Call for participation for an *ephemera* conference on:

Materialities and socialities of postcapitalism

Time and place: Tzoumerka, Greece, 21-22 September 2023
Organizers: Chris Giotitsas, Emilie Hesselbo and Lena Olaison

Right before the COVID-19 pandemic erupted, we planned this conference in a remote region of Greece. The global lockdown forced us to postpone it. Three years later, we find the scope of our original conference more pertinent than ever. The pandemic aggressively highlighted the fragility of contemporary societies and its repercussions are still felt today. Hence we revisit the original theme.

Crises are a defining characteristic of our times - from the looming dread of environmental collapse, to the perpetual turmoil in the financial markets, to overall existential doubts over our unsustainable 'way of life'. The aim of this conference is to inquire into the organising for the potential collapse of the current dominant mode of production and consumption. By doing so, we build on the ephemera conference in Copenhagen in 2014 around the theme of organising for post-growth, as well as the activist organising online conference which took place during the pandemic. Several special issues in *ephemera* also provide foundation too (Graziano and Trogal, 2019; Phillips and Jeanes, 2018; Chertkovskaya, Johnsen and Stoborod, 2017; Johnsen, Nelund, Olaison and Sørensen 2017). Nevertheless, the aim is *not* to provide yet more critique on capitalism. Instead, we invite activists, artists, designers, practitioners and researchers to contribute to the ongoing dialogue for post-capitalist construction, and to discuss how another world is in the making.

We are inspired by and wish to learn from real-life practices leading the way in building alternatives locally and globally. An enormous variety of initiatives may point to another way of organising: free and open-source software and

wikis, open design and hardware, repair and relocalisation, community currencies and infrastructures. Examples abound. Agricultural communities like Farm Hack and L'atelier paysan are creating technology and solidarity for sustainable agriculture; initiatives such as Public Lab, OpenBionics and Sensorica are reconceptualising scientific equipment, robotic and bionic and electronic hardware into open value and development networks; organisations like Enspiral develop novel modes of collaboration and co-creation.

We thus want to discuss empirical studies on initiatives for technological sovereignty and autonomy, citizen solidarity, transnational community cooperation, alternative conceptualisations of technological innovation based on the commons, self-organising through peer-to-peer technologies and practices, and many other cases and themes related to sustainable and resilient grassroots development. Do these studies offer concrete evidence for the capacity for genuine societal change driven by values that exceed individualistic self-interest and capitalist growth? And do they illustrate how such initiatives, when allowed to flourish, may provide the blueprints for the proliferation of alternative practices?

From a theoretical point of view, we want to open up space for discussion on how we can create and be part of post-capitalist imaginaries through various levels of organising. How networks of mutual aid and solidarity can be built, and how they can change the surrounding social and political landscapes. We also wish to re-examine what constitutes sustainable alternatives within the current political climate and in juxtaposition with pressing environmental, social and economic problems. What is the line between 'realistic' mainstream solutions and radical proposals? How can the 'realistic' solutions be radicalized and how can radical proposals scale or spread? How can we affectively relate to masses of people and what role the different types of solutions play in all this?

Greece has been at the centre of the current Euro-crisis, giving rise to novel and innovative forms of civil activity. Many of these gestate post-capitalist forms either by necessity or by design. By applying self-management and peer-to-peer practices – inspired by the commons and economic solidarity – and using digital and other technological innovations, new crisis-resilient socio-technological systems are emerging. Hence, the event will be held in the largely neglected yet unspoiled mountainous region of Tzoumerka, where farmers and researchers have created a community/space to collaboratively build practical solutions and tools for their production needs, using modern and traditional technologies.

We encourage participation in a variety of formats including articles, notes, photo essays, exhibitions, designs or any other practical and experimental contributions.

The deadline for submitting abstracts is extended until July 15th, 2023. Abstracts of no more than 500 words should be submitted in a PDF/word document, and any questions addressed to Chris Giotitsas (chris.giotitsas(at)gmail.com). The conference is free for participants without institutional support, while a selection of fee options is available for those with funding who wish to support *ephemera*.

An open call for a special issue in *ephemera* will follow the conference to which participants and non-participants will be able to submit their contributions.

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