GLOBAL CO-INCIDENCE: HETEROTOPIC PERFORMANCE AT THE AREOPAGOS

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ABSTRACT

DAVID P. TERRY: Global Co-incidence: Heterotopic Performance at the Areopagos
(Under the direction of Della Pollock)

Through ethnographic engagement with the Areopagos (Mars Hill) next to the Acropolis in Athens Greece, I articulate some of what it means or might mean to belong in a global world. The rock is a site of religious pilgrimage, secular tourism, making out, buying and selling of drugs among other activities. It is an example of what Foucault has called a "heterotopia" in which multiple real places converge on the same space. The simultaneous heterogeneity of the rock offers a way through which to rethink globalization as producing and being produced by what I call "co-incidences": events of coming together in space about which the question of causality must remain suspended. The notions of co-incidence and heterotopia help me to frame "globalization" not in terms of abstract mobility and dislocation but in terms of concrete performance practices. In so doing, I call for a more spatial theory of performance and a more performative theory of spatiality.

To Margene Diane Griffin Terry

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Homework

I spent the better part of the past year developing an extensive, affective connection with a large slab of limestone. This dissertation is an attempt to write from the often jarring intersections of various global bodies in material encounter with each other and the rock, the Areopagos or Mars Hill, a "rocky outrunner" of the Acropolis in Athens, Greece.[1] I am concerned with the contradictions and coincidences that produce and are produced by the heterogeneous group of people, histories, and physical objects that I encountered there. Drawing on Sarah Ahmed's queering of phenomenology I seek to make the rock not just something that I think "about," but something to think "from" and "with." Through the process of fieldwork the rock became and, despite the thousands of mile that now separate us, in many ways remains a primary point of orientation. In Sarah Ahmed's words, it is a "second skin….a social skin, a border that feels and is shaped by the 'impressions' left by others." [2] The diversity of the "others" whose impressions have shaped the rock defies any coherent categorization as an "ethnos." It is, precisely, the simultaneous heterogeneity of these "others" that has begun to produce a place in which I feel, almost inexplicably, at "home."

When I say that I feel "at home" on the rock, I do not mean to evoke the modernist idea

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1.   John M. Camp, *The Archaeology of Athens* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 7."Areopagos," it is sometimes also spelled Areopagus in English translation. I use the "os" ending because it is closest to the letters used in Greek.
2.   Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 9.

of home as "a stable center of safety and domestic virtue."[3] The rock is generally unstable,

relatively marginal, de-centering, at times dangerous, and decidedly public. Although I met many

people with whom I became quite close, the rock cannot be defined as a place "in the company

of loved ones."[4] Although the rock at times provides an ad-hoc sleeping spot or a place for

intimate religious worship, the rock does not (primarily) function as a place of shelter and

warmth. Its weather worn surface does not (primarily) work to restore human dignity and create

deep solidarity as the word "home" connotes in bell hook's "homeplace." The "site of resistance

and liberation" that hooks calls "homeplace" generates and transmits tactical embodied

knowledges that work inward to create a sense of community that in turn exerts force outward

against oppression.[5] The vectors that meet at the Areopagos move in a myriad of directions and

cannot be grafted onto a bi-directional model. The "homework" that I encounter on and perform

with the Areopagos conceptualizes home as "multiple, and portable, and sharable."[6] The

multiplicity of its homes is not reducible to any single overarching concept of belonging. Its

homes are movable and mutable. The "homework" of understanding them in relationship to each

other necessitates less solid ideas about what it means/might mean to "share."

     I engage with the Areopagos as home in an attempt to intervene in the "durable,

transposable system of definitions" that Bourdieu calls "habitus."[7] Bourdieu elaborates the idea

of habitus in chronocentric terms: "habitus—embodied history, internalized as second nature and

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3. Belinda Straight, "Introduction," in *Women on the Verge of Home*, ed. Belinda Straight (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005), 1.
4. Straight, "Introduction," 13.
5. bell hooks, "Homeplace: A Site of Resistance," *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics* 1990), 47.
6. Ruth Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart* (Beacon Press, 1997), x.
7. Piere Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 134.

so forgotten as history—is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product."[8] The performative "home" of "habitus" he describes begins in the emplacement(s) of childhood, but adapts to changing circumstances through improvisation within a set of embodied habits: It is a mobile home that projects its "inside" outward onto new terrains. My intention, in contrast, is to find a productive articulation of the multiple "outsides" that happen to meet on the same terrain—to take many different habiti "forgotten as history" and re-member them as geography. The rock functions, I argue, as a "global" home not in projecting a single habitual relationship to the world outward, but in bringing many different "outsides" to each other. My hope is that as the contrasting/competing/overlapping habiti that "happen" to meet at the rock come to rest in their performance on these pages they help to elucidate an extroverted sense of home, a mode of global belonging that, hoping to evoke both a sense of "just so happening" by chance and a sense of happening together in space, I will call "co-incidence."

Belonging

The Areopagos produces/is produced by a heterogeneous set of habiti that can neither be said to fully belong, nor to fully not belong with each other. Being at home on the rock enables/is enabled by "a cohabitation that goes beyond the limited concept of tolerance."[9] This not-belonging and not-not-belonging echoes Richard Schechner's sense of the self-in-performance as being beyond itself ("not-me") while still, at least in some sense, remaining itself ("not-not-me").[10] Schechner defines performance as "twice behaved behavior," noting that performances

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8. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 56.
9. Elspeth Probyn, *Outside Belongings* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 5.
10. Richard Schechner, *Between Theater and Anthropology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 36.

"mark identities, bend time, reshape and adorn the body, and tell stories." Each of these actions is a repetition of a previous doing: "performed actions that people train to do, that they practice and rehearse."[11] In contrast to Schechner's sense of performance as a becoming in time however, the not-not-belonging that I encountered at the Areopagos is a more explicitly spatial way of being multiple/being with multiplicity. I am working towards a theory of once-behaved co-incidences that gain their performative force by bringing together multiple behaviors in space. This spatial intervention of co-inciding into chronocentric theories of performance as repetition also troubles theories of intentionality and agency present in much performance scholarship. While performance can be a way of "bringing to completion" or "accomplishing" certain intentional acts, the kinds of performance that I am interested in here are precisely ones about which the question of what is "intended" and who or what is doing that "intending" are more open.[12]

What kinds of meaning and co-being are produced through and among bodies that "just so happen" to be standing, working, playing, worshiping, photographing, drinking, kissing, and writing beside each other? Elsbeth Probyn describes the effect of such co-incident being as "outside belongings." She draws her sense of "outside" from Montreal balconies in the summer which, like the Areopagos, almost always feature a heterogeneous mix of behaviors that cannot be said to have any one thing in common with each other and yet become more fully what they are in partial articulation to each other. As sun-starved Montrealeans spend their summers expanding their homes into the "outside" of their balconies, their activities begin to intermingle

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11. Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 22.
12. Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York City: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982), 91.

with the activities of their neighbors. Neighbors politely "tune out" each other's romantic engagements, throw each other lost balls, help each other find lost cats, share each other's music. For Probyn, "this experience inspires a mode of thinking about how people get along, how various forms of belonging are articulated, how individuals conjugate difference into manners of being, and how desires to become are played out in everyday circumstances."[13] Belonging as a desire to "become" as opposed to a desire to "restore" finds its seeds in places where differences co-incide. This dissertation attempts both to describe many such moments of co-incident "manners of being" performed by various social actors on, around, and with the Areopagos, and perform its own sense of home as a "mode of thinking" inspired by the web of those various modes of being. In some ways my project is picking up on the "just so happening" co-incidence of bodies on the rock and treating the "just so" of that happening as though it were on purpose.

Fig.1.1. The Areopagos as seen from the Pnyx.

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13. Probyn, *Outside Belongings*, 5.

The Areopagos is particularly well suited to this "homework" because the "manners of being" there are both ordinary and extra-ordinary, both beautiful and banal, both sacred and secular, both the heightened and framed poetic modes of being commonly called "performances" and the prosaic "stylized repetition of acts" the Judith Butler, among others, has called "performativities."[14] I engage with the tensions between the rock's ordinary and extra-ordinary uses as productive forces that, to borrow a phrase from Meaghan Morris, "create a space in which I can place my work."[15]

The field of performance studies, my primary disciplinary home, is often said to depend on a distinction between 1) special, heightened, or self-conscious modes of "twice behaved behavior" or "restored behavior" that are "performance" and 2) everyday, "once behaved," or unconsciously repeated performative modes of being.[16] This distinction evokes a contrast between the everyday work of living and special moments or modes in which communication becomes "aesthetic," heightened, or artful. Performativities are the repeated embodied actions that help to constitute "habiti" and performances are moments which "breakthrough" the sedimentations of habit.[17] Performances are specially framed or keyed behaviors that go about the work of behaving with a "consciousness of doubleness," a special kind of repetition that separates it from the forgotten rhythms of daily life.[18] Within performance studies, sometimes the word "performance" is used

14. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (London: Routledge, 1990), 177-90.
15. Meaghan Morris, *Too Soon Too Late: History in Popular Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 96.
16. Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 112; Schechner, *Between Theatre*.Schechner, *Between Theatre*, 36.
17. Dell Hymes, "Breakthrough Into Performance," in *Folklore: Performance and Communication*, ed. Dan Ben-Amos, and Kenneth S. Goldstein (The Hague: Mouton, 1975).
18. Marvin Carlson, *Performance: a Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

to indicate a special subset of practices that are heightened or aesthetic repetitions, at other times the mundane repetitions everyday life are themselves looked at through the lens of performance. Not every action "*is* performance," but any action can be looked at *"as* performance."[19]

 This distinction between the heightened aesthetic of performance and the banal rhythms of everyday practice has never sat easily with me. As both a practitioner and audience member, I am most drawn to theatrical productions that feel more "ordinary" and to everyday encounters that feel more "extraordinary." One of my aims with this project is to understand the various vectors (social/cultural, geographic/historical, textual/embodied, performed/performative) that meet at and constitute the Areopagos in order to generate a "mode of thinking" that does not resolve this tension, but renders it more productive. Calling something a "performance" implies a normative dimension, a kind of judgment with respect to some standard, whether that standard be the standards of a canon or the taken for granted day-to-day standards of "the way things are done." In working between everyday events reframed as performance and events that would likely be seen "to be" performances by those who created and witnessed them on the rock, I am seeking to make this normative dimension itself discussable. Calling something a performance is always, to some degree, a contested claim. "Performance" is a way of marking who is in and who is out, what counts and what does not, what is done well and what is done poorly, what is worth doing and what is not worth doing.

 The "co-incidences" I discuss in this document are everyday moments that "just so happen" to be extraordinary in their "once behaved" joining with each other. This is to say that in some

19. Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 1.

ways they "are" (or were) performances before I got onto the scene and in other ways they become performances when I label them "as" such for the purposes of analysis. "Co-incidence marks a space in between normative standards of performance as a special kind of event or action and performance as a lens through which one might look at any event or action. In focusing on "co-incident" performances I hope to place the way things "are" in tension with the way things "might" or even "ought" to be. I hope to stage what Soyini Madison has called a "performance of possibilities" that imagines an alternative sense of global belonging.[20] This is to say that in order to imagine how we belong in a global world, the normative senses through which "we" are constituted must themselves be put into question. In this regard the very slipperiness of "performance" as a signifier is an asset.

I thus see at the Areopagos a performance of home in the Deleuzian sense as something that "does not pre-exist" but is produced through an effort "to organize a limited space."[21] Such a home is not, as Meaghan Morris notes,

> a figure of containment but of provisional or 'working' definition. This kind of home is always made of mixed components, and the interior space it creates is a filter or a sieve rather than a sealed-in consistency; it is not a place of origin, but an 'aspect' of a process that it enables ("as though the circle tended on its own to open onto a future, as a function of the working forces it shelters") but does not precede—and so it is not an enclosure but a way of going outside.[22]

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20. D. Soyini Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance* (New York: Sage, 2003), 18.
21. Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Athlone Press, 1988), 311.
22. Morris, *Too Soon*, 97.

The rock functions as a "sieve" that brings together a mixture of bodies, texts, ideas, and modes of being that "happen" to co-incide in and around it. The specificity of the site about which I am writing resides, precisely, in the irreducible heterogeneity of its constituent parts.

The text that I am in the process of producing with and about the rock is self-conscious in that it "forefronts the perils and joys of writing" but it is neither auto-generative or auto-telic; it "finds its conditions of possibility in more carful modes of listening, reading, hearing, and seeing" the social. [23] Although it is, in some sense, a heightened, extra-ordinary mode of writing, a "twice-behaved" aesthetic rendering that joins diverse experiences "around" the rock, the aim of the project is not to produce itself as artifact. The text seeks to perform a co-incident sense of belonging that belies any easy distinction between the ordinary and extraordinary, between performative quotidian "behavior" and poetic "performance." It seeks to enact an extroverted sense of home that makes room for both those others with whom one feels a conscious and deep rooted sense of solidarity and those whom one "just so happens" to share space.

Fromness

The most common question I was asked during my fieldwork was "where are you from?" Tourists and travelers generally asked me because such small talk is one of the most readily available means of generating a quick connection with a stranger. Greeks asked me because they generally had trouble connecting my native sounding pronunciation with my Anglo-Saxon facial features. I have averaged over one domicile per year across 9 U.S. states and 2 continents over the thirty-two years of my life. My parents served as Evangelical missionaries in Greece when I

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23. Probyn, *Outside Belongings*, 7.

was between the ages of five and thirteen and I attended Greek schools for most of that time. Almost every one of those moves involved a complex shifting of my relationship to my family and the Evangelical ideology in which it is steeped—the foundations of my performative "habitus"— as well as the two countries to which I cannot be said to either fully belong or fully not belong. Consequently, the question of where I am "from" has always been a difficult one for me to answer. When, during a year-long furlough back in the US, my fourth grade teacher assigned us the presumptuous task of composing an autobiography, I claimed that I only felt truly "at home" on an airplane between the U.S. and Greece. I didn't yet know the words "bittersweet," "nostalgia" or "liminal" but I meant the image of the suspended airplane to evoke what I would now call the bittersweet mixture of nostalgia and anticipation that characterized those liminal moments. Such precocious insight may have once impressed Mrs. Prater with my potential as a writer, but its complexity does not lend itself to the needs of small talk. The question of "fromness" is not arbitrarily received in first encounters with strangers: it does the important work of telling social actors how they are positioned in relationship to one another, what ground they might have in common, which topics are safe for conversation and which are to be avoided.

Cultural identity is not an "essence" but a "positioning" and cross-cultural positioning almost always requires a way of answering for one's geography of origin.[24] In order to know how to behave "towards" someone, one must first know where that person is coming "from" and what

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24. Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 226.

route(s) they took from "there" to "here." The abstractions or convoluted complexities to which I am too easily forced in determining my "fromness" often renders me with too many positions which is functionally the same as being position-less. When talking with Greeks in particular, it is almost impossible for me to claim an origin in diplomatic enough terms to settle the often disturbing effects of my not-quite-Greekness. In ordinary social interactions this serves me relatively well: it functions as a sieve to help bring me into more meaningful conversations with folks I am more likely to get along with and shorten conversations with those I am less likely to befriend. Given the goal to study the heterogeneity of social actors meeting at the Areopagos, however, I needed to find a different way to answer the question so as to increase the diversity of people with whom I could talk.

My most effective and therefore most common reply to the question "where are you from?" during fieldwork was "right now I'm more or less from this rock." The reply attempted to forge a balance between the more-or-less approximation of my own subject position and the "right now" material fact of our co-presence on "this" rock. It was an abstract response, but one that was more palpable because it was grounded in the concrete empirical specificity of a moment. It was a strange response, but one that, ironically, figured me as less of a stranger. The rock from which I was "from" is the rock that we, in that very moment, shared, the rock on which we, in that very moment "co-incided." Being from "here" also meant being from "now." The rock's indexical "there-ness" allowed for easy questions about my experiences with the rock and the surrounding landscape. Although my responses were frequently less than succinct, I was consistently able to "ground" my scattered thoughts in the shared experience of an "indexical

present" at the rock.[25] Answering the question of my positionality thus became a way of not only telling where I was "coming from" but also of tugging at the maps on which others locate themselves, shifting, however gently, the relationship between place and self. It was a way to put "fromness" itself into question. The identity produced through "fromness" then becomes understood as "not a point to start from in the sense of being a given thing" but as "a posit or construct formalizable in a nonarbitrary [sic] way through a matrix of habits, practices, and discourses."[26] In its own everyday way, my "more or less fromness" on the Areopagos is an attempt to perform subtle shifts in some of those matrices. Claiming to be "more or less from" makes the everyday performativity of "fromness" itself part of our conversation.

The Global

Although it is playful, being "more or less from this rock" is not, or at least not primarily, a gimmick: it is a contextual rendering of a mode of global belonging. The pages that follow are an attempt to explicate some of what it does/might mean to be "from" this complex social, historical, and material space/place with the aim of elucidating some of the modes of belonging that emerge in an increasingly global world in which fewer and fewer people find the question of "fromness" easy to answer. Difficulty in determining where one is "from" and "to" what and whom one belongs is arguably the rule rather than exception. In the present global context, "the very concepts of homogeneous national cultures, the consensual or contiguous transmission of historical traditions, or 'organic' ethnic communities—as the grounds of cultural

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25. Adrian Piper, "Xenophobia and the Indexical Present," in *Reimaging America*, ed. Mark O'Brien, and Craig Little (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1990).
26. Linda Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race Gender and the Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 146.

comparativism—are in a profound process of redefinition." [27] Ours is frequently called an age of "globalization," of "fluidity and mobility." Even those who are more clearly "from" some specific place are significantly less likely stay put in that place of origin. Diaspora and the search for home are among the most dominant tropes of discourse on contemporary life. Few figures dominate contemporary theory as both objects about which to think and subjectivities/sites from which to think, more than that of the mobile body—the body "on the move."[28] Nomads, exiles, pilgrims, vagabonds, flaneurs, and wanderers are evoked and analyzed (whether for celebration or vilification) by a wide variety of social and cultural critics. "Movement" as John Durham Peters notes, "has become one of the central resources for social description."[29]

In addition to this sense of widespread up-rootedness and mobility, "globalization" implies "a spatialized ordering principle."[30] Mobile bodies are products of and attempts to resist the ways in which: "both time and space. . . have been taken out of the world of nature and immediate experience and placed, instead, in the world of abstraction—abstraction ruled, for the most part, by the demands of trade and capital, but also by various forms of patriarchy, colonialism, and imperialism."[31] "Globalization" often evokes a grid-like relationship to space in which individual sites are more or less interchangeable. In contrast to the "home bodies" they have, in theory, replaced, "homing bodies" are defined not by the specificity of their origin from which they have emerged, but by their mobile attempts to make specific, concrete and meaningful "places" out of

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27. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 7.
28. Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
29. John Durham Peters, *Speaking Into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 19.
30. Cresswell, *On the Move*, 16.
31. Cresswell, *On the Move*, 5.

the increasingly homogenous abstract "space" of global modernity. Mobile bodies are in search of and sought out by places to be "from"—both theoretically and physically.

In Greece, globalization is experienced as a crisis of identity on several fronts. First, tourism has long been the dominant industry in Greece. Its sunny climate, ample coastline, and ancient relics attract almost 15 million tourists a year to a country with a population of just under 11 million people. Second, the admission of Greece into the European Union has meant the increased flow of capital from the north. The faces of "local" grocery stores, banks, and restaurants have been increasingly replaced with those of transnational corporations. This has meant not only a cosmetic shift towards foreign brands, but a structural shift away from the comfortable inefficiencies of a socialist state towards the hyper-efficiency of transnational capitalism. Third, the promise of economic opportunity with entrance to the E.U. combined with insufficiently patrolled Greek borders and coastlines has led to a massive influx of immigrants. Although accurate numbers are difficult to come by, some estimate that Greece has moved from being approximately 1 percent non-ethnically Greek to upwards of 7 percent over the last 20 years.[32] Fourth, entrance into the EU has also forced an easing of anti-proselytization laws. Greece has technically allowed "freedom of religion" for decades, but until the last fifteen years or so, it was illegal to actively try and convert someone from one religion to another. I knew several Evangelicals who did time in Greek prisons for giving away Bibles to Greek youth. The EU required that this ban be lifted and the result has been a proliferation of missionary work

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32. The 1 percent and 7 percent figure comes from the 1990 and 2001 censuses respectively. The number of immigrants has certainly grown since then. The numbers invariably move up and down depending on who is making the case for them and various branches of the government that have vested interests in higher and lower number respectively often deliberately do not share their information with each other.

from a number of religious groups throughout Greece.

These forces are compounded by the fact that, in many respects, Greece was "global" before it was "Greece." The commercial and cultural dominance of classical Athens defined a "global" empire at a time when those who lived in what is now "Greece" called themselves "Athenians," "Spartans," and "Delphians." When "Greece" revolted against Ottoman Rule in the 19th century, many of the inhabitants of the southern Balkan Peninsula had to be convinced that they were, in fact "Hellenes" (Greeks) and not "Romai" (Roman). The forcefulness of "Hellenism" had more to do with Northern Europe's ideas about itself as the cultural heir to the Greek legacy of Plato, Aristotle, and Pericles than it did with the practices of "Greekness" on the ground in what is now called "Greece." In the form of Hellenism, Greece is often claimed as cultural origin of a Western modernity whose progression and expansion is a primary meaning of "globalization." As Maria Koundoura notes, it is not an accident that Matthew Arnold advocated "Hellenism as the cultural dominant that would stave off the confusion of barbarism."[33]

Greece is a compelling place through which to think through the global. It has "for so long been considered the stable measure of 'our' *time* in the present." Its antiquity has served as the archetype for what it means to be modern. Yet it remains a "a contradictory *space*."[34] In many ways contemporary Greek life represents the failure of modernity. Greece remains problematic, especially for critics who are interested in the "location of culture."[35] Greece may be the origin of the idea of modernity or the global as an "epoch" but contemporary Greece as a site of

33. Maria Koundoura, *The Greek Idea: The Formation of National and Transnational Identities* (New York: Taurus Academic Studies, 2007), 5.
34. Koundoura, *The Greek Idea*, 2. Emphasis added.
35. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*.

development, tourism, immigration, and ill-planned urbanization also brings together many of

the spatial complexities of global modernity. The forcefulness of "Greece" as an idea for and

from non-Greeks—from the empires of the Delian league and Alexander the great to

contemporary shipping magnates, in both religious and secular definitions of Western culture—

has meant that to be "Greek" has always, in some sense, meant to be "global" and to be "global"

has always, in some sense, meant to be "Greek."[36]

Fig.1.2. Glory days.

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36. The global cultural capital of "Greekness" took shape around three "place" controversies while I was there: 1) the ongoing dispute over the name of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). Many Greeks fear that allowing the republic to go by the simple name "Macedonia" is an attempt to claim the legacy of Alexander the Great and will inevitably lead to military expansion into Greek territory. 2) Several residents of the island of Lesbos brought suit against an association of gay women calling themselves "Lesbians" for copyright infringement. 3) Attempts to reign in the dispersal of plundered monuments once on the Acropolis. Although the temple itself is still in Greece, much of the sculpture that once adorned the temple and its surroundings is now housed the British Museum ("courtesy of Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin" who bought it from the Turks and sold it to the British government). Other sizable collections of artifacts that are originally "from" the Acropolis are now housed in "Copenhagen, Wuzburg, Palermo, Rome, Heidelberg, Vienna, Munich, and Strasbourg." The construction of the new Acropolis museum now holds empty spaces awaiting the return of those stolen works.Amy Beard, *The Parthenon* (London: Profile Books, 2002), 12.

Why the Areopagos?

The Areopagos (Mars Hill) at the base of the Acropolis in Athens, Greece, is a site of tourism and religious pilgrimage that is also used as a de facto public park. It is a government sanctioned "cultural" space on which a large number of illegal activities take place. The rock is a condensed cross-section of many different global flows. A large number of competing, contrasting, and overlapping homing bodies with various competing, contrasting, and overlapping relationships to the global coexist simultaneously there. The materially specific connections between them challenge the abstract deployment of "globalization" through concrete exemplars of both everyday and extraordinary ways in which the abstractions of both the "global" and the "local" is produced and negotiated. Yes, these various "homing bodies" are all increasingly "on the move" but they all move differently then each other. Furthermore, they each move differently from how they did previously because they have encountered each other. The Areopagos is not a "glocalised" marketing of a specific location for global consumption, but a materially specific conglomeration of global encounters in and around one specific location. [37] It tells not a single story of "globalization" but what Doreen Massey calls a "simultaneity of stories-so-far" of multiple experiences of the global.[38] The stories that meet on the rock are all "so-far," "more or less" approximations of co-incident globality that become meaningful in their articulation to each other. I thus see in the Areopagos not so much a "global sense of the local, a global sense of place" as a local sense of the global, a placed sense of globalization.[39]

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37. Erik A. Swyngedouw, "The Heart of the Place: The Resurrection of Locality in an Age of Hyperspace," *Geografiska Annaler. Series B. Human Geography* 1989): 31-42.
38. Doreen Massey, *For Space* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 9.

Co-incidence

Rather than rely on a meta-narrative of globalization, or focus on the stories producing/ produced by one or two of these flows in isolation (as a study of "tourism" or "religious pilgrimage," or "immigration" or "Greek nationalism" might do) I approach the rock through "the simultaneity of stories-so-far" of the spatial dimension and take the intersections of differences as the primary unit of analysis.[40] The stories I tell here gain meaning not through their individual chronological completion (they are each "so-far"/"more or less" approximations) but through their spatial joining (they are all together, however incompletely, in their "right now" occurrence on "this" rock). I thus engage with the rock as a condensation of the heterogeneous performed encounters with difference that I am calling "global co-incidences."

I borrow the term "co-incidence" from Sarah Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology*, but whereas Ahmed highlights the dash in "co-incidence" in an effort to "*avoid* turning the shared arrival into a matter of chance," my own usage of the dash attempts to highlight both the partially aleatory and the partially determined nature of these encounters.[41] The dash in "co-incidence" is intended to invoke the spatial sense of "being together" and the sense of "being by chance" that mark the kinds of "outside belongings" that most capture my imagination. "Co-incidences" are "once behaved" but heightened events of thrown-togetherness about which the question of cause or origin must necessarily remain suspended. They "happen" to be as they are, but they might be otherwise. They do not take place in "comforting, fabulous no places" of harmonious utopia but

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39. Massey, *For Space*, 9.
40. Massey, *For Space*, 9.
41. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 38.Emphasis added.

in the materially existing (and decidedly non-harmonious) "other" spaces that Foucault has called "heterotopias."[42] In heterotopias, to which I will return in greater detail in Chapter 5, many different places "just so happen" to be together in the same material space. These co-incidences "are disturbing because they make it possible to name this and that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy 'syntax' in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax that causes words and things to 'hold together.'"[43] Co-incidence is a coming together "by chance" that also produces the un-doing of many things done "on purpose." While heterotopias such as the Areopagos are materially specific sites, "many spaces converge and become entangled there."[44] The "entanglement" of these spaces with each other, in turn, partially disentangles each constituent place from its own "roots." This makes some of the "routes" that led it to be where/what it is discussable in relationship to the other routes with which it "just so happens" to intersect. In describing the encounters of co-incident "just so happenings" I am aware of the problematic politics of evoking a sense of originary and special "presence" critiqued by Derrida as the "metaphysics of presence."[45] Unlike the metaphysical charge that attempts to cover up the citationality of a presumed "original," my intention here is to evoke the "just so happening" encounters on the Areopagos in such a way that the multiple "fromnesses" of the actors that co-incide are understood as becoming together in a material setting that, despite the multiple "routes" of its construction, is nevertheless/more-or-less "here" and "now."

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42.   Probyn, *Outside Belongings*, 9.
43.   Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16.1(1986), 69.
44.   Soja cited in Probyn, *Outside Belongings*, 11.
45.   Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena.,* trans. A. Bass (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

Fig.1.3. Orienting.

Overview

The intertwined questions that guide this project are: 1) How does or might the Areopagos perform globalization? 2) How does or might a "once behaved" co-incidental syntax re-spatialize conceptualizations of performance and performativity? 3) How does or might this co-incident performance analytic contribute to productive rethinking of global belonging? 4) How does or might the relationship between "globality" and the Areopagos lend itself to a theory of writing/ performing the social?

This project is about the relation of the sign ("globalization") to matter (the Areopagos). It is also about framing "matter" itself as a relation between heterogeneous bodies and the rock and,

in turn, about activating/performing the Areopagos—in its relational/material complexity—as a supreme sign of heterogeneous simultaneous globality. Activating the co-incidences of heterotopia is less a matter of "restoring" or heightening banal behaviors through repetition in time than of re-situating and juxtaposing "thus far"/"more or less" performativities that encounter each other in space. It would be contradictory to stake a single argument on these grounds. Accordingly, I approach the composition of this dissertation episodically and "place" different narratives and arguments of various degrees of "thus far"/"more or less" completeness next to each other. I see the dissertation, like the rock that is its main preoccupation, as a place in which multiple arguments may work across multiple terrains to co-incide with each other. This is not to abdicate my authorial answerability but to render my voice as one among many co-inciding voices: to write "outside" of myself and toward "the fractal intricacies of language, skin, migration, state."[46]

One might describe this project as a phenomenology of globalization in the broadest sense of phenomenology as the study of how the world is made manifest in and through sensory encounters. I am, however, less interested than some phenomenologists might be in the absolute generalizability of my claims. The Areopagos offers a compelling vantage point from which to rethink the question of globalization. While I do make some tentative claims about what global belonging might look/feel like, I am more interested in the ways in which the complexities of life on the rock help to unwrite some familiar narratives about belonging and globality. I do not "answer" the questions listed above on the following pages so much as I am guided by them. I

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46. Sedgwick cited in Probyn, Outside Belongings, 14.

attempt to understand and write the Areopagos as a stage from which the question of what it means to belong in an age of globality might find compelling answers.

I also hope this text will perform the kind of "homework" that it describes on and with its readers. In this sense I see myself producing what Barthes would call a "writerly" as opposed to a "readerly" text.[47] In so doing I make two essential assumptions: First that, theories of the social and theories of writing are inextricably intertwined. The choices about how words and ideas are brought together on the page imply ways in which social actors are brought together in time and space and vice versa. Second, that it would be ironic at best to try to contain the co-incident dynamics of the rock as a singular or monolithic argument. The co-incidences of the rock do not allow for an easy separation between methodological questions, theoretical questions, or questions of empirical observation. As a work of ethnography, this texts moves towards a "thin" description of many different intersecting ethnoi at the areopagos rather than a "thick" description of any one of the intersecting ethnoi. Catching social actors at the Areopagos means not only catching them in process, but also catching them in fragments. Stitching these empirical fragments together into a legible whole without denying or pretending to transcend their status as fragmentary means weaving methodological, theoretical, and empirical threads. I read much of the theoretical material discussed in these pages not before I went to do my empirical "fieldwork" but while I sat on the rock. Much of my understanding of method was fleshed out in conversations with people I met during my time on the Areopagos as well. Thus the theoretical, methodological, and empirical often interrupt each other. The goal of this project is not to make

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47. Roland Barthes, *S/Z: An Essay.,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), 4.

empirical claims "about" the Areopagos from any one theoretical or methodological vantage point but to think "from" the Areopagos about what it means to "belong" in a global world.

Implications

1) While ours is, undeniably, an age of incredible mobility and re-definition of home for the majority of people, much of the literature on the subject tends either to look at one form of mobility at the expense of others or to rely on unhelpful abstractions that lump very disparate kinds of mobility under the rubric of "globalization." The idea of co-incidence that has emerged from my encounters with diversity of bodies and discourses that meet at the Areopagos helps to re-frame the question of globalization not in terms of an abstract mobility writ large, but in terms of concrete performance practices. Viewing the global as a set of practices helps to move from the abstraction of "globalization" toward a more concrete scale without reducing the "necessary complexity" of the global.[48] Understanding that many of those practices are (or can be viewed as) performances helps to draw out the centrality of the normative (good/bad, in/out) dimensions of what it means to belong in this emerging "global" world.

2) Theories of performance as re-membering, re-flecting, re-storing, re-behaving the past and/or imagining the future have long privileged time over space. Theatre spaces, for example, are often conceived of as "empty" such that the simultaneous heterogeneity of lived space is erased.[49] While performance is arguably a "time biased medium," my study attempts to intervene in this bias by exploring a more explicitly spatial theory of performance.[50] Spatiality, I argue,

48. J Macgregor Wise, "Reading Hall Reading Marx," *Cultural Studies* 17.2(2003), 107.
49. Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1968).
50. Harold Adams Innis, *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951).

helps to frame performance practices not as a series of expressions that one culture makes about itself, but as a series of spatial encounters with differences. It moves from a sequential logic of "then" toward a simultaneous logic of "meanwhile."

