The Temporary Academy of Arts (PAT)

Waste/d
The Temporary Academy of Arts (PAT)
A quasi institution, a para-institutional structure, dedicated to radical pedagogy

Mike Davies in *Planet of Slums*, portrays an unequal and explosive urban world. The 95% of the world population growth will be produced in the urban areas of the Global South of which its population is a permanent surplus to capital’s requirements and a ‘little more than humans-as-waste’. The labour of this population is ‘wasted labour’ as it is never likely to be a source of surplus value. There, reactionary geographies emerge, where necropolitics apply as a space of negation and the social dead produced by expropriations and alienation in an out global north nation states. While, at the same time as many analyses show, scavengers, state, the restructuring of markets, formal and informal economies are interwoven to the development of capital. Without the constant appropriation of unpaid work-performed by human and non-human natures, surplus value could not be developed and expanded. Waste/d is enmeshed into a circuit of global capital flow\(^1\). For some this is what lies at the core of the Capitalocene.

Our motivations and aspiration is that waste/d can be an internal limit to the above circuit of flow where value, bodies, humans, animals, soil, forest, knowledge are incorporated in the unstoppable process of accumulation and surplus value. Art-theory-education may be part and inform the conversation and the understanding of capitalocene and waste/d ‘potentia’. ‘Potentia’ which lies in radical education, reclaiming of labor and of ‘making living possible’ income, new societal and citizenry formations, climate justice.

Left Eyebrow (raised)
An area of thick, short hairs above the eye. Their main function is to prevent sweat, water, and other debris from falling down into the eye socket.

The following material has been produced by PAT; it is one of the compartments of a research based project. The way it has been worked

through, has become, gradually, a methodology of PAT to create material that can be used, shown and take different forms of presenting and exhibiting in diverse contexts. The following has the form of a publishing curatorial experiment, a text on the idea of waste/d. It is a device for a lecture performance, a video work, an installation, an outline of an art exhibition. At the same time, it is a set of directions on dramaturgy and performance. The script of Yota Ioannidou is a response to the “Passive Vampire” (originally published in 1945) by Gherasim Luca. Déline, a female character, appears on page 121. The script of Vangelis Vlahos is based on a video footage found on Newsbeast.gr website, entitled “Arrest in Exarchia” and shot on November 15, 2016. Previously PAT has worked in the same, multifaceted manner for the project Freedom, which has been shown also in a publication as well as in a short movie form. The compartments, as much as they hold their ‘medium-autonomy’, are also integral parts of a unity.

The material is a meditation, information, experimentation, critical attitude, valorisation of different aspects of waste/d, connected to phenomena of contemporary greek reality, related to the recent history that still shapes the physiognomy of this specific locality as well as its politics. Waste/d concerns old and new subjects and matter (from the precarious art workers bodies to the new wasted subjects produced by the hygiene norms of covid19) as well as new sophisticated methods of ‘cleaning’ (from global and local environmental politics in capitalocene, to state and police methods to clean the city of Athens from refugee squats and anarchists to ensure public order).

The covid-19 pandemic that locked-down the whole world, inevitably adds new input on thinking about human and artistic fragility and freedom. What are the stakes in the new emphasis on the public sector of the economy in the political rhetorics? Who are the new wasted subjects in the current crisis? Can we claim a new social contract on the occasion of this pandemic? How can we imagine and visualize an anti-WASTE front?

Our text refers to moments of recent greek history, as for example the liberalisation of the local production and health system, the cleansing operations of a neo liberal state, the dismantling of an armed militant group. These are small moments in the global history but interconnected to the big image of capitalocene. In the text, also, appear descriptions of works of art produced by greek artists, connected to moments of recent greek history, in diverse ways. Again these are small moments of the global art history but they are, though, interconnected to practices of interest. We want these moments of greek history and greek art (history) to be known, not enmeshed in a circuit of capital flow, but to be integral parts of a radical art-theory-education.
‘For the dominant politics is usually a matter of aesthetics. For us it was a matter of life and death.’

The writer Eduard Louis describes a day that his lumpen family goes to the sea to celebrate the 100 euro allowance given by the then government of France for the scheme ‘return to education’, for support of buying school material. Louis writes: ‘All day was a fest. For those who have everything, I haven’t ever seen a family going to the sea to celebrate a political decision, because for them politics change almost nothing. I realised that when I went to live in Paris, away from you: the dominant can complain for a left government, they can complain for a right government, but no government ever [literally] smashes their guts, no government breaks their waist, no government makes them go to the sea. Politics do not change their lives, or they barely change it. It is weird, it is exactly those who execute politics whereas politics have no consequence upon their lives. For the dominant, politics are usually a matter of aesthetics: a way to think themselves, a way to see the world, a way to configure their face. For us it was a matter of life and death.

As we all wonder what the next day will be after this unprecedented crisis, issues of freedom, justice as well as humanitarian issues come forth in urgent, pragmatic and existential ways. Art can be reinforced within this process as it is a praxis par excellence which can create the symbolic as well as the actual and activist space for such existential and ethical dilemmas. A space where new and unexpected modes of living, socializing, activating affects and powers can be proposed, discussed, thought and tried out.

