

# ‘BIG’ SOCIETY VS ‘SMALL’ GOVERNMENT? Charities, localism and communities in 19th and 21st Century Greece and UK: towards an old or a new structure of services? <sup>1</sup>

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## *Abstract*

The article, consisting of an introduction and four sections examines the relationship between the ‘Big Society’ doctrine and ideology underlying the doctrine and the concepts of charities, benevolence, locality and community. In the first section it approaches the current form of ‘Big Society’ and the debate about it. In the second it turns to a presentation of social provision in Victorian Britain and to forms of social provision reminiscent of the Big Society idea. Section three examines similar cases of social services provision by local private benefactors and communities in pre- and immediately post independence Greece. Part four concludes on similarities of the three cases bringing the idea of communities to the fore.

*Key words: Big Society, charities, locality, communities, United Kingdom, Greece, nineteenth century.*

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<sup>1</sup> Το άρθρο σε αρχική μορφή παρουσιάστηκε στο συνέδριο της βρετανικής Social Policy Association το 2011. Ευχαριστίες σε συμμετέχοντες για σχόλια σε εκείνη την αρχική μορφή. Κυρίως όμως ευχαριστίες προς την αναπληρώτρια καθηγήτρια κα Όλγα Στασινοπούλου, τον επίκουρο καθηγητή κο Χριστόφορο Σκαμνάκη και τους κριτές του Βήματος των Κοινωνικών Επιστημών για σχόλια σε πλέον πρόσφατες μορφές. Λάθη και ανεπάρκειες βαρύνουν τον συγγραφέα.

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## Introduction

The idea of the 'Big Society' has been with us for a number of years since its inaugural appearance in the Tory leadership contest and over two and a half years since the formation of the coalition government. As a doctrine it has been taken to at least imply or even denote, (not to mention push forward towards a), reshaping the form of welfare services provision with special regard to entities involved alongside change in respective social structures<sup>3</sup>. Should this assumption be correct, then it could be that such a provision of social welfare services should go hand-in-hand with a new form of social structure, a change that requires some new ideological justification and basis. It has thus attracted the interest of political actors and moreover of commentators and analysts, predominately in the fields of social policy and political science, as the Social Policy Association 2011 conference and many journal articles indicate. Most approaches evolve around two axes, the vagueness of the idea and term on the one hand; and its relation with Thatcherism (and Thatcherism's idea of 'rolling back the state'), neo-liberalism, and welfare expenditure cuts and restructuring with a view to deficit reduction, alongside the originality of the idea on the other (eg Evans, 2010; Bochel, 2011; lafrati, 2011; Mycock and Tonge, 2011; Taylor-Gooby and Stoker, 2011; Taylor-Gooby, 2011; Wiggan, 2011)<sup>4</sup>.

This article wishes to build upon both (not necessarily opposing) approaches as to bring a third one that relates to the size, locality role, relationships and bonds of a wider spectrum, of intended actors, to the fore. In this pursuit it will also use a third

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<sup>3</sup> Evidently the experience is not solely a British one. Changes in welfare provision (re-)structuring and a shift towards an enhanced role of the Voluntary and Community Sector can be seen in other European countries (eg Germany, the Netherlands), and the US with the inclusion of the ambiguous 'non-for-profit' term (Hogg & Baines, 2011), as well as local authorities (Greece) (Skamnakis, 2011)

<sup>4</sup> Another line that could be followed is attempting a mainstream comparative approach regarding the political economy mix in the provision and structure of services as to examine the changes in the welfare regime (Esping-Andersen 1998, Esping-Andersen 1998b) that may occur not just in the UK within the Big Society trends, but if not globally at least during the past two decades in Europe with the con-current existence of both retrenchment; and a 'new deal' in favour of social investment to achieve employability, instead of the giving out of passive transfers (Van Kersenbergen and Hemerijck 2012). Such a line however interesting remains out-with the scope and target of this article, that wishes to address issues of latent or indeed explicit ideology of the 'Big Society'.

pillar –historical references in particular to the British and Greek 19<sup>th</sup> century-<sup>5</sup> in order to argue about a latent preference of the founders of the ‘Big Society’ doctrine towards niche local communities adhering to Victorian era social values, as to substantiate the claim for the relation to size, locality etc referred just before. It is in this framework that this article will explore possible latent ideological premises in parity with historical developments in social formation both with each other, on the one hand and with current ones on the other. Therefore, the article consists of four parts: the first presenting and analyzing the ‘Big Society’ idea itself, placing emphasis on its components of locality, community, charity etc.; the second making references to the history of social assistance in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain focusing upon charities, mutuals, benevolence, philanthropy, etc; the third turning to Greek social assistance history over a similar period, but under an entirely different set of social and political circumstances; and the fourth attempting to draw comparisons and conclusions with view to ideology.

