

An aerial photograph of Athens, Greece, showing a dense urban grid. Overlaid on the map are several thick black lines and large, irregular black shapes that obscure parts of the city. The lines appear to trace specific paths or boundaries across the urban landscape. The black shapes vary in size and form, some resembling organic or abstract patterns. The overall effect is one of a city being dissected or analyzed through these overlays.

Klara Jaya Brekke
Christos Filippidis
Antonis Vradis

**Athens and the War
on Public Space**
Tracing a City in Crisis

ATHENS AND THE WAR ON PUBLIC SPACE

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Fig. 1. Hieronymus Bosch, *Ship of Fools* (1490–1500)

ATHENS AND THE WAR ON PUBLIC SPACE: TRACING A CITY IN CRISIS.
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HIC SVNT MONSTRA

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PREFACE

Drifting away from an eerily empty avenue, a lonely figure heads downstairs, into a metro station. We soon discern a woman in her mid-60s, clad in a pristine overcoat, slowly walking along the metro platform before taking a seat directly opposite a Syriza advertisement feverishly demanding her attention. Bright, contrasting colours exude seething positivity: “hope is coming.” She closes her eyes for a few moments, a reflex defence shutting out the viciousness of the instant. In these long years of crisis so many things appeared to be on the way; imminent arrivals followed by fleeting departures. At these moments of crisis time takes on, it would seem, something of a peculiar quality; condensed yet asynchronous, it obfuscates continuity and change. Eyes still wide shut, the woman is only one in the hundreds of thousands caught in the vortex of the Greek crisis, the world as she had known it in past decades collapsing with the deafening whimper of business-as-usual. The outburst of a revolt against soaring debt; fiscal adjustment programmes; poisonous austerity; hundreds of thousands fleeing North; hundreds of thousands fleeing from the East; hopes grown and swiftly shattered. Yet against and despite history’s frenzy, the everyday continues in its lethargic monotony. The middle-aged woman opens her eyes. The January 2015 victory of Syriza has come and gone, hopes across Europe and beyond have risen and fallen. There is now no hope in sight, and it’s only her train that is coming.

A historical split-second later, and we arrive at the summer of 2015. The Greek bailout referendum has just

taken place, and the Syriza government is about to execute the spectacular U-turn that would bury deep in despair those who had believed in hope’s arrival. We had finished writing these pieces a year earlier, in the summer of 2014, just before the beacon of hope started to fade. And still back then, none of us suspected where we would be finding ourselves today, two years on (and three to the moment you get this book into your hands). The crisis event that set us into motion at the time, what pushed us into shifting our gaze toward the devalued aspects of the everyday, still remains, gloomily present. Yet it has not remained intact — far from it. And it is this change that has rendered making any future prediction even more difficult. The Greek crisis broke onto history’s stage as an unanticipated rupture in a seeming continuum. Our desire was to study some of the facets it took as it did so — away from any quest for holistic or definite answers to the “how did we get here?” question; or even more, to the question of “where can we go next?” From the onset, the crisis forcefully illustrated how it would shake to the ground our world as we knew it. This then became our aim: to trace the marks of its shaking and to unveil those rapid shifts sweeping us into their vortex.

The very occurrence of such a crisis cries out for an explanation (why did it happen?), for blame (who caused it?), and for a tracing of its consequences (who is to pay the price?) — and there have been only too many attempts to engage with this ongoing social explosion that erupted in Greece in 2008. This is how the dominant frameworks

of understanding and describing the crisis were formed. And this is also how the frameworks for understanding our own selves within the crisis were then formed in return — frameworks we urgently needed to unveil and question. We were not to find whatever “truth” about the crisis in abstract financial indices, nor in the (neo)liberal management headquarters. Whatever “truth” exists would inevitably have to come from the lives of the most devalued and vulnerable populations, often showing that for many, this crisis had been around for quite some time. And this helped us reveal the limits and contradictions of the dominant narratives.

The crisis swiftly turned itself into a political paradigm and a framework for legitimising violence and exploitation with the excuse of the emergency. Some violence was soon to record itself in the ways in which social relations are constituted — and therefore, in the everyday spaces where these relations are tested out. Public space in this way became a light-sensitive surface upon which one could discern the material imprints of the most structural and violent characteristics of the crisis: from the rapid impoverishment caused by the notorious structural adjustment and the rapid shifts in the natural and built environment caused by the catastrophic politics of development, all the way to the increased devaluation of the lives of migrants and the neutralising of social antagonisms and resistance alike.

Public space can therefore tell us much about the authority of meaning, how this can only be articulated through lines on the ground, lines that are strict, if often invisible. The aim of this book is not to contribute yet another holistic explanation of the crisis. What it wishes to do is to put these footprints together, to understand how the abstract world of financial jargon and policy places its stamp upon the cityscape of the crisis-hit city par excellence: Athens.

The writings included here were prepared as part of Crisis-Scape, a collective research project that took place between 2012 and 2014, at the heart of the crisis moment. The book’s research subject concerns only a small unit

of time: a brief period when so many things changed so quickly. It lays no claim to universal answers; instead it aspires to bear historical witness to what happened during that time, to how those events left their mark upon the present — upon our daily relationships and their meanings. But our research subject also concerns only a small unit of space. Our project was based in the public space of Athens, the city where so many of the discourses and conditions of crisis as experienced across the world were illuminated and condensed at the time.

Our research spread in different directions, tracking an array of open-ended questions: from the role of infrastructure and the shifts the financial crisis brought about upon the built environment, all the way to the violent manifestations of the official anti-migrant policy, the rise of racism, the imposition of the emergency upon public space, and the phenomenology of mass transit. Our team comprised Klara Jaya Brekke, Dimitris Dalakoglou, Ross Domoney, Christos Filippidis, and Antonis Vradis. Aside from the written word, we also used audiovisual methods, communicating our findings through a series of documentaries and an interactive map — all of which are available on www.crisis-scape.net.

Our reasoning for working on Crisis-Scape was that no matter how formidable the forces that shape our lives, there is always a way to understand these by looking at our intimate, personal, and everyday state of being — and even more by looking at public space, where all the changes these forces bring about are tried out today. The annihilation of the past social contract is readable in the burst of anger or the feeling of emptiness of its alleged previous partners, as they speed under the city, inside an Athenian metro carriage. Major and xenophobic shifts in migration policy are illuminated through the stories of migrants trapped in the Athenian city centre, their desired journey to the West violently cut off. The toll of reconfiguring public space as a notion lays itself bare in the eviction of squats and occupied social centres in the city, in the militarised patrolling of its neighbourhoods, in the purge of all those deemed undesirable, in this ever-increasing in-

security in all of aspects of our lives, this fragmentation of its functions, and this feeling of powerlessness that comes as a result.

Caught in the frenzy of seemingly constant updates on the crisis, and with its main discourse claiming an unprecedented shift and rupture from the past, it is only too easy to forget what this past actually ever looked like. For this reason, the book's first chapter provides a chronological overview: a visual timeline (Brekke) highlighting the major events in our story from the beginnings of the global financial crisis and the early signs of cracks in the Athenian spatial contract in 2008 up until mid-2014, when our project came to a close. The timeline looks at incidents that took place in the city of Athens, alongside major national and international events that would in turn put their mark on the experience of everyday life in the city.

In chapter two, Filippidis studies the ways in which the collective presence of migrants in Athenian public space was criminalised through policies of informal bans on public gatherings under the pretext of hygienic arguments, shortly before the migrant crisis was to knock on Europe's door for good. The chapter expands upon the biopolitical dimensions of the crisis, affirming that its medicalisation had always been a proof of totalitarianism. In order to do so, Filippidis presents the short-circuit caused by the invocation of a humanitarian ideal. He examines the humanitarian focus on the biological dimension of victims of any disaster, arguing this insistence can only mean the depoliticisation of both the subjects facing violence and the conditions leading to such catastrophes in the first place. Taking as its starting point the tragic shipwreck at the shores of Lampedusa on October 3, 2013, the chapter illuminates how this event was used to further strengthen border controls and therefore, to intensify anti-migratory policies in Greece and the rest of Europe. The void left behind by the circumvention of political questions is filled using an array of techniques for the management of the human biological background. Not only does this process medicalise issues concerning the public sphere, but turns into an ultimate field of politics in itself.

In chapter three, Brekke goes on to present a very different type of mapping: an analogue representation of the Crisis-Scape online map of racist attacks, which shows some of the incidents and the type of violence experienced by migrants in Greece. On the map's online version, victims and witnesses were able to upload information pertaining to violence against migrants anonymously, making visible individual stories as well as providing an overview of these violent realities. For the purposes of this book, four incidents are described to represent both typical and regular attacks by the police and the far-right thugs of Golden Dawn, along with some of the most vivid cases of abuse by employers acting with an increased sense of impunity.

In the following two chapters, Vradis then gives a sense of the city in experiential terms: "The utter violence of the unuttered" and "Metronome" reflect on the Athenian metro as a point of departure for revealing and understanding the antagonisms and tensions that grew in this quintessential everyday space as the crisis deepened. The chapters open with a description of silences encountered in the city's communal spaces and evolve into essays on language, the crisis, and the aporia of inaction in face of it. What then follows is an essay where words are replaced altogether by photographs: a fleeting capture of the dead-ends Athenians are up against, their minds wandering in personal struggles, culminations and potential catastrophes, just as their bodies are caught in the reflux of mass commuter transit.

Then, in the final chapter, Filippidis analyses the police attacks launched against squats and occupied social centres in Athens in early 2013 — what he argues to be an attack against specific facets of public space. Starting from comments concerning the notions of performativity and paradigm, and conceiving the particularities of these operations through the tools, methodologies and problematisations of the field of counterinsurgency, the chapter shows how the undeclared state of emergency enforced upon the Athenian metropolis was performatively constructed through everyday police operations

that occupied some ever-increasing segments of public space — and then it explains how the crisis, as a particular articulation of the security/development nexus, was to take a very specific material and spatial form in the case of Athens.

Athens, just like so many others

We never intended to paint a portrait of Athens; not, at least, just for the sake of it. If what you find in the following pages does resemble something of an urban portrait, bear this in mind: despite their myriad differences seeping through and into the most minuscule detail, portraits still have this magical quality of sharing specific facial lines, lines that engrave and reveal primordial feelings of fear, of hope, or anger. Should there be one defining feature of our time, it must surely be the appearance of such lines in the portraits of turbulence-caught cities the world over. If, then, there is anything useful in the exercise of painting these urban portraits, it must be the promise of understanding better these forces of global cause and of such local, intimate effect; the same forces that silence populations, condemning them to ghastly survival; the same forces that jam communication signals between these populations. This book is a communication signal. It shouts out the ramifications of the crisis on the city of Athens — and it waits to hear back from elsewhere.

KJB, CF, AV
July 2016

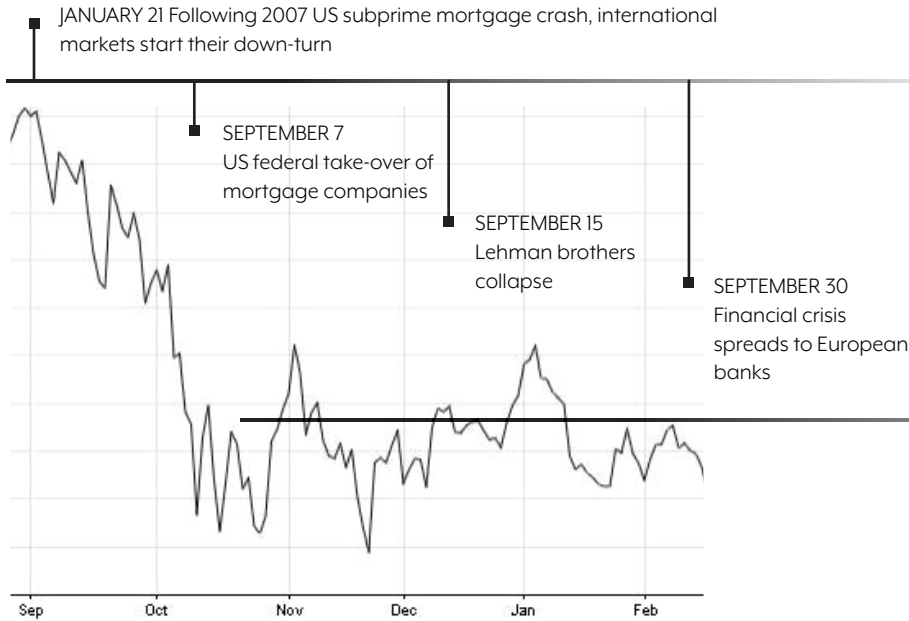
TIMELINE OF THE GREEK CRISIS

Klara Jaya Brekke

The following timeline of the Greek crisis includes specific and local events taking place in Athens alongside global “crisis” news and events in order to capture the many occurrences and swirling information shaping impressions and the lived experience in the city in those years. The timeline traces events from the early start of the global financial crisis in 2008 until May 2014 when the Crisis-Scape research project was completed.

It was originally published as an interactive map with live links on the crisis-scape.net website.

Photography by Ross Domoney.



DECEMBER 6
Police shoot and kill teenager Alexandros Grigoropoulos, sparking an uprising across Greece lasting for months



2009



JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH

JAN 4

Demonstrations and actions erupted across the country in support of migrant cleaner and organiser Kuneva after she was attacked by her employer, a symptom of heightened political awareness and sensitivity.

JAN 13

Offices of journalists' union ESIEA occupied in protest against biased media reporting and in support of the attacked cleaner Kuneva.

JAN 26

Government of Iceland steps down after continuous large protests following the collapse of major banks in October 2008.

JAN 5

Riot policeman shot and injured in Athens in the early morning. Subsequently raids and arrests of approx. 75 people in the neighborhood of Exarcheia.

JAN 9

Large demonstrations in Athens, Thessaloniki and Patras by students and teachers and workers. Heavy teargas and beating of demonstrators by police. Some attacks on police stations.

JAN 15

IMF announces global recession.

FEB 24

Grenade explodes outside the migrant steki (social centre) in the Athens neighbourhood Exarcheia. No injuries.

MAR 3

Six carriages on two trains of the Athens railway petrol bombed and burnt down: reported €16 million in damage.

MAR 31

Several solidarity actions for the cleaner Kuneva throughout March, including an occupation of Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, lasting for many months, demanding an end to subcontracting of cleaning companies.

APRIL MAY JUNE

■ APR 4
The G20 agrees on a 5 trillion dollar global stimulus package to counter the global financial crisis.

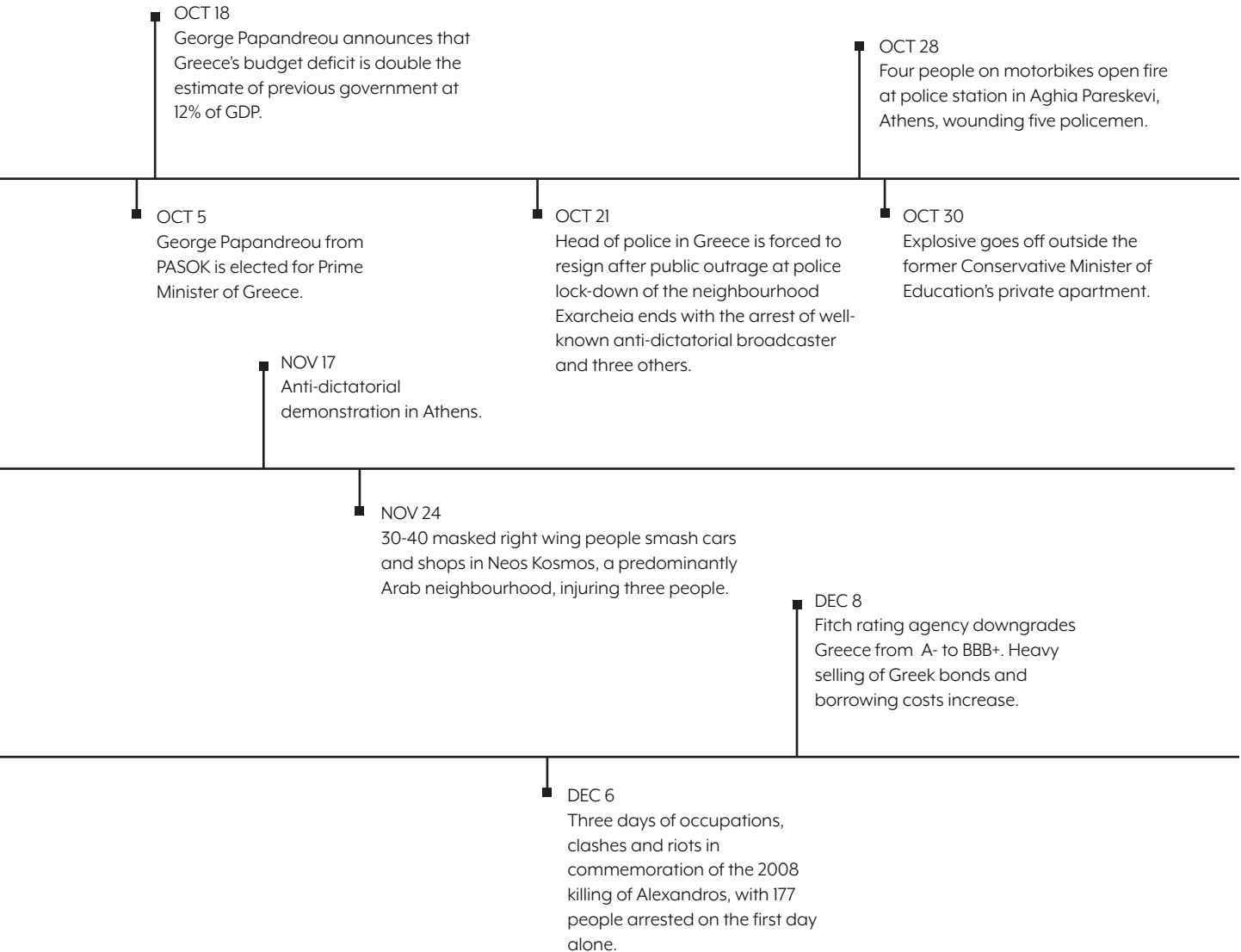
■ APR 22
Offices of political party PASOK attacked. Later police raid and arrest people at the Navarinou self-organised park in Exarcheia, Athens.

■ MAY 10
Far right political group, Chrysi Avgi (Golden Dawn), call for anti-immigration demonstration in central Athens under police protection.

■ MAY 20
Police conduct an immigration raid on a cafe in Athens and tear apart a Koran. Two days of violent clashes between police and migrants end in a large demonstration on the third day.

■ JUN 12
Police evict and burn down a refugee camp in Patras.

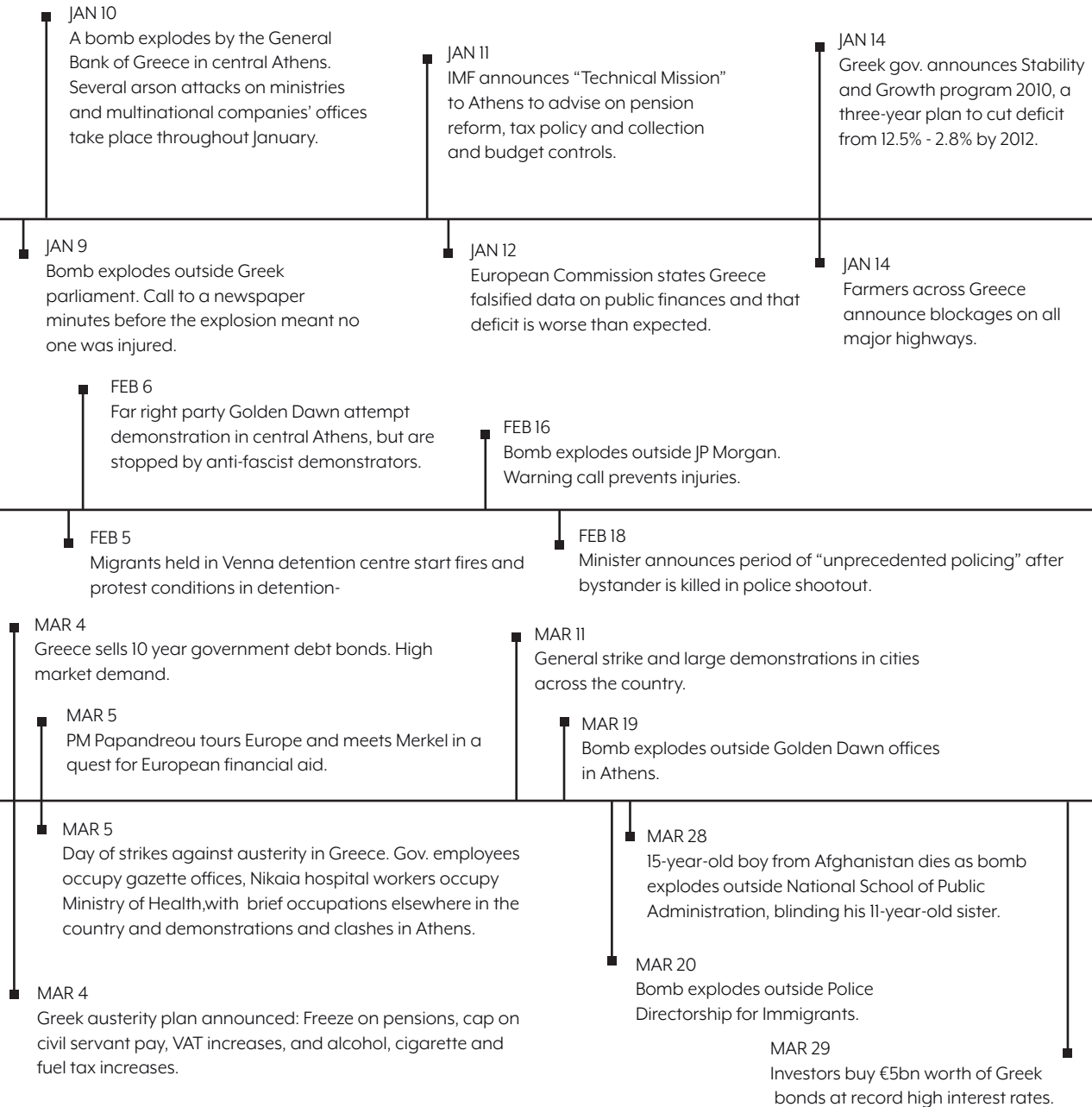
OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER



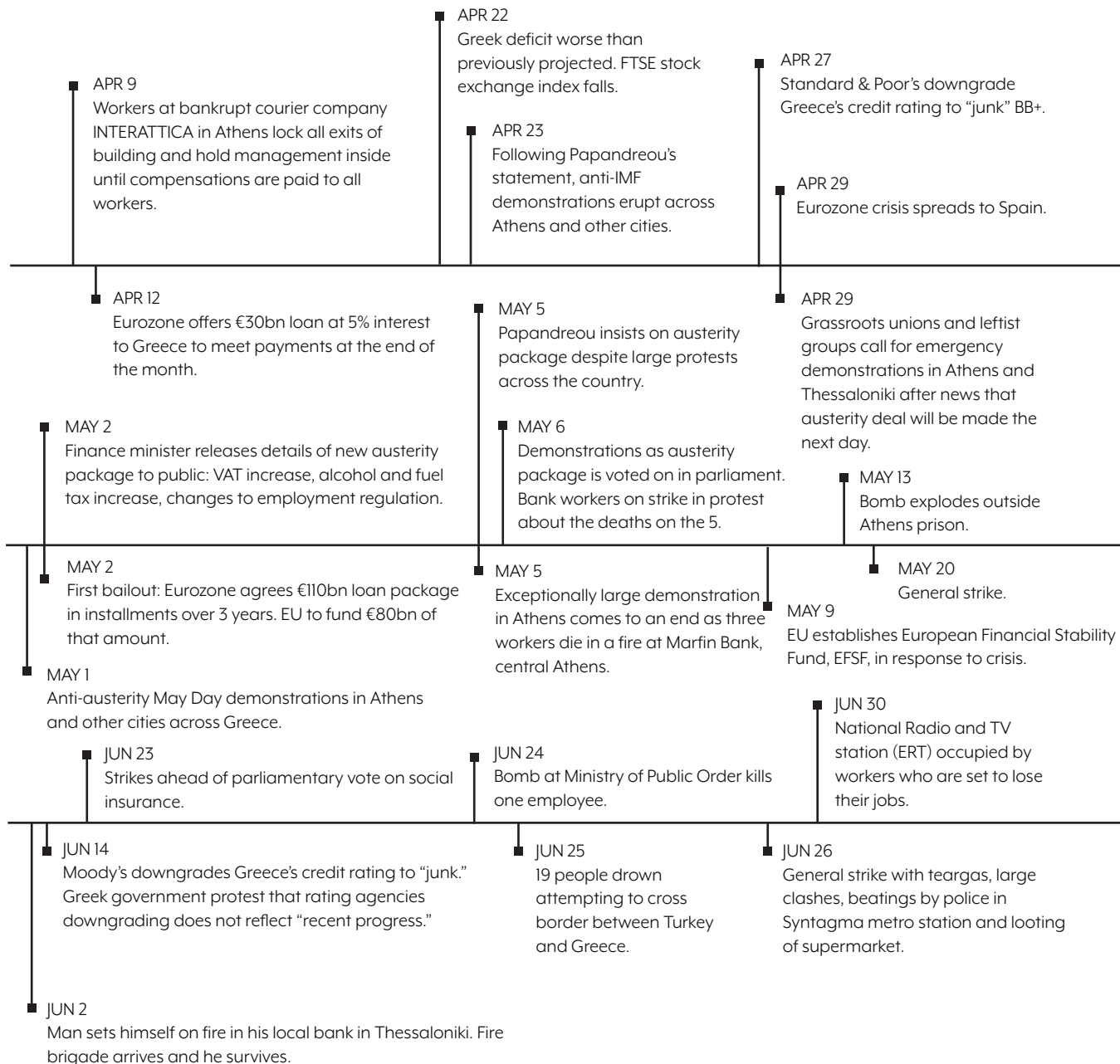
2010



JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH



APRIL MAY JUNE



JUL 8

Parliament passes EU-required pension reform and reform to employment laws, making it easier to hire and fire.

JUL 8

24-hour general strike in protest against social welfare reforms. Workers at the Parliament also on strike, impeding processing of new legislation.

AUG 5

Eurozone congratulates Greece and agrees to another €9bn tranche of the €110bn loan package, urging to crack-down on tax evasion.

JUL 13

Greece sells €1.6bn of debt on market.

JUL 23

Lorry driver facing financial difficulties hangs himself on bridge in Volos.

JUL 29

Lorry drivers on strike clash with riot police outside the Ministry of Transportation in Athens after being ordered back to work. Army vehicles sent out across the country to offer gas supplies.

SEP 1

IMF states: possible Greek default is "unnecessary, undesirable and unlikely."

SEP 14

Pakistani workers on strike, lorry drivers' strike continues with blockades on major access roads to Athens, attempting to fill the city with lorries. Small strike on national railway lines and road toll strikes after privatisation led to 100% toll increase.

SEP 21

Thousands of lorry drivers stay overnight outside Parliament. Blockades occur in the following days.

SEP 29

45 lorries breaking the strike by driving under police protection are shot at with shotgun.

SEP 10

Large demonstrations in Thessaloniki for two days in the lead-up to The International Fair where next year's social policy is announced.

SEP 15

Greek finance minister Constantinou travels to London, Paris and Frankfurt to "win over investors" and states a Greek default would result in selling of bonds in other periphery countries.

OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER





2011



JAN 5

A police's DIAS motorcycle force runs over and kills Roma girl on motorcycle in Menidi neighbourhood of Athens. Sparks violent clashes between police and local residents followed by two days of demonstrations in cities across Greece.

JAN 13

Athens transportation workers on strike despite court ruling declaring strike illegal.

JAN 25

300 migrants in Athens and Thessaloniki start collective hunger-strike against racist attacks and discrimination.

JAN 10

Court ruling for landfill in Athens area of Keratea to proceed. Sparks attacks by local residents on police station and more clashes.

JAN 14

Fitch downgrades Greek debt to junk status.

FEB 18

48h general strike, extending to a third day independent of political parties and trade unions. Clashes at Syntagma Square and across central Athens with very large quantities of teargas. Inspired by Tahrir Square, large amount of demonstrators try to stay at Syntagma Square outside Parliament but are repeatedly tear gassed and detained.

FEB 1

As transport prices set to rise by 40%, workers in one line in Athens go on strike, and there are many blockades at local stations to prevent passengers from paying the increased fares.

FEB 2

Doctors occupy Ministry of Health and union calls for indefinite strike in protest against privatisation of health care.

FEB 28

Ministry of Labour occupied in support of the ongoing hunger strike by 300 migrants.

MAR 9

ELSTAT releases figures showing increase in youth unemployment in Greece from 28.9% to 39% since December 2009.

MAR 22

Politicians meet increasing abuse when in public spaces. PM Papandreou is defended by Athens riot police on the island of Syros days after gov. vice-president had yoghurt thrown at him.

MAR 14

Ministry of Education announces merging of approximately 1000 schools, putting at risk jobs of approx. 4000 teachers. Teachers union calls for strike.

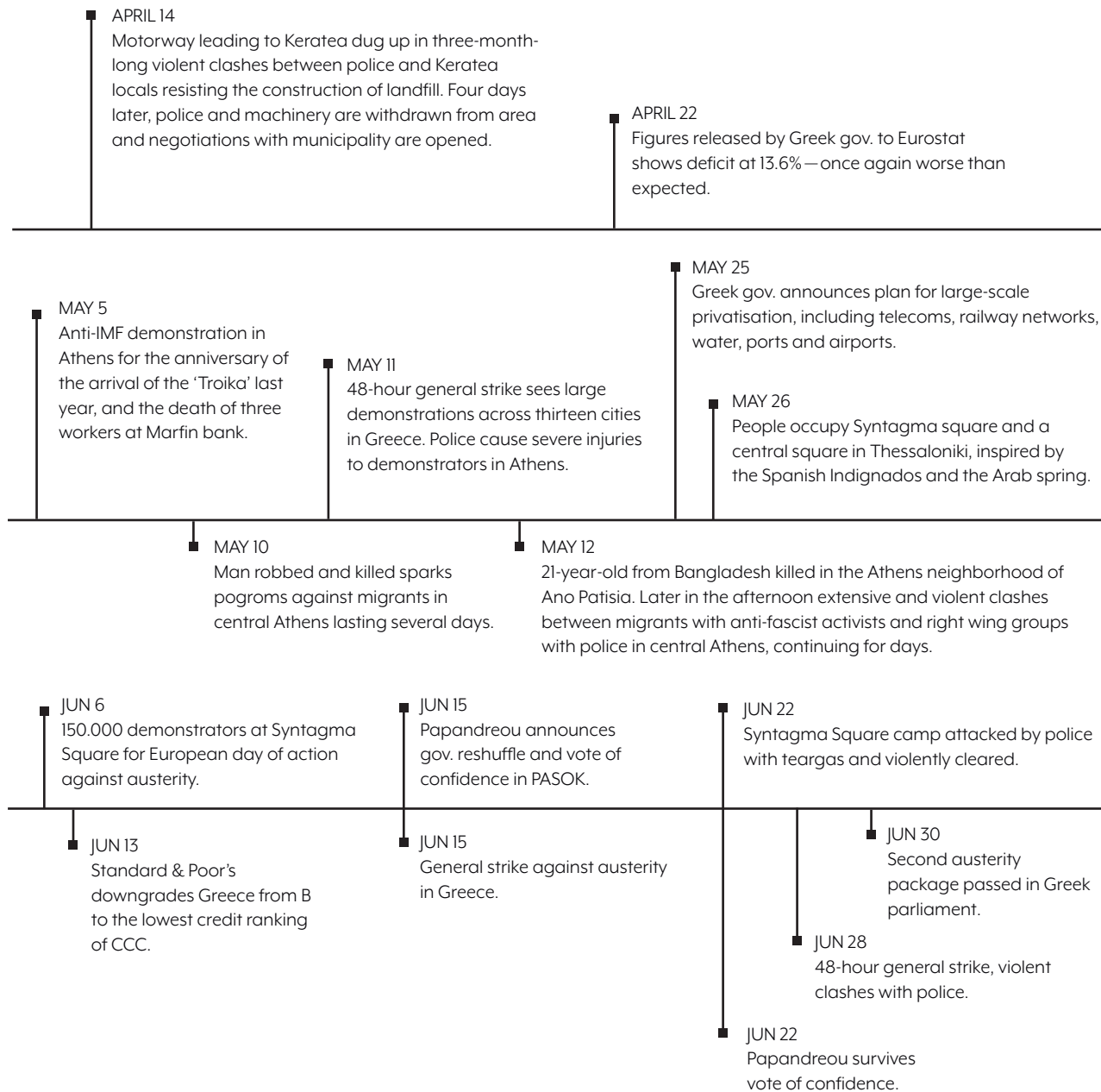
MAR 27

Town hall in Athens and several other cities occupied by workers on temporary contracts.

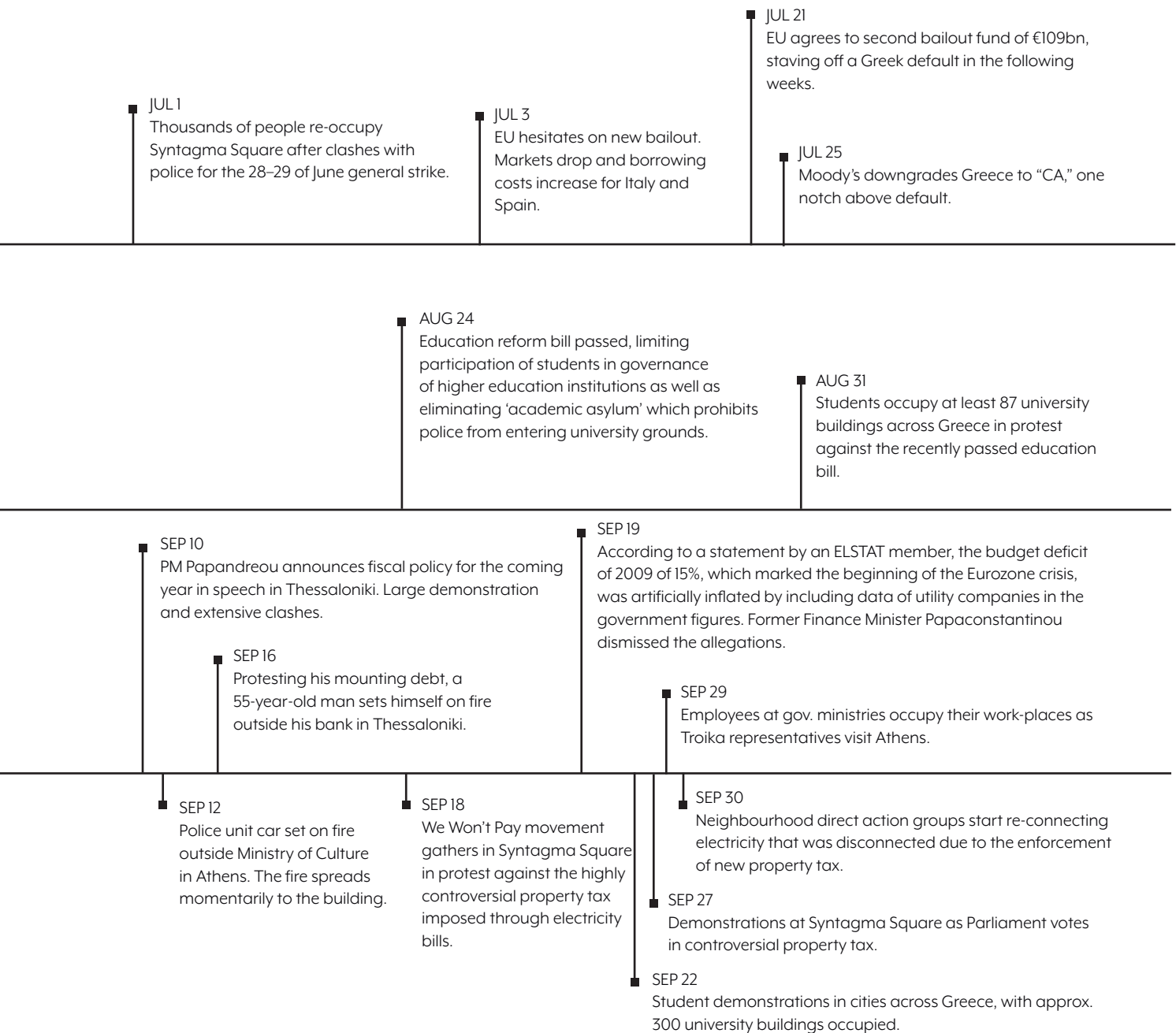
MAR 25

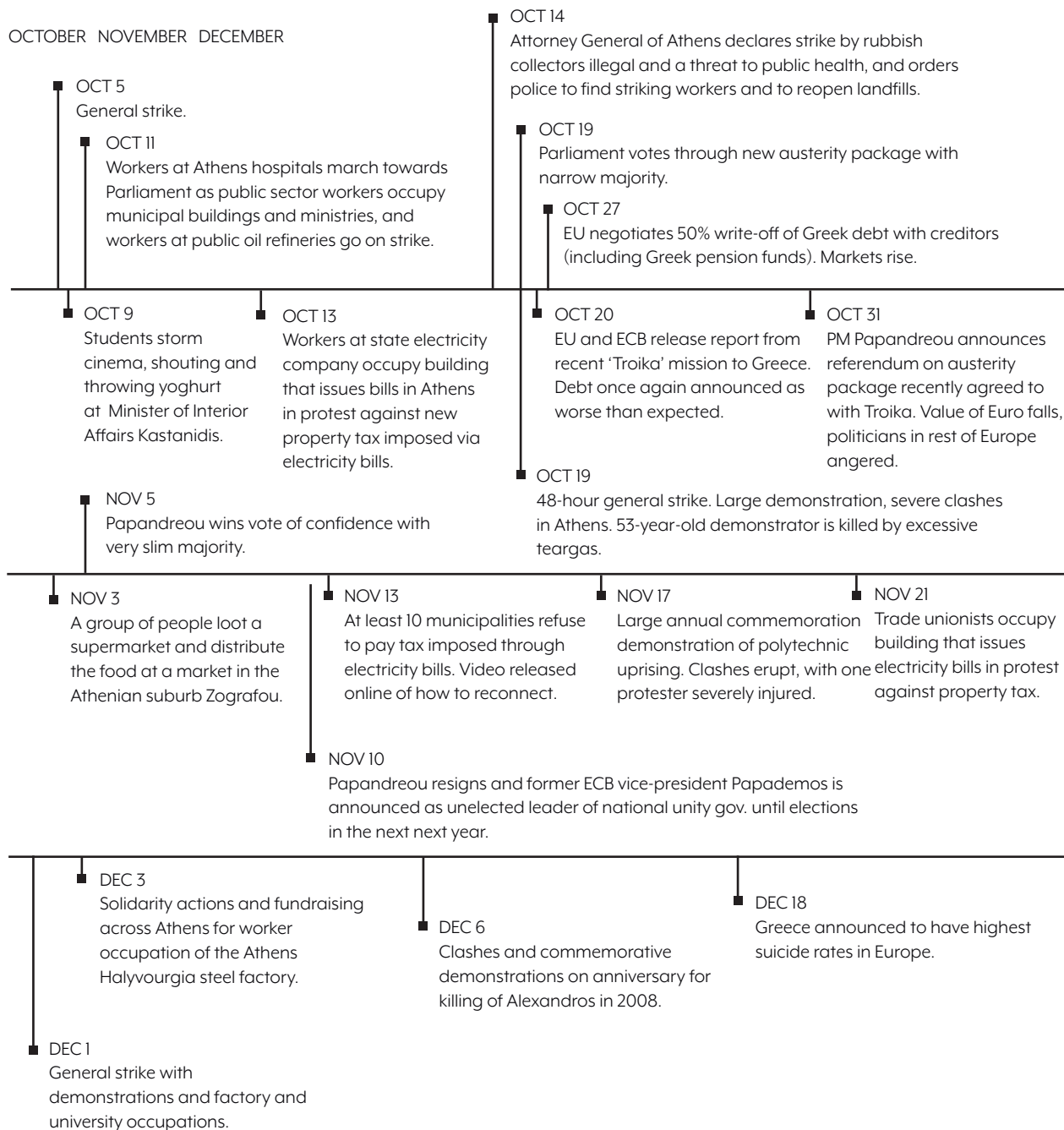
Students and teachers demonstrate against school closings, leading to many school occupations across the country.

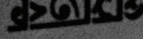
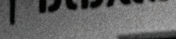
APRIL MAY JUNE



JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER





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2012



JAN 9

78-year-old man sets himself on fire and dies on the island of Lefkada.

JAN 17

Demonstration in Athens with independent and newly formed self-organised unions, inspired by recent action by steel workers.

JAN 27

Negotiations on deal where Greece's creditors (including national pension funds) take 50% cut on bonds in exchange for cash and new bonds. Deal stalled by EU ministers and Troika who demand further austerity cuts.

FEB 6

Health workers take over and run Kilikis Hospital, independently stating long lasting problems with national health system will not be resolved.

JAN 27

Health minister forbids unregistered organisations from running soup kitchens, many of which opened since crisis began to deal with increasing homelessness and poverty.

FEB 7

24-hour general strike with demonstrations in Athens. Police close Syntagma metro.

FEB 12

Dissent in Parliament nevertheless results in Greek MPs voting through new austerity measures.

FEB 21

EU finance ministers agree to new measures for second €130bn bailout.

FEB 26

Solidarity food distribution starts springing up across the city.

FEB 10

Four days of widespread protests, severe clashes and riots as 48-hour general strike against new austerity measures becomes mass demonstrations across the country. Ministries and local town halls occupied or set on fire. Over 40 banks, cinemas, shops and offices set on fire in central Athens.

FEB 19

Disappointment and increased tension as bailout memorandum is passed.

FEB 15

Two workers from the soon to close Organisation for Council Estates threaten to commit suicide by jumping off roof of offices.

FEB 8

Papademos meets with Greek coalition party leaders to discuss new austerity package.

MAR 19

70-year-old man storms into Athens' tax office shooting a shotgun. No injuries.

MAR 2

Greek high court rules that property tax included in electricity bill is constitutional, but enforcing the tax by cutting off electricity is unconstitutional.

MAR 14

Self-organised initiatives like the potato movement and Tutorpool start spreading.

MAR 30

Mass arrests of non-Greek looking people start in Athens.

MAR 13

Greece legalises reduction of wages on collective agreements.

MAR 25

Greek National Independence day turns into mass anti-austerity protests.

MAR 1

Man who was made redundant holds co-workers hostage after shooting his old boss at factory.

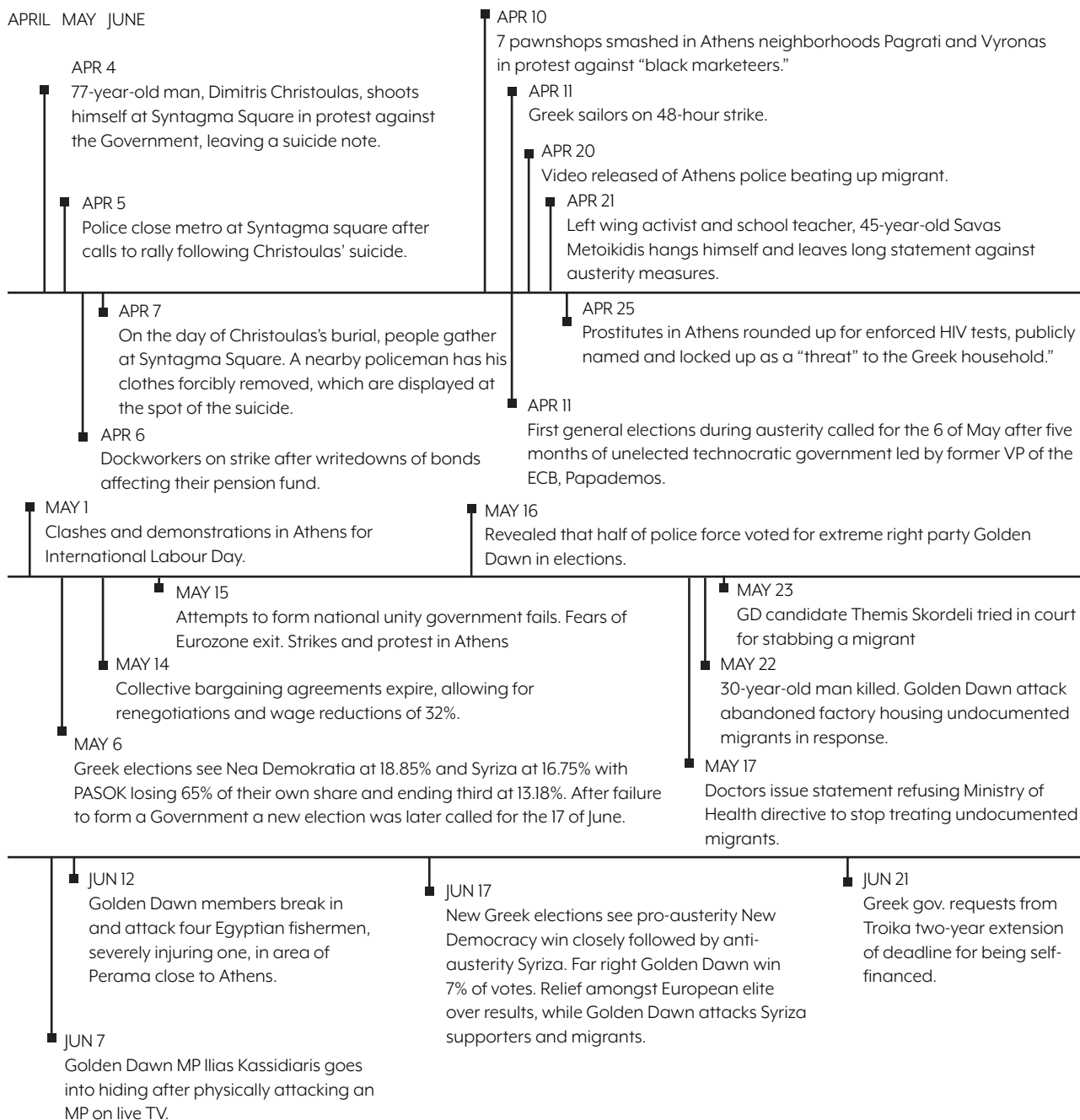
MAR 9

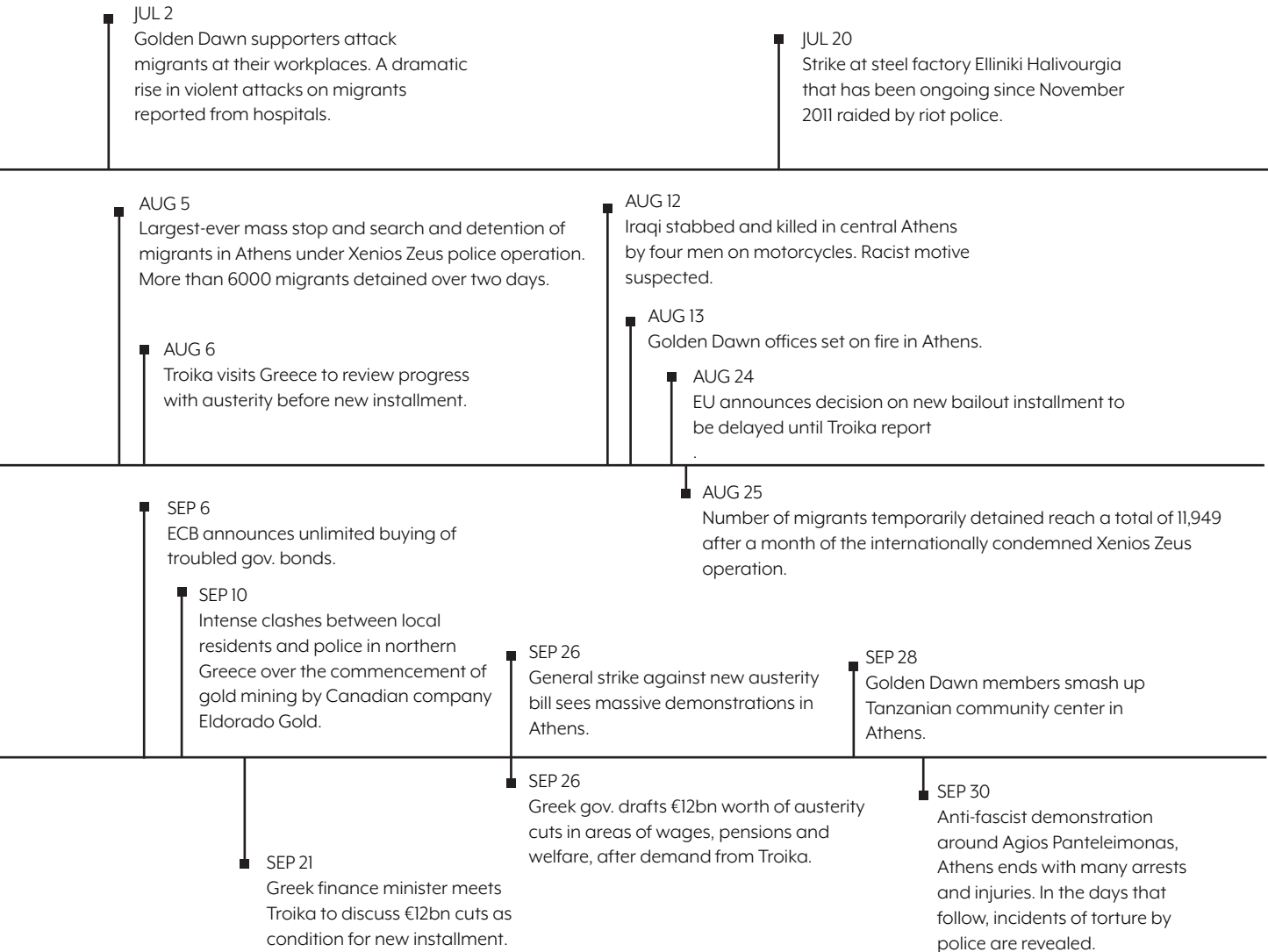
Greek gov. finalises debt swap deal with creditors and further austerity as part of conditions for second Troika €130bn bailout.

