

## TRANS(PER)FORMATIVE ACTS - SOCIAL SCULPTURES

### PART I REFLECTION

#### Prologue:

This essay is part of the research called Social Sculpture, Trans(per)formative Act, borrowing the term of **Social Sculpture** from Joseph Beuys through the lenses of Brazilian perspective of **Ecosocialism**, to study the potentialities of art to transform the social sphere. **How to embody ecosocialist ideas to dismantle inequalities, envisioning collective (trans)formations, and inspiring radical social change?**

The study of Beuys ideas, among other references, has influenced my artistic practice since my solo AL13FB<3 premiered in 2014 and DEUS/X\MACHINA in 2016. Still fascinated by the idea of social **transformation**, I have been using his theories as guidelines of a series of works which I call a **social sculptures series: THE CAVE, THE FOUNTAIN, and THE MARKET**. These works touch concepts in the areas of shadows, shamanism, and ancestry, water, sustainability and global warming, political materiality, and economics, via queerness as aesthetics and investigating the idea of 'social sculptures', or the potential of art to transform the social. With my works, I lookout for an art that can touch, not only visually but viscerally, not only the senses but possible directions, not static but transformative as an intervention to the shaping relations of body-space-time-material.

I am very intrigued and stimulated by transformative encounters and acts. In particular, I have been developing scores for my works, body tasks, and practices of sharing knowledge and creating collective experiences where co-imagining, co-creating, and collaborating is part of environmental thinking. The main reason to stay in thinking and practice is to mobilize and expose the potentialities of a future that moves **from ownership to access, from consumerism to sustainability, from market capital to social capital**.

My main motivation is to create space for eco-thinking, while investigating transformative actions in times of infectious and epidemic social inequalities, and not to conform with the "new normal". "***We won't go back to normality because normality was the problem***", is a motto for this proposal, also inspired by the projection of the visual artist Matías Segura at a building facade in Chile during Santiago's protests in October against fascism, privatization, and inequality. I have a dramaturgy accompaniment and collaboration with **Rodia Vomvolou**. Rodia is performing arts dramaturg, and researcher. She is currently doing a PhD in the Department of Media and Performance Studies of Utrecht University. I make use of Rodia's text material, for example the trans-authorship practice that she proposed, and conversations, creating a dialogical text. The dialogues also happen with ideas of the authors I encountered via books, online search and videos.

This text intends to be **performative**, that is, it intends to act, to do something. It is also a documentative collage of thoughts and ideas during the trajectory of the research that will work

as documental reference and that I decided to share. The text is separated into 5 acts and includes references to books I read during my research. It does not intend to be formally academic but it mixes formats. I also include a lot of quotes which sometimes I place as if I am curating the thoughts I found in the different fields to answer some of my questions, or to propose new ones. When I quote in the text I will use italic fonts and quotation marks. Rather than about my practice itself, this performative essay mainly contextualizes my practice, poses problems, and my current questions on consciousness and material world, social change, the role of art and transformation, performing and political action.

## **ACT I SOCIAL SCULPTURE or SOCIALISM**

*"To speak a true word is to transform the world". Paulo Freire*

**Social Sculpture or Social Art** is the term coined by the performance artist, german sculpture, alchemist, co-founder of the green party, and part of Fluxus Movement, Joseph Beuys. Beuys has been working with ideas such as a sense of warmth, trauma, and healing, key experiences, aspirational mentors, blackboard lectures, experiments or acts, and his unique view of the world material culture and his own theory of art. What attracted me to study Beuys' works are some similarities with my practice, for example approaching art as recovering collective experiences, the relation between body and other materials, the aspect of ritual in performance, stimulating community formation within politically active audiences, and the embrace of unconventional materials.

