

University of Thessaly  
Department of History,  
Archaeology and Social  
Anthropology



Εθνική Δημοκρατία  
Περιφέρεια Θεσσαλίας



ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ  
ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ

Seminars

2017

The aim of this 10-day program (June 25-July 5, 2017) is to convene an interdisciplinary group of graduate students, academics and cultural producers from fields such as anthropology, history, political philosophy, gender studies, cultural studies and new media studies for a period of intensive and provocative exchange regarding the pressing problems and questions of our research and our worlds.

The theme of this year's Pelion Summer Lab -- Democracy and Dissent -- will address urgent political developments around the globe both by revisiting classic texts of critical theory and social inquiry and tracing new trajectories of thought and novel modes of cultural critique and cultural production. Against the backdrop of neo-fascist xenophobia and neoliberal austerity, we will consider how democracy, so often invoked as an alibi of sovereignty, still holds out a vital promise of hospitality to the other, capable of disrupting multifarious justifications for intolerance, exclusion, dispossession and injury. As we consider emergent practices and potentialities for dissent, we will highlight the constitutive role of technology, culture and aesthetics in the political. Ethnographic and historical case studies from various sites will be interwoven with our more theoretical discussions. A highlight of the PSL will be a one-day public symposium held in the seaside village of Horto on June 29, in which instructors from the PSL, members of the University of Thessaly academic community and invited guests will speak.

Given that the humanities and social sciences are themselves critically at stake in these developments, both as target and as launchpad for critique, a fundamental aspect of this year's Summer Lab (and

future ones we hope will follow) is the reimagining of our routinized modes of teaching, researching and disseminating knowledge. Thus we do not see this summer meeting as simply an extension of our normal way of doing things to another time and place. Instead, we envision these days together as an opportunity to experiment and reflect together on how to better develop communities of learning and intellectual exchange outside of established hierarchies of knowledge and experience, as well as across multiple sites and diverse social and political contexts. Our aim is to reframe our questions and envision new modes of communicating our ideas and our research that might be worthy of the challenges of the contemporary situation.

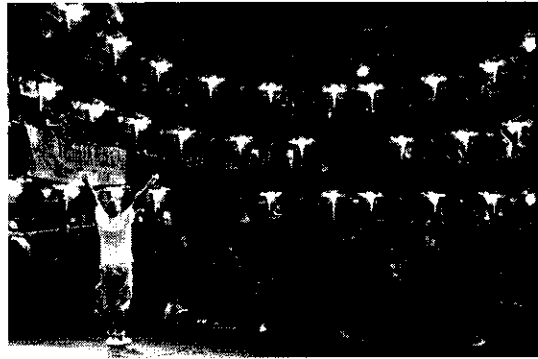
The format of the PSL is designed to bring participants into meaningful contact with prominent critical thinkers, as well as with each other. Our invited faculty will present either a master class focused on a foundational text, which participants will be asked to read in advance, or an experimental methodologies workshop. As we believe strongly in the need for an active and creative uptake of the Summer Lab's offerings (rather than a lecture-transmission model) participants will work together to develop a collaborative project based on their theoretical and research interest with the guidance of the organizers. The collaborative work that the students will produce (a short written text, a video, a podcast, a sound piece, a series of photographs) will be the trace of the dialogues and thinking of the days we spend together.

*Penelope Papailias, Mitsos Bilalis, Ioanna Laliotou*

## Seminar with Alexandros Kioupkiolis

### The Commons as an Alternative Paradigm of Collective Life

The idea of the 'commons' has emerged in the last two decades as an



Teatro Valle in Rome, occupation since 2011

alternative to both state governance and the competitive, profit-driven logics of the market. The commons refer to self-governed communities which create or manage a collective

good on ecologically sustainable, fair and

democratic terms. In reading the two texts, your objective should be to understand the problems which the commons can address and the alternative logics they embody in politics, the economy, our relation to the environment, and the city.

