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Heteropolitical Pedagogies: Citizenship and Childhood—Commoning Education in Contemporary Greece

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Introduction

In crisis-ridden Greece a shift can be observed where young people are interested in a move from private and public ownership to the common ownership of social resources, such as knowledge and education. Several people seek to manage collective resources with some independence from the state and the markets, promoting civic self-organisation and community across differences (Dardot & Laval, 2014; Hardt & Negri, 2012; Ostrom, 1990). People, especially the young, are looking for a different political ethics, or 'heteropolitics' (Kioupkiolis & Pechtelidis, 2017; Pechtelidis, 2016a), in response to social exclusion, unemployment and underemployment, state violence, and the crisis of politics and democracy. In this context, various social and cultural spaces have been emerging in Greece aiming for a more participatory education and citizenship.

In this chapter the focus is on the intergenerational process of commoning education, looking at two examples: a public elementary school

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(Fourfouras, The school of Nature and Colors, with children aged 6–12) and an independent pedagogical community (Sprogs), run by its members (parents, teachers and children), which enables us to understand the emergent logic of the commons in contemporary Greek education. A core group of two preschool teachers and around 14 parents and ten children (aged 2.5 to 5) were fully engaged in Sprogs, which started its operation in 2013 and finished in 2017. In Fourfouras the process of commoning education started from 2010 and continues to the present. In the beginning there were four teachers for the whole school. Today there are seven. With anonymity in mind, the name 'Sprogs' is fictitious. However, Fourfouras' real name is retained because its activity is known in Greece.

The analysis draws on empirical data collected from a variety of sources, such as participant observation, conversations with teachers and parents, blogs and internet sites of the school and the pedagogical community, various internet posts, videos and radio broadcasts, flyers and a teacher's autobiographical book about Fourfouras. Specifically, members of the Lab of Sociology of Education, which I direct, participated in the procedures of the numerous events held by Sprogs and were involved in many relevant discussions. Also, this study is something of a follow-up to a small-scale research project that we conducted in 2015 (Pechtelidis, Kioupkiolis, & Damopoulou, 2015). Regarding Fourfouras, we conducted a short-term participant observation in 2016. Moreover, a seminar about heterotopic pedagogical orientations was organised by the lab and took place on the premises of the University of Thessaly (15 April 2016), where teachers from Fourfouras, Sprogs and other alternative pedagogical communities presented various activities from their schools and their reflections about them. Furthermore, important material recorded in videos and sites (https://fourfourasweb.wordpress.com/) where the children share their thoughts and present their actions they have undertaken was used in this study.

My intention is to make the special lived experience of the people involved (the commoners) evident. Thus I seek to briefly describe rituals, practices and mentalities produced within these alternative educational social spaces, and to provide an understanding on how alternative children's subjectivities and citizenship come into being. I consider all these

practices as heteropolitical attempts to build spaces up for being and becoming in the here and now. The aim is to critically discuss both their dynamics and their limitations; their similarities and differences; and subsequently their consequences for the participants (children, parents and teachers) and society.

In this context I shall try to critically discuss the contributions of the pedagogical social realities of the study to the empowerment of children's status, and critically reflect on the embodied subjective features that are produced within these alternative sites. It is worth mentioning that I am especially interested in the intergenerational construction of citizenship, and production of a heteropolitical habitus within these particular heterotopic pedagogical and educational communities and collective groups. In this scope, I intend to bring out dominant beliefs and ideas about children's political ability, and their right to participate in public life on their own terms. Policy-making and politics are often alienated from children's views and ways of expressing opinions and participation in public life (Cockburn, 2010). Therefore such understandings are important to the empowerment of children's status and to foster their participation because this can have positive effects, such as leading to improved well-being and social inclusion. In doing this I draw from the theory of the 'new commons' (Bollier, 2014; Bollier & Helfrich, 2012; Dardot & Laval, 2014; Hardt & Negri, 2012; Ostrom, 1990), heterotopian and heteropolitical studies, the sociology of childhood, the sociology of education, the sociology of generation and Jacques Rancière's emancipation theory.