MAR 20

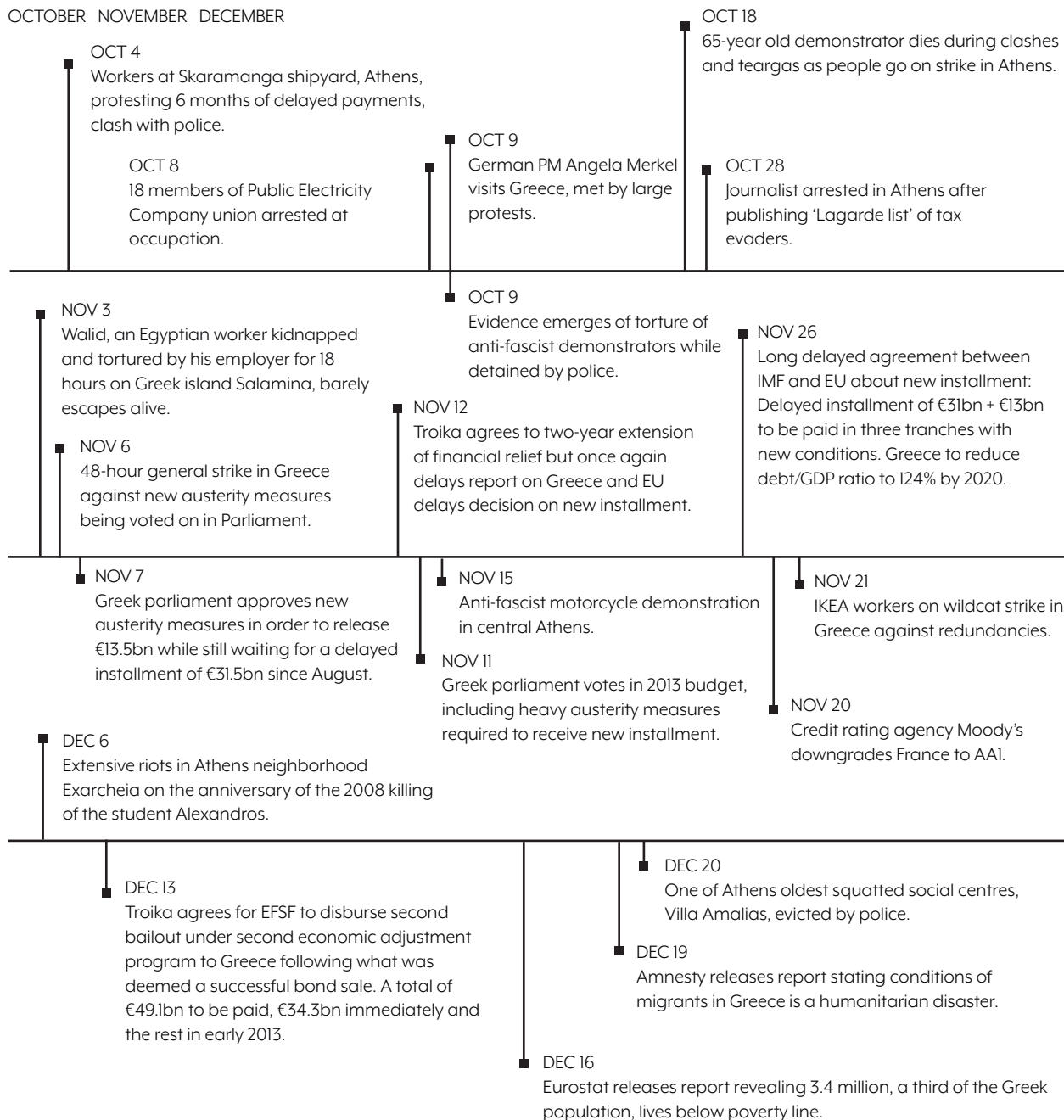
€14.5bn Greek gov. bonds mature.

APRIL MAY JUNE





OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER



ΑΣ
ΝΕΙΑΣ

της "γιάφκας" και
αξιακής εθιμότητας
πυλίζονται, ενόψει
"γιάφκας", ποινα-
αίς ενώ οι διαφο-
ρασεις. Επισημα-
νεται επίσης ότι
αυτών.

ΤΑ ΜΟΥΤΡΑ

αυτός δεν αρκούν για να κάψουν
διαρκώς κλιμακώοντας
οχικούς αγωνιστές
π. Η. Μασούρα
πενό τους Μ. Γκόγκω
διώξεων όλων
υπόθεσης Χαλανδρίου

ΚΡΑΤΙΑΣ

αλεγγής
γγής στο εφετιό
09:00, Λευκήρας και Αλεξάνδρας

Α
ΑΙΡΙΑ

ΑΝΤΕΒΟΥ

Σ.
ΤΑ.ΒΙΑ

Α.ΒΙΑ
ΒΙΑ

ΣΥΖΗΤΗΣΗ

Ε. ΚΕΙΡΟΚΡΑΤΙΑΙ Ο ΣΥΡΙΖΟΠΑΝΕΛΛΗΝ

ΑΠΡΙΛΙΟΥ 2010
ΑΘΗΝΩΝ, 19.00

Α
ΑΙΡΙΑ

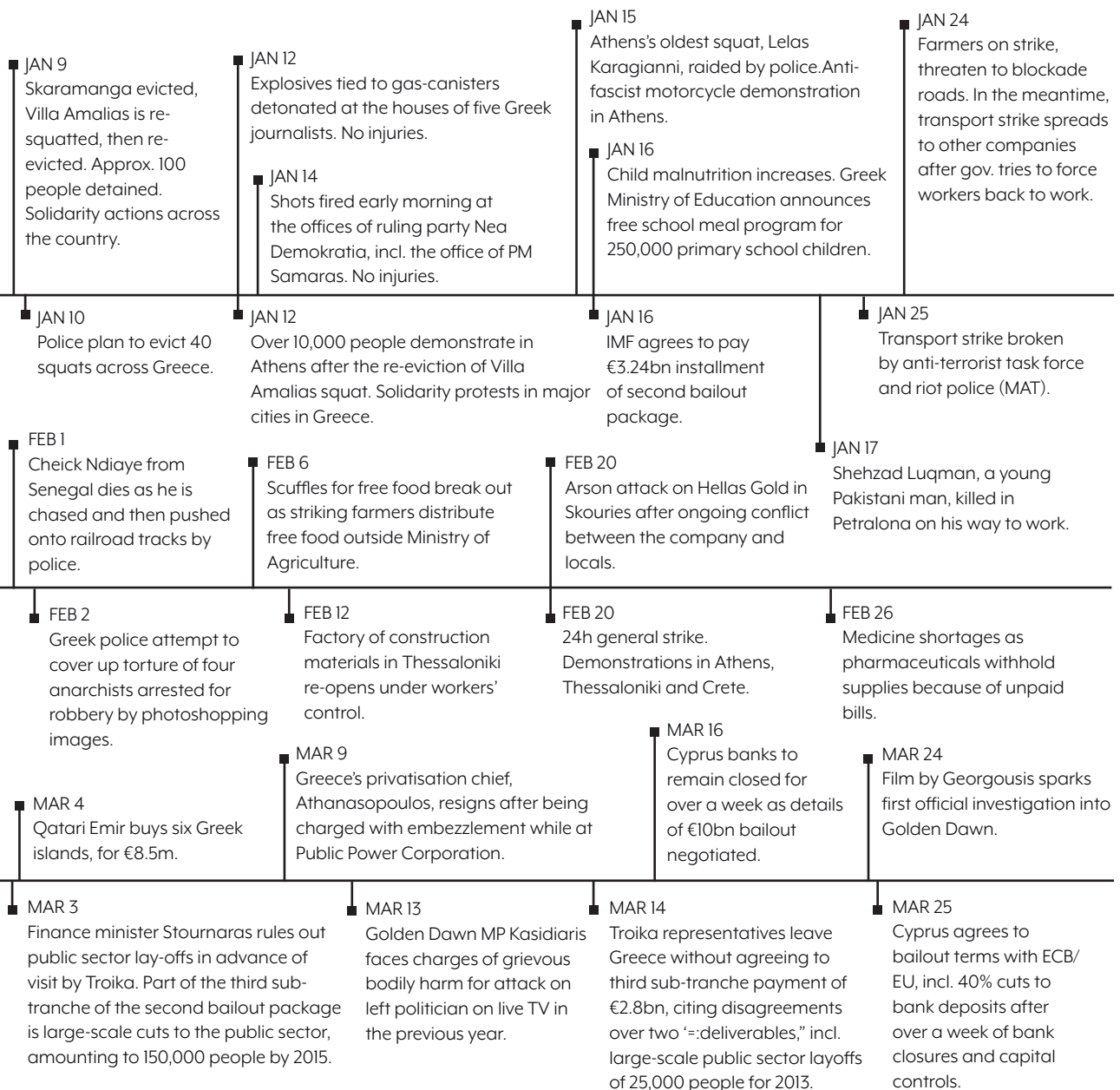
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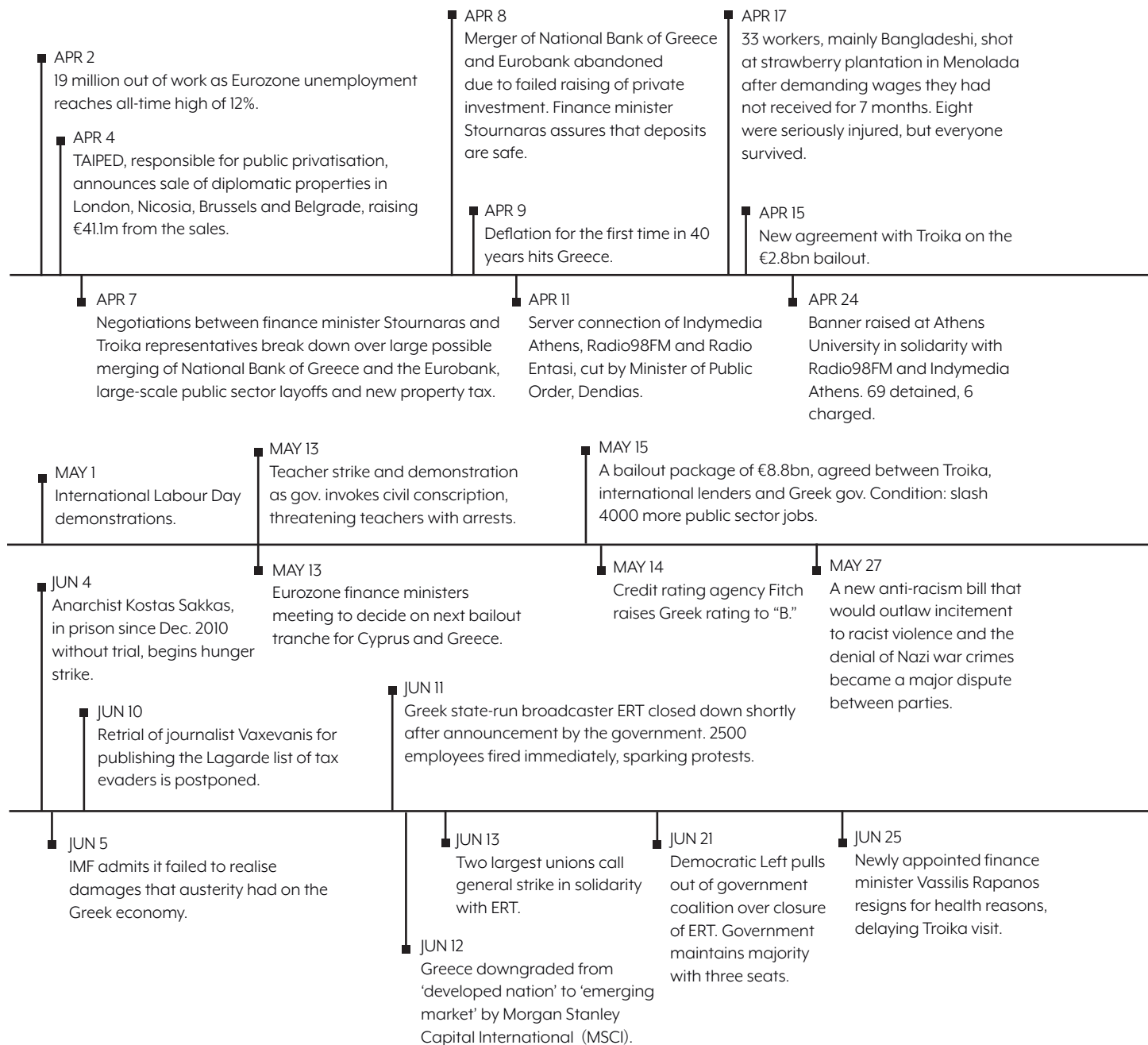
2013



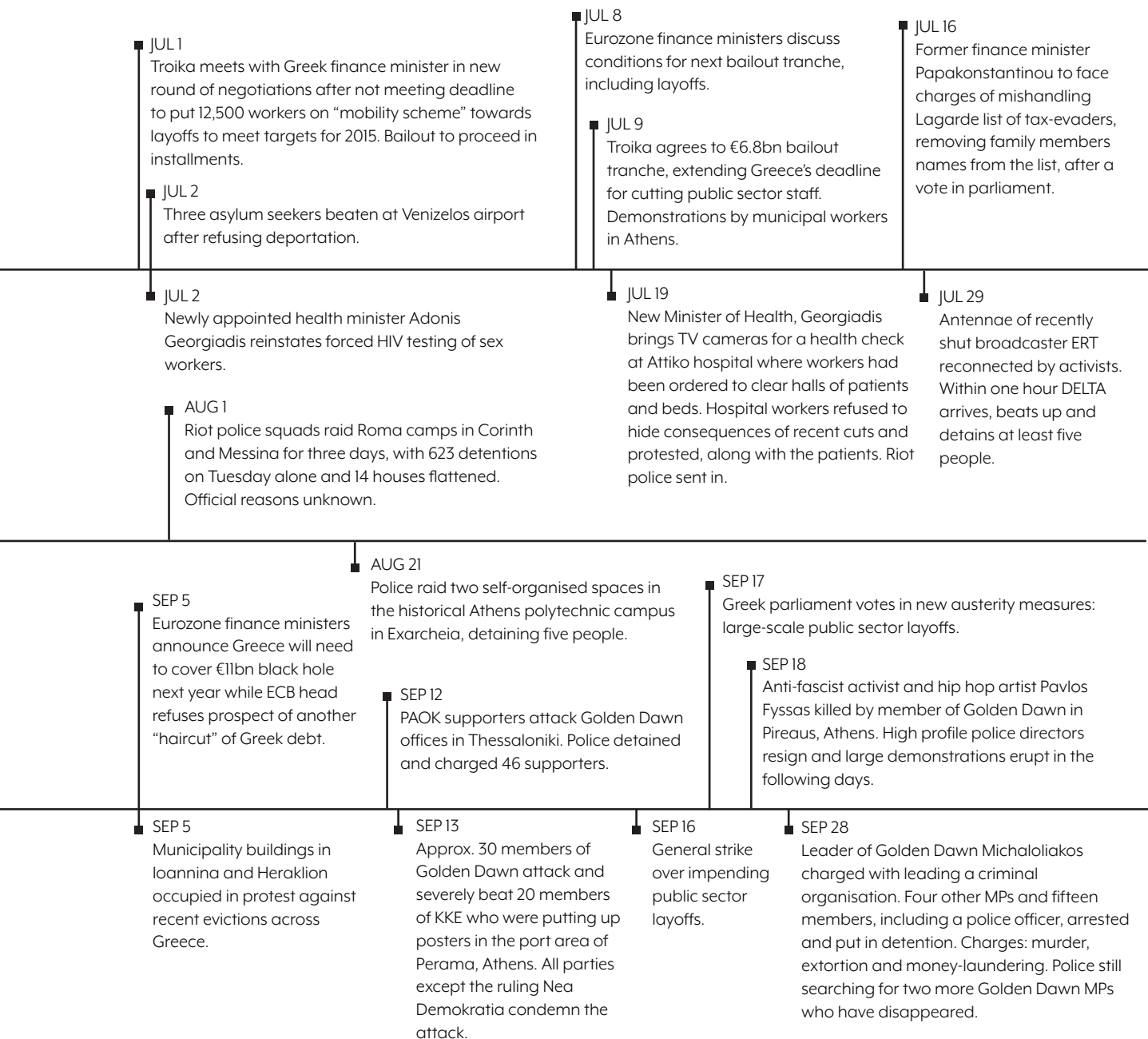
JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH



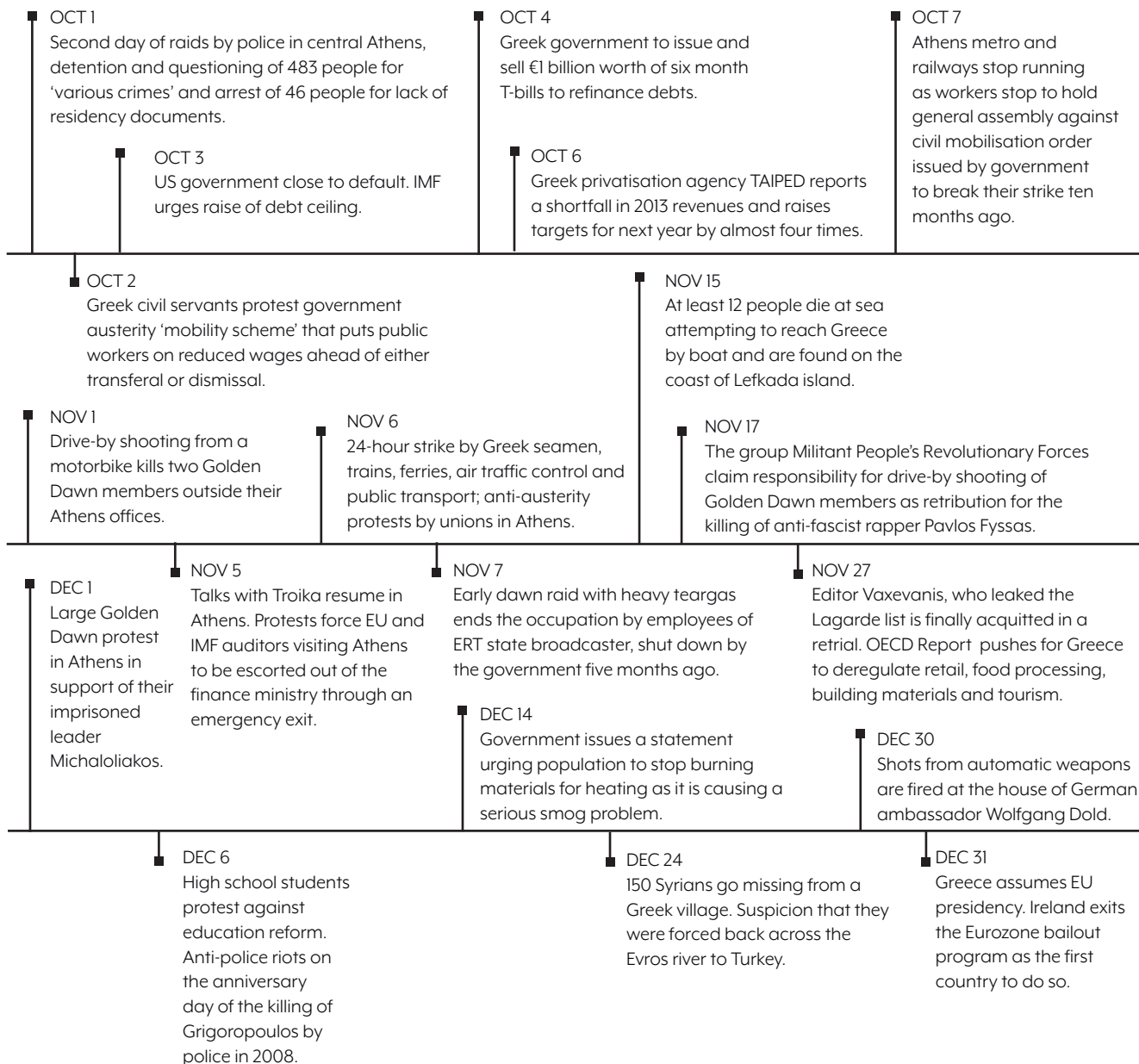
APRIL MAY JUNE



JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER





2014



JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH

JAN 8

Greece takes over EU presidency and makes statement that austerity is intolerable.

JAN 13

High court judges rule ex-finance minister Papacostantinou to stand trial over deleting names from Lagarde list of tax evaders.

JAN 17

Bullets in envelopes sent to governor of the Bank of Greece and one TV-journalist with a note against tax increases. The act was claimed by a group called Cretan Revolution.

JAN 19

Greek coast guards accused of mishandling and contributing to the sinking of a boat carrying refugees from Syria and Afghanistan, causing the deaths of an estimated eleven people sparking protests in Athens and other cities.

JAN 17

Photos released of Golden Dawn members doing nazi salutes and posing with weapons in mock-executions.

JAN 20

Christodoulos Xiros from Marxist group November 17 issues statement of return to armed struggle after having escaped from life sentence in prison. Other members of the group distanced themselves from the statement some days after.

FEB 2

Golden Dawn state they will form new party called New Dawn if banned from participating in elections.

FEB 17

Farmers in Greece protest new tax laws, while doctors protest Health Minister's closure of primary health care units.

FEB 12

Political communique released claiming responsibility for failed rocket attack on Mercedes Benz offices, against "the German capitalist machine."

FEB 28

Protesters injured by police in scuffles as IMF representative Paul Thomsen attempts to leave ministry office in Greece.

MAR 2

Police detain 90-year-old suffering from Alzheimers over €5000 debt to the tax office.

MAR 10

Inmate revealing terrible prison conditions by leaking pictures at Korydallos prison is prosecuted.

MAR 12

Public sector strike.

MAR 18

Seven Syrian refugees die drowning off coast of Lesbos, Greek island near Turkey.

MAR 30

So-called 4th austerity bill narrowly passed by Greek parliament.

MAR 7

German MEP testifies to European Parliament: deaths of newborn babies in Greece have increased by 43%.

MAR 16

Tax inspectors to take anger management classes after rise in aggression and attacks by public on tax collectors.

MAR 18

Deal struck between PM Samaras and the Troika after months of negotiations for a bail-out of €10bn, with conditions for policy still to be voted through parliament.

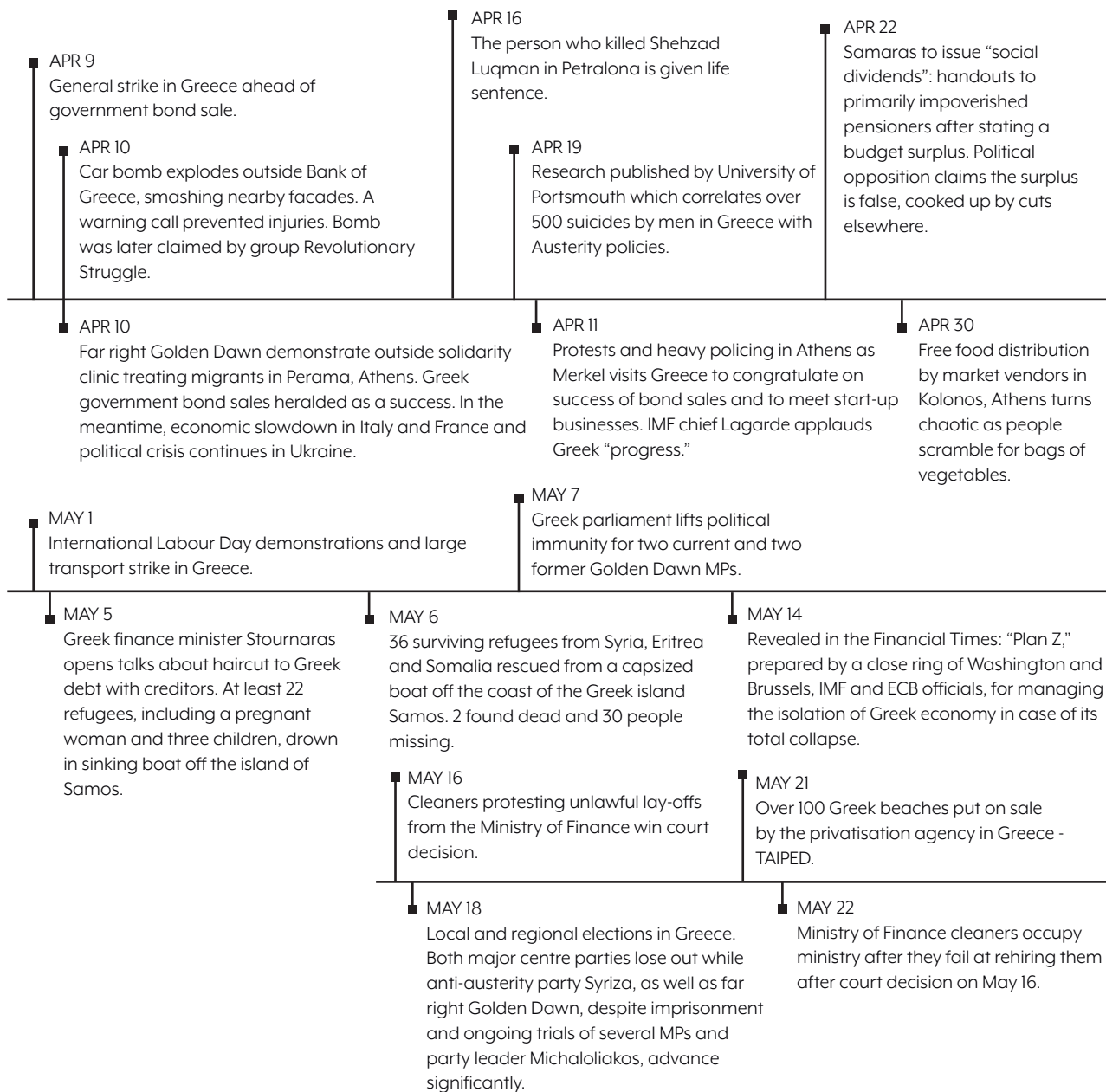
MAR 24

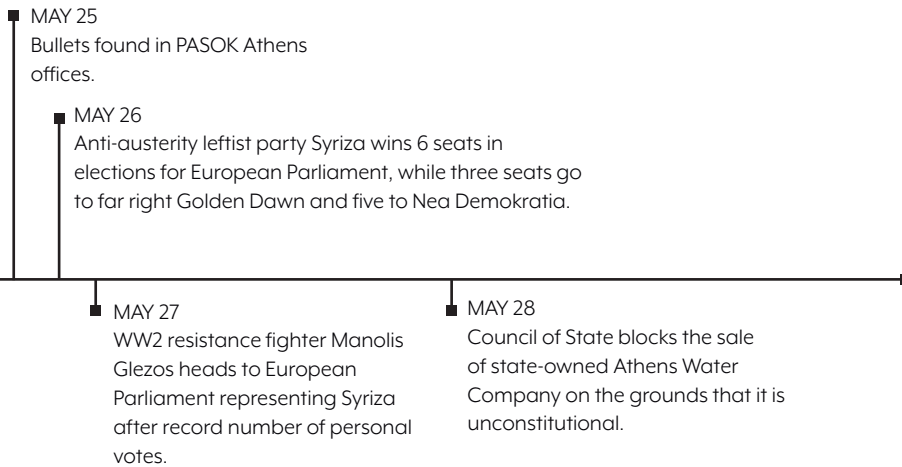
Bomb outside Athenian tax office found and defused by the police.

MAR 6

Greek coast guard fires warning shots at boat with refugees, injuring three people.

APRIL MAY





BIOPOLITICAL NARRATIVES AGAINST A WHITE BACKGROUND: MEDICAL POLICE AS CITY CARTOGRAPHER

Christos Filippidis

1. “The Abstract Nakedness of Being Human” – Modernity as Short-circuit

It was the early morning hours of October 3, 2013. The sun was rising over the Mediterranean. Amidst its natural tranquillity, even a god would have to try hard to discern the overloaded small boat that suddenly capsized off the shores of the quaint island of Lampedusa. A few hours later, the Italian coast guard would collect hundreds of bodies of anonymous migrants that had been travelling with the renowned Europe as their final destination. The shipwreck of that aged boat could not have caused any surprise, not even to the most mindful reader of mainstream newspapers. Soon enough, they would struggle to even recall it in their memory, squashed as it would be among so many others. But something made this one stand out. The Italian state, the same state that would in the past ram boats with their desperate Albanian living cargo in cold blood,¹ or that would abandon to their fate — right in the

middle of the Mediterranean — the boats originating from the shores of North Africa,² had this time round called for a day of *national* mourning for the loss of all these unknown *foreigners*. An entire nation, then, mourned for the loss of all those that it did not know; for people that were not even linked to it by any right of blood; but that had to the contrary scheduled a malign intrusion of its territorial integrity.

A strange event, if one were to take into account the fact that national mourning tends to be declared in the wake of the loss of some important person or some critical mass of what could be termed the national family. And yet, the Italian government seemingly ignored this rule, “diverting” the very conceptualization of the national property of mourning per se, demonstrating thus some unprecedented internationalist magnanimity. Some mag-

¹ The website *Fortress Europe* wrote on this instance, in April 2008: “It was March 28, 1997. At the strait of Otranto, 25 nautical miles from the shores of Apulia, the Italian navy ship ‘Sibilia’ rammed

and sank the Albanian ship ‘Katër i Radës’ 108 people died. Only the bodies of 81 of them were retrieved. For more information, see http://fortresseurope.blogspot.gr/2006/01/2008_555.html (in Greek).

² See for example the article titled “NATO: Investigate Fatal Boat Episode,” *Human Rights Watch*, May 10, 2011, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/05/10/nato-investigate-fatal-boat-episode>.

nanimity that could comprise the absolute ethical rupture in the contemporary history of humankind.

The question of mourning should not appear as a mere functional management of the end of a physical cycle. It is called upon to bring into our everyday symbolic universe the loss of a beloved person. It ought to reconcile us with their definitive loss and to bring to words the wound this loss leaves behind. Françoise Dastur rightly claims that “it is legitimate for us to discern in mourning [...] the roots of civilisation itself.”³ Mourning, in this sense, comprises a world with its very own stakes;⁴ a world that takes on the unbearable burden of positioning itself as an alleviative seam between life and death, as a reception area for the inescapable absence. Judith Butler claims that the process of mourning can compose a sense of political community and she shows us respectively how its ban can constitute an extension of violence: the very same violence that had led to death at the first place.⁵ In this sense the recent tragedy in Lampedusa, one among so many others, proved to be a particularly fortunate tragedy — accompanied as it was by an excess of mourning (when many similar ones remained numbers at best, suspending between stone-cold medical bureaucracies and statistical register departments). It was in the end the number of the dead that gave Lampedusa the status of a noteworthy event, as prescribed by the media culture of “body counts.” It was also an unprecedented opportunity for Europe to regroup, distributing liabilities and looking a boiling periphery in the eyes.

And so, in the breakthrough marked by this tragedy, one could dare try an inversion of Butler’s sensitive observations. Because this time round it was not the ban, but precisely the performance of the mourning that proved to

be a continuation of violence. The institutions that called for national mourning are exactly the same that have forced, for years now, thousands of migrants to travel in such precarious and hazardous ways, due to the violent exclusions resulting from the strict policies guarding Europe.⁶ And this can only be described as a violation of the memory of the deceased. Yet the functionality of the incident in question had multiple benefits. In-between the international attention paid to it, the then Greek prime minister Antonis Samaras seized the opportunity to promote his steadfast anti-migratory agenda. He communicatively used a catastrophe, in other words, to promote the very policies that had caused it at the first place. Nearly two weeks after the said shipwreck Samaras visited Malta and Italy aiming at the coordination and the further shielding of Southern Europe against the uncontrollable inflowing waves of migrants. A few days later, at the European Council Meeting in Brussels, he would present a seven-point plan for tackling illegal migration. He did also talk, as expected, about the humanitarian catastrophe in Lampedusa, attempting yet another manoeuvre. Speaking of the thousands of migrants reaching the European shores with nowhere to go, he said: “they are trapped, they have no past, they have no present, they have no future or prospects — and I consider this to be a major humanitarian catastrophe.”⁷ A catastrophe, then, that will befall them one way or another — either during their journey or at their destination. Either way, it impinges on their lives

3 Françoise Dastur, *La mort: Essai sur la finitude*, trans. Vicky Sotiropoulou (Athens: Scripta, 1999), 17 (in Greek).

4 It is in this aspect, for example, that a mourning act will be proven successful or not as Judith Butler points out, drawing from Freud’s work. See Judith Butler, *Prearious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London & New York: Verso, 2006), 20–21.

5 *Ibid.*, 22, 148.

6 During the last two decades approximately 20.000 people have lost their lives in their attempt to reach Southern Europe from Northern Africa and the Middle East. See Jack Shenker, “Mediterranean Migrant Deaths: A Litany of Largely Avoidable Loss,” *The Guardian*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/03/mediterranean-migrant-deaths-avoidable-loss>; Judith Sunderland, “Dispatches: Boat Migrant Tragedy Should Shake Europe’s Conscience,” *Human Rights Watch*, October 3, 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/10/03/dispatches-boat-migrant-tragedy-should-shake-europe-s-conscience>.

7 See “Samaras in Brussels: he presented 7 points for tackling illegal migration,” *To Vima*, October 25, 2013, <http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=536769>.

as a fatal incident. It carries that inescapable quality that befits a natural phenomenon. And the Greek prime minister described it as such.

The mourning discourse produced over the bodies of the hundreds of anonymous migrants was a media deception, as it essentially comprised an international call for the furthering of the militarisation of the management of migratory flows through the strengthening of the control of sea crossings and the “discouragement of movement.”⁸ It was a meticulous deception that took on the humani-

tarian challenge with the aim of turning migratory flows into the subject of military intervention par excellence, as nowadays dictated by the military and humanitarian industrial complex.⁹ “This ‘grey zone’ between the military and the humanitarian,” claims Mariella Pandolfi in a conversation with Athena Athanasiou, “denotes a redrawing of the political field.”¹⁰ From now on, the short-circuit of the contemporary culture of interventions finds one more application, this time by the “civilised” shores of Europe. The typical, by now, case of air-crafts hovering with no-one knowing whether they are to deliver bombs or humanitarian aid, hereby acquires the form of a domestic managerial mechanism that mourns in face of the countless dead. This, while it is precisely the same

8 Only a week after the Lampedusa tragedy the European Parliament would approve the commencing of the operation of the notorious Eurosur system (a composition of two words: Europe & Surveillance). This is a new system of surveillance and data exchange for the Mediterranean, as an extension of the functions of FRONTEX, which was developed by the European Union and which will be based on the use of satellite images and drones for the surveillance of the open sea and the shores of North Africa. See “The European Parliament approved the Eurosur system, which launches in December,” *To Vima*, October 11, 2013, <http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=534255>. See also “EU: Needless Deaths in Mediterranean,” *Human Rights Watch*, August 16, 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/08/16/eu-needless-deaths-mediterranean>. In addition and following the Lampedusa tragedy, the Mediterranean Task Force was introduced. Among others, this force will apply pressure for the application of the Greek–Turkish protocol for the return of “illegal” migrants. See “Samaras in Brussels.” Let us remember finally that in September 2012, and while there was information that the first Syrian refugees were already at the shores of Turkey, two consecutive meetings took place in Athens with the participation of the ministers of National Defence, Public Order, and Shipping. According to the then minister of Public Order, Nikos Dendias, the aim of these meetings was to take measures in order to “shield the Aegean,” as he said. Judging by the tone of the three ministers’ statements one could discern some deliberate foginess regarding the use of the term “illegal migrant” and “refugee,” and total vagueness regarding whether they spoke about humanitarian or about military action. See the press release of the Press Office of the Greek Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection on September 17, 2012, http://www.yptp.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=&perform=view&id=4350&Itemid=552, and Dionisis Vithoulkas, “The Meeting at the Ministry of Defence regarding the Migration Issue Has Ended” *To Vima*, September 17, 2012, <http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=475179>.

9 See Mariella Pandolfi, “Contract of Mutual (In)Difference: Governance and the Humanitarian Apparatus in Contemporary Albania and Kosovo,” *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 10, no. 1 (2003): 372. An indicative picture of this military–humanitarian interweaving is located in the founding moment of the contemporary humanitarian culture, as this is outlined in the birth of the Red Cross in 1863. More specifically, the five-member committee founded on February 17 of that year under the directorship of general Guillaume-Henri Dufour, and which would later evolve into the International Committee of the Red Cross, at first operated under the name Comité International et Permanent aux Blessés Militaires (International Committee for the Relief of the Wounded Soldiers). See Constantinos Skaltsas, *The Geneva Conventions* (Athens: Hellenic Red Cross, 1989), 8, 38. Let us remember, finally, that when commenting on the importance of the four Geneva Conventions, concerning the fate of unarmed populations, Carl Schmitt claimed that these only provide the legal grounds for the humanitarian interventions of the International Committee of the Red Cross — saying, characteristically: *Inter arma caritas* (Charity in the midst of arms). See Carl Schmitt, *The Theory of the Partisan: A Commentary/Remark on the Concept of the Political*, trans. A.C. Goodson (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 2004), 16.

10 Mariella Pandolfi and Athena Athanasiou, “Social Suffering in the Contemporary World,” in the newspaper inset *Vivliothiki, Eleftherotypia*, May 11, 2007 (in Greek). Concerning the notion of the grey zone, see also Mariella Pandolfi, “From Paradox to Paradigm: The Permanent State of Emergency in the Balkans,” in *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions*, eds. Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 163.

mechanism that produces this environment of risk and danger — rendering, with surgical precision, populations precarious and eventually doomed. What we are faced with, in this case, is not a typical intervention of the western military-humanitarian complex in an exotic troubled place, but the mobilisation of humanitarian discourse and a rhetoric of mercy and compassion for the purpose of homeland security in itself.¹¹ The use of the term “humanitarian catastrophe” and the “mourning” that accompanies it presuppose that one would start narrating the story from the end. And that they would stay there. “The choice of the term ‘humanitarian catastrophe,’” writes Pandolfi, “is an extreme image of this ‘mediatic’ tendency, often illusory by intention, that leads to the interpretation of violence in terms that are near-mechanical and natural [...] as if this had not been the end product of a complicated interaction between the altering of international balances and political phenomena produced by specific historical events playing out at very unique places.”¹²

An obscuring of all political processes that cause these catastrophic events is attempted today within the moral-emotional framework outlined by humanitarian rhetoric, and by focusing on the urgent character of these events. The entering of morality into the field of politics¹³ does not only safeguard the de-politicisation of the catastrophic phenomena that surround us, by re-assigning them meaning through an urgent interpretation of bad fortune and naturalness; it also offers the penultimate site

for the legalisation of the suspension of the rule of law under the pressure of the “state of emergency.”¹⁴ *Necessity*, this dark notion against which western political philosophy would always stand with uneasiness, nowadays constructs new fields for intervention. And it finds itself in an untangled interweaving with the notion of humanitarianism, some interweaving that has been meticulously constructed: “Both concepts, ‘humanitarian’ and ‘emergency,’” writes Craig Calhoun, “are cultural constructs and reflections of structural changes. They come together to shape a way of understanding what is happening in the world, a social imaginary that is of dramatic material consequence. Behind the rise of the humanitarian emergency lie specific ways of thinking about how the world works and specific, if often implicit moral orientations.”¹⁵ In the example of the Lampedusa tragedy, the conspiracy of the state of emergency and of humanitarianism nevertheless acquires more complex articulations. As the generic and abstract request for the rescue of human lives competes with the specific demand for stricter border controls, the humanitarian short-circuit is exposed in its full glory. No one is certain of whether the invocation of the emergency, in this case, aims at highlighting a collective human drama — and therefore constituting a call for immediate relief action, or whether it aims at safeguarding what national territorial integrity has established — and therefore perpetuating the conditions causing these dramas in the first place. In this intentional conceptual haze, mourning of any type can be performed unobstructed on the side of the furthering exclusions of sea crossings; exclusions that can only guarantee they will even-handedly offer reasons

11 In expanding the existent framework, Didier Fassin explains that “the distinctive feature of contemporary societies is without doubt the way the moral sentiments have become generalized as a frame of reference in political life. This is the phenomenon I term ‘humanitarian government.’” Didier Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present*, trans. Rachel Gomme (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012), 247.

12 Mariella Pandolfi, “‘Moral entrepreneurs,’ souverainetés mouvantes et barbelés: Le bio-politique dans les Balkans postcommunistes,” trans. Babis Georgantidis, *Sighrona Themata*, 82 (2003): 26 (in Greek).

13 See Didier Fassin, “Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life,” *Public Culture* 19, no. 3 (2007): 508, 511.

14 “Morality now justifies suspension of the rule of law,” write Fassin and Pandolfi. See Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, “Introduction: Military and Humanitarian Government in the Age of Intervention,” in *Contemporary States of Emergency*, eds. Fassin and Pandolfi, 12.

15 Craig Calhoun, “The Idea of Emergency: Humanitarian Action and Global (Dis)Order,” in *Contemporary States of Emergency*, eds. Fassin and Pandolfi, 29.

for fresh outbreaks of mourning in the future; a coexistence that does not form not even the tiniest of paradoxes.

It is then clear that the Lampedusa tragedy has revealed something much more substantial. It has shown to Europe (and its humanitarian staff in particular) that, having learnt how to safely operate at the distant humanist labs of the capitalist periphery while creating a profitable market and new mechanisms for the subjectification of the “other,” it now ought to gradually confront phenomena that will annoyingly repeat themselves at its geographical boundaries. Europe, this cynical confession of well being, which rushed to first utter a discourse concerning universality and global human rights, nowadays meets its discursive limits precisely in the awareness of its bewildered position within a truly universal, fluid and almost uncontrollable environment. Surrounded as it is by irksome flows, it reveals its true face: on the one hand attempting to safeguard its internal stability and on the other hand, to get rid of these inelegant tragedies. Not by preventing them, but by letting them happen “elsewhere.” Behind the humanitarian calls for the rescue of life lies a well-orchestrated operation for the management of death. Hereby death acquires a broader meaning which, to remember Michel Foucault, does not include “simply murder as such, but every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on.”¹⁶ Today, more than ever, it is proven that Europe’s abstract pronouncements and its carefree anguish for the lives-that-must-be-saved unavoidably trip over the terror caused by whatever possibility for its internal destabilisation. “Since the ripple effects of poverty, environmental collapse, civil conflict, health crises, and so on respect no international boundaries,

they can easily breach and destabilize the West’s carefully balanced way of life unless they are properly managed.”¹⁷

The intensification of border controls makes clear that the adverb “properly” above urgently calls for a redefinition of the “value of life” per se, readjusting the balance sheet of rescues and losses and intervening in the “social imaginary” that Calhoun described. This will henceforth be called to reconcile the audience of the humanitarian spectacle no longer with the unavoidable losses occurring under conditions extending beyond what is humanly possible, but with the losses resulting precisely from what is humanly possible. Humanitarian culture has been historically built precisely upon the notion of the “crisis”:¹⁸ that is, upon the imperative facts dictated by an emergency event. Yet the case of Lampedusa, and the wider matter of the management of the migratory flows that it exemplarily represents, sketch out a crisis that is far more crude and more literal. A crisis that does not offer any luxury for one to observe it from afar; and a need that emergences much more imperatively in lieu of any such distance.¹⁹ The “humanitarian catastrophe” that is playing out, for quite some time now, at the “vulnerable” thresholds of Europe, reveals the well-hidden operation of the humanitarian apparatus. The intentional concealing of

16 Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975–76*, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 256.

17 Pandolfi, “From Paradox to Paradigm,” 164. During his aforementioned visit to Brussels the then Greek prime minister stated: “The periphery exports destabilisation to Europe as a whole.” “Samaras in Brussels.”

18 See Pandolfi, “Contract of Mutual (In)Difference,” 381.

19 One could argue one such example has already made its appearance in Europe with the events that followed the breakdown of ex-Yugoslavia, and which led to the instalment of a permanent field of military-humanitarian intervention in the area. Yet the case in question, even if geographically abolishing any notion of distance from Europe, seems to comprise an exemplary way and a place for the application of the products of the humanitarian industry, as these were developed in the labs of the distant periphery. Pandolfi describes the Balkan particularity through the examples of Bosnia, of Kosovo, and, to a lesser extent, that of Albania, as cases of hybrid intra-European colonization, orchestrated by the EU–NATO–UN complex. See Pandolfi, “From Paradox to Paradigm,” 168.

the political characteristics in all other humanitarian examples, through the meticulous de-politicisation and naturalisation of every given tragedy, hereby returns in the form of an excess of the political that calls for vigilance, surveillance and protection of the (supra)national territorial integrity.²⁰ It returns, in other words, in the form of an excess of the *Political* in its Schmittian sense, one that marks refugees and migrants as Enemies against which Europe ought to defend itself²¹ — and their moving as acts of war²² which might then even lead to some dead.

20 The discourse produced in Europe today concerning migration brings to the fore, once again, the importance of the border. A border that updates its meanings on the one hand within a globalised environment that also gestates “unwelcome” flows, and on the other hand as part of the common functions of the European Union that by now assign to certain border cases a supra-local and supra-national role. The uncontrollable population flows call, then, to a peculiar return to the guarantees of the “outdated” territorial state. Some return that most certainly does not vindicate Foucault in regard to the devaluation of the geographical element in his analyses regarding the transformations of the state. Stuart Elden will therefore rightly claim, in a critical reading of the Foucauldian work, that “[t]erritory is more than merely land, but a rendering of the emergent concept of ‘space’ as a political category: owned, distributed, mapped, calculated, bordered, and controlled.” Stuart Elden, “Governmentality, Calculation, Territory,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 3 (2007): 578. In regard to the update in the importance of the border and the drastic proliferation of checkpoints in the contemporary globalised world, see the chapter “Ubiquitous Borders,” in Stephen Graham, *Cities Under Siege: The New Military Urbanism* (London & New York: Verso, 2010), 89–152.

21 “The specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy,” writes Schmitt. See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 26.

22 For example, the American military theoretician William Lind writes: “In Fourth Generation war [...] invasion by immigration can be at least as dangerous as invasion by a state army.” Cited in Stephen Graham, “The Urban ‘Battlespace,’” *Theory, Culture and Society* 26, nos. 7–8 (2009): 284. See also Stephen Graham, “Foucault’s Boomerang: The New Military Urbanism,” *Development Dialogue* 58 (2012): 40.

The mourning therefore declared for these lost lives steps onto an evident asymmetry which, paradoxically, is proven intrinsic of humanitarian projects overall. In this particular tragedy, whatever lamentation takes place appears insufficient to cover up the causes that lead to it. And whatever humanitarian call made does not suffice to blur the waters in which thousands of migrants sink their hopes on a daily basis. Through the infuriating rhetoric of compassion, a hierarchy of lives emerges, one that is key for the self-perception of the humanitarian construction which Fassin describes in an exemplary way: “Thus, within the humanitarian arena itself hierarchies of humanity are passively established but rarely identified for what they are — politics of life that at moments of crisis, result in the formation of two groups, those whose status protects their sacred character and those whom the institutions may sacrifice against their will.”²³ In this way, in the case of Lampedusa the asymmetry — and the antinomy — that dictates the discourses of security as much as rescue finally becomes evident. And yet, it stretches the central (if often implicit) idea behind the overall operation of the humanitarian apparatus to its limits — as Calhoun points out, this presupposes hierarchical conceptualisations of what we would call “humanity,” referring to the idea of *charity* in particular.²⁴ The field of the natural disaster or the war zone, which turns into a field of humanitarian aid, may appear as an environment filled with objective dangers for whoever may happen to populate it; yet in fact, it separates subjects in two worlds, revealing a “complex ontology of inequality [...] that differentiates in a hierarchical manner the values of human lives.”²⁵ This curative moment of the emergence of “human compassion” may appear to interrupt the frantic routes of violence, and ostensibly gives back to “humanity” its lost cohesion. Yet it dictates, through its own “normative schemes of intelli-

23 Fassin, “Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life,” 516.

24 Calhoun, “The Idea of Emergency,” 35.

25 Fassin, “Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life,” 519.

bility,”²⁶ conditions of subjectification and hierarchies that eventually reassert the familiar conditions of the asymmetrical assessment of lives.²⁷

In the case of Lampedusa, the humanitarian appeal acquires a more offensive form, since the above assessment is predetermined by the mechanisms that administer death in the Mediterranean. And so these are not, as they try to convince us, natural events: they are tangible results of an entirely normalised violence which, as Athanasiou writes, “is performed through the definition and the outlining of what lives are worth living”; through which lives are noteworthy and which ones are not.²⁸ Yet beyond the obvious function of “normative violence”²⁹ in our given example, the humanitarian construction acts in a normative way in itself, thanks to its gestating representations. The aim then is to prove that the tears and cries that followed this particular shipwreck off the shores of Italy not only failed to withhold the force of the violence that had caused them but to the contrary, offered this exact violence absolute legitimisation. This failure does not concern the excess of hypocrisy that trampled over everything alone; it also concerns that structural asymmetry residing in the very conception of the humanitarian idea itself. The devaluation of the lives of migrants that meticulously prepares these tragedies, as exemplified by the policies of Fortress-Europe now returns, via the humanitarian rhetoric, in the form of a more refined and indiscernible devaluation of

the “other.” Some devaluation that nails those who survive such a catastrophe to the position of a victim, a position they are not allowed to escape. This victimisation is the essence of the humanitarian industry. Pandolfi writes in this regard: “In this colonization of political space, humanitarianism is a technology that produces a body that must be transformed through the beneficence of aid.”³⁰ Through this transformation, the figure of the refugee becomes the namesake of the victim of a natural misfortune. A victim that requires immediate help and ought to be subjectified through this help, and this help alone; as a passive “consumer,” that is, of humanitarian products.

