

## VTH INTERNATIONAL ORAL HISTORY CONFERENCE

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ABSTRACTS. PAPERS MARKED IN YELLOW WILL BE PRESENTED IN ENGLISH

### **Adamopoulou Maria, "Germany made me": working memories of Greek Gastarbeiter in the Federal Republic of Germany (1960-1989)**

My research project collects life stories of Greek migrant workers to the Federal Republic of Germany from 1960 to 1989. The shadow of the Second World War and the Greek Civil War was heavy for the childhood and teenage years of my narrators, the future migrants, who experienced poverty, violence and loss. The harsh material conditions forced them to an early debut in the world of work. In March 1960, when the labor recruitment agreement between West Germany and Greece was signed, a way to escape misery opened for them together with a new chapter of hard work in a totally different industrial environment. This stay as a guest worker ended sooner or later, but it had long-term consequences to their life choices and identity formation. The last chapter of their working life concluded back in Greece in years of democratic transition and a relative affluence. There were numerous contemporary studies by social scientists and the press, which published detailed reportages and interviews with the migrants in different West German cities. However, what was missing was "la longue durée", namely a red thread throughout their lifetime connecting their survival strategies. Through the testimonies I collected, some crucial decisions, inescapable pressures and risky resolutions unveil the continuities and ruptures in their working lives. In their narrations, the biographical turns appear as alternatives or as one-way-streets. They give meaning to the shaping of their subjectivities as primarily hard-working individuals, but also particles of their contemporary sociopolitical environment.

### **Adarbeh Ahmad. Bloody holiday. Palestinian child labour in Israeli settlements**

During the summer vacation, youngsters spend their time playing, while some of them are obliged to work. In industrialized countries, they are eager to adopt regulations that safeguard youngsters who work and set severe penalties on those who break or violate child protection laws. Unfortunately, countries in the midst of a war do not provide appropriate protection. There are 65,000 youngsters working in Israeli settlements, and they work in extremely terrible conditions and are subjected to horrific exploitation by Israeli employers and Palestinian brokers. Child labor is caused by poverty and a lack of social justice as a result of discriminatory economic policies. Study's goal: To bring attention to the plight of Palestinian youngsters who work in Israeli settlements. The significance of the study: Understanding the factors that lead children to work and the settings in which they work is critical in assisting society in developing suitable policies to address this issue. Study's concern: Child labor is a global phenomenon caused by poverty, warfare, and family fragmentation. The Israeli occupation is the primary cause of poverty and instability, forcing youngsters to work to support their families. The answer to it: What is Israel's stance on Palestinian minors employed in settlements? Study's Methodology: The oral history method will be used, and interviews with children who work in the settlements will be conducted. It will focus on the story of the children of Aqraba village in Nablus, where nine children died in a traffic accident while on their way to work in the Jericho settlements, as well as my own personal experience working and growing up in the Israeli settlements.

**Alexandri E, G.Reppas, D.Hamhale, P.Hantzaroula (Oral History Group of Lesbos), Work experiences in the field of refugees' management**

Recently the islands in East Aegean Sea and especially Lesbos have received a huge number of refugees and migrants who look for a new life. The humanitarian crisis which the island of Lesbos faced activated immediately local and foreign volunteers, activists and the relevant state, municipal and private institutions. An event of global dimensions led to the recruitment of thousands of local and foreign employees in Lesbos. Drawing on oral history methodology, the Oral History Group of Lesbos (OPILES), which was formed in May 2017 in Mytilene, aims at approaching workers' experiences by collecting testimonies of employees in sectors that handle the refugee and migrant crisis. The paper will focus on the employees' everyday experiences at work and will analyze the multilayered working identities and relationships at the working place. Furthermore, it will deal with forms of resistance and protest in claiming their rights as workers and it will point at the multiplicity of workers' experiences and views in relation to their positioning in the workplace as well as in relation to the local community. The working trajectories, gender relations, expertise and skill are the specific themes that will be investigated in employees' experiences. Finally, the paper aims at the examination of intercultural and working relationships in the area of "humanitarian bureaucracy" and of employee's perceptions of the "refugee question."

**Alexandrou Ioanna, Narratives of enclaved villagers about the "new normal" after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, An attempt to record the minutiae of their daily and professional lives.**

The paper aims at recording the changes that occurred in the working environment of the residents of the Karpasia region after the Turkish invasion of 1974. Our study deals with the residents of three villages of Karpasia region (Yialousa, Agia Triada and Rizokarpaso), focusing on the conditions of their employment after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and during the period of their entrapment 1974-1994. How did these people experience and deal with the new conditions of administration and employment? How did they solve the various issues that arose as a result of the Turkish invasion, the closure or the restriction of activity in the area of several state organizations, private factories, education, agriculture? How long did they stay in their community, why did they leave and what were the chances to continue to operate professionally as enclaved workers?

**Amarianakis Stamatis, Chalkida's Cement: Life histories & livelihood projects of former industrial labourers in cement production during the Greek economic crisis**

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013, shortly after the second memorandum agreement between Greece and its creditors, Chalkida's cement factory, the longest surviving industrial unit in the area, was closed down leaving 236 people unemployed. The administration of the factory, Lafarge SA, a leader in global cement production, based their decision to close the factory on the vast contraction of domestic demand and a strategic plan to restructure its global production. The laid-off factory workers and their trade union occupied the facilities of the factory and appealed to national and international courts against its closure, while their struggle continues till today. Since 1926, the cement factory of Chalkida had not only provided the means for socioeconomic reproduction of multiple generations and enabled various livelihood projects, but also, shaped the city's industrial identity. Following Burawoy's scheme

of “global ethnography”, I propose an interscalar analysis of the life histories of former cement factory workers that links local practice with global processes. Taking the cement factory of Chalkida as a point of departure, I highlight the cultural and economic significance of cement at the local, national and global scales. Then I relate the life histories of people who worked at the factory with national and global historical developments focusing on their experiences of the recent economic crisis in Chalkida, a mid-sized, (post)industrial Greek city where I conducted extensive fieldwork between April 2015 and December 2016.

### **Badiou Marina, Women bank employees and trade unionism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: two life stories**

This research proposal examines the unionization of women bank employees through the archive of recorded oral testimonies of the Library of Equality and Gender, a project implemented by the National Center for Social Research. The research is based on two life stories, which were given to Mrs. Thanopoulou Maria and Mrs. Papathanassiou Ioanna. The first belongs to Terpsi Lambrinopoulou, a former bank clerk and secretary of the Association for Women's Rights, who talks about her career in the banking sector and her involvement with trade unionism. The second narrative of Fotini Sianou, a founding member of the Women's Committees of the Federation of Banking Organizations of Greece, also focuses on the two aforementioned issues. However, she extends to the important struggles for the rights and the substantial upgrading of the position of women workers, while also referring to remarkable women, who expressed trade unionism and the women's movement. The focus of the research is therefore the trade union actions and claims of women bank employees in Greece during the 20th century.

