SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE COMMONS: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING COLLECTIVE ACTION IN CRISIS-RIDDEN SOUTHERN EUROPE*

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Both social movement research and the literature on the commons provide rich accounts of the anti-austerity mobilizations and uprisings in southern Europe. Movement studies offer important insights regarding the context of mobilization and collective claim making. The commons literature emphasizes bottom-up practices of shared ownership, self-management, and social co-production that move beyond institutional solutions. Although both literatures highlight similar phenomena, they remain relatively unconnected. Their distance precludes a full grasp of the implications regarding the dynamic and abundant to-and-fro movement between protest-based politics and everyday forms of collective action in this region, which is heavily affected by the crisis' austerity management. Drawing on the South European context, this article rethinks key concepts addressed in both literatures (social movements-commons, activists-commoners, mobilization-commoning) and highlights how a conceptual synthesis can sharpen and (re)politicize the theorization of contemporary collective action in the everyday.

Scholars in the fields of social movement studies and the commons provide rich accounts of recent anti-austerity collective action through a wide variety of approaches (e.g., De Angelis 2017; della Porta 2015; Flesher Fominaya 2017). In this respect, both disciplines highlight loose organizational forms, the institution of alternative communities, and construction of collective imaginaries. In this article, however, we argue that the emergence of new forms of collective action focusing on the self-organization of everyday life, the provision of unofficial welfare services, and the creation of novel forms of social production and reproduction, particularly in the South European context during the global financial crisis, cannot be fully addressed by any of the two literatures alone.

On the one hand, social movement studies pay close attention to mobilization processes and impose strict limitations on the definition of social movement organizations (SMOs) that set important barriers in understanding these new forms of collective action. This issue is highlighted by social movement scholars using different definitions to describe recent grass-roots structures, such as direct social actions (Bosi and Zamponi 2015), alternative forms of resilience (Kousis and Paschou 2017), sustainable community movements (Forno and Graziano 2014). On the other hand, commons' scholars often isolate their cases from the historical—social, political, and cultural—context in which they emerge by placing an uneven emphasis on the economic-institutional aspects of common-pool resources (CPRs) and their governance

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(Ostrom 1990). At the same time, whilst more critical commons accounts usually provide solid narratives of their examples, they too often fail to provide a context-dependent account of how the commons and their actors are politically constituted through antagonism and the establishment of political boundaries (Bollier 2014; Hardt and Negri 2004).

We claim that the southern European experience in the post-2011 conjuncture is grounded on collective action processes that conceive social change not merely as an objective, but as a way of life. This opens promising research options. We take one of these to be the need to rethink social movement theory and a theory of the commons in light of one another through ways that are much more responsive to understanding social change and postcapitalist transformation as underlying characteristics of modern forms of collective action. Thus, our intervention should be seen as part of an emerging strand of collective action research that engages with the practical and theoretical interrelationships between new forms of sociopolitical organizing and contemporary social movements, especially after *los Indignados* and Occupy (Nunes 2021; Kioupkiolis and Katsambekis 2014; Dinerstein 2016). Our aim here is not to investigate whether the plurality of commons and solidarity initiatives constitute a social movement; but, rather, to suggest that the heuristic provided here by a theoretical synthesis between social movement studies and commons allows us to render southern European grassroots politics more intelligible. Against this background, the article attempts to stage a conversation between two theoretical approaches that have significantly shaped ongoing debates on the character, possibilities, and limitations of collective action. In doing so, it critically engages with and evaluates grassroots practices and forms of collective action in the aftermath of the Indignados' campaigns in 2011.

We argue that such a synthesis allows us to sketch a better understanding of the more plural mobilizations and prolific social practices manifested within collective action projects against neoliberal austerity in this particular region. Moreover, our synthesis seeks to account for the particular acts of identification and the type of political subjectivity that emerges through antagonism and the construction of new political projects. Finally, of particular importance here, is the way such actors construct new agentic articulations seeking to bring about social change in the organization of everyday life. However, for these phenomena and relations to be explored, there is first a need for both conceptual and theoretical clarification regarding a set of analytical categories employed by the two literatures: (1) social movements and SMOs-commons, (2) activists-commoners, and (3) mobilization-commoning.

The article is structured as follows: to empirically ground our theoretical exploration, the first part provides a brief illustration of the southern European context. With respect to Greece, our reflection is informed by extensive fieldwork research, involving a sum of 103 semi-structured interviews (with members of social centres, squats, grassroots unions, social clinics, collective kitchens, markets without middlemen and cooperatives), analysis of documents (announcements, reports, and other campaigning material), and participant observation conducted in fairs, festivals, and demonstrations in Athens and Thessaloniki between 2015 and 2018. With regards to Italy, Spain, and Portugal, our analysis is based on secondary literature and document analysis of founding declarations, campaigning announcements, and press releases of such projects. The second part of the article develops the theoretical logic that informs our account in establishing a relation among elements of the two literatures. After discussing the theoretical and analytical underpinnings of the research, we then turn to review the tripartite set of analytical distinctions in four steps (reactivation, deconstruction, abstraction, and commensuration) that allows us to demonstrate the relevance of our synthetic framework for understanding the forms of collective action emerged in crisis-ridden southern Europe. The article concludes with remarks about the potential of our conceptual synthesis to sharpen and (re)politicize the theorization of contemporary collective action.

EMPIRICAL CONTEXT: PROBLEMATIZING CRISIS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

The collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008 signaled the beginning of the latest financial crisis. As the crisis rapidly expanded to Europe, it mostly affected the national economies of the South. The impact of great public debt exposure was combined with bail-out programs in Greece and Portugal, as well as structural reforms and austerity cuts in Spain and Italy. To put it in a nutshell, the one and only remedy the EU, IMF, and the global markets pushed for in return for their "support" was the implementation of rescue programs based on austerity politics. The long-lasting austerity had devastating impact on the everyday life of local populations: wages and pensions were falling sharply, collective labor agreements had been removed, cuts in public spending figured as the only alternative, and official unemployment rates were increasing dramatically.

Against this backdrop, in 2011, a series of global uprisings peaked in the countries of southern Europe with the occupation of central squares by M12M (Portugal), *los Indignados* (Spain), and *Aganaktismenoi* (Greece). Although Italian mobilizations did not culminate in the same direction (Zamponi 2012), over several weeks, thousands of people appropriated the streets in the biggest cities of Italy expressing their discontent. Disaffection with political parties, dissent against austerity politics, and the forced economic adjustment were common elements uniting the protesters across the region (Della Porta 2015). The establishment of an incipient network of protest camps played a crucial role in the self-organization of struggles and self-management of the participants' everyday needs, mainly in Greece and Spain. The institution of popular assemblies, production of material infrastructures, and prefiguration of alternative ways of being and practicing in common were the catalyst in weaving an alternative problematization of the crisis's austerity management (Roussos 2019). Accordingly, despite their differences, such contentious events resulted in a vast opposition to neoliberal governance. More importantly though, the dismantling of national welfare systems gave birth to numerous commoning and solidarity structures that provided social welfare services from below, built social solidarity and economic alternatives, and prefigured another manner of organizing everyday life in common (Flesher Fominaya and Hayes 2017; Kousis and Paschou 2017; Malamidis 2020).

