OLD LANDS

*Old Lands* takes readers on an epic journey through the legion spaces and times of the Eastern Peloponnese, trailing in the footsteps of a Roman *periegete*, an Ottoman traveler, antiquarians, and anonymous agrarians.

Following waters in search of rest through the lens of Lucretian poetics, Christopher Witmore reconstitutes an untimely mode of ambulatory writing, chorography, mindful of the challenges we all face in these precarious times. Turning on pressing concerns that arise out of object-oriented encounters, *Old Lands* ponders the disappearance of an agrarian world rooted in the Neolithic, the transition to urban styles of living, and changes in communication, movement, and metabolism, while opening fresh perspectives on long-term inhabitation, changing mobilities, and appropriation through pollution. Carefully composed with those objects encountered along its varied paths, this book offers an original and wonderous account of a region in twenty-seven segments, and fulfills a longstanding ambition within archaeology to generate a polychronic narrative that stands as a complement and alternative to diachronic history.

*Old Lands* will be of interest to historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, and scholars of the Eastern Peloponnese. Those interested in the long-term changes in society, technology, and culture in this region will find this book captivating.

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OLD LANDS

A Chorography of the Eastern Peloponnese

Christopher Witmore
For Liz, Eli, and Liam
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AUTHOR’S NOTE

Topics are listed at the beginning of each segment in order to give the reader a sense of what lies ahead. Otherwise, you, dear reader, are asked to join in the journey.

Place names vary throughout the book and this variance is an artifact of fidelity. Spellings such as Anapli, Nauplia, and Nauplion are used in different segments true to historical specificity. This variety holds for units of measurement, whether in feet or meters, timed stops or stadia. This book seeks to maintain diversity as part of the story of these old lands. It is also a matter of conformity to both the mode of engagement and the identities of those in whose paths we follow. These differences of nomenclature and metrology are critical to understanding the ichnography of contemporary standards, which are always an achievement. While it is no ancillary concern to map out the diversity which lies behind the accomplishment that is consistency, it is anachronistic to disavow it. Some segments are historical; some are taken from notebooks, video diaries, and photography, and worked out through further research. This is not always made explicit in the writing as, as a matter of purpose, it depends on the aims and objectives of the segment. Lastly, a word should be said with regard to maps. These come at the end. Designed by Caleb Lightfoot, flat projections are properly situated as achievements, among others, rather than starting points.

In those ages before Greece became explicit as an optimal picture of lands seen from above, not all spaces were accorded equal value. Some things, some places, were more potent than others. Some groves were more favored by the gods; some ravines were more haunted by ghosts, some springs had their stories not to linger after dark, their magical spells that befell the wayward, or their nymphs and satyrs to lead one astray in tangled thickets. For so many of the ancients, the world emanated out from the common hearth under a home-centered sky. The Roman periegete who directed his readers around Greece in the second century CE did not describe a measured space spreading out in every direction. Rather, we read of walled enclosures offering themselves as protective containers. We read of agoras that lend themselves to the territorial form, where roads, named for the places they connected, issued, and converged. Radiating outwardly from the shared ground of the center the polis acquired its form as a series of encompassing spheres.

Apart from those repeatedly articulated histories where tattered fragments suggestive of the Greek past are cobbled together into the discrete contours of linear succession, not all times are externalized into a passage temporality or reducible to a homogeneous continuum. Some objects, though held to be separate by measured spans of history, are in reality co-extensive. Some surfaces, some walls, some foundations, folded into the polychronic ensemble of land, are suggestive of a time more weather-like than linear. Even though the hallowed halls of Mycenae fell to destruction after 1200 BCE, Bronze Age walls endured as part of the composition of Hellenistic communities. Even though Roman road pavements had been buried for over a millennium, the form of the cardo maximus continued to orient buildings, property boundaries, and streets in the late seventeenth century. A different species of contact occurs between persisting quanta of Jurassic limestone slabs laid upon Neolithic surfaces and the throngs of tourists who traipse across them to stand before the Bema of Ancient Corinth.

The entities that comprise these old lands compose legion spaces. The objects entangled into its composition give rise to unruly times. If other spaces,
other times open in the shadows of what has been disclosed then, as this book wagers, it is because space and time arise from vigors within, and frictions between, actual things. In search of rest, waters stream through deep strata, dissoluting a karstic course through a chthonic domain twelve hundred millennia in duration. Megaron (the great hall of Mycenaen palaces), temple, and the exhibition space of the museum stage authority, separate observers, and structure groups, and through the recurrence of form, something of the Bronze Age, Hellenistic period, and modern Greece swerve into proximity. Through the tone of their bells, a ruminant orchestra on the browse broadcasts the positions of individual sheep to shepherds under dense juniper canopies. Waiting out the germination of plants, agrarians live in accordance with the rhythms of season, weather, rye, scarcity, and surplus. With smart devices, whose actions were anticipated in magic, augury becomes pervasive by holding knowledge of distant events instantly. Each situation evokes distinctive spaces and times. Understanding each situation also demands something of a metaphysical overhaul, where time and space are not specified in advance, but are composed differently over idiosyncratic paths alongside things. To illuminate these situations, an alternate account of Greek lands is requisite.

Though the objects of this book are legion, they compose the old lands today known by the names they were so well known in antiquity, the Corinthia and the Argolid. The heartlands of Greece, here surfaces and folds were ancient in their radical, agrarian modification before the strong walls of Mycenae were raised. For millennia these aged and storied lands have exerted a profound influence upon the human imagination. The allure is, yes, that of antiquity and history, of myth and change, of wonderous ruin, relinquished burden, and departed worth. What weight has not been given to its renowned citadels, cities, or sanctuaries: Isthmia, Corinth, or Nemea, Mycenae, Tiryns, or Argos, Asine, Epidaurus, or Troizen? But there is also the draw of the land itself, the agrarian countryside, the high mountains, wide valleys, forested slopes, broken shores, the wine dark seas. There is the appeal of its people, their vitality, and their struggles—all foreigners who are beguiled to venture among them do so with their leave.

This book takes the form of a chorography. This term, “chorography,” is rooted in the Greek word chorographia, a combination of chôra (“place,” “land”, “country”) or chôros (“a definite space or place”) and graphia (“writing”). Thus, the term accommodates an alternative between two nouns, chôra or chôros, and the mode of engagement, graphia. Ancient chorographies described, delineated, and documented a country, land, or region. In the seventeenth and eighteenth

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1 See Strabo 10.3.5 for a discussion of the proper function of chorography (Ephorus gave the best account of the founding of cities, kinships, migrations, and original founders, “but I,” Plutarch says, “shall show the facts as they now are, as regards both the position of places and the distances between them; for this is the most appropriate function of Chorography”); see also 8.3.17.
centuries, antiquarians embraced chorography in their studies of community and history, memory and ruins, places both vanished and extant. In learning from these traditions, this book ventures farther by finding more in chorography’s etymological vagueness, for this ambiguity between chôra or chôros suggests a dual commitment to land, to its legion objects, and to how we dwell, or to space and how it is constituted.

Chorography: the very word suggests a different fidelity. A literary genre crafted in a world prior to comprehensive abstractions, it holds the potential for different understandings of the lands and spaces of the Eastern Peloponnese. By its very nature a chorography cannot begin with the refined map, with the purified representation, with the flat abstraction to the exclusion of other spaces. It must set out along the path, over the ridge, through the pass, behind the wall in medias res (in the midst of things) with an open disposition. In this, one submits to a naive trust that at the telos of this endeavor an account of these lands will emerge, numerous spaces will unfold, hopefully less forced or coerced and more encouraged, more coaxed, into coming forth. This also holds for regions, which are dominated by the sense of an encompassing area. Indeed, even the cherished notion of landscape is tethered to the mode of viewing terrain as picture, not to the land itself. What comprises a region has to be made and, yet again, this should not be settled in advance.