As John Mckenzie notes in *Perform or Else*, highlighting the abnormal "liminality" of performance has become the ironic norm for performance scholarship.[51] Despite the implicit spatialization of the term "limen," (threshold), the "betwixt and betweeness" of performances, tends to be viewed as betwixt and between moments in time rather than in terms of the essential betwixt-and-betweenness of spatiality. Although performance for Richard Schechner happens in "special times in special places," the bulk of performance scholarship seems to address the former often at the expense of the latter. With a few nods to the decorative importance of scenic design, the space of the theatre is most often conceived of as an "empty" one. Indeed Schechner's "special place" seems to be special precisely because it is a Cartesian container, a feminized "frame" of Arendtian "labour" and "work" that does little more than enable the important masculine "action" at hand.[52] Among other things, this temporal bias has meant erasing the "women's work" of creating and maintaining performance spaces.[53]

More explicitly spatial theory, particularly that informed by Doreen Massey's sense of space as the dimension of the "simultaneity of stories-so-far," helps to give shape to this under-theorized aspect of performance.[54] An important caveat to this work, however, is that while I am in some sense privileging spatiality for the purposes of emphasis, space and time are not separate

51. Jon McKenzie, *Perform Or Else* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
52. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).
53. Elizabeth Bell, "Performance Studies as Women's Work," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 13(1993).
54. Massey, *For Space*, 9.

entities. They are linked in what Massey calls "space-time."[55] I emphasize the spatial and attempt to write the "simultaneity" of performance; however, I do not see that simultaneity as the *opposite* or *lack* of mobility: "seeing space as a moment in the intersection of configured social relations. . . means it cannot be seen as static."[56] To think space as the dimension of "stories so-far" is not to think statically, but to think of multiple "more or less" intersecting movements.

   3) Although these moments of intersecting co-incident "stories-so-far" are partially determined by a myriad of forces (uneven flows of capital, formations of race, gender, sexuality, habits of the performer), they are experienced in such a way that their "by-chanceness" is more strongly felt. A more spatial theory of performance thus also becomes a theory of performance in which the aleatory is understood as a central component of social life, and especially public life. Catching social actors in moments of co-incident "so far"/"more or less" completion means catching them in moments about which the question of causality cannot be easily determined. As Massey argues, "space entails the unexpected. The specifically spatial within time-space is produced by that—sometimes happenstance, sometimes not—arrangement-in-relation-to-each-other that is the result of there being a multiplicity of trajectories."[57] To know bodies in space is to know contingent bodies that are always in the process of becoming.

   4) This combination of chance and spatiality helps me to understand a relationship between everyday behavior and performance that emphasizes the way in which being is heightened not by repetition or rehearsal, but by "once behaved" happenings that do not originate in any one person

55. Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 269.
56. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, 265.
57. Massey, *For Space*, 111.

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but in the joining of distinct "so-far" patterns of shared life. The everyday aesthetic, what I will call an "aletory" or accidental aesthetic.

5) By not assuming that these social actors have any one thing in common other than the "common ground" of the Areopagos on which they "just so happen" to co-incide I also move towards a materialist and post-humanist sense of agency. The main "actor" of the co-incidences is not a person, but a rock on and through which many different senses of "personhood" and "non-personhood" intersect. In so doing I hope to help disarticulate the inner experiences of "subjectivity," the cultural positioning of "identity," and the ability to effect change of "agency." This dis/re-placed sense of agency also helps to move away from an ontological dualism that assumes the discursive or symbolic are somehow immaterial containers for ideas and helps to assert the materiality of the discursive as a de/re-stabilizing force. This is to say that I think of the problem of culture not chiefly as a matter of interpreting texts, but of understanding material practices.

In Chapter 2 "Situating the Areopagos" I attempt to set the stage for what follows both by introducing the reader to the Areopagos as a site and by outlining some of the important ways in which in the Areopagos functions as a "real-and-imagined" place/space, noting its importance in classical Greece and early Christianity as well as its contemporary uses, its relationship to the surrounding cityscape, and its material composition.[58] I also consider how the rock-as-agent re-situates bodies, focusing in particular on the ways in which the slipperiness of the surface helps

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58. Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1996).

to enable co-incident ways of being. In Chapter 3 "Going There/Knowing There: Ethnography" I outline my research method which draws on both performance approaches to ethnography and surrealist "flaneury." In combining the two methods, I argue for a "queer" ethnographic practice that privileges moments of de-centering potentially shameful encounter over both moments of vulnerable recognition and moments of detached modernist play. I thus argue for an ethnographic practice that leaves us "beside ourselves." In Chapter 4 "Puns and Prisms" I explore the concept of co-incidence in relationship to Sarah Ahmed's queering of phenomenology, Burt State's phenomenology of theatre, and Karen Berard's notion of a post-human performativity. I focus in particular on puns/prism as ways to re-assert the agency of the materiality of language and to spatialize our understanding of discursive practices. In Chapter 5 "Heterotopography," I explore the Areopagos as a heterotopia (an other place/a place of others) and ask what it would mean to think about performance heterotopically, focusing in particular on the ways in which heterotopia helps to materialize and spatialize utopic visions of performance. In Chapter 6 I conclude with several accounts of de-centering that both summarize the project "thus far" and suggest future directions for research. Throughout the project I move back and forth between theoretical/analytic discourse, texts written about the Areopagos, anecdotal accounts of my fieldwork, and photographs almost all of which have been taken either of or from the Areopagos. My hope is that no single one of these threads overrides the others, but that they each function "beside" each other in rendering (some of) the "simultaneity of stories so far" of the Areopagos as a complex local that gives shape to an understanding of the performances and performativities of globality.

CHAPTER 2

SITUATING/BEING SITUATED BY THE AREOPAGOS

Fig.2.1. The Areopagos as seen from the Acropolis.

Between Monuments and Neighborhoods

The Areopagos, or Mars Hill, the 115-meter high slab of limestone in question, is

positioned on the northwest side of Acropolis (the center of ancient Athenian religious life, one

of the most ubiquitous icons of antiquity and one of the most visited tourists sites in the world),

on the south side of the Athenian Agora (the center of ancient Athenian commerce whose Stoa

has been all but fully reconstructed with grant money from the Rockefeller Foundation), north of

the Hill of the Muses and monument to Philopappou (exiled Syrian prince, Roman citizen, and

benefactor of Athens), and to the west the Pnyx (arguably the site of the first democratic

assembly in the world). This complex of historical monuments is itself nestled between the

upscale cafe lined streets of the Thisseon district to the northwest, the boisterous and often seedy

Monastiraki flea markets to the north, and the tourist-trap-lined streets of the Plaka to the

northeast. Further in the distance on all sides, the hill affords views of the sprawling cement

metropolis of the greater Athens area (population 6 million plus) from the Egalio mountain in the

west across Parnassos and Penteli in the north to Ymitos mountain in the east; from the working

class port of Pireas, which tends to root for Olympiakos sports club, to the posh suburbs of

Kiffisia, Kastri, and Ekali, which tend to root for hated rival Panathenaikos.

Fig.2.2. Gate thirteen—Panatheniakos

Fig.2.3. Gate seven—Olympiakos

The Areopagos is not the tallest hill in Athens; that distinction belongs to Lykavitos, which is prominently placed several miles away in the ritzy Kolonaki district. It is not the most heavily trafficked public space; that distinction belongs to the intersections of Syntagma Square or Omonia Square. It is not the most visited tourist site; that distinction certainly belongs to the Acropolis behind it. Any number of churches in Athens can claim to be of greater religious significance. More young people gather in the cafes and clubs below than are ever on the rock at any given time. The sunset is better from the Hill of the Muses. The Pnyx offers a better field on which to play and a larger supply of dandelion leaves to harvest for dinner. However, the Areopagos is, to my knowledge, the only place that serves all of these functions, and more, for so many different people at the same time. In this chapter I attempt to socially/historically/ physically situate the Areopagos as a place between justice and violence, between the pagan and the Christian, between tourism and public place. Then I turn to some peculiar features of the physical composition of the rock to look at some of the ways in which the rock situates social actors. My main goal here is to give some of the backgrounds of the rock in order to make more clear the kind of heterogeneous groundings that I see it offering to the project that follows.

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Fig.2.4. The Areopagos as seen from a Thisseon cafe.

Between Violence and Justice

One of the first things an ancient visitor to the Parthenon would have seen is the "metopes" carved into the western wall of the temple. These carvings show the Amazons (almost always interpreted by contemporary scholars as representing the Persians) camped on the Areopagos preparing to strike the Acropolis and the ensuing battle between Amazons and Athenians.[59] Thus the path up the western slope "with the Areopagos just behind it would have recalled the Amazon army's ascent, battle, and subsequent defeat at the hands of the Athenians."[60] In the

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59. Katherrine A. Schwab, "Celebrations of Victory: The Metopes of the Parthenon," in *The Parthenon: From Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Jenifer Neils (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 178.
60. Schwab, "Celebrations of Vitory," 178-79.

translation of Areopagos to "Mars Hill," its more common English name, "Ares" is properly

marked as the Greek name for the Roman "Mars." "Pagos," however, does not translate directly

into "hill." A more literal translation of the word would be "large rock." Indeed, its jagged barren

outline as seen from the Acropolis does appear to be that of a large projectile thrown from

another place (the planet "Mars" perhaps?) rather than an emergent part of the landscape that

surrounds as "hill" might connote. The Areopagos was, in one account of its naming, the site of

Ares' trial for the murder of Halirrhodotios, son of Poseidon, in the first ever trial by jury.

Because Halirrhodotios had slept with Ares' daughter, it was ruled justifiable homicide.

In "The Eumenides," the final section of Aeschylus's rendering of the cursed house of

Atreus, Orestes is tried on the rock for matricide. In Aeschylus's telling of the story, Orestes'

trial, not Mars', is the "first trial ever for the shedding of blood." As she oversees the trial, Athena

proclaims that:

> Now and in future time, this court of judges
>
> will continue to exist for the people of Aegeus,
>
> here on this hill of Ares where the Amazons
>
> pitched their tents when they invaded, armed,
>
> and angry at the King Theseus, raised up
>
> against the city the towering walls of their
>
> own battlements, and slit the throats of beasts
>
> in sacrifice to Ares. This is why

we call this place the rock and hill of Ares.[61]

Thus for Aeschylus the significance of the name of the hill is its status as a place of war over which the work of justice must prevail.

> Here the people's awe and innate fear
>
> will hold injustice back by day, by night,
>
> so long as the people have the laws intact,
>
> just as they are, and never alter them
>
> with foul infusions: muddy the cleanest spring,
>
> and all you'll have to drink is muddy water.[62]

The trial of Orestes comes at the end of a long chain of revenge. Agamemnon sacrifices Iphigenia in order to appease Poseidon on his way to fight the Trojan War. Upon his return to Athens Agamemnon is murdered by his wife Clytemnestra (who wants to avenge their daughter's death) and her lover Aegisthus (who also wants revenge because Agamemnon's father Atreus had killed Aegisthus' brothers and "offered them as a meal to their unwitting father Thyestes."[63]). At the bidding of Apollo, Orestes, the son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, returns from exile to avenge his father's death. After he has killed his mother and her lover, Orestes is forced to flee Athens, and is pursued by the Furies who, in turn, seek to avenge Clytemnestra. The trial of Orestes is thus presented as a necessary attempt to quell the forces of unchecked passionate

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61. Aeschylus, *The Oresteia.,* trans. Alan Shapiro, and Peter Burian (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 174-75.
62. Aeschylus, *Oresteia*, 174-75.
63. Helene P. Foley, "Introduction to Aeschylus' Oresteia," in *Aeschelus Oresteia* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), vii.

revenge. When Orestes is acquitted, the Furies are given a name change to the "Eumenides," or "kindly ones" in exchange for their willingness to stop perpetuating the cycle of revenge. A cult in their honor is initiated in the caves under the Areopagos. From their caves they offer special refuge to those accused of capital crimes. The myth serves, among other things, to locate the irrational passions in the murky underground, the dark caves below the rock, and reason in the clear views afforded by its summit.

Aeschylus' play, first performed at the theatre of Dionysus on the other side of the Acropolis only a few hundred meters away from the Areopagos, is often read as an attempt to intervene into the political debates of its day, something rather rare for Greek drama. The aristocratic Areopagos council had previously been the primary decision making body for all of Athens, but only three or four years before the first production of *The Oresteia,* it had been stripped of much of its power by the democratic leader Ephialtes.[64]

While the council retained jurisdiction over matters of homicide, blasphemy, and treason (passionate subjects with which it was, presumably, best not to trust the hoi polloi) most of the decision making power was shifted to the more inclusive "demos" that met at the Pnyx, the larger hill just to the west of the Areopagos. The shift in power "generated violet passions" among Athenians to the degree that the conservative leader Cimon was ostracized and the

64. Lisa Kallet, "Wealth, Power, and Prestige: Athens At Home and Abroad," in *The Parthenon: From Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Jenifer Neils (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 44.Arguably this shift in power towards the "ekklesia" or "demos" had to do with shifting from land wars (like the Amazonomachy depicted on the metopes of the Acropolis) towards naval wars. These new wars required new bodies to fight them and tradition held that those who fought should have the right to vote.

progressive Ephialtes was assassinated (to be replaced by Pericles).[65] In the wake of this upheaval (much of which played out within a few years of the play's first production and a few hundred feet of the theatre) Aeschylus' "Oresteia" offers the Areopagos "a new founding myth and an enduring importance that. . . suggests a desire to promote reconciliation among factions rather than to take sides and thus reopen recent wounds."[66] Although it has long since moved off site, the modern Greek Supreme Court still takes its name from the Areopagos as the birthplace of "diki" or justice. When I told Greeks I was doing a study of the Areopagos, I would thus have to quickly clarify that I was interested in the Areopagos "of then" ("tou tote") rather than the contemporary supreme court.
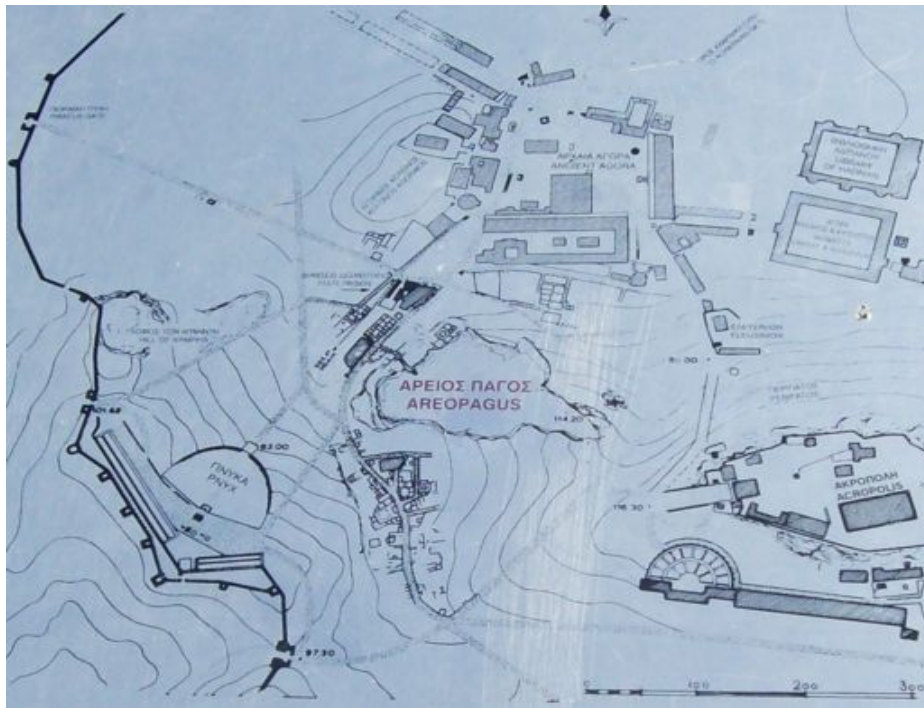
Fig.2.5. Map of the Areopagos on the informational plaque at the top of the hill.

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65. Foley, "Introduction," x. In future work I hope to connect ostracism with same to which I turn later in the chapter.
66. Foley, "Introduction," xi.

Between Pagan and Christian

Circa 53 A.D. the rock was also, according to the 17th Chapter of Acts, the site at which St. Paul first expressed the marriage of Greek and Jewish thought that became Christianity in his famous sermon of the "unknown god." Through his insistence that he represented the "unknown god" to which he had seen a monument on his walks through Athens, Paul converted Dionysus the Areopagite who, though named after the most pagan of the pagan gods, is honored as the first Athenian Christian and remains the patron saint of Athens in the Orthodox tradition:

> While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that
>
> the city was full of idols. So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the
>
> devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened
>
> to be there. Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some
>
> said, "What does this babbler want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a
>
> proclaimer of foreign divinities." (They said this because he was proclaiming the good
>
> news about Jesus and the resurrection.)[67]

At least fifty Evangelical churches and para-church ministries in U.S., one town in each of North Carolina and Maine, two Evangelical-owned coffee shops in Arizona and at least three Christian rock bands bear the name "Mars Hill" as a testament to this important conversion. The hill is a particularly central space for Evangelicals as it represents the two central ways of relating to the Evangelio: 1) the Bible is the singular word of God and 2) a primary occupation of everyone who believes this should be to "evangelize," to try and convert others. The site serves

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67. Acts 17:16-18

as a way of marking the historical validity of the story of the New Testament: "see, look, we know that it happened they way the book says that it happened, and we know that it happened here." It also serves as a reminder that here, on *this* spot, the most hardened of pagan hearts was brought into the fold. In this reading, the skyline of contemporary Athens becomes a marker of all the unsaved souls who will await a cataclysmic future if they do not convert:

> While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead. [68]

Almost every time I've been to the site, I've overheard a team of Evangelicals who have come to the hill to draw inspiration from—and often re-stage—the Apostle Paul's sermon, before setting out to proselytize their twenty-first century counterparts. These re-enactments of Paul's words are not "living heritage" events like one might encounter at a folk life museum or appreciative entertainment events like one might encounter at a renaissance fair. They are re-enactments that rehearse a contestation over the meaning of the land on which they take place. The rock is one of the most visited sacred sites for Evangelical Christians outside of the Holy Lands. (Arguably the Areopagos makes Athens part *of* the Holy Lands for many Christians.) Following in this Pauline example Christians often take the message of Mars Hill to be one of "meeting people where they are" rather than presenting the gospel in potentially alienating terms:

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68. Acts 17:30-31

Unlike fundamentalists who isolate themselves, creating "a separate culture where you live in a Christian cul-de-sac," as one spiky-haired member named Andrew Pack puts it, Mars Hillians [members of the Seattle mega church which takes its name from the Areopagos] pride themselves on friendships with non-Christians. They tend to be cultural activists who play in rock bands and care about the arts, living out a long Reformed tradition that asserts Christ's mandate over every corner of creation.[69]

Making a similar point with a different inflection, Pope Benedict IV recently issued a statement encouraging bishops of the church to make "use of the media to transmit the Word of God." In homage to the importance that media in general and the internet in particular have come to play in the popular consciousness, the pontiff urged his followers that "in this year dedicated to the Apostle St. Paul, who expressed the truth of the Gospel in accessible terms to a vast and varied audience, the 'modern Areopagos' deserve particular attention from the pastors of the Church."[70] He thus equates the Areopagos with the "internet" and "new media" more broadly, as a site of engaged public discourse.Because he quotes pagan philosophers and references a pagan monument that he had seen on his walks through Athens, Paul's sermon is often taken by contemporary Christians as a model for how to be "culturally relevant" when presenting the gospel:

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill [the Areopagos], and said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your

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69. Molly Worthen, "Who Would Jesus Smack Down," *The New York Times* The Times Magazine(2009).
70. The Catholic News Agency, "Use the Media to Transmit the Word of God Says Holy Father," www.catholicnewsagency.com/new/php?n=13968 (accessed October 5, 2008).

devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom

therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."[71]
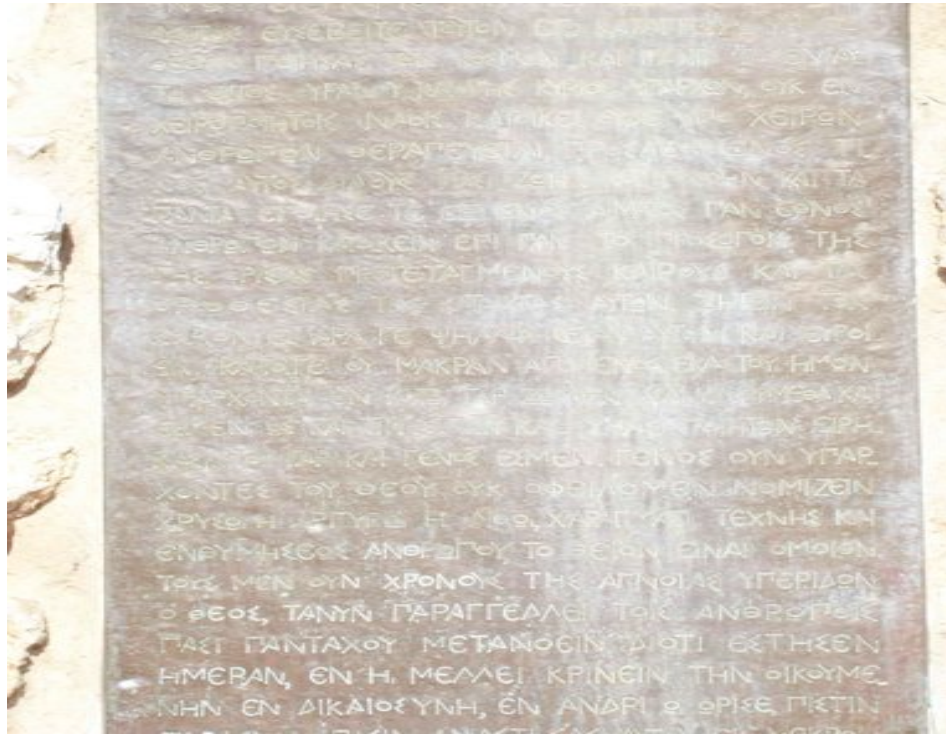
Fig.2.6. St. Paul's text on a plaque mounted on the southern side of the Areopagos.

In the late Roman period of Athens (4th-6th centuries AD) a large philosophical school

was built on the northern slopes of the Areopagos. At the time the prominence of "centers of

higher learning and ancient historical monuments" were among the chief reasons that Athens had

relative economic prosperity. The success of this cultural industry is seen in the foundations of

"numerous substantial villas" that also dot the slopes of the hill.[72] Archaeologists assume these

villas to be the homes of the "philosophers, sophists, and other teachers who were the aristocracy

71. Acts 17:22-23 King James Version.
72. Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 226-27.

and the wealthy men of Roman Athens."[73] These schools were pagan institutions that, even after

the official advent of Christianity by Constantine in 325 AD, "worshiped Herakles, Hermes, the

Nymphs, and the Muses."[74] Even after many of the pagan temples around it had been converted

into Christian temples, these schools continue to practice elements of the ancient religion. They

were, at least as archeology tells the story, the last holdouts of ancient Athens. In 529 AD the

Emperor Justinian "issued a decree forbidding any pagan to teach philosophy in Athens."[75] As a

result of the decree:

> In one of the large houses on the Areopagos, probably used as a private philosophical
>
> school, several sculptures were mutilated and a fine mosaic floor panel, presumably
>
> carrying some offensively pagan scene, was torn up and replaced with marble slabs.
>
> Other sculptures were thrown down two wells in the house.[76]

The new inhabitants of the house replaced the pagan symbols with crosses and the north

face of the hill—which had once housed the temple of the Eumenides— became a church in

honor of Dionysus the Areopagite, patron saint of the city, and the residence of the Athenian

Bishop.

Fig.2.7. Etching of the Church of St. Dionysos.

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73. Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 228.
74. Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 229.
75. Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 237.
76. Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 238.

Between Tourist Site and Public Space

The main attraction to the Areopagos for many contemporary visitors is not the site itself, but its proximity to the Acropolis. The Areopagos offers a place from which to take pictures of the Acropolis which is frequently deployed as a symbol of western culture writ large by tourists from throughout the western world. The enormous white columns of the Parthenon are, for many viewers, virtually synonymous with "ancientness" itself. It is also, however, and perhaps primarily a site that must be seen "in person" precisely as a way of authenticating the countless times it has been read about or seen in re-production. People are drawn to the site not just because it is an origin of historical trajectories, but also because it is the origin of countless images of itself. People pause on the Areopagos to admire the aura of the "original" Acropolis that has spawned so many copies and, most often, to pose for their own picture with the same image in the background to make note of the fact that, as Freud famously remarked upon seeing it for the first time," it really does exist just as we learned in school!"[77] Nestled in between so many monuments to antiquity and with views of the contemporary skyline, the Areopagos is an ideal place from which to mediate one's own experience of being "really" in Greece for later reflection.

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77. Sigmund Freud, ""A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis"," in *Collected Papers Vol. 5* (London: Hogarth Press, 1950), 304.

Fig.2.8. The Areopagos as seen on subway maps.

Unlike almost all of Athens' most popular tourist sites, however, the Areopagos is free of

charge and only loosely cared for by the ministry of culture. (When a voice recorder turned up

missing, I asked one of the guards at the Acropolis if it might have been turned into him. "The

Areopagos has nothing to do with us, nothing," he replied.) Because of the relative lack of

policing, the rock attracts a wider spectrum of folks than visit the fenced-off and whistle-

patrolled places (most of which require a 14 Euro admission ticket) that surround it. Unlike the

"enclavic tourist space" of the Acropolis, where at even the slightest deviation from the

prescribed path a chorus of cautionary whistle blows will ensure that all behavior is expressively "touristic" and appreciative in nature, the "heterogeneous tourist space" of the Areopagos is almost entirely devoid of official presence (except for the extremely rare instances of police drug raids).[78] It is a make-out spot for teens and young adults. It is one of the few places in the crowded and ill planned streets of Athens where one can get a sense of expanse. It is a great place to have a beer or twelve at the kiosk prices of 1-2 Euro each rather than the bar prices of 5-8 Euro each. The hashish there, sold by an affiliation of Lebanese, Iraqis, Syrians, and Pakistanis, is slightly overpriced and of inferior quality ("Albanian grass") but readily available. It is also a great place, I have found, to come alone to think about a vexing academic problem, or, I have been told, to ponder a change in job, to process a break-up. On Saturday nights in the summer it is impossible to find a free swatch of limestone on which to sit, but pretty easy to find a light if you happen to leave yours at home. All of the access points to the rock are open twenty-four hours a day/seven days a week. Some visitors live near the rock and come to it daily, others have traveled thousands of miles at great expense specifically to see it; others have traveled thousands of miles out of a desire for economic advantage or political safety and found the rock almost by accident. For a few months before I got there, I was told, a man slept on the edge of the rock nightly. I saw his camp, but never met him.

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78. Tim Edensor, *Tourists At the Taj: Performance and Meaning At a Symbolic Site* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 45,53.

Fig.2.9. Sleeping quarters (on top of the rock/under the tree).

The Areopagos is a publicly accessible space that anyone can enter, but it requires at least a ten-minute walk over steep, uneven, and slippery terrain to reach it from the most heavily trafficked parts of the city. The closest place to park legally (when one can find a spot there) is about a quarter mile away. For many economic migrants living in crowded quarters (often more than six to a room), working long hours without nearly earning enough to afford most available entertainment options, needing to maintain a relatively low profile in other public spaces due to the confluence of racist policing patterns and ever changing/unevenly enforced rules of legal documentation, the expanse provided by the view from the rock and the relative freedom from harassment creates a place of escape, rest, possibility, and communal performance. Kites are flown. Hookas are smoked. Music is shared over cell phone speakers.

Using the word "public" is particularly complicated in the context of the Areopagos given that, for many visitors, it is part of a quintessential image of the free public space of the ancient

Greek "polis." The "polis," for Hannah Arendt, among others, is a romantic image of public space as opposed to the "oikos," the "shadowy" private realm of women and slaves. Arendt separates human activity into a three part hierarchy: 1) labor or "the maintenance of life" on a natural/biological level which more or less disappears after the moment of its creation; 2) work or the creation of "artificial," human (i.e. non-natural) worlds which live on past their construction could form the common stages for 3) free, meaningful actions or "activities related to the common world" through which people come together and rationally exercise their collective agency.[79] Thus for Arendt, the public, outdoor, and free space of rational thought and deliberation on top of the rock would stand in opposition to the dark, "necessary" (and therefore not "free") labor of the private indoors of the houses and work of the factories that surround it.

Some contemporary uses of the rock are in keeping with this sense of public space, or the public-private hybrid "public sphere" conceptualized by Jurgen Habermas as emerging in coffee houses or salons. It is not uncommon, for instance, to see people use the rock as a place at which to "hold forth" and plot various philosophical/sociological musings with each other. But the wide variety of social actors who spend time at the Areopagos resist articulation into a single public.[80] The large numbers of largely non-citizen, largely un-or-under-employed immigrants, similarly largely un-or-under-employed young "anarchist" students, and "shadowy" black market drug dealers might, if anything, be thought of as constituting various "counter publics."[81] Some other

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79. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 28.
80. Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.,* trans.,Thomas Burger, and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 27.
81. Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text* 25/26(1990), 68.

behaviors, most notably making-out and sleeping would more properly belong within the realm of "oikos."As a tourist site, however, the Areopagos also functions as a commodification *of* "public space" as an ideal "in order to maximize opportunities to attract international capital and tourists."[82]

   My landlord during the time I was in Greece, a British-Greek with a background in investment baking, was thrilled to find out that I was doing my research at the Areopagos, which he called "Aristotle's rock," saying that he took all of his friends, clients, and would-be business partners to the rock when they visited Greece: "from there you can see the best of what it means to be Greek." This kind of seeing is what John Urry calls a "gazing": "to gaze as a tourist is to insert oneself within a historical process and to consume signs or markers of particular histories."[83] To gaze at Greek "history" in this way is to ignore the complexities of "space-time" and the multi-sensory spaces of contemporary Greek life that challenge any singular vision.

Fig.2.10. The Ancient Agora and the Areopagos.

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82. Edensor, *Tourists At the Taj*, 10.
83. John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage, 1990), 182.

Between Vortex and Non-place

Doreen Massey notes that "simultaneous heterogeneity" is the primary marker of the spatial dimension. [84] It follows that a central defining feature of any given locale is how it processes both heterogeneity and simultaneity. In the following section I look at two spatial categories that the Areopagos approaches and at times approximates but never quite becomes— Joseph Roach's "behavioral vortex" and Marc Auge's "non-place"—in order to make clearer the specific kind of simultaneity and heterogeneity that "have to do" with the Areopagos and the kind of work that I hope to "do" with them in re-framing globality.

As its centripetal force draws diverse practices into encounter with each other, the Areopagos is a akin to the "ludic spaces" that performance historian Joseph Roach calls "behavioral vortices."[85] Roach focuses in particular on the Afro-Caribbean Creole contact zones that activate and amplify the heterogeneity of circum-Atlantic experiences as "a kind of spatially induced carnival, a center of cultural self-invention through the restoration of behavior." These contact zones are "maelstroms" whose "magnetic force of commerce and pleasure suck the willing and the unwilling alike." Although they give the appearance of "transgression," vortices generally serve a conservative social function: "what it provides is far more official: a place in which everyday practices and attitudes may be legitimated, 'brought into the open,' reinforced, celebrated, or intensified."[86] In behavioral vortices as Roach describes them, the explicit

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84. Massey, *For Space*, 105.
85. Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 2.
86. Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 27.

performance of carnival temporarily releases pressures built up in an implicit everyday performative social order after which the existing structure is strengthened. Vortices are "globalizing" spaces in the sense that they bring heterogeneous vectors together, and temporarily amplify their heterogeneity in the simultaneous event of carnival before expressing them as a "global" whole. Roach argues, for example, that the curcum-Atlantic "global" world becomes itself through the boisterous racialized and fetishized performance of slave auctions, a primary vortex of Antebellum social relations.

While the Areopagos does share structural features with Roach's behavioral vortices, the rock's maelstrom is significantly less forceful; it is more tropical storm than hurricane. As an "more or less" approximation of a vortex, the Areopagos brings diverse behaviors together, and partially (but only partly) joins them to each other. Frequent moments of spontaneous music, of dancing, of commanding preaching, or of a shared sunset partially join visitors to each other, but never with the totalizing force of a vortex. Differences thus co-incide on the Areopagos but do not (or at least not usually or completely) congeal.

A "behavioral vortex" joins heterogeneous elements such that they become the heightened simultaneity of a single event. The "non-places" of Marc Auge's "hypermodernity," on the other hand, push heterogeneous actors into relatively scripted behaviors that are finely in tune with each other, decreasing the friction of simultaneity.[87] Non-places produce/are produced by non-events such that travelers can glide past each other with very little actual encounter. Auge's prototype of non-place is the airport, but he argues that the force of the non-places is increasingly

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87. Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (New York: Verso, 1995).

definitive of contemporary life. Globalization, in this narrative, "de-places" the world(s) that it encounters.

There are many attempts to render the Areopagos, like many of the tourist sites near it, into something akin to Auge's non-place, but they are only partly effective. At the Acropolis above, guards whistle and yell at the slightest hint of children playing in a pathway or photographers leaning into cordons in an attempts to better frame shots. During the daylight hours when the Acropolis is open, a substantial majority of visitors to the Areopagos are in packs of 30 to100 or more, tourists that have come down from the Acropolis and carry the performative effects of this disciplinarity with them. These bodies almost always walk up the newer, safer metal stairs rather than the older but less "official" steps carved directly into the limestone face. They follow the prescribed path to the center of the rock where they clump together as a guide gives a speech pointing to a few items in the landscape. Photographs are snapped, and the mass of bodies returns to their tour bus before departing for the next destination. The entire process usually takes about ten minutes.