Greece could be characterized as a laboratory of grassroots social innovation, with time banks and community gardens (Dalakoglou and Vradis 2011), collective kitchens and open markets without middlemen (Vaiou and Kalandides 2016), and social clinics providing free primary healthcare services (Kotronaki and Christou 2019). Moreover, the recuperated factory of Vio.Me (Malamidis 2018) and the K136 initiative against the privatization of Thessaloniki's water company (Velegrakis and Frezouli 2016) are examples of contemporary struggles that have set forward plans for cooperative management.

Precarity and unemployment also brought to the forefront the rise of self-managed cooperatives in Spain. Spain's housing bubble triggered the emergence of the PAH (Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca), a grassroots network of horizontal organizations, which provides consultation to debtors, negotiates with banks, organizes demonstrations, and squats vacant apartments (García-Lamarca 2017). The Marea Blanca and Marea Verde mobilizations in health and education sectors, respectively, are similar forms of practical political intervention on the basis of direct-democracy and self-management (Lois-González and Piñeira-Mantiñán 2015).

With respect to Italy, the alternative food networks and solidarity purchasing groups are indicative. Although numbers vary, research shows that there were more than 1000 solidarity purchasing groups with more than 150 thousand participants in crisis-ridden Italy (Grasseni 2014). From critical consumerism and economic activist groups, markets and day-care centers, social centers holding informal welfare services, to the self-managed factories of RiMaflow and Officine Zero (Forno and Graziano 2019), the Italian context provides a variety of examples (Bosi and Zamponi 2015; Di Feliciantonio 2016).

Table 1. The Paradigmatic Cases

Social Solidarity Clinics and Pharmacies (Greece)	In context of widespread exclusion from the Greek national health system due to the rising number of uninsured and financially deprived citizens, a network of Social Solidarity Clinics and Pharmacies (SSCPs) started to emerge, seeking to counter the effects of the crisis's neoliberal management in the health sector and thus offering primary health services free of charge to Greeks and migrants. At the same time, the more than forty SSCPs that have been operating across Greece (Teloni and Adam 2018; Malamidis 2020), have been engaged in campaigns for universal access to the health system and mobilized their members and patients against austerity governance (Kotronaki and Christou 2019). Organized mostly at the local level, social clinics comprise of healthcare professionals and other citizens in solidarity. Decisions are taken through the members' general assembly, while the clinics reject funding from political parties, NGOs, and the state.
Platforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH) (Spain)	The PAH was created in Barcelona in February 2009 as an assembly-based initiative, seeking to provide support to citizens facing evictions. In the Indignados aftermath, PAH gained popularity among activists, grassroots organizations, and citizens. As a result, by 2014, 205 platforms emerged in all seventeen regions of Spain (Flesher Fominaya 2015). In the beginning of the crisis, PAH's main aim was to raise awareness, provide legal and moral support, and organize demonstrations against the intensification of evictions. However, beyond these movement-like repertoires and mobilization activities, it developed solidarity practices and strategies to reclaim, in a more practical way, the right to housing for all (Romanos 2014). Crucially, the platform neither acts on behalf of people threatened to lose their houses nor provides "specialist" assistance; rather, it aims to engage those affected through general assemblies and activities emphasizing mutual aid. The numerous platforms across Spain have prevented systematic evictions and also occupied empty houses and blocks held by financial institutions to transform them into social housing (Flesher Fominaya 2015).
Vio.Me (Greece)	Vio.Me S.A. was founded in 1982 as a subsidiary of Philkeram-Johnston S.A. in the outskirts of Thessaloniki, producing chemical products for the manufacturing sector. In 2011, the parent company went bankrupt. The former owners decided to abandon Vio.Me's plant, leaving the workers unpaid and facing unemployment. After fruitless deliberations with the previous administration, Vio.Me workers' union decided to occupy the workplace and called for solidarity. In 2013, together with a great movement in solidarity, the workers took the production into their own hands (Roussos, Vragoteris, and Malamidis 2018). Since that moment, the factory became a source of dignity, equal labor relations, and remuneration for the members of the cooperative. At the same time, the "opening of the factory's gates to the society" through common assemblies of workers and individuals in solidarity, and the workers' engagement in labor mobilizations, brought Vio.Me at the epicenter of the anti-austerity mobilizations.
RiMaflow (Italy)	In 2013, two years after the bankruptcy of the industrial group owning the Maflow metal factory in Milan and following the decision of the new contractor to relocate the plant to Poland, a group of workers decided to "recover" their factory (Rinascita della Maflow, i.e., RiMaflow). Based on principles of self-management, coproduction, and mutual aid, RiMaflow workers created a cooperative for the re-use and recycling of electrical and electronic appliances (Forno and Graziano 2019). The workers of the cooperative, together with the Occupy Maflow Accosiation (a mass movement against neoliberal austerity), have converted the previously abandoned workspace into what they call the "Citadel of the Alternative Economy"' (Fumagalli, Gobetti, Morini, Serino, Allegri, Santini, Paes Leão, Willemsen, Pleic, Bencic, and Cvijanovic 2017: 78). In this polyfunctional space, more than 70 people are engaged in a variety of activities, including distribution of local farmers' products, artisan warehouse (carpentry, furniture restoration, modelling, upholstery, and metal processing), co-working spaces, parking space for campervans, a bar and restaurant.

K136 (Greece)	Thessaloniki's Public Water and Sewerage Company (EYATH) was among the state assets included in the portfolio of the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund (HRADF), founded in 2011 to facilitate the privatization of public infrastructures as part of the Greek Structural Adjustment Programs. In 2012, HRADF initiated the bidding process, which attracted companies like Suez and the Israel National Water Company (Kotsaka 2016). Within this context, however, an initiative of citizens and unions with the name Kinisi 136 (Initiative 136) attempted to participate in the process (Bieler and Jordan 2018). K136 organized a campaign for the social management and ownership of EYATH. The initiative elaborated a citizens' buyout plan, based on a contribution of 136 euros per household to get the water company under social control. The management of the EYATH would be divided among a network of smaller local companies allowing citizens' direct participation in decision making and management, following an open assembly and equal vote model. Although authorities excluded K136 from the bidding process, the latter's participation in protests and organization of a popular grassroots referendum led to the postponement of the EYATH's auction.

