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Transformations in Greek Migration Policy after 2015: Securitization Practices and Precarity of Refugees

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Abstract

The European refugee crisis of 2015 unveiled the incapacity of member states to act at a united front. Indeed, the innumerable refugee flows from Asia, mainly Syria, combined with unprecedented numbers of migrants from Africa, have prompted a series of diverse member-state responses, profoundly transforming European migration policy. The underlying procedures that relate to processes, such as the ongoing Revision of the Dublin Regulation, the European Agenda on Migration (2015), the EU-Turkey Deal (2016) and others, have tilted the migration policy apparatus of the EU towards security. This situation has not left Greece intact, as it was the entry point for those trying to reach Europe amidst the refugee crisis, resulting in Greece being transformed from a traditionally transit country, to a host one. A major trend that is observed in the Greek case (as well as in the EU) is that refugees tend to be securitized. This means that refugees have been perceived as a threat from several political elite actors, through the use of speech acts with the referent object being (mainly) societal security. As an outcome, the Greek migration policy has gradually adopted some excessive measures. What are the implications? Preliminary analysis shows that this practice has a direct impact on the precarity of refugees, contradicting an inclusive approach to migration. Hence, the contribution of this study is twofold. First, it seeks to unpack and present the transformation of Greek migration policies, during the post-2015 period. Second, this study, while briefly presenting key-data on the refugee flows, aspires to cast light on the impact the abovementioned existing transformations have on the precarity of refugees.

Keywords: Refugee Crisis, Greek Migration Policy, Transformation, Securitization, Precarity of Refugees

Introduction

The year 2015 was a turning point for the structural identity of the European Union (Papadakis 2021), as the European refugee crisis, which was triggered by the Syrian civil war that started in 2011, surfaced the different positions of the national asylum policies of the EU Member States with the Dublin Regulation (Trauner 2016). Amidst this crisis, Greece became the focus of attention for its role as the main transit point for hundreds of thousands of refugees, who came from mainly Middle Eastern and Asian war zones in order to continue their journey to Central and Northern Europe (Evangelinidis 2016), altering the Greek migration landscape.

At the level of implemented policy, the refugee crisis of 2015 resulted in the adoption of a series of measures, which in the short term aimed at addressing the extraordinary nature of migration flows. At a more medium-term level, Greece's migration policy began to take on a form of "emergency" management in a security continuum context (Dimari 2020). In the long run, despite the fact that the refugee crisis has had an impact on both security policies and integration issues, there is still no coherent picture of Greece's migration policy. This is due to the fact that since the outbreak of the refugee crisis (2015), up to the adoption of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum signed in September 2020, the two different governments that were called to deal with the migration phenomenon (SYRIZA-ANEL and New Democracy), due to lack of political consensus, did not succeed in producing a coherent migration policy. As a result, refugees started experiencing precarity.

Thus, the aim of this article is twofold. First, to examine the transformation of the Greek Migration Policy and its processes, with an emphasis on securitization. Second, to assess the impact this transformation has had on the precarity of refugees. To do so, the focus is on the fragmentation and securitization analysis of the refugee crisis of 2015 to date, offering five key development nodes which are: The European Migration Agenda signed in May 2015, which laid the foundations for the creation of the hot spots; the Closure of the Western Balkan Route and the consequent EU-Turkey Joint Statement of 18 March 2016; the Instrumentalization of the Refugee Issue by Turkey in February 2020; the Corona Virus Pandemic (Covid-19); and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum signed in September 2020.

Methodology

For the purposes of this research, triangulation of data was conducted. In social sciences, triangulation is defined as the combination of research methods aiming at the better analysis and in-depth understanding of the phenomena examined (Papadakis et al, 2016). Data are drawn from a literature review (including regulatory frameworks and policy documents) and secondary quantitative analysis. Assessing the way in which the new migration policy of Greece began to emerge, the authors divide the period of transformation of the Greek Migration Policy into the abovementioned five main nodes.