Right Nostril
External opening that admits air to the lungs

The conversation about Waste/d started in a wine bar in the center of Athens a summer night in 2019. Elpida’s reference to Dark Matter, where Gregory Sholette wonders what if we could imagine an art world unable to exclude the practices and practitioners it secretly depends upon?’ All of the forms that play an essential role in the symbolic economy of art. Collectively, the amateur and the failed artist who represent a vast flat field upon which a privileged few stand out in relief? This, as Sholette continues, does not refer to the lighting of the dark matter, as this is another way of the power to play the game. It is, rather, about those who self-consciously choose to work further from the territory of the mainstream art world for

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reasons of social, economic, and political stance. In a sense, these artists, curators, theoreticians have learned to embrace their own structural redundancy, they have, somehow, chosen to be “dark matter.” This provoked a dialogue on our positioning and status as cultural workers, artists, curators and writers. Although one could tell our work is in many ways wasted since it does not correspond to a financially sustainable practice nor is part of the mainstream global art canon, we don’t feel it is wasted. To open a dialogue with the leading art institutions and global art scenes doesn’t seem important anymore, like it seemed for some of us back in the early ‘00s, as we don’t find their focus relevant to our practice and thinking. This does not mean that, in terms of cultural policy and management, the leading private and state institutions of Greece could not do more in facilitating the presence of local artists in the centers with which they have a dialogue and that the strategies of these institutions are not problematic in many levels (emphasis on importing big international names instead of exporting local artists, building networks of questionable value instead of collaborations which would ensure measurable results in terms of visibility and financial support for the local artists and art workers).

How far can we go with demythologising what is irrelevant to us, regardless of being the centre, the core of globalised knowledge, money, power, decisions? To paraphrase Achille Mbembe, we still have to enforce our tools, our consciousness in order to free ourselves from our own entrapment in mainstream mythologies and open a future for all here and now, which is not waste/d. Even if it sounds like a manifesto, we need commitment to the articulation of the discourse produced by all waste/d powers, in writing, translating, archiving, publishing, distributing in order to create our set of mental dispositions. We need to reconcile a logic of indictment and a logic of self-affirmation, interruption and occupation. Mbembe proposes a ‘pedagogy of the presence’. This publication/tool for lecture performances, exhibitions, workshops, as well as the previous one we have published, accompanying our film/project Freedom, are part of such a pedagogy to which PAT is committed.

A commitment to demythologising has nothing to do with a local, national, xenophobic de-centralisation. It has to do with seeing ourselves clearly and not as an act of secession from the rest of the world, but in relation to ourselves and to other selves with whom we share the world. Create the possibility of ‘re-centering’ to what is important, relevant to us but also to

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share this with many, other, diverse centres, cartographing streams that are less predictable and imposed.

Tooth (broken)
Hard, bony enamel-coated structure used for biting and chewing.

The will to redirect the cartographing streams is a praxis of auto-poiesis, or even as Donna Haraway has taught us, a praxis of sym-poiesies, a practice that enables an escape from the predicament of predetermined identities and relations still enscripted upon minds, bodies, humans and other species, a praxis of ‘making kin’, as she urges. For Greece has been naturalised as a part of the global South, as this has been overdetermined by the dominant and powerful ‘geographies’ and all its following connotations. In the last years Greece has been an experiment par excellence of the exoticism of the contemporary South, on the one hand, and of the exorcism of the contemporary South memorandum crisis, on the other. Idealisation and anathema go always hand in hand.

In her work “Objects Lessons: For all Party occasions” (2018) Natasha Biza tells the strange story of a collection of luxury items that arrived in Athens in 1949 during the post-WWII period and within the civil war as part of the Marshall Plan Aid. Crockery, candy thermometers, coupat, bain-marie and all kinds of industrial goods from the USA were sent to Greece with an unknown purpose and remained in disuse for many years at the Agricultural University of Athens. A quick inventory was conducted sometime in the 1980’s, when the objects were moved to the storage of the Agricultural Museum, where they were found by the artist. The artist creates a meticulous inventory of 3000 objects. On the framework of the exhibition ‘Geometries’, where the complete documentation of the collection was exhibited, a round table discussion over coffee and cookies was organized. Seven guests were invited to discuss different aspects of the Marshall Plan and its material remains today in Greece. These forgotten, wasted objects shed light to a different aspect of the humanitarian help to post-war Greece. The process of healing and normalization after the Civil War was connected with that of a comfortable home, the acquisition of material goods as a presumption of development and prosperity, and new dietary habits (largely based on the consuming of sugar) as dictated by the American dream. The Marshall Plan is considered one of the tools through which this process took place.

For the inspirers of the Marshall Plan the priority was to feed the hungry european populations, so that they would resist communism. Their view of Greece was that it was “by nature, a dependent country”, seeing the Ameri-
cans as godfathers. In the early 50s, one third of the Greek population was totally dependent on the state to survive. The number of people working in the public sector had tripled. The Anglo-Saxon social anthropology cultivated systematically the idea of a Mediterranean uniqueness, a peculiarity. In a report making the account of the effect of the Marshall plan in 1951 the Americans note that they stopped communism but didn’t have anything sustainable to give instead, that they restored the order but this order was protected by corrupt governments. The way the Greek state of the time helped local ship-owners to buy hundreds of ships that the Americans sold to Greece at a discount, without asking these ship-owners to pay any taxes is indicative of the undercover transactions that took place. Historically modern Greece has mainly looked West in order to position itself, although attempts to find alliances in the Middle East orchestrated by the socialist party in the ‘80s have proposed alternative roots.

In rival cartographies, what does it really mean, what are the consequences, when one makes profane connections and alliances far from the more obvious or expected ones?

