NARRATIVES OF CRISIS: REPRESENTING CAPITALIST REALISM PART II: THE GREEK CRISIS

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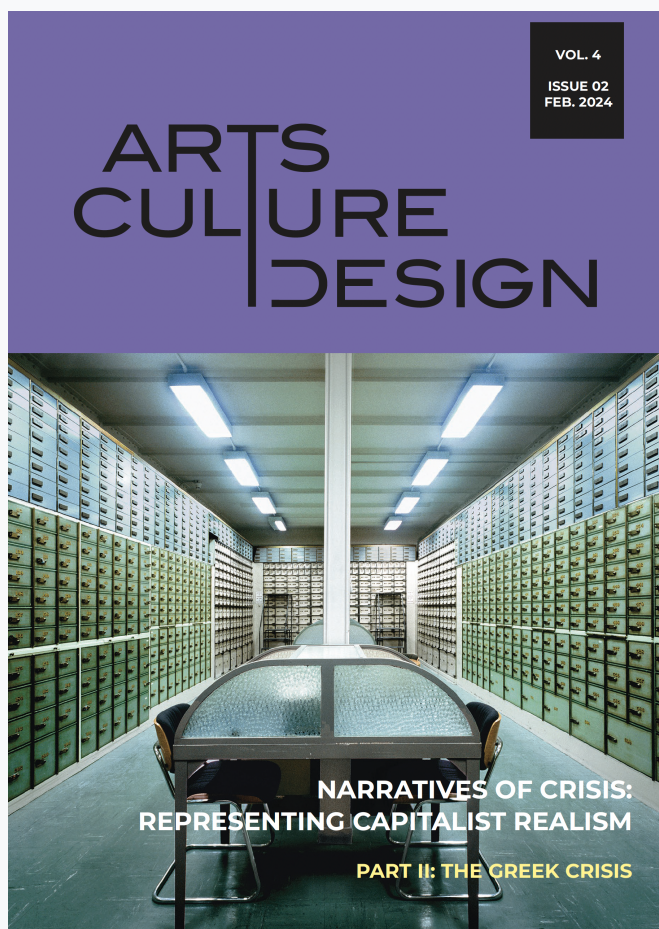
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NARRATIVES OF CRISIS: REPRESENTING CAPITALIST REALISM

PART II: THE GREEK CRISIS

RE-DRAWING INTERIOR SPACE

Yanna Barkouta

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RE-DRAWING INTERIOR SPACE: HABITATION PRACTICE AS ARCHITECTURAL METHOD

Ioanna Barkouta
University of West Attica

ABSTRACT

The subject of this article entails an endeavor to spatially interpret a synchronicity labeled as a "crisis," or more fittingly, as a "permacrisis." Initially, the concept of crisis will be explored in conjunction with the hermeneutics of "normalcy." Subsequently, the article will scrutinize the spatial manifestations of the crisis, placing a particular emphasis on habitation and housing dynamics. To this end, our focus will shift to Greece, specifically the city of Athens, where the crisis intertwines with habitation practices. Consequently, the article will juxtapose a theoretical exposition of the current crisis depiction with a narrative case study centered on habitation and accommodation. From the theoretical analysis of the crisis and its associated emergency housing needs to the narrative depiction of spatial transformations within an apartment in Athens, the lingering question pertains to the feasibility of generalizing from abstract versions to tangible realities, from the familiar to the everyday.

IOANNA BARKOUTA is a PhD architect practicing in Greece. She is Visiting Professor at the Department of Interior Architecture, University of West Attica (2023, 2022, 2021, 2020) and she was Visiting Professor at the Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly (2021, 2020, 2019, 2017, 2016, 2015). She studied Architecture (Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly), had a Ma Studies Diploma (School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens) and completed her PhD (cum laude) from the Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly. The title of her thesis is "Habitation in a state of emergency: The Athens Paradigm in Times of Crisis". She has published two books in Greek/English on architecture and architectural theory: "Habitation in crisis. The example of Athens, spatial upsets and reasons of the subjects from domestic scale to city scale" (2019) and "Practices of Urban Solidarity" (2016) with Zissis Kotionis. Projects and papers of hers have been published in Greece and abroad. She is an architect whose work spans across various scales, from housing projects to urban design. She is also involved in workshops and lectures (2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2013). Selected exhibitions: Biennale of Venice (architecture) 2016, Athens Biennale of Architecture (2015).

