

SITUATIONS: PROJECT FOR THE RADICAL IMAGINATION

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We are pleased to present the first double issue of *Situations: Project of the Radical Imagination, Volume VI, nos. 1 and 2*. The first number appeared online and on our website, **www.radicalimagination.com**, last Spring and we are now adding the second number, a thematic issue on the Mediterranean Imaginary to this print edition. The Mediterranean Imaginary crystalized in the summer of 2014 and included a special interview with Dan Georgakas on his radical praxis and insights over the last forty-five years and a perspective on the future.

Kristin Lawler, our book editor and collective member, brought the idea of the Mediterranean imaginary to the foreground through her own praxis in the summer of 2013 in Mataroa and a subsequent article on that journey to that Greek island of communal practice. Her essay for this issue, "The Mediterranean Imaginary: A Nationalism of the Sun, a Communism of the Sea," is a rigorous and playful attempt to characterize the idea of the futural Mediterranean imaginary drawing on the historians Ferdinand Braudel and E.P. Thompson, the philosopher and dramatist Jean-Paul Sartre and the author, Albert Camus and bridging her own idea of a slacker politics to confront and offer a resistance and refusal to the neoliberal socio-economic policies and effects and posit an alternative to the protestant ethic in general.

Michael Pelias engages some of the prominent figures on the famous ship of exiles, the *Mataroa* by looking at the influence the Parisian philosophical ethos had on their thinking and the relevance for their potential contemporary political force given the recent upsurges, though highly ambiguous of Leftist parliamentary gains in some countries of Western Europe. In part one of his essay, "The Greek 'boat people', Exile, the Philosophical Imaginary and its Contemporary Relevance," Pelias works through two types of creative nostalgia and the concepts of praxis and poesis as possible turning points for Left thinking amidst the smothering effects of Neo-liberalism. Part two will involve the Philosophical Imaginary and the return to the ancients and will appear in the next issue of *Situations*, Vol. VII.

Peter Brastis In his essay, “Greek Crisis as Concrete Universal: On the Impossibility of Reform and Impasse of Subjectivity,” shows that the ongoing political crisis in Greece has transformed this country from laggard to vanguard and examines this inversion of historical developments and asks what does the comprador nature of Greek capitalism and the growing insulation of the state tell us about the future of democracy and Global capitalism? Is the current situation in Greece a temporary setback or is it simply the first glimpse of our collective future: ever more disembodied capitalist markets and ever more authoritarian political regimes?

In his essay on “Mediterranean Noir,” **Dennis Broe** breathlessly surveys the recent film production, officially beginning as a genre in Marseille, in the region from both the Western Mediterranean, one deeply founded in literature, and the Eastern Mediterranean, the Algerian and Turkish portion of the genre and engages for the latter, a very precise reading of Rachid Bouchareb’s *Hors la Loi* which he claims reduplicates Pontecorvo’s classic *Battle of Algiers*. Broe broadens the Noir genre region with rigorous examples from beyond the classic boundaries of what the Mediterranean imaginary may signify.

Some of the gems from **Max Cafard’s** recent *Lightning Storm Mind* are excerpted for this issue. These re-imaginings of the fragments of Heraclitus give us the sense of what a contemporary Mediterranean pre-systematic philosophy may look like and hopefully we take heed and follow the Logos.

From Volume VI, no. 1, we are pleased to have **Jessie Klein’s** excellence intervention, “American Misery” concerning our contemporary alienation and anomie. She confronts the new symptoms we face and offers a Marxist humanist path as the starting point of a solution to the addictogenic society in which we live.

In her essay, “A Turing Test for Disability Studies,” **Marissa Brostoff** engages the false consciousness surrounding the dominant ideologies of intelligence studies. Basically putting to rest the assumptions behind IQ tests, the gift economy, and the notion of “cognitive disabilities,” Brostoff problematizes the aporia that these studies and those “afflicted” face and tries to reclaim the gift from the doctrine of “gifted education.”

Maureen Nappi pays both a homage and makes a critical retrieval of the work of Shulamith Firestone in her essay, “Shulamith Firestone: Cybernetics and Back to a Feminist Future. “Not only does Nappi describe with critical

verve the second wave feminist movement and its relationship to Simone DeBeauvoir's *The Second Sex*, but also grounds Firestone's work in today's debates regarding Cyberfeminism primarily through a critical engagement with Donna Haraway's *A Cyborg Manifesto*. Nappi strongly refigures Firestone's notion of Cybernetic communism urging a strong revitalization of this legendary radical feminist's thought for our time.

Taking his point of departure from one of **Pietro Sraffa's** annotations in his copy of Keynes' *General Theory* ("that's how a theory should be made."), Andrea Ginzburg in a very complex and provocative essay, "Sraffa and Social Analysis: Some Methodological Aspects," demonstrates the difficulty in dealing with generalized abstractions from Ricardo and Smith and how categories become reified, especially those of generic abstractions that lead to forms of generalizations in which relationships among the objects, and those between them, are not investigated and hence leave no room for relationships of structure. Ginzburg not only problematizes these aspects of methodology but also presents a hitherto unrecognized discussion between Gramsci and Sraffa on neo-classical economic theory. This essay is truly in the spirit of the radical imagination that it examines and deconstructs fixed categories in neo-classical and Marxian economic theories.

AK Thompson in "Occupation" Between Conquest and Liberation," investigates the notion of occupation historically from Zuccotti Park retrospectively to the Mohawks taking back Stanley Island in the St. Lawrence River after being expunged from it. Thompson also adds to the historical narrative a close reading of the occupy movements attempts at negation and problematizes liberation against the "two tales of Representation" that the Occupy movement of 2011 degenerated into. For Thompson, occupation has been a central tactic in the struggle to achieve decolonialization, not a story of representations but more precisely what we could radically rewrite as the appropriators reclaiming what the expropriators stole.

And finally **Russell Eliot Dale** reviews a new book on the philosophical issue of Paradox by Margaret Cuonzo. Dale gives Cuonzo many kudos for a tight and well-argued presentation, one that is oriented to the general reader, with many everyday examples of paradox theory. However, Dale argues that the book omits two very innovative and rich traditions in the history of logic, the Renaissance and Hegel. He offers a constructive critique that demonstrates that the Renaissance concern was with a multitude of paradoxes, having both a literary and scientific and mathematical quality. His example of "Galileo's Paradox" gives us much to reflect upon in terms

of reopening the door to Renaissance logic especially in its prefiguration of one-one mapping that is fundamental to Cantor's theory of transfinite numbers which is crucial to modern mathematics.

We hope that this first double issue of *Situations* will provoke thought, provide insight and produce new fields of research for our readers. The radical imagination attempts to retrieve what is best in the radical tradition and rethink categories and produce new ones for our troubled times. Our first step is to find the adequate objects for our theoretical understanding and ideas and within this process of adequation we can engage in new forms of thinking that lead to new strategies of acting in the world, a newness that can withstand relentless commodification, internalization and legitimization by the neo-liberal system, easy absorption into the Transnational Garrison State we inhabit but are ethically bound to resist and overcome. We think we are on this path and welcome you to the journey of the radical imagination and its effects.

Michael Pelias
For the editorial collective