The subsequent analysis will put forward the following claims:

1. The pedagogical cases of Sprogs and Fourfouras are perceived as heteropolitical (Kioupkiolis & Pechtelidis, 2017) endeavours in the sense that they develop a process of 'commoning education', which constructs alternative learning spaces and fosters experiments in thought and action beyond the dominant neoliberal order and the logics of top-down state power and profit-driven markets.
2. They engender a political activity, which is not focused on the formal political system.
3. The collective action on social structures and subjectivities ('the political') is part of the ordinary, face-to-face interactions and attempts at 'coping' with everyday problems.

4. The political activity takes place on every scale of social life in more or less institutionalised social spaces.
5. At the heart of the settings being studied, plurality and confluence, disruptions of normality and the making of alternative normalities are joined together.

Pedagogical Heterotopias, Heteropolitics and Subjectivity

Drawing from Michel Foucault (1986), we could consider Sprogs and Fourfouras public school as heterotopias—that is, as physical, social and symbolic spaces of otherness (Heynen, 2008; Pechtelidis, 2016a). They are heterotopias and not utopias because they are real places—places that exist and that are formed within a society and a culture. Foucault (1986) argues that utopias are sites with no real space, having a relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of society. These unreal spaces portray either a perfect society or a society turned upside-down. In contrast, heterotopias do not lead to a promised land because the struggle against domination and exploitation is relentless. Heterotopia is not a place we might reach but an ongoing process of becoming. It is worth mentioning that heterotopian experiments share a point of departure rather than a place of arrival. Foucault (1986) said that each heterotopia has a precise and determined operation within a specific social and historic formation. Thus it would be interesting to investigate how the heterotopias of the Sprogs, and Fourfouras operate within Greek society. It is important to see how they function in direct relation to a particular material reality, which consists of everyday issues, problems and contradictions. Therefore the main purpose of this chapter is to explore the dynamics and limitations of these spaces and the subjectivities that are crafted there.

Subjectivity is the main field of the struggle between hegemonic and non-hegemonic discourses in contemporary societies. In a seminar in 1984, Felix Guattari claimed that the crisis cutting through capitalism from the beginning of the 1970s in the West is above all a crisis of the

production of subjectivity (Lazzarato, 2014). The production of the subject is the most significant of all the productions of capitalism. Political economy is nothing more than a 'subjective economy'. Contemporary capitalism—that is, neoliberalism—proposes and imposes certain forms of subjectivity via the articulation of economic, technological and social practices and discourses. What subjects could become stands as the political, ethical, social and philosophical problem of today (Foucault, 1984). Foucault (1984, p. 42) suggested a transgressed critical style of thinking, or a 'limit attitude', to problematise the subjects' identities as social and historical products, and therefore to challenge existing ways of being and doing. Following Foucault (1986), we can examine whether the pedagogical sites that run through this study attempt to experiment in transcending and redefining the limits of childhood, education, pedagogy and citizenship.

With regard to the cases used in this study, the questions that arise are the following: Which are the pedagogical and educational conditions for a political and existential rupture with the hegemonic forms of subjectivity? What are the special tools for the production of a heteropolitical form of subjectivity and citizenship? How can the commons of education limit exclusions and power asymmetries?

Commoning Education

In light of the new commons theory (Bollier, 2014; Dardot & Laval, 2014; Hardt & Negri, 2012; Ostrom, 1990), we can argue that both Sprogs and Fourfouras are underpinned by the commons heteropolitical ethics and logic, despite their differences. Specifically, they share a common resource: education. The 'common' is interpreted here (for both cases) as a heteropolitical process of 'commoning' education (Means, Ford, & Slater, 2017), which I describe below. However, Sprogs is a typical or classic form of small-scale common. For Fourfouras, on the other hand, it could be claimed that it is a different kind of commons because the commons' ethics is developed inside a public school and in accordance with a specific official curriculum and strict state requirements.