Less intense in its fashion, the Portuguese experience presents us with a variety of agricultural and community-based initiatives. Although many groups were active before the crisis (Baumgarten 2017), almost 100 new grassroots projects of alternative consumption and production have emerged across the country between 2010 and 2015 (Santos, Rocha, Nolasco, Avelar, Albuquerque, and Penha-Lopes 2015). Such initiatives were not always directly related to social movements (Baumgarten 2017); however, cases like the community groups in Lisbon and Coimbra have set forward alternative forms of social organization in the urban landscape (Amaro and Ferreira 2018), while the examples of ecovillages in rural areas complement the picture (Esteves 2017).

As mentioned earlier, the anti-austerity mobilizations in each country followed distinct paths. In Greece, the five year-long anti-austerity protest cycle brought to the streets various collective actors and combined with the appointment of Syriza in government (Roussos 2019). The aftermath of Indignados occupations in Spain was characterized by the rise of Podemos and the incorporation of activist voices within the rising trend of municipalism, while the changes in the Italian political system were combined with mobilizations of precarious workers (Mattoni and Vogiatzoglou 2014). Anti-austerity mobilizations in Portugal challenged the traditional dominance of union-led mobilizations and signaled the multiplication of self-organized political projects focusing on democracy and participation (Baumgarten 2017), but diffusion mechanisms were not enough to trigger similar institutional effects. Overall, the several dislocations produced by the crisis triggered a wave of anti-austerity mobilizations in all countries of the southern European region and led citizens to engage with grassroots commoning alternatives.

Indeed, the birth of commoning and solidarity grassroots initiatives often coincides with periods of increased contention. For example, the global justice movement and the social forums in the 1990s played a key role in the outbreak of alternative economic formations in Latin America and Europe (Miller 2005: 2; de França Filho, Júnior, and Rigo 2012). In this regard, several accounts stress that commoning and solidarity initiatives share similar ethical and political values with social movements, such as solidarity, ecological thinking, collective and individual autonomy, local rootedness, and global interconnection (Miller 2005). Moreover, research has underlined the significance of synergies between social entrepreneurs, social movements, and community stakeholders in effectively building noncapital centric forms of social innovation (Longhurst, Avelino, Wittmayer, Weaver, Dumitru, Hielscher, Cipolla, Afonso, Kunze, and Elle 2016). Therefore, scholars and practitioners have long emphasized the need to strengthen the linkages between social movements and commoning and solidarity economy initiatives, and particularly to "integrate economic alternatives into social movements and social movements into economic alternatives" (Miller 2010: 35). Of course, such a development requires a contextual overlap between social movements and solidarity and commons projects, which is not always the case. For this reason, social movements are often presented as forms which challenge specific

policies and powerholders (antipolitics), while commoning and solidarity initiatives are ascribed a more suggestive role (alterpolitics) (Hage 2015). Hence, they have been treated as different entities and studied separately.

At first glance, it would seem that these two opposed perspectives allow us to account for two different forms of collective action: the former organized around claim making—disruptive or conventional—repertoires, the latter sustaining mutual-help and community resilience networks to address everyday needs. In line with social movements studies, which emphasize the everyday and prefigurative dimension of collective action (Leach and Haunss 2009; Haunss and Leach 2007; Flesher Fominaya 2015), and inspired by recent scholarship developed in the aftermath of Indignados mobilizations (see Bosi and Zamponi 2015; Forno and Graziano 2014; Varvarousis, Asara, and Akbulut 2020), we argue that such a division is unproductive when analyzing the crisis-ridden southern European context in two respects. Conceptually, it presents us with a clear-cut dichotomy in understanding the context for agency; the critique against dominant discourses and claim making towards powerholders is associated with the context for social movements, while the establishment of counterpractices and provision of alternatives are associated with commoning and solidarity projects. Empirically, it does not highlight the continuity between the wave of anti-austerity mobilizations and the development of grassroots projects of commoning and solidarity, nor does it help us contextualize, and thus understand, the contentious and political character of the latter. Although these responses created alternatives in a variety of sectors heavily affected by the repercussions of the crisis, this was predicated on the discourses, repertoires, and relational matrix of the anti-austerity protest events and Indignant movements. Moreover, while commoning and solidarity networks aimed to create alternatives in the here and now—prefiguring alternative forms of socioeconomic organization—they also sought to prevent the implementation of austerity measures and reverse policies that intensified material and social exclusion. Table 1 provides a short description of grassroots projects that are used to illustrate our claims in the following sections of the paper. We understand these projects as paradigmatic cases to highlight the general characteristics and qualities of the forms of collective action in question (Flyvbjerg 2006).

SOCIAL MOVEMENT STUDIES AND THE COMMONS: TOWARDS A SYNTHESIS

The 2008 crisis not only affected the economies of southern Europe, but it also assisted the formation of a particular universe of grassroots solidarity initiatives. Academic endeavors stemming both from social movement studies and the literature of the commons, each from its own perspective, have offered a plethora of valuable insights by thoroughly studying such developments. As we have already mentioned, it would seem that such a division of labor is relevant at first glance. However, with a focus on the southern European context, their respective failure to communicate has instead produced only partial explanations and theorizations of the phenomena we seek to understand here.

For social movement accounts, the strict defining characteristics of social movements, SMOs, human subjects, and social formations limit the contextualization of recent grassroots struggles in southern Europe by missing their transformative elements during everyday operation. For the literature on the commons, the respective explanatory frameworks seem unable to capture the specific contentious dynamics that shape the meso (organizational) and micro (individual) levels. As a result, they often lead to a catch-all style of theorizing with a descriptive and affirmative particularism. We argue that neither of these two literatures alone can assist us in fully understanding the transformations of the grassroots politics in southern Europe during the crisis. To provide a more capacious interpretation of such politics, we devise a synthetic reformulation of a set of key concepts and logics in the two literatures, showing how it may fruitfully be applied to a variety of cases in different countries of the region.

Our account starts with a double problematization: (a) of the new grassroots practices and forms of collective action in southern Europe in the aftermath of the Indignados, and (b) of the previous social movement and commons' scholarly attempts to account for them. We are thus led

to focus on scrutinizing "different *kinds* of logics and concepts" in social movement studies and commons' literatures (Howarth 2005: 326), seeking to account for the same political reality. Our task is not limited in providing a review of the two literatures. Rather, we aim to bridge these heterogeneous theoretical and empirical elements into a context-dependent synthetic articulation that involves "*a mutual modification of the logics and concepts articulated together in the process of explaining each particular instance of research*" (Howarth 2005: 327, italics in original).