This is not, therefore, just an embodied exposure to the material consequences of a catastrophe. It is also an exposure to the catastrophe’s own representation. In this way, the victimisation technique is accompanied by the careful management of witnessing, which turns humanitarian staff into the only voices of the victims—constructing and putting in place yet another derogatory division: a division “between those who are subjects (the witnesses who testify to the misfortunes of the world) and those who can exist only as objects (the unfortunate whose suffering is testified to in front of the world),” leading to what Fassin calls “humanitarian reduction of the victim.”³¹ For any humanitarian catastrophe, then, there is a corresponding catastrophe of meaning that succeeds it. A complete erasure of the meanings and the narrations of those who were confronted with violence, condemned to an enforced silence, merely compiling vivid images of an emergency on behalf of its humanitarian representation. “One of the most distinctive features of the emergency imaginary as it circulates in the global media,” writes Calhoun, “is that it renders those who suffer in emergencies as voiceless masses.”³² In silence, the protagonists of the catastrophes of this world are subjected to a biographical denuding that turns them into anonymous and a-histor-

26 Butler, *Precarious Life*, 146.

27 Alain Badiou writes in regard to this point: “Who can fail to see that in our humanitarian expeditions, interventions, embarkations of charitable *légionnaires*, the Subject presumed to be universal is split? On the side of the victims, the haggard animal exposed on television screens. On the side of the benefactors, conscience and the imperative to intervene. [...] Who cannot see that this ethics which rests on the misery of the world hides, behind its victim-Man, the good-Man, the white-Man?” Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. Peter Hallward (London & New York: Verso, 2001), 12.

28 Athena Athanasiou, *The Crisis as a “State of Emergency”: Critiques and Resistances* (Athens: Savvalas, 2012), 61, 82 (in Greek).

29 *Ibid.*, 82.

30 Pandolfi, “From Paradox to Paradigm,” 167.

31 Fassin, “Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life,” 517.

32 Calhoun, “The Idea of Emergency,” 55.

ical figures, merely populating destroyed landscapes and standardised infrastructures of mass nutrition and relief. Figures that are “paradigmatically distant,”³³ with no personal stories, their only connecting thread being the fact they ultimately share the same fateful way of being related to the catastrophe. In their collective drama, humanitarian aid appears as the only way for them to become visible. “However, the very gesture that appears to grant them recognition reduces them to what they are not — and often refuse to be — by reifying their condition of victimhood while ignoring their history and muting their words. Humanitarian reason pays more attention to the biological life of the destitute and unfortunate, the life in the name of which they are given aid, than to their biographical life, the life through which they could, independently, give a meaning to their own existence.”³⁴

This biological erasure is completed with the arrival of death — some death that is not even their own. When humanitarian discourse overrides the historicity of the lives lost as well as those that survived — in essence overriding the political conditions within which this historicity acquires its full meaning — then death inevitably means nothing.³⁵ Through these normative schemes reproduced by humanitarianism’s victimisation and de-subjectification, one could dare claim that eventually, death does not exist. Following Butler, who sheds light on the asymmet-

ric rating of lives in the context of war, we could claim that the normative humanitarian schemes “work precisely through providing no image, no name, no narrative, so that there never was a life, and there never was a death.”³⁶ The protagonists of the Lampendusa shipwreck, stripped of their biographical armament, “enjoy” a mourning that breaks out as a twofold irony. On the one hand, it is provocatively declared by the perpetrators themselves. On the other hand, sunken as it is into the abstraction of humanitarian rhetoric, it can only describe the end of a typical biological course — leaving outside all those biographical elements that would elevate death to an event with its own historicity, and mourning to its essential recipient and guarantor. The complete deassigning of meaning from death thereby comes to complete the humanitarian short-circuit. Right at the point where the rhetoric of mercy and compassion aspires to reveal the universal “value of life” is the point where it achieves its absolute devaluation and relativisation, focusing exclusively upon the mere event of biological existence. The humanitarian tears shed for the deaths of hundreds of migrants off the shores of Italy, performed some mercy that “insinuates aid not toward individuals, toward citizens, not toward political subjects — but toward bodies, that is, toward human life in its most naked of manifestations.”³⁷

We hereby enter into the heart of the humanitarian short-circuit. The obsessive adherence to the mere event of human biological existence as the starting point of whatever humanitarian provision — and by extension, as a main axis of our problematisation of humanness — challenges all those elements that make a human *truly* so. As stressed out by Calhoun, “this biological minimum is, perhaps, below the real minimum of the truly human, the capacity of speech and shaping social life.”³⁸ Such focusing upon this biological minimum is then not only insufficient to rescue the humanness that it invokes but, to the

33 Ibid., 33.

34 Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason*, 254.

35 Commenting on the ontological state of dying in the context of the Nazi extermination camp, Giorgio Agamben describes a condition that is radically separated from the experience of death. And yet, despite the vast differences between the two examples, we would risk interpreting the tragedies breaking out in the Mediterranean through his observations on Auschwitz — to the extent that an invisible thread seems to connect these two historical categories. Both are characterised by the absolute presence of a death that is violently stripped off its contexts, those that would have assigned it its any given meaning. Some stripping that forms, eventually, the appearance of a futile event and an “empty possibility.” See Agamben Giorgio, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 2002), 70–76.

36 Butler, *Prekarious Life*, 146.

37 Pandolfi, “Social Suffering in the Contemporary World.”

38 Calhoun, “The Idea of Emergency,” 34.

contrary — it casually marches toward the absolute political denuding of the human and to her definitive exposure to contemporary thanatopolitical landscapes. This denuding allows both the exposure of migratory populations to conditions of extreme precarity today, as well as the tying down of all who survive to a regime of impossibility of meaning. The equation of human nature with its literal biological backdrop, which has been driving the humanitarian project for more than two centuries, denies precisely all the wealth historically endowing humans and their particular complexities. Roberto Esposito stresses that “something like a definable and identifiable human nature doesn’t exist as such, independent from the meanings that culture and therefore history have, over the course of time, imprinted on it.”³⁹ And yet, at the sight of these survivors “we find ourselves confronted with a bare life that has been separated from its context.”⁴⁰ Or, to be more precise, we find ourselves confronted with a life whose context is proven to be the very event of biological survival itself.⁴¹ Amidst this new “survivalist public sphere”

shaping up,⁴² Agamben’s dystopic claim is proven assertively: taking on the Foucauldian analyses that concern the functions of biopower he claims that “[t]he decisive activity of biopower in our time consists in the production not of life or death, but rather of a mutable and virtually infinite survival.”⁴³

We therefore stand before a structural antinomy. An antinomy that was not born all of a sudden following the Lampedusa shipwreck, but one that carries behind it an entire tradition which — as contradictory as this may sound — commences from the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* of 1789. Hannah Arendt, whose gaze perhaps comprises the most incisive into the paradoxes of the Declaration, writes: “From the beginning the paradox involved in the declaration of inalienable human rights was that it reckoned with an ‘abstract’ human being who seemed to exist nowhere.”⁴⁴ The appeal to such a generalisable human substance is the one that, according to Arendt, paves the way for the deprivation of human rights — as much as this may sound like an oxymoron⁴⁵ — and it comprises the legitimising backdrop for the biographical

39 Roberto Esposito, *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 29.

40 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 61. Commenting upon the notion of bare life, Eva Geulen notes: “[N]aked or bare (and bared) life is not a prior substance, but instead what remains after the withdrawal of all forms.” Cited in Leland de la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 203.

41 Stressing upon the traumatic experience accompanying a violent event in our personal life, Cathy Caruth writes that “trauma is constituted not only by the destructive force of a violent event but by the very act of its survival. If we are to register the impact of violence we cannot, therefore, locate it only in the destructive moment of the past, but in an ongoing survival that belongs to the future.” In light of these observations, one can easily assume that the impact of such violence becomes more crucial under the conditions imposed by the humanitarian assignments of meaning. Because it is not only that violence constantly recurs through the internal psychic function of the trauma. It is also that as part of the humanitarian fixation, the survivor ought to live with a constant external reminder, constantly carrying the event of their surviv-

al as their only identity. See Cathy Caruth, “Violence and Time: Traumatic Survivals,” *Assemblage* 20 (1993), 25.

42 Pandolfi, “From Paradox to Paradigm,” 160.

43 Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, 155.

44 Arendt Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), 369.

45 Walter Benjamin had also foreseen the catastrophic extension of this unprecedented appeal to a universal human nature when he wrote that “[t]he proposition that existence stands higher than a just existence is false and ignominious, if existence is to mean nothing other than mere life.” And he added: “However sacred man is (or however sacred that life in him which is identically present in earthly life, death, and afterlife), there is no sacredness in his condition, in his bodily life vulnerable to injury by his fellow men.” Here, the notion of the *sacred* preserves its dual significance, since Benjamin knew that “what is here pronounced sacred was, according to ancient mythic thought, the marked bearer of guilt: life itself.” Walter Benjamin, “Critique of Violence,” in *Selected Writings*, Vol. 1, 1913–1926, trans. Marcus Bullock & Michael Jennings (Cambridge & London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 251. In regards to the ambivalent notion of the sacred, see Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 49–54.

denuding that the humanitarian construction enforces upon the “victims” of the disasters of this world. The idea, therefore, for one to resort to such an abstract notion of the human has led to the dead-ends in which thousands of migrants and refugees find themselves crammed today. “The conception of human rights, based upon the assumed existence of a human being as such, broke down at the very moment when those who professed to believe in it were for the first time confronted with people who had indeed lost all other qualities and specific relationships — except that they were still human.”⁴⁶ It is evident that the Declaration attempts to inscribe the “inalienable” rights of humans upon a supposedly universal human nature, referring to some extra-historical natural laws,⁴⁷ looking for the penultimate legitimisation in the definitive event of one being human, and that alone. As Arendt proves, however, this inscription has the exact opposite result since “the world found nothing sacred in the abstract nakedness of being human.”⁴⁸ And this, because at the exact same time when the plan for the conceptual construction of this new, abstract human being was activated, the philosophical and political foundations of the modern nation state were also being founded — with the emergence of the figure of the *citizen* becoming the essence of this foundation. With the emergence, that is, of an entirely political figure — the notion of *political* hereby denoting

primarily a specific relationship — that describes not only the absolute bearer of rights, but also that modern form of sovereign power that conveys these rights. Therefore, the fact that the terms “human” and “citizen” were jointly hosted by the Declaration was insufficient in bridging the conceptual and legal chasm that separates them, leaving the former fully exposed to nothing.

In locating this discrepancy, Agamben writes: “In the phrase *La déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen*, it is not clear whether the two terms *homme* and *citoyen* name two autonomous beings or instead form a unitary system in which the first is always already included in the second. And if the latter is the case, the kind of relation that exists between *homme* and *citoyen* still remains unclear.”⁴⁹ It is precisely within the vortex of this ambiguity that we are requested to interpret the paradoxes of the humanitarian construction as well as tragedies that will keep increasing in an environment built on the basis of what Arendt calls “the politically most pernicious doctrine of the modern age, namely that life is the highest good.”⁵⁰ The persistence upon this notion of “nothing but human,” shortly before nationalisms would start sweeping Europe from one end to the other, can therefore only be met with scepticism.⁵¹ The historical and political processes that followed the Declaration, and which gave form to a large part of the world as we know it today, made evident that only what is termed *citizenship* could safeguard

46 Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 380.

47 Arendt’s distrust regarding the declaration of the (human) nature as an explanatory principle of the human condition is expressed in two ways. First, she claims that such an appeal is futile since serious doubts may be raised about the very existence of laws in nature overall. Second, she stresses out that “nothing entitles us to assume that man has a nature or essence in the same sense as other things,” making sure to clarify that human nature is not in any case equated to the human condition. See *ibid.*, 378 and Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 9, 10, respectively.

48 Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 380. Arendt adds that “[t]he survivors of the extermination camps, the inmates of concentration and internment camps, and even the comparatively happy stateless people could see [...] that the abstract nakedness of being nothing but human was their greatest danger.” *Ibid.*

49 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 75.

50 Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 64. Many years earlier, and amidst the unpleasant experience of exile, Arendt would write, respectively: “Brought up in the conviction that life is the highest good and death the greatest dismay, we became witnesses and victims of worse terrors than death — without having been able to discover a higher ideal than life.” See Hannah Arendt, “We Refugees,” in *Altogether Elsewhere: Writers on Exile*, ed. Marc Robinson (Boston & London: Faber & Faber, 1994), 112.

51 Regarding the post-revolutionary emergence of the notion of the nation in Europe see E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 14–45.

these notorious “universal” human rights. A citizenship that already from its conception was chained to the notion of the sovereign nation-state, which would eventually establish itself as the absolute pre-condition for the absolutely unconditional. The fact that “[t]he Rights of Man, supposedly inalienable, proved unenforceable [...] whenever people appeared who were no longer citizens of any sovereign state”⁵² can henceforth only be conceived within this framework. It is only through the unconditional inscription of “universal” rights upon the notion of the sovereign nation-state that we can nowadays comprehend that paradoxical mechanism packing entire populations in a zone of total legal denuding, where they are left precisely with that “abstract nakedness of being nothing but human” — and that nakedness alone. Some packing that will become ever more violent in a world assuring us, as Arendt writes, that “for the time being, a sphere that is above the nations does not exist.”⁵³ One ought to seek part of the causes of the Lampedusa shipwreck within this inability to conceive and constitute a post-national or anti-national political sphere. It is this inability that nowadays traps thousands of refugees and migrants, eventually turning the conditions of their existence into a responsibility of the police and of humanitarian organisations.⁵⁴

One then understands why the humanitarian rhetoric, through its popular techniques of depoliticisation and naturalisation of any given tragedy, and through its choice to continue highlighting this notion of “nothing but human” as its ultimate mission, offers the most effective of alibi to the perpetrators of the catastrophes of this world. For as long as the appeals to “human life” are not followed by critical attempts to de-construct the notion of the nation and efforts of re-inscription in a new political context, refugee and migrant populations will continue

roaming as “nothing but human” — that is, as “life that cannot be sacrificed and yet may be killed,”⁵⁵ within the contracted killer fields that defend the contemporary nation states. The political denuding that stokes the humanitarian engine therefore acts in two directions. On the one hand, in the absolute erasure of the biographical wealth and the crude focusing upon the naked biological condition of the survivors which, as we saw, turns into an apolitical worshipping of survival. And on the other hand, in the choice to merely soothe the pain, leaving those quintessentially political conditions that caused it aside — and turning compassion into the ultimate apologist for brutality.⁵⁶ “The separation between humanitarianism and politics that we are experiencing today,” writes Agamben, “is the extreme phase of the separation of the rights of man from the rights of the citizen, in the final analysis, however, humanitarian organizations [...] can only grasp human life in the figure of bare or sacred life, and therefore, despite themselves, maintain a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight.”⁵⁷ Bare or sacred life becomes the fuel in the humanitarian engine. And the more this engine focuses upon the biological necessity of human existence, authorising the former as the only one qualified to describe the latter, the more political extermination will be foisted on in the form of humanitarian catastrophe. This authorisation ultimately outlines, in the most implicit of ways, the notorious *End of History*; some end that is entirely functional, imposed as an imperative political demand, thereby creating the infinite “post-po-

52 Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 372.

53 Ibid., 379.

54 See the chapter titled “Beyond Human Rights” in Giorgio Agamben, *Means without Ends: Notes on Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti & Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 19.

55 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 52.

56 In an incomparably incisive observation — even if in an entirely different historical framework — Arendt would write in regard to compassion and its apolitical extensions: “As a rule, it is not compassion which sets out to change worldly conditions in order to ease human suffering, but if it does, it will shun the drawn-out wearisome processes of persuasion, negotiation, and compromise, which are the processes of law and politics, and lend its voice to the suffering itself.” Arendt, *On Revolution*, 86.

57 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 78.

litical” space nowadays occupied by the inescapable and the necessity gestated by the “truths” of biological life.⁵⁸

2. White Aprons, or How One Philosophizes with a Lancet

The recurring tragedies at the aquatic fringes of Europe thus give birth to a logical paradox. The meticulous production of the conditions of risk and exclusion leading to the tragic shipwrecks in the Mediterranean continue to claim for themselves the aura of the random and of the mysterious that would otherwise inherently characterise natural world phenomena. And it is this insistence upon naturalisation that offers, as we saw previously, the ideology of border controls their much-desired de-politicisation — helping its zealots vanish beyond the horizon of moral responsibility. This surplus of “natural” disasters stands in perfect alignment with the discursive assumptions of the humanist hypothesis. The protagonists of the humanitarian performances wander around as natural objects — and they die as such. We saw how their naturalness equips them with all essential meanings during their uncertain itineraries toward Europe. It condemns them to hover around while grounded to their biological finiteness. Their physical temperatures reveal their presence in the sea from afar.⁵⁹ Their physical needs stand as their sole meanings, suffocatingly occupying their symbolic spaces. And their physical growth is the one that will secure them a place in the world of law. Because it is by now well-known that for the youngest percentage of the popula-

tions that arrive at the shores of Italy, their naked biologicality also means something else. It gestates all elements necessary in order to judge upon their inclusion in some special protection status and essentially, their assigning to a “dignified” legal status. Some assignment reached after a precise estimation of their age. Medical reports concerning skeletal age, dental age and physical growth of a young individual are in this way converted into a legal tool par excellence.⁶⁰ A special protection status is offered to under-age individuals, putting their precise age estimation at the stake of a series of medical examinations that act as an initial screening mechanism, on the basis of a crucial age threshold.⁶¹ It is doctors, then, that decide upon the legal status of a percentage of these populations. Here, biology speaks the language of courtrooms.

The emergence of the figure of the doctor at this stage does not appear to be incompatible. To the contrary, it affirms the tight relationship between the medical sector and the legal world. Some relationship not limited to the function of contemporary legal technologies alone, but one that establishes itself, first and foremost, at the notional level — as proven by the uses of the word crisis. In

58 Agamben writes in this regard: “The only task that still seems to retain some seriousness is the assumption of the burden — and the ‘total management’ — of biological life, that is, of the very animality of man. Genome, global economy, and humanitarian ideology are the three united faces of this process in which posthistorical humanity seems to take on its own physiology as its last, impolitical mandate.” Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Kevin Attell, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 77.

59 See for example Rey Koslowski, *The Evolution of Border Controls as a Mechanism to Prevent Illegal Migration* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2011), 9, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/bordercontrols-koslowski.pdf>.

60 See Emilio Nuzzolese et al., “Assessing Chronological Age of Unaccompanied Minors in Southern Italy,” *American Journal of Forensic Medical Pathology* 32, no. 3 (2011): 202, 203.

61 The report titled *Review of Current Laws, Policies, and Practices Relating to Age Assessment in Sixteen European Countries* states in this regard: “[A]ge assessment is used in Europe mainly to establish whether or not (and for how long) an individual is under 18 years of age and therefore eligible for protection under the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) and other relevant international, European, regional and national legal instruments.” Specifically in the case of Italy, it stresses out that “[i]n practice, most age assessment cases related to separated children are initiated because authorities suspect that an individual who claims to be a child is aged above 18. Sometimes age assessment is requested to establish whether the child is aged above or below 14 in relation to criminal responsibility.” See *Review of Current Laws, Policies, and Practices Relating to Age Assessment in Sixteen European Countries*, Separated Children in Europe Programme (Thematic Group on Age Assessment), May 2011, 4, 16, <http://www.scepnetwork.org/images/17/166.pdf>.

his studies on Psychiatric Power, Foucault demonstrates the legal-medical context of the term, showing how it was prevalent in the questionings of illness during a long period, spanning from Hippocrates up until the birth of pathological anatomy. For the medical practices of that long time, crisis meant the truth of the illness. It was the moment when illness would declare itself present. It was a moment of struggle between life and death, a moment of relapse, the *kairos*, as per Hippocrates, that signified a crucial turning point in the illness' trajectory.⁶² Up until the crisis would break out illness was, essentially, nothing. It remained both invisible and mute. It was the crisis that revealed it, that signalled its presence, and that delegated the doctor to *judge* it in the sense of the juridical decision, for its own truth, selecting the appropriate means to manage its symptoms.⁶³ The crisis, then, appears as a thickening of symptoms that, once they become apparent, make the illness truly exist. That decide for—and comprise—its truth. It is hereby important to locate the double meaning of the term crisis. On the one hand it describes a crucial moment in the illness' trajectory. On the other, it comprises the privileged topos for the exercise of medical practice—implicating the doctor in a way that renders him initially responsible for the diagnosis of this trajectory and then by extension, for the management of its symptoms. The doctor ought to recognise the crisis and to decide upon its management. The doctor is, in other words, called upon to judge.⁶⁴

62 See the lecture of January 23, 1974 in Michel Foucault, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège de France 1973–74*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 242, 259.

63 *Ibid.*, 244.

64 In the same regard, when attempting a brief perambulation in the conceptual dynamic of the crisis, Agamben reaffirms its medical use—which, along with its theological dimension comprise its two semantic roots. In either case, the term is connected to the notion of judgement, which in the medical field concerns the doctor's opinion when the illness' trajectory has reached the stage of struggle between life and death. See Giorgio Agamben, "The Endless Crisis as an Instrument of Power: In Conversation with Giorgio Agamben," *Verso*, June 4, 2013, <http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/1318-the-endless-crisis-as-an-instrument-of-power-in-conversation-with-giorgio-agamben>.

The importance of judgement and decision that characterises the role of the doctor throughout those twenty-two centuries of Medicine, as described by Foucault, brings its juridical relevance to date through the example of age estimation. And it shows how the doctor will momentarily turn into a juridical body, one that will decide upon the fate of the entire young population eventually reaching the European shores or surviving catastrophes. In these examples, the doctor may not be called upon to judge on the outbreak of some concealed disease—yet his role is nevertheless strictly tied to the duty of revealing some "truth" inscribed and expressed in a bodily manner.⁶⁵ The revealing, in other words, of the biological age of a human organism. Yet this recording is a disputable recording and hence, an "approximate truth." In the case of age estimation techniques this "approximation" is one expressed through a range that remains, in most cases, unspecified—and one that becomes the juridical topos par excellence for the young refugee and migrant.⁶⁶ A mere medical opinion is in this way transformed into a deportation order, or a leave to remain. The dependence upon these medical checks may not concern the entire migrant and refugee populations arriving in Europe yet it nevertheless highlights the importance reserved by the management of their naked biologicality as the ultimate political issue at stake. The authors of the report titled *Assessing Chronological Age of Unaccompanied Minors in*

[com/blogs/1318-the-endless-crisis-as-an-instrument-of-power-in-conversation-with-giorgio-agamben](http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/1318-the-endless-crisis-as-an-instrument-of-power-in-conversation-with-giorgio-agamben).

65 "The physician speaks only to utter the truth. [...] He names and he orders, that's all," writes Foucault in this regard. See Michel Foucault, *Speech Begins after Death: In Conversation with Claude Bonnefoy*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 35.

66 Concerning the error margin, the aforementioned report by the SCEP is affirmative: "In a number of cases, the margin of error is not indicated at all, or in an unclear way: for example, the certificate issued states the 'compatibility with the adult age' without indicating any age range." *Review of Current Laws, Policies, and Practices Relating to Age Assessment in Sixteen European Countries*, 16.

Southern Italy claim that “[a]ge estimation of unaccompanied minors is a fundamental principle of human rights and dignity.”⁶⁷ But this is not merely yet another instrumental and selective use of the term “human rights.” It additionally comprises a process evidently bypassing some elementary aspects of medical moral code. As the related report issued in late 2011 by the *Separated Children in Europe Programme* tells us, the process of estimating the age of young unaccompanied refugees and migrants in Italy is rife with deficiencies, omissions and assumptions essentially comprising a mechanism for the infringement, not the protection of whatever “human” rights.⁶⁸

Any meticulous observer of transformations that have taken place in the technologies of the field of criminal law procedure since the end of the 19th century would admittedly fail to be surprised by the conventional tests of age estimation that take place in some makeshift medical labs in Italy today. Ever since the days when Alphonse Bertillon would assort his first anthropometric samples in Paris, colossal transformations have taken place in regard to the involvement of bodily-physical characteristics in the field of criminal procedural law and criminology. What was at stake during that triumphant initial entering of the human body upon the police laboratories of the time was the creation of a lasting dependence of those who would repeatedly offend—then so-called “persistent offenders”—by some inescapable biological truths of theirs.⁶⁹ The caretakers of this entering showed blind trust to the latter. And so, developments in fields studying human body phenomena gradually became developments in the field of procedural substantiation itself. The body, then, would henceforth exude innocence or guilt. And it would do so in a non-negotiable and terminal manner. This was

the main purpose of the appeal to the previously apocryphal and enigmatic world of the body: to dissipate the veils of mystery and to disband any doubt that would traditionally cast its shadow upon the practice of judgement (crisis) and decision-making. Yet the certainties that the body would so open-handedly offer were not limited to the field of juridical and medical practice. As we shall see, they soon became a means for a broader way of thinking; a way of thinking politically.

One may therefore claim that age estimation tests belong to this police tradition commencing at the end of the 19th century and which dramatically widened the interweaving of law with the life sciences sector—some interweaving that was only indicatively revealed earlier on through the notion of the crisis. In either case, this particular mechanism of human assortment belongs to a much wider array of public security practices relating the issue of migration to regulations of the criminal law. And this is what connects it, paradoxically, to Bertillon’s distant practices. Age estimation tests comprise an exemplary case of interweaving the body with the law. And it may be pointless to continue to insist upon their technical deficiencies and the unreliability of their results. What retains its distinctive meaning, and re-introduces us to the environment formed by the humanist hypothesis, is that bare life, as main protagonist and as a product of this humanist project, hereby acquires a particular technical and communicable “form.” It can be articulated, in other words, through specific practices, through sizes and qualities, through recognisable and materially inscribed expressions. This articulation becomes much more than a mere projection of some irreversible physical characteristics; it becomes meaning and subject position. A position that, as Arendt would suggest, is determined by the field in which the subject itself can hold no responsibility whatsoever.⁷⁰ Along the same lines, and referring to the widespread contemporary biometric technologies, Agamben writes: “If [...] my identity is now determined by

67 Nuzzolese et al., “Assessing Chronological Age of Unaccompanied Minors in Southern Italy,” 206.

68 See *Review of Current Laws, Policies, and Practices Relating to Age Assessment in Sixteen European Countries*, 16–17.

69 See in this regard the chapter “Identity without the Person,” in Giorgio Agamben, *Nudities*, trans. David Kishik & Stefan Pedarella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 49–50.

70 See Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 373, 374, 382.

biological facts — that in no way depend on my will, and over which I have no control — then the construction of something like a personal ethics becomes problematic.”⁷¹

The involvement of the human organism in these brief medical examinations is only one of the most contemporary articulations of the political importance acquired by the body during modernity’s arrival. As stressed out by Esposito, it is modernity that shifts the centre of gravity of human meaning from the heavenly worlds — to which christianity had condemned it for centuries — to the earthly reality, declaring “the biological survival [to be] the highest good.”⁷² In describing the transformations taking place during the formation of the modern state, Foucault articulates this shift along a similar line, as follows: “It was no longer a question of leading people to their salvation in the next world but rather ensuring it in this world. And in this context, the word ‘salvation’ takes on different meanings: health, well-being (that is, sufficient wealth, standard of living), security, protection against accidents.”⁷³ This persistence upon the protection of life and the new meanings enjoyed by the notion of health in this modernist threshold launch an unprecedented recourse to the functions of the biological world. And no matter how paradoxical it may seem, modernity sought its truths and its meanings in the world compiled by these natural extra-historical functions. This recourse to the

natural world appears to haunt modernist thought. Some naturalisation that allows, as we saw, for the ideological legitimisation of the tragedies piling up at the borders of Europe. This is not just a discursive stratagem upon which humanist paradoxes are concentrated. It also comprises on the one hand a valuable field of problematising the human condition — offering an array of symbolic interpretations and discursive tools. And on the other hand, it comprises an inexhaustible field of scientific investigation and documentation, gradually claiming its own autonomy; some autonomy that eventually and in turn becomes meaning in itself.

It is well-known that the modernist culture was characterised from the outset by an obsession to rule over the natural world. Yet at the same time, it never ceased to invoke it both in order to give meaning and to judge its accomplishments, as well as in order to give shape and to interpret its social constructions.⁷⁴ The notion of the *natural* never ceased to cause awe nor to haunt the visions of technique and science. The conditions were born, therefore for a mysterious cyclical movement. On the one hand, the modernist ventures launched an endless struggle to overcome nature. On the other hand, they never ceased to invoke this in order to affirm and vindicate their choices — discovering, in its face, the ultimate refuge of truth. Yet this strong bond with natural “truths” and natural laws was not confined to the functions and specificities characterising the technical world. It occupied, in addition, a large part of the practices of social meaning-assigning in themselves. Perhaps the most typical expression of the said occupation lies in the widespread biologising practices that emphatically accompany the processes of anx-

71 Agamben, *Nudities*, 52. Let us at this point recall that many years ago, the Italian thinker had expressed the exact same question. He wrote, then, that “[t]he fact that must constitute the point of departure for any discourse on ethics is that there is no essence, no historical or spiritual vocation, no biological destiny that humans must enact or realize. This is the only reason why something like an ethics can exist, because it is clear that if humans were or had to be this or that substance, this or that destiny, no ethical experience would be possible — there would be only tasks to be done.” Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 43.

72 Esposito, *Bios*, 149. See also Roberto Esposito and Timothy Campbell, “Interview with Roberto Esposito,” trans. Anna Paparcone, *Diacritics* 36, no. 2 (2006): 54.

73 Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 784.

74 Zygmunt Bauman describes this mysterious presence of nature in the heart of the technical-scientific world as follows: “[W]ith the Enlightenment came the enthronement of the new deity, that of Nature, together with the legitimation of science as its only orthodox cult, and of scientists as its prophets and priests.” Zygmunt Bauman, “Modernity, Racism, Extermination,” in *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*, eds. Les Back & John Solomos (London & New York: Routledge, 2000), 218.

ious meaning-assigning of social relationships and human nature — grounding, as the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins would have it, the processes of meaning-assigning to the “sclerotic framework of a corporeal determination of cultural forms.”⁷⁵ The modernist obsession to describe cultural forms, moral behaviours and social structures through knowledge of the biological world phenomena would grow along with this knowledge itself. As the delving into life phenomena continued, the status those offered to the symbolisms and the meaning-assigning of human hypotheses was inflated. Today, the figure of the young refugee and migrant finds its paradigmatic position at the juncture between this knowledge and these symbolic intentions. Right where a mere dental examination seamlessly meets complicated law regulations. Yet this meet-up did not take place all of a sudden.

At approximately the same time when the renowned *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* would come to light, Europe would play host to some crucial political transformations. The forming of the nation-state signalled a series of unprecedented technical-administrative reconfigurations, at the core of which one can discern a tremendous interest in the phenomena of life and the functions of the human, by now as a biological species. In studying the importance of sexuality as the field where the disciplines of the body and the controlling of population phenomena meet — and in describing these new regulatory controls as a *biopolitics* of the population — Foucault identifies that exact era as western world’s “threshold of the biological modernity.” The modern human is no longer merely “a living animal with the additional capacity for a political existence,” as Aristotle had claimed, but “an animal whose politics places his existence as a living

being in question.”⁷⁶ We therefore see that the Declaration of Rights of 1789, which concerned us so much earlier on, and which attempted to inscribe the “inalienable” rights of human to the mere fact of their birth (and that alone), cannot be understood out of the context of the new role taken on by the meaning of human (human as body and human as species) within the emerging biopolitical framework of that time. Both are articulated in the light of a tremendous concern for the human’s biological background, one that is not only limited to the narrow confines of a bureaucratic project that is requested to take charge and to safeguard the quality of life of its population: instead, as revealed to us by the Declaration, this project tries out new interpretations and introduces novel political meanings.

On that same period, Foucault would once again refer to the notion of biopolitics — extracting elements from the specific environment formed by the strong interest in life phenomena. And he chose to do so, at his 1975–76 lectures, through the phenomenon of racism: racism as a state choice and as a state mechanism for the management of an *enemy within*.⁷⁷ Soon enough, Foucault realised that

75 Marshall Sahlins, *The Western Illusion of Human Nature: With Reflections on the Long History of Hierarchy, Equality, and the Sublimation of Anarchy in the West, and Comparative Notes on Other Conceptions of the Human Condition* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2008), 107.

76 See Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 143. See also Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 243.

77 See *ibid.*, 254. Foucault also refers to racism in passing in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* — yet he chose not to go into further detail. See Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 149–50. Yet it would not appear that Foucault’s intentions would include any detailed description of the racism phenomenon nor any recognition, by extension, of the transformations and different uses characterising the notion of race and racism through history. A fact that may give birth to analytical gaps particularly in the environment nowadays formed by the oft-encountered distancing of prevalent contemporary racist discourses from explicitly racial references, and their focusing primarily upon cultural differences instead. We could say that Foucault refers to what Tzvetan Todorov terms *racialism*, emphasising upon the ideological characteristics of the phenomenon and its relation to scientism, from which it aspires to extract whatever validation it may enjoy. For the distinction between racism and racialism, see Todorov Tzvetan, “Race and Racism,” trans. Catherine Porter, in *Theories of Race and Racism*, eds. Back & Solomos, 64–70. For the transformations regarding

within this new form of power relations undertaking the functions — and by extension, the very meaning — of (organic) life in an unprecedented productive and protective manner, one ought to seek the ways in which death continues to be intentionally applied; this renown, absolute right of the sovereign. The introduction of the notion of racism takes upon itself the task of filling this void, proving that life can harmoniously coincide with death within the exact same discursive-governmental framework. Yet it is *my* life and the death of the *other*. Or, to be precise, my life *through* the death of the other.⁷⁸ This is racism's signature function. The detailed description of which Foucault leaves incomplete, since during his succeeding lectures, in which he takes on processing the characteristics and particularities of biopolitics anew, he appears to be allured by the productive affirmations and the laws that organise the world of political economy.⁷⁹ Some allure that henceforth only allows him to approach death as a mere population

the notion of race see Michael Banton, "The Idiom of Race: A Critique of Presentism," in *Theories of Race and Racism*, eds. Back & Solomos, 51–63.

- 78 Achille Mbembe claims in this regard: "The perception of the existence of the Other as an attempt on my life, as a mortal threat or absolute danger whose biophysical elimination would strengthen my potential to life and security — this, I suggest, is one of the many imaginaries of sovereignty characteristic of both early and late modernity itself." See Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003), 18.
- 79 This is proven by Foucault's intention to change the title of the lectures of the next incoming year, distancing himself from the triptych *Security, Territory, Population*, and wishing to talk about "a history of 'governmentality,'" emphasising upon political economy as a form of knowledge that would from that point on offer new capacities for governmental intervention. It is also proven by the fact that the series of lectures for the academic year 1978–79, titled *The Birth of Biopolitics*, was in the end devoted "entirely to what should have been only its introduction" — that is, to the notion of liberalism. See, respectively, Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977–78*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 108 and Michel Senellart, "Course Context," in Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978–79*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 328, 331.

phenomenon, as a stand-alone natural dimension to be managed by the liberal state — not as some catastrophic result of one of its select tactics.⁸⁰

Yet we know that the emergence of liberalism did not by any means suggest the withdrawal of racism. To the contrary: racism comprises a purely modern phenomenon and a statutory element of liberal governance, meticulously hidden behind the infamous values of equality and universality. Identifying the crucial gap formed by Foucault's choice not to study the emergence of the bourgeois class in Europe as a quintessential product of its colonial practices,⁸¹ Ann Laura Stoler points at the links tying liberalism to nationalism during that crucial period of transformations for European states. And so, she claims that "[t]he most basic universalistic notions of 'human nature' and 'individual liberty,' [...] rested on combined notions of breeding and the learning of 'naturalized' habits that set off those who exhibited such a 'nature' and could exercise such liberty from the racially inferior."⁸² In this way, she shows that the moral principles that govern liberal democracy are constituted within the

80 Referring to the first volume of Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, and shedding light upon the paradoxical turn in the French thinker's thought, Agamben writes: "Until the very end, however, Foucault continued to investigate the 'processes of subjectivation' that, in the passage from the ancient to the modern world, bring the individual to objectify his own self, constituting himself as a subject and, at the same time, binding himself to a power of external control. Despite what one might have legitimately expected, Foucault never brought his insights to bear on what could well have appeared to be the exemplary place of modern biopolitics: the politics of the great totalitarian states of the twentieth century." See Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 71. One could finally claim that in light of this development, Mbembe's question of whether the Foucauldian notion of biopower is sufficient becomes timely; a question that stimulated him to introduce the notions of necropower and necropolitics. See Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 12.

- 81 To be precise, Foucault makes some brief references to colonialism as a racialised practice during his 1975–76 lectures, but chooses not to delve further in the matter. See for example, Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 60, 65.
- 82 See the chapter "Cultivating Bourgeois Bodies and Racial Selves," in Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's*

colonial context, first of all as racialised principles — and that the notion of citizenship ought to be conceived only through its gendered, class and racial connotations.⁸³ In this way, the colonial environment proved to be a testing ground for the philosophy of bourgeois liberalism,⁸⁴ since regulative colonial policies not only allowed for the conditions of subjectification of the colonized, but at the same time constructed the European bourgeois identity itself, in all its different versions.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, cross-reading Foucault's observations and covering his gaps through Stoler's careful commentaries we may for a second ponder upon the importance pertained, at that time, by the discussion over the defence of society reserved for state racism — and by extension, its health — through some very systematic policies of constituting and conceptualising the enemy within. Some enemy that, in the biopolitical horizon of its interpretation, henceforth becomes biologised.⁸⁶ A construction that is vital not only for the functions of racism but for the constitution of the liberal nation-state per se. Stoler suggests that we trust those who interpret “the racialized ‘interior’ frontiers that nationalisms create, not as excesses of a nationalism out of hand, but as social divisions crucial to the exclusionary principles of nation-states.”⁸⁷ Racism does not comprise

an accident in the process of the formation of the modern state — but rather, an integral part of this very process.

The importance of all these observations, and their relationship to the naturalisation that has concerned us up until this point, commence from the meeting point between this biological emergence and its undertaking with the new conceptualisations of danger; a meet-up that is constitutive for the modern national state. They commence, in other words, from the fact that within the biopolitical framework shaped on the one hand by the political-administrative transformations of the second half of the 18th century and on the other, by the ways in which state racism welcomed these transformations a century on, the ways in which the enemy (within) were questioned were updated themselves. In a condition, in other words that is characterised by “the acquisition of power over man insofar as man is a living being”⁸⁸ and due to the fact that the biological element henceforth enters a field entirely controlled by the state mechanisms, racism henceforth constitutes a phenomenon that is radically different to what was so far known as the “race struggle”⁸⁹ — and this racism now comes to be articulated not through a warlike relationship but through a biological-type relationship instead; fully compatible to the modern specifications and demands of biopower.⁹⁰ The enemy, in this case, is not merely a political-military opponent. They are a threat within the social body itself. Some threat that is, first and foremost, biological — and whose presence is henceforth articulated hygienically, becoming the subject of a number of relevant regulations. It is for this reason that Bauman claims that “racism is unthinkable without the advancement of modern science, modern technol-

History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1995), 131.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid., 98.

85 At the same time, choosing to study the functions of biopower along the side of the notions of the state of exception and the state of siege, Mbembe describes the colonial environment as a field of repeated exercises of exception, in which one can discern some of the fundamental material preconditions for the technologies of mass extermination developed as part of modernity. Perceiving the notion of race as crucial in the meaning-assigning of social segregations, and facing the institution of slavery as one of the earliest biopolitical experimentations, he sees in the colony not only a distinguished topos for the constitution of identities but also, a field for the questioning of humanness itself. See Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” 16–25.

86 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 61–62, 80, 216.

87 Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, 130.

88 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 239.

89 Ibid., 59–62.

90 Ibid., 255. Respectively, in commenting upon the interweaving of law and medicine in the shadow of the Nazi euthanasia programme, Esposito notes: “it isn’t so much that medical killing falls under the category of war as that war comes to be inscribed in a biomedical vision in which euthanasia emerges as an integral part,” in Esposito, *Bios*, 133.

ogy and modern forms of state power,” making it clear that it “is a thoroughly modern weapon used in the conduct of pre-modern, or at least not exclusively modern, struggles.”⁹¹ The transformations characterising the conceptualisations of the enemy are in this way proven to be inextricably interwoven to a sum of new techniques and ways of conceiving and describing it, which are in turn founded upon the knowledge rapidly produced by the field of life sciences. The sectors of medicine, of physical anthropology and of public health were assigned, in this way, a prime role not only for the needs of a “convincing” documentation and meaning-giving of biological differences but also, in the constitution of the modern national state in itself, through the particular questioning of its internal threats. Talking about the immense importance of the combination of medicine and hygiene in regard to issues of sexuality control during the 19th century, Foucault writes that it comprises “if not the most important element, an element of considerable importance because of the link it establishes between scientific knowledge of both biological and organic processes (or in other words, the population and the body), and because at the same time, medicine becomes a political intervention-technique with specific power-effects.”⁹²

And so, amidst the environment shaped by the above transformations, the constitution of the modern state may only be understood through the terms of the health of its population. Some population that appears as a new size, with its own characteristics, whose management requires a particular form of knowledge that is from now on offered by the newly-emergent fields of statistics and

demography.⁹³ The state, as a guarantor of the life and the health of its population, urgently takes on a dual protective role that functions in a self-constitutive manner. On the one hand, it meticulously constructs the biologised enemy within. On the other hand, it intervenes in order to protect society from the danger it gestates itself, focusing upon the “dangerous” and the “degenerative” bodies. Sometimes upon those bodies that “violate the law,” sometimes upon those bodies that are ill and transmit, and sometimes upon those that merely “differ.”⁹⁴ All these variations of the bodily are described in common in theories concerning degeneration and hereditary, in fears for the diffusion of immorality and criminality, and in the discourses over social deregulation.⁹⁵ In the prac-

91 Bauman, “Modernity, Racism, Extermination,” 212, 213.

92 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 252. Alison Bashford writes, in this regard, that the field of public health as constituted in the 19th century by the English sanitarian Edwin Chadwick, comprises a crucial tool for liberal governance. See Alison Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health* (London: Palgrave, 2004), 8.

93 Foucault even calls statistics the “science of the state.” See in this regard, Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 58, 67, 274, 315. See also Patrice Pinell, “Modern Medicine and the Civilizing Process,” *Sociology of Health & Illness* 18, no. 1 (1996): 8, and Elden, “Governmentality, Calculation, Territory,” 567, 572, 573, 575.

94 The problematisations of the body in the context of the constitution of the nation-state can only take place, as Stoler show us, in terms of gender and sexuality. As the degenerative obsessions were structurally involved in the attempts to form the new states, it was women who took on the duty of defending racial purity and safeguarding family morality. At the same time, “[n]ationalist discourse staked out those sexual practices that were nation-building and race-affirming, marking ‘unproductive eroticism [...] not only [as] immoral, [but as] unpatriotic.’” See Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, 130–36.

95 It is important to hereby recall that the field of criminology, as constituted by the Italian Cesare Lombroso, displayed for a few decades a strong belief in the inscription of criminal predispositions into human physiological characteristics. The notion of the born criminal, and the belief in the ability for criminal characteristics to be inherited, comprised the fundamental notions behind the Lombrosian theory. Eugenics as well as the numerous theories on degeneration invested heavily on this capacity of genetic transmission — turning matters of penal treatment and social organisation into issues of biomedical interpretation and management. A typical example of such is offered by the inscription of “criminal” behaviour in the physiological characteristics of the French anarchist Ravachol, as described by Lombroso: “[H]is face features a rather clear asymmetry, is characterised by an evidently narrow temple, the extravagant eyebrow arcs, the nose inclining to the right, the curved and unaligned ears — and finally, the enormous,

tising of these theories and discourses, the modern state builds a near-clinical image for its self, for its lustiness and for its integrity — articulating this practically in terms of belonging and exclusion. It therefore makes some sense for us to study the role played by biosciences in the above constitution — since it is these sciences that are the most qualified to suggest the new biological enemy of the state, that come as the ultimate attempts to naturalise hierarchies, to turn differences ideological and to legitimise exclusions, utilising the prestige and the precision fitting to their observations.⁹⁶ The rich knowledge concerning the natural backdrop of the human was born inside the same framework that led to the formation of the nation-state. We ought, therefore, to conceive the biomedical discourse as a discourse that is largely racialised, in order to conceive the role that it plays in the conceptualisation and in the constitution of natural identity itself.

As Alison Bashford stresses out, “[n]ation forming has found one of its primary languages in biomedical discourse, partly because of its investment in the abstract idea of boundary, identity and difference, but also because of the political philosophy that thinks of the population as

square-shaped lower jaw that sticks out, all constitute in this head the typical characteristics of the born criminal.” See Cesare Lombroso, *Gli anarchici*, trans. Takis Mpouzanis (Ioannina: Isnafi, 2011), 45 (in Greek).

96 As an example, Stoler mentions that germ theory acted as a prime colonial ideology — and referring to Jean and John Comaroff, she reminds us that “the technologies of colonial rule and the construction of certain kinds of scientific knowledge were [...] ‘cut from the same cultural cloth.’” See Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, 112. Stoler tries to show that the European bourgeoisie was constituted in racial, class and gendered terms, through its colonial practices — highlighting the key position occupied in this formation by the control of sexuality matters through hygiene as well. The sectors of medicine and public health intervened in a regulative manner and were met by an unprecedented impetus at the end of the 19th century, with Pauster’s discoveries inaugurating a large-scale campaign around cleanliness — the eventual aim being, as historian Georges Vigarello writes, the radical reform of human contact. See Georges Vigarello, *Le propre et le sale: L’hygiène du corps depuis le Moyen Âge*, trans. Spyros Marketos (Athens: Alexandraia, 2000), 247 (in Greek).

one body, the social body or the body of the polity.”⁹⁷ In the framework set by technologies and the discourses of state-liberal racism, and always under the influence of a widespread rhetoric concerning degenerative dangers, the displacement or the extermination of the “degenerative” does not mean, as Foucault shows us, merely the prevalence over a given enemy — but it signals, in addition, the strengthening and the consolidation of life itself.⁹⁸ The fields of medicine and hygiene immediately take on, as a result, to materially articulate the terms of the said consolidation. Some undertaking that becomes all the more urgent in the light of the new capacities in transportation and communications.⁹⁹ For example, in studying the im-

97 Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*, 4.

98 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 252, 255. Bauman writes in this regard: “The killing of the bearers of illnesses and degeneration, just like the killing of bacteria or viruses, comprises an operation that serves and augments life. Man does not think of this as murder, but as the salvation of life.” See Zygmunt Bauman, “Death, Immortality and Other Life Strategies,” in *The Political Management of Death*, ed. Dimitra Makrinioti, trans. Kostas Athanasiou (Athens: Nissos, 2008), 148 (in Greek). Let us finally recall that even Carl Schmitt had conceived the effects and the paradoxes of such a notional abuse. He therefore wrote that “[h]umanity as such cannot wage war because it has no enemy, at least not on this planet. The concept of humanity excludes the concept of the enemy, because the enemy does not cease to be a human being. [...] When a state fights its political enemy in the name of humanity, it is not a war for the sake of humanity, but a war wherein a particular state seeks to usurp a universal concept against its military opponent. At the expense of its opponent, it tries to identify itself with humanity in the same way as one can misuse peace, justice, progress, and civilization in order to claim these as one’s own and to deny the same to the enemy.” See Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 54.

99 Later on, Bashford would stress out that the population question that emerges in the Interwar Period, and begins to comprise a subject of systematic study for the then newly appearing League of Nations, is primarily problematised within the framework formed by population movements and flows, rather than through issues of reproduction and regulation of sexuality. The drastic increase and the facilitation of movement on a planetary scale forces the League of Nations to manage the “international hygiene” as “hygiene of immigration” and to approach the population matter in terms of “space, density, movement and land.” See Bashford Ali-

portance of the institution of hygienic quarantine in the constitution of national identity, Bashford, demonstrates the ways in which this contributed to the conceiving of the notion of national integrity. Through its protective and its prohibitive lines, it “made,” as she writes, “otherwise often abstract national or colonial boundaries very real.”¹⁰⁰ The global migration characterising the Interwar Period is treated as an equally crucial biomedical issue. Under the influence of eugenics and early genetics, the racially understood social body, which is now possible to be conceived more “literally” (that is, biologically) is faced with intruders who either carry transmissible diseases, or are judged to be of some “questionable” moral quality.¹⁰¹ Under the constant fear of the “degenerative” influence of these “dangerous” social groups, drastic measures were taken for the limitation of migration. Some action that is tremendously relevant in the environment formed by the increased migratory flows today, making timely the hygienic importance of borders in turn; borders that “are there to protect life itself,” now more than ever.¹⁰² In studying the particular example of Australia, Bashford concludes that in the end, its own population was constituted

through these technologies of border and hygiene control. Some constitution that is on the one hand literal — “with the restriction of entry of certain people on grounds of race, and on public health grounds.” On the other hand, it is imaginary — through the image “of the Australian national body as pure but requiring protection, as white, but precariously so.”¹⁰³

We are therefore dealing with a literal as much as a metaphorical function — both of which maintain their particular importance. Admittedly, the presence of organic metaphors in these observations does not come as a surprise. The anthropologist Mary Douglas, for example, claims that the body comprises a privileged field for the extraction of meanings and symbolisms — in particular, in regard to perceptions concerning social boundary-setting. “The body,” writes Douglas, “is a model which can stand for any bounded system. Its boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious. The body is a complex structure. The functions of its different parts and their relation afford a source of symbols for other complex structures.”¹⁰⁴ The body that comes under fire, that is threatened, that endangered — its exposed and vulnerable physical orifices in particular — acts, in this way, as a particularly effective condenser for many of the symbolisms related to the violation of boundaries. Bashford reaffirms this symbolic potential through her observations on health and hygiene, where the references to the notion of the *pathogenic* catapult their own symbolic capacities.¹⁰⁵ Hygiene, she claims in this way, is applied as discourse on boundaries and their violations, hence acting as a primary framework of meaning-assignment that discovers one of its preferential fields of application in the form and in the function of national borders. It

son, “Global Biopolitics and the History of World Health,” *History of the Human Sciences* 19, no. 1 (2006): 80.

