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## NOMADIC ACADEMY OF EXPERIMENTAL ARTS

This paper introduces a project of developing methods for Nomadic Academy of Experimental Arts in Helsinki, situated in Harakka island. It will work molecularly with artists, researchers, groups and with molar-structured institutions (academies of fine arts, theatre etc). It will be a place for part-time teacher-artists, activist-theorists, students and other citizens to learn, meet and develop their thoughts and practice. The academy will share the ethos of experimental arts, contemporary critical theory and radical social thinking. In it's program it will include areas like experimental sound art, experimental moving image, performance art, site-specific arts, critical/radical theory and collective projects with different communities.

We will develop a platform or "plateau" for the part-time teachers of experimental arts and other lecturers to introduce their teaching and other their activities. The academy has a fluent, small program of its own but our "staff" will do their teaching also elsewhere. In its simplest form "the plateau" for introducing the activities will be a website presenting the people and their courses. The ethos and inspiration for the new university is inspired by thinkers like Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Gregory Bateson and Paulo Freire. It is inspired also by the finnish groups mollecular.org and aktivistiylipisto (<http://aktivistiylipisto.wordpress.com/>), expressed in their pamphlet "Tuleva yliopisto" ("Future University" - <http://content.yudu.com/Library/A12e37/Tulevayliopisto/>) and many discussions with part-time -teachers dedicated to experimental arts.

The project of forming a Nomadic academy of experimental arts to Finland is tied to the current situation where the reformation of the university system is taking place. The reform is bringing forth concepts like entrepreneur-like pedagogy where the teachers are supposed to encourage the students to behave like entrepreneurs, as it is said in the home page of Helsinki School of Economics. In the situation like this it seems to be important to develop practices that are not only tied to neoliberal ideas - to establish alternative plateaus for critical and experimental practice of discussions and teaching. Being an off-project of the more official academic system, nomadic academy of experimental arts will develop a system of its own with it's own experimental "departments" (currently called as "areas"). When working with the more hegemonic universities, the role of nomadic academy of experimental arts will be parasite-like, or viral, hopefully infecting the institutions with the virus of non-hierarchicality.

Paradoxically working with very little or no funding at all can give that kind of freedom to nomadic academy of experimental arts that the more institutionalised schools, academies and universities can only dream of. We don't have to rely on the ties of the governmental or commercial funding. Félix Guattari's three-fold concept of Ecosophy of social ecology, mental ecology, and environmental ecology is inspiring in that sense. According to Guattari "there is an urgent need for us to free ourselves of scientific references and metaphors: to forge new paradigms which are instead ethico-aesthetic in inspiration" (Félix Guattari: The Three Ecologies, New Formations no 8 /summer 1989, 132). Guattari writes that it is important to abandon pseudo-scientific paradigms not just because of the complexity of the systems, but also because "the three ecologies are governed by a different

logic from that of ordinary communication between speakers and listeners" (Guattari 1989, 135).

The motto of Guattari's book *Three ecologies* is taken from Gregory Bateson's *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*: "There is an ecology of bad ideas, just as there is an ecology of weeds". According to Bateson there are three root causes for the current ecological crisis: 1) the technological progress, 2) population increase and 3) wrong thinking, wrong values of the Occident (Gregory Bateson: *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology* 1972, 498). A healthy ecology of human civilisation is defined as "a single system of environment combined with high human civilization in which the flexibility of the civilization shall match that of the environment to create an ongoing complex system, open-ended for slow change of even basic (hard-programmed) characteristics" (Bateson 1972, 502).

According to Bateson man-environment system became progressively unstable since the invention of metal, wheel and script. Civilizations fall, when they reach the limits of exploitation, and the flexibility offered by new inventions can lead to death when the flexible ideas become hard-programmed and too determined. This could be equal to the critique of doxa by Deleuze and Guattari, doxa meaning the unquestionable common beliefs and habits. Either man 1) is too clever, in which case we are doomed, or 2) he was not clever enough to limit his greed to courses which would not destroy the ongoing total system (Bateson 1972, 503). A "high" civilization means "that we can't go back to the lifestyle of Eskimos, aboriginals or the Bushmen", writes Bateson. The process would just start over. We need gadgets to promote and maintain wisdom. The organisms are not only results of genetic or environmental conditions but there is also the flexibility and preadaptation for unpredictable change at stake. According to Bateson, flexibility can be defined as uncommitted potentiality of change (Bateson 1972, 505).

An organism learns two ways, by experience and by flexibility and adaptation (Bateson 1972, 505, 509). There are ideas of immediate use but the more flexible parts can be saved for use on newer matters and given ideas or actions are subject to multiple determination by many interwoven strands, writes Bateson. When we turn off the light, we have multiple reasons for doing it. We do it partly by privacy, partly by reducing sensory input etc. There are always flexibility and hard-programmed ideas. In the ecology of ideas there is an evolutionary process about what which ideas will be hard-programmed. It can be that the ideas that work in the current situation may not be useful after longer time.