### **Barboudaki Eleni, Young seamstresses. "Everything I achieved I did it with needle and thread"**

At the end of the WWII, in the midst of the Civil War, the economic, business and labor status was described through proclamations, international agreements and financial measures aiming mainly to get the country out of poverty. In practice, forced village evacuations accelerated, among other causes, the wave of internal migration, caused by widespread income redistribution in the 1940s-49s, infrastructure destruction, declining agricultural production, and persecution. An entire generation of children found themselves working in urban centers during this period, in practice contributing to the family income. Among them were the young seamstresses, young or teenaged girls who, after they abandoned school, worked under the status of unpaid workers apprenticeship in professional seamstresses, home-based businesses and later handicrafts. As assistants first and then as seamstresses themselves, for a period of up to five years, they worked without working hours, without labor rights, without civic holidays and rest, worked constantly to "take the scissors". Their memories narrate their effort to become adults through work, in a difficult but also... popular profession, which would make them financially independent, but also highly desirable spouses, working at home in a kind of work-slavery. In the process, some of them become self-employed, stand out in the microcosm of the city and their clients, and became the same seamstresses, employing unpaid new "batches" of seamstresses. Meanwhile in the background everything was changing. In the "new" glossy world new needs are presented, consumption is projected as modern happiness and attractive-affordable products, mass-

produced, often imported, such as ready-made clothes, shape new shopping habits. The seamstresses are affected immediately, and survival is put in precarious again.

### **Brouskou Aegli, Life stories on work in the world of an Assisted-Living Facility**

In a workshop of storytelling and reading in an Assisted-Living Facility in Thessaloniki, which met regularly each week for three years (2012-2015), a group of 15-20 individuals, each over 80 years old, listen, talk and discuss. The longevity and the continuity of the workshop has created a storytelling community whose members are looking forward to the next meeting, hoping that they will be able to attend, speak, and listen to the rest of an unfinished story. Stories do not 'leave' with the researcher but change creatively into a connective tissue between the participants. They are being recorded, transcribed, and often read again. This is a world where family relationships are no longer supportive. Participants find an opportunity to negotiate their ultimate identity by offering their life stories, at their own pace and according to their mood. At the very center of their story, they often choose to place their professional identity, at times as a response to the stories of the others. The narration of work as a theme, seems to support an entire life narrative during the process of remembering: it constructs the narrative chronologically and places it in clear and recognizable contexts. It also opens up private life into public life. But most importantly, it allows the connection of a dynamic phase in life with the present deteriorating self, allowing composure to come into play, and asserting a new identity. The narrators recall their work experiences from the '40s to the '90s, in sectors such as education, manufacturing, mining in Belgium, agriculture, trade, music.

### **Bennedsen Hansen, Michael. Narrating pride and loss at sea – the oral history of a Danish Maersk Captain**

This paper zooms in on a single oral history of a retired Danish Maersk captain to tell a story of how technological and organizational changes in shipping have impacted the identity of seafarers working on container ships. With globalization and containerization, international shipping underwent fundamental changes. Global trade was transformed and maritime cultures upended. At the forefront of this transformation was the Danish shipping company Maersk. In the second half of the twentieth century, it became a transnational company and the world's largest container company. Through oral history and with a narrative approach, this paper explores the lived experience of this transformation. The personal work story of the retired captain is characterized by ambivalence - veering between pride and a sense of loss and displacement. Proud of representing a prestigious shipping company, with new, modern ships, but feeling displaced by a company transitioning from shipping to logistics and feeling his autonomy as a seafarer under pressure by the home office being able to monitor his every movement at sea. To create composure and meaning in his narrative, the captain draws on a dominant company narrative about the former CEO, Maersk McKinney-Moeller, as the embodiment of the company values and a seafarer at heart. By identifying with McKinney, claiming he was 'all about the seafarers,' the official company narrative becomes useful for personal identity purposes. The paper thus shows how oral histories are not only counter narratives but also reproduces dominant narratives. The paper contributes to the discussion around narratives in business history by offering oral history as a valuable method to investigate how organizational changes are experienced and made sense of through narratives.

**Dalkavoukis Vasilis. Why unemployed people do not practice prosumption? Conceptualizing informal gardening through unemployed peoples' narratives**

Informal gardening as a form of prosumption (production of goods for family consumption without market's mediation) has been defined as a critical practice for surviving in times of crises (e.g. WW II in England – “dig for victory”, post-socialist Cuba and “organoponicos”, contemporary crisis in Chicago etc.). Although in the frame of the contemporary Greek financial crisis many unemployed people have been involved in analogous institutional prosumption initiatives (e.g. municipal gardens etc.) according to the relevant bibliography, the great majority of informal prosumption practices is manifested by employed people or pensioners, at least according to my own field work. As an example, I'll present and comment two interviews with unemployed interlocutors who refuse to practice prosumption. My intention is to interpret their attitudes and conceptualizations about informal gardening prosumption in the frame of Demazière's pattern of unemployed peoples' reactions: “Despondency” (découragement), “competition” (compétition) and “creativity” (débrouillardise).

**Dimou Vasko & Ioanna Antoniadou, Archaeology's role in society and the archaeologist's body at work**

*What is archaeology and what do archaeologists do today? How does archaeology affect archaeologists and how is it affected by them?* Our presentation intends to discuss autobiographic narratives that concern the embodied and gendered experience of archaeological work. The goal is twofold. On one hand, we intend to analyse the factors that affect the context and the experience of archaeology today, while we attempt to understand the connections with wider phenomena and concepts underlying the construction and perception of archaeology and archaeologists. On the other hand, we attempt to examine the possibility of expanding this project into systematic research in oral history regarding work in archaeology. The basic idea that runs through the discussion is the way in which and the extent to which the ideology and institution of archaeology define the activities and the work conditions of its practitioners.

**Drakonakis Antonis & Giannis Zaimakis, The social time of precarity: flexible temporalities in the daily lives of young workers**

Flexploitation and precarity are blurring the boundaries between work and leisure time in contemporary society. Under conditions of constant changes in terms of working hours, income and job content, young people in flexible forms of employment confront obstacles to use their time in a creative and desirable way. However, a part of young precariat transforms the experience of precarity into cultural expression and contention, namely practices of creative resistance against the loss of control over time and the unfavorable conditions of crisis. The subject of this study is the everyday life of the young flexible proletariat and its creative side that remains, to some extent, an unexplored research field. Employing life stories of young precarious workers, the study examines grassroots voices about the meaning of time and the biographical trajectories in cultures of contention within the context of crisis. The research shed light on the ways in which a creative precariat confronts the depersonalization of time and the dystopia of employment precariousness.

