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Chapter

Trafficking and the “Victim Industry” Complex

Paraskevi S. Bouklis¹

Abstract

The antithesis between a criminalization and a human rights approach in the context of transnational trafficking in women has been a highly contested issue. On the one hand, it is argued that a criminalization approach would be better because security and border control measures will be fortified. On the other hand, it is maintained that a human rights approach would bring more effective results, as this will mobilize a more holistic solution, bringing together prevention, prosecution, protection of victims and partnerships for delivering gendered victims’ services. In the field of victims’ services, galloping US-influenced developments have mobilized victim-specific strategies and institutionalized a “victim industry” vocabulary: “reflection period”, “screening process”, “cooperation in exchange for protection”, “happy trafficking”, “renew boutique” etc. Underlying the construction of this vocabulary is the evolving notion of a phantom threat posed by organized crime (Hobbs 2013, p.226; Van Duyne 1996). This chapter re-animates Dick Hobbs’ (2013, p.231) suggestion that, in post-industrial societies, market forces overwhelmingly shape agency. Extending this to “sex trafficking”, mediated through market engagement, this emerging victim industry is an exemplary case of domain expansion (Hobbs 2002; Best 1997; Hobbs 2013; Back 2014). Revisiting the claims made under the initial antithesis between criminalization and human rights, the recent metamorphosis of gendered victims’ services due to financialization, neoliberalization and debt-governance is explored.

Keywords

Sex Trafficking; Victim Industry; Greece; Criminalization; “Organized Crime”.

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Introduction

This chapter visits the Greek anti-organized crime narrative entwined with anti-trafficking in women, and interrogates the conditions under which trafficking was constructed as a phantom threat that required an immediate legislative response (Levi 1981; Edwards and Levi 2008; Hobbs 2013; Antonopoulos and Papanicolaou 2014). Commonly perceived as a rupture of Greek “law and order”, trafficking in women emerged from its former invisibility during the years 2002 and 2003, and invoked extraordinary levels of hype, excitement and anxiety, gaining journalistic and legal prevalence in the public domain (Triandafyllidou 2000; Papanicolaou and Bouklis 2011; Papanicolaou 2011, 2008b; Triantafyllou n.d.).

New anti-trafficking discourses and technologies emerged to counterpose national security as well as human security threats. Namely, the threat posed by organized crime and its dominance in the Greek sex industry (Lazaridis 2001; Papanicolaou 2008a); the threats posed by domestic terrorism (Xenakis 2011; Bouklis 2012) and its constructed links with trafficking; and the unregulated migration threat amplified by trafficking networks violating Greece’s migration policies and justice system. The dominant narrative explored here reaffirms that human security, victim and human rights have been mobilized as a tool for meeting punitive targets against phantom amplified threats.

To respond to these threats, an initial criminalization response focusing on national security measures, border controls and retaliatory punitiveness was deemed inefficient as it was leaving victims unsupported (YPES Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008). In its place and with the aim to improve previous weaknesses, global human rights governance, inter-agency coordination and intergovernmental projects repositioned the victim industry at the core of anti-trafficking (YPES Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008, p.1). With this constructed antagonism between a criminalization and a human rights approach, the range and ambition of the specter of “trafficking” spread much wider and deeper. “Trafficking in women” is far from a “malady of modernity” and a globalized mutation of “violence against women” (Back 2014).

Rather, following Dick Hobbs (2013) the specific socio-legal and operational changes examined in this chapter constitute a prime example of “domain expansion” in which the parameters of a previously accepted problem expand far beyond all forms of social recognition (Back 2014, p.1; Best 1990, p.15). Namely, the expanding construction of “organized crime” transmogrifies the operation of the victim industry initially engaged in fighting trafficking. As the phantom threat of transnational trafficking ideologically transformed key institutions in Greece, it created a victim industry – a set of social arrangements that now aims to support the identification of large numbers of victims (Best 1997, p.9). These victims’ services emerged with a pivotal role: not only did they cooperate with law enforcement and assist in victim

protection, but they also offered secure accommodation, enabling medical care and securing public health. As an assemblage of powers, this newly formed victim industry mobilized elements from the surveillance and the medical-industrial complex to engage in a metamorphosis of anti-trafficking (see Framework programme concerning police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (AGIS) 22 July 2002). Relying mostly, however, on exogenous, discontinuous, and opportunistic funds, the financialization of victims' services, and its primary competitiveness in a *social problems marketplace* (Best 1990, p.15) leads to fluid and often unpredictable interchanges beyond criminalization and human rights logics.

Starting the business: a methodological note

Funded by the Onassis Foundation and under the guidance of Frances Heidensohn and Dick Hobbs, I preliminarily investigated trafficking in Greece in 2006 and 2007 (Bouklis 2007). Over the years anti-trafficking discourses and technologies entered the core investigation in full force. To investigate this powerful discursive domain, a tripartite “anti-trafficking promise” that aims to eliminate trafficking through criminalization, security and human rights was located. In grappling with these questions, I undertook both empirical and theoretical enquiries. The empirical part is based on research I conducted in the Greek anti-trafficking mechanisms during 2008–2009 and during follow-up visits in 2015, as well as on analysis of media representations of trafficking in women (Bouklis 2012).

The initial selection of Greece as a case study was not merely dictated by geopolitical considerations. It is well-documented, for instance, that Greece has been both a destination and a transit European country for women victims of trafficking (US 2002, 2003). It is also well-established that Greece is the external south-eastern European border, at the crossroads of east and west, with a rugged coastline and a multitude of islands. Since the 1990s, Greece has been well-known as a popular attraction for illegalized migrants (Pavlou 2004; Triandafyllidou 2000). During the same period, Greece has been frequently represented as the “centre of trafficking in Europe” (Hötzeldt 2003).

Neoliberalism: crime control and victim industries

To trace the shifts that are presented in the following sections, I provide here a brief tripartite reference to neoliberalism in order to establish connections between (a) the logic of finance capital, (b) the financialization of agencies, and (c) the victim industry. Firstly, neoliberal state institutions have evolved over the last 30 years on the premise of “strong individual private property rights, of freely functioning markets and free trade” (Harvey 2005, p.64). Essentially, this evolution lies in the liberation of capital from its Fordist institutions, in the transition from the hegemony

of industrial capital to that of finance capital, which “unifies industrial and commercial capital into a coherent whole” (Lazzarato p.139). Within this framework private enterprise and entrepreneurial initiatives are considered fundamental to innovation and wealth. Based on the assumption that continuous increases in productive and capital accumulation should deliver higher living standards to everyone, competition is held to be a primary virtue. Be it competition between individuals and institutions, firms, nations, or cities and regions, neoliberal reforms are aligned with the formation of competitive agencies in the world market (Harvey 2005, p.78).