For Guattari the logic of the three ecologies is "a logic of intensities, the logic of self-referential existential assemblages, engaging non-reversible duration" (Guattari 1989, 136). It is not the logic of "the totalized bodies of human subjects, but of part objects in the psychoanalytical sense - Winnicott's transitional objects, institutional objects ('subject groups'), faces, landscapes" (Guattari 1989, 136). In order to set the social and political practices back on their feet, there is urge to need to work for humanity instead of the semiotic universe of capitalism. Guattari writes how in the developed countries there is tendency to use social tension and despair in order to "stimulate" a principle which is related to the building of the areas of the precarious conditions, chronic unemployment which reaches both the young, the aged, part-time and undermined employees, making their condition

even more marginalised. At the same time there prevails rapid development of the technological-scientific realm which could help to resolve the most difficult ecological problems and to balance the most useful functions in the society.

In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (orig. in Portuguese 1968, translated in english 1970) Paulo Freire admits that freedom is something that can be also frightening. Freedom is something which is achieved through the learning in a learning system which is not relying on the hierarchy of the oppressor and the oppressed. We can also imagine a system where both the oppressor and the oppressed are oppressed by an unquestionable ideology, which gives no alternative to think or work differently. This demands an alternative pedagogy, which could be defined also as practical pedagogy.

Following Gilles Deleuze's thoughts, Charles J. Stivale has wrote about the importance of the practical pedagogy in his teaching and how it intersects with "the vital matter of becomings in teaching and learning, and more precisely, how we can grasp this pedagogy in relation to making the Body without Organs, which I see as fundamental for a pedagogy of friendship, for a pedagogy with friendship and certainly for a practical pedagogy" (Charles J. Stivale: Gilles Deleuze's ABCs, 38). The concept of BwO is closely linked to the concept of haecceity, which means individuality which is "different from that of a thing or a subject,... consist(ing) entirely of relations of movement and rest between molecules and particles, capacities to affect and be affected" (Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: *A Thousand Plateaus*, 261, cit. by Stivale in his book). These "relations" and "capacities" as necessary part in terms of the learning exchange between the teacher and the student, sometimes opening a dangerous landscape between the excess of chaos and the variable degrees of control.

The molecular structure of Nomadic Academy of Experimental Arts enables it to invent its own disciplines or areas, tight-rope in the field of invention, individuation and sharing. The methods include trust, flexibility, exploration and expression. This is visible in the currently invented areas of Academy, which are "the area for the technologies of time and space and ecology", "the area of cybernetics and insect-research", "the area of poetical-political aphorisms" and "the area of post-humanistic ethos".

#### APPENDIX: 8 1/2 QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NOMADIC ACADEMY (short version)

Q: What is a nomadic academy of experimental arts?

A: It can be your kitchen, a memo of some kind written by shaky hands holding a ball-point pen or a pirate garden. Helsinki Nomadic Academy of Experimental Arts which was established in 20.7.2009 in Harakka island is just one place for it.

Q: What does Helsinki Nomadic Academy of Experimental Arts do?

A: It invites learning and thinking bodies of different genders and generations to talk, dance, sing, to stop in their thoughts, to slow down and maybe to say no to the communication if they feel like it.

Q: Who are the idols of Nomadic Academy of Experimental Arts?

A: The unusual suspects. We are fans of dada, Collège de 'Pataphysique, Fluxus, Situationists International, other radical experimental arts' organisations, including several alternative groups in Helsinki.

Q: Why Nomadic Academy was established?

A: Because it was there, already. Grinning cats, Pussies in the Boots with their shiny teeth and the eels in their buckets on the office desks only prevented to see it.

Q: What is the structure in Academy?

A: We have two circles, the inner circle is dedicated to the elitistic art and the outer circle to anti-art / nomadic art. There is constant change going on between and within these circles.

Q: Who can join in?

A: Artists, the part-time teacher-artists and students, other individuals interested in learning, groups, assemblages and organisations - all who think that experimental and nomadic expression is good for the thoughts, the hearts, social relations and criticality. In some cases it is also possible for the animals and boats to join us.

Q: What are the sources of inspiration in Nomadic Academy?

A: Antihierarchical theory, from anarchist thinking to Paulo Freire, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. We also appreciate Aleksanteri Ahola-Valo, who was an artist, designer of buildings, writer and developed his own pedagogical system. We dislike all kinds of sexism, racism and fascism and "pavlovian reflex" -like -relation to money.

1/2 Q: What is your budget?

1/2 A: We have no funding.

Q: What happens now?

A: Filmperformances, experimental lecture, conversations, meetings with teacher-artists, art exhibition, music and else. During next year we will introduce our four methods of rite, rail, route and rib (in finnish riitti, rata, reitti and ruode).

homepage: <http://nomadinenakatemia.blogspot.com>