

GESTURE

Rereading gender studies and activisms in Greece. Encounters on gender related violence

Work Package 3: Archive trouble

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Abstract

Το τρίτο πακέτο εργασίας του προγράμματος GESTURE πειραματίζεται με την έννοια της «αναταραχής αρχείου» και εστιάζει στη σχέση μεταξύ του ακαδημαϊκού και του κινηματικού φεμινισμού στην Ελλάδα, κατά τις οποίες αναδύονται νέοι λόγοι και υποκείμενα γύρω από το κρίσιμο ζήτημα της έμφυλης βίας. Για την υλοποίησή του, η αρχειακή έρευνα έδωσε έμφαση:

- Στη διερεύνηση και αξιοποίηση επιλεγμένων αρχείων και αρχειακών πρακτικών σύγχρονων φεμινιστικών και queer αρχειοθετήσεων στο ελληνικό πλαίσιο.
- Στην διαμόρφωση ενός μεθοδολογικού πειραματισμού για την ανάπτυξη ενός «διαταραγμένου αρχείου», το οποίο υιοθετεί έναν θραυσματικό χαρακτήρα, στοχεύοντας στο να προτείνει μία ανοίκεια στάση απέναντι σε κανονικοποιημένες αφηγήσεις και αναπαραστάσεις της έμφυλης βίας.

Η έρευνα υιοθετεί μία διαθεματική προσέγγιση της έμφυλης βίας, όπου η κατηγορία 'γυναίκες' δεν αντιμετωπίζεται ουσιοκρατικά ως ομοιογενής, και όπου τίθενται υπό κριτική διερεύνηση οι συναρθρώσεις και οι διασταυρώσεις διακριτών συστημάτων εξουσίας, με άξονες κατηγορίες καταπίεσης και ταυτότητας όπως το φύλο, η φυλή, η εθν(ο)τικότητα, η σεξουαλικότητα, η κοινωνική τάξη. Έχει βασιστεί σε μία εννοιολόγηση του αρχείου, και μία προσέγγιση των αρχειακών πρακτικών η οποία αμφισβητεί συμβατικές αντιλήψεις των αρχείων ως πολύτιμων πηγών και πόρων για την ακαδημαϊκή έρευνα και την διατήρηση της ιστορικής μνήμης. Ο όρος 'αρχειοθέτηση', όπως χρησιμοποιείται σε αυτό το έργο, δεν αναφέρεται στις συμβατικές πρακτικές που εφαρμόζουν οι αρχειονόμοι και οι βιβλιοθηκονόμοι για τη διατήρηση, την τεκμηρίωση και την ευρετηρίαση αρχειακών συλλογών και υλικού. Αντίθετα, ο όρος 'φεμινιστικές και queer αρχειοθετήσεις' υποδηλώνει ένα σύνολο παρεμβάσεων και πρακτικών που υπερβαίνουν τους συμβατικούς ορισμούς του αρχείου. Σηματοδοτούν πρακτικές κατασκευής αρχείων και παραγωγής και συλλογής αρχειακών τεκμηρίων ως δραστηριότητες παραγωγής γνώσης και ως φεμινιστικές και queer πολιτικές παρεμβάσεις στο παρόν.

Ακολουθώντας μία τέτοια πειραματική προσέγγιση, οι θραυσματικές αφηγήσεις του διαταραγμένου αρχείου του προγράμματος ιχνηλατούν επεισόδια όπου οι συναντήσεις ακαδημαϊκών και κινηματικών φεμινισμών γύρω από το ζήτημα της έμφυλης βίας δεν είναι απαραίτητα αρμονικές ή συμπλέουσες. Το αρχείο επικεντρώνεται, σε περιστατικά και αναπαραστάσεις που ανακύπτουν σε στιγμές όπου η συν-αισθηματική ζωή διαπερνά την δημόσια ζωή, όπου προβληματοποιούνται οι πρακτικές της (μη-)καταγραφής των σωμάτων of colour σαν (συμ)μετεχόντων στις αντιστάσεις απέναντι στην έμφυλη βία, και όπου αμφισβητείται η ηγεμονική θεώρηση των σωφρονιστικών φεμινισμών.

I. Introduction

Kate Eichhorn's topical study 'The Archival Turn in Feminism: Outrage in Order' opens with her reminiscences from 2009 when attending a conference at Columbia University with the title 'Archiving Women' (2013). Eichhorn recounts her surprise when she realized that for most of the presentations at that conference "appeared to have less to do with women archiving than with women being archived" (2013, p. 2). She then goes on to reflect on this tension between thinking of women as subjects or as central agents of the archive and on the multiple fallouts that followed amongst the group of academic scholars and feminist activist archivists who were present at that conference.

