

Imaginary Topographies

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I think this project started when I first went to Ethiopia when I was seventeen. My time there has continually affected my work at Bard. This is one attempt to work with and through my relationship to the place.

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Sculpture at Asni Art Village. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Still from video, Erica Newton. July 2013.

Cento¹

I jostled for position, rounding the curve
 tell me where all past years are
 whose incompleteness is it? is it true the will can only wait like the womb?
 to explore is to penetrate, the world is inside of mother
 I remember the rain
 with its bundle of roads through
 and around and under the clutter they were, the real world which
 they encrusted
 the forms of the Ancients are nothing but forces 'in agreement' 'breathing together'
 distinction implies
 difference: awaited
 the voyeuristic distance
 between the spectator and the event
 cover him up: attitude and costume
 that radiate a certain distance out from the crater, that is the smile,
 because poetry is passage. is an equivoque-in-motion, addressed away
 the location of the farthest plane is not rigidly fixed
 the spatial or material plenum
 (which is a confused perception of ours)
 is symbol of the infinite (or perfectly complete) series of Monads,
 which has no gaps
 a tool could produce
 lines on a wall and that by curving or jumbling
 something evoking a creature
 could be formed

Initial Brainstorm from March 2013

Response Based on *Harlem is Nowhere* by Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts

To create some of that 'nowhere² shit' (Amiri Baraka)

Challenges of writers: (metaphor of dreams)

"rush to transpose a dream into words, at once preserving the vision and altering its reality³. This nowhere, between dream and reality, between what one sees and what one imagines, between what is happening and your attempt to describe it, is the territory we wander while awake" (137).

Photographs without people (Siskind's photos of abandoned buildings) useful because there is the possibility for many people and events to be infused into the scene. leaves it open⁴. No human subject specifically but many, all tied to something--a happening

"a flattened version of events, where a place is allowed to be only one thing or the other⁵" (94).

Q of positionality of the author

→continually holding this up to scrutiny⁶

Baldwin, Ellison, Hughes, Gumbo

who is he addressing--look toward them (108) (109)

² Develop concept. The negated subjectivity of black Americans resulting in the feeling of being nowhere. But to create the nowhere. This has agency, it is a desire to make something new (out of the negated space?) that does not or cannot exist in the world as it is. It could also be criticism--being placed nowhere by the writer, or what people are writing doesn't exist.

³ Make explicit the altering of reality. The problematics of transcription through me, aesthetics, of placing objects and images and drawing lines. A desire: for the space to hold that nowhere shit, to be the nowhere, to point to it? These are different and depending can come in on dif levels/dif points.

³ex. 'to be nowhere' is the environment of the space itself, to have ppl enter it as a whole.

³'to point to' means that this is the subject of the piece, the purpose that makes its self apparent through dif. aspects in piece.

³'to hold the nowhere' is similar though more within the objects themselves

⁴ How can this happen in other manifestations? What I originally thought of was working through the topography of the city or through objects--material things that relate to people but are simple enough themselves that they draw in complicated things all around them. Could even take responses of Ethiop. to objects or spaces?

⁵ How to allow something to be multiple?

□what are things I could be doing that would flatten? What do I need to be careful of?

⁶ What are specific methods for holding up my self to scrutiny? With the help of other people?

⁶Will I have a shifting position?

FICTION⁷, FACT, AUTHENTICITY, PARTICULAR, SPECIFIC, GENERIC⁸

Voice of the public--effect⁹¹⁰ on what you say on the personal-private¹¹ (Baldwin 102)

→ where is the particular?

"Circumstances under which [piece] is made"

→ how do they gain entry? who granted access? after access, permission?

→ what role will the art play--no longer in refuge of art. Harsher realm of sociology and politics, make an argument on way life is lived...both specific and generic, capture moments in time and space, but subjects are transformed into representative specimens¹² (98).

TO Q THAT--TO HOLD THAT UP AND LOOK AT IT

Where the writing is produced

influence, context

What are we already accustomed to hearing--what it already represents

→ layers of past work, current method of discussion and mode

Baldwin's method of sweeping claims (108) "wide range"

Siskind "used neighborhood as laboratory for experiments in atomizing reality" (111).

RESIST THIS¹³

To point to the writing and the space itself as having "the shifting and fugitive quality of dreams nearby."

Africa as metaphoric space? (112)

→ "how does it feel to live inside a metaphor?" (blackness)

⁷ Can fiction and fact be played with to get to something like accuracy? They are already played with in the making of anything--make this oscillation obvious?

⁸ Do I want to point to problems of generic?

⁹ The issues of representation already out there; in dialogue. The perspective of others and other people's previous presentations of what I'm looking at. To engage with this in what way?

¹⁰ Audience. Also who is my public? If Ethiopians are my public how does this effect the piece? In many ways I essentially want Fekat (Ethiopian Circus Troupe) to effect the piece themselves (asking them "effect this") because our relationship is what I'm exploring right? How to do this? What kind of questions? Explain the whole project? Give them the camera? But it is also about my perspective--or is it to mix that up?

¹¹ How much of this and the other? Speaking to public and seeking clarity or settling in the obscurity of the personal? How to maintain the particular when speaking to the public?

¹² Am I the representative specimen? Am I challenging them being specimens with specifics? With obscurity of personal? or do I want it to make people uncomfortable? Make them realize their habits

¹³ Is this possible?

To include myself

Ellison--"within the essay, his position, to the degree he is located anywhere, is slightly outside the boundaries of the landscape under scrutiny" (114). (human rights?)

"dilemma"¹⁴ of interpretation and orientation"

rejects position of tour guide or interpreter

Ellison uses curtain of mystery

Resist-->programmatically and didactic role

Pitts says this is what Baraka challenges Ellison on, he (Amrii Baraka) is not necessarily wrong but he is a black man talking about blackness--I am not.

What is not the case for me presumably is that my "major energy of the imagination goes not into creating works of art but to overcome the frustrations of social discrimination."

-->who is this an issue for in Addis?

what are the limitations or uses of my presence in terms of the imaginative? what does my presence produce¹⁵? can the interaction make something--can I point to something unique? (don't essentialize)

Is my presence of West and white something others must overcome to express themselves (to me)? Is the overall international program so readily visible that it is effecting¹⁶ imaginative space¹⁷?

The judgments¹⁸ I face while there--simplicity of needing to gain trust and personalness, energy of another culture in general--makes for less or more space for creative imagination? A lot of my ideas come from that space itself (and what about Fekat's?)

¹⁴ In effect piece is about this dilemma? I do want to reject the position of tour guide

¹⁵ How to point to the filter of my presence? The filter of my gaze (to take something produced from my immediate experience/interaction and put it through a deconstruction process)? The effect of my presence as a filter for self-expression...

¹⁶ Or am I asking, is their perceived vision of my perceived vision effecting imaginative space? Or what does it do to our relationship? Or what does their interpretation of the east/west divide do to their self-perception and that (their self image) in relation to me?

¹⁶Or more simply do I need to look at the effect of international presence initially? On what?

¹⁶- themselves

¹⁶- their idea of me

¹⁶- ??

¹⁷ This is an overarching question that could also be looked at with these other HR questions re: Spivak etc.

¹⁸ How is this connected to my origins being something we all need to overcome--differing origins being overcome or just running into each other and producing something?

“To be on the perimeter,
defending his right to live and create from beyond the veil but also oriented outward, toward
maintaining his position upon the elevated dais of panel discussion...
to occupy a negated position” (116)

Will I inevitably be on the perimeter¹⁹? Can this be resisted? How²⁰?
Should I point that position [as sometimes, if not always, being true]?
Can I create my own veil? Is this necessary?
Point is to question my right to live and create
 but to use the veil [as a sort of challenge to being tour guide²¹?]
 [as a method of exploration]?
 [means to self-consciousness]

To create and explore a negated position--impossible²²?

Q of whose celebrated, remembered, memorialized, picked out above others

- look at my position as interpreter²³ ← break down my interpretations

ALEXANDER GUMBY²⁴

his scrapbooks, where they are housed, how he is not memorialized
stories of success vs. failure

scrapbooks -- "preservation rather than creation." (127)

“JUXTAPOSITION and ACCRETION”

something is made here--METHOD OF ASSEMBLAGE²⁵

¹⁹ How do I use the perimeter position?

²⁰ Thoughts on other people's techniques--travel writers, journalists, memoirists--elevation. Rather it be an experience in poetics. Q's of translation (of experience--which may be why I ask about translation of actual language--not always a privilege of this clarity) methods

²¹ This would be, in a way, a veil between me and my audience back in America

²² Maybe it isn't possible in the collecting part but it could be created or simulated in an installation

²³ How to do this?

Or what about people's interpretations of me? Useful for my ability to look, utilize as many pov as possible

²⁴ Alexander Gumby made scrapbooks archiving African American history and owned a bookstore during the Harlem Renaissance.

Gumby built a “diorama vs. the outward, upward, excavating, campaigning” (of others) (127)

SCRAPBOOKING: CATEGORY, PERSONAL, ORGANIZE, ORDER, REFLECTIVE

the question of making, the ordering is both personal (reflective of lived experience and personal choice, association) and striving for universal and understandable organization (reflective also of times)

→ make scrapbook²⁶ type item/piece that doesn't attempt an order²⁷ (at least a normalized categorical one) and the reflect/deconstruct the possible categories that were “organically” made

→ Why? Something new? Something old?

personal order²⁸

at a certain level Gumby created a space for himself, a creative project that was itself personal --at a point, what more to ask?

especially for a black man surviving in the 30's--what else than to create a world around you?

he “interacted with history” in his own personal “idiosyncratic” way.

Q: how a work is housed? and who²⁹ it is for?

related obviously

similar to the idea of organization

how it is housed in terms of the form the work takes when it is being created; the intention of the author plays into this. I mean both materially and organizationally.

also obviously locationally--library, store, park bench...

For Gumby, this is how his books are or are not remembered or discovered

-how history is created and understood

²⁵ In an assemblage method what is opened up? What is possible?

²⁵- an interpretation after the assembling

- an ability to break down diorama created

- explore what is produced

²⁵Encyclopedia--read up on theories of production in this context

²⁶ What are the possible forms this can take on? Collect physical objects and display them? How does this relate to concepts of the encyclopedia? Can this be worked into a document/text of sorts?

²⁷ What are the possible methods for making scrapbook?

Effect of over planning?

²⁸ This could be one method among many for sussing out ideas/emotions, interpretations I don't know I have...

Is this a starting point? a mid point?

²⁹ Where is the performative aspect/where are different points of the work to be made? Audience

Different ways to map³⁰ interest³¹

- one of the ways to write about my experience in Addis, or to do “field work”, is to write about the city itself. A creative urbanism. In some ways I don’t have to focus so intensely on people--individuals, like its a case study, more materially based.
- use urbanism as a tool for communication. seek a common language or vision at least to come to a language bc at base your looking at the same thing--or at least one can point to it. This in some ways can put interpretation in the hands of local person--reflective of personal experience of their space. Though still a problem of terminology--imperialist and academic, translation

METHOD of gathering (would probably be *my* method taught to others)

→ send Fekat people out with recorders to own neighborhoods. collect and gather, interpret together, group assignments (myself included)...fun

AWE + CRITIQUE

find a happiness in looking differently-in looking up and around

find a liberative and stimulated-activism-in critique

→ how to get people to look at their city/surroundings this way, or to talk about it if they do, or to talk to *me* about it

permission to develop poetic and creative sense (wtf am I saying here? Assumptions)

Q: how to keep it personal and resist imperial--possible?

new source of entertainment

new source material for performances

new eyes (wholly their own?), new criticism

- HOLD MYSELF UP FOR [SELF] CRITICISM
- site specific art/perf piece in Addis
- To write a personal account, essay, that incorporates theory and other writers, interviews, gathered experience, poetics,
→ particularly to show a way of being in Africa that isn’t NGO

how do I know I’m right?--don’t. So the point is also to examine my presence

Critical whiteness and west. self-critique

→ point to awareness of different methods

to record or to catch it on the fly, to forget, spontaneity

not a frozen³², final form--cleaned³³ up

³⁰ Maps! How can mapping be part of process? What is in this concept? How can this be a method that helps me? Would probably need to develop something new for my own purposes...

³¹ VERY CAREFUL ABOUT METHOD

think about how I am remembering, or others as well (able to think about reactions)

SYSTEMATIC VS. UNSYSTEMATIC

- **Installation:** thinking about pseudo-scientific photographs [categorization, eugenics]
photograph myself as if I were one of those subjects (objects)

project over photos or film of Fekat peers (large scale 12'x5')

--goal is to make them seem more individual than me?

Film: Fekat images are slowly moving³⁴ (at first they don't look like it and we're merged)

I am photograph and they move projected³⁵ over me

→ recordings? only audio?

Amharic? Translate? Translate wrong?

Myself? ← reverse gaze, self-analysis. My writings?

Interview Q's- turn camera around?

Personal? Emotional? Facetious?

- Encyclopedia (this can also connect to installation³⁶)
- Experiments based on CA Conrad's somatic assignments. Take notes on experience and then write poems about it. If I can get Fekat members to participate that would also be good.

³² How to make the process something that's really a part of the piece? Don't want to make with just an end goal bc that closes other possibilities out and leaves less room for self-critique along the way. Obviously if self-critique is the end goal it is inherently the process. However what are some things I can do to keep stuff fluid? Worth thinking about what is inherent to the process I'm constructing? What are process-goals I want to be continually present? Is there a way for the final product to also be unfixed?

What does cleaned up/not

³³ Cleaned up look like? What is the purpose of one or the other?

³⁴ CAN SLOW FILM DOWN

³⁵ Different techniques here to draw out different things (see lyne's piece)

-Splitting screen

see artist: Elahé Massumi (A Kiss Is Not a Kiss, Hirja)

³⁶ Museums? Natural history museum? Objects?

see artist: Mark Dion

Orientalism as Related to...

“The fieldworker examines his tools and finds his camera inadequate. Most importantly, his very field of vision seems blurred. Yet he needs to come back home with a picture. It’s pouring rain out there, and the mosquitoes are starting to bite. In desperation, the baffled anthropologist burns his notes to create a moment of light, moves his face against the flame, closes his eyes and, hands grasping the camera, takes a picture of himself” (Trouillot 24).

Orientalism as outlined by Said is a field, be it in academic work or travel narrative, which effectually posits a way to think about “Who ‘I’ am?” in, say, England, rather than an actual discussion of what becomes the Orient itself (where that which becomes the Orient is how the field conceives of itself). I need to face this if this is what is going on. If this is not entirely true (which I am inclined to say) I still need to keep an eye to this tradition that precedes me. The next question really, is then, “Who am I in Ethiopia?” The following is a reaction to this type of question using Edward Said’s text.

...so far as it has existed in the West’s awareness, the Orient was a word which later accrued to it a wide field of meanings, associations, and connotations, and that these did not necessarily refer to the real Orient but to the field surrounding the word.

Thus Orientalism is not only a positive doctrine about the Orient that exists at any one time in the West; it is also an influential academic tradition, as well as an area of concern defined by travelers...readers of novels and accounts of exotic literature. Natural historians, and pilgrims to whom the Orient is a specific kind of knowledge about specific places, peoples, and civilizations. For the Orient idioms became frequent, and these idioms took firm hold in European discourse. Beneath the idioms there was a layer of doctrine about the Orient; this doctrine was fashioned out of the experience of many Europeans (203).

“In discussions of the Orient, the Orient is all absence, whereas one feels the Orientalist and what he says as presence; yet we must not forget that the Orientalists presence is enabled by the Orient’s effective absence” (208). Though Said has been challenged on the essential nature of this argument

(site) I find I want to work with this point for what I am producing, if not additionally the space I occupy when I am in Ethiopia. In part, the Orientalist is someone specific to a practice different from what I am doing, he is one who derives his name from a field of inquiry he created. However in many ways I am playing with this notion of my effective presence. The obtuse perspective of the writer on the “Orient” with its constructive force circumventing its power and wiping away its origins is something I desire to challenge. How other than to presence my voice, my filtering perspective, my reading? And then, of perhaps a greater challenge, to read it through again with a mind to the “layer of doctrine...fashioned out of the experience of [the] many Europeans” before me. Maybe this act ends up being more simultaneous than organized in sequence. This work and the presence of the “Orient” in turn, obviously affects my experience as a member of the “Occident” in both how I approach my actual lived experience and how I am approached by those whose space I enter. I cannot exclude this determining factor, much like the “field surrounding the word” Orient.

Though I’m wondering how to approach this question of absence. Faced with the challenge of my presence, and foregrounding my subjective experience, have I “absenced” others? Obviously I’m not trying to place the “Oriental”, who I seemed to have left out of my story, back in it. The point is to come back to subjectivity, to use subjective experience³⁷ so that the relationship of Oriental and Occidental outsider gets altered, thrown out from my depiction hopefully; and if it shows up anywhere, highlight it, debate it, break it apart somehow. But how much have I been

³⁷ I tried getting others to work with me in an attempt to use their subjective experience. This was done mainly through poetry or “derive-esc” exercises in the city but I was largely unsuccessful in getting others to produce things on their own. There was of course the limit of time and busy schedules. Translation was difficult of course, as can be noted in my multiple attempts at trying to explain what kind of process I wanted, but on another level, trying to explain free-writing (in translation) to those who had never been asked to do so all their educational lives was a challenge, though the difficulty is interesting to consider.

enabled by this history and this relationship? The strength of my presence, my ability to even go to Ethiopia ³⁸ effectively made by this work of absence in the past--where are the traces? Can one ever be fully successful in throwing out something which is perhaps fundamental to their identity, that is at base part of why I am making such a work?

