and Negri see in indignation towards injustice the motivation under which the multitude becomes a revolutionary force and produces new political subjects. They solidify this indignation into the common which is subject to capital's expropriation. "The indignation and antagonism of the multitude is thus directed not only against the violence of hierarchy and control by also in the defence of the productivity of the common and the freedom of encounters".[221] Following Spinoza, indignation for Hardt and Negri is one of the emotional registers that inevitably leads subjects, as a multitude, to act against the power relations that oppress the multitude. For Hardt and Negri, indignation provides the motor for individuals to suddenly arrive at a state of self-consciousness about those who oppress them and seek to become autonomous through an organisational structure that guarantees this autonomy. Hardt and Negri locate the field of this antagonism in the inability of capital to control labour. Immaterial labour is able to produce new and innovative ideas that cannot, all of them, be captured by capital. "The productivity of labor-power increasingly exceeds the bounds set in its employment by capital".[222] It is at this very point in which antagonism for Hardt and Negri can be transformed into revolt in which the multitude seeks to exit from its relationship with capital, grasping in full its autonomy. This elaborate route towards absolute autonomy is marked only by the timeliness of Kairos that will initiate the exodus of the multitude.[223] This appropriate time, which will disrupt the linear progression of capital's exploitation, will be grasped by a political subject; that political subject is the multitude or the new multitude. But if the multitude has already established its autonomy and subjects are free, why struggle at all? Why become indignant?

For Hardt and Negri, unlike the concept of 'the people', "the multitude is the result of a process of political constitution, although, whereas the people is formed as a unity by a

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[218] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 234-235
[219] Negri *Empire and Beyond*
[220] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 235
[221] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 165-178
[222] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 151
[223] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 165-178

hegemonic power standing above the plural social field, the multitude is formed through articulations on the plane of immanence without hegemony".[224] Hardt and Negri argue that unlike the concept of the people, where the differences of social actors are reduced to one identity, the concept of the multitude facilitates the singularity of social subjects participating that guarantees its multiplicity. It is in the establishment of the common that the multitude can become united. Unlike the concept of the people, social actors do not put aside their differences; the multitude retains its plural character. Hardt and Negri argue that the concept of the multitude differs from other concepts such as a mob or a crowd because it retains the diversity of social actors at the same time transforming them into a political being that will be able to pursue change and not become susceptible to manipulation by a leader.[225]

Due to the biopolitical production of subjectivity Hardt and Negri do not proceed to claim on the formation of the political subject which requires the division of the economic realm from the political. Hardt and Negri try to argue for the production of a political subject that is, unlike Laclau and Mouffe's, always connected to the realm of the economy. Where for Laclau and Mouffe the separation of the realm of the economy is necessary in the process of the formation of new political subjects for Hardt and Negri it is imperative for the production of a new collective subjectivity to acknowledge the penetration of capitalist relations of exploitation into every fabric of our social and political life. In that way Hardt and Negri try to produce a theory of the political subject that can replace Marx's concept of the proletariat and address what the concept of the proletariat does not; the incorporation of different identities which are equally important in the formation of a revolutionary political subjectivity. Where Laclau and Mouffe try to banish the concept of the proletariat as the subject of history and incorporate it in the plurality of different identities within the democratic project Hardt and Negri try to completely reinvent the concept of the proletariat.

Hardt and Negri locate the source of antagonism within the attempt of capital to control the emerging multitude which becomes slowly autonomous. According to Hardt and Negri the production of value, as immaterial commodities and production of social relations, requires the autonomy of labour. This autonomous labour produces a network of cooperation giving flesh to the multitude as an autonomous political subject from capitalist control. Caffentzis critiques Hardt and Negri argument that capital facilitates the autonomy of labour and its

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[224] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 167
[225] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*

ability to grow slowly autonomous from capital's control.[226] Caffentzis points out that the sense of autonomy and self-control within these new forms of labour is characteristic of the mechanisms used by capital to control labour. Contrary to Hardt and Negri Caffentzis demonstrates that autonomy is used to shape its subjectivity in divided ways.[227] Toscano further illustrates the limits of autonomy by focusing on the production of value in his examination of work in higher education. Toscano investigates the processes deployed within universities by faculty and students to create value in the form of knowledge, become productive and establish a cooperative network within academia.[228] Toscano points to the emergence of a common that is not taking place autonomous from capital and that is "not antithetical to capital but in fact productive".[229] This takes place within a process of intense competition within academic staff that masquerades as collective creativity, self-control and autonomy. There are individualistic and competitive aspects to the subjectivities created in these new forms of labour that cannot be ignored because they raise questions regarding the character of the multitude as a collective political subject. Lazzarato shows how neoliberal mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity focus upon an institutional matrix that promotes individualism and the production of subjectivities as individual entrepreneurs.[230]

What does it mean for the concept of the multitude and the politics of praxis when these characteristics are transferred in the attempt to build a direct form of democracy and a collective political subjectivity? In the next two sections I examine the ability of the Greek indignants and act as a collective political subject as put forward by Hard and Negri. In the next two sections I will critically reflect upon the Hardt and Negri's internal logic of the production of a collective political subjectivity that can unify different individuals without a consensus, maintaining their individuality. I do so by focusing on two important areas of praxis within the Greek indignant movement. First, I focus on the need of the participants to maintain a horizontal form of decision making and the politics produced within the public assemblies in their attempt to maintain the diversity of the movement. Second, I examine the attempt of the Greek indignants to establish "a common" language that unites the multitude and drives it to exit existing power relations.

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[226] George Caffentzis, "A Critique of 'Cognitive Capitalism'", in Michael A. Peters and Ergin Bulut (eds.), *Cognitive Capitalism, Education and Digital Labor*. (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).
[227] Caffentzis *In Letters of Blood and Fire*116
[228] Toscano 'The limits of Autonomy: Cognitive Capitalism and University Struggles' in Michael A. Peters and Ergin Bulut (eds.), *Cognitive Capitalism, Education and Digital Labor*. (New York: Peter Lang, 2011). 244-259.
[229] Toscano 'The Limits of Autonomy' 267
[230] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man*

3.2. The question of organisation: Horizontality and the limits of a horizontal form of decision making within the Greek indignant movement

As I argued in the previous chapter, the public assembly in Syntagma emerged from within the desire of participants for autonomous action and individual empowerment, to guide the action of the movement and attempt to build a set of goals and an alternative to the politics of austerity. Anyone could participate in the open assembly and influence the decisions made. Diversity and individuality was respected and no one could censor a speaker. This form of horizontal decision making is not new within collective form of organisation in Greece; it has a long history within the Greek anarchist movement.[231] Nonetheless this form of organisation was deemed autonomous by many of the participants from existing ideological structures and appropriated to facilitate the diversity of the participants within a form of collective action. In this section I explore the limitations of a horizontal mode of organisation when combined with a fetishism of diversity and individuality. This empirical analysis challenges Hardt and Negri's argument on the production of a collective political subjectivity that is not based upon consensus.

Interviewees' narratives illustrate a number of limitations in this effort to establish a horizontal form of decision making while at the same time preserving the diverse character of the movement. The first contradiction emerges in the attempt of the open assembly to establish a set of common goals or actions. Participants see the decisions taken in the public assembly as a threat to their individuality and therefore find it difficult to commit to a common set of actions. By trying to accede to the importance of diversity and not alienate participants, the assembly would frequently reach points of indecisiveness and inaction that made participants question the ability of the movement to act collectively against the politics of austerity. Finally participants came to realise the democratic deficit of the assembly in its claim to reflect the voices of every individual in the movement, and of the Greek people.

Chara, an unemployed graduate of psychology, had participated in the past in many forms of protests and in different organisations. However she felt that none of them reflected her political opinions.

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[231] George Kritidis. 'The Rise and Crisis of the Anarchist and Libertarian Movement in Greece' in Bart Van Bersteen, Ask Katzeff and Leendert Van Hoogenhuijze (eds), *The City is Ours: Squatting and Autonomous Movements in Europe from the 1970s to the Present*. (Oakland CA: PM Press, 2014). 63-94.

"I would go when there was a march and join a bloc for example the bloc of SYRIZA's youth. I was not going as a member of a party but in these marches you have to go somewhere because there are blocs and you have to go behind one whether you like it or not" she tells me frustrated and in an apologetic tone *"but with the indignants there was no specific framework like the one in these blogs so I felt more free there. There were no small groups with specific political standards that you have to meet. There was a general disagreement with the politics so far amongst the people and not a particular political framework. It was a general disagreement. So I preferred to stand side by side with these people that did not feel like supporting a party. I thought at the beginning that that was a good thing. Because for the first time I could be in the same protest with my dad, my grandma, my professor, my friends, with everyone! United under one thing, we are in a crisis and we disagree with this. So at the beginning I thought I agreed with everyone just because they were there, 'cause the movement existed. Just the fact that such a movement existed cheered me up. I would go to Syntagma square and I would feel a strange wave of joy. I was feeling happy with the upper part of the square and with the lower part of the square. I would feel happy in general with everyone that was there."* [232]

Chara enjoyed her participation. She enjoyed being able to speak for herself when participating at a protest and not being forced to support a political party. She wanted to feel empowered, as an individual, and that was not possible under the vertical organisational form of existing forms of collective organisation. In spite of her unwillingness to express her ideas and political beliefs to the open assembly so as to influence the character of the moment Chara discovered a sense of freedom within a form of protest that she previously could not imagine existed. She was able to talk to different people using informal language and hear their ideas and understand their emotions too. The ability to find a common ground among all these people made her feel even more ecstatic and hopeful. Chara was drawing pleasure from her newfound sense of freedom of expression and, as for many of the interviewees, in her

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[232] Chara G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 23 July 2013

ability to connect that joy to a plethora of people all joined together on what she thought was a common cause. This was enough for Chara to convince her to join the movement.

It was not just the independent character of the movement that captured the action of participants but a mandate for autonomy. This autonomy, as discussed in the previous chapter, was defined by the movement as a form of individual empowerment and an exit from existing power relations and ideological structures.

The open assembly emerged and operated within that mandate for individual empowerment, for building a movement that has no connections to existing forms of power relations. However, as participants began to engage within the assembly they would begin to discover its limitations.

Makis's original enthusiasm for the open assembly was slowly turning into scepticism and mistrust of the process and of the people participating. For Makis, the assembly represented a form of direct democracy that as an anarchist he never thought he could encounter on such a large scale with so many people in Greece. *"I glorified the assembly, I believed in the process"* Makis tells me apologetically. However, Makis through his participation was starting to unravel the limitations of a form of direct approach to decision making amongst such a diverse crowd and slowly loose his original enthusiasm. What captivated him about the movement was what drove him away. Makis would listen to people articulate their thoughts more coherently and even though they wouldn't use any "wooden speech" he would become sceptical as to whether they were speaking for themselves or trying to influence the decisions made in the assembly according to the agenda of a political party (most of the times left party). That made him re-examine the power of the general committee and the limitations of autonomy. As a participant in the committee he saw that anyone could alter the text of the resolutions voted in the committee ever so slightly in order to fit the language used by a left party.

> *"We could not change the resolutions made at the assembly but we would write them, we would be two people in the committee and whatever would come to us we would make a text of it, I mean it could change, the texts we were writing were subject to interpretation, you could formulate it as you wanted and focus on any part of the resolution you chose. For example I would say to someone, 'here I can see you did not include the issue of self-organisation or something*

> *more towards the left.' 'Yes but,' the other one would say, 'I also told*
> *you that you need to include the trade unions…' Yes, anyway these*
> *were attempts at direct democracy which were not implemented a*
> *hundred per cent."*[233]

Makis started to question the ability of the movement in maintaining autonomous action and was slowly filled with feelings of disappointment and resentment. He would look around him and see only enemies, people that threatened the autonomy of the movement. But his resentment was not limited to the process and participants of the general assembly. He would see people protesting alongside him that represented the Greek upper class and would start to "*feel nauseated*", becoming even more suspicious about the people around him and sceptical as to the political character of the movement. Suddenly his comrades were the people that surrounded him. *"You did not know who was in the square and why."*

Makis was now starting to wonder whether the open assembly could claim to be the only truly democratic method of exercising power. Makis's suspicion was coupled with a strong feeling of disappointment about the inability of all the people participating in the movement, to embrace a form of direct democracy and actively engage with the process and be a part of the decisions without trying to slide back to the "mentality" of delegation characteristic of liberal democracies.

> *"The assembly wanted to exist. But the people comprising the assembly*
> *were not there all the time. I mean it's like you coming here to Vox*[234] *and*
> *argue vociferously that we need to paint it blue and change the window-*
> *frames. But you never come back to see if this is done, or give some*
> *money to do this, and you do nothing to achieve this. Even when people*
> *where participating in a frame of direct democracy they were still stuck*
> *in the logic of delegation. We did not manage to do the most important*
> *thing: to break the imaginary of delegation. But you could not even*
> *explain what that was. You could not argue for implementing a model of*
> *direct democracy in front of people that were there one day and not the*
> *next. Or even if they are there they are there to drink their beer, smoke*
> *and be too afraid or bored to talk at the assembly, and they sit on the*

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[233] Makis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 17 September
[234] Occupied building at Exarcheia in Athens, operating as a bar, where the interview was conducted

> *grass, smoke their weed and just joke about with their friends about the*
> *assembly and adopt a nonchalant attitude towards the process."[235]*

Makis continued participating in the assembly even though he believed that it would not contribute to a radicalisation of Greek society nor in a wider implementation of a form of direct democracy. Instead he was hoping that it would *"establish a different culture to those that lived the assembly and they would be able to impart their experiences to every corner of Greece"[236]*

Makis loses his enthusiasm, in spite of his intense involvement with the movement and his efforts to introduce people to the idea of direct democracy and sometimes to the general ideas of the left. He is disappointed to see that despite all his efforts there were still people supporting capitalism or still clinging to their national identity and the idea of sovereignty. He begins to question his ability to find anything in common with the upper middle class people joining the protest because they see it as a social event, "a happening" that is interesting to participate in. Even the public assembly, the reason that made Makis join the movement and make Syntagma square his new home was starting to lose its significance.

> *There were no demands, just direct democracy. You could not pose*
> *demands or satisfy those demands in any way. It was an amorphous*
> *crowd that wanted to express itself. To be honest, I don't really know*
> *what it* [the crowd] *wanted. I mean, people were thinking "I have a*
> *certain lifestyle which is going to slightly change now that they are*
> *going to impose cuts. So why not go to Syntagma square given that*
> *everyone is there". That's how they were thinking. Even Menegaki[237]*
> *came to join us for a day.[238]*

Makis found that it was impossible to form a movement that would challenge neoliberalism and implement a direct form of democracy with people "who did not understand what it is to be poor or unemployed".

> *"At the beginning we just wanted to be heard. But after a while we*
> *should have all come together and write down five to ten common*
> *goals."* Kostas told me, disappointedly. *"This never happened. For*

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[235] Makis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 17 September
[236] Makis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 17 September
[237] A popular TV host of a morning chat show
[238] Makis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 17 September

> *me it was like a party. We talked about trivial issues most of the time*
> *and they were trying to decide whether the canteens should be banned*
> *out of Syntagma square or not; a decision that was never taken or*
> *implemented."[239]*

Kostas participated in the movement from the beginning and was involved in the building of the movement's website of the movement and participated in the discussion within the assembly. Even though participants voted for a number of resolutions in the assembly, he was disappointed to see that decisions were often not implemented and that resolutions and decisions were often contradictory. He saw a type of bureaucracy slowly emerge within the working groups that resembled that of the state. *"It was very bureaucratic the whole thing that's what we were fighting against! The assembly was like a festival."[240]* Kostas tells me again disappointed.

Some participants used the word "festival" and "apolitical" to describe the assembly in a negative way, as a comment on its inability to agree on specific goals and actions or to implement the decisions made. While others, mainly participants in the open assembly, use these words to describe the people that refuse to be a part of the assembly and focus upon emotional expressions.

Makis's story and Kostas's disappointment in the open assembly is reflected in the narrative of many of the interviewees that participated actively in the process of the open public assembly.

For Panagiotis, those participating in the open assembly threatened the autonomy of the movement by introducing ideological divisions, and by trying to get rid of or interpellate participants not belonging to their left ideological spectrum. This, according to Panagiotis and many other interviewees, was accomplished by political party operatives talking to people and trying to overtake the assembly in order to stir the decisions made. For Panagiotis it was these people that threatened the very notion of autonomy. Even though Panagiotis was not against the idea of a horizontal form of decision making, the inability of this form to represent every individual threatened the movement. For Panagiotis the point at which the movement lost its autonomy and alienated him came with the decision of the assembly to encourage people to strike.

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[239] Kostas R. interview conducted in person, Athens 30 July 2013
[240] Kostas R. interview conducted in person, Athens 30 July 2013

> *"The assembly voted and issued a statement on the 28th asking everyone to strike. You can't ask from people with financial problems not to go to work. They would get fired! They didn't get it! They couldn't understand the people. This decision was a big mistake for me. And I'm positive this decision was sponsored by a party because the next day I saw posters with that call all over the place."[241]*

Panagiotis firmly believes that the purity of the first days was lost. The decision by the assembly to call for a strike demonstrates to Panagiotis that it was a decision made by a left party and not by the indignants. It did not make sense to him how people could arrive at such a decision given that supporting a strike had a direct impact upon their already limited income. For Panagiotis it was only left political parties that were going to win by such an action, not the people. For Panagiotis it was left political parties that persuaded the people in the assembly that that was a good idea and dominated the assembly with their operatives so they would have the majority. Political parties infiltrated the movement. He was so sure that the movement lost its autonomy and purity that he could no longer be a part of it, even as a bystander. After all, his autonomy was now at stake.

The Interviewee's narratives indicate that they were struggling to establish an autonomous form of action and maintain the diversity of the movement. However, for many this could not be secured through a horizontal form of decision making. Similarly to Pavlos, other interviewees believed that the movement could facilitate an autonomous discourse and an autonomous form of action outside existing power relations. However, they did not believe that a horizontal form of organisation could achieve this. Many were looking for a leader to unite them. Others thought that the idea of direct democracy was fundamentally undemocratic and politically limited. *"I didn't mind the open assembly I liked the people there, but they were not discussing important issues. But they were not discussing political issues, they were discussing whether they would put a banner up or not and nonsense like that. There were no political discussions."[242]* Pavlos was disappointed when the assembly could not put forward a set of core demands that represented him and the people in the square and would not set specific political goals.

"We made a big mistake. We did not elect a permanent committee, even if that committee was rotating every 15 days, so it can lead and coordinate the movement. Instead everyone did

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[241] Panagiotis T. interview conducted in person, Athens, 15 September 2013
[242] Pavlos R. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 29 July 2013

whatever they liked. There was no one to organise things, to be the spokesman of the movement, to press on issues."[243] But for Pavlos the most important thing was the inability of the assembly to represent every individual in Greece. *"The assembly would vote on something, give this to an MP and that guy would throw it away and why's that? Not only because we did not have a representative of the movement but because the assembly had no mandate. Having 300 people discussing different issues; that's not an assembly. In Athens we have millions of residents. How can these 300 people express the views of millions?"*[244]

For Pavlos it was hypocritical to argue that the assembly managed to represent every person in Syntagma square let alone Greece. For him his individuality was lost in an attempt to do so and the power of the movement was diffused by its lack of clarity and organisation. For Pavlos only a central form of power within the movement could address these issues.

Participants made a point to maintain the diversity of the movement. However this diversity often threatened their individuality when they attempted to establish common goals. Many participants like Makis recognised that and chose to engage in a battle for the movement to establish a politics that can challenge capitalist relations; others like Panos became slowly detached from the movement and decided not to participate anymore.

In spite of their desire for freedom of individual expression and self-empowerment, participants were turning towards a vertical form of organisation and many were admitting that they would feel more free or autonomous if they were represented by a charismatic leader.

Similarly to Prentoulis and Thomassen interviewees' narrative indicates that they "are caught within a tension between horizontality and verticality… between moving beyond representation and accepting representational structures."[245] However as the interviewees narratives unfolds it is obvious that their inability to engage and support a horizontal form of decision making lays on their unwillingness to compromise their individual positions as the divide between them cannot be bridged.

Even though some of the interviewees believed in establishing a horizontal decision making within the movement and devoted their energy to maintaining and supporting a process of direct democracy within the movement longed for a leader that could inspire them and

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[243] Pavlos R. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 29 July 2013
[244] Pavlos R. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 29 July 2013
[245] Marina Prentoulis and Lasse Thomassen, (2013) 'Political Theory in the Square: Protest, representation and subjectification' *Contemporary Political Theory,* Vol.12, 3 p. 166

represent them. For many of the participants the assembly restricted their freedom and the only way to maintain their autonomy was to focus on their individual expression by expressing their emotions and feelings through movements of the body.

3.3. Autonomy and the Common

As discussed in the previous chapter discourse and ideology play a key role in the production of political subjectivity. Interviewees' desire for autonomy clashed with the need to articulate and establish a common ground; or in the words of Hardt and Negri, to establish a "common."[246] In this section I examine how Hardt and Negri's argument on the role of the "common" for the autonomy of the multitude and how the Greek indignants challenge this.

The multitude, Hardt and Negri argue, "is composed of innumerable internal differences that can never be reduced to a unity."[247] In the multitude social differences retain their character but are united on a common ground. The singularities that comprise the multitude are autonomous and seek to establish their autonomy and exit power relations that seek to obstruct their autonomy. According to Hardt and Negri, the multitude produces its own common in a state of revolt, through habits, dresses, language, and performance.[248]

> *"Revolts mobilise the common in two respects, increasing the intensity of each struggle and extending to other struggles. Intensively, internal to each local struggle, the common antagonism and common wealth of the exploited and expropriated are translated into common conducts, habits and performativity. Any time you enter a region where there is a strong revolt forming you are immediately struck by the common manners of dress, gestures and modes of relating and communicating."[249]*

Beyond this, the multitude in revolt shares experiences and emotions in common that impact upon the body, such as police violence.[250] These struggles spread through communication geographically, given that communication is the common that binds the multitude and its struggle against exploitation.

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[246] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth*
[247] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* xiv
[248] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*
[249] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 213
[250] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 213

In Greece the movement of indignation was inspired by Spain and quickly spread out all across Greece. Those networked revolts, for Hardt and Negri, do not just share a common enemy but also languages, habits desires and hopes for the future.[251] This common place emerges in the multitude but for Hardt and Negri in this abstract model the social actors do not have to make compromises in their identities or consent – as is in the case of the concept of the people; the multitude is a diversity but at the same time is a commonality that emerges before and during the revolt and this common is enough, they argue, to obliterate any confrontations within the multitude. The multitude is thus a single body, a political subject that acts in harmony but still maintains its diversity. When this body is organised as a form of direct democracy, it is this body that for Hardt and Negri has the potential to not to be alienated from politics. It is with this horizontal organisational framework that the multitude can express the common will.

Indeed, in spite of their differences the indignants appear to have built a form of solidarity and a common ground of protest. On every part of the square protestors were expressing their emotions and individuality and protesting alongside each other using different gestures and forms of communication that distinguished the movement from other movements and were recognisably a trade mark of the Greek indignants. For example, extending one's palm towards the parliament (mountza) or banging empty pots were registered as methods of protest characteristic of the movement. Other forms of expression or articulation of emotions were welcomed as a form of individual expression as it was within the mandate for autonomy. Even the public assembly that was not approved as a method of action by many of the participants was not challenged and was welcomed as another type of action among the many. However these signs and methods of protest were not always accepted and their use was often the source of internal conflict within the movement. An example of such a confrontation is identified by the interviewees as the use of signs. Interviewees point to heated arguments among participants over the use of the Greek flag as a "neutral" and autonomous symbol that would represent the movement. Many participants saw the use of this symbol, or other symbols connected to Greek identity such as helmets used by ancient Greek soldiers or foustaneles[252] as facilitating a nationalist understanding of the crisis turning the focus of the struggle to national sovereignty rather than a struggle against neoliberal politics and capitalism.

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[251] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 213

[252] Traditional Greek garment worn by men in Greece's modern history 18th-19th century connected to the Greek revolution against the Ottoman Empire

"I liked the idea of an autonomous movement. But there is a limit in autonomy. It's too difficult to move and reach the point of emancipation and that's why it ended. The first days there was a lack of clarity and we were trying to organise. There were already some problems regarding some semiotic issues. For example, some people wanted the presence of the Greek flag; others didn't. Others were putting forward the importance of nationality and country; others didn't want this. There was a democracy within the movement. No one oppressed anyone that wanted to express themselves in any way. So the square ended up being divided into two parts; the upper part of the square and the lower part of the square. Of course there was an interaction between the two. People would mingle from both parts of the square. I liked the diversity of the people. I just noticed that in the upper part of the square there were popular social classes that might have been voting all these years for the two main parties in Greece. People that were not so political in their lives that were more pure. These people were the most angry of all the participants because they felt that someone tricked them. I was in both parts of the square but I was mainly at the upper part. Because I belong to those that wanted the Greek flag because I don't think it signifies only right wing politics. I didn't like the lower part of the square because there were a lot of people from the anarchist movement even though it was very democratic. I didn't like it because they (participants at the lower part of the square) didn't like the Greek flag so they brought flags from other countries there, Portugal etc." [253]

Panos, even though annoyed by the attempt of participants to turn the attention to a struggle that is not focused on national identity and national sovereignty by introducing different flags in the square, was pleased to see that this was within the parameters of diversity set by the movement and in spite this there was at least for him an agreement to ban banners from existing forms of collective organisations mainly by trade unions and political parties. For Panos, as for many of the participants, the use of the Greek flag within the movement was important for defining the character of the movement causing thus an internal conflict between participants.

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[253] Panos C. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 7 August 2013

> *"I remember on one of the first days I saw a lot of Greek flags there and I didn't like that. It repelled me."* Jon tells me. *"I didn't like it because the main characteristic of the movement was a form of resistance and the Greek flags suggest the resistance of a nation or national community against a foreign invader and that doesn't express who I am. In spite of this I joined the movement and I rationalised the use of the Greek flags as the difference between the upper and lower part of the square."* [254]

Jon had to accept the presence of the Greek flag because it was within the parameters of autonomous action and individual expression set by the movement, but that did not mean that he was not allowed to voice his disagreement or repress his aversion of the use of this symbol within the parameters of resistance.

But it was not just the symbols and types of performance that were a point of confrontation amongst the participants and indicative of a lack of convergence. As I discussed in the previous chapter, there was a struggle around the articulation of different discourses within the open assembly and also outside the assembly in small, impromptu discussion groups. Different groups began to emerge within the movement establishing their own language and symbols. Interviewees' narrative points to a division within the movement between the upper part of Syntagma square and the lower part. This division had ideological characteristics. For many of the interviewees the upper part of the square was "the most emotional part"; it was the part where right wing and fascist ideologies were dominant, according to the narrative of interviewees participating in the lower part of the square, evident by the use of nationalistic symbols and the presence of groups articulating a nationalistic discourse. For interviewees that participated at the upper part of Syntagma square, the lower part was a stronghold of left parties and in particular SYRIZA or anarchist groups. The function of the public assembly was an attempt of the left to recruit more people using a method of organisation that had its roots within the anarchist movement. According to interviewees' narrative the setting within Syntagma square was not one of unity through the use of common symbols and language; it was a field permeated by antagonistic relations. Interviewees' narratives, however, are conflicted. On the one hand they were eager to point to the divisions and antagonisms within the movement and discuss extensively how this affected them. But on the other hand they would argue that the movement was one, united in spite of these divisions. As I will argue in

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[254] Jon P. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 16 July 2013

chapter six this unity was not on the basis of a common ground among the interviewees but on the premise of a consensus by the participants following a mandate for diversity set by the movement.

3.4. The Politics of the Multitude and the Greek Indignants

The emphasis given to diversity by the Greek indignants and the attempt to build a common framework without alienating any participant through the open assembly put the movement in a standstill. Decisions were not implemented and when decisions were made they were perceived by many of the participants as threatening to their individuality. The Greek indignant movement was not a united movement. The narrative of the interviewees about the division within Syntagma square and the internal antagonisms over the production of meaning and the use of symbols testifies to this. The Greek indignants were unable to unite by maintaining the diversity of the movement. Faced with this impasse many of the participants believed that their individuality can be best reflected though a charismatic leader or a political party.

Hardt and Negri's framework addresses the importance of the various social, political and economic mechanisms in which subjectivities are produced and how subjects can be created as articulators of existing power relations. However, in their attempt to outline the new graveyards of capitalism Hardt and Negri support their argument of the revolutionary potential of the multitude on its ability to overcome the very characteristics that shaped it without a struggle. In spite of their elaborate efforts to argue for a political subject that can challenge existing power relations Hardt and Negri's framework have us hope that this amorphous social body will eventually become an agent for radical change and subjectivities that organise and maintain capitalism are inherently revolutionary. They even acknowledge this element of hope in their theory:

> *"The important question at this point is what kind of body will these common singularities form? One possibility is that they will be enlisted in the global armies at the service of capital, subjugated in the global strategies of surveillance inclusion and violent marginalisation. This new social flesh in other words may be formed into the productive organs of the global social body of capital. Another possibility, however, is that these common singularities organise themselves autonomously though a kind of*

> *"power of the flesh" in line with the long philosophical tradition that stretches back to the apostle Paul of Tarsus. The power of the flesh is the power to transform ourselves through historical action and create a new world. From this abstract metaphysical perspective, then, the political is posed between two forms by which the social flesh of the multitude can be organised into a global social body".*[255]

The multitude as a political subject can, for Hardt and Negri, step outside the relationships that contributed to the character of its own subjectivity and organise itself autonomously[256]. However, as I noted in the previous section, within the confines of production immaterial or cognitive labour is not autonomous. Even when the multitude revolts against forms of capitalist control it is unable to escape power.[257] The multitude can even become aligned with dominant power.[258] The case of the indignants testifies to the inability of the protestors to step outside ideology and existing power relations. It demonstrates that antagonisms are key within forms of struggle and the production of a common political subjectivity cannot be achieved without consensus.