It is interesting to note that a book such as this, opens with conflictual episodes unfolding in an academic setting where different types of feminisms and diverse archival impulses met and conversed. Leaving these episodes aside for the time being, our report opens with Eichhorn's book as it has been key in the initial decision to orient the GESTURE project towards an inquiry on archives and on archival practices, while it has also set out a research path that was pursued in this work package. What Eichhorn terms as an 'archival turn in contemporary feminism' is simultaneously an observation and an invitation; it captures a relatively recent transformation in academic and activist feminist uses of the archive as well as calling for a deeper engagement of contemporary feminist activists' with genealogical politics. Drawing in particular from the work of Wendy Brown, Eichhorn observes that that feminism's "turn toward the archive is not a turn toward the past but rather an essential way of understanding and imagining other ways to live in the present" (2013, p. 9).

The primary focus of Eichhorn's empirical case studies and her political experiences and involvements with feminist and queer movements come mainly from North America. One of the questions that she does not address in her text, is whether her findings can travel across continents and contexts. For the purpose of this work package a relevant question would be: Has there been an archival turn in gender studies and gender activism in Greece? This is a complex, open question, difficult to address in the limited context of this research project. At most, our research will draw attention and reflect on some instances where the archive and practices of archiving are becoming central to feminist and queer activism and scholarships in the Greek context.

Recent Greek academic writings in the field of gender studies approaching the archive as their subject of inquiry and/or understanding archival practices as political interventions in the present seem rare.¹ The publication that probably marks a significant shift in this trend is the edited volume *Queer Politics/Public Memory: 30 Texts for Zak* published in the aftermath of the brutal murder of LGBT activist Zak Kostopoulos/Zackie Oh in central Athens in 21 September 2018 (Athanasίου et al., 2020). From the outset, in the introduction of the volume, the editors state emphatically that their project was conceived as part of a political struggle over the archive, the politics of public memory and forgetting. Then several contributors to the volume, namely Venetia Kantsa, Kostas Yannakopoulos, Eirini Avramopoulou, Grigoris Gougousis, and Angelika Psarra, echo this stance by invoking the emergence of new archival practices as key components of a queer feminist politics of the present and of contemporary resistances to gender-related violence. *Queer Politics, Public Memory: 30 Texts for Zak* is not an academic publication. It was designed as a project that would bring together people who work as researchers and/or as activists against gender-related violence,

¹ I have not conducted an extensive bibliographic research on this question. Penelope Papailias' work on the politics of historical representation in Greek society (2005) is centered around the notion of the archive as a subject of her inquiry, although her book might not be classified as a gender studies publication. Two recent PhD dissertations on feminist and queer politics in Greece engage with the archival turn in different ways (Manesi, 2021; Gianniri, 2023).

homophobia, transphobia and racism, in the wake of the mobilisations that erupted after the murder of Zak Kostopoulos.

Does, then, the publication of *Queer Politics/Public Memory: 30 Texts for Zak*, constitute a moment of realizing an archival turn in contemporary queer feminisms in Greece? It is, again, too difficult to address this question, it might also need to be reformulated. It's not this particular book which might be seen as constituting this moment or *a moment*, but rather the emergence of the movement for Justice for Zak/ZackieOh as a movement in progress, in the course of which this edited volume was produced. Regardless, this work package of GESTURE titled 'Archive Trouble' will face the task of reflecting on the new archival practices that some of the authors of the edited volume invoked or imagined for forging a methodological and epistemological experimentation with the making of archival forms and materials.

Research objectives

GESTURE's overall objectives are:

- To research the relationship between the gender studies and gender activism in contemporary Greece, highlighting antitheses, contradictions and/or synergies between the two fields as far as the issue of gender-related violence is concerned.
- To highlight different understandings and interventions concerning gender-related violence, especially those marginalized or erased by more legitimized/authoritative/validated positions in academic gender studies, gender activisms, or civil society, in order to address the intersections between the social and the epistemic aspects of gender violence.
- To understand the intersections between gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class and violence, in order to raise awareness of the many different forms of gender-related violence.

In this work package, these three objectives are addressed by

- Tactically, inquiring on selected archives and archival practices of contemporary feminist and queer archiving in the Greek context.
- Developing a methodological experimentation for forging the creation of a 'disturbed archive' composed of fragments, which aims to problematise the social production of knowledge about gender and violence in Greece.

II. Basic concepts and theoretical resources

GESTURE has charted an intersectional research trajectory that problematizes the encounters between academic and activist feminisms in Greece. In the context of this work package, this trajectory confronts the sometimes commonplace notion of 'women' (and, in particular, class- and race-privileged women) as the normative subjects of feminist theory and activism in Greece. It also insists on distinguishing gender-related violence from violence against women (regarded as a homogeneous category), and understands this concept as always involving situated relations of power and inequality shaped by the articulations of gender, sexual, racialized, class, ethnicity and other differences (Athanasidou et. al., 2020; Zavvou, 2021).

