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Documenta14 in ruins

Participation and antiquity in the 14th edition of *documenta*

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Abstract

The German exhibition *documenta* is inarguably one of the most well-known exhibitions worldwide and takes part every four to five years in Kassel (Germany). It is an exhibition with inherent political character since its first edition that happened in 1955. The topic discussed in this MA thesis, is the 14th edition of *documenta* and its partial re-location to Athens (Greece). This thesis is a critical examination of stereotypical assumptions about Greece's past that were included in the discourse of the exhibition, and manifested through the public program *Exercises of Freedom* and the artwork *The Parthenon of Books* by Marta Minujín. Additionally, these case studies were analyzed based on their common participatory factor using theories of spectatorship by Claire Bishop and Jacques Rancière. This research demonstrates that the *documenta14*, in the cases of these artworks, conceptualized greek past through the dominant framework of Eurocentric discourse.

Introduction

*What does it mean to become a learning institution that attempts to flatten the hierarchies between the exhibition publication and public program, and education?*¹

The non-profit organization and exhibition *documenta*, started some years after the end of WWII, to restore Germany's relationship with the arts and culture of the rest of Europe with the aim of healing the wound that fascism had caused to the field of the arts. *Documenta* is an exhibition that has been happening every four to five years in Kassel (Germany) since 1955 and has immense political character. The first Documenta featured works of major movements, such as Fauvism, Expressionism and Cubism, and modernist artists of the Avant-Garde, which are now considered to be part of the Western canon.² Especially after the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the exhibition has started becoming increasingly "global", and there have been attempts to diversify the content of the exhibition. In the past few decades, the art sector in general and especially blockbuster exhibitions, attempt to re-define art and liberate it from hegemonic discourses.³ This, along with the increasingly unstable situation in the European Union, and the failures of neo-liberal democracy to respond to the humanitarian crises, created foreground for self-reflection within the institution of *documenta14*.

Following this spirit, Adam Szymczyk the artistic director of the 14th edition of *documenta*, which took place in 2017, decided to partly re-locate the exhibition to Athens (Greece). Accordingly, the working title of the exhibition was *Learning from Athens*. The exhibition was held in both cities and there was a diverse range of artists exhibited. In this group, there was also a considerable inclusion of Greek artists but there was not a specific focus on them. Some honorable inclusions from the modernist Greek art scene were Nikos Hadjikiriakos Ghikas and Yiannis Tsarouhis, that are well acclaimed. Some of contemporary artists included, were for example, hip hop singer Negros tou Moria, and

¹ Angiama, *Aneducation- documenta 14*, 17.

² "Documenta14 Home page", *documenta14*, accessed June 25, 2019, <https://www.documenta.de/en/about#>.

³ Buurman, and Richter, "Documenta: Curating the History of the Present", 2-8.

visual artist and performer Danai Anesiadou. The artistic media ranged from representational art and architecture, to music and performances as well as photography, video art and sculpture. Both sites engaged with multiple venues, but two central spaces were the Fridericianum in Kassel, and the EMST (National Museum of Contemporary Art) in Athens.

The “de-centralization” of large scale exhibitions and biennials has been a topic of discussion for some years now and was first introduced to the *documenta* discourse by Okwui Enwezor, although the *documenta11* in which he tried to apply post-colonial theory never moved outside of Kassel.⁴ Decentralization means to move a blockbuster exhibition, from its traditional central space to a peripheral space. Anthony Gardner and Charles Green’s work, *Biennials, Triennials & Documenta* serves as a general introduction to the subject of biannual international exhibitions.⁵ Another helpful work is Carla Lucini’s *From the Center to the Periphery: Mapping the Global Shift in Biennials* which discusses the notions of the “center” and the “periphery”, the meaning that is attached to each of them through the case studies of Venice and Havana Biennials as well as Manifesta and Site Santa Fe Biennial.⁶

Such texts, prove the difficulty of decentralizing large scale exhibitions. This thesis will examine how the *documenta14* unfolded in the site of Athens. It is unclear what the curatorial team imagined Athens to be and what exactly was indicated by the title, *Learning from Athens*. In the *documenta14 reader*, Szymczyk declares that the choice of the city seemed inevitable and reflects what is happening “in the real world”.⁷ Moreover, Athens is a city that has always been highlighted because of its past rather than its contemporary culture. Tourism, history, cultural capital and images usually define Greece within the spectrum of classical antiquity; a narrative that has been idealized extensively in the Western imagination. However, contemporaneity in Greece is defined by the economic crisis, as the weakest link of the European Union.

⁴ Green, and Gardner, “Post – North? Documenta 11 and the challenges of the ‘Global Exhibition’”, 109-112.

⁵ Green and Gardner., *Biennials, Triennials and documenta: The exhibitions that created contemporary art*, 2016.

⁶ Lucini, “From The Center to the Periphery: Mapping the Global Shift in Biennials.”, 2015.

⁷ Szymczyk, “14: Iterability and Otherness- Learning and Working from Athens”, 2017.

In this thesis I will explore the ways the curatorial project of *documenta14* dealt with the cultural past of Greece. The main research question is how did the concept of *Documenta14: learning from Athens* approach and negotiate the current socio-political tension between Greece and Germany by outlining Greece's cultural past and how was this perceived by critics and audience. The focus of this paper will be on books from various disciplines, exhibition texts, interviews, articles, and artworks. Because the title and main texts of the exhibition revolve around the word "learning", it is necessary to address the role of the audience within the exhibition based on the concept of participation. The methodology used, is literary research using a combination of primary and secondary sources. Visual analysis will be used to contribute to the analysis of the artworks discussed. Moreover, *Documenta's* own publications, articles and websites are going to be supported by the use of literature that will differ in each chapter.

To answer the main research question, the thesis will be structured in three chapters. The first chapter will include a reception research exploring the reasons why the choice of Athens was perceived as a controversial. To answer that it is important to investigate who supported the exhibition and who not and what were the main points made by these articles. Each article is going to be discussed based on the professional background of each author, their political standpoint and place of origin. The friction inside Greece and the EU is right now crucial to mention, to unravel complexity of these responses. Furthermore, it is important to see these responses to the exhibition in comparison to the publications and statements made by the curatorial team about the initial aims and goals of the exhibition. Stuart Hall's theory "Encoding and Decoding", is going to be used for the media analysis of these primary sources and to highlight the potential reasons for the distinctive opinions between different sociopolitical groups.

In the second chapter, I will discuss the subject of learning within the exhibition, focusing on the participatory factors. Focusing on the public program of *documenta* called *The Parliament of Bodies* and more specifically to the participatory program which the *Parliament* launched in Athens called *Excercises of Freedom*.⁸ In Athens, this event was conducted inside the Municipality Art Center in Parko Eleftherias (Freedom Park) which

⁸ Zefikli, D. "Excercises of Freedom", *Third Text*, accessed 27, June 2019, <http://thirdtext.org/exercises-freedom-documenta14>.

once hosted the headquarters of the military police during the dictatorship in Greece (1967-1974). The event consisted of multidisciplinary events that engaged with the public and discussed the concepts of democracy and freedom. It is essential to see how they theoretically approached these concepts and how the visitors reacted to that. The third chapter, is going to focus on the artwork that came to be the trademark of the *documenta14* in Kassel, the *Parthenon of Books* by Marta Minujin. I will investigate how the artist used audience participation in order to realize her sculpture. I will also discuss the symbolism of the Parthenon through an archaeological and historical perspective, to question the validity of its use.

Also, in order to effectively understand the complexities behind representations and narratives about Greece, I will use the book *The Nation and its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology and National Imagination in Greece* by Yiannis Hamilakis (2007) and other theoretical approaches on nationhood by greek authors. To conclude, I will use Claire Bishop's book *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012) to discuss the participation in the artworks that function as case studies in the thesis. Additionally, the book *Emancipated Spectator* (2003) by Jacques Rancière is going to provide with further insights to the discussion of participation within the context of *documenta14*.⁹ The aim and aspirations of the thesis is to open a dialogue for better understandings of the problems of *documenta14* rather than dismissing the exhibition as a whole. What were the problematic points of the exhibition that created such negative reactions from the Greek press and people and is that justifiable? The concept of decentralizing a blockbuster exhibition needs to be investigated from many different sides. Indeed, there is the side of the institution which is aspiring to be more inclusive and the efforts that global curators make to change the current status quo are undoubtable. On the contrary, there is the side and the opinion of the one that is affected by this attempt, the one who receives this attention. Any reaction that comes from this side should not be dismissed as self-victimization without extensive analysis of the dominant side. The bigger question in which this thesis is attempting to contribute is the following: who learned from Athens

and *documenta14*?" Who was this receptive learner? And finally, how is this learner constructed? Contemporary art exhibitions such as *documenta* are intrinsically political and they ought to offer critical commentary about contemporary developments in art. However, they have to address socio political problems of their time. This thesis will hopefully provide an interdisciplinary answer to this question, using art theory as well as historical and archaeological perspectives. These perspectives are needed, specifically for the case study of Athens as the site of the exhibition. Combined together, these approaches are hopefully going to generate a discussion around the concept of *documenta14* and investigate the ways in which the exhibition might have failed to grasp the contemporaneity of Athenian reality.

Chapter 1

Documenta14's paradoxical aspirations

In this chapter, I will attempt to examine the reception of *documenta14*. Concomitantly, it is essential to account for the inherently political character of the biannual and perennial exhibitions. This edition of *documenta* is going to be examined by placing it in the broader debate of the curatorial practice of transforming exhibitions in platforms of a dialectical approach to art and political resistance. The tendency of relocating large-scale exhibitions to places that belong to the global South has often been accused of being a mere reproduction of the capitalist system of relations.¹⁰ This section is going to be reception research focusing on articles published in commercial and scholarly magazines, intending to expose the reasons why the theoretical framework of the *documenta14* and the partial relocation of the exhibition to Athens was perceived as a paradox. Additionally, the articles are going to be juxtaposed and compared with the original publications and statements made by the curators. These texts that set the theoretical basis are explanatory of the exhibition's concept. It is crucial to classify the responses and reveal their differences or common elements of various stakeholders. For that reason, it is necessary to make a primary division between scholarly and non-scholarly responses. Finally, I will attempt to map the responses discussed and see how politics, power relations, and academic knowledge might have affected them. Mainly because the difference in perception should not only be attributed to geographic characteristics or culture but instead to intersectional socio-political nuances to avoid vague generalizations.

1.1. The curatorial message

To gain a clear view of the reception of the exhibition by different subjects, I will use Stuart Hall's theory "Encoding/Decoding," which remains hugely influential in the field of

¹⁰ Kompatsiaris, "Curating Resistances: Ambivalences and Potentials of Contemporary Art Biennials.," 76-77.

cultural studies. His essay focuses on television and mass media reception research, but it is certainly applicable in this particular case with a few adjustments. Pierre Bourdieu's essay "Outline of a Sociological theory of Art Perception" is going to add another layer to the analysis.¹¹ Combining these theories will highlight the reasons behind the different opinions of authors and scholars depending on identity, professional background, and their political standpoint.

What remains necessary for this process is the focus on its theoretical framework. Without understanding the complexity of the political propositions made by the curators, one would possibly fail to grasp the concept of the exhibition fully. One could argue that the level of complication of the theories immediately targets a particular audience. This complexity could be the reason why *documenta*'s criticism revolved, in its vast majority, around the complexity of the curatorial concept, rather than the art exhibits. Also, it is crucial to note that these articles do not account for a direct audience perception. Nevertheless, art theorists and journalists owned the analytical tools to understand why and how the exhibition's message might have failed to reach a broader and less specialized audience. More specifically, it is because the *documenta* was explicitly a political and educational project that one needs to evaluate if and how less specialized visitors could have perceived the concept.

First and foremost, Hall's theory suggests the conduct of a qualitative study focused on a small number of representative samples. These samples are in this case the chosen articles that are going to be discussed. He proposes a semiotic model of communication which opposes the linear structure of the now dated "sender-message-receiver" model. He argues that communication does not function as a loop and that each stage of the communicative process is characterized by relative autonomy, that might contradict each other and might change the initial message. So, his model includes four stages: message (production), circulation, use, and reproduction. Different possibilities and limitations characterize each of these stages. As he notes: "no moment can fully guarantee the next moment with which it is articulated".¹² So, what he suggests is that the process of constructing meaning is always dependent on specific structures of dominance that

¹² Hall, S., "Encoding, Decoding", 508.

underpin a person's social existence. Therefore, no message has the same effect on people universally. If applied on *documenta*, this theory could be fruitful, because the exhibition relied heavily on concepts that were supposedly universal, such as democracy, freedom, and education. What Hall's semiotic theory suggests, is that the meaning of all terms depends on different subjectivities and is always under negotiation. It changes in every particular context. In the case of *documenta14*, the difference in the perception of the concept might relate to issues of identity, ideology, and cultural, political signifiers. Applying Hall's theory in this topic might shed light on the antagonistic ideologies that affected *documenta14* perceptions. Additionally, Bourdieu's theory analyses how taste and perception of art are a product of social processes, such as culture, education, and social class. This theory will assist in understanding what type of audience was targeted by the curators of the 14th edition.