Participants' need to maintain the diversity of the movement falls, as Hickel points out, within the confines of liberal politics sustaining thus existing power relations.[259] The mechanisms that constitute Hardt and Negri's theory on the production of a collective political subjectivity that maintains the diversity of individuals, in the indignant movement only preserve existing power relations and operate as catalysts that counter attempts to create a collective revolutionary political subjectivity. Hardt and Negri's theoretical argument leads to the erection of a framework that is based upon the extreme liberal character of the political and social processes that constitute the practice of this purportedly collective revolutionary subject arguing that this is inherently radical. However to argue for such extreme liberalism within Hardt and Negri's framework while at the same time to ignore the characteristics that contribute to the production of subjectivities by impressing upon these subjectivities a division between the economy and politics ignoring thus the structural elements that

[255] Hardt and Negri *Multitude* 159
[256] Hardt Michael and Negri Antonio, *Declaration* (e-book, 2012) http://antonionegriinenglish.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/93152857-hardt-negri-declaration-2012.pdf
[257] Alain Badiou. 'Beyond Formalisation: An Interview', *Angelaki* 8:2 (2003).
[258] Badiou 'Beyond Formalisation'
[259] Jason Hickel. 'Liberalism and the Politics of Occupy Wall Street' *Anthropology of this Century* (2012) (accessed online, November 2015 http://aotcpress.com/articles/liberalism-politics-occupy-wall-street/)

contribute to that character, as Laclau and Mouffe do, is to proceed to the erection of a framework permeated by the same limitations.

In spite of the emergent divisions within the square dominating the narrative of the interviewees, a contradiction emerges when interviewees discuss the movement as a collective form of action. "The movement was one" many interviewees told me in spite of their previous description of the different groups in conflict with each other and different discourses try to dominate the articulation process. Emotion appears to have a key role within this paradox. In *Commonwealth*, Hardt and Negri argue that the emotion of indignation is important in the revolt of the multitude.[260] They see indignation as "the raw material of revolt and rebellion."[261] The attempts of capital to expropriate "the common", which extend into every aspect of life, provoke the indignation of the multitude. The multitude is not united just under "the common" but also in an affective relationship that leads it to a radical confrontation with and exodus from the power relations that contributed to the character of its own subjectivity. In the next chapter I examine this contradiction and the importance of emotion in the production of a political subjectivity that can challenge existing power relations by critically engaging with the "affective turn" in theorising contemporary forms of power relations.[262]

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[260] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 236
[261] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth* 236
[262] Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean Halley (eds). *The Affective Turn*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2007).

Chapter 4

The Politics of Affect in Light of the Greek Indignant Movement

In the previous chapter I critically reflected upon Hardt and Negri's understanding of the production of a collective autonomous political subjectivity in the form of the multitude and concluded that the indignant movement cannot be viewed as such. However I barely touched upon their use of the concept of affect in the production of such an autonomous collective political subjectivity.

In this chapter I examine the importance of emotions within collective action. To do so I interrogate the role of emotions within an affective understanding of power relations. I thus examine the limitations of affect theory in understanding the production of political subjectivities within contemporary forms of collective action by focusing on how the intensities experienced by the indignants informed their political action. I argue that in spite of the intensities experienced by the interviewees this feeling provided a momentary sense of solidarity. Emotions were key within the processes of the movement and in shaping a sense of solidarity among different participants, however ideology and culture continue to play a key role in this process. Participants not only manage their emotions and bodies but do so within in an attempt to establish a common ground among them and resist the politics of austerity. The emergence of different groups and divisions in the movement testify to this.

"We are all indignants!" The main motto of the indignant movement suggests a dominance of the emotion of indignation amongst the protestors. However interviewees state that their protest was informed by a plethora of emotions. Sadness, joy, fear, outrage, anger Syntagma square was a large emotional canvas. Interviewees remember the first days of their participation as the most intense days of their lives. They are unable to describe exactly how they felt these first few days of their participation, and they would frequently use the word "electric" or "inexplicable" to capture the sense of togetherness they felt with so many different people protesting against austerity.

Giannis was one of the people that joined the movement before the occupation of Syntagma square and helped build the online profile of the movement.

> *When some people suggested that we move the occupation somewhere*
> *more central, such as Syntagma square I disagreed. I've disagreed not*
> *because of the proposed form of action but because we were in the*

> *beginning of May and we had ahead of us the summer. And we Greeks*
> *during the summer the only thing we can think of is the beach and the*
> *sun… To be honest I did not expect to see so many people from the*
> *first day we moved to Syntagma, I was surprised![263]*

Giannis can't hide his enthusiasm when he describes his error in judgement and the multitude of people arriving at Syntagma square "*to support and participate in this attempt to protest against the politics of austerity*". He was particularly enthusiastic about the diversity of the crowd *"there were so many people from old people and pensioners to young couples with their babies!"* Giannis is being bodily moved as he begins to recall the intensity of emotions and the atmosphere in Syntagma square in the beginning of the movement. *"There were so many people at Syntagma! Look I'm getting goose bumps! It was so intense! I could not comprehend that these people were not there to listen to a political leader speaking but to protest because there were annoyed with what was happening in their lives".[264]*

For Tasos a young activist the movement presented a unique opportunity to oppose the politics of neoliberalism. I met with Tasos in an occupied building close to Gazi (Athens) running as a café/bar and space for political discussions. He was working there voluntarily and suggested that we meet and talk about the movement after he finished his shift on the bar. There in a low but enthusiastic tone Tasos begun to describe his experience of the movement. Tasos finds it difficult to control his emotions when he talks about his participation in the movement. *"I think I'm getting a bit confused. Every time I speak about the movement I'm getting excited! It was the happiest time of my life. Being indignant was the best capacity I have ever had!"[265]* Tasos devoted every spare time of his life in Syntagma square, participating in the occupation of the square and in different committees. He felt that people's anger was transforming into political action that can bring social change. The indignant movement was something more to him than just another movement; it felt something different, something he could not quite put into words. *"There was an uplifting feeling in the square. A force, a feeling of power, you were feeling that this movement was not a random gathering. It felt that we were taking our lives in our hands. It's difficult to describe it!"[266]*

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[263] Giannis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, September 5 2013
[264] Giannis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, September 5 2013
[265] Tasos G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 18 July 2013
[266] Tasos G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 18 July 2013

The intensity experienced by Tasos was echoed in the narrative of most of the interviewees. This *"electric atmosphere"*, according to another interviewee, was dominant within the square. The large gathering of people sharing similar emotions at bodily proximity gave to most of the interviewees a profound sense of empowerment. How did the indignants experience this intense atmosphere? And how did this intensity informed their political action?

A recent "affective turn" in political inquiry puts the embodiment of intensities in the spotlight of political praxis, arguing that sensory information received by the body of an individual is the only way to understand and resist contemporary forms of power[267]. Brian Massumi even calls for Left movements to embrace this affective turn and focus on a performative type of action that has as its main purpose to produce this kind of stimulus[268].

In this section I will explore the potential of this "affective turn" in understanding contemporary forms of power relations and resistance by capturing the revolutionary moment and producing the common ground for the production of a collective political subjectivity. My inquiry will not just focus on Hardt and Negri's framework but also engage with arguments proposing that cultural studies and ideology are antiquated methods in examining contemporary forms of power relations and argue for a shift towards a theory of affect across all disciplines[269]. The main proponent of such an argument is Brian Massumi.

For Massumi power is transferred through the affective capacities of bodies. The contemporary world communicates through visual sensation[270]. The body or else the sensing body cannot be captured by the "rigid grid" of discourse and ideology[271]. Change is ever present and feeling is the process in which a subject is formed. Massumi embraces Hard and Negri's argument for an affective turn in the realm of production and argues that contemporary forms of action and the Left in general need to transform their tactics and become more affective.[272] He proposes that social movements should focus more on a performative mode of action rather than attempting to articulate a more convincing discourse through the media.

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[267] Michael Hardt. 'Foreword: What are Affects are Good for', in Clough and Halley *The Affective Turn* ix-xiii
[268] Brian Massumi, 'Navigating Movements', in Mary Zournazi. *Hope New Philosophies for Change,* (Annandale Australia: Pluto Press, 2002). 234.
[269] Massumi 'Navigating Movements' 234
[270] Brian Massumi. *Parables of the Virtual*. (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2002).
[271] Massumi *Parable of the Virtual* 2-3
[272] Massumi 'Navigating Movements' 234

> *"It seems to me that alternative political action does not have to fight against the idea that power has become affective, but rather has to learn to function itself on that same level – meet affective modulation with affective modulation. That requires, in some ways, a performative, theatrical or aesthetic approach to politics. For example, it is not possible for a dispossessed group to adequately communicate its needs and desires through the mass media. It just doesn't happen. It wasn't possible for marginal interest groups like the anti-globalisation movement, before the Seattle demonstration, to do that simply by arguing convincingly and broadcasting its message. The message doesn't get through, because the mass media doesn't function on that level of the rational weighing of choices."[273]*

The length of a chapter cannot do justice to the wide range of literature supporting an "affective turn". Instead I focus my inquiry on areas that I believe are at the heart of a theory of affect as developed within the thought of Brian Massumi and Hardt and Negri three main proponents of the "affective turn". In particular I critically reflect upon three core points that "justify" for Massumi the need of the Left and of social movements to focus on affective strategies. The first is the ability of this illusive affective force to unite the differences of individuals to an autonomous collective political subjectivity and maintain the individuality of the participants. The second is that this collective political subjectivity is inherently revolutionary and can challenge capitalism and the third that ideology is a dated concept in grasping contemporary forms of power relations.

But what is affect?

Massumi's, like Hardt and Negri's argument for an "affective turn" is built upon the work of Baruch Spinoza and Gilles Deleuze. The concept of affect has been commonly used as a synonymous to emotion. However Massumi, referencing Spinoza, highlights the difference between the concept of affect with that of emotion arguing that emotion is an personalised expression of affect, one of many.

> *"Affect is most often used loosely as a synonym for emotion. But….emotion and affect – if affect is intensity – follow different logics and pertain to different orders. An emotion is a subjective content, the*

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sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal. Emotion is qualified intensity, the conventional consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning. It is intensity owned and recognized. It is crucial to theorise the difference between affect and emotion. If some have the impression that affect has waned, it is because affect is unqualified"[274]

Affect can't be expressed by language or cognition for that matter, only through the unconscious automatic responses of the body. The body plays a key role within this theory of affect. It is precisely this point of affect as precognitive state and its ability to become political that I challenge within this chapter.

Following Spinoza, both Massumi and Hardt and Negri build a theory of political subjectivity upon his understanding on the potential of bodies to exert power and shape subjectivities. For Spinoza the individual does not only refer to human beings but also to non-living things within the natural world[275]. He perceives this complex world of individualities in the natural world as bodies that are comprised by other bodies and relate in an influential way to each other in order to achieve their survival. These bodies for Spinoza have the capacity to affect and be affected. In this relationship of affects the capacity to affect corresponds to the capacity to be affected. Spinoza believes that affect or the capacity to affect is the same as the capacity to act and exert power. "By affects I understand affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affections."[276] For that reason people collaborate in order to increase their capacity to affect. For Spinoza when two individuals come together they form a unity, a body twice as powerful in their ability to act.

For Spinoza every encounter that maximizes the power to act produces an emotion of joy and any decrease in the capacity to affect produces an emotion of sadness. "By joy therefore, I shall understand in what follows that passion by which the mind passes to a greater

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[274] Massumi, *Parables of the Virtual,* 28
[275] Benedict Spinoza. *A Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works*, trans. Edwin Curley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[276] Spinoza *A Spinoza Reader* 154.

perfection. And by sadness, that passion by which it paces to a lesser perfection."[277] Within this relationship there is a constant movement from sadness to joy, from a passive engagement to emotions which lead to sadness to a collaborative engagement of emotions that lead to joy and to the production of newfound knowledge by multiple subjectivities.

Emotions for Spinoza are not "vices of human nature but … properties pertaining to it in the same way that heat, cold, storm, thunder and such pertain to the nature of the atmosphere'[278]. Spinoza views emotions not as an obstacle to reason. Emotions and reason are intertwined. For Spinoza the road to reason passes through the mind and the body, confronting that way Descartes relationship between body and mind, reason and emotion and locating the production of thought within the process of affect and being affected[279]. As Hardt points out Spinoza's concept of affect requires us to think of reason and passions as actions of the mind and the body.[280] The mind and the body are not equated but a continuum, the one always informing and influencing the other. Affect works as a link between the mind's ability to think and the body's capacity to act.

Affect therefore does not refer just to emotions; it is rather according to John Beasley Murray an "index of power" that involves a relationship between reason and emotions, the body and the mind without the one overcoming the other.[281] This "affective turn" therefore puts forward a new ontology of humanity – initiated first from Spinoza, that can be "constantly open and renewed"[282] – in which humans are corporeal creatures permeated by unconscious affective forces translated into resonances through an emotional and cognitive function that impact upon our capacity to act and to be influenced. For Massumi emotions capture a part of affect.[283] Both Massumi and Hardt and Negri locate in particular emotions a motivating character for the emergence of forms of affective resistance. Emotions function as a momentary stimulus to the bodies of individuals that open the potential for the emergence of a collective form of resistance. They therefore play a key role in the production of political subjects.

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[277] Spinoza in S. Grattan. 'The Indignant Multitude: Spinozist Marxism after Empire', *Meditations* 25: (2011). 7-8.
[278] S. Ruddick, 'The Politics of Affect: Spinoza in the Work of Negri and Deleuze', *Theory Culture Society* 27: (2010). 21.
[279] Ruddick 'The Politics of Affect' 21
[280] Hardt 'Foreword'
[281] Jon Beasley-Murray. *Posthegemony: Political Theory and Latin America* (Minneapolis Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 2010). 128
[282] Beasley-Murray *Posthegemony* x
[283] Massumi 'Navigating Movements' 213

It is within this potential of bodies to affect other bodies that Massumi suggests a turn towards new tactics within social movements; tactics that are not based on the articulation of a discourse or an ideology but rather upon feeling, and the aesthesis of the body. Tactics based on expressing one's emotions through bodily gestures generates for Massumi a multitude of emotions and intensities embodied by individuals. In this way such a form of action does not only enables the emergence of a message that somehow cannot be articulated and fully captured by language but only experienced, challenging existing power relations but also building a sense of solidarity amongst the different individuals within a collective form of organisation.

In a similar note Hardt and Negri use the concept of affect to argue for a bond amongst different bodies that can form a common political subject i.e. the multitude. Could this relationship of affects produce a collective political subjectivity that can resist existing power relations?

According to interviewees' narrative the first days of their participation they experienced an intensity that inexplicably contributed to their decision to participate in the movement and connect to the different people around them. Massumi's invitation to the Left for adopting an affective approach to politics and Hardt and Negri's attempt to establish the emergence of a new proletariat based on the affective bond of the multitude warrants further investigation.

In the first section of this chapter I critically engage within the concept of affect in understanding the social world and emergent forms of collective action and the relationship between affect and emotion. I engage with the argument that sees ideology as redundant in grasping the production of a collective political subjectivity and critically reflect upon a discussion that sees power relations as affective. I relate this critique, in the second section of this chapter, to an empirical investigation of the role of the emotion of indignation and the importance given to cultural and ideological characteristics tied to emotions and expressions of the body by the indignants. In the second section I focus on the emotion of indignation and its role in uniting the differences among individuals in the movement. In the third section I explore the tension between the diversity of the movement and the attempt of the interviews to control their emotions and bodies informed by different ideological frameworks. I conclude this chapter with a summary of my findings on the limitations of the concept of affect, the importance given to ideological and cultural characteristics to emotion by the Greek indignants and the need to address the importance of emotion within concomitant

forms of collective action. In light of my analysis I argue for the importance of emotions in understanding the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity and stress the importance of feelings and emotions in the internalisation of power structures.

4.1. Reflecting upon the role of emotions within a theory of affect

In this section I examine the argument of an "affective turn" in the production of political subjectivities. I critically reflect upon the relation between "affect" and emotion and begin to unravel the internal contradictions of the argument of an "affective turn" in understanding contemporary forms of collective struggle.

Interviewees describe the first few days of their participation as exciting and intense; an experience they would never forget. Many use the word festival to describe the intensity of emotions in Syntagma square. Giannis remembers those days with joy and felt that this festive atmosphere played a key role in the popularity of the movement.

> "*It was like a festival that you do for the patron saint of a village. Those places as you know are usually packed with people that want to show off and buy stuff. But it was different with the indignant movement. People were there because, for me, we had a common goal. We did not like what we were living, we did not like our lives. We might have been dissatisfied with different aspects of our lives but we were all dissatisfied with our lives, we had a common goal*"[284]

This festivity was not an organised form of action (except for the live concerts). People would bring homemade banners with different mottos or with effigies of members of the government the ECB and the IMF, while others just bring with them a Greek flag. Anyone was able to express their emotions and feelings through symbols or bodily movements. *"There was a purity those days. The movement was pure"* Giannis said to me excited. For Giannis this festive atmosphere declared a sincerity of political action compared to the corrupt and behind the scenes activity of political parties and trade unions and their *"dishonest words"*.

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[284] Giannis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, September 5 2013

Many of the interviewees describe the first days of their participation as intense and emotional. But most importantly, as the days they felt truly free. Every person in Syntagma square could express their emotions without having to modify them to fit the framework of a collective action. It was this intensity that motivated many of the interviewees to stay in Syntagma square. This intensity according to many interviewees created a feeling of hope and potential for change.

In the first few days of their participation interviewees either clearly state or suggest that they felt empowered. The emotional intensity, the gathering of so many bodies at close proximity generated for many interviewees a feeling of individual empowerment. Many of the interviewees admit that for a moment that it no longer matter what everyone believed as long as they were a part of this intense atmosphere. It appeared that participants were all united under this shared experience of similar emotions creating an *"electric atmosphere"* according to many of the interviewees.

If we were to view the narrative of the interviewees through Massumi's understanding of the concept of affect, what interviewees felt these first few days was an affective force that united participants against the politics of austerity. Interviewees experienced intense emotions through their participation. Intensity as another word for affect, according to Massumi, entails within different emotional characteristics. Thus engaging in a critique of the argument made by affect theorists for the need to explore the importance of a precognitive state that can form a collective political subjectivity requires a better understanding on the role of emotion within this relationship and how we can begin to understand affect empirically before we begin to criticise it. A critique of the "affective turn" requires a closer examination upon the role of emotion and affect. In this way we can begin to map the political character of the concept of affect, explain the intensities experienced by the Greek indignants and examine the importance of emotions in shaping political subjectivities.

Even though Massumi argues for a difference between affect and emotion he claims that emotions can capture certain aspects of affect that words cannot. "… an emotion is a partial expression of affect."[285] Emotion as a "subjective content" captures part of this affective intensity, emotion is "intensity owned and recognised".[286] However an emotion cannot capture fully affect. Even though "No one emotional state can encompass all the depth and

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[285] Massumi 'Navigating Movements' 213
[286] Massumi *Parables of the Virtual* 28

breadth of our experiencing of experiencing…"[287] certain intense emotions can have a key role in shaping political action. Massumi identifies two strong emotional expressions that of anger and of laughter in interrupting power relations and opening up the possibilities for change.[288] Massumi finds in the emotional expressions of anger and laughter a powerful disruptive character that can contribute to the emergence of collective forms of resistance. "An affective expression" as he calls those emotions can lead to an interruption of

> *"…the flow of meaning that's taking place: the normalised interrelations and interactions that are happening and the functions that are being fulfilled. Because of that, they are irruptions of something that doesn't fit. Anger, for example, forces the situation to attention, it forces a pause filled with an intensity that is often too extreme to be expressed in words. Anger often degenerates into noise and inarticulate gestures. This forces the situation to rearray itself around that irruption, and to deal with the intensity in one way or another. In that sense it's brought something positive out — a reconfiguration."[289]*

According to Massumi there is little if any time for a conscious reflection upon intense emotional expressions as anger or laughter, the body just perceives them and reacts almost instantaneously[290]. Where emotion tames affect and transforms it into a personal experience affect is the interconnectivity of the intensities amongst individuals that binds them together. For Massumi it is in the intensity of those emotional expressions that resistance against capitalism can emerge. Maintaining this intensity is all it takes for a collective form of resistance against capitalism to emerge. This intensity is loaded with potentials and potentials for change. It is in this potential that Massumi understands freedom.

> *"This is the second way that affect has to do with intensity. There's like a population or swarm of potential ways of affecting or being affected that follows along as we move through life. We always have a vague sense that they're there. That vague sense of potential, we call it our 'freedom', and defend it fiercely…Having more potentials available intensifies our life. We're not enslaved by our situations.*

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[287] Massumi *Parables of the Virtual* 28
[288] Massumi *Parables of the Virtual* 28
[289] Massumi *Parables of the Virtual* 216
[290] Massumi *Parables of the Virtual* 216

Even if we never have our freedom, we're always experiencing a degree of freedom, or 'wriggle room'. Our degree of freedom at any one time corresponds to how much of our experiential 'depth' we can access towards a next step – how intensely we are living and moving. Once again it's all about the openness of situations and how we can live that openness."[291]

Within this open world of affects anything is possible. This openness is similar to Laclau and Mouffe's insistence on the "openness of the social world". However where in Laclau and Mouffe's case this social world is discursively constructed in Massumi's case it is formed in a matrix of affective relations.

Within this state of intensity the body responds in an autonomic matter as if having a thought of its own, opening our possibilities, giving us ultimately a feeling of freedom or "wriggle room". For Massumi this feeling of freedom and intensity allows individuals to overcome their differences and challenge capitalism. This is possible according to Massumi by engaging in processes that expands emotional registers.

Within this intensity Massumi argues that any personal interpretations of emotions miraculously disappear as soon as the body is exposed to the intensities and feelings of freedom. Feelings of anger are used to unite the differences and bodies to a common cause taking emotions out of their historical significance glorifying the moment. Every situation or intensity is unique, breading with potentials that cannot be predicted or captured by language or meaning. Every intensity as Massumi describes it is outside any historical ties and can somehow contribute in the radical change of subjectivity. "So language is two-pronged: it is a capture of experience, it codifies and normalises it and makes it communicable by providing a neutral frame of reference."[292] However in this intense state of almost unimaginable possibilities there is a wishful thinking within Massumi's argument that the emergent of affective relations will indeed challenge existing power relations and challenge them in such a way as to lead to the demise of capitalism.

Similarly, Hard and Negri hope that the indignation of individuals against capitalist power relations would lead them to an exodus of set relations. They deprive from the emotion of indignation any cultural and ideological characteristics as it is being informed by this alleged

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[291] Massumi 'Navigating Movements' 213-214
[292] Massumi 'Navigating Movements' 219

affective intensity which is always autonomous and precognitive. For Hardt and Negri indignation transforms the multitude from an apolitical mob to a collective political subject.[293] Hardt and Negri, unlike Massumi, attempt to tie the formation of the emotion of indignation and its meaning to the rise and the hegemonic role of immaterial labour. The second role of affect therefore, within Hardt and Negri's framework, is to function as a catalyst for individuals to realise their potential for autonomy from existing power relations through their indignation against power relations. However this tie is precarious mainly as I argued in the previous chapter on the inability of the multitude to escape the subjectivity shaping potentials of capital and act as a collective political subject.

Indignation, for Hardt and Negri, is the emotion that provides the motor for individuals to suddenly arrive at a state of almost self-consciousness about forces that oppress them and seek to become autonomous through a horizontal organisational structure that guarantees their autonomy. I would like to reflect on this affective relationship and the importance of the emotion of indignation given by Hardt and Negri and explore the potential of affect to function as a source of "liberation" of the self by the power relations that contribute to its character. Hardt and Negri provide a number of empirical examples from existing movements to support their hypothesis on the importance of the role of indignation in revolutionary movements and as the first step towards the formation of a common political subject.[294] However, Hardt and Negri do not engage into a deeper analysis of those movements in order to examine their hypothesis. The indignant movement, as its name states, renders a very interesting example for testing this hypothesis.

Massumi's understanding of emotions does not depart much from that of Hardt and Negri's. Where Massumi sees anger as the spark for a revolutionary movement that will interrupt and challenge existing power relations, Hardt and Negri replace anger with the emotion of indignation. They both ascribe to emotions the ability to momentary capture that illusive concept of affect, in doing so they eulogise the moment by ignoring the importance of historical, cultural and ideological ties to emotions and when this is partly addressed then it is done in a quite precarious manner. Both Massumi and Hardt and Negri hope that specific emotions or feelings will result into specific disruptive forms of action; forms of action that indeed challenge and shake to the core existing power relations; forms of action that have specific liberal and left ideological roots. Meaning has an insignificant role in the formation

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[293] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth*
[294] Hardt and Negri *Multitude*

of a collective political subject compared to bodies coming together through the intensity of transmitted affects. By focusing on particular emotions or emotional characteristics they both reduce interpersonal relationships to a multiplicity of intensities. I do not challenge the potential intense emotions can have in the emergence of radical action and the ability to challenge or disrupt existing power relations. I do however challenge the tendency of affect theorists to neglect the importance of ideology in shaping these power relations and the embodied emotions emerging from these relations.

Looking at the Greek indignant movement through the lenses of both Massumi and Hardt and Negri the drive to freedom experienced by the protestors the first days of intensity, expressed through strong emotions and bodily stimuli, was enough to create an affective bond amongst the protestors neglecting any differences amongst them. Within this state bodies were affecting bodies in order to create a collective bond so the protestors can increase the potential to affect or to exert power, challenging existing power relations; but as I argue that state of intensity was not enough for the protestors.

Within this theory of affect ideology and culture, even though have a hold upon our emotional responses magically disappear in front of the sheer force of affect. In the next sections I challenge this argument and examine the importance of particular emotions and intensities in the formation of a sense of solidarity and a common action towards challenging the politics of austerity.

4.2. Exploring the Politics of Indignation

In this section I engage with interviewees' narrative on the importance of emotions such as outrage, joy sadness and indignation role in producing a sense of solidarity in the form of an affective bond amongst the differences of the participants. I focus upon the emotion of indignation as experienced by the participants and argue that historical and cultural characteristics tied to the emotion of indignation though the history of collective struggle in Greece act as a catalyst against the unity of the indignants.

Indignation appears to be the emotion that motivated thousands of Greeks to gather at Syntagma square and demonstrate against neoliberal politics; after all the movement was named by that emotion. Many of the interviewees however categorically refuse to accept that they felt indignant at any point of their participation. For some of the interviewees

indignation represents a passive emotion while rage or outrage are emotions that can open up possibilities for political action. While for others such an emotion or any other shared emotions could not bridge the ideological and material differences amongst them.

For Stratos, a young unemployed musician, the indignant movement offered a unique experience. Stratos felt for the first time in his life free and autonomous. With the exception of a demonstration he joined when he was a student, the indignant movement was the only movement in which he felt completely free and able to express his individuality, for at least the first few days of his participation. *"The first day I went to Syntagma square and I felt free"* he told me excitedly. During the first days of his participation Stratos felt liberated. He did not have to prove to the collective that his beliefs were aligned with theirs; he only had to show that he was an individual, with emotions of anger and frustration towards structures of power. It was important for Stratos to be able to express his individuality and emotions without them being used by a political party. Stratos felt that existing ideologies could not represent him anymore and was excited to find a form of action in which he could unite with so many different people against the politics of austerity without having to be a framework that would restrict his individuality. The ability to do so within the indignants gave him a sense of freedom and empowerment.

His most intense memory of the indignant movement is that exhilarating feeling of freedom and autonomy when he would join in outrage and indignation the rest of the crowd gathered in Syntagma square chanting, dancing and performing offensive gestures towards the parliament. Interviewees such as Stratos describe the first days of their participation as a wave of not just emotions, a wave of feelings they could not quite put into words that allowed them to join the crowd and shout and perform gestures they never thought they would.

The first days for many participants resembled that of a festival. People would dance on the tunes of street bands or to the banging of empty pots. They would join other people in chanting, performing rude gesture towards the parliament. People would one minute be dancing and singing together while within seconds engage in rude gestures, shout and curse towards the parliament. In the lower part of the square people would drink bears and eat souvlaki while listening to live concerts by famous Greek artists.

Stratos found a feeling of freedom in his ability to express himself. He felt more comfortable at joining the rest of the crowd in performing rude gestures, chanting and shouting rude mottos against political parties and singing along to some of the concerts held there rather

than participating in the open assembly. He was too shy in articulating his emotions but he had no difficulty expressing them through different movements of the body. The emotional intensity in Syntagma square welcomed such a form of expression after all. However his feelings of freedom did not last for long. He was troubled by the possibility that there would be people performing the same gestures, singing at the same songs and experiencing the same feeling of freedom as he did but coming from different ideological perspectives.