In this work package, I have adopted an intersectional perspective in relation to my research on feminist and queer archiving; this informs the ways I have understood and analysed archival practices, the ways I have utilised archival collections and archival materials, as well as the process through which the project's 'disturbed archive' was developed. Embarking on this project three decades after the so-called 'archival turn' in the humanities and social sciences, does not render superfluous – especially in the Greek context – to state openly from the outset that this project does not subscribe to the notion that a 'proper' archival collection is or should be seen as a repository of documents and objects. My research is not archival in a conventional sense: rather, it approaches the archive as simultaneously a subject of inquiry, a site of affective research, and a space of political intervention. My archival research builds on the rich analytical framework of transfeminist and queer readings of the archive and of archival practices. I primarily draw from Ann Cvetkovich's theorising of the archive and her methodological experimentations in constructing a new *Archive of Feelings* (Cvetkovic, 2003). For making her contribution relevant to the Greek context, in particular for situating it on the intersections between academic gender studies and feminist activism in Greece around the question of gender-related violence, is a challenging task. To address it, I largely rely on Dimitris Papanikolaou's introduction of the concept of 'archive trouble', as a key resource for enacting a poetics of the disturbed archive and as a methodological logic for imagining non-normative archives on gender-related violence (Papanikolaou, 2017, 2018).

III. Methodology

The methodology used in this work package shifted as the research process unfolded. In the initial research design, I had set out to proceed from Ann Stoler's succinct formulation of the archival turn as a move from "archive-as-source to archive-as-subject" (2013, p. 44). A collection of Greek archives would be assembled for inquiring on how they contribute to the social production of knowledge about gender and gender-related violence. The critical task would then be to read these archives 'against their grain', locating silenced voices, hidden subjectivities, and lost patterns. However, the initial aim to dedicate the first part of the research on a comprehensive mapping of existing feminist and queer archives was gradually abandoned. In its place, I have opted to re-direct my research on taking note and drawing attention to selected archives and archival practices of feminist and queer archiving in Greece.

For one thing, the time afforded for completing this work would not suffice for a comprehensive mapping. An earlier project aiming to map and catalogue women's archives in Greece has been published in 2015 and one feasible solution could have been to rely on its findings and attempting to possibly extend and update it with post-2015 developments. This possibility though brought to the fore new and more challenging methodological concerns. The existing comprehensive catalogue was a mapping of 'Women's archives in Greece'. Would it make sense to update or extend this by adding more recent or older and neglected 'feminist' or 'queer' archives? How do these three denominations of all these archives relate to each other? Where do they overlap, when are they supplementary, where can we locate some frictions amongst them? How are these three terms conceptualised by those who make these attributions: researchers, archivists, activists – including me and on what grounds? What do these divergent conceptualisations ultimately reflect: methodological, political, or identitarian issues?

I acknowledge the importance of these questions, but I have realised that the research work that was feasible to accomplish in the context of the GESTURE project, would not be in the least sufficient for addressing them thoroughly. To do so, one would probably need to conduct extensive ethnographic work, carrying out an ethnography of some of these archives, but also embarking on a wide-ranging research that traces and

inquires on the circulations, conceptualisations and uses of these archives and their archival material in the context of gender studies and gender activism in Greece.

Instead, and taking into account the limitations of this project, the work package took primarily issue with what might be called 'feminist and queer archiving in Greece', in relation to the critical issue of gender-related violence. Here, I drew directly from Eichhorn's introduction of this concept (2013). The term 'archiving' does not refer to the conventional practices performed by archivists, librarians, and others in preserving, documenting and indexing archival material. Instead, 'feminist and queer archiving' denotes a set of interventions and practices that go beyond conventional definitions of the archive; they signify practices of forging archives and of producing and collecting archival materials as knowledge-making activities and as feminist and queer political interventions in the present.

A list of selected archives and archival practices of 'feminist and queer archiving' in Greece is presented in more detail in the website of the GESTURE project. This is by no means a comprehensive, nor an exhaustive list of such archives and practices. It was assembled through a somewhat reverse process than originally planned: Starting from instances of feminist and queer archiving hitting the ground of contemporary struggles against gender-related violence in Greece, and then moving back to archives and archival practices that are invested in these politics of the present.