Latin etymology reminds us of the polyvalence of the term regio: line, direction, boundary, part of a larger area or space, district, administrative subdivision, division or parcel (of land), part or division (of the sky or universe), part (of the body), sphere (of thought, activity). With so many meanings, let us linger briefly with the first—lines are fundamental to regions. A line measured from Tiryns to Aria laid the baseline for the first map of the Peloponnese produced by geodesic triangulation. A line blasted from the Saronic Gulf to the Gulf of Corinth unsealed a monstrous conduit between the Aegean and Adriatic closed since the Pleistocene. A line laid from Corinth to Argos opened the land to routine crossings in two directions at guaranteed times. For the majority of those who lived and died in this region, lines were not so much drawn around flatlands, as manifest in an engagement across water, along roads, over high


3 Debunking land in favor of landscape is not without precedent. In bolstering his definition landscape, Tim Ingold, for example, reduces “land” to that which is homogeneous and quantifiable, to something that weighs and forms a kind of lowest common denominator (1993, 153–54). I do not share this assessment. Were we to play at dialectical one-upmanship, one might contend that the “scape” gets in the way of land, but this would get us nowhere. Indeed, the etymology of “landscape” in “land” and “schap” proves to be somewhat more nuanced; see, for example, Andrews (1999, 28–9), Cosgrove (2004); also Cosgrove and Daniels (1988), McInerney and Sluiter (2016).

passes, through uplands, low valleys, or towns, under olive or carob, by walls, through doors, along corridors, or by referencing other times and places at a distance. To draw a line on a map is a beginning, but it is not our starting point.

This chorography takes shape over twenty-seven segments. These segments cross the length and breadth of the Eastern Peloponnese, from the isthmus of Corinth to Mycenae, from Argos to Asine, from Ermiom into the Saronic Gulf. One of the simplest forms of geometric space, “segment” is taken in its etymological sense of “seg-,” from secare, to cut, and “-ment,” as with the Latin suffix -men, -mentum, the product of this action. One must acknowledge that by writing land through a series of segments they give the impression of holding a preference for lines spatial over lines temporal, and that these spatialized lines are wholly arbitrary in their points of entry and division. What distinguishes this chorography from such a sleight-of-hand replacement of lines temporal with lines spatial, besides, as noted above, the specification of spaces and times as composed through contact and engagement, is that each segment is a portion of an actual thing. A neglected path taken over Malavria forms a very different sense of distance from a rail car moving through aged defiles south of Nemea. Open areas for Argive assembly in 272 BCE do not spatialize crowds in the same manner as squares in modern Nafplion. If these segments form lines, then it is because linearity is a quality of the object described and its rapports, whether within and along streets in Ancient Corinth, the Hadrianic aqueduct, vineyard trellises, or the transects of survey archaeologists. This, of course, is not to deny lines their dignity as objects; it is to emphasize that one is not reducible to the other.

As an archaeologist, I know what I am expected to say concerning my self-location and rationale for writing a chorography. This book, and the labors that contributed to it, fit into a very long tradition of scholarship concerned with landscape, place, and region in Greece; the ancients, Strabo the geographer, and Pausanias the periegete; the travelers and antiquarians, nearly all Northern Europeans; the Classical topographers; the travel writers; the archaeologists. As the latter, I realize that I am obliged to locate myself with respect to my predecessors and their traditions; my debt to them is tremendous. I am obligated to specify the ways I participate in these cultures by weighing previous scholarship, situating myself among the intelligentsia; this endeavor helps to demonstrate one’s credentials and establish trust in what is written. Archaeology is not without its expectations for how one structures a book; for how problems are to be

5 On the notion of region, see Oliver (2001).
6 A litany would include Jacob Spon and George Wheler, Sir William Gell and Edward Dodwell, François Pouqueville and William Martin Leake, among many others; Ernst Curtius and Herbert Lehmann, Eugene Vanderpool and William Kendrick Pritchett; the chorographer Antonios Miliarakis; the archaeologists Michael Jameson and James Wiseman; the travel writer Patrick Leigh Fermor.
posed. Theoretical frameworks should be set out in advance and everything follows from there—description and analysis through application. In this way we demonstrate how one's expertise shapes what lies before you; we also predetermine, we contain our objects of concern. But this is not that book.

An important disciplinary context for this chorography is that of regional archaeological survey. Over the last fifty years these old lands have been trudged by archaeologists, geographers, anthropologists, and others who have focused on the articulation of discrete regions over the last twenty millennia and more. Methodological approaches, disciplinary commitments, and areas of expertise supply predetermined frames for what has become of past lands, packaging its objects for other past-oriented fields, history and philology. The resulting descriptive geographies, site reports, or regional histories circumscribe objects, held to be archaeological, in a space and time regarded as primal and external, homogeneous and stable. Despite the emphasis on diachronic perspectives, lending emphasis to that which passes through time, researchers nonetheless order their findings into periods arranged into a linear sequence. Each object, whether site, landscape, or region, is locked into a horizon of expectation defined by a chain of succession and replacement—Neolithic then Bronze Age then Iron Age, Archaic then Classical—where they are relegated to the confines of their own eras—the Hellenistic, the Roman, the Ottoman—or a more nuanced continuum nonetheless gauged in such terms. This chorography could lend further nuance to these longstanding traditions. It could give shape to the undocumented recesses formed between their lines from the angle of historical trajectory. It could write out its routes across the succession of various eras. But this is not that book.

For what it is worth, archaeology is a conflictant field. It has yet to shed fully the empirical notion that it is, with respect to its objects, a cumulative tradition—advancing with ever more detail to generate comprehensive knowledge of the past. Drawing on continually refined methods, consistent, repeatable, compatible, with an even greater fidelity to what remains, a fuller picture of the continuity and discontinuity of human experience over the long term may be achieved. From the angle of discursive competence, each endeavor may attend to lacunae, lend emphasis to the neglected, refine the achievements of

7 Among them are the Eastern Korinthia Archaeological Survey, the Nemea Valley Archaeological Survey, the Berbati-Limnes Archaeological Survey, the Argolid Exploration Project, and the Methana Survey Project. One could also add the Mycenae Survey and the Argolid Survey, but these were temporally circumscribed.

8 Here, we should acknowledge a renewed interest in the road, route, and track among archaeologists as objects worthy of engagement and study See, for example, Alcock, Bodel, and Talbert (2012), Marchand (2009); also Snead, Erickson, and Darling (2009). Much of this work, of course, can be situated as part of a longstanding tradition within archaeology and classical topography: Hope Simpson and Hagel (2006), Lavery (1990), Wiseman (1978).

9 See Witmore and Shanks (2013).
others, and fill in the remaining gaps, which continue to open under the weight of relevance that comes with research. Beginning with the text, everyone cultivates an awareness of the ignored zones, the vague portions where they might add definition, perhaps zoom in to a little more detail, on the path towards a more intricate understanding of “landscape,” its changes and metamorphoses, whether within a particular era or across the millennia. The expanding encyclopedia of knowledge burdens every researcher with an impossible task. Yet, how does one reconcile this expectation of taking up the heritage of one’s object in its entirety with that of the critical gesture, which consigns previous ways of understanding, older paths to knowing, to the scrap pile of obsolescence? Self-contained bits and pieces continue to amass, involuntary memories of a land’s own past refuse to succumb to the expectations that seek to link them in search of a more comprehensive picture. This endeavor, while necessary, will bring us no closer to our objects, which will always exceed our attempts to come to terms with them.11

Some 150 years ago, archaeology parted ways with chorography. Description came to privilege the analysis that divided. Land was carved up by specialization; chthonic underlands for archaeology; prediluvian strata for geology; exceptional monuments for architectural history; Classical sculpture for art history; ancient literature for philology; flora and fauna for biology; contemporary Greece for anthropology and geography. Archaeology, like other fields of knowledge, invested in a cumulative picture of science wherein its objects were made to revolve around a discipline, rather than the discipline revolving around its objects. What might seem untimely from one angle is, from the other, timely, if not long overdue. Given our precarious times we must find a perspective that both grounds and reaches, that struggles for depth, for roots, that is inclusive of the full diversity of land objects and their rapports, while aspiring to be as subtle as the situation at hand. This is a vast endeavor. I am fully aware that too much weight may be placed on a word to the point of over-determination. I have found chorography to permit me the freedom of movement, which academic specialization prohibits and these old lands demand.