Vangelis Vlahos’ project “Is there any oversight on Ocalan?” (2009-11) attempts to recreate Abdullah Ocalan’s known and rumored route before his capture in Nairobi on February 15, 1999. Ocalan is the Kurdish militant leader, who in 1978 founded the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). The PKK has been listed as a terrorist organization by a number of states and organizations, and has been leading an armed campaign inside Turkey since 1984, with the intent of creating an independent Kurdish state. Ocalan, since 1999 is imprisoned by the Turkish state on Imrali Island in the Turkish Sea of Marmara. He was captured in Kenya on February 15, 1999 as he was driven from the Greek ambassador’s residence to the Nairobi international airport, where he was supposed to fly to Holland to ask for political asylum. At a time Greece was trying to meet the requirements to join the new common European currency, a major foreign policy objective, Ocalan’s arrest and the degree of Greek involvement in the case caused a major political crisis at home. Vlahos’ work is built through images found on the internet and tourist catalogues of the late 1990s and early 2000s. The material is installed on a 23 meters long wall-shelf creating a kind of timeline of all the places where Ocalan tried unsuccessfully to find political asylum. Given that there is no photographic evidence of the route, the research was based on only a few written testimonies of people who at some point encountered Ocalan in the four months before his arrest. From these testimonies, Vlahos only used details related to the backdrop of the journey that had to do mainly with the weather conditions, the time and landscape features. None of the images depict Ocalan himself or make any

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direct reference to the Kurdish issue or Greece’s involvement in the case. Without the event, the images are a series of common images of different landscapes, different types of buildings, airports and animals. The text accompanying the work facilitates the viewer to reconstruct this abstracted depiction of the politics involved in the case of Ocalan and his passage through Greece during his escape. The shelf holding the images is like an idler wheel that leads the viewer to the route of Ocalan’s adventure.

In this case, as in other Vlahos’ projects, he investigates the paths of diverse and reverse cartographies, the turnovers of geopolitical gaming. This work, among others, refers to the ‘sidelooks’ in politics. His work “Bridge” (2013-15) refers to a trade agreement between Greece and Syria during the seventies and eighties. The work “The Elounda summit - The differences between the parts are the subject of the composition” (2009), depicts Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou’s personal “mediation” between France and Libya over arrangements for bilateral troop withdrawals from Chad, in a summit meeting in Elounda Bay, Crete on November 15, 1984. The project consists of a series of 8 photographs taken at this event showing Papandreou, Gaddafi and Mitterrand seated around a table. The project “1992 - The renovation of the Bosnian parliament” (2006-7), focuses on the funding of the renovation of the Bosnian Parliament building in Sarajevo by the Greek State. The particular initiative of the renovation has been described by the former Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis as ‘a movement with a strong symbolism for Greece’s role in the Balkans’, while according to the government which inaugurated the project ‘it confirms the special role and particular interest of Greece in the area’.

Artistically speaking, the majority of Greek art professionals of our generation have, at least in the beginning of their careers, looked, mainly into the western art scene to create networks of dialogue and exchange. Postgraduate education in British Universities in the ‘90s and ‘00s has been the norm, whereas, later on, European exhibitions such as Manifesta-again politics, as always were involved, as this followed the post iron curtain era-proposed alternative artistic cartographies outside of the “former West”. For us, in our artistic practice as, it happens in politics, it is important to “sidelook” to further (waste/d) material (archives, magazines, publications, practices) that is created parallel to the dominant anglo-saxon paradigm. In other words we ask ourselves, what is our own geography of the South, the one we understand and we identify with, the one we want to belong to, or the one we belong to without realising it. What about Bratislava, Brazil, Cairo, Istanbul, Ireland, Lagos, Lebanon, Portugal, Prague, Pristina, Stuttgart? What about Douma, where Razan Zaitouneh and her comrades were kidnapped and disappeared by the Assad regime? What about the autonomous cultural centre in the city of Metelkova in Slovenia? What about a terrace in Koukaki where Dimitris Indares was beaten by the police?
What about the disappeared bodies in Newala Qesaba in Turkey? What about the town of Keratsini, where Pavlos Fyssas was murdered by members of Golden Dawn. What about Omonoia where Zak Kostopoulos was also murdered and Minneapolis where the Black American George Floyd was murdered by a policeman just as we were writing? What about Tirana where the demonstrations against the symbolic demolition of Tirana’s historic National Theatre were repressed by violent attacks by the police?

One cannot be naive when mapping up one’s own or collective routes, straight, diverse or perverse. All the above have limits, the same way that our thoughts on an anti-WASTE front have limits, but, if it is not too late for reform, let us consider updating our tools and sharpening our equipment.

**The oesophagus**
A tube connecting the mouth to the stomach.

Greek society underwent two waves of de-industrialisation. The first involved the so called ‘problematic companies’ of the ‘80s and the second a hundred more problematic industrial companies in the ‘90s. The first were saved by the National Bank, with a danger for the bank to go bankrupt, the second (including previously nationalized companies) were liquidated and sold, but left the state with heavy debts.

The processes through which a great number of local industries facing bankruptcy were either protected, bought off by the state or closed down, were considered as a scandal by many, favoring certain tycoons and burdening the fragile state economy. It is interesting to note that the vocabulary used for the handling of the problematics in the ‘90s was borrowed from the vocabulary of medicine. Vasso Papandreou, then Minister of Industry, called them a gagrena and argued for their purge, while according to the communist newspaper, Rizospastis, she had answered to a question of the opposition party at a Parliament meeting that “if we start digging into each other’s sins, then the political life of the country will be much polluted.”

In 2008 the artist Yota Ioannidou initiated the on-going project, *Stratagem*. *Stratagem* explores the consequences of factory relocation and de-industrialisation on the individual and society as a whole, by researching and tracing the operations of one single multinational business in Greece and the Czech Republic. The company operates under the name of Schiesser AG, the market leader among Germany’s specialized underwear producers.