Secondly, neoliberalism is a loose and shifting signifier (Brown 2015). Its discursive formulations, policy entailments and technologies are not fixed or settled. Extending beyond the limits of economic policy, neoliberalism is a modality of governance expanding through diverse portals and agents. Not only does it produce financial institutions, but it also generates subjects and practices of financialized spheres and activities “heretofore governed by other tables of value” (Brown 2015, p.21; Whitehead 2015). With its variant instantiations, neoliberalism’s plasticity often resides in progressive remedial narratives. From progressive tax reform and increasing investments in pharmaceutical, energy and technology research, to profitable immigration and counter-crime reforms, each of these issues has been framed in terms of its contribution to innovation, economic growth and market competitiveness (Brown 2015).

Thirdly, driven by private profit incentives and the economization of agencies, a new form of victims’ services is emerging in the second decade of the new millennium, which borrows components from two fields. On the one hand, it borrows components from the crime control industry. Following Nils Christie (2000), crime control has been transformed by a silent revolution. Industrial drive, innovation, private profit and capital accumulation have been at the core of the crime control commercial expansion. Replaced by the ethics of profit, a neoliberal political economy argument asserts that pressures towards a flexible economy create a large underclass of unnecessary labor. This new underclass is, in effect, “warehoused” (Lacey 2008, p.131) in the penal and crime control industry. Considering the fiscal implications of this shift, penalty and social welfare strategies are deployed for managing social marginality and maximizing private profit (Lacey 2008; Beckett and Western 2001).

On the other hand, these new victims’ services borrow components from an ever-expanding victim industry. Analogously to the crime control industry, Joel Best (1997, p.16) identifies the victim industry as an “industry mass producing victims”. Best argues that due to the absence of institutional restraints, most external agencies like legal institutions, mass media outlets, as well as crime control agencies endorse the victim industry. Accepting that increasingly more individuals should be recognized as victims, the victim industry also internally expands an ideological trend, according to which experts have a right and obligation to “label individuals as

victims and guide them into accepting that label” (Best 1997, p.16). Lastly, participants in the victim industry often have vested interests in the identification of victims, including enhanced prestige, influence, validation, increased income and popularity (Dunn 2010). Ultimately, these interests are weighted within a purported balance that needs to be achieved between the recognition and protection of victims, and the protection of offenders’ rights in the penal and crime control industry. As a result, convivial dynamics sustain crime control and victim industries (Lacey 2008; Mythen 2007; Walklate 2005).

To further complement this analysis, I suggest that it is useful to discuss key institutional changes in national victims’ services by including two main factors: 1) The growing coalescence of crime control and victim industries as a concurrent “domain expansion” (Best 1990, p.85), and 2) the subordination of agencies to new forms of financialization and valorization via emerging mobility, flexibility, evaluation and debt debates. With the former, while there might be a consensus about the core images of sex-trafficking victimization, the problem’s periphery features active debates over what should be considered victimization (e.g. sex work), and what are the accepted solutions to the problem (e.g. vocational training, residence permits) (see for instance Agustín 2007; Doezenia 2005; Kara 2009; Obokata 2006). In these peripheral debates, crime control and victim support are part of the claims-making rhetoric. As the victim industry is transformed through the examined debt-stricken period, various mutations occur in the interaction and convergence with phantom threats. Sensational media representations suggest that the national mutations of the victim industry discussed in the paragraphs that follow supposedly have direct involvement in trafficking, organized crime and corruption (Kousoulos 5/04/2015; Tsaldaris and Psarra 29/03/2015). Thus a new model for the perpetuation of “organized crime” is generated.

Core Claims: the emergence and growth of victims’ services

Beyond these prevalent elements, the Greek case study is important for the frame that it provides. From a legal perspective, the birth of the Greek anti-trafficking mechanisms with their “victim industry complex” had a firm legal basis, with strong anti-organized crime sentiments, often described as efforts against “chameleon crime” (Micha 2015, p.8). Major external developments that influenced the core claims of the Greek victim industry were the Annual US Trafficking in Persons Reports (US 2001) and the 2000 United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. Also, the 2005 Council of Europe’s Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, celebrated for its gender and equality imagery, set out the frame or model of

victimization articulations, especially with its requirement for member states to identify and protect victims.

Influenced by these developments, Law 2928/2001 (Modification of Provisions of the Penal Code and Code of Penal Procedure and for the Protection of Citizens from Punishable Acts of Criminal Organizations) stipulated protection measures granted to crime witnesses later to be applicable to the establishment of a Witness Protection Department, at the Sub-division against Organized Crime of the Security Directorate of Attica and Thessaloniki (United Nations Security Council 28 December 2006). Further, the formation of the anti-trafficking task force of the Hellenic Ministry of Public Order (merged in 2007 with the Ministry of Interior, and renamed in 2009 as the Ministry of Citizen Protection), combined with a network of NGO elements, was founded upon the enactment of the anti-trafficking legislation, Law 3064/2002 (ΦΕΚ Α'248/15-10-2002). In fact, the implementation of L.3064/2002, subsequently supplemented by delegated legislation and other specific provisions contained in L.3386/2005 (ΦΕΚ Α'212/23-08-2005) on the status of third country nationals, amended Chapter 19 of the Greek Penal Code. The new legal framework added a new paragraph to Article 323 (slave trade) of the Penal Code, entitled "Trafficking in Human Beings" (Article 323A). Article 323A criminalized contemporary forms of trafficking, *inter alia*, for the purpose of sexual exploitation and the economic exploitation of sexual freedom. This first legislative response has been criticized for its disproportionate focus on punitive and criminalization measures over preventive and protective measures (Micha 2015). It was also criticized for the underlying assertion that the sex industry was a prioritized target over other forms of labor violations (Papanicolaou and Bouklis 2011). Its executive Presidential Decree 233/2003 on arrangements for victims' protection (relevant to the P.C. articles 323, 323A, 349, 351 and 351A) defined trafficking victimization while listing in its Annex authorized victims' services.

It is within this framework that competitors in the social problems marketplace (Best 1990, p.17) engage in anti-trafficking claims-making. An important core element of this rhetoric constitutes the ongoing renewal of counter-trafficking developments. For instance, L.3386/2005 inserted the provision of victims' protection on humanitarian grounds within a broader border control context. To strengthen that front, a few years later L.3875/2010 (ΦΕΚ Α'158/20-09-2010) ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto, inserting both harsher criminalization provisions as well as broader victim protection. Broadening the possibility of victim protection to victims who do not cooperate with prosecution, and extending the "reflection period" available to victims for considering their options from 1 to 3 months was meant to bargain for a more victim-centered approach. Further, following the "gendered and victim-centered approach" of the European Parliament and Council (Directive 2011/36/EU), the Greek L.4189/2013 (ΦΕΚ Α'215/11-10-2013) offered provisions against the criminalization of victims for

more “rigorous prevention, prosecution and protection of victims’ rights” (par.7 Directive 2011/36/EU).