Social sculpture is a term that refers to an expanded concept of art. In *What is Art?, conversation with Joseph Beuys*, edited with essays by Volker Harlan, the term Social Sculpture refers to "**how we mold and shape the world in which we live.**" In the book *Joseph Beuys, Critical lives* from Claudia Mesh, she states that "*science and medicine are central themes and metaphors within Beuys' notion of social sculpture*" but also that projects like Germans Students Party (1967) and 100 Days of the Free International University, "*introduced the re-democratizing mechanism of the voters' initiative into the sphere of art as a central aspect of Beuys' notion of social sculpture.*"

The term social sculpture refers to Beuys **as the embodiment of an understanding of art that has the potential to transform the social sphere.** Beuys famously states "*If creativity relates to the transformation, change, and development of substance, then it can be applied to everything in the world, and is no longer restricted to art.*" In Claudia Mesh's book, she explains that Beuys began to differentiate his theory of social sculpture from the Steinerian model in 1969. She explains: "*in contrast to Steiner, Beuys elaborated his notions of social sculpture around a notion of individuals freedom - including any and all human activity originating in an individuals' free will - as art.*"

The notion of change (of the social sphere or the idea of social, so to say culture or as Paulo Freire would put it cultural revolution) relates with the practice of **creativity** itself. More than creation itself, sometimes opposed to destruction, or creativity related to making something

unusual, new or original (**or different**), or imaginative, the word also contains activity, **action**, to act. What I understand from *social sculpture* are the practices, the acts, the voices, and embodiment **beyond the confines of the art world**. Beuys was perhaps one of the pioneers to propose an interdisciplinary approach. Today, we need a trans-disciplinary entanglement. So, what I understand of social sculpture is attention to shaping the world we live in that goes beyond the art world. For Beuys, the process of making art, or making sculpture should be expanded to other fields. That is, the thinking process, the creativity, could support the formation of transformative social changes, if applied in other fields.

Concerning the idea of Social Art as an expanded concept of art, I prefer to think of expansion **NOT** as totalization or a totalizing notion of art or anything related to the totalitarian or European expansionist white project **BUT** I prefer to think of expansion as shamans make use of expansion of consciousness as a device of amplification, a technology of connection. So, for me, taking these social sculptures further is to emphasize the **transdisciplinary aspect of art within other social fields, amplified creativity, and practices of consciousness**.

Social sculpture has a relation as well with **thinking and action and freedom**.

How we mold and shape the world we live in. So, who are **we**? And **how** to do that? Beuys says, "*people are really not free in many aspects. They are dependent on their **social circumstances**, but they are free in their thinking, and here is the point of origin of sculpture. For me, the **formation of the thought is already sculpture**. The thought is a sculpture.<sup>1</sup>" Taking Beuys from behind here, and I hope he enjoys it, and proposing another emphasis instead of thought, I propose formation. **Formation of thought is sculpture**. Formation as Thinking together. Acting as a group. As Formative. Education. As (per)forming an action. I propose the idea of **thinking formations as a point of departure**. Of **collectivism**. Of **organized struggle**. Of **care strike**. Of **liberation**. And that is choreography. Social Choreography. Social Change. Social Movement.*

### **Action oriented towards changing social reality. *praxis***

**"theory is grounded in action, and action is theory embodied"**

As Paulo Freire puts it, "*it is only when the **oppressed** find the oppressor out and become involved in the **organized struggle** for their **liberation** that they begin to believe in themselves. This discovery cannot be purely intellectual but must involve **action**; nor it can be limited to mere activism, but must include serious **reflection**: only then will it be **praxis**."*(p.39) *Pedagogy of Oppressed, Paulo Freire*.

In *The Politics of Aesthetics*, Badiou does the same exercise of emphasis at Rosa Luxembour's famous "*Freedom is freedom for those who think **differently***", Badiou provokes us to shift the accent from 'differently' to 'think': '*Freedom is freedom for those who **think differently***. I can not hold to add or remember that not by chance **think different** is the slogan

---

<sup>1</sup> I have changed the original quote use of "man" and "he" to refer generally to people that includes all genders

from Apple, a multinational technology company from the U.S. that sells electronics, online services, and computers, like the one I write this that you read now, and 2 years ago (2019) the richest company in the world. Corporations have marketing tendencies to associate themselves with lifestyles and identities, not letting escape from consumerist culture and ideology of **pseudo freedom of choice, sloganizing, and appropriating.**

Paulo Freire, by proposing **problem-posing, cultural revolution, and dialogical theory of action** in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, proposes a certain **act differently**: "*What distinguishes revolutionary leaders from the dominant elite is not only their objectives but their procedures. If they act the same the objectives become identical. It is as self-contradictory for the dominant elites to **pose human-world relations problems** to the people as it is for revolutionary leaders **not to do so.***"(p.140) [...] *Action will constitute an authentic **praxis** only if its consequences become the object of **critical reflection** [...] otherwise, action is pure activism.*" Paulo Freire also talks of the path of **dialogue** and communication, via "**conscientizacao**"(p.40), proposing that it is crucial to **resolve external and international contradictions and relations of dependency** between societies, achieving **consciousness of being oppressed individuals, and transforming unjust reality.**

