

# MOMENTS | DE CRISE OF CRISIS

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## *Slashes - 32*

### *The dignified exit of Vangelis Yakoumakis, by Yannis Grammatopoulos*

While Greece is living the drama of its financial crisis, another drama, which has kept Greek society on its toes for forty days, found its tragic end on March 15<sup>th</sup>. The decaying body of twenty-year-old Vangelis Yakoumakis, a Dairy school student (studying the production of dairy at a public agricultural school) from Crete, who went missing on February 6<sup>th</sup>, was found in the surrounding area.

According to witnesses, Yakoumakis had been the victim of brutal bullying by a gang of fellow-Cretans. Their ridiculing practices would put him to the position of an inanimate object or, best case, an animal: They would make out of him a “juke-box,” locking him in a closet and asking him to sing, or stretch and pull a wet towel along his neck.

But in the afternoon of February 6<sup>th</sup> Vangelis had had enough. He fled the scene of his torture. He rushed out of his campus room heading toward the nearby lake of Ioannina, having left behind his mobile phone, refusing, thus, the Other the right to find him. Forty days later he was spotted by passersby with a knife at a short distance from his corpse and an incision on his wrist.

Psychoanalytic praxis teaches us that the act, a response to a crisis, transforms the subject. It can rise again in a different form. But Vangelis’s tragic story indicates that the subject’s re-emergence isn’t guaranteed. When one’s subjectivity is diminished to the level of object, there is not always a way-back.

Once a victim of similar practices in a provincial Greek town as a youngster, I have an experience of what it feels like. In situations like these, one only seeks an exit. In my case, psychoanalysis was a happy encounter that gave me the chance to renegotiate, among others, what was at stake during that traumatic period.

But the drama of Vangelis teaches us that not everyone finds such a way-out. Moreover, his act shows us the extent to which a subject can go in order to regain its lost dignity. Violently denied the right to his difference, Vangelis paid for it with his own life.



Yannis Grammatopoulos is a psychologist and a doctoral candidate in psychoanalysis at Middlesex University, member of the Hellenic Society of the NLS.