#### Readings:

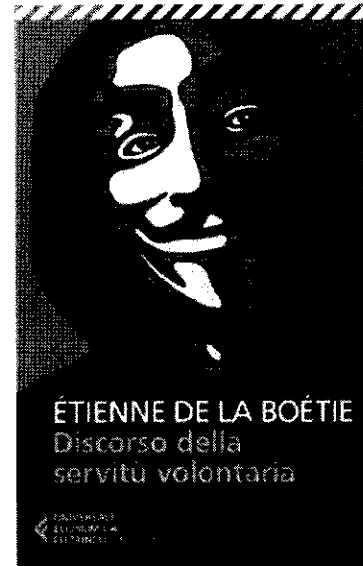
- Ostrom, Elinor, "Tragedy of the commons," in *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics Online*, 2008.
- "On the Commons: A Public Interview with Massimo De Angelis and Stavros Stavrides," *Flux journal* # 17, 2010

## Seminar with Dimitris Vardoulakis

### Why do we "fight for our servitude as if it were our salvation?"

#### Spinoza and La Boetie on Democracy

I am interested to situate La Boétie and Spinoza within the



materialist tradition. In particular, I want to show how they both use the concept of phronesis to make the political point. I will start with a quick account of phronesis from Book VI of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and then the Epicurus fragments in Diogenes Laertius, so as to situate La Boétie and Spinoza's position. I want to note in particular how phronesis associated with instrumental thinking. It is a kind of judgment that takes into account means and ends relations. At

De La Boetie

the same time, as La Boétie and Spinoza

well recognize, phronesis, or instrumental rationality, also requires the concept of power. The most difficult question here is, why do people fail to think instrumentally? Or, differently put, why do people fail to use their phronesis? Without tackling this question, a materialist politics can never hope to aspire to democracy.

#### Readings:

- De La Boétie, Étienne. *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2012 (1735).

- Spinoza, Baruch. Preface. *Theological-Political Treatise*, Gebhart ed., 2nd ed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991 (1670).

### Seminar with Patricia Dailey

#### Disruptive Performances: Fred Moten and the Black Radical Tradition

Fred Moten and Stefano Harney's *The Undercommons* is a kind of poetic manifesto, a reflection both philosophical and social on forms



image by Shanna Merola

of living and resistance that stem from the black radical tradition. This seminar will aim to further our understanding of the movement this book

engages by means of its references to music, flight,

negation, Fanon, Deleuze, Marx, and the haptic. We will try to parse out the ways in which Moten and Harney are both offering a critique of and a trajectory for radical social action. Our seminar will simply try to work out what is being asked of us, in relation to thought, feeling, sound, and action, and how it understands the legacy of the black radical tradition today.

#### Reading:

- Harney, Stefano & Moten, Fred. *The Undercommons. Fugitive Planning & Black Study*. Winenhoe/New York/Port Watson: Minor Compositions, 2013.

### Seminar with Athena Athanasiou

#### States of Emergency and Agonistic Politics: Toward a 'Not Yet of Democratic Imagination



Gezi standing protest, Istanbul

Like Marx and Engels, who began their *Communist Manifesto* (1848) by invoking spectre haunting Europe, which they called communism, Jacques Derrida started off his *Specters of Marx* by conjuring ghosts – in the plural. He also cited

revolutionary Marxist: Walter Benjamin's "weak messianic force

(the 2<sup>nd</sup> thesis *On the Concept of History*) was enlisted to instantiate radical possibility: one that has not been actualized and yet remains with us. The term "weak" indicates the contingent character of the messianic: messianic force is intimately related to messianic unforce (the incomplete, the failed, the defeated). The unanticipated possibility for the politics of agonism becomes the site of what Judith Butler calls "opening up the possibility of agency" (1997: 15). Agency, however, does not indicate the restoration of a sovereign individual subject of speech and action, but rather the aporia of subjectivation.

#### Reading:

- Butler, Judith. *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015.

## Seminar with Pamila Gupta

### Critical Oceanic Studies

---



Jason de Caires Taylor, "Vicissitudes"

The rise of ocean levels has become a sign of climate change and the Anthropocene. These rising water levels have created a new awareness of the ocean—as one of the last universal commons—and opened up

exploration—what is now being called 'critical oceanic studies' (Hofmeyr and Bystrom, 2017). While rich traditions of maritime scholarship on human history at sea have traced 'crossings' of people, ideas and objects (Chambers, 2008), critical ocean studies ask us to engage with both human and non-human aspects of the ocean, where surface and depth and the materiality and 'seaness' of the sea become central points of reflection. This workshop takes recent writings and art from this emerging area of scholarship to think anew and comparatively about oceanic bodies (Mediterranean, Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific).