The stage of "message production," following Hall, could be related to the new concept of *documenta14*, as envisioned by the curatorial team.¹³

The relocation of *documenta14* in Athens and the idea of *learning* was reflected in the title of the 2017 edition of *documenta: Learning from Athens*. Initially, the inclusion of the word "learning" in the working title of the exhibition indicated that there is indeed something to learn from Athens. Adam Szymczyk, the artistic director, discussed in the *documenta14 reader* that the project negotiated the idea of "unlearning".¹⁴ So, the initial goal was to question neo-colonial, neo-liberal, heteronormative, and patriarchic narratives that determine the flow of history and knowledge. By doing that, he simultaneously aspired to criticize Western art institutions that have been feeding on this narrative. However, the *documenta* is tied to the Western canon. This followed the general shift in biennials that became "self-conscious", the past decades.¹⁵ Bodies in a state of transition, the creation of entangled histories as well as the continuance and improvement of the institution of *documenta* itself were also vital theoretical aspects of the event. For this to be possible, people need to forget, un-learn and redefine hegemonic narratives collectively. In this way, Athens would function as a space of contemplation and thought production where people

¹³Hall, "Encoding, Decoding", 509.

¹⁴ Szymczyk, "14: Iterability and Otherness", 25-26.

¹⁵ Gardner and Green, *Biennials, Triennials and documenta*, 50.

are learning from each other. The concept of “un-learning” was further elaborated in one of the exhibition publications, called *an education documenta 14*. This concept was the theoretical framework which artworks, installations, lectures, and performances were built upon. This educational turn is quite popular in the field of exhibition making and is seen as a force of emancipation and capable of promoting social change.¹⁶ Accordingly, the goal of *documenta14* was to redefine the form of an exhibition by blending the boundaries between publications, art, and public programs and promote the engagement of the audience.¹⁷

Nevertheless, Panos Kompatsiaris mentions, exhibitions as such are characterized by an ambivalence: even though they aspire to manufacture “new worlds” they are still privileged to be part of a dominant socio-economic apparatus.¹⁸ Hall’s theory does not refer to art exhibitions but is applicable here. If one thinks of an exhibition as a communicative process, then its production is certainly affected by politics and power structures, as does its reception. The political nuances behind the production of any media message, can be summarized in this sentence by Hall: “Of course, the production process is not without its discursive aspect: it too is framed by meanings and ideas: knowledge-in-use concerning the routines of production, historically defined technical skills, professional ideologies, institutional knowledge, definitions and assumptions about the audience and so, frame the constitution of the program.”¹⁹ In that sense, the curators of *documenta* had to face the challenge of decentralizing the exhibition in a new space, that belongs to the Global South. Concomitantly, they had to turn against the internal power structure of the exhibition. Of course, the production of the concept cannot be detached from canonical knowledge. Exhibitions as such (The Venice Biennale, Manifesta, Documenta) are committed to providing an international and global perspective while trying to articulate the artistic and cultural multiplicity of their host city (“glocalism”).²⁰ In this case, with Kassel being a central site of the Western canon, and Athens being a space affected by the economic crisis, there was an asymmetrical relationship between the two host cities that

¹⁶ Kompatsiaris, “Curating Resistances”, 79.

¹⁷ Angiama, *An education- documenta 14*, 17

¹⁸ Kompatsiaris, “Curating Resistances”, 76.

¹⁹ Hall, “Encoding, Decoding”, 509.

²⁰ Kompatsiaris, “Curating Resistances”, 77.

had to be at least articulated. The publications and public programs also followed the same discipline: the “learning from each other” while questioning hegemonic and oppressive narratives. Furthermore, Hall argues that the ‘message’ (in this case the curatorial concept), is not only produced in a downward motion. On the contrary, each person constructs different levels of meaning from the same message, in a discursive process.

1.2.Scholarly Discourse

The critique of the exhibition comes from many different standpoints and ideological backgrounds. Following Hall’s model, the published texts represent the stage of the "reproduction" of the message. Because his theory is created to address television and mass media, the stages of "circulation” and “use” as he described them, are not applicable in the same way here. However, he argues that circulation and reception are indeed parts of the productive discourse.²¹ One of the endeavors of documenta was this: to blend the boundaries between artists, curators, and visitors and give creative authority to each subject involved in the process. I imply here that the time of the exhibition itself was when both “circulation” and “use” simultaneously happened. The consumption represented the exhibition itself, and the use describes the ‘moment’ when the visitor would have seen it and processed it. This is a moment that is simultaneously receptive and productive, and indeed, it was one of the aims of the curators to engage in participatory practices that involved the visitors. The extent to which this could be realized is questionable.

The articles are here representative of the part of the "reproduction." Each person decoded and constructed different meaningful experiences throughout the exhibition. The following section is going to be devoted to the opinions expressed by scholars who interpreted the concept, through an analytical lens that echoed their field of expertise. According to Bourdieu, any "deciphering process" that takes place in art perception, requires of the receptive part to have mastered a "complex code." Additionally, an art exhibition (mainly if it includes conceptual or abstract art) usually requires familiarity with the concepts and themes, but also the formal aspects of art.²² For instance, scholars

²¹ Hall, “Encoding, Decoding”, 509.

²² Bourdieu, “Outline of a sociological Theory of Art Perception.”, 218-219.

demonstrate familiarity with art theory and history and identify more specific problems in the exhibition.

Some examples coming from the international scholarly world, are exemplary of the main themes that the criticism focused on. One of the recurring problems that many scholars agreed on was the conceptualization of contemporary political problems. *Documenta14* attempted to raise awareness to individual and collective struggles around the globe. Unifying these complex propositions is a challenging endeavor, and it was sometimes perceived as a lack of curatorial cohesion. NYU professor of art theory Andrew Stefan Weiner, highlighted the impossibility of the reconciliation of all the problems of contemporaneity in an all-inclusive curatorial narrative; he addresses that the 14th edition tries to tackle all the problems, that were raised by previous curators in one exhibition.²³ Moreover, art historian and cultural critic T.J. Demos, argued that although the conceptualization of many urgent political matters was indeed successful, the general organization of the exhibition as a whole, was strategic.²⁴ Using this term, he means that the exhibition was deliberately inclusive of diverse artists, artworks, and narratives to be analyzed by researchers but it failed to reach bigger audiences. Also, if its role was to offer political solutions to the problems it mentions, then it failed. It was certainly a mapping of different socio-political situations, but not an articulate discussion of possible solutions. Additionally, the absence of incomprehensible texts and printed guides was apparent, and the exhibition would be puzzling for someone without higher education.²⁵ This is a critical insight showing that the exhibition was highly intellectual. Demos, incorporates in his perspective, the one of a viewer of different educational background. Indeed, the main reason why most “messages” are misinterpreted precisely because of the lack of equivalence between the producers and the audience.²⁶ Additionally, Weiner, characterized the artistic director's objectives as promising but highly romanticized; he also emphasized how the scale and excessive content of the exhibition negatively affected the concept.²⁷

²³ For example, Enwezor's vision of post-colonialism and Catherine David's aesthetics, politics and more.

²⁴ Demos, T.J., "Learning from Documenta: Athens, Post Democracy and Decolonization." *Third Text*, accessed 27, June 2019, <http://thirdtext.org/demos-documenta>.

²⁶ Hall, "Encoding, Decoding", 511.

²⁷ Weiner, A.S., "The art of the Possible: With and Against Documenta 14." *The Biennial Foundation*, August 2017, accessed 26 June, 2019, <http://www.biennialfoundation.org/2017/08/art-possible-documenta-14/>

Furthermore, Bruna Fetter saw the exhibition as contradictory but courageous. She and Weiner both agree and refer to what they see as an attempt to address difficult questions, that are almost impossible to answer, primarily because of how chaotic the curation was.²⁸ One could argue, that the chaotic character of the curation could actually give the visitor freedom of movement inside the venues of the exhibition, and freedom of interpretation.

However, the lack of unity is described by these articles is something that could overwhelm a visitor at the exhibition. Lack of unity, was not only described as an overwhelming abundance of themes and artworks, but also as a lack of coordination of the practical curation with the de-colonial curatorial concepts. For example, as Weiner said there was an inclusion of many indigenous artists which were all grouped together and presented in the Ottoneum, a venue in Kassel. It is contradictory of the claims of the exhibition. The sophisticated vocabulary and ambiguity of accompanying texts, Moreover, this also resonated with Hall's theory, mainly because he argued that a message gets ultimately distorted in the discursive process. More specifically, this happens because of all the underlying asymmetries between different audiences from various backgrounds. Ultimately, the art's message got lost in its abstraction. According to most scholars, the exhibition failed to create a unified curatorial narration.

Accordingly, David Corbet identified the exhibition as over-conceptual with a tendency of being archival, and serving as a witness to reality. Indeed, long videos, documentaries, books and texts which were inarguably central to the *documenta14* and there was an abundance of archival information. This is information that needs a long time to process, and this could be unappealing for audiences. Also, art historian Julian Stallabrass also condemned the exhibition for being exploitative of the Athenian economic situation as well as failing to dismantle the power dynamics it claimed it would.²⁹

Greek scholars, Yorgos Tzirtzilakis and Xenofon Tramboulakis, dismissed previous criticism that focuses on the abstract political dimension of the event as unproductive. For example, coming from a Greek background, they noticed the significance of the inclusion of Albanian art in the exhibition. So, Albanian people constitute an underrepresented minority in Greece, and there is racist tension between them

²⁸ Fetter, "Documenta 14: What can we still learn from Art?", 292.

²⁹ Stallabrass, "Documenta 14: Athens and Kassel", 752-754.

and local people. This inclusion, of course, could have gone unnoticed by someone not familiar with this political nuance. According to Hall, certain connotations are widely distributed in specific cultures or communities. In that sense, the authors offer an insight into a more location-focused perspective.³⁰

Another recurring theme in the criticism of *documenta14* is the problem of relocation. However, there was admittedly a fearless element in the 14th edition, that seemed to be political without fearing the consequences and potential criticism. David Corbet, believed that the accumulation of such adverse criticism was a positive sign. He states: "ambitious failures are better than unambitious successes." So, identifies this distinctive element of edge as that which makes the exhibition a rewarding experience. Indeed, what Corbet discussed was that at least the exhibition revealed the urgency for an open dialogue.³¹ Certainly, this manifests in the articles discussed and the wide range of criticism produced by multiple people.

Furthermore, Greek researcher and art critic Iliana Fokianaki presents a great example of a more explicit political analysis of the exhibition. Institutional power and the notion of state are significant for her curatorial research. In the postscript of an article she wrote for *Metropolis M Magazine*, she stated that the choice of Athens was superficial. To her, Athens was included as part of the global South, without mentioning any of its distinctive elements. She accuses the exhibition of reproducing clichés and failing to address the contemporary situation in Greece.³² Indeed, Adam Szymczyk refers to Athens as what once was that "proverbial cradle of that same European civilization that has once reached its present exhaustion." Tzirtzilakis and Tramboulakis called this an approach towards the "de-valued Other," which characterized the exhibition narrative. Finally, what seems to be apparent in Greek scholarly reception, judging from the articles of Tramboulakis and Tzirtzilakis as well as Fokianaki, is that they provide a "local" focused analysis.

Iason Athanasiadis demonstrated a well-articulated overview of this perspective regarding the cultural event. He argued that the recent history of Athens is marked by the

³⁰Hall, p.510.