“Orientalism stands forth and away from the Orient...” The inevitability of a Westerners’ distance from a culture of which their work incorporates. Or more generally, the act of producing artwork, which engages with the world, in that, becoming apart from oneself. The act of depicting a culture whether it is your own or not, produces a position which must be dealt with in one way or another. To acknowledge my standing “forth and away” by instead taking a deeply personal, and in effect, phenomenological approach to the experience of being in, and doing work on, a region which has traditionally occupied the space of a distant other. Said continues, “that Orientalism makes sense at all depends more on the West than on the Orient, and this sense is directly indebted to various Western techniques of representation that make the Orient visible, clear, ‘there’ in discourse about it” (22). My intention then is to “unrefine” these techniques and explore

³⁸ One of the things that allowed me entry into Ethiopia was my particular class and culture; and the thing that allows me to process in this way is my liberal arts education. I am in a way part of a transnational intellectual elite with a particular intellectual and cultural capital in both the U.S. and internationally.

One form of human rights work is not unlike this. I entered into this project because there was no way I felt comfortable with conducting fieldwork in the traditional sense. I struggled with the form international human rights have taken in practical discourse. There are still “human rights” problems in the world of course and I find the debate goes sort of like, “This is wrong and this is wrong with the field but there’s no solution to that and I still want to help.” I’m not sure if I’m engaging directly with the foundations of human rights as it exists now but hopefully dislodge and produce a functionally different vision of how individuals are and could be engaging with the themselves and the world, which includes members of the human rights community. But am I even inclined to call it a human rights project? Does it fall under this discipline for all that HR is an academic discipline? If I place it in another it has the potential to leave human rights unchallenged in the way I want. By placing it outside of HR I’m reifying the impossibility of a conceptual shift in a way.

alternative ways of depiction which necessarily incorporate my presence; both in the making of the work and my physical presence in the region. In large part I'm not concerned with a cohesive sense making to which the academic discipline of Orientalism claims. I find that I am acknowledging the dependence on the West in the type of ordering any academic or creative work made by me takes on. I want whatever type of sense which comes out of this to be transparent about the dependence on structures coming from myself generally as producer and myself as a westerner. I would argue that much I would desire to deconstruct will go unnoticed by me. To "*re-presence*" an experience, a place, my self in a place, is problematic (to me) in some ways. Is it that in some ways I am creating an imagined space much like the discipline of Orientalism? That is, one that is internally coherent and referential but instead here I am making no claims to objectivity?

This leads me to another desire for this work. If something like Orientalism has impacted lived experience of the world and the self, the relationship to sense and order, which it (among other things) has set up for us, is challengeable perhaps through similar means. What I mean is an intentional disruption of traditional methods of work and inquiry into places outside of "The West" has the potential to imagine a different set of relations, to order, to people, to sense, to the self.

Said writes:

Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-a-vis the Orient; translated into his text, this location includes the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate his text--all of which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally, representing it or speaking on its behalf (20).

I ask myself how am I located? The spatiality of this term is useful. Is *narrative* voice inevitable?

How is mine functioning if I'm opting out of traditional forms? Who is my reader? Finally, I would like to be able to make the claim that I am making an open and honest attempt at not containing or

speaking on behalf of anything aside from myself. Obviously, the possibility of this is in question. And the limits of containment are in question. In thinking about narrative voice I am working with non-traditional narrative forms. Inescapably the production of this work produces a kind of narrated body. Even if it is amorphous, fractured, incomplete, multi-media.

“The Orient follows (perhaps occurs within) certain distinct and intellectually knowable lines” (13). I want something to *occur* outside of these knowable lines in the cross-section of different methods of composition and processing. To put a finger on this something...no longer the Orient as thing made distinct from the scholarship helping to secure it but a coalescence of producer (me) and the space I’m working in; perhaps a made up space combining with the lived experience of my time in Addis Ababa (mixing with the historical presence of such a discipline as Orientalism?) as one *occurrence* not spatially distinct. I am presented with the challenge of how to maintain this in the sense of a presencing effect? I’m dealing here with the importance of space and location while trying to generate a temporal and spatial entanglement³⁹ of sorts. There is a significance to geographically imagined structures of Orient and Occident and there is the significance in how at points in this project I am 3,000 plus miles from where I was born and raised. So it is not my desire to make this significance washed but for spatiality to be articulated and experienced in a different way.

There is a level of immersion in my subjective experience and this is visible in the work I’m producing. In terms of my location, the spatial orientation of my position versus another gets collapsed somewhat. Also perhaps I’m working under the assumption that the relationship of East and West as it functions is highly aestheticized or is due in part to aesthetic works and so I am

³⁹ This word is drawn from Achille Mbembe who uses it to articulate his notions of historicity.

working directly through an aesthetic and poetic lens in the hopes that I can acknowledge this being at play in my experience while I myself produce work.

On a similar note, Said discusses how:

“[Dislocation] identifies the putative ground on which the Orientalist places himself so as to write about, legislate for, and reformulate Islam...dislocation is the epistemological passageway into his subject, and subsequently the observation platform from which in all his writing, and in every one of the influential positions he filled, he could survey Islam” (282).

I find I am doing something of the inverse. An immersion, the passageway into my project, which involves Ethiopia and myself, is through my subjective experience. If I have an observation platform it does not pretend to be separate or to function so as to make me a distant surveyor of some land I’m in.

But the question of dislocation is possibly different. For one, there is the obvious thing of being a *ferenj*⁴⁰. As I began to discuss above, about production of work “out and away” from myself, I am forever dislocated in a number of spheres. In my first reading of *Orientalism* I wrote a note about double consciousness and the veil (as posed by Du Bois). Positionally, I may be dislocated from the local. Temporally, I am from my past experience. With this, my present location is different; within academia my purpose dislocates me. Besides what worries me about my dislocation, perhaps it functions like a double-consciousness simultaneous to a veil I cannot lift.

⁴⁰ *Ferenj* is Amharic, translated as foreigner or white person.

Constructions and Interventions: The Space of Africa in History

This essay intends to deal with how the space of Africa has been envisioned over time and as we shall see, invariably the subjects who inhabit the continent as well. I will begin with an analysis of a Renaissance etching. My reasons for starting here are based on conclusions in recent historiographical work that pose early “Western” engagement and cultural production on the continent as having had particular generative force in the formation of our notions of world history and Africa. I find my use of the term “Western” here, necessitates quotes because, as I will later discuss, contemporary work points to this practice (travel literature in particular) as the basis for the construction of what we now take to be the West. I then move into a discussion of Hegel’s “Geographical Basis of World History” with the assumption that Hegel’s work, and the particular ordering of knowledge which characterized the Enlightenment, has had significant effects on our understanding of Africa and is implicated in subsequent theories of history. Achille Mbembe describes this work as an “archetype of what would become the colonial mode of speaking about Africa” (176). My intention is to put a reading of these two alongside the more recent works of Franz Fanon, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, and Achille Mbembe. Fanon is situated somewhat distinct from Trouillot and Mbembe. His work carries traces of an awareness of this pre-history and it is my intention to draw out particular themes of historicity which he is working under. The Oxford English Dictionary defines historicity as: “The fact, quality, or character of being situated in history; *esp.* historical accuracy or authenticity.” Each of these authors works towards a unique notion of historicity. That is, the way Africa is situated is in flux; its past, present (and future), tied to the changing conceptions of how history itself is understood. Unlike Mbembe and Trouillot, my

textual analysis of Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* borders on a literary critique at times.

Trouillot deepens and broadens the connection of the contemporary discipline and the condition of history clearly to the early modern period. Mbembe, while offering his own deep contributions, engages with Hegel, Fanon, and colonial discourse directly in his intervention into the space of Africa as it has been conceived.



Martin de Vos and Adriaen Colleart. *Africa*. Wikimedia Commons.

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marten_de_Vos_Adriaen_Collaert_Africa.jpg. 27 April 2014

This engraving designed by Martin de Vos in 1588 is part of a series of depictions of the “four continents,” Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Africa. It is entitled, “Allegories of Africa.” Even

beginning with its title we can gather that what we are seeing is an evocation of Africa through symbolic associations in sixteenth-century imaginary. The image is a trace memory of the myth of Africa as it formed. Centered around an African woman seen at ease riding on the back of a reptile, the scene is packed with an excess of wild animals; some are real, some imagined, with all those close to the foreground looking somewhat menacing. The woman is naked, looking sexually inviting. Her being the only fully figured person present (there looks to be some people in the background with spears and shields) she carries the symbolic weight of the continent in her form. Her positioning evokes a sense of availability of the continent, if only one can penetrate through the dangerous animal presence and perhaps break the woman's connection to them. Dragons battle a lion off to her right, snakes play at her feet: she seems one with the dense, animal world in which she is placed. There are traces of antiquity among the rocks however, in the background and a lone obelisk by the banks of the river. This is perhaps an allusion to the ancientness of the place, a civilization unchanging and overtaken by what is foregrounded here, the presence of the wild animals and the vastness of the geography.

In many ways this untamed utopic scene, which edges on the menacing. It is an image representing an Africa prior to colonization. This being one of four continents allegorically depicted represents a move toward a spatial and geographical organization of the world. A solidity contingent on imaginative frameworks the traces of which we can see in Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*. Hegel's work demonstrates a move towards *disciplining* this untamed and mysterious place. This is done literally through the discipline of "World History" and ideologically, to afford more control over the conceptualization of the place arguably paving the way for more control over its people. The etching is a depiction from afar, an inclusive surface,

voyeuristic almost. The focus seems to be on the subject but in many ways it is only a body, part of a greater field. Hegel moves away from any discussion of bodies in the flesh and in many ways this serves to distance him for the text is not about his experience of the place. It is as if Hegel names chaos and enters it to clear the space for understanding. Or, his naming of chaos is a sense making activity in and of itself.

For Hegel, world history has a beginning, a boundary, and a movement. Within his model, only certain regions engage in its process. The "*Old World*," that is, the land around the Mediterranean that housed the "great states of ancient history," is the "focus," the "setting of world history." This is the space from which Hegel conceives world history; it is the very base from which historicity arises. World history for him "would be inconceivable without it" (171).

This is only possible however in his juxtaposition of the "monolithic unity" of the "eastern portion" verses the "other extreme at the western end." His dependence on this juxtaposition demonstrates the inherent need of the "monolithic unity," without which world history in his construction is inconceivable. Though he separates each of the continents in his organization of the text, the "land beyond Syria"--in all directions *away* from the western it seems, functions as a seemingly incoherent mass. This is namely because, for Hegel, they are "outside the historical process." Hegel does remark that these regions "constitute the beginning of world history"; but herein lays the notion of movement in time in his historical process: though the region marks the beginning, "this beginning itself lies suspended" (172).

Hegel has “chosen to examine [the continent of Africa] first,” as he puts it, “because it can well be taken as an antecedent to our main enquiry”; that of world history (173). Africa here is set explicitly in extreme opposition to the very concept of history. It is here Hegel almost makes the point for me: Africa marks the space from which a particular notion of historicity can be established. In its suspension, freeze, exclusion, Hegel is making an historical project possible for the West. At the end of his section on Africa he continues his explanation as to why he begins with, and must not linger on, the continent:

We shall therefore leave Africa at this point...for it is an unhistorical continent, with no movement or development of its own...What we understand as Africa proper is that unhistorical and undeveloped land which is still enmeshed in the natural spirit, and which had to be mentioned here before we cross the threshold of world history itself (190).

Africa in effect had to be mentioned so as to set the bounds for his argument. World history has a boundary, a “threshold” which one can cross. Africa, “removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night” remains outside, and in its very boundlessness, so to speak, “presses in on itself”(174).

Hegel moves smoothly from a discussion of the subjects to the geographical region that contains them. When he says, “we find [Africa’s] inhabitants living in barbarism and savagery” immediately after describing the continent as having “no historical interest of its own” he is able to put a geographical binding on subjecthood. The imaginative geography of Africa links to a sense of the African subject. The continent itself is “the land of childhood” much as the continent itself is in darkness lacking self-consciousness. The African is a “horde,” figures in his reading of the continent (190).

Hegel constructs a world history through an inclusion or exclusion from what he calls the universal (159). If one has a self-conscious sense of the universal then one has historicity and can participate in the movement of world history. As alluded to above, Africa is a region in which this self-consciousness is not possible. He therefore establishes a geographical boundary in which world history takes place.

The connection of notions of world history and universalism in the context of exclusion is particularly interesting. Universalism and world history simultaneously legitimize each other here. As the discipline solidifies, world history becomes “universal”. As I will later discuss, Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues it is the subsuming of this notion into the discipline of history that constitutes its constructive nature. I would like to put forward that, until recent genealogical work such as Trouillots’ and the collapse of metanarratives, which he points to, our sense of the unquestionable nature of world history, stems from this connection. The sublimation of shared connection, of these origins of world history, draws on this geographically centered universalism.

Jumping forward to 1961 we have a discussion of Africa situated deep within colonization with the French colonization of Algeria. Drawing on the connectedness of the subject positions of colonizer-colonized as they inform each other within the space of the continent, *The Wretched of the Earth* is a text that deals in the realm of exchange, of social reality, or the “unreality,” which Fanon argues is the place of the colony (20).

Frantz Fanon depicts the relationship between colonizer and colonized with a poetics that draws in the colonial conception of historicity. The colonized subject is positioned specifically opposed to the colonizer here and his particular discussion of history (as well as how it should be

changed) draws on this formulation. For Fanon, the constructive nature and power inherent in history making and in the colony are one in the same.

He argues that the history written is "not the history of the country [the colonizer] is despoiling" rather it is the "history of his metropolis" to which he "refers constantly." The continent remains a staging ground, the colonized as much a part of the geographical place as it is imagined and used by the colonizer in the making of his own history. In this construction, Africa remains devoid of a historicity of its own.

The colonist makes history. His life is an epic, an odyssey. He is invested with the very beginning. 'We made this land.' He is the guarantor for its existence: 'If we leave, all will be lost, and this land will return to the Dark Ages.' Opposite him, listless beings wasted away by fevers and consumed by 'ancestral customs' compose a virtually petrified background to the innovative dynamism of colonial mercantilism.

In his use of the term 'ancestral custom' in connection to consumption and illness, the body of the colonized is at the same time tied to notions of the historical. The "listless beings" are not necessarily literally ill, but in their position as colonized, opposite the grotesque virility of the colonizer, they are subsumed into a languishing still. In this, the colonized subject is rendered, en masse, a "petrified background" against which the colonizer sets his history. The "innovative" historicized colonist is juxtaposed to the "petrified," and therefore ahistorical colonized, "consumed by 'ancestral customs.'" This claim allows Fanon to say, "the colonist makes history." It is possible for the colonist to "'make this land'" if they are the sole reason for its historicity. Fanon describes the colonizer who considers himself "'the guarantor for [Africa's] existence.'"

Once again we are presented with an oscillation between a depiction of the space of the colony, the "colonial world" and the bodies or subjects of the colonized or colonizer: "A world compartmentalized, Manichaeian and petrified, a world of statues: the statue of the general who

led the conquest, the statue of the engineer who built the bridge." Following the reference to statues Fanon moves directly into a description of the world that is "cocksure of itself" and crushes "with its stoniness the bodies of the backbones of those scarred by the whip." Here the world acts on the bodies of the colonized. The move between metaphor and the literal is poignant; bodies are rendered in stone, the world becomes petrified in a peculiar order, the force of these figurations comes down on actual bodies further ordering and stilling them: "The colonial subject is a man penned in; apartheid is but one method of compartmentalizing the colonial world."

It is interesting then, that Fanon discusses resistance also in terms of the body. The desire to break from the compartmentalizing and stony hold of the colonized world manifests in the intense muscularity in Fanon's descriptions. This is more explicit as he moves on to describe "the dream of the colonial subject are muscular dreams, dreams of action, dreams of aggressive vitality."

Taken out its literal sense here, the notion of statues can be related to a historicization. First, more visibly, it is exhibited in the statues of colonizers who effected the landscape of the colony. This historicization relates to what Fanon discussed above with regards to the colonizer writing history in reference to the metropolis. The statues construction is a pointed historical choice, its presence penetrates the colonial world. Second, the statue is symbolic of the constructive nature of the discipline of history.

In terms of the Fanon's discussion of decolonization in this context (which is arguably the main political premise of this text), he introduces decolonization as a type of history. The challenge to colonization here is articulated as putting "an end to the history of colonization." The implication here seems to be that the "immobility to which the colonized subject is condemned" is due to this

history (15). Perhaps Fanon is making the claim that decolonization is an historicization of the continent (and on its own terms).