This process produces the Areopagos as a "global" place in the sense that it becomes largely interchangeable with any number of other tourist destinations that these "mass" tourists might have visited in the past or might visit in the future. As a "global heritage" sight like the Pyramids, the Taj Mahal, the Coliseum, the Eiffel Tower, or the Empire State Building, the rock is not a place to which one belongs but a place at which one engages in scripted appreciative behaviors. In the context of this mass tourist experience, (non)encounters with heterogeneity on the Areopagos are "global" in the sense that they are more or less reducible to similar

(non)encounters with heterogeneity in any other tourist enclave in the world. This component of many visitors' experiences of the site is evidenced most poignantly, perhaps, by the daily presence of "native" Peruvian men dressed in North American "native" eagle feathered headdresses selling "native" music on the Athenian street below. Heterogeneity is experienced as difference qua difference in a generic drama with alternating social actors slipping into familiar and rigidly prescribed roles. In mass tourism "native" and by extension the "local" becomes a global simulacrum dislodged from any single referent.[88]

In some ways the Areopagos approaches this form of non-placed, generic globality, and for at least some of its visitors it is undoubtedly experienced as such, but the texture of the rock (both materially and figuratively) resists this kind of "global" flattening. Even when the rock is populated primarily by tourists (to say nothing of the other bodies that frequent it) the non-event/ non-place performativity of "mass" tourism exists in tension with a "romantic" tourism that seeks "uniquely framed contact with the place."[89] In John Urry's influential framing, "romantic" tourism is an elitist desire to visit places that the masses do not and that therefore "carry a high level of symbolic capital and which are guaranteed as different by the difficulty in getting there."[90] While Urry seems to make a strong class-based distinction between hoi polloi "mass" and elite "romantic" tourism, at the Areopagos, the two exist side by side in ways that cut across class lines. Many visitors, usually at least a handful from even the largest package tour, take the significantly more difficult to climb limestone stairs that offer a partial guarantee of a more

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88. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).
89. Simon Coleman, and Mike Crang, "Grounded Tourists, Traveling Theory," in *Tourism: Between Place and Performance*, ed. Simon Coleman, and Mike Crang (Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books, 2002), 2.
90. Coleman, and Crang, "Grounded Tourists," 3.

authentic experience at the top. The well-worn limestone stairs are very difficult to navigate without using both hands and feet. It is not uncommon to see strangers helping each other up the face. It is even more common to hear first time visitors gasp loudly after raising their eyes high enough to see the ancient/modern vista for the first time: "Oh my God!" "You've got to see this!" "Hurry up Mom, it's awesome!" Because the steps are so steep, the view usually appears all at once and even after hundreds of times climbing, the result still sometimes leaves me surprised. The near constant presence of such moments of rapture/rupture keep the Areopagos from being smoothed into a node of the generic "global."

The Areopagos is not only a place in which simultaneity of heterogeneity is negotiated, but also a space in which different strategies of negotiation come into play with each other. The site has elements of both the heightened "vortex" and the flattened "non-place." But neither is completely realized at, by, or on the rock. To the extent that these two variations on global encounter persist with each other (among other strategies), the rock is a particularly fruitful place in which to situate a re-thinking of "globality." It is from the interplay between the weak, everyday "non-place" and the over-determinining simultaneity of a heightened "vortex" that I hope to make what I will call a "poetics of the worldwide."[91]

Multiple Belongings

As David Harvey has noted of its neighbor, the Acropolis, the Areopagos "simultaneously 'belongs' to radically divergent imagined communities. And the question as to whom it 'truly' belongs has no direct theoretical answer: it is determined through political

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91. The distinction between place and space is slippery and used differently by different thinkers. A

contestation and struggle and, hence, is a relatively unstable determination."[92]The various

meanings and practices engaged in on the rock all share a time and place even while remaining

ideologically and temperamentally divergent. The resulting scene, though it does not produce a

single ideological vector or temperamental mood, finds a way of belonging together. As Massey

notes, "what gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it

is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations meeting and weaving together at

a particular locus."[93] This constellation of meeting points is decidedly "extroverted" not pointing

towards itself as some original source, but beyond itself to the global networks and social

relationships that produce it and are, in part, produced by it. Praying, journaling, drug dealing,

courtship, guitar playing, singing, chatting, philosophizing, water-selling, trip planning,

picnicking, picture taking, touring, conning, picking-up, sunset watching, kite flying, and more

happen next to/on top of/in the wake of each other in ways that both produce harmonies and

discords. The physical geography of the rock (slippery surface, proximity both to ancient and

modern Athens, relative remoteness, spacious vistas) sometimes tunes this "distinct mixture" of

heterogeneous behaviors into the same key and sometimes amplifies small differences between

what had previously seemed accordant actions.[94]

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92. David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 310.
93. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, 154.
94. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, 156.

Fig.2.11. Overwritten.

Because it is important to so many different kinds of people for so many different reasons,

the Areopagos is a particularly rich and contested co-incident place: it is not a place of or for a

specific kind of person or a specific set of activities. Rather, it draws a mixture of bodies to it for

a mixture of reasons. In Dwight Conquergood's terms, the place of the Areopagos is less a

"circumscribed territory" than a "heavily trafficked intersection, a port of call and exchange;" it

is a particularly rich condensation of a "postcolonial world crisscrossed by transnational

narratives, diasporic affiliations, and especially the movement and multiple migrations of

people."[95] The relatively "voluntary" movements of tourists, study-abroad students, religious

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95.   Dwight Conquergood, "Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research," *The Drama Review* 46(2002), 145.

pilgrims, indigenous Greeks and the "often economically propelled and politically coerced" movements of legal and illegal migrants that meet at the Areopagos (or glide past relatively unnoticed by each other) a part of an uneven "power geometry." [96]

Fig.2.12. Path.

Being Situated By the Areopagos

People situate themselves in relationship to the rock through a host of historical and social matrices (between ancient and modern, between tourist and public space, between justice and violence, between paganism and Christianity). The rock also situates people in relationship to itself and to others. As an symbolic object it orients people towards certain ideas/ideal rather than others. It is not, however, only an ideological orienting device: the rock also has peculiar physical attributes that situate bodies in particular ways. Beyond its function as a symbol that points beyond itself, the rock is a changing material object which enables/complicates the subjective relationships among other social actors. The rock does not have a single agency-in-

96.   Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, 149.

itself (any more than would any other social actor) but it is produced *as* an agent by its user visitors—as various as the later are, so too are the agencies of the Areopagos.

Fig.2.13.Surface.

Landscape architects, Sarah Ahmed notes, refer to the unofficial paths that folks take when cutting corners between points A and B, rather than taking officially sanctioned routes, as "desire lines."[97] The Areopagos bears the markings of millions upon millions of unofficial steps, but the result is not a series of lines that make walking along them easier; it is a change in the chemical composition of the stone which, ironically, makes walking on it more difficult. Because of its slick, polished surface, I originally though that the rock was made of marble. Only later did I discover that it was made of limestone. I explained my mistake to a geologist I met on the rock one day. "Well" he explained, "Your initial impression wasn't totally mistaken. You see, limestone plus heat plus pressure equals marble."

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97. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 19.

Fig.2.14. Changing composition.

The cumulative effect of the heat and pressure of countless unsanctioned movements is that

bodies now slide into each other in unpredictable patterns, are forced to look to each other for

help in determining the least treacherous next step, and smile at each other in moments of shared

awkwardness. There undoubtedly were times when some parts of the rock were much more

slippery than others, but those spots were subsequently avoided in favor of more sure ground;

this, in turn, put more heat and pressure on the safe spots, rendering them less safe for future

stepping. Whereas a "desire line" across a field might create an ever more established and easier

to use shortcut, steps of desire on the Areopagos create an ever expanding area that is

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increasingly difficult to navigate. As a result, it is almost impossible to keep one's footing on many very large sections of the rock (even after months of practice).

The smooth surface of the rock is almost as comfortable a thing on which to sit as it is a treacherous thing on which to walk. The rock is like a cushioned-grip pen designed to accommodate various knuckle sizes. The varying patterns of jutting stone allow one to sit and/or lean at virtually any angle one chooses like a ready-made recliner. The patterns of the alternatively concave and convex limestone lend themselves to the almost infinite expansion— "pull up a rock and join us"—or contraction of a social group. A slight turn of the hips can turn an intimate alcove into a gathering place for a larger group or vice versa. I have sat on the peak with groups of almost 100 that felt cohesive; I also know more than a few couples who told me they managed to complete the most intimate of acts in relative privacy just a few feet from the that same spot.

These two features of the physical geography of the rock—its slipperiness when walking, its comfort when sitting— are among the chief factors solidifying its position as a prime make-out spot. The rock facilitates intimacy by taking the responsibility for making the first move. By the time the social actors have interjected—"Hold me please that I might not slip." "Let me give you a hand there." "Catch me please I'm falling." "Are you OK?" "Be careful there, that next step is a doozie!" —they are, in some ways, only confirming relationships that the rock has already produced. The chemical movement from limestone to marble both enables and is produced by a series of performed actions.

This dialectic between the physical and cultural geography of the rock often highlights/

produces a separation between subjectivity and agency. In the case of a pre-make-out approach to the rock, for example, a particularly steep and slippery spot often pushes high-heel-wearing women to lean on their more sure footed male companions. The lean is often accompanied by nervous giggling on her part and calm deep throated reassurance/condescension on his. Like a gendered pairing of ballet dancers, he becomes the grounded masculine stability that supports her unstable and ephemeral femininity. In addition to the ways in which these actions fit into the "stylized repetition of acts" that constitute the performativities of gender and heteronormative coupling, the moment animates the rock itself as a social actor.[98] The boy in question may have brought dozens of other girls here before. He may have calculated the whole thing as a way to engender greater physical intimacy. Even if this is the case, however, a large part of what makes the spot "work" is the fact that the rock will push her to lean on him in ways that, even though he may be able to predict them in general will be surprising both to of them in the specific moment of their manifestations. The couple may have been brought to the rock by desires we could locate within their respective subjectivities, but they are, in a literal sense, "brought together" by the slipperiness of the rock. He may have wanted her to touch him, but he didn't plan on the specific spot where the slip/lean/grab happened. Thus, when the physical relationship between them escalates, they are not starting the erotic encounter from scratch, but continuing along a trajectory that was initiated by their respective physical relationships with the rock (as mediated by their gendered footwear).

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98.   Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 171-90.

Fig.2.15. Coupling.[99]

The slip/lean/grab creates what Bakhtin has called a discursive "loophole" that allows the couple both to intend and not intend their togetherness. They "retain for [themselves] the possibility of altering the ultimate final meaning" of their gestures.[100] For the performativity of "romance" to be felicitous, the agent of the co-incident accidental-intentionality (what I have elsewhere called an "aleatory aesthetics") is not one of the two subjectivities that are soon to "become one," but the rock on which they find themselves.[101] This co-incidental framing creates an aesthetic of the un-begun, or an aesthetic of a yet-to-be-determined beginning.

Rather than locate the "background" of the embodied performativity of the lovers in a nameless faceless "discourse," here the generative force of the performative bodies is a performative stone (which is itself produced as slippery in relationship with the countless bodies

99. Photo by Gianis Viliris. Used by permission.
100. Michael Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics.,* trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 233.
101. David P. Terry, "Haunting and Aleatory Aesthetics in "a Magical Mystery Tour of the American Theatre"," T*heatre Annual* 60(2007): 33-51.

that have pressed against it). The slippery ground works in collusion with the stars and expanse of city lights to create a fateful moment between lovers who are, to some degree, just along for the ride. My point is not that the rock solely determines the relationship between the two lovers, but that in this particular interaction between bodies and landscape the materiality of the rock is produced as agent. The dialogic social/intersubjective relationship between lovers is a trilectic interplay with the rock.

To Do With

My own slippery desire, to speak "from" the co-incidences of divergent mobile bodies on the rock "across" and "to" a number of binaries which, despite countless attempts to eradicate them still seem to dominate discussions of culture: public/private, local/global, modern/ancient, sacred/secular, privileged/subaltern, materiality/discursivity. The social relationships that produce/are produced by the rock pry open, blur, and complicate these widely held distinctions. I am arguing that, in some ways, the rock itself is the agent. My project follows along trajectories that the rock already started.

The place/sign of the rock, as I encounter it, "is a Janus faced thing: it wants to be about something, to be a sign, and it wants to be something, a thing in itself, a site of beauty."[102] In Barthes' terms, my writing seeks to move from "studium. . . that wide field of unconcerned desire, of various interest, of inconsequential taste" to "punctum. . . that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)" and back again. While for Barthes the categories of studia and puncta are specific to the photograph, I adapt them here to help me form a distinction

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102.Bert O. States, *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms: On the Phenomenology of Theater* (University of California Press, 1987), 10.

between the Areopagos as a variously meaningful social place which is an instantiation of larger forces (studium) and the Areopagos as a thing-in-itself (punctum).[103] I am driven by a desire to understand what it means or might mean to be global, but also by an affective connection to the stubbornness of the referent, the rockness of the rock, and by extension the physical fact of the bodies that co-incide on it. The rock is not merely a logical extension or exemplar of the larger forces of globalization but an accidental "prick" that re-frames those forces.

The "stubbornness" of the rock's materiality both "contains" the strange collage of bodies that inspire this project and "grounds" my intellectual tendency to wander. Its gravity pulls disparate things together into potentially meaningful entanglements. In a sense, of course, I create these meanings and am answerable for them, but I am not solely responsible for them. Could I have written about any number of other places and made the same or similar "points" about the question of globality? Certainly. But it is the material specificity of *this* place at *this* time that has wounded me in particular ways. While any number of places could be "significant" as answers to my questions, the ways in which the Areopagos multiplies and exceeds signification are what give its particularity. The stubbornness of the rock is what enables me to dis/re-place the agency of writing and to write from and towards co-incident surprise.

The scene between lovers above functions as a metonym in relationship to my project as whole. The lovers, a compilation of hundreds of encounters that I witnessed on the rock, function as an allegory for the relationship between writer, reader and landscape in the project at hand. My goal in writing such allegorical moments is not to preserve and share them, but to orient and

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103. Roland Barthes, *Roland Barthes.,* trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley: University of California, 1977), 27.

animate them "futuristically toward the construction of a precise, local, and social discursive context, of which [they] function[] as a mise en abyme."[104] It matters to me that these events are "true" not because of a relationship that I want my readers to have with them as "facts," but because of the relationship that the precision of their facticity allows me to create with my reader. This is to say that I intend this work to function allegorically as enabling nonfiction.

What I am recounting "happen" to be true events that "actually happened" to and through me on the rock. This double sense of "happening" both re-enforces and undermines the status of these events as "matters of fact" in important ways, emphasizing 1) their solidity as in/complete fragments which, because they have "already happened," are affectively and aesthetically felt as complete even as they are analytically understood as incomplete and 2) the improbable and ongoing chain of events in which they "just so happen" to be a part which calls into question the ways in which they might well have happened differently. To witness these events as fragments is to emphasize the partiality and the could-have-been-otherwise potentiality of the world. It is to privilege co-incidental moments of interruption as multiple vectors that collide in irreducibly complex patterns that are, nonetheless, speakable.

In treating anything and everything "to do with" the Areopagos as potentially significant, I am using the double sense of "to do with" that Meaghan Morris uses in the title of her essay "Things To Do With Shopping Centers": both things that happen to have something *to do* with the Areopagos, and things that the Areopagos *does*. To write "from" this rock is to treat anything that happens on or around it (as both a real and imagined place) as potentially significant, taking

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104. Meaghan Morris, "Banality in Cultural Studies," *Discourse* 10.2(1988), 14-15.

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special care to treat that which seems the most determined as though it is (potentially) a matter of chance and that which seems the most random as though it is (potentially) determined/determining. The rock thus becomes what performance scholar Mike Pearson and archeologist Michael Shanks have called a "scene-of-crime: a cordoned area where anything might be potentially meaningful and constitute evidence."[105] The critical stance I take towards this scene-of-crime is not, primarily, that of a detective seeking to get to the "bottom" of it, but of an artist seeking to discover what can be made of the pieces. I use the often evoked ethnographic injunction to make the "strange familiar and the familiar strange" in an attempt not only to "blur genres" in a "thick description" of a single social event but also to "blur" competing conceptions of the lived social vectors that co-incide on the rock into more productive imaginaries of the "global."[106]

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105. Mike Pearson, *In Comes I: Performance, Memory and Landscape* (Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press, 2007), 16.
106. Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (Basic Books, 1983). Greg Ulmer might call the Areopagos my "wide image."Gregory L. Ulmer, *Internet Inventions: From Literacy to Electracy* (New York: Longman, 2003).

CHAPTER 3

GOING/KNOWING:QUEERING ETHNOGRAPHY

Fig.3.1. The Acropolis as seen from the Areopagos.

Going/Knowng

All spaces are to some degree informed by simultaneity and heterogeneity but, as should by now be clear, these factors of spatiality are particularly well pronounced on the Areopagos. In order to study the complexity of the Areopagos as not only a "conceived" and "perceived" but also a "lived" space, I had to get close to it.[107] I came into the project having read lots of texts

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107.Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space.,* trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1991).

about the rock, about its historical, religious, and geographical contexts and about theories of performance and culture more broadly, but my study is invested in a "politics of the near": it assumes that there are particular kinds of knowledge that can be gained from lived contact that cannot be gained any other way.[108] Sometimes as Zora Neale Hurston writes, one has to "*go* there" to "*know* there."[109] I applied for funding. I put my life in North Carolina on hold, bought a plane ticket, tracked down an apartment in Athens. For six months I physically walked my body up to the top of the Areopagos hundreds of times. I stood on the rock through a rare Athenian snowstorm. I took naps in the coveted shade on hot summer days. I accidentally stained a small section of the rock with the oil from a can of tuna. I watched hundreds of thousands of people come past. I talked to hundreds of them. Some for a few minutes, others for hours. Some I will never see again. With others I am still in regular contact. As was stipulated in the IRB review of my study I made sure to obtain written or oral consent from those with whom I spoke and made sure to protect their privacy in subsequent coding, logging, and recording of data. I shared chocolate bars and loaves of bread. I danced, laughed, sang, and argued. I was bored. I was enthralled. I sat by myself for hours on a cold January day, nestled in an alcove that protected me from the bitter winds that kept other visitors away. I was there for spring sunsets and late summer nights when it was all but impossible to find a place to sit. I took pictures. I let other people take pictures of me. For four to ten hours a day (occasionally longer) over a period of six months, I lived on the rock. I wrote as much of down as I could in my blue notebooks. I came

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108. D. Soyini Madison, "My Desire is for the Poor to Speak Well of Me," in *Remembering: Oral History Performance*, ed. Della Pollock (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 149.
109. Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006), 192.

back to North Carolina and edited some of my thoughts into this document.

This process of experiential inquiry—going in order to know—places me within the methodological tradition of ethnography in the most basic sense of culture (ethnos) writing (graphy). Norm Denzin defines the practice of ethnography as "that form of inquiry and writing that produces descriptions and accounts of the ways of life of the writer and those written about."[110] Denzin's definition emphasizes the proximate and partial epistemology privileged by ethnographic practice in two senses.

First, Denzin's definition rests on Raymond Williams' sense of culture as a "whole way of life" but, instructively, Denzin omits the "whole."[111] This omission signals the ways in which ethnography—at least in its contemporary forms—privileges an epistemology of partiality and proximity. While the view from up close does not afford the same fiction of wholeness as the view from afar, ethnography assumes that there is an important kind of "knowing" to be gained from "going" and being close to other life worlds.

Second, Denzin's definition highlights the ways in which ethnography is always also a writing of the "way of life" of the ethnographer as much as it is of those it is written "about." What ethnographers encounter "there" is partially a function of the "here" that, in theory, they have left behind. An ethnographic text thus often tells as much if not more about where the ethnographer has come "from" historically, geographically, institutionally or otherwise than it tells about where the ethnographer has gone "to." Historically, most western ethnographic texts

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110.Norman K. Denzin, *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practice for the 21st Century* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), xi.
111.Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* (Columbia University Press, 1983).

have tended to gloss over the place that ethnographers come "from" (institutionally, geographically, philosophically) in favor of descriptions of the place that the ethnographer has gone "to." Culture writing, as Denzin frames it must try and place the "fromness" of the ethnographer into question as much as it interrogates the locations of others.

Fig.3.2. Looking up.

Situating Knowledge

These two assumptions about the partial and reflexive nature of ethnographic knowledge have informed both my experiences in the field and my approach to writing. I sought to be "more or less from" the rock then and seek to write about my experiences there now in such a way that "proximity not objectivity" is a primary "epistemological point of departure and return."[112] I did not go to the Areopagos to categorize efficiently the various social actors who met there and to make easily verifiable "objective" theoretical claims as to what forces brought them there. Although I make many "detours through theory," my attempt is always to return from these

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112. Conquergood, "Interventions," 146.

necessary detours to engagement with the material specificity of the lived space of the Areopagos.[113] I assume that, as Donna Haraway has argued, "the only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular."[114] My project sees the ethnographic encounter with the Areopagos as a way to find a larger image of the global that is not a grid-like abstraction—"the product[]of escape and transcendence of limits (the view from above)"—but is instead a concrete partiality: "the joining of partial views and halting voices into a collective subject position that promises a vision of the means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions of views from somewhere." [115] Going to the Areopagos and putting myself in embodied encounter with the global flows that meet there was/is an attempt to move from abstract knowledge about the global to an encounter with globalities in/as material, embodied particularities: not a view from nowhere, but a view from somewhere—what Haraway calls "situated knowledge."[116] In so doing, I hope to locate the question of globality rather than assume that globalization only happens on a large, abstract scale that is always opposed to the scaled down local: the Aropagos helps to give shape to a local sense of the global.

Haraway's conception of "situated knowledge" frames a distinction between "the view from a body" which is "always a complex, contradictory, structuring, and structured" and the "view from above, from nowhere, from simplicity."[117] In ethnographic practice, the view from "nowhere" that constructs the ethnographer as being without or beyond the limitations of

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113. Stuart Hall, "Marx's Notes on Method: A "Reading" of the "1857"," *Cultural Studies* 17.2(2003), 131.
114. Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14.3(1988), 590.
115. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 590.
116. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 589.
117. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," , 589.

location is often accompanied by the construction of an "ethnographic present" in which

"others," fixed in space and time, are presented as though they can never grow, change, move, or

surprise: although the ethnographer "moves on" in space, and progresses through time,

"temporally, spatially and developmentally the people he or she studied are presented as if

suspended in an unchanging and virtually timeless state." The ethnographic present locates

others in particular places, at a particular time in a particular stage of development, "as if the

ethnographer's description provides all that it is important or possible to know about their past

and future."[118] Locating "others" is a way of transcending one's own particularity such that

ethnographer-knower becomes the mobile outside to their fixed spatio-temporal world. Haraway

calls this creation of pseudo-objectivity and transcendence the "god trick."

Fig.3.3. Commuter train heads to the northern suburbs (Areopagos is in the background).

The prevalence of the "god trick" in ethnographic practice has historically connected

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118. Davis cited in Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, 10.

ethnography with dehumanizing Othering practices of masculinism, racism, imperialism and colonialism among a long list of "isms." The "view from nowhere" afforded by the "god trick" is a hegemonic practice that feigns disinterest even as it enacts the interests of power formations. The general social constructivist critique of this work has been to show that its enactments of "truth" are expressions of power. While this critique is a welcome corrective, Haraway notes that it serves primarily to "deny meanings and bodies" rather than to "build meanings and bodies that have a chance for life."[119] The radical relativism that enables this critique, which is itself located "nowhere" even as it uncovers the same thing "everywhere," enables deconstruction, but not creation.[120] It can reveal the ideological cracks in any foundational claims to authenticity or stable meaning without sufficiently theorizing the ground on which its own claims to critical authority rest or the grounds on which any thing new might be built. This form of ideological critique obscures the material specificity of specific bodies in specific places in favor of those nameless faceless discourses that have supposedly produced them. As a result, they, like the pseudo objective claims they challenge, fail to produce views from somewhere in particular.

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119. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 580. emphasis added
120. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 584.

Fig.3.4. Bump.

In contrast to the twin "god tricks" of totalism and relativism, Haraway champions "positioned rationality" of "situated knowledges" as a way to locate a partial objectivity. As places for "situating knowledges," she privileges the "standpoints of the subjugated." She privileges them not because they are somehow less constructed than standpoints of the powerful, but precisely because they are more likely to be recognized and recognize themselves *as* constructed: "they are least likely to allow denial of the critical and interpretive core of all knowledge."[121] They are thus most likely to produce knowledges that are potent for constructing "worlds less organized by axes of domination."[122] Situated knowledge is thus allied to re-

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121. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 584.
122. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 585.

constructed worlds and situated ethnography to potential worldscapes. Strategically encountering partiality is also a practice of encompassing potentiality: the barely perceptible, nascent or covert means by which "worlds less organized by axes of domination" come into play. Accordingly, the global is in hock to performativities of the local. Rather than anything like the field of transcendence an objective, objectifying approach might yield, the global is fractious from the ground up.

Fig.3.5. Monastiraki and north cityscape.

Vulnerable Observation (Depth)

In "situating" my knowledge claims, I also recognize that the knowledge produced through going to, being at, and returning from the Areopagos is always also partly knowledge produced "about" me. This is not to say that I am the object of study, or that my claims are limited to my own subjectivity, but to say that, through situating myself in the field I have been made subject

to various encounters. As the embodied measure of passage, arrival, and departure, I am to some extent, the story I tell. The "I" who is produced in this document was first produced through encounter with the rock and the various social actors who constituted it/were constituted by it over a limited period of time.[123]

Fig.3.6. My bump.

This is a story of the "vulnerability and vicissitudes" of being in the field altered by precariousness as underlined by Ruth Behar's theorization of the "vulnerable observer." Behar insists that ethnographers seek not only an understanding of the lives of others, but also an "understanding of what aspects of the self are the most important filters through which one perceives the world and in particular the topic being studied."[124] Her sense of reflexivity goes beyond an obligatory front-loading of one's race/class/gender/orientation/ability status in the opening paragraphs of one's writing and urges the inclusion of one's own emotional life—desires, frustrations, and heartache—at every stage of the research practice. Going there in order

123. Placing the "limit" with the rock rather than within my own subjective experience is one of the main things that distinguishes this project from the aims of "autoethnographic" writing that I have critiqued elsewhere. David P. Terry, "Once Blind, Now Seeing: Problematics of Confessional Performance," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26(3)(2006): 209-28.
124. Behar, *Vulerable Observer*, 13.

to know there, or what others have called a "performative epistemology" requires, as Dwight

Conquergood urges, "honesty, humility, self-reflexivity, and an acknowledgment of the

interdependence and reciprocal role-playing between knower and known."[125] Consequently,

Behar urges a blurring of ethnographic and subjective analysis arguing that such "vulnerable"

work can move beyond the "miniature bubble of navel-gazing" to address "the enormous sea of

serious social issues."[126]

In Gubrium and Holstein's words, this approach seeks to keep "the crisis of representation at

bay by making use of, not despairing over, []epistemological reflexivity."[127] By the "crisis of

representation" Gubrium and Holstein refer both to the conceptualized gap between symbolic

representations and the objects to which they (always imperfectly) refer and the power laden

process by which the relationship between representation and referent is secured. Behar is quick

to point out that exposing the vulnerable self is not an end in itself. Its value lies in its ability to

"take us somewhere we couldn't otherwise get to."[128] Vulnerability is a necessary precondition of

both being "there" and of making a meaningful approximation of that "being" available to one's

readers.

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125. Dwight Conquergood, "Ethnography, Rhetoric, and Performance," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78(1992), 182.
126. Behar, *Vulerable Observer*, 15.
127. Jaber F. Gubrium, and James A. Holstein, *Postmodern Interviewing* (Sage Publications, 2003), 14.
128. Behar, *Vulerable Observer*, 14.
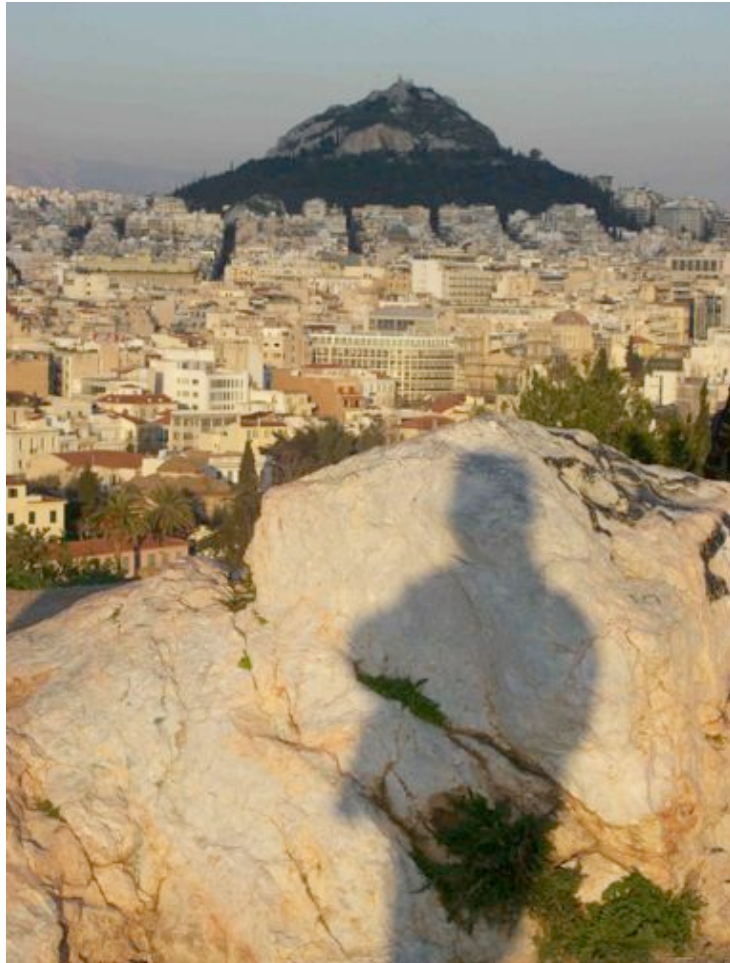
Fig.3.7. Shadow on rock.

Multiple "Theres": Challenge to Ethnography

Thus far this chapter has tried to emphasize some of the ways in which I understand my engagement with the Areopagos as an ethnographic enterprise—a going in order to know—that privileges proximity over objectivity, partiality over completeness, vulnerability over claims for self-transcendence. Even given the self-reflexive and proximate epistemology of ethnographic knowing that Denzin, Haraway, Behar and many others suggest, however, the "there" of the Areopagos presents a number of challenges to ethnographic practice. Most notably, the rock is

impossible to define in terms of a single ethnos. Going "there" meant going to many different "theres." The diversity of bodies that co-incide at the Areopagos and the diversity of activities in which they engage goes beyond what anyone could reasonably identify as a single, or even myriad cultures (or at least any cultures that one could claim without extremely high levels of abstraction). Furthermore, the intersection of different ethnoi is not just background noise; it is a central feature of the rock as a lived space and the main focus of my analysis. Beyond the proximity of ethnographer and any one Other, the "there" of my project was precisely, to the extent that such a concept can ever be said to be precise, the constantly shifting proximity of multiple "others" to each other and their respective cultural matrices.

Fig.3.8. Simultaneous heterogeneity.[129]

Consequently, although I encountered many things that moved me a great deal, my

129. Photograph by Gianis Viliris, used with permission.

primary modes of being on the rock were not defined by the vulnerable intimacy that Behar urges. I got to know those I met in and through their relationships to each other and to the rock. While sometimes this afforded me time for vulnerability through introspection and occasional intimate moments with specific others, more often than not the challenge of my observations came from my desire to take in as much breadth as possible. Being self reflexive about my own desires was thus often a turning outward toward the multiplicity of exteriorities that surrounded me, not a turning inward. What vulnerability I found with specific people was always in tension with my desire to pay attention to the multiplicity and heterogeneity that many models of intimate or proximate knowledge would, to some degree, bracket out.

Norm Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln construct a history of ethnographic inquiry in terms of a series of moments: a traditional moment marked by positivism and objectivity (1900-1950), a modernist moment marked by procedural formalism (1950-1970), a blurred genres moment marked by a shift to multiple genres of writing (1970-1986), the moment of the crisis of representation marked by heightened self-reflexivity and emphasis on the privileges of race, class gender and other power formations (1986-1990), a postmodern or experimental moment in which more genres are included in the writing of ethnography and textual experiment itself became a major pre-occupation (1990-1995), a post-experimental phase (1995-2000), and the present moment which is still in the process of being defined (2000-).[130] Denzin and Lincoln are quick to point out that none of the previous "moments" has died out. All of the moments, they

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130. Norman Denzin, and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Introduction:Entering the Field of Qualitative Research," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994).

insist, continue to operate in the present. This caveat notwithstanding, the narrative of ethnographic moments often becomes a narrative of progress that sits uneasily with me. "Once we looked at cultural knowledge in a detached way," the list of moments seems to say, "but we are evolving towards more authentic forms of writing culture." While once we looked at culture from a far, we are moving towards ways of knowing that, as Denzin puts it, "stay close to how people experience everyday life."[131] While this evolutionary narrative of increasing proximity to "the actual" is not the stated intention of Lincoln and Denzin, Behar, Haraway or any of the scholars who have taught me about ethnographic practice, it is a frequent effect of attempts to tell the story of ethnography.