³¹ Corbet, "Unlearning from Europe: Notes on Documenta," 30-38

³² Fokianaki, I. "Documenting Documenta 14 Athens.", *Metropolis M*, accessed 26, June 2019, https://www.metropolism.com/en/opinion/31387_documenting_documenta_14_athens#_ftn2.

memories of civil war, division, and the dictatorship. This collective memory has resulted in Athens being an introverted and “suspicious entity”³³ It is also widespread in Athens, to refer to the EU as a new economic “junta” because of the austerity measures. Additionally, Germany is the embodiment of this economic dictatorship for Greek citizens. What can be observed here, according to Hall’s theory is that ultimately any coding or decoding process, is embedded in language’s power structures. This is indeed the most determinate moment of the message.³⁴ Here one can observe the working of a connotation. According to Hall, this refers to less changeable ‘associative meanings’ that vary from instance to instance and depend on the intervention of codes. Connotative codes are in the end ‘fragments of ideology’.³⁵ If in the Greek language, there is a connotation that refers to EU austerity measures as the ‘new junta’ the deciphering process of the relocation of *documenta*14 must have been perceived rather suspiciously. This is why Athanasiadis thinks that one of the biggest challenges of the exhibition was the invention of an aesthetic and literal language, that would be really universal; a language that could be deciphered by all, including cultural tourists from around the globe, immigrants, refugees, and local people. However, most agreed that this quest was unsuccessful. The analytical observations made by scholars, could not possibly reflect, in their complexity, the opinions of the general public entirely. However, they provide actual reasons that might have affected the social impact of the curatorial message.

1.3. Commercial Publications

Commercial publications provide with a different set of opinions that indirectly reflect the general public. One can observe a commonplace between scholars and journalists, as both groups mentioned the issue of intellectualism. Scholarly discourse approached the subject more academically and possessed knowledge of the history of *documenta* as well as general art theory. Furthermore, in Bourdieu's theory, an instant and detailed comprehension of any

³³ Athanasiadis, I. “Athenian Panopticon: How can Athens inspire *documenta* to challenge our understanding of the global moment.”, *Art Review*, 2017, accessed 26 June, 2019, https://artreview.com/features/april_2017_feature_athenian_panopticon/

³⁴ Hall, “Encoding, Decoding”, 508.

³⁵ Hall, “Encoding, Decoding”, 512.

artistic message rely on the level of mastering possessed by the observer. To him, audiences with higher education are at home with scholarly culture. This way, they define themselves through a type of ‘class-centrism’ which determines their way of perceiving and is acquired through education.³⁶ This is why ‘intellectualism’ can exclude many social groups from the exhibition narrative.

Jeni Fulton described her visit to Kassel, as a confusing experience; she highlighted the fact, that most explanatory texts were ambiguous, small and non-descriptive.³⁷ Additionally, Angels Miralda successfully summarized the problem in one sentence: “Little information is provided about individual works, many just list the artist's name unironically on a "marble" brick.³⁸ This indeed constituted a problem for an event such as *documenta*, because it targeted a wide range of audiences, and in Athens it was even free of an entrance fee. This contradicted the aim of the project itself.

Luna Svarrer remarked that *documenta*'s new self-awareness is contradictory, yet positive. However, she characterized public programs as being extremely complicated for the general public. She, more specifically, criticized the public programs for being overly theorized that would not allow it to engage with most audiences.³⁹ Paul B. Preciado, the artistic director of these public programs, wrote a piece on the adversity of his experience with transitioning from "woman" to "man," inside the nation-state. The public programs of *documenta* that were focused on the ‘body’ as a social concept followed Preciado’s ideas and anticipated to be participatory. He additionally argued that bodies could not be free in a space where power relations function through an oppressive binary logic.⁴⁰ However, remarks such as Svarrer's drew a clearer picture of who was able to process these theoretical concepts.

Another recurring question raised by commercial articles, was how Athens would benefit from this exhibition. The concept failed to address the daily reality of living in

³⁶ Bourdieu, “Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception.”, 216-217.

³⁷ Fulton, J. “How Documenta Failed Everyone but its Curators.”, *SLEEK*, 2017, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.sleek-mag.com/article/documenta-14-kassel/> .

³⁸ Miralda, A. "Documenta14: Empty Promises and Contradictions.", *SLEEK*, 2017, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.sleek-mag.com/article/notes-from-documenta-14-athens/> .

³⁹ Svarrer, L. “What happens when the international art elite goes greek.”, *Medium*, 2016, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://medium.com/athenslivegr/documenta-14-what-happens-when-the-international-art-elite-goes-greek-b7be9c0352bb> .

⁴⁰ Preciado, “My body doesn’t exist,” 117-135.

Greece although it brought Greek art to Kassel as well. Angels Miralda, suggests that the move of relocating the exhibition to Athens was the first and last explicit statement that addressed the tension between the two countries. The article not only reflects the opinion of a big part of the Greek public but also harmonizes with scholarly opinions such as that of Fokianaki mentioned before. The concept of Greece being exoticized and *d14* acting as cultural colonization were reflected in the general public as well as scholars.

Concomitantly, anonymous interventions, anarchist posters, and stencils describe the climate in Athens and ascertain the analysis done by Athanasiadis and other Greek scholars.⁴¹ A zine published by an anarchist group of the Athens Law School created a hyper-ironic poster that spread in the streets in Athens. If connotations are indeed according to Hall, ‘fragments from ideology’, then the criticism originating from leftist and anarchist discourse decoded the message as such; a collective text published on the website "Diarriktes" states: “It doesn’t matter that Szymzyck doesn’t make a specific proposition, because he came here to meet us. It does not matter that Preciado sees us as exhibits... D14 is our mayor, Kaminis”.⁴² D14 is the teeth of the bourgeois of this town. Moreover, artists are ordinary tourists or even something worse. They are moussaka and plastic souvenirs. They are the corpse of art in decay”.⁴³ This explicit anarchist text accused *d14* being exoticizing as did Yiannis Varoufakis, ex-minister of Economics, who was part of the party SYRIZA and accused the exhibition of reinforcing “crisis tourism”. He elaborated on that by saying that the economic crisis should have been at least, explicitly addressed.⁴⁴

This criticism of *d14* approached it as a neo-colonial institution. Furthermore, the main argument was that the relocation was in a sense, a ‘cultural’ statement, without necessarily being political enough. For example, Fokianaki’s opinion intertwined with this political framework. In an article published in *Apollo* magazine, she observed that Athens functioned as an ‘alluring destination’ for this exhibition. However, one might argue that

⁴² Yiorgos Kaminis is the mayor of Athens and affiliated with neo-liberal center politics. He was connected with the political party PASOK (=ΠΑΣΟΚ) which translates as Panhellenic Socialist Party. PASOK was the political party that was in power when the decision to go into the Eurozone and most Greeks connect the failure of the euro in Greece with PASOK politics.

⁴³ « Η Documenta είναι μία μαλακία.»(=“Documenta is bullshit” ,my translation, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://diarriktes.wordpress.com/2017/05/18/h-documenta14-einai-mia-malakia/> .

⁴⁴ Varoufakis, Y. “Interview by Leon Kahane.” *Spike Art Magazine*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.spikeartmagazine.com/en/articles/doing-documenta-athens-rich-americans-taking-tour-poor-african-country>.

in Athens the curatorial team made relentless efforts to engage in actual political dialogue with Greece's recent past, and especially the military junta. For example, buildings with historical significance such as the NTUA (National Technical University of Athens) or Plateia Eleftherias (The Freedom Square), served as sites of interaction during the exhibition. This decision resonated with Szymczyk's statements and demonstrated an interest in Greek cultural and political history.⁴⁵ Also, Katerina Koskina, the artistic director of the National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMΣΤ), also argued that the event would bring focus on contemporary culture.⁴⁶ However, in the opening of documenta14 in Kassel, Kaminis mentioned that the event is the "Olympics" of art.⁴⁷

This is a highly controversial statement, considering the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004 cost the state an unprecedented amount of capital, which reached almost 8,9 billion euros. This money funded the renovation of most train stations and the building of new ones, the Athens metro, the Attica highway, stadiums and infrastructure that could house journalists and athletes. A big majority of these infrastructural developments are not in use today. Thus, the Olympic Games of 2004 are considered a financial farce by a big majority of Greek people. Many citizens hold the belief that most of this were done for Athens to simulate other northern European capitals and consequently be more attractive for market investments. Accordingly, documenta14's finances appeared to be shaky as well. Kassel, Hessen, and the Federal Cultural Foundation financed the exhibition. The exhibition ran over budget with a deficit of almost 7 million euros. This financial mismanagement of the curators led to consequently blaming the inclusion of Athens in this endeavor. The reasons mentioned by the press were the significant drop of visitors in Kassel and the fact that the institution financed both sites. The conclusion was that the inclusion of Athens was to blame for this financial misbalance.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Szymczyk, A., "Iterability and Otherness", 34-35.

⁴⁶ Koskina, K & Fokianaki, I. (2017). Is documenta exploiting the economic crisis in Athens? *Apollo*, 2017, 16-17, accessed 26, June 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317220762_Is_documenta_exploiting_the_economic_crisis_in_Athens .

⁴⁷ "Athens Mayor Kaminis in Kassel for documenta14 Opening." *GTP Headlines*, June 27 2017, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://news.gtp.gr/2017/06/12/athens-mayor-kaminis-kassel-documenta-14-opening/>.

⁴⁸ Brown, K. "Investigation of Documenta Shaky Finances Widens to include Possible Embezzlement of Public Funds.", *Artnews net*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/prosecutors-expand-investigation-into-documenta14-officials-on-the-suspicion-of-embezzlement-1224827> .

So, this reception research demonstrates the focus of the criticism. Even though the program was constructed as a meaningful discourse by the curatorial team, many factors affected its perception. Reflecting on Hall's theory was very useful to understand the different levels of meaning that influenced the criticism by different stakeholders. The process of 'decoding' of the message was strongly influenced by what Hall calls 'frameworks of knowledge.'⁴⁹ These frameworks affected all parts of the criticism in different ways. For example, the knowledge of previous debates about curating and *documenta* influenced the way scholarly critique unfolded. More specifically, possessing extensive knowledge of the ideological backgrounds and curatorial aspirations of previous artistic directors of the *documenta* was an element demonstrated exclusively by scholars. For instance, the juxtaposition between Szymzyck's and Enwezor's initiatives was very apparent in Weiner's article. Beholders of scholarly knowledge of art were much more comprehensive of the complexity of the matters discussed. However, this makes their criticism part of the spectrum of the hegemonic structure in the message production process, because of their privileged position in academic discourse. More specifically, Hall states that a viewpoint that manifests their 'professional position' characterizes their 'non-biased' operation. So, scholars here do represent a hegemonic opinion, not because their ideas necessarily follow the dominant narrative, but because their position in the discourse of the art world is dominant and they have been extensively educated to produce 'objective' opinions. For example, in most academic texts mentioned, the recurring theme concerning the discord and incoherence of the exhibition derives from their expertise and a set of dominant ideas on how an exhibition should be organized. Thus, their opinion carries 'a stamp of legitimacy,' and their position in authority gives more validity to what they expressed concerning *documenta14*.⁵⁰

However, one can observe interesting differentiations within the scholarly texts. For instance, Greek scholarly articles demonstrate the additional inclusion of a more localized and spatial perspective. Insightful examples of such positions are Athanasiadis and Fokianaki which added context-conscious opinions in the criticism. Indeed, some 'coded messages,' converge with linguistic codes of their cultural background, and are

⁴⁹Hall, "Encoding, Decoding", p.510.

⁵⁰ Hall, "Encoding, Decoding", 515-516.

embedded in other ideological dimensions.⁵¹ Institutional marks, structures of domination and submission, cultural and ideological backgrounds, all manifested in the criticism of the exhibition. The daily experience of insufficient governance, EU austerity measures, and anarchist ideology provide with additional complex connotative meanings. Words and audiovisual signs worked in different levels of meaning for each scholar individually. Nevertheless, the scholarly opinion holds a more dominant position in the spectrum of ideologies. However, a surprising turn in this reception research, using Stuart Hall's theory, is how this criticism unfolded, in what he calls, an 'oppositional code.' This interpretation of a 'code,' which in this case was the theoretical concept of the *documenta14*, was assigned much additional political meaning that fundamentally relates to the political situation between Greece and Germany.

