Greece and the Global South: gestures of spatial disobedience

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INTRODUCTION

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Early 1980s. Eleni, an Athens-based married choreographer, finds herself in a sudden, tumultuous love affair. She has fallen for Grigoris, a Greek living in Paris, who works for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and has played a key role in the negotiations for Greece's entry in the European Economic Community (EEC).[1] As the affair develops, Grigoris often talks about European expansion and unification and, more often than not, in rather uncomplimentary terms. 'The Portuguese are entering the EEC like we [Greeks] did, as the poor relatives; […] you know why they are reluctant to let us in, us Mediterraneans? They are afraid that we will be stealing their ashtrays [during meetings]'.[2]

The plot of Vassilis Alexakis's best-selling novel *Talgo* (1980) and its film adaptation, *Sudden Love* (Tsemberopoulos 1984), is as straightforward as the romantic affair at its core. This was, most probably, what secured the novel's success with the French and Greek readership – bilingual Alexakis wrote both the French and Greek versions as with all his books – and then the relative popularity of the film. At a closer look though, especially the film's main point seems to be less about the intricacies of sudden longing, and much more about Greece's recent entry into a novel economy of belonging. Coming soon after

1. Even though our arguments relate to both the novel *Talgo* and the film *Sudden Love*, our examples and scene analyses are based on the latter.

2. Quote from the film. Our translation.

the country's official entry in the EEC (1981), the film expresses a certain anxiety concerning Greece's relationship with its European partners. Moreover, it seems all too aware of the various ghosts from the past that the EEC's expansion to the south is likely to conjure.

In many ways, the narrative of *Sudden Love* ruminates on Greece's newly cemented position within the 'European family', but also, importantly, within the European south. And as it does, it leaves the audience with the awkward feeling of a relationship already undermined by long-standing power hierarchies, structural inequalities and deep-rooted preconceptions, including the false projection of a mind/north vs. body/south dialectic.

In the film, during their brief affair, Eleni and Grigoris will also enjoy a short trip to Lisbon, the 'corner' of Europe; they will listen to Portuguese fados and play rebetika songs; they will talk about life in the European south and the European north, before eventually returning to their respective homes in Athens and Paris. For Grigoris, whose work has him committed to participating in an organized and future-oriented north, this affair was another brief escape. He is, after all, used to returning to the Mediterranean in order to reconnect with his roots and his body. For Eleni, who returns frustrated to Greece after their trip to Portugal ends – together with their affair – this deep, sudden love has turned her life upside down, even if briefly. In an ending that seems more ironic to a contemporary audience than it did perhaps to the 1980s audience, Eleni wanders around in Portugal shortly before she departs for Athens, locked in a perpetual nostalgia for the European who will soon be gone. If for Grigoris this relationship was the expression of nostalgia for a Greece he has left behind, for Eleni it summons the nostalgia for a life she desired or, rather, the nostalgia for an unrealized future. On the one side, the film projects the south as a perpetual, immediate, bodily (and quite underdeveloped) playground of usable availability. On the other side, it traces in Europe the sudden, and somewhat desperate, longing for an alternative history and futurity. Eventually, the two sides meet in a rapturous, yet also always already ruptured, engagement.

The irony lies partly in the different expectations the characters in this story have from the others (and the others' *place*). At a closer and more political look, though, one realizes that there is a further irony: it is conveyed as a feeling of weirdness especially in the last scenes of the film adaptation. Towards the end of their trip in Portugal, Eleni wanders speechless, tormented and perplexed, her eyes transfixed. A contemporary viewer cannot escape the symbolic weight this image carries in today's context. If Greece was inundated with adverts promoting the slogan 'you are now in the EEC: learn about the EEC' in the 1980s,[3] all of a sudden, Eleni-the-southerner and her weird gaze register, in that same period, an early unease with this prescribed learning. And even though the narrative seems fixed upon the dialectic between Europe 'proper' and Greece or the European south, the film's end, unexpectedly, contains tacit hints of the possibility of another relationship, alliance or escape: this time, towards the Global South.