For instance, it introduced a temporary suspension of prosecution for violations relevant to sex work and illegal entry against victims of human trafficking, where victims cooperate with the authorities against their traffickers. It also introduced a temporary suspension of deportation for those testifying against organized crime groups. Crucially, L.4198/2013 introduced harsher punishments for offenders, and amending provisions of L.3811/2009 (ΦΕΚ Α’ 231/17-12-2009) linked the Hellenic Compensation Authority, under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights, with trafficking victimization by adding victim compensation as part of victim support provisions. Most recently, the codified current legislation was presented in L.4251/2014, Immigration and Social Integration Code and Other Provisions (ΦΕΚ Α’80/01-04-2014), replacing and codifying all current provisions, and simplifying procedures for access to justice and victim support. After all these ongoing changes, a system of “cooperation in exchange of protection” is still in place, where in practice the granting of residence permits to victims presupposes cooperation with the competent authorities (Micha 2015, p.32; L.4251/2015, arts. 49-56).

Operationally, since 2001 the inter-ministerial committee OKEA (Group Combating Human Trafficking) has been involved in counter-trafficking efforts, and since 2004 Greece has been implementing an integrated National Plan of Action against trafficking in human beings, aiming to screen, identify, protect and assist victims, as well as establishing repatriation support avenues (KETHI n.d.). To strengthen efforts, in 2006 the action plan ILAEIRA was introduced. Meanwhile, in 2007 the first case was established attesting to the dynamic participation of NGOs in counter-trafficking and victim support during the operation Vitrine (Onisenko 15/07/2007). In 2013 the National Rapporteur Office for Combatting Human Trafficking, head of the Office for the Combatting of Human Trafficking, was established (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2 December 2013). The Rapporteur was to play an important role by representing Greece in the EU network of National Rapporteurs against trafficking in human beings set up by the European Council. At the national level, in line with Directive 36/2011, the Rapporteur’s role involves monitoring the implementation of anti-trafficking policy and strengthening data collection. Its aim was the “integration of the National Reporting Mechanism for the identification of victims, the creation of a national database, the training of agencies and the deepening of cooperation” between competent services (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2 December 2013). As a result, convivial rather than antagonistic relations between the criminalization and human rights approaches have been continuously implanted.

Hellenic victims' services and the financial crisis

Genealogies of the “victim industry” can be discerned in the diverse commentaries focused on trafficking in Greece as a phenomenon linked to prostitution and the exploitation of migrant women in this specific social context (see, for instance Papanicolaou and Bouklis 2011; Lazaridis 2001; Lazos 2002a, 2002b; Lazos and Zanni 2003). Clandestine activities and phantom threats linked to transnational organized crime (Antonopoulos and Winterdyk 2005; Antonopoulos 2009) triggered ongoing legislative changes (Symeonidou-Kastanidou 2003; Dimitrainas 2003; Sykiotou 2009; Papathanasopoulos 2007; Bouklis 2012; Papanicolaou 2011; Bouklis and Chatzopoulos 2015). Once anti-trafficking was understood as investing not only in criminalization but also in the victim protection dimension, the lack of a national victim support service generated a gap in the wider design.

Gabriella Lazaridis' research, conducted between winter 1998 and spring 1999 (Lazaridis 2001), concludes that very few organizations gave support “to prostitutes” and victims of trafficking in Greece. According to Lazaridis, the support network reflected the way women, sex, women's rights and women's bodies are (de)valued in Greece. Simultaneously, Lazaridis focuses on a very specific instance of this devaluation and maintains that a barter system “where sex is exchanged for non-deportation” exists (Lazaridis 2001). Based on this, the success or “failure to protect victims and punish perpetrators” is often an intricate system of social reproduction.

Only a few years later, in 2004–2006, Georgios Papanicolaou's research mapped out a diverse and interconnected field of specialized anti-trafficking actors. With particular reference to sex work, however, his account contends that the Greek anti-trafficking structures were constituted time and time again under the influence of the abolitionist and “client-hostile” overtones of the US TIP Reports. Hence, the demands for creating a policing anti-trafficking core that would cooperate with ministries and NGOs – the latter being at the periphery – with the target to eliminate trafficking in women, have been a US TIP Report conceptualization imposed on Greek structures (Papanicolaou 2008a).

In line with Papanicolaou's findings, at the time of my research into anti-trafficking structures and victims' services, the civil society actors involved in pertinent services had already achieved a high level of organization, as an interconnected field of actors with both nationally and transnationally recognized social action. This evolution of a network of services, with their potential for interconnected actions, was remarkable as a sign of adaptable national structures, and a clear indication of the force of international anti-trafficking discourses and technologies. To some extent, however, the first signs of a “crisis” were evident since 2009. Complaints about “strategic funding” and “underlying nepotism” had already been acknowledged as the underlying reason for many inconsistent initiatives and for organizations that were “breaking under pressure” (see, e.g., Koukouzikis 2011; Matsi 15 February 2011; Papadopoulos 11 March 2014).

Worse, in 2012, important changes took place relevant to the financial support of victims' services because the financial crisis was having a domino effect on the funds made available to services for the victims of crime. Announcing the establishment of long- and short-term shelters for women victims of domestic violence and trafficking in fourteen municipalities across Greece, scheduled to be set up in May 2012, the Greek Prime Minister, Loukas Papademos – leading a provisional government to come to an agreement with the Troika – described the situation as a battle (Papademos 27/12/2011).

In the years 2013–2015 important changes took place in the Greek trafficking landscape. From being predominantly a country of destination and transit, Greece gradually succumbed to source country trends (U.S. Department of State 2013, 2014, 2015). This was a putative shift attributed to the stark impact of the financial crisis on all the three areas of prosecution, prevention and victims' support, exacerbated by “severe budgetary constraints” (U.S. Department of State 2015, p.170) Widespread unemployment and a drastic decline in opportunities resulted in what was often described as “desperate situations ... where people are prone to take risks and have few viable alternatives” (European Commission n.d.). Echoing these concerns, voices from NGOs suggested that “we are all victims now of the financial crisis”. This statement was taken up by the wider media, suggesting that all Greeks are now victims of trafficking due to the economic exploitation inflicted by European economic policies (Karteros 29 July 2011). Amidst these reconfigurations a further counter-trafficking development took place. From the initial introduction of the National Rapporteur's post and its foundation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, two key incentives became clear.

Firstly, the connection between criminalization and human rights anti-trafficking models was now taking a “penal populist” turn (see Garland 2002), the target of the Rapporteur being to “promote zero tolerance for the exploitation and trafficking of persons” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2 December 2013). Mirroring the often circulated “zero tolerance” discourse towards promise-breaking in relation to the repayment of the Greek debt to creditors, anti-trafficking was gradually elevated to a matter of national survival (Zilibotti 13 February 2015). This created a dynamic claim-making that linked economic collapse and trafficking, and packed a “powerful rhetorical punch” (Best 1990, p.18), suggesting that the financial crisis arguably placed Greece “closely alongside other poor European countries, which have supplied the worlds brothels and demand for free labour in the last two decades” (Cross Border Initiatives 18 January 2015).