100 Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*, 124.

101 *Ibid.*, 145. The connection to the moral sphere is achieved precisely through this arbitrary biologisation of moral behaviours, identical to the scientific determinism described earlier on by Todorov. Referring to the notion of knowledge-based politics, he notes: “Having established the ‘facts,’ the racialist draws from them a moral judgement and a political ideal,” in Todorov, “Race and Racism,” 66. On a similar note, Esposito writes in describing the short-circuit characterising the biologising strategy: “What appears as the social result of a determinate biological configuration is in reality the biological representation of a prior political decision.” See Esposito, *Bios*, 120. And so, we return to the connection between biology and law and to the uncontrollable notional exchanges characterising their relationship. Biology, then, speaks because it has been authorised to do so. And the problematics raised in this discussion concerns precisely this authorisation.

102 Angela Mitropoulos, *Contract and Contagion: From Biopolitics to Oikonomia* (Wivenhoe & Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2012), 122.

103 *Ibid.*, 162.

104 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London & New York: Routledge, 1994), 116. See also 4, 123, 126, 165.

105 In regard to the metaphorical uses of the notion of illness, see also Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1978), 58–61.

shows, therefore, that these do not comprise mere metaphors. “Far from being a straightforward metaphor, the use of the term ‘hygiene,’ particularly in the context of nationalism, was a result of the deep connection between the political and cultural imagining of bodies and nations, as well as a long history of an ‘imaginary geo-graphics’ of exclusion.”¹⁰⁶ And so, beyond their metaphorical and the symbolic dynamics health and illness organise, through their normative clinical imaginaries, some entirely tangible exclusions — and if need be, death itself. Because as Esposito assures us, the immunising logic fundamentally involved in the construction of modern meanings leads to the negation of life itself, once this traverses a certain threshold. Right where protection and death coexist in harmony, in a zone of absolute indistinction.¹⁰⁷

In this way, we witness a primarily metaphorical presence of the body (and its nosology) in the political discourse that accompanies the formation of the modern nation-state. We also have a number of entirely material articulations of this discourse which realise, in space as much as in time, the relationship between body and meaning. Referring to a contemporary articulation of the discourse over hygiene, which he terms *moral hygiene*, Jeffrey Schaler notes that these metaphorical constructions extend the limits and the responsibilities of public health “by applying a medical metaphor to every sphere of life, and then, quite absurdly, taking the metaphor literally.”¹⁰⁸ During this inconspicuous move from the metaphorical to the literal world, a tremendous expansion is granted to biomedical discourse and its applications. And late modernity has admittedly offered us the most totalitarian and the most destructive moment of the expansion in question — one that describes a much more literal and

perceptible presence of the biological in the foreground of the production of meanings. The policy of nazism showed some unprecedented meticulousness in assigning the human body with this particular philosophical mission, giving birth to an entirely new way of political thought as a result. The notion-al and notion-assigning responsibilities undertaken by the body during those crucial years are unparalleled. Along with them, the responsibilities of those that would usually study it were also extended. As we shall see, in this case the body does not invade the labs of conceptual constructions as a physical symbol or as a mere metaphor, but as a strict literalism.¹⁰⁹ And without meaning to draw any immediate parallels to that absolute thanatopolitical example of the 20th century, we would claim that the interweaving of body and law as articulated in the aforementioned medical examinations of age estimation, carries with it some of the poisonous aura of this literalism. What characterises the *here* and the *now* of our body, which is inescapable, constitutes our unique position in the world.¹¹⁰ This is the lesson of the nazi racial ideology. And this is also the meaning of the medical opinions in question. It does not comprise, in other words, an organic metaphor, but an organic literalism: a biological index that indicates subject positions.

“After all,” asks Esposito, “isn’t it a biological given, blood precisely, that constitutes the ultimate criterion for defining the juridical *status* of a person?”¹¹¹ The question describes the absolute superimposition, according to the Italian thinker, of the two semantic roots of the immunization notion — that is, the biological and the juridical one. And it proves that in the nazi case — as in the case of the examinations of age estimate, one could add — we find ourselves faced with a dual mechanism, one facet of which is occupied by the absolute biologisation of the ju-

106 Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*, 5.

107 Esposito Roberto, *Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics*, trans. Rhiannon Noel Welch (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 59–62 and Esposito and Campbell, “Interview with Roberto Esposito.”

108 Jeffrey A. Schaler, “Moral Hygiene,” *Culture and Society* 39, no. 4 (2002): 64.

109 Esposito Roberto, *Terms of the Political*, 81, 85.

110 The observation can only vindicate Arendt when she had claimed that “[t]he new refugees were persecuted not because of what they have done or thought, but because of what they unchangeably were.” Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 373.

111 Esposito, *Bios*, 183.

ridical and the other, by the absolute juridicalisation of the biological.¹¹² The nazi example, taking on the formidable focusing upon the biological procedures that constitute the *human*, elevates the demand for the protection of life — some life which, apart from constituting a signifying metaphor for the German *Volk*, is matched quite literally with care for its health, as articulated through a long list of related laws and regulations. For the health of every individual body, which would henceforth comprise both the guard and guarantor of the health of the german national “body” as a whole. Which is why Hans Reiter, one of the top officials in charge of the Reich’s hygienic policy, would stress upon the importance of everyone endorsing this new way of biological thinking; since what was at stake was no less than “the ‘substance’ of the same ‘biological body of the nation.’”¹¹³ The body therefore steps into the foreground of political procedures in some unprecedented manner, turning nazism into a “realization of biology”¹¹⁴ or, as Rudolph Hess declared, “nothing but applied biology.”¹¹⁵ The hygienic mechanism of national-socialism ought to defend health and the purity of this biological legacy that emerges as destiny and from now on, as the foremost political duty.¹¹⁶ In this way, this presence of the fatal and of the inescapable becomes a subject of undertaking.

“The body is not only a happy or unhappy accident that relates us to the implacable world of matter. *Its adherence to the Self is of value in itself.* It is an adherence that *one does not escape* and that no metaphor can confuse with the presence of an external object; it is a union that does not in any way alter the tragic character of finality.”¹¹⁷ This is how Lévinas describes the ontological repercussions of nazi philosophy in regard to the new importance acquired

by the relationship between the human and her/his body. This obsessive inscription of meaning onto the body comprised a systematic philosophical-medical project that on the one hand demonstrated some unprecedented faith in the notion of the race, and on the other some non-negotiable trust in the biomedical tools for the needs of racial protection. Closely following developments in genetics and eugenics, the nazi medical personnel took on both the task of the strict biological definition of the german race, as well as that of the turning of this definition into a political aim. Agamben writes that “[n]azism [...] did not limit itself to using and twisting scientific concepts for its own ends. The relationship between National Socialist ideology and the social and biological sciences of the time — in particular, genetics — is more intimate and complex and, at the same time, more disturbing.”¹¹⁸ The disturbing effect caused by this particular relationship concerns the fact that “these concepts are not treated as external (if binding) criteria of a sovereign decision: they are, rather, as such immediately political.”¹¹⁹

And so, the immune mechanisms that raised an unprecedented demand for the protection of human life from the dawn of modernity, in the case of nazism experience their most intense and their most murderous embodiment. As care for life is equated with the complete annihilation of any degenerative factor, ceaseless hygienic interventions are rendered inextricably interwoven with the mass death practices characterising the Reich. Practices that are equally medicalised and scientifically designed, that were applied with the certainty that they protect the health and the integrity of the national body, freed from the presence of assorted degenerative threats¹²⁰ — primarily the “jew-

112 Ibid., 138, 139, 183.

113 Ibid., 113. See also Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 84.

114 Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, 73.

115 Esposito, *Bios*, 112.

116 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 86.

117 Emmanuel Lévinas, “Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism,” trans. Seán Hand, *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 1 (1990): 68.

118 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 85.

119 Ibid.

120 The starting point in this acquitting procedure was Hitler’s personal order to Reich leaders Bouhler and Brandt, according to which they were called to take on the duty of expanding the responsibilities of the doctors in question so as “to allow the performing of euthanasia to patients with illnesses that are incurable, according to human judgement.” The document is dated September 1, 1939; a

ish threat.” The discourse over the threat in question was no hollow wording; it claimed to equally be in a position to identify and to biologically substantiate the latter. And the ambition for a naturalised interpretation of this absolute degenerative biological *evil* was born long before the nazis took power. As revealed by a letter sent by Hitler on September 16, 1919 to Adolf Gemlich, the time had come at that moment for old-fashioned emotional antisemitism to be overcome, since it did not help in the understanding of the real degenerative effect the Jews had on the German nation. As the still young Hitler would stress out, “[a]ntisemitism as a political movement may not and can not be determined by flashes of emotion, but rather through the understanding facts.”¹²¹ The most important of these was the unquestionable fact, for Hitler, that *Jewishness* henceforth ought to be understood in racial, not in religious terms.¹²² This new understanding would gradually

fact revealing that along with the official commencing of the war, another war broke out — this time for the consolidation of the national body. See *Cause of Death: Euthanasia: Disguised Extermination of the Mentally Ill during the Nazi Period (Prinzhorn collection)*, trans. Emi Vaikousi (Athens: Indiktos, 2011), 15 (in Greek).

121 Alan E. Steinweis, *Studying the Jew: Scholarly Antisemitism in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press 2008), 7.

122 The Jews, to be precise, were identified with the notions of the “abstract” and the “formless,” in contrast to the absolutely “concrete” substance of the German and every other race, in this way turning them into an anti-race. See Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Le mythe nazi*, trans. Victor Kamhis (Athens: Estia, 2008), 60 (in Greek); Bauman, “Modernity, Racism, Extermination,” 217. Moishe Postone explains that in the environment created by the spread of racial theories and the rise of social Darwinism in late 19th century, a strong tendency was observed for the conceptualisation of history in biological terms. In the case of national-socialism and the paradoxical “anti-capitalism” this represented, the German people identified with the notions of *Gemeinschaft*, of race, of concrete labour, of land and blood — as opposed to the Jews who were equated with the notions of flow, global capitalism and the “rootless,” abstract financial capital. In the biological spirit of the time, and under the influence of a particular fetishism characterising this distinction Nazism, according to Postone, attempted to articulate this concrete/abstract opposition in organic terms. It is therefore interesting to see that

pave the way for the mass medicalised extermination of the Jews. As Bauman writes, “[o]nly in its modern ‘scientific,’ racist form, the age-long repulsion of the Jews has been articulated as an exercise in sanitation; only with the modern reincarnation of Jew-hatred have the Jews been charged with an ineradicable vice, with an immanent flaw which cannot be separated from its carriers.”¹²³ Hitler, then, echoed the scientific spirit of his time — he was by no means a pioneer with the demand articulated in the letter in question. Already from the end of the 19th century, the rich anti-semitic discourse attempted to essentialise the “Jewish question,” claiming that the threat posed by the Jews not only stemmed by their biological nature, but that it was, in addition, inalterable.¹²⁴ On the basis of this inalterable condition, the Jewish proved to be unreceptive and hence worthy of displacement and extermination. The appeal to biology, then — in this, as much as in other examples — was not suggested merely by the symbolic capacities offered by the endless array of organic metaphors, but also by racism’s inherent need to describe its subject as irreversible. Some irreversibility offered open-handedly in biomedical science’s field of study: in the field where one would locate what Lévinas calls inescapable, final and eternally given.

3. Mapping out biopathologies in the Athenian city centre — (Greek) society must be defended

The Nazi paradigm and its ostensibly scientific antisemitism comprise a historically unique phenomenon. The

“[o]n the level of the capital fetish, it is not only the concrete side of the antimony which is naturalized and biologized. The manifest abstract dimension is also biologized — as the Jews.” See Moishe Postone, “Antisemitism and National Socialism: Notes on the German Reaction to ‘Holocaust,’” *New German Critique* 19, Special Issue 1: Germans and Jews (1980): 108–12.

123 Bauman, “Modernity, Racism, Extermination,” 219.

124 Typical such examples are those of Wilhelm Marr, Eugen Dühring, and Edouard Drumont. See Pierre-André Taguieff, *L'antisémitisme*, trans. Anastasia Iliadeli & Andreas Pantazopoulos (Athens: Estia, 2011), 13–22, 26–27 (in Greek).

choice to momentarily resort to its thanatopolitical idioms, thereby forming an interpretative framework, comes in full consciousness of the moral and conceptual dangers that it contains. The aim of this choice was not, therefore, to position asymmetrical events onto an axis of historical continuity, nor to attempt to equate heterogeneous phenomena. The Nazi experience offers an exemplary moment in the practices of political denuding, which have been tormenting the present article from the outset. And should there be one thing that forced this article to visit this dystopic world, it would be the intention to briefly ponder over both the terms, the explanations and the interpretations offered by Nazism itself concerning this denuding — as well as those hints revealing that the dystopia in question was gestating as a potentiality already from the moment when modernity arrived. This paradigm should not be allowed, in this sense, to keep to itself — since it ought to suggest interpretations for phenomena historically touching upon the present, if not predominantly for these. The Nazi case stands out there, in its uniqueness. If only it would comprise merely the subject of some care-free literature contemplation. To the contrary, the shadow it casts upon phenomena most relevant to nowadays describe the terms of the contemporary denuding, emerges as some stubborn destiny. The Nazi experience as such belongs exclusively to the past. Nevertheless, we have the right to dismay when we find ourselves faced with processes and phenomena that feature a distant but alarming relationship to that precise past. Understandably, then, Esposito claims that Nazism may have been defeated militarily but imposed itself politically, since the triumphant liberal democracy utilises today, just like then, the same biopolitical vocabulary.¹²⁵ Or, to express it in Agamben's words, allowing ourselves to momentarily delve into his dark diagnoses: "in modern democracies it is possible to

state in public what the Nazi biopoliticians did not dare to say."¹²⁶

The Nazi paradigm offers the opportunity for an invaluable study into biopolitical denuding and its necessary supplement — that is, the politicisation of the naked biologicality; as such, we ought to hear out its lessons, should we wish to sufficiently comprehend certain facets of the contemporary biopolitical condition. The complete rendering of the biological element into a political meaning, even if seemingly comprising a Nazi novelty, does not unfortunately allow us to nowadays conceive it as some exclusivity held by the Nazis. The technologies used then, both in their technique and in their political meaning, are considered anything but obsolete today. Which is why we ought to worry. Since, as Elden writes, "it is not the techniques, the technologies of the state, that parallel. It is the essence of these technologies, their conditions of possibility."¹²⁷ And these conditions, as conditions of modernity's potentiality — and by extension, of the contemporary state — have become more widespread and more implicit today. From contemporary biometric practices and new biotechnologies to the urgent meanings acquired by the notion of public health, to the role held by bioethical matters in our understanding of our social existence, the naked biopolitical backdrop of the human constantly returns to the fore of political production — reminding us it anything but retired after Nazism's end. "The knot binding politics and life together," warns Esposito, "which totalitarianism tightened with destructive consequences for both, is still before our eyes."¹²⁸ The immunitary obsession, which proved to be so decisive in the devising of the Nazi extermination plan, invested heavily upon this knot. And we ought to understand that much before the immunisation logic took the form of those well-known medical interventions and settings that rendered it more popular,

125 Esposito Roberto, "Totalitarianism or Biopolitics? Concerning a Philosophical Interpretation of the Twentieth Century," trans. Timothy Campbell, *Critical Inquiry* 34 (2008): 641.

126 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 94.

127 Stuart Elden, "National Socialism and the Politics of Calculation," *Social & Cultural Geography* 7, no. 5 (2006): 766.

128 Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, 75.

practical and intelligible, it had attempted to articulate and to safeguard itself juridically. An attempt described, for example, in the well-known positions of the jurist Karl Binding and the psychiatrist Alfred Hoche concerning the case of individuals with psychological illnesses and/or mental incapacities,¹²⁹ and through the Nuremberg Laws concerning the case of the Jews.¹³⁰

We therefore return to the dual semantic framework shown above, both through the brief reference to the notion of the crisis and through the absolute match of politics and biology in the thanatopolitical context of Nazism. We return, in other words, to the parallel medical and juridical function of the framework in question. The demand for a complete juridical denuding of the Jews had already been articulated, as Taguieff shows us, since the end of the 19th century. What the socialist and anti-semitic philosopher Eugen Dühring proposed back then, for example, was nothing but a “demand for the exclusion of Jews from the national quality of the citizen — either by ‘shutting the door on them,’ or by denaturalising them as citizens in the countries where they had become so.”¹³¹ And Taguieff reminds us that it was processes like this one that gradually paved the way to the extermination of the Jews. We may very well daze ourselves, then, once we identify the tremendous similarities between the paradigm in question and the environment rendering migrant and refugee populations immobile in the contemporary biopolitical dystopias today, presented as they were in the first part of this article. In the first case, we find ourselves faced with the typical, meticulous process of de-humanisation and demonisation that pushes the

Jews into that dark extra-judicial sphere. In the second case, this pre-required demonising function is undertaken with quite some consistency by the contemporary and more sophisticated racist discourses. Yet the relationship of migrants to the processes of de-politicisation is proven to be even more complex today. Trapped as they are in-between humanism and racism, they are exiled from the beneficial juridical world — sometimes due to a surplus of the “human” and other times through the force applied by the symbolisms of the “subhuman.” In either case, these two conceptual mechanisms of meaning jointly contribute to the radical juridical denuding of refugee and migrant populations, proving that the populations in question ought, in either case, to live stranded in their literal biological positions.

We then return to the point where we started from. Back at those shiploads full of pure and intact humanness. The naked biologicality that uncontrollably wanders around the turbulent seas nowadays represents the denaturalised or pre-political life par excellence. And this elemental denuding comprises the prerequisite for the operation of the contemporary mechanisms of extermination that guarantee the safeguarding and the defence of (neo)liberal Europe. Some safeguarding that, next to its military stakes, is nowadays ever-increasingly articulated in bio-medical terms — proving that it comprises the primary field upon which some elemental facets of the contemporary immunitary obsession are tried out. “Moving from the realm of infectious diseases to the social realm of immigration confirms this,” writes Esposito. “The fact that the growing flows of immigrants are thought [...] to be one of the worst dangers for our societies also suggests how central the immunitary question is becoming.”¹³² These anonymous extra-judicial figures do not wander therefore around only as biological literalisms but as biological threats as well. And so biology hereby acquires a new urgent meaning. Not as the unconditional bearer of natural rights, but as the dangerous bearer of contagious

129 See the renown text titled *Die Freigabe der Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens* (Authorization for the Annihilation of Life Unworthy of Being Lived), which was published in 1920. See in this regard Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 80–81 and *Cause of Death: Euthanasia*, 15.

130 They are these three laws, published in 1935: the Reich Citizenship Law, the Law to Protect German Blood and Honor, and the Law to Protect the Hereditary Health of the German People. Steinweis, *Studying the Jew*, 41–46. See also Taguieff, *Lantisémitisme*, 56.

131 Taguieff, *Lantisémitisme*, 27.

132 Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, 59.

diseases. A meaning urgently reinserting it into the fields of juridico-medical management by ways that include much more than the mere age estimation tests mentioned earlier on.

These naked biologicalities, exposed and voiceless, prove to be — as we saw in the article's first part, woefully vulnerable in face of interpretations and meanings — this time round rushing to safeguard whatever legitimacy, not from humanitarian rants but from the sciences of life. Nosology may nowadays not invest, neither ideologically nor explicitly, upon the rhetoric of degenerating dangers, yet it has nevertheless managed to contribute toward the production of a particular symbolic and conceptual framework and a particular set of images, both of which render migration an object of medical problematization. And furthermore, through the increased capacities for movement offered by the globalised world,¹³³ the discourse concerning the disease and its metaphors forms both a new framework for meaning-assignment of the nation-state as much as those conditions that re-legitimise and affirm the description of the latter in organic unity terms.¹³⁴ In this way, epidemiology becomes “a form of reasoning,”¹³⁵ through which both the phenomenon of migration as well as the very notions of nation and race are problematised. And sure enough, border lines take on, as Bashford showed us, a crucial juridico-medical function — proving that the conceptualisations of the nation pass through the conceptualisations of health and disease, and vice versa.¹³⁶

At the borders then, at those vulnerable openings of the national body, the management of naked biologicality is not only involved in swift age estimation procedures, but in a whole array of hygienic technologies as well, which contribute to the constitution of a clinical image of the nation — since, as Mitropoulos points out, the issue of contagious diseases urgently turns into a national securi-

ty issue.¹³⁷ Once again, then, bio-medical tools — but first of all, bio-medical meanings — will be employed with the aim of (re)constructing national identity and national integrity. Some integrity that ought to articulate itself both in spatial and in hygienic terms. The incentive for such an articulation in the context of the Greek particularity was taken on, in 2011, by the then minister of health Andreas Loverdos. Citing public health dangers and attempting to describe the materialities of the migratory flows in terms of a hygienic threat, he urgently invited teams of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and of the World Health Organization (WHO) in order to hygienically examine the migrant populations that remained incarcerated in Evros' detention camps.¹³⁸ The aim of this call was clear enough: by describing the issue of migration as an urgent public health issue (with the notion of the “public” hereby being expressed in terms of national homogeneity, that is, in terms of a threat to the Greek population) and safeguarding some rough clinical expressions, he would legitimise both the practice of confinement in contemporary concentration camps as a necessary and effective border policy and the fierce police operations as a necessary measure for the management of migrants in the interior of Greek metropolises. The intention to pathologise the issue of migration drew its ambitions and whatever legitimacy it may have held from the same tank supplying the required meanings both to the hygienic understanding of the nation-state and to the scientific anti-semitism of late modernity. And this does not, by any means, cause any surprise.

133 Ibid., 60.

134 Mitropoulos, *Contract and Contagion*, 121.

135 Ibid., 124.

136 Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*, 138, 152.

137 Mitropoulos, *Contract and Contagion*, 119.

138 See E. Mertens et al., “Assessment of Public Health Issues of Migrants at the Greek–Turkish Border, April 2011,” *Eurosurveillance* 17, no.2 (2012), <http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=20056>. I was initially informed about this particular visit of the ECDC and the WHO by the doctor-pulmonologist Chrysa Botsi (“Andreas Syggros” Hospital–HIV Unit and Act Up Hellas NGO), during personal communication that took place in Athens on September 10, 2013.

What did cause surprise — first of all, to Loverdos himself — were the conclusions of the field research conducted by the WHO and the ECDC. According to the relevant report issued in May the same year, there was no indication whatsoever that the “hygienic status” of migrants who cross the Greek-Turkish border may comprise any threat for diseases to be spread in the wider area — and in particular, any “threat for the health of the Greek population.” To the contrary, what the research clearly revealed were the severely lacking hygienic conditions characterising the detention camps themselves, and it held those conditions responsible for any likely future hygienic matter.¹³⁹ The conclusions of the report in question therefore resemble the familiar cyclical movement characterising a series of historical examples — and they unavoidably de-essentialise, in a way, the arguments of whatever scientific-like xenophobic rhetoric. This cyclical movement, as a trick skilfully moving between cause and effect in ways that renders the two unclear, unexpectedly turns the result into cause. And it manages to articulate the matter of the imposed social *conditions* as an organic *essence* — essentialising, eventually, whatever result and abruptly placing it at the beginning of the relevant train of thought. And so, the very conditions migrants are forced to live confined, *here* in Greece, form the environment that causes them to fall ill to a degree, thereby turning them into what they are accused of being.¹⁴⁰ “Tubercular Afghans, for example, did not come from Afghanistan with tuberculosis — the illness broke out here, due to their detention conditions,”

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Two typical examples prove the paradox of this reasoning, both offered by the rich tradition of the pathologising of the Jews through the centuries. The first case concerns the Jewish ghetto in renaissance Venice and the second one, the Jewish ghetto of Warsaw during the occupation of Poland by the Nazis. In both cases, the belief that Jews gestate contagious diseases was confirmed by the outcome of confinement conditions in the ghettos themselves. In addition, in the Warsaw example, the ghetto was situated in an area that was already contaminated. See, respectively, Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994), 236 and Esposito, *Bios*, 117.

argues Yannis Mouzalas on behalf of the organisation Doctors of the World.¹⁴¹ Starting from the end, Loverdos’ hygienic-racist arguments therefore bypassed this causal relationship, presenting the potentially ill migrants as the point zero of a threatening spread and offering the raw material for a self-fulfilling prophecy.

One could claim that this cyclical mechanism resembles, to a great extent, the observations of the anthropologist Michael Taussig on the primary function of the *colonial mirror*. It is a fact that “people delineate their world, including its large as well as its micro-scale politics, in stories and story-like creations.” It is through these everyday, convenient story-telling that the strengthening of ideologies is achieved, which in this way “enter into active social circulation and meaningful existence.”¹⁴² Thus, explains Taussig, the cultures of terror are formed, which act as a formidable sovereignty tool (or as cultures of sovereignty). The use of terror and the “cultural processing of fear” through simple narrative and mythological mechanisms, as constitutive elements of the problematising of the Other transformed, according to Taussig, the colonised into objects of cultural production. And so for example, his study of the Putumayo natives shows how narratives concerning the “savageness” of the natives formed a near-objective and trustworthy reality which allowed the colonisers to exercise some ferocious violence against them; in this way legitimising an inverse savageness which was entirely real this time round.¹⁴³ This case shows how the formation of a sovereign culture presupposes the meticulous processing of fear, which in our days opts to methodically utilise the presence of migrants — sometimes following criminological and other times, nosological narrative

¹⁴¹ See Anastasia Giamali, “The HCDCP and ECDC contradict Loverdos on the supposed ‘hygienic bomb,’” *I Avgi*, April 3, 2012, <http://www.avgi.gr/ArticleActions.show.action?articleID=679663>.

¹⁴² Michael Taussig, “Culture of Terror-Space of Death: Roger Casement’s Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, no. 3 (1984), 494.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 470, 482, 492, 494, 495.

schemas.¹⁴⁴ In the example that concerns us specifically, biomedical arguments are utilised in order to in return prove the inherent danger posed by migrants on the basis of some supposedly absolute otherness — this time articulated through forms of morbidity, not savageness. Some morbidity that is constructed first of all in narrative and mediatic terms. But it is the very conditions of detention in the concentration camps that allow this line of argumentation to transcend the level of a limited, fragile and questionable narrative construction — since their results can potentially turn, to an extent, whatever mythological hypotheses into a whole of fully verifiable clinical events. The *mirror* potentially operating in this case can therefore do so while meticulously concealing its reflective operation.

In the swirl of this cyclical movement, what remains at stake is the pathologising of the migratory flows and the construction of their medical depiction. And it is evident that such depiction would require being both systematic and meticulous. It would be the narratives themselves, then, that would have to become systematic — taking on the appropriate mediatic expressions and asserting vividness through the everyday experiences and images that would unfold during their very own narration. These narratives became, eventually, an extremely powerful tool of anti-migrant propaganda, succeeding in creating a state of emergency and an advantageous field for intervention as such; ensuring, at the same time, the preconditions for the effectiveness of this very intervention. In order to therefore understand the function of this choice and to sketch out the form of its systematic nature, it would be worth pondering, at this point, over some of its crucial moments — by putting together an elementary chronicle. In June 2011, only a few months after the visit of the WHO and ECDC teams in Evros, Loverdos would claim — from the UN podium during the High-Level Meeting on AIDS — that in Greece HIV concerns, to a large extent,

women prostitutes from Africa.¹⁴⁵ He said at the time: “During the past year and into the first months of 2011, we recorded a significant increase in new HIV/AIDS cases. Many of these concerned women from the sub-saharan Africa who were brought into the country illegally and forced into prostitution. For us, it is evident that problems of this kind can only be tackled through closer international collaboration.”¹⁴⁶ According to the doctor-pulmonologist and member of Act Up Hellas Chrysa Botsi, who was present at that UN meeting, Loverdos attempted to specifically target female sex workers from Africa for political purposes — purposes that would reveal themselves before too long.¹⁴⁷ And he did not hesitate in questioning even the official data of the Epidemiological Reports of the Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention (HCDCP), which had already been published and were therefore fully accessible to his discussants.¹⁴⁸

Yet Loverdos was careful not to leave his construction to chance. He came back to the issue in December the same year during a one-day conference that was organised in Athens under the topic of public health promotion. There, he once again attempted to target female sex workers, labelling them a major issue for public health — and once again in spite of the official epidemiological data. He mentioned that “unregistered prostitution and its connection to the issue of the spread of AIDS is a major problem for the city,” openly arguing this now concerned the

144 Sontag Susan, *AIDS and Its Metaphors* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989), 61.

145 See “Greece, H.E. Andreas Loverdos, 2011 High Level Meeting on AIDS, 92nd plenary meeting,” UN Webcast, June 9, 2011, <https://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2011/06/greece-h-e-andreas-loverdos-2011-high-level-meeting-on-aids-plenary-meeting.html>. I would like to thank Chrysa Botsi for pointing out this reference.

146 See his speech at the UN High-Level Meeting on AIDS, which was published on his personal website on June 9, 2011. <http://loverdos.gr/gr/index.php?Mid=68&art=2216>.

147 From personal communication with Chrysa Botsi.

148 See first of all the data in the report by the Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report in Greece* 25, October 31, 2010, but also the respective one for the year 2011, which was published later on, both of which contradict him. <http://www.keelpno.gr/>.

Greek family, since the transmission takes place “from the illegal migrant woman to the Greek client, to the Greek family.”¹⁴⁹ He suggested that all female carriers of the virus should be deported for this reason. In this particular construction Loverdos practiced those well-known understandings that link migration to hygienic matters, applying tried and tested schemata of the biologisation and pathologisation of the Other. And using the safeguards offered to him by the dominant patriarchal meanings he utilised the field of female sex work in particular in order to construct the image of a *biological enemy within*; to construct, in other words, only one of the crucial “testing grounds” upon which the reconstruction of national unity would be attempted during that difficult time of crisis — and the *nation-rebuilding* this required. Yet in a way, the construction in question is novel. And its novelty lies in the fact that it does not follow the usual moralistic problematisation of sex work as such, nor of the purchasing of sexual services as some “dangerous” male fleshly habit. What it attempts instead is a racial targeting of a segment of the female sex workers. Some targeting that seems ironic should one bring to mind that from the early 90s on, a considerable part of the dominant masculine culture in Greece was constituted precisely upon the purchasing of — often times forced — sexual services of migrant women.

Nearly three months later, the 9th Panhellenic Conference of Public Health and Health Services was held in Athens, co-organised by the HCDCP and the National School of Public Health under the telling title: “Greeks’ health in light of the new epidemics.” From the content of the Press Conference that took place on March 22 ahead of the conference in question — and from its title itself — it becomes clear that the notion of public health is hereby conceived strictly in terms of national identity and national homogeneity. Yet it is not merely the norma-

tive use of that abstract “us” that makes this conception appear justifiable in written language. The relevant Press Release rushed from the outset to rectify and to conceptually construct the position of this “us” — describing it within the whirl created by the migrant flows and their hygienic stakes. This is, then, an “us”-in-danger, a danger therefore reconstructing this “us.” “The ever-increasing population movement observed in recent years brings to the fore infectious diseases that had almost been forgotten, while “diseases” such as AIDS, with a history of more than thirty years, now take on new tendencies.”¹⁵⁰ The notion of public health is in this way problematised through the phenomenon of migration — and the editors of the press release in question make sure to clarify this from the beginning. The required landscape of emergency is formed in this way and the final ideological touches are put just before the medical-police units take to the streets. The hygienic validation of the population displacements that would be undertaken a few days later was now a fact.

This is how we reach April 1, 2012. During a joint press conference with Michalis Chrisochoidis, then minister of public order, Loverdos announced “the compulsory hygienic examination of the entire migrant population.” The same announcements included a regulation concerning the migrant concentration camps, the introduction of a compulsory health certificate for migrants, the setting of limitations to the employment of individuals suffering from infectious diseases, a phone line for the reporting of residencies where “illegal migrants are piled up,” and the setting of strict requirements for the spaces where migrants may reside.¹⁵¹ On the same day, the renowned Public Health Decree 39A (Government Gazette no. 1002/B/2012) was published under the title “Arrangements Concerning the Restriction of the Transmission

149 See “HIV Positive Sex Workers Must Be Deported,” *Eleftherotypia*, December 16, 2011, <http://www.enet.gr/?i=news.el.article&id=332267>.

150 See the press release titled “Greeks’ Health in Light of the New Epidemics,” March 22, 2012, <http://www.keelpno.gr>.

151 See “Hygienic checks to all migrants,” *Ethnos*, April 1, 2012, <http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=22768&subid=2&pubid=63638394>.

of Infectious Diseases.”¹⁵² This comprises, in essence, the materialising of all the commitments taken up by the two ministers. Yet it comprises a nightmarish Decree in terms of its content — signalling terrifying transformations both at the level of medical ethics and at the level of police responsibilities. What is of particular interest in this Decree is the unprecedented insistence upon the strict requirements that must be met by the houses where migrants reside — rendering both the hygienic and the police mechanisms the most appropriate for their control.¹⁵³ The Decree in question therefore comprises, among other things, a manual for the surveillance of private spaces; describing pre-requisites and standards in detail and assigning the medical police units an unprecedented task. It would therefore make sense for us to ponder over this novelty, since it paves the way for a tremendous transformation and widening of police applications themselves — but one that maintains, as we shall see, its own spatial importances.

In this way, we stand before an unprecedented demand for an expansion of the anti-migratory operations from the public realm, where they would traditionally limit themselves, to that of the private. A demand that describes, in the most murky and at the same time the most explicit and chilling of ways, the transformations caused by the crisis as a structural moment for (neo)liberal politics and as a condensation of the divisions that characterise the functions of the nation-state from the outset, as Stoler showed us. The hygienic pretexts used for the legitimisation of this operation confirm what Athanasiou had pointed out: that “the ultimate refuge of neoliberal politics is the return upon the political anatomy of the

body: the governance of the body in danger and the governance of the dangerous body.” Since, as she adds, “the medicalisation of the crisis was always a symptom of totalitarianism.”¹⁵⁴ In light of these symptoms, one could also observe that the responsibilities and the object of the medical police have some terrifying similarities to those of the “anachronistic” disciplinary authority that Foucault identified at the conjuncture of the two great imaginaries of death that haunted western thought: leprosy and plague. They therefore resemble those authorities exercising, as the French philosopher points out, an entirely a(na)tomic control and “function according to a double mode; that of binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal); and that of coercive assignment, of differential distribution (who he is; where he must be; how he is to be characterized; how he is to be recognized; how a constant surveillance is to be exercised over him in an individual way, etc.).”¹⁵⁵

The appeal to these hygienic schemata has its own political parallels and intentions. It forms, in other words, a particular political framework and it does not merely legitimise, but it first and foremost renders intelligible the use of a particular array of emergency juridico-political technologies. As Foucault writes, “in order to see perfect disciplines functioning, rulers dreamt of the state of plague,” and he adds that “[i]n order to make rights and laws function according to pure theory, the jurists place themselves in imagination in the state of nature.”¹⁵⁶ This juridical imaginary is anything but a coincidence since, as Agamben shows us, the notion of the state of nature holds a crucial function within the syntax of the philosophical establishment of the state and its disciplines. Regarding the use of the notion by him who revealed more than anyone else about it, he writes: “Hobbes, after all, was perfectly aware [...] that the state of nature did not nec-

152 The sense of emergency was intensified by the fact that both the press conference and the issuing of the hygienic decree in question took place on a Sunday; that is, urgently. Decree 39A was abolished in April 2013 by a decision of minister Fotini Skopouli (Government Gazette no. 1085/B/30–4-13) and was brought back by Adonis Georgiadis in June the same year. It was finally abolished in April 2015 by minister Panagiotis Kouroumbilis.

153 See Article 3 of the Hygienic Decree 39A.

154 Athanasiou, *The Crisis as a “State of Emergency,”* 45.

155 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 199.

156 *Ibid.*, 198.

essarily have to be conceived as a real epoch, but rather could be understood as a principle internal to the State revealed in the moment in which the State is considered ‘as if it were dissolved’ (*ut tanquam dissoluta consideretur*).¹⁵⁷ The conceptual presence of the state of nature in the discourse over the defence of the state is entirely utilitarian and may only be conceived in the framework of a primary ideological mission.

The state of nature, as the ostensibly absolute externality of the law, “is therefore not truly external to *nomos* but rather contains its virtuality.”¹⁵⁸ Agamben points out in this way that whatever positive law there might be, lives off this externality in the same way that the *rule*, according to Schmitt, lives off the exception. And this is where the political importance of this appeal to nosological representations of the state of nature lies. The state of nature, which returns in the form of the plague or the “hygienic bomb,” acts first and foremost as an ideal extra-judicial form, necessary for the formation of law. And through these functional returns it is shown that “what then appears (at the point in which society is considered as *tanquam dissoluta*) is in fact not the state of nature (as an earlier stage into which men would fall back) but the state of exception.”¹⁵⁹ In other words, the artificial and extortionate presence of this “morbid” state of nature at the heart of the political imaginary at stake establishes, as Benjamin would say, law — in the same way that the exception gives shape to the rule. By narratively and ideologically constructing the image of a hygienic threat and the profile of a crisis and a violent rupture to the continuum of (Greek) public health, the imposing figure of the necessity is constructed, which makes law — and its suspension — appear entirely explainable. This artificial state of nature makes sure to shed light onto the ways of the emergency, making sure to first of all safeguard the terms for a particular extension to the responsibilities of the executive power.

157 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 27.

158 Ibid.

159 Ibid.

Under these terms, the latter is rendered a tool of some perhaps indirect yet “emergency law-making.”¹⁶⁰

Hygienic Decree 39A constitutes exactly a terrifying version of such an emergency law-making operation. The planning and the announcements of a medical-police staff acquired, in the context of this decree, a clear legal articulation. Ten days later, Law 4075 would be published: the 59th article of this contains additional regulations on the one hand concerning the detention of citizens from third countries who have submitted an application for international protection, and on the other, the terms for the administrative deportation of migrants — both of which are concerned with public health matters. It comprises an exemplary articulation of the demands of medical police, which constitutes a further juridical enforcing of the hygienic anti-migratory narrative in which Loverdos had started to exercise himself already a year earlier. On April 26, 2012, a relevant Press Release by the Greek Police HQ announced that “checks have commenced in flats of Athens where large numbers of migrants reside.”¹⁶¹ These checks were taking place on the basis of the new measures that had just been announced by the ministers of health and public order, essentially comprising the most self-evident solution to the problem they themselves had narratively and ideologically constructed. More specifically, and following information by citizens, police raids took place in residencies that — according to the Press Release — comprised “sources of infection due to the

160 See for example the observations of the Swedish professor of political sciences, Herbert Tingsten, as cited in Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 7, 12.

161 See the relevant press release of the Greek police directorate, http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=14490&Itemid=878&lang=. See also, the press releases of the General Police Directorate of Attica on April 27 & 29, 2012, http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=14528&Itemid=879&lang= and http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=14613&Itemid=879&lang= respectively.

residence of an excess number of migrants.” Tens of individuals were “examined by the doctors of the HCDCP who participated in the joint teams, in order to find out whether they carry infectious or other transmissible diseases.”¹⁶² Nevertheless, none of the relevant Press Releases mentioned the results of the medical examinations to which the migrants were subjected, proving the character of the hygienic calls as a mere pretext—and their distancing from any real epidemiological picture. To the contrary, what was most real was the nightmarish expansion of the powers of the executive power; an expansion that is articulated at different levels. First of all, at the level of legislative powers. Second, at the level of the content of the very object of police applications. And finally, at the level of the conceptualisation of space, since a demand is officially articulated for the expansion of the responsibilities of the executive power from the public into the private sphere. In the examples in question, we are not dealing with “stop & search,” but with “raid & search” operations—the prime question of which is the transformation of the very notion of public space for police science.

During those same days, medical-police checks would start at the hang-outs of female sex workers and brothels. As we saw, Loverdos’ narrative constructions comprised from the outset of two different, even if not always discreet, “dangerous” parts, which concerned both the world of migration and the world of the sex work; both defined, to a large extent, in strict gendered terms. In parallel, then, to the raids in the homes of migrants conducted by the police, checks commenced in areas where female sex workers were active.¹⁶³ On April 27, the HCDCP and the Greek police would issue Press Releases, announcing that as part of the recently published hygienic decree, and during checks conducted in parts of the centre of Athens, one female migrant worker in an illegal brothel was found to

be HIV positive.¹⁶⁴ Controlling from the outset those terms of public discourse that would allow him to pretend to be prophetic, Loverdos would rush to announce that “the hygienic bomb of AIDS is no longer inside the migrants’ ghetto, as was the case until recently; it has now escaped the ghetto.”¹⁶⁵ The use of such influential urban imagery in this statement, is evidently not surprising. Instead, this imagery seems tremendously reasonable and delivers the appropriate stereotypical spatial form to the basic ideology that originally guided the calls of the minister. However, behind these imaginative spatial-ideological constructions of Loverdos we have to discern the facts and stand on two critical points. Firstly, on the fact that if something should undoubtedly concern us about its horrific extent that is none other than the promotion of sexism as the basic condition of public discourse and, after all, of politics itself. Secondly, on the very turn of the operation in question that would categorically contradict the minister, proving that his statements were not characterised by any prophetic quality; to the contrary, they were meticulously constructing a field of police-political intervention, attempting to pathologise a priori the presence of migrants in Greece.

The overwhelming majority of women arrested as part of this medical-police and absolutely sexist operation held Greek citizenship, were *informally* working as sex workers and were users of intravenous drugs, revealing an issue Loverdos did not want to see—but which was evidently articulated through the official epidemiological data.¹⁶⁶ It

162 See the press release of the directorate of the Greek police on April 26, 2012.

163 See the press release of the HCDCP titled “Application of Hygienic Decree,” April 25, 2012, <http://www.keelpno.gr>.

164 See the press release titled “Hygienic checks HCDCP,” April 27, 2012, <http://www.keelpno.gr>. See also the relevant press release of the Greek police on April 27, 2012.

165 See Panagiota Karlatira “The AIDS-infected whores are a ‘hygienic bomb,’” *Proto Thema*, May 1, 2012, <http://www.protothema.gr/greece/article/?aid=194015>.

166 The emphasis of this remark on the nationality of the women is not intended to overshadow or underestimate the plainly sexist nature of this operation, in favor of highlighting its racist dimension. Rather, the aim of these notes is to reveal the political expediency of the ministers who, secured inside the patriarchal social structure, chose to build an intervention field whose main

was revealing, in other words, the fact that the renown increase in HIV cases was related, among others, to the cuts in health provisions and the transformations that were rapidly taking place in the field of social welfare, due to the economic crisis.¹⁶⁷ Nevertheless, Loverdos greatly utilised the field he himself constructed, pointing where he wanted to. That first arrest of a *female migrant* sex worker comprised the point zero in operations that would continue for weeks, their well-known result being the humiliation and pre-trial detention of 27 seropositive women. On the eve of the crucial national elections of May 6, 2012, Loverdos and Chrisochoidis were convinced that the time had come for their ideological construction to produce its political surplus value. The first one, by showing off complacently the evidence of a unique diagnostic capability. The second one, by filling up the additional concentration camps that he himself had built.

Even before the dust around the tragic incident in question had settled, the medical police would once again take to the streets. Even though the relevant ministerial positions had been taken up by new people by that time, the anti-migratory operations continued apace — and with greater intensity, even. It was August 3 when approximately 2, 500 police were mobilised in Evros and another 2, 000 in Athens as part of the “Xenios Zeus” operation, “for the repulsion of illegal migrants from the borderline and their removal from the centre of the capital.”¹⁶⁸ This

objective was the promotion of national unity and security as the guarantor of social cohesion in this difficult time of crisis. A promotion that it could only be framed through the historically familiar gender and patriarchal terms; that is, through the exclusively *female* responsibility for the defense of national family and its health.

167 Botsi referred specifically to the drastic cuts that have taken place to the funding of therapeutic communities, the termination of relevant programmes and the cut in the supply of clean syringes — and finally, to the drastic decrease in financial sources required for HIV testing in Greece. From personal communication with Chrysa Botsi.

168 See the press release of the Greek Police Directorate on August 4, 2012. http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content

was a gigantic operation that, according to the police spokesman at the time, “takes place in our country for the first time and which will continue in the future.” The statement’s style was liminal and urgent. Presenting the matter of “illegal” migrants as a “matter of national necessity and survival,” the police spokesman made a commitment for the upgrading in the life quality in the wider area of the centre of Athens. The so-called “centre of Athens” took on a very particular ideological mission in these statements — one that, as we shall see later on, may only be conceived through the design of the new public security dogma; the notion of “public security” hereby describing both the various facets of public order and the problematisations of public health. This is the materialisation of a meticulous and patient *pogrom*, one that gradually turned into a constitutive element of public space itself — and its conceptualisations. “Anyone who is identified, whether on foot or moving via any medium of transportation, will be detained in the detention centres, where they will be held temporarily, until their return to their country of origin,” the Greek police spokesman would state characteristically.¹⁶⁹ Until February 23, 2013, which was also the last time when the Greek police published the number of detentions as part of the operation in question, 84, 792 migrants had been officially detained.¹⁷⁰ The police announcements were no meretricious exaggeration. The “Xenios Zeus” operation continued in central parts of Athens for almost two years, having led to the arrest of 5, 611 migrants in total who “did not meet the legal criteria for their stay in the country.”¹⁷¹

Nevertheless, what is daunting anew in the scale and the quality of the operation in question is the systemati-

&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=18424&Itemid=950&lang=.
169 Ibid.

170 See the press releases of the Greek Police up until February 23, 2013.

171 See the press release of the Greek Police Directorate on April 21, 2014, http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=40094&Itemid=1289&lang=

sation of the violations of what we would previously call private space, affirming that the so-called public space was once again proven insufficient for the ambitions of the medical police — thereby urgently and ironically demanding a spatial and conceptual expansion. Raids in residences, as tried out in the April operations, would then reach their climax and become systematic as part of the “Xenios Zeus” operation, turning migrants’ private spaces into lobbies for the concentration camps. A transformation that appears as a logical extension of the political and juridical denuding that the figure of the migrant and the refugee in Greece has been subjected to from the outset. And which is entitled to claim its own special position in the tradition of those technologies of confinement which, as Arendt writes, “were no penal institutions and that their inmates were accused of no crime, but that by and large they were destined to take care of ‘undesirable elements,’ i.e. of people who for one reason or another were deprived of their judicial person and their rightful place within the legal framework of the country in which they happened to live.”¹⁷² Let us not forget, after all, that when attempting to examine the origins of the juridical basis of confinement in concentration camps, Agamben traces back to a juridical institution of Prussian origin called *Schutzhaft* (literally, protective custody), which was often described by the national-socialist German jurists “as a preventative police measure insofar as it allowed individuals to be ‘taken into custody’ independently of any criminal behaviour, solely to avoid danger to the security of the state.”¹⁷³

It is in this exact context, then, that we ought to conceive migrants’ everyday private spaces as extensions of the concentration camps. Residencies which turn into biopolitical spaces par excellence, to the extent that the notions of public and private co-reside — as Agamben would have it — in a zone of absolute *indistinction*, in the sense that the place offering refuge to corporality and its

needs becomes an object of forced public exposure. The framework that renders the private sphere an advantageous place for the application of that *preventative police measure* was demarcated through the emergency appeals of the police spokesman, concerning the “national necessity and survival.” The infringement of the traditional dichotomy between public/private and this absolute exposure of the migrant subject to the public light and to the police gaze constitute the essential condition of the concentration camp. And this is what is applied in the raids in question. It is a typical case of applying and extending the idioms of the “emergency.” Where the limits of the law are redefined along with the limits of the space. Where the “inside” and the “outside” — whether concerning law or space — become indistinguishable. A new habitual culture is imposed through this absolute indistinguishability, on the one hand concerning the intimate sphere of the *oikos* and on the other, the public space of the *city*. As Stavros Stavrides points out, “the logic of the exception is metastatic. Like police blocks, it is everywhere. A new model of urban governance is produced which, even if still applied in exceptional conditions, is applied everyday, in common conditions, in places that edify a new urban experience.”¹⁷⁴

A new model of urban governance then, one that is tried out even in the most common and everyday spaces of the migrants: in their very own residencies. The police spokesman is illustrative in this regard: “we identify, in the presence of prosecuting authorities, the flats where tens of illegal migrants reside under unacceptable hygienic and security conditions.”¹⁷⁵ The typical hygienic pretext of the anti-migrant campaign therefore worked out once again as a trojan horse, in order for doors to be violated and for ample light to be shed on the dark spaces of “morbidity” and “infectiousness.” A hygienic discourse, then, that tests out limits. Whether these involve hygienic

172 Hannah Arendt, “Social Science Techniques and the Study of Concentration Camps,” *Jewish Social Studies* 12, no. 1 (1950): 55.