The sense of ethnography progressing ever closer in order to know ever deeper is also present in Behar's dichotomy between the cold, distant "god trick" gaze and the warm open-hearted presence of the situated "vulnerable" observer. Rather than clinically detached production of truth, she insists that we must write "those books which come upon us like ill-fortune, and distress us deeply, like the death of one we love better than ourselves, like suicide. A book must be an ice-axe to break the sea frozen inside us."[132] Behar wants to include the interior life of the ethnographer in order to move its readers to engage the life below the ice crust. But the "sea" she imagines is within the ethnographer and the process of getting to it is, at least metaphorically, through piercing, smashing, and gushing. It entails a degree of discursive and emotive violence in order to get at the truth that is presumably "there" below the cold

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131. Norman K. Denzin, *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003).
132. Behar, *Vulerable Observer*, 86.

surface.

Fig.3.9. Do not cross.

This vulnerable epistemology privileges the interior over the exterior, and the fluid over the solid. It also points toward a confessional sense of "going there"—"I can't believe she *went* there!"—that is increasingly common in so called "auto-ethnographic" texts. It is an epistemology that assumes knowledge that comes from "inside" is somehow inherently more authentic than that which comes from "outside."And it echoes subjectively the kind of objectivity under whose name journalists seek to "crack the nut," to break open crusty narratives and claims in order to excise a verifiable truth. This is also the logic, as Page Dubois has made painfully clear, of much torture: break the body to mine the secret within.[133]

133.Page DuBois, *Torture and Truth* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

Fig.3.10. A cave of the Furies.

Lincoln and Denzin's ethnographic moments and Behar's ice axe metaphor are more

complex ways of situating knowledge than I have presented here. I point to them in the way that

I have in order to emphasize a prominent current in much contemporary ethnographic writing

that privileges depth over breadth, intimate over public encounters. I recognize this

epistemological position is often a very useful one to take strategically, that it is by no means

exclusive to the authors I have discussed above, and that it is not as monolithic as I have

presented it. I also feel, however, that the assumption that proximate, self-reflexive, and interior

knowledge is somehow an inherently better form of knowledge than other forms is an often

under-theorized assumption of ethnographic practice. The radical heterogeneity of the Areopagos

challenges this assumption by providing a concrete material "there" which is inescapably wide,

shifting, and multiple and that requires, precisely, attending to the shared surfaces as a slippery

stage for self-enactment. It is to favor the ice-flow or, in this case, the many layers of rock

formation that make the peculiar transactions on its surface possible: to be "absorbed in extent and not in depth."[134]

Fig.3.11. Posing at twilight.

To write the multiple ethnoi of the Areopagos as I encountered them is: 1) to favor exteriority; 2) to write across multiple vectors, multiple logics, and multiple "structures of feeling" simultaneously and 3) to hail peripheral vision and eavesdropping rather than the concerned dyadic and wholative relations typically advanced by anthro-ethnography.[135] It is to look with a soft focus privileging the corner of one's eye, to listen with particular care to background noise, to privilege the logic of collage over that of deductive reasoning. To be

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134. Roland Barthes, *Michelet* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1987), 153.
135. Williams, *Culture and Society*, 100.

"there" at the Areopagos is to kinesthetically play the various vectors that pull on one's body with and against each other rather than trying to understand any one vector in situated isolation. Trying to understand these vectors in their multiple relations to each other challenges the ethnographic premise that there is a single "ethnos" in and from which one can locate one's knowledge, however deeply, vulnerably, or violently one might encounter it.

Furthermore, the multiple and multiplying "there" of the Areopagos is partly produced by bodies that are themselves engaged in situating what Haraway would call "views from nowhere." Among the "structures of feeling" at the Areopagos are a number of cultural practices that produce the "god trickery" that much contemporary ethnographic practice defines itself against. The Areopagos thus challenges any neat distinction between the view from "nowhere" and the view from "somewhere." It gives ethnographic specificity to the embodied practice of "views from above." The rock offers proximate contact with bodies in the process of both figuratively and literally constructing views of the Athenian cityscape, Western culture, the project of Philosophy, their own mobility and the mobility of others, the modern, the global, the transcendent, and the divine. It is a place at which the (theoretically) anti-body visions of Platonic, Aristotelian, and Pauline ideals are re-incorporated.

Fig.3.12. From somewhere.

It is a somewhere from which the "view from nowhere" is itself constructed. On its slopes, preachers re-perform St. Paul's sermon to the "Unknown God" who cannot be contained in the limiting materiality of temples and idols as children take turns sitting on different parts of the rock exclaiming "Paul sat here"/"No he sat here"/"No here!" Views of the body as a "blank page for social inscriptions" which are "deeply indebted to Aristotle" are contested at a place where Aristotle's own body is widely believed to have stood. While Haraway's model of "situated knowledges" forbids only "the god trick" of positing views from nowhere, the Areopagos offers proximity to god-trickery in/as situated action.

Fig.3.13. Only Jesus.

I draw from Haraway's conception of situated knowledges, yet I choose to "situate" and (a)proximate my understanding of the global not in "subjugated" knowledges per se, but in a specific place that produces/is produced by a variety of subjugated/subjugating, marginalized/ marginalizing discourses. Locating my study in the simultaneous heterogeneity of the Areopagos is a way of creating neither a view from "above" nor a knowledge from "below" but a theory from "between" "among" and "beside" multiple forces of globalization—in which those "forces" are understood as themselves being the product of complex and contradictory embodied material practices.

Why Performance?

Because of its longstanding investment in both textual and embodied knowledges, the strand of performance ethnography that emerges from the practice of the oral performance of literature is "uniquely suited to the challenge of bringing together disparate and stratified ways of knowing."[136] When the hermeneutic world-as-text trope emerged across the humanities and social sciences in the 1980s and 90s—Lincoln and Denzin's "fourth moment" of ethnography— scholars steeped in the performance of literature, most notably Dwight Conquergood, were prepared to discuss not only differences between "genres" within a textocentric frame but also materially different modes of knowing.[137] Theories of performance allow for a greater degree of material specificity through which to situate the "vulnerability" of observation.

Fig.3.14. Performer.

136. Conquergood, "Interventions," 147.
137. Denzin, *Interpretive Ethnography*, xvii.

I take seriously Victor Turner's definition of human beings as "homo performans;" I see performance not only as a central aspect of human life but also as a primary mechanism through which humans "reveal" themselves to themselves. [138] The self-revelation produced in performance is not merely a passive reflection or reduplication of a pre-existing object: "cultural performances shape and direct who we are and what we can become."[139] Performance ethnography thus privileges cultural performances as objects of study because they offer views of social lives at both their most transient and most circumscribed moments. Moments of performance work in the indicative and subjunctive modes simultaneously. These "self-conscious and symbolic acts" exist in bounded times and places; the "meaning and affect" they generate is the result of "embodied action that produces a heightened moment of communication."[140]

Fig.3.15. Dancers for Jesus.

138. Victor Turner, *On the Edge of the Bush: Anthropology as Experience*, University of Arizona Press (Tempe: 1985), 187.
139. Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, 154. Emphasis added
140. Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, 154.

Fig.3.16. Stage of the Theatre of Dionysus (southeast slope of the Acropolis).

Such moments in which social actors frame their own actions as "performance" or "restored behavior" are privileged by performance ethnography because they show others in the act of showing themselves to themselves or, more precisely, producing themselves for themselves.[141] The set apart actions of "cultural performance" often both produce and emerge from "liminal" stages in which social actors are "betwixt and between" different modes of being.[142] These states of being are framed as extra-ordinary and, as folklorist Richard Bauman notes, involve the

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141. Schechner, *Between Theatre*, 36.
142. Turner, *Ritual to Theatre*, 52.

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"assumption of an accountability to an audience for the way in which communication is carried out, above and beyond its referential content."[143] These are moments in which social actors are, paradoxically, both more and less than "themselves." In the moment of performance special relationalities between performer and audience are produced through aesthetic "markings."[144] Such moments allow ethnographers to engage with acts of "situated knowledge making" that are already in progress before the ethnographer-as-knowledge-maker arrives on the scene and thus to think "from" and "through" different framings.

Fig.3.17. Seeing differently.

In addition to privileging the heightened and circumscribed meaning-making of cultural performances, performance ethnography also offers a lens through which to view less self-conscious everyday social performances. Here performance ethnography draws on theatrical

143. Richard Bauman, "Verbal Art as Performance," in *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader* (Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 169.
144. Bauman cited in Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, 154.

metaphor deployed by sociologist Erving Goffman in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* to look at the ways in which everyday social interactions involve playing various roles for others (parent, student, customer etc.). Everyday life consists of many scripted behaviors that are not usually experienced consciously as being scripted (greeting, commuting, shopping, eating etc.). These behaviors are generally experienced consciously as performances only when one comes into contact with other ways of doing them: the everyday becomes extra-ordinary when it comes into contact with other versions of the ordinary. Thus a performance approach to ethnography is particularly keyed into moments of cross-cultural contact, not the least of which is the intersection between the ethnographer's own sense of everyday and the everydayness of others. This is not merely a matter of being "reflexive" about one's own cultural assumptions—a practice which has itself become a relatively "everyday" matter for social critics— but of paying special attention to the ways in which those assumptions are specifically produced as performance through situated, embodied contact with others. Conversely, a performance ethnographer recognizes and takes responsibility for the ways in which the behaviors of others are "marked" as performance precisely by one's own presence as audience.

Dwight Conquergood notes that performance ethnography, at its best, thinks "through" performance and "along" multiple "crisscrossing lines of activity and analysis," and embraces performance "1) as a work of imagination, as an object of study; 2) as a pragmatics of inquiry (both as model and method), and an optic and operator of research; 3) as a tactic of intervention, an alternative space of struggle."[145] Conquergood is careful to frame all three aspects

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145. Conquergood, "Interventions," 147.

(imagination, inquiry, and intervention) of performance research as, at every level, both doings and reflections on doing, as not just representations but material practices. Accordingly, to say that my primary "object" of study is the Areopagos—a place that may best be described as having either a weak ontology or multiple ontologies— is to recognize that the life worlds I have encountered there are not raw behavioral data to be uncovered and given textual meaning. These performed "actions" are also "analyses" of the world in and of themselves. Likewise, I conceive of my own inquiry in the field as itself a performed practice; I recognize and take responsibility for the ways in which the production of knowledge is an embodied practice as well as a textual reflection on practices. Performance foregrounds the art making practice of fieldwork as a way to give it shape.

Moral Map

In his essay "Performance as a Moral Act," Conquergood gives shape to the "vulnerable" space of fieldwork, the dynamic relations among field worker and field partners, by identifying four major ethnographic pitfalls: the selfishness of taking information from the Other for one's own gain ("the custodian's rip off"); the detachment of cynical withdrawal ("the skeptic's copout"); the superficiality of ready-made identifications ("the enthusiast's infatuation"); and the sensationalism of emphasizing the exotic in the Other ("the curator's exhibitionism").[146] Were I to fall into the "skeptics cop-out," I might argue that all of the encounters on the rock are merely a matter of chance, that their coming together does not speak of anything other than that it "just happened" to be so. Were I to perform the "custodian's rip-off" I might dislodge the fragments

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146. Dwight Conquergood, "Performing as a Moral Act: Ethical Dimensions of the Ethnography of Performance," *Literature in Performance* 5(1985), 5.

from their context and place them into my own pre-determined scheme. To the extent that I

enjoyed the "enthusiast's infatuation" I might collapse differences between myself and those I

met in the field based on superficial similarities (oh look, we are all "nomads"!). Conversely,

should I presume the "curator's exhibitionism" I would define field relationships by essentiallized

exotic differences. Importantly, for Conquergood the opposing forces of these pitfalls are not

limits that one can or should transcend but rather forces to which one is always subject. They

"become destructive only when they are vented without the counterbalancing pull of their

opposite." Conquergood calls the vulnerable space in between these oppositional pulls the space

of "dialogical performance." [147] He seeks to keep the "dialogue" between observer and observed

"open and ongoing" not by posing one privileged "emotional" or "connected" way of being

above a more "rational" and "disconnected" way of being but by placing various forms of co-

being in tension with each other. Behar's "vulnerable observation" often tends towards what

Conquergood calls the "enthusiast's infatuation," forging superficial affective connections

between self and other. Conquergood would not deny these connections, but would place them in

tension with the other poles of his schema. His conception of "dialogue," as drawn from

Bakhtin's *Dialogic Imagination* and *Rabelais and His World*, is an attempt not only to recognize

the complexity of the research relationship as an analytical fact, but to activate it in its

complexity as an aesthetic and ethical action through which to "take other beliefs [and actions]

seriously without taking [one's self] too seriously."[148] In giving form to "vulnerability" it

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147. Conquergood, "Performing as a Moral Act," 5.
148. Conquergood, "Ethnography, Rhetoric, and Performance," 81.

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recognizes the centrality of the "personal" and "partial" without limiting its knowledge claims to that of the "subjective" or "relative."

Listening Out Loud

Moving from the pseudo-objectivity of participant observation toward the situated knowledge of dialogic performance involves moving towards multi-sensory interview-conversations which are, in Lefebvre's words, "attentive, not only to words or pieces of information," and "confessions and confidences" but also "what are disdainfully called noises, which are said without meaning. . . murmurs full of meaning" and "silences."[149] The object of these interview-conversations is not more and better information for its own sake, but the co-creation/discovery of "modest but hard-won intimacies" in the moment of dialogic and kinesthetic encounter with others.[150] These intimacies foster a "quick slide from the experimental controls and grid-like patterning of some social science to the confusion and chaos of embodiment" and, in turn, allow one to "explore and use the rising heat" built in conversation. Listening—especially when one attempts to listen actively with one's entire body and to take responsibility for one's own role in actively shaping the conversation process through what Pollock calls "listening out loud" and "listening by heart"—is hard work; it is often awkward and embarrassing and, at its best, it works in ways that cannot be predicted or controlled:

    Begun in the spirit of preservation that drives much oral history practice—the

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149. Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life* (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004), 19.
150. Della Pollock, "Memory, Remembering, and Histories of Change: A Performance Practice," in *The Sage Handbook of Performance Studies*, ed. D. Soyini Madison, and Judith Hamera (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 90.

desire to save stories from both political obscurity and the ravages of mortality,

listening out loud sets fire to the thing saved: through the course of conversational

interviews, improvised retellings, scenic description, poetic transcription, and

public rehearsal, the story as a historical artifact goes up in the flames of

committed understanding.[151]

Re-configuring interviews as interview-conversations and putting the interview as artifact

"up in flames" means, to some extent, to spatialize the process of talking with others, to open

one's self up to the unexpected multiplicities of co-incidence.

Fig.3.18. Listen.

This is not a project about "separate people telling their separate lives" but a project about

what can happen between people and the material place of the Areopagos. [152] In addition to

influencing my approach to and experience in "the field," performance ethnography alters my

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151. Pollock, "Histories of Change," 91.
152. Pollock, "Histories of Change," 91.

relationship to the act of writing. In both cases I see those with whom I spent time on the rock not as subjects, but as co-creators of this document. Accordingly, this document is a collage of "messy texts" which intentionally blur both the line between self and other and between action and reflection.[153] The texts are not oriented toward the past in an effort to preserve a moment, but toward the future in an effort to give form to an ethic. Placing "proximity" as the point of both departure and return makes for a text with decidedly more blurry boundaries but its status as (a)proximation moves away from ontological fixation and towards ethical and aesthetic engagement. What Pollock calls "committed understanding" does not lend itself to neat texts that function as artifacts *for* their readers, but to active texts that try to work *on* and *with* their readers. This is what I envision for this project as both a study and writing of cultural performance.

Fig.3.19. Messy.

153. G.E. Marcus cited in Gubrium, and Holstein, *Postmodern Interviewing*, 14.

Staging Knowledge (Surface)

Thus situating the question of globality in the excess of co-incident surprises at the

Areopagos also entails a form of what Michael Bowman calls "staging knowledge." Bowman

extends the conscious particularity and partiality in Haraway's "situating knowledge" into a

"research method of simulation and experiment." While "staging knowledge" takes seriously the

need to place knowledge in materially specific and contextual situations, it also envisions ways

to move beyond that particularity not through a positivist abstraction of laws but through the

chain reactions of "spectacle."[154] The logic of spectacularity that Bowman gleans from Jean Luc

Goddard is a logic of montage. In Walter Benjamin's words, it seeks to "assemble large-scale

constructions out of the smallest and most precisely cut components" and to find "the crystal of

the total event" in the self-consciously constructed combination of small individual moments.

Staging knowledge in/as montage looks for ways of engaging with materiality that do not

assume the cause and effect logics of "vulgar historical naturalism."[155] This sense of montage

thus refuses to settle on either side of a materialist/constructivist binary. Instead it recognizes that

researchers are, like other social actors, always "making do" with bits and pieces of material

realities.[156] Staged knowledge does not shy away from its own status as always also a product of

the researcher's imagination but seeks instead to spectacularize the material. Unlike the kind of

"vulgar" materialism that assumes that a materialist historical account requires a minimalist

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154. Michael Bowman, "Looking for Stonewall's Arm: Tourist Performance as Research Method," in *Opening Acts: Performance in/as Communication and Cultural Criticism*, ed. Judith Hamera (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 123.

155. Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project.,* trans. Rolf Tiedemann (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1999), 467.

156. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life.,* trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

aesthetic, this approach carries with it something of Barthes' "(admissible?) dream to transport into a socialist society certain charms (not values) of the bourgeois art of living."[157] It doesn't seek to reduce or distill the "common" good, but to generate and extrapolate it through uncommon connections. The goal of research is not then to engage with the world "as it is" but to approach it at odd angles in hopes that one might be able to experience it, and stage it, differently. Staging knowledge does not search for some essential truth "behind" the world, but for the interplay of various truths along the world's surface.

The practitioner of knowledge staging is like the Baudelairian "flaneur" who does not walk with specific purpose from one destination to another, but strolls, grazes, and cruises as pricked by the "intoxication of empathy."[158] The flaneur does not apply rigid methods in hopes of uncovering some inner truth about the world. Method for the flaneur is not a way of predicting, controlling or limiting one's findings but of creating "opportunities to estrange ourselves from our habitual perception, interactions, and understandings of the world." It is a way of knowing that seeks to begin with un-doing ready-made, performative ways of being through performance interventions. In the prototypical example of flaneury: the turtle walk, the flaneur puts a leash on a turtle in order to slow down his own pace well below the typical relationship to time produced by the city around him. Walking a turtle makes it very difficult to engage with the world in the habitual performativities of the everyday and thus allows more "surreal evidence" to emerge. Staging knowledge does not attempt to unearth knowledge from the depths of an encounter;

157. Barthes, *Roland Barthes*, 60.
158. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 449.

instead, it aims to produce new knowledges through "fragmentation, the interruption of narratives, habits, routines" on the surface of living.[159] Meaning-making, this critical stance assumes, is easy. One does it all the time. Performative habiti work to filter experience with relative efficiency and minimal ruptures. The trick is to stage knowledge such that one can know and be known *differently* and to become, in the words of Barthes "absorbed in extent and not in depth."[160]

Even the most rigorous of "scientific" research is, to some degree, the product of "random or chance encounters with whatever objects, images, gestures or petty details one might be drawn to at a given moment." [161] The irregularities of "gaps, interruptions, and distractions" happen all the time and are not politically progressive in-and-of-themselves as many accounts of surrealist interruptions might contend. Staging knowledge is not an uncritical celebration of the surreal for its "surreality" but a privileging of the excessive in hopes that it will lead one to not only see and categorize another in a line of "differences" but to experience different modes of encounter. Thus, rather than assuming that the world is a complex place that requires laws and codes to simplify, staging knowledge assumes that we generally experience the world as much more simple than it actually is. Following the model of flaneury, he goal of research is to intervene in that hegemonic simplicity. Rather than looking for the repeatable or generic, it seeks to forge new connections between particularities.

In so doing, it produces a research equivalent of the hetero-ontologies produced by the rock,

159. Bowman, "Stonewall's Arm," 125.
160. Barthes, *Michelet*, 153.
161. Bowman, "Stonewall's Arm," 125.

what I will call co-incident research. Co-incident research assumes that modes of being together are always defined by varying degrees of chance and determination but it tends to look for the accidental in the determined and the determined in the accidental. Benjamin calls this practice "profane illumination," by which I take him to mean both attempting to extend one's critical gaze with particular care to the "profane" or aberrant but also to look at the "holy" or integral from the perspective of the as-yet-un-integrated place of detritus.[162] A co-incidental approach thus refuses models of research that begin with abstract principles that prescribe specific behaviors. Instead it begins with performed actions without necessarily knowing what results they will lead to. In Roland Barthes' summation of a similar approach to the practice of research:

> He rarely starts from an idea in order to invent an image for it subsequently; he starts from a sensuous object, and then hopes to meet in his work with the possibility of finding an abstraction for it. . . . he finds the gesture first (expression of the body), and then the idea (expression of the culture, of the intertext).[163]

This is not an inductive approach to research per se because it lacks an internal interpretive logic. To the contrary, the particular, in all of its particularity, remains unpredictably expansive. It turns itself out into the "possibility" of finding a correlative idea. The goal of this project is neither to deduce an explanation of events at the rock from the principles of "globalization" nor to induce the generic principles of simultaneous heterogeneity from what these fragments have "in common." The founding gesture of the project—my daily physical trips to the rock—has

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162. Bowman, "Stonewall's Arm," 125.
163. Barthes, *Roland Barthes*. Cited in Bowman, "Stonewall's Arm," 124.

made abstraction elusive, the project remains decidedly fragmented. This fragmentation does not stem from some general fragmentation of "postmodern" culture writ large, but from a sustained material engagement with a place whose defining characteristic, as I hope will become increasingly clear, is the simultaneity of heterogeneity.

Moral Map Revisited

This playful sense of method is not incompatible with the ethically charged description of co-performative witnessing described above, but there is an undeniable tension between the two. The tension is not only workable, but necessary. Listening "by heart" to a "simultaneity of stories so-far" means opening one's self up to not only the interruptions in one conversations but countless interruptions of multiple competing conversations. The interruptions caused by the multiplicity of "others" makes it difficult to focus one's attention on any given other with the care for which the ethically driven model of dialogic co-performance or co-performative witnessing calls. Rather than push out that which is not essential to the conversation, "staging knowledge" seeks to make interruptions central to the process of a different form of meaning-making; it follows white rabbits down holes in search of surprises and then tries to make those surprises the centerpieces of uncommon sense makings.

Conquergood's conception of the dialogic presses for a more ethical relationship between self and other by balancing pulls between opposing forces of commoditization, skepticism, exoticism, infatuation. The rock-as-agent turns that model inside out. It begins from an unstable center and turns our gaze outward. If the "skeptics cop-out," the "custodian's rip-off," the "enthusiast's infatuation," and the "curator's exhibitionism" pull us in four directions on an x-y

plane with dialogue in the center, we can imagine the rock operating on a z axis to unsettle and resettle the relationships among each of those positions. The ethnographic encounter thus becomes activated not only by a mutual desire for understanding, but also by a mutual experience of being taken aback. Of course, not all ways of being taken aback are equivalent.

Thus I'd like to pose two other ethnographic positions along the z axis that create an important tension in dialogic performance. The first I'll call "the flaneur's glibness." The flaneur's surrealist games of "staging knowledge" risk a lack of serious, sustained, or meaningful connection with others: they risk making an uncommon sense out of the "raw materials" provided by others who "just so happen" to be the impetus for the creative work of the flaneur hero (who is, not incidentally, almost always a straight, white, male bourgeois). The flaneur's glibness risks de-humanizing the others with whom he comes into contact. This glibness can take shape in any of Conquergood's four ethnographic positions. It can become the "skeptic's copout" by over-emphasizing the chance-ness of encounters (over-playing the coincident in co-incidence). It risks the "custodian's rip-off" by removing fragments from their original context and placing them in new contexts in which their meanings may become completely dislodged from even a trace of their referents. It can similarly become "the enthusiast's infatuation" through an over-emphasis on the importance of the smallest of similarities between fragments or the "curators exhibitionism" through an over-emphasis on the importance of the smallest differences between fragments. In sum, the flaneur's glibness risks playing with and on the surfaces of encounter such that the extent to which those surfaces are themselves grounded gets lost.

The second problematic position that I pose, "the auto-ethnographer's gushiness," in

contrast, risks focusing on the (presumed) depths of an encounter or series of encounters. If the flaneur's glibness risks not taking other seriously enough, the auto-ethnographer's gushiness risks taking itself too seriously. The auto ethnographer's over-emphasis on the vulnerability of observation can take place in all four of Conquergood's problematic subject positions: it can over-emphasize the pain or lack the ethnographer feels at not being able to know the Other enough (skeptic's copout), over-emphasize the destitution of others (curator's exhibitionism), over-emphasize the power of one's empathy for others (enthusiast's infatuation), or turn an encounter into an excuse to talk about one's own emotional response to it (custodian's rip off).

Like Conquergood's positions, I do not mean to pose these positions as "sins" per se, but as tendencies, as things that one, to some degree or other, cannot help but do. Both the tendency to over-emphasize depth and the tendency to over-emphasize the surface were consistently present in my process. In fact, some of the most provocative moments in the field and in subsequent writings occurred when I felt the deep recognition promised by vulnerable observation cut short by the interplay of competing surfaces.

Queering Ethnography.

I rely on a the space between Conquergood, Bowman and Behar in particular for my method: for what I do at the rock and how I approach writing it. But the rock has also dis-placed me in relation to it such that I have to raise further methodological questions that led me to "queer" ethnography, to an ethnography that writes from and towards an unstable subjective position of knowing and being known that is post-human, affective, material, and not located within the will of any single person. In the remainder of this chapter I explicate this queering

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through a discussion of embarrassment and shame, followed by a an account of these two affects in action.

Embarrassment

The process of "going to" and "knowing" the Areopagos as a collage of multiple exteriorities did at times make me feel upwellings of affective connectedness, what Bhehar might call "vulnerable observation," but, more often than not, I felt this "vulnerability" not as a gushing forth of empathy or guilt, but as embarrassment. Because the vast majority of the people to whom I spoke were people I was meeting for the first time and because my project was very difficult to summarize, I never got over being embarrassed. "Excuse me. Would you mind if I asked you a few questions?" Most often I was initially met with suspicion that I had to work to overcome. Gaining access was a constant job. Each day, each conversation within the day felt like starting over. Sometimes I would catch a wave of people who were really interested in my project or get into in depth conversations with some of the more frequent visitors to the rock but most of the time the interviews came in fits and starts. Some days I simply didn't have it in me to go up to yet another stranger and start a conversation so I sat and watched from a distance. While I got better at it, even after months of practice, it was never easy. I was beset by moments when my interest in others (or their interest in me) was activated, but the promise of connection was left unfulfilled. There were moments that "broke through" into performance in Bauman's terms, moments when the swapping of tales felt lifted out of the everyday in a heightened performer-audience relationship.[164] There were also, however, many others that were "broken off" before

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164. Hymes, "Breakthrough."

they could do so.
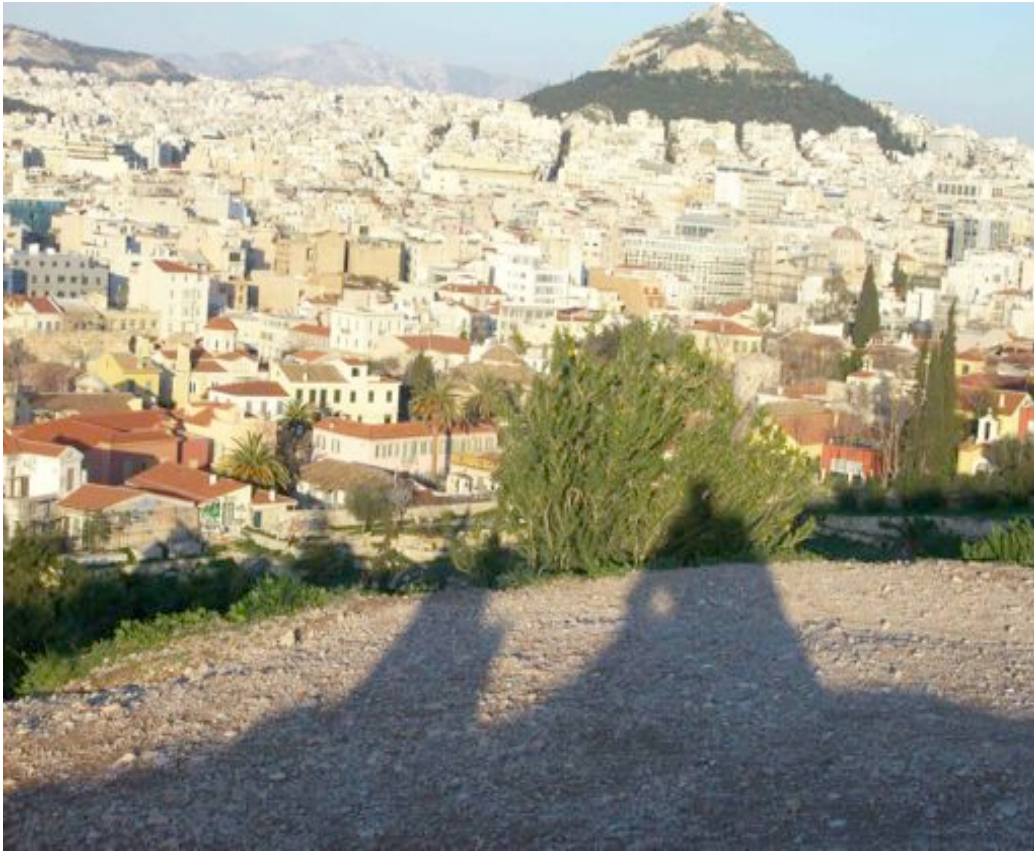
Fig.3.20. Shadow talking.

Some of my embarrassment can be attributed to my own background, particularly the

question of my problematic "fromness" discussed in the introduction. As the only round faced

and blond haired xenopedo ("foreign kid") in my elementary school classroom, whether I

succeeded or failed at performing "Greekness" I was often the object of ridicule. When my

family unexpectedly had to leave Greece and return to the U.S. just as I was entering

adolescence, I was an instant outcast in my "home" country. Christianity was by far the dominant

religion in the U.S. schools I attended, but it still wasn't exactly "cool" to have parents who were,

you know, *missionaries*. Having grown up around kids who dressed differently, I didn't know

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how to dress right in my new environment—and even if I had, our meager income wouldn't have given me access to the right clothes. I didn't know how to talk—and even if I had I was forbidden from watching the TV shows or listening to the music that was the most frequent topic of conversation. Like many people who discover performance in adolescence, I became a performer not because I was an extrovert, but because I was incredibly shy. Unlike the confusing social world around me that I could not find a way to fit into, the stage was a place where the rules were explicit: Stand here. Say this. Wear that. Do it louder. Furthermore, the stage was a place that required of everyone the kind of self-consciousness that I felt all of the time. The stage leveled the playing field by being a place in which potentially embarrassing, self-conscious behavior was not only accepted but required.

Fig.3.21. Students perform at the Heorodus Atticus Theatre (southwest corner of the Acropolis).[165]

Over time, I grew to understand embarrassment as an essential and ongoing component of the creative process. As Ann Bogart writes in *The Director Prepares*:

Every creative act involves a leap into the void. The leap has to occur at the right

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165. On the south western slope of the Acropolis.

moment and yet the time for the leap is never prescribed. In the midst of a leap, there are

no guarantees. To leap can often cause acute embarrassment. Embarrassment is a

partner in the creative act—a key collaborator. If your work does not sufficiently

embarrass you, then very likely no one will be touched by it.[166]

The potential to embarrass is central to the ability touch others. It is the risk of what might

happen if the "narcissistic circuit" of recognition between performer and audience is not

completed that gives the circuit much of its power.[167] As I often tell students in my performance

classes: "If you are nervous a about a given performance, see if you can figure out what is

embarrassing you, and do more of it."

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Shame

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Bogart's sense of the essential embarrassment of performance as aesthetic practice thus

moves my understanding of performance ethnography towards what Eve Sedgwick might call a

queer ethnography. I use the term "queer" not to refer to sexuality as an object of study (an

ethnography of queerness) but to emphasize a particularly exterior sense of identity that I draw

from Eve Sedgwick, among other queer theorists, that changes the way I approach fieldwork (a

queering of ethnography). Unlike Behar's sense of the "vulnerable" which gushes from the inside

out, Sedgwick centers her understanding of queer identity on the surface affect of shame. She

attempts to mobilize the red-faced effect of averted eyes and implicit disgust, to "remove the

blush from its terminal place as the betraying blazon of a ruptured narcissistic circuit, and instead

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166. Ann Bogart, *A Director Prepares: Seven Essays on Art and Theatre* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 113.
167. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 38.