Commons are various forms of collective ownership that have been established by different communities to ensure the survival and prosperity of each of their members. Whether they are material, such as land and water, or immaterial, such as education and knowledge, the commoners tend to form a web that connects all individuals into a network of social cooperation and interdependence. The existence of the commons presupposes and promotes the self-organisation of the communities and the rational management of their common resources (Ostrom, 1990). The commons' structure consists of three interrelated main parts: (1) common resources; (2) institutions (i.e. communing practices and rules); and (3) the communities or the commoners who are involved in the production and reproduction of commons (Bollier & Helfrich, 2012, p. 3). Hess and Ostrom (2011, p. 10) said: 'The analysis of any type of commons must involve the rules, decisions, and behaviours people make in groups in relation to their shared resource.' As we shall see below, the commons have limits, rules, social norms and sanctions determined by the commoners (i.e. the members of the community). In our cases, the children are considered to be commoners because they partly influence the formation of the communing practices and rules, mainly through their involvement in the assembly or the council. Also, they follow these rules and are subjected to the sanctions of the community to which they belong. From this perspective I shall try to illuminate this particular alternative logic of 'common education' through the specific description of the social organisation of space and time in the schools under study, and the process of citizenship that takes place there.

Time and Space

Everyday life is organised around 'time' and 'space'. According to Durkheim (2008), space and time are socially organised and are the basic axis of social life. Subjectivity is inevitably engendered within social space and time. In the heterotopic pedagogical social settings of the study, space and time are organised in a non-conventional way to produce a heteropolitical habitus. Specifically, both schools' buildings are located in the countryside. Sprogs is located in a seaside village in middle Greece;

Fourfouras is on the island of Crete island in the mountainous part of Rethimno. Fourfouras is a public elementary school so specific standards exist and rules regulate the its everyday life, the curriculum, the architecture, and the arrangement of space and time, which are imposed by the state through the Ministry of Education, Research, and Religious Affairs. However, the teachers at the school have expressed great will to change the layout of the classrooms in order to adapt them to their pedagogical demands and the children's needs. They used to say: 'classrooms' transformation will be finished when the school desks and chairs will look out of place' (Patsias, 2016, p. 55). The idea was that the same place could be used not only as a classroom but also as a workshop, or even as a place of relaxation; and additionally it should be reminiscent of a children's playroom. Moreover, the teachers turned an old storage room into a kitchen; and they built a learning space outdoors. They said that they initially arranged the outside classroom according to the official disciplinary frontal logics; however, after a while they were forced to conduct lessons everywhere they could, under a big tree, inside a church, in the hen house, in a flowerbed and so forth because the weather destroyed he building. Owing to this misfortune they realised that teaching and learning could be conducted everywhere (Patsias, 2016, p. 62). Furthermore, the teachers decided to replace the school chairs with big puffed balls. The children became excited, but the region's school council visited the school and made strict recommendations to the teachers to bring back the chairs and remove the balls. Nevertheless, the council provoked the aggressive reaction of the parents and the local community in general. Thus the balls have remained (ibid.).

Similar to Fourfouras, at Sprogs, children and adults feel free to build a social setting fitting their specific needs and interests. However, Sprogs is an independent pedagogical site for early childhood run by the members of a collective group, and therefore there are no official (state or private) standards about the space and time. Thus the participants on both the individual and the collective levels organise the space and the time on their own terms. Specifically, they follow their own time and space routines, even though there are some common standards or rules regulating the everyday life of the community. Precisely, the duration of a school day is quite limited and flexible. Arrival time is from 9:00 to

10:00 a.m. and end time is up to 14:30 p.m. Breakfast is served in the kitchen until 11:00 a.m. and assembly is called at around midday. Lunch usually starts at 13:00 p.m. (depending on the children's appetite). It could be said that this routine is fixed, but participation in it is optional. Also, for the rest of the day each participant is free to decide what to do and where to be. In a sense, even though there is a routine and a common time regulation for everyone, participants are free to experience these differently.

Time is interwoven with space. Specifically, the children can make use of the whole place to satisfy their own needs and interests. The place is familiar to them; they know every room of the building in detail and feel free to use every object, knowing that they belong to all the members of the group. When they want to go outside to play, walk, run, reflect and so on, they just do it. They do not have to ask an adult for permission. There are no prohibited areas for the children: the whole place is fully accessible to them at any time of the day. In that way, both children and adults perceive the school setting in very positive terms: the school feels like home.