> *I had a discussion with my friends while we were there. I thought at some point I might be doing rude gestures towards the parliament but the same a Golden Dawn member right next to me would do the same. And you ponder how would the rest of Greek society that is watching us perceives this possibility? And what kind of a result might this action have?*[295]

The intense feelings experienced by the interviewees suddenly are not as important as the message of that intensity. Stratos becomes particularly disturbed when he wonders about the message produced in the square when he notices that this emotional atmosphere could be experienced and felt as intensely by a fascist. His feeling of freedom is frozen on the prospect of that feeling and the message it carries being shaped by a fascist by engaging in similar forms of emotional expression and movements of the body. When Stratos became aware of this prospect he could no longer feel the intensity he experienced the first moment of his participation. This intense atmosphere is now tainted by this terrifying prospect which he cannot take out of his mind. His protest no longer has the same meaning as before. Protesting side by side with a member of the party of Golden Dawn frightens him, threatening his very need to fight against forms of power that oppress him. Many interviewees were troubled by the possibility that they might have been protesting alongside fascists or petty bourgeois or that their action was perceived as such by some people because of this all-inclusive emotion of indignation that came to signify the movement. For some such a prospect marked the end of their participation.

Many of the interviewees were troubled by the name given to the movement and the political characteristics of the emotion of indignation. They were keen to discuss how their misgivings about this emotional characteristic and how they interpret this emotion of indignation.

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[295] Stratos S. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 20 2013

Alex, a young musician, at the beginning of his interview thought it was important to express his difficulty in articulating his political thoughts in a coherent and apt way. As a musician he is used to express himself through his music, he believed however that focusing just on different expressive movements of the body and expressions based on performance as partly empty of meaning within such a diverse movement. He therefore hated the name given to the movement. He attempts to deconstruct the emotion of indignation and explain to me what it means to him by trying to compare it with the meaning of other emotions that for him suggest political engagement rather than apathy. Alex can't quite put into words exactly why he did not like the word indignant or why he did not felt indignant. He was becoming upset every time I would ask if and why he felt indignant.

> *"Indignation is an emotion it's something psychological, an emotion. I wanted to be something deeper than an emotion of indignation, to be determination and combativeness. The title was a bit wrong, I can't really say….I don't like that term that title it's a bit overused in a negative way, I can't really put it into words"[296]*

Alex believes that indignation signifies a middle class or bourgeois emotion but he is not quite sure why. The best he can do is to try to explain the meaning of indignation by comparing to other emotions. For Alex, indignation compared to other emotions signifies a form of political apathy, an acceptance of the defeat of any form of resistance and a stasis. But he is not quite satisfied with the meaning he assigned to indignation.

Another participant however has no difficulty identifying exactly what indignation signifies to him, why he refused to feel indignant or the reason why he believed the movement should not have been named as such. Panos is an anarchist activist; he joined the movement when the occupation was outside the Spanish embassy before it moved to Syntagma square. He attempts to explain what the emotion of indignation means to him by proceeding to a historical overview of the use of the emotion of indignation within Greek collective struggle and what that emotion signifies.

> *"The name indignant movement in Greece was given as an exact translation for the Spanish indignados. But can you recall who call themselves indignants in Greece before Syntagma square? Those people charging with the coppers, assaulting people in demos. The*

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[296] Alex E. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 12 2013

> *meaning indignant citizens in Greece should not exist… I disagree with the term because it is used mainly from radical right wingers which are the state within the state. Indignant citizens were also the ones we saw yesterday coming behind the lines of riot police and attacking left protestors[297]. It* [Indignation] *is a term with a very specific meaning here in Greece. Indignants were also the citizens that killed Lambrakis[298]. You cannot talk about indignant citizens it's a political mistake…"[299]*

Over the years Panos witnessed the use of the emotion of indignation as a means of justification for any political attacks against left activists and collective organisations. The use of the emotion of indignation by these fascist groups for Panos was strategic in order to create the impression that those attacks do not come from a particular group with clear ideological background but as a spontaneous reaction against left group activity by ordinary citizens that do not belong in any political group. For Panos this was accomplished by using an emotion that characterises the middle class. For Panos the emotion of indignation and the word indignant citizens signifies a very particular form of political action. For many anarchist activists the word indignation is a "red flag" used only to characterise fascist activities. The emotion of indignation has a particular meaning shaped through the history of collective action in Greece. Many of the interviewees refrained from using the name indignant movement, and sometimes corrected me, using instead the name movement of the squares or the outraged movement. In spite of Panos's objection to the emotion of indignation due to its political ties with fascist groups he acknowledges that someone can feel indignant without being a fascist or supporting any attacks towards left activists. He believes however that the ability of fascist groups all these years to use the emotion of indignation as a way to portray a political form of action that is popular and spontaneous without any ideological roots is founded in the inclusive character of the emotion.

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[297] I spoke to Panos on the 18th of September the day after the murder of Pavlos Fyssas, a left activist and rap singer, by Giorgos Roupakias a member of Golden Dawn at the area of Keratsini in Piraeus. The day of the interview there were a number of spontaneous protests at Keratsini by left groups. These protests were met by police violence and attacks from men coming from behind the lines of riot police wearing civilian cloths calling themselves indignant citizens. This incident was captured by TV camera crews and the mainstream media and raised a heated public discussion on the relationship between the police and the party of Golden Dawn
[298] Grigoris Lambrakis a left MP, known for his active involvement with the pacifist movement was murdered by two far right extremists on May 22 1963.
[299] Panos V. Interview conducted in person, Athens, September 18 2013

> *"There is indignation anyway. Every person expresses their indignation the way they do and react to that indignation the way they react. Now we are not all the same, so I can't consider myself a member of the indignant movement. I can't think myself as a member of the indignant movement in Syntagma square. Because who were those indignants and who was feeling indignant? A fascist was feeling indignant as was a blind supporter of party[300]. We were not the same. So we cannot talk about a movement that was homogenous, a movement that had a specific ideological framework. So who were those indignants after all? No I was not a member."[301]*

Even when Panos is trying to forget the negative meaning of the emotion of indignation and acknowledge the ability of people to feel indignant without being fascists he cannot see this shared emotion as a bridge for the differences amongst other participants. He believes that every individual has the ability to experience such an emotion but what that emotion signifies to each participant and how this meaning was shaped historically presents a barrier towards establishing a common link amongst those individuals. He finds possible to share an emotion with a fascist or a blind supporter of a party but he cannot ignore the interpretation these people assign to this emotion. For Panos any shared emotions or intensities within a collective form of organisation he can identify with should be coming from a common interpretation of set emotions. Any individual experience of emotions within a collective form of action should signify, for Panos, a common interpretation of these emotions and should always be informed by a left ideology.

Many interviewees shared Panos's inability to participate in such a diverse movement and Stratos's fear of being branded as fascists. Participants were engaging in a different way with the emotion of indignation and the intensities experienced by the movement than the one suggested by Massumi or Hardt and Negri. Many of the interviewees would try to limit any spontaneous movements and tried to a certain extend to manage their emotions. Many interviewees familiar with the ideological significance of the emotion of indignation within Greek political culture found difficult to ignore its use to describe the movement. Many

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[300] The exact translation to the phrase "a blind supporter of a party" would be party-dog κομματόσκυλο kommatoskilo, a word with negative connotation used to describe someone being a member of a party that is not just blindly following the party but also actively propagating the party line to recruit members often by being very confrontational to anyone who disagrees with the line set by the party.
[301] Panos V., Interview conducted in person, Athens, September 18 2013

interviewees in order to continue being a part of the movement they had to manage their bodies and emotions as to fit that of the crowd in order not to be excluded.

Emotions are tied to historical and cultural characteristics formed within collective struggle. For Panos and other participants with experience to collective activism the emotion of indignation has a particular meaning. Their hesitation towards being a part of the movement is attributed to the mandate for diversity and desire of the participants not to alienate anyone by using the emotion of indignation as an ideologically neutral point in which this diverse crowd can become a movement. The emotion of indignation is not just any other emotion, it is an emotion that has particular political characteristics. Its political significance, within Greek political culture, is shaped through a struggle between the left and the far right. Indignation could never act as a common denominator for uniting Panos, or other interviewees with experience on political activism, to other participants. Any person called herself indignant had a very particular political role that did not appealed to them. While interviewees' narrative shows that in order of their experiences to become meaningful they had to be shared and managed. Even for those that were ignorant of the history behind the emotion of indignation, they connect the emotion of indignation to a particular role. So even though they might felt it they were trying to suppress it refusing to accept the role as Alex did. For Alex that lack of combativeness coming from his interpretation of the emotion of indignation was connected to the upper and middle class and that was a role he was not prepared to play.

Participants would experience this "electric" atmosphere generated at the beginning of the movement through different performative practises however they would quickly reflect upon the inability of this feeling to become a bridge that would unite their differences. Furthermore the political characteristics of the emotion of indignation shaped within Greek political culture questioned by many participants its ability to unite the movement to a common form of action. Participants were becoming more sceptical and suspicious of individual emotions and expressions. In the next section I examine how participants were responding to the intensities experienced during their participation informed by ideological and cultural characteristics.

4.3. The Outraged Bodies: Managing intensities within the movement

In this section I bring my critique of Massumi's argument on the importance of rage within his theory of affect to bear upon an analysis of the emotion of rage within the Greek indignant movement. I demonstrate how in spite the intensities experienced interviewees manage these intensities informed by different ideological frameworks

As many of the interviewees saw in the emotion of indignation reflected a particular ideological framework they also begun to see particular actions and emotions permeated by ideology. Participants thus begun to manage the intensities experienced and shape their feelings. This section investigates this process.

Syntagma square was buzzing with different forms of emotional expression. Many participants would join one form of action or the other. The crowd would be dancing and chanting joyfully on the one side of the square while on the other people would be expressing their rage and disappointment in various ways (most popular by engaging in rude gestures such as extending the palm of one's hand towards the parliament). These forms of individual or collective expression would become more intense when there was a discussion or a vote on austerity measures in the parliament. The crowd outside the parliament would engage into a rampant outburst of rage. People would push each other trying to invade the parliament and stop the voting process.

I remember that day it was May. We were so many and people were so enraged that I thought we would get in the parliament and burn it[302]. This activist can't forget the day the outrage of the crowd almost turned into violence. Many of the interviewees remember vividly the days where the rage of people gathered in Syntagma square was so intense that the crowd was ready to explode into violence and invade or burn down the parliament. However somehow the crowd did not invade in the parliament or engaged into any other form of violent action.

There were not endless possibilities when it came to whether the movement would turn violent. Violence was already excluded as a potential by the movement. Participants managed to control their emotions and their bodies so as to not become violent. In order to obey this unwritten rule, participants had to manage their emotions and bodies to meet a specific ideological framework of political action. People joining the movement would manage their emotions and bodily responses so as to not get carried away by the intense atmosphere in the

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[302] Nick K. Interview conducted in person, Athens, August 6 2013

square and participate in violent action. This form of body and emotion management for many of the interviewees already informed them before they join the movement. Participants would engage into different forms of emotion and body management informed by different ideological frameworks.

Makis lost his job at the age of 33, a year before he decided to join the indignant movement. He used to have, according to his words, *"a very respectable job"* which could accommodate his extravagant lifestyle. *"I used to be in sales. I was making good money. I was going to mpouzoukia[303] every night spending money all the time. I was voting PASOK but I did not really care about politics."*[304] Makis's life changed when he found himself unemployed in his mid-30s. He was unable to find a job and admits that he was depressed for a while. He had to sacrifice a lot from his previous lifestyle and move back to his parents' house going through a period of depression. Makis had never before participated in any movement or joined a protest, and used to alternate his vote between the parties of Nea Demokratia and PASOK. He did not join the movement on the first day but seeing its popularity he decided *"to have a look at what was going on"*. At first he was impressed by the emotional atmosphere in Syntagma square, the possibility of expressing his emotions and finding out that he was not the only one feeling depressed and indignant. For Makis the emotion of indignation did not bear any particular meaning. He was relieved to find that other people were in a similar state of depression and mistrust of existing forms of organisation. Makis remembers that he was captivated by the atmosphere in Syntagma square. *"I saw a square that was passionate, intense, filled with rage but at the same time people were willing to talk to each other and support each other and help them cope with the difficulties they were facing in their lives. It was something that we don't normally do"*.[305] Makis found in the movement an emotional support he could not find elsewhere. He was able to express how he felt and find that he was not the only one feeling this way. He decided therefore to actively participate in the movement, something that he never thought he would do. Through his participation he started to transform his depression into anger towards the government. Makis shouted, chanted, danced and joined the open assembly and the informal discussions in Syntagma square. Makis was describing how his depression was slowly transformed into rage and how this rage was growing as the days went by. He would willingly try to forget his depression through his participation and become enraged towards those who felt was responsible for him feeling that

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[303] Big clubs with live performances and live Greek music
[304] Makis M. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 1 2013
[305] Makis M. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 1 2013

way. *"At the beginning we were all trying to let off some steam, to shout and say look we are here pay some attention to us!"[306]*

Makis admits how at the beginning he was carried away by this emotional atmosphere engaging in a form of action that was not really his character. After all it was the first thing he did after a long time that felt enjoyable. This form of expression was something that he was not used to do. He was trying to forget his feelings of sadness and depression and transform them in a way that would match that of the crowd around him. Eventually his attempt to forget such emotions and match his emotional state with the crowd made him feel much better; made him feel like he belonged and was not alone.

However, through his interaction with other members either in the open assembly or the open discussions in the lower part of the square Makis was now positive that he had to control and manage his outrage something that he suspected from the beginning.

> *"To be honest the first Sunday in the big demo I too shouted and cursed and made rude gestures such as mountza."[307] Makis t*old me in an apologetic tone as if he was embarrassed by his actions. *"But after a few times I've discussed it I realised that extreme outrage is not the solution. That was the difference between the upper and lower square. In the lower square you would engage in a deep analysis of your emotions and think whose fault is it, why I feel this way and how I can control it"*.[308]

Makis was convinced that uncontrolled outrage can lead to a violent form of action, something that he found undesirable. Any form of violent action for Makis was an act of terror not radical change and believed that any form of collective action should not follow any tactics informed by the anarchist movement. He therefore tried to manage his outrage and modify his action accordingly, condemning at the same time people that did not tried to engage in the same process of emotional management. As Makis was slowly modifying his emotions within the movement, he was starting to manage his gestures, his expressions as well as his body image. Makis confided to me that when he started to participate in the movement he was overweight. He decided to modify his body and lose a considerable

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[306] Makis M. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 1 2013
[307] Makis M. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 1 2013
[308] Makis M. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 1 2013

amount of weight in order to fit with the image of a "left revolutionary" and be able to run away from the police.

Makis managed his emotions and changed his body in order to match an image of a particular role he had in his mind. He began by interacting with the members of the movement and becoming attached to the processes developed in Syntagma square, finding a place he could identify with. Through his interaction with other participants and his participation for the first time in his life to a protest Makis was slowly managing his emotions changing his subjectivity. The impact the emotional atmosphere had upon him, the intensity of emotions he experienced by the close proximity of angry and frightened people like him and the fear of police violence were imprinted upon him and internalised by slowly becoming a left activist. Makis's decision to manage his emotions and his body image to play the role of a left activist was something that happened slowly, a process not imposed upon him. He internalised this role of left activist through an interaction with other participants and the articulation of their emotional state rather than by experiencing a multiplicity of intensities.

Makis's bodily change was not the result of what Brian Massumi calls "affective intensity". Participants do not only manage the intensities they experience but they do so reflecting upon particular ideological frameworks. Ideology still has a hold not only upon emotions but also upon intensities, if we are to proceed to such a division, negating Massumi's argument that "direct affect modulation takes place of old style ideology".[309] Makis had undoubtedly experienced strong emotions through his participation, either at the upper or the lower part of the square, emotions and feelings he never experienced before. He was not however carried away by embodying these emotions instead he tried to control them and shape them to the image created by his interaction with other members of the movement. Makis was trying to modify his emotional and bodily responses throughout his participation. Even while he was being engulfed by the intensity of bodies acting in outrage he tried to control himself as not to become violent and assume the image of "an extremist". Makis's attempt to manage his body image and ultimately assume a particular role was not a product of an automatic sensory response to the multiplicity of intensities. But he tried to manage his emotions and body based on his idea of a left activist shaped by his interaction with other activists. Makis choose to transform himself and his body in order to become a part of "a grid", if we are to use Massumi's language. He chose to adopt an ideological position and modify his emotions and body to internalise that position as if it was a role. Makis attributes a primacy to ideology and

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[309] Massumi 'Navigating Movements: A conversation with Brian Massumi' 233

meaning, a primacy that is questioned by affect theorists. For Massumi the importance given to ideology in shaping subjectivities belongs to the past.[310] The very idea of one managing her emotions or body to fit a particular role eludes affective theorists. Syntagma square normalised outrage but framed any action motivated by outrage within a specific ideological framework of political action.

Interviewees would not only manage their emotions during their participation but also in their decision to join the movement. *"Some people are trapped in their fear and misery. They look at their bills and they don't dare to do anything about it. They are waiting for someone else to make them feel better, to liberate them."*[311] Stella tells me. Unlike the people trapped in their fear Stella had to overcome her fear and oppose to those emotions by participating in the indignant movement and later at the food bank called "Allos Anthropos". Stella had some experience in political activism but the indignant movement awakened within her emotions of solidarity from her past experience making her overcome her fear for her future and personal survival. Stella tried to supress her emotions of fear and insecurity in order to join the movement and embrace emotions of rage evident in almost every participant. While during her first days of participation she tried to invoke joyful emotions from past experiences on political activism in order to put aside any doubts and fears. Stella, a single mother with two daughters, was always struggling to get by, doing sometimes two or three jobs at a time. However in her words she had *"a respectable life"*. Even before Giorgos Papandreou announces the implementation of austerity measures Stella was struggling to get by having to constantly move from house to house. *"We used to leave in a big house. Now from a 170 square meters apartment we leave in a 78 square meters apartment. I make 1.300 euros a year and four people are depending on that money."* [312]Stella had to manage her fear and focus on emotions such as solidarity and outrage in order to motivate herself and join the movement. She refused to feel frightened and depressed, realising that she cannot find a political party or political leader she can support and identify with but most importantly move her emotionally. A leader that would unite the country in solidarity, and achieve what Andreas Papandreou did with the founding of PASOK, move the masses creating a feeling of collectively working together that wanted to feel again. Her participation in the movement was an attempt to feel like that again.

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[310] Massumi 'Navigating Movements' 233
[311] Stella G., Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 14 2013
[312] Stella G., Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 14 2013

Participants had to overcome the uncertainty and fear dominating their lives and join the movement. Participating in the movement every day required full time commitment and people like Stella would be spending more time at occupying Syntagma square rather than trying to find a job or at least a day's wages. To do so, Stella had to invoke feelings of hope for the future and anger for the present and cultivate those through her participation avoiding giving in to fear and trepidation. To do so she would either invoke pleasant emotions by her past activities as an activist or engage her imagination and focus on emotions of anger, hope and joy evident in the participants around her in order to continue participating in the occupation of Syntagma square believing that through her participation she can change her life and the lives of others. This emotional management by participants is not to imply that participants were always aware of their emotional state and tried to proceed to a conscious management of such emotions in order to meet some realistic goals.

Participants express the need to communicate their emotions. They express the need to communicate their opposition to austerity. Many resent being part of any "intensity" that does not represent them.

As seen in chapter two participants engage in a discursive battle in their attempt to articulate their positions and communicate their emotions. The open assembly even small discussions on both parts of the square testify to this need. Participants were trying to make sense of the crisis and how to organise in order to oppose austerity. This process was deeply emotional and cognitive. Participants were expressing their emotions verbally or through movements of the body in their attempt to articulate their emotions and shape them in order to proceed to a collective form of action. Participants were captivated by the intensity of emotions in Syntagma square but were not acting outside ideology as collective political subject united under a relationship of affects. Participants were engaging into a battle of communicating emotions and feelings in the same way they were engaging into a battle of discourses within and outside the formal discussion of the open assembly. They were managing their bodies and intensities sometimes as seen in the case of Makis, as if it was a role they had to play, other times unconsciously.

4.4. The limitations of the "affective turn" in light of the Greek indignant movement

The narrative of the interviewees testifies to the importance of language and ideology in contemporary forms of collective action and the ties of emotions to ideology and culture.

Interviewees become sceptical as to whether indignation as an emotion, as it has been formed within Greek political culture can indeed challenge existing power relations. The moulding of the emotion of indignation within Greek social movement history of struggles signified for many participants a form of action that could give rise to nationalism or simply not propose any meaningful critique of capitalism. Participants enjoyed the festivity and intensity in Syntagma square but they had to engage into a discursive battle with other participants to put forward a critique of capitalism. Emotions and feelings however have a key role in this process.

Participants engaged with their emotions and the intensity of their experiences and try to manage their bodies and emotions around an ideological framework. Makis's body change and emotions management was not an automatic response to the intensities he experienced, he choose to reject emotional expressions that would encourage the articulation of a nationalist discourse and not oppose neoliberal politics. While Stella decided to join the movement after an internal struggle that pushed her to manage her fears and doubts and invoke emotions from her past experience of collective action in order to mobilise her and join the movement.

A cursory reading of the Greek indignant movement could certainly validate the hypothesis for an "affective turn" in the formation of the political subject. Interviewees' experience of the first days of their participation underlines the importance of intensity and the feeling of empowerment by the close proximity of so many bodies protesting in indignation against the politics of austerity. One could even argue that Hard and Negri's hope for the rise of the multitude is finally vindicated. However a closer look reveals the problematic of the importance placed on just the will to be against forms of oppression manifested in the intensities of bodies coming together and their affective abilities that escape existing power relations. In spite of Massumi's argument that affect always escapes cognition and meaning interviewee's narrative shows that they are critically reflecting upon the lack of a political character of the intensities experienced in the first days of their participation. They are questioning the ability to such intensity to produce a common form of action and a political response to the crisis. The experience of the first days of the interviewees could be interpreted as affective however that sense of freedom and togetherness did not last part from a moment. Interviewees are unable to experience the same feeling when they reflect upon the diversity of the participants, upon the possibility that they might share an emotion or a feeling with a fascist or a member of the bourgeoisie. The Greek indignants thus challenge the assumption

that the revolutionary potential of affect is immanent. As Laclau points, "the ability and the will to resist are not a gift from heaven but require a set of subjective transformations that are only the product of struggle themselves."[313]

Even though Massumi argues for the "sociolinguistic" character of emotions he ignores this prospect. The ability of emotions to capture and tame aspects of affect suggest that the ideological and cultural characteristics of emotions can change in an instance when social actors experience this illusive affective feeling. Even though such an assumption attempts to build an understanding of a political subjectivity that is always open and ever changing it produces an understanding of a fluid and unstable social world in which everything is possible. Interviewees' narratives indicate that any connection among them based on the intensities of the first days reduces the political character of the movement and reduces the movement to an amorphous mob. To read the indignant movement as a movement permeated by affects is thus to deny its political character and the political character of emotions and feelings and assume that any form of emotional expression and performance of the body can contribute to the emergence of a revolutionary collective political subjectivity.

 Interviewees experienced a plethora of intensities in the first few days of their participation. An experience they could not quite put into words. They enjoyed this opaque feeling and for a moment it brought them closer to other participants. However this experience was only momentary. In their interaction with other participants interviewees feel the need to reflect upon this intensity. They see that in order to make this experience political to bring it to the plain of signification and cultural meaning. They express the need to structure their feelings and manage their emotions and bodies by defying or embracing different ideologies. Arlie Hochschild demonstrates how people engage in a process in which they defy or accept what she calls "feeling rules" through a process of emotion management. In the following chapters I examine this process of emotion management from the part of the participants. A focus on such a process can help unravel the workings of ideology and the ability of the participants to challenge the politics of austerity and create a counter-hegemonic bloc and the possibility for social transformation.

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[313] Ernesto Laclau. 'Can Immanence Explain Social Struggles', in *Empire's New Clothes: reading Hardt and Negri,* Paul A. Passavant & Jodi Dean (eds.) (New York and London: Routledge, 2004). 28.

Chapter 5

Crisis, Defiance and the Emergence of the Indignant Movement

In the previous chapter I examined the importance of emotions and affect in the production of political subjectivities within the Greek indignant movement. In this chapter I focus on the role of emotions in the emergence of the movement. Interviewees were captivated by the emotional intensity experienced in the first days of their participation. This experience informed their desire to be a part of the movement. However how were participants motivated to join the movement? What drove them to Syntagma Square? In this chapter I examine the role of emotions within a crisis of representation.

In the previous chapters I examined the emergence of political antagonisms and their relation to processes rooted within the economy. I argued that ideology, culture and the economy have a hold upon the production of political subjectivities. I examined how the above categories inform the political character of emotions and their significance in the production of political subjectivities within the Greek indignant movement.

Emotions, as argued in the previous chapter, are not asignifying expressions of power relations. Emotions are permeable to cultural and ideological characteristics which feed into the subjectivity of the interviewees. In this chapter I examine the political significance of emotions and their connection to the emergence of antagonism.

In chapter two I examined the importance of periods of crisis in the emergence of antagonisms over meaning as an opportunity for social change. In this chapter I examine how antagonisms emerging over the production of meaning are grounded within an "organic crisis" of hegemony and manifest as an emotional crisis and a crisis of subjectivity. To do so I explore the emotional tension interviewees experience before joining the movement drawing upon Gramsci's concept of "organic crisis", Arlie Hochschild's theory of emotion work and the importance of the concept of reflexivity. I argue that the impact of neoliberal politics and politics of austerity combined with a crisis of representation, manifested through emotions of anxiety and fear, challenged the politics of austerity and contributed to the emergence of antagonism.

Interviewees place great emphasis upon their feelings and emotions. Interviewees' narratives show that their decisions to join the movement were rooted in their inability to feel

represented by a political party or ideology. Their inability to feel moved by a political party or an ideology was built slowly over the years and was manifested within this period of crisis. In some cases interviewees recall the last time they felt moved by an ideology or a party and yearn to feel the same way. Interviewees' narratives suggest that they were experiencing more than a crisis of representation. It was a crisis of subjectivity manifested in strong feelings of anxiety and fear which were unable to control in order to accept the politics of austerity. Their participation in the movement is accompanied by a need to engage and reflect upon their conflicting emotions. In this chapter I examine the role of emotions within a period of organic crisis. I argue that hegemonic discourses on the politics of austerity were accompanied with emotional characteristics pointing to a particular direction of feeling that interviewees could not internalise. Interviewees' experience of a crisis of subjectivity is located in their inability to shape their emotions in order to adhere to hegemonic feeling rules of austerity.

In the first section of this chapter I critically engage with Gramsci's concept of "organic crisis" and the role of emotions. I argue that even though Gramsci touches upon the importance of emotion in the emergence of antagonisms within a period of crisis, a deeper engagement with the role of emotion is warranted. I thus turn my attention to Hochschild's theory of emotion and the process of emotional dissonance to capture the inability of the Greek indignants to accept the politics of austerity. In the second section I focus on the emotional dissonance of the interviewees between the feelings produced by a hegemonic discourse of austerity and the impact of the crisis upon their lives. In the third section I examine how this emotional dissonance and organic crisis propelled participants to join the movement and reflect upon their emotions in order to resist the politics of austerity. I conclude this chapter by a summary of my positive critique of Gramsci's concept of "organic crisis" and Hochschild's theory of emotions and the importance of emotion in emergent forms of collective action.

5.1. Crisis of Hegemony and Emotional Dissonance

The inability to identify with political parties and trade unions at the time dominates interviewees' narratives. In this section I examine the political character of emotions within periods of crisis. I do so by a positive critique of Gramsci's concept of "organic crisis" and Arlie Hochschild's theory of emotions.

Interviewees remember how in the past they were able to be moved emotionally by an ideology or a political party. Interviewees frequently compare their past experiences with their present inability to find an ideological framework to represent them, but also move them emotionally. Interviewees found themselves struggling to manage their emotions, causing them to feel guilty and responsible for the crisis and afraid to stand against austerity.

Gramsci argues that a crisis of hegemony manifests when social classes are detached from current hegemonic relations and explores the cultural historical and ideological implications of such detachment.[314] A crisis of hegemony is not limited to a cognitive detachment but also to an emotional detachment form hegemonic discourse and hegemonic political forces. Interviewees saw the indignant movement as a medium through which to express their individual emotions and anxiety, and emotion's dominant discourse indicates they should feel and reflect upon these conflicting emotions.

Interviewees identify not only with an ideological framework at a cognitive level, as seen in previous chapters, but also on an emotional level. Emotions and feelings play a key role in this process. *"I felt betrayed and disappointed, because I believed (in PASOK)! I believed that it would bring the big change in Greece."*[315] Dimitra desperately searches for a party that she can "click" with. *"I can't find anyone to light my spark. Even if that party is not that big, just big enough to get into parliament. I could identify with the Green party for example but even though I agree with their manifesto and I care about the environment that was not enough".*[316]

Many of the interviewees expect to find a discourse that does not only "seem reasonable", as Dimitra sees the ideological framework of the Green Party, but also that can move them emotionally. Even though she identifies as *"being on the left"* she doesn't know what that means anymore and doesn't know how she is supposed to feel. Indeed many of the interviewees appear lost emotionally, experiencing a wide range of feelings and emotions not knowing how to express them. Even before the announcement of austerity and the Greek debt crisis, interviewees did not feel that any of the existing political parties could address issues that were present before the crisis (such as unemployment) and many participated in massive rallies that reflected such a crisis of hegemony. The debt crisis and the announcement of the implementation of a series of austerity measures caught many of the interviewees by surprise.