The focus of commercial publications, local press, and independent initiatives focused explicitly in the institutional dimension of the event. For example, The small text by the anarchist group was fiercely against *documenta14* happening in Athens, as was Varoufakis.⁵² This might suggest, that the model of activism proposed by the *documenta14* is intrinsically connected to another ideological sphere. Unexpectedly there was an agreement between scholarly criticism and political criticism which as well operated in opposition to the exhibition in many cases. Scholars and non-scholars used many arguments of the same political nature against the concept of the *documenta14* and its relation to Greece. One of the main differences between the groups appeared to be the different positions in the social structure of power. For example, scholarly opinion is more likely to be accepted as 'true' or 'right,' even when there are many commonalities with a more politically charged opinion, such as Varoufaki's one for example. All criticism seems to be political. However, there is a different level of emotional engagement in the different groups. Additionally, political opinion was expressed neutrally in academic texts. Other texts demonstrated political statements that derive from experience, not knowledge. Additionally, each group of stakeholders targeted different audiences, used different mediums, and had ultimately different goals to achieve. So, each group functioned within

⁵¹ Hall, "Encoding, Decoding," 513-514.

⁵² Tzirtzilakis & Tramboulakis article mentions that comments of that nature are hasty pre-judgments performed by the public and press.

the zones and limitations of their position in the social order. The theory of ‘encoding/decoding, was helpful to outline the details in the ways one experiences and decodes a message, whether that is artistic or political. Different ideological spheres, hierarchical position in society, and level of education are fundamental factors that affect this experience.

To conclude, an unexpected result using Hall's theory was outlining the prevailing opinions between people of various dispositions. Interestingly, there was a unanimous agreement between the different stakeholders. All of them criticized the exhibition using an “oppositional code” which according to Hall is a way of decoding the message in the opposite way than the way it is presented. More particularly, the message is decoded in a politicized framework that questions the mainstream signification of the message.⁵³ However, the distinctions between the opinions lie in nuances and details, depending on daily experience and knowledge. The concept of *un-learning*, the exhibition's educational nature, and the relocation to Athens were dominant in the critical reception. This deliberation outlines the next chapters of this paper. The concept of unlearning and how this was conceptualized by the public programs *Parliament of Bodies* is worth analyzing because participation was crucial from a curatorial perspective. The dialectic, collaborative processes proposed by a large scale exhibition, received much constructive criticism and the next chapters are going to focus on participation of the audience.

⁵³ Hall, “Encoding, Decoding”, 516-517.

Chapter 2

A parliament of Bio-political resistance

*What have we “learned from Athens”? I think that it’s precisely not so much about learning. It has nothing to do with a pedagogical turn of the arts, or all the artists learning something. We have to un-learn, de-link, from normative ways of thinking, specialized ways of thinking, to be open to something that can happen that is unknown. Paul. B. Preciado, 2017.*⁵⁴

The previous chapter was a discussion about the critical reception of *documenta14* and how this was affected by multiple factors, such as academic background, country of origin, or political disposition. The articles discussed outlined the central problematics and themes of the exhibition. It was clarified that the *documenta14* relied heavily on participation to produce non-hierarchical forms of representation and achieve its curatorial goals. Additionally, this dialectical process aspired to emancipate the audience of its ‘passivity’ and turn them to mobile carriers of ‘knowledge’ that have creative agency within the exhibition discourse. The question that needs to be answered on a first level is how the idea of “unlearning” was framed in the government programs of *documenta*, called “*The Parliament of Bodies*” and more specifically the program “*34 Exercises of Freedom*”. I wish to investigate the role of the human bodies as agents of freedom, within the historical space of the Municipality Art center in Athens, in which the programs took place. Additionally, it is crucial to analyze how architect Andreas Angelidakis formed and altered this space and how this relates to the framework of the *Parliament*.

Investigating the public function of *documenta14* will generate a better understanding of the power and limitations of blockbuster exhibitions. In this part, I will

⁵⁴ “Conversations Mousse58: Exposed to The Unknown: Paul B. Preciado and Georgia Sagri.”, *Mousse Magazine*, n.58, (2017), accessed 26, June 2019, <http://moussemagazine.it/paul-b-preciado-georgia-sagri-exposed-to-the-unknown-documenta-14-2017/>.

use Jacques Rancière's work on the 'Emancipated Spectator' to critically juxtapose it with Preciado's statements about the role of the audience in the Public Programs of the Exhibition, focusing on the example of *34 Exercises of Freedom*.

Next, I am going to examine the concept of 'freedom', as framed by the curators of *The Parliament of Bodies*, using the "Ethic of the care of the self as a practice of freedom" an interview with Michel Foucault conducted by Raul Fornet-Betancourt, Helmut Becker and Alfredo Gomez-Müller in 1984. Foucault, views freedom as a daily physical practice rather than a static state of being. This relates to his concept of the bio-political order dictated by global capitalism. Also, he discusses the central role of the "self" in ancient Greece and Rome, which connects with Greece's historical past.⁵⁵ Bio-politics, is intrinsically connected to neoliberalism and is a term that can help unravel the role of the body as an agent of freedom. This is particularly important in this context because it is inarguably the theoretical concept in which the programs and the exhibition were based on.⁵⁶ To analyse this aspect of the curatorial framework, the book *Biopolitics* by Catherine Mills is going to understand why the role of the body was central to the *Parliament of Bodies*.

2.1. The concept of the 'body' in the Public Programs of Documenta14.

The past two decades, there has been a rise in art exhibitions, marketing their public or participatory programs as 'social practice,' as opposition to commodified aesthetic experiences within global capitalist production.⁵⁷ Paul B. Preciado is a Spanish curator, writer, and philosopher that directed the Public Programs of the *documenta14*. When he was invited to curate the programs by Szymczyk something that he accepted to do because to him, Athens 'felt like home'; because as Spain, it also belongs to the broader Mediterranean area.⁵⁸ Preciado's academic research revolves around identity, gender, feminism, pornography, and architecture. According to Preciado, the main inspiration for

⁵⁶ "Conversations Mousse58: Exposed to The Unknown: Paul B. Preciado and Georgia Sagri.", *Mousse Magazine*, n.58 (2017), accessed 26, June 2019, <http://moussemagazine.it/paul-b-preciado-georgia-sagri-exposed-to-the-unknown-documenta-14-2017/>

⁵⁷ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 10-11.

⁵⁸ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 12-14.

the Parliament of Bodies, the public program that happened in both Kassel and Athens, was what he refers to as the failure of representative democracy, especially after the Greek referendum. The referendum took place in 2015, and Greek voters voted for further negotiations with the EU to put an end to austerity measures. The outcome showed that there are many restrictions of representative democracy within the context of the European Union, and the power structures cannot easily be reversed. Also, the choice of the word and concept of a 'parliament' could also be a reference to antiquity, which is noteworthy, considering Marta Minujin's gigantic Parthenon in Kassel and other elements of Greek antiquity that seemed to appear sparsely and sensationally in the exhibition. Emerging out of this political climate and realizing the failures of democracy and neo-liberal policies in the West and respectively Europe, this program was designed to "act as a space of cultural activism".⁵⁹ It was a program that attempted to question the established boundaries between the exhibition and educational program, the role of the curators and artists; and finally, the distinction between the art and the audience. It was supposed to function as a flexible space in which education and radical knowledge would flourish. Adalberto Aguirre, argues, however, that this discursive approach has become a new cliché that affects blockbuster exhibitions and art fairs such as biennials. Furthermore, one could argue that all these approaches resonate with the general curatorial project of *documenta14*.⁶⁰

So, Preciado and Georgia Sagri, a Greek performance artist with whom he worked closely aimed to explore the potentials of truly representative politics, through a non-hierarchical public program that would 'grow from the city' of Athens. The events were free in Athens, but one had to purchase a ticket to participate in the Kassel events. One could argue that even this detail, creates an asymmetrical relation between the two cities: there is a possibility that tourists in Kassel could also see the Athens venue, but local visitors in Athens might not have had the same opportunity to visit both sites. What is also remarkable, is that there is no specific term to describe precisely what this parliament was, because the curators avoided using "conventional museological names that establish

⁵⁹ "Conversations Mousse58: Exposed to The Unknown: Paul B. Preciado and Georgia Sagri.", *Mousse Magazine*, n.58 (2017), accessed 26, June 2019, <http://moussemagazine.it/paul-b-preciado-georgia-sagri-exposed-to-the-unknown-documenta-14-2017/> .

⁶⁰ Aguirre, "Education with Innovation: Beyond Art Pedagogical Projects," 177-178.

distinctions between talk and performance, theory and action, criticism and art".⁶¹ Anarchist and self-organizational politics also inspired the events. The direct participation of human bodies was crucial to achieving these curatorial and political goals. The Public Programs were not curated as traditional side-events, that often are independent of the exhibition, or at least this is how they were introduced to the public. The *Parliament of Bodies* is defined as an interdisciplinary program, comprised of multiple events that encouraged public participation, at least in theory. However, equating this program to a real parliament is impossible and maybe even irrelevant. The program manifested through a variety of media, ranging from performances to lectures, screenings, presentations, and even DJ sets, all of them practiced in the English language. Each day there were different schedules of various events usually mediated by either an artist, a curator or a performer.

According to Claire Bishop, a challenging aspect of public programs or collaborative artworks that are promoted as 'social practice' or in that case 'exercises', is the fact that precisely because it is tough to define them or categorize them according to traditional art historical or even political terms, it is increasingly difficult to assess their 'success'.⁶² Respectively, their success would only mean that they would achieve the goal of fostering open and equal discussion with the public.

The choice of the word "exercise" intertwines with education. It immediately evokes memories of school exercises, grades, and tutoring. Additionally, it can mean bodily exercise, such as walking, running, or training. It also has another layer of meaning: that of "practice." All these meanings and forms of exercise require discipline and focus. They are in a way, a process through which one puts his body in order and controls it entirely. *34 Exercises of Freedom* can be used as an example to estimate the role of physicality in the framework of the Public Programs. The program was a compilation of multiple types of events: 45 participants, philosophers, performers, artists, musicians were invited to create and discuss the turbulent history of Europe from the 1960s until now and examine the transition from totalitarian states to democratic capitalist states. Also, there is an inherent connection between the themes and the history of the Municipality Arts Center

⁶¹ "34 Exercises of Freedom", *documenta14*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.documenta14.de/en/public-programs/928/34-exercises-of-freedom>.

⁶² Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, I.

at Parko Eleftherias, which functioned as the headquarters of the Greek dictatorship police from 1967 until 1974.⁶³ Additionally, the themes revolved around various revolutionary paradigms, queer theory, eco-sexuality, indigeneity, and performativity.⁶⁴ *Documenta14* conceptualized the programs, by presenting a variety of suppressed narratives from the past and present and paradigms that developed outside the West, going beyond identity politics. This is how one can achieve direct participation in the programs, and as Preciado said, he was interested in deconstructing the concept of the 'audience' as a separate closed category, but also the concept of identity itself.⁶⁵

Preciado, being a transgender man himself, added the concept of "transition" in the discussion. He experienced a part of his transition in Athens that inspired him to make a connection between the 'transitioning body' and the 'transitioning institutions.' Symbolically, It signifies the transition from totalitarian regimes to democracy and even more disturbingly it might reveal the absence of freedom in both political systems.⁶⁶ Based on this framework, each person participating, from artists to audiences, would denounce their title, race, sexuality, and identity. The amount of active participation in the programs depended solely on the event of the day, and most of the times events did not call for that. There was however, a general conceptualization of the programs as an anti-fascist, anti-racist, feminist coalition.⁶⁷ This coalition, is a political proposition of resistance to the biopolitical order.

Biopower, is a term proposed by Michel Foucault describing how modern and contemporary politics, use their institutions and sciences in order to rationalize and categorize life, to ultimately control their populations. This type of politics is not only entrenched in the state, but also in the body itself. Science and institutions determine what is normal and what not. Thus, this legitimizes power over treatment for the correction of these abnormalities to create a unified "normal" population. Catherine Mills argues, that

⁶³ In Kassel, the Parliament of Bodies took place in the rotunda of the Fridericianum. Constructed under Friedrich II, the building opened in 1779 as a library and one of the first public museums in Europe. (See more: <https://www.documenta14.de/en/public-programs/> accessed 16, June 2019.)

⁶⁵ Fluxlino. "Parliament of Bodies Documenta14". YouTube video, 08:46, posted on August 16, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L25A8T27ykU> , accessed 26, June, 2019.

⁶⁶ Preciado, "My body doesn't exist," 117-135.