Operationalizing David Howarth's *logic of formalization*, we argue that such a modification allows us to render the different theories and concepts consistent and compatible with one another. In providing a theoretical rearticulation, we render the empirical phenomena under investigation more intelligible in four stages: reactivation, deconstruction, abstraction, and commensuration. The stage of *reactivation* involves a return to the founding problems initially addressed by the particular theory and to the underlying assumptions that led the latter to the construction of particular concepts. The next stage of *deconstruction* proceeds by pinpointing and weakening essentialist or deterministic aspects of the respective theories that render them incompatible with one another. In turn, *abstraction* consists of the elaboration of purely formal concepts or logics drawn from the plurality of relevant theoretical problematics (in our case, from different theories of social movements and the commons), "and which have been purified of those traces of particularity that may preclude their being applied to a variety of commensurate problems and questions" (ibid.: 326). This paves the way for the final stage of *commensuration,* where the articulation of the formal concepts or logics in conjunction with relevant empirical material produces a coherent explanatory chain to bear on the object being explored.

REACTIVATION STAGE

In the reactivation stage we present the way in which social movement studies and theories of the commons have previously problematized the phenomena they seek to understand and built their main concepts (social movements and SMOs-commons, activists-commoners, mobilization-commoning).

Social Movements, Social Movement Organizations, and the Commons

Attempting to provide an analytical framework for the study of social movements, Charles Tilly offered probably the most popular definition: a social movement "consists of a sustained challenge to power holders in the name of a population living under the jurisdiction of those power holders by means of repeated public displays of that populations worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment" (Tilly 1999: 257). Over the years, scholars have stressed specific aspects of social movements based on the explanatory contexts of their respective inquiries: shared beliefs and opinions (McCarthy and Zald 1977); sustained campaigns against specific claimants (Tarrow 1998); networks (Della Porta and Diani 2006), or forms of coordination (Diani 2015). Since all the different conceptualizations do not contradict but rather complement each other, Snow's (2013: 1201) synthesis provides us complete definition of social movements. He defines them as (1) "change-oriented in the sense that they seek or oppose change," (2) "challengers to or defenders of existing institutional structures or systems of authority," (3) "collective rather than individual enterprises," (4) acting "outside of existing institutional or organizational arrangements," that (5) "operate with some degree of organization," (6) and "typically display some degree of temporal continuity."

Although social movements cannot be reduced to the sum of SMOs, the definition of the former often leads to the definition of the latter. In developing this idea, McCarthy and Zald (1977) defined SMO as complex, or formal, organization that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement and endeavors to carry them out. Kriesi (1996) suggested that, along with SMOs, other organized formations, such as supportive organizations or formal associations, can also be components of social movements. NGOs, political parties, interest groups and other forms

of political action might be sympathetic to a movement, while SMOs might also use formal means to defend their agenda (Diani 1992). However, what distinguishes SMOs from other organizations is the former's direct contribution to action mobilization (Kriesi 1996).

Moving now to conceptualizations of the commons, we can distinguish between institutional and critical accounts. Institutionalist theories draw their attention to economy-driven assumptions (e.g. rational calculation, individual preferences, utility maximization). The most common reference in this tradition is Ostrom's work (1990), which suggests that fishing grounds, grazing areas, parking garages, mainframe computers, oceans, and so on, constitute Common Pool Recourses (CPRs). The appropriators of CPRs collectively set up design principles and rules to maintain their sustainability (ibid.). Thus, Ostrom counterposes to more orthodox rational choice driven models, which are favoring the "Leviathan" (public management) or the exclusionary (private property rights) solution, the solution of common property regimes as the most suitable way for collectively organizing and governing CPRs (ibid.).

Though insightful and rich, our view is that Ostrom's emphasis on the efficiency of common property regimes to sustain and manage CPRs hinders other important dimensions of the commons. Contemporary research describes the commons as a form of collective action that contains multiple political, cultural, and symbolic networks. For example, Stephen Gudeman conceptualizes the commons as all those material (lands, livestock, etc.) or immaterial (knowledge, culture, etc.) things that communities possess and share in common, "so that what happens to a commons is not a physical incident but a social event" (Gudeman 2001: 27-28). In this sense, commons are plural social systems composed of commoners, social relations, communal labor, and forms of collective decision making. From recuperated factories and co-operatives to social solidarity structures, the twofold character of the commons, meaning its use value and the plurality of subjects claiming its ownership, is constituted within and through an ecology of social practices and interactions that at the same time sustain and reproduce the two former elements (De Angelis 2017). Against institutionalist accounts, such approaches argue that the concept of the commons provides us with a broader logic of postcapitalist transformation, where resources are produced, managed, and distributed based on collective and equal participation (Kioupkiolis 2017).

Activists and Commoners

If social movements are identified at the macrolevel and SMOs at the mesolevel, then activists are the basic actors in the microlevel. But how do we define activists? This task seems easy for organizations with legal status and membership lists. However, things get more difficult when it comes to grassroots organizations, such as social centers, squats, and solidarity structures, that operate through self-organized and loose manners. The activist property in such networks is rather fluid, without any kind of official definition or membership. It is quite evident then that these organizations hardly comply with the organizational characteristics usually defined by structural approaches in the study of social movements (McCarthy and Zald 1977). In order to tackle this issue, Diani (2013) argues that the basic criterion for qualifying the activist status is an active engagement in the given social movement proceedings and its respective organizations. The recognition of an activist as a member in one movement is attributed only by the social movement community itself. However, following the methodological approaches and techniques mostly used in social movement inquiries (Della Porta and Diani 2006), it seems that the attribution of the activist status remains strongly linked with someone's participation in protest events and other forms related to street politics.

Shifting our attention to the term "commoner," in Ostromian approaches, individuals that participate in CPR systems are more often addressed as potential cooperators that calculate the outcomes of cooperative action for their personal welfare on the ground of pre-established interests and identities (Velicu and García-López 2018). In contrast, critical commons' literature understands the commons as a relational process, "a principle of cooperation and of responsibility to each other and to the earth, the forests, the seas, the animals" (Federici 2018, 110). Thus, several

works tend to focus on the performative character of subjectivities in order to capture the experience of everyday life within the community. Seen this way, identity is understood as a social process between individuals and the social practices that they partake in. Focusing on the biopolitical *dispositif* of neoliberal capitalism, Hardt and Negri (2004) claim that subjectivity emerges immanently through the forms that the biopolitical production takes and the multitude's cooperative interaction that provides the means to self-valorize its labor activity. Both labor (outside but in relation to capital) and the engagement with the production of alternative practices are key elements in De Angelis's (2017) conceptualization of commoner. As he clarifies, commoners are members of a plurality that claims ownership of a good or, as he puts it, "use value" through practices of self-governance and self-management (2017: 30). To sum up, the subjects operating within the commons are defined in terms of "their mutual dependence on this shared economy" and community (Neeson 1996, 321), which is being shaped by and shapes the (re)production of livelihoods beyond capitalism (De Angelis 2017).

