YEAR IN REVIEW 2021-2022

FEMINIST AUTONOMOUS CENTRE FOR RESEARCH
CONTENTS

REFLECTIONS
  all that we have is one another
  FAC’s ecosystem

SHIFTS AND TRANSFORMATIONS
  growing the FAC collective
  community
  internships

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

HIGHLIGHTS
  new research projects

PUBLICATIONS

FAC IN THE MEDIA
Entering the 2021–2022 academic year last September, we were hopeful but cautious about the possibilities of opening up the space and meeting, again, in person. This proved only to be possible on a limited scale. We had dozens of meetings with individuals, and several small working groups, online or in person wearing masks, keeping distances, self-testing, tracking who entered the space in order to prevent transmissions and offer support to people getting ill.

It has become abundantly clear, if it wasn’t already, that all we have is one another: the only ones who care about our survival and flourishing are each other. Resisting business as usual and affective austerity, vaccine apartheid and bordered public feelings, we tried to practice mutual aid, to break solitude, and to figure out how to (and whether to) come back together in shared space again.

This past year, we navigated the vicissitudes of the ongoing pandemic, ongoing and newly declared wars and invasions, the regime of extractive, neoliberal capitalism, and the undeclared war zone of patriarchy, state violence, including violently policed borders and cities, dangerous domestic spaces, hostile public spaces and discourses. It is extremely difficult to maintain an optimism of the will in a world literally on fire. Our being together, working together has helped us find ways to persist.

Speaking of persistence, over the past year, we focussed on the sustainability of FAC through the membership drive as well as making applications for grants to fund specific projects (including the Feminist Library). We sought to take care of our ecosystem, its roots and branches extending through collaboration with members and communities in Athens and around the world. See page X for an account of these thriving relationships, which nurture and enliven everything we do at FAC.

We organised the fifth annual Feminist No Borders summer school, which took place in June simultaneously in three cities (Heraklion, Palermo, and Berlin) and virtually (from FAC in Athens), with hybrid links between the four nodes, delighting in the possibility of encountering each other, and knowing that even across distances we can share in the intimacy of shared political visions, utopian imaginations, and working together toward a borderless world. The summer school focussed on theories and praxis of border and prison abolition, COVID borders/bordering through COVID, and positionality in research and activism. See page 14 for more details and look out for our upcoming calls for node organisers and participants for the 6th annual Feminist No Borders Summer School, to take place in June 2022.

In the coming year, our focus is on abolition: of police, prisons, borders, and the carceral logics and state and interpersonal violences that infuse our lives; on refusal: of racialised and gendered regimes of rule and representation; and resistance: against the criminalisation of people on the move, against the banalisation of feminicide and normalisation of violence against lesbians, trans people, and LGBTQI+ communities, against the inevitability of necropolitical capitalism and its crises.

TO THEIR SO-CALLED “COST OF LIVING CRISIS,” WE ANSWER WITH: OUR LIVES ARE PRICELESS!

TO THEIR WARS, OCCUPATIONS, AND TRIALS, WE ANSWER WITH: NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE!

TO THE WEAPONISATION OF OUR INHERENT VULNERABILITIES, OUR DESIRES, OUR VERY SURVIVAL, WE ANSWER WITH: SOLIDARITY IS OUR ONLY WEAPON!

Yours in struggle,
Aila, Anna, Camille, Carmen, Deanna, Lia, Myrto, and Penny
The FAC collective
“FAC’S ECOSYSTEM”

During the past year, we reflected on how our ecosystem looks like. By ecosystem, we mean the people, groups, communities, spaces we interact with in various forms, geographies and possibilities.

We also discussed how the “circle” plays a special role in the way we operate at FAC: we use the circle in our meetings as a tool to speak with intent and actively listen to each other; we open and close our meetings with a circle of care. The circle provides a safe(r) space for all voices to be heard; it allows polyphony and horizontality.

With all these in mind, we thought of FAC as an ecosystem of concentric circles like the ones in the cross-section of a tree trunk. The heart-wood is the central supporting pillar of the tree. In FAC, the heartwood is represented by the FAC collective.

Then, there is the sapwood, the active part of the tree’s wood through which water and minerals are conducted from the roots to the leaves, stores nutrients and helps to support the tree. In FAC, the research areas are its sapwood.

Then, there is the concentric growth ring that is divided into earlywood and latewood indicating the amount of wood added to a tree’s diameter in one growing season. Our concentric growth ring is the amalgam of collaborations and partnerships, some dating from the early start of FAC and others much more recent but equally valuable for FAC’s ecosystem.

There is, then, the bark—inner and outer—that insulates the tree against temperature extremes and keeps heartwood, sapwood, and all other concentric rings from drying out. FAC’s members and our broader community are our inner bark that support our tree to grow while the collectives and movements are our outer bark.

