



Abstract

Based on the framework that both piracy and dramaturgy have shaped and reshaped the collective imaginary, this contribution proposes the notion of "pirate dramaturgy" as an entangled mode of thinking-through-practising radical ecologies (and alternative world-making). Exploring the *Exterritory Project* (2009-ongoing) by artists Maayan Amir and Ruti Sela as both a material and immaterial site for rethinking the threads between ecology and performance while sailing through international waters of the Mediterranean Sea and the juridical voids they constitute, the article questions the urgency of reconceptualising modes of worlding beyond terrestrial-based frameworks. Drawing on blue humanities and anarchist studies, the article brings these fields together around the concept of extraterritoriality and proposes the concept of pirate dramaturgy as both an epistemic category and an operational tool – an engaged mode of looking at performances that navigate the margins of the legal-juridical as well as the edges of forms of representation. Through close analysis of Amir and Sela's interventions in extraterritorial waters, the contribution examines how maritime zones of legal ambiguity become dramaturgical sites for alternative modes of thinking and performing ecological-political practices, while foregrounding the radical potential of extraterritoriality to engage with the oceanic turn in performance studies.

Keywords: dramaturgy, piracy, anarchism, extraterritoriality, salt waters, blue studies

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Spinning Extraterritorial Yarns: Notes Towards Pirate Dramaturgy

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Extraterritorial Yarns¹

At the time of this writing, ecological questions proceed apace alongside the rise of the far right and the waning of the political significance and the communitarian aspirations that originally shaped the foundational substance of the democratic project and its co-dwelling.² Whether in the North or in the South, the inexorable ascendancy of narrow elites – comprising major owners, purchasers and investors who orchestrate the ecological discourse with the theatrical flair of television hosts – unfolds relentlessly and unimpeded. Scientifically trained in the generation of profit and capital accumulation, these entrepreneurs, who simultaneously function and perform as entertainers, correspond exactly to those who ostensibly govern and (should) steward the *ecology*, thereby consolidating their roles as the primary architects and enforcers of juridical authority and political demarcations. What constitutes legality and what does not; who is granted legitimacy and who is excluded from that legitimacy; what is a national territory deserving of protection and/or recognition as a state and what is not; which spaces are subjected to reduction or stripped of their margins – reabsorbed and folded back into dominant political domains – and which ones are empowered to conquer and expand their conceptual

1 This article was developed within the panel Eco-Epistemologies. Transdisciplinary Horizons in Performance, proposed by the research unit PerLa – Performance Epistemologies Research Lab (Università Iuav di Venezia) and presented at the Amfiteater symposium Ecology and the Performing Arts (9–10 October 2025, SLOGI, Ljubljana). The panel brought together five contributions exploring different intersections between Performance Studies and Island Studies, Blue Studies, Critical Performance Ecologies, Environmental Necropolitics, and Digital Space and Environment, with the aim of investigating the epistemological potential of transdisciplinary approaches to performance and ecology.

2 This article was written during a research stay in Melbourne, Australia – on a continent positioned at the furthest edge of what is conventionally defined as the *West* and radically dislocated from the Mediterranean waters that form the geographical and conceptual site of this case study. It took shape in the aftermath of the August 2025 White House meeting between Donald Trump and seven European leaders convened to discuss ending the war in Ukraine. In an article published in *Il Sole 24 Ore*, titled “The Washington Summit Demonstrates the Need for the United States of Europe”, Giuliano Noci described the moment as marking not merely a Spenglerian decline but the “funeral of the West”, with Europe – or, more precisely, those whose lives unfold across its lands and seas and make it possible at all – reduced to a silent, paying audience (Noci; my translation). Events have since moved beyond what was agreed in the rooms of the White House: Russia’s attacks on Ukraine and Israel’s assault on the Palestinian population in Gaza have continued, while Europe has lost political ground, stalled for time and dissolved into fragmented leaderships increasingly subordinated to the arms race of both East and West, rather than asserting itself as a pacifist, unified yet plural voice. Europe thus appears to require not simply reform but complete reconstruction and radical reconceptualisation.

and effective geographies; who endures punishment as disobedient and bears the designation of international terrorist and who, because of complicit and blind silence or enslavement, receives celebration as the ideal citizen, the laudable servile patriot: these determinations are arbitrarily established by a small coterie of powerful people who, from their concentrated and short-sighted loci of authority, govern and exercise dominion over all others and across any terrestrial, maritime and aerial dimensions. It is within this context of juridical violence and oppression – where law becomes the instrument of elite domination rather than collective justice and where ecological narratives must be reinvented and reenacted – that it becomes urgent to situate the radical potential of piracy and its alternative world-making. In doing so, such a repositioning enables a rethinking of not only our modes of conceptualising ecology but also all the practices bound up with it. Hence, piracy needs to take the stage. But which piracy? And which stage?