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to put it in circulation."[168]

Shifting from embarrassment to shame means sifting from feeling momentarily "out of place" to being "put in one's place." This is to shift from a vague feeling of impropriety brought on by an indecorous behavior to an essential identification as an inappropriate being. Although shame can itself be a performative—"shame on you"—Sedgwick notes that shameful moments are usually moments in which other hegemonic performativities in the Austinian sense—the prime example of which is the "I do" of the heteronormative husband wife union—fail (or are infelicitous in Austin's terms). She offers "queer performativity" as a name for "a strategy for the production of meaning and being, in relation to the affect of shame and to the later and related fact of stigma."[169] Shame, for Sedgqwick, is distinct from guilt in that one feels guilty for what one has *done* (an action that, in theory, can be confessed, repented, and overcome) but one feels shameful for what one *is*. Rather than attach queerness to a specific sexuality, she uses "queer" to reference "those whose sense of identity is for some reason tuned most durably to the note of shame."[170] "Queers" are those for whom the circuit of recognition of hegemonic performativities was at some crucial point broken.

I use Sedgwick's sense of queer performativity as a way to frame my ethnography at the Areopagos for a number of reasons 1)Shame is always at least a partly involuntary affect: one cannot chose to be shameful towards another person as one can (at least to some degree) choose to be vulnerable. 2) Shame is fundamentally relational: it is always experienced as happening

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168. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 41.
169. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 63.
170. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 63.

between people. It is highly contagious and always already "put into circulation."[171] Shame thus avoids assuming that an identity has an essence that exists "in" one person and can be "expressed" to another, while its ontology—the is-ness of shame—identifies sin with the sinner as an inherent essentialized component of a (repulsive) ideology. 4) Shame is a surface phenomenon—"living as it does on the capillaries of the face"[172]—that blurs inside and outside: a blush is simultaneously a movement "toward painful individuation" and "toward uncontrollable relationality."[173] In moments of shame, when gazes are averted and circuits of recognition are interrupted, we are simultaneously more aware of our bodies as bounded material objects and of our interconnectedness with those around us. 5) Shame is distinctly theatrical: "Performance interlines shame as more than just its result or a way of warding it off, though importantly it is both of those things. Shame is the affect that mantles the threshold between introversion and extroversion, between absorption and theatricality."[174] 6) Shame moves towards the political by generating identity as a potentiality: "it constitutes it as to-be-constituted."[175] The shared "we" of abjection is always an "about to be" never, or never fully, an "is." Shame thus frames an identity politics in which identity is not an answer, but a particularly provocative set of relational questions.

In this framework moments of failed or infelicitous performativities (the near constant stream of averted gazes, requests for interviews that did not interpolate their would-be subjects,

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171.Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 41.
172.Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 64.
173.Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 37.
174.Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 38.
175.Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 64.

conversations that were cut short because the conversants found me boring, awkward moments when I discovered an incompatible difference between two people that I tried to talk to at the same time or when someone I had grown to trust used a racist, sexist or homophobic slur) become not obstacles to be overcome, but key resources in performing what Sedgwick might call a queering of ethnography. These are the moments in which it is possible to imagine the magic of the "beside" of the heteronormative romance—the accidental slip and catch which re-configures bodies in a relationship that neither of them "intended"— to be expanded to include the "besides" of different forms of belonging. Shame, for Sedgwick, like the Areopagos for me, is a fruitful site of study precisely because it is so "slippery."[176] The slipperiness of the rock which makes it so ideal for the hegemonic practices of the heteronormative make-out—displacing agency to create the logic of romance also creates the possibility for the failure of the slip, the failure of the catch, the possibility that someone might slip next to or be caught by the wrong (or "wrong kind of") person.

These queer moments are ones which put performative relationalities into play. They move from dominant performatives towards the almost-but-not-quite performativity that Sedgwick calls "periperformative." The "refusals, fractures, [and] warpings" of the periperformative do not have the repetitive force that dominant performatives (such as the heteronormative "I do") can take for granted.[177] They are attempts to do something that is not "the way things are done." The queering work of periperformativity is not a matter of getting to the "bottom" of dominant

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176. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 64.
177. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 73.

performative discourses or of replacing them entirely, but of trying to find a different social logic that works beside them. It is a form of what Sedgwick calls "weak" or "reparative" theory which does not seek to dig beneath a represented truth to a more authentic "original" one. Instead, it works with "a glue of surplus beauty, surplus stylistic investment, unexplained upwellings" and "cements together and animates [an] amalgam of part objects with a logic of "besides" rather than "beneath" or "behind."[178]

Fishing

If anyone understands the shame of repeated rejection, it is Timo. In my first few months on the rock, he is the only other person to be there every day. He is running from the law in Germany— "I moved things from one place to another place, is that so bad?" I tell him it depends on the things and it depends on the places involved, but on the face of it, no, it doesn't seem that bad. The rock (he calls it "the mountain") is his main source of income. He takes pictures of tourists: "Please sir, can I take your picture with Acropolis or with Agora? Can I help you with picture together?" Once the pictures are taken he gives the camera back to the people he has just helped and shifts into his sales pitch: "Excuse me, I am coming here on the mountain helping the people with the pictures because I need money to get back to my country." The pause after the request and the accompanying face of vaguely threatening desperation never ceases to make me cringe. More than once I'm tempted to give him money myself just to avoid it.

The cringe-inducing moment is both enabled and compounded by the shame felt by the tourists themselves. Tourism, as described by Dean MacCannell, is a near constant evocation and

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178.Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 150.

thwarting of the desire to recognize and be recognized. To be a tourist is, for MacCannell always to engage in some degree of self loathing: "Tourists dislike tourists."[179] What he calls "touristic shame" is based on "not being tourist enough, on a failure to see everything as it 'ought' to be seen."[180] To be a tourist is to seek authentic moments like the ones that Timo has ostensibly just taken a picture of and to be perpetually disappointed in the results. For MacCannel tourism, with its constant injunction to "be authentic" is the paradigmatic experience of anxiety about modernity. It is also the moment at which "generalized anxiety" about the "authenticity of interpersonal relationships in modern society" (the ways in which tourist feels alienated from/in the "home" that they have left behind) meets a "certainty about the authenticity of touristic sights—-this is the "very" rock on which Paul/Plato/Socrates stood, the "original" Parthenon of which you have seen so many pictures.[181] In Sedgwick's terms, the moment of tourism (recognition interrupted) is the moment at which modern subjects are, perhaps, at their most queer. Timo draws tourists in by recognizing a need: they want to document that they are here. He smiles at them. Waits for them to pose and snaps the picture. He then, cagily, tries to slip them the camera back quickly while the corners of their mouths are still tingling from slightly forced smiles, while they are still looking for approval from whatever gaze they imagine behind the camera lens. His pitch, "I am looking for money to get back to my country," caries a direct implication: you have money to not only come here but also to return home; I do not. At this point Timo is no longer operating on charm, but on the shame of a broken circuit of recognition.

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179. Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken, 1976), 10.
180. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 10.
181. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 14.

Breaking the circuit means not assuming an essential connection between knower and known, but a mutual recognition of marginality, of displacement.

Fig.3.22. Through a glass dimly.

"Please can I help you with picture together?…. Please can I help you with picture together?…. Please can I help you with picture together?" Timo's refrain, which had at first greatly annoyed me, soon forms the background to my first few months on the rock. I am comforted by its predictable rhythm. I like that it makes me feel more "in the know"—more authentic, MacCannell would say—than the tourists coming to the rock for the first time. Recognizing this kind of pattern is, after all, one of the main things that make me an "ethnographer" and not a tourist myself. After experiencing the sting of rejection for a while as I

try to get people to talk to me for my project, I am amazed that Timo will approach almost anyone without a visible sense of apprehension. I soon become envious of how he asks people if he can help them with a picture so casually, as though the thought had just occurred to him, as though they "just so happen" to be here at the same time and he "just so happens" to notice that they might need help with a picture. My own sales pitch for my project is constrained by the IRB and my own sense of ethics, but I would be lying if I said that I didn't get competitive with him.

When asked where he is from, he claims to be from Holland, because they have a better national image than the Germans—he smokes a phantom joint and smiles when he explains this to me. "Is no good, lying. I know," he tells me later, "but is better than stealing." He makes between 30 and 70 Euros a day in the winter. Three times that in the warmer months. I've done the math: it's almost triple my research stipend.

Fig.3.23. Refuge.

Talking with Timo takes me back (or, rather, down) to the classical mythos of the rock; a temple in a now largely collapsed cave at the base of the hill had been dedicated to the Furies/ Eumenides—the subterranean goddesses of revenge turned goddesses of grace. Once Orestes is found not guilty after his trial on the Areopagos, in the third part of Aeschylus's "Oresteia," Athena grants the Furies a name change, a temple, and a new set of powers; the newly christened "Eumenides" or "kindly ones" become goddesses of grace, offering refuge for those accused of capital crimes. I want to tell Timo what an amazing bit of serendipity it is that the temple was there to protect the unjustly accused and it was now, in its own way, protecting him. I haven't formulated the thought fully yet, but that's the direction in which I am going. I'm feeling the familiar thrill of research, the inkling that the pieces might fit together. It doesn't matter. I barely get to start my spiel when he sees a young couple making their way up the slippery steps of the rock and he is off. "Can I help you with picture together?" Later he will apologize for interrupting me, but explain that he needs the money from the pictures, "Is for food, ya?" Later still, he will tell me that the money is, in fact, not for food but for heroin. I will learn how to size up how close to making enough money for his daily fix he is by reading his body language. I will be able to tell this even when seeing him from a great distance. I will do what I can to track down a treatment program for him. There won't be many options. Those I do offer he will quickly find reason to reject. I will once again turn my gaze down to the ground beneath us. We will stand in awkward silence until he sees another group of tourists: "Please, can I help you with picture?"

One afternoon when business is slow I try again to tell him more of the myth of the Eumenides, he still isn't nearly as interested as I want him to be. He interrupts me again, "Have

you ever read *Sisyphus*? By Herman Hesse?" he asks, "*That* is my favorite book: every day the same bullshit."

He limps from stone to stone, from tourist tourist. The limp is pronounced, his face pained but he is also strangely agile. "My leg is fine, ya?" he brings me into his confidence, one con artist to another. "One day I had an accident. Something fell on me while I was working [in his occasional job "fixing the tables and chairs"] and I came here. Before: only a little bit of money. After: much money!" He smiles. He taps his forehead with a slight wink: "pretty smart, for an addict." As he is talking a Greek girl who had been sitting with her boyfriend comes over and gives him 5 Euro. He smiles even more: "Sometimes I am lucky." He tells me of his other schemes as well—when it gets too cold to stand on the rock, for example he often goes to the train station and claims to need fifteen Euro for a ticket to Thessalonika where he has a job that he must start the next day. The story is detailed enough to convincingly draw people in but not with so much detail that it takes too long to share. He is very proud of the fact that he doesn't just ask for money outright, but offers a service or a sob story in return. "I am not a junkie" he says, rolling his eyes back into his head and miming drool dropping from his lip, "I am an addict. Is different." He likes to keep track of his earnings by nationality: "America, good money. Australia, good money. China, no money." He, like me, writes down his daily exploits in a journal.

One day while we are talking about the Acropolis and the Agora, he starts asking me a lot of questions about the ancient and modern cityscapes. I tell him what I know about the various sights. He seems very eager to know more. I, glad to finally have an audience for the minutia I

have spent so long accumulating, am happy to oblige. I try, again, to bring in the myth of the Eumenides, but the story fails. It is too long, too drawn out. He is looking for something pithier. He is doing research, it turns out, to add to his con: if people turn down him down as a photographer, he plans to offer his services as a tour guide. We are both, he says (offering a more successful co-incident rendering than my complex mythological reference) "fishers of men." He is fishing for money. I, for stories. He likes to call me Stephen King whenever he sees me writing in my notebook. I tell him horror isn't my genre but I've always had a soft spot for "The Shawshank Redemption." After almost two months of daily meetings, he decides to go back to Germany to serve his time. "I am already in prison. Every day the same bullshit." We make plans, both knowing we likely will never follow through on them, to meet again on the rock in two years time: I a newly minted Ph.D., he a newly minted parolee. I don't think he gets the joke of the rhyming "dee" and "ee." I feel more than a little uncomfortable when he suggests that we "bring our wives" as though these mythical women to whom we will be wed are some sort of accessories. Then again, maybe he is just making "small talk" and I'm the one dragging all this complex ideological baggage. Despite our proximity to the famous golden mean of the Parthenon, we do not find a middle ground on which to rest. Our relationship has always been and likely will always remain tense, but we stay beside each other, overhear each, slide into each other for many hours.

As the only other semi-permanent resident, Timo was my primary "informant" about life on the rock, especially in those first few months. A great deal of the thoughts contained in this document originated, in some way or another, from conversations that I had with Timo. I gave

him factoids to help him woo his clients. He gave me stories to help me woo my readers. In the final days before his departure, he gave me money to hold for him so that he would not spend it on heroin. "How do I know I can trust you?" He said. "You can't know" I started to reply. I wanted to add "but I do hope that you will do it anyway," but we were interrupted by a group of tourists whose picture he tried, unsuccessfully, to take in exchange for a few Euro.

Fig.3.24. Posing.

Beside Myself

I call the almost belonging, queer periperformativities that I experienced with Timo co-incidences. These are moments that bracket the question of what cause is "behind" the being "beside" of an "amalgam of part objects" at the Areopagos. Instead seeking common causes, they turn to the periperformative work of temporarily/spatially suturing differences while preserving their difference. The preposition "beside" has the advantage, Sedgwick notes, of not being paired in a binary (above/below, right/left, east/west): "beside" always implies multiple "besides."

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Performativity works to repeat the "just so" of dominant discourses to make them ever more taken for granted. The "everyday" work of performativity is the embodied works of repeating, and therefore naturalizing, the hegemonic "taken for granted." Judith Butler calls this process of performativity "the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding. . . self."[182] The embodied repetition produces these contingencies such that they are experienced as necessities. Although material, this performative reality is "real only to the extent that it is performed."[183] Many theories of performance separate "performance" from "performativity" by marking the former as a special kind of repetition that "marks" or "frames" itself *as* a repetition, or a "restored behavior."[184] When the repetition of "performativity comes to rest on *a* performance, questions of embodiment, of social relations, of ideological interpellations, of emotional and political effects, all become discussable."[185] Performances, because they are marked as repetitions, stage an intervention into the unmarked "everyday" and help to make visible the invisible work of "social sanction and taboo" that compel performative repetitions.[186]

The periperformativity of co-incidence attempts to stage a different kind of intervention into hegemonic "everydayness." Rather than stage itself as a heightened repetition, periperformative co-incidence stages itself through a one-of-kind/ what-are-the-odds synchronicity that is experienced as, in some ways, "at once restored." The coincidence in co-incidence thus stands in

182. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Thought," *Theatre Journal* 40(1988), 519.
183. Elin Diamond, *Performance and Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 4.
184. Schechner, *Between Theatre*, 36.
185. Diamond, *Performance and Cultural Politics*, 5.
186. Butler, "Performative Acts," 519.

for the power of linear repetition in helping to give form to a spatial syntax: a logic of "meanwhile" rather than a logic of "then."

In the events narrated above, I "just so happen" to be in the same place as Timo for a long period of time and I attempt to make something "happen" out of that co-incidence but that attempt at "breaking through into performance," to create a heightened performer-audience frame, is interrupted.[187] The central tension in the telling of the story is, for me at least, a tension between the gushiness of autoethnography and the glibness of flaneury, a tension between surface and depth. While I make attempts to "deepen" the relationship, Timo moves me towards a surface mode of defining himself with and towards me, what Probyn might call an "outside belonging."[188] The moments in which I perform myself as "belonging" with him most, are, arguably, the moments in which I am partly shamed by my proximity to him. As I try to write these moments now, I am pushing towards what Sedgwick might call a queer writing position that doesn't so much mark an irrevocable gap between self and other (the "skeptic's copout") as it attempts to write dialogically between and among our subject positions, placing the agency of our encounter not in an act of will on one or both of our parts, but in the space between us (the ground towards which our often averted gazes are turned) and our shared Sysiphean action of climbing up the Areopagos day after day, week after week in "the same bullshit" of our shared "everyday." Thus, Timo and the Areopagos help move me towards a queer, co-incident ethnographic practice that assumes the primary reason for "going there"—"the politics of the

187. Hymes, "Breakthrough."
188. Probyn, *Outside Belongings*.

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near"— is not to uncover some essential fact about "there-ness" but to stage encounters that

leave me "beside" myself.[189]

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189. Madison, "My Desire," 149.

CHAPTER 4

CO-INCIDENCE, PUNS, AND PRISMS

Fig.4.1. Setting.

The Rock as Prism

I often run into interference when naming the focus of my dissertation. Few in the U.S.

know the Areopagos by its Greek name. For those who are familiar with its English/Latin name,

"Mars Hill," it is usually associated with an Evangelical ministry of some sort. If I say that I am

studying "a rock," I am often misunderstood as saying "Iraq." This mis-hearing is particularly

awkward because it is often followed by a look of disappointment when the listener realizes that

I am not doing work that is so relevant to "current events": "Oh, you don't mean the country we

are at war with you mean, *a* rock! A rock. Oh, that's. . . .interesting." When I refer to it as "the

rock," especially when I describe some things that the rock does or ways in which the rock acts on imaginations and/or bodies, then I am often understood as referring to The Rock, the professional wrestler (so accustomed are we, perhaps, to ascribing agency to individual human actors alone). Although this sort of slippage in meaning is most commonly attributed to the connections between virtual chains of signification—"symbolicity as ephemeral"— it is largely the *"material manifestation"* of language that sets the stage for the slip/lean/grab of the pun.[190] I "just so happen" to use one set of sounds and not another to refer to "the rock." That set of sounds, in their "just so" materiality also "just so happen" to refer to other things. This interplay between the "just so" and the "just so happening" of discourse creates the meta-semiotic conditions of possibility for being misunderstood, being understood differently, or being understood on multiple levels simultaneously. There is a diverse chain of meanings that "happens" to co-incide in and around "the rock" but that diversity is made possible as much by the materiality of the discursive/symbolic, by its being "just so," as by its virtuality.

Puns like "the rock" above or the term "co-incidence" that frames this project, need not merely be matters of (mis)representation or "correspondence between descriptions and reality" in which "much like the infinite play of images between two facing mirrors, the epistemological gets bounced back and forth, but nothing more is seen."[191] They can also be engagements with language as a material practice that inflect the performative doing of language as diffraction, showing how, as Karen Barad argues in her account of performative materiality:

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190. Carole Blair, "Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric's Materiality," in *Rhetorical Bodies*, ed. Jack Selzer and Sharon Crowley (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 19.
191. Karen Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28.3(2003), 802-03.

What often appears as separate entities (and separate sets of concerns) with sharp edges do[] not actually entail a relation of absolute exteriority at all. Like the diffraction patterns illuminating the indefinite nature of boundaries displaying shadows in "light" regions and bright spots in "dark" regions a relation of "exteriority within." This is not a static relationality but a doing—the enactment of boundaries—that always entails constitutive exclusions and therefore requisite questions of accountability.[192]

To speak in puns as prisms is to make visible the work of drawing boundaries, of making categories that separate "this" from "that," and to call into question both the separation between "this" and "that" and the presumed unity of "this-ness" and "that-ness." To think in puns—to think prismatically, dis/re-placing agency within the non-human materiality of discourse—is to queer the presumed stability of one set of relationalities and to set the stage for another. Most importantly, it intervenes into conception of "rhetorical practice as a (symbolic, meaning-ful) instrument under the control of the [human] rhetor."[193] Puns, in this sense, are utterances in which an utterance doesn't just "mean," by referring to something outside of itself on behalf of the person who spoke it, but "does" something to and with its audience in part by pointing to *itself* as a material utterance. The kinds of puns that I am calling "co-incidental" can be seen as not just speaking "towards" their audience, but as speaking "back" at their utterer and destabalizing her or his position as "rhetor" by not "adhering strictly to what they are supposed to

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192. Barad, "Posthuman Performativity," 803. Barad begins her discussion of mater's mattering by disavowing the frequent deployment of the matter/mater pun, but I believe my own use of punning is in keeping with her framework.
193. Blair, "U.S. Memorial Sites," 21.

do."[194]

Beyond the materiality of the signs used to name it, the Areopagos itself as a physical object functions as a meta-pun that moves across and brings together multiple social, historical, and cultural frames simultaneously. By making the rock itself rather than any single ethnos the central object of study, my project attempts to move towards what Barad has called a "posthumanist notion of performativity." I seek to incorporate "important material and discursive, social and scientific, human and nonhuman, and natural and cultural factors" and to queer "the givenness of the differential categories of 'human' and 'nonhuman,' examining the practices through which these differential boundaries are stabilized and destabilized."[195]

Critiques of the flaneur/surrealist research methods I have called "staging knowledge" in Chapter 3 most often focus on the ways in which the flaneur is a straight, white, upper-middle-class man. His ways of walking, experimenting, and being are taken for granted, critics argue, without making clear the ways in which he is raced, classed, gendered etc. This is an important critique, but one that misses the possibility of flaneury to function as a queer-ing method: flaneury can also be an attempt to place the line that separates the "human" from the "non-human" into question. Moments of flaneury are, at least potentially, co-incidences in which agency is displaced/replaced onto material encounters. Rather than treating the world as something waiting to be described or language as an ephemeral symbolic tool for use in the act of description, the act of co-incidental writing attempts to understand the agency of the research

194. Blair, "U.S. Memorial Sites," 23.
195. Barad, "Posthuman Performativity," 808.

process as always at least partly picking up on work that the things "about" and "with" which it wants to speak have already put into motion.

Fig.4.2. Blurring.

Posed in the simplest possible form, my central research question is "how does/might the Areopagos perform?" While on first glance the broader implications of this question for performance studies, communication studies, and cultural studies (the particular nexus that is my academic "home") might be obscured by the narrow focus, the question is not intended as a over-arching inquiry that may be separated into component parts. I do not pose the rock as a frame, but as a prism. The performative act of naming the subject/object of my dissertation as the rock/a rock/the Areopagos/Mars Hill diffracts discourses of popular culture, transnational migration, antiquity, and religion, among others. The resulting interference patterns begin to engage "the rock" not as a passive object of study, but as a dynamic force that attracts/produces the

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simultaneity of heterogeneity, animates some differences between social actors, and begins to create the conditions of possibility of living and conceptualizing different social formations. The rock as prism opens a heterogeneous co-incidence of research themes without placing any one at the absolute center of investigation.

Fig.4.3. Paul's text from a different angle.

Poetics of the Worldwide

Because I learned Greek so young (I started in Greek schools at the age of five), I absorbed the language with a mixture of "proper" language in the classroom and the "vulgar" language of the schoolyard without monitoring at home, where I only spoke English, to help me sort between the two. I once, for example, quite naively said the equivalent of, "please hurry up,

bitch, I need to take a piss soon" to my third grade teacher right before recess.

My relationship with the Greek language is queer. Because I left Greece at the age of twelve, I should have a limited vocabulary, but a great number of the words learned in English after the age of twelve have Greek roots. When I began my research in Greece I knew the word for "teleology" (that is, of course, "teleology") but not the word for "muscle." As a result, I often hear Greek with an overly-literal poetics, as though it had been run through a computerized translator into another language or two and and then fed back again.

When Greeks talk about the problems of "globalization," they use the word "pancosmiopoesis" that I hear through its roots "pan" meaning all or wide as in pan-Asian or pan-American, "cosmos" meaning world or universe as in "cosmology," and "poesis" signifying the process of making aesthetically meaningful as in "poetics." So while people spoke to me, as they frequently did, of the evils of "globalization," I heard them as speaking about the "making poetic of the worldwide." While this reading is "really" there in the word itself, it is not a possibility that most Greeks hear in them. It is my queer relationship to the language that makes the (mis)hearing possible. This small slip in meaning is, in some ways, the clearest description of what I hope to do with this project: make a poetics of the world wide. As important as what it says, however, is how it says it: it arises as an accident that then gets treated as an "on purpose." While the phrase expresses my goals for the project, the performative act of naming it as such places language (understood as a material act that is itself fraught with both centripetal and centrifugal forces) as a primary agent. The phrase "making poetic of the worldwide" goes a long way towards framing the coming together in space that I mean to evoke with the phrase "global

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co-incidence," all the more so because it does so, in part, accidentally.

"Ontos" ology

Another effect of my queer relationship to Greek is that I have learned to work around words or phrases that I don't understand until I can figure out what they mean through context clues. Because I sound "like a native," most Greeks do not speak to me as they would a novice. They speak quickly, using lots of idioms that I haven't heard before, assuming that I will follow them. As a matter of course, I tend not to admit my ignorance. In addition to thus saving face, solving the puzzles of idiomatic phrases is part of the pleasure of speaking Greek for me. It allows me to be surprised by the everyday: to experience the "once behaved" quotidian as a heightened performance. I got pretty good at this game of context clue puzzle solving, determining almost immediately, for example, that to say "the new Acropolis museum cropped up like a cucumber" means its architecture seems out of place in relationship to its surroundings.

Fig.4.4. New Acropolis Museum.

But for months one that I didn't understand kept, well, "cropping up like a cucumber" in all sort of sentences in really unpredictable patterns. Try as I might, I could not figure out what the function of the word "ontos" was. None of the sentences in which it cropped up seemed to depend on the word for their main meaning in any identifiable way. As a result, I could easily get by without knowing what it meant. But the diversity of places in which it cropped up meant that there was also a dearth of clues with which to work. I refrained from asking for a definition outright in hopes that I would be able to solve the puzzle on my own. When listening proved insufficient, I started using the word myself, dropping it more or less randomly into sentences in hopes that it might stick. Eventually, through lots of trial and error, I realized that the word, "ontos" roughly translates to "indeed" as in: "Is he a jackass?" "Oh yes, he is indeed a jackass." I simultaneously realized that, of course, "ontos," shares a root with a word that I use most often in academic contexts: "ontology."

Again, this accident of language helps me to express something about my project (and all the more so for being in part an accident). Moments of co-incidence are moments of weak, everyday, indeed, "ontos" ontology. They are events that mark the taken for granted performative in its taken for granted-ness: the way in which what "just so happens" happens to be "just so." To *name* the "just so" as "ontos," as "indeed," as "of course," is to simultaneously call its indeed-ness, its performative of-course-ness into question. An "ontos" moment is a "once behaved" moment that is experienced as "at once" restored.

The (mis)hearings of "ontos" and "pancosmiopoesis" are the product of a queer set of lines: my belonging but not belonging to the Greek language. The "making poetic of the worldwide"

with a weak "ontos" ontology is perhaps the clearest definition of the aims of my project, and yet it is difficult to say "who" said it—it emerged from the co-incidence of countless conversations. Furthermore, the very difficulty in determining the "who" of the speaking is itself an integral part of what makes the terms "poetics of the worldwide" and "ontos" ontology such effective expressions of what this project is trying to accomplish. It is a performative saying that attempts to enact what it describes. As such, it only makes sense in the context of the multiple co-incident lines that helped to bring it into being. The difficulty provided by this kind of tangled feedback loop is itself a key component of my project. Even as it performs "a modesty of language with respect to its referent" it also expresses an immodesty with respect to the materiality of language.[196] It creates knots around the materiality of the discursive that produce the material signifier itself as a queer/queering agent of what Benjamin calls "profane illumination."[197]

Queer Phenomenology

In placing the "just so happening" object of the rock at the center of my study rather than an identifiable "ethnos," I move into the realm of what Sarah Ahmed calls the "ethno-phenomenological" of *Queer Phenomenology*. Ahmed's goal in queering phenomenology is to emphasize the social vectors that produce "a form of witnessing in which 'what arrives' becomes a 'what' only in the event of being apprehended as a 'what.'"[198] By re-framing the social historical and material actors who "just so happen" to arrive at the rock as the conditions of possibility for the arrival of the rock as a complex place/space, my goal is to move towards a "form of

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196. Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 60.
197. Walter Benjamin, "The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligencia," http://www.generation-online.org/c/fcsurrealism.htm (accessed 20 March 2009.
198. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 39.

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witnessing" in which the arriving ethnoi are understood as becoming in the multiplicity of their encounters with each other. In so doing, I hope to re-frame the question of what it means to be "global" not through an abstraction of what those arriving have in common, but through their co-incident, joining on and as the "common ground" of the Areopagos. I ask not what the essence of the rock is, or what essence of my relationship to the rock is, but, rather, "how did I or we arrive at the point where it is possible to witness the arrival of the [rock]?"[199] What multiple kinds of arrival does the rock necessitate/make possible?

The social, cultural, and historical trajectories that encounter each other at/as the Areopagos are the conditions of the rock's emergence as a "what" to be perceived. A Husserlean approach to phenomenology would attempt to bracket out this "background" in order to see the essential "rock-ness" of the rock. The queer phenomenology that Ahmed argues for, in contrast, tries to bring that "background" into the foreground. While Ahmed's intention is to offer a more queer/ ethnographic approach to phenomenology, my own is to offer a more queer/phenomenological approach to ethnography. Her goal is to emphasize the arrivals that produce "a form of witnessing in which 'what arrives' becomes a 'what' only in the event of being apprehended as a 'what.'"[200] My goal is to move towards a "form of witnessing" in which the arriving ethnoi are understood as becoming in the multiplicity of their encounters with each other as enabling/ enabled by various agencies of the Areopagos. I thus re-frame the social historical and material actors who "just so happen" to arrive at the rock as the conditions of possibility *for* the arrival of

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199. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 39.
200. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 39.

the rock as a "just so" complex place/space and vice versa. In so doing, I hope to re-frame the

question of what it means to be "global" not through an abstraction of what those arriving have

in common (as I would in a Huserlian search for the "globality" of the "global"), but through an

exploration of how the multiple co-incident, mutual, partial joinings arrive on and as the

"common ground" of the Areopagos.

Fig.4.5. It matters how we arrive.

Ahmed arrives at the project of queering phenomenology through the question of

"orientation" noting that "orientations involve different ways of registering the proximity of

objects and others."[201] The question of "orientation" is a question of what is near and what is far: it is thus not only a question of how we "inhabit space" in an abstract sense, but of "how we apprehend this world of shared inhabitance, as well as 'who' or 'what' we direct our attention toward." Importantly, Ahmed does not queer phenomenology by looking for "queer objects" but by looking for ways in which the "orientation *of* phenomenology" might itself be (re)understood and (re)mobilized as a sight of queer orientation/perception.

The table, which is often used as a "just so happen"s-to-be-here example by 19th and early 20th century phenomenologists in particular ("consider, for example, the 'table-ness' of the table. . . "), becomes a central focal point of Sarah Ahmed's queering of phenomenology. She tries to bring "what is 'behind'" (the ready-to-hand-ness of the table to philosophers) to the front in order to view its taken-for-granted-ness from a different angle.[202] The co-incidence of philosophers and tables is her primary example of the ways in which "certain objects are available to us because of lines we have already taken."[203] The work of queering these performative lines of habitus is the work of queering the grounds from which they emerge. Quering phenomenology means putting those tables at a slant and, I will argue, learning to think from bumpy, slippery, complex places like the Areopagos. Philosophy, after all, happened on rocks long before it ever happened on tables.

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201. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 3.
202. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 3.
203. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 22.

Fig.4.6. Taking note.

Instructively, Ahmed turned to the table "quite by chance." For a fleeting moment in Husserl's text, the table made an appearance and after that encounter she "could not help but follow tables around." The lines on which the table-as-agent led her, some of which my own work seeks to follow, do not lead in one single direction: "When you follow tables, you can end up anywhere." Tables are only asides for Husserl, tangents from which he quickly returns. They are detours, dead ends. So when Husserl returns from his "turn to the table," Ahmed gets "led astray." She finds herself in a moment of broken recognition with the text, hyper-aware of her own body "seated at my table, at the different tables that mattered at different points in my life. How I wanted to make these tables matter!"[204] As tables keep "cropping up" in their "ontos" ontology, she uses a Marxist/feminist lens to explore "how the orientation of phenomenology

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204. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 22.

toward the writing table might depend on forms of labor, which are relegated to the background." She follows lines of the classed "work" that produce tables as a commodity and the gendered household "labor" that makes sure that Husserl's table is "clear" so that it can so readily lend itself to the "action" of thinking. The background of the spatial orientation between writer and writing table is "shaped by other social orientations, such as gender and class, that affect 'what' comes into view, but also are not simply given, as they are the effects of the repetition of actions over time."[205] She thus queers the phenomenology of tables by re-marking their performativites. Thus she marks the table as not an "empty" space for staging thought, but a material process of multiple "stories so-far" becoming in space-time.

Throughout Ahmed's discussion of tables I found myself continually drifting towards a passage in Burt States' phenomenology of theatre, *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms*, that had been a favorite during my undergraduate years. States' phenomenology, which aligns much more with Husserl's than Ahmed's, attempts to find the "theater-ness" of theater. Theatre, for States, is a medium in which things stand in for something very near to what they actually are: it is "the medium par excellence that consumes the real in its realest forms." The "theater-ness" of "theater" is that objects in the theater are always experienced as being "really" themselves even as they "pretend" to be whatever it is that they stand in for. He theorizes theatre as an organism that 1) " feeds on the world as its nourishment," 2) "adapts to cultural climate and conditions that necessitate periodic shifts in direction and speed" and 3) "exhausts itself and dies—one of its

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205. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 23.

traditions, like generations, replacing another."[206] The "show" of the stage is a spectacle in which a "parade of objects and process" move from the once behaved environment of the world-as-is to a "twice behaved" reproduction as "imagery."[207] The stage is thus a site of both metaphorical and and queer/metonymic theatricality. The object in performance is always "a Janus faced thing: it wants to be about something, to be a sign, and it wants to be something, a thing in itself, a site of beauty."[208] This is to say that objects in performance are symbolic object that point beyond themselves toward something else but also point to their own "assiduous materiality."[209] Important for States is that these two realities (objects as image, and objects as themselves) are always experienced simultaneously in the theater.