#### Readings:

- Kerry Bystrom and Isabel Hofmeyr, "Oceanic Routes: (Post-) Notes on Hydro-Colonialism," *Comparative Literature* (2017), 69(1): 1-6.
- Elizabeth Deloughrey, "Submarine Futures of the Anthropocene," *Comparative Literature* (2017), 69(1): 32-44.
- Rachel Price, "Afterword: The Last Universal Commons," *Comparative Literature* (2017), 69(1): 45-53.

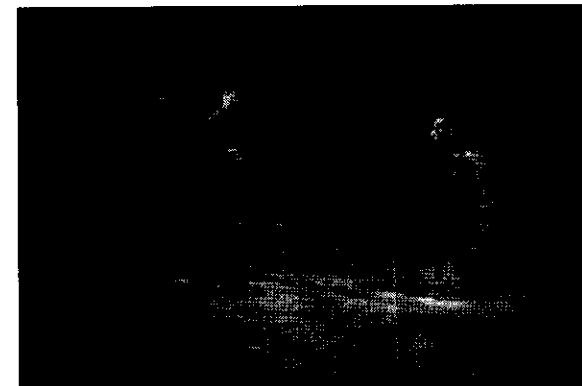
#### Suggested Reading:

Iain Chambers, Chapter 1: "Many Voices" in *Mediterranean Crossings* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

## Seminar with Elena Tzelepis

### Aesthetics in the Political: Antigone as a Stranger in the Polis

---



Freedom Theater of Jenin Refugee Camp,  
Performance of Fugard's *The Island*.

Sophocles' *Antigone* offers us a way to reflect the underpinnings of dissent, critique, and ethical responsibility. Through *Antigone*, we will think the social conditions that determine whom we should love and remember, whom we

can consider our intimate and how we should love and mourn our beloved ones. We will also think why critical public speech can be threatening to state authorities and/or authoritarian constructions of the law. We intend to go beyond the heroic formulations of Antigone and pose the question of collective civic responsibility and action. Exploring such questions, we are confronted with the perennial question of who belongs to the polis and who does not; who is included and at what price; who is constructed as a pariah, a public enemy, a foreign body; and what the gender, sexual, racial implications of this foreclosure of the public sphere are. Thus, we examine the workings of the ancient Greek polis as well as their resonances with contemporary politics of the democratic polity.

#### Reading:

- Butler, Judith. *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002

### Methodological Workshop with Petros Petridis

#### Machinima as Experimental Ethnographic Medium



*Occupy Second Life*

The workshop focuses on the genre of machinima (machine + cinema), videos and movies produced through the capturing and editing of

audiovisual material from the virtual worlds of video games.

#### During the workshop:

- We will focus on the political aspects of the practice of machinima creation. We will examine the conflicts that have taken place related to intellectual property rights and free fan labor involved in producing this material.
- We will learn how to create a machinima.
- We will examine the potential methodological implications of machinima as a cultural archiving technique and as a means of ethnographic representation.

#### Reading:

- Lowood, Henry and Michael Nitsche. "Video Capture, Machinima, Documentation, and the History of Virtual Worlds" (ch. 1) and "Tangible Narratives: Emerging Interfaces for Digital Storytelling and Machinima" (ch. 6) in *Machinima Reader*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

### Methodological Workshop with Juan Orrantia

#### Expanded Documentary



*Handsworth Songs*

An overview of experimental documentary/ethnographic and contemporary photography works that question the canons and engage with problems

traditional documentary. Through them we will discuss the political possibilities and uses of fiction, appropriation, ambiguity and non-linearity for engaging "the real". Emphasis will be on the interplay between form and content.

If participants are working on a project involving photography, audio, film/video or multimedia we can devote a section of the workshop in the form of a crit session to go over the material.