Mobilization and Commoning

The factors around individuals' participation in collective action have long shaped the literature on social movements. Some scholars focus on individuals' motives and their structural position (Walgrave 2013), others on SMOs' success in achieving consensus mobilization (Klandermans and Oegema 1987), or align their frames with the needs of the potential participants (Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford 1986). Additionally, a number of authors favor individuals' agency and thus understand subjects "as active attributors of meaning constructing their own ideas and searching for opportunities to put these ideas into practice" (Walgrave 2013, 206). Moreover, cultural meanings and moral shocks constitute decisive factors for strangers' mobilization, while proximity and affective bonds seem essential for movement sympathizers (Jasper and Poulsen 1995).

Over the years, scholars have indicated that the life of social movements also continues in times when there is not a public explosion of collective action (Castells 1983; Melucci 1995). For example, work on abeyance structures (Taylor 1989), submerged networks (Melucci 1995), and social movement communities (Buechler 1993) urges us to remain attentive to systems of social relationships, movements' origins and orientations, as well as cultural elements that all together animate the everyday life of the multiple networks of movement activists between one stage of mobilization to another. In this way, social movements' often necessary shift from political activities towards cultural activities and alternative institutions has been emphasized both as a means of survival in periods of demobilization and as key factor in facilitating mobilization. Moreover, studies on dress codes, activists' social hubs, and entertainment traditions have shown that activism entails a social living that moves beyond the narrow participation in protests and demonstrations (Leach and Haunss 2009). In short, forms of organizational experimentation and new conduct have attracted scholarly interest in relation to cultural innovation, nonetheless, for the vast majority of social movement scholars, mobilization remains the central theoretical category for exploring the ways through which social movements strategically pursue their political goals and seek to bring about social change.

Moving to the commons' literature, while institutionalist perspectives limit commoning to the ensemble of practices used by a community in claiming ownership and governing a commons (Ostrom 1990), critical accounts treat commoning as the whole spectrum of the life of the commons (Federici 2018). Seen this way, commoning involves an "instituting praxis", the moment that a collectivity decides to (re)create a common (Dardot and Laval 2019) and then moves to the patterns of production and reproduction that commoners set up upon principles of equality, horizontality, and self-organization (Linebaugh 2008). While performing these activities, commoners develop forms of social relations and (re)produce values, affects and meanings, such as solidarity, mutual aid, reciprocity and care (De Angelis 2017). Thus, the concept of commoning is constructed based on the interconnections between the natural, social, and cultural resources and a community on the one hand, and the multiple relations that are created

among commoners through their plural interactions and active participation in the workings and everyday life of the community on the other. In this respect, social change is addressed in the active engagement with the experiment of self-governance and the collective social conditions within which commoners relate to one another in the here and now.

DECONSTRUCTION STAGE

By reflecting upon the cases described in table 1, we seek to illustrate how each of the two theories alone fails to grapple with important characteristics of the collective action context during the crisis in southern Europe.

Social Movements, Social Movement Organizations, and the Commons

As it has been shown above, social movement studies' definitions opt to provide ideal types of SMOs by emphasizing the ways they mobilize and structure their claims, as well as by shedding light on their relations with political institutions and actors. However, such a definition does not sufficiently elucidate the forms of collective action emerged in the southern Europe crisis setting. For instance, thinking of the grassroots social clinics in Greece this inadequacy becomes prominent. Indeed, in many occasions, social clinics mobilize their members to actively participate in hospital blockades and other local struggles. Crucially, however, social clinics focus their action on organizing and providing primary healthcare services to everyone in need. Hence, since the main goal of social clinics is not the mobilization of their constituencies or political brokerage with institutional actors and power holders, it is hard to define them as SMOs according to the categorization provided by social movement studies.

To further illustrate, studying Vio.Me or RiMaflow as SMOs highlights the contentious dimension of their activities (raising awareness on self-management, supporting other workers' struggles, providing resources for the organization of strikes, and so on). Occasionally, they have contributed to the development of powerful demonstrations (Malamidis 2018). At the same time, however, such an analysis tends to overlook the social and economic activities with which the initiatives are engaged on an everyday level and enables them to construct an alternative practical imaginary that prefigures social change in the workplace environment. For this, resource mobilization theory (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Jenkins 1983) would pay attention to the organizational structure, manufacturing equipment, and products' distribution channels that enable these initiatives to sustain their action; but it would fail to analyze the significance of horizontal self-management in the workplace on a daily basis. The political process approach and the attribution of political opportunity structure (Tarrow 1998; Meyer 2004) can help us explore how increased political pluralism, the rise of unemployment, and the division of political and business elites in the southern European crisis context was interpreted as an opportunity by Vio.Me and RiMaflow workers to propose an alternative management plan. However, it does not entail the cultural underpinnings of solidarity that led workers to squat the factory premises and buttress the latter's collective operation. The contentious politics framework (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) highlights how the diffusion of repertoires of self-organization, brokerage of workers' with other SMOs and boundary formation between the workers and the former owners have led to the social appropriation of the factories. Nevertheless, the domain of practices and imaginaries that affects the use and government of collectively produced resources and social goods, elaborated in the aftermath of contentious processes, would not be the focus of such an analysis.

As mentioned, this emphasis on alternative practices and imaginaries of collective well-being capable of transcending the capitalist organization of society and economy can be found in critical commons literature. Such conceptualizations draw upon a critical analysis of the modern state and its entanglement with neoliberal capitalism to sketch an understanding of the commons as political processes involving actions and discourses that move beyond existing power structures (Holloway

2005). These perspectives recast the political imaginaries and repertoires of collective struggles of autonomous social agents beyond hierarchical and representative forms of politics and outside the state and market (Hardt and Negri 2009).

Despite the rich theoretical horizon of critical accounts, a mechanical application of theoretical abstractions to concrete processes and events entails a danger of theoreticism. This would tend to assume the emergence of transformative commons without examining their production and functioning through time. Therefore, such theoretical accounts should be complemented by thick descriptions of the practices of co-ownership, co-production, and co-management of social goods and spaces, and critical reflection on the matrix of relations and power structures that these new regimes of practices animate and sustain. This becomes more important when considering the plurality of identities, interests, and social practices, as well as organizational difficulties and contradictions in relation to state and market agents, within grassroots projects in the crisis-ridden southern Europe. Moreover, attempting to render such projects as necessarily operating outside mainstream politics downplays the impact of broader and consistent "dimensions of the political struggle that encourage people to engage in contentious politics" (Tarrow 1998: 19-20).

In this respect, an analysis of social clinics in Greece as *autopoietic* commons would pay less attention to key elements that have contributed to the former's institution and ability to mobilize their members and maintain support from broader parts of the population, such as: the role of resources (e.g. medical and pharmacist education, medical equipment and medicines, organization and management of healthcare skills, etc.) that were essential in constructing their networks; the members' previous engagement in social struggles, which was crucial for the rapid expansion the clinics' network; or the crucial role of "movementality" (Rakopoulos 2016), the actors' experience and knowledge acquired through their participation in the anti-austerity mobilizations and the squares' movement, for their internal direct-democratic operation (Teloni and Adam 2018). Thus, from a commons' perspective, what needs more systematic analysis is the meso-level of organizational innovations, especially attentive to the production of new power structures and institutions.