*"Beuys has also strongly emphasized, however, that the **action was precisely not the expression or representation of an underlying idea, not least because if that were the case the idea could have been conveyed much more efficiently without action.**"* That was stated in *Letting Art Teach*, by Gert Biesta and I find it important to underline that the social art or action that I am talking about, it is not just a necessity of expressing myself socially and/or finding means to do that, but my action shapes or acts within social body, social environment, social relations, social culture, and social materiality. And, yes, questioning imposed social limits as for example private property and means of production. What is interesting to me is to think about social art or social action is the potential of transformation of the social. Using technological tools of reflecting: creativity, consciousness-raising, dialogue, and self-organization we can move from the **conforming binary homogeneous commodified social modern life to the right of existence in plurality.**

### **Socialism**

*"Their aim, ecological **socialism**, would be an ecologically rational society founded on **democratic control, social equality, and the predominance of use of value.** I would add that this conception assumes **collective ownership of the means of production, democratic planning** that makes it possible for society to define the goals of investment and production, and a new technological structure of the productive forces. [...] In other words, **it must reintegrate the economic into the ecological, the social, and the political.**"(p.7-8)*

*"It is important to emphasize that such a process cannot begin without a **revolutionary transformation of social and political structures, and the vast majority of the population's active support of an ecosocialist program.** The development of socialist consciousness and ecological awareness is a process in which the decisive factor is people's*

*own collective experience of struggle, moving from local and partial confrontations to the **radical change of society**."* ( p.31)

The first two paragraphs are quotes from the book of the Brazilian Michael Löwy, *Ecosocialism, A radical alternative to capitalist catastrophe*, which proposes a revision on our, not only current modes of consumption but also production, and recalls utopia as indispensable to **social change**. To finish this act, I would like to add the notion of socialism to the unveiling of social sculpture as a term, or to the understanding of social art, or even to provoke thoughts or our understanding of the idea of the social itself. Social relates to **public, collective, equity, and cooperation**. Much of what arts should stand for and be built upon, as a (plural) society.

**Social Sculpture is self-knowledge; is to think what are you doing**

**Social Sculpture is to be in the contact with the world we live in**

**Social Sculpture is to transform in the process**

**Social Sculpture is to be affected by movement**

**Social Sculpture is to act trans fields**

**Social Sculpture is choreolisting formations**

**Social Sculpture is complexity and rhizome and nourishment**

**Social Sculpture is planned economy**

**Social Sculpture is Kunst=Kapital**

**Social Sculpture is structural radical cultural change**

**Social Sculpture is non-binary thinking**

**Social Sculpture is permeability**

**Social Sculpture is ecosocialism**

## **ACT II RADICAL (POLITICAL) (COLLECTIVE) ACTION**

**"world where inequality is manufactured" or full-time bankers or forms of rebellions or "resistances, which are inevitable companions to oppression".**

*"Praxagora, the leader of the conspiracy of women, announced:*

*Briefly my scheme is: mankind should possess*

*In common the instruments of happiness.*

*Henceforth private property comes to an end-*

*It's all wrong for a man to have too much to spend,*

*While others moan, starving; another we see*

*Has acres of land tilled prosperously,*

*While this man has not enough earth for his grave.*

*That's over: all things are owned henceforth by all."* ( p.91) Poem Ecclesiastusae (392 BC) by

Aristophanes. Example of socialist discourse before the even the appearance of economics as a system of thought, from the book, *An anthropology of Marxism*, by Cedric j. Robinson

During the research, one of the books I read was *An anthropology of Marxism*, by Cedric j. Robinson. Robinson takes Marx from behind and I hope Marx enjoys it. I quote "*Marx and*

Engels had frequently explained 'the **formation of ideas from a material practice.**' Their treatment of feudal society was a case in point: **'The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men people, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men people, appears at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behavior. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people.'**" (p.11)