### **Fintzos-Vlavis Anastasis, Redefining the moral boundaries of labour: The experience of sex work in Greece during the 1990s**

The aim of this paper is twofold. On the one hand, it tries to reconstitute the sex work experience, especially the precariousness, in a time of significant changes, through the oral testimony of a transgender woman sex worker. The end of the Cold War transformed Greece into a destination country for immigrants. This development affected the labour market, especially the sex market, as the participation of immigrant (mainly) women raised significantly, intentional or coercive, not only in terms of the organisation of work, but it also created a public discussion among lawyers, feminists and human rights activists in the European Union. The boundaries of what can be understood and be accepted as labour was the main subject of the discussion. On the other hand, this paper by examining the discourses, which were articulated, tries to explore the boundaries of labour. Where was the dividing line between legal and illegal activities in 1990s Greece? For an answer to be given and considering that a paper cannot include the wide range of discourses, the second part focuses on the parliament proceedings during the vote of 2734/1999 law "Regarding prostitutes and other provisions". This law replaces the former 1193/1981 and tried to modernise the legal framework of sex work. However, it would recognise sex work only as an income-earning activity and not as labour, failing to solve the sex workers problems and anxieties.

### **Georgiadou Dimitra, "You should focus now, mom, on your career...": Ambiguity and trajectories in the construction of a gendered self**

Kalliroi (pseudonym) is now a retired A-level research agronomist. At the same time, she is a mother and grandmother, a wife and someone's lover, a struggling trade unionist and a feminist of the second half of the democratic transition period, namely 1981-1989. Her narrative account of the trajectory she traced for over three decades in her professional career, from her youth to her retirement, the adventures of her survival and development in a harshly male-dominated professional field, the entanglement of family, personal desires and social struggles -both collective and individual- was recorded in 2011 in my effort to make sense of a gendered, subjective account based on first-hand experience of the misunderstood and misinterpreted status of a woman's *career*. I sought in this way to map the gendered dimension of an era that was idealized in the social imaginary as an era of unhindered development, social mobility, freedom, economic prosperity and rise. This paper comes ten years after the interview to offer, with the tools of the theory and methodology of oral history, a theoretical approach and interpretation of the conflict between the imaginary social and professional rise that accompanies hegemonic accounts regarding the *metapolitefsi* period and the complexities - the emotional, psychological and physical costs of trying to achieve development expectations for women scientists of the time, conflicts that have not been resolved to this day but are articulated from within new narratives regarding the world of work and accompany interpretations and attitudes about it until today.

### **Giannakopoulou Ioanna, "I do not know whether I ever lived, but my life began with work": work as a field of identity renegotiation in recovery**

The paper is based on my PhD Thesis entitled: *The reading history of a person in recovery: a case study*. It draws from the narration of an ex-drug user who had been abusing drugs for thirteen years until she joined a Therapeutic Community which provided her intensive residential treatment. After the transition to a substance-free way of living, she searched for

a job and succeeded in entering a workplace to gain financial independence and take care of her child. Through her narrative, her workplace becomes a place of rupture with her dependent past, a place of renegotiation of her identity. She becomes a subject who initially through work claims for survival and assumes her responsibilities as an autonomous person and as a mother. Then, work becomes the field that allows her desires to emerge. The narrator, while performing her recovered identity from substance use disorder, is at a “biographical turning point” as she explores motherhood, work, companionship in different terms and tries to re-write on her body, a story that does not exclude femininity in the space of the traditional house, nor does it give it a face of controversy and revolution in the space of the “drug street”. Thus, the working body becomes a body that seeks and achieves recognition and finally pleasure.

**Hamatsou Anastasia, "The nostalgia of a glorious world": testimonies of Cypriot immigration**

Cyprus in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s was an exporter of immigrants, mainly to Britain, but also to other countries and continents, such as Australia, Africa, America, etc. After 1974, emigration from Cyprus continued, while the phenomenon of expatriate repatriation has been noteworthy since the 1980s. All these migratory flows of Cypriots were the result of economic and political developments on the island. Immigration, in any case, was a solution to the urgent need for job search and livelihood. As part of the research project "Establishment of a Local Museum and Archive of the Community of Idalion" 2004-present, a series of interviews were conducted with Dalites living in England. In these testimonies, which in any case constitute a journey in the Cypriot migration, issues related to the daily life of immigrants (professional search and rehabilitation, housing, difficulties of integration, socialization, etc.) emerge at the first level. In a second "reading" of the testimonies and completely intertwined with the above, issues such as women's emancipation, relations with the metropolises, issues of self-identification and identity of immigrants and especially their children are highlighted.

**Haralambaki Katerina Maria, "The 100 Days Protest". The organization of Greek University teachers and the struggle for recognition and equality**

This paper is about the scientific faculty sector protest at University of Athens in 1978 and its analysis through protests and reactions of assistants and curators against the law 815, of Karamanlis government. The proposals' aim is to highlight the importance and the role of raid, shaping the university-in-change, focusing on the pursuit of industry recognition for equitable, non-hierarchical work in universities. Through today's oral testimonies of strikers at that time, this announcement examines the demands for work recognition inside universities as a vital part of their function and the demand for equal opportunities in employment and safeguarding scientific progress. Active participation of members in academic community, is also emphasized, based on substantive scientific characteristics and didactics and the wider demand for institutional restructuring, which is the peak of a public reflection on the shape of universities, the hierarchy and the production of knowledge and research, the ways of struggle and struggle within them, the form of trade unionism, the creation of professional and brotherly conscience.

**Ioannidis Stefanos, Revisiting the “radicalization” of factory workers in the 1970s: what can oral sources tell us?**

In the mid-1970s, the collapse of all three authoritarian regimes in Southern Europe (Portugal, Greece, Spain) and the transitions to democracy were accompanied by an upsurge in social movements, including the workers' movement. Factory workers were especially active, organizing in committees or unions and going on strike, before and especially after the democratic transitions had been triggered. Their behavior has been attributed to a general "social radicalization" that spread amongst various social groups. Under the light cast by the events of 1968 in France and 1969 in Italy, research assumed that the workers' "social radicalization" intertwined harmoniously with the "political radicalization" of the far-Left and radical socialists. Meanwhile, the traditional Left largely heeded the calls of provisional or "revolutionary" governments to abstain from a transition-threatening "extremism". In the case of Greece, where new factory committees and unions were being set up after the collapse of the dictatorship in July 1974, opportunities to assist or even lead factory strikes were indeed created, both for the far Left and the militants of the radical, socialist party (PASOK). But there is evidence to suggest that the emerging relationships were far from harmonious; on the contrary, attempts to impose an imaginary working-class identity and practice on factory workers resulted in a series of compromises and tensions between the leaders and the union base. Using interviews conducted with former factory workers and unionists in the home electrical appliance production sector, the presentation explores this interaction, with an aim of providing a better understanding of the emergence of a new workers' subjectivity during the transitions to democracy.

**Jarzabek Marcin. An oral history of Polish rail workers, or living railway history from 'a state within a state' to 'business like all other business'**

Since the end of the Second World War, the railway history in Poland went through trajectories parallel to the global trends in the economy. First, the railway as state entrepreneurship in communist Poland constituted the biggest employer and the primary means of transportation. Then, since the late 1970s, it has gradually faced technological backwardness and lost rivalry with car transportation. Finally, after the fall of communism, in the 1990s and 2000s, it went through neoliberal reorganisation and reduction processes. Railway employees could experience all these transitions within one lifespan. The paper is based on a broad research project on the oral history of Polish rail workers. Since 2020 I have conducted biographical interviews with the employees of various ranks: from track workers to management and professionals. Those stories, dated back to the 1950s, allow tracing the transformation of labour on the railway as reflected in the autobiographical narratives. I argue that there are at least three levels of transformation that the labour history of the railway has gone through within the last 50 years: (1) technological (due to the underdevelopment, steam traction was still present in Poland in the 1980s); (2) organisational (from the centralised and structured autonomous monopolists to the loose structure of different companies with some corporate management style); and (3) ideological (from the prestigious uniform formation and its mythical ethos to the deconstruction of that myth). My presentation will focus on how the work position and experience differ interviewees' perspectives on these three dimensions.

