

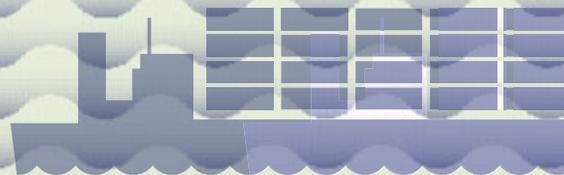


Logistical Worlds

Infrastructure, Software, Labour



N° 1 November 2014



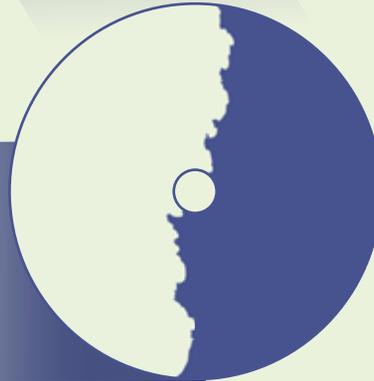
Piraeus, Greece

Concession to China. Gateway to Europe. Railway to nowhere.



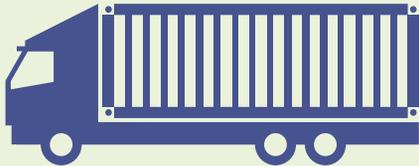
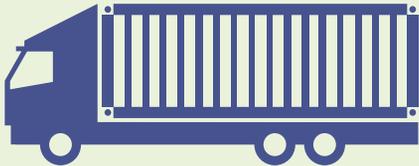
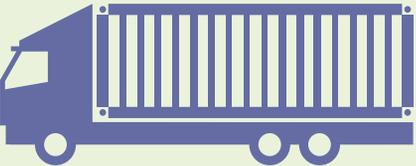
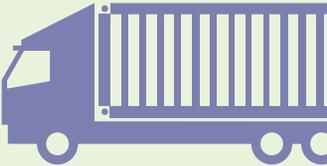
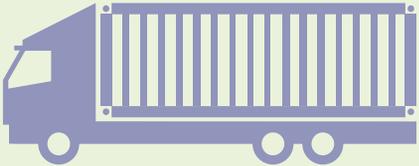
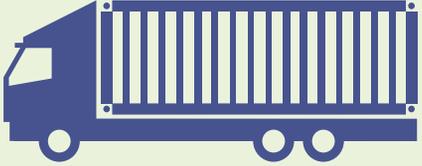
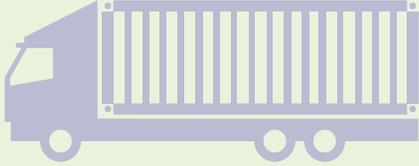
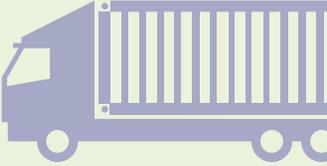
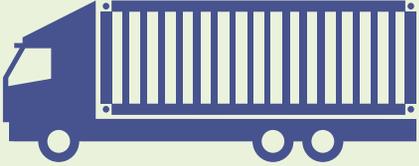
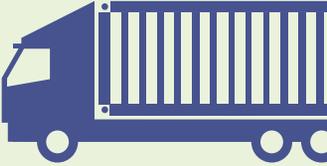
Kolkata, India

Roads become flyovers. Land becomes money. Subjectivity becomes political.

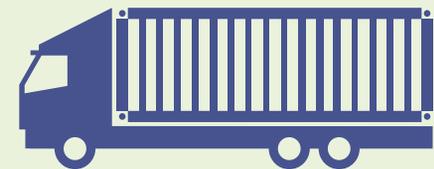


Valparaíso, Chile

Port doubles size. Copper parts shore. Sister to Guangzhou.



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Logistical Worlds: Territorial Governance in Piraeus and the New Silk Road

Brett Neilson and
Ned Rossiter

Our previous collective research project, Transit Labour (2009–2012), investigated circuits of labour and logistical operations in Shanghai, Kolkata and Sydney. Transit Labour traced the informality of e-waste industries and the political economy of standards in printed circuit board manufacturing in China. An extensive period of field work, site visits and archival research made clear how the rise of ‘New Towns’ supporting the IT sector in Kolkata was made possible by land zoning policies that resulted in the seizure of land from peasants, which we understood as a process of primitive accumulation. In Sydney our research focused on labour in regimes of governance related to shipping container loading and unloading times, transport routes, warehousing and inter-modal terminals. We saw how these primary components of a logistical city present a model of space, time, labour and economy whose dynamics register in ways distinct from the global city of finance capital and the industrial city of factories. Peripheries become primary spaces of coordination and control. Global infrastructural and software standards stitch spaces, labour and operational procedures together across diverse geographical scales and modalities of time.

The publication of this pamphlet signals the beginning of a new program of collective research that extends our interest in logistical operations along global lines of influence and connection marked by Chinese infrastructural expansion. Dubbed Logistical Worlds: Infrastructure, Software, Labour (2013–2016), this project moves between Athens, Kolkata and Valparaíso, investigating regimes of circulation and containment that connect China’s manufacturing industries to different corners of the world. Although these regimes are central to our interest, logistics applies not merely to circulation or transport, which is to say that it troubles the heuristic division between production and distribution. This is particularly evident in processes of global production where the assembly of goods across distant sites means that objects and knowledge must continually travel between locations. The reduction of transport costs through the introduction of efficient logistical systems has been an important factor in encouraging the relocation of industrial facilities to sites where the cost of labour

is cheaper. Logistics has thus contributed to the production of an increasingly heterogeneous arrangement of global space and time.

One sign of this is the proliferation of special economic zones, concessions, industrial parks, transport hubs and other dedicated spaces, which have provided a new geography for organizing production, attracting investment and regulating the supply of labour. But logistics is something more than a system for searching out and connecting diverse firms and labour forces on the basis of cost or other parameters. Logistics also actively produces environments and subjectivities, including those of workers and labour forces, through techniques of measure, coordination and optimization. This is to say it is not simply a socio-technical system that adapts to existing economic and material conditions. As Brian Larkin writes of infrastructures more generally, they 'also exist as forms separate from their purely technical functioning' and need to be analysed for their aesthetic and semiotic qualities. As such, they 'address and constitute subjects' and show 'how the political can be constituted through different means'. Understood in this way, logistics must be seen as a set of practices that make worlds.

infrastructure and software combine as technologies of governance that coordinate and control

We begin the second phase of this research with an interest in how infrastructure and software combine as technologies of governance that coordinate and control logistical operations and labour practices situated in select sites along the China-centred trade network known as the New Silk Road. Recalling the historical Silk Road of trade and cultural transmission that connected Asia to Europe, the geostrategic concept of the New Silk Road has emerged to register the logistical measures already being put in place by commercial entities and policy makers to meet the expected changes as Asia overtakes Europe as the world's largest trading region. At stake is the forging of new trade corridors that connect East Asia to Latin America and extend across the Indian subcontinent to southern Europe, where China's state owned shipping company, Cosco, has undertaken a major infrastructural investment in Piraeus.

*the port's
governance is vested
in the infrastructural
installations and
logistical routines*

Granted as a concession by the Greek government-controlled port authority to the Chinese state-owned company Cosco in 2009, the second pier of the port of Piraeus has become a crucial site of Chinese economic expansion in Europe. It is at once a space of infrastructural investment, economic transition, and changing labour processes and relations. Piraeus is also a political space, produced not only by dealings between states, companies, and continents but also by the exercise of power inherent in the management science of logistics. A crucial aspect of the port's governance is vested in the infrastructural installations and logistical routines that guide its operations. The standards and software protocols surrounding the movement of shipping containers are key factors here. Approaching the Cosco concession in this way means not only investigating its position in global meshes of transport, communication and software but also understanding how it expands the frontiers of capital to facilitate processes of accumulation, dispossession and exploitation.

There are currently three piers at Piraeus. Pier 1 is operated by the Piraeus Port Authority (OLP), the existing Greek organisation vested with control of the port in its entirety up until 2009 when the concession agreement was signed with Cosco Pacific, a subsidiary of Cosco Holdings whose majority shareholder is the Chinese (PRC) state-owned enterprise Cosco Group. With a 35 year lease of Piers II and III, Cosco's Piraeus Container Terminal (PCT) runs its port operations, planning and management using CATOS, a software system developed by the Korean based maritime logistics solution company Total Soft Bank. At Pier 1 OLP coordinates activities with NAVIS SPARCS N4, a US developed terminal operating system (TOS).

In principle these two systems are interoperable and have the technical capacity to coordinate different activities across the piers. Yet the movement of trans-shipment containers from the PCT to OLP piers, for example, is clocked in manually. The coincidence of dock work and paperwork reintroduces a media apparatus that asserts a regime of governance no longer accountable to the digital logic of search and calculation that define the event logs of terminal operating systems.



'Paperwork syncopates the state's rhythms' (Kafka). And, in the case of Piraeus, it invites minor technical errors that result in misplaced consignments and missing containers. Prone to human mistake and physical deterioration over time, there is also a certain autonomy of labour upheld by the media of paper files that nowadays appears strange, paradoxical, even quaint yet decidedly effective when set against real-time media of command and control.

Korea's Total Soft Bank is currently promoting its TOS as a technology suited to process mining within port settings. Using data generated through event logs that record port activity and organizational operations, process mining is a computational form of knowledge extraction designed to garner information on the timing and potential correlation of events in order to lever productivity and organizational transformation. Port infrastructure becomes animated not just by the movement of machines, but through patterns of data. Whether through the configuration of yard systems, the stacking sequence of containers, the oversight of customs procedures or the calculation of labour efficiencies, the making of port spaces according to computational transactions instantiates the economic potential of algorithmic governance.

It should not be forgotten that the concession of Piraeus occurred amid a global economic crisis in which the sovereign position of Greece has been severely challenged, both politically and economically. Although the conservative government of Kostas Karamanlis had been negotiating with Cosco and other interested parties since 2004 to establish a concession at Piraeus, plans had been delayed by industrial action and issues concerning EU competition rules. It was only in November 2008, during a visit of Chinese president Hu Jintao to Greece, that the deal with Cosco was finally signed. By this time the economic crisis was in full swing, with Lehmann Brothers having signed for bankruptcy two months earlier, the spread of debt contagion to the European banking system, and rising social antagonism in Greece before austerity and privatization measures. Within two weeks of the signing, the police killing of teenager Alexis Grigoropoulos in

the Exarchia district of Athens sparked the so-called December 2008 insurrection. The port was racked by strikes, which culminated just as the Cosco concession was due to begin in October 2009. By May 2010, Greece had accepted a bailout package that would significantly alter the country's position with respect to the so-called troika of the European Commission (EC), the International Monetary Fund, and European Central Bank – a decision with important implications for the territorial mutations at Piraeus.

In signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the troika, the Greek government agreed to accept a three-year loan of EUR 110 billion in exchange for the implementation of strict austerity measures. Formally these agreements imposed an immunity waiver on Greece, meaning that it could not regulate its sovereign debt and that lenders could approach the state as a private contractor. It is certainly necessary to ask how troika diktats and Greek law interact to shape logistical operations and labour relations in the concession. But there are also other normative orders at hand in the concession, among them OLP administrative powers, EC free zone regulations, Cosco social responsibility protocols, Chinese party-state rules exercised through Cosco's corporate governance, and even the rule-governed code that runs PCT's terminal operating system. The question then becomes one about how the shifting patterns of suspension, violation, enforcement and conflict between these various normative orders affect territorial arrangements at Piraeus.

Our collective research in Athens, led by Nelli Kambouri and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, highlights the many ways in which territory exceeds the national or continental state, while also remaining very much a force of capital whose coordinates manifest in very particular and often localised ways. Think, for example, of the Roma families residing in the Newly Built (dwellings without permits) situated on the hillside along the rail line connecting Piraeus to a freight and intermodal terminal currently under construction in Thriassion. Historically diasporic, the Romani people are frequently stripped of the right to property and denied the many privileges of citizenship. The scrap metal industry has

availed Roma families with a line of income, though even this has come under increasing pressure as rival scrap metal collectors and Golden Dawn thugs mete out violence and threats of housing demolition in an effort to exert economic and social-political control. The combination of European Union transport policies, austerity politics in Greece and investment from Cosco coalesces in the construction of new Ikonio-Thriassion rail line. This yet unused piece of infrastructure traverses an area whose economy in scrap metal prizes industrial cables rich in copper. Such items in turn are eventually sold on commodity markets whose prices are shaped significantly by the strong demand for metals in China.