Activists and Commoners

Earlier we noted that definitions of SMOs present ideal types that do not fit the organizations born in the southern European crisis context. On the same ground, we are skeptical whether the application of "activist status" to individuals participating in forms of collective action developed after the 2008 crisis is able to analytically capture the characteristics of their actions. In particular, Vio.Me and RiMaflow workers are well-defined by the respective labor movement as activists when protesting. However, their political identity moves beyond their claims on workers' rights and is constantly realized through the collective management of their workplace environment. K136 and PAH participants are well-recognized from the respective urban movements against the water privatization in Greece and evictions in Spain. Nevertheless, their political participation in contentious repertoires is complemented with their active engagement in the construction of practical alternatives. Additionally, participants in social clinics are engaged in mobilizations in the health sector, but their role unfolds to a greater extent during their daily participation in clinics' operation. As such, the activist idiom contextualizes the contentious role of the subject and strongly underlines its political dimension within the existing dominant order or field of experience. However, it seems less ample in signifying processes of (re)subjectivation, "the production through a series of actions of a body and a capacity for enunciation not previously identifiable within a given field of experience" (Rancière 1999: 35). With regards to the southern European crisis context, this process reflects the production of and participation in alternative social practices in the everyday.

Turning to the theory of the commons and devising the term commoner to understand the participants in the same cases discussed above, we are confronted with the opposite unresolved tension regarding subjects' formation. In such terms, the main points of interest in a commons-oriented study would be the development of alternative discourses in the production and

distribution of products by the Vio.Me and RiMaflow workers, as well as the ways that the latter perform social practices in the workplace and the economy differently (e.g. collective decision making, equal remuneration, distribution of products only in local markets, etc.). What becomes less important here, is the moment that actors decide and act upon certain issues. To add a second example, conceiving social clinics' participants as commoners emphasizes their identity as inherent in the practicing and organizing of grassroots healthcare provision. Hence, their participation in struggles against austerity cuts in public healthcare is relegated into a second order issue that usually escapes thorough analysis. Therefore, we claim that, more often than not, contemporary definitions discussed by the literature of commons lack the contentious contextualization which attributes to commoners the perspective of antagonism (for exceptions, among others, see De Angelis 2017; Kioupkiolis 2017; Chatterton and Pusey 2020). It is precisely due to this absence that the literature on commons alone is incapable of comprehensively analyzing the participants in the post-2011 conjuncture.

Mobilization and Commoning

Over the years, the growing interest of social movement studies around popular struggles could be roughly crystallized in two main approaches: a) structural approaches which highlight movements' ability to mobilize people, run campaigns, raise awareness, challenge authorities, and raise claims; b) New Social Movements theories that emphasize movements' transformative dynamics in the everyday settings, either by acting outside the typical institutional channels (Flesher Fominaya 2017), or by underlying their class elements and their role in producing alternative sociospatial, cultural, and symbolic meanings (Castells 1983). Nevertheless, in thinking about broader social change, both approaches revolve around mobilization. Indeed, from the crisis' outbreak, anti-austerity mobilizations articulated claims around economic and political aspects of the crisis (Diani and Kousis 2014; Flesher Fominaya and Hayes 2017). Taking for instance the labor sector, various examples can be found in all southern European countries where unions mobilized their constituents in strikes and workplace sit-ins (Mattoni and Vogiatzoglou 2014).

At the same time though, street politics have been complemented with the emergence and diffusion of numerous solidarity structures, actively providing informal welfare services to the affected population (Kousis and Paschou 2017). In the labor sector, the reappropriation and self-management of the Vio.Me and RiMaflow factories based on collective decision-making systems present only the tip of the iceberg among the numerous self-managed cooperatives emerged within this period. Against traditional social movement approaches, recent alternative theorizations highlighted that contention is endorsed in the practice of noncontentious actions (Forno and Graziano 2014: 13) and underscored that actions acquire political importance per se, without necessarily addressing specific power holders (Bosi and Zamponi 2015: 13; Varvarousis, Asara, and Akbulut 2020). Moreover, in the beginning of the previous decade, scholars engaging with the squares' and Occupy movements have resurfaced the notion of prefigurative politics to understand movements' in situ experimentation with new political and economic forms (Maeckelbergh 2011). In line with such works, we argue that conceiving mobilization only in terms of participation in claim-making repertoires overshadows the actual practice of social change through everyday practices; the prefigurative dimension that is vividly highlighted in commons' literature.

The emphasis of the critical commons' literature on the concept of commoning has shifted the attention of various works in the field towards the matrix of social practices that are put forward by a collectivity in (re)creating, sustaining, and (re)producing a commons. Thinking of the several grassroots organizations of solidarity and self-provisioning in southern Europe, the concept of commoning can assist us in signaling the interplay of the repertoires of co-ownership, co-production and co-management of resources and spaces (Chatterton and Pusey 2020). Following such a perspective, a focus on the social practices developed by collective kitchens or grassroots food networks can help us to draw out the implications of alternative values and ethics

in transforming the production and distribution of food (Rakopoulos 2016). Similarly, in exploring the alternative educational practices that have been generated by various solidarity projects, we can provide nuanced understandings of education as a good or resource collectively produced and governed by the particular communities (Pechtelidis and Kioupkiolis 2020). This is the case also for the grassroots practices of healthcare provisioning that have been evolved by participants in social clinics. Such initiatives made it possible to provide open and equal access to primary health-care services without discriminations (Teloni and Adam 2018), incorporating in this way the aspects of community management and sharing in healthcare provision. Eventually, regarding worker cooperatives and recuperated factories such as Vio.Me and RiMaflow, an investigation of their social practices can offer crucial insights for refiguring labor as a collectively produced resource and a socially produced value.

Nonetheless, while it is crucial to investigate social change through the prefigurative dimension of commons, it is also essential to not underplay the variations of collective action repertoires only within each project or, at best, in their relationship with other similar projects. In short, the characterization of social practices along a synchronic axis can capture the ways in which subjects relate with each other, as well as the rules and norms that inform the ways they understand their activities within a particular system of meaning. But while such a focus enables the researcher to capture the rules of a practice, inclusive of its subjects' positions and objects, it cannot be considered exhaustive. For us, then, there is also the need to foreground the diachronic dimension of a practice, "whether in terms of how they have emerged, or in terms of how they are being contested and/or transformed" (Glynos and Howarth 2007: 141). To put it bluntly, not all commons are necessarily evolved by or produce antagonistic political imaginaries. In this respect, attention to the context and processes of collective mobilization that (re)activate antagonisms enriches explanations of commoning and deepens their accounts on the dynamics of social change.