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5 Antonis Liakos, ibid, p.484.
The starting point for the project was the activity of the Schiesser Group in Athens, where their plants operated under the name of Schiesser Pallas and PALCO. The company became the centre point of local importance in 2003 when it decided to close down its plants in Athens and relocate its production facilities to various Eastern-European countries. For Greek society it was a particularly prominent story as it was part of a massive closure of factory production within the mainland, while the eastern European regions became the new agora for low-cost labour after 1989. The art project is structured upon various meetings and discussions, detailing the above phenomena and aims to investigate the issues that emerged. The material of the project is an assembly of maps, photos, video stills and interviews, collected, created and initiated by the artist during her visits to the company’s former and present plants. This material is organised, presented and performed in different ways. It takes the form of a publication, of a lecture performance, of an exhibition. Some of this material has been used for a collaboration of the artist with PAT, in the triptych, short film ‘Freedom’ in 2018. In the publication Stratagem, different contributors reflect on the issues of global politics, global art and post-Eastern European novel economics of severe capitalisation, re-ordering of labour exploitation aided and profited by the rest of Europe, part of it was the relocation of such factories. Issues of urban regeneration, gentrification, gender labour, workers’ trafficking, immigration and new geographies are phenomena that come into view. The project of Ioannidou is collecting, digging, (re)presenting and organising in unexpected ways, hidden structures to be brought to light in a way which is not only rational but also affective and visionary. Her work is a cartography where routes of the past, stories of devalued and waste/d beings, trajectories, connect to routes of the present ones. One month after the outburst of the corona virus in Europe the support of the public health systems throughout the world has been declared as priority. In Greece where the public sector of the economy is being continuously calumniated and is often considered as the scapegoat for most of the local malaises, in need of cure and cuts, we witness an unexpected celebration of it. And, what’s more, from a neoliberal government which has repeatedly argued against it.

Minister of Health Vasilis Kikilias stated “We want a strong public health and I think nobody doubts anymore that the National Health System has to be the first priority”. Former minister and economist Louka Katseli argued that “All Europe and the globe is cutting down its economic activity. Thus, the only development locomotive we can have is the public sector. If you don’t energize the public sector as well, with attention and thankfully we

6 Yota Ioannidou, 2009, Stratagem, Arnhem: Dutch Art Institute.
have the “cushion”, then we will face a deep recession”. Former Deputy Prime Minister of Greece Evangelos Venizelos argued that “We are in an epoch where politics has taken over from the economy. Everybody is looking to the nation state and, secondarily, to the EU to cover the problems of the market.

The establishment of the welfare state in Greece took place in the early 80s, under the socialist government of PASOK, two decades later than in the western and northern Europe and in a different social and political background. When the welfare state was established in western and northern European countries it was the time of strong unions and a spirit favoring state intervention even in conservative parties. In contrast, in southern Europe the social reforms took place in societies based on fragmented labor markets, with outdated welfare schemes, extensive family networks, differentiation between well-paid professionals with noble social security funds and low-paid professionals with poor social security funds. Although there were strong workers’ mobilizations the unions were weak and didn’t have the time to grow up because the exact same period in the US and Western Europe controversy had begun to erupt about the state’s involvement in insurance and health care. The socialist government expanded social security to the periphery of Greece, increased pensions and gave pensions to all the elderly who didn’t have social security. Nevertheless the social security system was unequal and not sustainable. At the same time, while in the decade 1980-1990 Greece was classified among the countries with reduced income inequalities, in 1990-2000 this was reverted and it was classified among those with increasing income inequalities.

The establishment of the National Security System (ESY), inspired by the British National Health System, was a priority for the government of PASOK. Hospital beds increased by 50%, but the reforms remained incomplete because of the restriction of public funds after 1985 and because certain unions of professionals who had better privileged social care prevented the creation of a united social care body with equal benefits for all. Moreover, public administration remained the “big patient”. In the post-war period it was established by the Right, and devotion to the party was the main criteria for recruitment and career, while after 1981 partisanship entered public administration changing the ideological composition but reducing efficiency and multiplying civil servants7.

After more than a decade of the economy and its vocabulary and logic ruling all other sectors along with a depreciation of humanities and an understanding of politics only as state financial management, we are facing, at least in words, an unexpected detournement: the public good is

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7 Antonis Liakos, ibid, p.431-434.
back on the top of the political rhetorics. Nevertheless, as neoliberalism is consolidated through the sociability of the crisis, the ‘angels of history’ of the public health system are back and the current politics involving the National Health System and the cooperation between the public and private sector are for many targeted to profit.

**Hangnail**
A piece of torn skin.

Yesterday, I did an exercise rereading books from my library, which had words like space, room, house etc. in their title. Sympathizing with all those women forced to stay at home, to cook, to spend “quality time” with their kids, to dress up, to work, to work out, it felt from another world to discover Gaston Bachelard’s romanticized exaltation of housework and housewifely (sic) care in “The Poetics of Space”.

“But how can housework be made into a creative activity?

The minute we apply a glimmer of consciousness to a mechanical gesture, or practice phenomenology while polishing a piece of old furniture, we sense new impressions come into being beneath this familiar domestic duty.

How wonderful it is to really become once more the inventor of a mechanical action!

From one object in a room to another, housewifely care weaves the ties that unite a very ancient past to a new epoch. The housewife awakens furniture that was asleep.”

Another exercise I did was to describe a room of my house. I chose the maid’s room. Back in post-war Athens, bourgeois apartments had a maid’s room. Maids were usually poor teenage girls from rural Greece and the islands, being very thankful to leave their home to come to the city to become servants with a minimum salary. Those maids did not have a class consciousness, their work was often seen for them as a step to enter the petit bourgeoisie, find a husband and follow the steps of their ladies. The maid’s room is 5,5 sq.m. It has a small window looking to the back yard and a small skylight to the kitchen bringing inside all the smells when cooking. I imagine it just fitted in a bed and a set of drawers. Now we use it as storing space. It is where we wash our clothes and hang them to get dry.