The logistical worlds of Piraeus are many and varied. Their scalar dimensions stretch around the Athens basin and glide across oceanic trade routes. Current tender arrangements foreshadow the possibility of a complete Cosco takeover of the port, although there are other contenders to assume operations at OLP. The tender process is managed and enforced by the Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund, a Greek government agency created at the behest of the troika to oversee the privatisation of state assets. Yet Piraeus is something more than a case study in privatisation, which after all is a logic affecting many social institutions and utilities, not just ports, worldwide. At stake is rather a politics of logistical operations that hit the ground in ways that create distinct labour regimes and territorial mutations. These operations also mesh into wider global patterns of connection and accumulation that make up capitalism as a whole. Although we have a specific interest in Chinese infrastructural interventions that cut and change these wider formations of global capital, it is really at the juncture of specific logistical operations and this more planetary vista that our analysis proceeds. The tensions and struggles that cross the port of Piraeus and its immediate surrounds are just one sign that this juncture cannot be easily managed or governed by logistical technologies, the increasingly multilevel articulation of political power in Europe, or the mercantilist ethos of Chinese state enterprise.



[logisticalworlds.org/blogs/
territorial-governance-in-
piraeus](https://logisticalworlds.org/blogs/territorial-governance-in-piraeus)

Trojan Horses, Black Holes and the Impossibility of Labour Struggles

Dimitris
Parsanoglou

One of the most significant facets of the current crisis in Greece is linked to the readjustment of labour relations. Apart from austerity measures, all major legislative initiatives, imposed in the framework of bailout loans and rescue packages provided by the Troika (the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank), included major structural reforms. The main aim of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) was nothing less than reducing labour cost in order to attract foreign investments.

In this framework, critics of the programs, stemming either from trade unions or from political forces of the left and right, focus on two interrelated issues: *deregulation* and *balkanization* or *chinafication*. Both of these positions imply a lost paradise; a world of a regulated labour regime – defined explicitly or implicitly in Fordist terms. Such a regime entails stable working relations with all the elements of labour protection that the Fordist regime of accumulation made us believe existed for at least some decades within and beyond the *Trente Glorieuses*. On the other hand, balkanization, africanization or chinafication are usually lined up as synonyms of the country's degradation to an allegedly lower status within the international pecking order. Apart from their strong racist connotations, the common denominator of these signifiers is their allusion to the labour regime that the creditors of the country want to impose upon Greek workers.

Within this swirling down into the abyss where labour rights – in general and in particular – become an obsolete dream, several Trojan horses can and have been found. Creditors and investors, who sometimes coincide, particularly in the case of German capital interested in specific activities such as energy, seem to attempt the consolidation of a bridled regime for the exploitation of any natural resource and technical infrastructure in the country. Along these lines, extended programs of privatisation, establishment of Special Economic Zones, which among others constitute no-man's-lands for labour rights, and specific Foreign Direct Investments are the main tools for a complete invasion of foreign capital into a ravaged country and for a full exploitation of a devastated labour force.

Paradise Lost? Alas! We've Never Been There

One thing is the money. But the economy is not only money. Living labour is not only measurable in financial terms. Surplus value is not only a financially determined appropriation; it is also – and maybe mostly – an aggregate of social relations and arrangements among workers and employers *specifically* developed in a given context. Speaking of context, we have to be rigid with the structural deficiency in defining any context at any given time. To be more clear: not only have the Fordist regime of accumulation and the labour regimes that it implied been an exception in the short history of capitalism, let alone the long history of labour; moreover, even this short period of Fordist normativity cannot be understood as a mere ideal type, on the body of which, even in the most advanced industrialised economies, nicks and scratches might be as visible as the smooth parts.

*Greece has not
been an exception*

Greece has not been an exception to the exceptionality that rules labour regimes around the globe, and more or less within advanced capitalist economies. What now is lamented as a deregulation of labour relations triggers at least two points of doubt. First of all, there seems to be an overwhelming amnesia for precarious forms of labour that existed before the crisis and even during the Fordist parenthesis. Secondly, there seems to be a misunderstanding with regard to the meaning of the word deregulation and the corollary significance attributed to regulation through labour legislation and the inspection of the state.

To begin with the former, not only since the 1980s have diverse forms of precarious work – informal, non-standard, atypical, non-declared, flexible, alternative, irregular, free-lance concealing dependent work, etc. – appeared; more importantly, they have been the most dynamic form of labour, particularly in some sectors, such as services and agriculture, even if they have never been really accepted by any component of the tripartite corporatist system. Identified by scholars as an indisputably strong tendency in all capitalist economies, developed and developing, informalization has been feared by national stakeholders and international organisations, such as OECD and ILO. Already in the mid-1990s, non-standard employment had reached 37 per cent in the UK, 30 per cent in France, almost 40 percent in Italy, more than 40 percent in the

*what is actually
happening in the
Greek laboratory
... is in fact an
overregulation of
any aspect of labour
antagonism*

Netherlands, and almost 50 per cent in Japan and in Australia.

As for the latter, deregulation can hardly describe the shifts that have occurred in labour regimes in the last years of the crisis. The main line of argument sustaining this type of thought, dominant in the left, is that since the 1980s the neoliberal revolution has been dismantling the role of the state and the state itself by relinquishing any control of the labour – and any other – market to the market itself. Nonetheless, what is actually happening in the Greek laboratory over the last four to five years, both at the level of legal production and the role of state, is in fact an *overregulation* of any aspect of labour antagonism. Labour issues, such as the amount of the minimum wage or the validity of collective agreements, previously regulated within social bargaining among social partners, are decided by the government. Even issues ‘self-regulated’ by the labour market have gone under the aegis of the state; and a state which is experiencing a state of exception!

Here we come to the third, but probably not the last, act of the tragedy. Apart from the Paradise, another loss is that of sovereignty, a common point of mourning among those who stand against the politics of austerity, nationalists but also radical leftists. Indicative for the latter are the analyses which follow the Agamben’s ‘state of exception’ paradigm, which insists on the transformations of sovereignty, always meaning the effective loss of sovereignty by the nation state, i.e. by the Greek nation state. A leitmotif in historical analyses and fears of the nationalist right and the communist left, constantly linked to ‘dependence model’ analyses of uneven development where Greece was always placed into the periphery, sovereignty oscillates viciously between a well-dowried bride and a lost daughter, always a radiant object of desire for powerful and greedy foreigners. Spookily, the slogan ‘Greece belongs to Greeks’ so often used by Golden Dawn was launched in the late 1970s by Andreas Papandreou who was at the time openly influenced by Samir Amin and the ‘core-periphery’ analysis.

Les enfants du Pirée

Piraeus, and more specifically the port of Piraeus, is one of the few places that clearly resemble a Purgatory of the crisis. Including the

worlds described above, Piraeus is a hub where the old Paradise and the new Hell collide in a paradigmatic way. Whatever could be thought of as Fordism in terms of organisation, processes and relations can be exemplarily found in the Piraeus Port Authority SA (OLP). At the end of 2012, the OLP was employing 1206 workers, mostly dockers. Most of them are unionized along the lines of the Dockworkers' Union – Port of Piraeus, founding member of the International Dockworkers Council (IDC). Even some years before the concession agreement between OLP, Piraeus Container Terminal (PCT) and Cosco Pacific, signed on 25 November 2008, governments and conservative media were insisting on the 'outrageous privileges of OLP dockworkers'.

This unjustified Paradise was substituted at least in Piers II and III (still under construction). The PCT labour regime, however, could be described for the moment more as a 'black hole' than a clear-cut hell. Little evidence on working conditions and labour relations has become public, and even entrance in PCT's facilities is difficult if not impossible. Recruitment processes, which are mainly monitored by the Diakinisis Port & SIA E.E., subsidiary of ELGEKA S.A., the largest Greek commercial company in the food sector, are kept as a sealed secret. As an employee and unionist in OLP describes: 'we do not have any formal contact with the company, because the company is theoretically subcontractor of Cosco. With the people of Diakinisis who are in the recruitment team, whenever we have gone inside, in any case you confront them, you know who they are, you know names, but there is no discussion on this [recruitment process and labour issues]'. A similar silence exists at PCT:

In the beginning, they were talking; they had the head of Human Resources speak, who was trembling like a leaf every time, because we went with Alavanos, when he was running as a candidate for Head of the Region of Attica, and they gave us this little lady. And there were two guys from Diakinisis who were pretending to be indifferent passersby, but they were following us everywhere. We were in front of the whole recruitment team, and she was trembling like a leaf, she couldn't look us in the eye. She was a 50-55 years

old woman in this condition. Now, they have changed policy, they have stopped talking entirely. For example, they were not responding to IDC or after, they were giving some vague answers. Then the IDC addressed even the headquarters in Antwerp. They were not yet moved to Piraeus, but now the headquarters have moved to Piraeus.

Everyday working conditions remain a black hole, on which the only rays of light are provided by workers who decided to denounce the company after being fired; more precisely, they pressed charges against the subcontractor for whom they worked in the PCT pier, because they were fired when they formed a rudimentary union. The description of working conditions and working arrangements can go under the heading *extreme flexibility*: 'you were receiving an SMS to be at work in 3 hours. Nobody knew in which shift he would work the next day. Me, for nine months, I never worked on the basis of a work schedule. There was no schedule at all'.

These are the two labour worlds that comprise the logistical world under construction in 'one of Europe's top five container-shipping hubs'. It is important to note that labour struggles have occurred and are still occurring only in Paradise; most of them are focusing in preserving the Paradise, in avoiding degradation to the status of the neighbouring Hell. Piraeus port, in its simplicity (one of the most clear FDIs so much persevered by Greek governments) and its complexity (there is undoubtedly a latent war among different actors who from their position and for their interest raise obstacles to the completion of the Piraeus Port-Thriassion Freight Centre project), can open avenues of research where labour regimes, labour struggles, sovereignty and, above all, crisis can be revisited. And they must be revisited, since up to now, explications provided are either deterministic or/and bound hand and foot by facilitating, yet repressive models.



[logisticalworlds.org/blogs/
trojan-horses-black-holes](https://logisticalworlds.org/blogs/trojan-horses-black-holes)

ΕΡΓΟΤΑΞΙΑΚΟΣ
ΧΩΡΟΣ
ΑΠΑΓΟΡΕΥΕΤΑΙ
Η ΕΙΣΟΔΟΣ

ΠΡΟΣΟΧΗ!
ΕΚΤΕΛΟΥΝΤΑΙ ΕΡΓΑ
ΜΕΙΩΣΤΕ ΤΑΧΥΤΗΤΑ

Dockworker Masculinities

Nelli Kambouri

Labour struggles in the Piraeus Port Authority (OLP) are dominated by tactics of controlling the limit between normal hours and overtime as well as occupying and bringing the port to a standstill. The division of labour along gender lines is a direct product of the composition of labour subjectivities that emerged in the docks in the long hours of paid overtime and striking. It may seem that dock work is stereotypically normalised as masculine only because in the past it required strong hands, but most of all it is the ability to work without having family or domestic care responsibilities that determine the gendered division of labour in the Port.

The story of the emergence of these subjectivities is a story of masculine bodies that come together to fight, to endure, to win. These bodies are almost entirely masculine and Greek. There are very few women amongst them aside from those workers who usually occupy marginal administrative positions. And there are no migrants, except for the cleaners employed in the container terminals by sub-contractors of OLP and the Piraeus Container Terminal (PCT) who undertake particular 'feminised', undervalued and underpaid forms of work. Some women from the administration have managed to enter and become active in the labour unions, though typically they perform hybrid and niche roles.