⁶⁷ Preciado, P.B., "The Parliament of Bodies – How does it feel to be a problem? (Public Program of documenta 14) Kassel, Germany 27 Apr 2017 - 29 Apr 2017", *Contemporary&*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.contemporaryand.com/de/> .

sexuality was one of the most central concepts in Foucault's research on Biopolitics. Sex was one of the most powerful spaces of oppression and still is.⁶⁸ For example, it was until recently that being homosexual was considered a disease and people were forced to receive mental treatment for it, or in the worse "case conversion therapy". Interestingly, this connects with Preciado's concept of "transitional" bodies, as a resistance practice directly targets the bio-political order of heteronormativity. Liberation of the body, non-conforming behaviors that cannot be categorized, could be a constant resistance to state power.⁶⁹

Although the framework of the role of the body as a participant in the *Parliament of Bodies* was quite ambiguous, the audience were encouraged to think of themselves in a certain way when experiencing the programs. Thus, in a sense the curators mediated the way the audience would perceive the program. Performance artist Georgia Sagri, added, that the Public Programs would aim to create 'an imaginary map of disparate freedoms.'⁷⁰ Indeed, the power of the body and the practice of freedom as a global, queer citizen of the world, was the emphasis of the theoretical framework.

However, brief research of what came to happen during the Public Programs shows a different reality. Focusing on the *34 Exercises of Freedom*, one can see that the form of the programs unfolded rather conventionally. The first day of the program had the central theme of "Freedom as Practice" and started with some introductory talks by curators Adam Szymczyk and Preciado, architect Andreas Angelidakis and continued with various other 'exercises' by philosopher Antonio Negri, artist Linnea Dick, activist Niilas Somby and closed with a performance by Sergio Zevallos.⁷¹ This theme focuses on 'practice', which aligns with the concept of the 'body.'

Freedom, in the theoretical context of the Public Programs, is not a permanent state of existence but a 'constant embodied struggle'. The term 'embodied' would mean here, a 'bio-political' struggle, in Foucauldian terms. Accordingly, one has to liberate themselves from restrictive concepts of identity by performing a daily exercise of "discontinuous

⁶⁸ Mills, *Biopolitics*, 16.

⁶⁹ Mills, *Biopolitics*, 17-18.

⁷⁰ "Conversations Mousse58: Exposed to The Unknown: Paul B. Preciado and Georgia Sagri.", *Mousse Magazine*, n.58 (2017), accessed 26, June 2019, <http://moussomagazine.it/paul-b-preciado-georgia-sagri-exposed-to-the-unknown-documenta-14-2017/>.

⁷¹ "34 Exercises of Freedom, Extended Program, September 14-24, 2016." *documenta14*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.documenta14.de/en/news/1929/34-exercises-of-freedom-extended-program-september-14-24-2016>.

actions”. “Discontinuous” are the actions which do not reproduce heteronormative mode of existence. Additionally, they are actions which question closed concepts of identity, culture and race and promote individuality. He argued that freedom, as the practice of oneself, contains a clear association with ethics and the freedoms of others. However, he does not believe that freedom is the same notion as liberation because liberation implies that freedom is a state of being that has already existed before, and the only way to gain it back is by liberating oneself from current political or ontological suppressions. The philosophical discourse as a daily practice of self-conscious actions that also take into account the freedom of the others.⁷²

Judging from the events of the first day, these concepts of body might have been promoted as a theory, but it is difficult to judge if they happened in practice, because they are in a way only dependent on the audience. The talks were formulated as lectures with time before and after the talk for questions. The main distinction that one can notice has to do with the formation of the surrounding space by Andreas Angelidakis in a more flexible way, which will be discussed in the next section of the chapter. An interesting example to demonstrate the role of history, on a first level, and the role of the spectators in the concept, on a secondary level, is Peruvian artist's Sergio Zevallos's performance: "*Educación cívica / Civic Education*", which was part of *Exercises of Freedom*. This performance took place on the 14th of September in Municipality Arts Center in Parko Eleftherias. It was carried out by six performers, three of whom were wearing military clothes and the other three were wearing civilian clothes. The performers proceeded in different sets of movements, imitating physical fighting with each other, dancing and imitating torture procedures. As Zevallos states, there was no difference between the civilian and the soldier, because they both live under sovereign power and that the performance is an exploration of blending the multiple identities in one body. According to researcher Despina Zefikli, this performance did not offer an alternative way of thinking history and just reproduced the master-narrative of national history books.⁷³ However, there was a connection with the historical past of the space, the tortures, and the experience of the dictatorship. The event lasted almost 45

⁷² Fornet-Betancourt and Becker et als, “The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom: An Interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984,” 112–131.

⁷³ Zefikli, D., "Exercises of Freedom: Documenta14", *Third Text*, (February 2017), accessed 26, June 2019, <http://thirdtext.org/exercises-freedom-documenta14>.

minutes. Interestingly enough, there was no apparent participation from the audience. The performers proceeded to divide the audience into two groups, of women and men at the start of the show, and each of the groups experienced the performance from another perspective and position. The women were seated on the left side of the room and men on the right. This on a first level seems to oppose the statements made by the Preciado. First and foremost, it reinforces binary logic by dividing the two genders and giving them different perspectives. Concomitantly, one could argue that judging by appearance is not a way to understand another person's gender category. Lastly, the audience is given the position of the spectator because they are not part of the scene, nor do they participate, they observe.⁷⁴

After discussing this example, it would be fruitful if one could look back on the initial statements: "You are invited to be part of the Parliament of Bodies documenta 14 public programs, hosted in the Athens Municipality Arts Center at Parko Eleftherias in September 2016." and "You are invited to actively construct this political theater every day, interrogating location, hierarchy, visibility, scale...".⁷⁵ This indicates that the curators wanted from the audience to interfere with the construction of the program. However, the phrases 'be part of', 'actively construct' are not given any further definition, but a vague meaning. There was a desire to reconstruct what Sagri called a 'truly representative politics,' but the question of how this can even be possible in the context of an art event which avoids every conventional museological term and distinction. This way, the ambiguity that governs not only the program but the definition of participation itself. According to Bishop, there cannot be an equation between democratic politics in society and democracy in art, because "models in democracy in art do not have an intrinsic relationship to models of democracy in society," because art is inherently paradoxical.⁷⁶ Additionally, according to Rancière, there is nothing intrinsically passive to the 'spectator' which renders the need for emancipation irrelevant. In the Public Programs, the spectators, or visitors did mediate the discussion, nor did they actively participate in Zervallo's

⁷⁴ Minus Plato, "Escape to Freedom Park 4 the Zervallos Workout". Filmed [14th September 2016]. YouTube video, 44.25. (11 October 2018), accessed 26, June 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_8NF59wRg8.

⁷⁵ "34 Exercises of Freedom", *documenta14 website*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.documenta14.de/en/public-programs/928/34-exercises-of-freedom>.

⁷⁶ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 279.

'exercise,' as was. Every talk kept the traditional form of a lecture, and the performances such as the one by Zavallos had an audience that stood and observed the performance quietly. Even if they did not participate, in an obvious physical way, that would not immediately mean that they were inactive. On the contrary, the 'spectator' is an integral cog in the construction of an art event, and without spectatorship, the performance exists only partially. To quote Rancière: "What makes it possible to pronounce the spectator seated in her seat inactive, if not the previously posited radical opposition between the active and the passive?." ⁷⁷ Rancière argues that the viewers construct meaning and interpret what is given, according to emotion, experience, and knowledge and "compose their poem." ⁷⁸ However, it is interesting how the discussion on bio-politics mediated the ways in which audiences engaged with the content.

In the context of *documenta14* especially because it was a project based on theory the relationship established in the public was quite unique. There was no direct participation, but the visitors were taught a different way to embrace the content, instead of practicing it themselves. In the end, it is difficult to measure how the people experiencing *Excercises of Freedom* engaged with the theory that framed it. So, the assumption that observing, looking and listening is not an active process is a symptom of the system that creates this binary between activity and passivity, which Rancière calls "the distribution of the sensible". ⁷⁹ What people understand, take for granted, like or dislike, is dependent on this concept, which consists of a form of soft power, usually imposed by the state, institutions, and people themselves. This shows that the curators of *documenta14* denounced the concepts of the "spectacle" and "spectator", at least in theory. Ultimately, the freedom of being a spectator, lies in the fact that they own the power of interpretation. The program unfolded in a rather conventional way, and the distinction between audience and artists was quite apparent. This lack of coherence is what Bishop identifies as "lack of both a social and an artistic target" of participatory art today, that stands without a particular political goal. ⁸⁰ Indeed, as discussed in the previous chapter and mentioned by several articles, the *documenta14* merely created very fragmented political propositions. However,

⁷⁷ Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, 12.

⁷⁸ Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, 13.

⁸⁰ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 284.

its propositions were an interesting theoretical approach on how to discuss global issues, instead of proposing a solution to them. Definitely, drawing from the example of the *34 Exercises of Freedom* and its various themes, it is almost impossible to generate a definite conclusion about its political effect because it is based on individual experience.

That is by no means a way to assess its effectiveness, but one can conclude that the statements and the actualization of the program do not define participation in traditional terms. Instead, they propose a new way of looking and the visitors decide how to use it during the discussions or the performance. The reason the program was perceived negatively, mostly related to the way it approached local history. For instance, Despina Zefkili argued that the program only engaged with the local history superficially. She adds, that the involvement of the curators and artists with the theme of the military dictatorship is very sentimental offering simplistic readings of this history, rather than critical intervention in more fluid parts of this history. To her, the use of powerful sentimental images enhanced a rather exoticized image of Athens.⁸¹

2.2. The concept of space in the '34 Exercises of Freedom'.

Greek architect Andreas Angelidakis was responsible for transforming the Municipality Arts Center, where the events took place. He experimented with the relationship between space and history. To establish a space suitable for the *Parliament of Bodies* that could also relate to the history of the place, he applied some formal and simultaneously 'ideological' changes to the building. So, he partially 'cut' parts of the concrete wall to reveal the stone basis of the building, to make its material history visible. Interestingly, exposing a lower part of the building through a small opening in the wall is a building technique, that was used in the building of the "Propylaea," the walls that surround the Acropolis hill. One of the oldest pieces of evidence of this wall was erected in the Late Bronze Age by the inhabitants of Athens of this period, referred to as "Pelasgoi". The classical fortress of the Acropolis was built then, with a small opening in the new walls, that exposed the Pelasgian wall for Athenians of the classical period to claim indigeneity

⁸¹ Zefkili, D. "'Exercises of Freedom: Documenta 14", *Third Text*, (February 2017), accessed 26, June 2019, <http://www.thirdtext.org/exercises-freedom-documenta14> .

and continuity in the space.⁸² Whether this was intentional or not, there is a secure visual and technical connection between the two buildings. Indeed, historical narratives and memories depend on space. A space of contested history such as the Municipality Arts Centre is the material evidence of a time in history that can reveal a fragmented idea of "nation." Oral history would reveal intersectional connections with a specific space. In that sense, space is not a stable concept. Accordingly, Angelidakis reformed the building, to adjust it in the memory of the outlawed subjects of the military junta and the victims of torture.⁸³ Furthermore, he covered the windows with black curtains to commemorate these victims. Additionally, he opened the back door of the building and simultaneously connected it to the Museum of Anti-dictatorial and Democratic Resistance, connecting the past and the present (Figure 3).

To engage with the participants, the spaces were "constructed" according to the theory of the "Open Form" as this was described by architect Oskar Hansen. The term "construction" is probably not as suitable to describe the architectural reformation of the space. It would be preferable to use the term "deconstruction." As mentioned, the building carried substantial political meaning: the collective memory of the Greek dictatorship and the tortures of "anybody" that did not conform to the rules of the state. The body plays a fundamental role in any political system and is constructed differently under each system. Accordingly, the surrounding space works as a supplement to the body and the body as a supplement to space.

The building was devoid of any ornamental decorations, chairs, tables, or other furniture to avoid reproducing the hierarchical structures that are inscribed within the design of furniture. In a way, space was almost empty. The walls were painted white, and other details would be grey or other neutral colors. If furniture and ornaments are design forms that depend on the hierarchical system or an ideological sphere, the lack of form here means "openness." The "open form" is originally an architecture theory that later on was applied in other forms of design and artistic practice such as performance and film.

⁸² Hölscher, *Visual Power in Ancient Greece and Rome: Between Art and Social Reality*, 115.

⁸³ "Parko Eleftherias, Athens Municipality Arts Center and Museum of Anti-dictatorial and Democratic Resistance.", *documenta14*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.documenta14.de/en/venues/951/parko-elftherias-athens-municipality-arts-center-and-museum-of-anti-dictatorial-and-democratic-resistance> .