### (a) ‘Big Society’, a proposal for a new structure of state and welfare services.

Further or perhaps due to its political implications, ‘Big Society’ has attracted the interest of many commentators commenting on its relation to Thatcherism and fiscal cuts; to its substance as an ideology or its lack of it as a catch-phrase, and/or to its clarity or haziness, among other issues concerning the term and its political application as recent academic work (including inter alia the 2011 SPA conference, Social Policy Review 23, and various articles) has shown. It has to be noted that the ‘Big Society’ doctrine was initially presented by Mr. David Cameron when he ran for the leadership of the Conservative Party. It grew during his years as Leader of the Opposition, as well as during the election campaign, and of course when he

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<sup>5</sup> The choice of the two case studies, however arbitrary at first sight, relates to their difference in state and economy structure and formation (worldwide Empire in the heart of the industrial revolution and expanding urbanisation in one case, versus an underdeveloped region of a declining Empire at first, and then a poor devastated state lacking structures and resources in the other); and similarity (as the remainder of this article will demonstrate) in social services structures and (absence of) provision on the other.

undertook the Premiership. The very fact that the doctrine was party-political laden raised issues of, and made commentators think, about substance and rhetoric and their relation, alongside the relation of Big Society with pluralism, ([http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2010/07/David\\_Cameron\\_Our\\_Big\\_Society\\_Agenda.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2010/07/David_Cameron_Our_Big_Society_Agenda.aspx), visited 23/05/11; Barker, 2011; H. Bochel, 2011).

It is also worth remembering that despite the 'Big Society' being a key doctrine for the Tories, it covers only a small part of one chapter in the 2010 Manifesto, mentioning that through its implementation it can enhance (self-)responsibility, empower groups and individuals and redistribute power from bureaucratic entities to smaller ones.

As Wiggan (2011) notes such a shift can be associated with the modernisers' group within the Tories. This group wishes to present themselves as well as their Party as civic conservatives and as politicians interested in combining self-reliance and social justice on the one hand, with economic liberalism and fiscal austerity on the other. In (coalition) government this was implemented by policies and Law-making related not only to cuts in public spending (Taylor-Gooby 2011), but also legislation for the promotion of social enterprise and enabling of communities <sup>6</sup> and Voluntary Community and Social Enterprises as social services providers within a discourse in favour of local entities' action and involvement. These new policies according to commentators aim(-ed) to facilitate an overall services restructuring and shift towards local decision making and rebalancing of stakeholder relations (Mycock and Tonge, 2011; Taylor-Gooby and Stoker, 2011; Teasdale et al, 2011) <sup>7</sup>. Moreover, according to Defty (2011), who refers to the Hansard Society's findings, people are interested more in issues related to their local area, a fact that can be taken into account in the discussions about power redistribution and a new role of communities but has the risk of keeping the 'Big Society' concept unclear too.

In a nutshell 'Big Society' and the spending cuts related to it, can go alongside decentralization (Taylor-Gooby and Stoker, 2011), widening of volunteer involvement and strengthening the role of charities, individuals, and other non state non for profit

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<sup>6</sup> However, as Clare Williams (2011) rightly remarks, these communities (to be empowered in their local areas and to undertake social tasks) are going to flourish better in more advantaged areas.