**Kazamias Giorgos, War, foreign occupation and work: the enclaved inhabitants of the region of Kyrenia, Cyprus and working life, 1974-1976**

How is working life affected by extraordinary negative events, such as war and/or foreign occupation? This is the question this paper attempts to examine and perhaps reply to. The



group presented are the Greek Cypriot inhabitants of the region of Kyrenia, Cyprus. Farmers and livestock owners in their majority, the group presented chose to remain in their homes and not follow their fellow-countrymen and -women when they fled the Turkish invasion. The presentation draws from a corpus of oral testimonies of enclaved persons, collected in the 1990s. The invasion and occupation led to the eventual displacement of all the formerly enclaved persons, most within two years of the invasion. Some spent periods of enclavement between a few months to up to two years in their home villages. Some of the questions we will attempt to reply to are: how did these persons meet the challenges of the extraordinary conditions they were facing? How did they solve the problems that they were faced with and that stemmed from the departure of their own social and professional milieu and sometimes by their replacement by Turkish Cypriots or Turkish settlers in their villages? Could they continue their working life in the occupied areas? How long did this activity last and why did they leave eventually?

### **Karakioulafi Christina, Facing successive crises: actors' working experiences during the periods of economic and pandemic crisis**

This paper focuses on the working experiences of actors during the periods of economic and pandemic crisis, drawing on the findings of a qualitative empirical study (based on 37 semi-structured interviews) conducted between September and November 2020. Already before the outbreak of the economic crisis, the actors' labour market showed evidence of deregulation, as well as employment precariousness and economic insecurity. However, during the economic crisis, these phenomena intensified, and the situation worsened after the breakdown of the collective agreement (CBA) for actors in the independent theatre, resulting in: the introduction of individual agreements, daily, or at best three-month contracts; the generalisation of undeclared and unpaid work; the diminution of wages; the extension of payments per hour or per performance; the highly common situation of unpaid rehearsals; payment as a percentage of the performance's tickets, all this in combination with increasing unemployment within the profession. The first lockdown of March 2020 and the closure of theatres brought to the fore the above-mentioned long-standing labour problems in the sector, amplifying them and intensifying actors' labour and economic uncertainty, while many actors (as other artists) were not able to benefit from the support measures. Although experiences of precarious work and economic insecurity are considered commonplace, as a 'normality' of artists' working lives, the pandemic has challenged even this 'normal insecurity' by provoking a layered or additional insecurity.

### **Karouta Dora, Women's work in the construction of a road network in Western Macedonia**

This proposal, as evidenced by its title, intends to examine the role of women in the countryside of Western Macedonia, through the examples of Pentalofos Kozani and Eptachori Kastoria, focusing on their work with the Engineer of the National Army. This wage labor, forced at first, lasted from 1948 to 1952 and resulted in the construction of the provincial road network, in order to access the difficulties faced by the National Army, during the Civil War. However, its importance lies in the consequences of this work, both in the social and in the personal life of these women. Consequences which are one of the various mechanisms of the social transition of the countryside of Western Macedonia in the post-war period. More specifically, using as the core of the study oral testimonies of residents of the aforementioned

areas, an attempt is made to highlight both the mental and social mechanisms that rearranged the daily life and gender relations of the area until the 1950s.

#### **Kondylatou Dimitra & Despina Nazou. «In the shade of the season». Film screening and discussion**

"In the shade of the season», D. Kondylatou' s film, tourism forms the framework in which women workers, either as owners of small hotel units, or as employees in the reception or cleaning sector, share their experiences of their work through which tourism acquires its subjective "ontologies". They also reflect on their gender biographies through the "explicit" but also the "unspoken" in the hotel spaces and their private domestic place. The presentation will focus a) on the screening of the 22-minute film "**In the shade of the season**" and b) on a 15-minute commentary by the director-researcher Dimitra Kondylatou and the social anthropologist Despina Nazou. Both of them, in a critical perspective on the film, will raise issues of gender working identities in the tourism hospitality industry, as they intersect with the nationality, class and the women's cultural backgrounds. Also, the ways of performing all the above actions in the intercultural - contact zones of the "intermediate spaces" of the hotels - where asymmetric and hierarchical working relations are produced- will be commented. These relations also shape the content of intercultural encounters with tourists using the cultural idioms of "hospitality" and "family" with which the " gendered emotional work" is expressed in the the discourse of the Greek tourism market. Methodological issues concerning the complex use of oral interviews and the recording of "intermediate spaces" to produce visual material - in this case a video-essay - within the framework of ethnographic and artistic research will also be discussed.

#### **Koulafeti Iliana & Maria Christodoulou, "Labour refugees" within the walls of Nicosia, 1963-1964**

The Greek and Turkish Cypriot inter-communal unrest in Cyprus (1963-1964) caused suffering on many levels. One of them was the economy and market with consequences such as unemployment, reduced mobility and the 'refugisation' of businesses, owners and workers. By the term 'labour refugees' we identify people who had been forced out as a result of the unrest and therefore either lost their jobs, their businesses or – at best – managed to transfer them from the Turkish Cypriot enclave – which had been systematically forming on the north side of walled Nicosia from 1958 onwards – to the Republic of Cyprus controlled areas. This paper intends to present the stories of Greek Cypriots who were active in and financially supported walled Nicosia's streets, which after the intercommunal riots of 1963-1964 fell within the Turkish Cypriot enclave of Nicosia. Methodologically, this paper will be based on: (i) oral testimonies of four groups of people: (a) owners of business, which were lost or relocated to new trade streets, (b) workers who became unemployment, (c) people who represented the labour rights or the government, (d) locals and (ii) primary sources, such as the press and state records.

#### **Kourtis Giannis, Apprenticeship in post-war Greece. Ruptures and renegotiation of work identities**

The present paper will attempt to look into the various forms of apprenticeship at the postwar Greece during the crucial decades '40 and '50 as well as the possible turning points or breaches that formed the work identities of the subjects. Basic acceptance is that labour is

relation, identity, physical fulfillment, creation of subjectivity (self-image) on a personal and collective basis. The primary material consists of storytelling by men and women who apprenticed and became craftsmen at manual professions such as shoemaker, barber, dressmaker. By using the oral history tools, we drew data concerning the apprenticeship of the subjects, the turning points they dealt with when they faced facts that influenced their lives, facts that were not the outcome of their own deeds: inland immigration, closure or modification of the companies, specialization loss. The tools used to collect the research data were: semi-structured interviews, research log that was kept by the researcher during the meetings and meditative texts motivated by the storytellings. During the examination of the apprenticeship, we investigated forms of informal (by the side of a professional/master) and formal apprenticeship (in an organized institution with definite curriculum) concerning the specific crafts. A fundamental question was how the storytellers were introduced to the trade secrets and if these stages included periods of voluntary work or delayed their practice in order to use the subjects as assistants to the existing companies. We investigated security conditions and work strategies which lead to personal independence and disengagement from salaried work, as well as work relations and possible experiences of inequality and exploitation.