In his essay “Anthropology and the Savage Slot: the Poetics and Politics of Otherness,” Trouillot draws together the universalizing project of world history to anthropology. He presents it as “[belonging] to a discursive field that is an inherent part of the West’s geography of imagination” (8). Disciplines, for Trouillot, “legitimize particular organizations of meaning.” They confirm and solidify a “pre-established compartment within a symbolic field.” For anthropology this is what Trouillot calls the “savage-slot” (9). The assumption that there exists a spatially distinct subject available for anthropological study signifies a particular and symbolic geographic ordering of the world. In a relation between the West and an *Elsewhere* (15) “the West was always first, as utopia or as challenge to it--that is, as a universal project, the boundaries of which are no-where, u-topias, non-spatial” (20). The West remains within the solidity of the knowable and definable space, set against the obscurity of the ‘outside.’ Hence anthropology being a disciplined looking outward beyond its self-constructed boundaries onto a subject yet to be properly ordered. Trouillot evokes the power inherent in this umbrella of universalism:

The symbolic process through which the West created itself thus involved the universal legitimacy of power--and order became, in that process, the answer to the question of legitimacy. To put it otherwise, the West is inconceivable without a metanarrative (22).

In connecting this universal legitimacy to metanarrative Trouillot is implying a particular “[imposed] frame within which to read world history” set by the West in its process of self-construction, which

it “deemed universal” drawing everywhere it set outside of itself simultaneously into this historicity (12).

Within this discussion Trouillot depicts its collapse in postmodernism. However, he situates the very concept of postmodernism, the collapse of metanarratives and the foundations of the West, into Western thought itself: “The perception of a collapse as revelation cannot be envisioned outside of the trajectory of thought that has marked the West and spread unevenly outside its expanding boundaries.” It seems to be still within a world historical frame constituted by Western thought. Postmodernism is contained in Western intellectual history even if it is a moment that questions the constructive legitimacy of that history: “Its conditions of existence coalesce within the West. The stance it spawns is unthinkable outside of the West, and has significance only within the boundaries set by the Western reading of world history” (12).

Decolonization, perhaps the kind alluded to by Fanon, and theories that rose out of attempts at the process help to further break down this universal legitimacy.

Toward the end of his book *On the Postcolony*, Mbembe explores the use of language in the making and controlling of the colony. He presents a colony as “sustained by an imaginary—that is, an interrelated set of signs that present themselves, in every instance, as an indisputable and undisputed meaning” (175). The indisputability of meaning here comes across in Hegel’s work. Hegel writes from a place of logical surety, using articulations that “anchor” the space of Africa “in pre-set certainty.” He simultaneously depicts a chaotic mass, a voided space while producing a representation in a language of complete terms, which seek (and claim) to “grasp” this place (176).

Africa becomes a space conceived of in the imaginary with these signs drawing the continent into a closed space all its own, outside of the universal.

In a detailing of travel narratives on Africa, Mbembe discusses the production of the imagined Africa “long before the colony was conquered and penetrated” arising from “a web of words [which] had been woven around these distant lands and their peoples.” A colonial discourse is produced in which there is an “ambiguity of the relationships between colonial vocabulary and what it seeks to designate: its referent” (175). This ambiguity is a reason why Fanon employs such poetics and why Trouillot refers to the poetics *and* politics when discussing the making of the savage-slot.

Trouillot points to the poetics inherent in this webbing of words. Both him and Mbembe train their focus on the constructive power of language. To set such a distinct imaginary boundary, in the production of a referent, there must be a form of poetics at work. In this instance Mbembe refers to the precursors to Hegel who were estranged from the poetic nature of their work and was in turn used in service of an internal rationality. Hegel’s text attempts to look beyond itself but is deeply entrenched in the poetics of his immediate positioning. Basing himself in his own logic, his is a concealed poetics. As Mbembe puts it, “the actual is no longer perceived except through the mirror of a perversity that is, in truth, that of the subject uttering this discourse” (178).

Apparent in Fanon’s writing is a struggle to reconcile the signage that simultaneously makes and breaks with lived experience. In order for him to deal with this ambiguity effectively he turns to poetics. He is facing the challenge of exploring the “referent” produced in the social reality of the colony. It is the very ambiguity that he is writing from within. In many ways, the ambiguity under the mirage of finitude is what constitutes the relations in a colony. Even as Fanon sets out to

clearly designate colonizer and colonized as “forever in opposition”, the field of images in which he situates the reader marks how difficult it is to articulate what is produced from this relation (14).

For Mbembe, these referents have ambiguous meaning because they are made in a mash-up of times, where there is a piling of moments and an excess of language in any particular interaction,

this fragment of the world called a colony is in reality made up of disparate times, overlapping sequences, hiatuses. This fragment of the world is a disparate tangle of random happenings that encourage the dispersal of language and its collapse into the silence of the void—one reason why, in a colony, one function of language is to distort everything (179).

Mbembe depicts an Africa distorted so to be spatially and historically distinct, arising out of language of negation. The language converges to the point of having a silencing effect, producing an imaginary void.

Finally, Mbembe moves into the contemporary manifestation of this concept. In many ways it is a summation of his project. He describes the postcolony as functioning in a way different from previous depictions Africa. What then does the space of Africa becomes in this construction? Ambiguity has a presence, a full figure, which Mbembe privileges. He does not attempt to clear it up but allows for the multiplicity inherent in the postcolony to have the possibility to produce something of its own. History is pulled into the contemporary that draws on the languages of past imaginaries, that layers together the articulations of signs, meaning making, social interactions, of Africa’s past in the present. He describes what we refer to as the postcolony though with a disdain for the word, as a period, avoiding a particularity of place.

we have been interested in the experience of a period that is far from being uniform and absolutely cannot be reduced to a succession of moments and events, but in which instants,

moments, and events are, as it were, on top of one another, inside one another. In this sense we must say that the postcolony is a period of embedding, a space of proliferation that is not solely disorder, chance, and madness, but emerges from a sort of violent gust, with its languages, its beauty and ugliness, its ways of summing up the world (242).

Here Mbembe attempts to show the postcolony in a completeness, or a wholeness rather than a closed totality, while keeping it in a state of becoming. By presencing all that makes up the space of the postcolony, (including the constructions and interventions each of the previous authors touched upon and are working under) Mbembe draws a picture of a period irreducible to a teleology. The continent no longer set outside the bounds of the historical, the African subject no longer placed securely in a voided “pure immediacy,” we are presented with a historicity which attempts to be uniquely full in form, an entanglement of past and present articulations.

Video clips

Performance scene: Why choose Bole (this particular neighborhood)? Its sort of the epitome of the commercialized “development” direction the city is going in. They are knocking down buildings, houses, neighborhoods and building high rises. In this instance I am standing in front of a mall with the only fancy movie theater inside. Most of my friends and I hate this area, its a symbol of a type of change and orientation that we would prefer not to take part in. Though a couple of them also really like seeing movies in this theater because it is the only place with Western films and is a very comfortable theater. It looks pretty different from parts of the city, I sort of like that it wouldn’t be what is expected for people looking at imagery of Africa (but then maybe this is part of why these types of things are built).

Basically, there is a complicated mix of things going on here. Firstly, the people who come here are what I’ve heard deemed “Ethio-ferenj,” who are wealthier Ethiopians who look a little more Western and I’ve heard described as oriented to the West culturally or as an ideal. There are poor beggars concentrated around the mall and the church (a recent construction), which is across the street. There are young people who sell things and help park cars on the street, and this is the place with the highest concentration of white people I’ve seen. This isn’t too many obviously, but they definitely frequent here (the only “outing” I went on with my uncle and cousin was seeing a movie here). To me then, this was a performance for many types of people; it would mean something different depending on who you were. Unfortunately, I came across no white people so part of my intended audience wasn’t there which arguably changed the purpose of the piece a bit. In addition I had a printed sign, in English and Amharic but it is hard to know how literate many of the people are especially because it is not so clear who was reading the sign.

I was just going to stand on that platform like a stage but Amaru (one of the friend’s I stayed with who is actually a dp and editor) encouraged me to put on the sign before we got to the square and he would film while I walked over. These to me are arguably the best scenes. We see me moving through a cityscape in a bright blue jumpsuit and watch as people move by me occasionally looking at each other or laughing to themselves. It isn’t however, until the camera comes around to the front when I am standing on the corner that we see that there is a sign on my chest. That I am

doing something as opposed to just walking. I like that I pass through beggars sitting on the sidewalk and a neatly dressed man on his cell phone in the same instant.



There aren't any shots of this but its funny to me that people still called out "ferenj" even though I was wearing the sign. In this way I was able to acknowledge their call in a way I normally can't. I did expect to get more attention than I did, especially while standing in one place. I think if I had done it in a different neighborhood I would have attracted more attention but also I would have worried a bit for my personal space--I'm not entirely sure how unfounded that is, but attention is scary nonetheless. I probably should have stood out there for longer but I'm not going to lie, I was pretty nervous.

I stand out intensely because of the jumpsuit, in addition to my hair and color. The choice of the jumpsuit I think was, a) to make a background for which the sign could be pinned, to scramble signs or disassociate people from reading me based on my own clothes; by wearing something manufactured in Addis but for purely practical use serves to render the slate that is my performing body, if not blank, then an obscured set of messages. At first I saw wearing a workers suit to be a challenge to the class distinctions present in the material wares of an individual moving through a city; that by wearing a jumpsuit I would be challenging peoples assumptions in regards to femininity and class that I carry while being in Addis. I find the jumpsuit to be a little problematic now, if only because I am not working class and in fact do not require a jumpsuit to do my job, even if I really like their style. Also, there is a moment when Amaru discusses that he heard someone say that they thought I was a Chinese worker. I wonder if they didn't see the sign, or couldn't read it--

which makes me question my assumption of literacy. Or, if I could have been a Chinese worker doing...what? I wonder how could the sign be interpreted if the concept of my being an artist wouldn't have entered your mind? Is the association with the jumpsuit to Chinese construction (or so disassociated from a white person) so strong that even if you really looked at me and you could tell I wasn't Chinese, the explanation of *Chinese* must follow?

Something I don't particularly like is the time when I'm standing on the platform and the look on my face. I look very serious, if not melancholy and don't make eye contact with anyone. I'm unsure what I would desire as an alternative though. I think I was going for a blank face, something neutral and also my anxiety may have been a part of it, not knowing what I would do or say if I met anyone's attention. I think I may come off as a little aloof, looking up instead of forward or around for much of the time. This is another problem: what I am looking at for about half the video is a big television screen on the front of the mall. It was an easy place to rest my eyes and distract me from my vulnerability, allowing me to space out and not focus on anyone around me. There is a moment when someone looks to where I am looking, following my gaze to the screen--a wholly unintentional move that associates me with this advert blaring above me.

On the topic of the advertisements on the screen, we see the screen as I am walking over towards the mall but while I am standing on the platform the sounds take over the soundscape of the clip. I opted out of having this audible during the installation since I didn't want the sound of it to take over the entire space, so unfortunately it has to be left to description here. One is a movie advertisement for an American movie with some sexual joke and the other prominent soundscape is this song "Hey, there Delilah" which, as most of you will know, was a mainstream alternative pop hit a number of years ago and has a number of cultural associations in the West. Being an over-emotional tween infiltrates my mind and the interpretation of my gestures by those viewing the video in America--a wholly embarrassing set of associations. In many ways the performance is really funny and this song lends an interesting hilarity but at the expense of something else--my pride perhaps?

Some of the shots were taken from a balcony of one of the malls (the stairs of which Amaru made me run up and down to get rid of my stomach pain). He's shooting from in front of a photo studio where his friend works. Its one of those places they take those cheesy photos of people with

choices of background and effect. It is the kind of thing that makes me really uncomfortable with the level of silliness (I feel toward it) that no one else seems to have any sense of. Anyway, I made us do a photo session and have a couple wallet-sized photos from this. This holds something that I think connects to the idea of that song I had so much trouble with, maybe something to do with pastiche or spectacle.



Being Called “Ferenj”

This idea of when you are walking down the street as a white person in Addis and people call out to you “Ferenjie!” (foreigner/white person) or “You!” or “Kyoe!” (light-skinned). I’ve been thinking about whether there is a sort of power play here, a sublimated interpersonal dynamic between strangers on the street, one in their home country and the other as an outsider. It’s a moment of being told: “You are an outsider” and “I see you.” In many ways: “Don’t feel too comfortable.” There is a need to call out the difference, not to let them, me, forget my position even as I walk down the street. Maybe there are a thousand assumptions that the Habesha⁴¹ person is making about why or what you are, and this depends on generations (for example the older folks having associations with the Italian occupation) but fundamentally the one assumption that they are right to make--and one that you cannot pretend away, is that you are an outsider. Something in the cool look, or toying calls, some space between you, filled with a history and the current actions of some globalized, international scene. Something I blame on a pre-established thing that others before and beside me have created in their faulty exchanges and which I feel I can be exempt from. But somehow this cannot be true, because I am inevitably a participant, willing in many ways. And the side of the glance, which is my presence observed, holds truth, or significance, or effect, whatever the assumptions are that I personally disagree with, or want to disassociate myself from. I can’t discount the legitimacy in the unknown Habesha’s look when they see me.

I feel that in some ways it is a challenge. To me? To what? My authority, my power? A practice or exercise in authority--naming me. Its pointing myself out to me--who else is would it be for?

I know I am white. Everyone else does--so why say it? So I don’t forget that I am, because this is not the experience of most white people in their daily lives--to know that they are white; to feel their skin--but is it like a shell? The way some have described the feeling of being black in a white (American) world? I mark the trouble with associating my experience with black experience

⁴¹ Habesha is the word Ethiopians and Eritreans use to refer to themselves.

in the United States. It is an entirely different set of relations. My whiteness is connected to a lot, my Americanness for one, feels very much a part of me, it sinks deep, no?

I think the double-consciousness is on the part of the Ethiopian folks, given their long history as a nation-state and their relationship to the West. From my conversations they've always looked upon the foreign people as relatively ignorant of the life and therefore unequipped to make any difference or constructive change.

I showed this piece of writing to Amaru, and though he agreed with and loved the piece, he added that there is another dimension to the calls. This is the fact that many just desire to speak to a foreigner, to have spoken to one, and this is the means. I'm not quite sure how to reconcile this. I am of course aware of this desire through other, longer conversations with strangers (where I've just asked straight up—why are you talking to me?). I wonder if it leaves a bad taste in my mouth because I have the sense it gives me more power than the above formulation does.

Spectatorship

Can I safely say this project is about myself? By doing this am I circumventing the problem of spectator? What I mean by this is if I am placing myself at the center of the work, then where does the gaze of spectator get located? If I am simultaneously reading my place as spectator and occupying the place of spectator then where does that leave the project? Am I simply looking at others looking at me as I take photographs, video, interact more generally with the place?

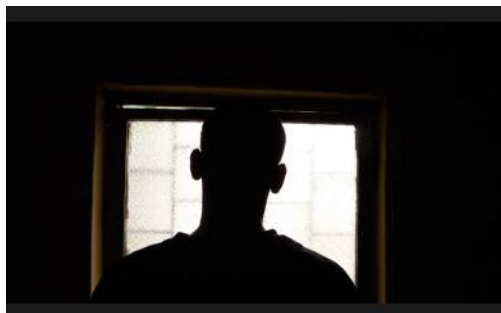
When going anywhere foreign this problem of spectator is present. However I'm wondering in this instance if spectator is the right word--

brings me out, a discomfort with extracting myself. Does the spatiality of relationships breaks up this concern? If I want to follow the curious idea of myself as



spectator, as tourist, as outsider (though am I an outsider if I am the subject?) there exists the problem of this interest as it relates to another more general one, that is, Ethiopia as a space among my other interests in race and conceptions of Africa. But I think my point is that it is more than this, it is this interest in another place read through me: me in Ethiopia. Me as white, woman,

occasionally calling myself artist (some discomfort in stratifying myself in these terms, they are useful but simplify perhaps). So the subject of my gaze is twofold when I ask how the subject of my gaze exists and is



presented. But in questioning this, I wonder about the role of my Ethiopian friends and others. Are they subjects in themselves for themselves in the work? To me? If I am to be central, then the problem arises that they function in service to my work, circling the edges of my gaze. Are they artists? Friends? Collaborators? Ethiopian bodies? Am I framing them? Pulling them under the umbrella of my subject matter without permission? What kind of permission is necessary? I have the desire to move away from the more self-indulgent focus that is so present in the writings from the summer. Towards what though? More theoretically inclined work? To thought dealing more directly with race and gaze?