The preface written by Avery F. Gordon of the book, *An anthropology of Marxism* by Robinson, proposes, "if the core proposition of Marx's historical materialism, simplified, is that "It is not the **consciousness of men people that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness**"<sup>2</sup>, then we might say that **the core proposition of Robinson's historical materialism, simplified, is exactly the reverse.**" or that "Robinson proposes a **dialect without determinism** grounded on the primacy of **social struggle and independent thought.**"(preface XXV) What caught me as well as one of the cores, or what had touched me that summarizes to me the book is the following paragraph from Robinson in the book:

"Alternatively, **if a socialist discourse can be recovered from earlier (\*precapitalist") eras, such a discovery would rupture the epochal confines of bourgeois epistemology sacred to both Liberalism and Marxism. [...]** The demonstration of an older and enduring oppositional discourse on poverty and property **might then emancipate socialism** from the ideological regime rigidly circumscribed by an attenuated and bourgeois construction of class struggle. The resistance to capitalism could then be understood as a derivative oppositional discourse whose origins suggest **a submerged and perhaps more profound historical crisis.**"(p.90)

Robinson shows that Marxian socialism was "not the first expression of socialism, **it is probable that it will not be the last.**" Robinson concludes chapter 2 with "the rudiments of western socialism appeared as early as the thirteenth century - without industrial production."

Although Robinson's objective was not "to simply critique the self-serving historical practices of Marxism or renounce Marxist conceits." Robinson criticizes that "**in much of the Marxian imagery, slaves contributed nothing to revolutionary thought or organization; neither did serfs, peasants, or women from any class or strata.**" But, Robinson brings down this imagery and shows that in previous and alternative socialisms in pre-Marxian and pre-capitalist socialist discourses, "**poor rural and urban rebels, female mystics and 'pious women', Latin medieval philosophers, radical communarians and communists, as well as 'thieves, exiles, and excommunicates' took the center of socialist tradition against the ruling class.**"

Robinson shows that **there is a "disconnect" between historical formations of socialism and its representations as well.** These alternative sites, as "**manifested in mass movements of violent rebelliousness, in a hysterical devotion as well as ecclesiastical debates**" contain "visions

---

<sup>2</sup> The famous sentence of Marx, in *A Contribution to the critique of Political Economy*

*of an **alternative social order**" - what bourgeois history pretends to ignore, silences or limits: "**a dialectic between power and resistance to its abuse.**"*

### **How can art be political?**

In conversation with Rodia Vomvolou that guided dramaturgically my research on trans(per)formative acts and a further understanding of my current work and practice, Rodia also provoked me with "*In fact what you are asking is **'how art can be political?'**"* Rodia proposed the read of the *State of Insecurity, government of the precarious* by the German Isabell Lorey.

I quote part of it: "*For Arendt, **politics is accordingly an art of performing, a performative art. Because of the necessary audience. For her, political action can only be imagined in relation to a liberation from the burdens of the oikos***<sup>3</sup>. *With this division between the private household and the politically connoted public sphere, Arendt reproduces the liberal and bourgeois gendered separation of spheres. [...] Nevertheless, Arendt's idea that **political freedom** has something to do with the **unpredictable, with insecurity and risk**, remains interesting.*" (p. 78-79)

In continuation to that provocation and also very intrigued by the idea of action, that also births the performance art (also known as *artistic action*) sphere itself, or theater (drama from Greek *action*), in *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt makes a separation of action with other human activities: "**of labor** corresponding to the biological life of the human as animal; **of work** relating to the artificial world of objects built upon earth; **and of action** which relates to our plurality as distinct individuals." Hannah also takes Marx from behind, and I hope Karl enjoys it, explaining that Marx misconceived **political action** by combining it with the other human activities that she calls **work and labor**.

Hannah also says that part of the human condition is to remind us that "*we are creatures that act*" and that "*most acts are performed in the manner of speech.*" Hannah, who proposes the famous "**to think what you are doing**" talks about the "*dangers*" of an action, "*we are never able to foretell with certainty the outcome and end of any action is simply that action has no end.*"

*"It is in accordance with the great tradition of Western thought to think along these lines: **to accuse freedom of luring a man into necessity, to condemn action, the spontaneous beginning of something new, because its results fall into a predetermined net of relationships, invariably dragging the agent with them, who seems to forfeit his their freedom the very moment he-they makes use of it.***

---

<sup>3</sup> The ancient Greek word **oikos** (ancient Greek: οἶκος, plural: οἶκοι; English prefix: eco- for ecology and economics) refers to three related but distinct concepts: **the family, the family's property, and the house**. Its meaning shifts even within texts, which can lead to confusion. The *oikos* was the basic unit of society in most Greek city-states. In normal Attic usage the *oikos*, in the context of families, referred to a line of descent from father to son from generation to generation. Alternatively, as Aristotle used it in his *Politics*, the term was sometimes used to refer to everybody living in a given house. Thus, the head of the *oikos*, along with his immediate family and his slaves, would all be encompassed. Large *oikoi* also had farms that were usually tended by the slaves, which were also the basic agricultural unit of the ancient economy. Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oikos>

[...]