This particular selection of archives and archival practices has also a tactical dimension. It has been assembled in a way that can propel the research process for the development of what was initially thought as the 'sample digital counter-archive' of the project. The concept of a 'counter-archive' was also gradually abandoned; the project's archiving practices have been reconceptualized as a process of assembling and narrating fragmentary stories around gender-related violence that can potentially forge a disturbed archive. The concepts of the 'disturbed archive' and of 'archive trouble' come from Papanikolaou's work, which primarily draws from the domains of cultural production and artistic practices in the context of the Greek financial crisis (2017, 2018). I have followed his unsettling methodological position in approaching artistic works, such as novels, theatre productions, films, performances, exhibitions as archival practices, but my focus diverges. I, therefore, use his concepts freely, with modifications and adaptations, as guiding methodological principles. For the research process of engaging with archival practice and of forging archival materials as part of the GESTURE project, the notion of 'archive trouble' entailed that:

- GESTURE's disturbed archive would not strive to becoming a comprehensive, cohesive archive on the encounters between academic feminism and the feminist movement in Greece around the question of gender-related violence. Instead, it has adopted a fragmentary framework, where its archival material are included as a disparate collection of narrative fragments.
- The disturbed archive attempts to forge "a dialogue with the intimate archives of belonging, of kinship, and of emotion" (Papanikolaou, 2018, p. 173), especially in relations to experiences of gender violence and subjectivities that have limited visibility.
- It experiments with a genealogical approach in forging new archival material. Its primary intention is to enact processes of defamiliarisation in relation to normalised narratives and representations of gender-related violence.
- These processes of defamiliarisation are seen through the lens of an intersectional perspective on gender-related violence situated in the Greek context. The narrative fragments of the disturbed archive are included and were through an understanding of gender-related violence as involving not only women, regarded in fact as a homogeneous category, but as always involving situated relations

of power and inequality shaped by the articulations of gender, sexual, racialized, class, ethnicity and other difference.

- The above also implies a defamiliarization with the conventional understandings of the concept of the archive as a resource for academic researchers and gender activists and of archival research as a practice of mining or of excavating into the preserved document collections and archival materials of the past.

Before discussing in more detail how this methodological framework was pursued and the research findings that it generated, I would like to point some of its limitations. The project's disturbed archive has not emerged as part of a collective, community-based, and movement-grounded effort to steer archive trouble. The process of its development followed a traditional research endeavour, where an academic researcher made methodological decisions, selected archival material, and assembled narratives. This process is in itself problematic, especially when juxtaposed to collective knowledge-making archival practices that have been employed by several feminist and queer collectivities in Greece. Even more so, it is problematic since this one researcher is cis-male, middle-aged, white, heterosexual and relatively detached to contemporary feminist and queer mobilisations against gender-related violence in Greece. Taking into account of my positionality calls for being reflexive in relation to all the methodological choices that I have undertaken in the context of researching archival practices and of proposing fragmentary alternative narratives on gender-related violence. Concomitantly, I will be trying to follow bell hooks' political vision of feminism as a 'movement for everybody' trying to trace synergies and alliances between contemporary feminist and queer movements against sexism and sexist exploitation, and oppression in Greece with struggles for social justice and anti-oppression mobilisations (hooks, 2000). I will reflect further on some of these limitations related to my positionality as the researcher of this work package in the following section of the report.

IV. Research findings & results

The initial research results of this work package span two spaces: this text, a written academic research report and the project's website under the special category named 'Archive Trouble'. The website material is further organised in two sub-sections: the first called 'Feminist and Queer Archivings' and the second 'Fragments: Disturbing the Archive'. The two different spaces and the two sub-sections are not supplementary, nor overlapping. They are composed as a fragmented representation of the research process and simultaneously as a documentation of the methodological experimentation used in developing an alternative archiving on gender-related violence in Greece. I will try to unpack and analyse this composition below.

In chronological terms, my funded research began in December 2023 by embarking on the 'mapping feminist and queer archives' created during the post-Junta (*Metapolitefsi*) period in Greece. I started with performing a wide and open online search, compiling a list of such archives as I was tracing them. The vastness of the archives and collections that appeared to be somewhere 'out there' -in various digital forms, in libraries, other archival spaces, state buildings, private homes, collective spaces- seemed overwhelming. I felt overwhelmed: it would be impossible to complete anything resembling a comprehensive mapping of these archives within the time frame of this work package. I was working against a deadline that was less than a year away.

As I found out shortly thereafter, a mapping research project funded by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and implemented by the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE) resulted in 2015 in the publication

of a comprehensive online catalogue of Women's Archives in Greece. This catalogue, named Cleo (after one of muses of Greek mythology) contains 980 such archives, sub-archives and collections. It is still operational today, searchable through a dedicated database and search engine.² Cleo brought me relief. I could now rely on Cleo for my mapping; I could possibly rethink my mapping as the task of updating Cleo's catalogue by supplanting it with those feminist and queer archival projects that have been initiated after the completion of EKKE's research project in 2012. I could also set out to trace and document other, older archives or collections that are missing from this catalogue of women's archives. I anticipated that such a research process and inquiry could then form the basis for developing a potential counter-archive: giving visibility to archives and archival practices that are not included in the institutional catalogue and examining the logics of their exclusion.