Because feminine and migrant bodies don't appear as an integral part of labour, the history of the dockworkers' movement is commonly told as a linear thread of events emblematic of the victories of Greek men against the Greek state or of Greek Dockworker Unions against Greek governments. This narrative begins with the 1929 dockworkers strike in Piraeus, when violent clashes between the dockworkers and the cavalry took place resulting in several deaths, but also in better salaries, control of working hours and paid overtime. The story spans throughout the next decades with more struggles, more strikes and violent confrontations, but also increasingly peaceful labour union negotiations and tactical alliances with leading political parties that end up with the unions achieving a stable, secure relationship with the state and dockworkers enjoying well-paid, public sector jobs with greater security and improved labour rights.

female bodies were chosen because they already performed the conventional gender roles assigned to them

Small incidents break this linearity, bringing silences and marginalisation to the forefront. In the 2000s, a limited number of female workers were hired by OLP to work in the container section of the port. These workers were selected through a public recruitment procedure that gave bonuses to the long-term unemployed and to parents of more than four children, most of whom were women. Initially, these female bodies were chosen because they already performed the conventional gender roles assigned to them as mothers and wives. Gradually, however, they had to be assigned to other specialisations, mostly to work as security and administrative personnel, where special skills are required (knowledge of legislative procedures, practical and organisational skills).

Although they had to start from the beginning, to learn anew and retrain in order to familiarise themselves with complicated terminology and frequent changes in the legal framework, some of these female workers willingly left the container terminal because they believed that this would give them more flexibility to combine work with care. This movement also meant that they lost the possibility to add to their fixed income the additional overtime that they would otherwise get in the long hours on the docks. Time is the most important variable when it comes to gender hierarchies in the port. Female bodies end up doing subsidiary tasks mostly in the passenger section of the port not only because they are seen as weak, but mostly because they lack (or are considered to lack) the indefinite time to commit to tasks. Neither containerisation nor digitisation could radically alter or re-articulate this condition.

Disruption: Masculinities in Crisis

The 2009 strike that began on the 1st of October disrupted the linear story of labour struggles in the Piraeus port. On that day marking the beginning of the 35 year concession of part of the Piraeus container terminal to Cosco subsidiary, PCT – signed during the previous year – dockworkers gathered once again to halt the mobilities of machines, things and people in the port, as they had done so many times in the past. The port was once again brought into a complete standstill.

While thousands of containers were trapped, others were forced to be redirected to other ports causing conflicts between the OLP unions, logistics companies, track companies and local businessmen.

The unions declared that the concession was ‘an outright sellout of public property’ and feared that the new container terminal operators would bring large-scale layoffs and the influx of cheap Chinese workers and goods. The strike, however, only succeeded in delaying the operationalisation of Cosco plans and signaled the start of a one month period of negotiations between the government and the PCT management. Union hopes that the newly elected Greek government in November 2009 would freeze the implementation of the concession were proven empty.

Media images of the strikers taken during that period portray almost exclusively male dockworkers carrying flags and banners that demand Chinese capital to leave the Port. Visual remnants of this period can still be found in the port as graffiti, posters hanging in the OLP buildings and as archival material in union blogs and websites. The ‘Chinese go Home’ graffiti still welcomes visitors at the entrance of the OLP Pier I as a reminder of the Greek dockworkers resistance to Chinese capitalism. The Cosco concession signifies a complete collapse of the relation between gender, capital and nation.

Yet there is also a process of self-mocking taking place: feminised and racialised images are posted on the walls as ironic commentaries of the broken relation of gender, capital and nation. One of them portrays a Chinese client who is trying to ‘buy’ a prostitute. She makes the following statement ‘Ok sir, I am a whore and I don’t sell myself. I just rent myself. If you wish to buy something, the port is on sale’.

The relationship between feminised (prostitution) masculinised labour (dock work) is reversed as the port enters a process of privatisation. Privatisation is here linked to the threat of the feminisation of labour that is anchored to fears of a loss of sovereignty. Unlike prostitution, the Cosco concession constitutes a ‘sale’ rather than a ‘rent’. The

'I am going to take the Pakistani citizenship to save the 25 euro entrance fee that the Minister of Health imposed in hospitals'

concession establishes above all a threat of a territorial invasion, the construction of a 'territory within a territory'.

The threat of disorder in the regime of gender, capital and nation is also apparent in another self-mocking joke found on the walls of OLP. When an old man is being asked by a friend why he is in a hurry, he replies: 'I am going to take the Pakistani citizenship to save the 25 euro entrance fee that the Minister of Health imposed in hospitals'.

The threat of feminisation and racialisation brings the story of dock worker masculinities to a dead-end. While existing employees in the OLP container terminal are able to retain their civil servant status and some of the labour rights that they had won during the past decades, PCT has no obligation under the concession to do the same for its own new recruits. Moreover, centrally imposed austerity measures have practically stopped the recruitment procedures of new dock workers in OLP, as is the case in the entire public sector in Greece, while older generations of dock workers were given incentives to resign. In effect for an undetermined period of time, OLP is in a position where it cannot recruit new dock workers because of the memorandum stipulations for the shrinking of the Greek public sector.

The implication of this dead-end is that PCT through its contracting and subcontracting companies is the only possible employer of new labour in the port. Newly recruited dockworkers will have to accept work without any of the benefits that were previously attached to dock labour. Although some – particularly the older OLP workers – retain part of their labour rights, most dock workers seem to have no choice but to renegotiate their labour relations on an individual basis without any of the former rights that they may have previously enjoyed.

In the context of the economic crisis, masculine bodies tend to become more fragile than in the past. They are exposed to forms of vulnerability that were previously reserved for feminised and racialised subjects in precarious sectors of the economy, such as those of the cleaners or the sex workers. Regimes of gender, class and nation that

previously privileged and idealised unionised masculine bodies are now rendering them more prone to victimisation.

Towards a Docile Cyborg

The threat of ‘Chinafication’ is often presented not only as the effect of the Cosco concession but also as the imminent condition of the Greek economy. The term refers to the globalisation of labour that often assumes a global precarious ‘unit’ who is genderless, without race and devoid of agency. Unable to refer back to a history of collective labour struggles, this unit pushes all labour to an impasse as it drags wages down and deprives all workers from hard-won labour rights. Being genderless, this unit can spend unlimited hours working. Emptied of race, this unit can perform any kind of unskilled work, without any labour rights – including fixed contracts, hours or paid overtime. In other words the unit of Chinafication appears to be a timeless and universal subject of capitalist development.

Rather than instituting Chinafied labour, however, the concession seems to have brought to the port only a few Chinese executives and high level officials commanding the PCT hierarchy. Labour in the docks continues to be predominantly Greek and male on both sides of the container terminal and migrant workers remain marginalised and invisible. What prevails, instead, is a sharp generational division between older and younger males that separates the OLP and PCT composition of labour. Although the line separating different generations of male dock workers seems difficult to cross, the borders of gender and race seem impossible to transgress.

Instead of challenging the gendered division of labour, the Cosco concession has reconfigured it in an unexpected way. PCT is increasingly able to recruit younger and more precarious bodies; bodies that become docile under the threat of continuous unemployment. Since it was mainly male dominated sectors (like the construction and ship building industries) that have been hit harder by the crisis, the numbers of available male (especially young) precarious labour becomes vast providing Cosco with far more skilled male bodies

*Labour in the docks
continues to be
predominantly
Greek and male*

than the Chinafication thesis assumes. New PCT recruits are neither genderless nor raceless: they are mostly young, robust, healthy, educated, masculine and Greek.

There is evidence to suggest that this new breed of dock workers is not usually recruited from the surrounding areas, such as Perama, where a large pool of unemployed, working class and poor men who used to work in the ship building industry are concentrated. New PCT dockworkers seem to be selected from different locales for their skills and ability to perform tasks in a digitised labour environment. Rather than physical strength, what seems to determine their employability is the capacity to spend unlimited time at work, completely free from care responsibilities. Another marker of employability is their ability to follow the protocols and procedures of PCT, while refraining from collective and communal labour struggles. The coming together of bodies that produced dock work subjectivities in the port becomes impossible. Rather than Chinafied units, the subjectivities that may emerge from these processes may be said to resemble 'docile cyborgs', that is masculine bodies able to transform themselves through their machinic extensions into a labour force devoid of collective labour experiences, rights, demands and even desires.



[logisticalworlds.org/blogs/
dockworker-masculinities](https://logisticalworlds.org/blogs/dockworker-masculinities)

Software, Machines, People and Things as Tangled Species

Pavlos
Hatzopoulos

First Event: The mobile phone of an assistant manager of Cosco subsidiary, Piraeus Container Terminal (PCT), rings while he is guiding two journalists around Piers II and III of Piraeus port. The assistant manager is urgently called by his interlocutor to solve a crisis. A client company is complaining that its reefer container has been damaged and the goods stored inside are endangered. The container has to be emptied of what seem to be bananas, and reloaded to another, unimpaired reefer. The assistant manager gives instructions to his interlocutor over the phone of the exact location within the terminal yard where the operation should take place. There is insufficient space at the current location of the damaged container for it to be stacked at the optimal angle so that its cargo can be emptied without the bananas spilling out into the yard.

Second Event: A regular passenger car is circling around the neighboring container terminal operated by the Piraeus Port Authority (OLP). Its passenger makes a stop below a quay crane where a party of four – an OLP trade unionist and three researchers – are standing. The passenger greets the OLP trade unionist and after a brief colloquial conversation, he gets back to his car and leaves. As the trade unionist confides to the researchers, he is looking for a lost container. The container seems to have moved between the Chinese operated PCT and Greek operated OLP piers, and no one is certain about which side it has been stacked.

These events do not register as usual in related event logs recorded by the Terminal Operating Systems (TOS) employed in the Piraeus Container terminals. These TOS profess to offer an all-encompassing handling of the totality of planning, operational and monitoring work performed in the terminals. CATOS, the TOS platform used by PCT and developed by Korean-based maritime logistics solution company Total Soft Bank Ltd (TSB), is designed to command and control all movement of machinery, things and people within the space of the container terminal. According to the description of its capacities as presented in TSB's website: 'Once you plan berth allocation, human resource allocation, vessel operation and yard operation using CATOS Planning,

you can supervise and control the whole operation in real time using CATOS Operation. CATOS Management then will provide analysed reports on its performance to help you with better planning next time. These three modules are shared as one database, therefore, the data integrity can be surely guaranteed’.

The sheer inability of CATOS (or of employed in the OLP Pier) to register the two events described above does not, however, attest to its failure of omnipotently commanding and controlling the mobility of people, things and machines in the container terminal, but instead signals the presence of more complex regimes of control that manage terminal operations.

Investigating such dynamics, it is important to critically reflect on the notion of protocological systems (Galloway) as synonymous with digital networks in general. Protocological control is only one among various organisational logics that produce the complex software regimes that are in place at the Piraeus terminals.

protocols are not critical to the organising principle of the software-driven promise of continuously boosting productivity in conjunction with the perpetual optimisation of container terminal operations

Protocols are central to the control of all information and data exchanges that organise the real-time operation of the terminal. In the semi-automated environments of the Piraeus container terminals, there are several types of protocols that are instituted to govern data flows within the Terminal Operating System and to ensure interoperability with other software systems. Radio link protocols enable data exchange between handling equipment, human agents and the TOS within the terminal. Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) protocols enable the interfacing of the TOS with information and transactions about containers, routes, quality controls, customs procedures and so on that involve the entire user community of the port. In spite of their centrality in managing these data exchanges, protocols are not critical to the organising principle of the software-driven promise of continuously boosting productivity in conjunction with the perpetual optimisation of container terminal operations. These processes are built into the software architectures of terminal operation systems, and their management relies much more on the control of machinic behaviour rather than on the regulation of data flows within the network as a whole.

The main anxiety haunting optimisation models is machinic idleness.