According to a preschool teacher at this social site, the primary idea was the creation of a pedagogical environment where children, teachers and parents feel free. This does not mean that they do not have rules regulating their behaviour. Indeed, they follow rules, which are the result of their co-decision in the assembly, as we shall see below.

On the whole, everyone has access to all the sites of the community at any time. Furthermore, all members have the right to co-configure and reinscribe the limits and usage of space and time. In this way, space and time are not considered to be static, fully predictable and controllable. Instead, they are contingent. They are not predetermined disciplinary tools imposed by the state, and the financial and economic power of the market.

The official school environment embodies particular values and hierarchies, and it attempts to ideologically discipline children according to specific political and economic criteria. It usually excludes children from the decision-making process and the formation of the rules of the school community. However, what becomes evident from the findings of this research is that children reflect on the issues of their school everyday life

and react accordingly. Children, together with their teachers and parents, reclaim social space and time, and declare the need for an active engagement in the educational social settings. The active participation of the children in them perhaps causes confusion about the role and participation of young children in public life. This confusion arose from inevitable uncertainty around the nature of 'childhood' and the shift of power between children and adults. As we shall see in the next section, the children's assembly and council, and their contribution to the formulation of the rules of these communities, are evidence of such a shift.

Heteropolitical Citizenship

'Citizenship' in the field of education and more widely has been on the political and civic organisations' agenda (Isin & Wood, 1999) in the decade since 2007. Traditionally, it relates to the relation between the individual and the state, defining citizens' legal rights and obligations (Marshall, 1950). The last two decades, citizenship has ceased to concern the development of formal knowledge of rights and duties and instead focuses on the various aspects of the formation of identity in political, cultural and economic life (Birzea, 2005).

In educational research and policy there is an ongoing discussion about the contribution of education to democratic citizenship (Biesta, 2011; Callan, 1997; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). This research emerges from different disciplines. Some approaches stress the juridical dimension of the relation between citizenship and education, and also the top-down relationship between the individual and the state (Feinberg & McDonough, 2003; Kymlicka & Norman, 2000). Other research focuses on the notion of citizenship as constituted by individuals and groups in their daily life in schools and elsewhere (Olson, Fejes, Dahlstedt, & Nicoll, 2014). A substantial body of research tends to focus on these two dimensions, assessing the influence of educational practices on knowledge, and dispositions necessary for good citizenship (Davies, 2010; Olson et al., 2014).

Much of this work considers the role of education in the preparation of young people and children for citizenship (Cockburn, 2013).

Recognising people as citizens is emphasised in Greek education policy. Considering citizenship education in Greece, there is a gap between its proclaimed aims and actual educational results (Makrinioti, 2012, pp. 56–57). Although citizenship education declares critical thinking and public engagement, in reality it channels pupils into predetermined and thus controllable social and political roles. Citizenship education in schools promotes specific moral responsibilities that precisely delineate what citizens should (or should not) do in the field of social interaction. However, the citizen's right to criticise, to protest, to change or to subvert bad laws and unfair policies is not mentioned (ibid., p. 57). In this way the pupils' preparation for public life is more or less a spoof because in practice it sidelines any participation of young people in public life. What's more, it produces an individualistic, apolitical version of the political (Cunningham & Lavalette, 2004).

Citizenship practice is still considered to be the result of specific educational trajectories. Focusing on what is not attained yet by the pupils neglects their existing activities as citizens in the present (Olson et al., 2014). Children are represented as incomplete social beings, as future adult citizens and thus as individuals without a present. Therefore they will only fully attain their social and political nature through a predefined socialising course. In this sense, it is vital to investigate and reconsider youth's and children's views about citizenship, as well as their citizenship activity and their potential for social change (Cockburn, 2010, 2013; Pechtelidis, 2016b; Percy-Smith, 2016; Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010).