Our ecosystem of concentric circles is a living organism of human and more-than-human elements that come into dialogue and synergy. It’s an amalgam of materials, knowledges, people, animals, and space growing together.

We were thrilled that the FAC collective grew over the past year, with the addition of Lia and Camille.

LIA SMARAGDOU FOUKIS joined the FAC collective in 2021 as co-coordinator of the research area Art as Research: Visual, Performative, and Documentary Knowledges. Lia is a performance and visual artist. Her artistic practice involves performance art and self portrait photography/videography to explore themes of humour, cringe, political correctness, gender, and transfeminism. Lia received her MA in performance making from Goldsmiths College, University of London and her BA in photography and audiovisual arts from the University of West Attica. She has been training in painting and music since childhood, and later in dance. Lia was a core member of CUNTemporary, overseeing various aspects of the public programmes including stage management, technical coordination of conferences and exhibitions as well as Djing. They are a founding member of 34es queer arts collective and a member of Aplakoi music company.

After co-organising the Palermo node of the 5th Annual Feminist No Borders Summer School, CAMILLE GENDROT joined the FAC collective in 2022 as co-coordinator of the research area Mobility: Migrations and Borders. Camille is a PhD Candidate in Public International Law at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne and a research fellow of the Institut Convergences des Migrations. Her research is focussed on the mobilities rights of persons in West Africa, the legal processes of facilitation and criminalisation of mobilities and the impacts of the international system on the construction of regional rights. Camille is also part of the Watch the Med–Alarm Phone activist network, with a particular focus on the Western Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic. She recently participated in the coordination of a chapter of the Atlas des migrations dans le monde : libertés de circulation, frontières, inégalités (with Alizée Dauchy, under the direction of Sara Casella-Colombeau. Migreurop, 2022, Armand Colin).
As a community-based research centre, which seeks to bridge research and political interventions, FAC is enlivened by participation and autonomous organising.

We are honoured to share space and feminist community with the following collectives who meet regularly at FAC, holding assemblies, making banners and placards for demonstrations, and organising events, mutual aid, and solidarity actions.

Shout out to our sisters and siblings in the struggle:

KAMIA ANOHI
FURKA
MID
QUEEREBT
SABBAT

FAC hosted ZA’ATAR on its premises from winter 2021 until fall 2022 after the non-profit organisation losing its space due to the sudden withdrawal of its funding. Za’atar offered sociolegal support as well as language classes to people seeking asylum and to people with precarious migration statuses and ran the Atlas programme for LGBTQI+ refugees.

The FAC collective was pleased to collaborate with Keni, Ronja, and Hatim, who lent their skills, knowledges, and infectious enthusiasm in the context of the internship programme:

KENI LI
University of Edinburgh, UK
(17/1 to 30/5/2022)

RONJA ROSEMEYER
University of Göttingen, Germany
(1/3 to 30/4/2022)

HATIM RACHDI
Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar
(29/5 to 15/7/2022)

We are grateful for all their contributions to the Feminist Library and the Feminist No Borders Summer School!
### Membership Drive

The membership drive ensures FAC’s **day-to-day sustainability and autonomy** from state institutions and foundations. Our aim is to fund FAC’s basic expenses through the membership drive. We did not run a membership drive in 2020 or 2021 due to the pandemic. In 2022, we held our second annual membership drive. **We are grateful to the 287 people** who kept FAC going this year.

- **287** members
- **10,454** amount raised in euro
- **37** average annual donation in euro
- **100%** percentage of FAC’s expenses covered
- **2,284** solidarity contributions raised and redistributed* in euro

*During the 5th annual Feminist No Borders Summer School, participants donated in €2284.34 in solidarity contributions, which we redistributed to 10 collectives/organisations that were invited to participate (see page 14).

### Financial Overview

#### Income
- **Memberships**: 10,454

#### Expenses
- **Rent**: 2,600
- **Utilities**: 1198
- **Telecommunications**: 413
- **Accountant**: 910
- **Tax and Insurance**: 100
- **Equipment/Supplies**: 2991
- **Staff Training**: 70
- **Platform and Banking Fees**: 637
- **Catering**: 84
- **Books**: 136
- **Labour****: 0

**Total Expenses**: 10,336

**Income less Expenses**: 117

**Note**: With the exception of funded research projects, all of the labour that has gone into coordinating FAC and delivering its programming has been **voluntary and without remuneration**.
NOVEMBER 2021

We hosted a meeting of the BRIDGES research team and began working on the final project task, which was the co-writing of a research monograph based on narrative productions.

In the context of the fifth Women in Film and Television festival, we participated in a roundtable ("No You Are Not Wrong!") about domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gendered violence organised and chaired by WIFT GR president Rea Walldén.