I started with what seemed as a likely omission in institutional archival projects: queer archives, queer histories and queer subjectivities. Indeed, neither Cleo's catalogue contains any mentions of the term queer and a similar approach is followed by other feminist institutional archival projects, such as the 'Historical Archive' on gender equality and the '*Collection of oral testimonies from eminent women*'.³ In parallel, I began studying Ann Cvetkovich's, *An Archive of Feelings* (2003) to get a deeper sense of practices of queer readings of the archive and of employing queer methods for forging grassroots archival collections.

Cvetkovich's work had an immediate impact on my work for this project. It made me realise that my previous hesitations and oscillations on how to carry out this work on gender-related violence in and of archival material and practices in Greece were closely connected to my positionality as a white, heterosexual, cisgender male researcher. I was uncomfortable and anxious of my distance to the subjects of inquiry and to the feminist and queer activism that would purportedly animate this research work. Instead, of acknowledging it, being reflexive and working along and across this distance, I went about my initial research through obfuscating my positionality. The impulse to construct a comprehensive mapping of feminist and queer archives in Greece from an external vantage point, advocating a view from nowhere of the male researcher who would perform a conventional cataloguing was the main problem to start with. I found a way out of this impasse by trying to work with Cvetkovich's paradigmatic example of engaging affectively with other archival material and collections for constructing her idiosyncratic archive of emotions, sexuality and trauma that animate lesbian public cultures.

My original distance to the general findings of this research project and to the fragmentary narratives of the project's disturbed archive has not disappeared and the point was not to somehow narrow it or abridge it. Instead, I have tried to conduct this research through my affective affinities to gender studies in Greece as a cis male researcher who has briefly worked in the outskirts of this field from a marginal position and to gender activism as a researcher who has tried to situate (part) of his academic work to the practices of anti-racist movements and resistances.

As a result, the disturbed archive that was developed through this process focuses on incidents and representations that emerge at moments when affective representations of gender-related violence pervade public life, when the practices of (non-)recording bodies of colour as (participants) in resistances against gender-related violence are problematized, and when the hegemonic articulations of carceral feminisms are questioned. The project's mapping exercise has concomitantly shifted into a composition of 15 cards/tabs, published in GESTURE's website. These capture affective encounters with 15 selected archives and archival

² See, the brief discussion of this catalogue of women's archive in our website:

<https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/arxeia/feministika-kai-kouir-archeia/katalogos-gynaikeion-archeion-kleio/> .

³ See the brief discussion in <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/arxeia/feministika-kai-kouir-archeia/archeio-proforikon-martyrion-geniki-g/>

practices that can be termed as ‘feminist and queer archiving’ in the Greek context. These 15 archives and archival practices have been selected because they have forged the research path that I followed for developing the fragmentary narratives that constitute the disturbed archive of the project.

I will discuss the three completed fragments of the GESTURE’s disturbed archive in more detail below.

Fragment one - ‘Affective life pervading public life’ (Cvetkovich, 2003, p.10)

The first fragment was fuelled by a process of digging in the repository of digitised material of the ‘Historical Archive’ of the Greek General Secretariat for Gender Equality.⁴ Amongst other documents, the digitised repository of the ‘Historical Archive’ features scanned copies of magazines published by different groups and collectives of the autonomous women’s movement of the 70s and 80s, such as *Skoupa* (5 issues), *Dini* (9 issues), *Gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon* (3 issues) and *Katina* (7 issues), the lesbian magazine *Lavris* (3 issues), and the (mostly) gay magazine *Amfi* (12 issues) from approximately the same period. I read this journal issues, at first, in the light of GESTURE’s overall approach: trying to discern different understandings of gender activism and gender-related violence and thinking about how these resonate with the different positionalities, discourses and subjectivities that constitute the field of gender studies and activism in Greece today.

In all these journals published in the late 70s and 80s, intersections between violence and gender emerge as a critical concern. And there are, indeed, considerable divergences. In the magazines of the autonomous women’s movement, gender-related violence is approached as a question of violence against women in the family and in the public sphere – the relevant journal articles focus on patriarchy, on rape and domestic violence. These publications were intimately connected to the feminist mobilizations against violence and rape that multiplied in Greece during the early 1980s, voicing demands for legal reforms and for policy measures for the protection of women survivors of violence. One concise and indicative manifestation can be found in the expanded special section on ‘violence and rape’ that featured in the second issue of the journal *Dini* (Dini, 1987). *Lavris* (a publication connected to the first lesbian collective in Greece, ‘The Autonomous Group of Homosexual Women’) and *Amfi* (connected to the first homosexual organization in Greece, AKOE - Hellenic Homosexual Liberation Movement) differ. I will not go into any detail, here. It’s enough to remember that AKOE’s inaugural public event in 1977 was aligned with the mobilization of trans sex workers against state repression and police violence, that the main speech in this public event was delivered by Betty Vakalidou, a trans sex worker, and that one of the principal themes in the articles of the two penultimate issues of *Lavris* was the outcry, ‘why do feminists insist on ignoring lesbians?’ (Kantsa, 2000). These divergences seem, perhaps, familiar and reflecting the homophobia and transphobia of that epoch.