We have to note, here, that the digital networks in the terminals have different topologies to other types of digital networks using the internet. CATOS is designed, for instance, as a decentralised system with a few central nodes and limited access to authorised users only. These central nodes include a radio server, a database server, a dispatcher server and a communication tower channeling radio messages. Apart from their privileged position within the CATOS network's architecture, these nodes play a critical role in the processes that spur the promise for the continuous reconfiguration of the mobilities of things, machines and people within the terminal. These nodes are where all operation data sets are stored and are then mined for producing performance analytics and subsequent proposals for the optimisation of terminal operations. The main anxiety haunting optimisation models is machinic idleness.

The ongoing research of IT companies involved in the container terminal business is increasingly driven towards data mining. Total Soft Bank, for instance, has been experimenting recently with the utilisation of process mining as an optimisation method offered to terminal operators as an additional service. Process mining, in comparison to other data mining techniques, is focused more on events and timing rather than the clustering of containers by cargo type or operator and is based on the mining and processing of detailed event logs registered by the TOS.

The embeddedness of process mining in terminal operations is not based on a series of flexible hierarchies, but on rigid hierarchies of machines, things and people. In an excerpt from a NAVIS report titled 'The Road to Optimization', such hierarchisation of terminal operations becomes evident: 'For most terminals the key to achieving higher productivity is not to operate equipment faster, but to make the operation more consistent, with fewer delays while equipment is waiting for containers or other equipment'. The minimisation of equipment waiting time is thus prioritised over the acceleration of equipment operation. In this sense, it is equipment that comes first, with (as explained in another optimisation report) quay cranes coming

‘For most terminals the key to achieving higher productivity is not to operate equipment faster, but to make the operation more consistent, with fewer delays while equipment is waiting for containers or other equipment’

before other types of equipment as the most expensive and the least flexible machinery.

Software regimes, along this line of analysis, are based on a combination of flexible and rigid hierarchisations of events, tasks and processes. Through these different logics of order that are in place in Piraeus, human bodies and labour become appendages to the primary task of the control of machinic behaviour.

Returning to the two events mentioned earlier: How do they fit or interact with these software-driven optimisation models? Both events are paradigmatic of human intervention in container terminal operations at the point of contingency scenarios that existing software systems have not as yet integrated into their algorithmic architectures. But can we comprehend these recurring contingencies when software command is disrupted as instances where regimes of control can be eluded?

Perhaps, surprisingly, the position of human labour within optimisation regimes is marginal. Although all human-machine interactions are recorded and analysed by the two TOS employed in Piraeus, the only usage of this data is related to human resource allocation in the terminals. In both Piers, for instance, the salaries of the workers are not tied to performance: in the OLP side, a rigid wage system ties salaries to the stipulations of the Memorandum agreements between the Troika and the Greek government, while even overtime is remunerated on an hourly basis and within a certain salary ceiling; in the PCT side, the more flexible salary system is tied to a complex system of subcontracting where labour is rewarded on a day shift basis and the remuneration of overtime is contingent upon management decisions.

Instead of merely noting this marginality of human labour, it is important, to trace the figurations of labour (Tsing) that are produced within the regimes of control in the Piraeus container terminals. One such figure that emerges is that of the ‘remote operator’. The remote operator is typically a machine operator – of a crane, a truck, a straddle carrier. Her/his role is that of sustaining the spectacle of the

informatised, machine-enabled efficiency of the container terminal. Her/his body thus occupies semi-visible positions that provide a bird's eye view of the container terminal; confined within small cubicles appended to container handling machines, her/his body is fixed within the cubicle in order to ensure that the machine operates in an optimal fashion.

The 'remote operator' becomes the protagonist in a very telling episode of collective rebellion inside the terminal (the only recorded collective rebellion against the labour regime enforced by PCT, based on the prohibition of unionisation and collective bargaining and the use of subcontracted labour). Rebellion is sparked by a machine failure, albeit the failure of an inferior machine. Some PCT workers decide to form a five-member workers' committee to complain about working conditions. These workers, mainly rail mounted gantry crane operators, are prompted to act as the heating and air conditioning system at the operators cabin is broken. The broken machinic supplement becomes the straw that breaks the camel's back since, as they claim, their sensitive job is dependent on 'optimal temperature conditions'.

Although this episode can be inscribed in the framework of traditional labour struggles for better working conditions, it simultaneously exceeds this interpretation. The demand of fixing the heating and air-conditioning in the operator's cabin is simultaneously inscribed in the discourse of the optimisation of terminal performance, where the workers' claim takes optimisation to its limits and demands optimisation everywhere.

Another figure of labour emerging in the Piraeus container terminals is that of the 'gamer-programmer'. The gamer-programmer usually inhabits a desk in the operations department of the terminal operator and s/he is the worker more persistently exposed to the graphical user interface of the TOS. S/he might be involved in vessel planning, or yard planning and so on. These personnel tend to attribute the emergence of contingencies that cannot be handled by the software system to human errors, usually made by remote operators. The remote operator can, however, easily step in to the figure of the game-programmer,

assisted by virtual reality training simulators and intelligent remote control stations.

This brief description of some of the key figurations of labour emerging in the Piraeus container terminals only serves to highlight the limitations of imagining social struggle through a human-centric approach. The opening up of militant research to the entanglement of software, machines, things and people as ‘tangled species’ (Haraway) inhabiting the container terminals can be a productive starting point for a research inquiry focusing on struggles against logistical capital. This research direction will be taken further in the next phase of the Logistical Worlds project study of the site of Piraeus container terminals.



[logisticalworlds.org/blogs/
software-machines-people](https://logisticalworlds.org/blogs/software-machines-people)

The Newly Built and the Aspropyrgos Zone: Illegality, Racism, Infrastructures

Ilias Marmaras

The Newly Built (*Neoktista*), located along the route of the new Ikonion-Thriassio rail line, are chosen as a spatial node for this research. They are a site of open racialised tension between ethnic Greek and Roma inhabitants, who accused of being responsible for the degradation of the town due to their involvement in the drug trade and the scrap industry.

The Newly Built, contrary to their name, are not so 'newly-built'. The area started being populated around the 1960s, when its first settlers moved there to encroach and inhabit a mostly empty land. The settlement belongs administratively to the municipality of Aspropyrgos, which once played host to granaries and lettuce fields. Aspropyrgos began to develop as an industrial zone after the 1960s and as a logistical hub in the late 1990s. Different migration waves, either internal (Greeks from the province) or international (Russian-Pontiacs, Pakistanis and later Albanians and Roma) arrived in the area. Migrants were attracted by the opportunities of labour in the fields and the growing industry, which became scarce since 2008 and the emergence of the financial crisis.

The current composition of the population is ethnically diverse, including families of the Russian-Pontiacs that settled in the area mainly during the 1970s, Albanian migrants that came in the 1990s, several Roma families that came in 2005, forcibly removed from Argos (Peloponnese) to set up their improvised houses (*tsantiria*) anew here. After 2008, and as the crisis became more acute, Greek families from the western suburbs of Athens arrived, motivated by the relatively lower prices of land and houses.

The Newly Built are linked to infrastructures in contingent and fleeting ways. They are constructed and sustained by what was stolen, reused and sold from existing infrastructures. Many of the houses in the settlement are containers or shanty constructions. Sewer metal caps on the streets, street lights and almost any metallic part of the town's infrastructure is removed and melted at the scrap foundries. For the moment, there are, however, no known incidents of thefts of metal from the infrastructure of Trainose, the independent state-owned railway company.

Illegality, Racism, Infrastructures

The debates at the local cafe of the Newly Built are constantly revolving around a matter: Roma, the ‘sub humans’ and ‘thieves’; the ‘criminal’ Russians; the ‘drug dealer’ Albanians. The problem of drug dealing is a major issue. The morphology of the area, its proximity with the North-west suburbia of Athens (Zefyri, Liosia, Menidi) – areas well-known during the last decades as ‘nests’ of different gangs that store and deal drugs – as well as its proximity to the port of Piraeus, makes the town a perfect location for this kind of business.

a special lab provided technical facilities for the construction of special hiding places inside trucks for the transport of the drugs

Warehouses where drugs are manufactured and packed are discovered from time to time in the area. On 19 March 2014, an illegal factory of drug manufacture and storage was raided by police forces. The factory was located in the area between Newly-Built and Aspropyrgos. Inside the factory, a special lab provided technical facilities for the construction of special hiding places inside trucks for the transport of the drugs. Media referred to the accused people in general as a gang of Greeks and foreigners.

In another case, during a police raid on 14 April 2014, 67kg of heroin and a small amount of cocaine were found in a Roma settlement in the same area. The drugs were buried in the ground outside the houses. Police used bulldozers to dig the ground and reveal the special barrels containing the drugs. This time, the police operation was covered by prime-time media. Two Roma were accused, a 19 year-old man and a woman aged 21. However, the same day six Bulgarians were arrested at the Greek-Turkish border, trying to enter the Greek territory in a boat carrying 50kg of heroin. The media attention in this case was basic.

‘A year ago some unknown guys attacked the bank with Kalashnikovs’, says a woman resident of Aspropyrgos. ‘Almost all the police force came to the spot. At the same time in another spot, some others were able to pass – undisturbed by the police – drugs and guns. This kind of thing has happened several times’. And she continues: ‘Another day, a mafia guy ran like hell in a Porsche cabrio. He crashed on a wall. People gathered around him and he, in a dizzy state, pulled a gun.











Police arrived and found the trunk full of cocaine. In a week he was out, free again’.

A businessman who owns a small enterprise in the area tells a story that reveals the vulnerable position of the inhabitants who face crime: ‘In one case, police were after someone who found shelter in my factory. They started shooting. At the beginning, the workers and I just stood frozen. And then we behaved, as there was nothing to see and we continued our work. In another case, I see a truck driver stopping for a cup of coffee. Another car stops aside, someone jumps on the truck, and takes the mobile phones and wallets. I look at the truck driver. He makes me a sign to keep quiet and say nothing’.

Illegal and dangerous usages of space proliferate. On the 13 of February 2014, after a police investigation, chemical waste in liquid form, extremely dangerous for public health, was found stored in the area. In the same investigation, findings included untreated and illegally stored industrial waste. After this incident, The Region of Attica took the initiative to have all Uncontrolled Waste Disposal Sites (UWDS) of the entire Attica Region aerially photographed in detail for the first time.

In another case, on 23 June 2011, police discovered an illegal lab for the treatment of chemicals. The lab was inside a house fenced with high walls. A Greek ethnic and two foreigners were arrested but dozens of barrels and plastic pots containing dangerous chemicals were already dispersed in many spots in the area.

Social Life, Education and Labour in the Newly-Builts and Aspropyrgos

George A. is 44 years old. He is unemployed. He lives in the Newly-Builts with his wife and his four daughters – the youngest is six months old. A 12 square metre container is their house. During the first two years they had no electricity and water. Later, they succeeded in connecting both. But today the electricity is cut because they have an unpaid bill of EUR 2,500. He says that ‘the bill corresponds to a house of 65 square meters!’ During the winter they burn wood to heat the water in order to take a bath.

at the social grocery of Aspropyrgos municipality, more than 400 families seek food-aid at least twice a week

'A pulmonary disease caused by the smoke affected one of my girls', he continues. 'I searched for a job but in vein. I am pissed off hearing: leave us your phone number. The plastic bottle on the fireplace that contained olive oil is empty. The only available solution for food is charity meals. We wait in the queue to get 2-3 portions to feed our children'.

According to the statistics of the Western Attica Region, at the social grocery of Aspropyrgos municipality, more than 400 families seek food-aid at least twice a week. The official number of the unemployed – those who are registered to the lists of OAED (Manpower Employment Organization) – in Thriassio is ten thousand.

In the Newly-Built there is the 6th elementary school that belongs to the Aspropyrgos municipality. According to the head of Primary Education of Western Attica, for the period of 2013-14 the school teaches 175 pupils of diverse origin: 2/5 of the pupils are Roma, 1/5 are Russian-Pontiacs and the rest Greek ethnics. The school has 11 classes and one reception class for pupils with special educational needs. There is also a nursery school, which has two classes for 50 infants. The director says that the school is understaffed of teachers. There are several problems with the school building, unresolved even to this day. The state does not own the area of the building and necessary works cannot be carried out. The parents have requested the relocation of the school from the Ministry of Education because of its current close proximity to an electricity power station.