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[314] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 210-218
[315] Dimitra E. Interview conducted in person, Athens 27 June 2013
[316] Dimitra E. Interview conducted in person, Athens 27 June 2013

"We have the money" replied the leader of the socialist party PASOK, Andreas Papandreou, to those who questioned his political strategy for extending the welfare state and the public sector during his election campaign in 2010, promising the decline of unemployment though a series of governmental spending initiatives.[317] However it was a promise that he would never keep. Along with Papandreou's inability to fulfil his promises, a number of political corruption scandals came to the fore in the course of three years which shook the confidence of Greek citizens in the political parties of PASOK and Nea Demokratia.[318] While the economy was declining and unemployment soared (especially amongst young people) the announcement and implementation of a series of austerity measures portrayed Papandreou as a liar in the eyes of the people. Many interviewees describe how they try to manage their frustration and remain patient, hoping that this crisis would soon be over. But for many of the interviewees this was another clear indication that existing parties should not be trusted.

> *"I grew tired of a political party or a trade union being behind any political action.* Kostas told me, disappointed. *I grew tired of believing them every time they told me that they would be there for me and to be left high and dry when you really need them. I just couldn't trust them anymore, people didn't trust them anymore. Two things people couldn't stand, MPs and trade unionists."[319]*

For Kostas, a young participant of the movement, the politics of austerity was the last straw. He could no longer associate with any political party and feel that they could represent him, a feeling he had had for some time. The crisis of representation, which the majority of the interviewees experienced long before the emergence of the movement, peaked at the very moment of the announcement of austerity and was transformed to a deeper crisis reflecting Gramsci's concept of "organic crisis". According to Gramsci the ability of a dominant social group to maintain its power rests on its ability to constantly preserve its authority within civil society through a system of support and the emergence of alliances amongst different social groups.[320] However within periods of crisis "...social classes become detached form their traditional parties. In other words, the traditional parties in that particular organisational form,

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[317] Vasilis Nedos. "''Λεφτά Υπάρχουν'' Ελεγε ο Γιώργος Παπανδρεου το 2009", *Kathimerini* http://www.kathimerini.gr/783966/article/epikairothta/politikh/lefta-yparxoyn-elege-o-g-papandreoy-to-2009 accessed 15/07/2015 (in Greek)
[318] Yiannis Mylonas. 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU: The 'Culturalization' of a Systemic Crisis and Bild-Zeitung's Framing of Greece', *TripleC* 10:2 (2012). 646-671.
[319] Kostas M. Interview conducted in person, Athens 31 June 2013
[320] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 210

with the particular men who constitute, represent, and lead them, are no longer recognised by their class (or fraction of a class) as its expression".[321] It is within this period that hegemonic forces enter a state of crisis extended to civil society and all spheres of the state. Within this state of crisis new political balances have the potential to emerge, articulating a new ideological framework.

The crisis of representation experienced by many interviewees and the accompanying emotional confusion were extended to other forms of collective organisation such as trade unions. Interviewees did not only reject other forms of collective action based on ideological grounds but also on their inability, in terms of their organisational form, to encompass their individuality and assert their independence form political parties. To that end many interviewees saw trade unions as an extension of political parties shaping their action so as to maintain their power ignoring the problems of the interviewees.

> *"I'd rather go and protest expressing myself than with the G.S.E.E. And that's why I went to Syntagma Square. To express something that interests me personally. All these people that work in the two main trade unions are supporters of a party and are coming from within that party system. When there's an election within trade unions the candidates are supported by different parties, the same in universities these things are unacceptable!"[322]*

As shown above, an interviewee attempted to explain why trade unions could not challenge the politics of austerity and capture his actions. Interviewees were unwilling to manage their individuality and emotions to fit the framework set by trade unions or other smaller political parties that might disagree with austerity.

> *"In the past I've joined many other marches under banners of parties or other collective organisations for example the youth of SYRIZA or E.A.K. I didn't join them because I agreed with everything they said or because I was a supporter but because during a march you have to join a banner of a bloc; you can't march alone."[323]*

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[321] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 210
[322] Giorgos T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 31 July 2013
[323] Georgia I. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 5 September 2013

Georgia is frustrated when she remembers how she had to modify her actions and emotions while protesting behind a banner of a party. She had joined such forms of protest in the past, but every time she did she felt less connected to that form of action and unable to match the enthusiasm of the other people around her. She did not want to participate again in such a protest – instead she desired to express her emotions without having to modify them.

Historically any form of protest in Greece would involve the organisation of said protest by trade unions, or organisations affiliated to a particular party, as well as by the anarchist movement. The dominant form of protest would be a march. Usually different collective organisations would set different meeting places before the demonstration and would either set their own route or join the rest of the movements and trade unions into a big march. Every collective organisation would have its own banner and people would decide whether they would march behind it. People marching behind a banner would see themselves as supporters or sympathisers of the collective organisation they decided to march with, as would other participants. Georgia describes to me how it would be impossible for someone to participate in a march and be able to march as an individual. She becomes frustrated when she explains to how standing behind a banner shapes her as a particular political individual. For many interviewees with experience in political activism, standing behind a banner of a particular collective organisation signifies that as an individual you embrace the discourse and ideology of said organisation.

However, interviewees' narratives focused not only on the inability of political parties and hegemonic discourses on the crisis to represent them, but also to move them emotionally. The emotions interviewees experienced were not reflected in the dominant discourse. Interviewees' narratives indicate an internal conflict between what they ought to feel and what they did feel. This conflict was more intense when discourses advocating austerity were portraying them as responsible for the crisis, trying to cultivate feelings of guilt. For many of the interviewees no one could alleviate their emotional burden. They felt like no political organisation could relate to their feelings of insecurity and anxiety or change them. Instead, many believed that political parties were trying to manage their emotional state in order to maintain power, or exploit their fears and anxieties as to serve the smooth transition to austerity. Many of the interviewees point to an internal struggle when they were encouraged to be patient and accept austerity as the only solution to the crisis. They perceive this attempt of the government as a fundamental threat to their individuality and shape them into

something they are not. Their protest is, for many interviewees, a form of resistance to such an attempt.

Throughout *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci discusses the importance of emotions and passions of a collective action arising from and taking advantage of the organic crisis of hegemony. Emotions are the driving force in the process of the articulation of a new alternative ideological framework which would subvert and overthrow existing hegemonic relations. Within this context Gramsci highlights the importance of emotions and stresses their political significance.[324] In *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci stress the political significance of emotions and passions through a critique of Croce's definition of politics. In his critique of Croce Gramsci discusses the significance within relations of hegemony capturing emotions and passions of the people within ideological structures. "To the extent that ideologies are historically necessary they have a validity which is "psychological"; they "organise" human masses, and create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of position, struggle, etc. To the extent that they are arbitrary they only create individual "movements", polemics and so on."[325]

For Gramsci, Croce's limited understanding of the political significance of emotions is reflected upon his inability to think of an "organised" and "permanent" passion, given that Croce's conception of politics ignores political parties and "plans of action" which "are worked out in advance".[326] To further illustrate Croce's inability to grasp the political importance of emotions, Gramsci argues that in the same way "politics becomes permanent action and gives birth to permanent organisations precisely in so far as it identifies itself with economics", but politics is also distinct from economics in the same way that "political passion" as a political action is born on the "permanent and organic" terrain of economic life", but also it "transcends it, bringing into play emotions and aspirations in whose incandescent atmosphere even calculations involving the individual human life itself obey different laws from those of individual profit".[327] It is evident from this engagement with Croce's definition of passion that for Gramsci the concept of passion must go beyond a mere connection to politics. Passion, for Gramsci, is not its complete identification with politics but is also a dynamic relationship between politics and economics where passion is "born" in the productive forces within society, but at the same time exceeds them into the political sphere

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[324] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 418
[325] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 376-377
[326] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 138-139
[327] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 139-140

enriching this sphere with a range of emotions. Within this dynamic relationship, emotions play a key role in the emergence of a historic bloc that can oppose hegemony and in the unification of "dispersed wills" and "heterogeneous aims" within "a "cultural-social" unity".[328]

In his argument on the emotional aspect of politics, Gramsci stresses its relation to the economic sphere. At the same time in his discussion of the emergence of forms of resistance, the importance of emotional rules or feeling rules for interpreting ideological conditions are established by an interaction between organic intellectuals and the masses.[329] For Gramsci, a "relationship of representation" is established when popular emotions are reflected within this relationship.[330] Even though Gramsci pays some attention to the importance in harnessing popular passions for establishing new social bonds and internalising new ideological frameworks that can challenge hegemonic politics, he is not focusing on the importance of emotions experienced during an "organic crisis" or on their role in the production of political subjectivities.

Indeed, as seen in previous chapters, participants express the need for a collective resistance towards crisis but also place importance upon emotional, cultural and ideological characteristics in shaping a response towards tackling crisis. Interviewees, as seen in Dimitra's case, focus their narratives around their emotions and their inability to relate their emotional state to an ideological framework. Interviewees struggle to synchronise emotions stemming from their everyday experiences and the impact of austerity upon their lives within a collective framework. Many interviewees use the phrase "I didn't know how to feel" to convey their experience of a crisis that extended beyond the point of institutional politics. According to Interviewees, this crisis of representation only intensified when the newly elected government of PASOK announced the necessity of a series of austerity measures in order to tackle the Greek financial crisis. Interviewees were unable to identify with the hegemonic discourse and the emotional characteristics it accompanied.

For many of the interviewees, PASOK's attempt to create a feeling of guilt and responsibility amongst the people for the crisis, backed by other political parties such as Nea Demokratia, only fuelled the inability of the interviewees to identify with a political party and a collective form of organisation. Interviewees focus their anger mainly on the failed attempts of the two

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[328] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 349
[329] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 418
[330] Gramsci *Prison Notebooks* 418

parties PASOK and Nea Demokratia, as well as the EU, to assume any responsibility for the crisis while at the same time portraying them, the people, as the main culprits. For the majority of the interviewees this was reflected in the phrase "we ate (the money) all together"[331], used by the then vice president of the government Theodoros Pangalos when he was discussing in Parliament the causes of the crisis. For interviewees, this quote by Theodoros Pangalos was an attempt to blame the Greek people for the crisis by engaging historically in clientelistic relations and continuing to vote for and support corrupt governments. Pangalos's quote was a point of reference for many interviewees when describing the injustice that fuelled their anger and resentment towards Greek politics. It was the ultimate hubris towards the Greek people struggling to cope with the crisis. Many of the interviewees would refer to this quote when they wanted to register their disgust and anger towards members of parliament and main political parties.

For Nikos, Theodoros Pangalos's phrase was *"the ultimate insult to the Greek people"*. For Nikos the government's attempt to represent the crisis as his fault was the last straw. Especially when this attempt was coming from a person who was in power for years, while living a very luxurious lifestyle. It was not just this phrase that fuelled Nikos's anger, and the anger and outrage of many of the interviewees. However this quote was, for many of the interviewees as well as for Nikos, a clear attempt by the government to deny any responsibility for the crisis. For most of the interviewees the attempt of the government to blame its citizens was infuriating. Nikos could not hold back his anger as he was trying to explain why he was unable to find a party, as had in the future, which could reflect his individuality.

> *"Of course I felt indignant! I felt indignant because there are still in government[332] people who created this problem, there are still people in power who are not up to the job, there are still people in power who don't know what needs to be done, there are still people in power who follow orders from "big" interests and especially outside the country. I felt indignant because the way things were going I could see no hope for the future and that things would get worse, as they did."* [333]

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[331] "Μαζί τα φάγαμε" "Mazi ta fagame"
[332] At the time Nea Demokratia was in government
[333] Nikos N. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 21 August 2013

Nikos, as many interviewees, was in conflict with the ability to feel guilty or responsible for the crisis as the government and the EU wanted him to be. Instead of being patient his anger was taking over and he was unable to suffer in silence and make the concessions the government wanted him to make. However in light of the lack of a political party or a collective organisation that can convey his emotional dissonance Nikos tried to remain calm and tried to believe that austerity was the only solution to the crisis.

For many of the interviewees austerity was presented as the only solution to the crisis, imposed by the all-knowing EU bureaucracy, and any alternative to austerity was immediately excluded. Any discussion of a resistance to austerity was introduced as a catastrophic scenario for the Greek economy.[334] At the same time, the government was trying to create a sense of insecurity and fear about the future if Greece did not comply with the programme imposed by the TROIKA.[335] Emotions such as patience and guilt dominated the discourses that supported austerity. For many of the interviewees these emotions were unbearable and did not reflect their own feelings. Interviewees perceive this attempt to control and manage their emotions as an attempt to manipulate them. It was a further indication that those in power could not understand how they feel.

In her work on emotional labour, Hochschild provides an insight into the importance of emotions in the internalisation of social rules.[336] Hochschild recognises the importance of ideology in shaping our actions however she argues that ideology also shapes our feelings, allowing us to internalise social rules not only on a cognitive level but also on an emotional one. Hochschild argues that feelings are paramount in understanding how we are constructed as subjects by ideology. Hochschild argues that Freud's understanding of anxiety as a "signal function" can be extended to all feelings and can provide a clue to the social rules that permeate us.[337] Thus where Freud argues for the importance of anxiety in signalling messages of danger to individual "from within or outside the individual", Hochschild appropriates this understanding to other emotional states.[338] Ideological frameworks are, therefore, not just cognitive frameworks but are also permeated by appropriate feelings and feeling rules. Every ideological framework indicates appropriate feelings and emotions. However these feeling

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[334] Mylonas 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU
[335] Mylonas 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU
[336] Arlie Russell Hochschild. 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure' *American Journal of Sociology* 85:3 (1979). 551-575.
[337] Hochschild *The Managed Heart* 17, 230-231
[338] Hochschild *The Managed Heart* 230; see also Sigmund Freud. 'Lecture XXXII: Anxiety and Institutional Life' in Peter Gay (ed.), The Freud Reader (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1989). 774.

rules are not always internalised involuntarily.[339] An ideological stance will provide the rules under which individuals manage their emotions.[340] Focusing on a critical engagement with a Freudian understanding of emotions, as well as via Goffman's insight on the ability of feeling to shape individual actions, Hochschild builds a map that can unravel the implication of social rules upon one's subjectivity by engaging with the impact of those rules upon one's emotions and body.[341] For Hochschild, everyone either consciously or unconsciously modifies their emotions to match the appropriate feelings in a social situation as determined by social rules.[342] As seen in chapter four, interviewees attempt to control and manage their emotions, within their participation, informed by different ideological frameworks.

Hochschild introduces the concept of emotion work in which an individual attempts to control, manage, shape or alter her feelings in similar fashions to the process of "deep acting" used by actors.[343] Hochschild describes feeling rules as the "bottom side" of ideology that always informs the process of emotion work. Emotion work becomes mostly apparent to an individual when her feelings do not match the situation. It is precisely at this point, when the individuals' feelings are different from what they should feel, that the individual reflects mostly upon feeling rules and the ideological framework that surrounds them. The individual attempts to reduce this dissonance through emotion work and these attempts, according to Hochschild, "are our periodic clues to rules of feeling"[344]. An indication of a rejection of an ideology, according to Hochschild, is evident when the individual refuses to manage her emotions according to set ideology's feeling rules. "Lax emotional management" is a clue to an individuals' rejection of an ideology, while an individual sometimes might adopt an alternative set of feeling rules and manage her emotions accordingly as a response to a rejection of an ideological framework.[345]

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[339] Hochschild 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure' 551-575.

[340] Hochschild 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure' 551-575. "Rules for managing feeling are implicit in any ideological stance; they are the "bottom side" of ideology. Ideology has often been construed as a flatly cognitive framework, lacking systematic implications for how we manage feelings, or, indeed, for how we feel. Yet, drawing on Durkheim (1961),12 Geertz (1964), and in part on Goffman (1974), we can think of ideology as an interpretive framework that can be described in terms of framing rules and feeling rules. By "framing rules" I refer to the rules according to which we ascribe definitions or meanings to situations" 556

[341] Hochschild *The Managed Heart* 211-232

[342] Hochschild *The Managed Heart* 35-75

[343] A method of acting developed by Stanislavski in which the actor invokes emotions and expresses them spontaneously. Hochschild *The Managed Heart* 35-42

[344] Hochschild 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure'

[345] Hochschild 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure' 567

Hochschild locates in the inability of individuals to accept ideological frameworks, feeling rules and management of their emotions accordingly, a crisis of that framework and an opportunity for change.

> *"Part of what we refer to as the psychological effects of "rapid social change," or "unrest," is a change in the relation of feeling rule to feeling and a lack of clarity about what the rule actually is, owing to conflicts and contradictions between contending sets of rules. Feelings and frames are deconventionalized, but not yet reconventionalized. We may, like the marginal man, say, "I don't know how I should feel.""*[346]

"It was something incredible back then, He (Andreas Papandreou) was something else"[347] says Maria, excited, waving her hands in enthusiasm when she began to elaborate on her feelings about political parties in Greece.[348] She can't help but reflect how she felt when PASOK was formed and promoting socialist ideals to how those feelings begun to change slowly over the years. She finds it impossible to identify with an ideological framework as she did back then. She feels lost and she believes the only solution to austerity is to be moved by a political figure that *"loves the country. That is the only way we can get out of the crisis."*[349] The inability to find such a figure left her deeply unsatisfied, disappointed and emotionally lost, struggling to survive and support her two daughters. She was beginning to feel hopeless in front of this financial dead end.

For many of the interviewees this dissonance magnified when, like Maria, they were trying to recall the last time a political party or collective organisation captured their actions and moved them emotionally. Their need to feel that way again is strong when faced with the absence of a party or a leader to motivate them and move them, especially within a period of crisis and financial instability.

Interviewees' narratives attest to the emergence of an "organic crisis" or crisis of hegemony. However, this crisis is not just limited to a detachment of social classes from hegemonic forces at a cognitive level. Gramsci's concept of "organic crisis", despite reflecting the crisis experienced by participants, is limited in capturing the range of detachment and the

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[346] Arlie Hochschild 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure' 567-568
[347] Maria S., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 13 July 2013
[348] Maria S., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 13 July 2013
[349] Maria S., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 13 July 2013

importance of emotions in the process of "organic crisis". Hochschild's framework suggests that a detachment of an ideological/hegemonic discourse is manifest more clearly for the individual at an emotional level. The articulation of floating signifiers within a period of crisis begins when individuals experience an emotional dissonance with the feeling rules articulated by the hegemonic discourse. This emotional dissonance produced a deeper crisis manifested in many cases in the form of anxiety and a crisis of subjectivity.

5.2. Subjectivity in Crisis and the Politics of Anxiety

In this section I focus my inquiry on the emotions of interviewees before the emergence of the Greek indignant movement. Drawing from my analysis on the previous section I examine the impact of emotional dissonance and organic crisis in the participants' subjectivity. I analyse the inability of the participants to emotionally internalise discourses that support the politics of austerity, and how this defined their decision to oppose the politics of austerity.

Christos, an unemployed young musician, in a very emotional tone tries to convey the reasons that made him join Greek indignant movement.

> *"Even though I'm too young and I have entered only recently the labour market and struggle for work and survival, without being supported by my family I could see my family struggling financially. I could see and experience police violence and political violence by having to engage in dilemmas being imposed to us by politicians. These dilemmas had no basis but to serve their own goals. I was very upset by what was happening in the music industry and in music schools. I studied music in a music school and they began cutting funding to music schools making it impossible for people to study there. And not just music schools, they were destroying everything, the record industry which was already in bad shape but at least it was there, any small bars that were organising gigs for new musicians. You could not find a political voice to represent you. This was one of the most important problems. To stand in front of the ballot box and not know what to vote; and if you did vote for someone you would do it with a heavy heart. Parliamentary politics and political parties were and still are completely corrupt and ridiculous. I can't stand even*

> *looking at 95% of the people that are in parliament. They are clowns*
> *and I think I'm talking about obvious issues because the words had*
> *lost their meaning. Because they were and still are describing another*
> *reality. I listen to political debates and I think that they are addressing*
> *to different people, they are talking another language, it was*
> *completely insane what was and still is happening. And it's also*
> *insane that some people support them."[350]*

For interviewees faced with an inability to find a form of representation that can move them and address the problems of crisis, this crisis of representation was transformed into a crisis of subjectivity. Interviewees were lost and did not how to act as political subjects. This crisis intensified when interviewees were confronted with the inability to reproduce their lives manifested as intense anxiety. As Christos tries to convey his experiences and inability to identify with a political party he starts to become tense. As a fresh graduate from music school Christos was aware of the difficulties on pursuing a career as a musician. However Christos found impossible to get any job, even outside the music industry, in order to support himself and not be dependent on his parents. He becomes particularly emotional as he tries to describe to me how anxiety was taking a hold on his life as his future in the music industry appeared bleak at best. Christos's lack of hope at the time and increased anxiety intensified in the absence of a political party that could address his problem of unemployment and give him back hope.

Christos's emotional confusion and rejection of the feelings the government was putting forward reflected the narrative of the majority of the interviewees. It was not just the words that did not reflect his reality, but the feelings as well. What he was feeling and experiencing in his everyday life did not correspond to what he was supposed to feel according to the discourse articulated around austerity. Christos, like many others, saw the feeling rules articulated by the dominant discourse of austerity as feelings they were trying to impose upon him that did not match his emotional state, leaving him emotionally confused. Any attempt by any political party to articulate a discourse that was being sympathetic to their anxieties and fears was only interpreted as insincere; an act to trick them to accept austerity.

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[350] Christos A. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 3 August 2013

Hochschild sees in this emotional dissonance an inability of individuals to feel what is expected to feel by dominant discourse.[351] That their feelings do not match the feelings they have leading them to question the dominant discourse and adopt another. [352]However in the case of the indignants, the crisis of representation they were experiencing left them more exposed to the emergence of an emotional conflict that manifested as anxiety.

In the absence of an ideological framework that can capture them emotionally, interviewees' narratives focus on their desire to act as individuals and express their emotions. Interviewees' narratives show how this intensified their anxiety.

> *"I got divorced from my wife because of what was happening in our lives; luckily we don't have any children. I lost touch with many of my friends because of anxiety issues, theirs and mine. I also lost two friends. Two of my friends committed suicide because they couldn't handle the pressure. Many of my friends and family left abroad to find a job. I see what is happening at large in society, children are starving"[353]*

Vangelis's narrative testifies as to the profound consequences of the first package of austerity within a year of the newly elected government upon people's lives that can be grasped only by those experiencing it. For Vangelis it goes beyond a mere statement of sympathy and understanding of this suffering by members of the government and members of parliament that support austerity, to alleviate his burden and suffering. He felt that no one could associate with what he was going through or try to make his life a little better. The severe impact of the crisis upon Vangelis's life amounted to a personal crisis. Even though not explicitly mentioned, but clearly referred to in his narrative, Vangelis's experiences made him question his political stance over the years and found himself struggling to marry a left ideology when it comes to the economy with a strong sense of national identity. He felt threatened by the IMF and the EU, especially in the absence of an opposing voice.

Vangelis struggled at the beginning to be patient and trust the government to provide a solution to the crisis. However, changes in his life and his struggle for survival made impossible to remain patient and only added to his anxiety. Patience was an emotion he could

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[351] Hochschild 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure' 567-568
[352] Hochschild 'Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure' 567-568
[353] Vangelis F. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 25 July 2013

not maintain anymore, while he resisted any attempt by the government to make him feel guilty. Instead, emotions of anger, disappointment and anxiety dominated his life.

The dominance of anxiety in the overwhelming majority of the interviewees' life is also connected with the inability to reproduce their lives, in some cases or in others to maintain their existing lifestyle or what they believed their life should be. It is obvious by the narrative of the interviewees that their anxiety is also rooted in a threat to their class privileges, even though the word class is avoided deliberately by many as it is used in the discourse articulated by the Greek Communist Party; a word that is used within "wooden speech". This is evident when interviewees describe the dissonance between how their lives used to be or what they imagined their life would be and the sudden impact of the crisis and the implementation of austerity.

> *"You know I've always thought at this age I would have a family, a good paying job and my own house. My partner and I thought about having a baby but we've decided that it's not a good time financially for us to have a baby and to be honest I don't know if there's ever going to be a good time."[354]*

Dimitris imagined that after graduating from the school of architecture he would be able to have a "comfortable" life enjoying some of the privileges he never had before. Instead, after his graduation, Dimitris struggled to find a job at a small company being paid only when he is working on a project. Struggling to survive, Dimitris can help but turn his anger towards those in power that promised him a different life. He was struggling to remain patient, manage his anger, and accept austerity implemented by the government.

This emotional dissonance, accompanied with the radical changes upon their standard of living, amounted to a deep personal crisis, producing emotions of anxiety and depression for many of the interviewees.

For many of the interviewees it was not just the inability of the government to understand their feelings that produced this level of crisis and anxiety, but also their inability to appropriate and manage their emotions to other forms of collective organisation. Faced with this crisis of subjectivity. interviewees' narratives indicate an introversion and further alienation from the people around them. Interviewees treated any collectively articulated

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[354] Dimitris R. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 7 August 2013

framework that attempted to manage their emotions and shape their individuality with suspicion and at most times with dismissal. *"I don't like being categorised"*, *"I want to be able to express as an individual"* *"I don't want my demonstration to be appropriated by a party"*. These were the most common phrases used by many of the interviews to indicate their desire to be a part of a movement that does not require them to shape their individuality.

The Greek indignant movement presented, for many, the only opportunity to express their emotions and individuality without any mediation. For interviewees that was the only "honest" form of action in response to the politics of austerity.

Interviewees defined the moment they decided to participate in the movement as the moment they decided they needed to change the way they feel and refuse to continue feeling as before, frightened and guilty, with no hope for their future and betrayed by the government, political parties and trade unions, or following their initial emotions of anger towards austerity. They were unable to feel what they knew they should feel. They began to have emotions that did not match the situation or they wanted to change those emotions. For most of the interviewees, their decision to go to Syntagma Square was the beginning of the end of a series of intense emotions that accompanied them for some time. This "organic crisis" manifested in intense emotions such as anxiety. Furthermore, it intensified the need of many of the interviewees to act as individuals, to express themselves as individuals and create a movement predicated upon the idea of individuality and difference.

5.3. Multiplicity, Emotional Reflexivity and the Emergence of the Movement

Interviewees saw in the indignant movement an opportunity to express their emotions and resist the politics of austerity. In this section I examine the processes in which participants engage in order to inform their resistance.

The overwhelming majority of the interviewees admit that they were cautious in their first encounter with the movement. They wanted to make sure that the movement was not indeed organised by a political party or another form of collective organisation, and that they would be able to express themselves and not an attempt of some party or trade union to appropriate their individuality to their own political purposes. They were not immediately carried away by the festivity and intensity of the form of protest in Syntagma Square. Instead interviewees begun to gather in small groups and reflect upon their emotions. Interviewees engaged with

other participants in an emotional, embodied and cognitive process of reflexivity in order to understand their emotional dissonance and address their mounting anxiety related to the crisis of representation.[355] Within this process of reflexivity, participants reflected not only upon their own actions and emotions, but also on how their actions and emotions relate to those of other participants. Interviewees cite this process of reflection as an indication of the desire of every participant to engage into a politics that focuses on social change and the formation of a movement that embraced diversity and individuality; a movement in which people could confess their mistakes and shame in knowingly supporting corrupt governments without being judged.

> *"The first days they were kind of quiet; they were having open discussions and at the same time making some fun performances and games for the people, to get them involved. It was something completely different from the stereotypical form of protest I was used to, marching in a circle attack the coppers and then go away. They were doing something different and we liked it so me and my mates decided to stay there."[356]*

Panagiotis was impressed by the different methods of protesting. He had never before encountered a protest that did not use any of the conventional methods. This protest was giving emphasis to individual expression and emotions by using their bodies as a means of self-expression. As with many other interviewees, Panagiotis was captivated by the novelty and inviting character of this type of protest. It was an indication for Panagiotis that this form of protest was not guided by a political party.

These "unconventional" methods of protest were an indication for many interviewees that this form of protest could incorporate their individuality. This novel form of action provided a platform for interviewees to express their emotions and reflect upon them without shaping them to fit a particular ideological framework. The most popular practise of this emotional reflection was participating in small informal discussion groups with other participants, which later gave birth to the open assembly.

Interviewees' narratives testify on the attempt of a process of emotional reflexion in their first days of their participation upon their conflicting and strange feelings, many times manifested

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[355] Holmes 'The Emotionalization of Reflexivity' 139-154
[356] Pangiotis V. Interivew conducted in person, Athens, 1 September 2013

as anxiety, which could not be expressed or encapsulated by any political party. They reflected upon those feelings by engaging in impromptu discussions with the people gathered there.