This article is an attempt to spatially interpret a synchronicity marked as an "emergency" (Agamben 2005; Athanasiou 2018), a "crisis" (Gentili 2021; Roitman 2014), or better, as "crises". In our contemporary era, "normalcy" intersects with significant crises—financial, economic, health, energy, ecological, climate, refugee and migration crises, up to recent geopolitical upheavals—thus complicating everyday life. This complexity places societies in a state of social, institutional, and political instability to such an extent that successive crises are now perceived as enduring or perpetual, a condition also referred to as a permacrisis[1].

Initially, the concept of crisis will be explored in relation to the hermeneutics of "normalcy". Subsequently, the spatial manifestations of the crisis will be studied with an emphasis on habitation and housing. In this direction, our focus will shift to Greece, particularly the city of Athens, where the crisis intersects with habitation practices. This entails that the theoretical presentation of a current crisis depiction will be succeeded by a narrative – a case study – centered on the fields of habitation and accommodation. The specific narrative adopts a research methodology coming from the qualitative approaches, aiming to bypass quantitative calculations of "how much" while emphasising the manner – the "how" - in which habitation practices are organised amidst crises. The narrative is structured around the description and recounting of a "critical habitation" revealing spatial snapshots from the interior space of the apartment (Barkouta 2019). If we consider a residence not as something "finalised, completed from the beginning" as Aris Konstadinidis mentions, but as something that "is being remolded through living; similarly to an 'expandable' life-tool", the particular research approach aims to redesign a dwelling from "within", from the interior space, placing emphasis on what is deemed "truly existing and necessary" (Konstadinidis 1972: 34). From the theoretical analysis of the crisis and emergency housing needs to the narrative description of spatial transformations within an apartment in Athens, the fundamental question remains: Can any generalizations be drawn from abstract representations to tangible realities, from the familiar to the everyday?

1. FROM THE "CRISIS" TO THE HOUSING "CRISIS"

In his genealogical study of the notion of "crisis", Reinhart Kosselleck traces its etymology back to the Greek infinitive "krinein[2]" (Koselleck 2006). According to the author, the historisation of how

the concept has been applied is necessary since its polysemy and wide distribution complicates its clarity and precision (Koselleck 2006: 397). Initially, the term "crisis" held distinct meanings associated with law, medicine and theology. In the field of theology for instance, the use of the word was connected to Christian theology and in particular "the moment of judgment" and the end of the world. Already since the Middle Ages, the application of the term in the field of medicine implied "the critical condition of the 'ailing body'" that suggested "a turning point in time dictating the crisis (in the sense of a decision - oversight) (Athanasiou 2018: 45). The timeliness of imminence and emergency constituted the temporal imprint of liminality as entailed by the notion of crisis within a historical context. At short, all initial meanings of "crisis" were in relation to dual choices like "right or wrong, salvation or condemnation, life or death" (Koselleck 2006: 358).

The shifting of the term "crisis" from its original etymologies to the prevalence of the current economic meanings is, according to Carlo Bordoni, due to our tendency of stripping off any event from the realm of individualism (Bauman & Bordoni 2014). Since the word "crisis" is considered a neutral term containing positive conceptualisations as well (a change, a decision and a turning point), its depersonalised dimension effectively relegates any undesirable event to a realm of ambiguity. To answer the same question, the anthropologist Janet Roitman in her book "Anti-crisis" (Roitman 2014) analyses the use of the notion of "crisis" in order to describe social phenomena by focusing on the "descent" of the word. More specifically, Roitman is looking for the root of the crisis in the words and terms indicating arrays of related concepts and by doing so, she is shedding light to connotations of the word: "liquidity, asset bubble, credit, interest rates, deregulation, corruption […] political and economic policy, ideology, neoliberalism, economic theory, […] financialisation, risk management, regulatory capture, and the falling rate of profit" (Roitman 2014: 42-43).