Juxtaposing this theory to the "closed form," Hansen's concept opposes monumental aesthetic creations that mirror the artist that created them, by enabling a discursive approach to the creation. It endows a person with the ability to establish a different relationship with the surrounding space.⁸⁴ It emerged as an answer to the modernist movement and particularly the works of Le Corbusier. This theory encourages the active involvement of a person with the artwork or the design and conceptualizes art as a flexible procedure rather than a stable material creation. The role of the architect then is restricted. He creates a background that can be changed as each subject interacts with it. This theory relates to the discursive freedom practices that the program aspired to create. It gives the participant (whoever that may be) a "freedom" of choice and movement. In the case of the public programs would give the visitors the option of actively participating in the design of space and blend the boundaries between audience, artists, and curators (Fig.1).

Additionally, the installation "DEMOS" makes another parallel with antiquity. Demos= in greek «δήμος» in contemporary greek means municipality, township. However, in ancient Greek, it meant "civilians." Also, the word democracy (= δημοκρατία < δήμος + κρατώ) derives from and essentially means a "state of people" or the people in power. This "installation" consisted of "concrete" blocks, that were made with a soft material and could be moved easily.⁸⁵ The lightness of the blocks assisted the visitors to move them around, combine them, and create different setups. Angelidakis referred to these blocks, as "ruins". The term "ruins" can have a multi-dimensional meaning. The association of ancient artifacts, ruins, and buildings with national imagination in Greek society were fundamental to the construction of national imagination. Archaeologist Yiannis Hamilakis remarked that greek archaeology is integrally nationalist and intertwines with the western perception of Greece. He states: "The production and reproduction of national imagination is not exclusively the work of extreme nationalistic regimes, nor simply of state apparatuses, however authoritarian these may be." He argues that, Ioannis Metaxas, who was the first dictator of Greece from 1936 to 1941, did not invent a new narrative of continuity; he built on pre-existing romantic claims about antiquity that originated in

⁸⁴ Kędziorek A. and Łukasz Ronduda, "Exhibition Oskar Hansen and the Open Form" (exhibition catalogue), *Serralves Museu De Arte Contemporanea*, 2015, 2-4 accessed 26, June 2019, http://www.serralves.pt/documentos/RoteirosExposicoes/1501_Roteiro_Oskar_ING_web.pdf .

Western Europe during the nineteenth century.⁸⁶ Hamilakis, argues that the Western construction of Greece's past is deeply entrenched in national imagination and is not exclusively used by extreme nationalist politics. It is also prevalent, in leftist ideology and democracy in general. He mentions that multi-culturalism and globalization might enhance the constant need for a constant evocation of the past, its materiality, and its ruins.⁸⁷ Consequently, one could argue that because these "ruins" are not made from marble, but fake concrete, they subvert the concept of memory and its relation to national imagination. Additionally, there is a dialogue with *documenta*'s historical past as an exhibition that originated in destroyed post-war Germany.⁸⁸ Lastly, it can also be interpreted as the "ruins" of the Greek economic crisis, the ruins of modernity, and the decay of capitalism around the world. What was very important to Szymczyk is that this decadence could beget knowledge production as in the 1st edition of *documenta*. However, the use of the term "ruins" to describe the concrete blocks, in combination with the name of the installation, "DEMOS", evokes a certain amount of sentimentality. One can easily connect these terms with a romanticized idea of antiquity. Symbols and reproductions of words and images, were quite problematic in the *Excercises of Freedom*. Hamilakis' argument about Greeks demonstrates, that the idea of classical antiquity has not yet been detached from Western romanticism. In that sense, the reproduction of words such as "demos", if not examined in a critical way, do not really question the meaning that has been attached to them, in Eurocentric discourses.

Eventually, the flexible architecture designed by Angelidakis, was the only formation that encouraged the audience to participate in an active, physical way. Although, Rancière argued that there is not always a need for audience participation, for an artwork to be political or critical enough, what is interesting in the case of the programs examined here, was that both the body and space could be constantly negotiated. In that sense, the curator, created a free framework that was not strict to its application. That is how participation, was not promoted in the traditional sense, what Ranciere would call "active." Activity presupposes a relation of cause and effect; it presumes that the viewer is only able

⁸⁶ Hamilakis, *The Nation and Its Ruins*, 201-202.

⁸⁷ Hamilakis, *The Nation and Its Ruins*, 290.

⁸⁸ Rikou and Yalouri, "Learning from Documenta," 132.

to grasp a concept in the way it is given or presented by the artist. Instead, the *documenta14* curators approach on participation, lied somewhere in the middle, of Ranciere's notions of activity and passivity. Indeed, there was some mediation for the audience, but not a specific desired outcome, which gave the visitor a freedom. Additionally, this free form architectural designs, was different in many cases. In lectures, everybody could move it and the audience would sit on the same level as the curators. On the contrary, in Zervallo's performance the blocks were shaped in the form of a traditional auditorium. For Rancière, the traditional construction of theater aims to "abolish exteriority" and reality. Thus, the auditorium and the stage serve this ideology. On the contrary, giving an active role to the audience does not allow him to immerse in the experience.⁸⁹ In a way, he accepts the power of passivity and gaze because each is free to create a meaningful subjective experience.

In conclusion, the Public Programs of *documenta14* was theorized in an open form. Although the theories discussed above underpinned the way the programs worked, the audience had freedom of participation, in a non-active way. However, the intention of the institution to work as an "an-educational" Parliament of bodies, blending the boundaries between art and politics was lost in translation. Additionally, the many references in antiquity and the dictatorship seemed to not question the traditional narratives of the Greek history. Using Rancière contributed to a better understanding of how the curators of the Public Programs, viewed the public. However, it is crucial to note that one cannot measure the success of the programs based on the theoretical framework. In the end, it is the relationship that each visitor builds with the artwork and spectacle. Given an overview of the theories, and the soft architecture provided the audience with a context, but also freedom of interpretation.

⁸⁹ Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator* ,14-15.

Chapter 3

Participation in the *Parthenon of Books*

What should be apparent by now is that this thesis examines the theoretical concept of the exhibition and simultaneously deals with some of the collaborative aspects of it. The public programs were undoubtedly at the theoretical core of *documenta14*, framed the show theoretically, and negotiated a different relationship with the public. However, the concept of interactivity and participation was, in some cases was promoted by some artists. Cooperation is central to democracy, as well as the anti-totalitarian ideology that was crucial to the exhibition. An artwork that came to be a symbol of *documenta14* in the Kassel venue, was the *Parthenon of Books* by Marta Minujín that she initially created in 1983. The reason why the artist chose to use the symbol of the Parthenon to indicate a connection to the archetype of democracy in the form of a participatory artwork might be apparent. The main sculpture, consisted of scaffoldings that replicated a real size Parthenon outside the Fridericianum in Kassel, during the days of the exhibition. The scaffoldings would fill with censored books from many places in the world. However, there are still questions to be answered. How did the *Parthenon of Books* approach public participation, and how does this connect to the concept of ancient Greek democracy? This artwork was inarguably a trademark of *documenta14* and marked its relocation to Athens. Its significance as symbol and its scale indicates an important artistic and ideological connection to the space of Athens.

Furthermore, it indicates how the artist idealized ancient Greek democracy. This examination will contribute to a further understanding of how this exhibition relied on socially engaged participatory art to generate political meaning and originality. In the end, this project remained semi-complete. Claire Bishop's book on participatory art *Artificial Hells* may complicate the discussion concerning the *Parthenon of Books*, the artwork that came to be the controversial trademark of *d14*. Additionally, the concept of the *homo sacer* and *bare life* as theorized by Giorgio Agamben⁹⁰ is going to be used to unravel potential problems of revoking the symbol of the Parthenon in contemporaneity.

3.1 An ambivalence: The Parthenon as a symbol of free speech

The decision of the Argentinian contemporary artist Marta Minujín to reconstruct an artwork that she created back in 1983 is affiliated with the political narrative portrayed by the *documenta14* curatorial team. Minujín initially created this project as part of her series *La caída de los mitos universales* which engaged with universal symbols, monuments and their reproductions in the public space. The first creation of the artwork was called *El Partenón de Libros*. Its formal construction consists of metal scaffolding and wire and is a replica of the Parthenon of the Athenian Acropolis in its original size. In the Parthenon of Books, she employed the use of 25,000 books that were banned by the Argentinian military junta. These books covered the whole structure of the replica, and it was placed in a public square in the southern part of Buenos Aires shortly after the collapse of the dictatorship of Argentina (Figure 4).⁹¹ This project, as an embodiment of the opposition against the junta and public support for freedom of speech and uncensored education, was of course of great political and artistic value back in 1983. Furthermore, the power of the banned documents, the freedom of learning, and publishing resonate with the general theoretical framework of *d14*. So, in the case of Kassel, *The Parthenon of Books* was placed outside the Fridericianum in Kassel, a neoclassical building built in 1779 and served as a library and museum (Figure 5).⁹² In this context, the original aims of the project were replaced by a generalized statement against censorship.⁹³ However, there is an array of questions that can complicate the discussion concerning the Parthenon of Books. For instance, one needs to place the concept in the historical context of ancient Greek democracy. Secondly, it is also essential to briefly see how the military junta in Greece, as well as the Nazi regime, instrumentalized such symbols. Lastly, one has to ask what these symbols mean today and what meanings they generate.

⁹¹ “Marta Minujin- June 17th”, *the documenta14 daybook*, London: Prestel, 2017.

⁹² Bal-Blanc, Fokidis, et als., “What Foundations Have Been Laid for Them: The Building and Burning of Knowledge”, *documenta14 website*, accessed 26, June 2019, https://www.documenta14.de/en/south/29_what_foundations_have_been_laid_for_them_the_building_and_burning_of_knowledge .

⁹³ Campbell. “Crisis Aesthetics: Documenta 14,” 279-286.

Primarily, one needs to examine the circumstances under which the Parthenon and other buildings in the Acropolis were built during the golden era of Classical Greece. One can also add here Giorgio Agamben's concepts on the *homo sacer* and *bare life*.⁹⁴ These concepts will be employed here in order to question the Parthenon as a symbol of democracy in contemporary art, especially in the context of *documenta* and the relocation of it in Greece. First and foremost, the Parthenon, built under the democracy of Pericles, is a landmark of the golden era of Greek antiquity. The construction started after the victories during the Persian Wars in 480 B.C. and was devoted to Athena, the patron goddess of Athens.⁹⁵ However, as Iphigeneia Leventi elaborates in her book *Polis in Crisis: Architectural Sculpture in Athens in the period of the Peloponnesian War* (2014) there were many more nuances in this architectural program. She argues that the sculptural ornaments of The Parthenon double-function as a symbol of victory and intimidation against the Peloponnesian threat.⁹⁶ This symbolization is also an interesting nuance of the hierarchies and the sense of cultural supremacy that characterized the ancient Greek democratic constitution. As mentioned before, according to Leventi, any potential enemy of Athens depicted in the iconography of the Acropolis as less of a human.⁹⁷ Departing from Leventi's arguments, that demonstrate some aspects of the Athenian democracy, one can investigate the power of such a symbol today.

One of the most well-known ancient Athenian concepts was that of "autochthony," with which ancient Athenian people claimed to be the only legitimate citizens of ancient Greece. Athens at that time was a microstate, and there was no Greek nation, as this was a concept that originated in much later times. "Autochthony" literally means "birth from the earth." One had to be born in Athenian soil, in order to gain their birthright to democratic practices and politics. In this way, ancestry, marriage, and inheritance defined who was Athenian "enough" in order to participate in the "demos." So, it is safe to say that in ancient

⁹⁵ Fincham, "The Parthenon Sculptures and Cultural Justice," 963.

⁹⁶ See more: Leventi, I., *Polis in Crisis: Architectural Sculpture in Athens during the Peloponnesian War*, Athens: Kardamitsa Publishing, my translation, (Original: *Πόλη σε κρίση: Αρχιτεκτονική Γλυπτική της Αθήνας την Περίοδο του Πελοποννησιακού Πολέμου*, Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Καρδαμίτσα, 2014.)

⁹⁷For example, a centaur or a giant were forms of life that were considered to be less than a human. In the Parthenon sculptural ornaments on the south side of the building, one can observe the depiction of war against the Centaurs. Leventi interpreted this as a symbolism of the superiority of Athenian people against any "barbaric" threat.

and modern times, democracy can seem ambivalent and exclusive. For example, there are always citizens that have more rights than others. Accordingly, in ancient democracy if someone was an immigrant was not entitled to voting rights; therefore, he was excluded from politics. This way, the Parthenon serves as quite a weak symbolism of free speech.