<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that 'locality' is important not only for the 'Big Society' argument and approach; locality has a long history in the UK, alongside other countries too.

entities whilst it refers to a wide spectrum of services and activities such as managing a neighbourhood post-office, or a local park, a local school, kindergarten, or any other form of provision for that matter (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/12/david-cameron-big-society-good>, visited 23/05/11; [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/building\\_big\\_society\\_o.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/building_big_society_o.pdf) published 18/5/2010, visited 23/05/11 ; The Conservative Manifesto 2010, [http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2009/11/David\\_Cameron\\_The\\_Big\\_Society.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2009/11/David_Cameron_The_Big_Society.aspx)). It becomes apparent that 'Big Society' is closely associated with locality, pluralism and various individuals taking on multiple roles. All these issues are reminiscent of 'Victorian Values' about charities voluntarism and participation (Evans, 2010), whereas the differences in transport and communication between mid and late nineteenth century on the one hand (favouring localism) and early twenty-first on the other (favouring broader entities) should not be underestimated. Therefore, Barker (2011) is right to claim that the Conservatives when using the term imply not one big society, but rather a large number of smaller ones, an idea this article wishes to pursue further, via a comparative examination of two nineteenth century cases where similar social entities played a significant (if not predominant) role in social provision, assistance and welfare services provision, despite different forms of state and society in which they operated. The key aim is to examine and present similarities in structures and especially services, that show a subtle preference by the 'Big Society' idea founders towards not only a nineteenth century Victorian ideology, but the importance of small (contemporary) local communities in the provision of social services. To achieve this, the article will turn to a brief historical investigation (nineteenth century Britain and nineteenth century Greece) in the next two sections.

## (b) Victorian Britain and Social Care: a Cradle of 'Big Society'?

State (in) action and abstention from social welfare provision policies (further to legislation for the workhouses and vaccinations, alongside erratic labour relations legislation), coupled with the existence of a philanthropic bourgeoisie (with ample

time) on the one hand; and the disintegration of rural communities going hand in hand with urban poverty and new social relations in urbanized areas on the other, led to the creation of mutuals, friendly societies, benevolent organizations etc. It can also be argued that apart from locality, two of the pillars upon which these entities were based, were class on the one hand, and religion on the other. So, there were societies of many denominations and religious affiliations (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish). On a less religious sector, the Charities Organisation Society formed in 1869 tried to balance itself between progressive implementation and traditional ideology (Fraser, 2003: 142 ff; 316) and despite offering umbrella organization and co-ordination operating mostly in the localities, its relation with the (New) Poor Law made it unappealing for members of the working class who formed alternative bodies catering inter alia for health-care, basic needs provision at low cost, funeral services, mostly at a local level too (Davey-Smith, Dorling and Shaw, 2001). Such a wide spectrum of motives, beliefs, aspirations, needs, hopes and expectations existing in various places <sup>8</sup> led to the existence of more than 640 charities in London alone during 1861 (Fraser, 2003: 136) with the idea of state-supervised private philanthropy being predominant (130), occasionally with a strong (protestant) moralistic and quasi militaristic doctrine to guide entities as the case of the Salvation Army indicates.

Poverty and pauperism alongside squalor, illiteracy and harsh working conditions, as briefly presented above, were one component of social predicaments, with disease, and especially pandemics and epidemics occurring every few years being another (Davey-Smith et al 2001, Fraser 2003). These problems prompted healthcare related replies such as the establishment of entities to cater either for their prevention and avoidance (hygiene promotion) or in the form of their amelioration (therapy). In particular, as far as health prevention and counseling (and perhaps monitoring) are under consideration in Salford and Manchester in 1862 working class women were employed by (local) Ladies Societies to work as health visitors in working class areas and families and teach hygiene, child care and upbringing, alongside other forms of family life (Davey-Smith et al 2001), evidently

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<sup>8</sup> It should not be forgotten that communication and transport in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were not as efficient and fast as in the 21<sup>st</sup>.