Geographer David Harvey in his book "The Enigma of Capital" (Harvey 2010b) studies crises by presenting the disparities between Marxist theory and conventional economic theory within the capitalist system. According to the author, "conventional" economists support a "tendency to equilibrium", whereas the crisis is understood only as the outcome of external factors and the system retains the tendency to restore balance. On the contrary, according to Marxist theory, balance is an unusual condition. Harvey, on his summary on crisis interpretation considers the

latter to be intrinsic to the system, believing that each crisis won't be resolved but will rather be transformed and translocated in time (Harvey 2010a). David Harvey's interpretation highlights the spatial dimension of the crisis, placing it in a central position. "The crisis today is more than ever a crisis of the city" (Harvey 2012). The management of economic surplus and the re-production of capital take on a spatial dimension through the procedures of urbanisation, through "predatory practices³" and land-grabs (Harvey 2012; Hadjimichalis 2018).

The correlation between a crisis and the spatial transformations in the city constitutes an extensive field of research (Ponzini 2016; Dalakoglou 2013). Architects, urban planners and geographers affirm that the role, definition and characteristics of space are being transformed when under crisis. According to Laura Burkhalter and Manuel Castells a crisis does not only take economic dimensions, but also social, ecological, spiritual and spatial ones, placing hence both space and city at the epicentre of their approach (Burkhalter & Castells 2009). Many scholars, by placing the interrelationship between crisis and space at the epicentre of their research, define the first as part of a neoliberal shift. According to Brenner, Peck and Theodore (2010), neoliberalism is not a homogeneous socioeconomic and ideological structure, but rather "a variegated form of regulatory restructuring that produces geo-institutional differentiation across places, territories, and scales". The association of space neoliberalisation with austerity policies has opened up a new field of research, relevant to austerity urbanism, which considers the latter a mutation of neoliberal urbanism (Peck 2012). If austerity can be considered a form of redistributive policy – in spatial and social terms (Peck 2012: 651) – then space can be reconceptualised as an exposure field of this "unequal" and "asymmetric" practice (Peck 2012; Peck 2015).

If we direct our attention to Greece, research on housing would not be possible without addressing the swift and violent changes instigated by the economic crisis of 2009-2018, that which all facets of daily life. In this context, the structural "reforms" mandated during the crisis, neoliberal policies, the process of impoverishment and the appropriation of public lands have underscored the significance of space in the implementation of austerity measures. As a result, housing exclusion was extended creating thus new housing issues, inequalities in the urban space were intensified and the building stock was degraded (Vaiou 2014; Barkouta 2019). The aggravation of housing issues ensuing from the intensive austerity programmes and the parallel withdrawal of state social policies for the provision of shelters

defined a new reality, that further destabilized the right to housing as we knew it (Vaiou 2014; Hadjimichalis 2018; Barkouta 2016). From the inability to repay extreme housing debts to forced relocations and co-habitations or increased quotas of energy deprivation, the vulnerability of households facing eviction or the displacement brought upon the short-term rental of properties – all constitute the multiple aspects of housing issues placing habitation at the centre (Barkouta 2019). During this adverse period, the constraints of the pandemic led to abrupt transformations of the housing landscape, such as the widespread adoption of telework and increased time spent indoors. And lately, the current energy crisis seems to be emerging as a new threat, amplifying the rhetoric of the 'endless crisis" (Agamben 2005, Athanasiou 2018) and further straining the already overburdened domain of housing.

The housing crisis and subsequent precariousness are now being considered as part of a self-evident and extended discussion (Barkouta 2019; stegasi360/eteron) while current studies and reports⁴ outline an emergency situation shaped by the rhythm, intensity and extent of the phenomenon. Although debates on housing are growing in public discourse and available information suggests how difficult it is to gain access to housing autonomy, spatial and material transformations taking place in the housing field are however not broadly reflected upon. Which means, that while systematic recordings answer about "how many" may be affected on the level of housing, contrivances and inventive practices of the everyday life are left in obscurity. Such a tactic will be presented in the next paragraphs giving an emphasis on the interior space of a residence, as well as subsequent practices of habitation.

A silent practice of survival as well as reduction of the exorbitant housing costs is the return to the parental home. Young, but also older adults, are forced to re-inhabit the house of their parents after a period of autonomous living⁵. Based on a young woman's, Eleni's, narrative, a research that focuses on the housing crisis becomes embodied and is transferred to the apartment's interior. Focus is shifting toward the specific and the narrative is being spatialised on multiple levels, moving from the house/ residence to its interior, in order to arrive at the level of an object, the sofa. Through Eleni's recounting, the residence regains its ambiguous character as a space of peace, but also domination, while the interior space is being re-drawn through the everyday habitation practices of its dwellers.