> *It was a festive atmosphere. Like a party, people laying at the grass drinking beer or smoking weed and then if you got bored you could join some people that were making rude gestures towards the parliament or booing. That did not interest me, I found it very boring. But then I heard that there was an open assembly, so I had a look and I found it interesting. It was the only thing I found interesting there, so I decided to go again the next day. In the first assembly we used a small guitar amplifier attached to a microphone. You could barely hear the voice of the person speaking. I mention this because it's important. It was difficult to hear what the speaker was saying. You needed to be very close. Around the speaker was a small group of people sitting down in a circle and it was something between psychoanalysis and a reflection of what was happening. That was the original goal of the people organising the assembly, to give everyone the ability to talk and express themselves than form a meaningful counter proposal to austerity. A lot of people would talk and say whatever they wanted. Some people would be very emotional and tear up while talking, something like that. I found it very seductive. So I decided to go again. The next day the amplifier was bigger, the crowd was bigger so I decided to stay a little longer"*[357]

Telis, an unemployed young actor, was not interested in the festive atmosphere in Syntagma Square. Telis was in Syntagma Square the first day people began to arrive there. It was his only way back home, after all. However he was captivated by this strange new process in which people could openly express themselves without a fear of ridicule or not fitting in the group. Telis, like many other interviewees with or without previous experience on activism, was not caught in a revolutionary fervour from the moment of his arrival in Syntagma Square. He was interested to see what was happening and was captured by a process so many people engaged in, a process of self-reflection. He saw this as an opportunity for people to

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[357] Telis T. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 5 September 2013

change and possible engage into radical politics. But he was not only captivated by the attempt of other people to engage in this process, he wanted to be a part of it.

"The first days were amazing! People were talking to you like you were old friends, like you were living next door! It was extraordinary!"[358]; an interviewee told me, excited. People in this process experienced a familiarity with all these strangers when they were beginning to discover that other people felt the same feelings of anxiety, fear and lack of hope, having "inappropriate" feelings and that they could express their feelings without judgement

Interviewees problematized their strange emotions. By reflecting upon those emotions, participants experienced a sense of catharsis. Interviewees often used the words "group therapy" or "psychoanalysis" to describe the public assembly or the methods of protest, especially in the first days of the emergence of the movement.

Participants begin to discover that even though their feelings were not echoed by an existing discourse, that did not mean that they could not articulate them and express them through movements of the body. The ability to do so gave them a feeling of individual empowerment and a sense that they were acting outside ideological discourses and existing power relations. It is in these first few days that every interviewee sees the movement as autonomous.

Even though Hochschild sees emotional dissonance as the potential for challenging an ideological framework she does not elaborate on how individuals reflect upon this dissonance or, according to King, how they problematize their emotional dissonance.[359] "The feeling itself is not problematized. The urge is to feel the 'correct' feeling, rather than worry about why you felt inclined to feel the 'wrong' feeling in the first place".[360] According to King, Hochschild's theory of emotional dissonance and an individual's experience of their inability to manage their emotions according to the social rules of an ideological framework is not problematized, it is rather located within the form of a Freudian anxiety.[361]

King argues that the only ways to address this is to turn on the process of reflection and focus on its emotional aspect.[362] King explores the importance of emotional reflection on activists and emotion management though counselling in order to maintain their enthusiasm and continue challenging hegemonic structures. In addition, Mary Holmes draws on King's

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[358] Pavlos C. Interview conducted in person, Athens 31 June 2013
[359] Deborah King. 'Sustaining activism through emotional reflexivity' in *Emotions and Social Movements* eds. Helena Flam and Deborah King. (Routledge: London, 2005).
[360] King 'Sustaining activism through emotional reflexivity' 153
[361] King 'Sustaining activism through emotional reflexivity'
[362] King 'Sustaining activism through emotional reflexivity'

empirical data to argue for the importance of thinking of the process of reflexivity as an "emotional, embodied and cognitive process"[363]. However, both Holmes and King use this understanding of reflection to show how activists use emotion work to reinvigorate their passion towards activism. Interviewees engage in a process of reflexivity to oppose and resist austerity. For many of the interviewees this was being a part of a movement that was a novel experience. This process of self-reflection did not signify a process which could challenge existing hegemonic structures. In the minds of the interviewees, as seen in previous chapters, this process of emotional reflection through an organisational format that facilitated the individuality of every participant signified an articulation of emotions not otherwise influenced by ideological frameworks. Unlike the activists in King's case the indignants attempted to form an ideological framework around their emotional dissonance, rather than manage their emotions according to the feeling rules of their movement by problematizing any inappropriate feelings.

"There was a purity those days. The movement was pure"[364] told to me an experienced activist. Many interviewees use the word pure to describe the atmosphere in the Square during the first days of their participation and capture the feelings of other participants. Interviewees would embrace this atmosphere of emotional expression either by articulating those emotions in the public assembly or other small discussion groups, or through movements of the body. For many of the interviewees the ability to express their emotions without them being appropriated for a political cause created a sense of freedom. While the very idea that every participant was expressing their personal emotions and feelings, revealing their own life stories and their opinions, without any need to impose those ideas upon others, indicated for many an honesty that was missing from politics.

Within the narrative of the interviewees their autonomy is related to the purity of emotions compared to ideological frameworks. This purity of emotional expression, either verbal or through movement, was frequently compared to the insincere discourse used by members of parliament when trying to impose austerity measures while at the same time appearing empathetic to those affected by austerity. Naming the movement after an emotion was revealing, for many interviewees, as attempt at political action in which they would express their inner self without attempting to deceive. It was an action portrayed as sincere and honest, characteristics that were lacking from the discourse articulated by the government and

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[363] Holmes 'The Emotionalization of Reflexivity' 140
[364] Pavlos C. Interview conducted in person, Athens 31 June 2013.

other political parties. It signified a process in which every participant could discover their political self by making sense of their feelings. Interviewees found a sense of freedom and autonomy within that understanding of purity that they bestowed to personal feelings and emotions. Through this process of emotional reflexivity, interviewees believed they could produce a discourse that is autonomous from existing ideological frameworks and that could challenge existing hegemonic relations. It was through this process that interviewees believed they could produce a collective sense of feeling and understanding of the politics of the crisis.

All interviewees stated or implied that they wanted to provide an ideological context to their emotions and to the emotions of others, and even try to change those that did not ascribe to their ideological framework, regardless of the form interviewees chose to express their feelings and engage in a process of self-reflection. Telis was captivated by this engagement with the emotions of other protestors. Telis refers to the process as seductive, given the potential of the transformation of such an emotional and vibrant atmosphere to a collective action against capitalism. These practises reminded many of the interviewees of a celebration rather a traditional demonstration. The words "fete", "festival" and "carnival" dotted the description of the interviewees of the movement. This festive atmosphere was a product of the attempt to express, articulate their emotions and understand them by creating a discourse of resistance towards austerity. Interviewees were attempting to frame those emotions around a common discourse that would reflect their emotions and feelings and reject the dominant discourse that could no longer capture their subjectivity.

5.4. The Beginnings of a Movement

The emergence of the movement was not a reaction to an event, a moral shock that compelled everyone to take to the streets and protest. Instead it was the culmination of a historical process of collective organisation within Greek politics that drove the need of the protestors to join a movement that is independent from political parties and other forms of collective organisation. The emergence of the movement can be argued that was the culmination of a crisis of hegemony within Greek politics. Participants refused to be governed by existing political forces and were getting detached from political parties which they felt had misrepresented them for years. In many respects Gramsci's concept of a crisis of hegemony or "organic crisis" puts forward a theory of crisis which manifests in the form of political

instability but is firmly grounded within relations of production. Nonetheless this dynamic concept needs to be informed by the role of emotions.

Hochschild's theory of emotion grasps the political importance of emotion in the internalisation of hegemonic relations and their rejection by establishing a connection between emotion and ideology. It further provides a better understanding of the rejection of an ideology and the political significance of emotions, such as anxiety and rage rooted within cultural historical and material processes.

Participants felt an emotional dissonance between the feelings they were experiencing by struggling to cope with the crisis and austerity and what they knew they should feel. Faced with material restraints and unable to reproduce their lives, feelings of anxiety dominated their lives. Discourses that supported austerity as the only way out of a crisis and a punishment towards an inherently corrupt and lazy culture only increased their anxiety as the proposed measures failed to work. This contradiction opened the possibility for the emergence of antagonism.

Within this crisis of hegemony Gramsci sees the prospect of the emergence of a new political coalition that could potentially challenge existing power relations. Emotions play a key role to such a process of defiance and articulation. Faced with such an emotional turmoil, participants turned to the only process that allowed them to reflect upon their conflicting emotions instead of being appropriated or managed to fit the feeling rules of a particular ideological framework. This gave them a feeling of autonomy and freedom.

The process of problematization of conflicting emotions cannot be ignored within the context of emotional dissonance. The emotional, cognitive and embodied reflection exercised by the participants opened up the possibility for the emergence of a movement that can resist the politics of austerity in spite of its diversity, and act independent from other forms of collective organisation. For the participants, engaging in processes of self-reflexion signified that participating individuals were eager to question their political subjectivity and produce a new autonomous political subject focused on social change. However, as discussed in Chapter three, this notion of autonomous action as existing outside ideological frameworks was an impossibility. As seen in Chapter two, any form of articulation was, for many participants, "poised" by ideology and ulterior motives and quickly this form of scepticism engulfed emotional expressions; for example many interviewees saw uncontrolled rage as a sign of a fascist ideology. Interviewees, through their participation, began to manage their

emotions and bodies informed by different ideological frameworks, in spite of their belief that they did so autonomously. In the next chapter I examine the emotion work of the indignants and how this process of emotion work contributed to the emergence of solidarity in spite of the differences amongst the protestors.

Chapter 6

The Emotion Work of the Indignants

In my analysis in the previous chapter I examined how interviewees engage or refused to engage in emotion work as to feel responsible and guilty for the crisis. In this chapter I examine the central role of emotion work played in sustaining the movement and facilitating its popularity and feelings of freedom and autonomy. Power is exercised by and reproduced through the feelings of the indignants. In this chapter, I draw from my theoretical critique on chapters two, three and four to examine the importance of emotion in establishing a common frame of action among the participants and how relations of power are challenged or reproduced through emotion management.

Participants were unable to build a common political subjectivity and maintain the diversity of the movement. The differences amongst the participants were too deep to form a collective action with clear goals. Yet, in spite of their differences the movement lasted, their actions where somewhat coordinated and participants manage to form strong bonds with each other in spite of their differences. *"No I don't think myself as a member of the indignant movement"* a participant told me yet, every time he would refer to the movement he would use the "we" pronoun and admit that at the time he felt solidarity with the participants and a part of a movement *"I was obsessed! I couldn't leave the square! That's where my life was!"*.[365] To grasp this paradox and the various forms of political action within the indignant movement I turn my attention to the emotion work engaged by the participants.

As Gould points out the term emotion work "implies a pre-existing emotional state that then is amplified or dampened".[366] Indeed as seen in the previous chapter participants begun to develop emotions of rage and discontent against the government and the two main parties as well as the EU and the German government. Sometimes these emotions were targeting particular individuals or groups such as members of the government, journalists supporting austerity, members of German government, public servants and MPs accused for corruption.

Interviewees' narrative shows how they focused on emotions of outrage in order to transform feelings from their lives and feelings generated by discourses on the politics of austerity that

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[365] John G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 3 August 2013
[366] Gould *Moving Politics* 213

promoted guilt, shame and fear. Within this context the indignants use different methods to augment and embody feelings of rage in the hope of creating a collective political subjectivity that can challenge the politics of austerity. At the same time, based on these feelings of hope and shared experiences, participants tried to build feelings of solidarity in spite of their differences, and ignoring emotions that promoted a division amongst them.

I examine how, in spite of the lack of common goals and a clear form of collective action, participants sometimes consciously but often unconsciously manage to form a somewhat organisational form that was accepted by everyone by managing feelings of outrage.

I focus my inquiry on the conditions surrounding this emotion work and feeling rules. In the previous chapter, I engaged whit Hochschild's theory of emotion and the concept of emotion work to show how participants joined the movement and refuse to accept the politics of austerity. According to Hochschild, emotion work is not just focused on the self but "by the self upon others, and by others upon the self".[367] According to Hochschild, emotion work does not function in isolation or outside forms of power relations. Hochschild uses this concept of emotion work to examine how workers manage their emotions within the labour process

Existing research on the importance of emotion work within social movements points out the significance of emotion work by activists in maintaining the level of commitment and solidarity within the movement, the mobilisation and popularity of the movement, and changing cultural perceptions about identity by challenging existing emotions tied to particular identities. Gould uses the concept of emotion work to show how ACT UP activists establish a different form of activism that can not only change existing understandings of, for example what it is to be gay or lesbian, but also establish a different form of activism that can pursue the goals set by the movement.[368] In the case of the indignants however the potential of emotion work for shaping new political subjects is put to the test in light of the diversity of the movement and lack of a common framework. Emotion work of the indignants can shed some light on the ability of the indignants to establish a sense of solidarity in spite of their differences but on the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivities within the movement.

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[367] Holmes 'The Emotionalization of Reflexivity' 139–154; King 'Sustaining activism through emotional reflexivity'; E.J. Perry 'Moving the Masses: Emotion work in the Chinese Revolution' *Mobilization* 2: (2002). 111-128; Chris Barker, Brian Martin & Mary Zournazi 'Emotional self- management for activists' *Reflective Practice* 9:4 (2008). 423-435.
[368] Gould *Moving Politics*

In the first section of this chapter, I focus on the emotion work of the indignants in transforming feelings of anxiety, fear and depression created by the crisis into an outrage towards an unethical political culture. In the second section, I examine how interviewees manage their feelings of outrage to adhere to a form of protest that is informed by a liberal understanding of democratic politics. In the third section, I analyse how the process of emotion work help build a sense of solidarity amongst the movement. I conclude this chapter by drawing upon my analysis on the emotion work of the indignants to show how in spite of their differences and their desire for autonomy their actions were informed by ideological frameworks that contribute to the decline of the movement.

6.1. Transforming Anxiety, Fear and Depression

Interviewees remember the first days of their participation as very emotional but, at the same time, there was a numbness, a lack of combativeness that begun to take shape only a few days after the first call. Emotions interviewees had before the movement were still dominant in the first days of their participation, however by engaging with other people and reflecting upon their emotions participants begun to transform emotions such as anxiety fear and depression into rage and hope for the future. The narrative of many participants testifies to such an emotion work in which they would try to forget their anxieties and depression and focus on emotions of outrage articulated in the movement. In this section, I examine how this emotion work of the indignants became a step towards building a collective movement and establish a sense of solidarity amongst the participants.

People would gather at first just out of curiosity and listen to other people talking in some informal "therapy sessions" and sometimes participate in that discussion. At large these discussions were dominated by sad personal stories and the fear and anxiety that ruled the lives of many of the participants. Other participants would reluctantly at first join other people in shouting offensive mottos or performing offensive gestures towards the parliament. As the crowd grew and people communicate and express their fears and anxieties towards the implementation of the politics of austerity and the corruption of public servants and MPs so was their outrage.

Outrage was slowly dominating Syntagma square. Christina remembers the feelings of the people during the first days.

> *"I went to Syntagma square before the "mountzes"[369]. People were so*
> *disappointed about austerity. That's what they were talking about the*
> *most, that and the responsibility of parties bringing us to this point. I*
> *remember people were slowly becoming very angry. But the people*
> *that were most angry were the unemployed. You could not even talk to*
> *them because they had so many problems and responsibilities, loans,*
> *kids, family. You could not talk to them or have a full discussion about*
> *anything. They were becoming so angry when you started to talk that*
> *the only thing they would say after a point was fuck them, so the*
> *discussion would end there. And you would end up feeling angry*
> *yourself"[370]*

Christina went to Syntagma square to communicate her personal feelings about austerity. She felt that there was a radical change needed in political culture to eradicate clientelism and corruption, the reasons that according to Christina contributed to the crisis, but as she was communicating her frustration she found herself internalising and relating very strongly to the frustration and anger of the unemployed. This made, for Christina, even though a pensioner now, unemployment one of the most important issues that need to be addressed. Christina, as many others, did not feel particularly outraged before joining the movement. However, their emotions were slowly changing towards outrage as they adopted, as in the case of Christina, a discourse or practises that focused and amplified emotions of outrage.

The banging of empty pots was a symbol of such transformation. People would gather in large groups and bang empty pots angrily or in a rhythm as a symbol of their inability to fill the pots with food. Through this performance they were transforming their anxieties and fears about finding food to fill their pots, and those around them, into rage.

Giorgos lost his job at the age of 35, a year before he decided to join the indignant movement. Giorgos's life changed when he found himself unemployed in his mid-30s. He was unable to find a job and he admits he was depressed for a while. He had to sacrifice a lot from his previous lifestyle and move back to his parents' house going through a period of depression. Within his participation in the movement Giorgos embraced this feeling of outrage towards a corrupt political culture and the political parties that deprived him of his old life, transforming his anxiety and depression into rage and discovering, through his participation

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[369] Offensive gesture made by extending one's palm outwards, usually towards someone's face.
[370] Christina M. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 2 July 2013

in the movement, a sense of belonging and a sense of contribution that was lacking from his previous life. He was engaging with the different forms of protest in the movement and enjoying the diversity of the crowd and sense of freedom of that protest. Being in a movement that welcomed diversity was important for him. Giorgos didn't think that any existing forms of organisation would have welcomed him unless he changed who he was. That was not the case with the indignant movement. He felt able to engage with people as himself and not as what others expected of him to be. No one was judging him or care about who he was and what his politics were. He was welcomed for who he was not what he had to become. He would discuss with other people about his opinion on the crisis and share his personal experiences and emotions even though he was reluctant to participate in the open assemblies.

Giorgos found in the movement a form of emotional support he could not find anywhere else. He was able to express how he felt and found he was not the only one feeling this way. He decided therefore to actively participate in the movement, something that he never thought he would do. Through his participation he started to transform his depression into anger towards the government. Giorgos shouted, chanted, danced and joined the open assembly and the informal discussions in Syntagma square. Giorgos was describing how his depression was slowly transformed into rage and how this rage was growing as the days went by. He would willingly, through his participation, try to forget his depression and become enraged towards unethical and corrupt politicians who he felt were responsible for him feeling that way. *"At the beginning we were all trying to let off some steam, to shout and say look we are here pay some attention to us!"* [371]

Giorgos admits how at the beginning he enjoyed becoming more angry and engaging in a form of action that was out his character. This form of expression was something that he was not used to. He was trying to forget his feelings of sadness and depression and transform them in a way that would match that of the crowd around him. Eventually his attempt to forget such emotions made him feel much better; made him feel like he belonged somewhere and was not alone. This process of unconscious repression of emotions such as anxiety and depression and their transformation into rage is reflected in the narrative of many of my interviewees.

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[371] Giorgos M., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 6 July 2013

Forms of individual or collective expression of anger and outrage would become more intense when there was a discussion or a vote on austerity measures in the parliament. The crowd outside the parliament would engage in a rampant outburst of rage. People would push each other trying to invade the parliament and stop the voting process.

The crowd would engage in different practises to express and stimulate outrage, performing rude gestures such as extending the palm of one's hand towards the parliament, burning effigies of EU officials, members of German government, the head of the IMF, members of the Greek government, MPs and news reporters supporting austerity. Such practises augmented and amplified the outrage of many of the interviewees. Their rage was focused on MPs (mainly from the two dominant political parties of PASOK and Nea Demokratia) and political parties, members of the German government and key EU officials as well as journalists supporting austerity and trade unionists. The indignants were drawing support and popularity by encouraging a rhetoric that provoked emotions of outrage towards a corrupt political system, as well as individual members of the government and other political parties and members of the German government and European officials. Key political figures were singled out as unethical, reflecting a corrupt political culture in Greece, which according to dominant discourses in the movement was the source of the crisis. Slogans, chants, banners and flyers were used to point out the corrupt and unethical conduct of MPs, the vindictive policies challenging Greek sovereignty, as well as peoples' inability to reproduce their lives by the implementation of the first austerity measures.

The dominance of outrage over other emotions was fuelled either by practises such as shouting or offensive gestures, the use of symbols or heated discussions amongst participants. These practises were surrounded by a discourse focusing on the unjust character of austerity combined with the unethical and corrupt practise of MPs and prominent members of the government that supported and maintained a corrupt political culture.

Interviewees reveal that the emotion of outrage was important in motivating them to join the movement. Different practises within the movement focused at stimulating emotions of outrage against policies of austerity. Such an attempt was not strictly organised. Some of these practises were imaginative efforts by individuals to express their anger. Interviewees see their emotional transformation as a form of resistance not only to austerity but also to the attempt of the government to impose austerity by managing their emotions and subjectivity. An example of such an attempt was for many of the interviewees reflected in the phrase of

the then vice president of the government "we ate together"[372]. The quote became a point of reference of the attempt of the government to create feelings of guilt and blame amongst Greek people in order to accept austerity. It was thus used by many of the participants as a way to stimulating outrage. Many banners and slogans within the movement were using this quote in order to stir anger amongst the people against an unethical and corrupt government that does not assume any responsibility for the crisis. Many of the interviewees would refer to this quote when they wanted to register their disgust towards members of parliament and main political parties and spoke of it as the most discussed within the movement. Another quote that stimulated similar feelings of moral outrage was the one used by the then Prime Minister Giorgos Papandreou during his election campaign "we have the money" defending his manifesto for more government spending against critiques, mainly by the party of Nea Demokratia. Interviewees point how both quotes were used to stimulate moral outrage against a political system that would lie and avoid accepting political responsibilities for the crisis in order to maintain its power. Interviewees recall how seeing these quotes on banners or even pictures of vice president of the government, the Prime Minister, the German PM Angela Merkel and the German Finance Wolfgang Schäuble or the head of the IMF Dominique Strauss-Kahn would encourage emotions of rage amongst the participants. It is worth noting that these practises used to stimulate outrage were not organised by a central committee within the movement. People would arrive at Syntagma square with homemade banners and effigies to burn with pictures of some of these key political figures encouraging the implementation of austerity.

Outrage was dominant within Syntagma square but, for many interviewees, it was often interchanged with inexplicable emotions of joy. *"Just the fact that such a movement existed cheered me up. I would go to Syntagma square and I would feel a strange wave of joy. I was feeling happy with the upper part of the square and with the lower part of the square. I would feel happy in general with everyone that was there."*[373] Syntagma square was buzzing with different forms of emotional expression. One moment the crowd would be expressing their anger and frustration towards the government while a few seconds after they would be dancing and chanting joyfully. In one part of the square, people would be chanting, crying and angrily banging empty pots while, on another part of the square, people would be

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[372] "Μαζί τα φάγαμε" "Mazi ta fagame"
[373] Chara G.. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 23 July 2013

drinking beers, relaxing and engaging in casual conversations with a street band playing different tunes and people dancing around them.

Interviewees compare the intensity of the emotion of outrage they felt during their participation only to emotions of joy and happiness. Many remember how these joyful emotions replaced feelings of depression and anxiety.

"I think I'm getting a bit confused. Every time I speak about the movement I'm getting excited! It was the happiest time of my life. Being indignant was the best capacity I have ever had!"[374] Tasos finds difficult to control his emotions when he talks about his participation in the movement. Any problems and internal conflicts even the decline of the movement and the implementation of austerity were not enough for Tasos to forget his feelings of joy and hope during his participation and sour his experience. For Tasos it was a feeling of hope that propelled him to join the movement, after his first scanning visit. Tasos in spite of his short experience with political activism he was beginning to get discouraged about the possibility of radical change. The popularity and passionate character of the movement gave him hope for the possibility of a radical change. Tasos saw in the faces of every protestor in Syntagma square the reflection of his own political desires, the abolition of capital and the emergence of a fair and equal society. There he could express his desires and feed his imagination about the emergence of a socialist society. This filled him with excitement, anticipation and commitment to a movement that was standing against political parties in general and the party that he was a member of. He tried to maintain this feeling through his participation and would hold on to it when he would see that the movement was not able to produce a collective response to austerity or when he would engage with participants that did not share his ideology.

Participants would try to maintain this feeling of happiness or maximise it. Participants were hanging on to this joyful emotion and used it as a medium for mobilisation. Different events were taking place in the square focusing on entertainment, from small performances to large concerts by Greek famous singers, creating this much discussed festive atmosphere in the square.

> *"It was like a festival that you do for the patron saint of a village.*
> *Those places as you know are usually packed with people that want to*
> *show off and buy stuff. But this was different, people were there*

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[374] Tasos G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 18 July 2013

> *because for me we had a common goal. We did not like what we were*
> *living, we did not like our lives. We might have been dissatisfied with*
> *different aspects of our lives but we were all dissatisfied with our*
> *lives."*[375]

Joyful emotions were as dominant in the square as emotions of outrage. The narrative of the interviewees testifies as to their need to feel happy again. This need was amplified after the unprovoked attack of riot police on the protestors. The number of people gathering in Syntagma square would increase during the weekends or during a vote in parliament for the implementation of austerity. The first attempt by Greek riot police to disperse this large number of people was swift and forceful. *"We breathed thousands of teargas that day"*[376] an interviewee recalls. In spite of the fear that was evident in almost every protestor that day many of the interviewees instead of fleeing choose to stay at Syntagma square. To overcome their fear participants begun singing and dancing. Soon this small celebration spread across Syntagma square transforming the site of protest into a large party in which people would dance ecstatically and sing all together revolutionary songs written during the seven years of junta in Greece. Interviewees that experienced this incident were eager to refer to this paradox as an extraordinary phenomenon that will accompany them for life. Interviewees reflect upon this paradox as an attempt to cope with the stress they were experiencing at the time and "make" themselves stay in the square in spite of the imminent danger.

For many interviewees this process was "strangely appealing". This sometimes unconscious transformation for many interviewees was what contributed to their decision to participate in the movement. This experience was stronger amongst interviewees experiencing deep emotional strains in their everyday lives, steaming form their inability to reproduce their lives, and with little or no experience to political activism. This transformation was not a coordinated attempt by some general organisational committee for strategic purposes. Participants engaging in this process were not engaging in these practises to attract more protestors or pursuit particular goals and political opportunities. This emotion management was a necessary response to an unbearable emotional state for every participant.

Participants engaged in an internal process of emotion management transforming their fears, depression and anxieties to outrage. Through this process participants were able to feel and internalise the rage of others as seen in the case of Christina.

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[375] Giannis R. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 20 July 2013
[376] Nick K. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 6 August 2013

6.2. Managing Outrage

In this section I examine the conscious or unconscious attempt of the Greek indignants to manage feelings of outrage. In spite of the inability of the indignants to establish a common political project as an alternative to austerity their resistance was informed by a liberal understanding of collective action. This is evident in the emotion work of participants in managing their outrage.

> *"To be honest the first Sunday in the big demo I too shouted and cursed and did rude gestures such as mountza."* Makis told me in an apologetic tone as if he was embarrassed by his actions. *"But after discussing it a few times I realised that extreme outrage is not the solution. That was the difference between the upper and lower square. In the lower square you would engage in a deep analysis of your emotions and think whose fault is it, why I feel this way and how I can control it."*[377]

Through his interaction with other members either in the open assembly or the open discussions in the lower part of the square Makis was now positive that he had to control and mange his outrage, something that he suspected from the beginning. Makis was convinced that uncontrolled outrage can lead to a violent form of action, a form of action that he thought only used by "terrorists" and those that wanted to promote chaos instead of pursuing political change. To politicise his anger and outrage, Makis believed that he had to manage it. Any form of violent action for Makis was an act of terror, not of radical change, and he believed that any form of collective action should not follow tactics informed by the anarchist movement or fascist parties such as the Golden Dawn. He therefore tried to manage his outrage and modify his actions accordingly, condemning at the same time people that did not try to engage in the same process of emotion management. Makis did not pursue a violent form of action, even during those days when people in outrage wanted to storm into parliament. Makis managed to keep himself from following such an attempt. Even on the days riot police stormed in the square, Makis refrained from picking up rocks from the ground and throwing them at the police as some people around him did, even though he felt

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[377] Makis M. Interview conducted in person, Athens, July 1 2013

like doing it at some point. Instead he decided to stay in the square and follow the example of peaceful protest set by the majority of the protestors.

He begun by interacting with the members of the movement and becoming attached to the processes developed in Syntagma square, finding a place he could identify with. Through his interaction with other participants and his participation for the first time in a protest, Makis was slowly managing his emotions to meet the emotions of the people around him, changing his subjectivity. By managing any violent impulses Makis adheres to the discourse articulated around him; that, in order for a protest to have an impact, it has to maintain its peaceful character. Makis's anger towards the unethical practise of MPs and their demand from the Greek people to accept austerity was modified by a discourse articulated around the need for a peaceful demonstration, mainly by left mainstream activists. Within this discourse, even though such unethical actions are condemned and should drive modes of struggle, this struggle should be framed within the paradigm of peaceful protest within liberal democracy and in the pursuit of the rise of a left government to power. This meant a peaceful but also passionate demonstration that might sometimes, without any provocation form the part of the protestors, result into violent police clash, as it did a number of times in Syntagma square.