Secondly, the financialization of the relevant initiatives enforced in the debt-sinking context a discussion about the cost of these services in various forms (Freitas 30 July 2015). Within the role of the Rapporteur, a disconnection of these services from the spread and proliferation of debt was attempted. Specifically, it was reported by the Ministry that “[t]he founding and operation of the Office will not incur any expenditure, because the Office will be staffed exclusively by Foreign Ministry

personnel” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2 December 2013). This introduced the debatable assertion that as a progressive change, justice, crime control and victim support goals should be paired with financial and economical goals.

Under financialization and connected to the newly found reverence for innovation, the Rapporteur expressed the commitment to engage with the private sector and the “political economy of trafficking” by offering “innovative”, “out of the box” thinking (Rapidis 17/03/2015). For the Rapporteur to achieve “demand reduction” was also set as core target in order to achieve a chain reaction: “sustain growth and responsible business and consumer behavior and durable employment generation” (Moskoff July 2014, p.3). In this market-driven account, making businesses responsible also included the creation of responsible consumers, according to the Rapporteur, by which ““responsible consumers’ are prepared to pay a premium for products bearing a socially responsible ‘footprint’” (Moskoff July 2014, p.4). In fact, the Office aimed to also “create conditions for better absorption of European funding and the realization of relevant” programs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2 December 2013), including: funding for the set-up of the National Coordination Mechanism for all state agencies; the set-up of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM), following the UK model, for swift victim identification, referral and support; the set-up of a National Database for victim assistance as well as for prosecutions; the provision of training, and the establishment of awareness-raising campaigns (Rapidis 17/03/2015). From the above, it becomes evident that also at the core of anti-trafficking claim-making a new neoliberal citizenship is being reworked as responsabilized entrepreneurialism and self-investment as a “shared sacrifice routinely solicited by heads of state and heads of businesses” (Brown 2015, p.210), working together for innovative solutions to prevent professed imminent catastrophes.

Periphery: rights, faith and security claims

To facilitate this discussion, the specific composition of the victim industry is explored in further detail. The complex orientation of the diverse agencies can be broadly classified into three groups: 1) rights-based, 2) faith-based, and 3) security-led. These groups often have overlapping rhetoric and ideologies that cut across the imposed artificial borders. The idea of multidisciplinary agencies that cooperate, mobilize and engage a complex group of actors is rooted in July 2001, when Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued its Memorandum of Concern: Trafficking of Migrant Women for Forced Prostitution into Greece (US 2001, 2002; Amnesty International 2007b). The HRW Memorandum acknowledged the joint ministerial decision by the ministers of public order and interior signed in May 2001 as a positive development to create a “work management group on trafficking” to develop, coordinate and implement anti-trafficking policy in Greece. The working group had a policing core and consisted of police officials, representatives from the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, the General Secretariat for Equality and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as the national representative from the European Observatory on Trafficking, and a sociologist (Human Rights Watch 2001).

This work management group had a difficult target ahead due to: 1) the absence of comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation; 2) the low number of prosecutions for trafficking under existing criminal law; 3) the lack of witness protection programs for trafficking victims to facilitate their participation in prosecutions; 4) the absence of government-sponsored services for all trafficked women, including shelter, medical care, psychological support, and assistance with other basic needs; 5) the ongoing detention and deportation of trafficking victims; 6) the complicity of police officers in the trafficking in women (Human Rights Watch 2001).

Gradually, by August 2004,² a high political-level Inter-ministerial Committee was formed, which prepared the integrated National Action Plan against trafficking in human beings. By attempting to cover the whole spectrum of actions related to trafficking, from locating, recognizing, fully supporting and offering shelter to victims, issuing a temporary residence and work permits, or granting voluntary repatriation on the merits of each case (Hoyle et al. 2011), to education and labor integration, a broad array of measures were brought to the negotiations table (Hellenic Police 2008a). From early on the General Secretariat for Gender Equality of the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization placed issues affecting women victims of trafficking in the claim-making rhetoric of the domain.

With reference to non-governmental elements, the investment in civil society organizations gained official recognition in 2005. The establishment of a “permanent forum” for the exchange of information and best practices between the competent ministries and NGOs was institutionalized after the enactment of L.3064/2002. This was based on the principles of victims’ rights and the recognition of a set of entitlements applicable to trafficking victims, as laid down by the P.D. 233/2003. In this framework, the Memorandum of Cooperation on Combating Trafficking in Persons and for Providing Aid to the Victims was signed by the jointly competent Secretaries (Justice, Interior, General Secretariat for Gender Equality, Foreign Affairs, Employment and Social Protection, Health and Social Solidarity, Public Order), twelve NGOs and the IOM. According to the views expressed at the time, this institutionalization was vital, as it “lifted many coordination problems” and facilitated NGO access to the screening and referral process (see, e.g., Panouris 2007).

The NGO component included a multifaceted group of diverse organizations: the NGOs Arsis and Solidarity, the Center of Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture

² In 2004 the Olympic Games were hosted in Athens, Greece. The organization of the Games promised to transform Athens in many different ways (Bouklis 2012, chapter 6). According to special reports regarding high security measures imposed by “Olympic security”, the main priority was to strengthen protections against terrorism and organized crime (see Tsenes 2006).

and Other Forms of Abuse, the Center for Defense of Human Rights (KEPAD), the Greek Council for Refugees, the European Network of Women, the International Company of Family Support (DESO), the NGO KLIMAKA, the StopNow program, and the organization Smile of the Child. Additionally, in the Memorandum, the participation of IOM was also institutionalized. In subsequent collaborations between civil society organizations more actors also participated, such as the Greek Section of Amnesty International and international organizations with a longstanding presence in Greece such as Doctors Without Borders and Doctors of the World (Papanicolaou and Bouklis 2011).

Revisiting the above victim-industry complex in 2015, it is evident that the engagement with civil society has been renewed and new synergies have emerged. Informed by the rapid abandonment of the welfare-oriented paradigm, and the adoption of the neoliberal financialization project, the establishment of the Office of the National Rapporteur replaced the previous Coordination Mechanism of competent Ministries, International Organizations and accredited NGOs. This aimed to promote better cooperation between the competent authorities and stakeholders. By directly applying for National Structural Funds (ESPA), and other EC funds for “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” (European Commission 2013) the Rapporteur now acquired a coordinating mandate, “[c]oordinating competent State, NGO, private and cultural sector stakeholders, towards a large-scale, multi-disciplinary anti-THB Action Plan in Prevention, Prosecution, Protection and Partnership” (National Rapporteur 2014). As a result, in the sections that follow I explore the changes reshaping this victim-corporate complex, implicitly fostering the institutionalization of relations of dominance, and filling up the space left by the decline of the welfare state (Gürcan April 2015).