States' most often cited example of this parade from object to image is the agency of a table and chair in the birth of realism. When 19th century French director Montigny put a table and chair on stage, States notes, it "revolutionized what we now call blocking." While the table and chair were meant to stand in for another table and chair, they were also objects-in-themselves and their material presence "forced" actors to take more "lifelike positions." The simple occurrence of furniture on the stage reportedly "created a temporary frenzy among the actors, since the art of acting—or grand acting, at least—had never required skill in moving around household obstacles." In States' reading, the simple occurrence of a table and chairs forced not only the bodies of actors to be re-oriented but also those of audiences:

One can only imagine how the first audiences reacted to this innovation. But one can

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206. States, *Great Reckonings*, 13.
207. States, *Great Reckonings*, 40.
208. States, *Great Reckonings*, 10.
209. Blair, "U.S. Memorial Sites," 17.

guess that so much furniture, intruding insolently on this sacred space reserved by long

tradition for the great set speeches of the drama, would not have been received simply as

images and signs of chairs and tables belonging to the fictional world of the play but as

things imported from the realm of the real.[210]

The indexicality of furniture and the "lifelike" performances that it required and enabled

functions as a revolution in theatrical practices. This moment is one that Ahmed and Sedgwick

might call a moment of queering. Although over time tables and chairs became the most

mundane of theatrical artifices as theatre incorporated them into its ritual, their first introduction

created a spatial crisis, a queer re-orienting. As the bodies of actors are forced to move in

unfamiliar ways, they become re-markable as bodies-in-themselves. The lines of the

performative forces that helped table, chair, and actor arrive on the stage become temporarily

visible. It is a moment of "ontos" ontology in which the taken for granted "just so" table-ness of

tables, the theatre-ness of theatre, and the body-ness of bodies becomes re-markable. The

"shock" of this queering—in which the mundane object of the table is importantly figured as the

agent that "forces" the ensuing actions— is an indexical re-minding that the bodies are both

standing in for other bodies and are bodies-in-themselves.[211]

The work of phenomenology for States is, in part, a "continual desymbolization of the

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210. States, *Great Reckonings*, 41.
211. Articulating the Areopagos to performed/performative tables is particularly provocative in that in addition to being a site from which to practice philosophy, the rock was also once one of the "parade of objects" move from "the real" into the "imagined" world of the stage. As I noted in Chapter 2, Aeschylus' Oresteia was first performed at the theatre of Dionysus a few hundred yards away from the "actual" Areopagos at a time when the political events surrounding the shifting of power away from the council of the Areopagites towards the demos still in recent memory form most viewers.

world," an attempt to try and describe the relationships between perceiving bodies and the world outside of, before, or beyond the linguistic. Queer phenomenology, at least as I understand it, seeks to engage with symbols as both objects of meaning ("twice behaved" representations) and objects in themselves (once behaved presentations).[212] Queering phenomenology, read through "ontos" performance, becomes a project invested in partially de-symbolizing our relationship with the symbolic or, more precisely, making legible some of the extra-symbolic experiences of symbols that are made possible by the fact that our encounters with symbols are always also spatio-material encounters. Husserl uses the table as an example because of its ready-to hand-ness, the ease with which he can use it and put it back. Its mundane-ness means it can easily be picked up and put back down without bringing too much baggage with it. It lends itself to the work of bracketing because it is so easily dislodged from the everyday. Queering phenomenology, for Ahmed, means letting the table speak back, letting it "force" her body into actions that it could not anticipate, such that the table-ness of the table makes re-markable the body-ness of her body. Ahmed follows tables around such that the taken-for-granted-ness of the table as something that enables the work of thought/communication/philosophy is brought into the foreground as a prism that multiplies, destabilizes and queers the work of symbolization itself. The table functions as a queering pun/prism not through its ephemerality as a free floating signifier, but through its materiality, not though its nature as a symbol, but through its nature as an object.

The term co-incidence is, like "ontos" ontology and "pancosmiopoesis" above, a borrowed

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212. States, *Great Reckonings*, 23.

term. For Ahmed the kinds of things that find themselves near to each other (like philosophers and tables) is more or less determined, even as the event of their encounter is open: "arrivals are determined, at least in a certain way, as a determination that might determine what gets near, even if it does not decide what happens once we are near."[213] In my reformulation of co-incidence throughout this document, I place an equal emphasis on both the aleatory ways in which "co-inciding" things "just so happen" to be together and the materially specific ways in which they happen to be "just so." The dash in "co-incident" emphasizes the productive tension between the ways in which that nearness is a materially specific determined/determining encounter and the ways in which both the causes and results of that nearness are open to multiple permutations. A particularly queer and particularly productive affect/effect arises when the question of what determined the nearness of those things must remain open.

Ahmed's queer "tabling" reframes my relationship to the Areopagos. The co-incidental "just so happening" of the Areopagos "brings things near to other things, whereby the nearness shapes the shape of each thing."[214] As a queer (re)orienting device, my rock, like her table, is fraught with possibilities that are given shape through the specific materiality of the place that grounds them. Through it, things are experienced in/as co-incidental encounter.

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213. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 39.
214. Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 39.

Fig.4.7. Beside.

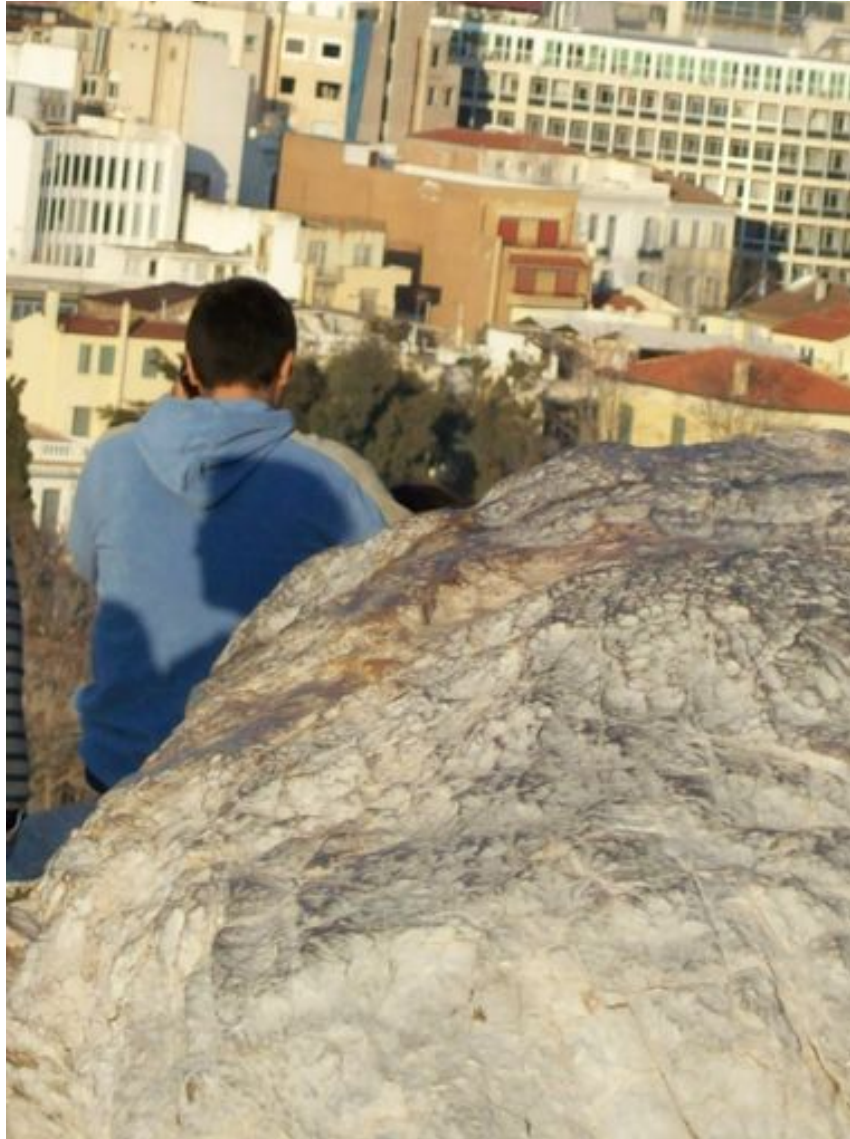## Familiar Strangers

Noting a pattern emerging through her travels, Sarah, a traveler making her way around

the world over the next year or so, beckons me: "Do you see that guy there? The one with the

long hair and the suit jacket? I saw him in the airport and I'm seeing him again here now. . . .

There is one in every city. I've learned to look for them." The category of person referred to here

('one in every city') is the stranger-encountered-more-than-once-in-a-short-period-of-time, the uncanny not-quite-strange-not-quite-familiar "other" who pops up in one's periphery. Such "others" might become friends, most likely not, but status as "meaningful" others has less to do with anything that they might be hiding beneath the skin, than with the material status of their body as a repeated presence. This is not the "extra" that one later discovers is the director of the film in a cameo role. This is the stranger who becomes familiar through repetition *as* a stranger. "Learning to look for them" might be read as a form of "paranoia" but it is, as Sarah describes it, a "reparative" practice in Eve Sedgwick's sense. She is not looking for the cause "beneath" the pattern ("Is he a repressed vision of my father?" "Is he a stalker?") but what can be made of the surprise of finding this person "beside" her. The familiar stranger is a "powerful part object" that offers a "glue of surplus beauty, surplus stylistic investment" that holds her experience of traveling "together" in a way that not only doesn't limit but even enhances its potential to veer off into an unexpected direction.[215]

She never talks to these familiar strangers, and rarely speculates too much about the specifics of who they are and what led them to be where they are. She prefers to engage with them as a pattern, as markers of time and space. That is to say, she engages with them ontologically as co-beings without any further epistemological or metaphysical questioning. They are, she says, a "source of comfort," but only if she "doesn't think about them too hard." It is a way of expanding her vision to the periphery, of tuning herself to patterns on shared surfaces, of marking both coincidence and co-incidence.

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215. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 150.

With a little bit of analysis, it is easy to make sense of the fact that there is "one in every city." Given that most of the cities she has been to over the past few months are major tourist destinations (Paris, Rome, Milan), given that she is getting information about where to go from the same Let's Go/Rick Steve/Lonely Planet/Wikitravel sources as most of her fellow budget travelers, it is, on some level, to be expected that some bodies would be in the same place and time as her on multiple occasions throughout her journey. For Sarah, however, the point of seeing familiar strangers is not the sense there is some greater meaning "behind" the apparently accidental. These "extras" in her life help to balance her on her journey precisely as co-incidence.

At eighteen, she was working a dead end job near Seattle not ready to enroll in college, not at all sure what her "next step" would be, when she was hit by a car while riding a scooter with her boyfriend. The driver was at fault and his insurance company gave the two of them a large settlement. The "accident" left her with expanded options, but she was still not ready for "permanent" direction. She sold what she could, packed up her life and left to travel. She doesn't know how long she will be traveling, and in many respects the "not knowing" is more important to her than the "traveling." She is on a journey away from an extremely restrictive childhood as a Jehovah's Witness. Some of her relatives have shunned her because of her apostasy. She is traveling to leave one life, but is not yet sure (or ready to be sure) towards what life she is moving. "That guy over there, the one with the long hair and suit jacket" is experienced as a coincidence; he enables her to be co-incident to herself, to be comfortably "beside herself" with strangeness. He could be an almost infinite number of people. There are an infinite number of reasons he might be here. By delving into the specifics of those reasons as little as possible, he

becomes a marker of the simple fact that her own life could be, and in an important sense already

is, other than it is/was.To look at him as a familiar stranger is also to recognize that she is a

familiar stranger to him. His co-incidental location marks hers. She too becomes a marker of

familiar possibility to him. This allows her to be "beside herself" as what Gary Saul Morson has

called a "sideshadow." In "sideshadowing," time is not a progressive line leading from one point

to another (as it does in, say, a Dickens novel) but rather a heterotopic "field of possibilities."[216]

The sideshadow is an experience of a heterotopic, carnivalesque time-space in which the

possible-but-not-certain reality of others and of one's self is experienced as a shadow-materiality.

Thus Sarah and her familiar strangers create, at least in her imagination, a landscape of

unpreposessing potentiality charged by common transience.

Fig.4.8. Pull up a rock.

216.Gary Saul Morson, *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 3.

Waiting

Chloe, an eighteen-year-old Albanian girl, has spent almost her entire life in Greece. She speaks Albanian, but feels much more comfortable speaking Greek. She lives in fear of being kidnapped when she returns to what should be her homeland to visit her grandmother. Her father forbids her to speak her native language in public in either country. That she speaks Albanian at all will mark her as Albanian to Greeks. That she speaks with an accent will mark her as Greek to Albanians. Each year she must go with her family to wait in line for papers from both Albanian and Greek officials. There is little order to the process. She and her family must be prepared to wait day in and day out in hopes of being seen. If a spot does not turn up, they must go back the next day until one does. There is no record marking who has been waiting for how long from one day to the next. Each day the process starts anew. It takes at least a few weeks at both agencies before their status is re-legalized. Often by the time the paperwork is finalized they only have a few weeks of "legal" status before they are once again thrown into limbo. She describes being consistently taunted and cursed at by both Greek and Albanian officials, but she says it is much worse at the Albanian embassy. The ritual harassment has become a pre-condition for having a place of "fromness"in the world. She came back to the rock many times over the course of the next few weeks. She liked that I was a "xenos" (foreigner) too, she said, but one who could speak Greek. She also liked that we were foreign in different ways. This mis/alliance helped both of us, for a time. There is an odd miss/recognition in seeing someone who is not-quite-Greek.

In another incident, a discharged U.S. soldier describes refusing to follow the order to

urinate near a checkpoint in Iraq. The order, she claims, was intended to make the checkpoint as unpleasant as possible so that fewer people would try to come through. Protesting that these were "human beings not dogs" she refused the order and was discharged. She has been in Greece trying, unsuccessfully, to connect with her older Greek relatives. She left the house after a violent argument in which she, defending her Muslim ex-husband, accused them of racism. She came to the rock on her way to the airport back to the U.S. in order to give herself a more positive image of Greece. "Look at that" she said of the Acropolis, "proof that a people can hold on to its history despite its wars."

We meet a group of Iraqi men who are on their way to northern Europe. They are not here to stay. There is no work in Greece. It is impossible to get asylum here. (Later I will learn from a friend working for Amnesty International that Greece approves less than 0.03% of asylum applications.) The Iraqi men are waiting for fake documents that will enable them to move to the (presumably) more hospitable nations of northern Europe. They have been in hiding since they got here. Despite its potentially sensitive nature, this information was offered relatively freely. Most of it came out in response to the standby question "where are you from?" If they are caught and finger printed then they will be extradited back to Greece if found in another EU country. If they can manage the next few days/weeks without getting fingerprinted by the Greek police then they will be allowed to stay in a place with a significantly better human rights record. Despite the risks, they have come here for shots of whiskey out of plastic cups with an Amstel chaser. They insist, despite repeated protests, on sharing with me and with the former soldier.

In these conversations, I am reminded of two stories my mom used to tell about the days

after we had first moved to Greece as missionaries in the early 80s. The first is about the time she was sitting in a park and heard someone yell at their dog to come. The dog complied and my mom realized that, though she had been studying the language for several months, that dog knew more Greek than she did. The second story centers on a phrase that she often repeated when people would ask her how she liked life in Athens. "I love it here," she would say, "except that wherever I go I stand in line." Memorizing a few relatively complex phrases that are likely to come up frequently in conversation is a common practice in the early stages of second language acquisition. It allows one to have the momentary sensation of fluency. It is a performance of faith in the (too distant) future when one will live more freely within the strange sounds of the still unfamiliar tongue. Only after using it a few times did she learn that she had been misplacing the accent. Rather than saying "opou kai na pao stekome se ourA" meaning "wherever I go I stand in line"—(a common experience for recent arrivals to a new place), she had been saying "opu kai na pao stekome se OUra" meaning, "wherever I go I stand in piss."

It was a slip of the tongue on her part, of course, an accident, a coincidence. I shared it in conversation with others I met on the rock whose presence with me, and each other, was yet another accident, yet another coincidence. And yet, through meeting of different bodies and their contexts there emerged a shared laughter of co-incidence. We laughed because we all, in our own ways, knew what it was to feel lower than dogs in the overwhelming sounds of an unknown language. We laughed again because we all knew, in our own ways, the connections between standing in line and standing in piss and how those connections can be expressed in ways that blur the lines between "human beings" and "dogs." Although we soon were to all go our separate

ways, in that moment we became more than the sum of our parts. The coincidence of our "just so happening" to be together became a dialogic co-incidence. Our co-presence activated my mom's slip of the tongue into a moment, however brief, of shared understanding of mutual slipperiness. As I say good goodbye to the Iraqis I offer my favorite Greek greeting, "yia xara," which means "health and joy." They look at me strangely and ask for an explanation. Through more shared laughter, we discover that the Greek word for "joy" and the Arabic word for "shit" are homonyms.

To one degree or another, we all meet on the rock because we are waiting for something. We all, to varying degrees, are foreigners, but we are each "foreign" differently. My mother's slip of the tongue leading from standing in "line" to standing in "piss" and the farewell greeting that becomes a wish for "shit" instead of a wish for joy each begin as small talk. They are conventional ways of navigating shared space with minimal risky interaction. They are attempts at a common language that do not, however, remain ordinary. Ironically, as they both turn towards the scatological, they offer a different "common ground." This is not the generic human condition of existentialism—"Let's go! We can't. Why not? We're waiting for Godot."[217] We are all waiting, in one way or another but the stakes of waiting are not the same. We all happen to be waiting together, co-incidentally in a shared performance that marks an un-common and temporary commonality. It is technically incorrect to say that "we" laugh together. The laughter, I want to argue produces a "we" out of diverse vectors that "happen" to co-incide. Co-incidence is not a matter of embracing chance for its own sake, but of queering co-performative witnessing

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217. Samuel Becket, *Waiting for Godot* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1982), 10.

and focusing on the act of dialogue not as a purely semiotic process but as a queer ethno-phenomenological one.

Co-incident bodies are affectively connected despite (and sometimes because of) the differences among them. Their "shared" language has a life of its own that does not belong to any one party in the dialogue, nor does it rest in a happy middle between two poles. In laughter the conversants become possessed by the fickleness of language, which both connects and distinguishes the speech contexts between which it flows. If, following Bakhtin, we imagine the vectors "oura" and "xara" as rays of light, "then the living and unrepeatable play of colors and light on the facets of the image that [they] construct can be explained as the spectral dispersion of the ray-word. . . in an atmosphere filled with the alien words." The piss-line of shit-joy breaks through "into its own meaning and its own expression across an environment full of alien words and variously evaluating accents, harmonizing with some elements in this environment and striking a dissonance with others."[218] These multi-lingual puns are "poetic image[s]" that do not forget the "contradictory acts of verbal recognition" that precede and surround their utterance. These pun/prisms, like the rock, function as co-incidental agents that bring us together in ways that none of us would be able to plan, predict, or control. Their "loopholes" create space for an "outside belonging."

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218. Bakhtin, *Problems*, 277.

Fig.4.9. Kites flown over the Areopagos on the first Monday of Lent.

Now I Need It and Here It Is.

Ryan comes up the rock from the gentle but (to most first time visitors) confusing western

slope. He takes large urgent steps, racing against the earth's rotation, determined to experience

the everyday magic of the setting sun from the top of the rock. After summitting (oh-but-just-in-

the nick-of-time!) he hands his camera to the nearest person and asks him to take a snapshot: the

tried but almost always less than true arms-length self-portrait technique cannot begin to capture

the majesty of the orange tinted Athens skyline behind him, nor will a shoulder and head shot be

enough to send home. No, if he is going to "be here now," he will need photographic proof

spanning from feet anchored fully on the ancient rock to tussled tufts of hair blending with cloud

wisps. He will need to be centered properly. The picture must capture the expanse of the

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Athenian vista, the drops of sweat that had accumulated on his brow throughout his day of wandering the streets, the sun glistening off the astrological observatory behind him and the bags under his eyes from days of not sleeping. The stranger-photographer is happy to oblige and very patient when the first two or three point and clicks do not quite capture the moment as his young director/subject/auteur's vision requires. It is tricky to get facial features to show up with that much backlight, but, if the ebullient thanks that follow Ryan's review of the final take is any indication, the resulting photograph is well worth the added hassle.

Later, when Ryan e-mails me a copy of the picture I will marvel at how old he looks (He is, and appears 19) But it will be hard for me to square the picture with my remembered image of him as impossibly young. It will remind me that among the reasons I am so drawn to him is that he reminds me of myself when I was his age, or, rather, reminds me of who I thought of myself as when I was his age—this being a very important distinction for the kind of person I think of myself as being at my present age.

I had been on the rock for several months at that point and he was the most willing research volunteer to date:

"What are you writing?" he asked

"I'm actually writing a book about this rock," I replied.

"Cool," he interjected before I had time to finish describing my project, "can I be in it?"

My blue notepad, like the camera, offered him a way to give artistic shape to an experience onto which he wanted desperately to hold. He just arrived from Spain. He hadn't slept in days and seemed to be running on pure adrenaline. Increasingly heavy lids threatened to obscure his

fiery eyes. He had climbed virtually all the major hills in Athens that day: Lykavitos, Phillopapou, the Acropolis. He had begun his day of climbing with the Areopagos, from which he had seen the sunrise (more or less) and now he was back for the sunset. The symmetry seemed most appropriate. Taking it "all" in was imperative if impossible. He needed to be as fully present for this moment as he could. Had it not been for the guy in his dorm who recommended that he study abroad, he would not be in Europe at all. Were it not for the guy on the train who had given him a map, he might not have found this rock and now it was one of his favorites. And he almost didn't come to Greece, he almost went somewhere else, but then someone recommended to him that he come and so he did. And his family made tremendous financial sacrifices for him to go to school. And it was an expensive time to by studying abroad with the conversion rate and everything, but they made it happen for him. And it was imperative if impossible that I understand just exactly how much he loved them (his family and the stranger who gave him the map alike).

He seemed as though he was about to explode into a cloud of pure contingency as he began to catalogue all of the different encounters that had pre-dated his visit to the rock. He couldn't believe he was there and was becoming increasingly aware of just how improbable his being there was. I tried to keep up as he listed the people who had made his arrival possible, but we both quickly realized the impossibility of an exhaustive catalogue. Asking me to share what I would one day write in order to help him remember this moment, he wrote his e-mail address down on a page of a tiny pocket notebook, before he started writing his voice began to quiver uncontrollably:

My mom…. My mom knew I would need one of these. She knew and she bought it for

me and she gave it to me right before I left. I told her I already had a big notebook. She

said that there would be a time when I wouldn't have it with me and I would want to

write something down and I didn't believe her, but I took it anyway because she was my

mom. And now I need it and here it is.

He began to cry.

I still have that crumpled piece of paper. It has come with me through four moves. I find it

now between the pages of the book I was reading a few weeks ago, now in the back of an old

shoe box waiting to be filed, now in the back of a suitcase where it slid out from its last hiding

place. The page functions symbolically as a reminder than an encounter that even at the time

seemed too good to be true and seems all the more so in memory, did, in fact, occur. It also re-

members the emotional charge of my meeting with Ryan. That little piece of paper, like Ahmed's

table, keeps turning up unexpectedly as an "ontos" reminder and continuance of Ryan's fabulous

ebullience.

Tourism, in Mark Neuman's words is a "metaphor for our struggle to make sense of self and

world in a highly differential culture." As a trope and object of analysis tourism "directs us to

sites were people are at work making meaning, situation themselves in relations to public

spectacle and making a biography that provides some coherency between self and world."[219] As

Michael Bowman notes, it is most common to address tourists as pairs of eyes (cultural dupes

219. Mark Neumann, "Wandering Through the Museum: Experience and Identity in a Spectator Culture," *Border/Lines* Summer 1988(1988), 22.

easily deceived by the magic of marketing or inauthentic gazers always in a vain search for the authentic/exotic other), or as sets of integers (the mobile consumers who make certain transnational movement of capital possible); but, "what tourists actually do when they travel besides spending money and looking at things, and the significance or meaning of their travel to them are relatively neglected questions in tourism studies."[220]

After ripping the page out of his notebook and handing it to me, Ryan turned towards the now-almost-fully-set sun and took several deep breaths. After a minute or so he turned back to me and asked, "Does it get any better than this?" I believe meant the question quite literally: he wanted to know if he would be "missing" anything if he returned to the hostel and got some much needed rest. Contrary to what I understood to be his conscious intentions, I took the question as a rhetorical device meant to indicate the specialness of the moment at hand. Willfully ignoring the coming magic of city lights, the fireworks soon to be set off from the "Elsewhere" amusement park, the sound of melancholic guitar music about to massage the air around us—out of respect for the emerging biological necessity of sleep, out of respect for the existential inability to "take in" any more than he already taken in, out of, perhaps, my own exhaustion from the conversation in which we had just engaged— I said, "No, Ryan. No, it certainly doesn't get any better than this."

Ryan's work is that of "theoria" in the ancient sense of the term as "travel to foreign places, to oracles, to sites where strange or marvelous objects, people, or activities were rumored to be." The theoros was sent "to such places in order to see what could be seen, to get the lay of the land,

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220. Bowman, "Stonewall's Arm," 103.

to investigate the rumors, and so forth." Having seen what could be seen, the "theoros" would "return home and appear before the public to give an account" of these other worlds.[221] The point of such work is less to find out facts that can be categorized than to find new ways of being, seeing, and doing. The emphasis of "theoria" comes to rest on particular objects as it does for Ryan in the small notebook, but it can also be defined by a periphery awareness. As in Bowman's search for "Stonewall's Arm," the object is important primarily because it compels a performance that enables one to make sense of diffuse cultural vectors. It is not quite a performance in Richard Schechner's sense of "twice behaved" restoration through time. It is less a repeating with or without a difference than a "once behaved" spatial performance, that draws many different vectors into its co-incidence.[222] It is thus experienced, perhaps, as "at once restored." It serves, as Ryan notes, not to emphasize the way things "are," but, precisely, to give expression to a particular moment of becoming. These things "just so happened" to "happen" this way. They could have "happened" otherwise. That they did happen "just so" is not the result of an individual agency, but of the collision of multiple heterogeneous material vectors that "happened" to co-incide. "Janus faced" performance/performative objects-as-prisms (Ryan's notebook, Ahmed's table, familiar strangers, shit-joy, "the rock," the Areopagos) thus suture the recognition that things could be otherwise with the recognition that they "just so happen" to be "just so." These objects thus mark "everyday" as an "ontos poetics of the worldwide," as a complex, ethno-phenomenological, space-time performance of co-incident "meanwhiles."

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221. Bowman, "Stonewall's Arm," 105.
222. Schechner, *Between Theatre*, 36.

CHAPTER 5

HETEROTOPIA

Fig.5.1. In process.

Returning to the Problem of Categories

Chapters 3 and 4 answered the question of methods and elucidated the co-incident, queer, ethno-phenomenological approach I have taken towards the Areopagos. I engaged with the rock, I have argued, as a way to move "beside myself" and as a way to engage with the generative materiality of discourse as a way of understanding different modes of "global belonging." Having answered the question of why I approached the lived complexity of *this particular* site in the way that I did, I now want to return to a thread that I left off in Chapter 2 and to discuss what *kind* of a site the Areopagos is and what it might have to say about other kinds of places, spaces, and practices. In the second chapter, I discussed a number of material and conceptual "places"

between which the Areopagos is situated (various neighborhoods in Athens, public space and tourist space, Paganism and Christianity, vortex and non-place, and—implicit throughout—ancient and modern) and some of the particular ways in which the site as such "situates" bodies in and around itself. I now want to return to the question of categorizing or situating the Areopagos through a spatial category that seems particularly in keeping with a queer ethno-phenomenological method: Foucault's conception of heterotopia (other place/place of others). Heterotopia offers, I hope, more clarity to the spatial sense of agency implicit throughout my discussion of co-incidence thus far. It also helps me to spell out some of the implications of this practice for studying other time-spaces, and for creating a more spatial-material conception of performance and globalization. This chapter moves through a discussion of Foucault's 1967 lecture on heterotopia followed by an explication of the heterotopic "besideness" I experienced at the Areopagos as read through one particularly provocative March afternoon.

Heterotopia

Throughout his ouvre, Foucault identifies spatiality is a primary locus through which discourse becomes articulated in/as materiality. Space helps Foucault to determine, as precisely as possible, "the points at which discourses are transformed in, through and on the basis of relations of power."[223] Much of his most influential social theory hinges on the power of official places such as the clinic, the prison or the museum to produce subjects. Arguably, to think as a Foucaultian is almost definitively to think "from" such disciplinary spaces if only because it is at such places that institutions and discourses can most easily be analyzed through and as concrete

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223. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 69-70.

practices.

My own project, however, deals with a space whose defining characteristic is not an institutionally unified discourse, but the simultaneity of multiple "so far" discourses. To make sense of this errant spatiality, I turn to Foucault's 1967 lecture, "De Espaces Autres" (Of Other Spaces/Spaces of Others), in which Foucault places the highly structured discursive sites of disciplinarity within the broader category of heterotopias.[224] It is one of the few instances in which Foucault directly addresses the spatiality that, arguably, underlies most of his work (including his geneological approach to history), and it has the potential to express a more dispersed form of agency emergent in the spatial dynamics of simultaneous co-incident performance.

Importantly in the context of my own project, the concept of heterotopia has a queer relationship to the rest of Foucault's writings: this is to say that, at least in some ways, the concept of "heterotopia" is yet another accident that I treat as an "on purpose." The notes for the lecture on heterotopia were never fully revised for publication by Foucault himself and were not published until around the time of his death in 1984. Although they sometimes announce themselves as a systematic analysis, Foucault's thoughts on heterotopia are often, as Edward Soja notes, "frustratingly incomplete, inconsistent, incoherent."[225] In the context of my co-incidental engagement with the Areopagos, I do not read the fragmentary and contradictory nature of these notes on "heterotopology" as signs that this is a dead end in Foucault's thought that he

224. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.
225. Soja, *Thirdspace*, 162.

consequently later abandoned. I do not see them as a failure of taxonomy, but as a performance of "heterotopic" thinking that emerges from the places they describe. Through their accidental, fragmentary, "so-far," incompleteness, they offer me a place from which to think "beside" some of the more totalizing interpretations of Foucault's conception of disciplinary power.

Foucault's sometimes labyrinthine discussion of various types of heterotopia is akin to the delightfully strange Borgesian "Chinese encyclopedia" with which Foucault begins the book published closest to the time of his 1967 heterotopia lecture, *The Order of Things*:

> in which it is written that 'animals are divided into (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame,(d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies.[226]

Foucault's list isn't quite as broad as Borges'; still, in addition to prisons and sanitariums Foucault places under the banner of heterotopias: mirrors, honeymoon hotels, retirement homes, cemeteries, theaters, cinemas, gardens, museums, libraries, vacation villages, saunas, motels, Puritan and Jesuit colonies, brothels, and ships, among others. All are heterotopias for Foucault in that they are 1) actual, locatable sites 2) that are in some sense qualitatively separate from the spaces that surround them 3) and that function as either places for "others" or as places that require/enable other behaviors.

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226. Borges cited in Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences.* (New York: Vintage, 1973), xv.

Foucault's list is broadly encompassing; his definitional criteria are exasperatingly slippery to say the least. Indeed, Edward Casey argues that this analysis doesn't offer a distinction between such basic key terms such as "place," "space," "location," and "site" and that the wide variety of examples of heterotopia "lacks a coherent ground of connection."[227] While I, too, often wish that Foucault's essay was more precise, I am convinced that this elusion of categorization is as much a component of the kind of heterotopic thinking that is enabled/ necessitated by heterotopias themselves. If heterotopias are, as Derek Gregory has noted, "marginal sites of modernity, constantly threatening to disrupt its closure and certainties," then it follows that the process of naming and categorizing them should be, to some degree, destabilizing.[228] The concept of heterotopia inspires a form of prismatic pun-thinking that performs its own version of co-incidence. In this regard what has proven to be a weakness in the concept heterotopia for many thinkers of space and place, its lack of referential specificity, is an asset in my project.