As for the things themselves, which only reveal so much of their being in any given situation, research can never take form as full disclosure. These lands, comprised as they are of trillions of things, can never be fully exhausted. Given the repeated mention of thing and object, these terms should be clarified at the start. A thing is taken in its etymological sense of gathering; that is, as an entity whose composite reality draws upon a variety of situations, but is not reducible to any or all of them. An object is taken in the sense of the Latin

11 Here, I find much common ground with the object-oriented approaches of Levi Bryant (2011, 2014) and Graham Harman (2011, 2013, 2016a).
objectum; that is, an obstruction, that which is exposed, thrown, or cast before anything else. Both terms serve to evoke any autonomous entity that cannot be broken down into its parts or reduced to its effects.\(^{12}\) As naively given things are made explicit and objects of the past come into being in the course of fieldwork, old perspectives fall to that which emerges. Across the centuries of archaeological work, given the diversity of approaches to site, land, and region there is less continuity than one would hope. With such massive bodies of scholarship, it seems daunting to return to the land with an altered perspective. Yet, we are in need of another way to apprehend what has become of the past, not as a “total record,”\(^{13}\) but as a diverse series of chorographic engagements informed by archaeology. In learning from the wall, the path, the condition of the field, the trash on the surface; by surrendering oneself to being nudged along by the things encountered is to embrace the risk that comes with trusting that a possibility will reveal itself.

Archaeology does not have a regional synthesis unique to itself, which is to say that it persists in borrowing from history, it endures in regarding the past as history (of course, by so doing such an account is no less archaeological).\(^{14}\) In writing this book I have aspired to that longstanding disciplinary ambition among archaeologists to generate a synthesis that can stand as a complement and alternative to a linear and ordered history. Consequently, such a synthesis might avoid historical expectations that shape how we conceive of these old lands by beginning not with what was, but what has become of it.\(^{15}\) To claim, however, that this chorography stands as a complete synthesis—that is, as an assemblage of disjoined fragments forged into a cogent whole—would be disingenuous. From the perspective permitted by the maps published at the end of this book, the image of connected segments is but paper-thin. The path, broken by encounters, digressions, excurses, is anything but linear. The nodes, whether held by pleats or torn by rents between different moments, interlocutors, experiences, are anything but homothetic; that is, understood as fixed and similar points of correspondence. Nor does this chorography ignore history. Perhaps it aspires to a synthetic treatment aware of its own impossibility. It could even be claimed that this chorography constitutes an anti-synthesis, for any commitment to things is oblique, disjointed, and utterly specific. Uncertainties aside, although this chorography cannot hope to paper over fragmentation or disjunction, it does have the virtue of aspiring to archaeology as literature.

It is indeed the archaeological that we must now single out for the considerable nuance it brings to chorography. A longstanding tradition of the antiquarian on the road, the phenomenological tradition of landscape through experience,

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12 After Harman (2013, 6–7); also see Witmore (2014a, 206, 2020).
14 See Olivier (2011), Olsen (2010); also Souvatzi, Baysal, and Baysal (2019).
the attention paid to subtle differences in surface, shape, substance is built into the field’s history and conditions one to simply observe the things around them. The archaeologist—if one might be permitted to indulge such a composite character—is attuned to look for grimy bits of pottery by the trail. The archaeologist notices where what is buried extrudes from the soil or how surface form suggests what lies below; they recognize how disparities in the orientation of rubble or the material in a wall recalls different hands at work or how a few gnarled olives hold the line of an old terrace freed from its girdle of sundry stone. The archaeologist cultivates a deep appreciation for human and nonhuman being over the long term; they are habituated to care for that which is crumbling, for what lies abandoned, and how it fits with what is near. The archaeologist raises questions of change, of ruination, of what other times are co-extensive with the encounter.

Of course, the archaeologist is not without certain impediments to perception. Often their art of noticing relegates the scatter of broken ceramics to the status of intermediary, a means to something else. In looking for evidence for what was, they often overlook what is, which may be ultimately incompatible with the will to historical truth that frames what guides them. The archaeologist has not always taken into account the erstwhile that is part of a reality that is here and now. Yet, through accumulated experience, an archaeologist might develop the requisite patience to hesitate in the face of the tumular mound; by virtue of its thingly propensities, they may yet strike out towards the unanticipated. By being open to the surprise of things, by being attuned to their suggestions, an archaeologist is conditioned to redefine their goals and orientations. It is here that I may submit two last motives for writing this book: to take a land so studied as to be familiar and conjure forth a new strangeness where the smack of wonder, the shiver of astonishment, may yet resound; and to offer an audacious defense of these old lands as uncompressible, of the countryside, an assemblage of legion things in themselves, as inexhaustible.

This is not the first book to pose such problems or to advance such propositions for how to proceed. Phenomenology invites its adherents to return to things, foremost understood as phenomena, and this term signals a concern for that which appears and make itself apparent to a human observer. Elevating firsthand observation and experience over caricatures of measured reportage and distilled representation it advocates thick, rich description of land, centered on the medium of the walking, sensing body. Rather than revolving exclusively around things inscribed on paper, it asks us to venture into the lived world, to be engaged on the ground, where other angles, connections, relationships might

16 Olivier (2011, 53).
18 Tilley (1994, 2010); also Brück (2005).
arise through the effective disposition of being there. There is much to commend about this perspective. What makes the following chorography different lies in how it neither abandons the natural sciences nor the affairs between actual objects which exist apart from that privileged rapport between the human and world. To this we may add a more frugal point. Walking returns some sense of gravity to the paths and distances once trudged without other recourse. Yet, human engagement with land shifts with the experience of being in a car or on a train, riding on a horse or within a boat, as does walking in the company of others. Likewise, some crossings are wholly nonhuman, whether one follows waters in search of rest or goats on the browse; and thus, they arise through the effective disposition, I would contend, of being-alongside-others there.

At variance with a flattened image of bounded lands, another sense of space is also highlighted by those who champion connectivities and networks. The notion of network, behind theories of connectivity, embraces this twentieth-century spatial grammar and deploys it as an operative principle in a world where point-to-point movement was the exception rather than the rule. It is not simply the case that networks hold greater meaning from distant offices with bright monitors where the intervening expanses are annulled to nothing, for the equipotency of points tethered by thin, electronic connections is grounded in a homogeneous space. Because the constitutive ingredient is the dot, the point of intersecting lines, which are deprived of volume, the network, no less than flat scenographies, subsumes inhabitable, three-dimensional spaces to two-dimensional with its assumed symmetries. While learning from these perspectives, this book sets out on a different path. So why should anyone read it?

First, Old Lands returns to the lived ground of the trail, the terroir, the soil, the objects that compose the lands (chôrai) of the Eastern Peloponnese in order to articulate something of their asymmetrical, incompressible, surplus realities outside of maps, apart from the two-dimensional. Such an endeavor demands a sustained philosophical exploration of heterogeneous spaces (chôroi). Second, this book offers an ancient, untimely, form of ambulatory writing as a timely mode for addressing present challenges. Rather than remain within the comfortable confines of our idiosyncratic fields of knowledge, it refuses to break up that which resists being broken by venturing in directions suggested by actual things confronted on the ground. Third, this book splits with an academic apartheid that sorts times into their own delineated boxes and offers what might well be described as an archaeological account of a polychronic, mixed
ensemble that remains true to the objects encountered, which are themselves participants in its co-articulation, its co-realization.