Additionally, some illegal practices can be concealed or tolerated, such as systemic violence that is always at work in the name of social order. For example, the state has the power to declare which citizen can be executed or imprisoned. Systemic violence has often been connected to totalitarian states, but Giorgio Agamben argues otherwise. He thinks that systemic violence exists in democratic states as well and transforms democracy to disguised totalitarianism.⁹⁸ He has elaborated on the theories of exception and the exclusion that are inherent in pre and postmodern democratic states. According to Anthony Downey, in his reading of Agamben, a state of exception, is the power that the state gives to itself to exclude itself from the law. The state of exception is how every liberal or democratic state can potentially transform a totalitarian one, by declaring specific individuals lesser than others. Furthermore, he argues that any juridical order needs a unification of people in order to be applied. Thus the sovereign constructs a unified situation in order for any juridical laws to be applicable.⁹⁹ Whoever deviates from the general rule and regulations of a democratic state, is susceptible to law loopholes, as well as state violence. Agamben's concept can be demonstrated by ancient Greek democracy, which excluded most immigrants, women, and slaves from civilian life. These subjects were not considered political citizens. Contemporary democracies maintain these tactics, and enhance them even more.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, this naturally leads to the discussion of the concept of *bare life* and the *homo sacer*. *Bare life*, is an experience of living without having civilian or human rights. These concepts refer to people who are excluded from society and live in the margins: such victims of torture, refugees or political prisoners.¹⁰¹ These people are an example of *homo sacer* which is potentially any subject of modernity according to Agamben, especially ones that transgress the closed categories of normality. His theory of marginalization goes beyond the clear boundaries between "in" and "out" society,

⁹⁸ Agamben, "Sovereign Power and Bare Life," 19-21.

⁹⁹ Agamben, "Sovereign Power and Bare Life," 16.

¹⁰⁰ Agamben, "Sovereign Power and Bare Life," 166-179.

¹⁰¹ Downey, "Zones of Indistinction", 109.

"margins," and "center." According to him, this exclusion of the abnormal subjects of society, is necessary for the undisturbed flow of democracy.¹⁰²

In ancient greek thought, *bare life* is defined by ancient Greek thought and the ancient *polis* as a city- state. There is a distinction between the terms *zoe* (ζωή) and *bios* (βίος) in ancient democracy, as developed in the classical period. *Zoe* means the biological life of a creature. *Bios* is the political life, which separates animals from humans. For instance, in ancient Greece, the dog as a subject, had no political rights. Thus, his life was considered less important, less human.¹⁰³ From Agamben's perspective, democracy is innately exclusive from antiquity until now.

So, using this theory, the symbol of the Parthenon can only be read, while keeping in mind the negative connotations that the ancient Greek democracy generates. Furthermore, one needs to ask how is the use of the Parthenon critical enough in the context of *documenta14*, an exhibition that strived to rethink collective memory and question Eurocentric master- narratives. However, the West identifies with ancient democratic ideas and takes pride in them.

What further complicates this issue is that the curatorial team aspired to approach the contemporary culture of Athens, rather than freeze it in the past. One could argue that tourism in Greece revolves around ancient sites and overshadows contemporary culture. In that sense, a replica sculpture of the Parthenon -and especially one of this magnitude- seems to contradict the ambitions of the curatorial concept itself. In the end, the ruins of the classical period served as the perfect foundation for the construction of the modern Greek nation and nationalist ideology. Also, this ideology was not merely greek per se. It was a fulfillment of the Western imagination of classical antiquity that originated in the early 19th century especially after the 1922 Asia Minor Catastrophe. Moreover, it resonates with the romanticism movement.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the notion of "autochthony", continuity and race were fundamental for dictatorships in Greece. Politicians still instrumentalize the classical past, in similar ways.¹⁰⁵ Naturally, the only way one could claim racial autochthony and material continuity in this space was the evidence of ancient ruins.

¹⁰² Downey, "Zones of Indistinction," 110.

¹⁰³ Downey, "Zones of Indistinction," 112-113.

¹⁰⁴ Hamilakis, *The Nation and its Ruins*, 60-61.

¹⁰⁵ Hamilakis, *The Nation and its Ruins*, 175-178.

Finally, it is undoubtedly challenging to detach the antiquity from the Western imagination of Greek culture, as it is one of the primary resources of tourism and symbolic capital in the country. However, the *documenta14* aspired to shift the focus in contemporary culture and arts that have long been ignored by tourists and economic investment themselves. Thus, several dangers arise from the misuses of classical antiquity. What could a replica sculpture of the Parthenon mean in the *documenta14* context? Using Agamben, one can only see the symbol of an imperfect democracy or a utopian symbol of a political system that has ultimately failed to deliver equality for all. The biggest problems that the *documenta* curators claimed to tackle were not only the economic and humanitarian crisis but also the refugee issue, which are in the end a problem generated by liberal democracy that in many cases transforms into a totalitarian system. The refugees are the contemporary *homo sacer* and the victims of states of exception: homeless and nomadic, without individual political rights in many countries. So, if one reads the artwork as a piece that purely demonstrates a pro-democracy, anti-censorship monument, maybe it lacks value because it fails to grasp aspects of democracy, that are quite totalitarian. However, there is another possible reading of the artwork: a monument against the censoring powers of democracy itself.

Subjects of contemporaneity are susceptible to being reduced to 'bare life' as slaves and women did in Athenian democracy of the classical era. Simultaneously, a significant number of Greek people live under the poverty line, and youngsters experience an unprecedented economic crisis and unviable measures of austerity that render many of them incapable of surviving in the free market economy. The paradoxical aspect of the *homo sacer*, lies within the malfunction of the European Union and the imbalances that it generates: everyone can be potentially reduced to 'bare life', even if they are part of a seemingly equal economic zone. Exactly as this happened in antiquity. Democracies tend to exclude some members of society from equality, and human rights are often overlooked.

What Agamben describes as “the extreme form of relation by which something is included solely through its exclusion” is thus an inherent part of democracy.¹⁰⁶ Keeping in mind that ancient democracy is exclusive, and did not recognize everyone as equal, the Parthenon as a symbol of free speech might lose its validity. Looking at how democracy

¹⁰⁶ Agamben, “Sovereign Power and Bare Life”, 18.

was perceived in antiquity, and using an example the Parthenon's role in recent greek history, this symbol cannot merely serve a resistance symbol, but the opposite. Additionally, the use of this symbol then contradicts the curatorial aspirations and themes of the exhibition; It does not question Eurocentric ideas; instead, it validates them. Furthermore, one could argue, that the monument of the Parthenon should only be used very carefully now, considering the rise of right-wing politics in Greece. Members of the Golden Dawn, extreme right wing party in Greece, take pride and gain validity using visual parallels of classical sculptures and monuments. In that sense, the symbol of the Parthenon could only reassure the Western imagination of democracy that excludes counter-narratives and people that live on the edges of the law and *zones of indistinction*.

In the end, Greece was not only chosen as the once great metropolis but also because it embodied the imbalance of inter- European relationships and the phenomenal failure of capitalist democracy.¹⁰⁷ One has to question if it is even possible to detach the object from these negative connotations. Of course, it is not to say that any use of ancient greek monumental architecture should be condemned. However, one has to examine the possibilities, limitations and multiple negative connotations that these symbols have nowadays. Furthermore, the construction of the sculpture entirely relied upon book donations of banned books from all over the world. It was built through a participatory democratic process that adds another layer of meaning to the project. Looking at this aspect of the work, one might also read it as a reclamation of democracy. However, participation in the artwork will be examined in the next section.

3.3 The participatory factor of the artwork

In the previous part, there was an analysis of the allegory of the Parthenon through a historical and philosophical framework based on Agamben's *homo sacer*. What deserves more analysis is the concept of participation and collaboration in the "building" of the Parthenon of Books in the context of *documenta14*. The sculpture, constructed entirely by scaffoldings, was placed outside the Fridericianum, which is one of the main sites where the exhibition unfolds. Additionally, the square outside the building where the Parthenon

¹⁰⁷ Campbell, "Crisis Aesthetics: Documenta 14",280.

was placed in a space of great historical importance. On May 19th, 1933, student groups compiled mostly by Nazis pursued a massive burning of 2,000 books that were considered anti-nationalist or anti-German, in Friedrichsplatz during the “Aktion wider den undeutschen Geist” (Campaign against the Un-German Spirit).¹⁰⁸ Minujin collaborated with the University of Vienna and the University of Kassel to create a list of censored books and then released an open call for book donations in order to complete the construction.¹⁰⁹ Most probably, university students did the research for the banned books. Minujin's *Parthenon* was that it was labeled as an artistic project and not a sculpture.¹¹⁰ Claire Bishop, discusses artistic projects in her book *Artificial Hells*. According to her, artistic projects as they emerged again after 1989 tend to replace studio specific artworks with a social process that might have an outcome outside the exhibition space. She also argues that because projects are artistic and simultaneously strive to be social, they lack particular political or social goals.¹¹¹ Furthermore, the collaboration between artists and visitors is taken as a given in a project, and there are questions of patronage to be raised.¹¹²

So, Marta Minujin's project did not call for direct physical participation (which was the case for the public programs) but rather an indirect one. The medium here was not only the person as donator, but the book as an object and narration. The project aimed was to create a monumental net of censored books, and it was ephemeral. The books were afterwards redistributed to people so they can eventually be read. Therefore, the role of the participators and their contribution to the creative process of this ephemeral monument are essential. Additionally, the role of books was their function as carriers of collective memory. The books are not only the constructive material of the sculpture but also come into a dialogue with the concept of collective *unlearning* as the curatorial project of *documenta* theorized it. Furthermore, this can unravel another layer of meaning produced by the Parthenon of Books: the function of it as a *temple* of knowledge with archival function.

¹⁰⁸ "Book Burning" in *The Holocaust Encyclopedia*, The United States Holocaust Museum website, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/book-burning>.

¹⁰⁹ "List of Banned Books," accessed 26, June 2019, <http://blogs.ubc.ca/documenta/files/2016/10/documenta-14-List-of-Banned-Books-2016-10-18.pdf>.

¹¹⁰ Bal-Blanc, P., "Marta Minujin", *documenta14 website*, accessed 25, June 2019, <https://www.documenta14.de/en/artists/1063/marta-minujin>.

¹¹¹ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 194-195.

¹¹² Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 199.

According to Bishop, relational art has become synonymous with contemporary art biennials. The concept of socially engaged art happens to be one of the main elements that constitute exhibitions such as *documenta*, especially after the 1990s.¹¹³ Relational art is often seen as a possible extension of democracy in the context of biannual exhibitions.¹¹⁴ Therefore, it is interesting to read this statement of the *documenta* website: “You are cordially invited to donate books and thus become part of the artwork.”¹¹⁵ That account indicates that the participators and the process comprise the sculpture. In that sense, the person becomes the work and transcends the binary logic of the passive viewer and artist, going beyond commodification of the sculpture. So, this artwork could only come into existence with the help of the public and the university. This added an element of uncertainty to the project, something that is manifested in democratic politics as well. However, the artist had a clear vision of what she wanted from the public. Hence, she created a list of censored book titles from across the globe, and the participants had to follow these instructions and donate one of these books.¹¹⁶ In the end, this project was celebrating the concept of free speech; however, free speech was not merely given to the donators because they had to commit to the rules of the given list.

In Bishop’s terminology, this assignment given to people outside the artistic realm, is called “outsourcing” and it usually applies to performance art. It is a term that originated from business language back in the 1990s and grew more with the expansion of global capitalist economy. In business, outsourcing is a legal “loophole” which allows companies to have loose labor work without having to adhere to national rules and regulations about work conditions. In art theory, outsourcing is used when discussing delegated performance. The performer, acts as an employer and uses non- artists to perform their own socioeconomic identity. However, the purposes of outsourcing differ from business to art. In art, using people outside from the art world is used to enhance unpredictability and affect.¹¹⁷ Interestingly, the practice of building *the Parthenon of Books* was not a

¹¹³ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 194.

¹¹⁴ Harvie, J. “Democracy and Neoliberalism in art’s Social Turn and Roger Hiorns’s Seizure”, *Performance Research*, vol.16, n.2, (May 2011), 113.

¹¹⁵ “Call for book donations for the Parthenon of Books”, *documenta14*, accessed 26, June 2019, <https://www.documenta14.de/en/news/1601/call-for-book-donations>.