I found that reading “Bodily Architectures,” a review on feminism and architecture, by Giuliana Bruno highlights these questions with a spatiality that is missing. My analysis of it here allows me to return to the actual presence of myself with others, in a place. The “‘inhabiting’ of place” is a disruption of positioning; it points to “mobility,” “consumption,” “incorporation.” It destabilizes my essentializing and fixed reading (e.g. my struggle with what to do with the idea of spectator) by drawing out questions regarding the “changing relation between the subject and object of perception”--which I think is what I was trying to get at above--this question of what that is. When looked at in a spatially oriented mode, spaces can both be bridged and more apparent and dynamic. Writing in regards to feminist film Bruno talks of the “concern over the ‘to-be-looked-at-ness’” pointing to the “enclosed space” that the woman inhabits (she is writing metaphorically as well as architecturally/spatially). I’m interested in the dynamic between interior-exterior. The production of self, the production of work. The discussion brings us back to “lived space.” These “(dis)locations” (as generated by this type of thought) point to the “production of [positions]...subject, visitor, spectator” and what else? A “shifting” and shiftable “narrative of

space" (Bruno 107).⁴²

⁴² I find Bruno's discussion on the "tourist gaze" which I've drawn from to be useful to quote in full:

The tourist should be understood as a crucial figuration in the changing relation between subject and object of perception. This figure abridges the distance, and perhaps the difference, between the two as it creates an "impact" on the world of objects. The touristic gaze essentially questions the "inhabiting" of place and the space of objects. It modifies the very idea of home, its immobility, its "real estate," its "alien" relation to otherness. Actively engaged in a spatial form of cognition, such a gaze affects the very experience of knowing and remembering. It is symptomatic of the shifting nature of the *vissuto*, an Italian expression that maps the space of one's lived experiences. As a practice, it acts upon the way we construct a narrative of objects, our own narrative, and the narrative of identity. A milieu of traveling cultures, tourism is thus a transitorial "looking space." Against some current assumptions, I view this perceptual paradigm an epitome of the vision of our times as fundamentally spatio-corporeal (Bruno 107).



Excerpts from Travel Notes

1.

The cross hangs from his neck. From my place on the couch I see it hang in the triangle of space formed by elbow resting on thigh to prop up chin. The chair rocks forward on two feet as he clicks through classic 90's⁴³ American movies.

2.

Sat next to a blind man in the taxi today. Was thinking how this man can't see my skin.

(On the TV now a music video with a white Jesus being crucified. An Habesha Protestant song with a white Jesus. I think about this actor--this white actor who is the central figure of the video--obviously, he is playing Jesus after all. He doesn't have to talk, just express the appropriate amount of suffering in this dramatic rendering of his crucifixion. I had been thinking about being an actor in Ethiopia--getting really good at Amharic and then getting attention on the street for that. hah.)

The blind man, who doesn't know he's sitting next to a Ferneji, asks me how much change he has. I count it, first wrong. I'm hoping I get my numbers right, selassa, 30 cents--he guessed correctly anyhow, giving me the hint of the word. He looks like he keeps counting it, feeling the size of the coins. Finally he puts 5 cents in his left hand and the rest in his right pocket.

3.

Thinking about eating pussy while the Ethiopian friends, all male, around me speak in Amharic. They are talking about stifling laughter while overhearing confused ferengies trying to speak to their Habesha friends on the phone.

The friends from work ask if I've come back to Ethiopia because of an Habesha man, the boyfriend from before.

Nesru confirms that he considers me a friend, not a boss--I call him when I come. He tells everyone I am his wife. We drink draft after draft. Sitting in the corner of a restaurant he frequents. Light through the tiny holes in corrugated metal. I will stay on the couch at his house that night and meet his very pregnant wife, son, sister, brother. Bess (she is my aunt), she is like a mother, she changed his life--taught him to drive, now he is a driver. But she is also a boss, maybe a very good one. At the door to the meat shop, which is at the front of the restaurant, the owner fidgets with the lock,

⁴³ Here I think to leave out he is a movie editor or that while I write my friend is pitching stories to a scriptwriter friend. Why do I feel the need to describe the nature of the films? Is it that I like to leave out electronics in favor of a simple image or something? Or am I trying to create some scene one would expect about a room in an African apartment?

"solves the problem of the empirical object by removing the Cokes and cartridges. At worst they can fabricate an entire new face for savagery...he was only one of the requisite parts of a tripartite relation, the mask of a mask" (Trioullot, 24).

his body half illuminated by the light from inside the shop. He is wearing a white coat like a doctors'. The light is a crisp straight line on his down tilted face. I am sitting in the tight darkened corner made by the back wall of the shop protruding into the restaurant area...

4.

Drink my sprite by myself, feel the sunburn on my neck and scratch my head. Waiting for the day to finish it seems like here. Half covered by the curtain--I begin to like the fancy boona bet.⁴⁴ How much noise and patience will this thirst quench? Fat Ethiopians eating their cakes. I want to take part in the same ingestible comforts. Maybe that's why Bill Murray is sad all the time, I should have said. I like the practice of starting from the inside. Fuck the external forces (with my imagined cock) and change energy time! Hey a moment alone I took descending the stairs. Why didn't I buy a pack of cigarettes? I keep picking at my face. Sing the breeze and skip over music (in the editing studio).

5.

I make my way
 through the breaks and rusted geometry
 the man made grooves
 welded connections
 of recycled refuse
 filled as it is
 with an order
 articulated this way
 a language of
 found
 personal assemblage
 this train
 with grass growing about its
 steady wheels
 and lizards
 slipping through
 its crevices
 moves (history)
 (changes energy time)
 shifts continually in its place

⁴⁴ Coffee house



Sculpture at Asni Art Village. Addis Ababa. Still from video. Erica Newton. July 2013.

7. Solid Door Breaks Off

Piece of a solid door breaks off in my hand. Finally a distance enough to write with words. Breathing out I lie back on a pile of lost (and there's that word again--heavy). calling the echo doesn't know the reflection--how to transcribe. The candles pile high on the side table. I am a barrel of weeds and music mutes lessening the load. The room is curving shapes--a veiny city. A moment of running the falling hills don't seem to be doing their job. There is a party outside but its just the tempo of the music and the kids fighting. I forgot my lunch and shat out my brains rinse the water from my fists and my oiled hair. Shelling the pace of a long day. Should it tangle up like a negotiated path? Is there a power in the ripple of the walls-can it rest my eyes to the faulty rickets in my dance style? I think I sweep away like a hair the line I seem to have left. It palls in the smooth slow motion I hardly notice. With the ripe matter of a brain under the timing of a good slip in the mud. I'm a little out of practice here. To use the word piss when returning to using a certain kind of toilet (a hole).

I find myself holding a **piece of a solid door** which **breaks off in my hand**. It is an accident as I close it. **Finally, a distance enough** from my thoughts **to write with words** as opposed to drawing. **Breathing out I lay back on a pile of** clothes. I **lost** a bit of weight (**and there's that word again--** evoking heaviness) from my shoulders there. When **calling the echo** one **doesn't know the reflection--**or perhaps **how to transcribe**. The candles pile high on the side table. I am a barrel of weeds and music mutes lessening the load. The room is full of curving shapes--reminiscent of a veiny city. I would desire a moment of running, the falling hills don't seem to be doing their job. There is a party outside but it's just the tempo of the music and the kids fighting. I forgot my lunch and had to eat shiro for the third time in a row. Subsequently I **shat out my brains**. At home, I rinse the water from my fists and my oiled hair. Shelling the pace of a long day. Should it tangle up like a negotiated path? Is there a power in the ripple of the walls-can it rest my eyes to the faulty rickets in my dance style? I think I sweep away like a hair the line I seem to have left. It palls in the smooth slow motion I hardly notice. With the ripe matter of new thoughts, a brain caught asunder. The use in the timing of a good slip in the mud. I'm a little out of practice here. To use the word piss when returning to using a certain kind of toilet.

A **piece of a solid door breaks off in my hand** when I enter the room of a friend of mine, Asnake. This was a minor detail in my brief visit. There is really not much we do anyway, not much to do on any given day. We get a little high. Here is a moment of back-grounding the immediacy of what

follows. After drawing for something like an hour without stopping I **finally** feel a **distance enough to write with words**. **Breathing out** I lay back on a **pile of lost** thoughts. I feel **(and there's that word again--heavy)**. I'm **calling the echo** of what just went through me and it **doesn't** even seem like I can **know the reflection--how to transcribe?** I turn to face the impossibility of it. **The candles** which Asne made **pile high on the side table**. I am looking for something to use for my own ends. It could be in the paintings on the walls, an image I could return with. **barreling** past myself, one day I will be a structure full **of weeds**. Now I find I can catch my breath **and** Asne has put on **music** which **mutes** my previous state/thinking, **lessening the load**. In the walls I see **the room is curving shapes--**calling to mind **a veiny city**. **A moment of running then falling**. The **hills don't seem to be doing their job** way out in the distance. It sounds as if **there is a party outside but its just the tempo of the music and the kids fighting**. I forgot my lunch of yogurt which was leaking anyway. I will go home **and shat out my brains** and **rinse the water from my fists and my oiled hair**, **shelling the pace of a long day**. Should it tangle up like a negotiated path? Is there a **power in the ripple of the walls-can it rest my eyes to the faulty rickets in my dance style?** I think I would like to **sweep away**, like a hair, the line I seem to have left. It **palls in the smooth slow motion** of daily living I **hardly notice**. **With the ripe matter of a brain under the timing of a good slip in the mud**. I'm a little out of practice here. To use the word piss when returning to using a certain kind of toilet is an odd thing.

A **piece** such as this offers little in the way **of a solid** understanding or mastery of the material. The **door** to the work is closed before one has the ability to enter. It **breaks off** (at moments and isn't easy to hold) **in my hand**. As one attempts to move forward through the piece there is **finally a distance enough** from which to apprehend a fluidity in accordance with the natural. A great bearing force sets upon the onlooker and strikes one with the urge **to write with words** which fluctuate and resemble the work itself. **Breathing out** into the material I am able to **lie back** again with ease **on a piling of lost** conceptualizations in which I trust. The commonly held understanding of solidity **(and there's that word again)** owes its strength to typical structures of wealth. The work manages to take all the cast offs of a days work (an unfortunate load--**heavy**) and re-appropriates it uselessly. **Calling the** names of past greats there is not even an **echo**. One **doesn't know** where to look, the work is nothing more than **the reflection** of something greater--more whole. It begs the question, **how to transcribe?** **The candles pile high on the side table**. I am caught wondering whether my presence here is proving anything, **barreling** past an amalgam **of weeds and music** which **mutes** any chance at sense. This however, is **lessening the load** somewhat. **The room**, once entered, is full of **curving shapes**. One has left a **veiny city** for a brief period inside the work. **A moment of running** ones hands over the shapes leaves an impression of **the falling hills** which have

been left behind and **don't seem to be doing their job** anyway. Upon exiting **there is a party outside but alas its just the tempo of the music and the kids fighting. I forgot to mention my lunch** which was nearly called up out of my stomach at the disorientation felt as I was leaving. I promptly went home **and shat out my brains**. As I **rinsed** my hands **the water** trickled down my forearm and dampened my sleeve, something I would not have noticed had I not been placed under such a level of stress during the viewing experience. I found that **from my fists and my oiled hair** came many a rambling notion which I had trouble reconciling. At last **shelling the pace of a long day, should it tangle up like** it does? One seeks **a negotiated path**, but is left with what? **Is there a power** to which one must speak? I may be forced to recon with complacency at play here in my critique, however **in the ripple effect of** any significant attempt at maintaining the integrity of **the walls** one builds is harrowing indeed--**can it** finally be put to **rest**? **My eyes** have grown tired of giving time **to the faulty** mechanisms in the work. **rickets** must I look for something **in my dance style**? One must gloss the finer points, **I think** for in order to weigh in **I sweep** over the details assembled together here. The work drifts **away like a stray hair** caught in the wind. I maintain **the line I seem to have left** is inconsequential, and take comfort in this. **It palls in** comparison to what I have known before, **the smooth slow motion** trickery **I hardly notice**. **With the ripeness** of age it is all of little **matter** to me now. The notion **of a brain under** is nothing but **the timing of a good slip in the mud**. Perhaps it is so, **I'm a little out of practice here**. **To use the word** that maintain solidity and the proper orientation is the forthright thing to do. I prefer to **piss** in the appropriate places **when returning to using a certain kind of toilet (a hole)**.

Hakluyt, Travel Narrative, Tableau

Richard Hakluyt, a British clergyman published a major work entitled *The Principal(I) Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of The English Nation*, first in 1589 and then an expanded second edition in 1598. At the time he was an advisor to the Queen in colonial affairs and the text was widely well received. My intention here is to discuss the nature of some of the writing contained within the *Principall Navigations* as well as to discuss how these parallel the materiality of the compilation itself.

The majority of the texts in the work read as basic accounts of leagues and location, as well as lists of places, plants and animal life. These are generally discussed in terms of commodity, with regular mentions of trade and consumption. This can be seen in an excerpt from a voyage in 1553:

Thus sailing forward on their voyage, they came to the Ilands of Canarie, continuing their course from thence until they arrived at the Iland of St. Nicholas, where they victualled themselves with fresh meat...whereof is great plenty in that Iland, and in maner of nothing els. From hence following on their course and tarrying here and there at the desert Ilands in the way, because they would not come too timely to the country of Guinea for the heat...at length they came to the first land of the country of Guinea, where they fel with the great river of Sesto, where they might for their marchandizes have laden their ships with the graines of that country, which is a very hote fruit, and much like unto a fig it groweth on the tree (41).

The use of the term merchandise [“marchendizes”] and the following detailed description of the fruit as an example, alongside geographical landmarks, points to a premise for travel and discovery on behalf of the Crown with goals of advancing trade. This is particularly apparent, as can be seen in the quotation below, when the Portuguese, Spanish, and French are mentioned. Competition (and distinction-making) is seen between other European nations. Among similar descriptions are

depictions of the people who inhabit the land. By this 1564 narrative, people have been given distinguishing titles such as Negroes, Caribs, and Indians, which are followed by descriptions of clothes, bodies, and often demeanor:

The 25 he came to Cabo Blanco, which is upon the coast of Africa, and a place where the Portuguese do ride, that fish there in the month of November especially, and is a very good place of fishing, for mullet, an dogfish. The people of that part of Africa are tawny, having long hair without any apparel, saving before their privy members. Their weapons in wars are bows and arrows. The 29 we came to Cape Verde. These people are all black, and are called negroes, without any apparel, saving before their privities: of stature goodly men...we passed the mainland, and an island called Tortuga, and sailed along the coast, the captain saw many Caribs on shore, some also in their canoes, which made tokens unto him of friendship, and showed him gold, meaning thereby that hey would trafic for wares, Whereupon he stayed to see the manners of them, and for two or three trifles they gave such things as they had about them, and departed: but the Caribs were very importunate to have them come on shore, which if it had not been for want of wares to traffic with them, he would not have denied them, because the Indians which he saw before were very gentle people. These were no such kind of people as we took them to be, but more devilish and are eaters and devourers of any man they catch (108).

Within this rather straight forward seeming motif, we find a description the content of which, though not style, strays beyond the mere recounting of fact. The information on the “Caribs” cannibalistic nature, obviously not gathered from direct from direct experience, seems to be from rumor. They begin to categorize the natives thus making room for himself in a sort of spatial sense. The implications of writing in this fashion, including that which does not stand out as more than a mundane recitation of what is seen, functions as more than the simple transference of information.

The use of a language of definition is, for the traveler, an act of elucidation. It functions to bring the foreign space into a conceptual field of knowing for the European reader and perhaps for the traveler himself. What will later be a literal making and taking of space is first done figuratively through the narrative document. This, I would like to argue, can be thought of as a form of clearing.

That is, a conceptual clearing of the [wild] forests of the ambiguous unknown. It is not a cleared or illuminated space that awaits revealing, or where “meaning” awaits revealing. I am arguing that the “sense” which is deemed inherent to the space once it can be seen (once it is cleared) is made simultaneously or *through* the clearing gesture.

The space is characterized as wild before the traveler enters it, upon entering they begin to make sense of it through a particular system of concretizing description of the space and people. If one notes the first quote, there is a distinct *forward motion* to the travels. There is a trajectory, a directionality, of out and away. The author makes this particular transition using such language: “Thus sailing forward on their voyage...” Tearing through the unknown, the writer of the travel narrative gives a form of presence to the space through this process of clearing the wild thicket-- first by deeming it wild, and then by entering and giving it sense. As Roderick Nash in *Wilderness and the American Mind* puts it, “Morality and social order seem to stop at the edge of the clearing” (29). Order and therefore presence, as conceived of in a historio-temporal sense, “stop at the edge of the clearing”. The more distant, the less traveled the land is, the more it is conceptualized as a dense thicket, temporally and historically distinct from the writer.

This type of gaze, which the travel narrative incorporates functions as something like a tableau within this clearing space. In the act of conceptual clearing, the visual field as read by the viewer, takes on a fixed perspective that in fact tells a very particular story. Despite this authorial rigidity in terms of sight, the author of a travel narrative, or the editor who curates the compilation, are difficult to locate in the content of the text. It is as if the viewer whose perspective we are privy to is isolated and struck from the text. There is an illusion of documentation in the descriptions of the people and places. One becomes disoriented and the authorial lens becomes subsumed in the

density of the thicket. But for the thicket to be described in such a way, someone must be skirting the edge of the clearing.