Eventually, my gaze fell on the affective life that bursts from the pages of *Amfi*. In stark contrast to all the other magazines mentioned above, *Amfi* (although often remembered today as ‘highbrow’)⁵ is the only publication that invited its readers to share their personal stories without fear and then published their personal narratives, which often recounted traumatic lived experiences of violence and abuse.

Amfi featured a regular column, titled ‘Testimonies’ that appeared successively from the first number of the journal, published in 1978. The column consisted of open letters to *Amfi*, from anonymous, eponymous, or pseudonymous readers, with occasional replies by the editorial committee or even by individual members of

⁴ See the brief discussion in <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/feministika-kai-kouir-archeia/istoriko-archeio-geniki-grammateia-is/>

⁵ See some of the interviews with former members of AKOE/AMFI in the documentary on their history: <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/akoe-amfi-i-istoria-mias-epanastasis/>

that committee. This column throughout all the issues of the journal, throughout its 12-year publication span, was used 'as a forum for personal histories that are also social and cultural ones' (Cvetkovich, 2003: 26)

The first fragment of the project's disturbed archive records an episode where these personal narratives of systemic gender-related violence were transferred 'out of place', beyond *Amfi*'s dedicated column and into the open, into heteronormative spaces of political struggle.

AKOE decided to participate in the mass mobilisations marking the fifth anniversary of the anti-junta Athens Polytechnic uprising. It was in November 1978. AKOE was present at a small table in the space of the Polytechnic school, where they sold books and issues of their journal *Amfi*, while they freely distributed a four-page brochure that was drafted especially for this occasion.

Members of left-wing student organisations tried to expel AKOE from the venue by force. AKOE was accused of operating 'against the political spirit of the Polytechnic uprising'. AKOE members did not leave, but they were forced to move their table near the anarchist stands, where they felt safer. A few weeks later, an article entitled, 'The Death of the Polytechnic' appeared in the left-wing journal *Anti*, stating emphatically that the presence of AKOE was the most 'obvious expression of the degeneration' of the commemorations of the Polytechnic uprising.

The event is recounted and reflected upon in a 1979 issue of *Amfi* (it is quite possibly its only existing trace) (*Amfi*, 1979).⁶ As noted in this issue, the controversy erupted with reference to the four-page brochure distributed by AKOE, or rather the fourth page of the four-page brochure. In the words of the journal, 'many did not understand its meaning'. The issue of *Amfi* re-printed all the texts that were used in the brochure. I could not trace the actual brochure anywhere, it is highly probable that it has been lost since both AKOE and *Amfi* did not keep a record or archive their activities. The first three pages of the brochure are written in the form and style of standard left-wing political leaflets of the time. One text provides a synopsis of the founding declaration of AKOE, another links AKOE's fight for the liberation of homosexual desire to the struggles initiated by the Polytechnic uprising, and the last one sums up AKOE's campaign against the proposed homophobic bill for the protection from sexually transmitted diseases that was submitted for discussion in the Greek Parliament by the post-junta right wing government of the time.

Then, a reversal of tone and style. In the fourth page, a personal narrative of an adolescent boy. It captures his remembrance of such a critical political event. In the first person, the adolescent boy writes about coming back home after attending a march on one anniversary of the Polytechnic uprising along with his younger sister, his father and his uncle. When they are back home, he is confronted in secret by his mother, while the two older men continue debating revolutionary politics in the background. His mother has been informed by a neighbor that he was seen kissing with one of his male classmates. She burst in threats and tears. The boy leaves the house in panic and is thinking of what to do next.

Inspired by Cvetkovich's observations on the need to invent archival material at times when they are not available to us, this archival fragment consists of a re-invention of AKOE's four-page brochure. AKOE's re-invented brochure is published in the dedicated section of the project's website (in Greek).

⁶ These events are not mentioned in the 2023 documentary 'AKOE/AMFI: The Story of a Revolution (*Just to sleep on their chest...)', which employs archival practices to preserve and reconstruct the 'lost', 'forgotten' aspects of the history of the movement. I was able to only find some brief references to the tensions between left-wing organisations and AKOE in the context of the commemorations of the Polytechnic uprising in the late 1970s in Vasiliki Polykarpou's Masters' thesis on the history of the LGBTQI+ movement in Greece (2019).