***If it were true that sovereignty and freedom are the same, then indeed no man folk could be free, because sovereignty, the ideal of uncompromising self-sufficiency and mastership, is contradictory to the very condition of plurality.***"(p.234)

RODIA: "I understand that the word 'shape' comes from Beuys and what I like about it is that it has a specific action in it, it implies a force already in the form. Personally, I find Ana Vujanović's proposition helpful in the text **"Notes on the Politicality of Contemporary Dance"** that **politicality is "the aspects of an artwork or art practice that address the ways it acts and intervenes in the public sphere"**. As she argues, politicality is a complex grid that characterizes every performance – no matter whether its content is political or not – because every performance is a social event that is practiced in public. **According to Vujanović there are three dominant modalities in which the political is practiced by and in performance today: 1. political content and the concept of engaged performance; 2. the politicality of the performance medium; and 3. the politicality of modes of work/production. I find the third mode the most interesting as in this politicality relies on "questions of property and authorship, principles of sharing, position in the exchange economy and market, production and distribution of knowledge, organization of artistic collectives, mechanisms of decision making, collaboration and networking."**

RODIA: So, the question here could also be in the structures of how we see hierarchy and distribution of power and traditionalism? Rancière argues that artistic practices are political because they are ways of doing and making that encompass a specific way of recasting the distribution of the sensible as they participate in the general distribution of ways of doing and making, as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility. Thus, art practices carry out politicality, either as a contribution to the existing distribution of the sensible or as a critical intervention into it. What I understand is that indeed you use appropriation as a specific strategy in relation to neoliberalism, while embodiment is part of your practice. They are both parts of your methodology. I would like to hear a bit more about the idea of praxis you said. Do you mean it in a specific context like for example the way that Aristotle uses the concept of praxis?

FIORE: First, I thought praxis was more, in my mind, a kind of "dialogue" between theory and practice, a kind of checking "what do you say vs what do you do" and how are they coherent and in a healthy relation to each other. Perhaps that is the meaning. Later, I also got one new view, that praxis can be, once you have acted, moved, chose, you do not take that for granted but you reflect on that action to learn about it, and to understand the effects of your action. The reflection on the terms and its use of praxis, I have just lately been studying or being attentive to. It inspired me to get the book from Arendt, and I am reading Paulo Freire now. Before I bought the books, I made a crazy search on Wikipedia. I think I have shown you the links at home/ I made a bookmark folder, from terms and words/ideas I was curious about or I would like to dig further. Usually, I think more of embodiment. I have been thinking about appropriation lately with a more identitarian talk with 'which material I could work or not' for example.

**RODIA:** Do you mean that you are using embodiment instead of appropriation? That's interesting to me cause embodiment has a positive meaning in my head while appropriation has a more negative or 'sneaky' meaning. It is a strategy we can use in our favor in the neoliberal realm but its first meaning is not positive. I'm also interested in the question "what are your materials?" because it is also a dramaturgical question and it has a more concrete layer in it.

**FIORE:** When I am in the process of a performance, for example, I build a lot of material together with bringing objects in the studio, or 'material' to place in the body, or that would affect or touch my body, this could also be music or light. Mostly when I think they are concrete or existing 'pieces'. I also work with tasks when I think of movement or trying the next day to re-work or continue what I was doing the previous day if it comes too. If I think of the cave, I think the tent to be material, as it is an object, the arrow, bow, styrofoam, I put music together, I used pieces mixed. In the cave also, there is Wagner, pop music from the U.S, club music, some Brazilian beats. I was interested in the 3rd eye, so I went to research music that had a frequency relating to the pineal gland. I had projectors in the studio, as much I could get from the working space. I think this to name some. There were also costumes for example in the process and text.