In Hakluyt's compilation there is a perceived sense of order, which comes from one's ability to take in the works as a unified whole even if the individual texts themselves are difficult to grasp with complete clarity. This is also due perhaps to the sheer size of *Principall Navigations* which in its original form was released in three volumes.

Hakluyt himself had a particular editorial agenda. Through compiling disparate accounts of exploration of non-European lands and placing them within a British imperial context, his goal was to claim a national history of discovery, and thereby generate a national identity. As Mathew Day put it: "Hakluyt published a national collection that promoted overseas trade, colonization and naval strength and that called for emulative action" (302). Hakluyt was well respected, employed by the Church of England (Day 199) and though Hakluyt did very little traveling himself and certainly did not go beyond Europe, those who did often carried his text with them as something of a guide. If we follow the concept of a prescribed and cultivated gaze, and the notion that this was a text which "called for emulative action," for a traveler to carry *Principall Navigations* could have had an immense effect on how they received the places they went. This is apparent in the trends of the travel narrative style. Often devised for entertainment, narratives continued conventions of past narratives with authors taking liberties to include, for instance, tales of mythical creatures.

One of the texts that Hakluyt includes is that of the *Voyage and Travels of Sir John Mandeville, Knight* written in the fourteenth century and originally printed in French. There is debate as to whether John Mandeville actually existed but he most likely did no travelling of his own and instead used previously written travel narratives adding his own flourishes and re-crafting

them so they seemed that he was the original recorder. One such flourish is this brief description of a health-giving fountain:

And whoso drinketh three times fasting of that water of that well he is whole of all manner sickness that he hath. And they that dwell there and drink often of that well they never have sickness; and they seem always young. I have drunken thereof three or four sithes, and yet, methinketh, I fare the better. Some men clepe it the well of youth. For they that often drink thereof seem always young-like, and live without sickness. And men say, that that well cometh out of Paradise, and therefore it is so virtuous (113).

He has observed the effect of this fountain as one which keeps those who drink of it young and healthy, its source said to be of "Paradise." He makes sure to vouch for this from his own experience of it, saying he has "drunken thereof three or four " times and that he believes he feels the effects of its magical medicinal properties stating, "methinkith, I fare the better."

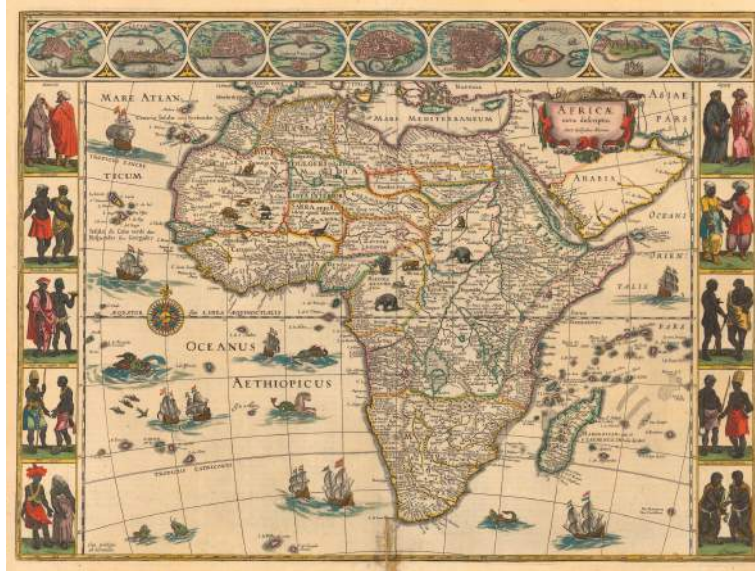
Returning to Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations*, it was not simply the content of the texts themselves that served the political nature of the project. *The Principall Navigations* "created meaning...through its form and structure. The collection was arranged chronologically by geographical region. The temporal narrative transformed ad hoc accounts of individual events into a national history" (Day 288). Hakluyt also took on his editorial position through the use of "liminal devices and conventions, both within the book (paritext) and outside it (epitext), that mediate the book to the reader" (Day 291). It would seem that Hakluyt would be easy to locate here. I would like to argue, paradoxically, that Hakluyt's subtle facilitation functioned to guide a proper reading similar to his own, his presence around the text body going unnoticed. For Hakluyt it is less so a close look at the subject itself but an admiration of his own look upon the *Navigations* as a whole. This type of look could be brought to the individual texts themselves, where the authorial lens

presenting itself as fact, creates a familiarized model for viewing the narrated geographic region. The author 'clears space' and writes the space he has cleared. To further the dynamic of 'cleared space', it is also a space that was often previously worked over by other travelers and myths. The reader is caught within the duality of a tableau admired, as it occurs on both the level of the *Principall Navigations* in its materiality and the works contained within it.⁴⁵

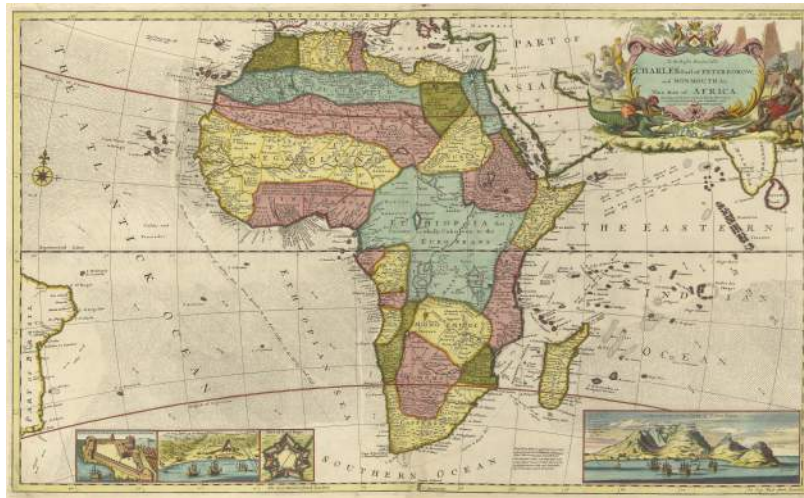
⁴⁵ On a more personal note, I hadn't realized the level of awareness present in the editing to such a detailed extent. Hakluyt was not just following a standard (one which came about "organically"), unaware of the effects on the reader or on the society. He was *creating* a standard (way of thinking) much more self-consciously than I had originally thought. He put thought into, format, layout--these were tools, "features" which "shaped the reception of the text" (Day 291). *Principal Navigations* wasn't an ad hoc, disorganized, personal project but a very calculated, detailed, rendering for a specific political purpose and audience. In thinking it was disorganized I saw it as less sinister.



1554



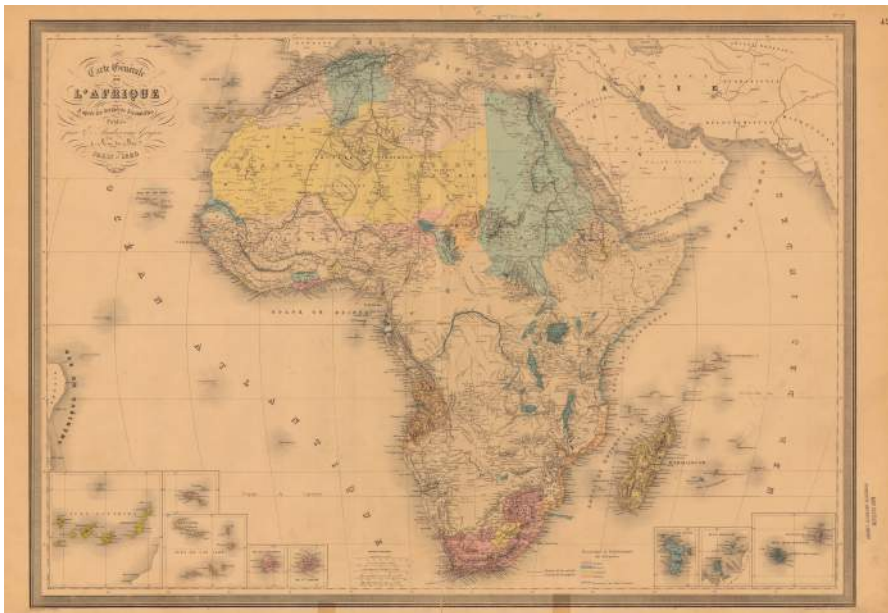
1644



1710



1805

1880⁴⁶

⁴⁶ These maps can be found online here:

http://libweb5.princeton.edu/visual_materials/maps/websites/africa/maps-continent/continent.html

They are a total of eleven similar maps depicted progressively (beginning and ending the same, e.g. 1554 map and 1880 map shown here) accompanied by descriptions. I tried to include one from each century to demonstrate changes although there is variation in style.

Excerpt from Principall Navigations (A briefe description of Afrike gathered by Richard Eden, 1553)

...Now therefore I will speake somewhat of the people and their maners, and maner of living, with an other briefe description of Africa also. It is to be understood, that the people which now inhabite the regions of the coast of Guinea, and the midle parts of Africa, as Libya the inner, and Nubia, with divers other great & large regions about the same, were in old time called Aethiopes and Nigritae, which we now call Moores, Moorens, or Negroes, a people of beastly living, without a God, lawe, religion, or common wealth, and so scorched and vexed with the heat of the sunne, that in many places they curse it when it riseth. Of the regions and people about the inner Libya (called Libya interior) Gemma Phrysius writeth thus. Libya interior is very large and desolate, in the which are many horrible wildernesses & mountaines, replenished with divers kinds of wilde and monstrous beastes and serpents. First from Mauritania or Barbary toward the South is Getulia, a rough and savage region, whose inhabitants are wilde and wandering people. After these follow the people called Melanogetuli and Pharusii, which wander in the wilderness, carrying with them great gourdes of water. The Ethiopians called Nigritae occupy a great part of Africa, and are extended to the West Ocean. Southward also they reach to the river Nigritis, whose nature agreeth with the river of Nilus, forasmuch as it is increased and diminished at the same time, and bringeth forth the like beastes as the Crocodile. By reason whereof, I thinke this to be the same river which the Portugals call Senega: For this river is also of the same nature. It is furthermore marveilous and very strange that is said of this river: And this is, that on the one side thereof, the inhabitants are of high stature and black, and on the other side, of browne or tawnie colour, and low stature, which thing also our men confirme to be true. There are also other people of Libya called Garamantes, whose women are common: for they contract no matri- monie, neither have respect to chastitie. After these are the nations of the people called Pyrei, Sathiodaphnitaie, Odrangi, Mimaces, Lynxamatae, Dolopes, Aganginae, Leuci Ethiopes, Xilicei Ethiopes, Calcei Ethiopes, and Nubi. These have the same situation in Ptolome that they now give to the kingdome of Nubia. Here are certaine Christians under the dominion of the great Emperour of Ethiopia, called Prester John. From these toward the West is a great nation of people called Aphricerones, whose region (as

farre as may be gathered by conjecture) is the same that is now called Regnum Orguene, confining upon the East parts of Guinea. From hence Westward, and somewhat toward the North, are the kingdoms of Gambia and Budomel, not farre from the river of Senega. And from hence toward the inland regions, and along by the sea coast, are the regions of Ginea or Guinea, which we commonly call Ginnee. On the Westside of these regions toward the Ocean, is the cape or point called Cabo verde, or Caput viride, (that is) the greene cape, to the which the Portugals first direct their course when they saile to America, or the land of Brasile. Then departing from hence, they turne to the right hand toward the quarter of the winde called Garbino, which is betweene the West and the South. But to speake somewhat more of Ethiopia: although there are many nations of people so named, yet is Aethiopia chiefly divided into two parts, whereof the one is called Aethiopia under Aegypt, a great & rich region. To this pertaineth the Island Meroe, imbraced round about with the stremes of the river Nilus. In this Island women reigned in old time. Josephus writeth, that it was sometime called Sabea: and that the Queene of Saba came from thence to Jerusalem, to heare the wisdom of Salomon. From hence toward the East reigneth the said Christian Emperor Prester John, whom some call Papa Johannes, & other say that he is called Pean Juan (that is) great John, whose Empire reacheth far beyond Nilus, and is extended to the coasts of the Red sea & Indian sea. The middle of the region is almost in 66. degrees of longitude, and 12. degrees of latitude. About this region inhabite the people called Clodi, Risophagi, Babylonii, Axiunitae, Molili, and Molibae. After these is the region called Troglodytica, whose inhabitants dwel in caves and dennes : for these are their houses, & the flesh of serpents their meat, as writeth Plinie, and Diodorus Siculus. They have no speech, but rather a grinning and chattering. There are also people without heads, called Blemies, having their eyes and mouth in their breast. Likewise Strucophagi, and naked Ganphasantes : Satyrs also, which have nothing of men but onely shape. Moreover Oripei, great hunters. Menones also, and the region of Smyrnophora, which bringeth forth myrrhe. After these is the region of Azania, in the which many Elephants are found. A great part of the other regions of Africke that are beyond the Aequinoctiall line, are now ascribed to the kingdome of Melinde, whose inhabitants are accustomed to trafique with the nations of Arabia, and

their king is joyned in friendship with the king of Portugal, and payeth tribute to Prester John. The other Ethiope, called Ethiopia interior (that is) the inner Ethiope, is not yet knowne for the greatnesse thereof, but onely by the sea coastes : yet is it described in this maner. First from the Aequinoctiall toward ye South, is a great region of Aethiopians, which bringeth forth white Elephants, Tygers, and the beastes called Rhinocerotes. Also a region that bringeth forth plenty of cynamome, lying betweene the branches of Nilus. Also the kingdome of Habech or Habasia, a region of Christian men, lying both on this side and beyond Nilus. Here are also the Aethiopians, called Ichthiophagi (that is) such as live onely by fish, and were sometimes subdued by the warres of great Alexander. Furthermore the Aethiopians called Rhapsii, & Anthropophagi, y' are accustomed to eat mans flesh, inhabite the regions neere unto the mountains called Montes Lunae (that is) the mountaines of the Moone. Gazatia is under the Tropike of Capricorne. After this followeth the front of Afrike, the Cape of Buena Speranza, or Caput Bonae Spei, that is, the Cape of good hope, by the which they passe that saile from Lisbon to Calicut. But by what names the Capes and gulfes are called, forasmuch as the same are in every globe and card, it were here superfluous to rehearse them. Some write that Africa was so named by the Grecians, because it is without colde. For the Greeke letter Alpha or A signifieth privation, voyd, or without : and Phrice signifieth colde. For in deed although in the stead of Winter they have a cloudy and tempestuous season, yet is it not colde, but rather smothering hote, with hote showres of raine also, and somewhere such scorching windes, that what by one meanes and other, they seeme at certaine times to live as it were in fornaces, and in maner already halfe way in Purgatorie or hell. Gemma Phrisius writeth, that in certaine parts of Africa, as in Atlas the greater, the aire in the night season is scene shining, with many strange fires and flames rising in maner as high as the Moone : and that in the element are sometime heard as it were the sound of pipes, trumpets and drummes: which noises may perhaps be caused by the vehement and sundry motions of such firie exhalations in the aire, as we see the like in many experiences wrought by fire, aire and winde (37).

Transcription (July 2013)

Me: ...Continue

Amaru: (laughs) so my grandmother they wanted to hide in the mountain the of the Golo mountain which is maybe 85 (km) from here, from Addis, you can see it and there is a church on the top and there is a crater lake. They have been hiding there with their cattle, many many of mothers and fathers from the countryside because they are scared of the Italians. So all the people now because they have seen what happened they will consider all ferenjies like Italian. *Oh they are Italian. What are they doing here?*

Me: yea

Amaru: Unless you explain everything or somebody has to tell them what's happening now...and... you will not be considered as Italian but because your ferenjie, they think you have something to do here. Positive and negative.

Me: yea

Amaru: They can see positive and they will say, *oh she is doing good here, she is helping others*. Because they can't see negative they will say she has something to do.

Me: Well but I think that that thing, the mentality thing, that's left over from colonization. Like they're right. Like anyone who first comes here--well ok I can't say that--but a lot of people that first come here they do have something--they don't realize it, but they do have something to take.

Amaru: yea

Me: And they have a reason for coming that isn't only out of love or you know to take care of others and stuff. It's like this other this specific--

Amaru: new

Me:-- African other person is (a) special something for some and they want to...there is something for them...yeah maybe there is something for them here. I don't know what it is but yeah hmm that's what I'm studying in school what I'm most interested in.

Amaru: When you go around sidist kilo see that statue and then try to watch older people... like I told you my father, if I take you home, in front of you they would accept you like a very good guest. My mother, of course, she doesn't care anything if you're there with me because you are my friend she would roll out a red carpet but my father he's: *Ferenj, what are they doing here?*

Email to Amaru and Naod (April 2014)

Selam Amaru and Naod!

Its no problem you were late on the reply Naod. I have about three weeks left in this project. I am really mostly interested in your responses to this, however you want and in whatever form. My apologies, it got pretty long--I wish it could be in Amharic!

Maybe this is something you knew, but I had known very little about the early history of Ethiopia in terms of its relationship to southern Europe. Of course the religious connection in the 1400's makes sense. Venice was supposedly the center of Christianity at the time and it would only follow that monks from the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia would travel there and be well received. The encounters with southern Europe are for me really interesting given Italy's attempts at having a colonial presence much later.

