PERFORMING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN SITU

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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.” 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.” 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.”

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

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid, 9, 10.
existence at the stake of language." 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.” 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 consequent-ly abandoned by Austin himself, they rest upon his subsequent theory concerning statements as acts, i.e. his theory of speech acts — and the strand of pragmatics to which this theory paved the way.

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. 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. 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. 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

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.
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 subjection proceedings or assignations of subjects in language, in fact determine their distribution.” 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.’” 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.” 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.” 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. 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?

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.” “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.” 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.
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).
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. 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.”

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—a各式各样 generalised condition of this social ontology.” 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?” 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.”

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.

21 Judith Butler, “From Performativity to Precarity,” trans. Akis Gavrilidis, 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.”

Yeats 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.”

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 (i.e. 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. 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.

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.” 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. A statement “whose operative reference to

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24 Ibid, 88.
reality is guaranteed by the institutional powers.” 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) and law (and therefore, the state of emergency) 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.” 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.

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 statuary 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.

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.”

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29 Agamben,* State of Exception*, 40.
30 Agamben,* The Coming Community*, 10.
31 See n. 28.
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. 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).” 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. On the other hand it performs, through this exposure, the comprehension of wider phenomena. 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. 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 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.

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.

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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.” 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. Chalmers, then, identifies — among others — the “explicitly stated fundamental laws and theoretical assumptions,” the “standard ways of applying the fundamental laws to a variety of types of situation,” the “instrumentation and instrumental techniques necessary for bringing the laws of the paradigm to bear on the real world,” and “some very general, metaphysical principles that guide work within a paradigm.” 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. That is, both in its generic and its strictly scientific use — which corresponds to what he terms the *disciplinary matrix*. 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. 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.”

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.” 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.” Nevertheless, such an apparent dichotomy should not overpower us — to the extent that one could reach some particularly useful conclusions

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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. 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 true 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
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.

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

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.
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


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.”

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” environment 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.” 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.” The manual even stresses out that “[i]n an unstable environment, the military may initially have the leading role.” 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 και 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).

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.


60 Ibíd., 5–14.
support legitimate business activities. Even providing security is part of a positive business environment.  

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), wherein the sector of security appears to consistently hold a leading role. 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. 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 began to be negotiable, precisely as dictated by the condition of state of emergency. And it is precisely within this negotiation
environment that police operations are ever-increasingly articulated as “high intensity policing” and the military operations as “low intensity warfare.”

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, 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.” 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. 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?” 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.”


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, Sørensen Stilhoff Jens and Fredrik Söderbaum, “Introduction: The End of the Development-Security Nexus?,” Development Dialogue 58 (2012), 7.

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.

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. Sørensen & 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, 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

73 Athanasiou, The Crisis as a “State of Exception,” 88.
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 lawmaker 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-juridical spheres — and hence, as “repression friendly” populations par excellence. 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. 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 *status инисто* (“lawlessness of their condition”) in his theory for the *Criminal Law of the Enemy*. In this way, an ideological “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. 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.” It was for the needs 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.

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. 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 indicatively 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/4d cgi/_w_articles_ell_1_13/01/2013_507759.

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...
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 anomy. 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

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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.\textsuperscript{86} Fully armed men of the EKAM 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.\textsuperscript{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)\textsuperscript{88} and “Patission 61 & Skaramanga” squat,\textsuperscript{89} while six days later, a similar operation took place at the “Lela Karagianni” squat,\textsuperscript{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. EKAM 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.”\textsuperscript{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

\textsuperscript{86} See “The eviction of the delta squat was ordered by Samaras!” http://www.alterthess.gr/content/me-entoli-samara-i-ekkenosi-tis-katalipsis-delta.


\textsuperscript{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” 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, proving that the selection of specific 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.” 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.

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

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.” 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.” 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.”

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 technocrats 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, 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. 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

96 See Dendias’ interview to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency. 
98 See Dendias’ interview to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency. 
99 Ibid. 
100 US Army Field Manual 3-06, 7-29, 8-16. 
urban enclaves, which is often used as a metonymy, in order to describe enclaves of insurgency.

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 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.

It is clear that the operational framework, as described above, guided all applications. But there is also a reverse process, of equal importance, 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.

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.” 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-
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.


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
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.” 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. Countersurgency 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 countersurgency 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. 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.” 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.”

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,

118 Cited in Graham, Cities Under Siege, 198.
“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.’”\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.”\textsuperscript{125} Recognising this


\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., 25.

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 26.

\textsuperscript{123} Glenn et al., “People Make the City,” 3.

\textsuperscript{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,” \textit{Space and Culture} 9, no. 1 (2006): 64.

\textsuperscript{125} Michel Foucault, \textit{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 \textit{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 memoir 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.”

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. 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. 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 military 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.”

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

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127 Ibid., 39.
128 See Graham, Cities Under Siege, xix, 86.
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.”

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. 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.”

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.” 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.” 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), and they com-

131 Glenn, “People Make the City,” 30.
133 Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, 30.
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). 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.” 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.

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. 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

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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.”

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.

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, 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,” thereby confirming what Nietzsche had diagnosed a while ago: “A thing must be burnt in so that it stays in the memory.” 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.”

Translated by Antonis Vradis

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