Eleni's wandering in Portugal takes her mainly to the sea: to the docks where she watches boats coming and going, unloading cargo from elsewhere, and then to the open sea on a stormy day, which holds, perhaps, the promise of another affair, beyond the old continent. In the film's very last sequence, in a series of shots-reverse shots, we watch Eleni arrive at the train station in Lisbon as she is reflected through the glass window of a travel agency and then from the travel agent's point of view. Behind the travel agent, on a relief global map on the wall, we see Australia, then Latin America. On the glass window between him and Eleni, we see posters promoting trips to 'Africa' and

3. This translates the widespread Greek 1980s slogan 'Eisai stin EOK – mathe gia tin EOK'.

'Brazil'. Arbitrary as it might seem at first, this image acquires unmistakable symbolic weight as the film's last visual impression. The glass through which we watch Eleni in the transitory space of the station becomes a new *lens* that takes us from the impasse of a hierarchical relationship with Europe to the possibility of other, horizontal alliances with the south, to which the paratactic sequence of the southern regions on the map and the posters points.

Four decades later, we put this issue together with the aim to (re)turn to the conjuncture of Greece and the south, in its current complexity of (be)longing and its rich genealogies. We cannot but feel this to be an awkward task, aware as we are of how disavowed Greece's position in the south has been in dominant conceptualizations of Greece, Greek polity and Greekness. Our generation has been largely educated in a (historicizing) understanding of modern Greece that promotes the axis east vs. west as its key paradigm. When it comes to Greece's historical, cultural and sociopolitical positionality, this paradigm has not been uniform but has been attached to various, at times conflicting, imaginaries. These include the elevation of Hellenism as the origin of European civilization and, by extension, the understanding of contemporary Greece as the last western front to the east and a bulwark separating Christianity from Islam or civilization from barbarism. They also include the commonplace casting of Greece as a bridge between the east and the west and an amalgam of western and eastern features and traditions. In another variant of this cognitive mapping, during the Cold War, Greece was promoted as a bulwark defending the capitalist west against the eastern-bloc communism. Especially for postwar Greek political and cultural discourse, the oft-used statement 'Greece belongs to the West', made famous by the then prime minister Konstantinos Karamanlis in 1976,[4] was a normative reassurance of the country's place 'on the right side of history'. Conversely, anticanonical understandings of Greece, a certain cultural anti-normativity and radical poetics of nationality, have kept reimagining Greece's eastern affiliations and cultural characteristics as its suppressed, subversive elements. A good example of the latter tendency is the continuing success of rebetika music as part of an eastern tradition and its concomitant politicization as countercultural.

These dominant framings, which take east vs. west (*not* north vs. south) as their axis, have operated alongside, and often against, other positionings of Greece as part of the Balkan peninsula or the Mediterranean, or as culturally and socio-economically allied with countries of the European south.[5] These positionings – each with its own epistemic and ideological ramifications – have been studied, historicized and interrogated by scholars whose work has prepared the ground for, and largely anticipated, current discussions of Greece's relation to the south (e.g. Gourgouris 1996; Lambropoulos 1988; Leontis 1995; Herzfeld 2002; Liakos 2002, 2008; Tziovas 2003; Kolocotroni and Mitsi 2008; Calotychos 2013; Butler and Athanasiou 2013; Plantzos 2016; Hanink 2017). In this Special Issue, we set out to probe the implications and potentialities that emerge from (re)orienting Greece towards the epistemological, conceptual and political space of what has been called the 'Global South' – a venture accompanied by the uneasiness we registered with the help of Tsemberopoulos's protagonist but also by our confidence in the promise such a repositioning holds.

THE EMERGENCE AND AFFORDANCES OF THE SOUTH AND NORTH AS CATEGORIES

The distinction between the (Global) North and (Global) South has entered academic and public debates since the 1990s, and especially in the twenty-first

4. Karamanlis's statement in parliament on 12 June 1976 was 'I Ellas anikei eis tin Dysin'. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wi75X_IGWoo. Accessed 1 September 2022.