In a fundamental book that rethinks Western land-oriented history by adopting a maritime gaze, Marcus Rediker (*Outlaws*) attempts to understand how the world worked at a time-space when oceans and continents – and thus, cultures and politics – were connected through crews of people boarding ships. On his voyage back and forth across the Atlantic – crossing those who were labelled *outlaws* because of the various ways they defied the laws of the day in order to resist their exploitation – the author proposes the sailor's yarn as a key for exploring what was historically hidden when discourses of dwelling, labour and resistance remained entrenched within terrestrial categories. Building on the genesis of the term, which grows from four related worlds of work – textile manufacture, fishing, rope making, seafaring – and whose original definition refers to spun fibre prepared for use in weaving or knitting (26), Marcus Rediker describes what soon takes on a meaning in nautical slang:

To spin a yarn is to tell a story or tale, usually one of maritime adventure, about dramatic shipwrecks, bloody battles, tyrannical officers, or determined resistance. These were often long, complex and colourful narratives, incorporating humorous, marvellous and fantastic elements as well as communal lore, practical knowledge of class and work and death-defying experience. The yarn is perpetually invented and reinvented in each and every maritime setting, whether at sea or ashore, as individual storytellers add their own talents and fashion their tales for an everchanging audience. The maritime story is called a yarn because of a specific labour process on the ship, where work was collective, lonely, and noncontinuous (26–27).

The collectivity, loneliness and discontinuity of yarns – and their material and immaterial evocation of strands, ropes and nets that constantly interweave – constitute the cardinal principle through which Marcus Rediker constructs his discourse around an alternative mode of inhabiting lands and seas. It is precisely within the weaving of these threads that hold together Mediterranean waters – through unexpected,

previously unmapped yet proximate and kindred routes – that this article positions itself. This article therefore argues that any rigorous, sustained reflection on ecology – whether theoretical or practical – must also pass through piracy, whose imaginary continues to exceed and unsettle the frameworks imposed by narrow, powerful elites. This intersection thus gestures toward a fundamental epistemic, aesthetic and political framework for rethinking our worlding as well as for enacting a decisive shift of perspective from land to sea, enabling us to think-through-practising radical and water-based modes of dwelling together.

Rather than addressing the full complexity of how piracy might constitute itself as a comprehensive methodology, I reserve for other contexts the upheaval and transformation it might entail.³ What I choose to foreground instead is the concept of extraterritoriality, which operates as the generative knot where the multiple yarns of the *Exterritory Project* are both tied together and spun forward into new configurations and through which I attempt to extend and develop the notion of *pirate dramaturgy* as both analytical category and creative practice.

By spanning and floating across multiple and heterogeneous dimensions and through their intrinsic and defining features of in-betweenness – simultaneously *ex-straneus* and *extra legem* and yet paradoxically and consistently citizens of a state, thereby perpetually compelled to confront and negotiate with institutional authorities and juridical frameworks – pirates have fundamentally challenged and reframed the boundaries and demarcations between legality and illegality, between legitimate and illegitimate forms of sovereignty and power (Heller-Roazen; Cotta). They have actively and strategically positioned themselves within an ongoing, contested re-negotiation and re-configuration of political power and authority, thereby significantly and continuously shaping and influencing dominant collective imaginaries about law, territory and belonging (Rediker, *Villains*). Nevertheless, as often and repeatedly occurs with those stubborn and disobedient subjectivities that attempt to resist systemic and hegemonic structures – operating simultaneously as insiders and outsiders – pirates have ultimately and perhaps inevitably been appropriated, neutralised and swallowed up by land-based jurisdictions (Sadowski). Swallowed up by the expansive, all-consuming apparatus of consumer capitalism and its cultural industries, their radical potential has been absorbed and defused. Rather than examining the popular-cultural reappropriation and commodification of piracy conceived merely and exclusively for mass consumption – carefully designed for simplistic entertainment and systematically dispossessed of its radical potential for

