

PRESS RELEASE

art•emis

Presentation of the bilingual edition

Περί Φιλανθρωπίας / On Philanthropy

Thursday 17 December 2009 at 7 pm

Zaimi 7, Exarcheia

Speakers:

Gianis Varoufakis, Professor at the Athens University

Anthony S. Papadimitriou, President of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation

Eugenios Trivizas, Author

The discussion will be chaired by Katerina Koskina,

Artistic Director of the J.F. Costopoulos Foundation

In philanthropic terms, our age of Corporate Responsibility and international humanitarian campaigns seems far removed from the era in which Saint Paul wrote to the Galatians exhorting them to “remember the poor”. And yet what Bataille calls the “accursed share” (*la part maudite*) and the use to which it is put remain a valid cultural barometer. So is “money the nerve of things” (*nervus rerum pecuniam*), as Cicero wrote? Perhaps so; perhaps not.

Philanthropy is often cited in public discourse in which it can figure as a value or a demand, but also as a critical parameter in our social and political activities. Convinced that the rhetoric of philanthropy draws some of its arguments from the same tanks of ideas and perceptions that feed into the theoretical and practical framework of our cultural production, art•emis set out to explore various historical, political and ethical aspects of this complex and often ambiguous notion.

Espousing the Fundamental Principle that creativity presupposes cooperation, art•emis has prioritised an exploration of the sphere of contemporary cultural processes and the production of original cultural discourse. In this context, contributions were sought from authors, academics, thinkers and representatives of philanthropic organizations in the belief that this would lead—irrespective of the degree to which their views converged or diverged—to a fruitful, though unavoidably fragmentary, collective thesis on philanthropy.

For giving, as the sociologist Marcell Mauss would write in his *An essay on the gift*¹, isn't one-dimensional, it's part of a triadic process: we don't just give, we also receive and reciprocate.

On Philanthropy features contributions from Yangos Andreadis, Gianis Varoufakis, Filippos Drakontaeidis, Theodoros Ziakas, Vasilis Karapostolis, Dionysis Kapsalis, Vaso Kinti, Ioannis Metaxas, Marios Begzos, Vasilis Papavasileiou, Anthony S. Papadimitriou, Stephanos Pasmazoglou, Konstantinos Tzamiotis, Eugenios Trivizas and Ioanna Tsivakou.

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¹ *Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques* [An essay on the gift: the form and reason of exchange in archaic societies].