Makis internalised this role of the left activist through his interaction with other participants. He internalise this role by working upon his emotions of outrage and generating emotions of solidarity and compassion. As Makis was slowly modifying his emotions within the movement, he was starting to manage his gestures, his expressions as well as his body image. Makis confide to me that when he started to participate in the movement he was overweight. He decided to modify his body and lose a considerable amount of weight in order to cope with the physical challenges of political activism such as, running away from the police or other activities that demand physical effort. For him, his body modification was driven by his need to adopt the image of a left activist and was the only way to manage and supress his fear of clash with the police. Makis managed his emotions and changed his body in order to match an image of a particular role he had in his mind and continued participating in the movement in spite of the intense police brutally in supressing the movement.

Makis transformed his body form in order to get rid of the role of a middle class man and embrace the role of a "left revolutionary". Makis becomes a political agent by managing and transforming his emotions and his body. By managing his emotions and body according to a specific ideological position, Makis internalises that position and acts accordingly. Makis

decision to manage his emotions and his body image to play the role of a left activist was something that happened slowly through his participation.

Makis's work upon his emotions to adhere to the discourse for a peaceful protest dominant within Syntagma square is a process that is reflected in the narrative of the interviewees. Many interviewees would try to limit any spontaneous movements and tried to manage their emotions and bodies. They would manage their emotions according to what they thought was appropriate behaviour within the context of a protest. For example, many interviewees like Makis would try to resist any actions that were outside of what they framed as "appropriate form of protest" such as violent tactics.

"I remember that day it was May. We were so many and so enraged that I thought we would get in the parliament and burn it."[378]

Nick can't forget the day the outrage of the crowd almost became violent. Many of the interviewees remember vividly the days where the rage in Syntagma square was so intense that the crowd was ready to explode into violence and invade or burn down the parliament. However, somehow the people restrain themselves.

"People played the role of the typical left activist" Nick told me. Nick an anarchist participant of the indignants was there from the first days the movement moved to Syntagma square.

> *"You could say we all worked for SYRIZA without realising it. If you teach people that we can solve our problems peacefully it's like you are telling them vote for a left party. But if you had said to the people lets go and grab our guns I don't know if they would join either. They joined the movement because it was peaceful. They stayed there for as long as they could, they inhaled the chemicals used by the police like...They played the role of the typical left activist. Please slay me master so I can become a saint, I sit here without moving and you hit me, look how bad you are. Something like that. We breathed thousands of teargas."[379]*

It was the role that Nick saw many participants internalising as well as himself. Nick becomes upset when he recalls the dominant position of the crowd not to defend itself. The

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[378] Nick K. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 6 August 2013
[379] Nick K. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 6 August 2013

decision not to respond to police violence with violent tactics was an issue barely discussed at Syntagma square. This decision was made from the very beginning. The protest had to remain peaceful; a silent rule everyone obeyed. Interviewees managed to control their emotions and their bodies as to not become violent. This made Nick extremely upset. It restrained and framed his actions something that he was not really used to when protesting with the anarchist block. Nick had to adhere to the unwritten rule of nonviolent action if he wanted to participate in the movement. Nick was captivated by the popularity of the movement and the democratic process of the open assemblies and believed that the movement could be the beginning of a revolutionary change that will awaken people's imagination and challenge capitalism. Nick did not want to lose all this, so he decided to keep his views to himself about employing violence as a strategy of resistance. Nick had to embrace as the rest of the participants this role of the left activist. The difference was that for Nick it was a conscious decision that made him feel embarrassed and guilty for abandoning his political beliefs, while for most of the interviewees it was a role already embodied. In spite of his conscious decision to manage his emotions and body reactions as not to break this rule he does not accept that he performed that role. Nick sees the other participants embracing the role of the typical pacifist left activist by managing their bodies and emotions but not himself. He was obeying to this rule by performing a role, that of *"the typical left activist"*. However, when Nick sees himself performing this role, he sees himself as just wearing this role rather than internalising it, as if it was a suit. In spite of Nick's belief that he merely adopted rather than internalised this role he admits that in the elections after the dismantling of the movement he voted for SYRIZA. Even though Nick argues that his conscious emotion management had no impact upon his political subjectivity, as his narrative unfolds, it shows that he had partly internalised that role. But still he refuses to admit that his actions respond to that role he so much hates but had to accept briefly.

> *"I was certain for that (that the movement will have an impact upon Greek parliamentary politics) in fact I was saying then that I will vote SYRIZA then. I was deeply convinced that this bipartisan system came to an end. Just because of Syntagma square. Now from what I heard from the people there blaming the two parties of power (main parties). I was saying to myself I will help SYRIZA get elected. And I remember a SYRIZA supporter accused me for political opportunism. But I responded that I will vote for your party so when you get elected the*

> *people would now that it's not about the parties, so they would erase*
> *that third option of their heads and move to more radical politics. And*
> *we go to elections and Nea Demokratia gets into power and the party*
> *of Golden Dawn skyrockets.* Says Nick to me in a disappointing tone.
> But his tone changes when he considers that one good thing that came
> out of Syntagma square was the rise of SYRIZA. *"So what did come*
> *out of the square? It brought a right wing party in power and*
> *increased the power of fascists. Ok the only good thing from all that*
> *was the rise of SYRIZA."* [380]

The activities of the movement were defined by internalising a role, as if an actor. Nick as Makis was obeying that role by shaping their emotions and managing their bodies. A process all interviewees engaged in, whether their participation lasted for a few days or from the beginning until the end of the movement. The issue of violence and managed anger presents a very interesting example on how participants tried to manage their emotions and bodies by obeying a feeling rule.

This form of protest was appealing, as seen in the case of Makis or Nick, to many people that were joining the movement out of curiosity as their attempt to transform their feelings of anxiety and depression to rage felt strangely liberating. However the expression of that rage had to be restricted. This restriction was not imposed by an organisation committee upon the movement. The decision for the movement not to turn into violent forms of action or promote any sort of violence was voted by the general assembly but was already implemented and accepted by almost every participant. Any form of violence would alienate participants and contradict the imperative for a movement that is diverse and can include everyone.

Over the years any form of violent action has been connected to the anarchist movement and painted as a banal terrorist attack by the media. For many of the interviewees any clash with riot police was painted as a terrorist act trying to provoke violence, while at the same time a violent collapse of the government by the crowd invading the parliament and physically attacking MPs was an act connected to fascist groups. The absence of any critical approach to violence, and its portray as an act only initiated and pursued by a few extremists groups, was a picture carefully painted by dominant discourse over the years and internalised by people without experience of activism. Violence was portrayed as a "bad" or unwarranted form of

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[380] Nick K. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 6 August 2013

action that was a barrier to a democratic process that welcomes a diversity of opinions, prohibiting the emergence of a common action though concession and agreement.

There was a general consensus amongst the participants on how to act upon their outrage. This involved sometimes, as in the case of Nick, a conscious attempt of emotion and body management. Refraining from violence did not only suggest refraining from adopting violent tactics and clashing with the police but also maintaining the same attitude towards participants that shared diverse ideological positions.

Other participants would try to make sure that people were managing their emotions so as not to become violent as a collective or towards each other. However, in order for participants to ensure this process of body and emotion management, a group was formed to discipline and encourage people to obey the nonviolent form of action, as well to ensure the diversity of the movement is respected by the participants. This group was named "psychremia group" or "coolheaded group". The group was responsible for maintaining the nonviolent character of protest but also diffusing any tensions or smoothing over any differences between participants in order to maintain the diversity of the movement and its peaceful character. Its authority was recognised by the participants. Interviewees did not see this group as an attempt to discipline their bodies and restrict their autonomy, for if someone challenged the disciplinary character of the group, they were challenging the very idea of the movement. However, when the Greek Communist Party engaged in a similar attempt to discipline and manage the bodies of the protestors, this was met with a violent reaction by the crowd. Members of the Communist Party formed a human chain between the parliament and the protestors in order to prevent protestors from entering the parliament and disrupt the voting process on the implementation of a series of austerity measures. The crowd perceived this as an attempt to squash its autonomy and appropriate their actions. Many interviewees are keen to reflect upon this incident and were enraged by the attempt of the Greek Communist Party to control their actions.

6.3. Emotion Work and Feelings of Solidarity

Managing emotions by dampening or amplifying them was not just focused on outrage. In the absence of clear goals and demands and given the importance given to the open character of the movement, participants found themselves at certain points struggling to generate or regenerate feelings of solidarity. To do so, many interviewees either consciously or

unconsciously focused on emotions and experiences that made them feel in solidarity with everyone in the square in spite of their differences. At large this emotion management was an unconscious process; however there were times in which interviewees admit that they caught themselves ignoring incidents and people that would threaten such emotions. In this section I examine how interviewees manage their emotions to feel in solidarity with the different people participating in the movement.

The everyday activities involved with the occupation of Syntagma Square were paramount in cementing, for many interviewees, their solidarity to other participants. Participating in the occupation was an easy way for many of the interviewees to transform any negative emotions, to feel useful to a collective again and to feel close to many different people. For some interviewees with past experiences of activism, their participation in the occupation was easier since they could invoke past emotions of solidarity and collectiveness. Spiros's and Antonis's experience provide an appropriate example of such process echoed in the narrative of many other interviewees.

At the time of the interview, Antonis had been unemployed for four years. His unemployment benefit was not enough to support his old lifestyle so he had to move back to his parents. As the years went by, and Antonis was unable to find a job, he would get severe episodes of anxiety. Slowly Antonis was becoming more depressed; he was losing any hope to find a job and was feeling lonely. Within his participation in the movement Antonis discovered a sense of belonging and a sense of contribution that was lacking from his life.

> *"The most important thing in the lower part of the square was to create an atmosphere in which everyone could express themselves in a democratic way. That was strange to me because this type of organisation is connected with the left and I'm not of the left. But through my participation in the "cool headed group" and the team responsible for cleaning I found something that was missing from my life".*[381]

He was engaging with the different forms of protest in the movement and enjoying the diversity of the crowd and sense of freedom of that protest. Being in a movement that welcomed diversity was important for him. Antonis didn't think that any existing form of organisation would have welcomed him unless he was going to change who he was. That was

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[381] Antonis V. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 8 July 2013

not the case with the indignant movement. He felt able to engage with people as himself and not as what others expected of him to be. However, imprinted on Antonis's memory is his everyday involvement in the occupation of the square. Antonis felt more comfortable participating in the groups responsible for the organisation of reproductive work in the square, rather than in the open assembly or other groups responsible for articulating a discourse alternative to austerity. In the group responsible for cleaning in the square, Antonis discovered a sense of fulfilment and a sense of contribution that he never experienced in all his years as a salesman. Antonis could see that his work in the occupation of the square was making an actual contribution to the collective while being able to express his political views and his emotions. This sense of accomplishment and of contributing to a collective was so strong for Antonis that he started to question his previous lifestyle and his need to get it back. He could see how his work was contributing to something big and important. Even after the dismantling of the movement, Antonis could not let go of this feeling. Antonis is now working at a soup kitchen while looking for a job and is known to many participants in Syntagma square as "the cook" a label that wears proudly. *"We can self-organise now"* says Antonis to me proudly, *"My involvement with the movement allowed me to get in the field of the left and live it".[382]*

For many interviewees, participating in the occupation, their life was at Syntagma square. Anything that was a part of their lives before the movement was now secondary and insignificant. Syntagma became their new home and the people there their family. *"You would go home to shower and maybe take a nap and you would come back and something different would have happened from what the assembly decided hours ago. After a while you wouldn't want to go home because you didn't want to miss anything"[383]* Vaggelis told me, a participant of the movement with no previous experience on activism. As participants became more embedded in the processes of the occupation of the square, they would start to bond with the people next to them, participating in the same process and sharing similar feelings of joy about the form of protest. For many of the interviewees their feelings of solidarity moved beyond the shared emotions of outrage and indignation with an unethical and unjust government. These feelings were rooted in the shared experiences tied with the process of an occupation. By participating in the occupation of Syntagma square Antonis, as other interviewees, felt like being a part of a community and their work important in sustaining this

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[382] Antonis V. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 8 July 2013
[383] Vaggelis P. Interview conducted in person, Athens , 4 September 2013

community. The reproductive work in the occupation of the square not only acted as a bonding agent but also gave a sense of fulfilment compared to the alienated self.

Spiros devoted his life to political activism and to his collective organisation. Spiros assess the movement against his long experience with political activism. The solidarity formed within the movement and within such a diverse group of people baffled him, especially when the point of reference of identification to the movement was different for everyone.

Spiros saw the members of his organisation as his extended family, his comrades. These feelings of solidarity were build after years of participation in this organisation and common struggle. Spiros's tone alters from angry to puzzled when he describes the differences between the indignant movement and other collective organisations such as trade unions. He cannot believe how such a diverse movement managed to form a bond that can be found only in collective organisations with a long history on political activism.

> *"I think what was happening was very blurry. I mean, if you'd ask five different people or ten or a hundred the first day at Syntagma square or the first five days where things were a bit unstructured you would get very different answers on who is this Us and this They... I think to talk about what the indignants had we first need to talk about what they didn't, and that was a collective subject. They were not organised like a general strike connected to trade unions with a clear organisation like GSEE[384] or ADEDY[385]. It was a very blurry and unclear thing. There was an Us and a They cause many people were making offensive gestures towards the parliament but there was not an Us and They or a clear consciousness as you have within a union or in the left in general. That Us and They reflected the whole of Greek society. One was that. The second was that it did not have any historical roots. It was brand new it did not have a history of activism and connection to trade unions or political parties etc."[386]*

Spiros's tone change when he reflects upon his experience of the movement. He cannot believe how he begun to have feelings of solidarity and comradeship similar to the ones he

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[384] ΓΣΕΕ (in Greek) Is the highest body of trade union organisation in Greece and is comprised of a coalition of 83 workers unions.
[385] ΑΔΕΔΥ (in Greek) Is the trade union organisation for the representation of civil servants
[386] Spiros K. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 27 August 2013

had to other activists from his organisation. The narrative of the majority of the interviewees testifies to Spiros's assessment of the absence of a common reference of identification within the movement and its importance in forming feelings of solidarity. In spite of the lack of basic characteristics for building some sort of common base to political action, Spiros managed to form a strong bond with the members of the indignants in a very short period of time.

> *"When sometimes things started to work out in the movement and we were all working together it was very easy to become familiar to each other and therefore accept each other for who we are. And especially with the operation of the working groups there might have been some divisions, as you have amongst the left. But the most important thing was that we all respected each other as comrades do. I mean our bond had archetypical roots. We ate together, we worked together and there was an agreement on basic issues"[387]*

In spite of his initial hesitations Spiros managed to form strong bonds with the participants by focusing on shared experiences during the occupation. It was easy to form such feelings as he drew from similar experience in his past as an activist. Spiros would focus on these experiences and ignore any differences with the other participants in the movement. He was convinced that there was no one that would embrace a fascist ideology or support the party of Golden Dawn and at the same time participate in the occupation of the square. Spiros would unconsciously focus upon these emotions of solidarity in order to convince himself that the movement was a left movement even though he acknowledges that the movement was diverse and that anyone could be a part of it.

The sharing of embodied experiences and practises, that accompany an occupation, such as eating together, sleeping together, dancing together, fleeing from the police and being assaulted by the police, was what built the basis for solidarity amongst such a diverse group of people. Interviewees were drawing pleasure and joy form these experiences. For many interviewees without experience of political activism, their commitment to the movement and the process of the occupation of the square was originated in this joy of participation. Interviewees without any particular experience of political activism discovered a newfound pleasure in their participation. For many of the interviewees without experience of collective

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[387] Spiros K. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 27 August 2013

activism participating in the occupation of Syntagma square involved a change in their life. This life style for many was appealing and pleasurable, creating a passionate involvement towards the everyday practises of the occupation. Mundane actions such as participating in the cleaning crew of Syntagma square were as important for many interviewees as any other actions. Interviewees would often compare their feelings during the occupation to the feelings experienced when they had to leave the site of occupation and return back to their previous lives.

During their participation in the movement, interviewees had the feeling they were contributing to something bigger, to a collective effort towards improving not only their lives but the lives of others. This was frequently compared to feelings of depression, anxiety and most of the time, loneliness and political disengagement they had to face in their lives before the movement. Interviewees' refer to personal stories mostly involving mundane practises in maintaining the occupation of the square to show how their experiences made them feel close to the people around them.

The emphasis given to diversity and to the importance of not alienating participants demanded great emotional effort on the part of many participants. Nikos describes to me how he tried to calm himself down in order not to become enraged and clash with other protestors that had a nationalist interpretation of the crisis articulating a racist and xenophobic discourse, trying to frame indignation under the banner of fascist ideals. *"You had to be patient and accept that they were different people around you"* Nikos told me in a disappointing tone.[388] For Nikos to continue his participation he had to bury his objections and manage any other hostile feelings towards participants with different ideological stance.

For Giorgos an anarchist activist the open character of the movement had to have a limit.

> *"I remember when we had a fight with a fascist group in the upper part of the square. We were trying to kick them out and we ended up having a fight. I remember someone used a fire extinguisher and then the people in the square told us off! That we need to stop and that everyone is welcome! I couldn't take it so that was the last time I participated in the occupation. I went again to Syntagma with my friends a few times but that was only to hunt for fascists".* [389]

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[388] Nikos F. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 5 July 2013
[389] Giorgos C. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 12 September 2013

Accepting fascists in the movement and managing any hostile feelings he has towards them was impossible for Giorgos. He was happy to restrain himself from engaging in violent tactics but he could not accept that he was going to be in the same movement with a fascist or that he had to suppress his disgust and anger towards fascism. For many participants engaging in a conscious emotion work to feel solidarity with the people in the movement was emotionally unbearable and marked the end of their participation.

To smooth these differences and maintain feelings of solidarity, Tasos and his friends decided to change the focus of the crisis from national to international by carrying with them flags from other states that were affected by the crisis.

> *"At the beginning there was an obsession by some people from the left about the use of Greek flags. They would see a Greek flag and they would immediately assume that that guy that is carrying the flag is a fascist is a nationalist etc. there were a lot of Greek flags the first few days at Syntagma square that created a lot of tensions cause some people would fight those carrying the flags thinking they were fascists saying you don't belong here etc. And we were thinking with some of my friends how to manage this anger and division towards each other and focus upon solidarity. So what we did was to bring the next day a few Spanish flags a few Tunisian flags etc. for people to focus towards oppression of all nations not just Greece."*[390]

Tasos and his friends did not just try to manage any antagonisms within participants and emotions of solidarity by trying to change the meaning of a national symbol. It was also an attempt to channel the outrage of people carrying Greek flags away from a nationalistic discourse that focused on the threat of national sovereignty to issues of social equality and the threat of austerity upon the welfare state, issues important to him.

Some of the interviewees would make a conscious or sometimes unconscious effort to maintain these feelings of solidarity and ignore the diversity of the participants that might threaten such feelings. For Spiros for example this emotion work was an unconscious attempt. Even though Spiros came across many participants that were articulating a fascist discourse he would ignore them when he would discuss his feelings of solidarity and he would focus on the bond he formed with the people participating in the reproductive

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[390] Tasos G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 18 July 2013

processes of the occupation. Others like Tasos, would focus on shaping people's subjectivity by managing their emotions.

6.4. The Dominance of Outrage

Outrage became the dominant emotion within the movement. Participants would focus on transforming emotions they had before, such as anxiety, fear and depression to emotions of outrage. This outrage however was framed within a particular form of action. It was an action of a peaceful demonstration that welcomed diversity and did not alienate any individual. Participants developed within the movement different practises to manage their outrage within this framework. The emotion work of the indignants is not limited to outrage. Participants drawing from past experiences or experiences and emotions formed during their participation would build a sense of solidarity in spite of the divisions within the movement. Participants, either consciously or unconsciously, would focus on emotions that help them create a sense of togetherness with the other participants and ignore their differences. Feelings of solidarity within the movement are established within a conscious or unconscious emotion work in which participants are aware of the differences amongst them.

From this perspective, emotions and feelings appear to be tools in the hands of various leaders of a movement for mobilising people and furthering their goals vindicating the arguments of political opportunity theorists such as Sydney Tarrow.[391] However, the emotion work performed by the indignants was not a strategic conscious decision. Practises that amplified outrage amongst the movement by the participants such as banging empty pots or performing offensive gestures towards the parliament were practises that contributed to the mobilisation of participants in the movement. However, this was not the intention of the participants engaging in these methods. The moral outrage stimulated by these practises was not a decision made by a central figure in the movement as part of a strategic deployment of emotions. As Gould argues, by instrumentalising emotions and feelings within movement activity "we lose sight of the sensuous experience of feelings and thus of their power or force in stimulating or blocking activism".[392]

Focusing on practises that promoted rage and outrage participants manage to supress other feelings that were intensified during this crisis of representation. The movement was slowly

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[391] Tarrow *Power in Movement* 112
[392] Gould *Moving Politics* 223

transforming for many participants into a place of hope by maintaining this emotion and channelling it into a common struggle, while for others it functioned as a place to vent their mounting frustration. Participants politicise this moral outrage around a discourse that criticises political parties and trade unions on the basis of a lack of ethical politics.

In John Holloway's words "in the beginning is the scream". The indignant movement managed to establish that emotional undertone necessary for the rise of a revolutionary movement.[393] However in the words of an interviewee *"not all of as understand outrage in the same way. I might feel outraged because of social injustice but a fascist might feel outraged too because of the rising numbers of immigrants entering Greece."*[394] Indeed in their attempt to establish a common framework upon which their feelings could be managed and used to frame their resistance towards the politics of austerity, participants discovered that in spite of their common emotions of outrage their interpretation of that outrage differed significantly. These common elements that manage to establish outrage as the dominant emotion are being captured by different ideological discourses giving different meaning to the emotion of outrage and shaping the actions and bodies of participants.

Even though interviewees focus upon the significance of their emotional expression their outrage is informed by different ideological discourses. Participants tried to establish, as seen in chapter two, a common framework which could reflect the diversity of the crowd and form a counter hegemonic discourse to the politics of austerity. They approached this attempt, as seen in chapter five, by exploring and reflecting upon their emotions. They ascribed however to their emotions an autonomy and approached them as detached from any ideological frameworks or feeling rules. What they were beginning to discover was that feelings and emotions were bound up by ideology, and no matter how they focused on the intensities experienced during their participation, they could not ignore this.

The purity of emotions was now under scrutiny. Interviewees begin to notice this diversity in spite of the shared emotions of outrage. As participants interacted, and their differences became more noticeable, acrimonious conflicts begun to emerge and many of the interviewees could not mange feelings of solidarity anymore.

In spite of their attempt to manage their feelings, to focus on feelings of solidarity and to supress any hostile feelings towards other participants, the differences amongst them were

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[393] John Holloway. *Change the World Without Taking Power*. (London: Pluto Press 2002). 1.
[394] Dimitris G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 5 July 2013

too great to maintain these feelings. In the next chapter, I examine these discourses and how they impact upon feelings of solidarity and outrage as well as how some of these discourses were able to be absorbed by dominant discourses of austerity using emotions and feelings.

Chapter 7

"So what comes next?" The decline of the movement and fracturing solidarity

In the previous chapter, drawing from my critique in chapters two, three and four, I showed how participants through their resistance to austerity internalised a moral outrage towards political parties and towards the hegemonic discourses on the crisis. Through emotion work they established solidarity based on a liberal understanding of political action that constituted their subjectivity. As I argued in chapter three, political subjectivity is a product of collective struggles. Subjects are interpellated by ideology and constituted as subjects through emotion work. This process is rooted within a relationship within politics and the economy. In this chapter I draw on this theoretical understanding of the production of political subjectivity to examine how the Greek indignants were constituted as political subjects through the internalisation of hegemonic discourses on austerity. I focus my inquiry on the decline of the movement. I do so by mapping the discourses on the Greek Debt that were articulated by the participants to show how economic behaviour within neoliberalism shapes the production of political subjectivities in the movement and the importance of emotion within this process. To do so I draw from Lazzarato's analysis on the ability of debt to become a mechanism for the production of subjectivity. In *The Making of the Indebted Man* Lazzarato unravels the hegemonisation[395] of debt as a mechanism for the production of political subjectivities within neoliberalism.

> *"Debt acts as a "capture," "predation," and "extraction" machine on the whole of society, as an instrument for macroeconomic prescription and management, and as a mechanism for income redistribution. It also functions as a mechanism for the production and "government" of collective and individual subjectivities."[396]*

The production of political subjectivity through the power relations of debt is at the core of Lazzarato's inquiry. Drawing from Nietzsche, Deleuze and Marx, Lazzarato builds the pillars of his argument on the emergence of "a particular form of homo economicus: the "indebted man.""[397]

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[395] Although Lazzarato would prefer the use of the Foucauldian concept of government even though he argues for the dominant character of debt within neoliberalism, Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man* 25

[396] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man* 29

[397] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man*

Lazzarato begins his inquiry with a genealogical understanding of the debtor-creditor relationship found in Nietzsche's work "The Genealogy of Morals".[398] Lazzarato argues that within this relationship a particular morality based on the promise of repayment is inscribed, cultivating feelings of guilt and responsibility, building in this way a moral imperative which acts as a guarantee for the trustworthiness of the creditor over time. This power relation produces a subjectivity that is instilled with a memory and a conscience that is shaped in "the domain of debt obligations".[399] Debt therefore, Lazzarato argues, is at the epicentre of social relations and reflects an ethico-political process rooted within economic activity. "Economic production and the production of subjectivity, labor and ethics, are indissociable."[400] The subject therefore becomes an "entrepreneur of the self" permeated by the power relations and moral imperatives of the debtor-creditor relationship.

> *"In the debt economy, to become human capital or an entrepreneur of the self means assuming the costs as well as the risks of a flexible and financialised economy, costs and risks which are not only – far from it – those of innovation, but also and especially those of precariousness, poverty, unemployment, a failing health system, housing shortages etc. To make an enterprise of oneself (Foucault) – that means taking responsibility for poverty, unemployment, precariousness, welfare benefits, low wages, reduced pensions, etc., as if these were the individual's "resources" and "investments" to manage as capital, as "his" capital."[401]*

Within this dynamic the national debt is individualised, this entrepreneur of the self feels equally responsible for her country's debt as if it was her own. Lazzarato illustrates how the emotion of responsibility is shaped within a matrix of historical and material characteristics of the debtor-creditor relationship. Within this relationship a political subjectivity is constituted, emotionally internalising neoliberal ideology through the emotion of responsibility. Indeed, according to Stavrakakis the discourse used by the EU for the debt crisis is attached to a moral failing of every Greek citizen.[402] As Lazzarato argues, the sovereign debt is moralised and rebranded in a way as to transform it to a personal debt,

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[398] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man*
[399] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man* 40
[400] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man* 49
[401] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man* 51
[402] Yiannis Stavrakakis, 'Debt society: Greece and the Future of post-democracy', *Radical Philosophy* 181: (2013).

giving the feeling of Greece as a failed household that is about to get bankrupt, creating feelings of individual responsibility and guilt.

In this chapter I argue that emotions already experienced within the movement surrounding the discourse of moral indignation contributed to the internalisation of national debt as a personal debt. These emotions were already rooted within the participants' subjectivity and were drawn when the movement was unable to produce a common political project against austerity.

The inability of participants in the indignant movement to form a collective response to the politics of austerity contributed to the decline of the movement. In chapter three I demonstrated that the concept of the multitude is unable to capture contemporary forms of collective action with reference to the inability of interviewees to act outside ideology and in chapter two I examined the importance of discourse in the production of political subjectivities informed by a relationship between politics and the economy. In this chapter I draw from these critiques to examine the decline and dispersal of the movement and the failure of the political subject to challenge existing hegemonic discourses as well as the importance of hegemonic ideologies in the production of political subjectivities. In the first section of this chapter I examine how the fetishisation of diversity within the movement failed to contribute to the production of a common political project. In the second section I proceed to an analysis of the different discourses articulated within Syntagma square and their impact on the subjectivity of the participants in light of the inability of the movement to produce a collective response to austerity. I conclude this chapter with some reflections on political praxis.

7.1. Diversity and the need to produce a common political project

As interviewees revisit the last few days of their participation their enthusiasm and excitement in their narrative disappears. Their excitement at their description of the first days was slowly replaced by scepticism and feelings of disappointment marking the end of their participation. In this section I examine the role of diversity in the decline of the movement

 "It was an exchange of ideas, there were no particular demands" Chara said enthusiastically at the beginning of her interview. Chara, a young postgraduate student joined the movement

from the first day. She enjoyed the diversity of the movement and was captivated by its popularity.

> *"There was a general disagreement with the politics so far amongst the people and there was not a particular political framework. It was a general disagreement. So I preferred to stand side by side with people that did not felt like supporting a party. I thought at the beginning that that was a good thing. Because for the first time I could be in the same protest with my dad, my grandma, my professor, my friends with everyone! United under one thing, we are in a crisis and we disagree with this. So at the beginning I thought I agreed with everyone just because they were there, because the movement existed. Just the fact that such a movement existed cheered me up".*[403]

Chara participated enthusiastically and even though she did not feel the need to contribute to the public assembly she believed that within this process the movement could produce an alternative to austerity.

Chara's pessimism of the movement's ability to have an impact upon Greek politics is a surprise, compared to her initial enthusiastic account of the movement and her ability to find meaning in her life through her participation. Many interviewees shared Chara's cynical attitude toward the movement's ability to challenge the politics of austerity and neoliberalism at the end. The majority of the interviewees, in spite of their initial enthusiasm, described the movement's decline as an almost "natural" phenomenon that was bound to happen at some point. Their narrative is divided into two segments. Many of the interviewees begin their narrative with an enthusiastic account of the first days of their participation. They are keen to discuss the intensity of emotions they have experienced and become excited in the memory of those events. Only to be replaced by an overwhelming disappointment.