173 Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 95.

174 Stavrides Stavros, *Suspended Spaces of Alterity* (Athens: Alexandria, 2010), 27 (in Greek).

175 See the press release of the Greek police on August 4, 2012.

quarantines, the sealing of borders, or the violation of private spaces, the question of health draws limits and subject positions, forming both the terms of national unity and public order as such. Which is why health observers participated in the raids.¹⁷⁶ And which is why the operation in question commenced with the support of the HCDCP.¹⁷⁷ Up until February 14, 2013 — which was the last time when the Greek police issued a Press Release with any reference to the number of house searches — 528 such raids had taken place.¹⁷⁸ The teams of the health police are therefore trained in shifting these spatial-juridical limits, rendering raids into private spaces an entirely normalised police practice. According to Chrysa Botsi, the hygienic legislation and the legislative mechanisms would always hold relationships primarily with the sector of justice, and much less so with the police. Nevertheless, as she claims, it is only recently that such operations appeared and with such depth.¹⁷⁹ A development that can only worry us, judging from the similarities that it holds to that absolute thanatopolitical paradigm of the 20th century, as this was described above, and shivering before the image composed by handcuffs and white aprons combined. “The knot binding politics and life together [...] is still before our eyes.”¹⁸⁰

We reach, in this way, the final stop of this brief overview; right at the end of September 2012. In medical websites and bourgeois newspapers, identical articles are published concerning the composition of the first hygienic and epidemiological map of Athens by the HCDCP.¹⁸¹ According to the medical website *Iatropedia*, “for the first time, a research-mapping of the city of Athens was attempted and completed, with the HCDCP creating the hygienic and epidemiological map of the capital. [...] Even if there is no complete epidemiological study to date that would offer trustworthy responses and statistical data concerning the impact or even the prevalence of infectious diseases among migrants in Greece, whether legal or illegal, the findings of the medical examinations in Athenian neighbourhoods that contain many migrants have revealed some extremely disconcerting findings.”¹⁸² The articles in question do not constitute a mere description of the field research that was conducted and continues to be conducted in the centre of Athens by the HCDCP. They have obvious political intention and attempt to rejuvenate, by feeding it with scientific-like arguments, the anti-migrant construction that had pathologised migrant populations in Greece already from mid-2011. They do not concern, then, the recording of the spread of infectious diseases in Athens in general, but specifically how migrants are involved in this supposed spread. And the revealing/construction of this involvement was, as we saw, a state choice from the outset. As is characteristically pointed out in a relevant article of the newspaper *Ta Nea*, “the study focused upon areas of the capital that contain many migrants.”¹⁸³ And as one would expect, the study in question includes extended references to sex work — this time in male one, too¹⁸⁴ — proving how the then minis-

176 Health observers belong to the Public Health Administrations of each Health Prefecture. From personal communication with Chrysa Botsi.

177 See the HCDCP Information Bulletin 18, August 2012, 49.

178 See the press release of the Greek Police Directorate of February 15, 2013. http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=24840&Itemid=1058&lang=

179 From personal communication with Chrysa Botsi.

180 Esposito, *Terms of the Political*, 75.

181 The map in question is not to be confused with the hygienic map that the HCDCP has been composing in recent years in common with the National School of Public Health (NSPH), and which comprises, essentially, a recording of data regarding public and private health services providers in Greece.

182 See “What areas are threatened by infectious diseases and epidemics,” <http://www.iatropedia.gr/articles/read/2799>.

183 See “HCDCP: athens is a hygienic bomb,” *Ta Nea*, September 27, 2012, <http://ygeia.tanea.gr/default.asp?pid=8&ct=1&articleID=15629&la=1>.

184 At this point, it is interesting to see that references to male prostitution do not recall, as one would expect, the well-known moralistic and hetero-normative arguments that link HIV to sexual

contact between men. Nor do they attempt to describe, as is the norm, AIDS as one of the most recognisable results of “abnormality.” To the contrary, they utilise well-known motives of the main argumentation of the contemporary *cultural racism*, aiming at the assessment of male migrants sex workers on the basis of cultural criteria, and their inclusion into a framework of cultural retrogression. They bring, in this way, homophobia to the fore and they update the tools of the xenophobic agenda. We read, then, in Iatropedia in regards to male migrants sex workers that “most of them are Afghani and Kurds, while previously many Albanians participated, too. They do not consider themselves to be homosexual, while they oft-times hold homophobic and anti-homosexual feelings, due to their cultural background and their Muslim religion. They consider themselves to be heterosexual, and their clients to be inferior beings (since they are homosexuals).” See “What areas are threatened by infectious diseases and epidemics.” Momentarily, the presence of such a piece of information in a series of articles with a hygienic direction might puzzle. Soon enough, however, one understands that what we are faced with is not mere medical philology with xenophobic insinuations. To the contrary, the hygienic arguments and whatever clinical images are the ones hosted in this libel of anti-migrant propaganda. And for this reason, the use of popular forms of contemporary islamophobic rhetoric should not come as any surprise. As the group *Queericulum Vitae* writes, through the contemporary racist uses, the impression is given that “homophobic attitudes are not a threat anymore to the western culture — the West is free of all this now.” And they point out that “[t]his transformation of the ‘West’ in a pure power of freedom and equality, one that has deleted from its memory all its past, this transformation is expressed also through this racist, islamophobic rhetoric of our times, the times of the ‘clash of civilizations.’” See “DV8, Islamophobia and Propaganda as Art,” <http://www.qvzine.net/>. Let us not forget, also, that the practice of *public sex*, part of which may concern male sex workers, has a very precarious character — to the extent that its public nature itself renders it vulnerable to homophobic attacks. And this attacks would traditionally, much before the *culturalist* warnings of the ministry of health, take place by the Greek police and/or other Greek homophobes. See in this regard, Marnelakis Giorgos, “The Precarious Geographies of ‘Public Sex’ in the City,” *Architekton: Journal of the Association of Greek Architects* 63 (2007): 66–68. Finally, the constructability of the discourse in question is proven by the fact that the official research-mapping out of male prostitution issued by the HCDCP in July 2012 — that is, only two months prior — included no reference whatsoever to homophobic expressions, concerning male migrant sex workers. See Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *Street Program for Male Prostitution: Activity Report*, January–June 2012, July 2012, Athens, <http://www.keelpno.gr/>.

ter of health Andreas Lykourantos — who is the one that passed on, according to the articles in question, the study to the parliament — received Loverdos’ construction unquestionably and rushed to reinforce it. “The epidemiologists’ analyses showed that the most common way of contagion is unprotected sexual intercourse,” the article in question would characteristically write concerning HIV. But also, for Sexually Transmitted Diseases, the outcomes were indicative: “These numbers are attributed both to the increase of male and female prostitution (legal or not) as well as to the great inflow of migrants without legal documents and without vaccination coverage in the countries of origin.”¹⁸⁵

These articles professed a crystal-clear responsibility of the migrant populations in regard to the spread of infectious diseases in the centre of Athens, with emphasis on the HIV.¹⁸⁶ “The hygienic epidemiological danger posed by the migrant phenomenon is shown vividly from the HCDCP’s research-mapping out,” the newspaper *Kathimerini*¹⁸⁷ wrote at the same time, carrying on the familiar narrative, the main arguments of which had collapsed, as we saw, already from that visit of the WHO and the ECDC at the detention centres of Evros. Yet beyond this resounding rebuttal, the most effective way for one to be convinced of the constructability of the data composing the discourse in question was to refer to the official epidemiological data published by HCDCP itself for the year 2012. The Epidemiological Bulletin of that year showed then, in regard

185 “HCDCP: Athens Is a Hygienic Bomb.”

186 This meticulous construction of responsibility is connected with a unique feature of first-world self-perception. Sontag wrote, then, in regard to the uses and the abuses of AIDS, that “[p]art of the centuries-old conception of Europe as a privileged cultural entity is that it is a place which is colonized by lethal diseases coming from elsewhere. Europe is assumed to be by rights free of disease.” Sontag, *AIDS and Its Metaphors*, 50.

187 See “HCDCP: Concern regarding the Increase of Infectious Diseases in Athens’ Historic Centre,” *Kathimerini*, September 27, 2012, <http://www.kathimerini.gr/15002/article/epikairothta/ellada/keelpno-anhsyxia-gia-thn-ay3hsh-loimwdwn-noshmatwn-sto-istoriko-kentro-ths-a8hnas>.

to the HIV, what had already been shown in the case of the prosecution of the seropositive women, which had not yet been forgotten at that point, since most of them remained in pre-trial detention. It was the first time since the appearance of the HIV virus in Greece that intravenous drug users (IVDU) comprised the population group with the largest number of HIV infection recordings. According to the HCDCP's Epidemiological Bulletin for 2012, "2011 saw a dramatic increase in HIV infection among users of intravenous drugs. Comparing the recorded cases among the IVDU population in 2011 with the corresponding one in 2010, an increase is shown of approximately 1,600%. In 2012, HIV infections among IVDU doubled [...]. For the first time in 2012, from the outset of the epidemic in Greece, IVDU comprise the population group with the largest number of recorded HIV infections."¹⁸⁸ Yet in the media articles in question, which took upon themselves to inform readers about this mapping out, and which most probably also reproduced some relevant information bulletin of the ministry of health, there is no reference to the IVDU whatsoever; and this, for two main reasons. On the one hand, such a reference would call upon the institutions of the ministry of health, which were invoking this "map," since they would have to explain themselves for the cuts in social welfare services that had been imposed long ago, and which are the ones that led to the tremendous increase of HIV cases from 2010 on. On the other hand, the primary aim of these made-up map recordings was to construct a dangerous hygienic profile for migrants, and not to reveal the HIV spread among the IVDU population — the majority of which are of Greek citizenship.¹⁸⁹

188 See Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report in Greece* 27, December 31, 2012, 15. See also, table 2, 10 and figure 4, 16, <http://www.keelpno.gr/>.

189 From personal communication with Chrysa Botsi, *ibid.* At this point, it is important to clarify that these remarks do not aim to shift responsibilities from one targeted social group to another. Instead, they attempt to highlight the deliberate limits and the tampering that feature the dramatic descriptions of the health conditions of central Athens, proving that the dominant rhetoric

And this proves that this was a discourse that commenced with ready-made and specific conclusions. A set of articles that utilised a set of disparate epidemiological data, assigning them a certain identity and reinforcing anew the dominant anti-migrant discourses.¹⁹⁰

Let us recall at this point that the HCDCP had already announced its intention to map out the areas and the migratory populations of central areas of Athens, with the Press Release issued on April 25, 2012, in which it announced the putting into practice of the Hygienic Decree 39A.¹⁹¹ That is, with the medico-police teams in the streets, with house raids and with obligatory hygienic checks. Nevertheless, the ever-so-obvious disparity between the official epidemiological data and the supposed cartographic findings of the articles in question sparked the interest for a personal research regarding the standing and the intentions of the latter. And the most relevant body to confirm the data adduced in these articles was the HCDCP itself.

behind the massive biopolitical exercises of the Greek state raised any descriptiveness and clinical persuasiveness through the absolutely real and gloomy facts, created by the very policy of cuts in social welfare sector. And it is hereby worth remembering that almost a year after the prosecution of the seropositive women, a similar operation was repeated on March 6, 2013 in the Athenian city centre, this time round with mass arrests of drug users and their transfer to the migrant detention camp of Amygdaleza. There, they were subjected to compulsory blood tests and detailed recording of all their personal and medical data, before they were released. The so-called operation "Thetis" was designed in common by the Greek police and the National Centre for Health Operations (EKEPY). See indicatively the Press Release of the General Police Directorate of Attica on March 7, 2013, http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=25366&Itemid=1073&lang=.

190 In regard to the dominant narratives and the often-encountered arguments linking migrants to the spread of infectious diseases, Christina Samartzi, head of the Domestic Missions Unit of the Athens Multi-Clinic of the Doctors of the World during 2013, claimed that they attempt to target migrants for political reasons. From personal communication that took place in Athens on February 7, 2013.

191 See the press release of the HCDCP titled "Application of Hygienic Decree."

And so, following a series of telephone communication with various departments of the body (department of epidemiological surveillance, department of intervention in the community, department of education), and following electronic mail and personal visits to the external units of the HCDCP responsible for collecting the research's data, it was proven, clearly, that no-one knew anything about the articles in question and about the specific cartographic data they presented. Quizzed faces, unanswered electronic messages and unawareness at the other end of the phone line. *The articles in question had no relationship whatsoever to the epidemiological mapping out of Athens!* They probably comprise fabrications of the ministry of health which, by collecting scattered epidemiological data from the HCDCP's field research and laying it out hastily, attempted to construct a clinical and phobic image for the "hygienic status" of the migrant populations in central parts of Athens.¹⁹² It attempted, in other words, to crystallise scientifically and clinically the demands that the anti-migratory hygienic discourse carried with it, inaugurated as it had in March 2011 with Loverdos' calls and the visit of the WHO and the ECDC teams to the concentration camps of Evros. A very systematic operation to construct a field of medical-police intervention which commenced, as we saw, with an official institutional rebuttal and was completed, as part of this overview, with the description of a faux and imaginative epidemiological map.¹⁹³

This methodicalness comprised yet another sign that the Greek state attempted, amidst the murky landscape of the crisis — which comprises, first and foremost, a cri-

sis for its structures and its meanings — to recompose the image of its managerial capacities and to reconstruct its functions. And for the purposes of this nation-rebuilding, the pathologisation of migratory populations offered on the one hand a historically tested solution and on the other, a concrete way through which the Greek state would be able to see and to show the first results of this reconstructing, away from moral and juridical limitations. What, then, was tried methodically in the 19th century at the colonial field, is nowadays attempted in a more legitimated manner — more legitimated in the sense that it acquires meaning in the framework of a "just" response to an "invasion" and not as part of a colonial practice — in the environment formed by the post-colonial communities in the heart of the western metropolises. As Foucault and Stoler point out, the constitution of the liberal national state — both in the sense of the constitution of a collective identity and the constitution of management apparatuses — was founded upon the meticulous construction of the enemy within, and in the drawing of racialised "interior frontiers." And this construction, within the biopolitical horizon of the processes of meaning-assigning from which it remained confined, ought to be articulated in biological terms. The discourses and the calls for "the defence of the (Greek) society" could not but speak the language of the doctors and the hygienists. And this had to happen convincingly. It had to happen in ways that would prove that the epidemiological dangers were not some hysteric announcements of a fantasist minister, but were in a position, by that point, to be reflected in a clinical and cartographic way. Suiting, that is, to an able state mechanism which applies a plan of holistic management and which has convinced itself about this capacity. This hygienic discourse, as an attempt to scientifically document the anti-migrant ideological construction, nowadays ought to be read next to the other "serious initiatives" of the Greek state; next to the "Xenios Zeus" operation, to the concentration camps, to the deportation industry, to the reinforcement of border controls. The liminal discourses on "national survival" were, first and foremost, biopolitical.

192 From personal communication with Chrysa Botsi.

193 Clearly, the operation of pathologising the migratory flows did not end there. It is indicative that during the Greek presidency of the European Union, a European meeting-workshop took place in Athens on March 19 & 20, 2014, co-organised by the HCDCP, the ECDC and the Greek presidency, titled "Public Health Benefits of Screening for Infectious Diseases among Newly Arrived Migrants to the EU/EEA." See the press release under the same title, <http://gr2014.eu/sites/default/files/Press%20Release.pdf>. I thank Chrysa Botsi for this information.

By “mapping out,” then, corporalities, spatialities, and modalities, the Greek state attempted to create a picture of health and the vigor of its national population, ensuring this by mapping the supposed dangers it is faced with. But first and foremost, it recomposed the preconditions of a collective belonging, and suggested a way in which to think about it. This suggestion constitutes one of the two tremendous meanings that the publication of these articles maintains. And it assures us that even today, at the time of *culturalism*¹⁹⁴ and of *differentialist racism*,¹⁹⁵ at the time of calls for the “right to difference” and the ironic question of tolerance, the biologising arguments that composed the most nightmarish, and at the same time most fundamental process of biological racism maintain some disconcerting allure. As Etienne Balibar points out, after all, the notions of nature and culture can only be read in an inextricable interaction, when we encounter them in the interpretative frameworks of either old- or neo-racisms. The demand for the preservation of cultural difference, particularly in the way this is articulated via the main agenda of differentialist racism brings back, eventually, the “biological thematic” — either by approaching cultural differences as “natural,” or by reading xenophobia as a “natural” social reaction to cultural mixing. Naturalising, eventually, racist behaviours.¹⁹⁶ And let us not forget that “*culture can also function like a nature*, and it can in particular function as a way of locking individuals and groups a priori into a genealogy, into a determination that is immutable and intangible in origin.”¹⁹⁷ Nevertheless, in the example of the Greek hygienic construction the biological thematic returns in the most explicit and clear of ways, revealing a case of a peculiar and “delayed” biological racism. And demonstrating that the body continues to comprise the ultimate refuge of truth; a container for

the extraction of concepts and meanings that is entirely functional, as Bashford showed us, both for political philosophy in general and for the conceptualisations of the nation in particular. It appears, then, that the bio-medical discourse, despite whatever deviations it may have from the anachronistic articulations of the *Rassenhygiene* (racial hygiene), proves to be, even today, terrifyingly present in the thinking of the national identity. In being that necessary gluing material between the natural and the political body, biomedical discourse offers the most tangible set of images for limits and their transgressions; in the case of the articles in question, it took on describing them through the organic and often macabre antagonisms describing the dialectics of health and illness.

Shinning as it does in its metaphorical richness, illness finds itself wherever anything else struggles to convince. It finds itself there to spread fear and justify violence, “[s]ince the interest of the metaphor is precisely that it refers to a disease so overlaid with mystification, so charged with the fantasy of inescapable fatality.”¹⁹⁸ It is precisely the invocation to this quality of the inescapable and the fatal that legitimises the use of the syntax of the emergency. The same syntax which turned the breaching of public spaces, the enforced blood-tests and the detentions of seropositive women an entirely normalised practice. The illness that invades upon the body of the society gives birth to a state of siege; a “war being defined as an emergency in which no sacrifice is excessive.”¹⁹⁹ The mechanisms of medical police invested, therefore, upon the production of fear in order to give the emergency the form they imagined to be appropriate. And in order to politically capitalise, in return, upon the endless empty field born by the demand for personal protection and security. As Bauman stresses out, “the gain in political legitimisation and in the acceptance of any government showing force,” each and every time that a question of a public threat is raised,

194 See Todorov, “Race and Racism,” 67–70.

195 See Etienne Balibar, “Is There a ‘Neo-Racism’?,” in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, trans. Chris Turner (London & New York: Verso, 1991), 21–27.

196 *Ibid.*, 22, 26.

197 *Ibid.*, 22.

198 Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, 87.

199 Sontag, *AIDS and Its Metaphors*, 11.

is invaluable.”²⁰⁰ There were then, some very important reasons for the state to continue to train itself in such an economy of fear and feelings. And part of this training comprises the invention of fields of intervention. Which is what the teams of the medical police did so methodically. The political management of fear, as in the examples of the culture of fear unveiled by Taussig, leads with quite some certainty to the landscapes of exception and of legal violence. Where *necessitas legem non habet*.²⁰¹

Yet it was not only certain populations that were problematised through these clinical articulations of the emergency. It was also certain geographies. And more specifically, central parts of Athens — which are the ones that have been hosting, for years now, the everyday spaces of public gathering of migrants. This is, then, where the second functional importance of the discourse in question is located. A primary aim of this cartographic construction was to prove that, through the “morbidity” of the migrants, the centre of Athens is also ill. Since the large migrant densities would not, in themselves, offer a pretext for a disciplinary urban management, one way was for doctors and for hygienists to bend over them, after the criminologists — constructing and then portraying the “pathological” threats these densities carry with them. The equation “ill migrants=ill centre” created in turn a new field of intervention for the state, this time on the basis of a *city-rebuilding* that was fully compatible with the broader demands of nation-rebuilding.²⁰² The matter of the management of the migrant flows and densities in central neighbourhoods of Athens was set, largely, as

a main axis for a set of new conceptualisations, designs and plans regarding the urgent *sanitation* of the city. As the Self-Organised Space of the Architecture School very poignantly claims, commencing from the occasion of the architectural competition *Re-think Athens*,²⁰³ the ideological and symbolic importance of the athenian centre proves to be immense. It comprises the field for the production of meanings. It points out, then, that the matter of management of “ghettoization phenomena” of parts of the centre of Athens, “by being constructed [...] in public discourse as a national issue that concerns all, forms a condition of emergency that points at the migration issue as a whole, setting the tone for the management of migrants across the entire national territory, remoulding tolerances. [...] And more specifically, the further ban of migrant workers.”²⁰⁴ Athens’ city centre comprised, then, a field of ideological exercises for the domestic sovereign power — specifically, the field through which the matter of the migrants’ presence was meticulously constructed as a “national problem.” The discourse on the devaluation of certain parts of the centre can only be seen, in this way, in strong interaction with a logic of the construction “of the ‘problem’ on the basis of predetermined ‘solutions,’ that is, the vast growth of the mechanisms of security and public order.”²⁰⁵

These emblematic parts of “devaluation” acted as select places for the design of the anti-migratory policy as a whole. In this case, the “devaluation” itself was attempted to be articulated in epidemiological terms, constructing an urgent cartographic image with entirely false facts. As the editors of the journal *Hérodote* had once claimed, dur-

200 Bauman Zygmunt, *Liquid Fear*, trans. Giorgos Karampelas (Athens: Polytropion, 2007), 193 (in Greek).

201 A Latin phrase that may be translated in two ways. Either as “necessity does not recognize any law,” or as “necessity creates its own law.” Cited in Agamben, *State of Exception*, 24.

202 For a typical ideological connection of city-rebuilding and nation-rebuilding see Marcus Bensasson and Nikos Chrysoloras “Athens Lacking Only Elgin as Windows Erase Crisis: Cities,” *Bloomberg*, April 24, 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-04-24/athens-lacking-only-elgin-as-windows-erase-crisis-cities.html>.

203 See relevant information at the website <http://www.rethinkathens.org/>.

204 See the booklet Self-managed Space of Athens School of Architecture, *The Architectural Competition Re-Think Athens and the Ideological/Symbolic importance of the Athenian Centre* (Athens 2012), 38 (in Greek), http://nothingtorethink.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/12_06_25-re-think-athens-cebccf80cf81cebfcf83cebfcf85cc81cf81ceb1.pdf.

205 Ibid. 43.

ing a conversation with Foucault about geography, and pointing specifically at the crucial position occupied by the notion of the map within the power/knowledge relation, “[w]hat power needs is not science but a mass of information which its strategic position can enable it to exploit.”²⁰⁶ One such example of arbitrary accumulation and composition of scattered information, lies in the set of articles in question concerning the so-called epidemiological map. In either case, the centre of Athens appears to be overcome by the forces of the “state of nature” — which, as we saw earlier on, make sure to ideologically and juridically create that void space, subsequently occupied by the applications of the emergency. The systematic references to the hygienic dangers and in particular, the co-ordinated references to the existence of a cartographic tool of epidemiological surveillance, create an image of the city that resembles a magnetic field. A field within which uncontrollable, morbid forces are constantly applied — and which contaminate anyone who may enter inside it. And this image is an image of emergency. It requires radical solutions. It requires, in other words, police applications. The origins of this project of medical-police problematisation of the athenian centre are located in the intersection of two different traditions. On the one hand, in the discourse that connects the field of hygiene with the theory and the practice of urban replanning, already from the birth of the early industrial city. On the other hand, in the framework nowadays forming the dominant discourses on cities and designs policies of public security through the targeting of post-colonial migrant neighbourhoods in the hearts of western metropolises. And each one of these traditions pertains its own particular disciplinary importance.

It is well-known that the matter of hygiene was assigned, from the outset, a key mission in the planning of

the modern city. And this is not a mere managerial mission. The newly appearing working class and its habits became the object of a complete reform on the basis of hygienic arguments with strong moralistic and ideological extensions. At a time when organic metaphors offered the necessary tools for the thinking about the city and its vital functions, the state planning of the terms of life and habitation of the difficultly adjustable workers held a strong hygienic framework.²⁰⁷ But class struggles themselves, along with the early workers’ demands were often treated as the object of a common military-hygienic matter. As the architect Eyal Weizman points out, the military experimental designs and the urban transformations to which they paved the way, show us a close relationship between the hygiene programmes and the urban modernisation of the 19th century.²⁰⁸ The replanning of Paris by the renown baron Haussmann comprises one such case. The demand for a structural replanning of the city was articulated, as we know, in the shadow of the revolutionary events that shook Paris and other large European cities, right about at the middle of the 19th century; and it had, therefore, its own military issues. But the military staff chose to articulate and to materialise the demand in question *also* through hygienic pretexts. The city historian, Leonardo Benevolo, writes characteristically about Paris: “The new wide and straight roads must replace the unhygienic neighbourhoods and the narrow alleys that were used during the revolutionary movements, while at the same time facilitating the hygiene and the movement of the troops. Haussmann has in his disposal the article 13 of the law concerning hygiene and a decree of the Senate of 1852, which approves land expropriation with a mere decision

206 See Michel Foucault, “Questions on Geography,” trans. Colin Gordon, in Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden (eds.), *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 180.

207 See for example James Donald, *Imagining the Modern City*, (London: The Athlone Press, 1999), 28–37.

208 See Eyal Weizman and Phillip Misselwitz, “Military Operations as Urban Planning,” *Mute Magazine*, August 28, 2003, <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/military-operations-urban-planning>.

of the executive power.”²⁰⁹ A demand of urban replanning with clearly police-military extensions, effortlessly finds its natural environment in the expressions of the early hygienic discourse. The dominant imaginaries for the early industrial cities and their functions were constituted, then, through specific problematisations of the figures of the workers; of their health, their habits, their resistances, their residencies and their public spaces.

Very broadly, one could claim that what this collective figure of the worker offered in the past, in terms of the dominant meaning-assignments of the cities and the proposals for their replanning, is nowadays offered through the environment formed by the presence of the post-colonial migrant populations in the heart or in the periphery of the western metropolises. The dominant discourses on the city form a sense of its identity, through a demand for discipline or exclusion of these populations — and they turn their spaces into one of the main meanings of this forming. In the case of Athens we saw that the already tested, from the past, pretexts of public health were mobilised once again, in order to target the public and the private spaces of the migrants — offering an exemplary case of some, once again, delayed hygienic-urban planning discourse. Nevertheless, the biomedical discourse nowadays seems not to comprise the only priority for the targeting in question, since the problematisation of the migrant presence in contemporary metropolises appears to internationally extract its tools from that universe of notions that compose, in common, the “Clash of Civilizations,”²¹⁰ cultural racism and Orientalism. Graham claims that “[a]s colonial migration to the increasingly post-colonial centres of empire has grown since the Second World War, so racialised depictions of immigrant districts as ‘backward’ zones threatening the body-politic of the (post)imperial

city and nation helped Orientalist discourses, and imperial practices of urban subjugation, to telescope back to infuse domestic urban geographies.”²¹¹

What was therefore tested out so meticulously in the colonial spaces and times, leading Edward Said to such a deep analysis of the orientalist practices, is nowadays paradoxically repeated in the western metropolitan environment. The methodology is, nevertheless, the same. “Underlying all the different units of Orientalist discourse,” writes Said, “is a set of representative figures, or tropes. These figures are to the actual Orient [...] as stylized costumes are to characters in a play.”²¹² In this way, the Orient — and Islam in particular — is attempted to be sunk into a framework of enforced western representations, which demonise it; therefore *also* demonising its scattered representatives in the West — and therefore their everyday urban geographies as well. We are therefore led to what is nowadays called “inner city Orientalism.”²¹³ The moving of the agenda of the “Clash of Civilizations” to the heart of the “first world” urban formations offers a suiting framework for the problematising of the migrant presence and its micro-geographies. The, by now familiar, stereotypical representations of “Athens that has turned into Kabul” dominate public discourse and everyday conversations, raising issues of cultural incompatibility and non-assimilation. On the basis of the neo-conservative and racialised rhetoric, the argument is articulated that “the clash of civilizations has invaded the very streets of the most enlightened and iconic Western bourgeois urban spaces, with devastating consequences for security.”²¹⁴ And that is precisely where a new field of military-police applications is inaugurated. Graham writes in this regard: “In all Western nations, it is the postcolonial diasporas, and their neighbourhoods, that are the main targets of

209 Leonardo Benevolo, *The European City*, trans. Anna Papastavrou, (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1997), 274 (in Greek).

210 See Emran Qureshi and Michael A. Sells, “Introduction: Constructing the Muslim Enemy,” in Emran Qureshi and Michael A. Sells (eds.), *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 1–47.

211 Graham, *Foucault’s Boomerang*, 39.

212 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 71.

213 Graham, *Foucault’s Boomerang*, 39.

214 Graham, *Cities Under Siege*, 49.

the new, internal and often highly racialised security politics.”²¹⁵

In the drastic transformations of the urban functions and in the demographic changes that characterise contemporary metropolises, colonial practices are tested out in new fields of application. The places of collective migrant presence in the western urban environments comprise, perhaps, the most important of these. The technologies of governance that were applied and continue to be applied in some exotic labs of the East and the South nowadays offer all the necessary supplies for the composition, and for the model of governance itself for these contemporary “*internal colonies*.”²¹⁶ And as the violent and long colonial History shows us, they consist first of all an attempt of *visualisation* of the colonial object itself. Using his studies of colonial Delhi as an axis in examining some common characteristics across the various technologies of colonial governance, and attempting to form the basis for an “analytics of governmentality,” Stephen Legg points out the tremendous importance maintained by the notion of *visibility* for the very intelligibility of the colonial field. The colonial field as an interweaving, first of all, of spaces and populations. The notion of visibility hereby brings together and condenses a sum of relationships, purposes and practices: “ways of seeing and representing reality; the practical knowledge of specialists and policy-makers; plans, maps and diagrams. How are some objects highlighted while others are obfuscated? What relations are suggested between subjects and space? How is risk mapped and what are the suggested remedies?”²¹⁷ The mapping out presented by the aforementioned discourse attempts to take on this duty of the visualization of the field. The management, therefore, of the centre of Athens as an application of hygienic and orientalist representa-

tions may, in a paradoxical way, be included in the tradition of these technologies of governance. And as we saw, it comprises the point of a catastrophic meeting of different regimes of truth.

In this way, one can nowadays discern in the dominant discourses around Athens, sometimes that anachronistic description of urban planning as a matter of bodies, spaces and germs. Other times, the guideposts of the clash of civilisations. And some other times, familiar traces from typical combinations of the two—since, as Stoler and Bashford show us, racism and their colonial practices had their own ways to be articulated hygienically. In either case, this “violent invasion of anti-western culture” into the emblematic urban landscapes of western “superiority” produces a *functional* sense of a state of siege. Let alone when it carries with it a set of organic challenges. The response to this invasion can only be a military one. Whether it concerns the “invasion of the barbarians” or the “invasion of the plague.” It requires military management. The discourse around the epidemiological map in question may be alternatively seen as a public presentation of a map of police operations. Because the spaces in which the “geographers” and the writers of the medical police so meticulously focused upon match entirely with the neighbourhoods where, for two years, the “Xenios Zeus” operation was under way; they match the places in which the city-rebuilding project will be determined and eventually, judged upon as an ideological prerequisite for nation-rebuilding at this time of crisis. If the demand for the recovery of the athenian centre from the “barbarian hordes” is viewed through the framework of a peculiar reverse or repressed colonial practice, then as History shows us, such “mapping out” was required through and through. Because the map is not only a visualization of the field one wishes to command. It is also a very specific way in which to speak the truth. It is truth per se. This truth, as a question of visibility comprises, then, one of the main stakes of the governance of populations, of populations in space. And the map was always in a position

215 Graham, “Foucault’s Boomerang,” 40.

216 Ibid., 39.

217 Stephen Legg, “Foucault’s Population Geographies: Classifications, Biopolitics and Governmental Spaces,” *Population, Space and Place* 11 (2005): 148.

to shed light; to light up even the darkest of spots. And if need be, to draw them out of nothing.

Translated by Antonis Vradis

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MAPPING RACIST VIOLENCE

Klara Jaya Brekke

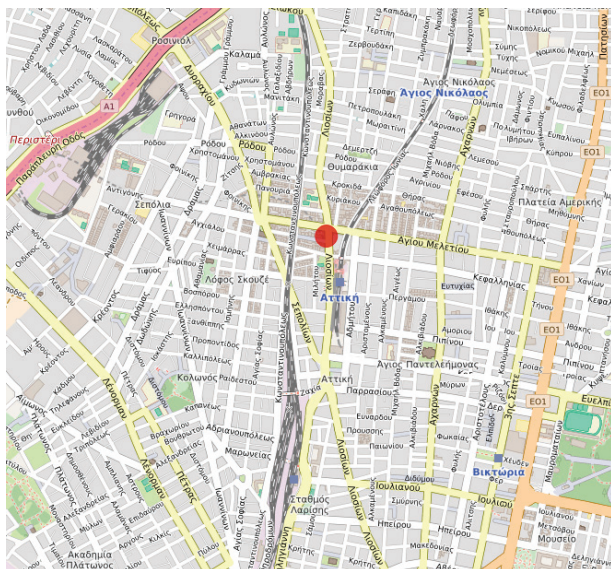
map.crisis-scape.net is an online map of racist attacks with a focus on Athens, while including some of the more severe incidents from the rest of Greece. The map was launched in the spring of 2013, created using a local install of Ushahidi, an open source mapping and data-visualisation platform, and lasted until May 2015. It allowed anyone to submit information about a racist attack by adding the location, type and time of the attack along with any eyewitness accounts of what happened. Once submitted, each incident was then screened and — to the extent possible — verified by the crisis-scape research group, seeking additional sources before it was made public. Incidents could be added anonymously; only an email address was required in order to follow up on the report and to clarify any details.

The mapping project began while the migration flows through Greece were still relatively small in comparison to the years that followed. The focus was therefore on the frequent attacks that took place by the police, Golden Dawn, employers, or other local residents, rather than on the systemic violence in detention centres and along borders. Most of the data was gathered through the help of existing migrant associations in Athens and reports by the Racist Violence Recording Network, as well as local indymedia nodes.

The motivation for the mapping project was twofold: on the one hand to serve as a possible outlet for information and reporting that was not being registered because of

police complicity, and on the other, to present the attacks in a medium where the severity of the situation could be communicated in one glance. The map was shared widely and became a reference for reporting on the situation in international news outlets (*Al Jazeera*, *The Guardian*, and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*).

The map served as a cumulative record of attacks, with the aim of preventing these experiences from being lost in the continuous flow of crisis stories and information coming out of Greece at the time. Although it was visually quantitative the intention of the map was not to arrive at exact numbers but instead to serve as a witness, making visible the violence that was taking place, while keeping hidden any potentially sensitive information. When known and widely published, the names of people who were attacked were explicitly used in respect of their person, to not turn people into faceless victims.



Police Beat and Throw Afghani Man from Balcony

July 25, 2012
Liosion, Athens, Greece

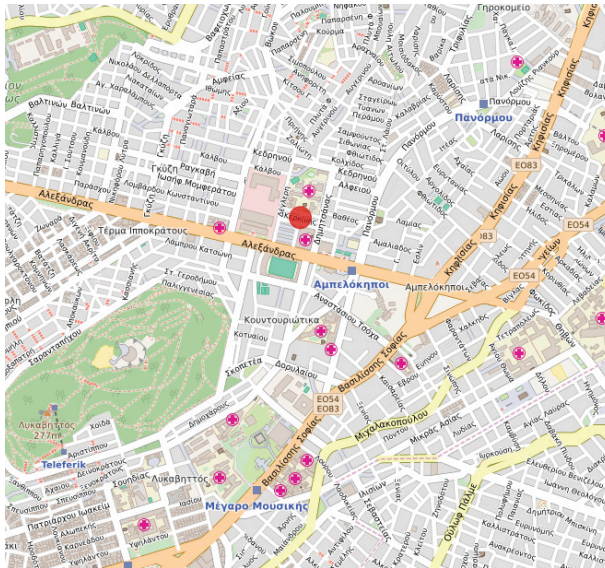
Categories: Severe physical attack; damage to property; theft; police

Description: Statement made by AH while hospitalised: “On Wednesday (25th of July) two policemen entered the house where I live on Liosion at 10 a.m. The officers wore normal uniforms. They entered the house while keeping their hands on their batons and began asking me and my compatriots for money and told us to “bring all the money you have.” Then my countrymen fled from the balcony using a fire escape ladder descending from the third floor. I stayed and tried to get away from the balcony. I told police “I have not done anything, what are you accusing me of?” Then two more policemen arrived and the earlier two left. When I told them that I had no money, the police began to beat me with batons and told me “Why don’t you jump from the balcony? I will help you to jump.” I was

pushed from the balcony but held on to an iron post. The police continued to beat me until I fell from the balcony.” AH was then taken by ambulance to the hospital.

Link to incident report:
<http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/63>

Additional sources:
<https://www.ksm.gr/αστυνομικοι-βασανισαν-και-εριξαν-απο/>



Iranian Man Stabbed Twelve Times by Men on Motorcycles

August 7, 2014

Kerkinis street, Athens, close to the police headquarters

Category: Severe physical attack

Description: Outside the police headquarters on August 7, 2014, a motorcycle with three men around the age of 30, dressed in black and with shaved heads stopped AN on the street. One asked him where he's from, he responded that he was from Iran. AN had been asked that question many times before, especially by police. Then two of the men punched him until he fell, while the third person waited on the bike. The attack lasted for about a minute. One of the men was sitting on top of him as he was stabbed 12 times to the chest and abdomen.

After they escaped he managed to get himself to the main road, Alexandras, where he got the attention of the security guard at Άγιος Σάββας who called an ambulance. At this point he had lost a lot of blood. At the hospital the doctors asked him if he had papers, and the police

enquired whether his papers were fake or not. He had to have 60 stitches for his wounds.

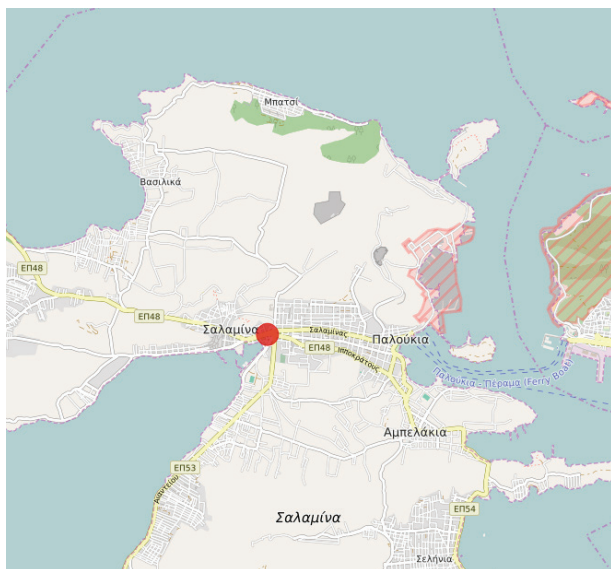
Link to incident report:

<http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/230>

Additional sources:

<https://athens.indymedia.org/post/1529988/>

<http://www.vice.com/gr/read/epithesi-maxairies-iran>



Walid Taleb from Egypt Chained and Tortured for 19 hours by Employer

November 3, 2012
 Salamis Island, Greece

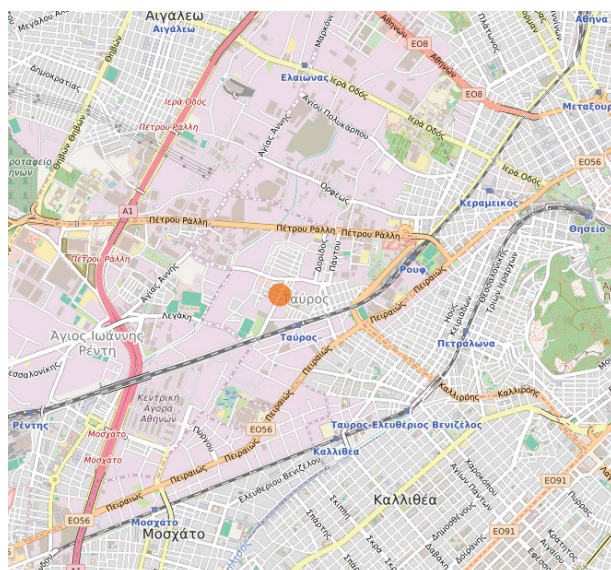
Category: Severe physical attack; torture

Description: 29 year old WT from Egypt is chained, kidnapped and held in a barn by his employer, the baker Georgios Sgourdadas (former local councillor and deputy mayor for Nea Demokratia in Salamina) and Sgourdadas' son for 19 hours while they torture and severely beat him, telling him they will kill him. In the early morning they leave for a moment and WT manages to escape. He collapses at a nearby gas station (<http://bit.ly/1dG68Wr>), unable to speak or move and is found some hours later. Taken to the hospital, the medical workers say he does not need attention and he is arrested for lack of documents and held in the police station for four days without medical attention. Sgourdadas is arrested and released on bail a couple of days later.

Comments: Katsaros (Sep 4 2013) Thank you for the site and the report! I have some minor corrections to make: – The baker's name is Georgios Sgourdadas (not Sgourdodos). – The exact point that the victim collapsed was here: <http://bit.ly/1dG68Wr> (I cannot find a way to point this to your map). I was there when the Egyptian was found, as I was living nearby. Feel free to ask for any related details.

Link to incident report:
<http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/22>

Additional sources:
<http://international.radiobubble.gr/2012/11/walid-story.html>
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-migrants-idUSBRE8B5oY920121206>
<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/claims-of-rising-racism-in-greece-as-young-egyptian-tortured-by-employer-1.551037>



Link to incident report:

<http://map.crisis-scape.net/reports/view/125>

Additional sources:

<http://icantrelaxingreece.wordpress.com/2013/07/24/attack-on-migrants-house-in-tavros/>

https://athens.indymedia.org/front.php3?lang=el&article_id=1483242

Golden Dawn Attack Home of Migrants

July 21, 2013

Tavros, Athens, Greece [exact location unverified]

Category: Physical attack; verbal attack; damage to property; theft

Description: Pretending to be police officers, six fascists entered the house of migrants in Tavros to “check their papers”. When the migrants asked for the assistance of a police patrol car the six began beating the migrants, cursing them and stating they were from Golden Dawn. They then stole their wallets, work permits and some appliances in the house and any cash they could find in front of shocked neighbors. When the migrants recognised two of the perpetrators, they fled. The victims are now prosecuting the two perpetrators that they recognised.

On Tuesday the 23rd a solidarity protest was held in Tavros.

THE UTTER VIOLENCE OF THE UNUTTERED (OR: THE SOMNOLENT SERENITY OF THE PASSENGER IN THE RAGING CITY)

Antonis Vradis

How to write about crisis and silence

The place is just one among all those seamlessly forming the string of cities that *go bust* and *burst* at our present moment. The time is the interval between the threshold of the outbreak crisis and its aftermath, anywhere in-between the seemingly countless sprouts of conflict by now permeating the surface of our everyday. It happens to be Athens: the city that has for so long haunted global imagination as the site of resistance par excellence and now, in its antipodal historical moment, as a solid example of neoliberal development teetering and slipping into its own abyss. Landmark dates — the signing of memoranda with the country's lenders, general strikes in their anticipation and in retaliation — endlessly alternate in a reading of crisis as a series of cinematic-like sequences. But what happens between these snippets?

The outright aim of this project has been to read the crisis and its aftermath, yet it has striven to do so by bypassing the highs of spectacular tension, by focusing on the ostensible lows of the mundane and of the prosaic instead. And no site reveals the seeming mundaneness of the urban more clearly than its modes of mass transpor-

tation. In their endlessly repeated banality, they constitute the epitome of conviviality that subtly defines our everyday. In this, again, Athens is not alone: the commuter is the archetypal figure of our global present urban condition. In her repeated, palindromic movement between one private space (the home) and another (the workplace) *through* but not *quite within* public space, the commuter epitomises a much greater shift.

Think, for a second, of the striking change in carriages and other spaces of mass transportation in affluent cities the world over. Change brought about by the advent and unprecedented spread of smartphones, tablets and assorted devices allowing the commuter to connect herself to a vast information landscape, and to disconnect from her immediate environment in return. Think, now, how much this disconnection may signal about our collective urban psyche and our current condition: it may be revealing anything from contemplation to indifference, serenity to seething resentment. In this, the commuter's silence can be much more revealing than the martial cries, the polemic, and the uproar playing out on the city's surface.

To comprehend and to write about silence, not just in the city's underground network, but anywhere in the

spectrum of human relationships, and to try and outline the horizon of possibilities it opens up, is by default a formidable task. “What is wrong?” we will anxiously ask a friend, a partner, a lover, in a hasty attempt to cast away the uneasiness of their silence. For silence is always threatening: it carries and looms in the danger of a breakdown, of a permanent loss of communication between the transmitter and the receiver, of extreme uncertainty about the future; it is a simultaneous miniature of, and warning signal for death. What we fear in silence is the vast and unknown potentialities that it conceals, all that hides behind and beneath what it leaves *unuttered*.

The not-so-public space of language

As an adjective, the *utter* is the absolute, the total, the complete. As a verb, it signifies the act of articulating, of emitting sounds that will put one’s thoughts into language. To utter is then to mediate, through voice, between our *thought* and its *language*. Sharing as it does a root [-*ut*] with *out*, the verb to *utter* (to extract one’s thoughts out of one’s body through the mouth) draws itself into a parallel with the absolute. Language is paralleled — if not altogether equated — with thought itself, a short-circuit that circumvents the latter.

In its logical conclusion, this line of thought would then lead us to believe that the silence of the metro carriage (a silence hereby understood for the sake of argument as the absence of words, and that alone) should signal a *nothingness* of thought: if there is no word uttered, there is nothing to be reflected upon. In other words or, better even, in *no* words: what cognitive space might there be to reflect in physical spaces where people do not talk to one another? What could possibly remain to explore in this negative space, the space containing this seeming absence of language?

This question, the question of verbal communication (and more, of its ceasing) lands us directly in the matter of the public in its purest of forms. In its most fundamental of definitions public space is the space of plurality, the

space where singularities converge. For Arendt, this plurality is twofold: on the one hand it signals *equality* and on the other, *distinction*. We all belong to the same species hence we are similar enough to understand one another. Each of us remains, at the same time, distinguishable and unique enough to form a plurality that will in turn allow us the enjoyment of meaningful interaction. And it is *word*, this uttering of our thought through language, that primarily makes possible the meaningful communication of our actions to one another.

Think, for a second, of the following image: a commuter in whichever western metropolis today, in whatever mass mode of transport, reading Arendt’s *The Human Condition*, originally written just over five decades ago. Most probably scrolling down a reading device, they will soon enough reach across this passage:

If men were not distinct, each human being distinguished from any other who is, was, or will ever be, they would need neither speech nor action to make themselves understood. Signs and sounds to communicate immediate, identical needs and wants would be enough.¹

Think now of the commuter sitting immediately next to them, also reading the same passage. “If men were not distinct.” And the next one. And the next one. An entire carriage, a train, a whole underground network bustling with commuters reading *in silence* the passage verbatim, stressing the importance of distinction in the forming of the need for speech through language and for action. “But we all read different things, we leave different homes, we arrive at different workplaces” would come the voice of protest. Sure this is true, yet in terms of our action, in terms of what we actually *do* in urban space, the image above is an adequate representation of our present condition: as contemporary urbanites we are fast becoming less

1 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 174–75.

and less distinguishable from one another. To inhabit or to traverse spaces in common, let us recall, is a necessary but not sufficient condition to create the level of interaction that is in turn necessary to render these spaces public. Beyond sharing the experience offered by common physical surroundings, we must act in common or, at the very least, we must communicate this experience, this action, to one another through language.

Yet to co-inhabit these spaces while at the same time confining ourselves to a form of interaction that alienates us through the absence of *action* and *language*, is a hallmark of the modern condition. “World alienation,” Arendt tells us, “and not self-alienation as Marx thought, has been the hallmark of the modern age.”² To alienate ourselves from the world entails ceasing to communicate primarily through the overwhelming absence of language. In the environment formed, in return, by our language-less and inter-action-less coexistence, public space ceases to be such, and it is only seemingly resurrected in the form of its very own representation: the silent public becomes a spectacular swindle, a replica of its own self.

A tripartite “miracle”: language, event and crisis

To comprehend and to articulate, to write about this particular silence, the silence of the Athenian metro at the city’s moment of crisis, has been particularly difficult. But why? What could it be that I find so difficult to articulate from my visits to the metro? What kind of untold force makes it so hard, at times, to face up to the realities beneath? Life down there, after all, just like the life above at street level, goes on, at least on the face of it. Just like before, the train carriage finds itself acting as the same crucible containing and swirlingly transferring faces old, new, tired or exhilarated, assertive or puzzled. Just like before, the passenger will ever-so-often attempt to erect for herself a momentary curtain of anonymity in the middle of spaces public; a sideways gaze, an amassing and spit-

ting out of words barely reaching beyond the empty and the mundane, a self-inflicted passivity.

But something is different. And this difference is as much ground-breaking as it may at first appear to be inconspicuous. There is silence in the metro, words that mark a presence in their absence. And even if this absence may have existed before, it now takes on an entirely unprecedented meaning, positioned as it is in the context of crisis. Amidst the barrage of words, in-between the statements and discourses that have for so long attempted to grapple with them, the most devastating of conditions of the crisis have now become those that remain unarticulated, *unuttered*.

