THE DOCUMENTATION OF THE ELEMENTAL

In the forthcoming public performance by Hector Mavridis, during the prologue, progression and epilogue, a loaf of bread, stamped with a logo (the word approach in Greek and in German) will be produced and a definition of the reality of the particular project and hypothesis will be provided.
This dense mixture of semiotic and ideological orientations consists of a fertile, flexible and adaptive field for an informal or formal exegesis (explanation or interpretation).
The performance will include a variety of possible fields of semiotic meaning that might be closely connected with the history of civilization, the power of everyday common rituals, the gestures and the codification systems of regular or irregular behavioural disciplines.
Moreover, long after the public performance is over, when this network of meanings has already distributed its core of significant value, major additional elements of collateral propositions will emerge, producing fresh value connections, thus completing the overall semantic field within its powerful and specific time fragment.
Hector Mavridis is enacting this ritual but also its outcome (the bread-symbol), to remind us of the approaching path, in space and time, of a functional hierarchy of collective practices that lead civilization to a secure future. The cultivation of wheat in Mesopotamia comes at the end of the period of the human being as hunter-gatherer and triggers the new historical era of sedentary life, the economy of accumulation, provision and joyful collective living: the tentative exploration of the emerging new world (new lands and horizons), of language, meaning and sense. We see also the development of common and sharable identities, of consecutive and overlapping cultural expressions.
The ability to process and store agricultural products (olives, grapes, wheat), to knead and bake, to transform matter-substance (wheat) to another form (bread) means not only the joyful abandonment of the circumstances of lack and necessity, but the entry into the realm of the conceptual appropriation of stochastic meaning orientations, resulting from this transformation.
In the same way, the harvest and the visual and sensory discovery of the materiality of cotton leads, through its transformation, to fabric, and to the extraction of minerals (iron, copper); this in turn leads, through a process of synthesis, to forms of processing metal to make tools of cultivation and to the production household tools; the appropriation of clay leads, through its technical manipulation and the firing kiln process, to the production of a variety of household pottery. This transformation of matter to forms is a critical and essential achievement of the pattern of civilisation that emerges and spreads from the middle and near East to liberate Europe, literally and conceptually, through the narrow valley passages of the Axios river (Greece) in the Balkan peninsula, the Brennero pass (Italy-Austria) in the Alps and the Iberian peninsula (Spain).
Centuries later, after the establishment and spread of production techniques for bread, clothes, metal tools and pottery, the development of these exceptional technologies evolved and gave birth to complex new forms of thought, triggering the emergence of conceptual symbolism, the sociology of individual behaviour rituals, linguistic metaphor and semiotics. For example, these developments led to the insistent and bold anthropological and aesthetic visual ‘reconnaissance’; to the understanding and conceptual negotiation of the content of the signifier agapi, referring to gathering for the common meal, sharing bread and wine (theological, artistic, anthropological, historical, behaviouristic, linguistic). Furthermore, the evolution of rich fertile and sharable symbolism and intellectual metaphor, following successive everyday rituals, connect the actual object (the bread) and its stochastic guidance which, in the case of Ektoras Mavridis, becomes a conceptual meaning focus. A form, a shape, a symbol of a multitude of constantly rearranging varieties of meaning that exercise and adjust thinking in a sense far from its primary propositional meaning.
When two or more human beings meet in peace they share bread (unique and essential food), whenever they are invited as guests they will share bread, if they find themselves crossing unknown territory, forming a temporary or permanent group (refugees) they will carry and share bread.
As we comprehend this powerful stochastic motivation, based on the re-formation/transformation of a natural substance (flower, cotton, minerals, clay) to multiple functional objects; these objects become the carriers of a cohesive meaningful ethos (common values uniting and sustaining unity in a given social entity/group), carriers of overlapping interactive layers of meaning . These overlapping layers of sense, constituting a hard crust of meaning, can unfold, insulate, isolate or combine into possible stasis (inactivity) or accelerations of ethical relations. Bread that is offered and shared secures not only the body but contributes to the definition, the evolution and firmness of relationships and, moreover, fortifies fundamental hypotheses regarding each and all complete relationships.
Shifting from the object (bread) that is structuring, measuring, applying reason to various correlated systems of relations in space and time, as is contained and confined either in the hands and in the body of a human being (hold, eat, share, keep a piece of bread), to the visual and semantic values of its icon (eidolon) we have to create fresh corresponding stochastic breakthroughs. In this exceptional historic moment, Ektoras Mavridis delivers his public report, commenting on the composition of the mythical object, idol and symbol, as he embeds within it the mark of its lost nature, the stamp, the vital act of reflecting its loss.
The approach, this melting amalgam of active meaning gesture, this stamp, this cry and tactic, is discharging its historical signification, the valuable re-direction of its cross-historical cultural content; and it explicitly expresses its subtle reasoning. Containing and been contained in this very proposition of the first perfect content as it is firmly adapted to the materiality of the object (the prime elaborated object as both content and concept). To this ideal object, we have to return as we advance and endlessly create new exceptional meaning attractors (in medical technology and chemistry, engineering technologies, education, arboriculture, architecture, anthropology) rearranging and regulating the wealth of our common culture. This unique blend of meaning, concept and materiality (word, stamp, bread) is offered to be eaten. Therefore, we eat, we become a unity, correspond and transmit the quality of its existence. Estimating, waiting, debating and detecting this complex of relationships. Withdrawing our trust from its public eidolon and to every eidolon of disorderly importance, celebrating and satisfying the appetite of our body and consciousness.
Nonetheless, Ektoras Mavridis, capricious inventor and manipulator of conceptual diversions not only disagrees with this specific familiar and important form (the bread) and the well- known comprehensive system it refers to but he also re-forms its purity. He mixes dough with soil and produces a new entity, a hybrid of relations, aiming to gain the value of this exeresis (exemption), inviting us to a thorough exploration of its content, targeting and undermining the known figure (the bread) thus eating and learning from it to create an irregular distortion of the body. The body can no longer connect to the bread through the eating ritual but reacts to its visual presence. No longer do we connect with its taste and texture but to the metaphor of its transformation in text, narration and description. It seems that this mixture of terra and flour will revise all practices of its supervisor and stochastic operator taking him/her away from the certainty of this and all artefacts/artworks to the relativity of its text. From the morphological unity to the conceptual decomposition; from its paradigmatic eidolon to its constitutional revision and reform.
In this proposal, put forward by Ektoras Mavridis, we are witnessing the accumulation of varieties and passion applied both to the current collective research and the unanswered past and present questions of our active consciousness, of the historical reassurances and the present declarations of meaning , of our welfare, while we are gathering at a broad and short-term meeting, in a garden of important questions, gathering round a table of findings, declarations and gestures.

**IORDANIS STYLIDIS**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**

UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

EUROPE - HELLAS

[www.iordanisstylidis.gr](http://www.iordanisstylidis.gr/)