**RODIA:** And then there was also 'Fernando Belfiore' as a material: as a body, as a name, as the artist, as the performer. You were playing a lot with your identity or in other words using yourself as material. Last time, you said that your materials are "movement, magic, conversations, some provocations, excess, loudness, and criticism". So here you understand materials in a different way that relates more to qualities and intentions. While now you went back to the very basic layer of materials: body, sound, text, objects, etc. I think this is a helpful process of unfolding the different layers of your materials. For example, you use the body → your body → your naked body → your body with a swimsuit → your body with a specific pop reference → loudness → provocation → criticism....

**FIORE:** For the cave, I remember after experimenting, having decided to build a trajectory where slowly would make me enter "in this cave". This trajectory would make me go with different temporalities and with these materials in relation to my body, hand-paint, arrow, coca-cola, advertisements. One of the choices was accumulation, going back and forth in time, sensuality, viscerally, being taken by movement, arrowing and being arrowed, going in between the audience space, visiting the projectors, playing with "reality"/ like confusing it or showing it can be manipulated. I also could think of potentialities in the process or material that have built the research that are immaterial materials like concepts.

**RODIA:** Aha, of course in the process things are not working so linear or separately as we are discussing them now. All the different layers work at the same time and you are not always aware of them when into the process. I would break it even more down and put the intention as a third layer. So, what you have described is the qualities of the materials and now we are looking at what was your intention in using them in the way you said. For example criticism or provocation is part of this third layer. Could you think about that more?

**FIORE:** I remember I was in this workshop, that is when the project started. I got really disturbed with that environment. I started asking for more and more beamers. It seems there was a fascination with point technology (if this is a term/hope you know what I mean, something Elon Muskish). I also saw a fascination with these tools without considering the body or space. I also remember there was an assumption I should be fascinated by it too. I think that is when I felt projected things onto me.

## Intermezzo - V A P O R W A V E

### ACT III Trans-per-formative acts

I propose a Transformative notion of art, a **trans-per-formative notion**.

#### Trans-per-formative acts

**Trans (trǎnz)** 1. a prefix meaning “across,” “through,” occurring orig. in loanwords from Latin, used in particular to form verbs denoting movement or conveyance from place to place or complete change, or to form adjectives meaning “**crossing**,” “on the other side of,” or “going beyond”

**Per (pɜr; unstressed pər)** prep. 1. for or in each or every; a or an: 1. a prefix meaning “through,” “thoroughly,” “utterly,” “very”: ( **thought**, during) by means of. via the, through, the by the way of. Borrowed from Latin via (road) from Proto-Indo-European \*weg. A method or manner of doing something. A state or condition

**formative** ('fɔr mə tɪv) adj. 1. giving form or shape; forming; **shaping**. 2. pertaining to formation or development:

**acts (äkt)** 1. The process of doing or **performing** something

**transform**, to alter or be altered radically in form, function, etc.

**transformative**, the definition of transformative is something, such as a lesson or experience, that inspires change or causes a shift in viewpoint.

**performative**, relating to or of the nature of artistic performance.

**active**, engaged in action or activity; characterized by energetic work, motion,

**performativity**, an act that people come to perform in the mode of belief which has been rehearsed much like a script. It is further asserted that people make a reality through repetition (just as actors who make a script). Butler sees gender, not as an expression of what one is, rather as something that one does. Performativity is a concept that can be thought of as a language that functions as a form **of social action** and has the effect of change.

#### Act

**"Action as distinguished from fabrication, is never possible in isolation; to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act.**

[...]

*Greek and Latin, unlike the modern languages, contain two altogether different and yet interrelated words with which to designate the verb "to act." To the two greek verbs archein ( to begin, to lead to rule) and prattein ( to pass through, to achieve, to finish) correspond the two Latin verbs agere ( to set in motion, to lead) and gerege ( whose original meaning is to bear)*

[...]

*Action, moreover, no matter what is specific content, always establishes relationships and therefore has an inherent tendency to force open all limitations and cut across all boundaries*

[...]