Heterotopias, like performance, have a Janus faced ontology: 1) They are effectively "outside of all places." They are "other" places that exist in unreal/surreal relationship to the places around them. 2) Unlike the purely imaginary topos of utopias, heterotopias also have a "location in reality."[229] This is to say that heterotopias are simultaneously concrete/material and imaginary/virtual. They exist as an alternate reality as simultaneously "real-and-imagined"

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227. Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 300-01.
228. Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994), 151.
229. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.

reflections of the surrounding culture.[230] Heterotopic reflections, however, are not mere

replications, they are also forms of pun/prisms: in them, "the real sites, all the other real sites that

can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted."[231]

Although they are in relationship with all of the surrounding sites, they "suspect, neutralize, or

invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect." They thus function as

"effectively enacted utopia[s]."[232] Andrew Wood offers the example of an amusement park as a

prototype for understanding heterotopia. An amusement park contains many of the same things

that are contained in the cit[ies] that are near by, but it remains "somehow outside the bounds of

conventional urbanity."[233] Within its walls children drive cars and adults pose for cheesy

portraits, large things appear small and small things large, dangerous things are experienced as

controlled thrills, etc. These inversions carry the trace of what Bakhtin might call "carnival."[234]

Foucault's relatively unsystematic approach to heterotopias in "Of Other Spaces,"moves

from a logic of "then" to a logic of "meanwhile."Through the framework of performance, I am

less bothered by the lack of systematization in Foucault's notes on heterotopia than other critics

have been. I see in them a form heterotopic thinking that might (however temporarily, however

contradictorily) move "beside" the logics of disciplinary performativity and enact "blueprints of a

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230.Soja, *Thirdspace*.
231. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.
232. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.
233. Andrew Wood, "Managing the Lady Managers: The Shaping of Heterotopian Spaces in the 1893 Chicago Expositions' Woman's Building," *Southern Communication Journal* 69.4(2004), 291.
234.Michael Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World.,* trans. Michael Holquist (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984).

world not quite here, a horizon of possibility, not a fixed schema."[235] A somewhat playful

relationship to taxonomy seems to be appropriate for such blueprints.

Towards a Heterotopian Performative

One of the most fruitful results of my engagement with both Foucault's theory "Of Other

Spaces" and the Areopagos has been the ways in which it enables an extension and critique of

Jose Muñoz and Jill Dolan's separate but compatible theories of the "utopian performative."

Munoz and Dolan have different disciplinary locations (Muñoz in performance studies and

Dolan in theatre studies) and, these inflect their perspectives. Still both are interested in the

relationship between utopia and performance and the ensuing possibilities for imagining a more

just world. Furthermore, both are specifically interested in performance as a mode of potentiality

through which queer subjects can resist dominant social imaginaries. Re-imagining their

conceptions of the utopian performative as a variation on the heterotopian performative the

potentiality each cites gains materiality and their respective performatives gain space. In so doing

I hope to give more concrete scope to the prospect of a particularly queer subjectivity/agency.

Dolan describes the theatre as utopian in the sense that it is "a place where people come

together embodied and passionate, to share experiences of meaning-making and imagination that

can describe or capture fleeting intimations of a better world."[236] Dolan finds herself drawn to

performance "lured by the possibility that in its insistent presence (and *present*) my fellow

spectators and I might connect more fully with the complexities of our past and the possibility of

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235.José Esteban Muñoz, "Stages: Queers, Punks, and the Utopian Performative," in *The Performance Studies Handbook*, ed. Judith Hamera and D. Soyini Madison (New York: Sage, 2005), 9.
236.Jill Dolan, *Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope At the Theater* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 2.

a better future."[237] She argues that the utopian performative is a moment that hails audiences into a temporary public through the experience of a subjunctive oneness that Victor Turner has called "communitas."[238] In utopian performative events people come together in "real places—whether theatres or dance clubs—to explore in imaginary spaces the potential of the "not yet" and the "not here."[239] Through her investigation of the subjunctive utopia in the theatre, she hopes to "re-animate humanism": because performance lasts only for a moment, because it disappears, she argues, it can offer temporary, charged moments of shared "humanity" without resorting to a "transhistorical" claim.

I am sympathetic to Dolan's aims, and have myself experienced moments in the theatre that I would describe in similar terms. I do, however, think that there are a number of limitations to her utopic framework that shifting towards a heterotopic, co-incident frame helps to address.

Moving towards a heterotopic theory of performance rather than utopic theory helps to situate the transformative moments of performance in broader socio-economic terms in ways that utopia misses. Although she makes a nod to lower budget theatre, most of the performances she describes are ones that emerge from a decidedly upper middle class social structure, tickets to which cost upwards of one-hundred dollars. I do not mean to accuse her of classism here—there is a good reason that some of those shows cost as much to produce as they did, and expensive art can be well worth seeing—but merely to point out that the schema of "utopia" makes these issues difficult to talk about in ways that "heterotopia" helps to amend. I would not want to reduce the

237. Dolan, *Utopia*, 5.
238. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995), 96.
239. Dolan, *Utopia*, 20.

theatre to its economic indexes, but by placing as much emphasis as she does on the ephemeral temporal "presence" of performance, Dolan arguably disarticulates performance from its materiality.

In addition, Dolan's utopic sense of spatiality is largely that of an "empty" static container in which the actions of time unfold. The power of the theatre as a utopic space is precisely that it could be *anything*. It offers hope because it doesn't offer anything to stand in the way of the unfolding articulations of communitas.

Finally, in focusing on the ways in which audiences consume performance as an "about to disappear" event, Dolan erases the important aspects through which performance is constructed. It is only by, in Arendt's terms, transcending both the "labor" of daily life and the "work" of theatre making (the sweat of rehearsal rooms) that Dolan is able to move into the "action" of performance as utopic possibility. Thus the "public" of her theatre is found only by bracketing entire sections of life from within the sphere of "humanism."

For Muñoz, as for Dolan, performance "renders potential blueprints of a world not quite here, a horizon of possibility, not a fixed schema." It is oriented towards the future, but "as a flux, a temporal disorganization, as a moment when the here and now is transcended by a then and there that could and indeed should be."[240] Specifically, performance is able to allow queer subjects to imagine a "futurity" beyond the "life promised by heterosexual temporality."[241] He frames his discussion of utopia in terms of two senses of the word "stage" as 1) "a developmental

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240. Muñoz, "Stages," 9.
241. Muñoz, "Stages," 10.

hiccup a moment of misalignment that will, hopefully, correct itself"—"It's just a stage. She'll grow out of it."— and 2) as the literal places of "stages" in queer and punk clubs on which alternate modes of belonging are enacted. In placing utopia in the material place of the "stage" and the temporal "hiccup" of staging, Muñoz moves towards heterotopia and the by-chance-ness of coming together in space of co-incidence. He also highlights how the "doing" of being other becomes a "dwelling," treating the accidental moment of the "hiccup" stage as though it is an on purpose and expanding it into a performative stage for imagining future possibilities.[242] Dwelling on the moment of the stage, refusing to pass through it, does not have to mean dwelling on a "nostalgic past;" it can also mean "dwelling on a past that helps us feel a certain structure of feelings, a circuit of queer belonging."[243]

Muñoz's utopia adds to Dolan's in important ways and moves towards what I would call a co-incident heterotopic performative. 1) His double use of "stages" (as places and as moments) moves towards thinking in Massey's sense of "space-time." 2) The accident-turned-on-purpose of the "hiccup" moves towards what I would call an "aleatory aesthetics" that tries to make more room for "everyday" "work" and "labor" within the "action" of the theatre. 3) Thus his hope is not grounded as much in the immaterial no-place of utopia as it is in the heterogeneous materiality of heterotopia.

By partly placing the potential of queer world making in the materiality of space itself rather than individual "queer" actors, a heterotopic schema extends Muñoz's theory of utopia in ways

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242. Muñoz, "Stages," 15.
243. Muñoz, "Stages," 18.

that make room for a more open sense of "queer." The agency of heterotopia as "other place" frame queerness not as an expression of a specific group of "queer" people, but as an always potential function of encounters with difference. It is not surprising that Dolan arrives at an exclusive sense of humanism when she begins with the space of the stage as an empty container. For Dolan it is, in some sense, the failure of the stage to be a "place" in deCerteau's sense of a local with constraining agency that enables the utopic "actions" of human agency. Heterotopia, by contrast describes an inherently multiple and multiplying "place" that understands certain kinds of "place" to themselves have multiple and multiplying senses of agency.[244]

I turn to Foucault's sense of heterotopia looking for a way to acknowledge and activate the performance of this place itself. To look at how the Areopagos as a "stage" can induce even non-queer identifying subjects into the queer world making of co-incident "hiccups." This is to say that by thinking heterotopically I am looking for performative space-times that extend the circuit of queer belonging beyond those who identify as queer. Thus, I see the importance of heterotopia not in that it can allow for an individual or group of individuals to resist dominant social pressures, but in that it offers alternative, co-incident, models of spatial and social becoming.

Mirroring

The mirror has been a conventional figure for performance. The imitative mimetic work of performance is often, following Aristotle, described as holding up a mirror to nature. In this way performance ostensibly reveals a preferred idea or an "ideal" (essential and true) reality. The figure of the mirror is also critical to Foucault, but in a different sense. Rather than being directly

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244. Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life.*

or indirectly representational, the mirror, for Foucault, is a "mixed, joint experience" of utopia and heterotopia. In the reflection of the mirror "I see myself where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface."[245] Through reflection, the mirror gives the appearance of a depth that is not "actually" there into which I imagine myself. Although it inverts left and right, this experience offers the illusion of allowing me to see myself from outside of myself as others see me. Thus, in addition to the virtual space opened up "behind" the mirror, looking in a mirror also creates a virtual place "in front of" the mirror in which I imagine myself to stand outside of myself. This is to say that the mirror allows me to stand virtually in the place that I actually inhabit: "it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point that is over there."[246]

Heterotopias are entirely virtual and entirely real. Much like a body on stage, a heterotopia is not only always being itself, but also always pretending to be itself; in Schechnerian terms it is a "not real. . . not not real" place, a place of simultaneous belief and unbelief.[247] This real-unreal ontology is what makes heterotopias such promising places to think from: they are places in which the world is both completely what it already is and completely something else entirely. Heterotopia offers not only the promise that we might virtually become "something different and something more" than what we already are, but a recognition that there are different modes of

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245. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.
246. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 24.
247. Schechner, *Between Theatre*, 113.

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being already imbedded in what is materially present.[248]

In its presentation of a simultaneously real and imaginary indexicality, "heterotopia" offers, I argue, a potential turn from the *performativity* of institutional spaces toward a more nuanced spatial theory of *performance*. It is not difficult to make this move from Foucault's description of "effectively enacted utopias" toward more explicit performance terms. If performance is, as Victor Turner has argued, a primary mechanism through which cultures show themselves to themselves, then the real and imagined reflections of heterotopias are performing places: these are places that reflect, refract, distort surrounding sites in much the same way that an actor, shaman, storyteller puts cultural memes "into play." Heterotopias are in Turner's terms, simultaneously "fakings" and "makings."[249]

Although the rock is easily located as a real place in the center of downtown Athens, it is also an imagined place for a host of historical, religious, personal, and political reasons. Its otherness is double: it is a special "place outside of places" that attracts people to it from great distances but it also draws many people to it who are themselves "othered" by the surrounding city. Some come there to be "other" than what they are, others come there to find a safe(er) place to be as "others." The differences that co-incide there are at once reflections of the surrounding city and broader global contexts "as they are" and attempts to make "something different and something more" out of them.[250]

One visitor to the rock, commenting on both the contrast between the rock's relative

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248. D. Soyini Madison, "The Dialogic Performative in Critical Ethnography," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26(2006), 320.
249. Turner, *On the Edge*, 83.
250. Madison, "Dialogic Performative," 320.

tranquility and the stressful pace of the surrounding city and the way in which almost every variety of person in Athens seems to pass through it on any given day, called it "the dialysis machine for the city of Athens." This "dialysis" function is a central feature of heterotopias and one of the reasons that Foucault notes, all societies produce heterotopias (even if they do so differently).The performance of purification/reflection is a cornerstone of any system of social organization. This "dialytic" purification is not a liminal wash that produces a generic humanity but a wellspring of common disordered life. One most often enters such alternative places spaces or states "ultimately to leave refreshed and ready to return to the norms of authorized behavior."[251] The rock's "otherness" as an other place serves to mark off and circumscribe certain non-dominant behaviors in ways that re-enforce the need to engage in normative behaviors once one leaves.

I want to argue, however, that heterotopia is the spatial foundation of performances that can serve more than a primarily escapist/normative/entertainment function. Most notably, the heterotopia of the rock offers a space in which dominant performative regimes are more clearly encountered as one among many competing modes of being. Furthermore, those modes of being compete with each other more vigorously within different logics in heterotopia than they would in other spaces. From the perspective of dominant utilitarian spaces heterotopias appear largely ineffective at producing much besides temporary escape for the dominant and containment for the deviant, this pessimistic perspective is, I would argue, partly a function of the kinds of spaces /places from which social critics tend to think. From the point of view of heterotopias we can not

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251. Wood, "Lady Managers," 291.

only re-imagine those dominant spaces but also enter into alternative relationships and proximal/ potential alliances.

Like the couple preparing to make out in the allegory presented in chapter 2, I am interested in the kinds of relationships the rock can make happen. In the remainder of this section I move through Foucault's six principles of heterotopia in order to clarify some key relationships among heterotopia, performance and the Areopagos. I follow this discussion of how I am thinking heterotopically "about" the Areopagos with a vision of what it might mean to think heterotopically "from" the Areopagos.

1st Principle: Universally Necessary, Heterogeneously Formed

All societies have heterotopias, but there is "no one absolutely universal form" of heterotopia.[252] Foucault does distinguish between more-or-less temporary "heterotopias of crisis" (boarding schools, honeymoon hotels) that we might think of "other" spaces marked for those who are by necessity or choice in a temporary state of being "elsewhere" and the more-or-less permanent "heterotopias of deviation" (prisons, asylums) that we might think of as places of/for "others" who are less likely to return from their "elsewhere" state.[253] (Most of Foucault's subsequent oeuvre focuses almost entirely on the heterotopias of deviation that he believes are rapidly replacing heterotopias of crisis" in modernity.) The "dialysis machine" of the Areopagos functions as a crisis heterotopia for some visitors (adolescent backpackers, package tourist retirees), a "heterotopia of deviation" for others (drug addicts, immigrants). Another distinction between types of heterotopias that is implicit but under-theorized in Foucault's discussion is the

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252. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 23.
253. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 23-24.

distinction between heterotopias as places *for/of* containing othered subjects (whether temporarily or permanently rendered as such) and heterotopias as places that enable and require *other* practices and other modes of thinking. The distinction between these two senses of heterotopia shows up most clearly when Foucault concludes his essay by noting that "the ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates."[254] Some form of espionage would certainly seem to define the "panoptic" prison space from which Foucault imagines the disciplinarity of both deviation and crisis. The heterotopia of the Areopagos that I attempt to imagine from in this document aligns itself much more with the space of the ship as the space of "dreaming" and "piracy."

2nd Principle: Historical Contingency

The social function of any given heterotopia is historically contingent and changes over time. Thus shifts in the uses heterotopias offer insights into shifts in the surrounding culture(s). Foucault offers the example of the western European cemetery and argues that a shift in the cemetery's heterotopic function emerges from changing beliefs about death. As belief in the afterlife of the immaterial soul waned in the 18th century, ornamentation of the physical remains as "the only trace of our existence in the world and in language" became more important.[255] This lead to an increasingly individualized experience of death that correlated with an understanding of death as emblematic of "illnesses" that could be caught by the living. As belief in this contagion rose in the 19th century, the cemetery was moved away from its former central

254. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 27.
255. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 25.

position out to the edge of the city. As this example illustrates, heterotopias are able to give material specificity to claims about discursive shifts. Since they are performing spaces through which cultures show themselves to themselves, or, more precisely, produce themselves for themselves, changes in heterotopia offer key metonymic encounters with broader cultural shifts. Heterotopia offers access to such discursive reflection/refraction already in process. To the extent that we are going through a shift in how cultures relate across national boundaries the kinds of "global" encounter experienced at heterotopias such as the Areopagos are likely to be particularly illuminative of these shifts.

3rd Principle: Juxtaposition

Heterotopias are "capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are themselves incompatible." Notably for my purposes of making more explicit the link between heterotopia and performance, the first example that Foucault offers to illustrate this principle is theatre that "brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another."[256] This spatial way of describing theatre marks it as a place at which differences come together into seemingly impossible but nonetheless real juxtapositions. This principle of juxtaposition is a key component of the heuristic way I am approaching the Areopagos throughout this document. It was the explicit theme of the first part of chapter 2, "Situating the Areopagos," in which I located the rock "between," violence and justice, between ancient and modern, between public and tourist space, between paganism and Christianity, between vortex and non-place.

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256. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 26.

4th Principle: Alternate Sense of Time

Heterotopia usually implies "heterocrhonia" or an alternative sense of time. Foucault notes that there are two major ways in which this break can take place: the "perpetual and indefinite" accumulative time of the museum or library and the "fleeting, transitory, precarious" time of the festival. Much as it brings together both heterotopia of crisis and heterotopia of deviation, the Areopagos brings together these (among other) heterocronies. The intensity of moments that count as meaningful, the degree of variation between one kind of moment and the next, the spacing between moments, all fluctuate between different chronological rhythms and amplitudes. Both the historical time of the museum and the intense but fleeting presence of the festival are acutely felt on the Areopagos. For many visitors to the rock, the juxtaposition of the contemporary Athenian skyline with the ubiquitous markers of antiquity creates a "break with traditional time" by moving towards the "quasi eternal" time of museum space. The scenes of the Acropolis and the Agora, their monuments built, destroyed and rebuilt over many millennia by great men from Pericles to Rockefeller offer an almost impossible accumulation of epochs. For other visitors, this break in time leads to the carnivalesque inversions of the fair as fire jugglers, street musicians, drug peddlers, assorted dancers, preachers of various degrees of official sanctioning compete for attention. Unlike museum time which functions in a logic of even progression, carnival time functions with a logic of rupture, anachronism, and excess. One perceives the progression of "indefinitely accumulating time" at a distance; carnivalesque time swirls and incorporates those in its path.[257] Whereas museum time offers a progression from Act

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257. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 26.

I to Act II, "carnival time" offers a simultaneity of moments that are brought together not by progression but by intensity, moments that are, at least in Foucault's estimation, "absolutely temporal."[258] Although there are other examples (the Spanish Steps in Rome, certain sections of Golden Gate Park in San Francisco come most readily to mind) the clear simultaneity of these two kinds of heterochrony (along with others) is another of the key reasons that I selected the Areopagos as a site for my study.

Most notably for my present aims of understanding heterotopia at it relates to performance, the Areopagos clearly juxtaposes what Peggy Phelan has called "institutions whose only [or at least primary] function is to preserve and honor objects" as accumulating time with performances whose "only life is in the present."[259] It juxtaposes the logics of preservation with those of disappearance. The question of the value and status of performance as ephemeral has been central to performance and dramatic theory since Plato. It gained particular salience in the 1990s when Peggy Phelan made the oft-cited, oft-maligned claim that:

> Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the
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> circulation of representations: once it does so it becomes something other than
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> performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of
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> reproduction, it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology.[260]

The claim was subsequently vigorously critiqued by Philip Auslander, among others, who noted that "the very concept of live performance presupposes that of reproduction… the live can exist

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258.Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 26.
259.Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 165,146.
260.Phelan, *Unmarked*, 146.

only within an economy of reproduction."[261] More subtle critiques followed, mostly through a deployment of Derrida's critique of the metaphysics of presence, which "used the concept of orality to characterize a metaphysical search for a realm of pre-discursive being and immediate, unmediated encounter."[262] By viewing the Areopagos as a heterotopia, I am interested in moving towards a performance studies praxis that does not seek to valorize the production of presence, but instead seeks to pluralize our understanding of the modalities through which various presences are produced, experienced, maintained, and contested. My encounter with the multiple presences of the rock help to moves my understanding of performance studies away from a fixation on a binary between absence and presence. I seek instead to understand a disparate set of performed processes that produce and are produced by different modalities of "presencing." This is to say that the rock helps me to see the ontology of performance as an unstable, multiple "ontos" ontology.

5th Principle: Isolated But Penetrable

Heterotopias have a "system of opening and closing" that both isolates them and makes them penetrable." There are some heterotopias with compulsory entry (barracks, prison) and others that require rites of religious purification (hamam) or hygienic purification (sauna). There are still other heterotopias that almost anyone can enter, but by entering through the gate that anyone could pass through, one is, paradoxically, subjected to a form of exclusion: a heterotopic visitor to a motel, for example, is a "guest in transit" (an anyone-who-happens-to-pass-by, a no-one-in-

261. Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 54.
262. Shannon Jackson, *Professing Performance: Theatre in the Academy From Philology to Performativity*, Theatre and Performance Theory (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 60.

particular) not an "invited guest." [263]

The opening and closing of the Areopagos is different for different visitors. Unlike most of the surrounding sites of historical significance, it does not require a ticket and has no closing times. Unlike the surrounding cafes, the Areopagos does not require visitors to purchase food or drink. Religious visitors sometimes engage in praying, chanting, fasting, and singing before or shortly after arrival. While they may have walked to the rock through the same paths as other visitors, these ceremonial acts serve to key into the religious significance of the site. It is, arguably, these actions (not the stairs and gates) that allow them to enter the Areopagos as a sacred space.

For others, entering and exiting the Areopagos is an almost accidental function of its proximity to the Acropolis and Agora: it is an afterthought, an added bonus to a visit to the surrounding sites that are of greater importance. Being on the rock as a tourist is a way of being an "uninvited guest" or "guest in transit." This is a large source of the "touristic shame" that Dean MacCannell argues "is not based on being a tourist but on not being tourist enough. . . on a failure to see everything the way it ought to be seen."[264] Almost anyone with the economic means to do so can become a tourist, but "the rhetoric of tourism is full of manifestations of the importance of the authenticity of the relationship between tourists and what they see" that tourists almost inevitably fail to achieve.[265] As they move seemingly freely between the rock and other tourist sites, these visitors become aware of their own inauthenticity. Entering the site as a

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263. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 27.
264. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 10.
265. MacCannell, *The Tourist*, 14.

tourist is, to some degree, always characterized by a failure to belong.

For most visitors already living in the city of Athens, the rock is much more closely associated with everyday life than any sense of escape from the everyday. Although Foucault claims that the confluence of "freely accessible" public space and heterotopia is relatively rare, something akin to a public park is, at least for some visitors, among the "incompatible places" that converge at the Areopagos. In fact, one of the key differences between the Areopagos and surrounding public spaces is the *lack* of policing. Despite the preponderance of illegal activities, I saw the police on the rock only two or three times during my tenure, but I saw them almost daily in the nearby public parks and squares. The rock requires at least 10 minutes of strenuous walking/hiking to get to from the nearest public street (even after making the trip every day for months I was almost always out of breath when I reached the summit). This distance forms a porous border that serves to separate it, however slightly, from the rest of the city. Getting there is enough of an inconvenience that most police officers, for example, don't bother unless they have to, but not so much of an inconvenience that it dissuades those who wish to avoid the police. The act of walking up the hill serves as a sieve through which certain kinds of people (those with more free time, the young and able bodied, the unemployed) are more likely to be there than others (those with more strenuous work schedules, the elderly, parents). Furthermore the strenuous hike can serve as a micro rite of passage that helps to transform those who do make the trip. The means by which various social actors enter the Areopagos function as performance practices through which they can "breakthrough" into performances of alternate spatial

relationships.[266] Once having achieved the summit, the uninvited guest may break through the veil of inauthenticity in which tourists remain shrouded and/or the disciplinary regimes of other, plotted spaces. This is not to say that the visitor thus simultaneously achieves authenticity. Rather he/she may now more freely mobilize the performative resources of "making" and "faking."[267]

6th Principle: Reflection/Refraction

Heterotopias function as a counter to all of the other spaces that remain as either an "illusion that exposes every real space. . . as still more illusory" or as "another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled."[268] In heterotopias different version of the world-as-it-might-be are materialized and/or the world as-it-is becomes experienced as one among man possible worlds. Both of these effects occur at the Areopagos simultaneously when visitors first take in the vista of Athens. Almost any direction one looks from the hill, the views are stunning. The effect of the view is at once serene and unnerving. Many visitors confess to the fantasy of erasing the modern skyline in an attempt to re-imagine the ancient polis. Others block out the "cementopolis" in favor of the natural beauty of the many trees on the hill of the muses and the pnyx. Others still admire how beautiful the city is from a distance in comparison to the experience of it up close. Although there are very few skyscrapers due to the frequency of earthquakes, the streets of Athens are haphazard rather than on a grid like pattern. Within the city this creates major problems with congestion, but from above, at least

266. Hymes, "Breakthrough."
267. Turner, *On the Edge*, 83.
268. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 27.

from the angle afforded by the Areopagos, the chaos on the streets is seldom visible. An

occasional horn honk makes its way up the hill, but in general the city seems quite peaceful. If

there is a concert in a nearby outdoor venue or a major football match on television the resulting

sounds seems to arise from the city itself speaking in one voice. The buildings of Athens are

generally painted white and were almost all built in the same generic style. And yet, especially

with the soft light of sunrise or sunset, when viewed from a distance the subtle differences in

shades of white becomes apparent and it becomes possible to view "cementopolis" as a work of

art and/or a piece of nature.

Fig.5.2.Slant.

In this sense, one goes to the rock not in order to see the rock itself as an object, but to

"participate in a dream of what it is." The rock functions as a "crystallizer" of the city of Athens and, arguably, western culture more broadly.[269] There is, however, as Roland Barthes says of the view from Eiffel Tower, a dialectic in the panorama:

> on the one hand, it is a euphoric vision, for it can slide slowly, lightly the entire length of a continuous image of [the city], and initially no "accident" manages to interrupt this great layer of mineral and vegetal strata, perceived in the distance in the bliss of altitude; but, on the other hand, this very continuity engages the mind in a certain struggle, it seeks to be deciphered. We must find signs within it, a familiarity proceeding from history and from myth.[270]

The panorama offers a vision of the city as harmonious unity but we are predisposed to break the view up into meaningful pieces. The most common way of finding meaning in the landscape is to place oneself into it: "There is our hotel"/"We started out there this morning. Then we walked over there. Then over there. Then over here."/"That's the OTE [power company building] that gives us electricity."/"Our house is way up there next to that round mosque"/"These rolling hills remind me of San Francisco." Even as the grand view offers a unity to the city, it also, however briefly, calls many habitual ways of being into question. When seen in/on the panorama, the activities of daily life become noticeable. They stand out, at least potentially, in their "ontos" ontology. Like many other performances, the panorama thus simultaneously realizes an ideal unity of the surrounding culture (or cultures) even as it calls that "everyday" unity into question.

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269. Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 7.
270. Barthes, *Mythologies*, 10.

In sum, Foucault's principles of heterotopia are 1) There is no universal form of heterotopias, but heterotopias of some sort are a necessary part of any given social structure. 2) The function of any given heterotopia is historically contingent. 3) Heterotopias can juxtapose several real places in the same space. 4) Heterotopias imply alternative relationships to time. 5) Heterotopias have a system of opening and closing that both connects and separates them from other spaces. 6) Heterotopias serve as an ideal form of other spaces and/or as an unreal space that makes more palpable the social construction of other spaces around them. These principles indicate why heterotopias are potentially revelatory sites of study and, I hope, make more clear the connection I am trying to elucidate between heterotopia and performance. Foucault describes what others have called "globalization" in terms of "simultaneity" and "juxtaposition," claiming that we are in an "epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed."[271] The "global" as heterotopia becomes a mode of thinking in which the simultaneous becomes privileged over the linear. Foucault thus sidesteps the tendency for a linear "vocabulary of time" to lead to a tight progression in which 1) causes become effects and 2) individual interior selves are expressed through agencies that act on the world. Moving towards a logic of errant heterotopic spatiality, then, becomes a co-incident way of dis/relocating that agency of linear causal time and "individual consciousness" in the shared material production of space. In the next section I offer a performative description of how I see this logic of errant spatiality playing out in the specificity of the Areopagos. I attempt to untangle some of the "stories so-far" space-time threads that became knotted there one afternoon in early March 2008. My narrative moves back and forth in

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271. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 69.

time and beside itself in space per the dis/re-located agency of queer phenomenology. Accordingly, I hope to offer a sense of where various social actors are coming "from," where they are going "to," what kind of place/space they imagine themselves to be "at." In so doing, I offer a sense of being co-incidently, heterotopically "global" as the concrete kinesthetic experience of multiple social vectors. They also demonstrate that being heterotopically "attuned to those around us" can produce a "fleeting feeling of belonging," a co-incidence that is, incidentally, productive of a queer agency.[272]

Fig.5.3. About to set.

272.Dolan, *Utopia*, 19.

March Evening in Question

Early evening strolling, most commonly called "making a volta," is among the most normative performances for middle class Greek life, and it is hard to imagine these strollers as being "othered" in any fundamental sense. Making a "volta," akin to what other cultures might call "taking an evening constitutional," generally involves walking back and forth along a prescribed linear path (in seaside cities or villages usually from one end of the town's water front to the other). Groups of teenagers, married couples, pairs of old women stroll up and down from just before sundown until an hour or so past. Making a volta is a transition between the work-defined daytime hours and nightlife sociality. Making a volta also often involves stopping for a rest, a snack, or a coffee but such stopping is always according to one's whim and fancy: too rigid time tables are frowned upon. Chairs in cafes and restaurants along the volta route generally face outward from the tables toward the parade of passing bodies, rather than across the table towards one's seated companions. Making a volta is about seeing and being seen, but the nature of the "looking" and "posing" is much more casual than it would be at a night club or a bar later in the evening. One must put in an appearance, but not appear to be trying too hard. Those in the middle of a volta are second only to package tourists on a tight schedule in the order of those least likely to be willing to participate in my study. The volta, as a central component of the rhythms of daily life, is not a time for meeting strangers. When lived as a station in volta making, the Areopagos is a place to be with others, but not too intensely. The hill is an everyday way station between an afternoon of working and/or napping and an evening of reverie.

On a pleasant Sunday in late March I came to the rock around 5 p.m., just as the stream

of volta makers began to make their way around its rim. The daisies that suddenly sprouted a few weeks before along the hillside were much more likely to receive comment than the 60 or so missionaries with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints who have gathered below to say goodbye to those in their ranks who have completed their two-year mission.

I have met many of these missionaries before on the rock. In fact, it is among the very first places that each of them visited upon arrival in Greece. For them, this is not just one place in a series of potential stops on an evening stroll. It is a sacred site of great spiritual and personal significance. The church performs an initiation ritual there in which each new missionary reads a section of the 17th chapter of Acts in Greek (a language that they have each spent about six weeks studying with varying degrees of success). The process simultaneously bonds them as a group, gives them practice in the language, models the kind of evangelism that they will spend the next two years practicing. In the passage, the Apostle Paul finds the city of Athens to be "wholly given to idolatry" and begins to dispute with all he meets in both the "synagogue" and the "market place," preaching about "Jesus and the resurrection."[273] The Stoic and Epicurean philosophers bring Paul to the Areopagos, "for thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean."[274] Such engagement with the strange and new is their main activity: "all the Athenians and strangers that were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing."

On their first or second day in the country, after six weeks of training, with two years of

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273. All scripture references in this section are from the Official Scriptures of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Act 17:16-32 (http://scriptures.lds.org/acts/17)
274. Acts 17:19

street walking evangelism ahead of them, these young missionaries come to the rock that was once the place for "Athenians and strangers" to tell and hear "the new." They stand in a circle in well-pressed dark pants, white shirts, and ties. Their leader distributes photocopies of the text in Greek and each takes a verse in succession with trembling stuttering voices: "Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill, and said, 'Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious,'" reads a cracked-voice young Elder from Sweden.[275] "For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you," reads a jet-lagged Nevadan.[276] The young man next to him struggles with plosives and gutturals as he declares, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."[277] These clean cut young men have given up two years in the prime of their lives to make sure that as many people as possible know that God is not "worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."[278] They have come to a country to which none of them have genetic or experiential ties because God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."[279]

The first time that I am there for the ritual, they invite me to read with them and I, more nervous about content than delivery, echo Paul's insistence "that they should seek the Lord, if

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275. Acts 17:22
276. Acts 17:23
277. Acts 17:24
278. Acts 17:25
279. Acts 17:27

haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us."[280] This

will hopefully give them comfort in the lonely days of missionary work ahead. The trembling

voice next to me reminds us that it is important to take seriously the cultural context of others:

"for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of *your own poets* have said,

for we are also his offspring."[281] This globalized religion comes, however, at the cost of local

material expressions, "for as much then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think

that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."[282] Indeed

the call to universality is a call to choose sides, "and the times of this ignorance God winked at;

but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in which

he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath

given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."[283]

My sticking point with the sermon is the claim to universality. For the "too superstitious

Athenians and strangers" in the text, however, the issue is much more "the resurrection of the

dead." Some of them mock it, others want to hear more. Having said his piece, Paul departs

"from among them." This is, perhaps, the most important point for the young missionaries. The

results are not in their hands, but in God's. Many people will mock them—in some cases

violently—but they must always remember that the Atheneans and strangers mocked Paul too,

"howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among them was Dionysus the Areopagite,

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280. Acts 17:28
281. Acts 17: 28 emphasis added
282. Acts 17:29
283. Acts 17:30

and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."[284]

I have grown quite friendly with many of these missionaries. Even when they don't come up to the rock we run into each other, on the winding streets of Athens, on the subway. What mutual affection we found was undoubtedly shaped by overlapping occupational concerns: I participated in their initiation ritual, was a child of missionaries for a different sect, and share knowledge of some scripture, but perhaps most importantly I am, as they are, in a "line of work" that requires me to talk to strangers. Missionaries have long served as the precursors to and doubles of ethnographers. They are drawn to me as I am to them because we are willing to talk when so many other people are not. I'm happy to help them with their Greek. They seem intrigued by my theories about Foucaultian disciplinarity and the ways in which I see the primary work of missionaries to be not so much converting others as (re)producing the missionaries themselves as good subjects to the Church. I tell them I can think of no better example of disciplinarity than spending two years almost completely isolated from friends and family back home (45 minutes a week for e-mailing, phone calls only on Christmas and Mother's Day) repeating the core tenets of their faith to hostile listeners in a foreign tongue under the gaze of Church officials and fellow missionaries. They tell me that changing partners once every few months at the discretion of Church leaders serves to ensure that experienced and less experienced missionaries work together. I agree, but point out that it also keeps their primary bonding with the Church as a whole rather than with any one individual. Not only do they entertain this theory, many of them genuinely seem to agree with it. True to a Foucaultian understanding of productive

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284. Acts 17:34

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discursive power, revealing this "repressed" truth to them does not lead them suddenly to see the error in their relationship to the Church. On the contrary it seems to reinforce it. Even some of the older Church members who sometimes serve as their grandparently chaperones tell me they are "impressed" with my "wisdom." It seems that what I, the "Athenian and stranger" ever in search of the "new," call "productive discursive power," is not that different from what they call the "leading of the Holy Spirit." "I don't always (or even often) agree with you," I told a group of guys one day, "but I couldn't ask for better people to study: ya'll are so well organized!" I meant it as a joke and, much to my pleasure, they seemed to get it.