How else might other spaces arise from the surface of the page? How might the articulation of heterogeneous spaces inform us in our pressing need to return to ground? Will the juxtaposition of different spaces and times open new insights into how to live well with these old lands? These are among some of the questions that give rise to this book. In these precarious times we, all of us, are in desperate need of an integrated method that tarries on the ground, pauses in the field, observes the soil, the trees, the vines, the weeds, that emerges with things, that forms out of land. Archaeologists have yet to develop a style of writing whose twists and turns are receptive to provocations roused by the things encountered. This account is embedded with thick description, an intense, even obsessive, fidelity to locality, to utter specificity. Attuned to the ruined wall, the terraced contours, the vineyard soil, the unwholesome vapors above marshes, the life-giving waters of ancient springs, this account follows their hints, their suggestions to larger lessons or to that which is less obvious. Strabo and Pausanias, the antiquarians, teach us another way to write without imposing arbitrary boundaries indicative of disciplines.

It would be disingenuous to deny how, for me, this book fits into a larger puzzle, what has been described elsewhere as a symmetrical archaeology. Still, in writing a chorography a different set of loyalties arise to the telos of this endeavor; that is, to 

chôra, land, country, or to 

chôros, place and space. Situating these as the outcomes reminds us of the struggle to see apart from what maps manifest from the angle of ninety degrees. Thus, after an engagement with the initial flattening of the Peloponnese with the Expédition scientifique de Morée (1829–32) the ensuing narrative grasps at the lands over which it moves, by which its course is counselled.

Segments 1 through 9 move from the isthmus of Corinth to the citadel of Mycenae. Along the road that crosses the isthmus to Ancient Corinth, the book begins with several objects suggestive of the proportionality of the Peloponnese: the canal that severs thousands of years of terrestrial crossings to create an island were a peninsula existed; the wall that prevents and permits movement; the marine terraces raised upon what becomes of trillions of fossilized corpses. It walks through the differences between the diachronic and polychronic, history and archaeology, in Ancient Corinth. It juxtaposes Northern European and Ottoman perspectives on the walled enclosures of Acrocorinth in the late seventeenth century. It drives in isolation along a concrete highway that reduces and

26 Here we may note other fine examples in the work of Robert Byron (1937), Bruce Chatwin (1987), Barry Lopez (1986), Robert Macfarlane (2012, 2019), Rebecca Solnit (2010).
compresses old geographical barriers and distances, and radically redefines the
nature of locality and human consciousness in the region. It slows to a walk
through chôra, investigating soils and terroir, and tasting of wines. With survey
archaeologists, it explores how space comes to be understood in regional arch-
aeological projects and discusses landscape practices along a field transect in
Nemea. With the poetics of Lucretius, it courses with waters through a channel
that, in mimicry of karstic forms, reoriented a chreode hundreds of thousands of
years in the making, and into ruin. It joins Gertrude Bell on an 1899 journey
by train through the Tretos Pass and works through the radical changes in
speed, distance, time, volume, and power that accompany the railroad. In light
of Walter Benjamin’s theses on the concept of history, it moves through Myce-
nae by learning how archaeology, beginning with Schliemann, was led astray
here by a genuine historical image.

Segments 10 through 18 attend to the old ways between Mycenae and
ancient Asine. Progressing from the grave of archaeologist Humfrey Payne to the
Argive sanctuary of Hera, the book retraces a Bronze Age route by terraces of
relinquished labor, over tombs of ancestors, inherited and adopted. It moves
with the monocultural inversion that flips the entire Argive plain from a locus
of calculated scarcity to that of reckless abundance. It undertakes a comparison
(synkrisis) of patient forms of government with independent poleis and impatient
governance with risk-taking kings. From a seat in the Hellenistic theatre of
Argos, against the backdrop of a Northern European desire for a lost Greece, it
works through the creation of a mono-linguistic territory and the nationalistic
definition of the soil. Using clues from his unpublished logbooks it accompanies
William Martin Leake from Argos to Anapli in 1806, in the course of creating
of a map based on timed distances with Ottoman post horses, and writing his
descriptive geography, Travels in the Morea. In the company of those who make
a living in Nauplion it takes to its streets, exploring the transformation of
to that of reckles abundance. It undertakes a comparison
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the Argive Plain from a locus

Segments 19 through 27 journey to Ermioni then traipse over the Adheres
Mountains and into the Saronic Gulf. In the company of a local fisherman turned
watersports guide, this portion of the book begins at sea between Tolo and Vivari
and touches upon matters of concern related to tourism, the end of traditional boat
making, near-shore fish, and a precarious and uncertain future for traditional fish-
ers, commercial long-line trawlers, and corporate aquaculturalists. Upon returning
to dry land it traces differences in the definition of land and belonging between

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Mesolithic foragers and tenant farmers under Ottoman overlords with eight students. It crosses a forgotten pass among herds into the Southern Argolid, over upland plains, and through a marginal gorge, highlighting estranged relations to an altered countryside persistent in its capacity to hold and engender. It conjures the forgotten spaces that emanated out from hearth under a home-centered sky. It contends with the olfactory burden of living with one’s own ordure in a polis without sewers or cesspits. It follows braided paths over a mountain range in the footsteps of antiquarians, Classical topographers, and others who have traced Pausanias’s path to Troizen. Exploring an old antagonism between agriculture and archaeology and a positive understanding of ruination, it strolls through the garden world of Ancient Troizen and situates the afterlife of a polis in light of Heidegger’s notions of Gelasenheit (releasement towards things) and Seinlassen (letting what is inexplicable stand as such). Trailing an Englishman, an Italian artist, and a janissary to Methana, it raises questions of truth and falsity with respect to reason, science, and history. Casting off by ferry into the Saronic Gulf, it churns through escalations of human pollution in sea and air while grasping for ground.

This book turns on matters of longstanding archaeological concern. Many segments transpire at watershed moments in how we understand space, reflecting on the disappearance of an agrarian world rooted in the Neolithic; the transition to urban styles of living; changes in communication, movement, and metabolism that follow internal combustion engines. Some segments, grounded by encounters with lithic scatters and springs, fields and groves, enclosures and truck roads, turn around issues of dwelling and belonging among hunter-gatherers, herders, agrarians, and urbanites. Others develop around key concerns that arise out of the encounter: object memory, agrarian patriotism, and estranged belonging; changing mobilities; archaeology versus history; pollution and the appropriation of ground, sea, and air; truth and the construction of knowledge; the nature of things and ontology; enclosure and exhibition; topology and duration; ever-changing relations between humans, their fellow creatures, and the wider environmental milieu; the need for thick description; and coming to ground in a new climate regime. Although some segments are dated, which serves as an indication that they transpired through a single crossing, all are, in fact, iterative.

Each segment results from spending time in a place, walking paths, visiting and revisiting the same grounds, again and again. Repetition of interaction serves to build familiarity, even a habitual competence, what de Certeau discusses as metis, a Greek word that among other things speaks to an experience born out of years of repeated crossings. Such repetition, without flat abstractions, helps to shed presuppositions that come with returning to ground with an estranged perspective. Where pastoral imagery no longer makes sense in the wake of the radical modification of Greek lands, by repeating a path

through experiential learning, by coming to see things from a different angle, by remaining open to letting go in a flash of insight, we may come to grasp different understandings of these lands.\textsuperscript{29} Just as the ambulatory mode is a way of engaging things encountered along the path, automobile, train, boat, or mount provide necessary contrasts. In walking, one moves slowly, engaging smells, being attentive to the textures of the path, to tracks in the soil, to geoponics, to weeds.\textsuperscript{30} In a car, one races along in mutual isolation, trading a closeness to land objects for comfortable interiors at speed.

