

# There is not enough space to save this document.

Eva Vaslamatzi

A virtual dialogue with the "cloud";  
a (quasi-)virtual apartment;  
a rereading of Virginia Woolf's  
A Room of One's Own.

Textual fragments are displayed at random on the page, bringing together considerations on different kinds of spaces (memory space, virtual space, mental space, physical space, writing space, social space...) in an attempt to create some space for reflection.

\* "There is not enough space to save this document to iCloud". This message constantly pops up on the upper part of my screen while I am supposed to write about space.

(Words, their meaning as well as my considering what their interpretation should be in the context of this text, make me think of Virginia Woolf's encounter with the words "woman" and "fiction" in her book A Room of One's Own. Invited to give a lecture about these two words, Woolf reflects on the best way to answer the challenge. What does a woman need in order to write fiction? Space. A room "with a lock on the door". Woolf addresses these notions indirectly, through the everyday observation of her environment, and finally through the creation of her own fiction, as a woman.)

\* This message coming from

"above" now tells me that there is no more space in my online data storage. Its "memory" cannot retain any more information, threatening the safety of the text. In times past, supposing such a technology would have been present, I would have perceived it as a sign of the Gods, and would have acted accordingly, fearing the consequences. But it's 2019. How

Memory and space, digital or physical, artificial or human, seem to be interconnected. Memory is a space, and space is where memory occurs. The space hosting a person's memory is being restricted with age, and computer machines seem to run out of memory with the passing of time.

should I interpret this message at the top of my screen?

("The rooms differ so completely; they are calm or thunderous; open on to the sea, or, on the contrary, give on to a prison yard; are hung with washing; or alive with opals and silks; are hard as horsehair or soft as feathers." For Woolf, space is a potentiality, everything starts from physical space to expand to other forms of space. The absence of space also means the absence of one's self. There are as many rooms as there are human characters.)

Using mental "rooms" to store memory images was a common method in ancient times, practised especially by orators. Known as mnemonics—or "the art of memory", as Frances A. Yates prefers to call it—it was a sort of "iqner writing" that aimed to overcome the limited capacity of natural memory. Training their memory artificially, orators were virtually reproducing the common experience of walking inside a building. The building had to be monumental, with many rooms, each of them well-lit so as to host an "image" adequately. The image should be captivating, dramatic or comic, not just dull or mundane. Also, one leads to the other, for the overarching linear composition is embedded in each mnemonic element. These "forced memories", although inspired by the real world, "[seem] to belong to a world which is either impossible for us to understand or which is not being really fully explained to us"

\* Trying to save some memories and gain some new space, I connect my hard drive to my computer, initiating a backup. But there is no space left on my hard drive, either. Do "memories" necessarily equal "memory"?

My father had not returned to Istanbul for more than forty years. When he finally did, he followed some kind of mnemonics, applying it to the "real space". First, he went to the primary school he used to attend, then he remembered the path he took every day after school. He managed to find his way, and in the end found himself facing his old house. Unable to welcome him, the building looked like theatrical decor or some massive monument. Although he had kept a lot of memories of each and every room, now he couldn't navigate its spaces.

\* In contemporary times, when both online data storage and physical hard drives are full, the only solution is to "purchase additional storage or remove some documents". Pay or forget.

("What is the truth about these houses, for example, dim and festive now with their red windows in the dusk, but raw and red and squalid, with their sweets and their bootlaces at nine o'clock in the morning?" The truth Woolf wants to uncover about "these houses" is not visible on the outside but rather on the inside, the domestic space, the lives of the inhabitants, the gossip and the relationship between people sharing the same space—family and neighbours.)

Some years later, the artist Gülsün Karamustafa exposed in the National Museum of Contemporary Art of Athens a model of this very house, which happens to be the same house she has been living in since 1991. Interested in the history of minorities in Turkey and forced migrations between Greece and Turkey, she was aware of the history of the house before she fortuitously met my father at the entrance's main door. Built by my father's family, the house was a Greek property that was abandoned in 1956, one year after the Istanbul pogrom and the nationalist attacks against the Greek minority. On the wall behind the model, a selection of family photos and a text briefly explaining the history of my family evoked the life of the inhabitants. But the model, roughly the size of a person, standing still in the middle of a dark room under spotlights, did not tell anything about the "truth" of this house. Like most family photographs, it does not represent a traumatic moment. Its commonplace appearance hides all traumatic memories, which are only available to those who experienced them. Personally, I haven't directly experienced any trauma in this apartment. But I once spent one week there, in order to maybe hear the echo of past events, and ultimately find the truth of the house. The only thing that remains of this effort is a photo in black and white of me at the front door, a fake memory of me as an inhabitant of the apartment.

\* I can't ignore anymore the absence of space. I scroll down through my saved documents and digital archive of photos, trying to estimate their "value". While doing this mechanically, I keep on thinking:

"Do they really deserve the space they occupy in my memory?"

What do we keep memories of?  
Which past events should remind us of?  
Is the representation of memories a good way to deal with memories?  
What form(s) does art take in our memory?

Are memories real?"