5. See Lambropoulos (2003, 2022b: n.pag.), for modern Greece's positionings in various imaginaries.

century, as a new ordering principle for the post-Cold War world. As with most world-ordering distinctions, the meanings, heuristic value and affordances of both categories have been intensely debated.

The north/south divide came to update and eventually replace the distinction between the First, Second and Third worlds after the collapse of eastern-bloc communism in 1989, which eclipsed the Second World as a category. The previous tripartite division was premised on standards of economic development and was linked to a model of progress that foregrounded industrialization. In the First World, the axis of this development was the capitalist market within a democratic framework, while in the Second World, state socialism (Wagner 2017: 4–5). While the First and Second worlds followed different paths towards what they understood as progress, the Third World related to them in 'asymmetric ways'; if we would translate this in current terms, Peter Wagner writes, 'the South had two Norths to which it was oriented' (2017: 4–5).

While the First and Second worlds represented a binary choice between two sociopolitical models, the collapse of the Second World established the global hegemony of western-style neo-liberal capitalism as the only viable model: a model that would reign globally, uninhibited, marking what Francis Fukuyama famously called the 'end of history'.[6] The initial euphoria of western liberal thinkers in the early 1990s, exemplified by Fukuyama's motto, soon proved misplaced and today feels bitterly ironic, to say the least. For many thinkers on the left, the universalization of neo-liberal capitalism established the all-encompassing, supranational form of power that Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri called *Empire* (2000) and solidified the so-called TINA doctrine,[7] that is, 'a politics without an alternative' (Badiou 2007: 4). This was seen as the end of emancipatory politics and the consolidation of an anti-utopian outlook marked by 'the widespread sense' that 'it is now impossible even to imagine a coherent alternative to [capitalism]' (Fisher 2009: 2).

Theories of the south came to the forefront of academic debates in the twenty-first century as interventions in this presumed depletion of alternative models and worlds. Challenging the professed victory of the TINA doctrine, they suggested that this new order could also mark 'the end of the *limits* of plurality' (Wagner 2017: 5, emphasis added), creating space for talking about 'multiple' (Eisenstadt 2000) or 'alternative' modernities (Gaonkar 2001; Wagner 2017: 5). Postcolonial and decolonial thinkers, particularly, saw the south as generating multiple modes of 'worlding'[8] that open up alternative spatiotemporal entanglements and modes of knowing, being and relating to others: modes that resist the extractivist (neo-)colonial structures of capitalist modernity.

This understanding of the south as a repository of alternative models and world-making practices, decoupled from a strictly defined geographical space, has given shape to the body of theory referred to as 'Southern theory' (Connell 2007), 'theory from the South' or 'epistemologies of the South' (Santos 2014; Wagner 2017: 8). Thus, although the north/south divide suggests an oppositional structure, the term 'Global South' does not represent a uniform counter-model but a plurality of models that resist the homogenizing forces of capitalist modernity. Southern theory has partly emerged from experiences of oppression and resistance to colonial-capitalist domination. As Boaventura de Sousa Santos writes, 'the South is a metaphor for the systematic suffering inflicted upon large populations by Western-centric colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy' (2020: 35). In this sense, 'there is a South because there was and still is

6. This refers to the title of Fukuyama's book, *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992).

7. The slogan 'There Is No Alternative' (TINA) was popularized by Margaret Thatcher and other conservative politicians in the 1980s and 1990s.

8. The concept of worlding comes from Martin Heidegger but has been used in postcolonial and new materialist theory in different ways, offering a lens for studying how possible 'worlds' emerge from the entanglement of humans with their environment, other species and the non-human world (see, e.g. Haraway 2008, 2016 and Karagiannis and Wagner 2007).

a North' (Santos 2020: 35). However, the current north/south distinction seeks to overcome the structure of 'asymmetrical counter-concepts',[9] which determined previous distinctions like that between Orient and Occident. Rather than defining itself as the north's negative other, the south is concerned with fostering horizontal alliances between southern communities, peoples, cultures (Lambropoulos 2022b) and poses as 'a site of conceptual superiority and innovativeness' (Wagner 2017: 14).