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2. INTERIOR SPACE AND HABITATION PRACTICES

Eleni, aged 42, resides in the living room of her parents' apartment located in Ghyzi, Athens. For the past six years, she, along with her eight-year-old daughter, has been accommodated by her seventy-year-old parents in a rented 72-square-meter flat. Their living space comprises two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen, a bathroom, and two balconies (Fig.1). The front balcony overlooks the main road and connects the smaller bedroom to the living room, while the rear balcony links the larger bedroom to the kitchen, providing a view of the internal uncovered area of the building.

The seven-storey apartment block was constructed at the beginning of the '60s. The ground-floor pilotis is being used as a parking space, while the rest of the floors are residential, most of them rented. The apartment block represents the architectural typology of the area. The neighbourhood is characterised by a high plot ratio and is comprised by multi-floor buildings with a pilotis. The area is being designated as residential and presents with a high degree of traffic congestion.

Initially, the interlocutor inhabited the apartment only with her daughter. "It was the house where I came to stay alone with my daughter, without her dad, and I did everything myself [...] it was my house. And we had very good time here [...] It was my own creation, I mean, from the colors of the walls to every little detail. How can I say this? There were no indications left from the past. It was just a house that resembled a blank sheet of paper." The normality implied is deflected when the interlocutor is "forced[6]" to move in after an extended period of unemployment. Following her occupation as a secretary for the last two decades, her employment after 2009 gets destabilised. As she characteristically mentions "there were some years where we did well. Ehm, this was interrupted violently[7], mainly due the events from the outside". It is in this house where her parents move into and stay until Eleni and her daughter return as guests.

"We all liked this house and it was convenient – the child's school was nearby etc. We had this idea, that they should come here [...] hoping that when I manage to find work, I could return here and they would go back to my grandmother's house. That was the plan." Eleni draws up a management plan in order to deal with "the events from the outside", which include forced relocation, but also the hope that the timeliness of abrupt changes and rapid transformation refer to "exceptional" and temporal events.

And in the end, of course, this is what happened and we decided to rent the grandmother's house so that we get some extra help, ehm... and we stayed all together... here.

The story of her journey from her own house to the sofa of her parental house is spatially imprinted as a zig-zag, whereas the moves between places and the changes in working environment are captured as shifts within the city. The interlocutor and her daughter have changed five houses within the period of five years. They try to minimise the cost of accommodation by moving to a smaller house, later moving to a self-owned house and finally returning to the parental house in order to eliminate subsistence expenses. Eleni recounts the "forced" relocations:

In the beginning I was left without work, there was a gradual repetition, where this was happening all the time. [...] In 2009, while I had lost my permanent job, we came to this house because costs were the same and the space roomier [...] I found work, not in my subject [...] then I was left without work again, I found another job, the company went bankrupt. [...] There was a house belonging to the family, my grandmother's [...] which was small, could not fit us all, but we were forced to go there. [...] In 2010 I found another job, which again didn't last very long and then... a decrease in my salary by 300 euros [...] where I couldn't even maintain this house [...] the company bankrupted again and once more I was left unemployed. I could understand that things were getting worse, there was nothing I could do, there was nothing I could do. This is how we ended up living with my parents again, even at this moment, and with myself being unemployed.

Space allocation and the spatiotemporal co-articulation of daily functions were decided before the move, forming an informal protocol of cohabitation which described the restructuring of the apartment. "We had created a plan, a full plan, we had discussed it a lot. We had agreed on the basics. How I would like things to be, and this is how it happened, there were no objections on behalf of my parents. The little one got the same bedroom as before, this is her own bedroom, my parents kept the bedroom I used to sleep in when we [two] stayed here and I now sleep in the living-room. I had thought about it a lot, we discussed it and this was how things were done after all".

Apart from the management and arrangement of spaces and their functions, the transition to the parental house became a field for internal

Figure 1: Floor plan of Eleni's apartment (Ioanna Barkouta)

processes and reflections related to the wishes, needs and habits of all persons involved in the cohabitation.

> We took the decision under a lot of pressure. [...] I knew it wasn't possible and we were trying to delay this, my parents didn't want to, because they understood it was going to be difficult for them and us too [...] they were trying to delay this and maybe... they didn't want to face reality. I was under a lot of stress and I could see it wasn't going to change soon, so I was pushing them. They didn't want to believe in this, but they were forced to. [...] They, too, were convinced that for the time being it is the best [choice].