³ Here, I refer to another publication where I focused on the specific agency of the Jolly Roger flag to introduce the figure of the pirate as a conceptual persona who, embodying a maritime-multi-perspective, enables us to rethink critically and creatively both human-environment organisations and human-community interactions. The attempt is, thus, to reshape our dominant discourses – terrestrial and colonial – by promoting a salt-watery epistemology that facilitates the shifting, expanding and simultaneously deepening of our modes of conceptualisation and imagination, both geographical and political. See Bonanno.

genuine political transformation and collective liberation (Liang) – this contribution navigates and interrogates the contested meanings, interpretations and political orientations that remain at stake in contemporary representations of piracy. It seeks, thus, to rehabilitate and reclaim the figure of the pirate not as a dangerous and violent criminal requiring avoidance, punishment and elimination, but rather as a contemporary political symbol and practical model that embodies radical, subversive and genuinely collective ways of co-existing and organising social life, both across wet contested spaces and within terrestrial movements. Indeed, as Anselm Franke, Eyal Weizman and Ines Weizman observe:

Pirates learn how to abuse and exploit the advantage of their geography – the political voids and legal loopholes that exist in extraterritorial zones help constitute an alternative, faster, deadlier, and more efficient system of flow and circulation. Piracy was indeed for trans-oceanic trade what terrorism is for economic globalization (Franke, Weizman E., Weizman I. 121).

This comparison, while provocative and unsettling, highlights how pirates, operating outside conventional territorial frameworks, fundamentally disrupt established systems of control and circulation and, thus, embody the meaning and perspective of being extraterritorial. And it is precisely around and through this concept of extraterritoriality – which Gerhard Richter defines as “existing in a territory beyond territory, belonging to a territory while at the same time being ‘extra’ or superfluous to it” (Hart 16) – that Maayan Amir and Ruti Sela co-curated a publication entitled *Extraterritorialities in Occupied Worlds* to develop its critical and creative framework.

Edited and produced as an integral part of the broader *Exterritory* art project itself, it was specifically designed and intended to encourage and facilitate both the theoretical investigation and practical exploration of ideas and concepts concerning extraterritoriality in all its dimensions. And thus, the whole project explicitly and ambitiously attempts “not only to draw on existing definitions of extraterritoriality but seeks to reload it with new meanings, searching for ways in which the notion of extraterritoriality could produce a critique of discriminating power structures and re-articulate new practical, conceptual and poetical possibilities” (Amir and Sela 15). It does so by generating a network of intellectual, artistic and professional connections that circumvent national politics and social hierarchies, while setting up enclaves of *(temporary) freedom*.⁴

⁴ This expression *(temporary) freedom* directly recalls the authors’ own description of their work and helps to clarify its meaning and perspective. The full statement from which this expression is taken is the following: “*Exterritory* is an art project that strives to create a platform for knowledge production and exchange in an autonomous space temporarily free from grounding national restraints. The project wishes to become a platform in transit of (temporary) freedom.” For further insights, see the website of the artists or this link: <https://www.visibleproject.org/project-4/exterritory-project/>.

The TAZ is like an uprising which does not engage directly with the State, a guerrilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, before the State can crush it. Because the State is concerned primarily with Simulation rather than substance, the TAZ can 'occupy' these areas clandestinely and carry on its festal purposes for quite a while in relative peace. [...] As soon as the TAZ is named (represented, mediated), it must vanish, it will vanish, leaving behind it an empty husk, only to spring up again somewhere else, once again invisible because of undefinable in terms of the Spectacle. The TAZ is thus a perfect tactic for an era in which the State is omnipresent and all-powerful and yet simultaneously riddled with cracks and vacancies. And because the TAZ is a microcosm of that 'anarchist dream' of a free culture, I can think of no better tactic by which to work toward that goal while at the same time experiencing some of its benefits here and now. (Bey, *The Temporary* 128)