bringing together health and employment on the one hand, with local groups on the other, a fact quite reminiscent of both Victorian values and the 'Big Society' doctrine. The field of health care is somehow two-fold regarding the repercussions of disease and the combating of the said repercussions, through hospitals for the ill and shelters and orphanages for their dependents. Commencing our approach with a brief reference to the hospitals we have to firstly remember that in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries medical knowledge and science were in such an infancy that hospitals were in reality acting rather as shelters and hospices for the diseased (and not only) poor, than as centres offering therapeutic treatment. Most hospitals were established by local dignitaries, and as time proceeded they were funded by 'subscriptions' of elites who could then could 'refer' their protégés if they were in need, whilst the religious element and clergy involvement should not go unnoticed either. Boards of governors and/or guardians were also selected from prominent local families and circles often in an effort to achieve better social status and esteem. Similarly as the developments of Royal Hospitals in large towns such as Sheffield in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (where the hospital was funded by local wealthy iron traders) indicates, in the 1860s the 'subscription' system was perceived by poor beneficiaries as charity from the better off. Non eradication or even expansion of disease alongside medical and scientific curiosity by some doctors became over time the vault upon which old type hospitals turned to therapeutic centres during the mid and late nineteenth century, prompting inter alia a need to broaden and better regulate the access of the population covered (Abel-Smith, 1964; Fraser, 2003).

Turning to the unfortunate results of disease and inadequate healthcare however, it should be remembered that epidemics and pandemics (influenza, typhus, cholera, plague, typhoid etc.) continued undeterred with a vast number of victims and causing many deaths due to the combination of lack of both resources and medical knowledge, with the last major cholera outbreak occurring in London in 1866 (Davey-Smith, Dorling and Shaw, 2001). This epidemic caused more than 3,000 deaths mainly in the East End (already blighted by overcrowding, bad housing, poverty, lack of infrastructure, all resulting and culminating to infant and child mortality), and lead many families and young children to destitution, with children begging, sleeping in the streets or gutters and suffering severe accidents in the workplace, while

remaining deprived of even elementary education. A response to the last problem was the setting up of a 'ragged school' by Thomas John Barnardo in 1867. Three years later, once he realized that too many of the school's pupils were living in destitute conditions, he established the first home for boys in Stepney Causeway, motivated by his Christian (Evangelical Protestant convert) beliefs. The home, however, did not exclude children of other denominations, neither did it wish to proselytize, and after the death of a child refused shelter due to overcrowding, its motto became 'no destitute child ever refused admission'. Shelter provision was later expanded to also cover girls and education and training on basic skills and crafts were also offered as to lead children to an independent living. Though it all begun as a local enterprise, within almost 40 years (by 1905 when Barnardo died) 96 homes caring for more than 8,500 children were operating throughout the country. The Charity enjoyed financial support from many (mostly evangelists), though some questions and critique were also raised ([www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk), 3/07/12). It can be seen that even one of the largest (even today) organisations commenced as a local initiative founded by philopaedic and Christian values to combat destitution as (among other reasons) a result of disease and epidemics in a deprived area <sup>9</sup>.

To recapitulate, liberal theory alongside philanthropy, benevolence, special social bond (occasionally religious denomination related ones) and locality, all related to a sense of 'belonging' matched by state inaction during the Victorian era (and before) caused throughout Britain the setting up, creation and functioning of a vast number and spectrum of initiatives and entities operating mainly on a local level. This observation matches with and corroborates Evans's (2010) point about the relationship between the 'Big Society' doctrine and Victorian values. On the other hand, an issue not pursued too much to-date is the question relating these forms of social welfare and services provision to an idea of locality and moreover community. Another issue remaining to be examined (especially while keeping the idea of locality and community in mind) is whether a state that had an entirely different political structure and performed entirely different social and economic functions, over almost the same period, took similar or different social policy measures, and under what

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<sup>9</sup> This is of interest as similar cases can be found in Greek welfare history of the same period, will be found in the next section.



circumstances and why. Therefore, the next section of this article will turn to nineteenth century pre and immediately post independence Greece.

### (c) Was there a 'big society' in pre-independence and nineteenth century Greece?

As just mentioned, different cases and social and state structures can provide additional information and insight about the role of social entities in the provision of social assistance.

Pre-independence Greece was governed by the Sublime Porte <sup>10</sup> under the 'millet' (religious-linguistic grouping) system, that was based upon a further division to a pyramid-like structure with representatives (vekil) on top, to niche local communities in bottom undertaking manifold tasks that occasionally included activities in the spectrum of social assistance. The assistance offered by these predominately agricultural groupings of poor serfs and petty proprietors was rather limited directed to alleviation of extreme hardship for the 'deserving' poor <sup>11</sup>. There were a few notable successful exceptions such as the cases of Ampellakia in Thessaly, Mastichochoia in Chios, Mademochoria, to mention the most important cases, as other ones existed also, that combine wealth creation through specialized production and trading of specific goods with robust services provision. (Anastasopoulos, 2010; Karouzou, 2010; Seitanidou, 2010; Dikeos 2011, Dikeos 2012).