ABSTRACTION STAGE

This section presents the synthetic explanatory logic that emerges from the rearticulation of the two theories. To be sure, we do not suggest a general mixture of the two literatures. As mentioned previously, social movement studies and the literature of commons neither analyze the same subject matter, nor do they emphasize the same research questions. Moreover, social movements and the commons are distinct entities that often have different starting and ending points (De Angelis 2017) and follow similar but not identical trajectories (Miller 2005). What we argue for, nevertheless, is that the development of numerous commoning and solidarity structures in southern Europe, parallel to the dismantling of the welfare state, should be seen as cases of continuity of the wave of anti-austerity mobilizations. Thus, a synthetic framework allows us to draw a more fully-fledged account of the dynamics and trajectories of collective action in this particular context.

Social Movements, Social Movement Organizations, and the Commons

Social movement studies may benefit by approaching the emergence of solidarity structures as sites of commoning, where new sites of struggle opt for the preservation or creation of a commons. Departing from contentious origins and incorporating the characteristics of social antagonism, these organizations move beyond the traditional explanations offered for SMOs (i.e. the action mobilization of their constituents). They evolve into social systems of commoning, where people shape their daily lives collectively based on their shared needs and produce new commonwealth forged through relations of equality, trust, care, and mutual aid (Grasseni 2014).

At the same time, by incorporating the structural aspects of SMOs in the literature of the commons, the latter acquires a more defined shape. Instead of deriving explanations of concrete phenomena from abstract concepts of a general commons' theory, the denotation of commons in

terms of their organizational structure, decision-making system, networking models, and use of resources deepens the level of analysis and reveals important insights regarding the democratic and strategic quality of their internal operation. Moreover, attention to the different sociopolitical environments that surrounds the birth and reproduction of commons contributes to coherent explanations regarding their specificities and different trajectories.

Activists and Commoners

The activist status suggested by social movement studies underlines the political dimension of the actors involved in social movement activities, which is mostly realized through their participation in protest events. Although the importance of such definition is not contested, it offers a partial reading of the characteristics of subjects in the southern European crisis setting. From our point of view, an activist's identity is realized in the everyday reality of collective action, with the public raise of claims being only one of its aspects. In this context, the literature of the commons complements the activist idiom by emphasizing the participation of subjects in the decision-making process and administration of the everyday life of the commoning and solidarity projects with reference to the principle of equality. This engenders a dimension of civic learning within and through the new ways of doing and being in common (Biesta 2011), against social exclusions and the privilege of enlightened leaders (Kioupkiolis 2017). Indeed, activism in the southern European anti-austerity mobilizations has been connected with a radical notion of citizenship, departing from an anti-oligarchic perspective (Gerbaudo 2017). This notion of citizenship grants a central role to the subject in the process of social transformation through the active realization of the latter's subjectivity in everyday life. In this sense, aspects of care, trust, mutuality and equity become key features of the activist identity, thus giving rise to an incipient culture that redefines the ground-rules of the social—how society should be, and how people should relate to one another.

The notion of commoner, on the other hand, reflects the member of a community that participates collectively in the production and governance of commons. Although this characterization sheds light on subjects' exposure to processes of decision making and administration of the everyday life of the community, it says little regarding the political character of such activity, which was the cornerstone of the grassroots initiatives developed amidst the crisis. In light of the social movement studies, which contextualize activists' characteristics, it is important to bring into the discussion the instituting dimension (the political) of the social practices we seek to analyze (Laclau and Zac 1994). Thus, beyond the investigation of alternative practices and relations, it is also important to emphasize the very contestation of the fundamental norms, which sustain and (re)produce the existing order, through decision and act (Glynos and Howarth 2007). Analyzing the contentious origins of commoners within the crisis-ridden southern European context allows us to identify the different political trajectories of the subjects, explore the various forms of participation depending on each political tradition, understand the continuity and the signification of their actions, and ultimately (re)politicize processes of subjectivation.

Mobilization and Commoning

The end of mobilization in the southern European crisis context neither follows the periodization of the anti-austerity campaign nor coincides with the decrease of civil disobedience (Sergi and Vogiatzoglou 2013). Rather, it actively takes place in everyday settings through (often locally oriented) collective struggles and initiatives that create alternatives for the social reproduction of resources affected by state and market enclosures (Arampatzi 2017). By emphasizing alternative social practices as a horizon of lived social change in the here and now, the literature of the commons complements the claim-based orientation of social movement studies and better frames the noncontentious characteristics pointed out by more recent social movements accounts (Bosi and Zamponi 2015; Forno and Graziano 2014).

However, the identity of such practices should not be taken for granted by assuming that commoning will necessarily result in postcapitalist or "progressive alternative" social transformation. In fact, social movement studies urge us to remain attentive to the entire domain of politics and changes in subjectivities (motives, attribution of meaning and ideas due to moral shocks, proximity, etc.) in a particular historical context. Hence, it allows us to specify collective action practices with some precision independently of the primary field of meaning (i.e., specific to a worker cooperative or SMO, etc.) within which they operate, and situate them vis-à-vis the existing order and its dominant social relations and institutions. Taken as a whole, it is in the interval between the commoning of needs and resources and the constitution of antagonistic relations and institutions that we can start tracing a logic of political praxis that brings together the fundamental material dimensions of livelihood (work, housing, healthcare, etc.) and the ways actors redefine themselves and create new structural contexts amidst the dislocation of existing structures. This involves an activity that is at the same time personal and collective, which at once transforms the subjects (i.e., *praxis*) and the sociomaterial conditions of their livelihood (i.e., *poiesis*) (Balibar 2017).

COMMENSURATION

In this final stage of our theoretical rearticulation (the movement from the abstract to the concrete in four steps) we show how such synthesis renders the post-2011 grassroots projects emerged in the southern European context more intelligible. Instead of approaching social clinics or Vio.Me and RiMaflow factories as generic or autopoietic forms of commons, and thus present a linear and affirmative understanding of these collective endeavors, we draw our attention to a more movement-like analysis of their precise characteristics (see table 2). By incorporating the meso-level of analysis, we emphasize the organizational aspect of these initiatives and study them as organizations with defined procedures, aims, resources, and coalitions that have developed in the aftermath of powerful movements, followed distinct trajectories, experienced various internal conflicts and formed diverse political alignments (Kokkinidis 2015). For instance, in the case of Vio.Me and the role of resources, we can focus on how the change of production brought Vio.Me closer to the local community (Malamidis 2018). Similarly, by paying attention to the medicines' exchange and the connection of social clinics with different political actors, we are able to explore the formation of different networks and their role in preserving or affecting the autonomy of each clinic.