Eleni's return to the parental house kindles reveries about family life. The nostalgic mood resolves around a sense of safety and loyalty, revealing "memories of protection[8]". As memory and imagination remain "indissoluble", they create a safety belt, with many "critical" events taking place "without" it, while an idealised family daily life safely unfolds "within" it. Prior to the (re)habitation of a residence in materialistic terms, its habitation takes place on a dreaming level first. Gaston Bachelard mentions: "To inhabit your parental home in dreams is more than doing so in memory, as it means you live in the lost house the way you dreamt within it" (Bachelard 1994: 33). The interlocutor recounts the first days of being hosted: "At the beginning there was this joy that we returned back to the house that was once mine. Also, during the first period there was an enthusiasm, that our lives were once more interwoven [with the parents]... it was nice, there was grace and beauty [...] I was very happy and I felt like this for a very long time" .

The romantic approach of a "dreamlike" cohabitation in a "neutral" or "protected" space does not take into account social arrangements of space and their unequal, competitive and conflicting character (see in this regard Lefebvre 1996). Space as a product of social relationships is being regulated by explicit norms and implicit, potentially competitive arrangements. Beyond the explicit agreement of the hosting "protocol" that defines the cohabitation lay-out, users are exposed to the undefined uses and encounters that may lead to inclusion or exclusion. "However, at this moment, it weighs heavily on me that this isn't my home. Now that it's been some time... I think it's the economic problems and not just the cohabitation, the economic problems and other kinds of problems, the personal ones, that feel heavy. I mean, if we assumed that there was a relative financial comfort, I wouldn't take it so hard, now I do take it hard because we cannot move freely, we are dependent, financially dependent. [...] It's not my home anymore, it is the house of my parents, it feels somehow weird. [...] It's a compromise for everyone".

3. THE SOFA

Although the apartment's layout remained the same since the interlocutor first moved in, the allocation of uses and everyday functions changed. Regarding this change, the interlocutor mentions: "Look, this is a three-room apartment, it is supposed to be made for a family, it has two bedrooms, so this is not the issue – the issue is that I have no personal space". Eleni sleeps on the living-room sofa. "There was no space for me elsewhere anyway, I had to sleep here". The polysemy of spaces is projected unto the furniture of the residence, ascribing them a wider range of utilitarian and symbolic value. The meaning of each object is supported by a series of associations in relation to its use and functionality[9]. According to Herman Herzberger,
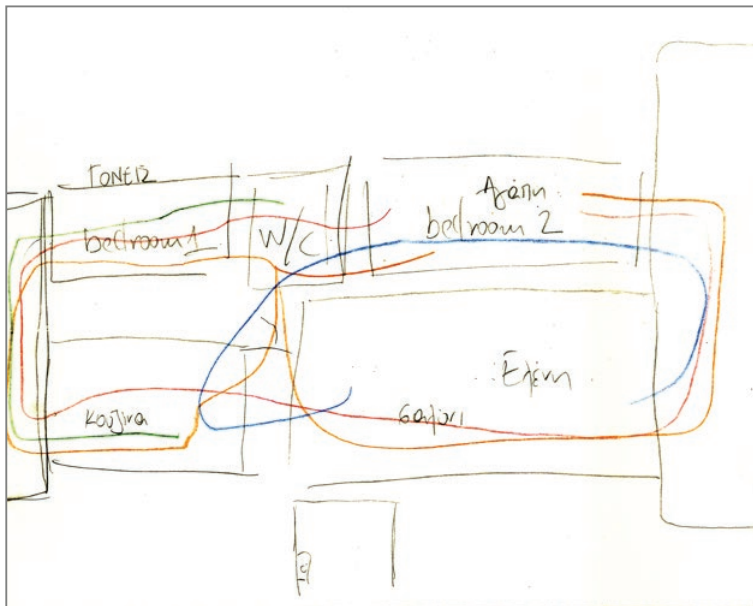
Figure 2: A movement diagram of the daily routes of Eleni, her daughter and parents

the "absolute functionality" of an object renders it "inflexible", allowing limited space for interpretations of functionality to the user (Herzberger 1991: 469). In the case of Eleni's accommodation, the "sofa" is supported by associations that ascribe on it the additional meaning of a "bed". The connotations however between these two objects are conflicting. The daily use of the sofa as bed – hence of the living-room as bedroom – creates a temporary sense of privacy, with the space signifying some times associations of openness and other times of closeness. This ambiguity of the room opens the space up to a process of negotiations.