When exactly did this “now” arrive, when did it become such? When did we enter our present moment of crisis? It is a crucial question not least because it reflects—in a peculiar type of historical miniature—a much greater and predominant conceptualisation of historical time: think here, for example, of the coming about of Arendt’s “modern age” and all this entails. When did this modern age thrust itself into history’s present? And by extension, when did we ever reach (let alone surpass) this seemingly magical threshold that may distinguish the existence of some ostensibly “real” public space from its subsequent replica, from its spectacular representation—supposing, of course, that this is what we are living through at the moment?

The question, to be sure, far exceeds the ontological quests any metro carriage may potentially carry with it. To begin from the example of the acts of thought and its uttering, as above: naturally, these do entail language. Yet this entailment in itself presupposes a chronological sequence: first we think, then we articulate this thought in the form of language. An only too often encountered confusion lies in our tendency to suppress, if not altogether override this chronological sequence, leading to the aforementioned logical short-circuit where *thought* is wrongly assumed to equate to *language*. In its reverse reading, this logical fallacy would lead to an even more evidently illogical assumption according to which hold-

2 Ibid., 254.

ing a thought without expressing it is an action that has never quite happened, that never occurred *at all*. The act of thinking is both *utter* and *existent* only at the precise if fleeting moment when it is articulated — right when and only (at) once it is *uttered*.

Our understanding of the uttering of thought through language in this way resembles a *miracle-like* moment. And to draw this parallel, between the moment when language is born (the moment of acting through the uttering a thought) and a “miracle,” is far from a coincidence: colloquially, the act of “uttering” something signifies not just *any* articulation of meaning through words but that exact, crucial moment when we *commence* this articulation. “He hardly had time to utter a word,” we will say, pinpointing that split-second moment between the realization someone may be faced with an imminent, catastrophic event and its actual occurrence. A moment stripped of any continuity, endurance or length. A moment that lands into our existence as abruptly and suddenly as it then departs, leaving us no time to comprehend, let alone to communicate it. A moment that we deem to be unexplainable, then, lying beyond our system of reason — and as with all such moments, we wrap it into a supposed “holiness,” the protective sphere of religious incomprehension: a defensive act allowing us a way out of this exact incomprehensibility. This understanding, then, of the uttering of thought through language, its “magic” of uttering, is not at all distant from our conceptualisation of history’s peaks, its lows and its ruptures: all those *utter* moments that signal, in our minds, a sudden and abrupt change of course, a swift and violent turn of the page.

This gross simplification of the historical process, as with the simplification of the process of thought-uttering may be understandable — and more even, it may even point toward some quintessentially human quality. Before becoming capable of influencing, shaping and altering any of the quantities and qualities far exceeding its scale, the human mind requires their scaling down to a level that makes them comprehensible:

Prior to the shrinkage of space and the abolition of distance through railroads, steamships, and airplanes, there is the infinitely greater and more effective shrinkage which comes about through the surveying capacity of the human mind, whose use of numbers, symbols, and models can condense and scale earthly physical distance down to the size of the human body’s natural sense and understanding.³

We are for the largest part unable to fully comprehend how exactly history takes its course; the vast scale of humanity’s life-course vastly exceeds our own. And so we require sign-posts, metaphors, schemata involving the compression of a long process into an often-times fleeting moment: anything that may help us understand what is playing out at the greater scale of things. Think, here, of the *event* as it is conceived in Badiou and in a vast assorted philosophical tradition overall — its understanding as that fleeting historical moment of rupture when his so-called *truth* becomes discernible. The historical event, just like the event of language, is in this way conceived to be a miracle-like “process from which something new emerges.”⁴

This would be where the parallel with the crisis becomes discernible: in very much of a similar way, crisis appears out of nowhere, in a miracle-like (read: incomprehensible) process that condenses time, annihilating historical depth and perspective alike.

Crisis and its articulation

It might be rewarding to delve a bit further into the specific case of the event of our present historical moment, the “something new” of the crisis. The understanding of the crisis as an event, this conceptualisation of *shift* into

³ Ibid., 250–51.

⁴ Daniel Bensaïd, “Alain Badiou and the Miracle of the Event”, in *Think Again: Alain Badiou and the Future of Philosophy*, ed. Peter Hallward (London & New York: Continuum, 2004), 175.

a *predicament* has of course permeated much of the prevalent contemporary discourse. Once again, just as in Badiou's event, just as in the case of the event of language, the crisis has been perceived and projected as something that arrives to us miracle-like: as something that appears seemingly out of nowhere and — it is hoped, as we are told — will soon enough vanish back into nothingness, then oblivion. It comprises a moment of judgement wherein the past is crushed and annihilated, while the future is suspended — both thanks to the sheer gravitative force of the crisis-event itself.

To understand history in such a way is to conceive it as a series of largely disjointed chronological strips, broken and kept apart by miracle-like crisis-events: the kind of understanding that may allow one to pose the type of question articulated earlier on — regarding when “exactly” our present historical moment may have arrived. Yet of course it is in history's sometimes parallel, often-times antithetical fluidities that the “new” is born, always commencing from the shell of the old; it is thresholds of historical volumes filled-then-surpassed, overflowed, that perpetually push us into our rolling present, rather than switch-like event-miracles announcing their coming. To understand history as a series of events of this kind is to perceive it as a peculiar amalgam of disjointed series that are inexplicable, unpredictable and unstoppable.

It should by now become easier to discern the potential threats looming in such a simplified, miracle-like understanding of history overall and of the crisis in particular. In terms of political agency, this is excruciatingly disempowering. Think, for a second: how may our lives feel in our current, history-burdened setting, in this moment of apparent exception and rupture? How may it feel to move around, to act in a time and a space boiling from the seething force of the event, the future-in-suspension that has landed in our present? How may one possibly be expected not only to resist, but to react overall — to behave and to act with agency when faced with the sheer verticality of the historical event breaking out before them?

As with any moment of rupture, our primordial, initial reaction is one of shock — and ensuing silence. In this way, the outbreak of one event (the crisis) does, logically enough, block the articulation of another one (language).

There may be no better way to describe the vicissitudes caused by the absence of the articulation of language, of the distance between thought and word and the ensuing distance this opens up between ourselves and our environment, than to turn to the kingdom of language: to literature.

In Peter Handke's *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*, Joseph Bloch is an ex-goalkeeper who spends an entire long day, the day when he is fired from his job as a construction worker, aimlessly wandering around the streets of his unnamed city. Bloch is not even entirely sure whether he has been affirmatively laid off; the insinuation lies, he seems to believe, in the distancing of his (former — or are they not?) peers on the day he shows up for work. The remainder of this day comprises an ever-increasing distancing of Bloch from his environment. In-between his endless perambulations, he chokes a lover. We are told of the murder almost in passing. The fact, of course, remains: Bloch has killed another person. And yet the killing is no culmination, it is neither conceived nor treated as some particularly “special” event of any kind — described as it is in the passivity and the distance that permeates the rest of the novel. No more, perhaps less. Page after page, before as much as after the killing, the breakdown in communication between Bloch and everyone around him is gradual but assertive. Page after page his intermittent conversations become even more so, then awkward, then futile. At a point words are eliminated altogether, replaced by drawings and symbols: the utter annihilation of any uttering of language.

On the face of it, in terms of their coming together as a visual inlay, as a whole, Handke's characters go on with their lives uninterrupted: they congregate, they interact, they drink, they eat, they have sex, (*one of them gets murdered*), they — even if awkwardly — still talk, they part ways and come back together. They faithfully follow the

soothingly mundane circles of the everyday. Before they know it, they have extracted themselves from their own surroundings, present in body, absent in mind: “he was so far away from what happened around him that he himself no longer appeared in what he saw and heard. ‘Like aerial photographs,’ he thought.”⁵ Soon enough Handke’s insinuation becomes clear. For Bloch, the attempt to pretend that life goes on just like it had done before comprises an aim of utmost importance: not only is he trying to push away the fact of his fall from grace; goalie to construction worker, famous athlete to laid off labourer. He seems to hope, even, that by so doing he might be able to also conceal his hideous act, to tuck it somewhere inside the mundaneness of his boresome repetitions, within the withdrawal of the articulation of any act, in his negation of language. “If he kept up his guard, it could go on like this, one thing after another.”⁶

If he kept up his guard, it could go on like this. In the glaring absence of any collective thread to catch those of us falling from grace at our moment of crisis, this pretence, the “keeping up of our guard,” becomes a final, an ultimate line of defence. Faced with this hammering and collapse of the social entity, of the social whole, the individual response might very well be a pretence this collapse is not actually taking place. Better even, to somehow hope that hiding behind this “keeping up of their guard” will at the very least raise the chances of those individual guard-raisers not being the ones to be picked and annihilated in the crisis-moment, that they might survive it more or less unscathed: *pretend that nothing happens*, goes this mantra, *and it could be that nothing actually happens to you in return.*

When does *something* happen over *nothing*? The beauty in Handke’s narrative and in his writing lies in his ability to overcome this precise dichotomy. In fiction, just as in the real world, two foundational logical possibilities exist

that are mutually exclusive; simultaneously, when combined, they exclude any third possibility from occurring. Possibility (A) is that something will happen. Possibility (B) is that nothing will happen. Handke circumvents the need for his narrative to fall under either possibility (A) or (B). He ignores it outright: what does or does not happen is not what is at stake, not at all. Joseph Bloch wanders around the unnamed city that Handke has built for him, entering and exiting spaces interior (houses, hotel rooms, cinemas), drifting into and out of streets. Things do constantly happen but in essence nothing appears to do so, since nothing carries the burden of consequence. What could have otherwise been major events capable of defining the main narrative become mere parentheses, backdrops. There is no head-turner through the entire novel. Quite the opposite. Bloch used to be famous, a well-known footballer. He is now firmly in the time of his fall from grace, introduced to us as a construction worker at that exact moment when he loses that job as well. A glorious past, an indifferent and ever-slumping present.

Athens would have been an ideal host city for Bloch. At the exact same historical moment when *everything* changes, this storm of catastrophic activity is masked under the banal, concealed within the action-less everyday. In face of the absence of action, nothing happens. In face of the absence of language, nothing is said. As the city slumps into its time of crisis and austerity, its dwellers become ever-so more nerveless: as if bodies strive to imitate, in their docility, the newly-found monotony of the place in which they reside.

The exception of silence

I ask myself, once again: what makes it so hard to come to peace with and to articulate this ostensible serenity of the commuter, of the passenger in the city at its moment of crisis? What, after all, can be so disconcerting in the absence of mundane small talk, what kind of feelings may the long silences truly conceal or instil?

5 Peter Handke, *The Goalie’s Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*, trans. Michael Roloff (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2007). 79.

6 *Ibid.*, 58.

What the politics of austerity has pushed for, and may have eventually succeeded in bringing about, is the breakdown of a key social bond. They have pushed for the sweeping atomization of the individual: at the current historical moment, a full four years into the process, *each* stands not with, but against *all*; every single entity is faced up against the whole. And this is nowhere more evident than in this space of forced conviviality, the metro. Of all urban spaces, there might be no other space more vividly articulating the breakdown of individual from her environment, just like the characters in Handke's novel. Right here, in the carriages of the Athenian metro, day in, day out, the expectancy for the unexpected, for something to occur, steadfastly gives way to the certainty that *nothing will happen*: better even, perhaps, that no matter what happens, no matter how gruesome or shocking, nothing will be forceful enough to disturb the passenger's newly found somnolent tranquillity. And even: that social and political action *in extremis* can and will only force more individual passivity, indifference and inaction.

And so, within our current state of exception (this abnormal state, the escape from the previous state of normality, where everything morphs and tends toward its utter state) what was previously normal becomes an exception: a new state of normality that is anything but so. What to do, then, how to act within this new environment? It is a gruesome dilemma. To remain inactive in face of devastating change means to render oneself docile — irrelevant, if not even complacent. But to act, to try break out and away from the generalised exception can only stand as an exception in itself — an exception within the exception that confirms the rule, a double negation that logically equals its elimination.

In the final pages of *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*, Bloch watches an amateur division football game from the sidelines. He is now a mere spectator to the spectacle in which he had once been a protagonist. As he watches he is joined, or maybe he joins another spectator. At some point a penalty kick is awarded to one of the two teams. A decisive moment that interrupts the

game's time-flow, capable of determining its eventual outcome. How Bloch and his co-spectator had found each other, or who this second character is, are both equally and entirely unimportant. What matters (*and here's a spoiler warning...*) is condensed in the line of reasoning that Bloch puts across to his fellow spectator at the sight of the awarding of the penalty kick. Bloch unveils all those mental dilemmas, the internal dialogue that he trusts to be taking place in the mind of the goalkeeper *at* (in German: *bei*) the sight of the penalty kick being executed, just as they would have occurred in his own mind right at the moment when he would have found himself in that same position. The essence of the dilemma, for Bloch as much as for the goalkeeper he now observes, lies at this single world, *bei*. Most often translated into the English language as *at*, *bei* shares a root with *by*. In their essence, they both describe a chronological as much as a spatial proximity. This *agony at* is an agony the novel grapples throughout and confronts at its culmination; an agony lasting a split-second moment, encapsulated in this near-magical elevation, in the condensation and the amalgamation of *time into distance*.

What gives Heindke's character the shivers is the *elfmeter*, a word describing both the act of executing a penalty kick but also *the distance* (eleven meters) between the point from which it is executed and the goalkeeper. Both *bei* and the *elfmeter* comprise, in this sense, time articulated through distance: they denote the distance between the person (the goalkeeper) and the football (the execution spot) which signals the moment for the act itself (the penalty kick) to occur.

Throughout the novel Bloch agonises over inaction; even committing the most gruesome of murders cannot help him escape the sense that nothing truly happens. No matter what he does, there will be no event. Whatever might actually happen in the novel is swiftly relegated to only description, the sole linguistic articulation, the uttering of something into nothing. Whatever he says vanishes. What Bloch expresses, as a character, is our agony for the untold, for the unuttered: language is if not the

prime means of human interaction, our so-called natural way of communicating with one another. Its suspension leaves us with anxiety over what is supposed to be there but is not. The moment when we utter our thought through language, just like the moment when we have to make a decision, lies at the very end, the final part of our thought predicament. That ultimate moment itself many not even necessarily involve action as we have come to strictly understand it: a goalkeeper faced with a penalty kick can be equally effective when choosing to stay put or to move in either direction. It is the whole process building up to the decision that comes to determine the result. For Bloch, for the goalkeeper that he now watches, as well as for the striker standing opposite him, the penalty's outcome is all but entirely decided upon *before* the ball is even touched, before it is even fired toward the goal post: it is all but entirely decided upon by their prior knowledge of each others' mentality and habit. The final outcome may come down to the twitching of a muscle, to the jiggle of a hand, to the nervous positioning of a limb revealing an intention to move in either direction. But no matter what happens (and what does actually happen in the final lines of the novel is wonderfully unexpected) this outcome is all but determined in the build up of the final act, in the time that precedes the utter, in the threshold event-moment when the footballer kicks the ball and this does or does not end in the goalkeepers' goal. In Handke's entire fictional world, up until these final moments, the event only has a build-up, the utter only has a precedent, and the uttering of thought through language is omitted as unnecessary rattle.

The annihilated space of the unuttered

What Handke describes through and up until the final pages of his novel is an end that never was; a constant flow, a sequence of occurrences that always fall short of turning into events, of *becoming*, a state-of-not-quite-being, the permanence of a limbo. The only actual event that occurs through its pages lies at its very end, in the seem-

ingly mundane, routine execution of a penalty kick. In describing this elfmeter, the "eleven meters" that denote *both* the distance of the ball from the goal-post set for the execution of the penalty kick *and* this execution in itself, Handke morphs time into distance: he finally recognizes an event, even if he still understands its occurrence by tracing its potential mark in space.

In very much of an equivalent manner the event of crisis (in its ostensibly metaphysically distant and abstract occurrence) may be described and articulated through space, through the tangible mark it leaves upon these seemingly mundane spaces of our cohabitation and co-existence: public spaces. And the space of mass transit is not only one, and perhaps the archetypal space of the kind; it is, in addition, the space that lingers through, over and under the rest of spaces public; a transient space that takes us out of and back into spaces private. This seemingly endless repetition, with its remarkably false assuredness that no force may ever be strong enough to break the banality of everyday transit, stands in absolute juxtaposition and contradiction to the sheer force of crisis wherein everything is bound to change — and swiftly so.

In Handke, the incomplete, the unuttered of the event comes to an end at the novel's own end: it is precisely here, at this peculiar amalgamation of space (the distance to the goal) into time (the moment of the penalty's execution) where his main character finally begins to talk, to voice his thoughts. And not only does he do so, but he even attempts to transcend the expected linearity of the event's occurrence — he attempts to foresee the outcome of the final event that now lies ahead of him.

A voice to foresee, to judge and to determine the outcome of an event while this is still playing out: what better metaphor for the voices of authority springing up during the crisis? As this apocalyptic-like moment breaks out and deepens, the clutter of voices carrying some supposed knowledge multiplies across the public realm. This moment of judgement, it would seem, lures all those with or without any supposed expertise to use their words to judge and to be judged on these words in return. Mean-

while, crushed somewhere underneath the discourse of expertise and authority, the uttering of language in the everyday seems to vanish: people talk less to one another, they go quieter. Soon enough, most of them become silent altogether.

This silence, the silence of the unuttered is nothing less than a death of the human condition as we had known it so far. To utter, let us recall, is to act — and to fulfil in this way one of Arendt’s three fundamental activities which in turn constitute her human condition, her *vita activa*. To act is also the only activity that is specifically concerned with the sociability of humans on earth. This corresponds to what Arendt terms “the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world.”⁷ Action is “the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter”⁸ and is only possible because of this condition of plurality: the act of joining two dots is plausible only if the two (a plurality: more than one) exist. The condition of plurality is a sine qua non, an absolute prerequisite for our existence as a whole and for our political existence in particular. For Arendt, politically speaking “to die is the same as to ‘cease to be among men.’”⁹ We are still among one another even if we have, for the largest part, stopped communicating between us. Does that make us politically alive, or dead?

A third possibility might very well exist — one where thought is still very much alive yet threatened, essentially blackmailed in remaining unarticulated: the *crisis* has emerged as the absolute narrative of our times, as a collective fate that has befallen us en masse. This understanding denies the individual her capacity to judge, to *krinein* — the ancient Greek word for judging that shares a root with *crisis*. The discourse of crisis as something that is collectively inevitable thrives upon, and at the same time feeds into this absolute lack of individual judge-

ment — what Arendt herself would have called political judgement. This is one of the most excruciatingly violent, if seemingly subdued, conditions of the crisis: its enforced chronological singularity (an event that happens at an instant) by definition allows zero time and zero space for the articulation of any alternative narrative.

But to believe that any decision, any change of course may be determined in a moment, to understand history through its articulation of a single event and similarly, to understand language entirely and exclusively *through and only once* words are uttered, is a great fallacy — an abrupt over-simplification stripping one and all of the elements of process, the state prior to the state of *being*: the liminal but ever-crucial state of *verging toward*. Contained within this *meanwhile*, this toward moment, is a formidable quality, even if (or: exactly because) it is unspoken.

This is precisely where the utter violence of the unuttered lies. Right here, in the spaces of the everyday that it permeates, having by this point established itself both as a miracle-like event that defies any logical explanation and as a judgement-event claiming for itself an exclusivity exactly over this capacity to judge; right now, at the moment when the crisis establishes itself more firmly than ever before; right here, where any questions of agency, of the role of the subject, become as utterly irrelevant as would be the commuter questioning the course of their palindromic movement inside the spaces of the city at crisis.

7 Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 7.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., 20.

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METRONOME

Antonis Vradis

1. Of cities and time

From the muffled midnight coffee sipping inside the Jewish Ghetto walls of renaissance Venice all the way to the roaring, high-speed commuter connections of the present, the greatest task in city-building has been to master time. To measure and to regulate, to compress or even to expand time as a dimension has been an indispensable precondition for the growth of the city itself.

At its most elemental, the city turns time into space: stretching out the human capacity for speed, and thereby condensing time, is what facilitates the unrelenting amassing of bodies, concrete and energy that constitutes the urban. But in its innermost part, the city has also been about potentiality: it has been built on, and always held in its essence, a promise of some kind of surplus, of freedom, growth, or whatever success. This potentiality only becomes possible once time is tamed; once it is stretched beyond the human capacity for movement and for speed, for urban transportation.

In its vein-like form, then, urban transportation is what makes the heart of the city beat. Metropolitan transportation holds a potential, a sublime power capable of becoming tangible: its sheer potential, this idea that *one may plausibly* arrive at a point from another within a fraction of the time required otherwise, has a very real, concrete effect. Sprawl, the growth of a city toward any point on the horizon, is facilitated by, and indeed becomes pos-

sible thanks to, urban transport. Transportation is in this sense no less than the city's great colonising force, a force that domesticates the uncontrollable time and through this, colonises and renders space urbanisable.

Not by chance, in the urban archipelago of our present time, the most glaring megalopolises are those featuring a dense transportation grid. The metro has become a city status symbol. Its mere existence constitutes a sign of affirmation not entirely unlike the social status assigned by the middle-class suburbanite to vehicle ownership. It is a reverse symbolism wherein an absolutely concrete and tangible system of public transportation—or a private medium—holds the potential of transporting and lifting its owner up through the ranks, to the middle-class, in the case of the individual living under capitalism; and onto some global city status in the case of the urban entity.

This perpetual potentiality, the capacity to endlessly insinuate some seemingly plausible ascendancy, has been a core constituent of urban power. Movement generously offers the sense of such a potential ascendancy, even if this may turn out to be always reversed, and therefore false. Once in the metro, the urbanite moves along a strictly predefined route and back again, always. The order, the *nomos*, in the urban relies upon this metro tempo being kept rigorously: it's a metronome holding and feeling the city's beat.

2. The metro-urban-apparatus

This simple time-keeping device perfectly encapsulates and reflects the human desire to *keep hold* of time, a blazingly futile attempt to fully master the dimension that permeates human existence to its core, over the dimension that defines and exposes human impermanence.

In building cities, humans were still able to partially master time, if only in order to rule over space. But the process of founding, of expanding cities — and sustaining this expansion — has required much more than any ruling over space. This stretching of human capacity, and this unrelenting amassing of bodies, of concrete and energy, have all required some great mastery: an entire finely-tuned set of techniques of calculating, ordering and governing populations and space. In sort: a set of techniques that constitute the urban apparatus. And what, exactly, is meant by the *apparatus*? Foucault:

[A] thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions — in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the network that can be established between these elements.¹

An urban apparatus would include the discourses, institutions and forms that constitute the urban, those that make it possible. On the other hand, it becomes an apparatus when these elements connect to become a network. And studying this network in time, a sort of historical element of sorts, helps us understand how power relations come to be. A historical element? Agamben:

By “the historical element,” I mean the set of institutions, of processes of subjectification, and of rules in which power relations become concrete.²

The metro is the arterial system of the urban apparatus, driven by and even dictating its heart, not just in the sense of connecting, transporting subjects through the urban network, but in the sense of creating them, in the sense of forming the commuter-subject.

Commuting is the essence of the urban: a city truly becomes urban once it has exceeded the size threshold by which its workers must exercise this practice in order to reach their workplace. It only becomes a ‘global’ city when it has a metro; urbanites are defined by being commuters. The longest commuting times, however, those that stretch the total hours of daily labour to and beyond the limits of human capacity, are exclusive to the global city, to any megalopolis of the present.

The apparatus, as a notion, finds itself upon that which remains unsaid: more than just a connecting thread, the apparatus is the *insinuation* and the *given*. The great force of the apparatus is that it renders itself invisible. As a vehicle, the metro renders urban life both *possible* and *given*; better even, it is what makes itself *appear* as *something of a given*, it renders supra-human urban speed normal. It is a speed-apparatus that lies at the core of the urban normal.

Understanding speed is essential in untangling the *rapidly* and *solidly* forming landscapes of the crisis. They are rapid, just like the velocity of the metro. And they are solid, just like the metro’s steady track, the speed of the sovereign. Landscapes form in an instant, as instant as is the rupture of crisis, and most importantly, landscapes become the new normal state of being, rendering themselves into a given and therefore unquestionable state of being. But if the strength of the apparatus lies in its invis-

1 Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 194)

2 Giorgio Agamben, *What Is an Apparatus? And Other Essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 6.

ibility, its greatest weakness is, obviously, its exposure. It takes just a moment for the apparatus to be exposed as a plexus that weaves together subjugation and consent: just a moment.

3. A moment in the life of a city

Just a moment: the date is January 24, 2013 and the time is somewhere in the early afternoon. As of the past few days not a single medium of mass transit traverses the city of Athens; workers at the city's Metro have been on strike since January 17. Today, eight days later, the Ministry of Transport has announced their civil conscription: an order for their forced return to work. In response, workers at Athens' Urban Transport Organisation (OASA) have called rolling 24-hour strikes in solidarity, while the workers on the Metro's Green Line (ISAP) and the city's trams have followed suit.

There is not a single transit medium in sight. The absence confirms the assumption with which I began the *Metronome* project: no element of everyday urban life shouts "routine" more than mass transportation systems. Along, perhaps, with the city's fabric — its buildings, its pavements and its streets — the image of buses, trams, and metro carriages traversing streets and running beneath them is emblematic of urban normality, emblematic of a city's orderly function. Commuting to and from work, this ever-cyclical, ever-repetitive crawling through the urban web relies almost exclusively on this network. The *routine* is the habitual, the periodic, the quotidian, yet etymologically, it derives from *route*: it denotes taking the usual course of action, the beaten path. Carriages and buses traverse the urban body, carrying yawning faces and constrained gazes. A population might very well find itself caught in the turbulent waves of political destabilisation or a financial crisis; people's personal lives might, and will most certainly be, caught in a vast array of personal dramas. Even then, against and despite them, the everyday marches on. No matter how large the public deficit, regardless of how many workers are laid off, their wages

reduced or not, few (sometimes very few) certainties continue apace. Day in and day out, the bus, tram or metro will be there, ready to take the worker back-and-forth, *from* and *to* her spaces of habitation and labour.

What happens inside these commuting spaces? The bus, the tram, and the metro carriage constitute ambivalent, questionable, grey zones; while they allow an encroaching of the private space of dwelling into public spaces, they simultaneously, at the exact same time, materialise the aggressive imposition of the workplace onto the non-productive time of the worker, through the colonisation of their commuting time as unpaid, even if it is inextricable from the labour process. Take a look at Athens in crisis: from afar, nothing has changed. Day in, day out, the traffic is still there, the buildings are mostly in place, buses carry on carrying people along. Of course, history has a fascinating quality of changing in the most exquisite of ways. By the time a grandiose event marks our once-and-for-all passage from an era to another, the most substantial part of change will have taken place already. Throughout these crisis days, Athens' buses, her trams and her metro carriages keep moving on. But who do they carry? Where to? With up to half of the active population officially or unofficially unemployed, commuting should perhaps be redefined, if not altogether scrapped. Fresh swarms of the unemployed come to meet the not-so-new migrants, the same people who had kept alive quintessential public spaces (the streets, the squares) and hybrid ones (the mass transit systems) alike, at times when neo-liberal euphoria was rendering them obsolete.

Returning to our chosen "now," we inhabit this moment, this single moment in the life of the city, where even the faintest façade of normality is lifted, when the vein-like transportation halts, for a fleeting historical second, where it is most difficult, altogether impossible perhaps, to pretend in any way that things keep on as any kind of normal. The city beat has stopped, the *metronome* has precious little rhythm to count: this is the largest mass transportation strike that Athens — and the

country — has seen in years. For an entire week, the city is paralysed.

The stakes are high, too high. By the eighth day, a civil conscription is declared. Following the police raids in occupied spaces across the city during the winter prior, a sense, even a scent, of normality and order has to be preserved, at any expense. This is even more so, since the transportation workers would be the very first in a wave of public sector workers to go on strike, their main and common demand being exemption from the so-called single payroll. Part of the government's agreement with the troika of lenders, this single payroll was to be applied across the entire public sector, leading to extensive wage reductions. And the essence of the single payroll as a notion lies in its universality: should one striking group be strong enough to break the enforced deal, it would almost certainly cause its collapse.

So the strike had to end, and its long, historical moment did so with the declaration of the civil conscription by the Ministry of Transport. It was an order that was exceptional, in more than one sense. The measure carries some formidable symbolic weight, since the law that provides for it traces back to 1974, that is to the very early days of the post-dictatorial state. This is Law 17/1974, "Concerning the Political Address of Emergency Situations." The "emergency situations" are specified to include a deliberate vagueness: "every sudden situation caused either by natural *or other events*, or by anomalies of nature and which result in the hindrance and the disruption of the financial and the social life of the country" (emphasis added). The order is rife with symbolism: Law 17/1974 was spelled out almost at the same time as the commencement of the post-dictatorial state; it was an attempt to draw and to outline the limits of the democratic regime, to define *normality by deduction*, by articulating what is to be deemed exceptional, and therefore unacceptable. Just short of four decades on, as the long cycle of the post-dictatorial Third Greek Democracy seemed to be drawing to an end, one of the most symbolically charged decisions was executed upon workers who were disrupting

the mundane, the quotidian. The striking metro workers were committing the ultimate sin: they were exposing the urban apparatus, making it visible. This is simply unacceptable. Despite and against pivoting social change, the perception of routine has to continue: the everyday must and will carry on.

4. Tick-tock

And the everyday did carry on. On January 25, hours after the metro workers had been forced back to work, I jumped back into the metro. I rode on its Green Line, the ISAP — the Electric Railway of Athens and Piraeus — a remnant of a time when the two cities were entirely separate entities. The ISAP stretches from the port of Piraeus, with its anachronistic grandiosity, eighties-style, dense glass buildings reflecting on the water, opening up to sea routes to the Aegean and far beyond. At the line's other end, pretty much due north at the other end of the Attica Basin, lies the leafy old suburb of Kifisia. Sunk in its blissful middle-class tranquillity, Kifisia oversees Athens through its distant snobbishness, the metro extension being a necessary evil that connects it to a city it wants to have as little as possible to do with. Yet more affluent estates lie even further north: here, distance from, and not proximity to, the station is a privilege, a symbol of affluence and power.

In-between its two end stations, the ISAP weaves together working-class southern neighbourhoods, the eternal buzz of Omonoia, the density of Victoria, the ultimate commuter hub of Attiki; and central neighbourhoods that slowly give way to the northern affluence. There is something particular about the ISAP, a part of the Athenian metro that is not quite so: its unsteady pace and access to natural light displays a tranquillity that is nowhere to be seen in the metro's underground darkness. ISAP has, in this way, a quality shared by particular metro lines the world over: Berlin's S-Bahn, with its socialist-reminiscent spaciousness and its overground outwardness; London's old Silverlink (now the Overground), the way it used to

be, with its record delays and its seemingly unorthodox routes, ignoring and bypassing the city centre; or New York's night-time and weekend subway services, reliable in their unreliability... Nearly every city, it would seem, has at least one metro line that reveals something of its psyche, one part of the network that for whatever reason escapes the readiness and accuracy of the apparatus. In Athens this is the ISAP, and if there is anywhere that's fit to eavesdrop for words between the metronome's strikes, it's here.

Tick. "I never thought it would come to this. But I probably have to go, I have to get out of this place. And soon, you know it, so will you."

Tock. The middle-aged man has one of the most shy but frenzied gazes I have seen in a long while. The combination is a peculiar one, and it gets me thinking. In the metro, in the bus or in the tram, our utmost struggle is to rest our gaze somewhere; better even, to allow it a private thoroughfare, a trajectory to reach beyond the point where we stand. In a space of intense togetherness, every single other sense of ours is exposed, naked: we may overhear conversations, we may smell and we may touch our fellow passengers. Taste aside, the only sense acting as line of defence against this cramped and forced conviviality is sight. The old man's gaze appears to be lost, and yet it may be anything but. The swivelling movement of his eyes is an ever-constant attempt to negotiate momentary grace. As our gaze extends away from our bodies toward the closest visible obstacle (whether in the way of a fellow passenger, or merely an intermediate surface), resting it somewhere may very well be an attempt to claim back some of the privacy that has been taken away from us: the frenzied moving around of the old man's eyes brings to mind nothing less than a motionless duck-and-cover, trying to fight against this oppression of a forced conviviality, this fast and furious coming-together-apart at the exact moment when the city comes apart. It breaks down *as a whole*. Above the ground lies a society reduced to a spectator of its own destruction, and what a perplexing spectacle its underground reflection makes for. Here, in

the spaces of the metro, Athenians do not watch their city being destroyed; like women in John Berger, they "watch themselves being looked at,"³ this timeless destiny reserved for the oppressed. To place our gaze outside the trajectory of one another becomes a near-instant attempt to reflect away from, and to compensate for, our over-ground inertia.

Tick. I never thought it would come to this. I never thought that I myself would be here, overhearing this young couple (are they twenty-early-something? At most). Day in, day out, here in the ISAP it is difficult to avoid all the clichés about a society that is at war with itself, about the people who I encounter, who are traumatised almost as much, it feels, as by being caught in a physical war. I encounter people who had simply not expected to be in this position, ever, in their lives. I never thought it would come to this. And, as tremendously devastating as it may be, at the very least, an actual, physical war carries with it some tangible signs of warning. There may be some precursory acts, and even if not, the sheer force of physical destruction would at the very least allow everyone a concrete realisation of where they now stand, of what they have been caught up in. But here? What happens to a city engulfed into this metaphysical transcendence of crisis? The combination of abstract cause and absolutely concrete effect is mesmerising. Nothing short of a catastrophe, similar only to the vast humanitarian disasters left behind by the likes of hurricanes and earthquakes, the crisis is nevertheless never fully (and almost not even partially) explained, or rationalised: it just is. Austerity, supposedly coming in response to this very crisis, has emerged as the new *carte blanche*: "a veritable 9/11 in Europe: a watchword, in other words, for neoliberal governments to quieten any dissenting voice."⁴ It is that, and much more. It is a new apparatus by which maximised speed, the abruptness and

3 John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: BBC and Penguin Books, 1972), 46.

4 Andy Merrifield, "Urban Jacobinism?," *Cities@Manchester*, 2013. <http://citiesmcr.wordpress.com/2013/02/04/urban-jacobinism/>

the altogether sudden, becomes a norm. It is an invisible threat that rams through our lives, coming from seemingly nowhere and, therefore, potentially, from anywhere, an invisible threat that sends our gaze into a restless search for a cause.

Tock. Perhaps, more than any else, the word that epitomises our present condition is *soon*. The young man's words to his lover ring, once again in my years. "I will probably have to go... and *soon*, you know it, so will you." He knows little other than his imminent arrival, and he also knows that the same goes for his lover: both of them will leap into some swifter-than-ever-expected migration. Why? That matters little, and essentially not at all. The same is true of what matters during our trip on a metro, when we wait for the announcement of the next stop: why is everyone in a carriage? Why are they all heading in the same direction? Why is the route defined and drawn the way it is? Would anyone be able to answer these questions? Their sheer complexity protects the apparatus, the invisible. We don't even know from where to begin. Why we are here and why we are going elsewhere matters little. What does matter, is that this transportation will indeed happen. And *soon*.

Somehow the ever-restless gaze of the old man now makes sense. In the metro carriage, swivelling along the tracks, just like a whole world caught into the turbulence of the crisis, there is next to no time to reflect. A primordial *reflex* replaces reflection, taking the gaze away from where danger may potentially lie: that is, from anywhere. It is a jump to the exit — even if by sight alone — and the ever-accelerating, swivelling landscape that surrounds us.

5. "I never thought it would come to this"

"I never thought it would come to this." The rest of the passengers in the carriage and I—at least those of us close enough to the young couple—have long become accidental eavesdroppers. Why are we bearing witness to this conversation? Why are we allowed to listen to what ought to have been tucked deep inside the realm of the private?

Why does the couple seem indifferent to safeguarding the privacy of their precious words?

Tick. Tick. And *tick* again. At this time of crisis, unable to fully comprehend what is happening to us, we jump to any exit from the scene around us, to be sure: gazes extend far, far beyond the metro carriage. Yet still, defying mind and gaze, our bodies are still here, their inescapable materiality binding us behind and inside its steel panels, fixing us to its trembling ground. *Tick, tick, tick...* As historical time around us muddles and speeds up, the rhythmic repetition of the everyday gives way to an ever-more-frantic tempo, asynchronous and rapid, incomprehensible and mesmerising. In what may be an instinctive attempt to drag my mind away from its unintentional eavesdropping, I trace with my eyes the arm of the young man, all the way down to his hands and to his fingers. While he talks to his lover calmly, his hands gesture fiercely. Soon, both hands become so tense that the veins appear to acquire a separate volume of their very own: from where I stand, they seem as if they were disjointed from his hands and somehow fixed back onto them. His fingers' muscles are completely locked into position. He continues to spell his words out calmly, staggering words, words that one would only expect to hear with some devastating ferociousness, a ferociousness shoved into his body's intense inertia instead. The realisation begins to sink in that the young man may be performing what he cannot bear to articulate through his words. He is literally embodying what he would have wanted to keep altogether unfelt, unseen and, more than anything, unsaid.

Neither of them would have suspected that they were going to live through the puzzled moment they now do. The disparity is unbearable: for most of us, it would feel impossible to even play witness to a condition that we are unable to articulate. What is, in the end, this mystifying crisis? How did it come about? When might it end? The questions, for most, have taken on some theological quality. They are theological both in the sense of the incapacity of our reason and in the stoicism these people deploy in dealing with an unbearable present. It seems

as if the “this, too, shall pass” mantra has been replaced by an exodus to the past and, at the same time, a jump into the future. The young couple “never thought” (this “never” was in their happier times past) and they know, they sense, what will happen to them “soon” (in their near future). And so here lies the ultimate contradiction. Even if our bodies are located inside the metro carriage, joined to its moving space, our minds are in synch with present time precisely by their distancing from it; *contemporary* as per Agamben, that is, “that relationship with time that adheres to it through a disjunction and anachronism.”⁵ It is a disjunction, a distance as a pre-requisite for us to gain any sense of perspective, to be able to then become contemporaries to our present in Agamben’s second sense: “the contemporary is he who firmly holds his gaze on his own time so as to perceive not its light, but rather its darkness.”⁶ As the mesmerising rhythm of history raises its tempo, more and more of us find ourselves in this in-between time, detached from the darkness of a present we cannot read through. More and more of us linger between a tick, and a tock.

6. The *prónoia* beat

This is, then, the bipartite theology of the crisis: one the one hand, there is the helplessness we feel in face of acts that seem divine in their undefinable root, stemming from some superior force that we can neither fully comprehend, nor do we really want to delve into that much. On the other hand, the crisis is dealt with through a new, reinforced *oikonomia*: by getting things done at the level of the mundane, we are controlling and governing human behaviour, as per Agamben. This is a crisis of judgement in quite some literal sense, then: we are doing away with thinking overall, and just making sure that we get things done. We traverse through our everyday, not more than flies in Wittgenstein’s famous glass bottle.

For Wittgenstein’s fly, the bottle is a transparent cage that traps it, barring it from roaming the rest of the world. At the exact same time, this bottle is the fly’s entire world. The bottle, says Wittgenstein, is language: this is what allows us to comprehend and to communicate, to see into a world we can otherwise never quite fully reach. In the urban realm, Wittgenstein’s fly is the commuter, and her medium of urban transportation is her transparent bottle. Allowing her to reach the world that surrounds her, this is the exact same medium that nails her, that traps her inside. The commuting medium is what helps her comprehend the existence of an entire world, the urban whole, that she can never quite physically traverse in its vast entirety.

This feeling of incomplete traversal, of knowing where she stands, is exactly the source of disorientation and loss for the commuter. One would have been tempted to play down, to question the attachment of the commuter to her transportation medium, or her following of its retrogression, as just some source of disorientation or loss, particularly when compared to the sheer devastation of migration, or exile.

And yet this is quite some loss: it is the loss of much of a capacity to think outside the apparatus, an apparatus that thinks both before the urbanite and for him. In the Greek language, the notions of *welfare* and of *forethought* are both articulated through the term *prónoia*. The welfare state, then, translates into the *kratos prónoias*, and it is most intriguing to see that as this form of state apparatus, experienced in Europe in the preceding decades, fades away, a new kind of *prónoia* rises in the horizon. This one is in much closer proximity to the second notion, that of *forethought*. So far, the *prónoia* has come to denote the prudence of providence, the act of securing against future pitfalls. But etymologically, the *prónoia* is that which *precedes (pro-) thought (-nous)*: not just securing against future risk, it is what rests before, and lies beneath, the intelligible as a whole. The present crisis — social, political, economic — exposes this crisis of judgement in its most pure, its most naked of forms. It exposes the mechanism,

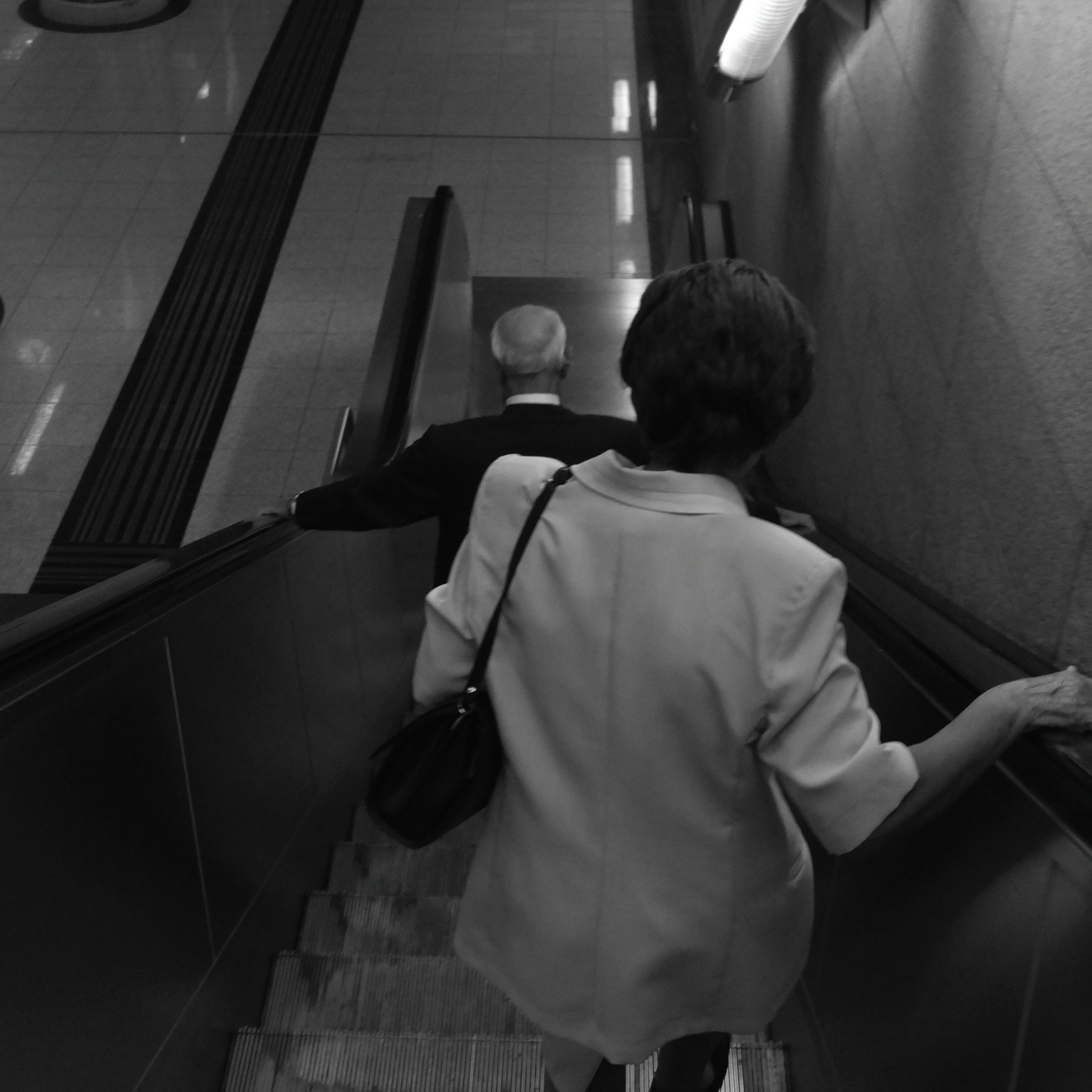
⁵ Agamben, *What Is an Apparatus?*, 41.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 44.

the network, that lies beneath and before thought; that which renders the urbanite a commuter, their perambulation a retrogression, their freedom of movement confined to a gaze and a thought. It is an apparatus that seeps through the said and the unsaid, the uttered as much as the unuttered. This is the historical moment when individuals come face to face with the historical *element*, as Agamben would have it, the moment when these processes of subjectification become evident; when the thread of the power relations that send them in their endless retrogression become visible; and when the metronome acquires its volume, making the unuttered thoughts in the metro all the more startling, all the more violent.

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ΕΜΒΛΟΝ ΠΟΡΤΑΣ

ΚΑΘΕΣΤΕ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΤΙΣΤΡΕΦΗ ΔΕΞΙΑ ΚΑΤΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΡΤΑΣ

- * ΠΡΟΣΤΕΤΕ ΤΗ ΑΣΤΡΑΓΑΛΗ ΟΥΣΙΑ
- * ΤΡΑΒΗΣΤΕ ΤΗ ΛΑΒΗ
- * ΑΝΩΣΤΕ ΤΗ ΣΤΡΟΦΑ

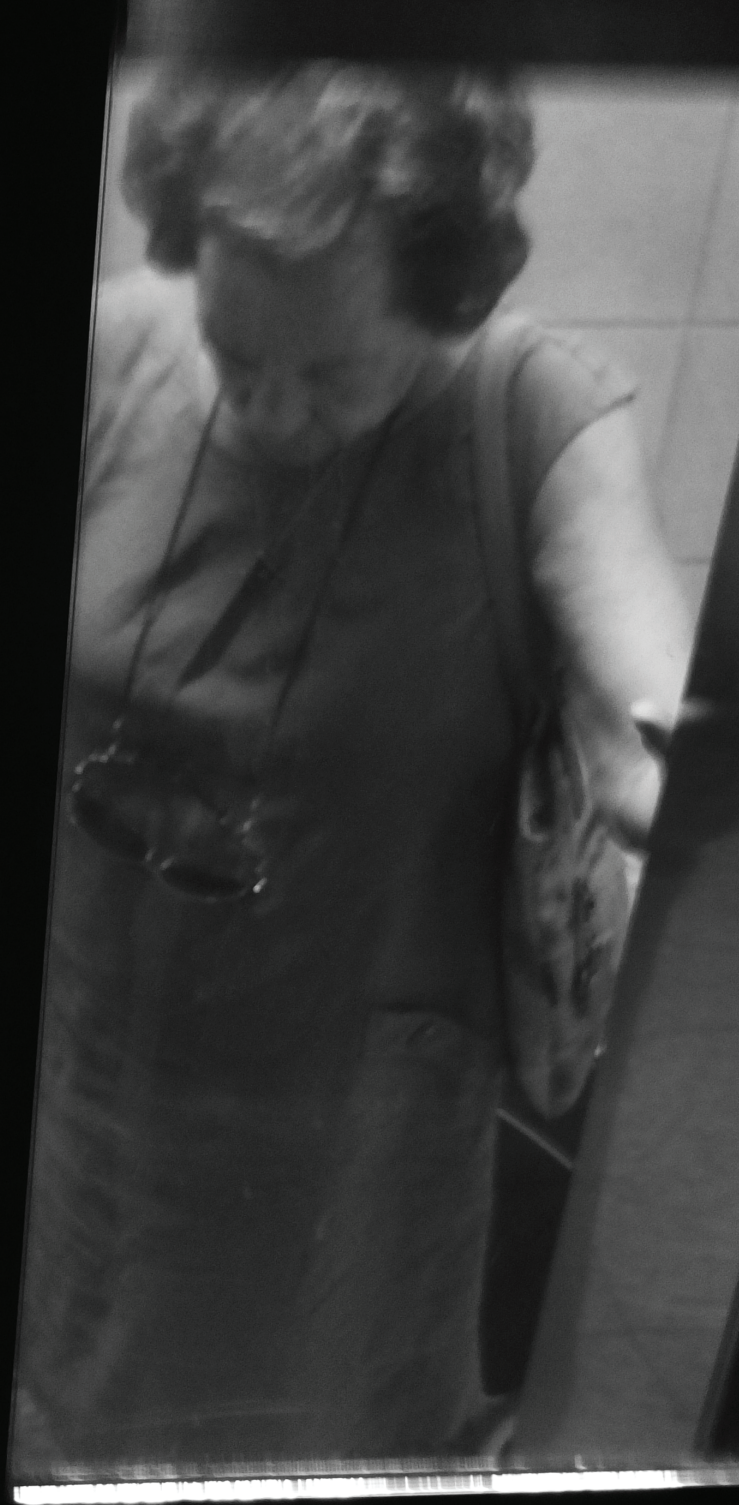
ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗ ΔΕΞΙΑ











PERFORMING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY *IN SITU*

Christos Filippidis

1. Linguistic (and Other) Suggestions

In the opening chapter of his book *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*, Slavoj Žižek adduces the following story: “there is,” he writes, “an old story about a worker suspected of stealing: every evening, as he leaves the factory, the wheelbarrow he rolls in front of him is carefully inspected. The guards can find nothing. It is always empty. Finally, the penny drops: what the worker is stealing are the wheelbarrows themselves.”¹ Here, Žižek utilises the paradox of this story to reveal the hidden mechanisms of meaning-assigning activated for the needs of the conceptualisations of violence. Part of a near-reflex associative process, the worker’s daily exiting of the factory with a wheelbarrow-*form* insinuates and logically presupposes the existence of an object-*content*. As part of his sideways reflections on violence, Žižek matches this automatism of thought to the “visible expressions of violence” that occupy the centre-stage of our minds and which, in the vortex of dominant symbolisms, take on their only-too-familiar moral and value form. The empty wheelbarrow — let alone its repetition — obviously comprises an act that is void of meaning, should one interpret it in a more or less self-evident context. Yet what the worker does comprises a deviation from the framework set by the automatism in

question. The worker chooses to steal the wheelbarrow itself, showing that what had in its initial interpretation comprised form-for-some-content for him comprises, paradoxically, the content itself. The peculiar rupture in this meaning continuum helps Žižek claim that we must learn “to disentangle ourselves from the fascinating lure of this directly visible ‘subjective’ violence” and to try to understand “the contours of the background which generates such outbursts.”² This attempt will inadvertently lead us, according to Žižek, to the revealing of a more foundational form of violence — one that he terms “symbolic” — which is “embodied in language and its forms” and that “pertains to language as such, to its imposition of a certain universe of meaning.”³

If there is anything worth keeping from this symbolic use of the small, repeated “mischief” of the worker’s it is that we owe, every time that such processes of meaning-assigning are activated, to carefully examine the conditions of the constitution — and therefore, the terms of the legitimization of any such given process. And it is not coincidental that Žižek’s main conclusion from the use of this “parable” inadvertently leads to the kingdom of language. Not only because the human “made their own life, their nature, a stake of their speech” and, as eloquently summed up by Giorgio Agamben, “they placed their own

1 Cited in Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (New York: Picador 2008), 1.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid, 9, 10.

existence at the stake of language.”⁴ But also, at the same time, because language equips us with a paradigmatic interweaving mechanism of form and content through its everyday function. Agamben, attempting to articulate some very basic thoughts on the nature of language and the function of *command*, refers to a small chapter in the book of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus*, and he utilises some relevant linguistic observations of theirs. Following the two theoreticians he then claims that there are many facets of language “that cannot be reduced down to a system of signs for us to communicate the signified through their signifier. For example, between ‘John walks’ and ‘John, walk’ there is apparently the same semantic framework, yet at the pragmatic level it is completely different — the framework is shifted altogether.”⁵ In essence, Deleuze and Guattari commence from the research of the philosopher J.L. Austin on performative verbs and from what he had initially termed *performative hypothesis*. But primarily, since the latter was consequently abandoned by Austin himself, they rest upon his subsequent theory concerning statements as acts, i.e. his theory of *speech acts*⁶ — and the strand of pragmatics to which this theory paved the way.