#### **Kozlova, Inga. Life strategies of Ukrainian migrants outside the home country (Case of Warsaw)**

This text will be based on data collected in 1-17 of March 2019 in Poland in the boundaries of the sociological research project “The Challenges of Modern Migration: The Ukrainian Community in Poland,” which was conducted by a team of Department of Sociology, Ukrainian Catholic University. The research consisted of two parts: qualitative and quantitative and was conducted in 6 cities of Poland (Warsaw, Wroclaw, Gdansk, Krakow, Lublin, Poznan). Was collected 400+ questionnaires in each town (total amount 3415) and ten in-depth interviews in each of these six cities (total amount of in-depth interviews - 60). This text will be based on the qualitative part of this project, which was conducted in Warsaw and consist of 10 in-depth interviews with Ukrainian migrants (men and women of different age, qualifications and social status). The focus of the research was ways of adaptation and life strategies of the labor migrants, also educational migrants, which became labor migrants too. In the process of analysis was identified such strategies as:

- escaping of reality
- a finding of your-self (business and public activism)
- a search of a more politically and financially secure life

The main idea of the text is to show the context of these models and ways of its transformations.

#### **Kratka Lenka, «It Was Our Way to Market Economy». Post-1989 Economic Transformation in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic through the Eyes of Former Socialist Managers**

The paper concentrates on the economic transformation in Czechoslovakia (after the split of the federation in 1992 in the Czech Republic) as it was experienced and co-created by “socialist managers.” It means by men and, to a much lesser extent, women who suddenly – after the velvet revolution – faced dramatic changes in their professional lives and careers,

especially change in ownership of “their” enterprise, their employer in the form of privatization of huge state property. However, the privatization process was not only about change of ownership but also about the change in the whole “world of work.” And the impact of this upheaval was twofold: positive when the company was successfully privatized and transformed; and negative when liquidated. The paper is based on one hundred oral history interviews with former “socialist” managers who mainly reflect the privatization process issue, broadly the change of the ownership structure and, consequently, the transformation of society. Their chances, threats, and opportunities in a new economic environment are also discussed.

### **Kritsotaki Despo, Young professionals in a new field: Working in “mental hygiene” in post-war Greece (1950s-1960s)**

In 1950s- and 1960s-Greece “mental hygiene” was viewed as an innovative method for dealing with mental health problems on the basis of prevention and early intervention, community care and social rehabilitation. Its chief promoter was the Mental Hygiene Sector of the Royal National Foundation, which was founded in 1956, became a private law entity in 1964 and was placed under state supervision in 1970. The Sector, with services in Athens, Thessaloniki, Piraeus and Patrai, was staffed by male and female professionals – psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers – most of whom were young and represented professions and scientific approaches that were just making their appearance in Greece. Based on 16 oral history interviews, mostly with staff of the services in Athens, the presentation explores the working experience of these young and new professionals in this novel institution that was established within the rather traditional, but rapidly changing, Greek society of the 1950s and 1960s. The presentation focuses on the construction of their professional identity through a) the relationships and hierarchies within the Sector; b) their interactions with mental health professionals and agents outside the Sector; and c) their everyday work with their patients. The life stories analysed in this paper highlight the multifaceted experience of working in mental healthcare in post-war Greece, the interrelations of this experience with gender, age, social class and scientific expertise, and, finally, its important role in the formation of the subjectivity of men and women, especially of those of young age.

### **Kyameti Mary, Modern Potters of Samos: People and Objects, Life Stories and Embodied Action**

The biographical narratives of four families of modern Samian potters and the “social life” (Appadurai and Kopytoff, 1986) of ceramics reflect the history of a group of “craftsmen” and also the changes of the Samian society with the entry of tourism. Periods of prosperity, gaps and regenerations of the potter’s profession with its gendered connotations, the dialectical relations of people and things, of society and material world appear in the life stories of modern potters. Ceramics as handicrafts, as useful objects or souvenirs mediate the narratives of their creators, they “act” in the world and they are part of the self of the “subjects” (Gell 1998, Tilley 2001, Petridou 2016). At the heart of bio-narratives there are connections of people and things, there are also gender meanings of work and professional reorientations, and there are results that object itself has “produced” in the subject (Tilley, 2001), in the body and in the experiential experience of the social world (Petridou, 2016), in *being* and in *being in the world* (Tilley, 2012). At the same time, ceramics as a ‘total social phenomenon’ (Mauss,

1999 and Karsenti, 2000) project the embodied experience through the gender exploration and the cultural standardization (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). The findings came from the field research and from biographical narrative interviews of eight contemporary potters with an emphasis on life experiences from their profession and parallel from a phenomenological investigation of the creators' direct embodied experiences in relation to their handicrafts.

**Loizou-Voulgaraki Dimitra, Magdalini Maniou, Maria Menegaki, The role of women workers in MYKOBAR through personal testimonies**

As early as the 1960s and 1970s, personal narrative has been enshrined as a way of approaching historical events, as an autonomous type of historical sources, which within the appropriate methodological framework can provide valuable data for both historical and sociological research. The subject of the paper is the role of women workers in the MYKOBAR mines, as recorded in the personal testimonies of both women and men. MYKOBAR was a mining company, which operated between 1955 and 1985 in Mykonos for the exploitation of baryte ore. This heavy industrial activity had a decisive impact on the island's rural local economy and society. The employment of women (mainly in the hand sorting of the ore), especially in a highly male-dominated activity, such as mining, is of particular interest.

Through personal testimonies, this work aims to raise issues related to gender segregation of labor and to detail the working profile of women workers in the mines, as well as their daily interaction with their male colleagues (known as "Metalleiotes" in Mykonos) in relation to their job duties. The personal narrative, characterized by its direct expression and spontaneity, provides valuable information not only on the role of women in mining production but also on the history of a small society that is not captured by the lens of "official", "national" historiography.

**Mamoulaki Elena, Women and work in rural Crete: A comparative approach to the agricultural and tourist sectors through biographical narratives**

The presentation explores aspects of the relationship between women and work in rural Crete and examines the social, cultural and economic conditions that contribute to its formation. The research focuses on two towns characteristic for the island in terms of economic activity and social life. Mountain town A is based on the agricultural sector and is considered to retain to a greater extent "traditional" cultural elements. The seaside town B is based on tourism and seems to follow more "modern" trends. Both settlements are similar in terms of population, infrastructure and services and are equidistant from a large urban center of the island. The research is based on a number of interviews with the method a) of biographical narrative approach and b) of the semi-structured interviews with women of different ages who come from or live in these two towns. The research explores the experiences, expectations and frustrations of the subjects through the discourses and representations that concern the past and the present of the work experience but also the life plans regarding the "building" of the professional prospects for the future. Noting the rather limited study of labor issues in rural areas and in particular its gender dimensions, the presentation summarizes the first findings of an ongoing research on a) the views, attitudes and strategies of informants regarding work, family and the community, b) the ways in which female identities are constructed through (paid and unpaid) work, and finally c) the meanings of care as a (non) profession.