Have you heard of the myth of Prester John? This is a myth that made its way into accounts over the centuries about a Christian kingdom in "the East" whose king was called Prester (or Priest) John. It starts with a letter which began circulating around 1165. It was said to be written by Prester John and describes his kingdom. The letter was used, translated, and paraphrased over the centuries (Eco 103). The letter was most likely not written by anyone by the name of Prester John of course. It was full of tropes which exploited the appeal of the Orient through such things as the abundance of riches and wonders.

An example of such paraphrasing is that of John Mandeville in *The Travels of John Mandeville*. The man did not in fact do any travelling and compiled his text through drawing on various sources. He alluded to eyewitness accounts and described creatures from much earlier

texts. But this tradition of fantastical tales influenced travellers' accounts who were known to have actually been to these places as well (Eco 103).

Umberto Eco describes well the way the "letter" of Prester John functioned: "A political project was gradually reinforced through this geographical fantasizing. In other words, the phantasm called up by some imaginary scribe served as a pretext for the expansion of the Christian world toward Africa and Asia, a friendly prop for the white man's burden" (104).

In the 14th century the land of Prester John began to be located in Africa specifically, as opposed to it previously being located not so far east. The Portuguese were convinced it was in Ethiopia, which had often been mistaken for India, or was called one of three Indias. The myth of Prester John is placed against the backdrop of the rest of Africa as if they were searching for a land which could represent for them a civilization "like themselves" amid the mysterious expanse of the far east or of the unexplored African continent.

These are perhaps reasons why the Portuguese made a diplomatic mission to Ethiopia in 1520, which was recorded by Portuguese chaplain Father Francisco Alvarez, who arrived with the mission (English Trans in 1881).

The relationship to Europe started to change with the Jesuit mission to Ethiopia (1555-1634). The mythological kingdom of Prester John was no longer on equal footing when Catholicism took hold of Europe and Ethiopia began to change in the eyes of Europe:

By treating Christian Ethiopians as non-believers, the Jesuits started to chip away at the idea of Ethio-European commonality and shaped a new discourse of otherness: no longer were Ethiopians Christian brothers to be respected, but rather heretics to be converted (Salvatore 186).

To make a story short the conversions which followed in some regions resulted in internal struggle, destabilizing the Empire. But the Jesuits were eventually kicked out. This was the beginning of Ethiopia cutting ties with Europe for two and a half centuries.

I feel like I'm telling you your history now but this is just what I'm learning and maybe you can offer some reactions. Also this lets me talk about the following, that is, the opinion of much of Europe over time in regards to Ethiopia's self-isolation with Europe:

With the exception of a few isolated attempts to reconnect with the historical engine of the world—Christian Europe—Ethiopia had de facto severed its tie with the civilized world and retreated into a condition of static isolation, a condition that the Ethiopianist Conti Rossini defined as that of a “museum of people” (Salvatore 275).

A “museum of people”? It seems that any explorer following this would be going to Ethiopia with the idea of looking back into the past, as if the people were frozen in time. It points to a separation created not unlike how a patron at a museum feels in relation to the art in a glass case.

There is a lot of discussion that this isolation was due to the geography, what with the presence of the highlands and in some of the arguments there is a sense that, to an extent, it was always in isolation. But during this time Ethiopia was strengthening ties with other (Muslim) neighbors (Tibebu 415).

Regardless, the Jesuit writings marked a turn in how Ethiopians were discussed. A writing by the Jesuit “the Abyssinian generally have well-shaped figures, good height and good facial features, spare bodies, pointed noses and thin lips, so that the people of Europe have the advantage of them in colour but not in other things”(Salvatore 209).

So then the concept of Ethiopians and their difference from Europe gets more explicit. When Europeans began to travel to Ethiopia again in the 18th and 19th centuries, Ethiopia was

characterized as distinct from the rest of “black” Africa. Sometimes called “black caucasians” or “white negroes.” This was used, for example, by the Italians after their defeat in Adwa, as if they were more civilized than the rest of Africa. For Italy to enter Ethiopia in the first place it had to take on the “white man’s burden”, rationalizing that Ethiopia needed help in developing its resources (Tibebu, 419).

A novelist by the name of Waugh wrote: “Abyssinia could not claim recognition on equal terms by the civilized nations and at the same time maintain her barbarous isolation; she must put her natural resources at the disposal of the world; since she was obviously unable to develop them herself, it must be done for her, to their mutual benefit, by a more advanced power [such as Italy]” (Tibebu 421).

Mostly I just want a reaction to my writing this to you. The myth of Prester John is all over European writing and I wonder what you think of it as a myth and Ethiopia’s relationship to it. What does it mean for a myth to be so much a part of Europe’s relationship to Ethiopia? Does Ethiopia have similar myths? In addition there is this question of Ethiopia in terms of color; how the changing concept of race in Ethiopia affected the country’s changing relationship to Europe and other parts of Africa.

I realize this might be hard to answer in English so if there is someone who could translate with you maybe we can work something out. If the two of you want to respond to each other that’s great too.





#0a

I find myself wanting:

a certain look a woman in heels looking priestly Shime's arm open front

two priests,
a woman in heels with a certain look in her eye

man walks by
talking to himself, woman tsks

#0b

man holds

manikin by crotch

open front two priests wanting to list

the red x I find myself

tsk

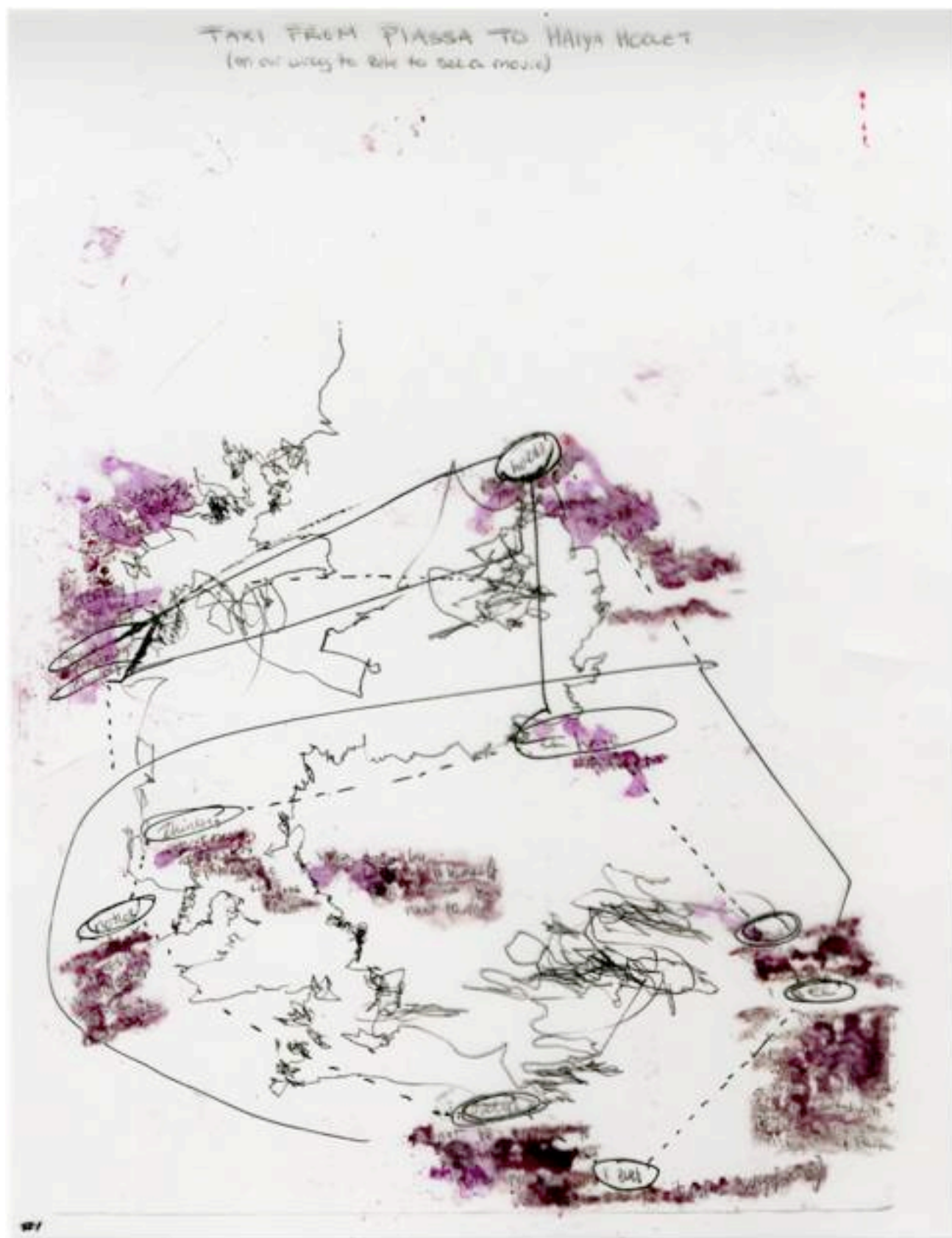
a woman with a certain look in her eye

talking to himself

thinking about the meaning

he stands in front of

("perfectly")



#1

holds the sound

himself--

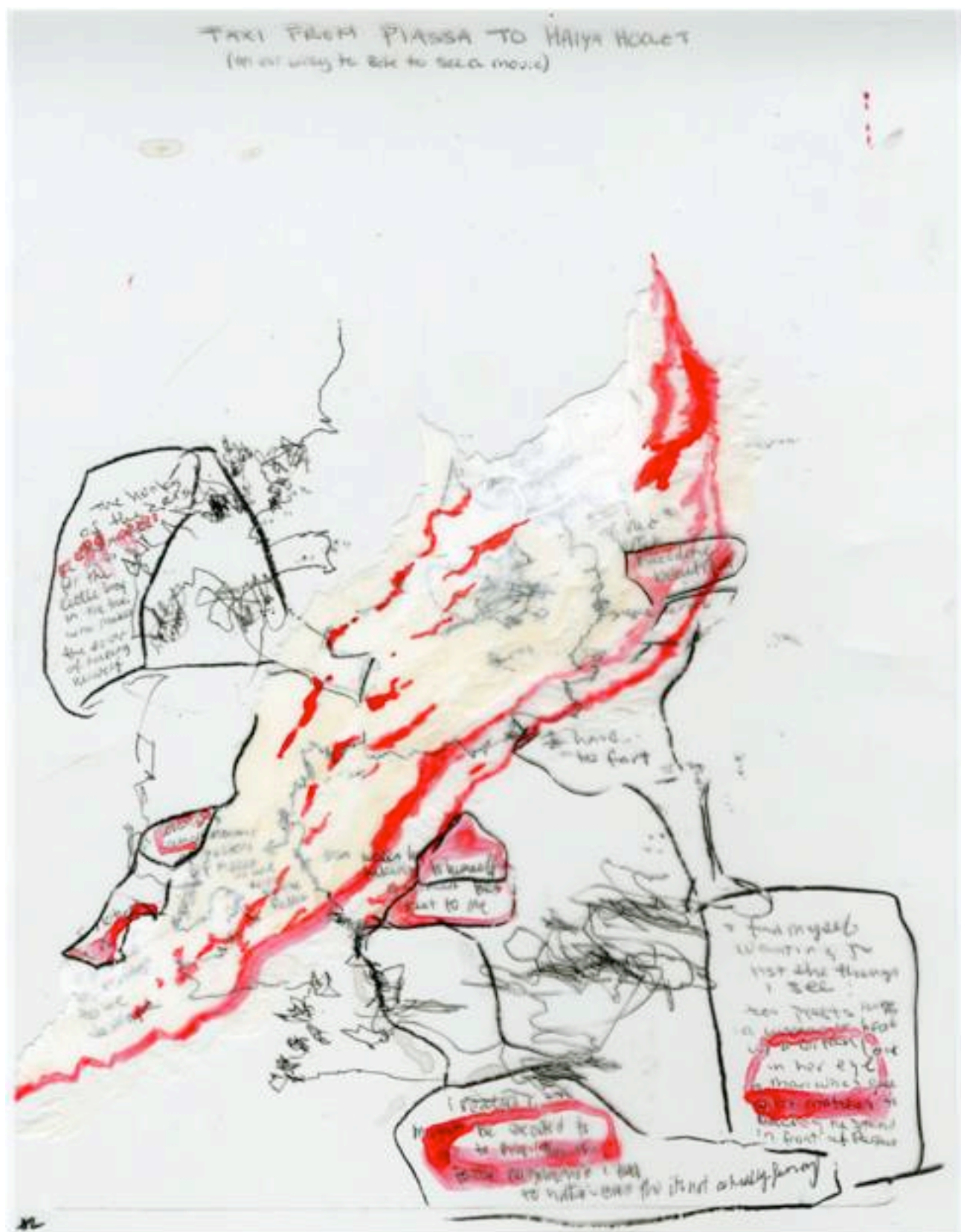
I have held, or forgotten

so many variables

of observation

I seem to have found myself monstrously opposed--

Who is it that left me clinging to the arbitrary?



#2

To himself, woman!
take it

look her in the eye

and the shirt matches

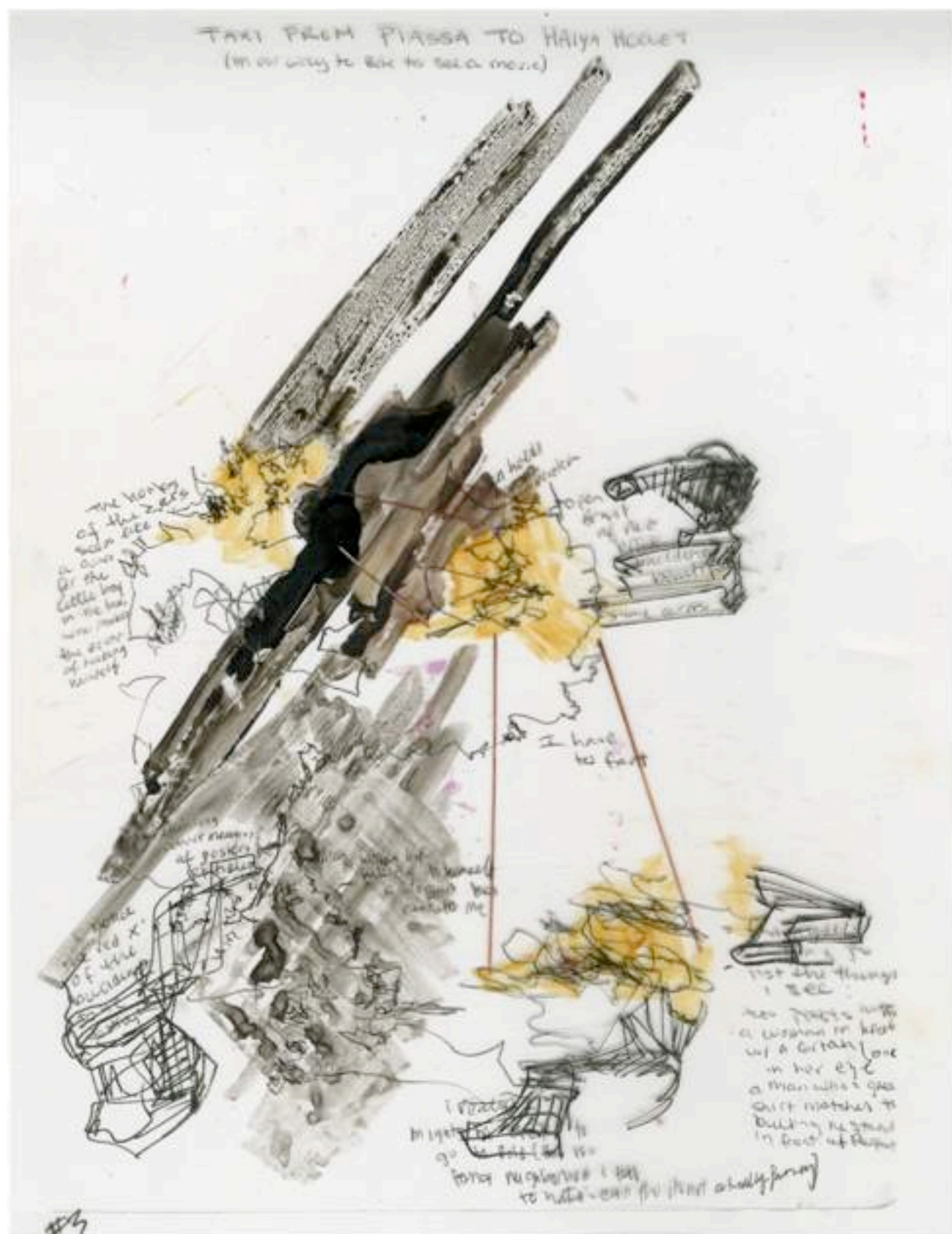
They, lost on the covered cusp

#2b

but the tension
that pulls shape

out among the haphazard
colloquialisms

(I was feeling especially hungry
when I made this)