On the March evening in question, virtually every LDS missionary in Athens has come to the Areopagos to send off those among them who have completed their mission. A photographer from a local paper is taking pictures to commemorate. Recent developments with a polygamist sect in Texas have been giving the Mormons bad press that they are trying to combat through public relations. They have already given interviews to the paper. The evening ritual was suggested as a likely spot for a flattering photograph. A few of the parents of the missionaries have joined the group, but I am the only person under the age of 45 in the circle without an official LDS name tag. My clothes are wrinkled and my face is unshaven. I don't know the words to almost any of the hymns and sometimes stand silently as everyone around me sings. Yet somehow I am sure that to the photographer I am indistinguishable from the rest of the group.

Fig.5.4. Besides.

After the hymns are finished and the leader of the Greek LDS church has spoken, the departing missionaries offer their "testimonies." As a teacher of performance I have seldom seen the kind of absolute commitment that these young men and women share "in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen." Though at times their voices tremble and they still stumble over a word here and there, the difference between these performances and those of the first scripture reading ritual are breathtaking. With the weight of their years of street walking evangelism behind them and the momentous occasion of saying farewell to the community on which they have depended for so long in front of them, they give flesh, as if for the first time, to abstract concepts— "agape" (love) "pisti" (faith) "aderfes i aderfe" (brothers and sisters).

Meanwhile, the smell of burning hash is making its way up the hill. Some self-identified "hippies," whose music has become a regular afternoon occurrence over the past few months, are performing a ritual of their own. They, too, have become touchstones for me over the past few months. Their impromptu jam sessions are usually shaped by two or more guitars and a lyre. A combination of bongo drums, plastic bottles, jangling keys, and other found objects provide

percussion. The sessions last between two and four hours with between two and fifteen participants. Music is drawn from a collection of Greek and English pop, rock, reggae, and jazz, with an occasional improvised song thrown into the mix. I generally sing along when I know the words and hum along when I don't. I try to add percussion just loud enough to be a participant but not so loud as to let my general lack of rhythm show. I let the frequently circulated joints pass me by (more out of deference for my addiction to the tobacco with which the hash is almost always rolled than anything else). Many of the participants are around the same age as the missionaries above, but there are also a few younger teens and older students.

My favorite thing to do during these sessions is to write in my blue journal. A great number of the thoughts contained in this document were first formulated as the music from the jam sessions surrounded me. Besides the fact that music gives me focus, my writing seems to be one among many forms of expression. Kosta's fire sticks. Natalia's dancing. My pen and paper. We sit next to each other talking occasionally between songs—sometimes someone will grab my notebook to see what is inside, or write a scribble of their own. My digital recorder gets used less to document interviews than it does to test out new sounds. Over the month of February this group gave rise to a song called "Night is Falling" (Nyxta Peftei). The song began with sections of a poem by Anastasia's friend and teacher originally composed in Spanish translated into Greek by way of English. Panos added some guitar licks. Johnny, the Greek-American street musician sang lead. There is a part during the refrain, "Night is Falling. Night is Falling," when I get to harmonize and sing "ligo, ligo, ligo, ligo" (that means, roughly, "little by little, little by little, little") in a key that, for some reason, I usually hit just about right (a rarity for me). On the day

the song first found life, we sang for almost two hours straight. The melancholy rock/blues number begins with an observation about the changing demographics of the city: "Walking in Athens. Only foreigners do I see." The falling of night that is coming little by little, however, is not a sign of cold, danger, or dreariness, but of the possibility that something interesting might happen. After all, when weekend metro service in Athens was extended to 2am on weekend nights, most night-amorous young Athenians were excited because the new service would let them get *to* the clubs at a more respectable hour; waiting for service to begin again at 5:30 am before returning home was seldom a problem.

On the March afternoon in question, the jam band has a posse of fifteen or so. As the Mormon service moves on, the band amps up its volume. By the time they reach "Wild thing, da da da dum, you make my heart sing," almost all of them are joining in as loudly as they can in what appears to be a deliberate effort to disrupt the service above. "Wild thing, da da da dum, I think you move me." The next song on their improvised set list is Depeche Mode's "Your Own Personal Jesus." It is one of Thanos' favorite songs. His deep Johnny Cash/Nick Cave voice booms up the hillside, "someone to hear your prayer, someone who cares" in a not-so subtle attempt to mock the white shirt and dark tie crowd on the slope above them. Many of the LDS missionaries seem oblivious, a few seem to have noticed but be pretending not to notice.

Fig.5.5. Lyre.

The three groups discussed so far, the "volta" makers, the LDS worshipers and the jam band

form the main events of the evening, but they are not alone. There are large groups of tourists,

snapping pictures from the top of the hill. Couples seeking more secluded spots to watch the

sunset. Madvi, a Pakistani construction worker whose injured leg has given him paid time off

work that he plans to spend drinking as much bourbon as possible, is looking for me. He is

hopeful that I might share a swig of his half empty bottle. He is pleasant enough when relatively

sober, but at this stage of the game he repeats himself a lot and can sometimes get violently upset

when I don't join in the reverie as fully as he would like. Kahlil, an 18-year-old Afghani migrant

whom I met during his first few days in Athens, is looking for me as well. He had some broken

English at the time, but most of our communication was through pictures drawn in my journal. He now has enough Greek to tell me some good news. He is visibly excited. This is the first good news he has been able to share with me in weeks. The good news? He has begun stealing electronic goods for the mafia in exchange for a place to sleep and 20 Euros a day. Mahmood, who is from Palestine by way of Syria, by way of Turkey and on his way to northern Europe but likes to hide behind his massive head of curly locks and pretend to be from Brazil, asks me about the recent change in extradition laws in Norway. Norway has officially stopped sending asylum seekers back to Greece due to horrid human rights conditions, but Mahmood doesn't want to make the trip until he has heard first-hand from people who have been allowed to stay. He left his family in Lebanon due to a set of conflicts the details of which he would rather I not share with you. Without the stability and support of his family, he was forced to flee the country: from Lebanon to Syria to Turkey, to Greece. At each border crossing there were others who left with him but did not survive the ordeal. Some starved, some were murdered, others drowned at sea. It took him two tries to get to Greece from Turkey. He saved up money to pay the mafia to carry him via boat. The boat "stretched from here to that tree [a distance of only about 12 feet] and they put 30 of us in there. It was too many." The boat sank not far from the Turkish shore. He was put in jail as an "illegal" in Turkey. When he was released, his brother wired him money to pay for another attempt. This time the boat sank at almost the exact halfway point between Greek and Turkish territory. He could swim (others around him were not so lucky) but the water was freezing. Above him, he could hear helicopters; to either side he saw Greek and Turkish boats. They went back and forth for many hours deliberating about what to do with the people floating

in freezing cold "neutral" water. "As far away as we are from that hill," he says, gesturing towards the church of St. Marina. Eventually, the Greeks agreed to take them. When he arrived on Greek soil, he said, he literally bent down and kissed the ground. Now, he is desperately hoping to leave for Norway, or Sweden, or Slovenia, or the US, or almost any place but this one. In the meantime, he comes to the rock to sit and think, to rest after work, to be away from his cramped apartment. I see him almost daily. We like to "shoot the shit," a phrase I taught him when I told him the story of the shit-joy Greek-Arabic pun.

While looking for me on the March afternoon in question, he met up with a former U.S. Navy midshipwoman who was looking to score some hash and thought he looked like the sort to know. He does not do drugs himself, but he had met Kostas from the jam band and was pretty sure he might have a little something. As the midshipwoman and her boyfriend moved closer to the music in search of drugs, the band moves into an Al Green number: "give me a ticket for an aeroplane" as the LDS missionaries hug good-bye above them; "I ain't got time for a fast train," as Kahlil walks back to his new mafia supplied dorm room; "lonely days are gone," as I tell Mahmood that the route to Norway is not as secure as I had thought; "I'm going home," as the volta makers plan their next cafe stop; "my baby she wrote me a letter," as the midshipwoman says "oh my God," her commanders played this song over her ship's intercom to tell them that their last tour in the Persian Gulf was coming to an end. This. Exact. Song. What are the odds?

On that March afternoon/evening a large number of the threads I had been following for my months on the rock became entangled in a seemingly impossible but nonetheless real coincidental convergence. This heterotopic co-incidence is both unstable and intractably

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material. It thus calls for a kind magical thinking and a real-and-imaginary way of being "beside ourselves."

I, in being there then and in writing now, am pushed and pulled to the impossible but nonetheless real space of being between diverse trajectories which form pun/prisms around song lyrics. As floating pieces of discourse belonging to none-and-all of us, the lyrics offer multiple points of attachment that mark the co-incidental actors as simultaneously joined and not joined. We are there, then, together, in the material act of hearing and singing the lyrics, but these multiple and multiplying pieces of heterotopic discourse do not mean the same thing to each of us. They are fragments that are "completed" only in the space-time momentary co-incidental joining. "Your own personal Jesus," is a site of genuine faith and an oppositional ironic pull. Beyond the direct irony, when read heterotopically they also call into question the idea of "ownership"—whose Jesus is it if "I" have to tell "you" that "he"is yours? and the "personal"— when expressed in such a shared space, what does it mean to say something is "personal"? This chain of joining, dispersing social vectors reaches an apex (for me at least) the case of "going home." In the heterotopic context of the Areopagos, the belonging evoked by "home" draws on an impossibly diverse set of attachments that are experienced as at once belonging and not belonging to each other. As volta makers, tourists, "hippies," asylum seekers, missionaries, ethnographers and more belong to the humble, "homely" signifier as a material utterance, even as they call into question its ability to signify any one kind of belonging in particular.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Fig.6.1. Performer.

Thesis

The Greek word for dissertation is "diatrivi" from which we draw the English word "diatribe." In other educational systems what I am writing would be called a "thesis, from the Greek word "thesi" meaning "place." Although I advance many arguments in this document, my encounter with the Areopagos did not yield solid enough ground to serve as a foundational "soap

box" for a diatribe. Although it is about a locatable site in the center of Athens, the kind of

"place" that the Areopagos provides for my work is not a stable one. Mahmood, the curly haired

Palestinian/faux Brazilian from the last chapter, understood that I needed to write this document

in order to get a job, but he was always frustrated when I described all of the different things I

was thinking about on any given day: "A book should have a point," Mahmood said to me once,

"you want to write about everything!" He was my most common companion during my last few

months on the rock, the person whom I most grew to consider, in all the complex implications of

the term, my friend. I consider him as such less because of the ways in which he helps to

"ground" or "locate" me as because of the ways in which he keeps me off balance, on my toes.

He loves to calls me repeatedly while I am interviewing other people only to hang up just as I

reach for my phone and then laugh at me from the other side of the rock. No matter how many

times he does this, for some reason, I always fall for it. Mahmood and I are still in touch. More

that once he has called me from across the globe to ask advice, to make fun of me, to "shoot the

shit." On at least two occasions his phone calls physically interrupted me while I was typing

some of these pages, displacing the act of writing as he had once displaced the act of

interviewing.

I evoke Mahmood as I move towards a conclusion of the "stories so-far" I encountered at the

Areopagos in order to make a very simple point: while writing a dissertation is, in some sense,

about offering a "diatribe" of arguments and about finding my "thesis" in the world, the research

encounter I have had with the Areopagos has been defined by the ways in which it helped to

"dislocate" me. The "belonging" that I found with Mahmood and others whom I met on the rock

is less defined by any essential identity or securely bounded "safe" place than by a mutual feeling of being "undone." The term co-incidence which I have used to frame my study, comes from the Latin for "co" meaning together and "incide" meaning to "cut, remove, or separate."[285] Mahmood, ever the "cut up," consistently reminded/reminds me that even (especially?) when concluding the monumental task of dissertating, I ought not to take myself too seriously. Accordingly, before I move on to offer some more formal words of conclusion and some suggestions of future directions for research, I want to offer a few more examples of encounters on the rock that similarly dislocate me.

Co-incident 1: Conned

I went to the Areopagos in order that I might know it, or know something about how the question of "globalization" appears from it. I was hoping that I might find a way to ethnographically "situate" knowledge claims about the "global" in its concrete particularities. Too nervous/embarrassed to start conversations, I had intended to spend my first few days watching people on the rock: to sit back and make observations, not to put too much pressure on myself. Like a good "flaneur" I wanted to open myself up to chance. I didn't want to force anything. I couldn't believe my luck when, not a half hour after I got to the rock, a charming Italian man named Francisco approached me and asked me what I was writing about. Someone had approached *me*! Almost right away! This would be easier than I thought!

He was full of stories about a life lived alternating between Italy, Greece, and Egypt. I wrote them all down diligently, paying particular attention to how his stories indicated a "global"

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285. Incide. Dictionary.com. *Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary.* MICRA, Inc. http:/ /dictionary.reference.com/browse/incide (accessed: April 18, 2009)

identity. He was just the kind of chatty stranger I had hoped to meet. I had to work to tune out the background (in particular Timo, whom I had not yet met, but whose constant pleading for someone to let him take a picture grew annoying very quickly). The conversation wound around differences between life in Greece and Italy. We agreed that it was best to be a person who belonged in more than one place. We agreed that this made thing more interesting. After about twenty minutes he asked me if I wanted to go with him to get an ouzo. I wanted very much to go, I told him, but I had work to do, "I need to study the diversity of people on this rock, not just one person. That's my research question." Francisco was very insistent and, had I not had the research imperative to stay, I would most certainly have gone with him. As it was, he left, visibly disappointed.

That first day of "fishing" for stories did not yield any more solid interviews and I wrote in my journal that night that I wished I had gone with him. My sense of regret grew over time. It would be weeks before I found someone as eager to talk as Francisco. I spent hours pouring over my notes from our conversation during those weeks. His words were some of the only evidence that I had actually been at the rock talking to people, that I had "gone" there to "know" there. I clung to them with the sense that my fate as an academic depended on being able to make something out of them.

Then, a few weeks later, I saw Francisco at the rock again. I called out his name loudly and approached him with great gusto. He seemed surprised to see me and didn't greet me with as much enthusiasm as I had hoped. He left shortly after a brief conversation with me. Although I later had the story confirmed by several of his victims, it was Timo who first filled me in:

Francisco was a con artist. He preyed on single male travelers, meeting them in touristic places and playing the role of the friendly charismatic stranger from a foreign land. After telling people what it seemed they wanted to hear for twenty minutes or so, he asked them to grab a drink with him at a bar. Had I gone with him he would have taken me to this "great place for cheap ouzo." After we had downed a round of three Euro ouzos at a somewhat seedy bar, two attractive women would have joined us. Francisco would have bought a round of drinks and then suggested that I do the same. I would likely have followed along. The women would have ordered champagne. Then Francisco and the women would come up with a reason to leave. I would then be met by a pair of large bouncers who, upon discovering that I didn't have enough on me to pay the 75 Euro per drink charge for the women's champagne, would have walked me to the nearest ATM while I made a withdrawal.

The con, like Timo's picture game and countless other ways of getting tourists to part with cash, traffics in shame. It creates a circuit of recognition and then cuts it short. It leaves the victim shamed at having been conned and shamed at having been at such a seedy place in the middle of the day. It banks on this shame to prohibit the victim from seeking help. After Timo told me what Francisco had been up to, he pointed out that the camera Francisco wore around his neck was an old plastic 35mm that never had any film in it. "Look, look inside! No film." I, the ethnographer eager for a story, had missed this detail. I reacted to Timo's revelation in a detached, some might say "academic," way. I pretended as though I had only heard about the con happening to other people. I was too ashamed to tell him how close I had been to being conned myself.

Fig.6.2. Signal.[286]

Co-incident 2: Earthquake

The power has been out at the station that provides my apartment with internet access.

Despite the risk of theft, I have brought my laptop with me in hopes of catching a Wi-Fi signal. I

am desperate to hear news of a contested primary between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton

back in the US. Obama, branded as "hope" was then for me, as for many others, in his own way a

site of unprepossessing potentiality. I was drawn to him because he could be so many different

things at once. He was still a not-yet-actualized potential, a kernel. Getting a Wi-Fi signal proved

harder than I thought but I was determined. While I sat on the rock trying to get a signal, there

was an earthquake in Athens. It was a minor quake by Greek standards: nobody was hurt and

damage was relatively insignificant. Still it was a severe enough quake that had my head not

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286. Photo by Gianis Birilis used by permission.

been so wrapped up in my laptop, so determined to get news about Obama, I would have felt the quake. As it happened, although the ground beneath me was literally shaking, I did not feel a thing. I found out about the earthquake ten minutes after it happened when I received e-mail from a friend in New York who had read about it from a news story sent to the UPI by the Athenian earthquake research center that was less than 100 ft. away from me at the time.

Fig.6.3 Earthquake research center for Athens is on the right.

Re-situated

The incident in which I was conned might well serve as a cautionary tale about the perils of ethnographic epistemology, about how much ethnographers depend on unreliable sources, about the hermeneutic problems of knowing others and the importance of embedding oneself deeply in the field in order to avoid being made the fool. The incident in which I missed the earthquake might well serve as a cautionary tale of space being "annihilated by time" through the "speed-up

of global interconnections and the instantaneity of the screen."[287] It might be used to tell the story of abstract global mediascapes encroaching on "local" contexts, and of my virtual "presence" in the screen as overriding my material "presence" on the rock.

Both events tell stories of my own failure-as-knower. Both are moments of slipping. If my time at the Areopagos has taught me anything, it is to read these moments of failure as full of potentiality. I have learned to see such accidents as heterotopic co-incidental "stages" in the double sense that Munoz proposes. They are potentially shame-inducing, accidents that trip me up and leave me beside myself. They are "hiccups," awkward "stages" that *should* be passed through as quickly as possible if I am to maintain my composure. Once "dwelt" upon, however these "hiccups" can become stages: queer modes of desiring, knowing, and co-inciding. They are accidents that knock me off balance and, to the extent that I do not write them out of the way and, on the contrary, reset my sights on them as an immanent potentiality, they set the stage for the openness of an aleatory aesthetics.

Spermologos

While Paul was waiting. . . in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So, he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign

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287. Massey, *For Space*, 90.

Gods."[288]

The Greek word translated a "babbler" above is "spermologos," defined by the OED as "an instance of babbling or idle talk." Modern usage of spermologos in Greece most commonly connotes "gossip," and is almost invariably applied to women.[289] In my experience, the sexist connections between femininity and inconsequential speech, centuries in the making, does not appear to be lost on anyone. A more literal translation of the epithet is "seed picker"—" esp. of the crow that picks up grain in field." The crow scavenges and does not dine on anything of substance but rather pecks here and there without much thought for how the pieces might fit together into anything like a meal. It eats, one might say in effort to invert the gender stereotype, like a bachelor. Dining not on a complete meal but on bits and pieces of the leftover simultaneity of "pieces of meal so-far," the spermologos is, in some sense, a dilettante, one who skims surfaces of many texts, a jack-of-all- trades-master-of-none, a sophist of sorts. Ever the optimist, I prefer to think of spermology as a version of interdisciplinarity, as a form of "bricolage" or "making do" in deCerteau's sense of the terms.[290]

It is difficult to know which side of the Stoic/Epicurean divide the author of Acts means us to believe hurled the insult. On the one hand, it is easy to see that the hedonism of the Epicurians would recoil at the sight of "one lounging about the market place and picking up a substance by whatever may chance to fall from the loads of merchandise; hence, beggarly, abject, vile, (a

288. Acts 17:16-18 All scripture in this chapter are from the New International Version of the New Testament, (the version of scripture that I grew up reading).
289. The Oxford English Dictionary Online
290. Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.

parasite)."[291] The guttersipery of the spermologos is surely not compatible with an Epicurian life "devoted to the pursuit of pleasure; hence, luxurious, sensual, gluttonous." On the other hand, the insult may well have originated with the Stoics who likely would have no place for one "getting a living by flattery and buffoonery: an empty talker, babbler." Such sleight-of-hand shallowness would certainly not be compatible with the life of a Stoic as "one who practices repression of emotion, indifference to pleasure or pain, and patient endurance." Though the spermologos would seem to offer something to each, he or she can please neither the Stoic policemen who would evacuate the sensual from signification, nor the Epicurian hedonistic professors of desire.

The seed picker is one who speaks in what Roland Barthes has called "the neutral": "that which outplays the paradigm. . . baffles the paradigm."[292] The Barthesean neutral is not passive, middling, grey, noncommittal or wishy-washy. It is not a "neither-nor" criticism that divides the universe in two and then claims to have transcended the binary.[293] The neutral that Barthes calls for is not a transcendent term, but a third term to the binary (in this case Stoicism/Epicurianism) that depends on and simultaneously disrupts it. Paul, the babbler, poses as the non-Stoic, non-Epicurian. The seed-picker, I want to suggest, is a "poet-thinker of the event," one who thinks space-time, one who embraces contradictions as a potential source of queer-world making: an ethics—to be sure—but one with a distinctly queer sense of one-size-can-never-fit-all justice.[294]

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291. Thayer and Smith, "Greek Lexicon Entry for Spermologos," *The New Testament Greek Lexicon*, http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=4691 (accessed April 5, 2007).

292. Roland Barthes, *The Neutral: Lecture Course At the Collège De France (1977-1978).,* trans. Thomas Celic and Eric Marty, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 6.

293. Barthes, *Mythologies*, 83.

294. Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 2.

It believes that, if one is willing to do the work of piecing them together, perhaps the most provocative and useful truths are hidden where one might least expect to find them: on the slippery surface of things.

"The ancient Greeks did not know the main thing about themselves," Bakhtin quips in one of his later essays, "that they were *ancient* Greeks, and they never called themselves that." In his description of what he calls "creative understanding," he urges those who would want to know and be known by "others" not to give up their own "outsideness"—not to try to traverse the space between self and other in hopes of extracting or discovering a more genuine truth, but, rather, to acknowledge the difference and to make, the space of difference itself a source of nourishment, the substance on which one might graze.[295] Rather than seeing the space between self and other as a lack, Bakhtin sees it as a necessity for the creative act: "in order to understand, it is immensely important for the person who understands to be *located outside* of the object of his or her creative understanding."[296]As Yve-Alain Bois notes he has learned from Barthes, "the real flavor is in the grain, on the surface of things."[297] From the perspective of the spermologos, picking the accidental "just so" seeds that "just so happen" to be left on the surface are often more productive than trying to plumb the depths.

Idols

I may converge with St. Paul when he is framed as a "spermologos,"seed-picker, babbler, but he and I part ways on our understandings of materiality. Paul's point of contact with his

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295.Michael Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays.,* trans. Michael and Emerson Holquist, Caryl (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 8.Emphasis original.
296. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres*, 7.
297. Yve-Alain Bois, "Writer, Artisan, Narrator," *October* 26(1983), 28.

pagan interlocutors is an altar he "happened" across while strolling though the marketplace that is inscribed "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD."[298] The "superstitious" Greeks had a God for everything. This statue was, in Paul's interpretation, a catchall to cover anything that they might have missed. Paul seizes on this monument as an opportunity to express his own god *as* the (as yet) unknown. He claims universality for his god by staging a global "whole earth" ontology that is disarticulated from the material: "the Lord of heaven. . . does not live in temples made by hand."[299] In the past God has looked past the "ignorance" of idolatry—worshiping the material— but the day is coming when the God beyond the material will "judge the world with justice."[300] Paul thus moves from heterotopic material multiplicity to the immateriality of a global utopia. My own "poetics of the worldwide" tries to stay closer to the ground of multiple, everyday "ontos." It tries to move towards what Massey has called a "politics of specificity" noting that "the application of equal, abstract rules, in a world of endless specificity, not to mention gross inequality, is not in fact 'fair.'"[301]

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298. Acts 17:25
299. Acts 17:24
300. Acts 17:31
301. Massey, *For Space*, 103.

Fig.6.4. Collage

Fragments

For centuries after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Athens remained well known for its schools of pagan philosophy. Students would come from all over the world to study with renowned teachers who charged fees for the lessons and turned their homes, many of which were on the Areopagos, into schools. Eunaplus describes the lavish home-school of sophist Julian of Cappadocia noting that Julian had "erected statutes of the pupils he most admired."[302] When, in the year 529, Byzantine Emperor Justinian issued his decree forbidding pagan philosophy in Athens, archeologist John Camp notes that:

> In at least once instance we may be able to see Christians at work as a result of this
> decree. In one of the large houses on the Areopagos, probably used as a private
> philosophical school, several sculptures were mutilated and a fine mosaic floor was torn

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302. Eunapius cited in Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 228..

up and replaced with marble slabs. Other sculptures were thrown down two wells in the house. The final occupants were apparently Christians, who furnished the house with lamps decorated with crosses and a sigma table used for reenactments of the last supper.[303]

As I move towards completing this "milestone" in my career, I am enamored of an idea that emerges through joining these two archeological incidents. 1) My trying to find a "thesis" is, in some sense, trying to find a place amid a long "line" of students. The dissertation-as-form carries something of the myth of monumentality about it, something of the impossible desire to "impress" or etch—another meaning, by the way, of "incide"— oneself into the memory of one's committee with an illusory degree of permanence.

Fig.6.5.Line of profiles.

2) The emergent anxiety surrounding dissertation writing as monument is ameliorated by the idea that some of those fragments thrown down the well might have been the statues that a pagan philosopher/dissertation advisor had commissioned of his students. It may sound perverse to find

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303.Camp, *Archaeology of Athens*, 238.

hope in this image of shattering, but I prefer to think of my work in the context of that well, as one among many fragments that compose not a totality but an "amalgam of powerful part-objects."[304] Understanding the mythic/monumental past in my encounter with the Areopagos helps me to understand it through what Page duBois calls the "aesthetic of the fragment."[305] That is to say that treating the accidental combination of fragments in the well as "on purpose" helps me to see the potentially embarrassing "just a stage-ness" of the dissertation's many hiccups as a "stage" from which to know and be known differently.[306]

Fig.6.6. Fragments down the well.

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304. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 150.
305. Page DuBois, *Sappho is Burning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 31.
306. Muñoz, "Stages," 9.

3) The well also returns me to Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. A well, especially one that has been filled in over time with the fragments of history is a space in between the passion filled space of the Furies in the caves *below* the Areopagos and the abstract one-size-fits all justice of the Apollonian space *above* it. In Arendt's framework, throwing the monuments of "action" making philosophers down into the depths of the "labor" of life sustaining well creates a space between home "oikos" and the public "polis."[307] I imagine these fragments that have been, through the accidents of history, detained as "material witnesses." They are not the objects of inquiry themselves, but periperformative fragments that, precisely *as* fragments, point towards a queer sense of one-size-never-fits-all knowing and being known.

The "just so" fragments in the well also point me to Elaine Scarry's pun/prism meditation on the relationship between the aesthetics and ethics. Scarry gets "hung up" on the odd co-incidence that a single world, "fairness," is used both to refer to "loveliness of countenance" and to "the ethical requirement for 'being fair,' 'playing fair' and 'fair distribution.'"[308] What counts as beautiful, her pun/prism posits is always to some degree a measure of what counts as just. I also find myself extending Scarry's pun/prism of "fairness" to include the heterotopia of "the fair."[309] I am taken me to the time-space of the fair: that magical seasonal gathering which brings together unequal things and treats them as equal, in which we celebrate the largest of things that are supposed to be small and the smallest of things that are supposed to be large, in which the ugly is

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307. Arendt
308. Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 91.
309. DuBois, *Sappho is Burning*, 31.

treated as beautiful, in which everyday performativity becomes a site of heightened performance.

In carving his iconic statue of David, Michelangelo is said to have used the aesthetic process of "disegno" and assume that the form of "David" was already there in the marble and that it was his job as artist to remove the excess pieces of marble.[310] In this view of aesthetic sense of "fairness," making the beautiful means removing the everyday. This points to a tension between the equally but differently problematic ideas of the "aesthetic" and the "excessive." The aesthetic component of life is that which in some ways goes beyond instrumentality. The aesthetic is that which is in some way culturally defined as meaningful beyond its content (the difference between "eating" and "dining," "mating" and "making love"). The excessive component of human life also goes beyond instrumentality but is culturally defined as waste, or dirt in Mary Douglas/William James's sense of "matter out of place."[311] An aesthetic of the fragment re-frames the questions of beauty and justice as questions that must always be asked from the "amalgamation of partial part objects" of heterotopia rather than from abstract "timeless" and "space-less" ideals of utopia.[312] To think the question of a "poetics of the worldwide" is to think not from the ordered world of the museum, or the abstract ordering space of many renderings of "globalization" but, as I have attempted to do in these pages, from the messy, excessive and always partial world of "the fair."

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310. "Michelangelo's David" http://www.spiritus-temporis.com/michelangelo%27s-david/ (Accessed April 15, 2009). Ironically, Michelangelo did not "take away" enough: the statue of David has a foreskin, and if there is one thing we can say with certainty about what the historical Jewish king, it is that he would have been circumcised.
311. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger; an Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 165.
312. Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 150.

Fig.6.7. Over the point classic.

While this "fair" heterotopia is particularly strongly felt at the Areopagos, it is important to note that simultaneous heterogeneity is a feature of all space-time intersections. Thinking performance in this framework means moving away from a chronocentric conception of performance based on repetition in time and towards a "space-time" or "chronotopic" conception of performance that emphasizes the importance of "simultaneous heterogeneity" in creating the "possibility of surprise" in performance events.[313] I have offered here not a linear chronological model of contextualization (performance x builds on/ quotes/ contest/ repeats/ is set up by performance y which builds on/ quotes/ repeats/ contest/ is set up by performance z), but a co-incident space-time model of simultaneous competing, overlapping, contested and contesting performances. My hope is that I have rendered what Marvin Carlson calls the "consciousness of doubleness" in performance as not one of an original and a copy placed before and after each other in time (a logic of "then"), but of multiplicities "stories so-far" fragments thrown together other in space (a logic of "meanwhile").[314]

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313. Massey, *For Space*, 105.
314. Carlson, *Performance: a Critical Introduction*, 80.

To think globally as an "ontos" poetics of the worldwide, I have argued, is to think "beside ourselves," to allow ourselves to be dis/replaced, and to re-imagine agency as something that is not located within some universal sense of humanity. The queer ethnographic methods I have used in this project help to re-frame ethnographic research so that it is not so much a process of knowing or gaining mastery of the people and places to which one has gone but a process of being "made unknown by them."[315] I have attempted to re-imagine ethnography as a queer process of getting lost rather than as process of finding out. In the process, I have also tried to move towards a spatial sense of material discourse that attempts not to collapse into a humanist/ performer-centered sense of agency. To be "made unknown" is to allow the material world to speak back in ways that disarticulate and re-place subjectivity, identity, and agency.

Thinking "fairly" in an age of globality must not presuming that "the fair" is a set of abstract rules applied in the same way in all places. "Global" rules evenly applied regardless of the heterogeneity of context (especially when done on a "global scale") are, in fact, profoundly "unfair." To think "fairly" global means to think in "more or less" approximations: to imagine an "ontos" poetics of the worldwide. Throughout this dissertation I have attempted to think from the intersections of heterogeneity that comprise the de-centering "heterotopia" of the Areopagos. All spaces are, as Massey notes, to some degree heterotopic. Explicit heterotopias such as the Areopagos offer fruitful places from which to imagine modes of sociality/belonging that are not yet here/now. They help elucidate the traces of what Agamben has called "coming communities,"

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315. Della Pollock, "Marking New Directions in Performance Ethnography," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26(2006), 328.

by tuning us to everyday ways in which alternate modes of social articulation are already in process. My hope is that these pages speak from and towards a concrete, but necessarily complex, sense of fairness. This poetics of imperfect specificity animates fragments which "just so happen" to be "irreparably in the world" without reducing the "just so" of their "taking-place" to something that needs to be transcended.[316] The material fragment of an idol-to-the-unknown is what Agamben might call a "whatever singularity" that *could* be anything even as it is *exactly* "what it is."[317] Materially situated/re-situating studies in performance and spatiality such the one I have offered above are a necessary part of creating global imaginaries that understand the "inessential commonality," of global belongings.[318]

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316. Agamben, *Coming Community*, 11.
317. Agamben, *Coming Community*, 17.
318. Agamben, *Coming Community*, 18.

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