As one must find the humility to trust in the thing encountered to open thought in its direction, the confidence in one’s own ability to connect, and the audacity to remain open to other possibilities, an excursus on the nature of chorography comes at the end. Likewise, to begin with the map is to reinforce the power of projected, two-dimensional space over others. The object-oriented disposition offered here requires a writer, whether archaeologist or other, to place aside the map that conditions what is to be observed and how to observe it. This is not to abandon maps completely. Maps are among other achievements that come at the telos of this endeavor and readers are cautioned not to treat this imagery as the only path to accessing the spaces opened by this chorography. Such a book asks for a lot of patience on the part of its reader who may find reward with the argument by staying true to the path. To help the reader prepare for the journey a litany of concerns raised along the way are placed at the front of each segment.

This book draws on a decade and more of traveling, interviewing, observing, photographing, collecting, noting, videoing, reasoning, and arranging the wealth and character of this region. It draws upon many more decades in revisiting sites discussed by others and connecting features on the ground with the achievements of predecessors. Upon setting out I was not sure where the path would lead me; I was not sure where the writing would go. While I have ceded much of what I brought to the path in order to learn new ones, this text, to be sure, is fraught by my limitations. I continue to grapple with how to locate myself vis-à-vis such a work. Whereas more on the issue of authorship will be said by way of an epilogue, for what it is worth, as an archaeologist and inheritor of agrarian obligations, as a former stonemason and student of the Classics, as a walker raised among herds, and a father mindful of the challenges my sons will face, I have been shaped by both the page and the pagus. Over twenty-five years of breaking its earth, heeding the call of its recesses, these Greek lands merge with the person. I recognize a need to return to the soil, to land, to understand the actual things both in themselves and for others, who struggle for ground, as now we all must do. Just as these old lands offer a rare opportunity to explore that struggle at a depth over its diverse surfaces, this journey

\textsuperscript{29} Also see Bradley (2003).
\textsuperscript{30} Also González-Ruibal (2019, 162).
opens an occasion to learn how to struggle in our precarious times. Many of the segments that follow expand beyond the archaeologist to imagine the engagement of others or to take the path with them. Thus, the reader should be aware that these segments shift in and out of different perspectives—some at variance with my own—I, we, or the third person, through what we might term avatars, such as the Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi, archaeologist Gertrude Bell, or Plutarch’s Pyrrhus of Epirus.

One might see such a project, which draws together so many previously separate concerns, as the culmination of a career. Had I waited, this book might not have been written. A certain rashness and naivety was necessary to its character and scope. For what one lacks in carrying the burdens of knowledge, one may gain in an alacrity and audacity of imagination, which counts for a great deal, arguably more, with respect to these old lands; I can only hope to have honored it.

Bibliography


PREFACE


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PROLOGUE

The measure of the Morea?

When French surveyors raised a truncated cairn of dry stacked stones on St Elie de Khéli, the highest point of Mt Arachneo, there was nowhere in the Morea from which to view the region in its entirety.\(^1\) For those consumed by this endeavor, erecting a two-meter monument of stone in 1829 served to signal how this visual deficiency would soon change.

Beginning from a simple point in Nafplion, French surveyors calculated with a repeating theodolite—an 8-inch Gambey—an angle off a known base, a 3,500-meter line staked out over unencumbered plain between Tiryns and Aria.\(^2\) From a point to the ends of a segment with known length, they determined the interior angle and, with this, the precise measure of two other lines to form a triangle. With this primary shape, the surveyors then established a second triangle from a survey station on the Larissa of Argos. Between Argos and Nafplion another side, another measured line, now extended across the plain. From this length, soon gauged from the summit of St Elie de Khéli, a third triangle was ascertained; one with the proportion requisite for measuring though triangulation the whole of the Morea, a region increasingly called by its ancient name, the Peloponnese.

What begins in the flat plain, where divisions between plots had long been maintained by agrarians, moves to the tops of mountains. From a primary triangle, the simplest of forms after the point, segment, and angle, a latticework

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\(^1\) Peytier, Puillon de Boblaye, and Servier describe the stations as *des côtes tronqués offrant un très bon pointé* (1833, 90); for the dimensions of the signal cairns, see Bory de Saint-Vincent (1834, 20).

\(^2\) These measurements were undertaken with a chain calibrated against a copper meter at various temperatures (Peytier, Puillon de Boblaye, and Servier 1833). On the 3,500-meter baseline, see Segment 14.
of these simple forms was built. Through geometry the highest peak in the Eastern Morea is flattened.

In order to see the whole of this region from anywhere, its mountainous contours, its gentle slopes, its deep valleys must be translated onto a uniform, precisely measured plane; and this flat surface is given new relevance with latitude and longitude tethered to the globe for the first time. In this way, that which is heterogeneous and variable is translated into that which is homogeneous and stable. Set to a scale of 1:200,000, the resulting map—the *Carte de la Morée*—was published in six sheets, only three years after the raising of the cairn on Arachneo. After 1832, a young King Otto can spread out the map on any table in any room of his little palace in Nafplion. He can examine a scaled-down, yet faithful, image of the peninsula, and thereby dominate the region at the center of a fledgling nation.

There had been other maps of the Morea. Prior to 1800, the most reliable maps were derived from Admiralty surveys. Though the shape of the coastline, the location of ports, and streams were detailed, features in the regional interior remained in question. Prior to 1832, those intrepid few who ventured inland with cartographic ambitions derived their distances from estimations based on timed movements and paces counted between points. No features had been obtained through geodesic measurement. So when the director of the *Expédition scientifique de Morée* (1829–1832), Colonel Jean Baptiste Geneviève Marcellin Bory de Saint-Vincent, argued that the advantage held by the geographer Émile Le Puillon de Boblaye over all his predecessors in clarifying ancient geography was that he knew “l’état des lieux tels qu’ils sont réellement” (the state of the places as they really are), the colonel had in mind a géographie actuelle derived through geodesic triangulation. This was a cartographic enterprise whose precision could be measured in deviations of a meter or less between Argos and Arachneo, a distance exceeding 22 kilometers.

In vaunting the topographical endeavors of the *Expédition*, the feats of ancient heroes may not have been far from Bory de Saint-Vincent’s thoughts. (Indeed,
the last signal to have been erected on Arachneo, the French had conjectured, announced the fall of Troy, as stated by Aeschylus’s Clytemnestra.\footnote{Agamemnon 309; Puillon de Boblaye (1836, 53); also see Frazer (1898 Vol. III, 233).} Plagued by fever and hardship, officers within the topographical brigade endeavored with their activities to the bitter end; one devoted capitaine purportedly met his death with pencil in hand.\footnote{Bory de Saint-Vincent (1834, 19, 50–51).} Why such an endeavor came to gain so radical an importance requires a demonstration of how this map proved fundamental to securing those sites and objects documented by the Expédition for all future forms of knowledge and its production.

Erecting signals, stretching chain, measuring lengths and angles, noting these tabulations in lists, such tasks were only part of the mission. Modeled upon the collaborative body behind the Description de l’Égypte, the Expédition involved the
intense scrutiny of the Morea from numerous scholarly angles.\textsuperscript{11} While surveyors eyed yonder heights in establishing their triangles, topographers and geographers, artists and architects descended on other areas of the Morea to undertake their various pursuits. That the whole of this state-sponsored mission was overseen by the Dépôt de la Guerre should not go unnoticed.\textsuperscript{12} Having aided in issuing the final eviction notices to the Ottomans, the French embrace the mantle of liberators as a sufficient justification for carrying out these endeavors. To the liberators goes the license. To the protectors goes the privilege. To the discoverers goes the distinction.