Rights-based actors

The main organization that has been defining trafficking as a gender equality and human rights issue is the General Secretariat for Equality and its research center, the Center of Research For Equality Issues (KETHI - *ΚΕΘΙ*). KETHI's role has been vital in many respects. In 2001 KETHI issued an important overview of legal definitions related to what constitutes trafficking, how victims of trafficking are defined, how victimization occurs in this context and also what the human rights issues at stake are (see Tsaklagkanou 2001). Also in 2001, an overview of the trafficking in women literature and the links between trafficking in women, sex work and sexual exploitation, as presented in national and international literature was compiled (Lazari and Laliotou 2001). Focusing on violence against women, the first national epidemiological research project on domestic violence was published by KETHI in 2003, and its results portrayed a rather alarming picture. According to the research 56 per cent of the women who participated had been experiencing violence (psychological, physical or sexual) (Artinopoulou et al. 2003). Moreover, and with a view to engage with issues linked to trafficking in women, during the years 2007 and

2008 KETHI issued a number of publications relevant to migration and trafficking, and to women refugees and asylum seekers in Greece (Drouga 2008; Maratou-Alipranti et al. 2007; Apostolaki et al. 2008).

In the years 2011–2014, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality took a more innovative direction. In cooperation with municipalities all over Greece it launched the establishment of shelters for women victims of violence and, *inter alia*, victims of trafficking. Funded by the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF 2007-2013), 16 shelters initiated operation, and three more were operated by the National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA), “offering assistance to 15 new cases in 2013” (National Rapporteur 2014, p.8). Designed to restructure the operation of shelters, KETHI also engaged in dynamic synergies with IOM, with the aim of organizing public awareness campaigns and engaging with the private sector to enhance “corporate social responsibility” (European Commission n.d.), and in cooperation with local Bar Associations in Greece developed action to help the legal representation of trafficking victims (National Rapporteur 2014, p.9).

Of equal importance, at the level of civil society, the Center for Research and Action on Peace, (KEDE – *KEAE*), founded in 1988 (KEDE n.d.) and operating as a women’s organization since 1999, launched in December 2002, until December 2004, the project StopNow I, and from October 2004 until September 2006 the project StopNow II, funded by YDAS (Hellenic Aid) of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Instilling a rhetoric of efficiency and accountability, the projects have provided highly influential accounts in the official formation of Greek anti-trafficking claims (Papanicolaou 2008a; Papanicolaou and Bouklis 2011). In particular, the alarming statistical data provided by StopNow have been repeatedly quoted in the years following the research, reporting that from 1990 to 1997 the number of foreign women forced into prostitution in Greece multiplied tenfold from 2,100 to 21,750, and fell to 17,200 by 2002 (Lazos and Zanni 2003, p.7). An equally active project spawned by KEDE, with a view to empower women, has been the Women’s Initiative for Peace (WINPEACE) project, an initiative led by Margarita Papandreou (Van Steen 2003).

The study of the Greek sex industry and trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation, funded by StopNow and the Greek state, was based on prostitution, migration and sex trafficking victims as inseparable categories (Lazos 2002a; Lazos and Zanni 2003). The demand for sexual services was described as the underlying factor behind the commodification of women and the (modern-day) sex slave trade (Papanicolaou 2008a). In these descriptions constructions of gender and sexuality were evoked: “one million men – about 30 percent of the nation’s sexually active population – call on these women regularly (about twice a month) to satisfy their erotic whims and impulses” (Tzilivakis 25/09/2009). These representations certainly enforce associations between trafficking, sex work, and the “nation’s sexuality”. Meanwhile KEDE was mentioned as an active participant in the ILAEIRA

Anti-Trafficking Interagency-Operational Action Plan in July 2008 (Hellenic Police 2008).

Moreover, the Galatsi Group has been enforcing the anti-trafficking campaign in Greece (Sotiropoulos and Karamagioli 2006). The Galatsi Group emerged in 2001–2002 and involved a range of organizations from different cities and diverse activist fields (Papanicolaou and Bouklis 2011). From the Greek section of Amnesty International, the Center of Support of Victims of Ill-treatment and Social Exclusion, the Center for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Other Forms of Ill-treatment, to the Center for Support of Families of the Holy Archdiocese of Athens, the Galatsi Group has been comprised of diverse actors. A few have been officially included in the Memorandum of Cooperation, while others preserve a level of independence in terms of official cooperation with the Greek anti-trafficking authorities.

There is also the European Network of Women, a women's organization that is interconnected with groups and individuals throughout Europe. During the years of my investigation, The European Network of Women was offering accommodation (shelter) for time periods ranging from one week to several months, and psychological support to victims (European Network of Women n.d.). The Network also operated an SOS Hotline, which came to fill an important gap in the area of support for trafficking victims in Greece. In 2011, due to the lack of funds and debt accumulation, only the "SOS line survived with the help of volunteers" (Reinventing Greece 2012).

Importantly, the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR), founded in 1989, has been crucial in the areas of trafficking, refugee and asylum in Greece. Their legal department specializes in humanitarian assistance and the legal representation of refugee and asylum applicants in Greece (Greek Council for Refugees n.d.). For victims of trafficking, GCR has been cooperating with the Anti-trafficking Directorate of the Greek Police and the competent judicial authorities in order to facilitate the process of victims' identification, and contribute to the provision of both legal and social assistance.

Lastly, the Greek Helsinki Monitor (GHM) was founded in 1992 and has since been affiliated with the Minority Rights Group – International (Greek Helsinki Monitor n.d.-a; Minority Rights Group - International n.d.). GHM monitors, publishes and lobbies on human rights issues in Greece, and occasionally in the Balkans, as part of a wider human rights network. Based on GHM's affiliations and memberships, this network has been comprised of the International Helsinki Federation, which was forced to close down in November 2007 due to bankruptcy caused by fraud (see International Helsinki Federation n.d.), the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX), the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), the Southeast Europe Media Organization (SEEMO), OneWorld.Net and the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) (International Freedom of Expression Exchange n.d.; Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network

n.d.; South East Europe Media Organisation n.d.; OneWorld.Net n.d.; The World Organisation Against Torture n.d.). It is best known for its anti-conformist discourse in defending the rights of minorities in Greece, including ethnic, religious and sexual minorities, and for its aggressive critique of discriminatory institutional practices, hate speech and state violence (Greek Helsinki Monitor n.d.-c).