> I sleep [on the sofa], I take away the covers when I get up. The notion of a bed does not exist during the day. It turns into an in situ bed and then it's taken away. Usually you wouldn't see it, because either I have already woken up or gotten up at that time. I don't let it look like a bed.

 Walter Benjamin connects life within space – and especially an interior (space) – to a search for traces. "To live is to leave traces. It is them that are being emphasised within an interior" (Benjamin 1986: 155-156). The absence of traces in the case of the additional occupations of space may allow appropriate uses of the living-room to remain within the visibility field, while concealing any other traces emerging from practices relevant to its use as a bedroom. The appearance of traces stemming from this latter type of accommodation would make the transposition of its practice within the visibility sphere possible, allowing both awareness and possibly disputes to emerge.

> Usually blankets are here, this is an indication. But when someone comes to the house or if

they bother me, I will take them away. Now, in daily life, that is when we run like crazy to get everything done, I often leave them where they are. It's a blanket, a sheet and a pillow. If someone comes, I will certainly store them away, I will take them inside. So that we have somewhere to sit down to, right?

The differentiated use of the "bedroom" reinterprets the consolidated importance of the living-room, which retains, however, its material imprint as is.

The living-room can also turn to a bedroom, as long as this remains an "in situ" procedure. The practice of this momentary habitation regulates both space and time within the residence. During the night, the space turns into a bedroom, hence to a personal space, while during the day the room is once more returned to its use as a living-room for the family and this adjustment divides the residence space into two separate zones of day and night. This time sequence, nevertheless, gets short-circuited when uses get mixed, rendering the residence space to a field of negotiations and contests between established identities – albeit temporarily.

> It so happened that we were sleeping with the little one [...] here in the living-room and the bell rang and a friend of my parents had come for a visit, with her passing through and waking us up and it was inconvenient for everyone, for her too of course and also us... They sat in the kitchen and I suppose their visit was shorter than they would have liked. We stayed in bed

.
The ambiguity of spaces reveals their hierarchical evaluation when uses overlap with each other. The presence of the two women on the

apartment sofa cancels the option of using the particular space as a living-room. However, at the same time the guests' movement takes away the option of using this space as a personal one. Some times a snap-shot depicting stasis, other times a snap-shot depicting movement, this forced assembly of uses reveals the association of architectural characteristics of spaces in terms of visibility, supervision and sound communication. .

4. THE DOOR

The interlocutor appropriates apartment areas by temporarily occupying any "residual" spaces in the residence. "This is a room, but also a transit area out of necessity. That is, if you want to enter the house, there is no door you can close here, it is the house entrance, if you want to exit the house, again, this is where you go through, this means you cannot sit down, take out your clothes and sit".

The "living-room" connotations are disrupted and undermined by the "bedroom" connotations and vice versa. The living-room use as a space of community and coexistence displaces the use of the bedroom as the territory of intimacy where the personal moments of everyday life unfold. The "forced" placement of the bed next to the entrance door and the hallway sabotages the simultaneous and orderly use of this "hybrid" space, whereas the architectural structure is being revealed as a spatial arrangement of control determining the relationship between movement, visibility and supervision (Colomina 1996). The interlocutor is expected to "fit" her settlement within the habitation shell on an ephemeral and occasional basis as if it were some sort of temporary accommodation – i.e. in a sense that reminds us of short-term hospitality – while in reality this is long-term[10] occupation.

The issue is that I have no personal space. Because, yes there is a door that closes and keeps [spaces] apart, but ok, this is not a personal space, I cannot close the door so that no one passes through when I don't want them to... it's connected to the kitchen.