**Matthaiou Olga, Roula Paraskevaidou, Yannis Pikilidis (Oral History Group of Katerini,)**  
**Social integration of vulnerable groups, life stories, gender structure of individuals in the area of Katerini**

In the last 20 years in the European area and within the development of the Social Economy sector, there is a tendency for the establishment and operation of productive units, organized on a commercial basis and in real-life working conditions to create job positions for socially vulnerable groups. Therefore, new organizational/legal forms, such as the “Social Cooperatives” and the “Social Businesses” appeared and have been the most popular forms for undertaking the said activities within the last years. These new social entrepreneurship models are gaining ground within Greece. More specifically, in the area of Katerini, in the region of Central Macedonia there are three active businesses of the Social Economy sector (SCE: Social Cooperative Enterprises) addressing socially vulnerable groups (unemployed people, individuals with psychosocial issues, refugees). Through the present research focusing around narratives of the lives of individuals, their personal stories, their expectations/frustrations, beliefs/refutations, the conditions and practices that structure the individuals involved based on their gender are looked into. The research also focuses on the role of businesses in the local economy and their relation to the local public institutions and the society.

**Otrishchenko Natalia. “On the one hand it was the crisis, on the other hand, it was possible to do a lot of things”: Professional strategies of Lviv urban planners during 1990s**

What does it mean to be a professional? How do people negotiate their expertise during the period of social changes (and speak about it three decades later)? How do they describe their work experiences during political and economic transformations? The paper is going to follow the biographies of a number of Lviv architects and urban planners. It will develop on ruptures and continuances in the field of urban expertise between the state socialism and the establishment of a free market in Ukraine from the perspective of work everydayness and both institutional and individual strategies. Development of professional careers during the late 1980s and the early 1990s is the core of my presentation. I am going to explore how the collapse of the USSR has influenced “biographical turns” in lives of Lviv urban planners. My story is zooming into specific case, but it is also contributing to the larger discussion about the sense of expertise and personal agency during the times of political, economic, and social ruptures. The research is based on twenty in-depth semi-structured interviews with architects and urban planners recorded in 2018-20. The majority of this cohort entered the profession in 1970s and remained there for decades. The presentation is developed within my post-doc project “Urban Experts and Changing Cities: Reshaping the Professional Field (1970s-2010s)” affiliated with the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe and the Leibniz Center for Contemporary History in Potsdam.

**Pesce Boris. Revolts, organizations, social environment of foreign laborers in Piedmont from 2012 to today. The cases of Castelnuovo Scrivia and Saluzzo**

The essay, using interviews with immigrants and also to analyze the use of oral testimony in public representations of work, sources from Digital History such as YouTube, Facebook, articles and interviews on sites, investigate from a historical social point of view the two revolts foreign laborers in Piedmont in Castelnuovo Scrivia and in Saluzzo from 2012 to today. The research starts from statistical sources, bibliography, but, in order to deepen them in

aspects that are difficult to access, such as the subjectivity of choices concerning work or the identity, use the method of micro-history (to reconstruct, given a limited space, the choices of individuals and the dynamics of a small group such as the ghettos) because only thus can we describe the interpersonal relationships that can shed light on the questions analyzed. Starting from a very brief historical overview of the laborers in the Po Valley from 1950 and migration policies, we want to outline a brief historical social profile of today's immigrant laborers in this area (geographical origin, age, studies, profession, precariousness). The housing conditions of the workers are then deepened because here as in other historical precedents such as Rosarno, Nardò, it is often the factor at the base of the struggles. We then focus on the case studies and in particular on trade unions set up by the workers, links with the existing trade unions and associations, associations or committees born with the struggle for solidarity. Finally, we want to outline a comparison between these experiences and others of the recent past such as Nardò or Agro Pontino.

**Petousi Vasiliki, Evgenia Petropoulou & Irimi Aboumogli, Gender, age, family and communal relations: narratives of women in/and for stock raising**

Sociological and other perspectives tend to approach work, occupations and the conditions that shape them within urban contexts. Studies that look at rural settings tend to focus on the work and occupational status of men, primarily farmers and secondarily stockbreeders. If women's work is studied, it is in farming and only rarely in stockbreeding. Even then, women's lives and their occupational engagement with animal husbandry are perceived as secondary, ancillary, incidental to the men's occupational activity which is constituted as focal. This way the process of constructing women as gendered workers in interaction with hierarchical family, kinship and community relations is silenced and overlooked. In the present work, based on the biographies of two young women actively engaged in animal husbandry in a mountainous area of the country, we investigate issues of gender and age as they structure subjectivities, and we explore the significant of family, kinship and community relations.

**Polykarpou Vasiliki, The city of Saint Quentin as a crossroads of experiences and contradictions: schoolteachers' narratives in a small town of Picardie**

Arriving in the city of Saint Quentin to work at Condorcet High School, I knew I would encounter unprecedented situations there, as this was my first time living in a rural area of northern France. The strict program and discipline of school life gave some space for human communication and interaction between employees mainly during the lunch time. Through these circumstances I met two of my interlocutors, who were teachers at school and with whom I met again to share their stories with me. The story of Th. and E. piqued my interest from the first time I talked with them because in a way they brought back again and again the issue of nomadism and the lasting mobilisations caused in their lives by the multiple crises they experienced, social, political or even personal crises. Through their words emerge the engendered, class, racial and religious aspects of their common world, that of working in public education in a small French town. At the same time, their narratives bring to the fore events that shaped their subjectivity and played a decisive role in their choices, such as the Algerian war, immigration, the rise of the far right, and other important moments that I recorded in order to learn more about them and for our meeting place, the city of Saint Quentin.

### **Pontikaki Georgia & Styliani Tsangali, On routes of precarity: The case of an employee in the courier and delivery sector**

In the context of neoliberalism and post-fordist organisation of labor, contemporary labor landscape is to a large extent shaped by conditions of precarity and flexibility. Regarding the Greek case, empirical surveys highlight an already pre-existing precarious situation that became amplified and broadened during the financial and social crisis, creating an impact on different aspects of working people's life (e.g. Karakioulafi et al., 2014). Labor continues to constitute an active agent of subjectification, thus contributing to the constitution of identities that refer to the normalisation of precarious conditions, as well as to emerging individual or collective practices of resistance, that are adopted by the subjects themselves opposing these conditions (Kesisoglou & Nikolopoulou, 2019; Norbäck, 2019). The present research, conducted in the context of a postgraduate class of Sociology Department of University of Crete, undertakes the case study of an employee in the courier and delivery sector featuring long-term precarious employment experience and involvement in an endeavor of organising a grassroots union in Rethymno. Examining the way flexible and precarious occupation is experienced and the forms of coping with it, the study aims to highlight the different types of meaning-bestowal on labor that are produced throughout the narrator's working life course and to portray the way the working self is constituted in the circumstances of precarity. Presented data were produced via biographical narrative interview and the biographical narrative approach is adopted for the analysis. Implications emerge concerning the dynamic interaction between enablement of resistance practices by the working individual and the bestowal of meaning on labor on the one hand, as well as the formation of working self, on the other.