Greek independence commences in the late 1820s under very dire circumstances of extreme deprivation and poverty for the population living in a destroyed countryside; and of a state lacking funds, bureaucracy and legislation. The Greek state could play a rather limited role in the social welfare context under these conditions, leaving most actions in the hands of benefactors (often wealthy Greeks living abroad, and in cases members of the European royalty) and small groups,

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<sup>10</sup> The Sublime Porte ruled pre-independence Greece for approximately four centuries from mid 1400s to early 1830s. It paid minimal attention to forms of social policy, focusing on charity, philanthropy and benevolence according to the rulings of the Holy Koran (Anastasopoulos, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> The term is not exactly compatible to the one used in Victorian society, since it refers to a different tradition.

mostly local. These were involved in the creation of institutions, mainly hospitals and orphanages, and secondly hospices for the poor and elderly. Such was the case of the hospital in Syros set up in 1827 (officially 1825, before the Independence of 1828), with the funds of wealthy people who had fled from other islands, whilst other benefactors were later (Proios in 1887, Vardakas in 1938) added (Leivadaras 2009). Likewise wealthy Greeks from the diaspora in 1854 assisted in establishing the Athens Ophthalmic Hospital, and other wealthy benefactors hospitals still bearing their names (or names of Saints after which the benefactors were Christened) in various locations (Patras, Pireas, etc) up to late 19<sup>th</sup> century. 'Elpis' (Hope) municipal hospital of Athens, established in 1836 and 'Evangelismos' (Annunciation) hospital in 1884, have a slightly different history as they were created mostly through foreign royal assistance (Bavarian and Russian respectively), with however considerable donations by wealthy Greeks from home and abroad. (Kokkinakis, 2010; Korasidou, 2002; Liakos. 1993; Chatzidaki, 2005; Adamantidou and Vatzeli, 2009; Mastrogiannis, 1960).

As for other forms of social hardship and plight amelioration, these were mostly orphanages (one established by the state, the rest by local benefactors such as Chatzikostas, Babayiotis, et al) <sup>12</sup>, and shelters and hospices for the elderly, or the destitute, usually set up by 'benevolent societies'<sup>13</sup> that had a mostly bourgeois membership, as the case of Athens indicates, whilst individual contributions (in cases through bequests) should not be overlooked. Lastly, it should also be noted that similar tactics were followed in areas of the Ottoman Empire with a strong Greek population, not incorporated in the Greek state by those dates (Mastrogiannis, 1960; Korasidou, 2004; Kokkinakis, 2010; Polyzoidis, 2008).

Therefore, as far as pre and early independence Greece is under consideration, in a nutshell the combination of either unwillingness (mostly in the Ottoman days), or of incapacity (during the first period of independence) of state on the one hand, with a

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<sup>12</sup> Some of these orphanages were set up after epidemics (cholera 1854 in Athens) in order to assist the children of the epidemics' victims. We should not forget that forms of education and training were also offered (eg in Zanneio in Pireaus) alongside the assistance by other entities in the area of education and training (see next footnote), the entire picture being reminiscent of the ragged schools and Barnardo's in the same period.

<sup>13</sup> In a few cases such societies as 'Parnassos' looked after the education and training of vulnerable children too.

sense of locality, obligation and linguistic and cultural-national-religious community on the other, facilitated forms of provision that were based upon local, community and benevolent action rather reminiscent of the current 'Big Society' approach, as far as the need for benevolent involvement either on an individual, or on a community (local or other) level is concerned.