9. English translation of Reinhart Koselleck's term 'asymmetrische Gegenbegriffe' (1989: 211–59).

As a conceptual distinction, the north/south divide is not coterminous with the geographical borders between the northern and southern hemispheres. There are several societies that for different reasons do not neatly fit either category, including China, Russia and Greece. South and north, however, can also coexist within the same society or within a larger formation like Europe (Dainotto 2011). Santos addresses Europe's *internal* south in his proposal for a 'new vision of Europe'. This inner south, he explains, pertains both to marginalized population groups and particularly migrants from the Global South within Europe's borders and to countries of the European south (Santos 2020: 35):

> The South that confronts Europe as the other is both outside and inside Europe. The South outside Europe comprises the countries which are the source of raw materials to be explored by North-based multinational corporations; countries whose natural disasters elicit European humanitarian aid; countries which are unable to sustain their populations, thus giving rise to the problem of immigration that afflicts Europe; countries which breed terrorists that must be fought with the utmost severity. The South inside Europe bespeaks the immigrants, the Roma people, the children of immigrants, some of whom have lived in Europe for generations and even hold European passports but nevertheless are not viewed as 'Europeans like the others'. […] There is, however, another South inside Europe. It is a geographical South, though partaking of the metaphorical South as well. In this instance, I mean the countries in southern Europe – Greece, Portugal and Spain in particular.
>
> (Santos 2020: 36)

By putting together this issue, we enter the contested terrain the south has come to occupy in order to test the potential of this category in the case of Greece: the perspectives it opens up for a conceptual, epistemological and political remapping of the country, its history and contemporary culture and polity. If the south is a category not bound by geographical borders, how can we bring it to bear on Greece, and how can the Greek case contribute to debates on the south?

GREECE, EUROPE AND THE SOUTH

Associations of Greece with the (Global) South have been resisted and contested for various reasons and from different perspectives. These range from culturally, ideologically or even racially motivated attempts to keep Greece exclusively attached to a (white, superior and … northern) Europe to critical approaches that are sometimes too quick to attach the tags of (self-)exoticization or neo-orientalism to attempts by Greek or non-Greek scholars and artists to think Greece through imaginaries of the south.

In revisiting Greece through the lens of the south, we certainly need to be alert to the traps of (self)-exoticism or neo-orientalism. As we explain in the following, the critique towards *documenta 14*'s venture to 'learn from Athens' – broached by Eva Fotiadi (pp. 207–25 in this issue) and Alexander Strecker (pp. 186–206) in this issue – made this abundantly clear. But one need not throw away the baby with the bathwater. There is much to be gained from southern epistemologies as ways of veering away from the TINA doctrine attached to the governmentality of the north – as it materialized, for example, in the rigid narrative of austerity during the Greek 'Crisis' – in order to explore other modes of worlding: modes that could help rethink the Greek past and imagine different presents and futures. We thus invite the enriching and critical potential of exploring Greece's affiliations – historical and current, cultural and political – with regions of the south and the struggles of their people.

If the south holds the promise of an exit from the impasse to which European modernity has led, one can easily imagine how that promise can find resonance in a country like Greece, which has been seen as a 'crypto-colony' (Herzfeld 2002) or a 'debt colony' (Varoufakis 2017) of the European north. This position of dependency is still palpable today, despite neo-liberal narratives of recovery, happiness and new beginning that took shape after the declared end of the 'Greek Crisis' (Soudias and Katsinas 2022). Nevertheless, probing Greece's affiliations with the south is not an easy task, for different reasons.