The sliding door separates the living-room from the rest of the house. The door is implied by the interlocutor as the sufficient condition for the demarcation of privacy, with its placement however attributing to it characteristics of connection and communication. The door, as a boundary, intercepts and separates, and by doing thus it divides space, it discourages osmosis and imposes disjunction (Simmel 2020, Perec 1997). At the same time, it unifies

and brings in contact, as it lifts any separation it may be possibly imposed. The closing or opening of the door is a practice that activates the mechanism of prohibition or reception. This gesture works in pairs like closed-open, inside-outside, secret-obvious, closeness-distance and influences flow and movement, communication and isolation, activating thus a mechanism of communication through sight and sound[11]. The amphisemy of the door is revealed through the daily life within the residence. Sometimes it guards the integrity of a territory and other times "dissolves" itself allowing permeability. On a house-plan drawing Eleni sketches her daily routes in the house, as well as those of her daughter and parents. (Fig.2)

My parents are very discreet. If I want... I don't know... get dressed, I will let them know. I will tell them 'I am closing the door because I want to...' Now, if it so happens and all doors are open and I would like to get dressed, I will tell them: 'I want to get dressed' and I will close the doors. Therefore, you know... nobody comes

.

Interpersonal settings and a sense of solidarity smooth the edges caused by any arrangements stemming out of heterotopic uses of the residence. The harmonic co-existence implied by Eleni is described through a sense of privacy generated by the closing of the door, ensuring thus the autonomy of her "bedroom". The space of movement transforms into a space of stasis, lending it the features of a bedroom. She undermines this same position a little later.

Summer is an issue, because at this point doors should remain open. We seldom opened the doors at night. I had the biggest issue [...] I'd leave the kitchen door open to let in a breeze. When things got tough, I would gradually open [this one]. The biggest problem for me was the sound. Because I wanted the window closed. So, yes, there was an issue there. I could leave it open and then close it at five in the morning. So we wouldn't burst from the heat during the night, but it made my sleep difficult.

The residence, reclaiming its initial role of protection from climatological conditions, reveals space as a tense field of power exercise. When the door is closed, the interlocutor – even temporarily – has access to her own personal space. The properties of this space are being lost and whatever privacy exists will dissolve the moment the door opens, either to allow air circulation or unrestricted movement within the apartment. Fluctuating between solidarity and dominance (Barkouta 2016), the management of co-habitation intervenes upon power cor-

relations, some times within and other times without prescribed uses and functions, but always revealing a power play. The way space is organised and demarcated directly relates to the ways the "self" is defined and constructed against the "Other", the latter seen either as strange and threatening or different. Eleni recounts an incident interweaving the architectural layout of spaces with tactics of their delimitation and appropriation.

> It happened though, I didn't get up and my mum couldn't stay in the room any longer, she wanted to make coffee and ehm… she will get up and go [to the kitchen] at some point. She will think about it, she will wait, yes. But at some point she will go. It happens rarely, but it does happen […] I can hear her walking through, I know she can wait in her room for this reason, she may wish to get up earlier and she delays it so she won't wake us up […] in the end, I do wake up.

The family "promise" for an equal and free participation in a coherent collaborative existence is defeated, although on an imaginary level it remains active. According to Hardt and Negri, the family remains the main space for gathering social experience and experiencing care and intimacy, while simultaneously imposing hierarchies, constrictions, exclusions and distortions (Hardt & Negri 2009:162). The interlocutor describes this daily movement as if it were a straight line drawn upon the residence layout, connecting thus the departure point to the final point of destination through the shortest – but also most appropriate – route. This route remains familiar, as it is inscribed upon the specifications resulting through the informal protocol of in-habitation. In correspondence to the visit snap-shot where the interlocutor was sleeping, the residence maintains a self-evident and "proper" mapping between spaces and functions whichoverweighs intermediate shifts and failures. The route between the kitchen and bedroom – with the kitchen being connected through the hallway to the living-room – seems to remain unaffected by what is really taking place within the apartment. But there are also other snapshots, that seem to deviate from the dominant pathways and regulations.

> My parents are both very supportive, I mean regardless of whether is night or day, they will often use the balcony to enter the kitchen, so they won't disturb me […] yes, there are many times when they will come out from here and go to the kitchen, they will also return the same way, because of course during the night it's closed, if they have to they will do it, they can't, therefore […]