The argument in relation to the proposed separation lies in the position that the migration reality in the Greek political scene is not a static phenomenon. On the contrary, it is characterized by transformation nodes which have defined both individually and synthetically the process of response of Europe and especially of Greece to the complex and urgent issue of the management of migration. The scientific corpus used for the literature review consists mainly of policy documents and previous national and international research in relation to the five transformation nodes, while it is largely based on official sources of the United Nations, the European Union and Greece.

Secondary quantitative analysis refers to the review of quantitative data already collected either in international and national official databases, or in a previous study, by a different researcher who usually wishes to answer a new research question (Payne and Payne, 2004). The scientific data that is used for the secondary quantitative analysis include studies prepared by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Greek government departments on migration policy, universities, NGOs and research centers, institutions on the issue of migration, such as the European Commission, the European Commission, ECRE and others.

Securitization of Migration and Precarity

The theory of securitization has been formulated by the Copenhagen School of Security Studies (Diskaya 2013). In its primary articulation security was described as a speech act, with securitization constituting a discursive type of act that verbally constructs a threat (McDonald 2008). For Buzan et al. (1998) securitization is the process whereby normal politics surpass the already established rules of the polity and articulates an issue as one that needs a different handling. Summing up, securitization revolves around securitizing actors, referent objects, existential threats, political interests with certain repercussions and under given and specific conditions (Buzan et al, 1998). The Copenhagen School of Security has listed five security sectors: military, political, economic, societal and environmental. As far as migration is concerned it is part of the societal security sector of analysis that deals with issues such as identity and culture (Buzan et al, 1998).

What is the connection of securitization of refugees with precarity though? To answer this question, it would be prudent to define precarity first. Burawoy (2015) defines precarity in relation to insecure work and subsequently insecure livelihood, whereas there are also alternative approaches that link precarity with uncertainty and unpredictability in a broader sense (Ettlinger 2007). According to Vickers et al. (2019, 3), precarity can receive a plethora of forms, and can thus be comprehended as a “process, political practice, performance, tendency, category, structural condition, and state.

It is well established that precarity, both conceptually as well as analytically, is highly interconnected with geographical mobility and broadly with refugee/migrant groups as “distinctively precarious subjects” that, by virtue of their forced mobility, experience several forms of vulnerability (Vickers et al. 2019, 3). According to Menjívar and

Kanstroom (2013) the leading trend as far as contemporary migration research is concerned, centers around the vulnerability that is interrelated with ‘illegality’ and ‘deportability,’ (the tendency to deport refugees) which, in turn, constitute acute securitization processes.

A range of factors are related to migration and can be understood as enhancing precarity. Yet, migration itself is not the only variable in this equation (Vickers et al. 2019). Rather, the framing of newcomers in a certain way and the subsequent measures that are implemented in the context of the realist policy frame, which has as distinctive attributes securitization processes that are informed through practices and discourses, constitute significant variables in the refugee precarity equation.

Despite the fact that the precarity refugees from Asia experience in host states is well documented (Butler 2006 in Greene 2020, 6; Canefe 2018; Alison 2012; Janmyr 2016; Baban et al. 2017; Ilcan et al. 2018), data on the Greek case are scarce (Cabot 2018, 8; Greene 2020), whereas international studies that take into consideration securitization processes in tandem with refugee precarity, are fragmented (Nagy 2018; Williams and Mountz 2018; Bates-Eamer 2019; Harney 2013; Dimari 2021, 12).

In what follows, the authors will track and sketch the processes that have triggered the “peculiar” transformation of the Greek Migration Policy, which has resulted in precarious conditions for refugees currently residing in Greece. But why “peculiar”?

During 2015, over one million people arrived in Europe by sea. The main drivers were the ongoing conflicts in mainly Asian countries such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan and poverty, human rights violations and unstable security conditions in countries such as Pakistan, Eritrea, Iran and Somalia (UNHCR, 2020a). The influx into Europe was principally made through the Balkan corridor. The main branch of this corridor starts from Turkey, passes through Greece to Northern Macedonia and from there to Serbia, Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia and finally to Austria, Germany and beyond (Arsenijević et al, 2017).