First, it requires reckoning with Greece's ambivalent relation to Europe itself. This involves the need to 'Decolonize Hellas', to use the name of a recent initiative by a group of scholars, artists, activists and civil society actors, committed to interrogating Greece's role vis-à-vis 'geographies and genealogies of European colonialism' (Decolonize Hellas Official Website 2021: n.pag.). While modern Greece's (economic) relation to Europe can be seen in terms of dependency, the Hellenic ideal – a western construction of ancient Greece – helped shape European modernity: this includes not only Europe's (self-)identification with progress, reason and democratic freedom, but also its colonial project (Decolonize Hellas Official Website 2021: n.pag.). Modern Greece has derived its self-image from this Hellenic ideal, inflected through its western construction, without really reckoning with its role in a darker narrative of Europe.

In light of the above, the effort to reassess Greece's positioning vis-à-vis the north and south is a critical opening which starts by destabilizing a long line of idealized mappings. Positioning Greece in the European and Global South also means genealogically challenging, and analysing with a novel epistemological lens, its long-standing socio-economic instability; its exceptionalist nationalism; its unacknowledged relation to the histories of colonialism, racialization, racism and orientalism (Abbas 2015, 2018); its obsessive attachment to ideologies of the classical debt and the Hellenic ideal (Hanink 2017); its uneven development; its cryptocolonial governmentalities (Herzfeld 2002); its chronic capital extractionist arrangements (with countries of the north), as well as the construction of its landscape as the 'sea and sun paradise' that in recent years is being globally promoted with the slogan 'Live Your Myth in Greece'. It also means revisiting Greek archives to shed new light on identities shaped through Greece's complex standing vis-à-vis the older east/west and Orient/Occident distinction. In this issue, Alexander Kazamias (pp. 161–83) undertakes this task by scrutinizing (historical) representations of Arabs by Greeks. He thus probes the at times surprising particularities of

Greek orientalism as an internalized, 'borrowed' discourse from European colonial ideology. Using the categories of 'internalized' and 'transposed orientalism', Kazamias unfolds a process whereby modern Greeks – themselves the object of a western orientalist gaze – internalize this deprecating image of themselves and then, in an attempt to mitigate it, project it upon neighbouring 'Eastern' cultures which they see as inferior, less westernized or less 'white' than themselves. Untangling the intricacies of such processes, as Kazamias does, helps us historically ground and account for specific forms of resistance to exploring Greece's affinities with the south (cf. Karayanni 2004).

Given this long-standing resistance, it is important to ponder on the reasons behind a more recent, and quite spectacular, turn to the south as a conceptual frame through which to map, socioculturally and politico-economically, contemporary Greece. Specific sets of events became catalysts for this turn. The first is what we refer to, for the sake of brevity, as the 'Greek Crisis': a socio-economic and political crisis that broke out in 2009, as part of the Eurozone crisis and in the aftermath of the market collapse and global recession of 2007–08. The second is the declared 'migration crisis' that unravelled partly in Greece since 2015.

In more than one way, the Eurozone crisis foregrounded the discrepancy between the European north and south. Representations of Greece and the so-called PIGS[10] countries in the northern European press during this crisis were painfully steeped in (neo)colonial prejudice (Santos 2020: 37; Mylonas 2019). But the crisis also raised possibilities for closer political affinities and common struggles between countries of the European and Global South. As Alkisti Efthymiou (pp. 227–45) reminds us in this issue, the political upheaval of the crisis-years in Greece, as well as specific cultural and sociopolitical mobilizations – such as the Syntagma square movement in 2011, mass anti-austerity demonstrations, the rise of new queer and antifascist movements and the emergence of cultural genres such as the cinematic Weird Wave or the flourishing of (performance) poetry and street art as forms of political expression – underlined Greece's affinities to other countries of the Mediterranean and Latin America. Taking cinematic expressions of queer feminist critique as a searchlight, Efthymiou explores such affinities by taking us back and forth from the Greek crisis-scape to crisis-scapes in Chile, Argentina and Brazil in the past decade, in search of political and affective entanglements emerging from different experiences of living in crisis.