One teacher from the school says that violent incidents between pupils are frequent. Problems of drug use and prostitution exist in some families: 'In one case, a father was pushing his daughter to prostitution and her brother, who was experiencing this at home, was aggressive at school'. 'Because', he continues, 'the financial status of the parents is very low, children experience violence due to poverty on one side and domestic violence on the other. And violence generates violence'.

Occasionally, Halyps Cement, a subsidiary of Italcementi Group, that is located in the area, provides financial aid to the school.

When they (immigrants) were asking for their salaries, the bosses reported them to the police calling them illegal immigrants.

The Head of Primary Education in Western Attica says: ‘Roma people preserve their own way of living. They are constantly on the road. When they move they take their children with them. Thus, the children cannot follow and complete formal education. They are not willing to learn how to co-exist with other ethnic groups. There are exceptions but the stereotypes remain strong. Roma usually arrive on the periphery of cities. It is easier for them to “conquer” an uncontrolled area and to set up settlements. Lack of control facilitates activities like burning of tires in order to extract metal, thefts (mostly copper) and drug dealing. Roma, although they have Greek citizenship, are among the ethnic groups that suffer from racist attacks. The neo-Nazi political party Golden Dawn establishes its presence in the area using Roma as scapegoats. The conflict relations between Roma and Russian-Pontiac families are clearly of an ethnic-racist nature’.

Another local merchant explains: ‘In the past, industry brought money to the area. The rents paid by the factories were high. As far as the immigrants are concerned, on one hand they were subjects of exploitation and on the other hand they were not welcomed. When they (immigrants) were asking for their salaries, the bosses reported them to the police calling them illegal immigrants. But now in this period of crisis all these “bosses” take the side of Golden Dawn and collaborate with every demagogue that gives them any kind of promise. The ex-owners of small factories of metal products (*aluminades*) that today become members of Golden Dawn were employing immigrants in the past’.

The area of Aspropyrgos is highly industrialized. It has the highest indicative number of increasing population in Greece. Here are located the three most important steel industries in Greece and the Aspropyrgos Refinery (Hellenic Petroleum). In total, 670 industrial units are located in Thriassio, almost 40 per cent of total Greek industry, something that makes the area the most polluted zone in Attika region and probably in Greece.

The only public transport that connects the town of Aspropyrgos with the Newly-Builts is bus line 805. Due to several attacks on the bus

drivers and passengers, the frequency is nowadays low and there are rumours about a definitive abolition of the line. However, there is an intense reaction on the part of the Aspropyrgos municipality against this measure.

The Head of Primary Education of Western Attica explains a specific case of racism, concerning the 12th elementary school of Aspropyrgos located at the district Psari. According to this official, it is a district where many Roma families have their settlements:

The parents of the Greek and Russian-Pontiac pupils demanded the exclusion of Roma pupils. The mayor of Aspropyrgos cooperated with them. Then, two reception classes for the Roma children were constructed by the use of containers. Later, the containers were 'baptised' the 12th elementary school.

A conflict between Primary Education of Western Attica and the municipality began, and one day bulldozers raided the Roma settlement of the area. An NGO, active in the area, collected signatures from the Roma and denounced the incident at the European Court of Human Rights. According to the European law on human rights, no country is allowed to form educational infrastructure that separates ethnicities and minorities. The ECHR issued a conviction to the Greek state, including a fine. Still, the situation remains unresolved. However, the Head of Primary Education adds that 'the problem is more complicated because some Roma families do not wish to disperse their children in different schools, because the parents are afraid that the children will meet Roma from other areas and families and they will probably get married in undesirable marriages'.

At the East side of the Newly-Built, the last natural water source of the Thriassio area is located. The spring is located in Zastani. During the past decades, it has served as an important water supply for shepherds and farmers. Today it is neglected, almost abandoned, and only a few people try to keep it clean and preserve it. But they try.



logisticalworlds.org/blogs/newly-built-aspropyrgos-zone

The New Ikonion-Thriassion Rail Line

Anna Lascari

Anything new carries an aura of a promise and consequently an expectation. The not yet operational New Ikonion – Thriassion rail line does exactly that, as it unfolds from its origin in the heavily guarded Piraeus Container Terminal (PCT) facilities to the under construction Thriassion Freight and Intermodal Center. Scenarios about Cosco’s expansion that may generate employment in the area are futuristic and speculative. Unsubstantiated hopes have risen high amongst residents populating the areas that the rail crosses, expecting benefits for their communities, which will come, depending on their location, either from the development of Piraeus harbor and the PCT terminal, from Cosco or from the rail line itself.



Diesel engine, Thriassion, March 7

The line, although not electrified yet, has been completed and runs from the busy Piraeus container terminals up to an ambitious freight centre that is currently under construction. The line goes underground as it leaves the port and it becomes visible again when it reaches Schisto avenue. From Schisto, the line moves to Thriassion.

Both a café owner at Neoktista (the Newly Built), a small town near Aspropyrgos, and a topographer at Thriassion told us that they saw a container train on 6 March. We didn't see any evidence of cargo when we visited the Thriassion site a day later. But we saw a diesel engine parked next to the new line, which we hadn't seen in our first visit.

New Ikonion

It is said that the Persian emperor Xerxes watched the battle of Salamis (480 BC) from one of the peaks of Mount Egaleo, which is included in the Municipality of Perama. Like Xerxes, the residents of New Ikonion, one of the three settlements of Perama, watch PCT's operations every day down below.

Cosco's motto 'bridging the east with the west' begins in the port of Piraeus. In Perama, the relation between Greece and China takes a new dimension.

The New Ikonion settlement, which unfolds north to the port on a small hill, and its unfinished structures – for example, the church of Saint Paraskevi has been under construction for about 20 years – is visible from the busy and newly constructed Piers II and III. Framed between new quay cranes and super post-panamax quay cranes, New Ikonion appears as an irregularity or a forgotten backdrop standing totally irrelevant to the working norms of PCT.

The lives of the residents of Ikonio seem to be affected by PCT and its daily operations. Stacks of containers, large quay cranes and tracks going in and out of the piers are the predominant view from this rather precarious settlement. The mechanical sounds coming from the piers contribute to the unavoidable presence of PCT in the area. Besides the common complaint that New Ikonion lost its view to the sea, most residents agree that Piraeus Port Authority (OLP) were there before they settled in the area in the 1970s.

Since 2009, the shipyards lost more than 70% of their business leaving most of New Ikonion residents unemployed.



New Ikonion Settlement and the church of Saint Paraskevi



PCT, Pier II. View from New Ikonion

They could have hired more people from this area we were told, 'but they are not here to help us'. Most people of New Ikonion used to work at the ship repair docks to the west of Pier III. Since 2009, the shipyards lost more than 70% of their business leaving most of New Ikonion residents unemployed.

After a small but intense argument about the percentage of poverty in the area, the clients of a café agreed that about 80% of the New Ikonion population is below the poverty line and they are dependent on food distribution delivered at the courtyard of Saint Paraskevi.

Contrary to state and media ebullience for the Cosco investment in the Greek economy, few residents seem to be trapped in the wagon of progress, hoping for benefits for their community. Mostly though, poverty, unemployment, state and municipal indifference have crashed their hopes.

New Ikonion residents still speculate about the motives behind Cosco's expansion of the ship-repair yards and development of the Thriassion Freight and Intermodal Center. They also wonder about social investments (parks, shopping centres, restaurants) in the land separating the PCT piers from the New Ikonion settlement, on which stand several abandoned and inactive petrol tanks.

PCT

The heavily guarded Cosco facilities and operations are clearly visible with a naked eye from New Ikonion. Pier II and Pier III, which is operable only on its eastern side for now, are working in near full capacity. PCT platform trucks moving containers from new quay cranes are running close to berthing places leaving the large middle area empty. There is no sign of anyone walking around the piers.

Pointing at trucks going in and out the PCT gate, a former worker at the shipyard, unemployed since 2009, maintains that the ship to truck business would be reduced dramatically when the transport of cargo via railway will be operable. 'All these trucks', he said, 'will disappear one day soon'.

The ship to rail intermodal transport route seems to gain an increasing significance with European Union transport policy towards greener transport and the EU support for the further development of the ship to rail transport of cargo (currently standing at 20-25% of the overall volume of cargo transport in Europe.)

Schisto

Leaving from OLP and PCT Piers the New Ikonio-Thriassion line goes underground. The tunnel runs under a soccer field and it becomes visible again as it reaches Schisto avenue. We were told that about one and a half kilometers into the tunnel there are two fully computerised control rooms, one opposite to the other. To accommodate traffic, the line branches inside the tunnel and becomes a single line again at Schisto. Unemployed since 2009, a local resident told us that he followed the line and walked into the tunnel looking for work. 'If I see



*PCT, Pier II. View from New Ikonion.
Inactive old petrol tanks*

people working somewhere, I go and ask for work’, he said. ‘When I walked into the tunnel I hadn’t had any idea what kind of work the people going in the tunnel were doing. They told me they were installing control equipment for the train line’.

From Schisto, the line, clean and polished, runs its lonely route to Thriassion.

One can climb on the tracks in several spots from Schisto Avenue. Security is lacking and twice we encountered a horse which had entered the rail tracks. In most areas there is a light wire fence along the edges of the rail, possibly to prevent animals from getting on the tracks. But the line remains vulnerable in its journey.

The Newly Builds

Most Roma families in the Newly Builds (*Neoktista*) – about a 1000



Thriassion, April 11



Thriassion, construction of bathrooms

people – used to be involved in the scrap metal ‘industry’ and scrap metal facilities exist along the New Ikonion-Threassion line. The scrap metal industry favors copper, found in electric cables, for its higher price in the scrap metal market. According to an OSE official, OSE suffers a great deal from stolen electric cables, metal pipelines and tracks, with the tracks being the less favorable item. Do the Roma or those who are involved in the scrap business present a real danger to the New Ikonion-Threassion line? Approached from auxiliary roads, individuals or organised groups can reach the line and damage it for reasons other than scrap collection.

Local youths have already interacted with the new infrastructures, with graffiti artists putting their tags on the walls of small tunnels on the route of the line. Anything can happen inside the tunnels.

Thriassion

In Triassion, new railway light signals welcome the arrival of the line. Here, as in most areas on the route of the line, it feels as though you are entering a huge set design for a Western movie.

Thriassion, a vast ambitious freight centre, currently exists in architectural drawings only. In 2013, OSE signed a contract with Aktor Alt-Alstom Consortium with an overall deadline for completion of the project in 2016. An Aktor electrical engineer told us in one of our visits that there is a modification on the plans of the original contract. The modification has to do with the realisation of the construction of infrastructures to facilitate freight's logistical needs. Now, the consortium will construct fewer buildings, 'primarily offices and public bathrooms', the same source told us. The modification may also be related to arguments against the emphasis that has been placed by the responsible actors (the state and some state-owned companies) on developing infrastructures rather than attracting the cargo that will potentially move through them.

In Aspropyrgos and Thriassion there are plenty of vacant warehouses that could accommodate cargo if required.

If PCT can fire up expectations for development, construction of community facilities and jobs to New Ikonion residents, the brand New Ikonion-Thriassion train line does exactly the same. As it crosses the Attica landscape, the line carries the optimism of growth implied by the state and the media and the illusion of change, even when all it does is make itself visible as infrastructure without an economy. Forgotten settlements imagine themselves within this cartography of promised growth. If such growth does ever eventuate, it will carry along another aura: the aura of technological development that may affect the lives of the communities it transverses in ways different to what their residents currently imagine.

The train is coming, the train is coming!



[logisticalworlds.org/
blogs/new-ikonion](http://logisticalworlds.org/blogs/new-ikonion)

Containment

Ursula Huws

*A baby sardine
Saw his first submarine
And cried as he looked through the peephole
'Oh come, come, come', said the sardine's mum
It's only a tin full of people
Spike Milligan, 1968.*

The container is simultaneously both one of the most concrete examples of the economic logic that enables global capitalism to function and one of the most potent metaphors for the social life of the population whose choices are shaped by this economic logic.