*Even though stories are the inevitable results of action, it is not the actor but the storyteller who perceives and "makes" the story.*"(p.188-192) **THE HUMAN CONDITION, ACTION** Hannah Arendt

**RODIA VOMVOLOU: Write a definition of what trans (per) formative means for you for the moment. Try to be strict and write it only in a short paragraph.**

-I am using this term as a **transformative potential in the artistic process to act radical change in society**. But it has these other possible meanings in the word as **performative, formative, (through)active form, action, transformation, crossing**. In the end, it relates to the idea of **critical (creative) thinking and acting in the world we live in**. Finding transformative potential in the process. Be affected by the movement of others and your own.

During the research, I bumped into many usage and perspectives of the potentialities of transformation, for example, when we speak of materialism and historical view, from a Marxist socialist perspective, much is spoken about *"regulated production of transformations or **transformation of material reality and non-private property**."* So, a transformation in the real material world, in how things are produced and consumed. *"Deleuze is focused on HOW THINGS change (overtime, historically) for difference over time, for movement."* Where transformation has a relation with time and history. In *Moving as Thing*, André Lepecki reminds the view on corporeal transformation, *"Karl Marx famously noted that if human activity in general is capable of **enacting corporeal transformations** on matter by turning it into an object of use (for instance, by turning a block of wood into a table), under the specific parameters of capitalism, human activity makes objects endure a supplementary, magical, or **incorporeal transformation**, where anything made for the use of humans turns into "a very strange thing" called a **commodity**."*(p.87) This transformation relates to the value of things and embodiment. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick describes *"queer performativity as an ongoing project for transforming the way we may define—and **break—boundaries** to identity. Transformation is also to connect to who you really are or who you want to be against a world that demands sameness, normality and condemns the "odd", the "strange."*<sup>4</sup> A whole list of transformations could be laid out. But those transformations above are close to me and my work, relating temporality, movement and body, identity and objects that form narratives and imaginaries beyond a dominating hegemonic culture, that is as a project one of type of mind, existence and truth. This one world project is relying on progress, extraction, death, domination and expansion.

When I was young, in the theater, we used to talk about not going to eat pizza after a show. Performance pizza is the performance that does not change your life. It is a performance that

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Performativity>

you just go on with your life and keep consuming, following your daily rituals inside a chain of ideological pre-programmed lifestyles in which things are available, permanent, in circulation, part of the matrix. In that case, performance pizza is a spectacle in a society of consumers. Panem et circenses. In a liquid society where everything we see is food. Does performance change something? And in which stomachs? In any case, the idea of something transformative rather than a consuming spectacle stayed in my mind for years.

*"For Butler, the distinction between the personal and the political or between private and public is itself a fiction designed to support an oppressive status quo: **our most personal acts are, in fact, continually being scripted by hegemonic social conventions and ideologies.**"<sup>5</sup>*

Perhaps an answer to the question if a performance or art changes something is by questioning those binary distinctions questioned by Butler, and perhaps new movement studies, unpredictability, or rehearsals instead of scripted modes of living, and perhaps by questioning capitalist private ownership of our consciousness and imagination at once and its current urgency.

**The process of embodying ideas and their reflection is a practice of transformation.** Being affected by it is a practice of transformation. Embodiment and environment are in touch. Embodiment and environment shape. Another aspect of transformation I think is relevant is to transform the logic and the modus operandi of normative patterns and construct.

Molding and shaping can show that reality can change. Against the in(formation) and neoliberal practices and Fukuyamist and determinism and classic-romantic-objectivism forcefully tries to imprint when it comes to the capitalist system as the all-perfect, all-natural, or all what we got. "a *variation of the same*", or a "*personalized life*" as Žižek would put it.

## **Plurality**

**Anti-Cartesian, Anti-Newtonian Anti-Hegemonic-Capitalism logic.**

**Contradicting tradition, non-hierarchical structure**

**A different logic from the programmed habitus,**

**B. Against automated perception.**

**Resistance and Non-conforming**

**Exposing, making visible the system, Distribution**

**Embodying Imagination Social Capital**

---

<sup>5</sup>

<https://cia.nurdue.edu/academic/english/theory/genderandsex/modules/butlerperformativity.html#~:text=For%20Butler%2C%20the%20distinction%20between%20hegemonic%20social%20conventions%20and%20ideologies>

**Thinking alternatives, healing processes and new materialisms**

*To politicize the actions.*

*The spect-ACTress*

*The spect-ACTing*

**A transperformative collective body.**

**From Big Brother to SISTERS.**

**ENACTIVISM**

**AGENCY**