#3

he is his own palace
--the man who talks to himself

his palace is destroyed--by her tsking
or she tsks at the destruction of his palace

maybe she doesn't have one
--maybe only thinks she does

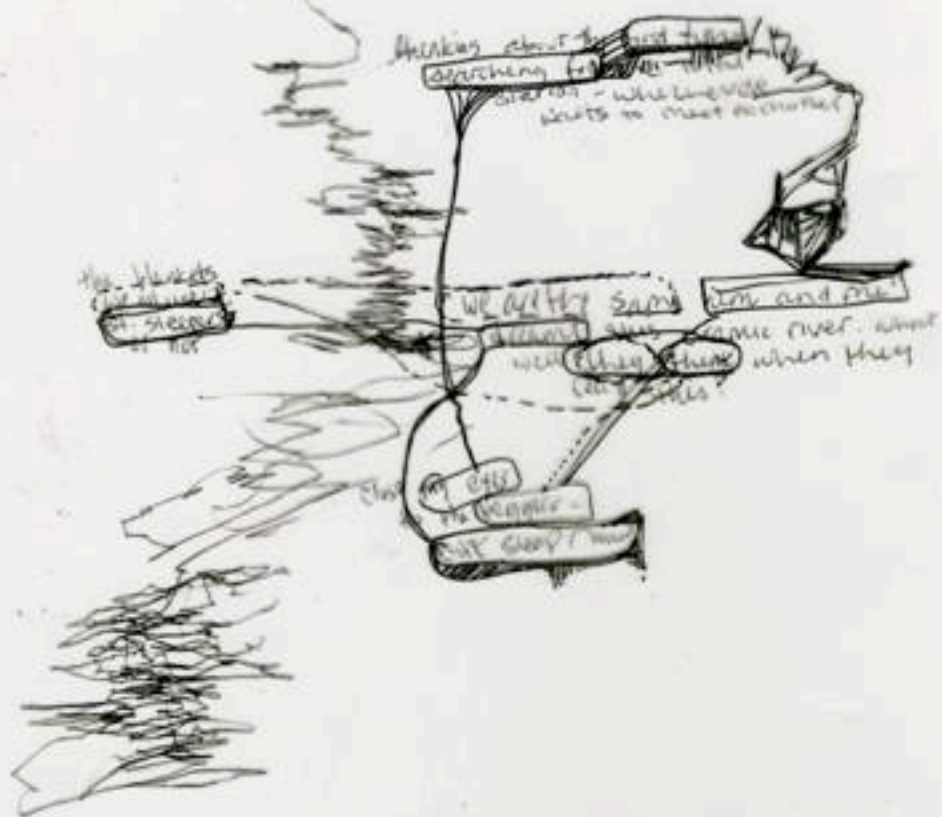


#4

a lit pedestal
crackling holes
the occasional swirl
a justifiable shape
highrises add a three-
dimensionality inflected with gold

light patches in the city
guided, seeping, rising,
to the floor in a dispersal
not unlike muddy water

SOMEWHERE AROUND KAWNARDS TO NIAA BOUT (ADJIN)



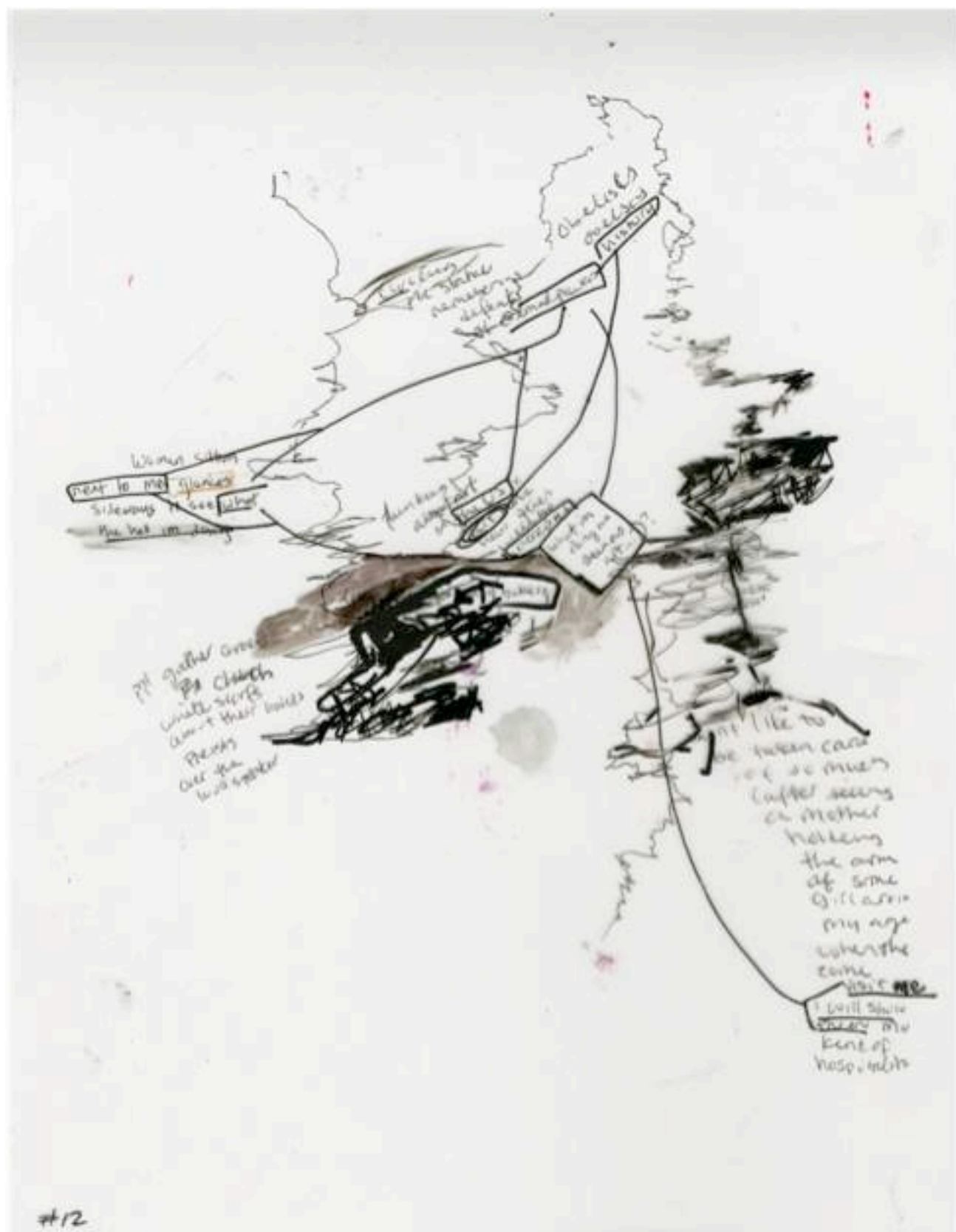
#5

searching for → first time → "--him & me" → beggars → they think → we all use → "we are the same--"

searching for → my eyes

street sleepers → dreamt → don't sleep now

we all use → they → beggars



#12

white scarves about their bodies--
circling the statue

remembering defeat
to see what the hell I'm doing

art here
about their bodies

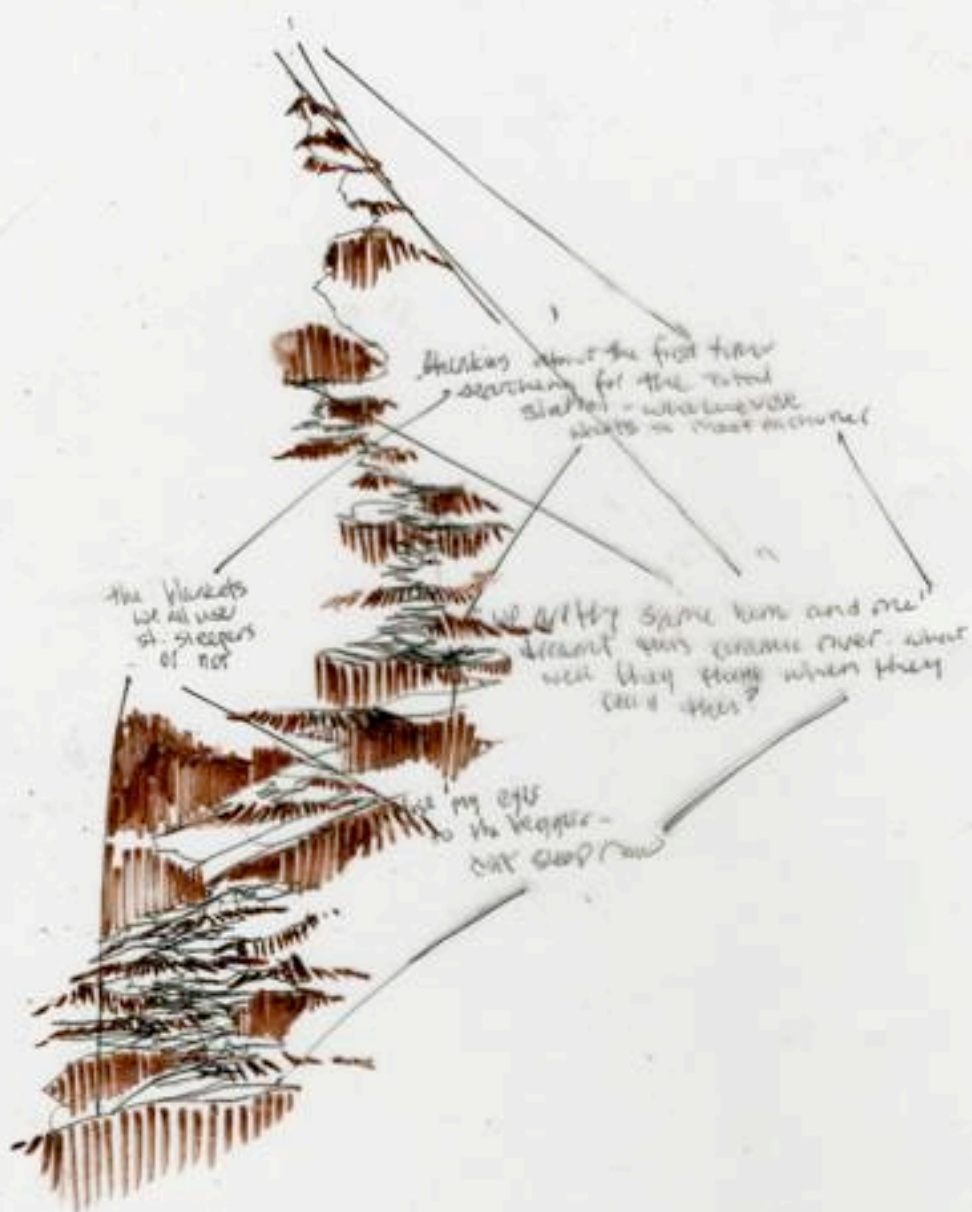
#12b

gathering glances
remembering states
and stolen obelisks
a marked history

over the loudspeakers
what the hell
I'm doing seen

circling history
glances to the left
after seeing
(obelisks) some girl around my age

SOMEWHERE AROUND KAWOLCHES TO NATA HOUSE (AMAM)



#13

urgency of divided space

dashed landing

a whimsical state

browns carry unfixed flash and gesture

a rootless place

a map more

of the uneasy wash

than measured line

windy space

marked down the mountain

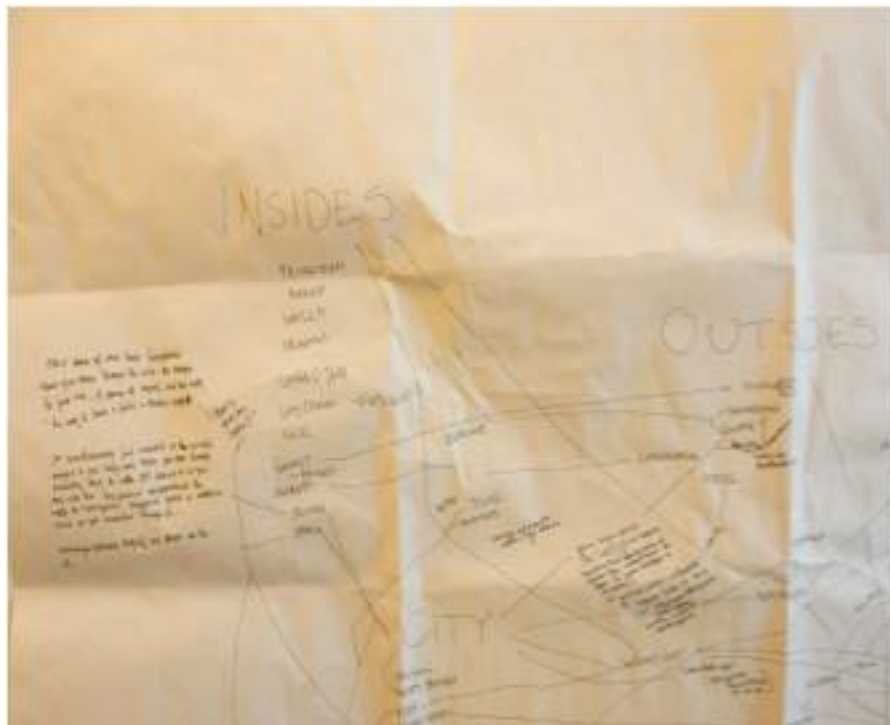
a range created

that breaks easily

to slide

from being held

apart from surface



What Is It?

cento (pg.1): roads that are, and cut through, the historic tangling, the referential effects
 they breath together, even though there is a distinction, a symbiosis
 city-organs
 distance is voyeurism
 making of human
 "attitude and costume" layers of daily interaction, authenticity, performance
 this in relation to the making of artwork
 "addressed away" extends out, becomes directed out, motion of roads and lines an awaited distance
 costuming effect of created works apart from yourself as maker--becoming spectator
 it extends circling back on itself collapsing distinction or a fixed point of vision and end point
 talking a lot about the action of making and where the self gets located in that outwardly directed
 expression the forming of the world or a vision of it, perception historically, presently the piling on and
 cutting through the complete being the unfixed the motion

The self-referential nature of the work I've set-up doesn't allow me to write something from an analytic distance that contains the piece as a whole without also having to comment on it. For instance, what is an artist statement? Does that type of document occupy a space external from the artwork that is legitimate? I think it may not be possible for something like an artist statement to function separately from the work in the process-based model I've set up. However, as one friend asked, am I afraid to speak to something overarching because I am afraid of doing violence? Why leave the theory I've dealt with out? I don't think what I've been working on can be contained or explained within an intellectual framework of a particular theory, such as some particular attempts at theorizing race or post-coloniality. However satisfying it may be to place this within the context of one theory or text, I think it is beside the point. To some extent I feel that the work functions itself as a theoretical framework. A mode in which to operate amid complicated relationships to art, geography, history, subjectivity.

A contemporary phenomenological response to me (a western woman) in Ethiopia derived from within the struggles listed above, is obviously somewhat informed by the theory I've read but I think it sets up its own internal system which speaks to (by allowing me to speak to) the problems of attempting to make such a work. For example, being a performing body as a *ferenj*.

This is present within the gestural artwork, and the oscillation to different types of written responses. I think these dynamics speak to memory, transcription, and construction. I can say safely that I am struggling against the organizational forces in the history of ideas about west and east.⁴⁷ I mean this in the context of geographical and historical imagination and how this has informed my identity (and in turn my work); and in addition, the traditional formal constraints while trying to use different media to approach all this. The metaphoric play between these two contexts produce a

For instance, I'm not discussing the process of racialization directly in most of this work, but I am bearing this in mind as I produce (in the U.S. and in Ethiopia). The production therefore, seeks to keep a critical eye to these dynamics while simultaneously seeking to disrupt the organizational principles, e.g. race, which put limits on us as thinking, moving subjects.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot writes⁴⁸ about how the West constructed itself through the use of

⁴⁷ "The peculiar hold on late-nineteenth century liberal European culture of such relatively punitive ideas will seem mysterious unless it is remembered that the appeal of sciences like linguistics, anthropology, and biology was that they were empirical, and by no means speculative or idealistic." (Said 232)

⁴⁸The disciplinary connection of Anthropology to Western self-construction: Trouillot refers to the position of the non-western subject as occupying the "savage-slot" as the basis for anthropology. The formation of the subject and place of study for anthropology, Trouillot argues, necessarily arose simultaneous to the symbolic formation of the West as occupying a geographical and subject position distinct from an "Elsewhere". This grounding for anthropology originated prior to the "institutionalization of anthropology as a specialized field of inquiry" (18). Trouillot ties together a "thematic correspondence" between utopia, savage, and the West. In this relation, "the West was

the ontological category of the "savage-slot." Through anthropology it was able to survey from a distance "the savage". The discipline characterized it in a shifting position (whichever way was most useful) from noble to barbarous, from an *authoritative* locale which served the West's purposes in solidifying a unique identity distinctly outside of the discourse of savage. By making work that incorporates myself as part of it, as opposed to external to it as maker, I would like to address the fact that I am being made simultaneously. And in turn, that I am scrutinizing what I am producing.