#### Readings:

- Azoulay, Ariella. Introduction. *The Civil Contract of Photography*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008.
- Lind, Maria and Hito Steyerl. *The Greenroom: Reconsidering the Documentary and Contemporary Art*. Introduction.
- Levi Strauss, David. "Nikons and Icons. Is the aestheticization-of-suffering critique still valid?", *Book Forum*, 2007
- [http://www.bookforum.com/inprint/014\\_02/258](http://www.bookforum.com/inprint/014_02/258)
- Demos, T. J. *The Migrant Image: The Art and Politics of Documentary During Global Crisis*. Durham: Duke University Press. (Recommended)

In preparation also look at these works/artists:

- Sensate Journal (<http://sensatejournal.com/>), The Atlas Group Archives by, Walid Raad ([www.theatlasgroup.org](http://www.theatlasgroup.org)), Taryn Simon // Diana Matar (Evidence), Richard Mosse (Infra) <https://witness.worldpressphoto.org/incoming-the-collateral-damage-of-conceptual-documentary-a3a389acf8be>
- Maya Goded (Plaza de la Soledad), Zanele Muholi, Jim Goldberg (Open See), Suggested: Sans Soleil (Chris Marker)

## PROJECT LAB «Democracy Simulation»

Mitsos Bilalis & Penelope Papailias

The basic idea: you will work in pairs to \*propose\* an intervention in a critical event (media event, artistic event, intellectual/academic or everyday situation) in which in one way or another democracy in your opinion is on the line. This event could be something that has been haunting you from your research. It could be something that has pre-occupied itself upon you as a concern from your activism or from navigating everyday life from whatever subject position.

We want you to probe this problem, to crack it open, with some of the theoretical concepts from the seminars.

You will propose an *intervention*, trying to brainstorm a "format". We do not want to fetishize new "digital tools", leading you to focus your work on technical fine tuning. What is really important to us is the shock of *bibliocentrism* and its logics of knowledge production and circulation, hierarchies of expertise, condition of knowledge, scan, commodification, etc. that is in process, directly affecting communication, political community, scholarship... The real question: how in political, not just practical terms, do we "write" today?

That being said we do have some ideas and we are more than sure you also will have many things to show us.

For your 1.5-minute presentation on the final day of lab (July 4<sup>th</sup>) you will present your PROPOSAL for this intervention. It can take the form of a short essay, a powerpoint, a photo essay, an explainer video, a listicle, a syllabus, a short video, a machinima, an activity for children, an art exhibit, a performance... We like to think of this as the start of an conversation that will extend beyond and after the lab and we will be very interested if these little "seeds" sprout after we leave Paou.

Pelion Summer Lab											
Program Outline											
	June 25, 2017	June 26, 2017	June 27, 2017	June 28, 2017	June 29, 2017	June 30, 2017	July 1, 2017	July 2, 2017	July 3, 2017	July 4, 2017	July 5, 2017
09.00 - 09.30		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
10.00	Arrival	Introduction to the Academic Program			Public Workshop "Democracy and Dissent"	Excursion to Trikeri Island	Methodological Workshop (Orrantia)	Project Lab	Project Lab		Departure
12.00 - 13.30		Introduction to Project Lab	Project Lab	Methodological Workshop (Petridis)							
14.00		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch							
18.00 - 21.00	Welcome meeting	Seminar (Kioupiolis)	Seminar (Vardoulakis)	Seminar (Dailey)	Group Dinner		Seminar (Athanasiou)	Seminar (Tzelepis)	Seminar (Gupta)	Students Presentations	Farewell Dinner
21.30	Group Dinner	Group Dinner					Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		

## Menu

Meals	Sunday 25/06	Monday 26/06	Tuesday 27/06	Wednesday 28/06	Thursday 29/06
Breakfast	Arrival	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk  Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk  Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk  Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk  Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg
Snack		Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers	Coffee, Soft Drinks, Biscuits, Fruit, Pies
Lunch		Stuffed vegetables (with rice, no meat);  feta <sup>[1]</sup> cheese, <i>florinis</i> paprika <sup>[3]</sup> , <i>tsitsiravila</i> <sup>[4]</sup> , bread, fruit <sup>[5]</sup>	Baked chicken with potatoes, Greek salad <sup>[6]</sup> , <i>tzatziki</i> <sup>[7]</sup> , bread, fruit	Pasta napoletaine or with basil pesto, green salad, ground cheese, fruit	Congress (Horto)
Snack		Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Fruit	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Fruit	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Fruit	
Dinner	Welcome Dinner	Free	Free	Free	Congress Dinner