Along similar lines, Eliana Otta (pp. 247–57) in this issue pleads for such entanglements between communities in the Global South and Greece by focusing on alternative practices of mourning. These practices acquired more urgency owing to another crisis that hit societies around the world in uneven ways: the COVID-19 pandemic. In her manifesto for what she calls 'fertilizing mourning', the coincidence of Peru's and Greece's bicentennials of independence and their overlap with the pandemic become a starting point for proposing an alternative, engaged and participatory understanding of mourning from the Global South. Inspired by Indigenous techniques for soil regeneration, communal practices and non-anthropocentric world-views, 'fertilizing mourning' foregrounds the capacity of mourning as a reproductive life force and a means for defending communal life both in the south and in the north.

The Greek Crisis threw the many underlying structural homologies – and the important differences – between Greece and countries of the south into sharper relief. To probe such homologies is not simply to entertain an experiment in comparisons; it is rather a radical exercise of genealogy, an 'archive

10. A derogatory acronym for southern European crisis-stricken countries, namely Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain.

trouble' that involves revisiting the histories of Greece and countries from the Global South through each other.[11] The aim is not only to underline confluences and incongruities[12] but also to denaturalize existing cognitive mappings. This is what Gregory Jusdanis (pp. 143–60) ventures to do in this issue by proposing the concept of 'incongruous comparison' as a mode of juxtaposing ideas, authors, texts and institutions that do not evidently share a common – historical, geographical – ground. Adamantios Korais, a key figure of the 'Greek Enlightenment', and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Argentina's leading intellectual and president, serve here as a test case for such a comparison. Equally attentive to symmetries and asymmetries, common interests and disjunctions or misunderstandings, translatability and its limits, Jusdanis proposes incongruous comparison as a tool for considering alternative projects of modernization that fall outside the western Europe/colony dichotomy.

Jusdanis's project partakes in what we see as a new interest in modern Greek studies for confluences and shared experiences between Greece and societies of the Global South. Eleni Kefala's 2020 study *The Conquered*, which revisits the experience of the fall of the Byzantine capital to the Ottomans and the Mexica capital of Tenochtitlan–Tlatelolco to the Spanish through anonymous poems from those eras, is another fine example of studies of 'incongruous comparison' that hold the potential to reposition Greece and the field of modern Greek studies. Moving from historical contexts to the present, Vassilis Lambropoulos's (2022a, 2022b) recent reading of contemporary Greek poetry through the lens of the Global South offers a much-needed introduction of southern theory in discussions of contemporary Greek literature.[13]

These examples point only to some of the openings for debates about Greece and the Global South that have acquired new impetus in recent years by critics, scholars, activists and social movements and continue to proliferate as we write these lines. Introducing the lens(es) of the south in discussions about Greece and Europe need not be seen as a one-sided process whereby the south 'teaches lessons' to the north. 'Rather than inverted teaching, we need mutual learning', Santos argues, proposing 'a post-colonial, post-imperial conversation between Europe and the vast non-European world' (2020: 34). It is very difficult to read these lines today without pondering Greece's double place in the European world but also in the (Global) South. This, at least, was the consensus among the group of cultural critics and curators who decided to split the fourteenth edition of *documenta* (2017) – the biggest international exhibition of contemporary art – between Kassel (its common location, in Germany) and Athens, under the title 'Learning from Athens'. Their title echoes Santos's argument about the south 'teaching back' or being involved in a mutual learning.

Alexander Strecker's article in the current issue returns to the controversy surrounding *documenta*'s 'Learning from Athens' exhibition and shows that there was an undeniable topicality and an analytical and political potential in this artistic and theoretical gesture. There are, Strecker maintains, still many things to learn from Greece's often unacknowledged articulations of anti-colonial, antipatriarchal, migratory and alternative modernist voices. While acknowledging the necessity of critiques to the gesture of *documenta* 14, Strecker shows that the exhibition also involved examples of 'connective thinking' that overcame the north/south binary at the heart of the tension between the exhibition's two locations, Germany and Greece. Yet, as Eva Fotiadi counterargues in her article, there were pitfalls in *documenta*'s venture of 'Learning from Athens', which mainly related to the often uncritical and generalizing

11. We have used 'archive trouble' and other related concepts, such as 'grammars of crisis', in recent years, in an effort to understand critical, embodied and iconoclastic approaches to Greek history that involve a questioning of knowledge production and a belief in the reparative power of aesthetics at a time of intense crisis (Papanikolaou 2011, 2021; Boletsi 2021; Boletsi et al. 2020).