Using the notion of 'subjectification' instead of 'socialisation' (Biesta, 2011) enables us to conceptualise children (and adults) as agents. 'Subjectification' is the opposite of 'socialisation' and 'identification' because it does not place children in a predetermined position and role (Bath & Karlsson, 2016; Biesta, 2011). In this sense it challenges the conventional connections between education, citizenship and democracy (Biesta, 2011) because it contests the notion that 'political subjectivities can be and have to be fully formed before democracy can take off […] A democratic citizen is not a pre-defined identity that can simply be taught and learned, but emerges again and again in new ways from engagement with the experiment of democratic politics' (Biesta, 2011, p. 152).

In particular, within the pedagogical settings of the study, the children are not socialised into a predetermined citizenship identity. Specifically, they enact an autonomous subjectivity through their direct involvement in the assembly or the council of the group, unconditional play and the expression of solidarity. For instance, at Sprogs the assembly has a core role in the workings and everyday life of the group. Teachers and parents equally and horizontally participate in the decision-making process. Decisions are the result of discussion and full agreement among the participants. Necessary tasks, such as cleaning and cooking, are equally distributed between all members. In the same vein, the children's assembly is established. It is called daily by the teachers, between 11:30 a.m. and midday, as long as there are issues to be settled. Children are not obliged to participate in the workings of the assembly, but whoever decides to participate has to respect its alternative rules. For example, children must be quiet and ask for permission when they want to say something. Two children are delegated as the coordinators of the procedure by their teachers. It was observed that this handling gradually reduced the adults' influence and helped children to effectively control their consultation. The children assembly's agenda consists of a range of topics and issues. A favourite topic of the children is the excursions of the team, such as a visit to a museum, free play, a picnic or hiking in the mountains. The ideas are engendered from all members of the group and are discussed in detail during the assembly. Another major topic under consideration is the everyday needs of the school, such as demands to change the breakfast menu, buying a new CD player, or just expressing one's feelings and experiences. The children seem to gradually become more responsible for their lives through their daily participation in the procedures of the assembly. They realise what it really means to make a decision come true by their own means and power. They learn how to find, collectively and individualistically, solutions to problems and organise their everyday life. They all seem very familiar with the process of dialogue, collective thinking and decision-making. Furthermore, the children try to end discussions that are fully acceptable to all the participants because they realise that it is important for all members to feel satisfied about the group's decisions.

In the public elementary school of Fourfouras, the teachers, inspired by the children's councils in Summerhill School (Neil, 1970), established a weekly council where all pupils could actively participate with their teachers. Every month, four children are delegated as the coordinators of the procedure. A difference from Sprogs' assembly is that the coordinators are older (sixth-graders). It is worth mentioning that another difference is that the participants in the council finally vote. However, there are cases showing that the children really care not only about the majority of the voters but also about the minority. For instance, they try to renegotiate a decision of the council in order to include and satisfy those who voted against, teachers and pupils. Cockburn's (2010) work in the UK notes that children do not like to have significant minorities of children without being heard, and for this they make compromises. Moreover, the children reconceptualise and reconstruct the notion of 'detention' or 'punishment' during the council's procedures, showing great effectiveness, justice and solidarity. Remarkably, adults' interference in the council's procedures diminished as time went by. The Child's Counsel (an independent principle advocating children's rights; it is part of the official institution of the Citizen's Council) visited the school and recorded how a 'children's society' can effectively handle a school's everyday issues and problems, such as the division of work, bullying, racism and sexism, and therefore how it can function autonomously, helping not only the pupils but also the school and the community.

Cockburn (2007) argued about the importance of an 'intermediary space' where children's everyday language and worlds will communicate with those of contemporary public spheres. Bath and Karlsson (2016) characterise 'intermediary space' as play. Jans (2004, p. 35) also stresses the importance of playfulness for a 'children-sized concept of citizenship'. We could expand these conceptualisations of the 'intermediary space', including the participation in the assembly, or the council.