But as Chara's narrative unfolded her enthusiasm and excitement in her voice begun to fade away, along with her hope for a collapse of neoliberalism and the emergence of a radical movement. *"It was like a break up at the beginning: you go out, you get drunk, celebrate and express your anger. The movement was society's fury. And after the fury comes grief and*

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[403] Chara G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 23 July 2013

acceptance. You start going home more often and think "what's the point? What is going to change if I go to one more demo? I've been to so many and nothing has changed!"[404]

As the days went by and the movement grew Chara wanted to see this enthusiasm and popularity transformed into a common action that will not only resist austerity but produce a politics that can tackle the crisis. This was a desire rooted in the narrative of the majority of the interviewees. But the more interviewees were interacting with other participants the more they were beginning to notice that the differences between them made impossible the emergence of a common framework.

> *"I would consider very seriously if I would go again to an invitation by the indignants. Because once you've passed this stage you want to go to the next stage. You don't want to repeat the same. You want to say "ok we would all come together as indignants" but stop and think who are those indignants? We can't put everyone in the same bag anymore. Because a fascist can be indignant because of the rising immigration. There needs to be common framework. There was an exchange of ideas and positions which I've noticed didn't end in particular suggestions, because a specific position means a specific way of political thinking. I mean it's not enough to say we disagree with everything, you need to make suggestions and propose alternatives."*[405]

Indeed Chara's reservation is reflected in the narrative of many of the interviewees while the differences between them only reinforce the idea of many interviewees that the emotion of outrage and other dominant emotions within the square are informed by diverse ideological frameworks that cannot come together and form a commonly accepted articulatory chain. Interviewees see that consensus is the only way to produce a common political project however for many this negated the role of the movement to incorporate everyone without alienating individuals. For other interviewees the differences amongst participants were too great to be bridge and unable to produce a common political project.

As seen in the previous chapter interviewees experienced intense feelings of outrage, freedom, joy and solidarity through their participation. These feelings were articulated around

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[404] Chara G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 23 July 2013
[405] Chara G. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 23 July 2013

different ideological discourses. Participants were enjoying these new feelings of empowerment and outrage at the beginning of their participation. The crowd was only growing and Syntagma square was a big laboratory of hope. Participants were "living indignation" by engaging in different political discussions fuelled by emotions of outrage and expressing them in different forms of bodily performances. Any feelings of hostility against other participants based upon income or ideology were actively pushed away by some interviewees in light of the possibility of the emergence of a collective form of action that can bring political and economic change in Greece. However, interviewees reveal their need to become more specific, this open character of the movement could no longer maintain the intensity of their emotions. They were looking for a framework that could "move" them, that could capture their feelings. In spite of their efforts there was always a simmering conflict amongst participants, tensions would rise and interviewees would become less able to manage feelings of solidarity when they would attempt to form a collective understanding of the politics of austerity and a response to the politics of austerity.

The domination of the emotion of outrage and the resistance to the politics of austerity is built around a discourse of injustice. Interviewees' narrative shows that the articulatory practise is narrowed around the ethical parameters of austerity. However, some elements acquire different meanings around this fixed point of injustice and demand for equality. Elements such as social justice, equality, transparency, freedom were articulated around this nodal point but never fixed in an common discourse, rather formed multiple chains of equivalence influenced by different ideological discourses giving a different meaning to austerity.

The more participants interacted with each other and expressed their resistance to the politics of austerity and its injustice, the more they were expressing the need for the emergence of a collective framework that would produce an answer to austerity and the politics of neoliberalism and move them past the point of resistance to the point of struggle. Many of the interviewees were ready to channel their emotion work towards a common goal formed around the point of reference of which they manage their emotions with regards to the injustice of austerity.

The majority of interviewees reveal that the more they interacted with other members of the movement the more it was becoming difficult to maintain feelings of empowerment and autonomy. For many of the interviewees, the diversity of the interviewees was more obvious within the open assemblies. The open character of the movement, which was once welcomed,

was now threatening feelings of empowerment and individuality. Even the open assembly could not facilitate these feelings for the participants anymore.

The open assembly was initially a place for self-reflection and individual expression. It was now transformed as a centre for coordinating the organisation of the movement as well as an attempt to establish a counter-discourse to the politics of crisis that would at the same time secure and maintain the diversity of the movement. Many interviewees saw these parameters as a threat to their individuality, contrary to the mandate for autonomy set by the movement. These people would instead focus their participation on performative action, such as dancing, singing or performing rude gestures, while those interviewees participating in and supporting the open assembly began to see how the multiplicity of the movement presented enormous limitations on attempts to produce a movement with collective goals that can challenge existing power relations of neoliberal democracy. Feelings of empowerment were under threat now and the attempt of many interviewees to manage any threatening emotions towards other participants and feel in solidarity was now a herculean task which soon became impossible to control. In spite of their efforts, "enemies" would appear everywhere trying to appropriate the movement within a particular ideological framework using words, symbols or emotional expressions.

Interviewees were bonded by shared feelings of outrage and autonomy, as well as shared experiences of combativeness and being in a collective rooted within the most basic activities for maintaining the occupation of Syntagma square. However these feelings began to be put into question when interviewees found themselves wanting a collective political response to the crisis that would move them beyond a resistance to austerity.

In spite of feelings of solidarity, rooted in emotional work for overcoming the differences between participants and focus on shared emotions and experiences that were formed mainly in the reproductive work involved with the occupation of the square, the overwhelming majority of the interviewees admit that the movement was unable to form a commonly accepted discourse that would challenge the politics of austerity. *"The movement had no goals"* was the most common response to any enquiries about the demands and objectives of the movement. Even the open assembly, which for many participants at the time was the apex of such an attempt, was unable to produce a discourse that was commonly accepted by everyone based on the notion of a direct form of democracy.

The multiplicity of the movement, as I demonstrated in previous chapters, rendered the task of creating a common base impossible. Differences based on the diversity of ideological positions, as well as differences in income, produced an atmosphere of insecurity, continuous suspicion of other participants and a threat to individuality. The context of the movement was now changing. Multiplicity and diversity were still desirable but participants began to see this diversity as a threat to their individuality. Interviewees wanted to be a part of a collective movement with common goals, however, it was impossible to create this kind of movement without alienating some of the participants.

The movement could not produce a collective understanding of the politics of the crisis or a new collective form of politics that would resist and challenge the politics of austerity. The intense feelings of solidarity and outrage formed in the first few days did not disappear within a day. Instead these feelings were transformed slowly. Their inability to form a collective alternative to the politics of austerity was at the root of this transformation. As discussed in chapter three, participants were not acting "outside" existing power relations. Instead participants were "exposed" to different coherent critiques of the movement and of dominant discourses supporting austerity.

7.2. Divisions in the Square

As the movement grew so did the need to establish a common discourse. Participants that were present from the first days of the movement and in the occupation of Syntagma square felt that there was a need for the movement to address particular issues of social injustice and the injustice of the austerity in order to shape the politics of the movement into a common struggle against austerity. This however appeared to be a herculean task that required many of the participants to both compromise and also to radically change their subjectivity; an attempt that contradicted the movement's purpose for maintaining the individuality of every participant. For many, this problem shifted the focus from shared issues to the issues that divided them. The emergent antagonisms within the movement as I will show shaped their political actions, left them open to dominant discourses and contributed to the decline of the movement.

As the movement grew tensions began to emerge on what the direction of the movement should be, the methods that should be employed, its organisational form, its openness to trade unions and its purpose. The division that interviewees identified from the beginning,

dominating interviewees' narrative was a division with topographical characteristics; the division between the upper and the lower part of Syntagma square. At the core of this division was a difference between a conservative or right wing and a left wing ideology. The basis for this division was a difference in the politics of praxis and a perception of the mandate for autonomous action as set by the movement.

In the lower part of Syntagma square most of the participants were focused on forming a common discourse, a collective politics against austerity that would challenge the politics of neoliberalism through a collective form of self-organisation based on a model of direct democracy. Many interviewees perceived this form of direct democracy and empowerment of the self as a means towards uprooting existing forms of corruption and establishing a political ethos that would ensure the transparency of political power, maintaining at the same time feelings of empowerment that emerged at the beginning of their participation.

However, in the upper part of Syntagma square the attempt to establish a common discourse and an organisation that would, according to many participants, attempt to *"homogenize"* the movement was a threat to their individuality and autonomy. This would, it is believed, essentially transform the movement into another form of political party. Instead participants believed that the only way to resist the politics of austerity while maintaining their autonomy was by expressing their individuality and moral outrage against a corrupt political culture through symbols, shouting, dancing and other movements of the body, especially on key dates which austerity measures were under vote in the parliament.

Participants would see either parts of Syntagma square "as different sides of the same coin". Participants moved freely from the upper part of the square to the lower and vice versa and would engage with people in both parts of the square with the same vigour and conviction. However, interviewees' narratives changes when they begin to discuss the goals of the movement and the attempt to establish a common political response to austerity. At this point some interviewees would feel that the practises in lower part of the square were an attempt of the parties of the left to manipulate the movement by trying to impose a commonly accepted framework. On the other hand interviewees on the lower part of the square saw the people that focused their action only in expressing their emotions as easily manipulated and a prey to nationalist and fascist ideologies. Interviewees in the upper and in the lower part of the square often use the word *"apolitical"* to describe the other side a crowd that was easily manipulated. At the epicentre of this division lays a need to maintain feelings of autonomy

and a demand for political equality and individual empowerment as set in the beginning of the movement.

Many of the interviewees believed that part of the reason for the crisis was the expansion of public spending on salaries for civil servants and also that public services were not functioning properly or were inherently corrupt. In that sense, they felt that they were being punished for someone else's misconduct and "sins". Thus they were ready to accept significant cut backs into public spending and layoffs of public servants as part of the austerity package, perceiving it as a necessary structural change for "the good of the country".

Acrimonious conflicts began to emerge around the injustice of austerity and its ethical parameters. The need for justice and punishment against "*those that brought us to this point*" was a popular demand within the square. However, participants' ideas of what justice is and who deserves to be punished differ significantly. As Stathis says:

> *"I just want to see all those that governed this country going through a special tribunal, and be tried for their crimes. I don't agree with Pangalos's quote but I do believe that we, as citizens need to look ourselves in the mirror when we think of who we voted for in the past few years, we have a responsibility as to what we allowed to happen in this country".*[406]

For Stathis, the creation of the committee for the legality of debt by the movement was a step towards this direction and his participation in this committee was driven by his need to punish the people that were responsible for his precarious financial situation. He believed that it was the only way to get justice for the profound consequences the crisis had upon his life and the lack of responsibility and political ethos by political parties. At the same time this tribunal for Stathis was also a form of action that would prevent the rise of violent sentiments accompanied with injustice and the rise of fascist parties, such as Golden Dawn, that advocate a more violent form of justice. Other interviewees identify different forms of punishment however many participants were convinced that the only form of punishment was through violence. However, this contradicted the dominant position of the movement. Some of the participants who supported the peaceful character of the protest still felt the need to get justice from "*the corrupt and unethical political parties*" through violence. For those, this

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[406] Stathis S. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 23 July 2013

anger and the need for punishment could be represented within the parliament by Golden Dawn. As Michalis, a young unemployed man who joined a movement for the first time, told me:

> "I don't believe what they say about Golden Dawn. I think it's a patriotic party but to be honest I didn't vote them for that. It was mainly because I wanted to see them fuck them up. To see all those in there [Parliament] get beaten up, because they deserve it!"[407]

The focus of injustice was also shifted towards the threat posed by the EU, and particularly Germany, to national identity. Many interviewees were prepared to accept policies of austerity as long as these policies were not enforced by *"foreign interests"*. *"In essence we are a protectorate (of Germany). We have an important geopolitical position so they don't let the Greek people rule their own home".*[408] Vasilis, even though says he is against nationalism and identifies himself as being part of the left, focuses his narrative on forms of resistance against a colonialist attitude towards Greece. He begins to mistrust *"people from the left"* who ignore this *"foreign invasion"* and believes that their only purpose was to appropriate the movement for their own interests. He gets particularly upset with the lack of assuming any responsibility as citizens for the crisis and the corrupt political culture within Greece, a notion that was beginning to gain ground within participants as I will discuss in the next section. He therefore decided to stop going to Syntagma square as it could no longer produce a common *"responsible solution to the crisis"* and support a neoliberal party on the first round of elections. Vasilis is interpellated by a nationalistic ideology forcing him to concede to *"any means necessary"* as long as it secures his national identity.

> "I voted for Stefanos Manos[409] in the previous elections, even though he is on the right. Although left or right it makes no difference anymore it's all the same. I voted for him because he is the only one I believe who is going to implement some austerity but he is going to do whatever it takes to take us out of the crisis. He is the only honest man, even though he is on right, because in the past as a minister he

[407] Michalis G. Interview conducted in person, Athens 16 July 2013
[408] Vasilis L. Interview conducted in person, Athens 7 July 2013
[409] Leader at the time of a liberal party Drasi which merged with the party Recreate Greece in February 2012

> *implemented some radical changes, he showed that he dares, that he*
> *has balls!"[410]*

Kostas, a 23 year old postgraduate student, could feel the division and tension in the movement every time he would join. For Kostas the movement was not autonomous. From the first few days of his participation he was particularly troubled by the articulation of the discourse around the need for resistance against *"colonialist attitudes of Germany"* and *"desire for class security"*. *"I could feel an internal struggle within me every time I went to the square. But I would rationalise that there could not be so many fascists there and those that did join were only at the upper part of the square"*.[411] Kostas engages in a process of emotion work to maintain feelings of solidarity. He would see people placing emphasis on their national identity and promoting a conservative and right wing discourse arguing for a return to *"traditional values"* as a solution to the crisis. He saw people dressed up as key figures of the Greek revolution against the Ottoman Empire articulating a fascist discourse against immigrants and that frightened him.

> *"There were a couple of incidents with fascists. I remember a*
> *happening was organised in the lower part of the square against*
> *xenophobia. And if I remember correctly there was a football game set*
> *at the lower part of the square, I think it was a game to establish the*
> *friendship between Greeks and immigrants. And then out of the blue*
> *some people arrived carrying Greek flags calling themselves*
> *indignants trying to pick up a fight and started threatening us"[412]*

Even though Kostas knew that this action did not represent the majority of participants he would still see parts of a homophobic and sexist discourse bleed in to the narrative of resistance against *"colonialist politics"* and focus that resistance towards gaining national independence rather than fighting neoliberal politics. At the beginning of his interview Kostas states his deep concern about the implementation of austerity and the deep impact that austerity had upon his life. Kostas was already struggling to get by and he was stressed about his future. He joined the movement in Syntagma square in the hopes that he would be able to express this fear and find hope for his future. Even though Kostas, a gay man, found himself in Syntagma square driven by the deep financial restraints and a need to oppose

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[410] Vasilis L. Interview conducted in person, Athens 7 July 2013
[411] Kostas P. Interview conducted in person, Athens 4 July 2013
[412] Kostas P. Interview conducted in person, Athens 4 July 2013

neoliberalism, the conservative attitudes he encountered made him withdraw to a position in which he had to defend gay rights. As his narrative focuses on the divisions in the square and especially the discourses he believes dominate the upper part of the square, his original position of a resistance to austerity and neoliberalism changes. His narrative is focused around a defence of gay rights and a resistance towards any conservative and fascist discourses articulated within the square. After what Kostas finds to be a failed attempt towards educating participants about gay rights and shaping the discourse in the square, Kostas becomes more and more detached from the movement. His failed attempt only captured his agency towards fighting for gay rights against what he was seeing as the rise of fascist and conservative ideology in Greece (especially with the rise of Golden Dawn) coming from within the movement. Austerity and neoliberalism is now no longer the enemy. He is more receptive to neoliberal changes in Greek economy as long as they come with a liberal change into Greek culture. He can no longer ignore the differences in the square and becomes more and more detached from the movement. This withdrawal changed his priority from establishing a socialist society to a society that is less conservative in spite of being neoliberal. He is now overwhelmed with a fear of the rise of conservatism and fascism. He is less concerned about the ramifications of austerity upon his life and the lives of others. He came to accept the "reality" of austerity, especially if it was introduced by liberal values of equality, and was determined to fight against the rise of homophobia. Kostas was constituted as a political subject within the battle of discourses developed in the Square. In spite his initial trepidation on the politics of austerity Kostas was interpellated by a liberal discourse connected to the politics of neoliberalism. Kostas was able to accept austerity as the least objectionable scenario as it was introduced by a liberal understanding of gay rights and aspects of individual responsibility.

Kostas's experience reflects the experience of many interviewees who felt a strong reservation against continuing being a part of the movement that articulates a conservative discourse. Like Kostas, many feared that if they continued to participate, in spite of their efforts to shape the discourse, they would be corroborating in establishing a form of power relations that they opposed and in maintaining existing power relations that they opposed.

Kostas and Vasilis through their participation in the movement prioritise different discourses and focus their resistance which is informed by set discourses. Thus the focus of their resistance is shifted from hegemonic discourses that support austerity and discourses of

resistance to discourses that threaten national sovereignty, in the case of Vasilis, or gay rights, in the case of Kostas.

On the same token, many anarchist activists and people from the left, even though were themselves captivated by the novelty of the practices within the movement (some of which were already practiced within the anarchist movement) and the popularity of demands of equality and resistance to a neoliberal response to the crisis, they began to resent the focus placed on national identity. They did not want to be a part of the articulation of a discourse that had at its core the emergence of a resistance against *"foreign oppression"*, strengthening a nationalistic and a fascist discourse.

The use of the Greek flag signified for many an attempt to turn a fight against neoliberalism to the production of nationalistic or fascist subjectivities. The use of the Greek flag was a source of tension and conflicts amongst participants. Some of the participants tried to address this issue in different ways in order to manage hostile emotions towards the movement and facilitate its diversity, as seen in previous chapter in the case of Tasos by introducing flags from other countries affected by austerity.

At the same time the emphasis given to the exclusion of trade unions from the movement and the focus on an attempt to provide a clear anti-capitalist form of struggle, by focusing on the importance of strike and the reorganisation of social reproduction, alienated many of the interviewees. For others such an attempt was a clear indication of their inability to transcend ideological restrictions and need to slide back to the corrupt political culture that led to the debt crisis.

These increased tensions and conflicts as well as the radical differences amongst participants produced feelings of suspicion and mistrust towards each other. Making the attempt to maintain feelings of solidarity for many impossible.

As participants were discovering the limitations of the movement in producing a collective response against neoliberalism or the pursuit for equality many were beginning to lose their enthusiasm in their participation and found difficult to manage emotions and bodies. Grigoris was already beginning to get disappointed with the diversity of the movement and questioned the solutions it might provide to austerity when nationalists and fascists were already part of the movement. *"There were feelings of solidarity. For example if you would fall you knew there were people to help you get up. But the most collective thing I saw in the square was*

when they organised a football game. It was all very nice but not enough."[413] He tried to manage any fears he had of clashing with the police and focus on the collective effort of the public assembly and its democratic procedures at the lower part of the square. He was enjoying his participation in spite of the diversity of the movement and tried to focus on emotions of outrage that made him feel in solidarity to the people around him. His description of his participation is enthusiastic and he cannot quite remember why he felt so strongly connected to the people around him. But he remembers the day he decided not to continue being a part of the movement clearly and vividly.

> *"I got really scared. It was at the high point of the movement, I don't remember exactly the date 24-25 of July I think, where the police started beating us and tear gassing us. I personally got defeated by this counterinsurgency. I got very frightened and especially that day! They started charging towards the crowd and I remember a lot of us manage to get into a hotel, which opened its doors for us. And I remember we were so many people crammed into a small room like cattle and outside we were surrounded by police ready to arrest us and beat us. I don't know maybe it had something to do with my claustrophobia but the fact that I could not leave this place really scared me. Maybe it was my issue only because my friends did not have the same experience, they didn't feel like I did. I was defeated that day!"*[414]

For Grigoris his experience with police violence marked the end of his participation. He enjoyed being a part of a collective form of resistance for the first time. However, he began to get disappointed when he saw he could not find a solution to austerity though his participation. For Grigoris, the police brutality he experienced was the incident that made him come to terms with the movement not being able to produce a politics that go beyond resistance.

Interviewees' narratives suggest that the differences between participants became transformed into an antagonism of different discourses. Within this antagonism, dominant discourses supporting austerity were articulated in order to defend points of antagonism.

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[413] Grigoris S. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 15 July 2013
[414] Grigoris S. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 15 July 2013

Participants were slowly becoming aware of their inability to build a collective response to austerity. The diversity of the movement was now restraining the autonomy of participants and individual empowerment and transferring the focus of resistance form austerity. For many of the participants the limitations of the movement did not put an end to that pursuit. The crisis was now a reality and its tackling was resting upon their shoulders as individuals.

7.3. From Feelings of Outrage to Feelings of Civic Duty and Individual Responsibility

As interviewees' narratives were unfolding, their initial enthusiasm and outrage in their narrative and of their memories was transformed into pessimism focusing on feelings of responsibility, civic duty, disappointment and confusion as they began to describe how they become estranged from the movement. In this section I examine how interviewees internalise a responsibility towards the Greek national debt by embracing emotions of individual responsibility and civic duty.

For many interviewees the inability to form a collective response to the crisis that could radically transform Greek political culture was an indication of lack of individual responsibility as citizens to deal with the crisis. *"There was no centre figure there to organise or lead,"* says Dimitris, *"so after a point it was just a lot of different groups within the same space. You can't stop the memorandum like that or put corrupt politicians behind bars."*[415] In the absence of a common discourse many of the interviewees were beginning to feel disappointed. The Greek national debt was becoming a bitter reality and the government's plea for the "need for individual sacrifices", required by the implementation of further austerity, appeared as a hard but necessary means to change a political culture of clientelism and institutional corruption.[416]

A growing sense of responsibility for tackling the crisis and for past political choices began to resonate with the participants. The outrage channelled towards a corrupt political system and the demand for a more ethical conduct and a change in the Greek political culture was soon directed towards the self. Feelings of empowerment during their "autonomous" action compelled many of the interviewees to assume a sense of responsibility and deal with the debt crisis as if it was an individual debt crisis. *"We have a responsibility* [for the crisis]

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[415] Dimitris G. interview conducted in person, Athens 7 September 2013
[416] Yiannis Mylonas, 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU: The 'Culturalization' of a Systemic Crisis and Bild-Zeitung's Framing of Greece', *TripleC*, 10(2): 646-671, 2012

because we let them come in to our houses and tell us what to do. How did you [the government] *let them* [TROIKA] *come into your home and tell you what to do? We have a responsibility because we owe money to everyone".[417]* Many of the interviewees use the metaphor of a household in debt to refer to the Greek debt crisis and maintain that they responsible owners who need to make some hard decisions to maintain their credibility as responsible individuals.

Even though Theodoros' Pangalos statement "we ate together" became a source of antagonism and spark feelings of outrage against the government and political parties, it was soon regarded as a statement that reflected the political subjectivities of the participants; a lack of individual responsibility and individual ethical standards contributed significantly to the establishment of existing power relations and the corrupt political culture which the outrage of participants is channelled against. The discourse articulated by the EU that portrayed Greek citizens as lazy, unethical and irresponsible, even though infuriating, was somehow hiding a kernel of truth for many of the interviewees.[418] Many of the interviewees believed that the only way to change their self and redeem them from their past political choices that somehow contributed to the crisis, was to act responsibly. Supporters of PASOK or Nea Demokratia and public servants were singled out. Unable to construct a common political project as a response to austerity and by focusing upon a perceived immorality of debt, participants are interpellated by discourses supporting austerity. These discourses have as a nodal point the need for ethics and responsibility, points that had already been articulated within the movement, resonating with them from the beginning of their participation.

In search for these ethical attributes, the EU and the "foreigners" were not always portrayed as the enemy. Interviewees' narrative on the EU and the TROIKA alternates from enemies and a threat to national sovereignty and their national identity to allies in the fight against corruption and the attempt to instil moral values within Greek political culture. Many interviewees see the role of the TROIKA and the EU as a threat to their national sovereignty but at the same time as a "necessary evil" for the implementation of a European political ethos. Within the core of this political ethos lays the neoliberal imperative of individual responsibility, which grows in light of the absence of a collective discourse alternative to austerity.

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[417] Stefanos C., Interview conducted in person, Athens, 6 August 2013
[418] Yiannis Mylonas, 'Media and the Economic Crisis of the EU: The 'Culturalization' of a Systemic Crisis and Bild-Zeitung's Framing of Greece', *TripleC*, 10(2): 646-671, 2012

"Political parties still represent the interests of the few. They have made some steps towards purging themselves. I believe that foreigners [EU, TROIKA] are more just compared to our guys [Greek MPs, political parties]. I mean, I believe that some things they suggest need to be done, even though it has a severe impact upon everyone's lives. But you can't do anything else, that's the way it should be done. But I still feel that the government[419] and political parties are untrustworthy. And I believe the only solution is to punish them come Election Day. And I think it's a good sign that PASOK's numbers dropped to 5 per cent. And that's how it should be done with everyone else not implementing their promises. I believe that if we stay in the EU and before we accuse our European partners we need to reflect on our own responsibilities. I believe that it is a mistake to accuse TROIKA. As if they are a monster, a mean supervisor without looking at our share of responsibility [for the crisis]. *Of course we are responsible for the crisis. Who else would it be?"*[420]

Nikos's original anger towards a corrupt political culture is now turned towards himself and others. His feelings of empowerment during the first days he believes should be accommodated by a sense of responsibility for his past and future political choices. He compares his view of individual responsibility to the inability of the movement to produce a common discourse towards tackling the crisis.

"I have been a member of a European organisation and worked with a lot of people from different European countries. We have a lot in common. But every government has to tend to their own people. And each and every one of us is trying to secure our own home. So you can't assign responsibility outside your country. I'm not saying that they are great but we do let them get involved in our affairs because they [EU] *are the only ones who can tackle the crisis and be efficient."*[421]

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[419] At the time of the interview the party of Nea Demokratia was in government.
[420] Nikos R. Interview conducted in person, Athens 12 September 2013
[421] Nikos R. Interview conducted in person, Athens 12 September 2013

Nikos believes he is somewhat responsible for the crisis and even though he does not believe he or the Greek people should be punished he comes to the conclusion that some austerity measures are necessary. He feels that "a level of suffering is acceptable" as long as this is accompanied by a change in Greek political culture that makes the state more efficient and ethical.

The Greek debt and the Greek debt crisis became a reality from which many believed they could not escape. Many of the interviewees were looking for a collective means of representation that would not only provide an alternative to austerity but also reform a corrupt political culture, regain national sovereignty – or as many have put it "national pride" – and establish a political ethos that reflects European values. Nikos's sense of responsibility that warrants "some austerity" is not an aberration

> *"I didn't want to endure the suffering that was coming with austerity.*
> *Or anyway I could but if there was one package of austerity not many.*
> *I mean, change should have some consequences positive and negative.*
> *I mean, we need to sacrifice some things for our own good and the*
> *good of the country. We need to endure our burden but not so*
> *heavily"[422]*

Vaso's narrative reflects a turn in the narrative of many of the interviewees that welcomed different aspects of austerity, connecting austerity to the need for change. This is articulated as a necessary step towards a change in political culture that was marked by corruption and individual irresponsibility. Interviewees' narratives of a more ethical politics oftentimes contradicts their arguments against austerity.

For Dimitra, some of the strict demands of the TROIKA were necessary in order to discipline Greek citizens as well as create a collective consciousness within Greek society. For Dimitra the memorandum was necessary to discipline Greek citizens and instil within the consciousness of the Greek people a more ethical conduct of public affairs. She saw austerity as part of that attempt. Dimitra uses as an example how she, and others according to her observation, changed their attitude towards paying taxes.

> *"I remember I never thought about paying my taxes, it was the last*
> *thing on my mind. But now I make a conscious effort to pay my taxes*

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[422] Vaso R. Interview condcuted in person, Athens, 12 July 2013

first. Why is it now that I'm so conscious about paying my taxes? I pay first my taxes and then I spend whatever is left of my pension. There are many people that think like that now. Did we use to think like that? I'm telling you no! Maybe one good thing that came out of the memorandum was that it disciplined us, because we are undisciplined people."[423]

Dimitra's main motivation to join the movement was her concern about *"the good of the country"*. She joined the movement in the hopes that she would contribute to the emergence of a collective action that offers an alternative to austerity, an action that would move her emotionally and change a corrupt political culture by fostering individual responsibility for the national debt. However, for Dimitra the resistance of some of the participants to accept some austerity, which would also apparently tackle the problem of corruption within Greece and "laziness and ineffectiveness of public employees", was an indication that the movement could not move beyond the politics of resistance.

"They said that my pension might be threatened; to be honest I don't care. What I do care is what they are going to do with unemployment. That's why I can't vote for the Greek Communist Party cause what they say about capitalism and this and that can't happen. Tsipras looks like he cares but is he going to keep caring or is he going to be consumed by the big interests? But he must find a way out. When we have such high unemployment and there's no way for this number to drop I can't talk about my pension being reduced. We need to take measures to combat unemployment. And I will tell you something that you might not like, the government's argument for reducing the minimum wage to 480 euros is sound because that is going to attract investments. Now you are going to ask how people are going to cope with 480 euros, the same way we coped in the 60s."[424]

Her experience of the movement convinced her that the only way this corrupt Greek political culture could change was not by its citizens.