In the work “Season” (working title), Dimitra Kondylatou investigates, through a film project in three parts, how reproductive and emotional labour is practiced in a commercialised simulacrum of domesticity, the tourist accommodations. According to international statistics, there are posts in the so-called hospitality industry principally occupied by women.
Without necessarily having a relevant education, women are presumed to have ‘by default’ the required skills and knowledge for these jobs, as ‘part of their gendered identity’. Combining interviews with women working in the hospitality sector and anthropological research with fiction, Kondylatou explores the notions of hospitality and (performative) labour in tourism. She raises questions on various issues regarding these professions; from the working conditions, to the impact of multicultural encounters, as well as geopolitical powers – that might bring to the fore gender, class, cultural inequalities, biopolitical and geopolitical powers, but they can also be empowering – to the immaterial qualities, such as hospitality, care, communication, empathy and generosity, that being entangled in financial transaction and in self-staged – branded as ‘authentic’– performativity, get blurred with services, facilities, tasks and business.

Theorist Angela MacRobbie in her book ‘Be Creative’ makes an analysis of affective labour and readings of this kind of labour which still don’t see clearly how strongly affective labour is rooted in manipulation and exploitation of women, how they are celebrating aspects of affective labour with a degree of naivety and little concern for the way in which subjectivities get shaped up to perform these tasks within a framework of individualization, competition and self-reliance and ‘passionate work’. As she argues, ‘immaterial labour’, ‘emotional labour’, ‘affective labour’ or in her term ‘passionate work’ is now in a ‘dominant position in the contemporary informational economy’. She underlines that on the one hand capitalism has never before made such extensive use of the ‘manipulation of affects’, which entails ‘human contact’ and proximity, a kind of tactility and corporeality in everyday working situations. Capitalism makes a seductive offer to young women with the promise of pleasure in work, while at the same time this work is nowadays bound to be precarious and insecure and lacking the protection of conventional employment, making it all the more obvious that the ‘risk class’ as proposed by Ulrich Beck, may be subject to ‘social mobility’, which, thought, does not know where it is going. In her words, ‘the new waves of feminism, mark out alliances between queer, transgender and feminist politics, with an emphasis on the care work that women, find themselves expected to perform and underline the anomalies of passionate work leading to willing self-exploitation. This is supported on how affectionate labour markets re-traditionalize gender’ and as she points it is surprising how theorists of post-fordism often overlook how this is working as a de-politicizing containment strategy. More to that McRobbie draws the lines that homogenise, for example ‘emotional labour’ and ‘creative work’, putting in the same bucket the work of top fashion models to low paid female care workers and reminds us that gender work—such as fashion modeling—without the presence of strong feminist perspective can lead to severe confusion and neglect of the ‘harshly hierarchical divisions within the expansive field of immaterial labour’.

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8 Angela MacRobbie, 2016, Be Creative, Cambridge, Polity Press.
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There is a box
There is a light

I am in the corner

There is the light
There is the box

1.
Déline ...... 6 stops
I am not Déline
Déline is you

I am D.
Like a dummy
d.

2.
I am Déline

Am I the passive
vampire? Or are you?

I am D.
and
I am a vampire

3.
And now I am
dressed
I am wearing
my mirrored dress

I will stretch
the light

and

4.
I will go out

as you will.

We will not meet

5.
There is a forest

There is a highway

There is the sun

not harmful for me

There
is my hand

6.
There is a person

Walks straight to me
and

passes through

7.
That’s safe for him

I saw a box
He kept it with his
thin hands

8.
I follow the highway

I cannot walk that fast
The city is nearby

Just a little of itching
The sun doesn’t hurt me

9.
A bird comes
and talks to me

Don’t go there
there is nothing to eat
Get out of my way
I can even eat you

and the bird left

10.
My dress is heavy
Every one of its parts
knocking
each other

And my movement
weighing harder

11.
The man with the
thin hands keeping
the box is behind me.

He is in a rush
The box is empty

Now it’s my turn

12.
There is a tree.

I lay down under its shadow
The man passes
I nod at him

He doesn’t respond
The bird flies
over his head
and gives him a bite

13.
He is scared
a bit

keeps walking straight to
the city.

I move slowly,
following him

The sunset

14. Final

There is not
enough blood
in the moon
Axillary hair
Hair growing in the armpit, normally starts to appear at the beginning of puberty.

Since last autumn we receive frequent emails from the new Municipality of Athens about their cleaning operations throughout the city, they seem to be constantly cleaning neighborhoods, graffiti, roads with new, innovative, state of the art cleaning machines. During the corona virus quarantine they moreover disinfect the city. At the same time, the cleaners union expresses their dissatisfaction over the lack of protection measures for the workers. Moreover, besides the constant celebration of the doctors and nurses in public hospitals during the covid19 crisis, the cleaning workers in the hospitals complain that they are neglected.

The artist Eva Giannakopoulou, in her “Proposal for a Women* Labour Monument (and the tribute to the female* Albanian proletariat)” proposes an audiovisual installation that departs from two contradictory and deferred events of women* conditions in times of tense political ferment. In 1918 Fanny Kaplan (2) shot Vladimir Lenin three times in front of a factory. Two shots missed, but one hit home. She was then interrogated and killed on September 3 of the same year. Decades later, in 2016 Greece, three Albanian immigrant women work under extremely precarious working conditions in the kitchen of a tourist restaurant. Linking a violent historical event of the October Revolution with the phenomenon of immigration following the fall of the Eastern Bloc, the proposal for this work focuses on the historical and conceptual relevance of two women ‘narratives’; examining how these narratives manifest at various ways on a political, personal and artistic level. The project raises questions about the new technologies of memory and public space. Under contemporary conditions, the claims of public space and the presence of bodies-with-rights and bodies-without-rights, are becoming increasingly dense and controversial. The debate about monuments and the presence in public memory once again focuses on the structures, forms, mechanisms, and apparatuses of power. Can we think of the creation of new mnemonic feminist aesthetic techniques and what would be their characteristics?