¹¹⁶ “List of Banned Books”, accessed 26, June 2019, <http://blogs.ubc.ca/documenta/files/2017/07/List-of-Banned-Books-2017-08-01.pdf>

¹¹⁷ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 231-232.

performance, nor did it have a direct human participation; participation here was indirect. Yet, the list of books did not allow for such volatility. Instead, the delegation here is immensely controlled and predictable, if the participants follow the rules. It was probably not possible for one to donate a book of his choice, because all the books were ultimately placed in the sculpture by the artist herself. There was no freedom of decision then, and in contrary to Bishop's delegation, the aim of the artwork was not to produce unpredictability. This art piece cannot be identified as delegated performance, but the call for donation can be considered as delegation. Bishop considers the delegated performance to be a two-way gesture. This cooperative factor was missing completely from the *Parthenon of Books*. Participants had no agency. Indeed, there was something passive about the artwork. One could argue, that Minujin did not want to create an active experience because the focus shifted on the objects themselves and not in the participants or the artist; after all, these objects illustrate historicity and memory.

Consequently, one can identify a paradox here, which is the illusion of free choice. Thus, certain limitations affect the social impact of participatory projects such as the Parthenon of books precisely because of the cultural and historical context in which they are realized.¹¹⁸ Additionally, the process of delegation, through which the Parthenon was realized, is a simulation of the democratic system and the way it manifests. Thus, the impact of this involvement is reasonably limited. Firstly, because the artist just assigned a task that was specific in itself and left no room for creativity. Secondly, because there is something tricky in identifying the people as part of the artwork. This echoes in Bishop's text, as she discusses the function of participatory art in bi-annual style exhibitions. She explains the current state of exhibition making by saying that through participation, the exhibition becomes a forum where the viewer is also the participant and artist, looking at his position and perspective from a different angle.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, the participants are excluded from the choice of the theme and the creative process of the artwork. They become similar to employees or volunteer workers employed by the artist. These types of artworks, according to Bishop, are created for a secondary audience. This audience is never informed about the

¹¹⁸ Harvie, "Democracy and Neoliberalism", 114.

¹¹⁹ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 217.

names of the participants and their role in the artwork.¹²⁰ For example, there is no account for the donators in the *documenta14* website, and no one is informed about the trajectories of these books, which could add another layer to the sculpture.

Furthermore, voluntary participation of the public, in this case the donations, is very similar to the capitalist economic structure. Volunteer work and unpaid labor are one of neo-liberalism's most significant ramifications.¹²¹ The Parthenon of Books was reliant on donations and personal initiative. However, what was the reimbursement for the voluntary donations? The answer can only be found in the hierarchy between the artist and the viewer. Giving one the choice of participation reproduces the hierarchical system and does not question it from its roots. One has to stand in a specific position to assign a job. This brings in mind the politics of inclusion and Slavoj Žižek's discussion on the paradoxes of inclusion and identity politics in his book *Violence*. He quotes: "What Nietzsche and Freud share is the idea that justice as equality is founded on envy--on the envy of the Other who has what we do not have, and who enjoys it. The demand for justice is thus ultimately the demand that the excessive enjoyment of the Other should be curtailed so that everyone's access to enjoyment is equal."¹²² Žižek's concept can be applied in this participatory artwork: one is offered a position in power for a brief moment, although the choice and creative freedom are illusionary. However, according to Bishop there are some dangers when discussing artistic participation with political terms. After all, art creates an experience that is simultaneously in and outside of the social reality. It does not have to conform to the rules of politics.

Finally, the trademark of *documenta14* had a dangerously obvious connection with classical antiquity. The reproduction of the Parthenon, in a sculpture that assimilates the real building in its magnitude, indicates a lot about how Greece was included in the narrative of *documenta14*. First and foremost, using examples from antiquity one can understand that a monument of such scale, concealed many dark aspects of antiquity. Democracy was not as inclusive as one is usually taught. Many subjectivities were pushed to the margins of society, included women and slaves who had no right to vote and no free

¹²⁰ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 216-217.

¹²¹ Harvie, "Democracy and Neoliberalism", 114.

¹²² Žižek, S., *Violence*, p.89.

speech. The use of this visual language is also contradictory to what the curatorial team aspired to do; using antiquity to indicate the exhibition's connection to Greece can be considered a cliché move. More specifically, a paradigm of classical antiquity freezes Greece in a time and space that mostly exists in the Western imagination. Additionally, using Yiannis Hamilakis indicates that the romanticized narrative of classical antiquity and democracy, was constructed precisely in Western Europe during the 19th century and was then used in greek narrations as well. Also, of classical symbols are used nowadays by the far right to claim racial purity; the racist discourse of the Golden Dawn party is based very much in visual signs that signify meaning to the biggest majority of Greek people. Moreover, Minujin assigned non-artists with the task of donating books that would built the Parthenon. The books they could choose were only titles from the list that she made in collaboration with universities. This did not allow for any spontaneity. This means that, in Bishop's terms, the Parthenon was a delegated artwork, whose result was already predicted. As Rancière states, if participation happens under these terms it ceases to be impactful. To him, participatory art has to seek for new ways to question the definition of activity and passivity and transcend these modes.¹²³ The combination of visual signs and collaboration did not seem to achieve any different or radical reading of democracy than the one people are already familiar with. Ultimately, classical greek antiquity is very dominant in Western historical narratives and is rarely questioned, even in leftist discourses. This is not to say, that any reference to antiquity is necessarily dangerous; however, in an exhibition with a history of innovation that is claiming a non-western approach to art, it seems superficial.

¹²³ Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, p.23.

Conclusion

This research aimed to identify the paradoxes concerning the partial relocation of 14th edition of *documenta14* to Athens, focusing on the framework of the exhibition. Additionally, it aimed to highlight the ways in which ways, some of the artworks and theoretical texts of *documenta14* exhibition narrative reproduced idealized conceptions and clichés about Greece's cultural past. The subject of this thesis revolves around the decentralization of large scale exhibitions. The examples examined, approached historical aspects of Greece in a Eurocentric way. Sometimes, they reproduced the dominant Western idealistic portrayal of the city of Athens. In a way, the inclusion of Greece seemed to be approached superficially, by creating visual and thematic references, without providing a critical approach to them. The thesis was certainly provided a critical stance towards certain aspects of the exhibition, rather than an objective account of it. Only specific aspects of the exhibition were discussed and the research does not account for all the subjects that could be discussed. It was specifically focused on identifying the paradoxes behind the relocation of *documenta*. Accordingly, this created an asymmetrical relationship between the two host cities, unintentionally. On a positive note, the exhibition highlighted greek art by including many contemporary greek artists.

The theoretical concept was defined using primary sources, in the way it was expressed in the main publications and catalogue that accompanied the exhibition. Firstly, the most important source of information was *the documenta14 reader* which included texts by curators, theorists and artists that discussed the exhibition's main concerns and ideas. Secondly, *an education documenta14* was very important in analyzing the educational aspect of the exhibition whenever needed. Also, the catalogue of the event called *documenta14 daybook* was used to extract information about all the artists and artworks presented. Additionally, the official website of the exhibition was very useful and provided with helpful information about the programs, calendars and more theoretical texts. Finally, the use of statements and interviews made by some of the main curators such as Adam Szymczyk and Paul B. Preciado clarified the curatorial goals even more.

The first chapter following the first sub-question, aimed to unravel the reasons why the exhibition received a negative criticism and the choice of Athens was considered

paradoxical. It focused on articles published by scholars and journalists, art theorists and political groups. These texts were in the big majority written in English for an international audience. Some of them were also written in Greek and targeted a local audience. Using Stuart Hall's theory *Encoding/ Decoding* unlocked various reasons why the reception of *documenta14* was negative. The theory gave an interesting result that was unexpected: Scholars and non-scholars, greek and international people reached a unanimous agreement concerning the institutional dimension of the event. Most articles concluded that the problem was the incoherent curation of the exhibition. Additionally, many scholars identified the absence of a direct political discussion around the turbulent relationships between Greece and Germany, which was also the case for more politically biased publications. The economic crisis was central for most criticism, as well as the way the *documenta14* approached the country itself. The first chapter proved to be a challenging task, especially because the result was unpredictable. However, it served as a good introduction of the topics discussed in next chapters and summarized the main problems of the curatorial concept of the exhibition.

The second chapter focused on the Public Programs of *documenta*. More specifically, it looked at how the launch introductory program called *Excercises of Freedom* dealt with the audience participation focusing on the human body, and the reformation of space. More specifically, the concept of participation was formulated around the democratic ideal and the concept of a parliament. Although, there was some mediation from the curators, the visitors were entirely free to choose how to react to their surrounding discussions or art. Participation seemed to intertwine with anti-dictatorial resistance narratives, proposing that current problems could only be solved with a bio-political struggle. The uses of symbols of antiquity, were demonstrated by Andreas Angelidakis' mobile architectural blocks, an installation called "demos", to avoid traditional divisions between audience and artists. However, in the *Parliament of Bodies*, terms such as *demos*(=δημος), "parliament" and Zevallo's performance, offered an overly nostalgic attitude towards Greek history. Also, using Rancière's text on the *Emancipated Spectator* it became clear that the curator, Paul B. Preciado wanted to create an environment that would question the role of the spectators. However, Rancière's theory highlighted the fact that absence of direction was not necessarily negative for the audience.

On the contrary, there was space for the spectator to use the theory and move quite freely within the space of the exhibition. In the end, a transformative artistic experience derives from the visitor's interaction with what is presented as well. The reason why the *Excercises of Freedom* as perceived quite negatively by critics, despite Preciado's intentions, lied more in the overly theorized and romantic approach towards democracy, rather than a lack of participation.

The final chapter focused on the artwork that came to be the trademark of the exhibition. The *Parthenon of Books* by Marta Minujín was a participatory large scale monument. There was an obvious, almost immediate connection between the artwork and Athens. This chapter was also challenging because it goes against dominant research on classical antiquity. Using the philosophical approach on the *homo sacer* by Giorgio Agamben, I highlighted the exclusivity of ancient and contemporary democratic systems. Minujín's artwork constituted a statement against censorship. However, the argument posed in this chapter, is that nowadays it is challenging to use the design of the Parthenon to argue about free speech. First of all, because back in the time it was created it was only a symbol of a very exclusive democracy. Secondly, because it has additional layers of meaning attached to it in recent years. Moreover, the artist initially created this work back in the 1980s. The recreation of it in the context of *documenta14* because of the obvious visual and historical reasons generates other layers of meaning. By highlighting that the imagery of classical antiquities dominates every mainstream accounts of Greece, the artwork seems to lose its transformative force. Instead of offering a radical discussion around the uses of antiquity, it reproduces the Western imagination of Greece and again, freezes it in time.

To conclude, the curators were responsible for an edition of *documenta14* that was relocated for the first time and this was undoubtedly challenging. With the fear of not being inclusive enough they were responsible of incorporating art from the host city of Athens, and art from everywhere else in the world and they managed to include artists from many different locations outside the West. Additionally, they had to articulate the complexity of the new host city. Unfortunately, they did not manage to focus on a specific curatorial narrative and attach it to a specific political proposition. Furthermore, the many references in classical antiquity,

either visual or textual, seemed to reproduce a cliché image of Greece, especially as imagined by the West.

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Figure 1.



Andreas Angelidakis, *DEMOS*, installation, 2016, dimensions variable. Picture from documenta 14 public program, Athens Municipality Arts Center Parko Eleftherias, photo by Stathis Mamalakis.

<https://www.designboom.com/art/andreas-angelidakis-demos-reconstruction-toronto-moca-12-12-2018/>. (Accessed 25, June 2019).

Figure 2.



Elias Kasidiaris, member of the Golden Dawn party in Greece, photo from his electoral campaign in front of a classical or neoclassical building <https://magnesia247.gr/ilias-kasidiaris-ipopsifios-dimarxos-athinon/>. (Accessed 26, June 2019).

Figure 3.



DEMOS installation and the windows of the Municipality Arts Center covered with black curtains.

https://www.interiorsfromgreece.com/news-when-a-pouf-becomes-a-part-of-an-installation.php?lang_id=1 (Accessed 25, June 2019)

Figure 4.



Marta Minujin, *The Parthenon of Books*, Buenos Aires, 1983. <http://www.zarpado.com/el-partenon-x-marta-minujin/> (Accessed 26, June 2019).

Figure 5.



Marta Minujin, *The Parthenon of Books*, Kassel, 2017. <https://frieze.com/article/tale-two-cities?language=de> (Accessed 25, June 2019).

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