TAZ is the abbreviation for Temporary Autonomous Zone, a concept conceived by the anarchist Hakim Bey in his manifesto to "highlight indeterminate zones within late capitalism, everyday occurrences that refuse, whether by accident or design, to be incorporated into dominant narratives" (Sellars 83). This manifesto became an extraordinarily divisive text in anarchist circles and revolutionary movements as well as in cyberculture – a complexity and a controversy that, while fascinating and generative, I do not intend to explore further here, leaving a more thorough engagement with its theoretical and political waves for other contexts.⁵ What is instead relevant to underline is the role of the TAZ as a site that, precisely because of its extraterritoriality, actualises those times and spaces in which freedom is possible and truly materialised. Specifically, it is through its temporality and its capacity to exist simultaneously beyond the State, the Nation and any institutional law, that the TAZ, as the first modern form of *pirate utopia* (Bey, *The Temporary* 163), constitutes exactly the epistemic category by means of which the *Exterritory Project* might be examined and reframed. Just as pirate utopias – stateless, mobile, organised according to their own codes and articles⁶ – were conceived as temporary formations enacted across ungovernable, ungoverned waters, so too does this project unfold upon and perform with Mediterranean salt waters: a

⁵ For a general overview of the relevance of Temporary Autonomous Zones' conception and its declinations and effects in current global politics and philosophical, ecological knowledge production, see, among others, Waalwijk, Swanstrom and Polyakov.

⁶ The features and organisational structures of pirate utopias are first traced by Hakim Bey – pseudonym of Peter Lamborn Wilson – in his essay "Pirate Utopias", in which he outlines pirate enclaves as early forms of proto-anarchist societies that operated beyond the reach of state governance and embraced radical, if provisional, forms of freedom. On the radical and anarchist potential of pirate figures and communities as models of alternative political organisation see: Bey, *Pirate utopias*; Graeber, *Fragments*; Graeber, *Pirate enlightenment*.

temporary space beyond territorial control that materialises alternative modes of co-dwelling in the gaps between territorial jurisdictions. As Bey himself insists:

It is not a harbinger of some pie-in-the-sky Social Utopia to which we must sacrifice our lives that our children's children may breathe a bit of free air. The TAZ must be the scene of our present autonomy, but it can only exist on the condition that we already know ourselves as free beings (Bey, *The Temporary* 173).

It is precisely within this condition – of recognising one's own freedom and finding the space and the time in which to perform it – that the dramaturgy of the project takes shape. Freedom, here, is not an abstract ideal or a given, but rather a field of practice that must be continuously negotiated, reclaimed and practised. It is by floating on this dramaturgical intention that the project positions itself as a site of experimentation, where the act of practising and the act of thinking are not separated but deeply entangled, each informing and transforming the other. Significantly, it is through its thinking-through-practice (Bleeker, *Doing* 23–48) radical forms of freedom that dramaturgy, finally and extensively, turns into a mode of enacting that goes beyond its simple technical or organisational function. It becomes, instead, that “catalytic mode of working that has the capacity to activate processes that in today's sociopolitical and economic context could be understood as indirect, inefficient, interfering, or negatively efficient” (Georgelou, Protopapa, Theodoridou 21). As such, dramaturgy positions itself as a form of resistance to the dominant logics of productivity and measurable outcome, insisting on the value of what escapes easy quantification – the slow, the oblique, the unresolved. In doing so, it becomes a salt-soaked path for circumventing any form of control and, above all, for creating alternative forms of coexistence and reciprocity capable of holding together artists and thinkers from conflict zones where such encounters are usually denied.

Moving towards wet routes – attentive, tentative, inhabiting ungovernable and contested spaces – the project suggests intersections of currents that escape any terrestrial positioning and plunge into water-based sites. In so doing, any sense of being bound by the State dissolves, making it possible to recreate that maritime dimension of the *jus publicum Europaeum* described by Schmitt, in which a form of freedom irreducible to its terrestrial counterpart is activated by ships as essentially non-state vessels (Schmitt 172–173). Within this stateless geography, the *Exterritory Project* was conceived in 2009, when Maayan Amir and Ruti Sela began searching for a neutral space in which to screen a compilation of films by artists from the Middle East. As Alice Pfeiffer reports in the Global Edition of the *New York Times*, “the only space that appeared to be suitable, allowing people from countries in conflict to show their work together, was a strip of extraterritorial water 11 kilometres, or about seven miles, off Israel in the Mediterranean. The

strip is generally about 13 kilometres wide, beyond which lie international waters" (1).⁷