Parallel to the cleaning operations, the months before the quarantine, we witnessed another type of cleaning operations, that of squats and solidarity and anarchist structures in the city. The financial crisis and austerity measures had already established the deepening and hardening of the nation state, the surveillance apparatuses and the hardness of exclusions. In the beginning of 2020, the Minister of Citizen Protection Michalis Chrisochoidis has argued that their priority is fighting political crime and not other criminal offenses.
On June 29, 2002, a failed bombing attempt at the port of Piraeus led Greek authorities to the arrest of Savvas Xiros, a member of the November 17 revolutionary organisation (17N). His arrest, the first ever of a member of the group, led to the discovery of two hideouts and the arrest of further suspects. The two hideouts, a ground-level apartment in Athens’ Kato Patissia district and a two-room flat in the Pagrati area, were chock full of all the material 17N used in its attacks: stolen license plates, many keys, a computer, proclamations, forging materials, explosives, guns and bomb-making materials.

Vangelis Vlahos’ project “Objects to relate to a trial - Nov17” (2016-17), consists of two inventories of all the items seized from the two November 17 hideouts, excepting those used as evidence in the group’s trial or reported by the media, and the testimony of three plumbers in the 17N’s trial, in which they describe what they saw in one of the hideouts when they went to repair the plumbing.

The November 17 Revolutionary Organization was established in 1975 in the aftermath of the Greek dictatorship (1967-1974). The group, the most durable of the militant Leftist revolutionary groups to emerge from the European radical milieu of the 1970s, assassinated 23 people in 103 attacks on US, British, Turkish and Greek targets over a period of 27 years.

The trial of the 17N opened in Athens on March 3, 2003, and lasted nine months. It was one of the most publicly followed trials in the history of Greece.

The existence of this organisation, its resilience in contemporary, democratic period of Greece has many times divided public opinion, the media and intellectual circles. It is connected with a particular history regarding the institutions of democracy and anti-institutional dynamics within greek mentality and politics, but also with radical thinking.

The work of Vlahos is concentrating in details, in found material which has been trivial and not used for the trial, in all that, which has been considered unnecessary. This interest for the small, the unnoticeable is in a way a cue for us to look into the details, into elements of history which are not all that obvious, or things that little by little reveal, of a story which is enmeshed with the recent history of Greece. The years of Junta, the dynamics of the change of polity after the fall of the dictatorship (Metapolitefsi) and the contradictions that shape contemporary greek politics as well as the subjects of neo-greeks, or even, further back, the wounds of a bloody Civil War (which mapped out in which part of the iron curtain Greece would be positioned), all these shaped a particular local history of institutional and anti-institutional, conservatism and anti-state and oppositional attitude that go hand by hand even in some of our official politics. The harsh expulsion,
in post-civil war times of a large (left) group of citizens by the state apparatus, the actions of the state and of all related powers (such as the press) which turned their attention to the dislocation and demonisation of the left led to the coiling of the powers of the left and sometimes to more extreme combat schemes. The powers of the Cold War helped towards this direction, globally. As a result, in Greece, a paradox has been recorded gradually, the dominant discourse being the main culprit for the awry Greek neoliberalism and capitalism. The existence of 17th of November which once coexisted with the Italian Red Brigades and the German RAF, outlasted them, shaping a specific paradigm in local contemporary politics. The distant, unspectacular mode that Vlahos adopts is an ‘unfocusing’ technique that invites us, viewers, to turn to what is out of sight, but not necessarily out of importance.

The anus
An opening at the opposite end of the tract from the mouth. Its function is to control the expulsion of unwanted matter.

‘The battle for modern subjectivity is a struggle for immunological equilibrium’
Beatrice Presiado, Testo Junkie

One of the quarantine nights I had a dream. I saw that my house was full of holes, the shadows were broken and didn’t close, I was closing the door and the door was reopening, everything was old and helpless (do we say helpless for objects?), unable to do their job, to help me feel safe. The state is taking care, for the streets to be clean and empty. But how safe are we really? We are not. Not because we are segregated, nor because we have stopped going to work and having an income, neither because everybody is angry trying to cope with these new demands, domestic, professional, relational, but because there are some people that are more waste/d than us, working exposed and disposable, in hospitals, supermarkets, cleaning companies, because our economical status makes us more losers than others and separates us more cruelly than before, because everything is played in a highly designed and paid communication game from the part of the state and the public dialogue is more than ever wasted. As, loosely, a journalist from a big local TV channel stated, during this lock-down period, ‘we deliberately chose to have individual interviews only with ministers!’ Any voice from civilians, syndicates and whatsoever is silenced. We, the ‘staying home’ people, we are tuned, we are obedient, we are individualised, losing the power of the many, we are biopowered but we cannot shout that the extinction of the health system locally and in Europe is not a matter of our personal responsibility, that the cries of people from different professional fields cannot change the fact, that our society, Europe long ago gave away
the vision of a welfare society. Covid-19 is just mirroring the state of our health system and the values of the capitalist society. For once more we, as individuals, have to carry as a burden on our own backs the responsibility of the local corruption and waste of public money, the de-investment of public health and social programs. Doctors and nurses during the pandemic were giving their uneven battle, but in our ‘civilised’ world, in our praised for marketing reasons and political campaigning national health system, there aren’t enough masks, syringes, gauzes and people have to pay private nurses because of severe lack of personnel (and this is something happening long before the pandemic crisis).