At the European level, therefore, migration topped the EU agenda in the summer and autumn of 2015 (Papadakis, 2021). The media focused on the situation in Europe's southern borders (Guiraudon, 2018) with an emphasis on Greece, which eventually became a place of reception of huge migratory and refugee flows, mainly due to the lack of a coherent EU migration policy and response. Speaking with numbers, as far as recognized refugees are concerned, in March 2021, there resided 13.495 asylum seekers and refugees in the Greek islands mainly from Asia. In addition, the national reception system of Greece currently hosts approximately 60.000 Asian mainly asylum seekers and refugees (Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2021a).

Despite Europe’s humanitarian and legal obligations to treat refugees with dignity and to provide safe havens and asylum, in the unprecedented explosion of migration flows into the European Union, with Greece as its main gateway, European countries have found themselves unprepared or unwilling to deal with the influx. What followed was

a series of measures and legislation at the EU level, with the ultimate goal of managing migration flows that, nevertheless, forced Greece to be at the forefront due to its geographical location. A new migration policy began to emerge and take shape in Europe (Arsenijević et al, 2017), which in the case of Greece, began to systematically transform the core of its migration policy leading to mostly fragmented attempts to manage migration in the context of what the authors of this article regard as the five nodes of the transformation of the Greek Migration Policy, namely, the European Migration Agenda signed in May 2015, the EU-Turkey Joint Statement of 18 March 2016, the Instrumentalization of the Refugee Issue by Turkey in February 2020, the arrival of the Corona Virus Pandemic (Covid-19) and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum signed in September 2020, which are discussed in the following section.

The five nodes of the transformation of the post-2015 Greek migration policy and securitization processes: a hand in hand evolution

i. The European Migration Agenda

The EU responded to the refugee crisis by laying the foundations for a holistic approach to the migration issue with the European Migration Agenda, signed in May 2015. The new EU Migration Agenda revolved around the reduction of “illegal” migration, the root causes of illegal and forced displacement in third countries, smugglers and traffickers, return policies, border management, strengthening Frontex, the application of “smart” technology for Europe's task of protecting its citizens through a strong common asylum policy, the implementation of a common policy, the evaluation of the Dublin system and the drafting of a new policy on legal migration that would maximize benefits for countries of origin (Papadopoulos 2016).

Illegality and deportability prominently featured in the EU Migration Agenda, which also introduced “hotspots” that were formally approved by the European Council on 25-26 June 2015 (European Commission 2015a) that aimed, inter alia, to help Member States facing significant pressure from migratory flows, in particular with regard to the identification process (European Parliament 2016), bringing upon what is known in the international literature as the “criminalization” of migration (crimmigration) (Menjívar et al. 2018).

Indeed, the hotspot approach inaugurates a new era for the management of migration at a European level, bringing excess security practices at the heart of policy measures. Indeed, as Tazzioli (2018) has argued, the management of migration through the hotspots implies a redefinition of the very concept of control, interrelated with the very sensitive issue of security. According to Mezzadra and Neilson (2013), control is imposed on the one hand through specific points and time limits for the detection of migrants, while on the other hand the control practice is placed in a wider context of channels and infrastructures to limit migratory flows, thus relating to illegality and deportability concepts and thus leading to precarity for refugees.

ii. The EU-Turkey Joint Statement

The EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016, which is part of the Greece-Turkey Joint Action Plan launched in 2015 (General Secretariat of the Council 2016), refers to the transfer of migrants from Greece and Italy back to Turkey. Turkey hosted at the time about 3.5 million Syrian refugees in its territory, with the vast majority of them living without a residence permit and being "tolerated" under a "temporary protection" regime (EASO 2020). The EU-Turkey Statement bids Turkey to keep refugees in its territory and to prevent them from entering the EU; in return, it receives funding and its proposal to join the EU Member States status is considered much more seriously.