DECEMBER 2021

Anna Carastathis gave the keynote address at the Migrant Civic Practices in Times of Crisis conference (Institute for Culture and Society at Western Sydney University), organised by Sukhmani Khorana. The talk, based on a forthcoming article (co-authored with Myrto Tsilimpoundi) urged disrupting visual narratives of displacement and focussed on (non) citizen/refugee photojournalism in conditions of perpetual displacement in Lesvos, increasingly characterised by state-enforced media blackouts and carceral encampment.


JANUARY 2022

We suspended in person activities and plans due to the Omicron wave...

FEBRUARY 2022

We were interviewed by Vica Kravtsova for Feminist Translocalities, an online journal, matrix of feminist utopias, zine, exhibitions and events about feminist theory and history.

MARCH 2022

We hosted Sabah Choudrey during their visit to Athens and held a launch event about their recently published book, Supporting Trans People of Colour: How to make your practice inclusive (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2022), which provides an introduction to issues around People of Colour (POC) trans inclusion, using case studies, tips, checklists, and anonymous survey results to set out best practice for any professionals working with trans people to create safer spaces, support and awareness.

We launched our second annual membership drive (on hiatus during the lockdown years of the pandemic), see pages 8-9 for details.

APRIL 2022

A working group was formed to provide support around individual experiences of sexual harassment and gendered violence during research fieldwork and to strategise collective responses. The group continues to meet virtually on a monthly basis.

We held a public workshop to launch Why We Fight, a virtual archive of stories of how people came to be involved in the struggle against gendered violence. The archive is still collecting stories, which you can submit through the website. The project was conceived and initiated by Tim Coomar, who also built the website in collaboration with graphic designer Anastasia Koktsidou.

We organised an online roundtable discussion with CITY Journal and Nuart Journal with the editors and contributors to the Special Feature on Inscriptions of Crisis: Graffiti, Street Art, and Urban Interventions in CITY 25(3-4). Editors Myrto Tsilimpoundi and Anna Carastathis organised and facilitated the roundtable, with the participation of contributors Julia Tulke (University of Rochester), Oksana Zaporozhets (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography), Susan Hansen (Middlesex University), Paridhi Gupta (Jawaharlal Nehru University), Piyarat Panlee (Kasetsart University), Sarah H. Awad (Aalborg University), Konstantinos Avramidis (University of Cyprus). You can read a transcript of the discussion in Nuart Journal 3(2): 126–133.

We held the first online discussion in the series Transfeminist International! about an insurgent, no borders, intersectionalist transfeminism. Invited Speakers: Marquis Bey (Northwestern University, Author of Black Trans Feminism), Jules Joanne Cleeson (Co-editor of Transgender Marxism), Elle O’Rourke (Editor, New Socialist, Co-editor of Transgender Marxism), Trish Salah (Queen’s University, Author of Wanting in Arabic: Poems and Lyric Sexology Vol. 1), McKenzie Wark (The New School, Author of Capital Is Dead: Is This Something Worse?). A video recording of the invited speakers’ provocations (with Greek subtitles) and a book documenting the discussion are forthcoming.

FAC hosted an exploratory workshop, Learning with African communities in Athens: Exploring urban citizenship through cultural interventions in the city, with researchers in the project Decolonising the City. Co-designing a participatory arts-based
In July, the BRIDGES project concluded. BRIDGES ran from November 2019 to July 2022 and was funded through the ERASMUS+/SEPIE Strategic Partnership scheme (2019-1-ES01-KA203-06442; FAC received 50,105 euro). With our collaborators in universities and community organisations we used participatory action methods to produce a toolkit, we designed a course curriculum, and wrote a book based on narrative productions about migration, antiracist feminism, and decolonial knowledges, entitled Dismantling Walls, Building Bridges: Creating antiracist feminist alliances within, outside, and against universities (FAC press, 2022). You can find all of the project’s open access outputs on the BRIDGES website.

Za’atar organised an art exhibit entitled Hospitality in the Context of Migration at FAC, featuring refugee, asylum-seeker, and migrant artists to question the meanings of home and hospitality. Two works have remained on display at FAC courtesy of the artist, Francesco Ymeraj.

Penny Travlou participated in Documenta15, Kassel as a member of the research team of the Power to the Commons! Assembly (funded by DOEN Foundation, Netherlands), an ongoing collaborative project developed through a partnership of arts initiatives in Latin America and Africa within lumbung artists in Arts Collaboratory.

**AUGUST 2022**

Decolonising urban knowledge(s): an ordinary imperative in extraordinary times. Penny Travlou organised a panel session in the RC21 International Conference, Athens, with: Catalina Ortiz (UCL), Giulia Testori (Joint Research Centre European Commission, Seville), Marina Toneli Siqueira (Univeridade Federal do Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil). This panel brought together transdisciplinary researchers and practitioners on the avenues to decolonise urban knowledge(s) and foster epistemic justice around city making.