### **Poyyaprath Rayaroth Nisha. Battles in Tents: Tales from Indian Circus**

Circus industry in the Indian subcontinent often figures in the common sense as a place of extreme exploitation with dangerous working conditions, wretched living conditions and miserable wages. But if one looks at the history of the labour unions in India we would hardly find a circus workers' union. We may bear in mind that circus flourished in North Malabar, South India along with the Communist movement and trade unions in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Trade unionism of circus workers, and entertainment industry in general, had been limited in the west also where industrial capitalism had hit its peak. Ironically, long before a circus workers' union came into being, the circus company owners had formed an organization, All India Circus Association in 1953. This paper explores the tumultuous history of the formation of a circus labor union in the 1980s, Indian Circus Employees' Union under the tutelage of Indian National Trade Union Congress, the only existing trade union for circus workers in India. This exciting class battle will be explored through various narratives gleaned from interviews, personal memorabilia and publications including notices, booklets and the mouthpiece publications of the worker's union and owner's organization, *Circus Worker* and *Big Top* respectively. Another significant aspect is the delineation between the performing artistes and other workers, an unsettling division of 'art' and 'labor', 'high' and 'low'.

### **Saleniece Irena & Maija Grizāne. Work habits and welfare: experience of Latvian people before and after World War Two**



During World War II Latvia was incorporated into the Soviet Union. The memories of young people of the transition period (born in the 1920-30s) from the collection of Daugavpils University Oral History Centre allow us revealing how Latvians reacted to the process of sovietisation. During the interwar period as a result of agrarian reform in the Republic of Latvia, many families were engaged in agricultural work as rightful landowners with sense of social stability and opportunities in the trade of agricultural products within the state-organised exports, so welfare was a result of hard labour. The life stories demonstrate that from the very childhood Latvians were taught own initiative farming and the ideal of householder, who is thoughtful, laborious and responsible for his own life. There were not many rich people in Latvia (except Riga), so material welfare and fortune was a dream of almost everyone. Communist ideologues denied private property as a source of exploitation and promulgated hatred towards “bloodsuckers”– rich farmers and the bourgeoisie. The new Soviet people had to be proud of belonging to low-income segments, which was vice versa in the interwar period. Material welfare, which was treated by communists as “private property” and “philistinism”, was among the values inherited from the interwar period. The majority of Latvians did not accept nationalisation of their properties and collectivisation of land in the course of sovietisation and continued high valuating material goods, as well as decent work habits.

**Smyrneos Antonis & Eleni Barboudaki, Teacher’s evaluation as a means of enforcing state control in the post-war period: Narrating the compliance with the rule**

The human body is the purpose and objective of authority. It is put in "treatment" and "training" to respond, to be controlled, to obey, under a robust surveillance system with strict hierarchy and absolutely restrictive rules of control of the corps. This architecture of power, as described by M. Foucault, is a theoretical framework for understanding and interpreting forms of control, such as teacher’s evaluation. Teacher’s evaluation as a means of forcing control in the post-war years is the subject of this research. The centralization and authoritarianism of the Greek state is presented in the narratives of persons who experienced evaluation first as students and then as teachers themselves. Describing the enforcement of order, the control that the system exercised over them through its officials, the degree of their obedience or the form of disobedience they showed, their personal choices and motivations, they essentially narrate their lives until their retirement.

**Strangleman Tim. Listening to working life narratives: revealing the loss, attachment and meaning in work (Keynote speech)**

In this paper I will reflect on what narratives of working lives can tell us both about the work people do, but also wider issues around economic life. Over the last four decades there has been tremendous change in the world of work with many traditional industries undergoing profound transformation or have been completely obliterated altogether. We, as oral historians, occupy an important place in recording and preserving the thoughts, ideas, aspirations and memories about work now and a lost world of work rapidly disappearing physically as well as from memory. The paper draws on the author’s three decades of research into industrial decline and deindustrialisation and will draw on his new book *Voices of Guinness: An Oral History of the Park Royal Brewery*, (Oxford 2019).

### **Soros Giorgos, An alternative way of unionising! Grassroot syndicalists' experiences in Greece and Spain**

Over the past years, tens of grassroot unions, that are especially appealing to young employees as well as migrant workers, have made their appearance in Greece. Typically, these unions are committed to collective bargaining, deeply democratic and participative and highlight the importance of their members' activism. In Spain, similarly to Greece, the two great confederations, UGT and CCOOs, not being able to respond to employer aggressiveness and losing members who have been inactive, are longing for the old times of collective agreements. In contrast to big unions, the smaller, radical unions of CGT and CNT have amidst the crisis increased not only their members' numbers, but also their ability to mobilise. Deriving from the disintegration of the historical, civil war era CNT, these unions have strong reference to anarchosyndicalism. Considering the re-emergence of anarchosyndicalism and other forms of alternative radical syndicalist action in Greece (where anarchosyndicalism was prevalent in the early days of the labour union movement) the present study aims to explore the narratives of the subjects themselves considering their involvement not only with labour movement, but also with formal syndicalist organisations that pursue a rupture in mainstream unionism. More specifically, we seek to examine similarities and differences in their experiences of commitment to grassroot syndicalism, their relations to big unions as well as broader social movements (feminist, ecologist etc) and prospects of advancement of movement syndicalism in today's conditions of extreme financial and social crises. For this purpose, 22 qualitative, semi-structured interviews with grassroot union members were conducted in Greece and Spain.

### **Termen Lavinia. Women voices and narratives about migration and work. The stories of Lina, Ana, Felicia and Viorica**

In the last twenty years thousands of Romanian women left their homes, children and families to go and work abroad, mainly in Italy. This is also the story of my mother, Lina and her friends: Viorica, Felicia and Ana. All of them are from the same village, they went to Italy at same time, lived and worked in the same city, Napoli. My research is based on their life stories. In fact, the research started with my mother's story and I extended it interviewing her three friends too. All of them were in their thirties and forties, married with children when they left to work in Italy as housekeepers and caregivers of the elderly, badante in Italian . For all four this was the first working experience abroad without knowing any foreign language and for two of them was first time to travel outside of Romania. During the interviews I noticed that their memories about the years they spent working in Italy have two faces: traumatic memories because they left behind their children and family and memories about how the time there gave them more confidence and strength as women. This study attempts to analyze and describe (1) how the working experience abroad for these four women was a turning point in their life stories (2) what their narratives communicate about work and empowering women.