#### (d) Comparison and Conclusions

The article attempts to co-examine three distinct historical cases in the development (or retrenchment) of social policy measures, focusing upon providers, their ideology, functions, size and location versus area of activity. Despite their salient differences, the three cases perform some similar functions that are worth pointing out. Orphanages, and education and training entities in both Victorian Britain and post independence Greece were created (inter alia) as a response to epidemics, whilst unions, societies, mutuals (in the UK often associated with denomination) were also abundant offering consolation and support to the needy, at a local level, a fact observed in pre-independence Greece too. Actions were mostly local (this was in large part due to the relative lack of transport and telecommunication facilities), offered by benevolent individuals or niche groups to specified and 'targeted' beneficiaries. In most cases providers belonged to an affluent bourgeoisie or quasi bourgeoisie and recipients to the lower classes, with the exemption of unions and mutuals where members came from the same (usually working) class, or other groupings with strong bonds and sense of belonging and inter- (or even intra-) relationships among their members-. The 'Big Society' doctrine as implemented by the Tory-Liberal Democrat 2010 Coalition Government (see also Social Policy Review 24 part I) aside from its apparent intentions, implications and repercussions in relation to the retrenchment of the Keynesian Welfare State policies and re-instating of Thatcherite ideology (eg P. Taylor-Gooby, 2011; H. Bochel 2011; P. Taylor-Gooby and G. Stoker, 2011) as briefly discussed earlier in this article too <sup>14</sup>,

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<sup>14</sup> It goes without saying that the current level of social welfare services in the UK, however retrenched from its Keynesian golden days, cannot be compared with the absence of services during the Victorian era. The article obviously does not wish a comparison of structures and services between the two (or indeed four, if we add the Greek case) cases, but the exploration of certain

clearly relates to social bodies, entities, actors and actions similar to the Victorian ones (Evans, 2010) <sup>15</sup>.

This article wishes to bring the issue of locality, on the one hand and niche groups with strong and closely knit bonds on the other a little more to the fore, and in agreement with Barker (2011) about the doctrine referring not to one big society but to too many small ones, suggesting that a key element underlying current ideology and doctrine is one of (local) community<sup>16,17</sup>. The term by and large derives and is related to Toennies's concept of community/gemeinschaft, but does not entirely correspond (or indeed is identical) to it. Though the conceptual components of positive relationship and (mutual) social bonds that may lead to an 'organic life' of a social group may exist, parameters like kinship are certainly absent, whilst in our use it cannot refer to family and/or other pre-existing entities. It is rather that some of the key components of Toennies's community such as (occasional, in our case) blood and moreover place (stronger, in our case) locality and neighbourhood relations (denomination also in our case as we have seen), duty and pleasures sharing, alongside agreements based upon reciprocity, mutual assistance, and above all consensus exist either more subtly or less latently in the use of the term in this article, than that the entities referred to earlier are themselves 'gemeinschafts' (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/46214312/Tonnies-Community-and-Civil-Society>. 15 July 2012). In this article, 'community' refers to an entity that includes a number of these components alongside benevolence, sense of duty, locality and (occasionally) niche groupings of common interests, aspirations, feelings, causes and pursuits, in line with the 'Big Society' doctrine both in the form of actors and the scope of activities and to an important extent apparent in the two historic cases examined <sup>18</sup>.

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ideological premises such as the importance of individualism, benevolence, locality and community, that appear in all cases (see Dikeos, 2012 too).

<sup>15</sup> All these open up the issue of the relation between pluralism (as actors and their roles are concerned), liberalism (freedom of activities alongside state retrenchment and inaction, coupled by individual responsibility, as seen in the sections on the nineteenth century); and the role of other entities (associations, societies, charities) to cover the vacuum on the other. This question however falls beyond the limits of this short article.

<sup>16</sup> Fact and development observed in Victorian Britain and 19<sup>th</sup> century pre and post independence Greece too.

<sup>17</sup> Locality is one, however not the key component in the formation of community. It is anyway stronger in the nineteenth century due to transport and (tele-)communication reasons.

<sup>18</sup> Additionally, an interesting subject for study is the formation and significance of community as integral part of the 'local', and its role in governance in different historical moments. Moreover, a

Therefore, building upon Barker, we attempt a step further and propose the association of the 'Big Society' doctrine with an ideology that could have a term such as communities-ism coined for both the 'Big Society' doctrine and the ideology underlying it.

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further question especially for today is the complex interrelation between local communities and solidarity formations (such as philanthropic and non-for-profit associations at national or local level) on one hand, and the presence and importance of global civil society organizations (e.g. Red Cross, YWCA) on the other. These issues however are a little beyond the main targets of this article.

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