Although these structural aspects provide crucial insights for the formation of such initiatives, attention to their everyday operation brings to light their prefigurative dimension. With respect to the occupied factories of Vio.Me and RiMaflow, we can see how the workers' shared needs and self-management set the foundations for a new understanding of the content of their labor. Setting both the factories' facilities and their decision-making model open in use for the local communities, the two factories constitute exemplary sites where social transformation is negotiated in practical terms on a daily basis. Similarly, the provision of primary healthcare services by social clinics to everyone in need, offers a practical example of community management in the provision of primary healthcare.

As we have shown earlier, the process of subjects' formation in the southern European context can be better understood by taking into account both the antagonistic and the performative dimension of individual participation in such politics. Hence, this double movement involves the public contestation of neoliberal austerity practices, as well as the political processes that seek to establish new rules and institutions in the name of horizontal relations, common rights, and community sharing. Understanding processes of political subjectivation through a synthetic prism, allows us to capture the process in which actors identify themselves with certain struggles (Arampatzi 2017) and ensures that their content is based on specific sets of social relations, practices, and values (in table 2 on the following page, see row 2, "Type of core agent"). This perspective allows us both to highlight those contentious characteristics of

Table 2. Dimensions of Collective Action

Concepts and Dimensions	*Social Movements Studies*	*Commons*	*South European Synthesis*
Dimensions and models of organization	Social Movement: public and sustained challenge addressing specific power-holders by individuals and organizations. SMOs: formal and/or informal political organizations which aim to mobilize its constituents and their participation in different movements.	Commons in institutionalist approaches: Common pool resources Commons in critical approaches: communities for the preservation, co-production, and co-management of resources and/or goods.	Constellation of formal and informal communities: (a) has its roots in the anti-austerity movements and (b) engages with alternatives in the coproduction and provision of services and goods to meet basic needs.
Type of core agent	Activist: member of a social movement community defined on the ground of loose participation in protest events, campaigns, SMOs and other SM activities.	Commoner: member of a community or social network that co-produces or shares resources substantial for their livelihood.	A radical notion of citizenship that raises politicized claims to commoning and democratic politics, constituted on the ground of antagonistic relations and renegotiated within the plural social practices, collective interests, and needs of the community.
Political and social dimensions of agency practices	Mobilization: alignment of interests and resources to take political action; sustained challenges to authorities, participation in protest events, raising claims and demands towards institutions.	Commoning in institutionalist approaches: ensemble of practices used by a community to claim ownership and governing a commons. Commoning in Critical approaches: lived social change—the matrix of social relations and practices that informs and is informed by coproduction of the natural, social, and cultural resources within a community.	A *political praxis*— through which individuals become actors (*praxis*) and, in turn, these actors refigure the sociomaterial conditions of their existence (*poiesis*)— based on common interests and needs that adopts hands-on repertoires and engages in struggles to reappropriate social production and reproduction from below in the here and now.

Vio.Me and RiMaflow workers related to their involvement in the anti-austerity mobilizations and be attentive to the "process of becoming" a subject through acting out alternative imaginaries and establishing novel social practices (Forno and Graziano 2019).

Similarly, in the case of social clinics, this synthetic lens enables us to trace the antagonistic elements of their collective militancy against the neoliberalization of healthcare provision through hospital blockades, participation in the square movement and broader anti-austerity mobilizations. At the same time, it draws particular attention to the exploration of subject formation through the management of health as a common good at the community level. Such a synthetic view explains how the role of heterogeneous actors, e.g. the participants of K136 and PAH initiatives, is not only limited to demonstrating against the water privatization or eviction processes but is also extended to incorporate their active engagement in the collective management of urban space, in particular, and their desire for active participation in democratic politics more broadly (Biesta 2011).

Within the crisis context, actors started to prefigure alternative practices, relationships, and imaginaries, which were against and practically beyond the neoliberal ordering: this was realized by the combination of mobilization with elements of commoning. The cases of the recuperated factories in Greece and Italy are illustrative in showing how this combination took place. Started as typical workers' struggles by claiming back unpaid salaries and demanding to not lose their jobs, the cases of Vio.Me and RiMaflow are paradigmatic instances of the contemporary labor movement. Participation in protests and strikes, actions for the cancelation of the auction of their plants, the actual imprisonment of one worker and, of course, the seizing of the means of production set the process of mobilization at the epicenter. At the same time, our synthetic approach pays attention to the very process through which the workers appropriate their work in common and transform the former sterile workplace into an open infrastructure for social movements and the local community in the urban landscape (Kokkinidis 2015). Here, the "Political and social dimensions of agency" (last row, table 2) are in a constant interaction, informed by what we described as a logic of political praxis. This involves a to-and-fro movement between *praxis*—the free action in which individuals are empowered to realize and release their creative capacities—and *poiesis*—a social activity (material transformation) that is socially realized and socially beneficial.

CONCLUSIONS

Economic crisis led to large anti-austerity protests across southern European countries. The development of the crisis further boosted the welfare retrenchment and brought to the forefront solidarity and commoning projects, such as self-organized workers' collectives, markets without middlemen, social solidarity clinics, and pharmacies providing bottom-up services that used to be provided by the state and the market. In this article, we have argued that a synthetic rearticulation of social movement studies and the literature of the commons can assist us in elaborating a more capacious account of developments regarding everyday reality and grass-roots politics in crisis-ridden southern Europe.

In our effort to sharpen our understanding of the existing political configurations vis-à-vis grassroots politics, we examined the explanatory capacity of three core analytical categories in each of the two literatures by pitching them against each other and combining their logics: (1) social movement and SMOs-commons, (2) activists-commoners, and (3) mobilization-commoning. The framework we propose here is not intended to be a general heuristic to explain all forms of contemporary collective action around the globe, nor does it assume that the overlap between social movements and commons is total. Rather, it is a historically and spatially specific framework that is useful in drawing a comprehensive understanding of grassroots collective action in the European South during the global financial crisis.

We see our synthetic framework carrying both analytical and normative implications for the study of collective action and social change in a broader setting, granting that its application remains extremely attentive to the given empirical context. Analytically, we contend that our synthesis serves to highlight: (a) the much more plural and lived patterns of contemporary collective action without downplaying the task of organization and the sociopolitical context within which they emerge; (b) a more radical notion of political subjectivity focusing on both the antagonistic (social movements) dimension and the productive (commoning) aspect of alternative norms and modes of being and governing; and (c) a more capacious interpretation of instrumental (related to specific claims and goals) and prefigurative strategies to make sense of social change and agency. This approach involves shifting our understanding of such struggles from being claim-based, reactive, or defensive towards a more critical account that addresses them as a *political praxis*; an act that seeks to transform social relations and practices and create postcapitalist alternatives in the here and now. In other words, the normative orientation we pointed out earlier arises in this particular move of projecting alternative ideals into the object of study in an effort to formulate a fuller critical explanation of what counts as politics.

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