Jans (2004, p. 40) says that 'citizenship of children is based on a continuous learning process in which children and adults are interdependent'. As Mannheim (2001, p. 301) notes, 'not only does the teacher educate his pupil, but the pupil educates his teacher too. Generations are in a state of constant interaction.' In this sense it is worth noting the interconnection, as well as the conflict, between generations. Children face a

different set of experiences from those faced by the generation of their parents and teachers at a similar life point, and therefore they will build a different orientation to the current challenges. However, the fact that children live in different generational conditions from the previous generations does not mean that their values will be radically alien to those of their parents and teachers. In particular, we could claim that the children in these schools inherit a political and cultural capital from their parents and teachers, but they rework it with their own terms and experience. Within this scope, generations are perceived in dispositional and hence subjective terms, and are linked to a range of possible modes of thought, experience, feeling and action (Woodman & Wyn, 2015). Eyerman and Turner (1998, p. 93) define a generation by its common habitus, including emotions, attitudes and embodied practices. Habitus is a set of emotions, attitudes and embodied practices of which individuals are not necessarily aware. According to Bourdieu (1977), social action is being driven primarily by the socially based dispositions developed within each individual's social environment. These dispositions are not totally deterministic, nor always rational and conscious. While Bourdieu (2000) argued that habitus persisted over time, he went out of his way to claim that it is not static, nor necessarily unified. Therefore it is crucial to study it in its actual formation.

Considering both children and adults' participation in the assembly or the council of the groups, we could point out an intergenerational agency (Mayall, 2015; Woodman & Wyn, 2015, pp. 68–70) which provides a base of a hybridised habitus, or, to put it differently, a mixing of new dispositions and elements of tradition. In other words, the relationship between the young and old generations inside the educational commons of this study seems to produce a new habitus. According to a teacher from Fourfouras, not only do children gradually become more responsible, autonomous, self-regulated and familiarised with the democratic process of dialogue and decision-making through their participation in the procedures of the council, but also adult participants take an important 'lesson' about children'socracy. In particular, the adults (the teachers in Fourfouras, and the teachers and parents in Sprogs), inspired by the tradition of the democratic schools, launched the idea of a council or an assembly, but the ways the children were negotiating and arranging

their issues was innovative and actually effective. The children tended to reconceptualise the procedures of the council or the assembly and adapt them to their own terms, demands and views. They showed great sensitivity and concern for the protection of collective life, the right to express their own opinion and equal participation in decision-making procedures. For instance, at Fourfouras, the children were not completely satisfied with the voting procedure owing to the exclusion of those who voted against the majority's will, and thus they tried to negotiate and rearrange the procedure with different and more inclusive terms, as described above.

On the whole, the everyday life at Sprogs and Fourfouras reflects, and reproduces, to an extent the view of the defenders of children's rights that children who are involved in institutions, such as a school, should actively participate in their function and organisation (MacNaughton & Smith, 2009). What's more, priority is given to children's needs and their broader development, and not only in their preparation for the marketplace and the process of economic production. In other words, children are not considered only as the future employees in a global economic system of knowledge but mainly as active members of society 'here and now' (Cockburn, 2013; Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010). Despite the daily problems and restraints, the members (children and adults) of these pedagogical heterotopias try to establish heteropolitical structures that give them the opportunity to directly participate in the workings of these sites as citizens of the present.

Emancipation 'Here' and 'Now'

These alternative pedagogical and social practices challenge both *traditional* and *(neo)liberal paternalism*. Traditional paternalism does not acknowledge any rights and autonomy to young children. In this context, the 'child' is depicted as the 'other' and is contrasted with the 'adult' (Jenks, 1996). Specifically, children are represented as directly related to nature, irrationalism, dependence, immaturity, play and the private sphere, while adults are seen as connected to civilisation, rationalism, independence, work and the public sphere. Traditional paternalism

articulates contradictory ideas about children. On the one hand, they are seen as innocent, dependent, pure, incompetent and unable to work. On the other hand, they are considered inherently fierce, cruel and threatening, putting themselves and society in danger.

We could argue that traditional paternalism is related to the generalised interest of the modern states to regulate and control the entire population (Rose, 1989). According to Rose (1989), children are the main object of control and surveillance of adult society. 'Modern' disciplinary power seeks consensus about the legitimacy of its intervening and regulative practices on children through its processed and subtle ways of surveillance and control (Jenks, 1996). Children are both the target and the instrument of disciplinary power in the formal educational system. Disciplinary power has an educational dimension in the sense that it transmits information and knowledge to subjects in order to exploit all information, knowledge and skills in the near future. Disciplinary power thus aims to form the productive and docile subject (Foucault, 1995). From the other point of view, we could argue that in the pedagogical heterotopias of the study, children would possibly learn to overthrow the disciplinary power of the state and the market.