Floating on salt waters and escaping from land-bound laws, the project then began as a platform for critical thinking on the problems of nations and borders worldwide and, in particular, as an attempt to find a way to curate artist events and seminars in the context of the ongoing Palestinian boycott of Israeli cultural institutions, seeking a mutually accessible space free from questions of boundaries and hyper-national claims.⁸ The live performance – and the whole concept of the project – started with the projection of a video named *Wild West*, which was presented on the sails of a boat in June 2009 in the extraterritorial strip, and it was followed online by thousands of viewers around the world. The main intention was to suspend national borders by perceiving salt waters as a “space of experiential unruliness” (Hildebrandt 188) and as one of those (few) things which cannot become private property, since no part of the sea – historically and traditionally – can be considered as a territory owned by any people whatsoever (Grotius 84). While lands are occupied, the sea remains outside any sovereignty – and thus, it creates an image of art exhibited in an ungovernable space, a meeting point for artists and practitioners from various currents of knowledge drawn to its potential and its radical agency of freedom. After the first projection, over the following nine months, Maayan Amir and Ruti Sela worked on a new, broader edition of the project, studying the notion of territory from multiple perspectives – legal, linguistic, sociological, artistic – to explore the capacity of extraterritoriality to hold certain people, spaces, images at a distance removed from their usual legal system, by questioning and practising this distancing – this representational logic – the artists attempt “to encourage the need to rethink the limits of current political concepts, as well as those of current modes of relation between law, representation and space. These shape what is perceived as the political sphere and consequently the art world” (Heiman para 3).

The subsequent edition of the project – planned for June 2010 and taking the form of a floating journey departing from Israel’s extraterritorial waters towards Cyprus – was launched through an open call to which artists and curators around the world responded. A week before the planned departure, Turkish aid ships bound for Gaza were attacked by Israeli commandos. And yet, despite warnings from the Israeli army to interrupt, the artists proceeded. The result was a resounding success: nearly 7,000 viewers followed online, with 24 artists and 50 programmes presented. Videos, photographs and images in motion were projected from boat to boat while

7 Not by chance, it is on this same strip of water that, from 31 May 2010, the Israeli Defence Force began boarding and seizing vessels of the Free Gaza Movement aid flotilla: civilian convoys that had been sailing to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza. Far from being silenced, the movement has since grown into a global initiative – the Freedom Flotilla Coalition and now Global Sumud Flotilla – bringing together activists, artists and solidarity networks from across the world, who continue to challenge the blockade and the political conditions that sustain it. At the time of this writing, an even larger expedition is expected in March 2026 – as a sign that the call for freedom does not diminish but multiplies. For further insights, see: Sanger, De Jong.

8 To explore this further, see Sutton.

conferences and conversations were held on open desks and on beaches. Alternative and heterogeneous forms of gathering were witnessed by participants, filmed by the organisers and followed live online. These unfolded simultaneously across a stretch of extraterritorialities that extends the notion of territoriality – conventionally defined as “the attempt to affect, influence, or control actions and interactions by asserting and attempting to enforce control over a geographic area” (Sack 55). As such, extraterritoriality becomes a critical, creative attempt to articulate a dimension that moves beyond territory – predominantly conceived as the instrument of control over people and spaces. In this regard, in a short essay, Leonardo Mastromauro discusses the unstable, ungraspable and unownable definition of the South(s) as an intensity that traverses social and spatial relations and, by deactivating the operations of the geopolitical machine, opens life to the dimension of what he defines as *the inappropriable*. The notion of *inappropriability* thus becomes the conceptual and imaginal category that stands against every form of governability and sovereignty, of control and administration, against the power of purchase, possession and subjugation within national flags and militarised borders. What is particularly interesting to note here is that, to arrive at this concept, Leonardo Mastromauro takes an etymological detour tracing the Latin root of the word *territory* back to *terrere*, which specifically recalls the verbs “to terrify” and “to frighten” (53–57). By navigating the intersection of Indigenous and Mediterranean studies, this etymological move draws attention to the ways in which the exercise of domination has historically constituted the founding act of territory and the category through which the relationship between social, cultural and political space has most often been conceived and enacted, thought-practiced. Such a semantic framework brings into sharp relief the close and almost symbiotic relationship between territory and the notion of the State. As Ryngaert argues, the State exercises its governmental authority over its territory to the exclusion of other States, thereby producing a condition bound up with the drawing of ever more rigid territorial boundaries (2). How, then, might such lines of separation be rethought? How might such demarcations begin to dissolve? And perhaps most urgently – assuming a language in which the sea is figured as a space of political militancy – how might we *break the siege*⁹ and engage anew with the notion of frontiers and blockage? It is in response to these questions that the blue and oceanic studies might offer a particularly generative, both theoretical and practical, immaterial and sensory horizon.