**SEPTEMBER 2022**

Deanna Dadusc and Camille Gendrot organised a three-day workshop in Palermo on the Criminalisation of the Facilitation of Migration. We brought together several activist groups and community organisations involved in the struggles for de-criminalisation of migration, to build upon our shared experience and expertise, to reflect on our work from an intersectional and abolitionist perspective, and to develop common strategies and campaigns to challenge and resist criminalisation both on a legal and political level. The workshops were
Lesbians against patriarchal violence: Lesbians as political subjects. Panel at the Lesbian Feminist Festival, Kypseli Public Market, Athens. What are the representations, the constructions and the aesthetics of the category “lesbian”? What does a lesbian look like? Is there a way to live our lives “out and proud” in a heteronormative society that constantly renders us invisible? Myrto Tsilimpassounidi, Carmen Zografou, and Simone Stergioula talked about all this, but also about our sexualities, desires, and participation in a non-essentialist, inclusive and intersectional community with and among lesbians.

We participated in the community table at the Athens Art Book Fair with our first FAC press publication, Come Let Me Tell You: Feminist, Lesbian, and Queer Narratives of the Post-dictatorship Period.

OCTOBER

After many delays and postponements due to the pandemic, the Community Course on Abolition Feminisms began! Eleven fantastic participants meet weekly with Anna Carastathis to engage in a collective process of enquiry that will result in an edited volume on the feminist politics of abolition. (A parallel reading group on the same topic, convened by Valentina Azarova, Anna Carastathis, and Myrto Tsilimpassounidi, will begin in November 2022.)

Melina Voulgaridou Toelle offered a queer/trans-positive workshop on do-it-yourself yoga, reclaiming a yoga practice from the commodification of yoga.

Inside, Things are Dancing. A series of workshops were offered, which approached theory not as an abstract thing or a body of work but as a cosmos that informs daily gestures and objects with an anticipatory illumination. Simone Stergioula led participants through a process of entering theory and approaching it as an imaginative, playful, and personal practice.

A new collaboration began with RIZA, Urban Gardens Athens, to work together creatively to imagine FAC’s backyard as our new safe outdoor haven. The garden will be co-designed and maintained by a working group consisting of members of collectives that meet regularly at FAC.

Starting in July 2022, the Feminist Library under construction at FAC research, together with MiQ, a collective of second-generation Albanian Athenians who meet at FAC, have been participating in The Europe Challenge.

In this context, we are working on two research projects. ANA-MESA/ndërmjet/in between: an oral history project with Albanian immigrants living in Greece; and the Network of feminist libraries: an effort to map, connect with, and engage in mutual support with feminist libraries around the world.

The RESIST project, funded by the European Union (Horizon Europe) and the Swiss and UK governments, will run for 4 years and will involve collaborations with 40 grassroots queer feminist collectives and organisations in eight countries: Ireland, Spain, Belarus, France, Switzerland, Poland, Germany, and Greece, including people living in exile across Europe due to ‘anti-gender’ politics.

RESIST is coordinated by University College Dublin, in collaboration with co-investigators at the Feminist Autonomous Centre for research, Edinburgh Napier University, European University Viadrina, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Université de Lausanne, Université de Fribourg, Maynooth University, Universitat Pompeu Fabra.
What follows is a list of publications (many of them open access) by members of the FAC collective and our collaborators, published in 2021-2022.


Carastathis, Anna (2022). Break the Silencing: Gendered violence from the incomprehensible to the unthinkable [in Greek]. Let’s talk about mass media #4: The Greek #MeToo and public discourse. ENA Institute of Alternative Politics.


Travlou, Penny and Bernat, Aniko (2022). Solidarity and Care Economy in Times of ‘Crisis’: A View from Greece and Hungary between 2015 and 2020. In V. Česnautytė, A. Klimczuk, C. Miguel, and...
Travlou, Penny and Pettas, Dimitris (2021). Touristification, Airbnb sharing economy and resistance against their impact on local neighbourhoods in Athens, COST Action From Sharing To Caring: Examining Socio-Technical Aspects of the Collaborative Economy. Podcast Series organised by Nicholas Nicol, University of Nicosia, Cyprus.


The Feminist Autonomous Centre for Research aspires to produce knowledge with the participation of the community and horizontal processes of learning [in Greek] by Klelia Arbilia for In Exarchia.

FAC: This is a feminist call to action! [in Greek] by Anastasia Valtopoulou for Popaganda News.

FAC: An emerging feminist community in the centre of Athens [in Greek] by Anna Kokori for Lifo.


Thank you for reading!