However, today, a different *neoliberal* paternalistic perception of childhood has been developed, as the viability of the current hegemonic neoliberal regime demands a different socialisation process of children. In particular, children's well-being is connected with autonomy, and hence the 'child' is deemed to be an agent in the socialisation process (Smith, 2012). The 'competent and autonomous child' represents a relatively new form of governance, which stresses children's views, and their right of choice and participation in decision-making about matters that concern them. Although this image creates a new potential for childhood, at the same time new forms of intervention and paternalistic control limit it (Pechtelidis & Stamou, 2017).

To be more specific, *(neo)liberal discourse* about childhood is also paternalistic, but at a different level from traditional paternalism. We could claim that this discourse is a compound of a limited form of autonomy and a limited form of paternalism. In fact, even though it acknowledges children's right to autonomy, competence and active participation in learning, their agency is undermined since it is represented as being

demarcated and controlled through particular patterns initiated by adults (Smith, 2012). Actually, restraints on children's autonomy are considered necessary for their future rational development and independence. Thus children's agency tends to be an outcome of adults' guiding. In this way, children's 'autonomy' is cancelled in practice and their emancipation is continually postponed.

To grasp the meaning of this paradox it is necessary to situate it in the current political context of hegemonic neoliberal rationality and govern-mentality, which increases the apparently contradictory connection between freedom and control. The dominant neoliberal strategies in education are intended to give prominence to children's abilities for self-regulation and self-management (Pechtelidis & Stamou, 2017; Smith, 2012). In this sense, neoliberalism is trying to govern the individual from within by guiding their self-management according to specific normative standards (Dean, 2009; Foucault, 1991, 2010; Rose, 1989). However, in the discursive neoliberal context, children's autonomy is exclusively perceived in relation to consumption and the world of goods, to entrepreneurship and the market (Pechtelidis & Stamou, 2017; Smith, 2012).

Considering the heteropolitical regulation of Sprogs and Fourfouras' everyday life, we could argue that they challenge both traditional and neoliberal paternalism. Thus they are cracks in the current post-political regime, and an obstacle in the operations of neoliberal power. Also, the heteropolitical pedagogical styles of Sprogs and Fourfouras question the traditional discourse about a child being a passive, weak, defective and ignorant being, who is lacking not only in knowledge, capabilities and skills but also in learning capability (Biesta, 2010).

Everyday life at Sprogs and Fourfouras challenges the dominant pedagogical myth, according to which the world is divided into those who possess the knowledge and others who are ignorant, or the clever and the stupid, respectively, the competent and the incompetent (Rancière, 2010). At Sprogs, the children are not dependent on the educators, who explain to them the physical and social reality. Specifically, the main goal of this pedagogical project is self-reliance and collective autonomy, and consequently the emancipation of children from the adults (educators and parents). Therefore the aim of this particular pedagogy is the constant verification both of the principle under which all people are equal

and the belief that there is no natural hierarchy of intellectual capabilities (Rancière, 2010, p. 6). The child is being encouraged to see, think and act in order to realise that they are not dependent on the others who claim that they can see, think and act on the child's behalf (Rancière, 1991, 2010). In this sense, children's trajectory towards learning and knowing is also a trajectory towards emancipation, where the mind learns to obey only itself. This approach resonates quite similar alternative pedagogical approaches, such as the Reggio Emilia approach, which challenge the popular assumption that children are not capable of learning by themselves, without adult help and instruction. However, that does not mean that the teacher's role is cancelled. Instead, we could argue that the educator is someone who demands the effort and devotion from their pupils, and also verify that this process is carefully accomplished by them (Rancière, 1991, 2010).