It is no coincidence that the frontispiece to the first volume published by the Expédition in 1831—dedicated to architecture, sculptures, and inscriptions—was comprised of the most celebrated vestiges of the Classical past to be encountered by the Architectural Division in the course of their labors. At the center of the page stands an aedicule crowned by an acroteria-fringed marble found at Epidaurus, held aloft by caryatids of Roman Loucos near Astros. Sundry sculptural pieces litter the foreground: by the plinths of the two caryatids recline Athena (in the Roman guise of Minerva) and Herakles (Hercules), fragments of metopes uncovered by the architect, Abel Blouet, and company at the temple of Zeus in Olympia; at the center sits a sphinx drafted from Delos, a composite capital found in Coron, and small funerary vases found in tombs of Aegina.\textsuperscript{13} Among these superlative stones lies an inscription upon which are indicated the main cities explored in the course of the French exploits. In the background on the right rises the Acropolis of Athens; on the left looms Acrocorinth. Below the latter, in the middle ground, are three figures: a French soldier shows to a Greek a French frigate "qui débarque les troupes par lesquelles la liberté et la paix sont rendues à la Grèce" (which landed the troops by which freedom and peace were restored to Greece).\textsuperscript{14} At their feet kneels "un Turc rendant ses armes" (a Turk returning his weapons).\textsuperscript{15} Here, France stands between Greece and the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{16} In the midst of all, set within the immutable marble of the central monument is an inscription to the Expédition itself—the title of the first volume, ordered by the government of France, with its date and author.

\textsuperscript{12} On the political, economic, and social consequences of state-sponsored mapping projects in the nineteenth century, see (Driver 2001; Scott 1998); in the context of France, see Godlewska (1999).
\textsuperscript{13} Blouet (1831, 3).
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} While Abel Blouet and Bory de Saint-Vincent regarded their work as a contribution to science and the arts, they nonetheless reassert a Northern European prerogative formerly laid open through conquest and occupation.
Frontispiece from Blouet 1831, Gennadius Library, ASCSA (photo by Don Lavigne).
The next image to follow the frontispiece will come at the end, as the first of the plates: a map of the Peloponnese. Upon its flat surface ancient sites are indicated as points; ancient names are supplied in brackets. Dashed lines connect one site to others indicating the paths taken by Blouet’s group. With this map one gets the impression that the achievements of the French would more than just connect the dots; these liberators would lift the veil of time and expose a Classical past in the sense of making it known (this is precise meaning of “discover,” to “lift the covering”).¹⁷ And yet, for Ernst Curtius, famed “father” of Classical archaeology, future excavator of Olympia, the scientific gains of the three volumes eventually published by the Architectural Division were not in proportion to the lavishness of their expenditure.¹⁸ Because of the delay caused by climate and sickness in the execution of the triangulation survey, Blouet was forced to base his map on one published by Pierre Lapie in 1826.¹⁹ Lapie’s map lacked the first-rate precision of what was to come. Its delimitation of the Morea coastline rested on partial certainty. Its depiction of the interior of the region was wholly arbitrary. Had Blouet waited, Curtius’s assessment might have been different, if only because of the French architect’s cartographic base.

Without the work of the topographical brigade, vestiges of the Classical past could not be made fully known, much less kept, safeguarded, and archived for all time. This aspiration could only be fulfilled after 1832. With the addition of the descriptive geographies published by Puillon de Boblaye, which included illustrations, the Carte de la Morée becomes a primary visual mode for fixing objects and observations to the whole of the Morea; it also becomes a basis for manipulating such information at a distance.²⁰ After the Expédition “what it is to see and what there is to see” in the Morea is redefined.²¹ The French endeavors were now tethered to the map which will guide all ensuing endeavors of similar purpose.

In the first historical geography of the peninsula published in German, the Peloponnesos (1851–1852), Curtius placed the Carte out front. Opposite the title

¹⁷ Martin Heidegger recognized the importance of such a truth-event in terms of alêthéia, the Greek word for truth, which he translated as “unconcealment” (2008a). For Heidegger, science and technology open a methodical assault on that which is hidden or naively given. As a systematic invasion of being, this process is ongoing; its character is that of a self-fulfilling prophesy that results in the impoverishment of being. For more concerning the semantic importance of “discover” in the context of maps and exploration, see Sloterdijk (2013, 99).
¹⁸ “Im Allgemeinen kann man sich des Eindrucks nicht erwehren, dass der wissenschaftliche Gewinn nicht im Verhältnisse zu der Pracht der Ausstattung steht” (Curtius 1851–1852, 135).
¹⁹ For a comparison of the two maps, see Curtius (1851–1852, 133–34), Ploutoglou et al. (2011).
²⁰ Witmore (2013a, 137–45).
²¹ Latour (1986, 9).
A version of the French map is situated as the frontispiece to Volume 1 (its presence is all the more notable over the course of two volumes sparsely supplied with illustrations, all either planimetric views of sites or topographic profiles). With this map, as Curtius noted, Peloponnesian chorography for the first time obtained a secure and firm foundation. It was a firm foundation, indeed. The Carte formed the basis for all subsequent maps of the Peloponnesian produced throughout the nineteenth century. Yet by the century’s end the inconsistencies in maps based upon the French survey had become too numerous to be corrected by wrestling with its constraints in the resulting projections. Need also arose for maps at different scales. At 1:25,000, 1:10,000, and 1:5,000, maps can be used for land registers, planning of public and private works, securing names to any and all locations, or backcountry trekking. With a variety of scales, one confronts the combination of the expansion of the map to capture the most minute of details and the pervasiveness of the two-dimensional extended into every domain. What had been the most powerful articulation of power possible in the early nineteenth century now infiltrates all aspects of life. The map now shapes how space is understood.

No one can deny the gains. Future anthropologists, archaeologists, classicists, botanists, geographers, and topographers would no longer have to count their paces, time their distances, or write out their trails to the base of mountains. With key points now firmly positioned in the region on paper, there is little need to repeat the act of tethering each point to its encompassing milieu. As with Curtius, they too would place the map at the beginning. For this was a map that

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22 In noting “durch diese Karten hat die peloponnesische Chorographie zuerst eine feste und sichere Grundlage erhalten,” Curtius (Curtius 1851–1852, 134) underlined the importance of such a map for the progress of knowledge.

23 Throughout the later nineteenth century it would form a basis for subsequent maps—Carte de la Grèce (1852) (in twenty sheets at a scale of 1:200,000) was followed by the Austrian Staff Map (1880) (1:200,000), Greek Ordnance Map (1885) (eleven sheets at a scale of 1:300,000), General-Karte des Königreiches Griechenland (1885) (1:300,000), Topographische und Hyposmetrische Karte des Peloponnes (1892) (in four sheets at a scale of 1:300,000).

24 A new Geodesic Mission (Geodaitikí Apostoli) was initiated in 1889. What begins as an Austrian Military Mission under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Heinrich Harl would become a Greek military endeavor in 1895—renamed in 1926 as the Hellenic Military Geographical Service (HMGS)—thus ending the history of Northern European control over the mapping, demarcating, and naming of Greek localities. Over the course of many decades, a new infrastructural base would be established on the basis of a new cycle of survey, geodesy, and triangulation. Whereas the Carte de la Morée was based upon 183 principle points over the Morea and the surrounding islands, the HMGS would establish 26,739 (first and second order) trigonometric control points over the whole of Greece (see Naval Intelligence Division (1944, 397–403), Peytier, Puillon de Boblaye, and Servier (1833, 102–06); also see the HMGS website: http://web.gys.gr/portal/page?_pageid=33,36335&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL).