With regard to trafficking in women, insofar as trafficking is conceptualized as a gender violence and illegalized migration problem, GHM situates the issue in structural root causes, namely institutionalized xenophobia and sexism (see e.g. Greek Helsinki Monitor n.d.-b; Greek Helsinki Monitor and The World Organisation Against Torture 2002). With specific reference to Greek anti-trafficking developments, two main points commonly appear in GHM's criticism. The first is related to victims' treatment: "[v]ictims of trafficking in Greece continue to be treated like criminals. As individuals without papers, they are detained in prison pending deportation for working illegally in Greece" (Greek Helsinki Monitor and The World Organisation Against Torture 2002; Greek Helsinki Monitor 2009). The second pertains to the judicial mechanisms and the effectiveness and accountability of the broader criminal justice system: "[a]lthough Greece has incorporated the term 'trafficking in human beings' in Law 2605/98 with which Greece has ratified the Europol agreement, the term has never been invoked officially before the Greek court of law" (Greek Helsinki Monitor and The World Organisation Against Torture 2002). In this respect, GHM has been the source that fed a series of interventions by transnational NGOs in the Greek trafficking situation, on the basis of its fierce and consistent human rights criticism and activist action (Human Rights Watch 8 March 2002). Ultimately, GHM's insistence on the question of the root cause of xenophobia and racism has been underpinned by an awareness of the fact that the Greek government's response to the problem has been intricately conditioned by the need to defuse international interventions, which did press towards more police action (Papanicolaou 2008a).

An important entrepreneurial initiative aimed at providing temporary shelter services in the Attica district, Central Macedonia and Lesvos, is the STEGI project, implemented by the NGO PRAKSIS set up in 2005, and funded by the EEA SOAM program. Offering services to unaccompanied minors, asylum seekers and vulnerable women, PRAKSIS has been collaborating with IOM in order to "facilitate the voluntary repatriation of unaccompanied minors ... and achieve family reunification in case their parents have already settled and live in a European country (Dublin II)" (PRAKSIS n.d.-b). With an extensive track record of collaborations, e.g. with KLIMAKA, Doctors of the World, ARSIS and various municipalities, as well as fund generation (e.g. European Social Fund), PRAKSIS has been addressing poverty and social housing (PRAKSIS n.d.-a).

Lastly, the Family and Childcare Center KMOP, with an extensive repertoire of diverse claim-making from BeatBullying to Delete Cyberbullying and Mingle (lifelong learning), gradually became by 2013–2014 the leading organization of the

international partnership between Greece, Italy, France and Portugal, leading the project Resiland: Participation, Capacities and Resilience of Children on the Move against Trafficking and Exploitation, funded by the program Prevention of and Fight against Crime (ISEC) (European Commission n.d.). Commencing on 1 November 2013 for 24 months, this project was based on “an innovative human rights-based approach” putting “children and their histories at the centre in order to identify effective protection measures”, and contributing to the EU anti-trafficking debates (Resiland 2013).

Faith-based actors

The 19th Century anti-slavery campaign against the “white slave trade” has influenced contemporary “moral crusaders”, whose impact on the establishment of anti-trafficking initiatives is significant. Contemporary anti-trafficking public letters have been generated by increasing Evangelical involvement, and by celebrities, activists and academics who have been seeking to put pressure on world leaders for tough measures on prostitution (Elliott 2004). In Europe, faith-based organizations have been active in anti-prostitution crusades. The international Catholic charity Caritas, for instance, “organizes prevention campaigns, operates safe houses, and assists in the repatriation of trafficked women” (Elliott 2004; Caritas Internationalis 6 August 2015).

Typically, faith-based types of assistance to victims may include, among other types of support: 1) shelter, medical assistance, food and clothing; 2) social, psychological and spiritual assistance; 3) legal and financial help; 4) moral support for victims in legal proceedings and meetings with police; 5) help in contacting other services, doctors and advice centers (Elliott 2004). Arguably, the main dimension that faith-based initiatives can add to aftercare is “compassion based on the conviction that the spiritual healing of the Great Physician is the best hope for overcoming the pain, brokenness, and trauma suffered by trafficking victims” (Elliott 2004). Along these lines of faith-based intervention, Caritas Hellas has contributed to anti-trafficking knowledge-production. According to its estimates up to 90,000 people were believed to have been trafficked into Greece in 2000, mainly from Eastern Europe (Elliott 2004).

In terms of similar claims missions, Nea Zoi is a distinguished organization, internationally recognized for its contribution to Greek anti-trafficking structures. It defines its work as “support and restoration of individuals in prostitution” (US 2008, p.42). These initiatives have arguably focused on victims’ rights. Nea Zoi was founded as a non-profit organization in 2006, and has been based in the center of Athens. Its mission has been to “rehabilitate individuals involved in prostitution by addressing their physical, emotional and spiritual needs through outreach work and relationship building by developing exit strategies in partnership with local churches and local and governmental initiatives” (Nea Zoi n.d.-c). Nea Zoi focuses on reaching out to men and women working in prostitution (mostly in street

prostitution), and offers “hope, assistance, support and alternatives, desiring to see men and women empowered by God for a new life” (Nea Zoi n.d.-b):

Motivated by God’s love, Nea Zoi visits red light districts of Athens where they offer friendship, advice and opportunities for a change, believing that a relationship with a loving God is the foundation for lasting transformation (INV.gr n.d.).

Importantly, and similarly to Caritas, Nea Zoi has identified specific socioeconomic factors that have been increasing the risk of trafficking, such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, the degradation of cultural values (work ethic and gender roles), and global economic factors (Nea Zoi n.d.-a). To achieve the rehabilitative and healing potential of the exit strategies it promotes in the context of trafficking, Nea Zoi has been working with “ALL people in prostitution” as what “often begins as trafficking ends as ‘choice’” (Nea Zoi n.d.-a). Among its actions, a prominent initiative has been funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. According to this, Nea Zoi has been working towards the implementation of a vocational day program with a job placement/creation component for “exploited women to exit prostitution” (Nea Zoi n.d.-c). In line with the entrepreneurial changes of 2011–2014, Nea Zoi has been involved in partnerships with Love 146 UK, the Ratiu Center for Democracy and the National Agency Against Human Trafficking in Persons (Romania). It also led the preparation of a handicraft business for women victims of trafficking “in order to make and sell handbags” (European Commission n.d.).

Moreover, the Center for the Support of the Family, KE.S.O. (*Kentro Stiriksis Oikogeneias*), which was established by the Archdiocese of Athens and the Church of Greece in 1999, has been operating as a service of the Archdiocese of Athens with a view to conduct campaigns on issues such as the “crisis of the Greek family, the foundation of the conservation and growth of the Nation” and the “biological annihilation of the Greek nation”, as well as to offer charitable support to diverse vulnerable groups (Papanicolaou 2008a). From drug users, “victims of abortions”, victims of domestic violence and their children, to victims of trafficking, KE.S.O. has synthesized humanitarian and religious discourses (KE.S.O. n.d.). Notably, it has maintained that trafficking is a national issue. As in national economic disasters, KE.S.O.’s claim-making revolves around the empowerment of the Greek heterosexual family as the antidote to crises and catastrophes (KE.S.O. 11/03/2013).