Pete Seeger's 1963 hit 'Little Boxes' gave the hippy generation of the later 1960s a symbol of conformity against which they could define themselves: 'and the people, in the houses; they all went to the university and they all got put in boxes and they all came out the same'. But surely the central, heart-breaking, observation to be drawn from that imagery of 'little boxes, all the same' that are 'all made out of ticky-tacky' is not so much that their inhabitants are all the same but that their diversity is constrained by structures that severely repress or distort any external expression of it. The complex irregularity of life, its pains and pleasures, hopes and triumphs are all jammed, like sardines, into contorting containers, physical or organisational such as repetitive labour processes, timetables and mass housing. The boxes may be the same but the people inside them are not, and therein lies the tragedy and hope of their lives.

Spike Milligan's 'tin full of people' could be a commuter train, an airplane, an apartment block, a factory, a warehouse, a supermarket or an office workstation. The more standardised the unit, the greater the possibility for connecting or interchanging it with others, for replicating it, and for reconfiguring its arrangements in time or space. Global value chains depend crucially on modularisation. The use of standard weights and measures is as old as trade itself and as intimately connected with human labour processes – the standard size of a brick, a bottle or a barrel dictating the hand-span or muscle-power required

to shift it just as the price – whether of goods or labour – is related to the number of units. Standardisation is essential to the mathematics of commerce and embedded in all its functioning.

The dimensions and ratings of the intermodal freight container were standardised in January 1968 and its identification markings seven months later. This universally agreed size – which suits containers for transport on a single truck or rail flat car – is such that they cannot be lifted by human effort alone. The labour of handling them is therefore dictated by the demands of the technology. The view of the container port in Piraeus is dominated by geometric stacks of containers and the silhouettes of cranes and their eerie vertical and horizontal movements through three dimensional space. The crane operators in their cabins are barely visible except on their way to or from their work stations. The containers are uniform and (like the residential little boxes Seeger sang about) distinguished from each other – at least to the human eye – only by their colours and corporate markings.

The diversity and irregular shapes of their contents cannot be guessed and are removed from any direct contact with the workers who guide their passage from factory to warehouse to dock to ship, across seas and countries, to other docks and factories and warehouses and along ever more roads, to the opening, the moment of being seen, and a transitory existence (in the case of inanimate objects) to human use before the onset of entropy, and yet another journey as undifferentiated content, this time to a landfill site.

The regularity and conformity of the standardised containers is visually very similar to the representations of the compartments of a hard disk, as portrayed in the programs used to defragment them. Here too, differently coloured rectangles are tidily reorganised, with no clue to the nature of their digital content – poems, pictures, love letters or invoices. Who knows?

The programs used by the port workers in Piraeus for working out the optimal sequence for unloading the containers from a ship and stacking

*Global value chains
depend crucially on
modularisation.*

them on a pier are strikingly similar. Seemingly abstract coloured rectangles are manipulated on a screen to dictate real realignments in time and space. These workers do have some hypothetical knowledge of the contents of the containers, encoded on their systems. So their judgements about how and where to stack them are informed by the relative weight of the contents, the container's next destination and whether or not the contents are deemed hazardous. But increasingly this information remains in the domain of supposition. Cosco does not allow national or international inspectors to enter their part of the port to check the containers physically. For all anyone knows, any given container might contain nuclear waste, illegal drugs, weapons or a frightened group of undocumented migrants.

In this Legoland where standardised containers are redistributed using standardised symbols manipulated by workers with increasingly standardised labour processes, whether in the port office, on the pier, on board the ship or on the vehicle taking them to their next destination, workers' individuality of the workers still finds some expression. Beside the desk of one remote operator working at the Piraeus Port Authority (OLP) terminal, a child's drawing of a container ship sits alongside a crucifix and a quotation from Michael Korda, attesting to the worker's active spiritual, intellectual and emotional life.

But to be alive is not necessarily to be well. Whilst solidarities undoubtedly exist, the bleak divisions imposed by the modular logic of global trade are hard to cross. Containers are carried smoothly from ship to shore but the ship workers employed by the Chinese operated Piraeus Container Terminal (PCT) are kept firmly behind fences and do not interact with the Greek dock workers. Fences also keep residents, public sector workers and inspectors out of the private piers of PCT. Like an alimentary canal through which indigestible pieces of food pass without any direct contact with surrounding tissues, this piece of corporate corridor has minimal contact with the surrounding territory beyond sucking in labour power and exhaling pollution, and a very small sweat of wages, into the Piraeus economy.

Human beings produce the hidden contents of these containers and human beings consume them, but the labour involved in both production and consumption processes is increasingly shaped by imperatives of the global commodity chains that link them: imperatives of standardisation and containment. Yet these imperatives are contradictory. The hard disk sometimes needs to defragment, and sometimes (in moments of crisis) an attempt is even made to undefragment. These dialectics of fragmentation, defragmentation and reconnection offer, perhaps, our best hope for the future.



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Metal Scrappers: Connectivity and Flexibility of the Marginalised

Carolyn Phillip

Pier II at Piraeus is a site where various transnational transportation networks coalesce. Leased to China's Cosco, the global hub receives, reloads, transfers and consigns goods stored in containers. Pier II is mainly used for the trans-shipment of containers that – immediately and without taxation – leave the harbour after being reloaded on a subsequent ship. Less than 20 percent of the containers that leave the Pier are loaded on rail or heavy-goods vehicles to continue their journey further into Europe.

Cosco operates within a flexible network that exists in geographically remote but highly connected zones of exception, largely detached from the surrounding societal and economical infrastructure. The former dockworkers of the Ikónio neighbourhood overlooking the pier, the sailors at Piraeus as well as the industrial zone of Pérama west of Pier II are seemingly untouched by Cosco's logistical networks.

According to the narratives of the area's residents – small scale tradesmen and local workers employed in ship-repair and the metal industry – the traditional labour and industrial networks have long been globalised but at the same time have maintained strong local links with small scale businesses. The traditional economic and labour networks surrounding Cosco's Pier II are a locally tightly knitted fabric of deeply interdependent entities, hierarchically structured from large industrial factories with large workforces, small and middle scale enterprises to semi-legally self-employed individuals. If one actor ceases to exist, the whole system is affected. Their mutual local dependencies seem disadvantageous in comparison with the geographic flexibility of global players.

The deterioration of metal industry located at the Western end of Asprópirgos illustrates this phenomenon. It hosted two major Greek steel factories: Ellinikí Chalivourugía and Chalivourgikí. Once a significant industry, the steel sector has been seriously hit by economic decline and austerity, resulting in the closure of one factory in early 2014. The industry produces a certain amount of steel from used metal instead of more expensive 'freshly mined' materials. Southeast of the

the narratives of the collectors tell stories of flexibility, border crossings and global connections

plants, an industrial zone accommodating the ship repair and building industries sheds huge amounts of scrap metal to be recycled. The *mandres*, the metal collecting yards, gather and assort these materials. When the ship repair business declined in the course of recession, it provided less and less cheap material for the *mandres* and the steal factories. Simultaneously the demands for steel in the domestic building sector dropped while in the export sector in neighbouring Turkey emerged as a competitor. These tendencies combined with spreading unemployment intensify an occupational phenomenon: the collecting of metal scrap in the streets. Although they represent the end of the chain in the metal industry, the individuals engaging in this line of employment share some common characteristics with the global corporate actors of Pier II.

The scrap collectors work in the neighbourhoods surrounding the Cosco pier. They tour the area with small vehicles or supermarket carriers. Container trucks thunder by as they gather valuable material for recycling. They pick up all kinds of used metal: old cables and wires, rusty bedsteads and colourful oil canisters. Unlike the operators of global trade residing in the isolated Cosco offices down at the harbour, the scrap collectors are visible and present on the streets but seemingly unconnected to global networks.

However the narratives of the collectors tell stories of flexibility, border crossings and global connections: the refugee from Asia Minor with experience sailing the seas in a fishing trawler, the Pakistani who has journeyed to the European periphery aiming to reach his brother in Germany, the Albanian Roma who has constantly migrated before settling in Athens. The collectors have various backgrounds of African, Asian, Greek or Roma descent. They came to Greece in different periods, by different routes, by different means. Many of the local Greek collectors have a history of a variety of professional occupations, of travelling and migration.

A Greek collector from Keratsíni explains:

I am educated, I was a mechanic. All my life I was sailing the world. India, China, Australia, Africa, South America. I have seen everything. I am 74 and have a small pension, but it is not enough.

The image of dirtiness inherent to the places where the scrappers find the valuables – the trash bins – subsequently becomes associated with their work or even the person of the collectors themselves. This image is not always adopted by the scrappers though. Many are concerned about state control and reluctant to speak to strangers. They discuss their occupation as a matter of fact or even as a healthy exercise.

I don't consider it as work. I am 83 years old. (Yes, I know. Many people say I don't look like it.) I do it for my legs, when I sit too much, they are getting old.

Mostly self-employed, the collectors enjoy a certain kind of independence. Like other freelancers, they individually decide about their working hours. Yet they also have to adapt to the functioning and the schedules of the connected industries.

You are asking why there is nobody on the street now? I don't have fixed hours. I don't have a boss. I work whenever I want. Morning, afternoon or evening. In the afternoon it is better because in the morning they collect the rubbish from the city.

Their tales of global connections, leisure activity and independence are tinged by marginality, and exist on and transgress the borders of legality. While the authorities stretch competition rules in favour of the influential Cosco, they increase pressure on small businesses like the scrap industry via strict control. According to the research of documentary film-maker Christos Karapelis, the old generation of scrappers wished for state control to support the individual collectors against the arbitrary price politics of the scrap yards. Now however

Migrant scrappers emerged on the streets in the course of Greece becoming the main entrance for migrants and refugees to Europe.

they have become subjects of illegal practices themselves. A new law established at the beginning of 2014 demands numerous permits in order to pursue metal collecting. A lot of scrappers lack legal papers of various kinds. Consequently the amount of metal brought to the *mandres* has dropped by half since January. One *mandras* owner remarked:

Now with the new law we need to check the VAT number, address and driving license of the scrappers. To check if they are working legally and if the material is stolen or not. We play the role of the police.

When a collector without the legal requirements sells metal more than three times a year he or she is considered to be running an illegal business or bypassing the tax system. Considering the profits of large corporations bypassing the tax office as a result of corruption or 'promotion of economy', the persecution of scrappers seems rather disproportionate. Refugees who are improvising to substitute the de-facto non-existent asylum system or Greek pensioners affected by the government's austerity cuts are forced into illegality.

As the economic situation of the majority population is constantly declining, the composition of scrappers is shifting. Certain groups are abandoning the trade while others are entering the business. Traditionally the scrap trade was dominated by Greek Roma. In two *mandres*, the workers stated:

There used to be more Greeks, especially Roma. But they couldn't keep their cars because of the tighter controls and the taxes. They didn't have the license to sell the scrap (only for selling carpets). So the Roma are gone from the business.

Migrant scrappers emerged on the streets in the course of Greece becoming the main entrance for migrants and refugees to Europe. When the state fortified its borders as a requirement of the Dublin treaties, the country turned into their inescapable station of detention.

Many of the newcomers became scrap seekers. With the increasing economic deterioration, the pressure mounts on them to become again globalised subjects 'on the move'. While most are excluded legally from global strands of migration and transportation, they find loopholes to continue migrating, looking for a better life elsewhere.

I worked in construction before I started collecting metal. In construction there is no work anymore. I'm 17 years in Greece now. Nearly all Pakistanis have left because of crisis. My brother is in Germany. Now for 5 years I collect metal, that's the job left.

But metal collecting also becomes increasingly laborious as less metal is discarded by private households while the number of scrappers is increasing. The economic decline of the area drives long time residents to become scrap seekers.

The foreigners collect during the day, the Pakistani, the Bangladeshi, the Bulgarian. The Greeks are ashamed. They collect rather in the evening.