25 Latour (1986); on maps and nineteenth-century military power, see Driver (2001).
maintained an optical fidelity to the physical proportions and visual properties of the entire Morea as seen from above, and such a map will precondition nearly all modes of regional engagement and geographical disclosure under the guise of scientific research. One need not, of course, reduce maps to those inscriptions that seek to transport something of the physical world without distortion at a distance.\textsuperscript{26} There are other maps and modes of mapping.\textsuperscript{27} It is, however, with a base map whose accuracy served the purpose of visually transporting measurable qualities of the land that anyone from anywhere could go directly to their object of concern and continue with it along the cumulative path of scientific research, the profitable path of economic development, the efficient path of technological progress, or the formalistic path of legislative authority. Between the Argive plain or Arachneo and the scientific interlocutor comes such a map. Because of a trust that locales were secure vis-à-vis other geographical features, information about a region can now be gathered bit by bit. A homogeneous space becomes the base line of description, scientific and otherwise, a ground against which these old lands would come to divulge their secrets.

When the archaeologist David Rupp, in the company of colleagues, climbed the slopes of Arachneo nearly 150 years after the topographical brigade raised their cairn these researchers began on a secure footing.\textsuperscript{28} Upon Arachneo, the Roman traveler Pausanias had situated the altars to Zeus and Hera.\textsuperscript{29} Charles de Vaudrimey, the staff officer in charge of the Argolid section of the French topographical brigade, associated a large enclosure in the saddle between its two peaks, Profitis Elias (St Elie de Khéli) and Arna, with the two altars.\textsuperscript{30} Curtius, following in Vaudrimey’s footsteps, further affirmed the location of the altar within the enclosure at the saddle.\textsuperscript{31} In the wake of these associations, the labors undertaken by subsequent researchers rested upon a known information base that could be questioned, revisited, and refined.

Rupp and his colleagues proceed into observation with a certainty of what and how that could only arise from the page. First, they embrace the

\textsuperscript{26} This is not to reassert that phenomenological distrust of maps (see Aldred and Lucas 2019, 30–1), only to situate maps that follow in the line of the Carte as manifesting one space among others without allowing them to assert one space above others.

\textsuperscript{27} See Tuan (1977), Turnbull (1994, 2000); also Gillings, Hacgüzeller, and Lock (2019).

\textsuperscript{28} Rupp made two visits to the peak—in 1973 and 1975. Among other colleagues to accompany him were Eugene Vanderpool, Merle Langdon, and John Camp (Rupp 1976, note 10).

\textsuperscript{29} On Pausanias, see Segments 17 and 22.

\textsuperscript{30} Bory de Saint-Vincent (1834, 51).

\textsuperscript{31} Curtius (1851–52, 418).
proposition that Pausanias placed the altars on the summit, not in a depression below. Serving as a directive to that which has yet to be articulated, this proposition pointed them to the enclosure in the saddle. There they proceed to undermine the site as the location for these altars. Using diagnostic sherds of pottery—identifiable on the grounds of material, shape, and/or decoration—found on the surface within its walls they establish temporal coordinates: “Bronze Age (ca. 3200–1100 BCE) onward.” After situating the large enclosure within an earlier timeframe, they demonstrate through lack the error of previous identifications. Because no objects (erstwhile blocks or sacrificial debris) are revealed here to support the associations of Curtius and Vaudrimey, the location of the altars is detached from the saddle enclosure. Through the labors of Rupp and his colleagues these textual objects will be (re)connected with objects on the summit of Profitis Elias, around the very point where French topographers raised their cairn. At the peak, Rupp and his colleagues photograph objects rendered as features of what Pausanias mentioned. They pace out an area covered in broken ceramics. They stretch out measuring tapes over remnants of walls. They produce a plan of the site. Concentrations of pottery—dated Late Geometric to early Archaic (mid-eighth to mid-seventh century) and Archaic to Classical (700–323 BCE)—are manifest as shaded areas against white ground. Undefined lines of stone acquire definition as either foundations or forms between outcrops. For fields like archaeology it is a given that photographs, maps, and plans constitute a priori modes of engaging its objects. These media underwrite consistent, repeatable, and standardized practices for how to deal with the unruly things suggestive of antiquity. Thus, their ongoing enrollment ensures that those who seek out such objects encounter them within the radius of routinized activity which they themselves open.

Over thirty years after Rupp’s survey, archaeologists will return to the summit of Arachneo. Olga Psychoyos and Yannis Karatzikos investigate the peak in the wake of its devastation. They note how ground east of the outcrop where the French raised their cairn had been leveled by bulldozer. They find how objects documented by Rupp had been obliterated in the course of building a new chapel. They detail how walls and surfaces buried in the 1970s now lay exposed before them. To the east of the outcrop, they mention how an

32 Rupp (1976, 264).
34 Cf. note 17 on Heidegger and alētheia; also see Sloterdijk (2016, 204–05).
35 In the context of developer-funded investigations, excavations were undertaken by the 4th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities from February 2009 and October 2010 (Psychoyos and Karatzikos 2015, 2016).
36 Construction of the chapel was abandoned afterwards, but a few courses of stone were raised.
antenna had been erected by the Hellenic Telecommunications Organization (OTE). While changes and coming interventions on the peak call to them, once again, the page directs archaeologists in what to seek and find, what to observe, and how to observe it.

Around a concrete geodesic column erected by the Hellenic Military Geographical Service to replace the French signal cairn, these new archaeologists lay out the Cartesian grid over an area of 60 x 40 meters. By stretching tapes across the peak, squares and rectangles on the ground take on the properties of squares and rectangles on the page. The flat surface orients and directs practitioners in the process of making visible what is revealed to remain. In a formidable surge of imitation, they too take photos of rocky surfaces. They too put dates to previously undisclosed objects upon this summit. Objects formerly buried are framed as of late Bronze Age; their forms are secured to the page. Once again, researchers proceed by filling in white space, thus adding to the explicit ground of the articulated past.

In publication Rupp situates his plan, photographs, and descriptions subsequent to a map of the “Argeia and Epidauria.” A dot marked “1199” tethers both map and plan together. An established benchmark, a concrete column raised upon the loftiest outcrop, now, in turn, ties image to the highest point of the peak. On paper this measured point is marked within the contours of Arachneo, which is set within the outline of the coastline, with respect to other points, Nafplion, Argos, and Mycenae. Psychoyos and Karatzikos also begin with the map. Similarly, all other images are situated as subsequent to an initial figure of

37 Rupp (1976, 262).
Google Earth. In both maps, named points and lines are situated within a frame, and what on the page comes to represent a node floating within a constellation of other nodes encapsulated by white space, on the ground translates into a continuous surface connected to other continuous surfaces round an imperfect sphere. What is left of ancient altars, a prehistoric sanctuary, a ruined chapel, and a chapel foundation abandoned in the midst of construction are defined from above in uninterrupted relation to other lands on a globe. Through the map, space spreads out in every direction, and the observer knows where to stand. Across these continuous, unbroken surfaces might not all points come to be treated with equal interest?

Look again upon the caryatids which hold aloft the roof of immutable posterity. There is an allure to long hidden things now disclosed, and by extension that which is hidden, those things yet to be revealed, call to those who seek to make them explicit. What had become of the Classical past was, for Blouet, as with the antiquarians before him, literally *terra incognita*, albeit defined within a land now documented with ever-increasing detail. Beginning with points, lines, and areas, other zones await definition with ever-higher degrees of articulation. After the initial flattening, every researcher is directed towards the vaguely defined portions where they might lend definition. Making an area explicit is tied to filling in whitespace, whether around points, along lines, or across areas of the countryside. Increasingly refined articulations obscured that excess within objects, what things might have shown of their own accord had they not been burdened with systematized observations that begin with the page.