Friday 30/06	Saturday 01/07	Sunday 02/07	Monday 03/07	Tuesday 04/07	Wednesday 05/07
Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk	Beverages: Coffee (filter & instant), Tea, Juice, Milk
Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg	Food: Cereals, Bread, Jam, Yogurt, Cheese, Cold cuts (Turkey), Egg
Excursion to Trikeri Island	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Crackers
	Zucchini stuffed with rice and beef with egg-and-lemon sauce; Greek salad, bread, fruit	Strapatsada <sup>1)</sup> , smoked aubergine salad, tabule <sup>2)</sup> , feta cheese, bread, fruit	Baked Fish Plaki <sup>3)</sup> , beluga lentil salad <sup>4)</sup> , bread, fruit	Beef yourvetsi <sup>5)</sup> [2] with orzo pasta kritharaki, Greek salad, bread, fruit	
	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Fruit	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Fruit	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Fruit	Coffee, Ice Tea, Juice, Fruit	
	Free	Free	Free	Farewell Dinner	
					Departure

PELION  
SUMMER LAB

## Housing & Food philosophy

There is a lot to say about this topic! Pelion Summer Lab is taking place in a historic monastery, which boasts a simple, but fully functional communal kitchen. There is good reason from a practical and economical standpoint, but also from a deeper social, political (and gastronomical) perspective, to make the kitchen the heart of our operation.

We will provide basic ingredients for a breakfast buffet (eggs, milk, yogurt, honey, bread, coffee/tea, etc.) and a home-cooked Greek meal (i.e., baked vegetables, pita) at lunchtime.

Participants will all participate on a rotating basis as helpers in serving and cleaning up (not cooking or preparing the food). We will try to accommodate dietary restrictions and food allergies to the extent possible in this setting.

There will be at least three dinners provided by the program (a welcome dinner at Argalasti the first night, a dinner in Horto after the public workshop and a farewell dinner in Lafkos). On other evenings, participants can go out to eat in neighboring villages or order in (limited options, such as sournaki).

The rooms of the monastery conference center are converted monks' cells with dramatic views to the sea. They are simple but comfortable (with two single beds and a private bath). There is one indoor common space available for use by participants, as well as an outdoor courtyard with large wooden monastic tables. There is also a dining room adjacent to the kitchen.

Bed sheets will be changed every three days. The participants will be notified the day before.

# Democracy and Dissent around the Globe

June 29, 2017

Angelinis-Hadjinikou Foundation, Horto, Pelion

{starting at 10 am}  
in the arts...

with

Elena Tzelepis (University of Athens)  
Syrago Tsiara (Thessaloniki Center of Contemporary Art)  
Juan Orrianta (University of Witwatersrand)  
Hypatia Vourloumis (International Centre for Hellenic and  
Mediterranean Studies)

{coffee break}

in academe

with

Pamila Gupta (University of Witwatersrand)  
Polymeris Voglis (University of Thessaly)  
Ioanna Laliotou (University of Thessaly)  
Nikos Christofis (University of Macedonia)  
Sinan Birdal (dismissed professor University of Izik, University of  
Southern California)

{midday break and starting up again at 6pm}

in networks, commons

PELION  
SUMMERLAB  
Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, University of Thessaly

with

Mitsos Bilalis (University of Thessaly)  
Alexandros Kioupiolis (Aristotle University)  
Amanda Third (Western Sydney University)  
Penelope Papailias (University of Thessaly)

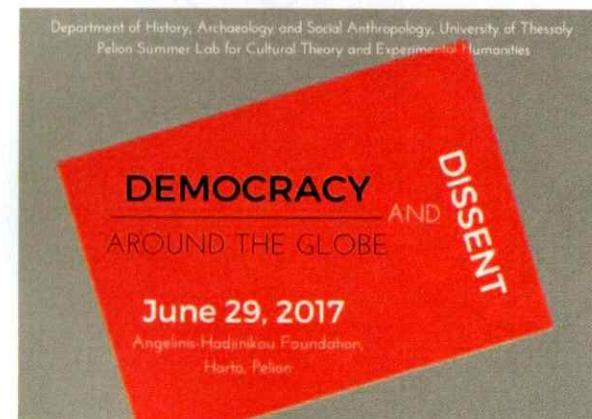
{more coffee}

in movements, feminisms

a propos of the recent publication of Athena Athanasiou's  
*Agonistic Mourning: Political Dissidence and the Women in  
Black* (Edinburgh University Press)

Amanda Third (Western Sydney University)  
Patricia Dailey (Columbia University)  
Dimitris Vardoulakis (Western Sydney University)

{dinner break, followed by dance party}



PELION  
SUMMERLAB  
Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, University of Thessaly