The European Council sought this agreement in order to stop illegal migration from Turkey to the EU. Yet, since its inception it has been particularly complex and difficult to implement, as the EU, for its part, has agreed to resettle one Syrian refugee from Turkey for each refugee returned to Turkey, respectively, while Turkey agreed to take all necessary measures to prevent the creation of new road or land routes for illegal migration between Turkey and the EU (European Council 2016). Turkey did not actually implement the key points - provisions of the 'Deal', especially with regard to the prevention of the creation of new roads (and even facilitation) for illegal migration. As such, this deal, from its outset, was deemed to lead to precarity for refugees.

In order to make the EU-Turkey Statement operational in the country, the then Greek government enacted new laws that were distinctively stricter as far as asylum procedures, detention, deportation and control of the external borders of Greece are concerned. These laws also brought to the fore the issue of the integration of refugees in Greek society (Skleparis 2018). This dysfunctional agreement has created a permanent humanitarian crisis in the Greek islands, which escalated in September 2020 with the complete destruction of the refugee structure of Moria, which was burnt, showcasing the precarity refugees and migrants constantly experience. Its ineffectiveness (Heck and Hess 2017; Rygiel et al 2016) lies primary in its security formulations which allow Turkey to act as it sees fit in order to pursue aspired geopolitical goals, instrumentalizing, inter alia, the inability of the EU to reach political consensus as far as a united front on migration is concerned and impacting on the well being of refugees and migrants.

iii. The Instrumentalization of the Refugee Crisis by Turkey

In February 2020, Turkey commenced to instrumentalize the refugee issue in an attempt to put pressure at the European Union and NATO to back up its military operations in Syria. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, violating the already dysfunctional 2016 agreement, threatened to open the country's borders to Europe. As a result, in just a few days, an estimated 13,000 refugees and migrants found themselves in Evros, trying to enter Europe. The result was thousands of people being trapped between the borders of Greece and Turkey, causing a huge crisis between the two countries and revealing Turkey's intention to use the refugee issue to the benefit of its own geopolitical developments and (maximalist) purposes - plans (Lappas 2020).

This situation took on enormous proportions. Reacting to Turkish pressure, the immediate response of the Greek Government was to successfully securitize the asylum process through a legislative act that referred to the extremely urgent and unforeseen need to address the asymmetric threat to national security (Hellenic Parliament 2020). Greece closed its borders, deployed its army along the border, and warned people gathered at the border not to cross, while announcing brief deportations (Vasilaki 2020).

The Evros February 2020 crisis revealed and basically exposed the inherent deficiencies of the EU deal in real conditions and brought the precarity of refugees at the forefront of official discussions. The fact that Greece was at the forefront during this situation, left it no choice but to act firmly against Turkey which attempted to manipulate the ineffective deal, prompting Greece to adopt a harsher securitized stance towards refugees. In security terms, the Greek stance has shown the severity of the issue and the respective response, which served both as a message to Turkey that the Greek state would not succumb to geopolitical blackmails, and as an overall message to its EU counterparts that the security of the country is of high priority. In sum, this event has been crucial in the Greek migration policy making, as it put Greece in the position to elaborate on a migration policy that would take into consideration, other than the security of the country and the way it would handle newcomers, Turkey's aspirations to manipulate the deal for its own geopolitical agenda.

iv. The Corona Virus Pandemic (Covid-19)

The 2015 refugee crisis in Greece marked the inauguration of a new period of migration policy making. The Greek government faced with two major challenges (Aggelidis et al. 2020), one being the Evros February crisis and the other the pandemic, adopted a policy that up to a point converged these two events in one single hardened policy towards migrants and refugees, leading to precarious conditions for them. The suspension of asylum applications was thus followed by a range of activities during this period that outline the differentiated stance of the Greek government, as regards refugees/migrants in relation to Greek citizens. During the period between 2.3.2020 and 14.4.2020, twelve emergency measures were taken, whether institutionalized or not, in order to deal with the spread of the disease both in detention centers and in Greek hosting facilities overall (Papadatos-Anagnostopoulos et al. 2020).