Athena Athanasiou in her small and intense book ‘The Crisis as a state of emergency’ talks about the medicalisation of the memorandum crisis and the fact that we were ordered to undertake with our own bodies the salvation of our country. And, what an irony, we are now facing a critical medicalisation under the threat of covid-19 and we are again interpellated. As Athanasiou underlines, in a crisis the issue is not how we construct the meaning or the collective representations of crisis, but how we are called to incarnate and affect the regulatorily norm, how we are interpellated as individuals of crisis, according to Althusser’s terminology. As she argues, a demagogic discourse and a mesh of alternating terrorist and pimply/salvific rhetoric articulated in the face of the crisis seeks to teach us how to be, how to incorporate the necessary norms of adaptation and self-management, and how we will be identified in contradistinction to the clandestine ‘others’. Athanasiou refers to the memorandum crisis, nevertheless the power of her analysis, as we are facing the covi-19 pandemic, underlines the continuum of crises and that, as she points out, the ‘crisis’ as a historical and cultural governance condition is always linked to questions of how to live and desire, with the governing of life and its limits. Therefore, her book is full of insights relevant to the pandemic crisis. As it happens with the memorandum crisis, it also happens today in a concrete way, within the pandemic, such a regulation of lives and the disciplinary medical discourse and vocabulary draws the line between the political body that needs protection and the naked foreign bodies that threaten it. The state of emergency makes the function of power return from a set of laws (law authority) to a set of rules (governmentality), and the rules reinstall the dominant power. The state of emergency makes every form of life vulnerable to the possibility of a status of exception, such as the deprivation of rights-as it happened with the corona virus pandemic and lock down. This condition of vulnerability is what Butler calls precarity, on the basis of which, regulatorily it is decided who is culturally conceivable as a sustainable subject and a life worth living.

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As history has shown, the transference of crises to the individual activates the fascist tendencies in society. These tendencies are primal, they go, as well, beyond the party we vote for, they target our more intimate fears of ours and they tend to get rid of everything that makes us feel vulnerable, as individuals and as groups (as emphasised by the covid-19 slogan ‘We can make it!’). For that we tend to get rid or overlook the less powerful, the less obedient, the less privileged, looking into a jungle-rule cleansing of the less wanted, be it feelings, thoughts, or human beings. But immunisation cannot make us immune to feelings, humans, animals, viruses, catastrophes, thoughts, underprivileged, and anxieties, forever; because another one is always on the way.

EXTERIOR – EXARCHIA – NIGHT

Video is shot with a mobile phone

We are at Stournari Street

Shot 1

LONG SHOT – EYE LEVEL SHOT
In the foreground there is a police officer in khaki uniform, black boots and knee pads, with his back towards the camera in the middle of the road. He is holding a large Plexiglas shield with his left hand that protects his body from nose to knee level. His right hand is behind his back, his fist is clenched. He is standing still, in the ‘at ease’ position, his legs slightly apart, his body and head in upright position. Ten meters in front of him, on the far side of the street, there is a group of people with concealed faces, standing behind a makeshift roadblock of upturned chairs and tables. Smoke rises behind them.
In the street in front of the roadblock there are rocks, pieces of wood and broken glass.

SOUND
Crowd shouting, broken glass, stones...

2”18
The police officer takes a large sideways step towards the left with his left leg and bends slightly his right leg (the weight of his body on the right leg).

3”09
A hop on the left leg with a simultaneous extended forward raise of the
right leg with bent knee (the weight of his body is on the left leg).

4”.03
He brings down the right leg forcefully raises slightly the left and brings both tightly together.
He stands with feet joined at attention, holding the shield with his left hand in front of his body and with his right arm behind his back. Objects are thrown towards him.

4”.15
He takes a right side step to the side with his right leg and keeps the left leg still. He returns to the original position (the legs form a reversed V).

4”.21
In front of him, three men with concealed faces are moving outside the road block.

5”.10
He takes a big step backwards (towards the camera) with his right foot and swiftly brings his left foot firmly next to his right.

6”.00
Slight hop with both feet joined.

6”.10
One of the three men picks up speed, jumps and while in the air hurls forcefully a rock in the police officer’s direction. (At the same time) the officer retreats, takes nine successive steps back (towards the camera), with slightly bent knees and on the tips of his boots.

8”.11
Zoom out

9”.07
He continues by taking a further two steps by hopping with his feet joined. He brings his right arm in front of him and holds it tightly against his chest.
A shower of objects thrown towards the police officers’ side
(Crowd shouting)
A few steps ahead of him, two police officers (officer B and officer C), enter the frame from the right. They run towards the men who are outside the roadblock. They fall with force on one of them and throw him to the ground.

Officer A begins running ahead, towards the clash at the center of the frame. Officers B and C turn the man face down. They put their knees against the man’s back and legs. They pull his hands back.

Slight zoom out

Zoom in

More police officers enter the frame from the right and the left of the frame. They run towards the site of the clash near the road block. The demonstrators retreat a few meters. Objects are thrown towards the officers.

(Crowd shouting)

Officer A arrives at the site of the clash. He trips over and falls on all fours. He gets up.

A total of 14 officers arrive at the scene. They form a wall parallel to the road block. The man is immobilized on the street, face down and wearing hand cuffs behind his back.

SOUND
Crowd shouting. motorbikes speeding.

“Fuck! They caught him!!” (male voice off frame)
Rocks and other objects are thrown towards the officers.

The officers with their backs towards the camera create two parallel lines in formation, facing the road block, and take a few steps back in unison (towards the camera). Among them, at the center of the frame, two officers (backs towards the camera) drag the man towards the rear (towards the camera).

SOUND
Crowd shouting and indiscernible talking (off frame)

A petrol bomb explodes in front of the police officers. The frame fills with a blinding light.

The camera turns abruptly to the top right, towards the foliage of the trees.