The migrant scrappers are mainly seen as population in transit, although some of them have become 'new locals' mainly focussing on working in their own neighbourhood and considering themselves as residents. When asking an Albanian Roma where – after he had been living and working with his six-person family in Kateríni, Lárissa, Lamía, Domokós and other places – if he intended to move on because of the difficult economical situation, he replied:

Why? Should I go back to Albania? I have no house there. My family is here, so I am here.

Many of the collected statements reflect phenomena existent also in the majority society. While many Greeks consider long-term residents with non-Greek origin as foreigners, the subjects themselves, like the above testimony, regard themselves as locals. Mainstream discourses

about the ‘increasing migrant population as a problem’ also exist among the scrappers.

There is a lot of antagonism between Greek and foreigners that do the same job. The foreign nationals take our jobs.

The construction of Greek identity has shifted with the newcomers in business. Formerly disassociated groups now include themselves in a broader definition of ‘being Greek’. A Roma scrapper – who by mainstream Greek discourse is not included in the definition of being a ‘real’ Greek – refers to Pakistani and Bangladesh collectors as ‘foreigners’ but sees herself as Greek:

There should be only Greeks like us looking for metal ... The Pakistanis now are coming and taking our jobs.

Labour relations in contemporary Greece are becoming increasingly precarious but the scrappers are a group the end of the economic chain that has always been the embodiment of precariousness. Their narratives speak of flexibility, mobility and assimilation to extreme changes as normality.

Before this I sold water, carried luggage, cleaned shoes. I didn't study very much because I could not pay. But when I worked 15 years in the refinery (Ellikina Dilistiria), 12 hours a day, I became assistant to an engineer. But then there were some problems and I had to change ... I worked on fishing trawlers, sailed the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean, South Africa.



[logisticalworlds.org/
blogs/metal-scrappers](http://logisticalworlds.org/blogs/metal-scrappers)

Being exposed to economic crisis, competition for scarce resources and governmental repression once again, the scrappers will have to find ways to adapt or change their trade routes, their occupation or their location. Having histories and experiences of flexibility and precarity, they might at least have an advantage here as their lives always been characterised by constant change and movement.

Concepts

Infrastructure Υποδομές



Infrastructure is matter that moves matter (Larkin). At once mundane and monumental, infrastructure enables capital's expansion. Infrastructure is more than groundwork. Infrastructure cuts across corridors, fibres and code with imperial force. Yet infrastructure is vulnerable. Striking against infrastructure requires not just sabotage but constitutive acts of organization. Infrastructure permeates technical and algorithmic divisions to become both concrete and soft. Infrastructure is not boring. Infrastructure aestheticizes rationality.

Οι υποδομές είναι ύλη που κινεί ύλη (Larkin). Συνάμα τετριμμένες και μνημειώδεις, οι υποδομές επιτρέπουν την εξάπλωση του κεφαλαίου. Οι υποδομές είναι κάτι περισσότερο από θεμέλια. Οι υποδομές διασχίζουν διαδρόμους, ίνες και κώδικα με αυτοκρατορική δύναμη. Ωστόσο, οι υποδομές είναι ευάλωτες. Η απεργία κατά των υποδομών απαιτεί όχι μόνο σαμποτάζ, αλλά και καταστατικές πράξεις οργάνωσης. Οι υποδομές διαπερνούν τεχνικές και αλγοριθμικές διαιρέσεις για να γίνουν τόσο συμπαγείς όσο και μαλακές. Οι υποδομές δεν είναι βαρετές. Οι υποδομές αισθητικοποιούν την ορθολογικότητα.

Labour Εργασία



Labour is not simply work. Labour is the name of subjectivity under the domination of state and capital. Labour lives and is animated by energy, unrest and movement. Labour inheres in bodily and cognitive relations. Labour is subject to processes of abstraction that seek to reduce it to temporal measure. The tension between abstract and living labour is constitutive of political struggle. This tension crosses bodies and souls. It also shapes global space. Logistical labour emerges at the interface between infrastructure, software protocols and design. Labour time is real-time.

Η εργασία δεν είναι απλά δουλειά. Η εργασία είναι το όνομα της υποκειμενικότητας που τελεί υπό την κυριαρχία του κράτους και του κεφαλαίου. Η εργασία ζει και βρίθκει ενέργειας, αναταραχής και κίνησης. Η εργασία ενυπάρχει σε σωματικές και γνωσιακές σχέσεις. Η εργασία υπόκειται σε διαδικασίες αφαίρεσης που επιδιώκουν να την καταστήσουν χρονικά μετρήσιμη. Η ένταση μεταξύ αφηρημένης και ζωντανής εργασίας είναι το συστατικό στοιχείο της πολιτικής πάλης. Αυτή η ένταση διαπερνά σώματα και ψυχές. Διαμορφώνει, επίσης, τον παγκόσμιο χώρο. Η εργασία γύρω από τα logistics αναδύεται στο σημείο διεπαφής μεταξύ υποδομών, πρωτοκόλλων λογισμικού και σχεδιασμού. Ο χρόνος της εργασίας είναι σε πραγματικό χρόνο.

Logistics



Logistics is a programmer's game. Logistical methods of organization apply to production and patterns of mobility. The global logistics industries are key to understanding emerging configurations of the social as well as their implied technologies and labour regimes. The primary task of logistics is to manage the movement of people and things in the interests of communication, transport and economic efficiencies. Central to logistics is the question and scope of governance, both of labouring subjects and the treatment of objects or things. Logistics arranges objects in space and time according to the demands of capital. Logistics puts anything, anywhere at anytime. Logistics is magic (Lyster).

Τα logistics είναι το παιχνίδι ενός προγραμματιστή. Οι logistical μέθοδοι οργάνωσης εφαρμόζονται στην παραγωγή και στα μοτίβα κινητικότητας. Η παγκόσμια βιομηχανία logistics είναι το κλειδί για την κατανόηση των αναδυόμενων διαμορφώσεων του κοινωνικού, καθώς και των τεχνολογιών και των καθεστώτων εργασίας που τις συνοδεύουν. Το κύριο καθήκον των logistics είναι να διαχειριστούν την κινητικότητα ανθρώπων και πραγμάτων προς το συμφέρον της επικοινωνίας, των μεταφορών και της οικονομικής αποδοτικότητας. Κεντρικό στα logistics είναι το ζήτημα και η οπτική της

διακυβέρνησης, τόσο των εργασιακών υποκειμενικοτήτων όσο και της αντιμετώπισης των αντικειμένων ή των πραγμάτων. Τα logistics οργανώνουν τα αντικείμενα στο χώρο και το χρόνο, σύμφωνα με τις απαιτήσεις του κεφαλαίου. Τα logistics τοποθετούν οτιδήποτε, οπουδήποτε και ανά πάσα στιγμή. Τα logistics είναι μαγεία (Lyster).

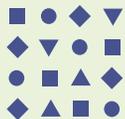
Standards Πρότυπα



Standards are everywhere. Standards assume politics. Standards assume decision. More precisely, standards assume a political economy through which power is asserted. Their capacity to interlock with one another and adapt to change over time and circumstance are key to their power as non-state agents of governance. Standards underpin capital accumulation and political hegemony from the micro level of algorithmic apparatuses to the macro level of global infrastructures. Standards are crucial to the interoperability of protocols across software platforms and infrastructural components. The labour of creating standards never ends. Standards conflict as much as they match. The best thing about standards is that there are so many to choose from (Tanenbaum).

Τα πρότυπα βρίσκονται παντού. Τα πρότυπα προεικάζουν πολιτικές. Τα πρότυπα προεικάζουν λήψη αποφάσεων. Ακριβέστερα, τα πρότυπα προεικάζουν μια πολιτική οικονομία μέσω της οποίας ασκείται η εξουσία. Η ικανότητά τους να συμπλέκονται μεταξύ τους και να προσαρμόζονται σε αλλαγές στο χρόνο και τη συγκυρία είναι το κλειδί για την εξουσία τους ως μη κρατικοί φορείς διακυβέρνησης. Τα πρότυπα υποστυλώνουν τη συσσώρευση κεφαλαίου και την πολιτική ηγεμονία από το μικρο-επίπεδο των αλγοριθμικών μηχανισμών ως το μακρο-επίπεδο των παγκόσμιων υποδομών. Τα πρότυπα είναι ζωτικής σημασίας για τη διαλειτουργικότητα των πρωτοκόλλων ανάμεσα σε πλατφόρμες λογισμικού και συστατικά των υποδομών. Η εργασία δημιουργίας προτύπων δεν τελειώνει ποτέ. Τα πρότυπα συγκρούονται όσο και ταιριάζουν. Το καλύτερο πράγμα σε σχέση με τα πρότυπα είναι ότι υπάρχουν τόσα πολλά από τα οποία μπορούμε να επιλέξουμε (Tanenbaum).

Protocols Πρωτόκολλα



Protocols govern systems. Their technics and rules of organization shape the extraction and divorce of value from those engaged in logistical modes of production. The capacity for standards to hold traction depends on protocological control. But there are also standards for protocols. Protocols are the immaterial groundwork of material infrastructures. Protocols enable soft forms of power. Protocols are the invisible servants to logistical operations that mobilize people, finance and things. By reducing the world to rules, we ruin our imagination to overthrow regimes – technological, social, economic, political. Protocols demand conformity. Protocols give no truck to contingency.

Τα πρωτόκολλα διέπουν συστήματα. Οι τεχνικές και οι κανόνες οργάνωσής τους διαμορφώνουν την απόσπαση και το διαζύγιο της αξίας από εκείνους που εμπλέκονται στους logistical τρόπους παραγωγής. Η ελκτική ικανότητα των προτύπων εξαρτάται από τον πρωτοκολλογικό έλεγχο. Υπάρχουν, όμως, πρότυπα και για τα πρωτόκολλα. Τα πρωτόκολλα είναι τα άυλα θεμέλια των υλικών υποδομών. Τα πρωτόκολλα ενεργοποιούν ήπιες μορφές εξουσίας. Τα πρωτόκολλα είναι οι αόρατοι υπηρέτες των λειτουργιών logistics που κινητοποιούν τους ανθρώπους, την χρηματοοικονομία και τα πράγματα. Με το να ανάγουμε τον κόσμο σε κανόνες, καταστρέφουμε τη φαντασία μας για να ανατρέψουμε καθεστώτα – τεχνολογικά, κοινωνικά, οικονομικά, πολιτικά. Τα πρωτόκολλα απαιτούν συμμόρφωση. Τα πρωτόκολλα δεν αφήνουν χώρο στην ενδεχομενικότητα.

Parameters Παράμετροι



Parametric rules govern time, space and the mobility of people, finance and things. Parameters set limits that define and delimit ranges of activity and action. Logistics organizes labour as an abstraction within parameters governed by software. In computer science a parameter is a function, command or 'formal argument' that establishes the reference for an 'actual argument', which then executes the command of the parameter. A change in parameters alters the operation of a program, model or simulation. Logistical operations are specific to the values that define the functions of parameters. Yet such operations are accompanied and perhaps preconditioned by the possibility of breaking and remaking rules. Therein lies the politics of parameters.

Οι παραμετρικοί κανόνες κυβερνούν τον χρόνο, το χώρο και την κινητικότητα των ατόμων, την χρηματοοικονομία και τα πράγματα. Οι παράμετροι θέτουν όρια που καθορίζουν και οριοθετούν το εύρος δραστηριοτήτων και δράσεων. Τα logistics οργανώνουν την εργασία ως μια αφαίρεση σύμφωνα με παραμέτρους που διέπονται από το λογισμικό. Στην επιστήμη των υπολογιστών μια παράμετρος είναι μια συνάρτηση, μία εντολή ή μία «τυπική διαδικασία» που εδραιώνει το σημείο αναφοράς για μία «πραγματική διαδικασία», η οποία στη συνέχεια εκτελεί την εντολή της παραμέτρου. Μια αλλαγή στις παραμέτρους μεταβάλλει τη λειτουργία ενός προγράμματος, ενός μοντέλου ή μίας προσομοίωσης. Οι λειτουργίες logistics σχετίζονται με τις συγκεκριμένες μεταβλητές που ορίζουν τις συναρτήσεις των παραμέτρων. Ωστόσο, οι λειτουργίες αυτές συνοδεύονται και ίσως προαπαιτούνται από την δυνατότητα παραβίασης και επανακατασκευής των κανόνων. Εκεί βρίσκεται η πολιτική των παραμέτρων.