Out of the above mentioned measures, the 'Agnodiki' Plan is an indicative securitizing measure. On March 18 2020, the government announced a curfew on the islands' Reception and Identifications Centers (RICs), two days before quarantine was imposed on the general population, implementing the 'Agnodiki' plan for crisis management in refugee populations. The measures for the RICs also included a curfew at night, a ban on visits to those who did not work in the structures during the day. It is a partial confinement of thousands of people in overcrowded structures (Aggelidis et al. 2020). The restriction of traffic in the RICs continued with continuous extensions for six months, until at least the middle of September, long after the end of the quarantine

for the general population on April 28, without even a case being detected inside the structures (Aggelidis et al. 2020).

Another notable point of reference is the inclusion of migrants and refugees in Greece's vaccination program. Whereas the first Greek citizen was vaccinated the 27th of December 2020, vaccination in host structures was scheduled to begin in May 2021, as according to the Minister of Migration and Asylum of Greece, detention centers were not facing "the issue of morbidity or the spread of the coronavirus", so staff and residents would be vaccinated "in turn, based on age, as will the general population" (Naftermporiki.gr 2021).

These measures reveal the disposition of the government to be stricter in its refugee handlings, as it practically had no assistance in tackling these situations from its European counterparts. Indeed, the Minister of Migration and Asylum himself admitted that concerning the management of Covid-19 in Greece, the measures taken in camps and for the general refugee population were stricter from the general measures for the Greek citizens (Papadatos-Anagnostopoulos et al 2020).

This approach has evidently exacerbated the precarious position of refugees due to stricter measures taken for them by the Greek polity. In addition, it has shown the determination of Greece to use a more conservative approach on migration, amidst a period when overall uncertainty prevailed.

v. The New Pact on Migration and Asylum

The new Pact on Migration and Asylum is a flagship initiative of the European Commission that provides a fresh start to tackle the complex challenges posed by migration in a globalized context, combining responsibility and solidarity between Member States (Eulive.com 2020).

The new Commission's proposal is based on three pillars: a strong external dimension with countries of origin and transit, more effective management of external borders, stricter and fairer rules for solidarity within the EU (European Commission 2020). According to Peers (2020), the Commission's new Pact on Asylum and Migration does not restart the whole process from scratch. But it is trying to unblock the whole conversation by submitting legislative proposals, focusing on issues of border proceedings and the relocation of asylum seekers. The main points of the New Asylum and Migration Pact are border control, asylum procedures, the extension of Eurodac actions, the Dublin Rules on Asylum Responsibility and more (Peers 2020).

The Greek Government is currently negotiating changes to be inserted in the Pact that would better serve the security of Greece, as a forefront country. The main concern of the government is to make substantial improvements, so that the entire burden is not passed exclusively to the front-line Member States. Greece promotes a number of policies focusing on the country's security, including the reduction of refugee-migration flows, the return of those who are not entitled to international protection and the

practical solidarity with the host countries and in particular on the islands (Hellenic Parliament 2021). Regarding the EU-Turkey Joint Statement, Greece asks for its proper implementation, through a financial mechanism which should be accompanied by a monitoring mechanism that will record new arrivals on a monthly basis from Turkey and returns to Turkey (Hellenic Parliament 2021). The New Pact on Migration and Asylum is expected to inaugurate a new era of migration policy making in the Greek case overall. As the Minister of Migration and Asylum of Greece stated "Open border policy is over" (Capital. gr 2021), thus pointing out that securitization of migration practices in the Greek case will continue to take place.