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[423] Dimitra E. Interview conducted in person, Athens 27 June 2013
[424] Dimitra E. Interview conducted in person, Athens 27 June 2013

> *"I got very upset when I overheard a discussion between two people,*
> *a supporter of PASOK and a supporter of Nea Demokratia, when they*
> *were trying to blame the problem of corruption in Greece to either*
> *parties. And I told them "you should be ashamed – both of you did*
> *this!" And if you are here it's because you lost or you're about to lose*
> *your privileges. That is my opinion and no one can change it! And*
> *their response to me was you got your pension now, you're sorted*
> *now, we don't know what's going to happen to us. Their nerve! I got*
> *my pension working for 45 years in the private sector! I was not one*
> *of those public servants that got their pension after 20 years of work! I*
> *am against this attitude dominating the public sector!"*[425]

Dimitra's disappointment was not only in the inability of the participants to form a collective discourse against the crisis but to feel responsible for the crisis and to produce a solution to the crisis that did not reproduce the already corrupt political culture.

Many of the interviewees are therefore ready to consent to "some austerity" and endure radical changes in their living standards in light of implementing a political ethos that would not only ensure their individuality but guarantee a neoliberal meritocracy within public life and Greek political culture. Feelings of outrage were slowly transformed around a discourse of individual responsibility for the past and the future, and the mandate for change posed by the movement transformed into a mandate for "*individual responsibility*" and an ethical political culture. *"Sixty percent of the people, us, are responsible for this crisis. And why I'm saying us? I told you before that we vote based on our individual interests and not based on the political good. You are going to ask me what do I mean when with this political good. I mean how I can build a better future for our kids."*[426] This need to act towards "*the political good*" or "*the good of the country*" dominates the narrative of the interviewees. Every interviewee has a different idea of what that "*common good*" is, however a common thread runs through their narrative; an individual responsibility towards the Greek debt. A responsibility for being a part of a corrupt political culture responsible for expanding the public sector and perpetuating clientelism. Many interviewees remember how their attempt to articulate the injustice of austerity upon the welfare state, within the discursive battle, was met with fierce opposition. For many interviewees, any arguments within the movement that

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[425] Dimitra E. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 27 June 2013
[426] Tolis C. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 25 August 2013

focused on the impact of austerity upon the public sector and the welfare state were lacking the much needed new political ethics and a desire to maintain a corrupt and unethical politics. The articulation of debt and the crisis was transforming from a financial problem to a cultural and social problem of ethical values.

> *"It's not just a financial crisis it is also a social crisis. You can predict the economy. When an average Greek with a low income owned ten credit cards, a mortgage and car loans and they were having vacations at Mykonos right next to Latsis you could see that at some point this would blow up 'cause the numbers didn't add up. But of course no one told us about this 'cause it was in their interest, those that were in power then. So no matter what type of policy they implement there's no way they are going to solve the crisis. First they need to solve the social crisis, of course not those who created it, and after that we can talk about the financial crisis. If the Greeks wanted, if they were thinking right they could have solved this problem but we all enjoyed ourselves and focused on our own gains. This crisis could have been avoided if we Greeks were smart and had family values and try to instil our values to our children, if we had that we would have ousted those political parties that created this crisis. They will only make this crisis worse"*[427]

Interviewees' narratives show that they are ready to accept austerity, viewing the EU as the only medium towards justice and change, but at the same time perceiving such attempts as a threat to their national identity.

Interviewees' narratives vindicate Lazzarato's argument on a political subjectivity that is produced around the ethical and material characteristics of debt within neoliberalism. By using cultural references that paint an almost racist picture of the Greek people, dominant discourses used by "debtors" create a caricature in which "the Greeks laze away in the sun while German Protestants slave away under gloomy skies for the good of Europe and humanity"[428]

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[427] Babis L. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 9 July 2013
[428] Lazzarato *The Making of the Indebted Man* 31

Indeed, discursive elements articulated by foreign media, and EU and German officials portrayed Greek citizens and politics as lacking in morality, responsibility and permeated by a corrupt political culture which is almost imprinted in the DNA of every Greek citizen, are already articulated by the participants in Syntagma square from the beginning. Austerity, tied to this articulation of the debt crisis and its implementation, is not restricted to having a merely disciplinary character but is a means to instil the "missing" values that make a responsible and credible citizen and the only way to transform a corrupt political culture.

Faced with the challenge to become a responsible individual, the mandate of the movement to improve the lives of the unemployed the poor, maintain the welfare state, etc., without a common course of action towards achieving those issues seemed futile, while methods of self-organisation developed within the movement and already resonating within Greek society was a temporary patch and in some cases also an exercise in futility. Many participants consent to different aspects of austerity they believe are necessary to exit the crisis and regain credibility as responsible citizens.

> *"I think going on a strike is a very dated form of action and resistance. It creates more problems for the people. For example if a doctor is on strike it's only the patients that suffer, your kid goes to school and teachers strike for five months it's our kids that suffer. It creates problems to regular people and lower class people, those that have money and have means they don't care. I went a few times to get some papers I needed to collect 30 euros and they were on strike for almost a month. It's regular people that suffer by this form of action. Strike lost its meaning by this overuse because it is necessary sometimes. And these trade union people use the union as a stepping stone to get elected into parliament and at the end become a part of the problem that they were allegedly trying to fight"* [429]

Many interviewees, in view of this impossibility to achieve the moral imperatives necessary to change the Greek political culture and become responsible citizens alone from their participation in the movement, perceive methods of disruption such as a strike or even the very occupation of Syntagma square as a counterproductive action towards attracting investments and stimulating the "growth" necessary to combat unemployment, decline

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[429] Lefteris N. Interview conducted in person, Athens, 12 September 2013

wages, pensions, welfare state etc. Many participants began to question even the occupation of Syntagma square.

Interviewees' narratives, however, point towards the breaking of the feeling of "guilt" between debtor and creditor. The repayment of debt is not a priority in their narrative but there is a responsibility towards the debtors to not to repeat the behaviour that, according to the creditor, contributed to the debt crisis. This is because interviewees acknowledge that repaying or attempting to repay such a debt would have a severe material impact upon their lives.

7.4. The End of "Indignation"

Interviewees' narratives show the importance of building a collective response to austerity. Participants express the desire to move beyond a collective action of resistance to a collective action that produced an alternative to austerity. Their attempt to build such a political project failed when participants had to consent to a common framework. In their inability to form a common political project participants reconstitute themselves emotionally so as to reconcile their own dissonance by becoming a neoliberal subject.

Discourses on the injustice of austerity and the Greek crisis focus on the corrupt political culture and the inability of political parties to *"act responsibly"*. Participants express this through a moral outrage that informs their actions and contributes to establishing solidarity amongst the movement in spite of its diversity. This is internalised through a process of emotion work in which participants transform emotions of anxiety, depression and fear into outrage. However, in the absence of a common political project discourses on the significance of austerity permeate the subjectivity of participants creating emotions of individual responsibility. These emotions of responsibility already formed the basis of moral outrage and resistance against the politics of austerity. Participants found themselves unable to re-articulate debt within their moral outrage. This echoes my critique of Laclau and Mouffe in chapter two on how material conditions not subsumed in the articulation process constitute political subjectivities.

Participants did not enter the movement as autonomous subjects, but as subjects interpellated by ideology and neoliberal politics. The struggle against austerity was constituted by such political subjects. This becomes clearer when we turn our attention to how interviewees

perceive national debt and the politics of austerity. Interviewees experience an internal conflict. They acknowledge the severe impact austerity has upon their lives and the financial difficulties they would have to face in the future, but they emphasise a need to act as responsible individuals/citizens and address the problems highlighted by dominant discourses on the origin of the crisis; a corrupt political culture that can only be tackled by a series of disciplinary mechanisms in order to ensure that this will not happen again. They internalise these discourses by managing their outrage and accepting their responsibility.

Almost three months after its formation the Greek indignant movement dissolved. Participation was already slowly declining. On the 30th of July 2011 at 4.30 in the morning a swift police operation cleared the few people left on the occupation of Syntagma square. A few weeks later another call of indignation was met with little participation. The indignant movement was over.

In spite of its inability to produce a common political project against austerity, the Greek indignant movement manage to mobilise thousands of Greek people and establish forms of resistance and self-organisation that continue to inform collective action in Greece. The indignant movement lifted taboos on the practice of self-organisation and of horizontal decision-making in right-wing discourse; these practices were no longer only applicable to a lifestyle of "extremists" and anarchists squatting buildings.[430] This was not just accomplished within a process of re-articulation of some elements, as noted by Laclau and Mouffe. It was internalised as a process that can produce collective politics by the indignants through their engagement and by associating particular emotions to this process such as joy, togetherness, solidarity. In chapter three I critically engaged with the notion of a horizontal form of decision making within collective action and the ability to produce a collective political subjectivity. My critical inquiry was focused upon the parameters set by Hardt and Negri for such an action and their argument that a horizontal form of organisation can produce autonomous subjects and a revolutionary political subjectivity that is constituted outside social struggles. Throughout my thesis I demonstrate how the emergence of forms of resistance is a product of social struggles and I highlight the importance of consensus in the production of a common political project that is constituted from within existing power relations. However, it is also important to appreciate the significance of self-organisation and

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[430] Kritidis, George. 'The Rise and Crisis of the Anarchist and Libertarian Movement in Greece' in Bart Van Bersteen, Ask Katzeff and Leendert Van Hoogenhuijze (eds), *The City is Ours: Squatting and Autonomous Movements in Europe from the 1970s to the Present,* (Oakland CA: PM Press, 2014).

of horizontal forms of decision making within forms of collective action. As seen in the case of Makis in chapter six, it was within this process of self-organisation that Makis managed to overcome feelings of alienation, anxiety and competitiveness experienced in what he calls now *"previous life"* as a salesman and constitute himself as a political subject that engages in forms of anticapitalist struggle. Such a process does not only contribute to the production of a sense of solidarity amongst participants but when it is exercised within a particular ideological framework of anti-capitalist struggle it can produce a collective revolutionary political subjectivity. The process of emotion work has a key role within this attempt.

The Greek indignant movement may have burnt briefly and brightly but it was unable to produce a common political project that united the crowd gathered in the square towards a common political project against capitalism. However, the practices that were developed within the Square still inform political praxis in Greece, while feelings of togetherness and collective contribution experienced by the participants during their resistance still resonate within them. The Greek indignant movement might not have produced a collective revolutionary political subject but the processes developed within the movement, emerging from a struggle against neoliberalism, can contribute to the emergence of such a subjectivity in the future. This contribution is established and shaped within a history of collective struggles. To paraphrase a motto used on many of the banners in Syntagma Square, *"You do everything to bury me but you forget that I'm a seed."*

Conclusion: Political Subjectivity and the Greek Indignant Movement

This thesis makes an original contribution to the study of political subjectivity and the politics of the Greek indignant movement by demonstrating that political subjectivities are constituted within social struggles; a process that is permeated by hegemonic ideologies, emotions, the economy and culture. I make an original contribution to the study of emancipatory politics by demonstrating the importance of emotion in motivating individuals to participate in protest movements and the processes in which future protest movements can focus their activities in order to challenge capitalist power relations and the field of politics in general by mapping the inability of popular movements, and in particular the Greek indignant movement, to overcome hegemonic subjectivities emerging from within forms of resistance. I make a contribution to Greek politics and the politics of the Greek indignant movement by engaging in a longitudinal empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement informed by an immanent critique of contemporary theories on the production of political subjectivities.

My examination of the importance of emotions within a period of crisis and of the articulation of emotions by the Greek indignants demonstrates that emotions have a political character; they are a source of resistance and of practices that reproduce capitalist relations of production. My original contribution on the importance of emotion, ideology, culture and the economy in the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity within the Greek indignant movement addresses important lacunae in the debate on the production of a collective political subject that can produce emancipatory politics. This can be further explored building upon the inability of the Greek indignants to produce a collective political project autonomous from existing ideologies and without alienating any of the other participants.

I began my inquiry by discussing the conceptual problems arising from the mechanisms that produce political subjectivity within contemporary forms of collective action when looking at the Greek indignant movement. I discussed how in spite of the rise of a popular movement against the politics of austerity in Greece and the summer of rage, the politics of austerity still persist. To the extent that any implementation of austerity policies and measures following the decline of the movement was met with little if any resistance, I demonstrate how this empirical problem opens up the problematic on the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity within contemporary forms of resistance. I situated my thesis within a theoretical debate that dominates the literature on the politics of the Greek indignant

movement and the production of political subjectivity. More specifically, I focused on the problematic that when viewing political subjectivity on the one hand as discursively constructed within a terrain of political antagonisms over the hegemony of meaning, and on the other as shaped within the labour process as autonomous from existing power relations. In addition I focused on the significance of periods of crisis and the importance of emotion within such periods in reproducing or challenging existing power relations. As such my thesis makes an original contribution to the field of politics, the study of emergent forms of resistance, popular movements, and contemporary theoretical debate on the production of political subjectivity, the politics of Greece and of the Greek indignant movement.

In this concluding chapter I discuss the original contribution to knowledge I make in my study of the emergence of the Greek indignant movement and the production of political subjectivities within a period of crisis in Greece and discuss areas for future research that my original contribution opens. I the first section of this chapter I offer a summary of the findings of my research on the politics of the Greek indignant movement and how each chapter contributes to my original contribution to knowledge. I conclude this chapter by discussing areas for future research opened up by my examination of the politics of the Greek indignant movement and my original contribution.

8.1. The Politics of the Greek Indignant Movement

In my first chapter I make an original contribution to the field of politics and to approaches for the study of collective action and forms of popular struggle by proposing a methodological synthesis on the study of popular movements, contemporary forms of resistance and production of a political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. I examined the importance and limitations of discourse theory in the study of contemporary forms of collective action and the importance of critical theory in addressing the epistemological limitations of discourse theory in the study of popular struggles and emancipatory politics. I began my inquiry by grounding my problematic within a methodological matrix, discussing the epistemological parameters of my research. I illustrated the importance and significance of the method of discourse analysis and the method of articulation in illuminating processes of meaning-making within social movements. I also provide a valuable step by step method for mapping data collected from a qualitative study of the Greek indignant movement. I argued that in spite of its significance in understanding the processes under which collective movement produce and challenge meaning, the method of articulation is grounded within an

epistemological approach which gives us no tools which we can use to begin and explain the mechanisms that guide and inform such a process. To that end I turned to critical theory and the method of immanent critique as a tool with which to interrogate the theoretical problematic set by this thesis. I discussed how immanent critique can be used to address the problems presented by discourse analysis and the process of articulation. My analysis contributed to the method for studying contemporary forms of collective struggle by demonstrating that although discourse analysis is a valuable method in mapping the discourses articulated within popular movements it is unable to grasp the process which can lead to emancipatory politics or their lack of. It is thus restricted to a descriptive rather than explanatory method of inquiry in the study of the production of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. I therefore contributed to the study of contemporary forms of collective action by proposing a methodological approach in studying popular movements and contemporary forms of resistance by laying out a methodological synthesis of discourse analysis and critical theory that can guide research on emancipatory politics.

Following the path set by my methodological discussion I problematized the theoretical effort of Laclau and Mouffe to account for the formation of contemporary forms of resistance, grounding this in my empirical investigation of the Greek indignant movement. I focused my inquiry on the abstract concepts of antagonism, discourse articulation, hegemony and the people. I found that although these concepts can map the power relations operating through ideology and discourse they are unable to explain why these social antagonisms emerged and how to distinguish between struggles over meaning that reproduce or challenge existing power relations. I found that the Greek indignants challenge the universal political subject of the "people", as put forward by Laclau, which links democratic demands in a series of equivalence to establish a common political project. I demonstrated that Laclau and Mouffe's hegemony offers useful insights into how ideology constitutes political subjectivities. However I demonstrated that power relations established in the field of the economy inform social struggles. By engaging in an immanent critique of Laclau and Mouffe's theory of social democracy and the production of political subjectivity relating this to an empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement and their inability to build a movement with common goals and a counter-hegemonic discourse to austerity I challenged Laclau and Mouffe's theory on the production of a political subject based upon discoursive articulations. I solidified the importance of the concepts of hegemony and ideology as well as the

significance of discourse in the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivities and forms of collective resistance. However I demonstrated how Laclau and Mouffe's framework is based upon a liberal approach to the production of political subjectivities and focuses only on the realm of politics neglecting the importance of the field of the economy. By locating this analytical lacuna I extended the boundaries of knowledge on the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity by demonstrating the significance of the economy in the production of political subjectivities and showed that power relations established within the field of the economy are the basis upon which hegemony works to inform social struggles. I further contributed to the debate on the ability of popular movements to build a left democratic coalition that can challenge capitalism by showing that any form of popular struggle based solely on the articulation of different discourses and the fetishisation of diversity of discourses cannot achieve a set of common goals that can challenge existing power relations. This analysis contributes to critical research on discourse theory and in particular Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical framework on the production of political subjectivities.

On the basis of this analytical lacunae in Laclau and Mouffe's theory, I continued my inquiry by turning my attention upon Hardt and Negri's argument on the production of a political subjectivity rooted within changes in the labour process. I critically engaged with the significance of changes in the labour process and the power relations shaped in the field of the economy proposed by Hardt and Negri. As such I demonstrated the significance of the field of the economy in shaping political subjectivities. I demonstrated how Hardt and Negri's conceptual matrix leads to an understanding of the production of a political subjectivity as something that is immanent within changes in the labour process. This subject is capable of exiting existing power relations and in fact reproduces set relations. As such I problematized Hardt and Negri's argument on the autonomy of this universal political subject – the multitude – relating this analysis to the inability of the Greek indignants to act outside existing ideologies and come together producing a common political project to address the crisis and the politics of austerity. I thus demonstrated that emergent forms of resistance and the production of political subjectivities are grounded within social struggles. I made an original contribution to the study of political subjectivity and emancipatory politics by pointing to the internal contradictions of Hard and Negri's theory and challenging the role of autonomy and the concept of affect in the production of contemporary forms of political subjectivity within Hardt and Negri's argument for the emergence of politics that can

challenge capitalism. I did so by engaging with the Greek indignants' understanding of autonomy as acting outside power relations and how this acted as an obstacle in the process of building a collective action that can challenge capitalism. I thus contributed to the field of emancipatory politics by demonstrating the theoretical limitations of the concept of autonomy in facilitating the production of political subjectivities that can challenge capitalism. Furthermore my findings on the inability of the Greek indignants to form an autonomous movement proposed in the lines of Hardt and Negri contribute to the critical research on Hardt and Negri's theory on the political subject. In addition I contributed to the field of politics and the politics of the Greek indignant movement by engaging with my findings on the fetishisation of diversity within the movement demonstrate how the Greek indignants understanding of autonomous action is connected to power relations shaped within the field of the economy shaping their political subjectivity.

I continued my critical engagement with Hardt and Negri's framework with a close examination of the concept of affect in order to account for contemporary forms of resistance and collective action and I analysed the relationship between affect and emotion as put forward by Brian Massumi. I demonstrated that even though affect creates a momentary bond it is unable to contribute to the production of meaningful politics of resistance. I demonstrated how the intensities experienced by the Greek indignants were permeated by ideologies and showed how this acted as a barrier to any attempt to build a common political project. This finding makes a contribution to theories on popular movements and their ability to produce a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. I demonstrated that the concept of affect cannot explain feelings of solidarity amongst a popular movement and argued that ideology still has a hold upon the production of political subjectivities. By mapping the limits of the politics of affect and grounding this to empirical analysis I contribute to theories that attempt to grasp this illusive concept and critique ability of the politics of affect to incite forms of emancipatory struggle.

I argued that there is a connection between emotion and ideology and examined this connection within my empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement by focusing on the emotion of indignation and its cultural and ideological characteristics. I showed that the meaning of being indignant was shaped within a history of collective struggle in Greece, signifying a form of action connected to fascist organisations trying to appropriate an emotion connected to the middle class and how this meaning permeated the subjectivity of

the participants. I thus contributed to theories that problematize the political character of emotion and the concept of affect.

In chapters two, three and four I challenged and extended the boundaries of contemporary theories for the production of political subjectivity and forms of collective organisation that can challenge capitalism. I did so by engaging in an immanent critique of the above theories grounded in an empirical research of the Greek indignant movement. I demonstrated that a key problem with these theories is that they fail to consider how discourses, emotions and changes in the labour process operate in the reproduction of existing power relations. As such both theoretical approaches erect a theory in which they see a political subject who is actually liberal as inherently radical. This obscures understanding of the mechanisms that contribute to the emergence of a revolutionary political subjectivity. My critical engagement with the above theories and its relation to an empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement contributes both empirically and theoretically the academic debate that sees power as hegemonic in the lines proposed by Laclau and Mouffe or affective in the lines proposed by Hard and Negri. My findings on the limitations of both theoretical frameworks help move the boundaries imposed in the study of political subjectivity by this debate and look beyond their limitations in the emergence of a theoretical framework that can grasp the mechanisms for the production of political subjectivity.

I examined the significance of an organic crisis in emergent forms of resistance, particularly in terms of the relation between crisis and the inability of social actors to be moved emotionally by existing forms of representation and ideologies. I located the emergence of the Greek indignant movement in the inability of the participants to manage emotions of anxiety, fear and guilt. Within this emotional context there was a subjective attempt to internalize hegemonic discourses on the need for austerity and an attendant dissonance between those emotions and emotions of outrage. Through their participation in the movement the Greek indignants were able to problematize their feelings towards building a collective form of resistance this processes and I showed that this was the key reference point in terms of the popularity of the Greek indignant movement. My analysis informed Gramsci's concept of organic crisis austerity by introducing Arlie Russell Hochschild's concept of emotional dissonance in order to grasp how the Greek indignants were motivated to participate in forms of resistance against. By addressing the importance of emotions within periods of crisis and their key role in the erection of popular forms of resistance I contribute to the field of politics and theories on the importance of crisis in emergent popular struggle.

I continued by demonstrating how the Greek indignants' problematization of emotions and action was informed by a liberal understanding of protest that emphasizes the importance of diversity and difference and a non-violent form of protest. This common framework of action was internalised by the participants through a process of a conscious and unconscious emotion management of the feeling of outrage. I demonstrated the importance of Hochschild's concept of emotion work in the mobilisation of the movement. I showed how her concept of emotion work can be also used to grasp social movement processes and the production of political subjectivities. Participants tried to invoke and provoke feelings of outrage, and feelings of joy at maintaining and increasing the popularity of the movement. I demonstrated that this process of emotion work was key in the building of a sense of solidarity amongst the participants. I demonstrated that the internalisation of moral outrage was articulated around discourses that opposed a corrupt political culture and highlighted the significance of individual responsibility. My analysis on the emotional processes the Greek indignants experienced during their participation extended the boundaries of Hochschild's concept of emotion work and contributes to the field of social movement study, the study on the significance of emotions for emancipatory politics and politics of praxis.

I closed my argument by demonstrating the ability of hegemonic discourses of austerity to interpellate participants in the movement through a process of emotion work that is rooted within a hegemonization of a relationship between debtor/creditor as produced within capitalism, engaging with Maurizio Lazzarato's argument on the emergence of indebted subjectivities that maintain existing power relations. Emotions that were articulated within a discourse producing emotions of moral outrage against the politics of austerity are also articulated in hegemonic discourses that propagate a need for austerity and a need to tackle the problem of national debt. Participants internalise feelings of individual responsibility towards national debt and begin to see the implementation of austerity as way to act responsibly as individuals towards debtors and as a way to act as citizens combating a corrupt political culture. I discussed how this process involves a process of emotion work in which participants manage their outrage towards accepting austerity and supress emotions steaming from material consequences of austerity upon their lives. This analysis contributes to theories on the ability of hegemonic politics to shape political subjectivities and maintain existing power relations.

The production of political subjectivity is not immanent within changes in the labour process. Instead power relations within the field of economy inform political antagonisms. The Greek

indignants are constituted as political subjects within antagonisms emerging in their desire to form a collective political project. In their attempt to build a common political project with an emphasis upon diversity, participants begin to prioritise different discourses, while leaving themselves vulnerable to hegemonic discourses on austerity. This is informed by a process of emotion work. However, when this process of emotion work is informed by a collective political project it can contribute to the emergence of emancipatory politics. This important finding can contribute to theories on emancipatory politics and future political praxis that seeks ot challenge capitalist power relations.

8.2. The Greek Indignant Movement and Areas for Future Research

My research is not just focused upon a philosophical inquiry of abstract concepts but rather grounds a theoretical analysis on the production of political subjectivity within the real world. As such my research opens up potential for future research in the theoretical and empirical investigation of contemporary forms of collective action and resistance.

Intense emotions dominate forms of protest and resistance. Yet the political character of emotions and their role in the process of building a movement and emancipatory politics receive little attention. My findings on the key role of emotions to motivate individuals to join a popular movement and build a sense of solidarity through emotion work as well as their significance of emotions in internalising hegemonic discourses invites further research on the political character of emotions that can move beyond their significance in social movement activities. My findings on the process of maintaining solidarity within a diverse movement by working on emotions as well as the key role of emotion in the process through which participants internalise hegemonic discourses on the crisis and debt open up a theoretical debate on the ability of popular movements to produce a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism and their role in maintaining existing power relations. This invites further empirical and theoretical focused analysis in order to take into account a broader impact of contemporary forms of resistance and solidify my findings.

I demonstrated the political character of emotions and its significance within the forms of collective struggle. I showed that the concept of emotion work can act as a guide to unravel the internalisation of ideologies and how it can inform the mobilisation and building of solidarity within collective forms of action. As such the concept of emotion work can act as a guide to future research on collective action to unravel the political processes developed within social movements.

My argument on the relevance of Hochschild's concept of emotion work to understand social movement activities opens up a new approach on social movement activity that can inform future research on contemporary forms of resistance and theoretical debates on the political character of emotions as well as the significance of the concept of affect. In particular the emotion work done by activists and participants in the movement warrant further investigation. My findings on the role of emotion and emotion work on the internalisation of hegemonic discourses provides a theoretical grounding for future empirical research on popular politics after the Financial Crisis of 2008 and the rise of right wing politics in Europe and the U.S.A in particular.

My thesis also opens up areas for future research on subjects that focus upon the contemporary politics of Greece. For example my examination on the importance of ideology and emotion work in the rise and decline of the Greek indignant movement can bear upon areas of research that focus upon governmental policies, voting behaviour and future forms of collective action within Greece .

My findings on the character of contemporary forms of resistance that is based on popular struggle with no clear goals invites a theoretical debate on entering perhaps a new age on collective movement activity that challenges theoretical arguments made by New Social Movement Theory. This can be further explored by an empirical investigation of forms of collective struggle after the Financial Crisis of 2008 based upon the contribution my thesis makes to research for critical engagement with dominant theories on emancipatory politics and in particular my immanent critique of Laclau and Mouffe's framework.

My examination of the concepts of the multitude and autonomy as developed by Hardt and Negri and my empirical grounding of these examinations invite further theoretical and empirical research on the internal contradictions of these concepts and their ability to capture emancipatory politics. In particular my examination of the interrelation of the concepts of affect, autonomy and the multitude put forward a critique upon their effectiveness to explain and capture contemporary forms of collective action and the production of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism. The internal contradictions of these concepts certainly invite further theoretical and empirical analysis.

My critical engagement with the theories of Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri identified a number of contradictions in relation to their argument that both theoretical frameworks contribute in grasping the potential for the production of emancipatory politics. I

grounded this immanent critique upon an empirical analysis of the Greek indignant movement. Nonetheless this critique could be further strengthened by further empirical analysis of other contemporary forms of collective action.

My critique of the theories of Laclau and Mouffe and Hardt and Negri on the mechanisms for the production of a collective political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism grounded within empirical examples of the Greek indignant movement can inform research that focuses on these theories and seeks to move beyond the boundaries set within this debate. As such my research can inform the theoretical debate on conceptualising the possibilities of universal political subject that can lead emancipatory change.

My findings that periods of organic crisis are experienced infused by an emotional dissonance which motivates individuals to join forms of resistance and collective action contributes to our understanding of processes give rise to popular forms of resistance. This analysis opens up potentials for further empirical and theoretical research in the fields of politics and sociology on the importance of crisis and crisis of subjectivity in forms of resistance.

My empirical analysis of the activities and processes developed within the Greek indignant movement open areas for future research that focuses on emancipatory politics. In particular my findings on the significance of reproductive processes as well as emotion work around a left anti -capitalist discourse developed within the movement in forming a sense of solidarity and shaping subjectivities that question neoliberal politics warrants further empirical investigation in areas of research that focus on politics that can challenge capitalist power relations.

Finally my original contribution to critiques on the articulation of liberal politics in building a political subjectivity that can challenge capitalism in the lines developed by Laclau and Mouffe, as well as the internal contradictions found within Hardt and Negri's framework that as I argue help erect a liberal theory of the political subject that reproduces existing power relations invites further theoretical and empirical research on the ability of liberal politics to facilitate a revolutionary political subjectivity.

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