Fragment two – Recording the presence of female and migrant bodies of colour

The second fragment is inspired by a passage from Sara Ahmed's, *The Feminist Killjoy Handbook* (2023). There, Ahmed performs 'archival work', attempting to re-draw lineages with older texts by black British feminist authors, such as those found in the book *Charting the Journey* which was published in 1988. She draws particularly from Avtar Brah's contribution in this edited volume. Ahmed reflects on Brah's account of her early encounters with feminist politics as a woman of colour and how their repeated attempts to bring race into public discussions and to connect anti-racism with other feminist political demands were outwardly ignored in different feminist events, meetings and workshops of the 1970s and 80s. Ahmed then notes: 'Feminism became white not because Black and brown women were not there, speaking, knowing, creating, but because we were blanked, not recorded as being there. (2023, p. 65)

Ahmed's observations reconfigured a general uneasiness that I often felt during my research work in and with existing feminist archives in the Greek context. Black, brown and migrant women are rendered marginal or invisible by most Greek feminist archival practices, even in the context of recent archival projects of the past 15 years.

The 88 women included in the feminist archive of Greek Female Architects are all white.⁷ In their feminist biographies drafted especially for this archival project, the presence of black or brown female subjectivities is not recorded - as likely collaborators or co-workers, as possible inspirations, as the women of colour who had possibly performed care work for the white women architects' families, while they were out doing their architectural work. Likewise, the 62 eminent women, whose biographical interviews compose the archive of oral testimonies on gender equality and the history of women's movements created by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and EKKE, are all white.⁸ In all these archives, the invisibility of female bodies of colour is brushed away, the apparent whiteness of Greek feminism does not become an issue for further reflection.

The second archival fragment follows Ahmed's call for recording female and migrant bodies of colour as being there in the history of (Greek) feminisms. Beforehand, I would like to acknowledge, here, other feminist and queer archival practices developing in the past years in Greece that have been engaging with such significant work, particularly the archival project, titled "This is not a Feminist project"⁹ and a number of projects initiated by the Feminist Autonomous Centre for research (FAC).¹⁰

The audiovisual material included in GESTURE's website as the second fragment of its disturbed archive, comes from my encounters with migrant organisations in the late 2000s – early 2010s, in particular in relation to their efforts of creating their own websites and other digital media for mobilising, for multiplying their political work, and for archiving their histories. Two such organisations were the United African Women's Organisation and the Determined Independent Women in Action for Total Advancement (DIWATA) founded by Filipino migrant women in Athens, Greece. The websites which were created back then are now mostly defunct. Most of the materials -videos, photos, drawings, letters, other texts- which were painstakingly collected by numerous members' of these organisations so that they would become visible online have now mostly disappeared from the digital realm.

⁷ See <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/psifiako-archeio-ellinidon-architekton/>

⁸ See <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/arxeia/feministika-kai-kouir-archeia/archeio-proforikon-martyrion-geniki-g/>

⁹ See <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/feministika-kai-kouir-archeia/this-is-not-a-feminist-project/>

¹⁰ See <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/feministika-kai-kouir-archeia/queer-archeia-ypo-kataskevi/>

At the time, I was the person responsible for collecting all these material for the two migrant organisation and for publishing them on their new websites. I have tried to recover some of these, mostly by searching the stored files my old, now unused computer, and my archived e-mail correspondence of that time.

Inspired by Cvetkovich's experimental archiving methods, this second fragment attempts to enact the affective value of ephemeral or marginal material, associated with nostalgia, personal memory, and trauma (2003, pp. 243-44).

Fragment three – Spectrum of decarceration (Terwiel, 2020)

The third fragment is inspired by a draft text written by Nelli Kambouri on the aftermath of Angela Davis' visit to Greece for delivering the annual Nicos Poulantzas Memorial Lecture in December 2017.¹¹ Her text was written in the context of her participation in the community course 'Abolition Feminisms', which was organised by the Feminist Autonomous Centre for research (FAC) in spring 2022. It has not been published. Kambouri (a member of GESTURE's research team) reflects on the tension between Davis' well-attended and seemingly well-received talk on 'Abolition Feminism: Theories and Practices for Our Time' and the current strategies of many feminist organizations in Greece. These often seem to turn in entirely different directions, mobilising primarily around judicial battles on gender-based crimes, calling for police reform, campaigning for an increase of sentencing and for harsher penalties for perpetrators and sometimes also embracing practices of vigilantism.

Drawn by these observations, I was predisposed to always be looking for traces of voices and practices that problematise carceral feminisms as I was conducting my research in Greek feminist archival material of the 1970s and 1980s documenting the growing feminist movements against rape and gendered violence. I chose to focus on one of these traces. This trace comes from the journal published by the group "*Kinisi gia tin Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon*", which is considered as first collective of the Autonomous Women's Movement that emerged in the post-junta years in Greece. I have selected this particular archival trace, because it impressed me as involving the orchestration of affective excess and as employing what Kate Eichhorn calls 'dirty archival methods' (2013).