Sustained and articulated by Steve Mentz, *blue humanities* – understood through “wet narratives [that] emphasize disorder, disorientation, and rupture” and “a

9 Here I refer to the slogan of the Freedom Flotilla Coalition and the Global Sumud Flotilla, which gained widespread visibility particularly following 7 October 2023, in pro-Palestinian demonstrations on a global scale. The reference is also connected to the title of a song written collaboratively during their recent expeditions, which has become a symbol of resistance against Israel's blockade of Gaza. For further details, see the movement's official websites: <https://freedomflotilla.org/>, <https://www.globalsumudflotilla.org/>.

dry countermovement that attempts to make sense and meaning out of disaster" (*Shipwreck Modernity* 11) – provide a platform for scholars who have shifted their attention from land-bound frameworks to the movements of seawaters, advocating a maritime multiperspectival approach embodied and enacted through watery metaphors. Central to this reorientation and deterritorialization is the rethinking of the language through which we habitually make, compose and manipulate reality – a mode of conceptualising the world that is entrenched and deeply anchored to the need of grounding, rooting, landing (Jue 11–15). Contrary to any dry structure that has historically and predominantly operated in the definition of geopolitical agency and ecological domains – mostly drawn from customary Western discursive maps that usually "harbor a colonialist mindset" (Oppermann 3) – blue humanities seek to raise critical awareness about our relations among (extra)territorialities and politics. According to Joanna Zylinska, the ontological shift toward a model of being, thinking and acting with saltwater is underpinned by multiple ethical and political demands. As she writes, adopting an epistemology engaged with sea and ocean allows us "to repair historical injustice that has resulted in the impairing of our own 'Western' epistemological frameworks and to learn from others about how to think and live otherwise" (Zylinska 65).

In order to materialise possible forms of solution – or at least formulate tools with which to begin – Steve Mentz, in his book *Ocean*, proposes a series of conceptual substitutions that quietly but insistently challenge the terrestrial bias deeply embedded in our modes of conceptualisation and representation of the world – a vocabulary that has for too long been grounded in the stability and fixity suggested by the very notion of "fields" of research (xv–xviii). Among these substitutions, the term ship replaces the notion of state, gesturing towards the ways in which salt waters, rather than solid, bounded and boundable land, might centre heterotopic and relational forms of belonging that resist the enclosures of national sovereignty (Mentz xvi–xvii; see also Kuhn). The boat thus becomes a space that – inhabiting the sea – positions itself beyond the nation-state and dwells within those extraterritorial dimensions that open onto alternative ways of relating to the world. Not by chance, boats, sails and screens on waters are the media through which the entire dramaturgy of the *Exterritory Project* is conceived and performed. What kind of world, then, could take shape from within this unstable position? And what type of dramaturgy intervenes in its constitution? How, finally, might dramaturgy turn into a practice of worlding?