Beyond the ideological importance of KE.S.O.’s institutional motives, its intervention developed a practical relevance from an early stage, as the organization was in a position to mobilize the Church’s already well-established infrastructure and draw additional funds in order to provide shelter and support to women. These actions were often executed in cooperation with other organizations, including IOM (Papanicolaou 2008a). Similarly, the NGO Solidarity of the Church of Greece, based in Athens, played a prominent role in the area of victims’ services. Accommodation, legal advice, medical treatment, psychosocial support, assistance to find work, in-

house language courses, and support from IOM for victims' repatriation are among the services provided. Further, in 2015 Solidarity signed a memorandum of cooperation with Aegean Airlines, to offer support to vulnerable social groups (Solidarity 2015). In 2014, however, this NGO was repeatedly characterized as a "sinful" organization by the media, with millions of "corrupt" funds drawn from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (YDAS) (Katsakos 23/02/2014; Iefimerida 27/02/2014). Lastly, a reference should also be made to the action of Kivotos, "a multi-ethnic youth center, run by a Greek Orthodox priest and dedicated to rescuing youngsters from the brink of social exclusion" (INV.gr n.d.).

Security-led initiatives

In the emergence of security-led initiatives, an assemblage of intelligence, securitization practices and rights discourse has bridged victims' services (rights claims) and intelligence. This assemblage has dictated that victims' services are to be read in conjunction with existing security discourses and technologies. NGOs such as PRAKSIS, Smile of the Child, ARIS, KMOP, GCR, the NO Project, A21 Campaign, and the governmental IOM and General Secretary of Gender Equality have been participating in partnerships in order to reconcile victim-centered and security-centered approaches.

For instance, the EU and IOM project AGIS started in 2003 and comprised multiple phases with diverse objectives and European Commission funds. Specifically, AGIS 2003 (Phase I) established a network of partners involved in counter-trafficking training. Phase II in 2005 extended the cooperation through a multi-disciplinary training process, bringing together law enforcement, judicial practitioners, and NGO partners, in identifying and providing assistance to victims of trafficking. Phase III facilitated the implementation of security training courses at national levels, via 1) translation of training materials; 2) implementation of pilot training courses by EU experts; 3) promotion of best practices and knowledge exchange; 4) publication of conclusions and recommendations (IOM n.d.). In Greece, this initiative had crucial implications, such as the establishment of the Law Preparatory Committee. In cooperation with the competent ministries and the Hellenic Police, this Committee was appointed to introduce to the Greek Parliament a bill for the ratification of the UN 2000 Anti-trafficking Protocol. The bill aimed to introduce a holistic framework, with the establishment of shelters and victims' identification and support services at its core (IOM n.d.). To this, a bilateral agreement between Albania and Greece, signed in 2005 and focused on the transnational protection and humanitarian repatriation of children, was ratified on 25 August 2008, with the new Law 3692/2008 (Shuteriqi et al. 2006). The implementation of L.3692/2008 includes prosecution and prevention activities in both countries, as well as cooperation for the identification of victims, for the individual assessment of each case, and for repatriation and reintegration in the

country of origin. In this respect, the reference to victims throughout the security-led initiatives reflects a very specific and rather narrow conceptualization of which actions are to be taken with the aim to protect victims.

With specific reference to securitization (Aradau 2004), and while it has been presented as an issue of prevention within the broader framework of “protective measures”, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been exclusively responsible for cases that involve third-country nationals, particularly those who are in need of Schengen visas to enter Greece. In this respect, any actions taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been portrayed as sensitive to preventing human rights violations. This applies to actions that involve the implementation of increased controls and the launch of investigations to determine whether visas have been obtained in fraudulent ways, as by enacting stricter controls the pertinent authorities have claimed that victims’ identification is facilitated.

Since the establishment of the National Rapporteur Office mentioned earlier, key guidelines were to be developed for the identification, compensation and safe repatriation of victims falling now under the remit of the NRM. As a result, for the period 2014–2020 funds from EU structural funds (ESPA) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) are to sustain the National Rapporteur Office’s assuming a lead role in compiling information and coordinating all stakeholders and partners of the NRM. Again, these developments were deemed efficient as, in line with a “victim-centered approach, the NR Office will opt to participate in a larger EU Transnational Referral Mechanism which links national referral mechanisms to better identify, refer, protect and assist victims”. Additionally these developments were deemed economical as they succeed with a “considerable economy of resources” (European Commission n.d.).

It is also worth mentioning at this stage that IOM Athens has been involved in a rather diverse set of activities: from being an important partner in the resolution of victims’ identification and repatriation, to organizing educational seminars for raising awareness among students in Greece, and raising wider awareness and promoting the rights of migrant women and the rights of women victims of trafficking in Greek society (funded by Hellenic AID, of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs). In this context, under the European Initiative EQUAL, and in cooperation with the Development Partnership to Promote Equal Rights for Trafficked Persons (ASPIDDA), IOM Athens has organized information seminars on the issue of trafficking in women. IOM’s involvement in raising awareness and participation in the broader anti-trafficking structures and, more specifically, the ongoing cooperation between IOM Athens and the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the issues of trafficking in women, serves as a constant reminder that the underpinning elements of the rights language have been used to deliver policy results pertinent to illegalized migration (Bouklis 2012, chapters 1, 2, and 4).

With trafficking victimization becoming more elusive and harder to identify as “more and more victims turn into perpetrators”, IOM identified a tactic that relies

on coercion, perversely referred to as “happy trafficking” (Kitsantonis 29 January 2008), and adapted their efforts based on these emerging trends. To this end, in the years 2011–2014, IOM Greece intensified their actions in cooperation with NGOs and state organizations (Anti-Trafficking Unit of the Hellenic Police, EKKA, the A21 Campaign), and with IOM missions in origin countries (Russia, Romania, Bulgaria) (National Rapporteur 2014, p.8). This is significant as it shows that the “new” anti-trafficking conceptualization has been counting on the previously established structures and yet it has been attempting to improve or correct them without offering, in practice, a clear sense of what exactly needs to be improved.