12. In thinking through comparison in these terms, we draw inspiration from Natalie Melas's proposal for a (postcolonial) comparatism that moves away from models of equivalence to explore 'figures of incommensurability' (2007: xii).

13. For another study that involves Greek literature in discussions of the (Global) South, see Karagiannis (2017).

adoption of a southern epistemology. In her critical review of *documenta*'s official publication, *South as a State of Mind*, Fotiadi traces a tendency to rejoice in the power of metaphor (in this case, the south as a new, trendy curatorial metaphor in the global art market), while bypassing its limits, challenges and double binds. Nowhere was this tension more obvious, perhaps, than in the indignant reactions by Greek artists and intellectuals to what they saw as *documenta*'s cryptocolonial attitude towards the 'local southerners' from whom they were supposed to learn (Tulke and Efstathiou 2022: n.pag.).

Another major recent event that has called for a rethinking of Greece's relation to the Global South was the declared 'migration crisis', ongoing since 2015. As unprecedented numbers of refugees made their way to Europe through Greece and Italy since the summer of 2015, the Greek space became the theatre of an increasingly sinister fortification of European borders, as well as intra-European bordering between Greece and the countries of the European north. In conjunction and parallel development with Greece's socio-economic crisis, the refugee crisis evidenced, once again, the strong necropolitical side and taxonomic aspects of neo-liberal (European) biopolitics. With most refugees wishing to migrate to northern Europe rather than stay in crisis-hit Greece, and with European countries, to different extents, trying to avoid this outcome, Greece came to exemplify a liminal space: neither 'North' nor 'South'. Or, rather, same as the north but not quite, while also firmly positioned in the south, whose corner it is not ready to fight: unable to persuade its European counterparts to fully open their borders to refugees and at the same time unwilling to think its current predicaments differently, by showing a deeper and more political alliance with refugees, their projects and desires.

Greece's experience with the socio-economic and migration crises of the past decade allows us to see the weirdness we described at the start of this introduction in a different and much more powerful light. We find ourselves, in many ways, in productive limbo, not in tune with many a proposed position for Greece. Fully aware that this is also an incongruous comparison, we would like to bring this introduction to a close by turning, not only in solidarity, but more importantly in terms of performative citizenship, to the migrants and refugees who reach Greece and the European south. 'Greece and the South' can also stand as a call to engage in mutual learning with the movement, projects and (disobedient) practices of migrants today. Through them we may also be able to share other imaginaries, epistemologies and tactics for disorienting and reorienting Greece.

In the face of a European narrative that assumes 'the homogeneity of geographical and political space' (Sforna 2022: 14), thereby supporting border securitization processes, we join scholars who have recently turned their attention to migrants' mobility as a sociopolitical force and have reassessed migrant strategies of 'counter-surveillance' (e.g. by misleading computer vision algorithms; Sforna 2022: 47) and 'counter-mapping', through practices that push the limits of traditional cartography and generate a certain 'spatial disobedience' (Tazzioli 2019). 'Looking at migration', Tazzioli suggests, 'pushes us to reconceptualize categories and notions of political theory that pertain to the domain of collective subjectivities' (2019: 131). We share a similar feeling: the claims that 'Greece belongs to the West' and that Greece aspires to be an 'equal partner of the North' have long been tacit (or not so tacit) protocols of spatial obedience. We know how they have worked, and our aim is not simply to unmask them; we want to detail and derail them. If 'Greece and the

South' is to become a meaningful turn, it can only do so through persistent attempts at spatial *dis*obedience. We understand such spatial disobedience as geographical and cognitive, but more importantly, as an ethical, political and radically historicizing task.

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