Conclusion

The aim of this research is to figure out how novel and alternative practices of citizenship, participation in public life, social self-reconstruction, and self-governance in education and pedagogy initiate a process of sharing knowledge, and opening education, citizenship and politics to all social actors, including adults as well as children, to the settings of the research on a basis of equality and autonomy.

In particular, Sprogs and Fourfouras are perceived as heteropolitical because they develop a process of 'commoning education', which constructs alternative spaces for learning and promotes experimentation in thought and action beyond the top-down, bureaucratic structures of state administration and profit-driven market logics. In these contexts, there seems to be a cultivation of a specific heteropolitical habitus of the commons consisting of the dispositions of (1) direct involvement in public and collective life; (2) autonomy; and (3) self-reliance. The members of these settings (children and adults) contribute to openness, social justice and the well-being of the community. Plurality and confluence, disruptions of normality and the making of alternative normalities are joined together in the educational settings of the study. These specific figures of

the 'common' created intergenerationally by the social actors are critically considered as responses to the contemporary crises of liberal democracy, and economic life, the increasing inequalities and environmental breakdown. However, further research grounded on children's views is needed because the statements expressed in this study are mostly from an adult perspective (teachers and researchers). Furthermore, the processes of commoning education are initiated mainly by adults. Despite this the children have an active role in this process, which they conceptualise and enrich with their own experience and views. Also, we should take into consideration the fact that adults' mentoring and support can happen in many ways (Cockburn, 2010, p. 310). In our cases, they try not to get involved too much and give space for children to express themselves freely and to shape the process on their own terms.

Moreover, it is important to stress that the process of commoning education occurs on every scale of social life and it could not be immediately applied to all the various contexts and scales. This specific heteropolitical activity of the commons of this study is subject to numerous practical constraints in each case. For instance, the governments and bureaucracies are often cautious or unwilling to support the commons because they perceive them as an independent force, which threatens their certainties and their allies in the marketplace (Bollier, 2014). According to Bollier (2014), governments prefer to manage their resources through predetermined conventional and strict hierarchical control systems. For them the commoning of education appears chaotic and unreliable.

Regarding the autonomous commons, like Sprogs, the basic constraint is with funding. Sprogs' members decided to put an end to this endeavour after four years because they could no longer afford the cost. Many commoners claim that the state should support the commons on both an economic and a legal level. They argue that the majority of governments provide legal privileges and subsidies to support new businesses to develop and thrive. In this context, it is argued that the best model for the backing of the commons is a commons-friendly state policy, which not only provides money, resources and legal protection but also supervises them. However, the state should not be heavily involved in control of the commons because there is a risk of limiting commoners' desire to manage things by themselves (Bollier, 2014).

Also it is argued that the heteropolitical activity is unfolded within specific heretopic pedagogical space-time constellations. Specifically, they seem to promote new possibilities of subjectivity through the rejection of a particular form of individuality that has been imposed on us for many years through the conventional educational system. The participants (adults and children) experiment with new ways of thinking and acting, of subjectification and citizenship. They construct new subjectivities and they engage in alternative social relations. It seems that they are educational and pedagogical communities that give them the chance to change the way they feel, think and act. However, the adults (teachers and parents) are the ones who initiated this change because the children cannot do so because of either the formal school constraints (in the case of the public school of Fourfouras) or their young age (mainly at Sprogs). However, children have the ability to influence and shape the process of subjectification.

All the above reveals a political vision that brings lived experience and collaboration to the forefront: a political activity which is not focused on the formal political system but is engendered in the educational and pedagogical communities of this study. 'The political'—namely, the collective action on social structures and subjectivities—is part of face-to-face interactions and attempts at 'dealing' with everyday problems. In this sense, they produce micropolitical actions that may have an impact only on certain social practices and relations, or they may coalesce with others to prepare and engender large-scale antagonisms and systemic macrochanges. Moreover, this unique experience cannot be reduced to predefined meanings of political participation, citizenship, education, childhood and so on. Thus it becomes apparent how important it is to preserve the openness of concepts such as 'citizen', 'child', 'student' and 'adult' inside any given discourse. This approach provides a deeper understanding of how such concepts are created in the context of everyday life and thus are never final and fixed.

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