Do we need maps to give form to regions? Is the path through the measured, optimal image shown from the angle of 90 degrees the only way to an awareness of the lands it conveys? Does the flat projection betray spaces at variance with those of the mapmaker? Archaeology is a non-zero-sum game and such documents are its necessary returns. The fate of those objects archaeologically disclosed speaks to the importance of such modes of engagement and manifestation. For without the publication of their labors, what had become of these altars and those chthonic objects below them prior to their destruction

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40 William Gell, the English antiquarian, had already compared the lack of knowledge concerning Greece to the uncharted African interiors (1810, i). The rationale of filling in white space for the charted land of the Greek past remains implicit within all forms of research, whether it be with archaeological surveys casting ever-finer meshed nets over “landscapes,” or with Classicists who legitimate overturning rocks because no one else has bothered to do so. For example, Forbes and Mee, in their introduction to the Methana Archaeological Project, are explicit in their rationale of contributing knowledge to what was “largely a blank spot on the map” (1997, 1).
would have been fully bulldozed into oblivion. Still, if the mode of revealing is the map, the plan, the photograph, then one grasps those qualities that can be manifest in two dimensions. If the past is conceived within the confines of a laminar history, then what has become of the past is relegated to episodes within or through compartments specified along the timeline. It is not what the flat projection fails to translate, or how it sieves away the world, but that we should always embrace the map, the plan, the planimetric perspective, as the mode of revealing the world that is so peculiar.

When Heidegger stated that “the being of beings is sought and found in the representedness of beings,” he drove home the point that the world picture (Weltbild) was the world grasped as picture. Archaeologists, architects, geographers, developers, whosoever is concerned with making these old lands explicit are obliged to the picture in advance. It not only grounds everything that we do, but conditions how we conceive of our objects and ourselves. As Heidegger pointed out, “such a projection maps out in advance the way in which the procedure of knowing is to bind itself to the region that is opened up.” Geometric forms now undergird recognizable forms of the things-themselves and secure the ground-plan for those consistencies extracted from a naively given continuum of inconsistencies. Objects named and dated call forth the measured image of that which exists in excess of the name and image. All acquisitions of terrace walls, field plots, roads, ceramic scatters, etc., begin with the optimal image. The picture is the mode of revealing; it mediates what and how something is made explicit for the observer who is lured into seeing themselves as standing apart from that which is shown. In this sense, and others, surveyors, cartographers, geographers, and archaeologists belong together.

When in times of drought ancient farmers made the long trek to the top of Arachneo to give sacrifice to Zeus and Hera, any comprehensive view of the island of Pelops was an artifact of divine privilege; that is, assuming an ancient conception of the divine that imagined gods as refusing to content themselves with oblique angles and embracing a direct, sky-centered view to the world below. The closest these ancient agrarians could come to such superhuman...
vision was to look upon distant lands from these heights, known in even more ancient times as Sapyselaton.\textsuperscript{44} Plowing fields, awaiting the germination of rye, grinding grain, finding love, and seeking fortune, human acts occurred firmly on the ground, which, without the reproduced and projected image, was the seat of knowing for these ordinary mortals.\textsuperscript{45} This is not to assume that ancient farmers lacked the capacity to understand the shape of the land or the imagination to render that shape on a flat surface; rather, it is to acknowledge that their eyes grasped the land with other views that one could only regard as partial after the trigonometric flattening of Arachneo with the aid of signal cairns and theodolites, stakes and an engineer chain.

The French map, archaeological maps, photographs, illustrations, all translate actual objects onto a surface while maintaining something of their qualities without distortion. In making land explicit from right angles, maps subsume objects suggestive of diverse spaces to what can be rendered as a flat surface, which is internalized by the observer as the grounds for knowing. Always beginning here, we have forgotten how the projected space conditions our understanding of space by absorbing other spaces. In this, the encompassing definition of a region comes to dominate all other meanings. Yet, any assessment of a region defined in such a way is premature for most of the inhabitants of these old lands. In order to think of spaces that precede the map it is at least partly necessary to exhume other conceptions of these lands from history. It is also a question of thinking of space differently. For space externalized, projected, and homogeneous cannot be primordial in the way maps, and later satellite imagery, suggest. Beginning with the actual labors, locales, and instruments that lead to the \textit{Carte}, the outcome of French cartographic endeavors, serves us this lesson.

Prior to the arrival of the French surveyors, subsequent archaeologists, bulldozers, and telecommunications, everyone drawn to this peak approached it without the ideal formalities that situated this post-\textit{Carte} perception. If ancient peoples bothered to take the measure of these heights, then they did so in other ways: perhaps in the number of shaded stops along the path; perhaps with the amount of water or \textit{kykeon} swilled from a waterskin; perhaps in the intensity and texture of mastic gum, which passes over the tongue from bitter to pine. If they attempted to overcome distance, then they did so by looking up, or down: sacrifices were perhaps recognized by trails of smoke that could be seen from below; those who sacrifice upon these high altars only need look to gain a fleeting appreciation of something suggestive of the view enjoyed by gods. Yet, the ancients did not see as one does through the map. And to

\footnotesize{44 A name which suggests the prevalence of the silver fir.}
\footnotesize{45 Serres (2017, 132).}
continue with this line of thinking reinforces an understanding of knowledge centered exclusively upon humans as observers, rather than something that sparkles among objects outside of us.

No one really knows why this peak was called Arachneo. The Greek arachne, the spider’s web, radiates out in thin, gossamer lines. Arachne specifies a particular type of sundial, one ascribed to Eudoxus. Later, the spider designates the ecliptic, the twelve-point circle, perhaps derived from the horizon system, on the astrolabe. The relation between these things and the peak has meaning. From the point of axis at the peak, where signals flare, where clouds rise, where fires to Zeus and Hera burn, and knowledge shimmers, the web extends like falling shadows into the surrounding lands and onto the page. An object of reference from distant lands, this lofty summit served to mark those storied locales about its base. A point of observation above all other points is where the calculated and repeatable observation that absorbs these lands begins. Yet, the name proved tenacious, for, it is said, Arachnaea was still in use among agrarians at the turn of the nineteenth century. Cairns, altars, slotted crag, and detritus left by those drawn here, at the point of the peak one encounters something approaching the gnomon-like self-showing of knowledge, which is all too easily stifled. Arachneo: the name suggests an axis of knowing before the page and outside of us.

These lands are patient of interpretation in terms of the modes of manifestation we happen to deploy, but we, our media, are not the only objects that enable observation, or otherwise. Chorography, that ancient genre deployed by the likes of Pausanias and Strabo, offers another way to suggest a diversity of spaces, apart from the a priori container or continuous surface or homogeneous background. This is not about recouping some sense of the naivety that came with living in a world without pervasive two-dimensional images of the region. Rather, in rounding this mountain, this axis of knowledge, through the old lands of the Eastern Peloponnese, this book seeks to understand how interactions with and between peaks, routes, roads, crests, valleys, walled cities, paths and plots, houses and hearths, mounts and engines gave rise to radically different spaces.

To submit everything to the law of leveling is an error empirically, aesthetically, and speculatively. We err empirically by amplifying our sense of sight, for we have heavily circumscribed our ability to see by failing to be attuned to that

46 Vitruvius 9.8.1; Schaldach (2004).
47 Neugebauer (1949).
48 Frazer (1898 III, 233–34).
51 Also see Bryant (2014).
surplus reality which defies the page. We err aesthetically by allowing the necessary repetition that underlines our practices to shape our narratives, for we neglect to the detriment of the page the artistry of the achievement in writing these old lands. We err speculatively by failing to appreciate those other spaces ill served by the leveling, spaces that pervaded past lives, and spaces that might make a difference in how we might ourselves learn to live with the land.

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