I think this translates most readily into the taxi map exercises. The first level of engagement is taking a mini-bus taxi full of people to a given destination. I just did the exercise three or so times when I remembered and was on my way somewhere. I tried to get a few of my habesha friends to do this regularly as well but it didn't work out. The city at this time was pretty congested due to construction. The task was simply to put pen to paper in my notebook and let the motion of the taxi carry my pen. Along the "mapped route" I marked points that drew my attention, such as images I wanted to note, or thoughts that passed noticeably through my head. This is essentially what constituted the experience of recording the information of the map. When I returned, I made transparencies out of the maps, about 20 copies for each of the three maps. Then, I drew and

always first, as utopia or as challenge to it." This constitutes "a universal project, the boundaries of which are no-where, u-topias, non-spatial." The ordering made possible by this is not produced in the Enlightenment only "but [is] part and parcel of the horizons set by the Renaissance and its simultaneous creation of Europe and Otherness" (20).

The structures here "impose a frame within which to read world history" (12). He is pointing to the formation of metanarratives as inherent in a conceptualization of history that draws on the savage and the West. Since the West formed with the constructive force over the "no-where," the "non-spatial," the savage, "the symbolic process through which the West created itself thus involved the universal legitimacy of power--and order became, in that process, the answer to the question of legitimacy. To put it otherwise, the West is inconceivable without a metanarrative" (22). Thus the relationship to anthropology, Western self-conceptualization, and a reading of history become linked.

painted over the transparencies focusing on the gestures as well as the language. With the language, I constructed poems through making different types connections. For example, through both circling and drawing lines, which is a constraint in and of itself, or through other limitations, such as in what got blocked out or highlighted through the gestural work. In addition, I occasionally wrote poems in reaction from the complete image the gestural drawings produced.

The drawings go through multiple configurations. They are worked over, altering the present reading with the presence of different types of recording (temporally, and different media) coming through in dialogue with one another. Obviously these are subjective maps made by "my hand specifically" (as Julie Mehretu says) and I want to presence my hand in the making of all of this. The maps are pointing to my imagination but they are working from a given surface. That is, they work from the movement of the road in one stage, my gestural "reaction" to that in another. It is dealing with memory, history, and my location.⁴⁹

For example, here is discussion about the significance of a coffee stain on one of the maps:

It occurred a few weeks after returning to the U.S. This leads to questions of what is before or after the "making of the piece." The map part? The work on the transparencies? There are, as in many things, multiple instances of recording. This process is reminiscent of the project in general. The "piece" itself is made of various stages marking various intentions

⁴⁹ A work by Bill T. Jones (*Floating the Tongue*: "a solo improvisation that seeks to reveal the activity of the mind as the body moves, delving into the experience of consciousness") demonstrates this concept aptly: the making and performing and "demonstrating thinking" are simultaneous, they make up what constitutes the piece as a whole. It highlights the simultaneity of experience and is read through the act of performing which I think is significant. To an extent it is the moment of creation, effecting itself. Here is an attempt to break down and present internal landscapes and processes. The processes of which are separated and performed. They are collapsed in the self and maybe this is ok. In considering the significance of being "a person on stage with a location" the person's lived experiences are carried in what they produce as a maker. With an eye to self-reflexivity the phases can work as a processual and active way of gazing back at one's own work while still remaining present inside it. If this is true only symbolically in the performance, I think it could be argued that within the event of the piece itself is this looking, which affects what is made, remaking. This follows Bill T's comment that he is looking for "art not at the service of the de-selfed self" that that would be classicist in nature. He stresses that he is "in my body and in constant exchange with the world." The erasure of the "evidence of [my] thinking" would be a complacency to a history of power (and hierarchy, valuation).

and occurrences. The experiences of reading it over in a coffee shop in Berkeley happened to get recorded, marked on the page by my spilling a drop of coffee. My clumsiness lending a significance to a moment that would have been forgotten, unrecorded, and therefore unreadable in the work. It marks one particular instance of interaction. It functions as one form of multiple readings, literally, in time.

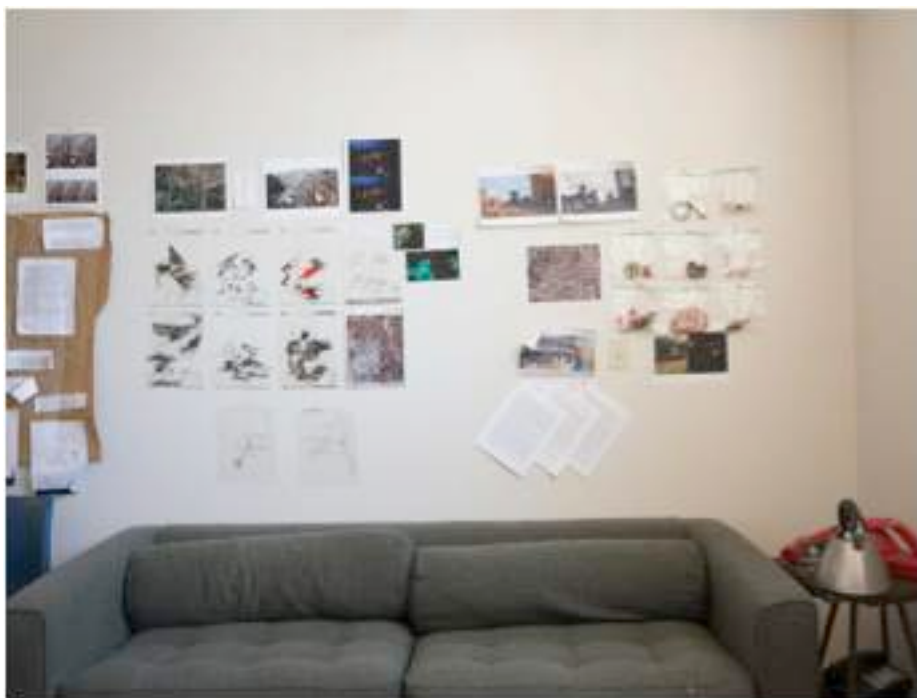
In some ways I am attempting here to draw a connection between the notion of historicity and the map pieces. What gets called up for me right now is the problematics of recollection and recording. If we consider memory on a global and historical scale, one must take into account direct and indirect experiences translated and filtered through various bodies over time⁵⁰. I would argue that these create the circumstances under which I presently make.

More personally, the formed space of a moment is recorded in a very particular way and is being filtered through the present. My memory of the situation, of watching a man minding his own business talking to himself outside the stopped taxi and the woman next to me “tsking”. Of course she could have been reacting to something else. Was it for me? absent minded? The language I use in the first mapping is often considering my filter (I notice, I used to, I see, I realize) in that moment. My memory then effecting what I see and record. What is that filtering? One answer would be that this is a strategic locating of myself verses the extracted self of the travel writer. What would it be if it wasn’t recorded that way? What does this mean I am missing? How to read this? And then I wonder about the effects of reading this now. What does the piece become? How has it changed?

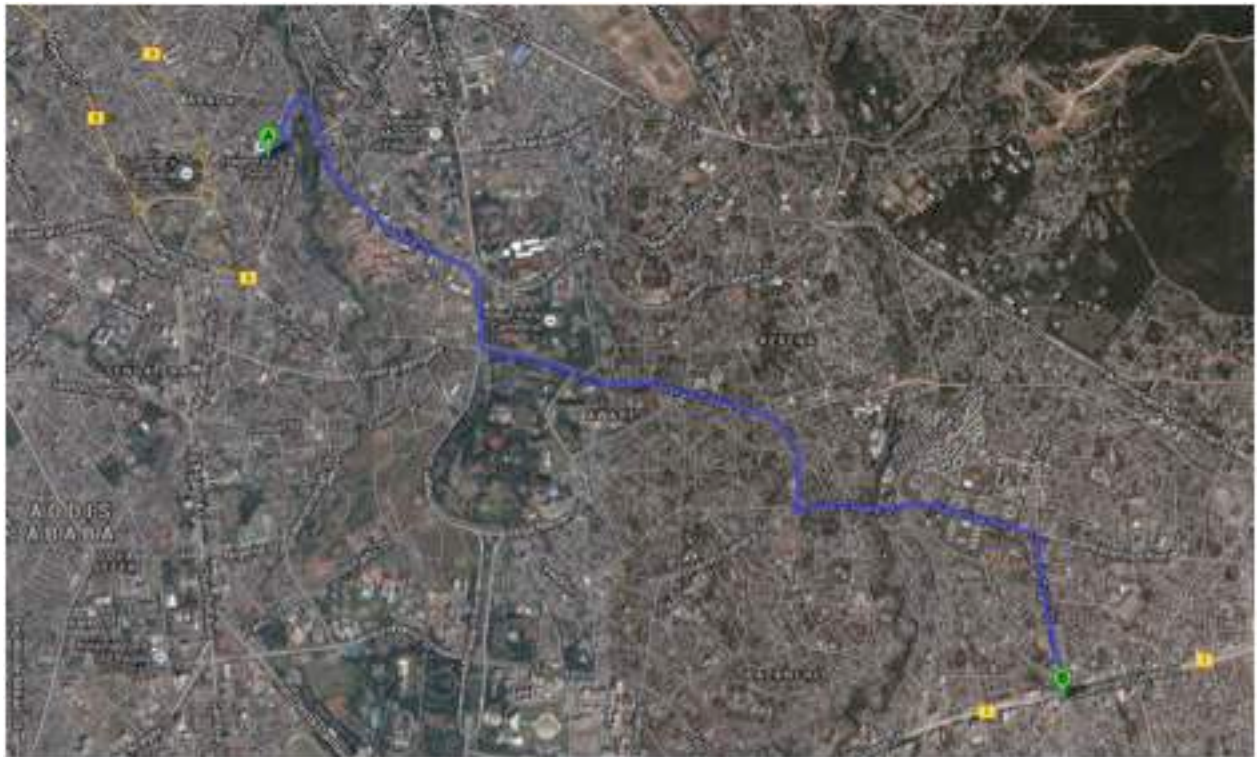
⁵⁰ “The centuries-old designation of geographical space to the east of Europe as ‘Oriental’ was partly political, partly doctrinal, and partly imaginative; it implied no necessary connection between actual experience of the Orient and knowledge of what is Oriental...But when...the many hundreds of nineteenth century European travelers and scholars discuss the Orient, we can immediately note a far more intimate and proprietary attitude...the *geographical space* of the Orient was penetrated, worked over, taken hold of. The cumulative effect of decades of so sovereign a Western handling turned the Orient from alien into colonial space” (Said, 211).

At one point in my notes I write: "Its the negative space that builds up, the structural elements holding it together." I was simultaneously referring to an image made from drawing on a transparency as well as considering the shape of the project as a whole. I then ask: "Does this connect to concepts of recording? What becomes unreadable?"

In one of the maps I refer to a "ceramic river." In a response to this language I interpreted "the ceramic river as the space I see between myself and others, between the act of drawing and what it shows, between the drawing and any one reading of it, or a fragile construction of the map, of art, of rifts between people because of this practice or because of who we are and where we come from."



Google Map: Piassa to Haya Hulet



Original language to above "Taxi Map":

1. man holds manikin by crotch
2. open front of red brick building beautiful
3. Shime's arm
4. I have to fart
5. thinking about meaning of posters of Meles as we drive by the palace
6. man walks by talking to himself a woman tsks next to me
7. I find myself wanting to list the things I see: two priests looking priestly, a woman in heels with a certain look in her eye, a man who's green shirt matches the building he stands in front of perfectly
8. I realize I might be excited to go to Bole (this is a fancy neighborhood I used to hate even though its not actually fancy)
9. I notice the red X of the buildings to be destroyed
10. the honks of the drivers seem like a song for the little boy in the taxi who makes the sound of the honking himself

SOMEWHERE AROUND KASANCHES TO NAMA RIVER (ADAM)



Google Map: Kazanches to Haya Hulet



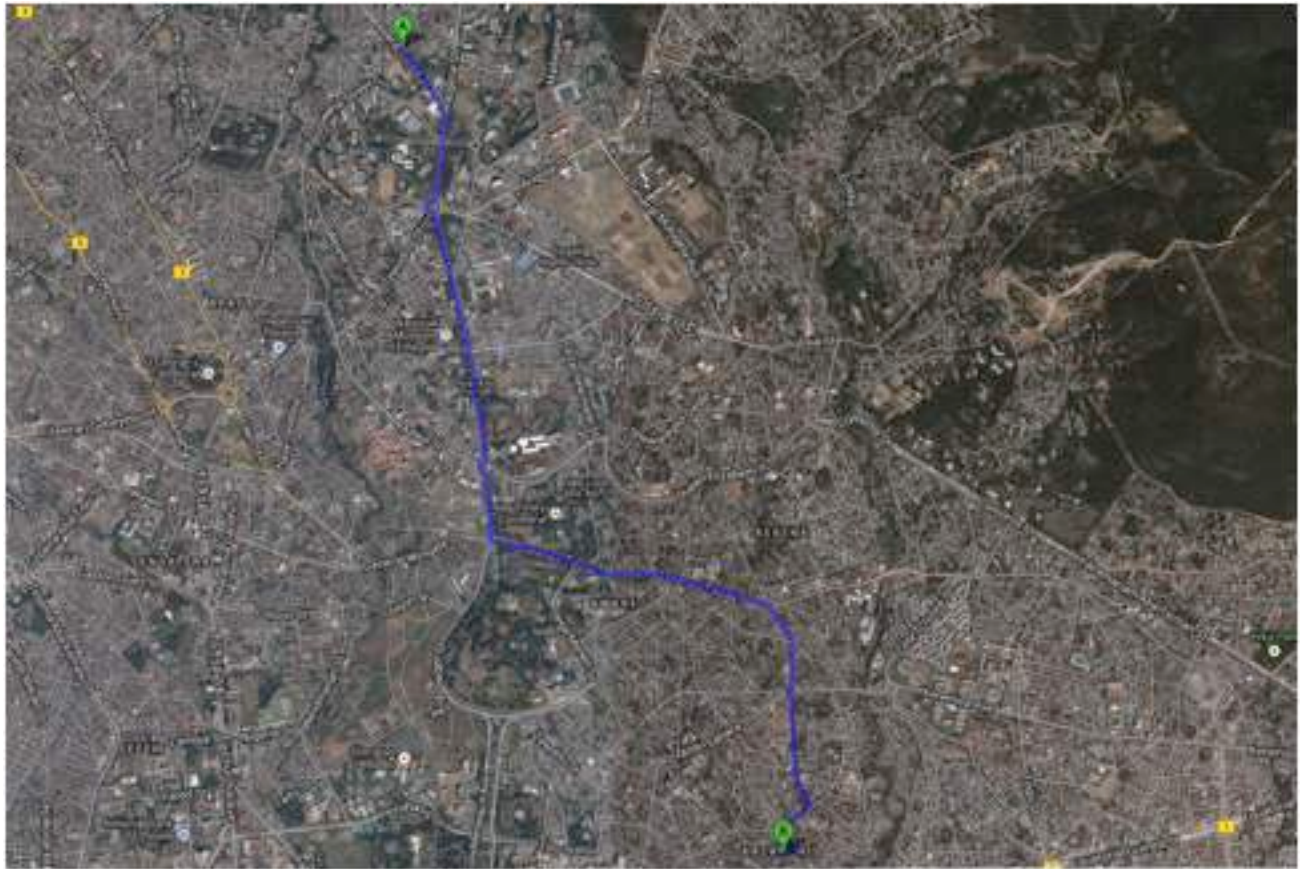
original language in above “Taxi Map”

1. the blankets we all use st. sleepers or not
2. thinking about the first time searching for the Total station—where where everyone waits to meet eachother
3. “We are the same him and me” dreamt this ciramic river. What will they think when they read this?
4. close my eyes to the beggars—don’t sleep now

TAXI FROM MENE TO KASANCRES



Google Map: Menen to Kazanches



Original language to above "Taxi Map":

1. woman sitting next to me glances sideways to see what the hell I'm doing
2. ppl gather around church white scarfs about their bodies priests over the loudspeaker
3. long line for Shoa bakery
4. thinking about art in the U.S. & art here how this will be accepted (what I'm doing seen as art..?)
5. circling the statue remembering defeat of colonial powers
6. obelisks obelisks history
7. don't like to be taken care of so much (after seeing a mother holding the arm of some girl around my age) when they come visit me I will show them my kind of hospitality



Memory in a Parking Lot

they have
been picked
from
the ground
a passed
moment that
hung from
a collection
of line
in a
layered
coming in
from the
sides to
tie in the
middle of
my vision
the view of
the mount-
ains collected

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SOMEWHERE AROUND KASHNICKS TO NANA RIVER (MAY 1941)



Looking about the river
stream for the good
fishing - will be over
fast in the morning

The blankets
we all use
at sleepers
of not

"I will go down with him and me"
about this came over. what
will they bring when they
come back

Close my eyes
to the world
and sleep



LIVING THE STATE MEMBERSHIP

Women sitting next to me quines

Long low table

don't like to be taken care of so much (after seeing ex mother holding the arm of some girl as in my age when the same girl was still small about my height)

TAXI FROM PIASSA TO HAIYA HOULET

(on our way to see to sea more)