Precarity of refugees

According to the most recent data from UNHCR (2020b), from 2014 to March 2020, 1.258,051 mainly Asian migrants/refugees entered in Greece. Currently, the national reception system of Greece hosts approximately 60.000 asylum seekers and refugees of Asian origin. Concerning recognized refugees, as of March 2021, there were 13.495 asylum seekers/refugees living in the Greek islands, the overwhelming majority from Asia (Ministry of Migration and Asylum 2021a). In addition, according to the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum (2021b) from 2016 to March 2021, 306.498 people have preregistered for international protection in Greece, whereas for the same period, 327.976 have applied for international protection. The number of refugee status decisions issued from 2016 to March 2021 was 69.237.

Most of these asylum seekers face difficult living conditions and are exposed to a variety of security risks (Amnesty International 2016; UNHCR 2020a). The situation took on frenzy dimensions at the end of August 2020, when a fire broke out at the Moria Reception and Identification Center (RIC) in Lesbos, which back then hosted, alongside with the adjacent informal Olive Grove area, about 12,000 asylum seekers, including about 4,000 children (UNHCR 2020a).

Beyond this event, refugees have been coming across difficult conditions from the onset of their journey to Greece as they have had to deal with the dangerous crossing of national borders. As far as access to social provisions and particularly housing is concerned, there currently resides 11.609 asylum seekers in RICs, 26.679 in overall reception facilities, and 20.956 have been housed through the ESTIA program (Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum 2021b). In addition, from 16/07/2019 to 29/03/2019 29.410 asylum seekers have registered for the HELIOS program, while 12.051 recognized refugees receive financial aid for house rent (Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum 2021b). Yet, significant challenges remain, as the mainland's hospitality structures and accommodation facilities are constantly operating at full capacity (Spyratoy 2020).

Concerning access to health care, migrants legally residing in the country have the same rights as Greek citizens, a clear evidence of an existing inclusive approach to the Public Health Policy. However, health services do not seem to cover all their needs, due

to the complexity of the system and the lack of knowledge of available health services (Athanasias 2020). Undocumented migrants are even more vulnerable, as they do not have access to public health facilities, except in emergencies, or when their lives are in danger. Similarly, people who have applied for asylum and are awaiting confirmation of their identity as asylum seekers have access to health only in emergencies (Athanasias 2020). On July 11 2019, a Circular of the Ministry of Labor was issued, according to which, asylum seekers are not entitled to a Greek Social Security Number (SSN), a document until then necessary for access to public health services. However, from 1 April 2020, asylum seekers are able to receive, upon their identification, a Provisional Insurance and Health Coverage Number (PAAYPA), which provides them with free access to basic medical care. However, the absence of sufficient documents or the delay of the necessary vaccinations becomes an occasion to prevent the enrollment of children (Aggelidis et al. 2020). This precarious position was exacerbated throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, as migrant and refugee populations were scheduled to be part of the national vaccination program several months after the commencement of the program for Greek citizens (Naftermporiki.gr 2021).

Regarding access to education, children that seek for asylum are obligated to go to public primary and secondary schools in Greece (ECRE 2020a). Children of 6-15 years can attend school nearby their place of residence, together with Greek children, at schools that are indicated by the Ministry of Education. Thus, an inclusive education policy has been developed for migrant children. Speaking in numbers, at the end of 2019, there were 37,000, migrant children in Greece, 4,686 of them, unaccompanied (ECRE 2020a). Out of the number of children present in Greece, the report estimated that a third (12,800-12,900) of these children, aged from 4 to 17 years old, were enrolled in formal education for the period 2018-2019. In addition, the rate of school attendance has been higher for children that live in apartments and for unaccompanied children (67%), showcasing the precarious conditions for children living at closed camps (ECRE 2020a). According to the same report, in December 2019, 8,000 enrolled in formal education for the period 2019-2020, i.e. 5,000 children less than the previous year (ECRE 2020a).