.
The spatial snapshot of kitchen access through the balcony is an invention, a spatial detour, shaping anew the harder shell of the residence. This "incongruous" movement, although related to the interior of the residence, takes place externally, enveloping the apartment in zig-zags. The border between "outside" and "inside" is fluid, activating residual spaces and trying to create space. The balcony, being "something like a corridor" is comprised by its "slightly differentiated" uses, that deviate from the conventional match-ups between utilisations and functions (Barkouta 2016). The alternative route of "bedroom-balcony-kitchen" adds an additional room to the residence layout, that of Eleni, whereas the safe and familiar route of "bedroom-living room-kitchen" reproduces exclusions and is subjected to the authority of conventional boundaries. The "no door" version - where the door remains closed, acting as a wall or partition – and the "no balcony" one - where the balcony functions as a corridor – deviate from the initial meanings of the residence. The established authority of conventional spatial meanings is transformed, setting up "inappropriate" spatial splicings and "unsuitable" spatial uses. Routes multiply, recomposing thus the space of the residence based on movement. Hard demarcations and classifications become flexible and "incongruous" occupation takes place in an active way, when the living-room door closes and the balcony of the house is being given over a different use (Barkouta 2019). The residence space is being comprised of these spatial refinements too, adding to the literal meaning of its architectural syntax something from the resourcefulness of personal – spatial – idioms.

NOTES

[1] The noun "permacrisis" was chosen as "word of the year" in 2022 by Collins dictionary. It refers to an extended period of insta-bility and insecurity and refers to a series of challenges – including Covid19, US-China rivalry, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and energy prices – that show no signs of abating. (https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2022/nov/01/sums-up-2022-permacrisis-chosen-as-collins-word-of-the-year).

[2] It means "to judge".

[3] By using the term "predatory practices", David Harvey describes the process of gentrification of parts of the city, the privatisa-tion of public spaces, the practice of redlining and blockbusting, as well as the high-risk lending practices (Harvey, 2013:115-122).

[4] According to Worldbank data, in 2022 the housing cost in Greece was the greatest in Europe with 30% of the population spending 40% of its income in order to cover for housing expenses. According to the Greek Statistical Authority, in 2022 Greece was second among European countries in percentage (%) distribution of the population undergoing material deprivation. When it comes to the space constraint index, research by the Greek Statistical Authority on living conditions for 2020 reveals a percentage of 29% among the population and 43,9% among the poor population.

[5] The term boomerang kids or boomerang generation describes the phenomenon of returning to the parental home and is related to the increasing difficulties experienced by young people when it comes to economic autonomy. https://stegasi360.eteron.org/glossary/

[6] The imposition of "necessity" emerges both as meaning and as a phrase during the whole conversation. The sense of coercion is being expressed in the interlocutor's speech as she often and emphatically repeats the word "necessarily" and/ or "forced". As an indication: "there was nothing I could do, I mean everything [happened] out of necessity… first of all I was forced to leave here… in 2012 when I left here, I had to leave out of necessity and… I was forced to leave from there too, exactly as it happened with my grandmother's house".

[7] The interlocutor connects violence to the economic crisis bringing into the foreground a rich discussion. According to Vaiou, violence in times of "crisis" becomes ubiquitous (Vaiou 2014:535). Here, in the term violence, are included direct actions caus-ing physical, mental or moral harm, but also "symbolic representations"or practices shaping conditions of deprivation that are considered corrosive of human dignity. In this sense, the crisis is connected to a structural violence, the violence of poverty and exclusion, the violence of precariousness, the increase of domestic violence and also the physical violence by the resisting embodied subjects (Vaiou 2014; Dalakoglou 2013; Athanasiou 2018). Judith Butler, introduces the notion of "normative violence" as she connects precariousness to violence, which is "the capacity of power to render life both possible and restricted" (Athana-siou 2018).

[8] "[The parental house] resonates with the familiar component of faith" (Bachelard 1994).

[9] Herman Herzberger refers to the importance of "strong associations" that are related to the uses of a sofa: "What a sofa implies may be considered as the sum of what those who are responsible for its existence have to offer: carpenters, buyers, an ideology, a society, a culture" (Herzberger 1991: 469).

[10] The ephemeral residence described here has already lasted for four years, while there are no prospects of change in the im-mediate future. The interlocutor mentions characteristically: "This is the worst, that I do not see any way out, I cannot maintain myself and my daughter without receiving any help. Ehm, for the time being, yes, but it doesn't… it doesn't… I may be express-ing my fears, but they are based in reality".

[11] The interlocutor, referring to visual communication and spatial ways of management, raises the issue of sound privacy. Control is not imposed only through visibility, but also through sound: "Yes, a folding screen is an optical separator. But there is no equivalent for sound, right? […] Nobody can see what's in there. On a sound level of course, it doesn't… You hear, they hear, that's also very important".

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