Shelters

Under Greek law, trafficked victims are entitled to free medical, pharmaceutical and hospital care throughout the period they are entitled to protection and assistance, i.e. throughout the period they cooperate with law enforcement. This exceeds the minimum requirement for emergency care outlined in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. However, it has been widely acknowledged that many women have difficulty accessing health care in state hospitals because of the lack of awareness among hospital staff of the social aspects of trafficking and anti-trafficking legislation. According to the testimony of NGO representatives:

Only when we accompany the victims in the hospital and explain to the personnel there what the situation is, what the [2003 Presidential] Decree stipulates, as well as the fact that our organisation, although not on the list of organisations mentioned in the Decree, has a memorandum of cooperation with the authorities in assisting victims of trafficking, do they agree to look at the case. In effect, we need to carry a big file with the relevant paperwork to the hospital each time. (Amnesty International 2007a)

The issue of shelters is then highly important, and yet extremely under-represented in the literature. Between the years 2004–2015 two key developmental stages have been identified. The first stage started with the mobilization of anti-trafficking imported discourse and technologies and the operation of existing shelters until 2008. For this first stage, the establishment of the Group against Human Trafficking led the way in setting up and potentially monitoring shelters in Greece. This inter-ministerial composition initially promoted the change of the legislative framework and coordinated information about and the sensitization of the public to the phenomenon of trafficking. However, this committee set up only an informal referral system coordinated by the National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA), under the Ministry of Labor, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity (Ariadne Network 2007; EKKA n.d.). In this respect, EKKA has been the main governmental entity responsible for

providing protection and accommodation to trafficking victims. In 2008, EKKA operated two shelters for TIP victims, one in Athens and the second in Thessaloniki.

However, by 2008, due to what appears to be a lack of sufficient regulation and funding, most of the shelters that became operative during the first few years were gradually closing down. For instance, the NGO KLIMAKA for women victims of human trafficking (Klimaka NGO n.d.), supported by the Ministry of External Affairs (YDAS), operated the shelter CHLOE in Athens, with the capacity to host 12 women and children. Between the years 2005–2008 the shelter reportedly hosted 110 survivors (Klimaka Policy Blog 8 January 2010). In 2008, the functioning of the shelter was interrupted (Kantouris 08/03/2009). Similarly, the NGO CVME's (or EKYTHKA in Greek) Center for Research and Support of Victims of Abuse and Social Exclusion was among the projects initially funded by Hellenic Aid and YDAS (Wikileaks 2006). CVME run a shelter in Ioannina, which was reportedly facing operational problems due to budgetary problems in 2009. Further, in Thessaloniki, the shelter run by the Medical Center for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture and Other Forms of Ill-treatment stopped receiving regular funds since 2004 and has stopped cooperating with the inter-ministerial commission. Meanwhile, again in Thessaloniki, the shelter operated by the National Center of Social Solidarity, funded by the Ministry of Health, primarily hosted victims of domestic violence but not victims of sex or labor trafficking (Kantouris 08/03/2009). Lastly, reference should be made to the NGO International Company of Family Support (DESO), as it was set up in 2004 and operated a shelter in Athens, administered by the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity. In the years that followed the economic crisis, DESO was also among the organizations that sought private funds to sustain their work, specifically their shelter Care (Frontida) (Kleva Pharmaceuticals 2009).

The second stage in the shelter claim-making domain involved key changes that took place in 2008–2015. A notable NGO that reflects these changes is the A21 Campaign established in 2007–2008. In the first stage of claim-making A21 was not mentioned in the Memorandum of Cooperation. From the end of 2008 onwards, however, A21 has been operating a shelter in Thessaloniki and has been involved in research, planning and fundraising. The A21 Campaign is a team comprised of individuals, organizations, government officials and “people committed to abolish injustice in the 21st Century”, with the goal to “raise awareness, take legal action and offer rehabilitation services to rescued victims of human trafficking in order to fight this injustice by using a comprehensive approach” (The A21 Campaign n.d.-a, n.d.-b). In the years 2013–2015, the A21 Campaign has been involved in new collaborations and enterprises. Specifically, a social enterprise called Renew Boutique involves second-hand clothes being donated and then sold. Their entrepreneurial activities also involve the operation of an online shop. The shop has commercialized core claims of the campaign, with t-shirts, wrist bands and prayer guides offering “specific verses and topics that relate to human trafficking, as well 21 ideas on how you can take action to abolish injustice” (The A21 Campaign n.d.-c).

In the years 2013–2014 EKKA also operated five short-term shelters (EKKA 23 October 2015). Influenced by the financialization changes, since 2011 EKKA has been engaged in the “innovation and coordination” of housing projects. For instance, EKKA has been managing housing applications for asylum seekers in Greece, achieving “a much better coordination of all housing projects that are financed by the European Refugee Fund” (European Commission n.d.). The changes undergone by EKKA have arguably increased the national ability to support vulnerable victims of trafficking by adjusting the protection offered by state or non-governmental organizations under “the existing web platform – called ESTIA”. The introduction of the new National Referral System aims to cover victims’ needs and provide a “road map and a real-time response to each incident that is reported” (European Commission n.d.). Further, funded by the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF 2007-2013), the General Secretariat for Equality in cooperation with municipalities all over Greece has launched the establishment of shelters for women victims of violence, including trafficking. It was reported that in 2014–2015 16 shelters were in operation and three were operated by EKKA, “offering assistance to 15 new cases in 2013”.

During these two stages some initiatives raised important questions pertinent to their ability to provide safe services to victims, due to alleged links to trafficking networks (Linardou 15/07/2007; Popotas and Kalyva 15/07/2007). Opening up a grey zone between criminality and victimhood, the use of shelters is also connected to a wider discussion about immigration detention centers and their suitability for “protecting” victims (Greek Helsinki Monitor and The World Organisation Against Torture 2002). From the above it is evident that a quasi-autonomous and rather fragmented NGO sector has been mobilized in Greece (Frangonikolopoulos February 2014). With the majority of NGOs being governed by self-perpetuating boards, without proper oversight of their activities and more importantly their finances, and with a “growing number of scandals regarding irregularities in the allocation and management of state funds by NGOs” (Frangonikolopoulos February 2014, p.5; Clarke et al. 2015), the initially observed trafficking phantom threat expanded via corruption and clientelism within anti-trafficking and victim support.

The Trafficking Victim Industry – A tentative conclusion

After more than a decade of public discussion and domain expansion, trafficking’s periphery features active debates about what should be considered abuse and what the available solutions to this are. By considering rights, religious and security claims, and their interconnections, in the years 2002–2015 changes in the funding opportunities due to financial crises have led to a core claim towards neoliberal reforms, characterized by increased managerialism and entrepreneurialism. Rather than mobilizing local communities against neoliberal policies and structural

inequalities, mainstream NGOs act as “charity intermediaries” for intensifying neoliberal shifts (Gürçan April 2015, p.48).

Domain expansion efforts are not always validated and, in their claim-making (in)capacity, initiatives have been accused of direct participation in trafficking (Tsaldaris and Psarra 29/03/2015; Kousoulos 5/04/2015). Divided between progressive reformers versus corrupt organizations, the initiatives have been reliant on the international capacity to transit project design and generate funding: “[t]here cannot be national strategies and policies with occasional funding given by the EU. When this funding stops the structures stop working as well” (Lazaros Petromelidis, Director of Greek Council for Refugees, quoted in Amnesty International 2010). As a result, contemporary changes, marked by the increasing financialization and neoliberalization of the world economy, tend to perpetuate and generate new phantom threats.

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