Algorithms Αλγόριθμοι



Algorithms arrange infrastructural power. Algorithms play a vital role in calculating the material properties and organizational capacities of infrastructure. Algorithms build computational systems of governance that hold a variable relation between the mathematical execution of code and external environments defined through arrangements of data. Algorithms instruct things to do things to things. Algorithms create patterns. Condensing code and sociality, algorithms generate movement through data processing, scraping and forecasting. Algorithms drive financial markets, operate transport and communications infrastructure, connect global supply chains and allocate resources. Algorithms evaluate labour productivity and capital gains in real-time. Algorithms displace experts and transform worlds.

Οι αλγόριθμοι οργανώνουν την εξουσία των υποδομών. Οι αλγόριθμοι διαδραματίζουν ζωτικό ρόλο στον υπολογισμό των υλικών ιδιοτήτων και των οργανωτικών δυνατοτήτων των υποδομών. Οι αλγόριθμοι χτίζουν υπολογιστικά συστήματα διακυβέρνησης που διατηρούν μια μεταβλητή σχέση μεταξύ της μαθηματικής εκτέλεσης του κώδικα και του εξωτερικού περιβάλλοντος, το οποίο ορίζεται μέσω διευθέτησης των δεδομένων. Οι αλγόριθμοι καθοδηγούν πράγματα να κάνουν πράγματα σε άλλα πράγματα. Οι αλγόριθμοι δημιουργούν πρότυπα. Συμπυκνώνοντας κώδικα και κοινωνικότητα, οι αλγόριθμοι παράγουν κίνηση μέσω της επεξεργασίας δεδομένων, του scraping και της πρόγνωσης. Οι αλγόριθμοι οδηγούν τις χρηματοπιστωτικές αγορές, θέτουν σε λειτουργία τις υποδομές μεταφορών και επικοινωνιών, συνδέουν τις παγκόσμιες αλυσίδες εφοδιασμού και κατανέουν πόρους. Οι αλγόριθμοι εκτιμούν την παραγωγικότητα της εργασίας και την υπεραξία του κεφαλαίου σε πραγματικό χρόνο. Οι αλγόριθμοι εκτοπίζουν εμπειρογνώμονες και μεταμορφώνουν κόσμους.

Chains Αλυσίδες



Chains supply. Chains connect. Chains bind. Chains link multiple units into single linear systems. Chains produce value. Chains join enterprises through relations of subcontracting and outsourcing. Chains proliferate difference within structures of economic power. Chains balance robustness against agility. Chains stimulate standardization. Chains grow gaps between rich and poor. Chains generate varied forms of hierarchy and exclusion. Chains connect diverse firms and labour forces (Tsing). Chains mobilize the political fantasy of hitting at the weakest link. Workers of the world have nothing to lose but their chains.

Οι αλυσίδες εφοδιάζουν. Οι αλυσίδες συνδέουν. Οι αλυσίδες δεσμεύουν. Οι αλυσίδες συνδέουν πολλαπλές μονάδες σε ενιαία γραμμικά συστήματα. Οι αλυσίδες παράγουν αξία. Οι αλυσίδες εντάσσονται στην επιχειρηματικότητα μέσα από σχέσεις υπεργολαβίας και εξωτερικής ανάθεσης. Οι αλυσίδες πολλαπλασιάζουν την διαφορά εντός των δομών της οικονομικής εξουσίας. Οι αλυσίδες εξισορροπούν τη στιβαρότητα με την ευκινησία. Οι αλυσίδες τονώνουν την τυποποίηση. Οι αλυσίδες μεγαλώνουν το χάσμα μεταξύ πλουσίων και φτωχών. Οι αλυσίδες δημιουργούν ποικίλες μορφές ιεραρχίας και αποκλεισμού. Οι αλυσίδες συνδέουν διαφοροποιημένες επιχειρήσεις με τις δυνάμεις της εργασίας (Tsing). Οι αλυσίδες κινητοποιούν την πολιτική φαντασία για το χτύπημα στον πιο αδύναμο κρίκο. Οι εργάτες του κόσμου δεν έχουν τίποτα να χάσουν εκτός από τις αλυσίδες τους.

Zones Ζώνες



Zones are territories for organizing logistical operations. With historical precedents in free ports, pirate enclaves and colonial concessions, zones have multiplied their presence in the contemporary global landscape. Zones are instruments of market rationality subject to irrational proliferation. Zones generate undeclared forms of polity (Easterling). Authoritarian capitalism conjures zones as spaces where anything can happen, liberal democracy presents them as hideaways for its constitutive

coercions. Neither sites of transition nor development, zones are spaces where dispossession meets exploitation. Zones are not fields for your ethnography. Keep out and don't ask questions!

Οι ζώνες είναι εδάφη για την οργάνωση των δραστηριοτήτων logistics. Με ιστορικά προηγούμενα σε ελεύθερα λιμάνια, πειρατικούς θύλακες και αποικιακές παραχωρήσεις, οι ζώνες έχουν πολλαπλασιάσει την παρουσία τους στο σύγχρονο παγκόσμιο τοπίο. Οι ζώνες είναι όργανα της ορθολογικότητας της αγοράς που υπόκειται σε έναν παράλογο πολλαπλασιασμό. Οι ζώνες παράγουν αδήλωτες μορφές πολιτεύματος (Easterling). Ο αυταρχικός καπιταλισμός πλάθει ζώνες ως χώρους όπου τα πάντα μπορούν να συμβούν, η φιλελεύθερη δημοκρατία τις παρουσιάζει ως κρησφύγετα για τους συστατικούς εξαναγκασμούς της. Ούτε τόποι μετάβασης, ούτε ανάπτυξης, οι ζώνες είναι χώροι όπου η απαλλοτρίωση συναντά την εκμετάλλευση. Οι ζώνες δεν αποτελούν πεδία της εθνογραφικής σας έρευνας. Μείνετε έξω και μην κάνετε ερωτήσεις!

Corridors Διάδρομοι



Corridors connect zones. Corridors bundle infrastructure along axes to narrow space and accelerate time. Corridors establish channels or pipelines of movement that intensify logistical organization and its accompanying tensions and conflicts. Stable regulations, well-developed communications, efficient transport systems and uniform software implementations are the basic requirements for establishing corridors. Yet corridors cross borders and negotiate variegated conditions of capitalism. Corridors string governance across gaps of knowledge and topography. Power vacates the office. Decisions are made in the corridor.

Οι διάδρομοι συνδέουν ζώνες. Οι διάδρομοι συνενώνουν υποδομές κατά μήκος αξόνων προκειμένου να στενέψουν τον χώρο και να επιταχύνουν το χρόνο. Οι διάδρομοι δημιουργούν δίαυλους ή αγωγούς κίνησης που εντείνουν την logistical οργάνωση και τις εντάσεις και συγκρούσεις

που τη συνοδεύουν. Σταθερά ρυθμιστικά πλαίσια, καλά ανεπτυγμένες επικοινωνίες, αποτελεσματικά συστήματα μεταφορών και ομοιόμορφες εφαρμογές λογισμικού είναι οι βασικές προϋποθέσεις για τη δημιουργία διαδρόμων. Ωστόσο, οι διάδρομοι διασχίζουν σύνορα και διαπραγματεύονται ποικίλες συνθήκες του καπιταλισμού. Οι διάδρομοι πλέκουν τη διακυβέρνηση διαμέσου κενών της γνώσης και της τοπογραφίας. Η εξουσία εγκαταλείπει το γραφείο. Οι αποφάσεις λαμβάνονται στο διάδρομο.

Optimization Βελτιστοποίηση



All optimization is partial. Optimization modifies design to improve efficiency and performance. Optimization is the art and science of the tweak. Optimization drives labour hard. Optimization is clean. Optimization marshals mathematics to the ends of capital. Optimization generates externalities of time and dirt (Douglas). Linear or quadratic, unconstrained or bound, optimization embraces variables but shuns deviation. Optimization transcends heuristics. Optimization divides the world into levels or orders, selecting or finding possibilities within hierarchies. Optimization is not utopian. Optimization settles for the sufficiently good.

Η βελτιστοποίηση είναι πάντοτε μερική. Η βελτιστοποίηση τροποποιεί το σχεδιασμό για τη βελτίωση της αποτελεσματικότητας και των επιδόσεων. Η βελτιστοποίηση είναι η τέχνη και η επιστήμη των μικρών μετατροπών (tweak). Η βελτιστοποίηση εξουσιάζει με σκληρό τρόπο την εργασία. Η βελτιστοποίηση είναι καθαρή. Η βελτιστοποίηση διευθετεί τα μαθηματικά για τους σκοπούς του κεφαλαίου. Η βελτιστοποίηση παράγει εξωτερικότητες χρόνου και βρωμιάς (Douglas). Γραμμική ή τετραγωνική, χωρίς εξαναγκασμούς ή δεμένη, η βελτιστοποίηση αγκαλιάζει τις μεταβλητές, αλλά αποφεύγει την απόκλιση. Η βελτιστοποίηση υπερβαίνει την ευρετική μέθοδο. Η βελτιστοποίηση χωρίζει τον κόσμο σε επίπεδα ή τάξεις, κάνοντας επιλογές ή βρίσκοντας δυνατότητες στο πλαίσιο ιεραρχιών. Η βελτιστοποίηση δεν είναι ουτοπική. Η βελτιστοποίηση συμβιβάζεται με το αρκούντως καλό.

Contingency Ενδεχομενικότητα



Contingency is the nightmare of logistics. Contingency is more than unpredictability or randomness. Contingency registers the force of material practices and events that disrupt logistical operations. Labour strikes, software glitches, inventory blowouts, traffic gridlocks – all interrupt the desire for a smooth world that animates logistical interventions and fantasies. Contingency produces variation and movement that prompt the invention of standards and protocols. Contingency demands ‘fault tolerance’ to make logistical worlds seamless. Once a normative state has been achieved, disruption and renewal can happen again. Contingency makes logistics.

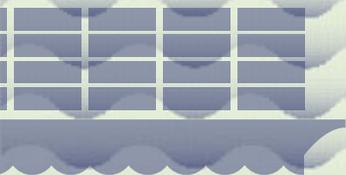
Η ενδεχομενικότητα είναι ο εφιάλτης των logistics. Η ενδεχομενικότητα είναι κάτι περισσότερο από το απρόβλεπτο ή το τυχαίο. Η ενδεχομενικότητα καταγράφει τη δύναμη των υλικών πρακτικών και τα γεγονότα που διαταράσσουν τις δραστηριότητες των logistics. Εργατικές απεργίες, δυσλειτουργίες λογισμικού, συστήματα απογραφής που κλατάρουν, κυκλοφοριακά μποτιλιαρίσματα διακόπτουν την επιθυμία για έναν λείο κόσμο που ζωντανεύει τις παρεμβάσεις και τις φαντασιώσεις των logistics. Η ενδεχομενικότητα παράγει παρέκκλιση και κίνηση που ωθούν στην επινόηση προτύπων και πρωτοκόλλων. Η ενδεχομενικότητα απαιτεί την «ανοχή λαθών» προκειμένου να παραμείνουν οι κόσμοι των logistics αδιάλειπτοι. Μόλις επιτευχθεί μία κανονιστική κατάσταση, η αναστάτωση και η ανανέωση μπορεί να συμβούν και πάλι. Η ενδεχομενικότητα παράγει logistics.

Colophon

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**Infrastructure makes
worlds. Software controls
movement. Labour
escapes measure.**

Logistics is the operative
dimension of capital.
It produces circulatory
regimes of containment.
Piraeus, Valparaíso,
Kolkata: no longer cities,
these are zones, corridors
and concessions that
make logistical worlds.

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