4 Giorgio Agamben, “Giorgio Agamben on Biopolitics (the Greek tv interview)” This is the interview that Agamben gave to Akis Gavriilidis in 2011, as part of the tv series *Places of Life, Places of Ideas*. Available at <https://nomadicuniversality.wordpress.com/2015/10/30/giorgio-agamben-on-biopolitics-the-greek-tv-interview-2/>.

5 Ibid. Agamben’s note takes us a few years back, to his observations concerning the paradoxical function of the statement and the closedness characterising the world of signs. He wrote, back then, that “the individual can put language into act only on condition of identifying himself with the very event of saying, and not with what is said in it.” See Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books 2002), 116.

6 See also the extremely condensed and substantial overview of Austin’s thought by Jenny Thomas, in the second chapter (“Speech Acts”) of her book *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics* (London: Longman, 1995).

Austin effectively made a tripartite distinction for the purpose of comprehending the function of these acts. Following the collapse of the performative hypothesis, he distinguished three different dimensions for each act. He termed the first one locution/locutionary act — this one relates to all that was actually said. The second one, illocution/illocutionary act — this relates to the intention of the speaker behind their words. And the third one, perlocution/perlocutionary act — this is no other than the result of the speech act upon the audience.⁷ What Austin revealed, then, is that there is something much more meaningful in everyday language than the mere meaning of the words that we use; that words, after all, perform some acts.⁸ And this is precisely where Austin’s valuable contribution to the field of thought and interpretation of communication lies. Should we therefore carefully follow this reading, it would seem that speech acts pertain a relative — if important — autonomy in relationship to the system of signs within which we would expect statements to acquire their meaning and their semantic content.⁹ In this sense, it would not be too far-stretched at this point for one to argue that Austin’s novelty points at another way for us to read Žižek’s parable adduced earlier on. In his case, the wheelbarrow is not merely empty, it is also void of meaning. But also beyond that which is visible, the worker makes another act that has its own importance and its own meaning. If, in the linguistic examples, the linguistic *forms* (statements) appear to safeguard, in many cases, some autonomy in relation to the semantic *content*

7 Ibid.

8 This is precisely what Austin means in the title *How To Do Things with Words* of his series of lectures at the University of Harvard in 1955.

9 We nevertheless ought to clarify at this point that these statements are not self-sufficient overall, since they depend upon any given cultural context, which legitimates these statements in having precisely the performative force in question. See also Thomas, *Meaning in Interaction* and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 82.

of the words used—even acting as content per se—, in the case of the worker the wheelbarrow-form of his pertains its own autonomy, both in relation to the content that one would expect to find inside it and to the act of such an expectation in itself. And as we saw already, for the worker this act comprised the content itself from the upstart.

Following the thought of the linguist Oswald Ducrot, Deleuze and Guattari articulate this clearly. There are terms and statements in everyday language that appear to be unquestionably self-referential due to their illocutionary force. “And the illocutionary is in turn explained by collective assemblages of enunciation, by juridical acts or equivalents of juridical acts, which, far from depending on subjectification proceedings or assignments of subjects in language, in fact determine their distribution.”¹⁰ Here, the juridical reference is anything but coincidental. To the extent that the primary mission of language, as per Deleuze and Guattari, is not to transfer information but *order-words*, their conclusion seems to be logical in that “[o]rder-words do not concern commands only, but every act is linked to statements by a ‘social obligation.’”¹¹ This social obligation is obviously juridically mediated and articulated. Ducrot goes as far as constructing “a pragmatics covering all of linguistics and moves toward a study of assemblages of enunciation, considered from a ‘juridical,’ ‘polemical,’ or ‘political’ point of view.”¹² The importance of such referral to other sectors of meaning-assignment of the human experience is enormous—and it proves that the value of performativity—or to be more precise, of illocutionarity and perlocutionarity, concerns fields that exceed far beyond the field of strict linguistic use. The position of Deleuze and Guattari is indicative—according to them, in the shadow of this omnipresent command, linguistic acts “seem to be defined as the set of all *incorporeal transformations* current in a given society and *attributed*

to the bodies of that society.”¹³ They are, in other words, bodiless linguistic apparatuses applied—and performing *something*—directly on the bodies. “Every order-word [...] carries a little death sentence,” write Deleuze and Guattari.¹⁴ Would it not be here, then, that the citation of *habeas corpus* acquires its full meaning, one which Agamben referred to—and one that ensured from the 13th century already, the physical, embodied presence of a person before the court?¹⁵

In light of these observations, one ought to admit that no thinker has highlighted the importance of performativity for the purposes of embodied perception any better than Judith Butler. Her incisive observations, commencing from the notion of the gendered self as a performative construction, revealed some unique sensitivity concerning the understanding of the complicated nature of the construction of the subject. And—as should be expected—one of the primary starting points in Butler’s thought lies in Austin’s aforementioned theory of the speech acts—more specifically, as noted by Athena Athanasiou, in the “Derridean critical reading” of this theory, introducing an “updated version of the theory of performativity in the context of gender and the gendered/sexual difference.”¹⁶ “Gender is no way a stable identity,” writes Butler. “Rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time—an identity instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*.”¹⁷ It is not, then, that gender *is*—it is that it *happens*. And their performative expressions acquire meaning precisely upon this difference. Butler’s contribution

10 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 78.

11 Ibid, 76, 79.

12 Ibid, 524.

13 Ibid, 80.

14 Ibid, 76.

15 See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 73.

16 See the chapter “Gender Trouble: Feminist Theory and Politics after the Deconstruction of Identity,” in Athena Athanasiou, *Life at the Limit: Essays on Gender, Body and Biopolitics* (Athens: Ek-kremes, 2007), 205 (in Greek).

17 Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” *Theatre Journal* 49, no. 1 (1988): 519.

to the ongoing reflection on the production of identity appears invaluable, now in a sense making necessary and unavoidable a passing through the world of performativity, should one wish to seriously deal with the meaning-assigning of the Self and the Other. The emphasis upon the processes of production of gendered difference has highlighted, in the most exemplary of ways, the leading role that the body holds as the field in which the reproduction of dominant cultural conventions is at stake, on an everyday level. And it updated the importance of our acts not only as political acts, but as performative ones—highlighting their unavoidably public character.¹⁸ Butler gets to the point, in the end, of claiming that “gender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed.”¹⁹

Yet in her latter work, the American theorist exceeds the field of the strictly gendered production, trying out a performative reading of the wider notion of *precarity* or to be more precise, the precarious subject. As part of this attempt, then, she claims that it is now an urgent matter for us to listen out to the suggestions of a social ontology “according to which we are, each and every one of us, exposed to one another—and precarity comprises a generalised condition of this social ontology.”²⁰ Precarity, then, is related to this foundational interaction with one another, lying in the shade of those social and cultural contexts in which our everyday experience (is forced to) acquire its meaning. In the heart of this interaction, Butler persistently raises the question of “how could it then be that the way in which we act, the way in which we specialise the forms of our existence—what we can term the field of performativity—is placed within a sphere of

relationality without which we cannot insist upon our Own Being? We do not construct our self on our own, nor are we completely defined.”²¹ In this ambivalent and suspended position of the subject, then, the performative relationship is expressed through ways of reproduction but also of rejection and diversion of social conventions. This suspension comes out of the world of order-words and social obligation, to bring Deleuze and Guattari back to our discussion, and as an amphoteric position that at times hosts negation, and at other times acceptance, within an environment of rules and orders. “But let us remember,” says Butler, “that performativity does not just refer to explicit speech acts, but also to the reproduction of norms. Indeed, there is no reproduction of the social world that is not at the same time a reproduction of those norms that govern the intelligibility of the body in space and time.”²² Performativity, therefore, as the field in which the potentialities of belonging, as we all as exclusions are born—and therefore, as the field in which the recognition of the subject is assessed—can only inherently relate with the possibilities of precarity that linger and constantly haunt on the one hand the relational constitution of the self, and on the other, the reproduction of this social world—eventually implying that in a sense, and through the field of performativity, our own exposure to precarity is performed as well.

In light of this implication—and particularly amidst the dark environment created by the “crisis” in Greece, it would make sense to examine the meaning of the state of emergency as a producer of precarity par excellence. As Athanasiou writes, “the state of emergency renders every form of life vulnerable to the possibility of the imposition

18 Ibid, 526.

19 Ibid, 527.

20 Judith Butler, “Performative Politics and Critique of State Violence,” trans. Michalis Laliotis, in Athena Athanasiou (ed.), *Performativity and Precarity: Judith Butler in Athens* (Athens: Nissos, 2011), 38 (in Greek). This is the third Annual Lecture in memory of Nicos Poulantzas that took place on December 16, 2009 at the Goethe Institute in Athens.

21 Judith Butler, “From Performativity to Precarity,” trans. Akis Gavriilidis, in Athanasiou (ed.), *Performativity and Precarity*, 65. This is the lecture that took place on December 17, 2009 at the Panteion University of Athens—and effectively comprises an edited version of the lecture titled “Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics,” which took place at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid on June 8, 2009.

22 Ibid, 75.

of any status of exception, such as the removal of rights.”²³ Yeat Athanasiou’s reading is not limited upon a mere noting of the strong ties that link together precarity and the state of emergency — but she suggests in addition a conceptualisation of the latter as a performative act. It would make sense for the state of emergency to be read hereby in two different ways, in regards to its performative function. On the one hand, it invades in the form of the most imposing and violent framework of reproduction/suspension of rules in the field of performativity; in that sphere, that is, in which Butler positions both the terms of the constitution of the self and precarity as an ontological regime and a constant possibility. On the other hand, it is inherently involved in the conditions of the production of precarity *per se* — since, as Athanasiou writes, “it is particularly important [...] for us to conceive the act of suspension of law, under the state of emergency terms, as a performative act — some act that “refreshes” the spectre of an otherwise “redundant” sovereignty — therefore creating a contemporary form of sovereignty in the field of governmentality.”²⁴ The importance of this observation lies upon the fact that the state of emergency does not merely apply — as part of a typical correspondence — a suspension that has been theoretically and irrevocably conceived in the field of law, but it constantly reformulates the model of sovereignty itself, which has in turn ensured to allow it (ie. the state of emergency) an exceptional position (exceptional, in both senses of the term) amidst its legal arsenal. And it is precisely this transformative dynamic that testifies to its performative function. Not only because, as pointed out by Agamben, the notion of necessity *theoretically* becomes a “primary source of law,” doing something much more important than merely forming law — since it is this notion that provides, first and foremost, the capacity for it to become conceivable at the first

place.²⁵ But also because, should the passage from the field of *norm* (semantics, as Deleuze and Guattari would have it) to the field of *act* (i.e. pragmatics) did not take place, with the application of a real state of exception, sovereign power would not have been able to ritualistically re-affirm its own mission, which is not other than the performance of the suspension of the law.²⁶

The importance of the act, and by extension of the performative function, in the field of law emerges after all from the structural interweaving of language and law, as this was schematically revealed from our brief passage from Deleuze and Guattari. Agamben reminds us that it is not at all certain that a norm will be applied, “just as between language and world, so between the norm and its application there is no internal nexus that allows one to be derived immediately from the other.”²⁷ To the contrary, what ensures the application of the norm, the Italian thinker assures us, presupposes a “trial” which reaches its apogee, ritualistically, with the activation of a statement (i.e. linguistically) that directly acts, as we saw, upon the body (and more specifically, the delivery of a verdict in a courtroom — that is, the speech act *par excellence*), utilising the illocutionary force of words and their perlocutionary dynamic.²⁸ A statement “whose operative reference to

23 Athena Athanasiou, *The Crisis as a “State of Exception”: Critiques and Resistances* (Athens: Savvalas, 2012), 84 (in Greek).

24 *Ibid.*, 88.

25 Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 17, 24. Agamben writes: “According to a tenaciously Latin adage [...], *necessitas legem non habet*, ‘necessity has no law,’ which is interpreted in two ways: ‘necessity does not recognize any law’ and ‘necessity creates its own laws.’ [...] In both cases, the theory of the state of exception is wholly reduced to the theory of the *status necessitatis*.”

26 See here the renowned definition by Carl Schmitt regarding the sovereign, in Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 5.

27 Agamben, *State of Exception*, 40.

28 Let us not forget that this exposure-to-language had been excellently articulated by Agamben himself in *The Coming Community*, when he wrote that “exposure-is pure relationship with language itself, with its taking-place. It is what happens to something (or more precisely, to the taking-place of something) by the very fact of being in relation to language, the fact of being-called.” See

reality is guaranteed by the institutional powers.²⁹ From the same institutional powers that had erstwhile instructed the exception to constitute law — providing, in this way, an honorary position for the *state of exception* within the latter, including into the rule its own suspension and allowing, eventually, for a logical short-circuit. Following, therefore, Athanasiou's inducement we ought to see, indeed, a performative case within the state of emergency, a case whose weighty material consequences have already started to make an appearance in the city of Athens.

2. From Language to Paradigm

The structural relationship between language (and therefore, its pragmatic function *too*) and law (and therefore, the state of emergency *too*) is also revealed in another, indirect way through Agamben's work. Many years before he attempted to offer some clarifications upon the central position of the notion of *paradigm* in his work, the Italian philosopher wrote: "exemplary is what is not defined by any property, except by being-called."³⁰ It would therefore suffice to even briefly ponder over the definition above in order for one to see the similarity this holds with the exposure-to-language that Agamben focused upon in the

late part of the same book, and to which he dedicated and continues to dedicate a large part of his work as a whole.³¹

An unquestionable similarity that momentarily gives birth to a fair question, as we seek the ways in which the aforementioned exposure becomes paradigmatic. This pure relationship with language — which as we saw, comprises the statutory condition for the reproduction of the social world and its rules — is characterised by the properties of a paradigm. But how is the notion of the paradigm used in the work of Agamben? The Italian philosopher deals with the issue in both his book *The Coming Community* and in *The Signature of All Things — On Method*. Nevertheless, despite any possible similarities, these two public appearances of the paradigm in Agamben's work appear to hint at different levels. A conclusion that is rather plausible, if one takes into account that the two lie eighteen years apart. And this distance might very well be insinuated by the fact that the Italian thinker chooses to use, in these two texts, two different terms of the Italian language: *esempio* (which corresponds to the English word *example*) and *paradigma* (which corresponds to the English word *paradigm*), in order to describe their paradigmatic function.³²

Nevertheless, and for the purposes of our own investigation, it would make sense to ponder over the second, more contemporary and detailed description of the notion of the paradigm. Agamben writes in relation to this: "In the course of my research, I have written on certain figures such as homo sacer, the Muselmann, the state of exception, and the concentration camp. While these are all actual historical phenomena, I nonetheless treated them as paradigms whose role was to constitute and make intelligible a broader historical-problematic context."³³

Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 96. Effectively, we could claim that what Agamben calls *exposure* corresponds and belongs to the field of performativity, as this was highlighted by Butler. Both choose to keep distance from the essentialist conceptualisations of the subject — preferring, to the contrary, to ponder over the liquid everyday ways-of-being and to the ways in which language and symbolic relations are involved in their social recognition. "My qualities and my being-thus are not qualifications of a substance (of a subject) that remains behind them and that I would truly be. I am never *this* or *that*, but always *such*, *thus*. [...] not presupposition but exposure," writes Agamben. "Gender is no way a stable identity [...] rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time — an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of act," writes Butler.

29 Agamben, *State of Exception*, 40.

30 Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 10.

31 See n. 28.

32 See the chapter titled "Example" in Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 9–11 and the chapter titled "What Is a Paradigm?" in Giorgio Agamben, *The Signature of All Things: On Method*, trans. Luca D'Isanto with Kevin Attell (New York: Zone Books, New York 2009), 9–32.

33 Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, 9.

Here, then, the enigmatic function of the state of emergency becomes up-to-date through our introduction to the notion of the paradigm. But what is a paradigm characterised by, and how exactly is the state of emergency related to it? As mentioned already, the paradigm might claim its pragmatic legitimisation through resorting to some specific historical phenomenon. Yet the reason for which one might chose to focus upon this phenomenon, assigning it with paradigmatic qualities, has to do with the capacities offered by the latter in relation to the comprehension of broader phenomena; some phenomena that might be characterised by qualitative differences — and which would not necessarily have any historical link. The paradigmatic relationship is activated through the relationship of analogy, not the relationship of metaphor — as Agamben himself clarifies.³⁴ And it “does not merely occur between sensible objects or between these objects and a general rule; it occurs instead between a singularity (which thus becomes a paradigm) and its exposition (its intelligibility).”³⁵ The performative dimension, then, appears to return — through the descriptions above — with a double meaning. On the one hand the paradigm is born through its own exposure, that is, through its performance.³⁶ On the other hand it performs, through this exposure, the comprehension of wider phenomena.³⁷ The

state of emergency, as one of the nodal examples of Agamben’s thought, is conceived precisely through this dual function — and this is where any given reading of it is rendered necessary.

We therefore see that the paradigm appears to carry a crucial performative dynamic that is expressed simultaneously at two different levels. One could claim that in his clarifications above, Agamben focused primarily upon the second of these levels — attempting to highlight its meaning-assigning qualities through the analogy relationship, while at the same time making sure to clarify this does not comprise a mere activation of a typical semantic process.³⁸ What it would mean, though, for him to focus upon the first level of this double function? To focus, that is, upon how the paradigm is exposed through its singularity — and upon how it is only through this exposure that it acquires its paradigmatic quality? It therefore becomes clear that any attempt to study the function of a paradigm ought to weight itself against the conditions of its own public exposure. In other words, it ought to judge it through its materialities, its observability and its applicability.

This knowledge, even if it does not appear to comprise a priority for Agamben, explains his — far from coincidental — reference to the work of Thomas S. Kuhn; that is, his entering upon the world of epistemology and the natural sciences. The importance of this reference is not limited upon the capacities offered by the syntax of epistemology for the needs of describing the notion of the paradigm: it also allows us to study how the state of emer-

34 Ibid., 18, 20.

35 Ibid., 23.

36 Ibid., 18, 23.

37 Ibid., 9, 31. Agamben writes that the purpose of the use of the paradigms in his work “was to make intelligible series of phenomena whose kinship had eluded or could elude the historian’s gaze.” Nevertheless, and following criticism that he received in relation to the use of paradigms and their historical extensions, the Italian philosopher was quick to state: “I am not an historian. I work with paradigms. A paradigm is something like an example, an exemplar, a historically singular phenomenon.” See the interview titled “Interview With Giorgio Agamben — Life, a Work of Art Without an Author: The State of Exception, the Administration of Disorder, and Private Life,” as given to Ulrich Raulff, in the *German Law Journal* 5, no. 5 (2004): 610, http://www.germanlawjournal.com/pdfs/Vol05No05/PDF_Vol_05_No_05_609-614_special_issue_Raulff_Interview.pdf. For some critiques to the paradigmatic uses

of Agamben, see Leland De La Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 220, 221, 243, 246.

38 Agamben writes characteristically: “Here we are not dealing with a signifier that is extended to designate heterogeneous phenomena by virtue of the same semantic structure,” in Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, 18. We therefore return, in a paradoxical way, to the linguistic suggestions that had introduced us, early on, to the notion of performativity and pragmatics and which, as a reminder, asserted their meaning through some respective diversions of their strict semantic function.

gency is constructed upon its materiality, precisely in the way that a paradigm is constructed in the natural sciences section; that is, through theory, observations, and tests.

Alan F. Chalmers, a philosopher of science, writes that “a paradigm is made up of the general theoretical assumptions and laws and the techniques for their application that the members of a particular scientific community adopt.”³⁹ And despite the fact that the paradigm is not quite open to a specific definition, it seems that it is possible to describe some of its typical ingredients.⁴⁰ Chalmers, then, identifies — among others — the “explicitly stated fundamental laws and theoretical assumptions,”⁴¹ the “standard ways of applying the fundamental laws to a variety of types of situation,”⁴² the “instrumentation and instrumental techniques necessary for bringing the laws of the paradigm to bear on the real world,”⁴³ and “some very general, metaphysical principles that guide work within a paradigm.”⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the paradigm is used in Kuhn’s work in an ambivalent way. As Chalmers writes, the American science historian admits, in the postscript of the 1970 edition of his fundamental work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, that he uses the notion in a dual meaning.⁴⁵ That is, both in its generic and its strictly scientific use — which corresponds to what he terms the *disciplinary matrix*.⁴⁶ But also in a more specialised use, for which Kuhn reserves the term *exemplar*. While Chalmers focuses particularly upon the first notion of the

paradigm, Agamben — who has knowledge of this ambivalence — appears, in his related clarifications, to have more interest for the second one which, as he emphasises, appeared to be more interesting for Kuhn himself.⁴⁷ On the basis of this second meaning, and attempting to disentangle the composition of science from the existence of a strict system of rules, Agamben writes that “a paradigm is simply an example, a single case that by its repeatability acquires the capacity to model tacitly the behavior and research practices of scientists.”⁴⁸

In this way, then, the performative function of the notion of the paradigm is re-articulated — a notion that is now, through the exposure of its uniqueness (and in particular, through the repetition of this exposure) *tacitly* guides the practices of the scientists and gives shape to a more-or-less concrete line of research. It is clear that Agamben wishes, through this description, to distance himself from the importance held by strict rules and laws in the composition of scientific paradigms. He even hints that the paradigm is only or mostly born through its exposure — and it is conceived through the observation of this exposure, without any theoretical tool or system of basic interpretative rules as a prerequisite.

Chalmers however, who focuses upon the first interpretation of Kuhn’s paradigm, stresses that “in science, theory exists before observation” and that “observations and tests are conducted with the aim of the control or the clarification of some existent theory.”⁴⁹ And if we were to recall that one of the typical elements of the paradigm are the “explicitly stated fundamental laws and theoretical assumptions,” then it becomes evident that the paradigms do, indeed, play a crucial role in the “guidance of the observation and the test.”⁵⁰ Nevertheless, such an apparent dichotomy should not overpower us — to the extent that one could reach some particularly useful conclusions

39 Alan A. Chalmers, *What Is This Thing Called Science?*, trans. Giorgos Fourtounis (Heraklion: Crete University Press, 1994), 140 (quotes used from the Greek translation).

40 *Ibid.*, 142.

41 *Ibid.*

42 *Ibid.*

43 *Ibid.*, 143.

44 *Ibid.*

45 *Ibid.*, 158.

46 “The first meaning of ‘paradigm,’” writes Agamben, “designates the common possessions of the members of a certain scientific community, namely the set of techniques, models, and values to which the group members more or less consciously adhere,” in Agamben, *The Signature of All Things*, 11.

47 *Ibid.*

48 *Ibid.*

49 Chalmers, *What Is This Thing Called Science?*, 51. See also 52, 187.

50 *Ibid.*, 156.

from this conversation between the different meanings of the paradigm. And we shall see that in the cases that will concern us later on, such a conversation is not only in a position to interpret in a more effective manner the reality created by the state of emergency (the state of emergency-as-paradigm) but in addition, it updates its performative function as well.

What is important for one to keep in mind from these observations is that the state of emergency appears to constitute itself both epistemologically and performatively. That is, both through the *discourse* about the state of emergency and through its repeated performative acts.

The constant repetition of a paradigm (in the sense of the *exemplar*, as Agamben would prefer) acquires its paradigmatic meaning only amidst the conceptual framework that allows it to claim paradigmatic capabilities.⁵¹ Respectively, the theoretical framework does not remain invariant, but it transforms and reconsiders itself (in a performative manner) through the constant repetitions of the paradigm (once again, in its sense of the *exemplar*). After all, the state of emergency does not comprise a phenomenon of the natural world but it manifests itself on

the one hand as result of intense processes taking place at the level of ideological production and on the other hand, through its materiality: as way, that is, of applying some “theoretical assumptions” and one conceptual and operational framework that is formed specifically for this end.

Should we therefore wish to study the state of emergency as a paradigm, that is in its repetition, it would make sense to visit the theoretical labs that design it and that make sure to induce it both with the ideological guarantees necessary (those that will allow it to claim its full paradigmatic meaning, to demand its requisite legitimation and to resume, at any given moment, its very particular historical capacities) as well as with the conceptual framework that will successfully guide any given applications of it at the field of operations. It comprises, therefore, a double theoretical-conceptual responsibility — whose claiming has been concerning the headquarters of police science long before the state of emergency established its by now well-known terms upon public space.

3. Paradigmatic Constructions at a Time of Crisis

Our brief but nevertheless demanding perambulation in both the world of linguistics and the field of epistemology aimed at setting the theoretical foundations for an alternative comprehension of the informal, undeclared and performative appearances of the state of emergency. We now ought to test out the limit of these, by peeking over the bleak present as outlined by the intensive police operations against select façades of public space in Athens and beyond. An opportunity to conduct such an exercise is offered by the coordinated eviction operations of specific squats that took place in the city of Athens in the period between December 2012 and January 2013.

Ever since, a great number of attempts has been made to interpret this coordinated attack—and there is no intention hereby to downplay any of these. By all means, then, the opinion holds truth that in attempting a (far) right turn materialised through a plan for a police management of the wider area of the urban centre, the state

⁵¹ Chalmers even suggests, concerning the relationship between theory and observation, that during an experiment — and in-between the enormous volume of both relevant and irrelevant information existing in the world surrounding the researcher — there is a tendency only for those observations to be recorded that are considered relevant with the control or the clarification of an existent theory; he describes, in this way, the strong correlation between experiment and observation and theory itself. We could therefore imagine that an observation, even if it repeats itself consistently during an experiment, might nevertheless not be related to the theory that we want to test — and to therefore be unable to act neither in the direction of the strengthening the consistency of a paradigm, nor towards its radical challenging. To remain, that is, altogether uncorrelated. See also *ibid.*, 50–51. Along the effect of theory, one should not ignore the influence exercised by the “general metaphysical principles that govern scientific work,” as part of the paradigm. And let us hereby remember, in order to return to language, the respective dependence of the pragmatic force of statements upon their different cultural contexts, as this dependence was articulated in footnote 9.

expressed its crystal-clear intention to attack the nuclei of resistance in question—wiping off their trace and more importantly even, their social potentialities. The widespread claim is also important that the actual aim of this repressive operation was to directly attack—with whatever symbolic extensions this would have—those who fight, resist and in addition composite, under these conditions of crisis, those terms that would allow for this resistance to be collectively expressed.

Beyond these interpretations, which we hold every right to support—and which are only some within the world of interpretative capacities—the present chapter will insist upon another aspect of these operations which may appear to somewhat escape us so far, yet nevertheless acts quietly toward the (re)production of a crucial meaning for its own self.

It would then be interesting to focus upon the fact in itself that these operations *took place*;⁵² that is, to focus on their materiality and their performance, on the particular ways in which they were applied and on the theoretical-conceptual framework that appears both to explain and to have meticulously prepared them. One could therefore suggest that a crucial meaning is produced during the public appearance (or *exposure*, as per Agamben) of these operations as forms that were lead, through their repetition, to their own self-comprehension, their self-legitimation and further, their self-improvement. Forms that were to a large extent self-referential—essentially requiring their exposure to public light in order to hold meaning as such.

52 It is hereby worth adding a comment on the phrase *lamvánō chōra* (“take place”) in regard to its dual meaning. The interpretation of the phrase is identical to the meaning of “something occurs.” If, however, we were to attempt an etymological reading based upon the ancient Greek terms of which it comprises (*lamvánō*: take; *chōra*: space) then the phrase could also mean *to occupy space*. In the example that interests us, both interpretations retain their meaning. Both as a reminder of the performative dynamic of the operations in question, as well as an update of the meaning of space (public space in particular) for the needs of comprehension not only of these operations but of the act as a whole.

Forms that had to be tested and tried out in practical terms (as the necessary structure doing the “dirty” experimental lab work as part of a mechanism of crisis management), as defined, at the time, by the ideological and political preconditions for any discussion concerning the “crisis.” And it is upon the environment shaped by these experiments that we ought to seek the signs revealing that a paradigmatic operation was, indeed, under way. The environment (also) shaped by the operations in question bore the characteristics of a peculiar state of emergency, and therefore appeared to allow the space necessary for the constitution of a (new) paradigm. We are in this way called to treat these operations as experiments that are part of a theoretical environment and a scientific-police community, which would continue to design and to develop itself based upon the observational statements that follow the experiments in question. In other words, we can comprehend these operations as exercises in real space, at real time. Not only as means toward an end, but as an end in themselves—once again referring, in a way, to the parable of the worker and the empty wheel-barrels and in this way outlining the apogee of sovereignty’s self-satisfaction. In order to comprehend this peculiar self-referential function, it would therefore make sense to focus upon the materialities of this informal state of emergency and upon the ways in which this was performed—commencing, however, from the ideological and conceptual framework that worked supportively. That is, from the metaphysical (as per Chalmers) rules of the paradigm and the particular theory that navigates it.

What broke out almost entirely naturally back then obscured an intensive attempt of ideological re-definition, whose origins we could trace in the period that followed the revolt of December 2008. In face of the awe caused by the latter, and amidst the panic that had overwhelmed local sovereignty as a consequence both of the spread of the antagonistic movement processes and of the birth of a new cycle of political counter-violence, the need became imperative for some restoration of legal order that would be first and foremost ideological and conceptual. It was

the ex-minister of public order Michalis Chrisochoidis who undertook this difficult mission, specialised as he is in counter-terrorism matters—and it was him who attempted to catch up with the lost ideological ground thus in a way highlighting his predecessors' omissions in regard to the administration of the December revolt.

What became evident at that moment was the urgent need for the conceptual—and by extension the social—balances shattered following the outbreak of December's revolt to be restored, hence activating a co-ordinated ideological-police plan under the broad subject title “Zero tolerance to anomie.”⁵³ Zero tolerance, more specifically, against forms of political anomie that meet political demands and social conflicts, forms one could position in the tradition of anomie that commences, according to Foucault, already during the passage from the 18th to the 19th century.⁵⁴

We therefore enter a period of “counter-revolt”: one that could have been interpreted, at that particular historical moment, through a strictly etymological lens—that is, as the period that followed the revolt, rather than as a conscious expression of that particular police-military sector called *counterinsurgency*. Yet this period is characterised by a meticulous policy which, in its attempt to manage what was the “up until then latent social antagonism,” as it came to light through December's revolt,⁵⁵ was

structured around the main target of theory and practice of the counterinsurgency, namely to “win (once again) the hearts and minds” of the population,⁵⁶ in this way beginning once again to invest on an ideological level. Ever since, colossal transformations have taken place in the Greek reality, admittedly suggesting an exemplary case of acceleration of historical time. And if there is one thing that holds some particular importance amidst the environment created by these transformations, surely it is this: that the setting demarcated by the discourses around the crisis at the time, began to show, gradually, some alarming resemblance to the models produced by the official manuals and the literature of counterinsurgency on behalf of the operations taking place at crucial areas of the capitalist periphery with those regimes of truth that the official manuals and the discourse of counterinsurgency produce on behalf of the operations that take place both in crucial parts of the capitalist periphery as well as in the heart of western metropolises. What, then, Chrisochoidis termed the “End of Anomie” a few years ago—attempting to react, if instinctively, to the unprecedented production of political demands and political counter-violence—appeared to have matured, enjoying a holistic and uninterrupted integration in the official rhetoric of counterinsurgency, the latter understood as that specific range of military-police operations that have been patiently and meticulously producing, for the last five decades at the very least, a tradition of their own.⁵⁷

53 See for example the article by Dionisis Vithoulkas, “Consultation between Chrisochoidis and mayors: zero tolerance and social cohesion,” *To Vima*, January 9, 2010, <http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=308437>. The article of *Naftemporiki*, titled “M. Chrisochoidis: Zero Tolerance to Anomie, Social Cohesion and Social Justice,” January 8, 2010, <http://www.naftemporiki.gr/audio/429132>, and the article by Kostas Tomaras titled “We Shall Put an End to Anomie,” *To Ethnos*, October 9, 2009, <http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=11424&subid=2&pubid=6898843>.

54 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 273–75.

55 See in this regard, Akis Gavriilidis, “The Professors of Nothing: Counterinsurgency as a Political Science,” *Theseis* 113 (2010), http://www.theseis.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1125&Itemid=29.

56 See David J. Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 6, 37, 187–90.

57 This tradition appears to commence after the end of WWII, when a surge was observed in the so called “small wars,” particularly with national liberation characteristics. Based upon the facts created by these conflicts, and in an attempt to confront either the revolutionary, or the national-liberation movements, a new sector was constituted in western military theory and practice that corresponds to what we term counterinsurgency. Ever since, an intense production of discourse has taken place, which is not limited to field manuals and the mapping of individual operations, but instead also includes attempts toward the re-conceptualisation of the armed confrontation based upon the transformations that

But what would somewhat validate the accession of the domestic policies of public order into the official military family of counterinsurgency? A plausible answer appears to lie in the relevant contemporary analyses and manuals that deal with the subject of counterinsurgency itself. Even a quick skim through these would allow for the detection of the crucial place reserved in this discussion for the notion of *nation-building*—that is, of the process that “involves the use of armed force as part of a broader effort to promote political and economic reforms with the objective of transforming a society emerging from conflict into one at peace with itself and its neighbors.”⁵⁸

It concerns, in other words, a process of armed intervention with the supposed aim of the reconstruction of the vital operations of a “fragile” state mechanism, which is characterised by the strong presence of internal clashes and antagonisms—and which theoretically shows signs of political, financial and social “destabilisation.” For the largest part, it is materialised through the raw intervention of third countries, an intervention that facilitates their own interests. This reconstruction process—and with the given fact of the presence of internal antagonisms—becomes a subject of military management, precisely because only an armed intervention, and therefore only the systematic presence of security forces in these areas, could guarantee the formation of a “stable” envi-

ronment that would in return allow for these functions to be effectively reconstructed.

Nevertheless, for the needs of the reading that is suggested further on, both the notion of “counterinsurgency” and that of “nation-building” are used in specific ways, attempting their adjustment to the framework shaped by the events that hereby concern us. And avoiding, by means of economy of space, clarifications in matters of terminology, it would only be worth keeping in mind the strong ties that appear to exist between military operations and economic development both through the discourses and through the multilevel fields of counterinsurgency application. “COIN (counterinsurgency) operations...,” wrote the US field manual on counterinsurgency at the time, “combine offensive, defensive, and stability operations to achieve the stable and secure environment needed for effective governance, essential services, and economic development.”⁵⁹ These operations are vital, then, for the formation of a safe environment, in turn necessary for a country’s financial development. And they comprise the precondition for the gradual formation of “..an environment that attracts outside capital for further development.”⁶⁰ The manual even stresses out that “[i]n an unstable environment, the military may initially have the leading role.”⁶¹ And in regard to economic development in particular, it suggests: “Create an environment where business can thrive. In every state (except perhaps a completely socialist one), business drives the economy. To strengthen the economy, find ways to encourage and

were taking place in the field of Law of War. And so, next to founders of counterinsurgency such as Roger Trinquier, Frank Kitson and David Galula — and in the light of the new facts brought about by the four Geneva Treaties of 1949, one can detect the juridical framework formed by the observations of the national-socialist jurist Carl Schmitt, as this is composed through his work *The Theory of the Partisan: A Commentary/Remark on the Concept of the Political*, trans. A.C. Goodson (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 2004).

58 This purposefully abstract definition is suggested in James Dobbins et al., *The Beginner’s Guide to Nation-Building* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2007), xvii. The term nation-building is mostly used in US literature, while in the corresponding European one the most widespread term is state-building. Nevertheless, in recent years the two are often used interchangeably.

59 See *us Army Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency*, December 15, 2006, 5-2, <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf>. Also see Austin Long, *On “Other War”: Lessons from Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2006), 52-55, 71-73, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG482.pdf, in regard to the notion of pacification and its relationship to security and development.

60 *us Army Field Manual 3-24*, 5-6.

61 *Ibid.*, 5-14.

support legitimate business activities. Even providing security is part of a positive business environment.”⁶²

Gradually, a few structural similarities with the Greek reality start to be outlined—some reality at the time formed on the one hand by the discourses around the crisis and on the other hand by the intensification of policies of repression. And it would require no great effort for one to see that the rhetoric and the policies of fiscal adjustment in Greece, moving in tandem with the all-out attack against political demands and struggles, both referred to a process of a very *particular* nation-building (or, to be precise, *nation-rebuilding*),⁶³ wherein the sector of security appears to consistently hold a leading role.⁶⁴ The redesign

of the public security dogma, so heavily promoted at the time, was not separate from the demand for the formation of a secure economic environment—as this was vividly articulated in the US counterinsurgency manual. Some redesign materialised in full correlation to the demands and the particularities of what David J. Kilcullen, perhaps the most important contemporary theoretician of counterinsurgency, terms *domestic counterinsurgency*.⁶⁵ A domestic counterinsurgency, that is, which in the Greek case had to constitute itself amidst the complicated environment created by the particularities of 2008; of 2008 as an exceptional historical coincidence. That had, in other words, to manage a social revolt first, and then the social challenges swiftly born by the crisis in Greece, also as a result of the global financial crisis that broke out the same year. In this particular environment the then minister of public order, Nikos Dendias, appeared to be taking on the ideological construction of his predecessor regarding the end of anomie—updating and fine-tuning it to the demands articulated through the agenda of fiscal adjustment and development on the one hand, and the rhetoric of the emergency on the other. For the purposes of this fine-tuning, the minister chose to mobilise the most militarised part of the Greek police with some ever-increasing frequency—thus confirming that the boundaries between police and military forces have already begun to be negotiable, precisely as dictated by the condition of state of emergency.⁶⁶ And it is precisely within this negotiation

62 Ibid., 5–17.

63 At this point, a relevant terminological clarification would be of use. The choice of the term nation-rebuilding follows an interpretation of the crisis as a radical restructuring of the relationship between labour and domestic capital. It does not share, therefore, the commonplace view concerning the explicit intervention of third countries in the domestic matters of the Greek state aiming at whatever manipulation of this; an articulation that already offers ample space to the well-known and convenient, for local capital, readings based on national liberation. To the contrary, references to nation-rebuilding wish to describe the processes of elementary restructuring of the Greek state on the basis on facts formed by the debt crisis and the enforcement of a new field of relationships and meanings required by the restructuring in question—and which is by no means articulated in class terms alone. It is for this reason that the term nation-rebuilding was chosen over, say, state-rebuilding. Because the reconstruction in question did not include merely the restructuring of the relationship between labour and capital, but it also invested upon a restructuring of the national identity—as the latter has been articulated, for example, through the updated forms taken by anti-migration agenda in recent years. The radical transformation of the field of public security was therefore considered to be imperative for the imposition of these new relationships and meanings. And a key aim of the observations articulated in these pages is the clarification of the ideological environment in which this restructuring acquired its meaning, and the highlighting of those elements that reflected elementary characteristics of the theory and practice of counterinsurgency.

64 In this environment, no surprise should be caused by the rumours, already from early 2013, that would refer to an agreement between the Greek government and the private military company Academi (ex-Blackwater) regarding the needs of the parliament

protection. See in this regard, Barbara Van Haute, “Ambassador Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos on the Greek Economic Crisis: *Could This Greek Tragedy Lead to Civil War?*,” Greece–Salonika, December 17, 2012, http://greece-salonika.blogspot.gr/2013/02/blog-post_3328.html.

65 Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency*, 11.

66 The interweaving between police and military forces is clearly articulated, from the past, through the disputed discussion on the counterinsurgency—see, for example, the chapter “Developing Host-Nation Security Forces,” in *US Army Field Manual 3–24*, 6–1–6–22 and the chapter “Direct Action on the Populations of Cities” in Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*, trans. Daniel Lee (Connecticut & London:

environment that police operations are ever-increasingly articulated as “high intensity policing” and the military operations as “low intensity warfare.”⁶⁷

This militarisation became the most trustworthy indicator of the existence of effective domestic security forces and therefore the main prerequisite for a safe investment environment. The known case of the sabotage of the gold mine extraction facilities in Skouries (Chalkidiki) comprised a typical example of such. Both the repression that followed the sabotage and the discourse that outshone the public dialogue carry remarkable similarities with the observations of the theoreticians of counterinsurgency. “‘Commando’ terrorist attack against the investments,” wrote the newspaper *Ta Nea* on February 18,⁶⁸ whilst in the article of the newspaper *Kathimerini* titled “Foreign investments in the gold mines are now rope walking,” the links in question were articulated explicitly: “the management of the company,” quotes the article in question, “directly questioned, last week, the capacity of the Greek state to manage large-scale investments and sent a

clear message to the government that, ‘should a clear and meticulous investment landscape not be formed,’ it will abandon Greece.”⁶⁹ Such warnings outlined the portrait of a “failed or “fragile” state, terms that compose a crucial part of the main conceptual core reflecting the contemporary plexus of development and security globally.⁷⁰ There is therefore no doubt in that the clearness and the meticulousness of the landscape in question could only be guaranteed by the advancing of repressive technologies — something that Dendias did not hesitate to try out straight away by applying, in relation to this case, policies of public order with unprecedented combative and refined characteristics. In January 2013, on the occasion of the reactions that followed the eviction of the squats, he stated: “should there be no public security, there will never be any economic recovery. Who will ever come to invest even a single euro in the country?.”⁷¹ Development, then, is that tightly connected to the transformations taking place in the field of public security, that we could even comprehend it, in itself, as an “infinite and generalised strategy of counterinsurgency.”⁷²

Praegeer Security International, 2006), 37–42. In regard to this interweaving, the hesitant if crucial entering of the 71st Airborne Brigade of Killis in the public discussion was crucial; the Brigade is specialised both in exercises of crowd control and urban operations. Indeed, its presence was not limited to the level of a mediatic working hypothesis, as the unit in question was called in to take on security tasks for the military parade of October 28, 2012 in the city of Thessaloniki — hence formalising its invasion in the public space. See in this regard the articles “Karampelas Says No To Army-Police, But The Government’s People Insist: The Greek Police Cannot Do It Alone” and “71st Brigade: The Super-Force They Want to Turn into Riot Police,” <http://bloko.gr/enoples-dynameis/o-karampelas-leei-oxi-ston-strato-astynomia-alla-kybernhetikoi-epimenoy-n-h-elas-den-mporei-monh.html> and <http://www.onalert.gr/stories/taxiarxia-mat-eidikis-dynameis/19616> respectively.

67 Stephen Graham, *Cities Under Siege: The New Military Urbanism* (London & New York: Verso, 2010), 96; “The Urban “Battlespace,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 26, nos. 7–8 (2009): 282–83.

68 See Foteini Stefanopoulou, “‘Commando’ terrorist attack against the investments,” *Ta Nea*, February 18, 2012, <http://www.tanea.gr/news/greece/article/5001818/katadromiko-tromokratiko-xytyphma-stis-ependyseis/>.

69 See Chrisa Liaggou “The foreign investments in the gold mines are now rope-walking,” *Kathimerini*, March 24, 2013, http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_economy_2_24/03/2013_515169. See also the article by an anonymous “special contributor” titled “Skouries was just the beginning...,” *To Vima*, February 20, 2013, <http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=499044>.

70 Through the use of these terms, an attempt is made to place emphasis upon the incapacity of a state both to impose order and to apply certain policies. See in this regard, Sörensen Stihoff Jens and Fredrik Söderbaum, “Introduction: The End of the Development-Security Nexus?,” *Development Dialogue* 58 (2012), 7.

71 See the interview of Dendias to Giannis Souliotis titled “We had been expecting a terrorist attack since November,” *Kathimerini*, January 20, 2013, http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_politics_2_20/01/2013_508566.

72 See in this regard, Mariella Pandolfi, “From Paradox to Paradigm: The Permanent State of Emergency in the Balkans,” in Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi (eds.), *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 166. Sörensen & Söderbaum respectively stress out that “[d]evelopment is security.” They nevertheless widen the field of discussion in regard to the links connecting the two

We therefore understand that the environment of emergency playing host to the production of public space phenomena was constructed, first and foremost, at an ideological level. It imposed, as Chalmers would argue, a very specific comprehension of the way in which the (social) world operates in its entirety and by extension, a very specific metaphysics of meaning upon which the military administration of the crisis was designed — or to be precise, the crisis-as-its-military-administration. The crucial “metaphysical rules that guide scientific work” were safeguarded in this way, as part of that juridico-repressive paradigm, hence paving the way for the constitution of the paradigm itself as such. Both the feverish, repeated procedures at the level of ideological production and the constructive dimension in the notion of nation-building highlight the performative property of the state of emergency. The latter, to recall Athanasiou’s reading, “refreshes” the phantasmatic of an otherwise ‘redundant’ sovereignty therefore creating a contemporary form of sovereignty in the field of governmentality.⁷³ It is precisely within this framework that this form of sovereign authority ought either to manage the fields of social conflict formed by the policies of extreme austerity, turning them into fields of vehement police-military operation — or to invent them, should these not exist already. The attack against squats,

notions today, claiming that development is gradually replaced by the more sophisticated term “sustainable development” and security is ever-increasingly expressed as “resilience”; a term that is particularly popular in recent years. They stress out, then, that in this transitory framework the notions of insecurity and risk hold key roles—on the one hand by imposing particular conditions of subjectification, and on the other by compositing an environment of creative opportunities for capital. “Modernity’s ambition of achieving security through material development and through the idea of protection,” write Sørensen & Söderbaum, “is replaced by a politics focusing on resilience and continuous global disaster management in which intervention is a normalised practice.” It is not difficult, therefore, to comprehend the crisis in Greece as a typical aspect in this panorama of disasters. See Sørensen & Söderbaum, “Introduction,” 13–14. See also, Mark Neocleous, “Resisting Resilience,” *Radical Philosophy* 178 (2013), 2–7.

73 Athanasiou, *The Crisis as a “State of Exception,”* 88.

approximately one month before the sabotage case in the Chalkidiki mines, may be positioned somewhere between these two capacities: both as operations against a long-time open political-ideological front, with some nevertheless entirely material expressions, and as operations whose centrality was constructed ideologically, for other reasons, at the time when these operations took place.

These *other reasons* were *also* located in some open fronts that the state (and its right-wing articulation in particular) had with itself — particularly in the fact that the long-time-coming moment had arrived for it to prove that it is, indeed, the “responsible guarantor with the duty of the ultimate decision,”⁷⁴ something evidently presupposing a radical redefinition of its relationship to the state of emergency.⁷⁵ In this direction, it would either duly utilise any given opportunities offered to it, or it would attempt to form the conditions that would allow it to exercise, in practical and communicative terms, the redefinition in question. It would attempt, then, to construct some crucial fields of experiment. Migrant and refugee populations undoubtedly comprise one such privileged field to test out the new dogma of public security at the

74 Wording of the German constitutionalist Kurt Wolzendorff in regard to the duty of the “pure state” as cited in Schmitt’s *Political Theology*. Here, the Greek translation of the work in question is used, since in its English attribution, the respective phrase “responsible and ultimate guarantor” does not convey the due significance to the notion of the decision, see Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. Panagiotis Kondylis (Athens: Leviathan, 1994), 49 (in Greek).