### **Theodosiou Aspasia & Eleni Kallimopoulou, Artistic labour on the music stage: Greek female singers and forms of affective labour**

Despite the general belief that an adequate understanding of the musical phenomenon presupposes, among other things, an understanding of the work conditions of those engaged in music making, the distinction between music as work and music as art is not often explored.

At the same time, the common theme of music work is rarely included in the otherwise captivating discursive field, both academic and public, of music practice. The present paper joins the recent turn to the study of creative and artistic labour, acknowledging that in the context of post-fordist modes of production, the artist becomes an emblematic figure of broader transformations taking place in the work-field. The paper focuses on aspects of the working lives of female singers who are active in the fields of *entehno* (art-song), and *laiko-dimotiko* (urban-folk) music, and work in a variety of music clubs (*magazia, kendra*), aiming to highlight the ways in which they themselves narrate and give meaning to their work experience. We approach the wider field of artistic / creative work by looking at the ways in which "immaterial" and "affective labour" (Hardt & Negri, Lazaratto) is embedded in processes of learning and performing music, in order to broaden our understanding of the multiple ways in which music acquires value. More specific questions explored include the following: What are the implications of acknowledging music as work for the widespread notion that music is an aesthetic practice that is closely intertwined with the production of affect / emotion, entertainment and fun? How are gender and emotion involved in the production of various forms of music work and musical subjectivities? How is precarity intertwined with racialized and gendered artistic labour? Our discussion will draw upon semi-structured interviews conducted with female singers face-to-face and online, in the context of a broader ethnographic research project.

#### **Tsamourtzi Christina, The most important labour unions of Giannitsa through the stories of trade unionists**

The paper highlights the rich but unknown history of the labor movement in the city of Giannitsa, as formed from 1974 to early 2000's. The main source was the interviews of former syndicalists of various trade unions, as the city had a dynamic labor movement and their archives. The aim was to present as fully as possible the action of the most important unions through the people who formed them. The main questions that were asked concerned the development of the labor movement in the province, but also the issues of creating a different identity, that of the trade unionist. From their establishment until their final cessation, the Unions played an active role in mobilizing the workers of the area, in defending and securing their rights. It is worth noting that the unions that will be presented were dissolved in their majority when the factories in the area were closed. The narrations of the former members were rich and enlightening. In the case of the informants, their trade union status was an important part of their identity and proves how dynamic the labor and trade union movement was, especially during the post 1974 period, and how important it was for people to realize their class identity and vigorously claim the best conditions in the workplace.

#### **Tzifopoulos Menelaos, 'Oops, what now?': Teachers' narratives about the renegotiation of their role during the Covid-19 pandemic**

The teaching profession during the Covid-19 pandemic seemed to be renegotiated, in the context of the Self-Determination Theory. Questions that the teacher was asked to answer and concern his micro-level are related to his autonomy, the updating of his knowledge and skills (acquisition of global literacy skills) and the relationships/cooperation with the students, as well as with his colleagues. This new working condition of uncertainty and insecurity scared, disappointed and "terrorized" the teacher at an international level. In such a context, Greek teachers in this presentation come with their narratives to give us their subjective "truth",

their own phenomenological perspective on how they responded to their teaching in this period of health, social, political and educational crisis. Attempting, initially empathetically and then interpretively, critically, to invade the 'world' of three (3) teachers who teach in primary schools in the Prefecture of Thessaloniki, it is understood that teachers reveal "hidden" aspects of their teaching role, the reconstruction of their professional identity and their adaptation to new conditions (differentiated teaching methods, differentiation of the means of communication and interaction, adoption of new forms of assessment). As noted by the participants, teaching in such a period of crisis was a process of "violent" re-emergence of their role and their didactic-pedagogical practices, which often deviated from the systematic deficits in education-training, differentiated-adapted material and, of course, with the living conditions of students and their families.

### **Tsingra Nikoletta, Recording and analyzing the professional experiences of Kalymnian sponge divers from the perspective of social history**

Kalymnos is a small geographical island that belongs to the Dodecanese island cluster and it is known worldwide for its sponge diving action even nowadays, after being impressed on folk narrative and memory, as "the island of sponge divers." Therefore, in this presentation the profession of sponge diving will be approached by the perspective of social history. The axes on which the recommendation is based on, are the following: 1)the organization of the sponge diving profession and consequently the changes that have taken place over the years (due to the technological evolution of the season and consequently the method of diving, as there have been differences between divers and sponge divers), 2)the field of expertise each one that composes the sponge diving "body," 3)the forms of employment, 4)the social relationships which have been developed, 5)the working culture was created. Their long – term migration from the island, also the problems and the difficulties they encountered during their employment outside of Greek coastline where they worked. On the one hand, they accentuate the sponge diving identity as a distinctive and peculiar professional activity. On the other hand, emerges the identity of Kalymnian sponge divers as a really hard worker with lots of physical dangers. Targeted and discrete, Oral History as a distinct field of the Science of History and oral testimonies as Oral History's tool, will enhance the sponge profession (history from below). The presentation of this proposal will be based on the oral testimonies of both elderly – retired sponge divers as well as youngers. Having as a guide each individual memory and their personal testimonies, will be expressed subjectivity for the past in the regard of the present.

### **Tsiolis Giorgos, Critical approaches to the concept of precarity through biographical narratives**

The concepts of precarity and flexibility have been associated with post-Fordist transformations of work and labour. The concept of precarity, used both academically and in public discourses, often describes lives that are characterized by economic, emotional and social insecurity, temporariness and frequent shifts from employment to unemployment. Critical approaches to the concept of precarity have underlined that its excessive use renders it both analytically weak and apolitical. Following this line of critique, highlights that precarity is not merely a condition that cuts across classes or a condition that characterizes contemporary working lives but it is mainly a condition related to social positions. By adopting a biographical narrative approach and analyzing working lives or people who have

experienced informal and unstable work positions, we are planning to discuss how finding work, constructing work identities as well as experiencing insecurity and vulnerability are intertwined with unequal access to economic resources, social positioning as well as complex networks and relations of life trajectories.

**Van Boeschoten Riki & Antonis Antoniou, From “smokestack nostalgia” to critical reflexivity: life stories about deindustrialization in crisis-ridden Greece**

This paper attempts to observe the deindustrialization process of Volos, industrial centre since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, through the life stories of workers who lived through the transition from the industrial era to post-industrial realities. Such narratives are of great interest for the study of deindustrialization, as they often cover both experiences of “prosperity” with vast employment opportunities lasting until the mid ‘80s, and experiences of personal and professional downfall in the next decades. We will use a corpus of 19 oral history interviews carried out in 2018 by students of the University of Thessaly. The analysis of this material so far has shown a wide variety of responses to factory closures, depending on class, gender, age, political attitudes and family history. In order to look deeper into this differentiation, we will focus more in particular on three life stories of workers of a successful factory which suddenly closed down in 2016. All three worked for over a decade on the same job in this company and took part in the activities of their trade union until the bitter end. Yet their narratives vary greatly in the importance each narrator attributes to “work” and to the experience of unemployment or precarity after closure or in the way he looks at the future.