A Small Pirate Planet

In her essay "EF's Visit to a Small Planet" (2004), Elinor Fuchs elaborates what a dramaturgical mode of looking entails by proposing the image of a small planet: as

if any performance, any play, any dramatic action operates to create a world that functions according to its own internal logic and laws. Imagining dramaturgy as a map with coordinates – as well as metamorphosis, genealogy, presence and proximity of bodies – Elinor Fuchs proposes a theoretical gaze that locates within dramaturgy a small world, a specific mode of inhabiting the stage that gradually opens onto a mode of inhabiting geography more broadly. Without dwelling on the full detail of a text that begins, not by chance, with an illustration of *A Chart of Mars* by Sir Robert Stawell Ball – as if to suggest the visual composition of a planet, the attempt to define it, map it, measure it, draw it in order to understand it, without ever exhausting it – dramaturgy and the mode of looking it carries (Bleeker, “Dramaturgy” 166) emerge here as instruments of observation and making. In so doing, they reveal themselves as media through and with which performers imagine, enact and bring the audience into a world:

A play is not a flat work of literature, not a description in poetry of another world, but is in itself another world passing before you in time and space. Language is only one part of this world. Those who think too exclusively in terms of language find it hard to read plays. When you “see” this other world, when you experience its space-time dynamics, its architectonics, then you can figure out the role of language in it. If too tight a focus on language makes it hard to read plays, too tight a focus on character creates the opposite problem: it makes the reading too easy. To look at dramatic structures narrowly in terms of characters risks unproblematically collapsing this strange world into our own world. The stage world never obeys the same rules as ours, because in its world, nothing else is possible besides what is there: no one else lives there; no other geography is available; no alternative actions can be taken (Fuchs 6).

We might generally assume that the world established by dramaturgy itself is *ex-straneus* to the one inhabited by its audience – as if it were a purely aesthetic experience. Yet, since the aesthetic dimension is inherent in any radical emancipatory politics and is constitutive of a specific mode of dwelling (Žižek 131), what kind of world might the practice of dramaturgy, becoming pirate, establish? And then, since every action constructs its own precise ecology, how might a pirate dramaturgy, in its extraterritorial dimension beyond land-bound paradigms, construct an aesthetics – and, ultimately, a politics? More precisely, and perhaps most urgently: how might dramaturgy construct a pirate planet? Pertinent to observe – and in order to sketch a few notes to be developed elsewhere – is the political role of this thinking-through-practice. If dramaturgy is indeed:

a politicized practice itself that provides a *ground* on which to address artistic production by working within structures and reimagining our relation to them at the same time, in order to produce something that exceeds them, a socialization perhaps that cannot be restricted either to the confines of an artistic project or to

then how might we think and rethink it through the pirate imaginary? And what might this entail in practice? Answering these questions would require considerably more space than is available here; what remains pertinent to note, however, is the need to return, once more, to the etymological roots of the word dramaturgy itself – that is, to the Greek terms of *drama* and *ergon*, action and work, which become critical and creative knots as well as a productive point of departure (Georgelou, Protopapa, Theodoridou 74–92). This etymological detour, indeed, raises the question of what these actions are and in which spaces they need to be enacted. By working through these reflections, the concept of *pirate dramaturgy* takes shape, then, as an imaginal and material methodology drawn from the pirate commonwealth built upon ships. Its horizontal organisation, its position within extraterritorialities and its constitutive generation of radical democratic law-making (Land) allow us to rethink any ecological discourse bound to the abode – *oikos* and *logos*, yet again – moving beyond the concept of *domus* and thus resisting domestication, mastery, centrism (Malabou 219). Furthermore, it mobilises and activates a practice capable of sabotaging and reinventing the dominant terrestrial modes of knowledge production, both epistemic and aesthetic. Such a dramaturgy becomes, then, not merely the work of the actions of performance, but the scope of transformations that may derive from and be affected by the enactment of the performance itself (Stanger 220).

Like pirates who set sail across extraterritorialities, under a flag that no longer performs its sovereign function of proscription and exclusion, moving through strategies that exceed national laws – not merely hijacking and disrupting, but inventing otherwise – the *Exterritory Project* charts such a course. In so doing, Maayan Amir and Ruti Sela stage perhaps the most urgent attempt to reclaim those communitarian aspirations and that foundational democratic project that needs to set back into circulation a free mode of thinking and practising – temporary, yet constant and repeatable – both onshore and offshore. These are the sites that Jacques Rancière calls “the happy shores of the free exchange of goods and bodies” – that is, the shores of democratic politics (Rancière 47). Sailing and composing on the waterfront then, it turns dramaturgy into a pirate practice of worlding: a stubborn, engaged and radically democratic antidote to the political and terrestrial burn(out).

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