75 Along with mass applications of the security apparatus, an intensification of processes was observed that would have once been limited to the margins of the lawmaking function, or would have been expressed as extreme versions of the application of the law. Typical examples include the mass voting-in of Legislative Acts under an emergency process — and the ever more frequent use of the measure of civil conscription. The latter is firstly offered as a potentiality through the application of the Legislative Decree 17/1974 “Concerning the Political Planning of the Emergency” and secondly, through Article 41 of Law 3536/2007, with the telling title “Regulations for the handling of emergencies at peacetime,” which even invokes matters of public order and public health.

time — as social categories that are forced, from the moment when they appear in the hostile Greek territory, to reside in extra-judicial spheres — and hence, as “repression friendly” populations par excellence.⁷⁶ It would therefore be meaningful for one to study the operations against them not merely as a plan to manage migratory flows, but also as a privileged field on the one hand for the reconstruction of national identity (particularly useful at a time of crisis) and on the other, for the redesign of public security policies, in the spirit of the nation-rebuilding process in question. At a parallel level, the milieu of occupied social centres was deemed appropriate as an additional testing field for this redesign process.⁷⁷ Both their explicit political, antagonist and antistatist characteristics and their nature per se — as projects that have in addition long ago terminated their relationship first and foremost with Civil Law — in a sense condense elements of what Günther Jakobs, drawing from Kant, describes as *statu iniusto* (“lawlessness of their condition”) in his theory for the *Criminal Law of the Enemy*.⁷⁸ In this way, an ideolog-

ical “legitimization” is provided to whatever operations might take place against them — therefore forming a safe field of experimentation for the state. It is upon the utilisation of this particularity that the eviction operations of squats were planned out. And the ultimate aim was not only the show of state force, but also the testing out of all ways and forms through which this showing off could, at a practical level, be successfully completed.

As mentioned already, these experiments took place in the heart of the long-declared “war against anomie.” This war, however, held the redesigning of public security dogma and a fresh conceptual framework as prerequisites.⁷⁹ And this in turn required a complete transformation of the Greek police’s structures — one that would concern not only combatant units, but also all those who, as Panagiotis Kondylis would argue, “are not concerned with the application of violence in itself, but with the successful preparation of this application.”⁸⁰ It was for the needs

76 The militarisation of the management of migratory flows in Greece comprises a typical example of the construction of a field of experiment. For its legitimisation, a liminal metaphoric discourse articulated around the “enemy-invasion-occupation” axis was first and foremost mobilised, which then in turn offered the ideological prerequisites for the mass anti-migrant operations to land in the public sphere as a self-evident mathematical problem.

77 It would at this point be worth observing that the operations in question, both against migrant populations and against occupied social spaces were not only given meaning through the wider demands of nation-rebuilding, but also through a rhetoric of city-rebuilding, as part of which the notion of “reoccupation” held a key position. To take back, then, our city from the migrants and the occupied buildings from the anarchists. Here lied the main prerequisites for the replanning of the city of Athens. See inductively the articles titled “Ant. Samaras: Beginning with a tense rhetoric and aggressive manner,” *To Vima*, April 7, 2012, <http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=452514>, and “An end to the era of occupations,” *Kathimerini*, January 13, 2013, http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/_w_articles_ell_1_13/01/2013_507759.

78 When introducing the theory of the Criminal Law of the Enemy — a notion that has started to exercise considerable influence upon juridical thought —, and describing the capacities offered by

it first and foremost for the law-maker, the German law theoretician Günther Jakobs claims that when justice deals with persons for which “..it is speculated that they constantly and decisively divert from Law, hence offering no cognitive guarantee that is necessary for them to be treated as persons,” then “the response of Law toward such a form of criminality is marked by the fact that it does not concern itself primarily with the restoration of the fault caused to the force of the rule of Justice, but with the elimination of the danger in question,” see Günther Jakobs, “The Criminal Law of the Citizen and the Criminal Law of the Enemy,” *Penal Justice* 7 (2005): 873.

79 See the interview by Dendias on April 28, 2013 to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency, http://www.minocp.gov.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=4602&Itemid=570&lang=.

80 Kondylis Panagiotis, *Theory of War* (Athens: Themelio, 1999), 353. As the newspaper *Imerisia* writes, “The minister of Public Order presented, further, the reorganisation effort of the Greek Police currently under way, which is aimed at unhooking the latter from the static model of the 1980s decade, one that does not fulfil contemporary needs, as he pointed out; to acquire a new organisational structure, to become more mobile and to utilise new capacities in the sectors of criminological research, of collection and dissemination of data.” See “Dendias in the Operation Centres of FBI and the NYPD,” *Imerisia*, April 27, 2013, <http://www.imerisia.gr/article.asp?catid=26509&subid=2&pubid=113033936>.

of this redesigning process that Dendias resorted to importing know-how from the US — certified by his most recent trip to New York in April 2013. Such know-how was clearly not limited to practical advice and issues of tactical policing of cities, but it also included conceptual and operational borrowings, which concern both the conceptualisation of cities as well as ways to conceive operations within these. Yet this turning of the gaze toward the US's model of security industry did not appear to be yet another narcissistic vision of some vain minister: rather, it was meticulously organised over a lengthy time period — which indeed proves that a new paradigm, in an epistemological sense, had been activated. Quite a few months before the New York visit in question, an article in the newspaper *To Vima* referred to contacts between Dendias and the city's ex-mayor, Rudolph Giuliani, as well as the ex-head official of the NYPD, William Bratton, who returned to this position in December 2013.⁸¹

Dendias' contacts with the US security industry were therefore neither generic nor abstract. To the contrary, what the minister wished to introduce from the upstart was an unprecedented technology of urban space surveillance, similar to the one developed in New York City in the nineties — what came to be known as the *Zero Tolerance* dogma.⁸² More specifically, the two prominent individuals that Dendias was in touch with from the summer of 2012 already were the same ones who would put into practice the renowned *Broken Windows Theory*, a particular theory of criminology that pushed for the extended police control of urban environments, and for the spread

of repressive operations in as many fields of everyday urban life as possible — all on the basis of a questionable hypothesis concerning the escalation of violence and “anti-social” behaviour.⁸³ In practice, this theory first of all meant a new way of recording, storing and mapping out criminal acts — which in turn demanded a new, automated real-time information management system. In an interview five months after the publication of the article in question, Dendias would even explicitly refer to the Broken Windows Theory when attempting to position himself in relation to the squats' evictions. He said at the time: “What we had seen taking place in our country was the phenomenon of the ‘broken window’ [...] Our will is not only to fix the ‘damage,’ but to prevent it from reoccurring; to erect a social wall against anomie. To put an end to the many ‘broken windows’ of our collective presence in public space.”⁸⁴ Through his trans-Atlantic communication, Dendias' objective was not only to familiarise himself with the tools and techniques allowing him the capacity to dictate the new “crime map” of the centre of Athens. In addition, as the article in question informs us, one of his main targets was to import know-how concerning the facing of “wild criminality.”⁸⁵ More specifically, to receive advice in regards to the constitution of new police units, with special equipment and heavy arms. The article refers to the notorious SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) Unit, which in the case of New York comes under the Emergency Service Unit (ESU). This is one of the most militarised units of the US police, specialised in counter-terrorism operations. This is, in other words, what for the time being corresponds, in the Greek police family, to the Special Counter-Terrorist Unit (EKAM).

Approximately two weeks after the publication of the article in question, the eviction of the “Delta” squat in

81 See Vasilis Lampropoulos, “Police commandos for the... Kalashnikov fights; Dendias's direct connection with Giuliani and Bratton, who ‘swept clean’ New York City during the nineties,” *To Vima*, August 26, 2012, <http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=471987>.

82 See “The Dark Side of Zero Tolerance,” *The Economist*, April 1, 1999, <http://www.economist.com/node/195184>; “The Human Cost of ‘Zero Tolerance,’” *New York Times*, April 28, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/29/opinion/sunday/the-cost-of-zero-tolerance.html>.

83 See indicatively the article by the American criminologist Randall G. Sheldon, “Assessing ‘Broken Windows’: A Brief Critique, Center of Juvenile and Criminal Justice,” <http://198.170.117.218/pdf/broken.pdf>.

84 See “We had been expecting a terrorist attack since November.”

85 See “Police commandos for the... Kalashnikov fights?”

Thessaloniki would show that the Greek Police's reconstruction plan was swiftly being brought into action.⁸⁶ Fully armed men of the ΕΚΑΜ unit stormed the building in the early hours of September 12, 2012 — in a military operation for which the Greek police made sure, for the first time, to manage it communicatively by uploading related video footage on its official website.⁸⁷ It was evident that the eviction in question did not comprise yet another operation of the Greek police, but a zero point in a circle of experiments on the basis of the new paradigm that the policing science had been working on for a while. On January 9, 2013, similar operations were repeated at the “Villa Amalias” squat (following the reoccupation of the building, which had been evicted on December 12, 2012)⁸⁸ and “Patisson 61 & Skaramanga” squat,⁸⁹ while six days later, a similar operation took place at the “Lela Karagianni” squat,⁹⁰ which was eventually considered a “search” and not an eviction operation — and for which the Greek Police did not even issue any related press release. ΕΚΑΜ units were also used for the eviction of the occupation of

the headquarters of Democratic Left Party, on January 9, 2013, which had taken place in a show of solidarity to the reoccupation of Villa Amalias. Then again, during the eviction of the metro depot in Sepolia (Athens), which was under occupation by its striking workers, on January 25, 2013. And finally, in the raid operation in the village of Ierissos, Chalkidiki, on March 7, 2013, aiming at the arrest of suspects for the sabotage of the area's gold mines. And so, after the pilot operation of September 2012 a field was swiftly constructed that one could say, gave shape and hence made more tangible and intelligible the scientific subject that had been ideologically constructed through the discourse over anomie. At this point, we shall therefore repeat that beyond the message of authoritarianism these operations had aimed to transmit, a tremendously important meaning was gestated in the means-as-end in itself; one that was self-corrected and self-developed through its repeated use. In the ideological environment described above, the militarisation of public space as a sign of modernisation of the state apparatus comprised a product whose demand was meticulously constructed. And it is within this constructed demand that the product had to improve its characteristics, forming an operational paradigm that constantly supplied its own self.

Hence, in order for us to study the practicalities and the materialities of this paradigm, we would ought to study its conceptual framework as well. Chalmers writes that “every paradigm comprises a particular conceptual framework through which the world is conceived and described; and a specific sum of experimental and theoretical techniques for the adjustment of the paradigm to nature.”⁹¹ And so, next to the ideological constructions that secured the legitimisation of the paradigm in question, a series of notions were also developed, which in a sense complemented the theoretical prerequisites of this policing disciplinary matrix (with the term disciplinary hereby acquiring its dual meaning). The insistence of this article upon the conceptual framework does not

86 See “The eviction of the ΔΕΛΤΑ squat was ordered by Samaras!,” <http://www.alterthess.gr/content/me-entoli-samara-i-ekkenosi-tis-katalipsis-delta>.

87 See the press release by the General Police Directorate of Thessaloniki of September 12, 2012, http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=19898&Itemid=973&langng=. Also see the website of the occupation <http://delta.squat.gr/>.

88 See the press release by the General Police Directorate of Attica of January 9, 2013, http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=23740&Itemid=1028&langng=. Also see the occupation's statements at the web address http://villa-amalias.blogspot.gr/2013_01_01_archive.html.

89 See the press release by the General Police Directorate of Attica of January 9, 2013, http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27.%27&perform=view&id=23749&Itemid=1028&langng=. Also see the occupation's statement at <http://pat61.squat.gr/2013/01/7582/>.

90 See Dionisis Vithoulkas, “Reoccupation of ‘Lela Karagianni’ in Kypseli,” *To Vima*, January 15, 2013, <http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=493097>. Also see the occupation's statement at http://squathost.com/lelas_k/gr/anak_17j.htm.

91 Chalmers, *What Is This Thing Called Science?*, 155.

derive from some inexplicable obsession, nor from any overvalued epistemological projections in the field of military-police operations. To the contrary, it follows upon the wider discussion that is fully under way today in the circles of the most advanced military headquarters. By now, the observations of the Israeli architect Eyal Weizman concerning the integration of elements and notions of critical theory and post-structuralism in the repertoire of the Israeli Defence Forces are well known. Beyond the explicit and justified doubt expressed on whether the introduction of this theory in military practices aims at nothing but the hiding of the bloody results of the latter, the interesting fact remains that these unfamiliar and abstract schemas have had, to an extent, an influence upon the planning of specific operations. The recently appeared *operational theory*, which is officially taught by the Operational Theory Research Institute, acts precisely in the direction of the application of theoretical and conceptual innovations in operational planning. In military jargon, it is located “somewhere between strategy and tactics”⁹² and one could claim that it comprises, in a sense, a concept testing field — the ultimate aim being their application in the primary branch of operational planning. The suggestions by the US major Ben Zweibelson move in the same direction. He himself may not speak of an *operational* but a *design theory* instead — nevertheless, the *design concepts* that he suggests focus precisely upon operations’ conceptual framework and more precisely, upon what he terms *conceptual planning*,⁹³ proving that the selection of specif-

ic notions maintains its own particular importance in the process of operational planning.

Now concerning the example that we are interested in, one could most definitely not claim that Dendias utilised the language of post-structuralism (not yet, at least). What is hereby attempted is a mere placing of emphasis upon some notions that he used, which were typical of the new public order dogma at the time — and which effortlessly find their counterparts in the military discussion. And so, in an interview of his in the newspaper *Kathimerini* on January 20, 2013 in regards to some wrong choices in past police tactics, Dendias claimed: “In Greece, the model that has been followed is the guarding of targets, with all that this means, and not the formation of a uniform security area.”⁹⁴ The minister therefore made clear that the new plan for the surveillance of public space was related to the creation of a spatial continuum that would equal the application of a continuum in law enforcement. To contextualize the statement, we would have to focus upon the conceptual affinities that it holds to what would equate, in military language, a battlespace without *dead spaces*. That is, without any places within space where access with weapon systems and means of surveillance would be impossible — the two cornerstones, that is, of law enforcement.⁹⁵

Dendias therefore outlined an urban space with as few dead spaces as possible. In another interview, he became

92 See Eyal Weizman, “Lethal Theory,” *LOG Magazine* 7 (2006): 59, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/57693125/Eyal-Weizman-Lethal-Theory>. Also see Eyal Weizman, “The Art of War,” *Frieze Magazine* 99 (2006), https://www.frieze.com/issue/article/the_art_of_war/.

93 Zweibelson Ben, “Breaking Barriers to Deeper Understanding: How Post-Modern Concepts Are ‘Value-Added’ to Military Conceptual Planning Considerations,” *Small Wars Journal*, September 21, 2011, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/breaking-barriers-to-deeper-understanding-how-post-modern-concepts-are-value-added%E2%80%98to-mil>.

94 See the interview titled “We had been expecting a terrorist attack since November.”

95 See the *US Army Field Manual 3-06: Urban Operations*, October 26, 2006, 5-21, 5-30, 6-18, B-19, Glossary-7, <https://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-06.pdf>. Let us remember at this point that such a demand for security, articulated in terms of an uninterrupted spatial continuum, carries an evident military colour — deriving in part from the era of artillery fortifications. And so, those areas that the defender was unable to launch against and was unable to guard were termed dead grounds, dead areas or blind spots. See in this regard Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture* (Cambridge & Malden: Polity Press, 2005), 171, 182 and G.J. Ashworth, *War and the City* (London & New York: Routledge, 1991), 26, 28.

more illustrative: “The centre of Athens is our façade, our shop-front and it is at the cutting edge of the Greek police’s efforts [...] with the planning of consecutive patrols of a number units, that intersect one another at specific moments, so as to allow no space to criminality.”⁹⁶ What Dendias described as the “centre of Athens” was no other than the most important testing lab for the experimental control of the basic principles of the new public order paradigm at the time. His attempt to create a uniform security area made its offensive characteristics rather evident in the multiple variants of the Athenian public space. And the logic running through the ways in which the continuity and unity of the secure area in question could be safeguarded appears to lend itself, once again, some basic elements from the counterinsurgency manuals. The then current US Counterinsurgency Field Manual suggested, in this regard: “COIN efforts should begin by controlling key areas. Security and influence then spread out from secured areas. The pattern of this approach is to clear, hold, and build one village, area, or city — and then reinforce success by expanding to other areas.”⁹⁷ In the aforementioned interview to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency, Dendias stated respectively: “We therefore try to conquer the absolute in the centre of Athens and from that point on, with the experience...” and “the know-how the Greek police will have acquired, to be able to expand this paradigm to the other areas, to the centres of other cities.”⁹⁸

96 See Dendias’ interview to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency.

97 See *us Army Field Manual 3-24*, 5–18. One can find similar recipes for the production of a unified security space in old, classic references of the counterinsurgency — even if these are based upon a conceptualisation of compartmentalisation and spatial fragmentation. See for example the chapter “Conducting Counterinsurgency Operations,” in *Trinquier, Modern Warfare*, 57–74 and the chapter “The Operations,” in David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Connecticut & London: Praeger Security International, 2006), 75–94. Also see Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping* (London & Boston: Faber and Faber, 1991), 102–31.

98 See Dendias’ interview to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency.

By intervening and conducting operations on a daily basis, the Greek police science then performatively constituted on the one hand a repertoire of action and on the other, the prerequisites of its own conceptualisation as an epistemological paradigm. The notion of the “uniform security area” consisted the backbone of the conceptual framework required by the paradigm in question. Along to it, some other notions strengthened this framework. The terms “avaton” (inviolable space, traditionally used to describe the Exarcheia area), “centres of lawlessness” (used widely during the communicative management of the evictions of squats) and “Gaulish village” (this is how Dendias called the residents of Ierissos in Chalkidiki, in regards to the resistance formed against the gold-mine investments in the area) all described, in different ways, the demand for a uniform security area. Their correspondence to the military manuals is, once again, glaring. And the fact that Dendias looked toward the model security industry of the US allows us to presume that his technocrats⁹⁹ fully utilised the rich US production of theory on the policing of contemporary cities. If, therefore, one was to take a look at the current Urban Operations Field Manual they would easily conclude that the “avaton,” the “centres of lawlessness” and the “Gaulish villages” were all typical examples of what are thereby called *pockets of resistance*,¹⁰⁰ the presence of which is deemed entirely incompatible with the quest for a uniform security area. Referring to the ways in which these pockets are problematised in the urban environment, Stephen Graham writes that “techniques of urban militarism and urbicidal violence serve to discipline or displace dissent and resistance” that is born in the areas in question.¹⁰¹ It is indeed indicative that in the strict military language connecting cities to military operations, a prominent position — with an oft-equally charged meaning — is reserved for the term

99 Ibid.

100 *us Army Field Manual 3-06*, 7–29, 8–16.

101 Graham Stephen, *Cities Under Siege*, 85.

urban enclaves, which is often used as a metonymy, in order to describe enclaves of insurgency.¹⁰²

Once the ideological prerequisites of the new paradigm had been safeguarded, and once an elementary conceptual framework had been deployed for the guidance of the tests, all these now ought to be tried at the level of experiment. And this is where we inevitably move to the field of exercise, where it is not only the redefinition of the relationship of the state to the state of emergency that was tried — it is also where, first and foremost, its own intelligibility was constructed. The state of emergency does not only comprise an eminent political-juridical form, but it is itself simultaneously comprised as a plexus of materialities, spatialities and temporalities. The field of capacities that opened up during the *taking-place*¹⁰³ of these operations comprised a separate chapter for that (just like as for any other) paradigm of the military-police science, and a (scientific) subject of practical and experimental examination. Some people must therefore have taken the time, after the end of this first cycle of operations, to sit back and extensively examine the technical details, the mistakes, difficulties and the unexpected elements of these emergency exercises. It is once again the military sources that assure us how crucial details of such might be: not only during the application, but even during the actual conceptualisation of these operations.¹⁰⁴ It is clear that the operational framework, as described above, guided all applications. But there is also a reverse process, of equal im-

portance, that was activated through these experiments: a process that produced knowledge during action and fed back into the operational framework—and hence, into the sovereign authority and its material expressions.¹⁰⁵ This is precisely where the dual performative function of the experiments in question is located. Both as operations that revitalise and refresh the schema of emergency, performing the main function of sovereign authority, and as exercises that perform and take care of their own selves. The state of emergency, therefore, is not merely dragged out of a warehouse of dusted juridical tools — but it ought, every time, to additionally nurture the forms of its informal declaration. And it is these forms that were being tried out in Athens' metropolitan lab at the time.

Yet the state of emergency ought to modernise its forms not only due to the condition of the urgency imposed by the financial crisis, but also as part of a duty weighting upon the state mechanisms of destruction in regards to the issue of the management of cities and the position these hold in the agenda of military operations. In his foundational work *Low Intensity Operations — Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping*, the British general Frank Kitson wrote that already from 1969 the *RUSI Journal* hosted “an article which comes to the conclusion that low-level urban insurgency combined with propaganda and economic pressure, is likely to be the most popular form of operation in the future.”¹⁰⁶ In the shadow of the cold-war paradigm, this assertion remained to be proven. Yet today, no-one can question how apt this prediction had been. And so, in an ever-increasingly urbanised environment, military headquarters adjust their dogmas to the particularities and difficulties of urban formations. And as the *RUSI Journal* pointedly highlights, these are not conventional military operations but rather, counter-

102 See for example, Naveh Shimon, “Between the Striated and the Smooth. Urban Enclaves and Fractal Manoeuvres.” Paper delivered at conference “An Archipelago of Exception,” Centre for Contemporary Culture, Barcelona, November 11, 2005, <http://www.publicspace.org/es/texto-biblioteca/eng/bo23-between-the-striated-and-the-smooth-urban-enclaves-and-fractal-maneuvres>.

103 See footnote 52.

104 See indicatively the chapter “Understanding the Urban Environment” in *us Army Field Manual 3–06*, and Russell W. Glenn and Jamison Jo Medby, *Streetsmart: Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield for Urban Operations* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2002), 29, 78–83, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR1287.pdf.

105 “Action becomes knowledge and knowledge becomes action,” stresses the director of the Operational Theory Research Institute Shimon Naveh, in an interview of his to Eyal Weizman, *Lethal Theory*, 65.

106 Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, 21.

insurgency operations in an urban terrain. This comprises, in other words, a combination of counterinsurgency and urban operations. One can identify this combination in an exemplary form in the responsibilities of the 71st Airborne Brigade of Kilkis, segments of which are specialised in operations of crowd control, counter-terrorism, peace-keeping and urban operations. The brigade in question participates in the NATO Response Force (NRF) which was founded following the Organisation's Head of State Summit in Prague in November 2002. As General James Jones, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) has stated, the NATO Response Force is "... an important recognition on the part of the Alliance that the international security environment has changed dramatically."¹⁰⁷ A few months after the Prague Summit, NATO issued a manual for operations in urban terrain, proving that part of the change in question concerned the role of cities. In its opening pages, one reads: "Demographic trends indicate that the further urbanisation of towns and cities will continue, and that future military operations of all types could be expected to have an urban dimension."¹⁰⁸

The schema of the state of emergency is therefore called to revise its forms amidst the landscape formed by the financial crisis on the one hand and by the urbanisation of the military subject on the other. Should we insist upon the strictly practical dimensions of these forms, we could perhaps detect two discreet sides to the importance of the police operations that interest us; that is, two different practicality categories. One that concerns the violation of buildings as an applied science, and one that is related

to the field of social interaction — as merely two sides to a requisite study in operating. It is well-known that the EKAM units already had "specialised personnel concerned with violation issues" (of doors, walls).¹⁰⁹ Yet at the time it appeared that this particular practice acquired, precisely amidst the status formed by the state of emergency, some particular weight that in turn required new exercise fields. This because a gradual extension of the idioms of the state of emergency was observed, from the public into the private sphere. And for the needs of this extension, it was deemed necessary to forcefully violate material limits that would traditionally defend the distinction between public and private. One may, still, hold some doubt regarding the extent to which the violation in question did indeed take place during the operations against squats — since the police raids did not reveal any violent passage from the public into the private but instead, a passage from the public to the public; from one version of the public to another. Yet at the same time when these operations were under way, one could read in the press releases of the Greek police news about other everyday searches in houses where migrants resided, resulting in hundreds of arrests.

No clarification has been offered on the ways in which these searches were conducted to date, apart from the fact that they were accompanied by the presence of an attorney. Yet the raid by men of the EKAM unit, on the night of April 10, 2013, in the houses of two suspects for the sabotage to the infrastructure of the Chalkidiki gold mines, most definitely forms an indicative framework. What matters is that all the operations to which we refer acquired their dominant meaning via a rhetoric of urgency, always within the context of the restructuring of the Greek police science. In other words, via a rhetoric of the state of emergency, which appeared to gradually claim its expansion from the public upon the private sphere.¹¹⁰ Such repeated

107 This information comes from the official website of the 71st Brigade. See http://www.army.gr/structure/eg/dieuthinseis/71am/visit_us.html.

108 North Atlantic Treaty Organisation/Research and Technology Organisation, *Urban Operations in the Year 2020*, 2003, 3, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA413638>. See also Jennifer Morrison Taw and Bruce Hoffman, *The Urbanization of Insurgency: The Potential Challenge to U.S. Army Operations* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1994), http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2005/MR398.pdf.

109 See http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=52&Itemid=43&lang=.

110 Let us remember, here, that in his respective observations regarding the neutral zone of exception wherein bare life resides, Gior-

tests then comprised opportunities to experimentally test out this expansion — and beyond whatever symbolic baggage they may carry, they simultaneously produced some invaluable know-how for the police operations per se. Invaluable to such an extent that we would argue it contends for a position right next to the fundamental reasons why these tests occurred in the first place. The door, as a signifying material element of the dichotomy between public and private, has already started transforming itself into a key part of what is at stake with the state of emergency operations. The wind of the state of emergency will therefore slam it ever more frequently, ever more ferociously, as a reminder that it stands there as one of the final, perhaps, material obstacles before the utter colonisation of the everyday — and therefore, as one of the main issues at stake in politics itself. “Precisely because it can also be opened, its closure provides the feeling of a stronger isolation against everything outside this space than the mere unstructured wall,” Georg Simmel would once write about the door.¹¹¹ Let alone when this emergent “outside” meticulously prepares itself to violate doors at will. War, for Philip Misselwitz, has by now entered “the field of the everyday, the private kingdom of the house.”¹¹²

Through these repeated tests the EKAM units learn and practice elements concerning how one storms a building, how to cut off a city block, how to cooperate with

other security forces, what type of means and equipment one is to use and much more. Nevertheless, one would be excused to presume that such know-how could also be secured during exercises *in vitro* — that is, amidst a controlled environment of a state of emergency-in-simulation. What therefore makes the know-how acquired through the tests in question so special is precisely the fact that it is produced during its exposure to public light. And this exposure entails two discreet benefits for the science of counterinsurgency. On the one hand, these exercises take place in a field where a real, and therefore unpredictable enemy exists — proving that these exercises acquire meaning first and foremost as exercises in managing the Other: not only the Other-as-enemy, but also the Other-as-non-combatant and in the assemblage between the two in particular. A dual demand that is put forward as ever-increasingly urgent amidst the rich literature produced concerning present-day operations in complicated urban terrains. On the other hand, only the exposure of these exercises to public light — that is, only their systematic entrance into a real testing field and repeated applications — would be the one verifying the constitution of the paradigm as such. Because police science, the *Polizeiwissenschaft* whose main subject comprises, as per Foucault, the governance of all the forms of human coexistence,¹¹³ that is the field of public phenomena, turns by default public space into an enormous testing lab. And it would therefore only make sense for any plexus of theory and experimentation that may reserve the status of the epistemological paradigm for itself, to claim within public space whatever paradigmatic properties it may hold.¹¹⁴

gio Agamben deals precisely with the limit in question between the domus and the city: “[I]f classical politics is born through the separation of these two spheres, life that may be killed but not sacrificed is the hinge on which each sphere is articulated and the threshold at which the two spheres are joined in becoming indeterminate.” Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 56.

111 See Georg Simmel, “Bridge and Door,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 11, no. 1 (1994), 7.

112 Eyal Weizman and Phillip Misselwitz, “Military Operations as Urban Planning,” *Mute Magazine*, August 28, 2003, available at <http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/military-operations-urban-planning>. See also Stephen Graham, “Introduction: Cities, Warfare, and States of Emergency,” in Stephen Graham (ed.), *Cities, War and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 5.

113 Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977–78*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 326.

114 In regard to the observation statements that accompany experiments and perceptual experiences overall, Chalmers stresses that “they comprise public entities articulated in a public language and which involve theories with varying degrees of generalisation and complexity,” in Chalmers, *What Is This Thing Called Science?*, 43.

And so, any attempt to ponder over any paradigm of repression introduces us, by default, to the field of social interaction. An introduction already known from the time of Clausewitz, when he would write that “[w]ar [...] is part of man’s social existence.”¹¹⁵ And yet today, amidst the status of urbanisation and asymmetrical-isation of conflicts, the operations of emergency appear to diffuse themselves across ever-widening parts of the social field—coming to compose the most essential condition for the reproduction of the urban everydayness itself. It is telling that emphasis upon social interaction lead to the transition from the military term *Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain* (also known as MOUT) to the term *Urban Operations*, wherein the crucial meaning is no longer identified in urban topographical particularities as much as in the permanent and dense presence of the (non-combatant) population.¹¹⁶ Counterinsurgency operations, after all, comprise the operations par excellence for mapping out and managing the population. And it is not a coincidence that for the needs of training forces that participate in counterinsurgency operations (and as part of what Derek Gregory calls the *cultural turn*) the US army resorted to “.. simulations that attempt to incorporate the transactional intimacy of the cultural turn by using Civilian Role Players in Massively MultiPlayer Online Games or by using Artificial Intelligence to model cultural interactions.”¹¹⁷ Understanding, however, the limited capacities of these simulations the RAND Corporation makes clear, through the mouth of Russell Glenn, that these operations-exercises in real urban terrain will prove most indispensable in the future since “no purpose-built urban training site

and no simulation will be able to present the heterogeneity and complexity of a modern megalopolis for many years to come.”¹¹⁸ The military-police science therefore ought to operate in situ and to occupy even more public space, focusing even further upon the “public” rather than “space.” After all, the retired US lieutenant colonel Ralph Peters is clear enough: “While the physical characteristics of the assaulted or occupied city are of great importance, the key variable is the population. [...] Man’s complexity is richer than any architectural detail.”¹¹⁹

4. Plastic Deformations of “Common Sense”

And so, we find ourselves at the cross-section between two crucial active processes that include, on the one hand, the shady characteristics of the financial crisis — and hence, the articulations of the state of emergency as well — and on the other hand, the persistent demands for the urbanisation of the military subject, with the necessary emphasis upon the asymmetric dimensions that characterise the contemporary environment of armed conflict.

It is at the heart of this cross-section that it makes sense for us to seek some elementary indications for the fate of public space today. Admittedly, we ought to recognise that the experimental uses of public space do not contain any elements of originality. One could claim, after all, that public space comprises the location par excellence for exercising the exception. Yet what catches our interest is the fact that the contemporary fields of militarised exercise in situ are transformed and enriched, by this point, qualitatively — to such an extent that some of these gradually migrate from the colonial zones (where they would traditionally limit themselves) to select variations of the so-called “first world” urban environment. We know that colonies always comprised the crucial fields of exercise for disciplinary technologies. As Achille Mbembe points out,

115 Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard & Peter Paret (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 100.

116 Russell W. Glenn et al., “People Make the City,” *Executive Summary: Joint Urban Operations Observations and Insights from Afghanistan and Iraq* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2007), 1, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG428.2.pdf.

117 Derek Gregory, “The Rush to the Intimate: Counterinsurgency and the Cultural Turn,” *Radical Philosophy* 150 (2008): 16.

118 Cited in Graham, *Cities Under Siege*, 198.

119 Ralph Peters, “The Human Terrain of Urban Operations,” *Parameters* 30, no. 1 (2000): 4.

“the colonies are the location par excellence where the controls and guarantees of juridical order can be suspended — the zone where the violence of the state of exception is deemed to operate in the service of ‘civilization.’”¹²⁰

And so, for the colonial countries, colonies were not merely sources of invaluable raw material and reservoirs of mass unpaid labor. They also comprised a unique testing field for reconfigurations concerning the exercise of sovereign power. “Colonial occupation itself was a matter of seizing, delimiting, and asserting control over a physical geographical area — of writing on the ground a new set of social and spatial relations.”¹²¹ The inscription of this new plexus of social relations on the ground was — and continues to be — one of the issues at stake for the state of emergency apparatuses. And, for the needs of this inscription, a systematic investment is required on the notion of the ground, which is utilised as “raw material of sovereignty and the violence it carried with it.”¹²²

The need for such fields of experimentation continues to concern the military-police complex today — which make sure to process the ways of in situ exercise of sovereign power, giving birth to more refined forms. For example, the aforementioned study by the RAND Corporation, titled “People Make the City,” concerns itself with the importance of the American *doctrine for joint urban operations* (JP 3–06), with some quite telling prose: “Ongoing operations in the villages, towns, and cities of Afghanistan and Iraq offer the first real test of the United States’ first-ever joint urban operations doctrine. [...] The objective of this study is to reveal tools that will better enable military and civilian alike to best meet national policy objectives by more effectively conducting urban combat and restoration.”¹²³ In other words: putting together a specialised manual is not enough; this has to, in addition,

be tried out. The military operations in countries of the capitalist periphery offer such paradigmatic opportunities. And we should keep in mind that the know-how produced in these select laboratory places does not limit itself to the narrow spatial limits of the latter, but instead refreshes the operational capacities of the military-police science, for the needs of *homeland security* itself.¹²⁴ Foucault would tellingly write about this: “It should never be forgotten that while colonization, with its techniques and its political and juridical weapons, obviously transported European models to other continents, it also had a considerable boomerang effect on the mechanisms of power in the West, and on the apparatuses, institutions, and techniques of power. A whole series of colonial models was brought back to the West, and the result was that the West could practice something resembling colonization, or an internal colonialism, on itself.”¹²⁵ Recognising this

120 Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 24.

121 *Ibid.*, 25.

122 *Ibid.*, 26.

123 Glenn et al., “People Make the City,” 3.

124 A typical example of such interaction is offered through the military management of the social explosion that followed the destruction of a large part of New Orleans by hurricane Katrina in August 2005. Graham points out that in the aftermath of the operations in Baghdad and in Fallujah, “U.S. Army commanders, in response to Katrina, talked openly in the *Army Times* about the need to launch “urban combat” operations to “take back” the city from “insurgents” who had bred anarchy and violence.” See Stephen Graham, “‘Homeland’ Insecurities?: Katrina and the Politics of ‘Security’ in Metropolitan America,” *Space and Culture* 9, no. 1 (2006): 64.

125 Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975–76*, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 103. One typical such example lies in the case of the French general Thomas Robert Bugeaud. In 1840, Bugeaud took on repressing the uprising of the Algerians against the French colonialists. Nine years later, he would return to Paris and write his treatise titled *La Guerre des Rues et des Maisons* (The War of Streets and Houses), which would comprise one of the most important influences in the way in which the city of Paris was designed by the renown baron Haussmann. In light of this fact, the well-known involvement of the military field in the replanning of Paris in question proves to be more significant even. Bugeaud did not put together just a martial memoirs treatise, but a manual of urban planning as well; its raw material being the conclusions from the tests and experiments that took place in a purely military and colonial lab. And based upon this manual, the “strategic embellishment” of Paris

particular novelty in Foucault's thought, Graham emphasised upon the fact that "it points beyond traditional ideas of colonisation toward a *two-way* process in the flow of ideas, techniques and practices of power between metropolitan heartlands of colonial powers and the spaces of colonised peripheries."¹²⁶

From the academic year 1975–76, the time when Foucault would refer to the boomerang effects at his Collège de France lectures, cities globally have been subject to rather radical transformations. At the core of these transformations lies the phenomenon of mass migration and its embroilment in the process of further urbanisation. At this state of forced movement and mass dispersion, and under the influence of fiercer and more flexible forms of capitalist exploitation, the conditions are shaped up for extreme intra-urban polarisations — which, in a number of cases of western metropolises, allow for the formation of a type of downgraded *internal colonies*.¹²⁷ In this way, new territories of separation are born and hence, new spaces of conflict — which in turn prove themselves to be privileged fields of exercise for the counterinsurgency mechanisms of military-police complex. Therefore, the fields of exercise in question include, gradually, some select places of the "first world" urban formations, therefore utilising the opportunities of testing out new technologies of discipline offered in the very heart of the metropolises.¹²⁸ Should we now place next to them, the spatialities and the temporalities of radical political demands and projects — which are transformed into a subject of mil-

itary management anew — a particular environment of cases is produced; cases which may maintain a stable relationship to the know-how produced in some exotic, colonial lab, yet is nevertheless characterised, in addition, by a *local* production of disciplinary technologies, which is gradually diffused in an ever-increasing number of articulations of the social and urban field.

In this process of diffusion, the re-articulation and readjustment of public meanings holds a key role. In the case of Athens, the spatial terms of segregations may not yet bear the strictness of the (neo)colonial examples — and so, the ground inscription in question may be articulated with more refined and more indiscernible ways. Nevertheless, the way in which Mbembe describes the relationship between ground and sovereignty, and in particular the way in which this is intermediated by the production of cultural and conceptual constructions, finds a complete application in the uniform security area that Dendias, for example, envisioned. And specifically concerning the ways by which the military management of migrants was articulated in the city, proving that some aspects of the urban centre were understood through a colonial-orientalist imaginary that on the one hand gave birth to a demand for territorial recovery — and on the other, it allowed and it encouraged the systematic exercise of violence. Mbembe then argues: "The writing of new spatial relations (territorialization) was, ultimately, tantamount to [...] the manufacturing of a large reservoir of cultural imaginaries. These imaginaries gave meaning to the enactment of differential rights to differing categories of people for different purposes within the same space; in brief, the exercise of sovereignty."¹²⁹

This is therefore where the last episode of our trial perambulation through the performative landscapes of the state of emergency stands. And it concerns precisely the ways in which social relationships and their meanings are redistributed through the spatial demands produced by the concept of the state of emergency — and through its

was designed — which then in turn comprised a model for a series of urban regeneration schemes across Europe. See in this regard the chapter titled "Urbicide," in Sharon Rotbard, *White City, Black City: Architecture and War in Tel Aviv and Jaffa, Babel, Tel Aviv 2005*, available in a translation by Sharon Rotbard and Orit Gat at <http://babelarchitectures.blogspot.gr/2009/07/urbicide.html>. See also Weizman & Misselwitz, "Military Operations as Urban Planning," 43–46.

126 Stephen Graham, "Foucault's Boomerang: The New Military Urbanism," *Development Dialogue* 58 (2012): 38.

127 *Ibid.*, 39.

128 See Graham, *Cities Under Siege*, xix, 86.

129 Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 26.

practical articulations in particular. Because apart from performing themselves, as we saw, patiently and meticulously producing their paradigmatic self-image, they also perform something else: they cause extremely serious deformations to the understanding of public experience. The territorial inscription of the demand of public security carries with it the reproduction of a new plexus of meaning-assigning, one which re-structures the meaning of public presence in itself — at the precise moment when the operations in question take place. The permanent police presence in public space comprises, in this sense, an essential element of meaning-assigning for public space *per se*. And beyond whatever material articulations, it invests first and foremost upon the field of perception. Butler writes that “[t]o produce what will constitute the public sphere, however, it is necessary to control the way in which people see, how they hear, what they see. [...] The public sphere is constituted in part by what can appear, and the regulation of the sphere of appearance is one way to establish what will count as reality, and what will not.”¹³⁰ The transformation of public space into a field of constant military-police experiments additionally acts, then, as a particular “regulation of the sphere of appearance.” And it relies upon the quick adaptability of the population. “A military force introduced during times of crisis becomes a tool of social engineering,” writes, entirely shamelessly, the RAND Corporation.¹³¹ A position that merely reflects the tremendous importance carried, today, by the widespread mixing of the figure of the soldier with wider segments of the population — and which repeats what is by now a commonplace in the counterinsurgency operations: “COIN operations can be characterized as armed social work.”¹³²

As part of this social engineering, the loss of vital segments of public space ought to become an object of habit. It reshapes, in this way, the subjects on the basis of new disciplines — thus utilising what Foucault had diagnosed long ago. Namely, that “[t]he individual is not [...] power’s opposite number; the individual is one of power’s first effects.”¹³³ The repeated operations, therefore, aim at accustoming the subject with their harsh reality. Some accustoming with loss, which takes place through its repetition, that is, in the field of habit — gradually shifting the limits of social tolerance and simultaneously gaining grounds of public space as much as segments of public meanings. This battle over meanings comprises one of the basic presuppositions for the success of the military-police operations. And it was analysed above, to an extent, through the extensive references to the field of ideological production. The US manual for the Urban Operations reserves a special place for this presupposition, through its reference to the term *psychological operations* (PSYOP). According to the manual’s glossary, these are “[p]lanned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator’s objectives.”¹³⁴ Sliding over the reference to the foreign dimension of the audiences, it would make sense for one to focus upon the fact that they clearly comprise propaganda operations aiming at the influencing of public opinion. Operations, that is, which are fully and clearly situated in the field of ideological production. In the manual’s technical terminology, *psychological operations* are directly linked to the so-called *public affairs* (PA),¹³⁵ and they com-

130 Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London & New York: Verso, 2006), xx.

131 Glenn, “*People Make the City*,” 30.

132 See *us Army Field Manual 3-24, A-7* and Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency*, 43.

133 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 30.

134 *us Army Field Manual 3-06*, Glossary-21.

135 Public affairs: Those public information, command information, and community relations activities directed toward both the external and internal publics with interest in the Department of Defense. *Ibid.*, Glossary-21 & 5-19, 5-20.

prise one of those foundational elements that comprise the main core of the *information operations* (IO).¹³⁶

Therefore, the ideological design and the ideological curation of these operations evidently include psyop elements and vice versa. Yet what maintains its own importance is the fact that the exercises in real space, at real time, beyond the ideological shielding and propaganda that they presuppose, also demonstrate an autonomous capacity to act as peculiar psyop in themselves. As operations, that is, which themselves carry a conceptual, training and psychological charge precisely at the moment when they take place—and in particular during their repetition. The materialities and the practicalities of the operations themselves and the physical presence of security forces per se therefore train, to a large extent, for their acceptance. And this is the way in which they are performatively transformed into a “tool of social engineering,” intervening in the intelligibility of public experience in itself. In their study titled *Streetsmart—Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield for Urban Operations*, Glenn and Medby argue that “[p]opulation groups or individuals can also be manipulated by either the friendly or opposing force, by other parties, or by events themselves. Such manipulation may be with or without the knowledge of the subjects influenced.”¹³⁷ It would therefore make sense, indeed, to emphasise upon the “plastic” capacity attributed to the events themselves. The Xenios-Zeus operation comprised, for example, a typical case of such—since it was not merely an operation that translated into a tremendous investment in the field of the operational capacities of the police science. It was also an implicit and meticulous educational procedure in the field of social engineering, the main subject of which comprised the shifting and the

reassignment of meaning of personal experience within the contemporary public space. That is, on the one hand the instalment of fear in the life of the migrant subject, which enforced an informal regime of curfew. On the other hand, the familiarisation of the non-migrant subject with the everyday sight of mass arrests and population displacements, which re-assigns them meaning—making them gradually appear as an urban banality, if not as an essential element of the metropolitan aesthetics.¹³⁸ The field of ideological production may not suffice, then, on its own, in order to influence the most innermost articulations of the embodied perception, so crucial for the experience of public space. Its necessary addition must be sought, it seems, in a phenomenology of the everyday “legal” violence.

The repeated operations do not only comprise, however, a reality in the Arendtian sense of the public phenomenon to which we are exposed in an embodied way.¹³⁹ They also leave indelible traces in the field of representation—that is, in the sphere of the spectacle and image management. In this sense, the familiarisation with *this* reality is not developed only at the level of public phenomena, of which we have an entirely personal, embodied lived experience—but also at the level of their representation; that is, the ultimate field of meaning-assigning, therefore in the end invading once again the private sphere spectacularly and communicatively. If there is something that therefore completes our familiarisation

136 Information operations: The employment of the core capabilities of electronic warfare, computer network operations, psychological operations, military deception, and operations security, in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to affect and defend information and information systems and to influence decisionmaking. *Ibid.*, Glossary-14 & 5–14.

137 Glenn and Medby, *Streetsmart*, 91.

138 Obviously, the observation in question does not regard all those who sometimes cheered and at other times felt innermost satisfaction at the sight of the aforementioned displacements. And it is worth to be said that long before Xenios-Zeus operation it was them who made sure the public spaces were transformed into places inhospitable and forbidden for migrants.

139 In regard to the notion of the “public,” Arendt wrote that “[f]or us, appearance—something that is being seen and heard by others as well as by ourselves—constitutes reality” and that “our feeling for reality depends utterly upon appearance and therefore upon the existence of a public realm.” See Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 50, 51.

with the state of emergency, it is our familiarisation with the state-of-emergency-as-spectacle, as part of which we consume it, effortlessly, through its media representations as well. “The ‘shock and awe’ strategy,” writes Butler, “seeks not only to produce an aesthetic dimension to war, but to exploit and instrumentalize the visual aesthetics as part of a war strategy itself.”¹⁴⁰ In this direction, the filming on part of the Greek police itself of the operations for the eviction of squats (as well as that of other operations) opens up precisely the question of their aestheticisation as an additional element of this emergency social education. And if one were to judge from their “artistic” result, it appears that the main aim of these police media products was not so much to aesthetically curate the public presence of the Greek police, as much as to enforce it.

And so, beyond the strictly technical part of the operations in question, and with whatever training and know-how importance held by their repetition at a practical and technical level, there was some additional gain for the domestic sovereignty, hereby related to the familiarization of the “public opinion” precisely with these operations and their repeatability. More precisely, public opinion as an abstract and constructed — therefore artificially common — sense and opinion about the things that surround us, is constructed through the constant repetition of these appearances, which merely utilise its known elastic qualities.¹⁴¹ The military management of social demands and

political struggles invaded, at the time, the field of public sphere — with forms that made it one of the main signifiers of the socio-economic crisis and its political management — producing, in turn, a specialised yet entirely recognisable imagery of the crisis. The black-clad, fully armed member of the EKAM unit, always charged with a surplus of military semantics that was too heavy for the taste of the Greek post-dictatorial tradition (and as such remained hidden and almost entirely inactive, behind the most refined public facets of the Greek police), became a symbolic condenser of public-space-at-the-time-of-crisis, taking care of re-drawing, hastily and harshly, the limits of what is conceivable, permissible and normal. We therefore dealt with a meticulous attempt to shift the meaning-assigning of urban phenomena away from the field of political and social demands and antagonisms, into the field of military conflicts.

And let us not forget that the EKAM unit was traditionally mobilised in cases where there was, usually, a concrete possibility for the use of arms from the opposite side: that is, in cases where there was the chance of armed conflict. The fact that these same elite security forces were effortlessly used in order to break up strikes, or to repeatedly raid occupied social spaces, evinced the fact that the conceptual framework of what comprises an armed conflict was simultaneously shifted. Or, to put it more simply — that is, with Schmittian terms —, an ever-increasing number of forms of social antagonism were gradually conceived and assigned meaning through the liminal semiotics of the of the Friend/Enemy relation — in particular, through its most extreme implementation, that is, of armed conflict,¹⁴² which correspondingly requires a liminal i.e. military administration. The repeated uses of

¹⁴⁰ Butler, *Precarious Life*, 148.

¹⁴¹ Referring to the notion of population and the fields of management this would form for the newly-appearing state of the 17th century and its *raison d'État* and specifically concerning its truth production, he would write: “*raison d'État* must act on the consciousness of people, not just to impose some true or false beliefs on them, as when, for example, sovereigns want to create belief in their own legitimacy or in the illegitimacy of their rival, but in such a way that their opinion is modified, of course, and along with their opinion their way of doing things, their way of acting, their behavior as economic subjects and as political subjects. This work of public opinion will be one of the aspects of the politics of truth in *raison d'État*.” See Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 275.

¹⁴² Let us not forget, at this point, that Carl Schmitt argued that “[t]he friend, enemy, and combat concepts receive their real meaning precisely because they refer to the real possibility of physical killing. War follows from enmity. War is the existential negation of the enemy. It is the most extreme consequence of enmity,” Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab, (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 33.

this more militarised section of the police for cases which could once even comprise the subject of political negotiations shows, in the clearest of ways, that the crisis carries with it an entire apparatus of conceptual-penal-military mechanisms, the everydayness and the repeated public activations of which performatively ensure it the weight of the normal and the natural. What would formerly extract its meaning and justification from history and the conquests of political and social struggles — an extraction that is rightful and, to a large extent, publicly recognised as such even from its enemies — was at the time ordered to violently declassify itself and to hastily take its place within the new, flexible penal context of the crisis. This violent declassification comprises merely one of the forms assumed by the state of emergency as an educational process. And as Roger Dadoun stresses out, the foundational anthropological function of education is to “deal with violence, to negotiate violence,”¹⁴³ thereby confirming what Nietzsche had diagnosed a while ago: “A thing must be burnt in so that it stays in the memory.”¹⁴⁴ This violent inscription describes the function of bourgeois democracy itself, allowing one of the advisers of the Greek ex prime-minister to articulate it best: “the monopoly of violence belongs to the democratic state alone — and we will crush you.”¹⁴⁵

Translated by Antonis Vradis

143 Roger Dadoun, *La violence: Essai sur l' "homo violens,"* trans. Nikolas Al. Sevastakis (Athens: Scripta, 1998) (in Greek), 48.

144 Friedrich Nietzsche, *On The Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Diethe Carol (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 38.

145 See the article that Failos Kranidiotis published only four days after the evictions of “Villa Amalias” and “Patisision 61 & Skaramanga” squats, titled “The Monopoly of Violence,” *Demokratia*, January 13, 2013, <http://bit.ly/2bZrQvw>.

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