Left Knee
Joint between the upper and lower leg.

Reinventing the social.
Our capitulation costs 800 euros, given as a fire extinguisher, which maybe will make us forget claims for a systemic change. Those working in private companies affected by the corona virus and some freelancers are given the state support of 800 or 600 euros. Nevertheless, it is not clear why some professions are not included in this, amongst them visual artists and curators. All the measurements for the support of contemporary culture that the Ministry of Culture in Greece announced are for proposals of new work. Artists are expected to be productive in order to be supported.

Designer Anab Jain from Superflux, cried out on Twitter: “No, I am not learning a new skill during lockdown. Neither am I *using this time* to focus and get in flow. I am mostly trying to keep my business, students and family afloat and praying for those who are ill. Please let’s just be. A crisis does not have to be productised.”
What we have to face is that the danger(s) in front of us are ethical and existential. Works of art do not come up by force of producing. They create the space, the forms, the knowledge for facing the challenges of our condition, of all sorts that are inseparable-economical, ethical, and existential. This also comes with the space for reflecting, reading, taking distance from the imperatives of crisis. As a society invests in the support of the people, of all kind of professions and occupations, doctors, lawyers, shop owners, teachers, who during or in the aftermath of crisis, will put back in track our lives, the same is demanded for the creative forces- who have also the same material needs as the others-. Maybe, on a happy note, this is an opportunity to reinvest, or reconfigure and update our tools as individuals and as societies, our understanding that art is part of this reconfiguration and it is not to be wasted in projects of mere and numerical productivity.

It is more than certain that this condition will find its own forms, works, schemes for knowledge, affect and desire. And for that it is necessary to leave some free/empty/wasted space. This publication at hand is inspired to be such a product; it came out of necessity and desire and feels uncomfortable with the forces of spinning.

END

Extras

-”anarcho-capitalism/neoliberalism”

-The romanticization of the quarantine is a class privilege! https://t.co/CB4Kg17hFN

-Waste/The Guardian

-Billions of dollars worth of food is going to waste as growers and producers from California to Florida are facing a massive surplus of highly perishable items.

As US food banks handle record demand and grocery stores struggle to keep shelves stocked, farmers are dumping fresh milk and plowing vegetables back into the dirt as the shutdown of the food service industry has scrambled the supply chain. Roughly half the food grown in the US was previously destined for restaurants, schools, stadiums, theme parks and cruise ships.
How is waste/d translated into greek?

The publication of WASTE in correspondence to the arrangement of an apartment, every room, a chapter of WASTE. Corridor, living room, bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, window 1, window 2, window 3....

The movement of troubled de-linkage

Hello,
I think that the communication I had with Yota and Gene, is the foreground for what it is happening in our minds and it could be a kind of a ‘script’ for a self reflexive and at the same time associative ‘art work’, video-lecture or whatever.... A kind of background that could at the same time leads us to articulate our ideas. I feel also perplexed and I cover my confusion by doing everyday a bit of work, not in order to be productive, but to lose myself and reality by making reality a bit more abstract.

Why thinking is not a waste.

Recently I was reading that ridiculous research grants on humanities leave taxpayers scratching their heads wondering just what the government was thinking”. Seriously, don’t bother with philosophy. Don’t bother trying to understand the rules of logic or what makes an action right or wrong. Don’t bother trying to follow humanity’s “great conversation” let alone trying to contribute to it. Waste of time and money.

Maybe in these strange times it is the moment to think what is waste/d and what isn’t. Why we should reinvest not on matters that are accountable and measured directly but how we can find mechanisms to make space for claiming right and wrong, voicing all these that are omitted from the proclamation of institutional politics should be named and heard. How certain crises make us rethink what it means for a second for humanity to be put on pause, evolve in reverse and ‘dark matter’ to be considered as value and valuable?

“When you don’t exist you cannot be contaminated”, a calling for an arts demonstration, Natalie Yiaxi’s sound piece for Gabriela, an audio project by 3 137 artist run space. In “The War of the Worlds”, a sci-fi tragicomedy, Natalia Yiaxi imagines a demonstration by a united visual arts front, and the chaos it would cause in light of recent developments. This piece incorporates previous projects of hers, such as the radio spot for the imaginary artists’ support program A.A.F.A.Y, (2015), an acronym for Adopt An Artist For A Year, and the song Nothing At All, (2015).
Waste_research Rooftop in Exarchia by police drone. December 2019
Natasa Biza
Object Lessons - For all Party Occasions, 2018, Round table discussion over coffee and cookies

Vangelis Vlahos
2 models and 7 dossiers on a table
Installation view at The Breeder gallery, Athens, 2007

Objects to relate to a trial (17N), 2016-17, detail
Patnou 84 inventory, 15 A4 printed pages (framed)

Vangelis Vlahos
IS THERE ANY OVERSIGHT ON OCALAN?, 2009-2011, 119 framed photos (variable dimensions) on a wall mounted shelf (23m)

The Bridge, 2013-2015, 102 photos on a wall mounted shelf (15.6m), detail

The Elounda summit (The differences between the parts are the subject of the composition), 2009, 8 photos on a wall mounted shelf (2.5m)

Eva Giannakopoulou
Proposal for a Women Labour Monument (and the tribute to the female Albanian proletariat)

Dimitra Kondylatou
Season (working title), video still, 2020

Yota Ioannidou
Presentation of Stratagem: Other possible worlds-Dictionary in Space, Casino Luxembourg – Forum d’art contemporain and Centre Emile Hamilius (Luxembourg), 2011

Natalie Yiaxi
Breaking News, 2020, audio work, presented in Gabriela Foundation

CAN’T CATCH IT WHEN YOU DON’T EXIST
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