This fragment emanates from an article published in the feminist magazine, *Apeleftherosi ton Ginaikon*, in (1978, February). The article recounts an insurrection that took place a few weeks earlier at the Empirikio juvenile penitentiary for girls located in central Athens. As we learn from the article, one Sunday of December 1977 the inmates escaped while being escorted to church service. They climbed onto nearby roofs, shouted slogans, and refused to go either to the church or to return back to the penitentiary. The riot police was summoned, the girls were beaten and some were arrested. Six of these girls, considered to be the 'primary perpetrators' of the insurrection, were locked up in Athens' principal prison, Korydallos, awaiting trial. The article ends by addressing feminist organisations and calls for mobilising to abolish all juvenile penitentiaries for girls and all similar 'prison camps' and for solidarity with the six girls who are awaiting trial.

The text of the article is accompanied by photos of three real inmate cards. They are included in the publication in handwritten form, as they were initially filed by the administrators of the juvenile penitentiary for girls. Only the names of the girls are smudged by the editors of the magazine. The text of the article does not refer directly to the three inmate cards and it does not mention how they were recovered by the author and how they decided to publish them. The inmate cards predate the article and the insurrection at the Empirikio

¹¹ Angela Davis' 2017 Athens lecture is available on video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYBqEFmlqMA>

juvenile penitentiary. They document three internments of three underage girls in 1964 and 1965. The reason for their internment, as stated in their cards, was “moral perversion”.

38 years later, this article was reprinted in the journal of the feminist collective *Migada*. The reprinted version digitised the original text, while also including two of the initial three inmate cards in digital form (2015).

V. Conclusion

The research conducted in this work package resulted in the creation of a dedicated section of GESTURE’s website divided in two layers: ‘Feminist and Queer Archiving’ and the ‘Fragments: Disturbing the Archive’. Both layers have developed as an open-ended research process and methodological experimentation. They are not final or finalised works or research findings. In the conclusion of the report, I would like to briefly discuss some existing archival practices, archival projects, and texts that have been extremely useful for this work package, and that will inform the further development of GESTURE’s disturbed archive in the next phase of the project.

A radical gesture of Ann Cvetkovich’s archive of feeling, is her re-rendering of Toni Morrison’s proposition that ‘facts’ and ‘truth’ are not the same thing. In the context of her work on lesbian public cultures, Cvetkovich shows the need to invent archives when we don’t have them, especially in relation to narratives and subjectivities that have not been recorded in the past. She discusses, along these lines, the example of Cheryl Dunye’s 1996 film *Watermelon Woman*, which is based on the creation of a series of fictional archives of an African American actress who played the stereotypical maid roles in old Hollywood films (2013: 240-42). Drawing inspiration from this work, for the first fragment of the project’s disturbed archive, we will include a re-invention of the ‘lost’ four-page brochure that AKOE distributed during the fifth anniversary of the anti-junta Athens Polytechnic uprising in November 1978.

The initial research design of the project proposed that the disturbed archive will be expanded and enriched with new material emanating from fieldwork data of its next phase, in particular biographical interviews and focus groups with academics, feminist and queer activists, civil society representatives, gender studies students and young researchers. For this task, it is vital to persist with a continued methodological inquiry on GESTURE’s own archival practices. In this regard, we will continue to pursue Maria Tamboukou’s call for adopting a genealogical approach to feminist archival work, while critically reflecting on the project’s archiving practices as configuring a ‘process of becoming, a field of forces where events erupt, tracks are mapped, traces are unveiled and new knowledges emerge and crystallize’ (2019, p. 13). Along these lines, the three completed fragmented stories will be supplanted with at least three new ones. In that effort, I will try to address some of the methodological limitations of the development disturbed archive as it stands, especially in relation to its process of development. Instead of treating this next phase, as a conventional solitary endeavor of one researcher, I will try to engage with collective knowledge-making archival practices.

There are two recent projects that have developed in the Greek context which have been stimulating in this context. The first is the open, ongoing collective effort to create the foundations for a community-run ‘HIV/Aids archive’ in Greece by *Thetiki Foni* (Positive Voice), the Greek Union of People Living with HIV – noting also that this project aims to include an archive of gender violence.¹² The second collective project conducted by the Feminist Autonomous Centre for research (FAC) has resulted in the publication of a book, a book that can be read, however, as an archive in itself (Karastathis and Polykarpou, 2021). The edited volume ‘Come,

¹² See <https://gesture.soc.uoc.gr/feministika-kai-kouir-archeia/politiko-archeio-gia-to-hiv-aids-stin-ellada/>

Let Me Tell You: Feminist, Lesbian and Queer Narratives of the Post-dictatorship Period', published in Greek, experiments with queer feminist oral history methodologies for developing fragmented narratives that surface the systemic violence of the regime of gender and sexual normativity in the Greek context. Both projects show, in different ways, how archival practices against gender-related violence are inherently connected to affective collective experiences that can generate collective responses in the present.

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