As far as access to labor is concerned, up to the end of 2019, asylum seekers could get access to the labor market, once they obtained an asylum seekers card (ECRE 2020b). The average time period for this was approximately 44 days in 2019. Yet, access to the labor market is acutely disadvantaged by the economic circumstances currently in Greece, the towering unemployment rate and the disjointed labor market (Papadakis et al. 2021), additional shortcomings posed by the antagonism with Greek-speaking recruits, and organizational impediments they come across when they attempt to acquire vital documents, may lead to undeclared employment with rigorous repercussions pertaining to fundamental social rights (ECRE 2020b). According to ECRE (2020b), these impediments are more acute for applicants that live in open mainland camps and/or informal accommodation. Moreover, asylum seekers continue to come across considerable obstacles as far as opening bank accounts is concerned. At the same time, employers prepared to recruit asylum seekers are dispirited for this reason (ECRE 2020b).

The Greek Council for Refugees has drafted a report that sums up several practices that lead to the precarity of refugees. The report mentions, among others, there is a sort of a ban on the movement of asylum seekers inland, which results in overcrowding and deteriorating living conditions for migrants/refugees that live on the islands. In addition, the report refers to the inadequate hygienic conditions, as well as to unshackled mental health issues, and to shortages of medical staff at reception and identification centers (Greek Council for Refugees, 2019, 40). Another notable finding is that there is limited access to free legal assistance. Last, the report argues that vulnerable groups and people who have been tortured (in their home countries) do not always receive the special care they are entitled to (Greek Council for Refugees 2019).

Conclusions

This article set out to investigate the evolution and transformation of the Greek Migration policy for the period 2015 – 2020. More specifically, the authors support the view that the evolution and transformation of the Greek Migration Policy goes hand in hand with institutionalized securitization processes that have impacted the precarity of refugees.

The post refugee crisis period was categorized into five nodes, to highlight the non-static character of Greek Migration Policy as an outcome of several crises the Greek state had to deal with. In this context the theory of securitization was employed to examine accompanying securitization processes in the period under examination. Yet, this theory was used from the lens of precarity of refugees to show the pragmatic impact securitization has on refugees, by conducting, in addition, secondary quantitative analysis.

A first reading of the migration policy of Greece for the period 2015-2020, shows a fragmented way of managing migration with a strong tendency of adopting policies that have led to its 'conservatization' and to an institutionalized securitization. For Papadakis (2021) the lack of coordination and the deep divisions at the European level played a decisive role in this, but also the problems that the Dublin Regulation creates for Greece, that have essentially transformed it from a transit to a destination country.

The 'conservatization' and securitization of the Greek Migration Policy has generated a precarity 'continuum' for refugees in a multidimensional way. Refugees in Greece experience social 'hardship' in the form of insecure livelihood, uncertainty, dysfunctional access in housing, education and health care provision, which are interrelated with political trends towards institutionalized securitization practices. In fact, it seems that precarity accompanies refugees from the start of their journey, evolves during the same journey and climaxes in Greece, as a host state.

As such, it seems that the state of precarity of refugees has a spiral form, beginning from their physical security and extending to precarity in interactions with other refugees in – mainly – closed camps where living conditions are not decent, to precarity in their interaction with the polity (which takes a realist frame policy stance towards them) and

culminating in their precarity as far as a (limited) part of media and native citizens are concerned, who tend to adopt stereotypic approaches towards them, leading to xenophobia in some cases, exacerbating the spiral of precarity of refugees in an indefinite mode.

These findings show the necessity for the elaboration of a more viable migration policy in the Greek case, given the fact that the five nodes, with all their positive and negative outcomes, have generated enough knowledge capital to elaborate a more sustainable migration policy. In addition, as far as securitization is concerned, the crisis management capital that has been acquired could lead to a positive turn in security policy making. Positive security formulations, in turn, alongside with a more targeted inclusion approach for migrants/refugees that wish to remain in Greece, in tandem with faster bureaucratic processes that will not hinder the access of these groups to welfare provisions, could start reversing the precarity of refugees. The New Pact on Migration, despite its pragmatic security tilting, seems to be a promising start to overcome all the above. But its results remain to be seen, especially taking into account that the Greek Migration Policy is substantially affected by the developments and transformations in the EU Migration Policy.

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