

A vintage color photograph of two women in traditional Greek folk costumes. The woman on the left stands, wearing a white dress with a large red skirt panel and a yellow headscarf. The woman on the right is seated, wearing a dark blue dress with a white collar and a red hat. They are on a hillside with a view of Athens and the sea in the background.

# *Cruising Athens*

*Potentialities for queer futures*

*Using our bodies and imaginations, we will find  
ways to queer erotic potentials, reclaim desires  
within the urban landscape and produce  
transformative mappings of lust.*

*Athens Subsumption*

*Cruising Athens Workshop \* / Coming together of ppl unknown  
@Romantso 15/02/2020, The Queer Archive Festival 2020*

***Guiding through***  
*pg.2-5*

***Reader***  
*pg.6-11*

***Futures and Potentialities***  
*pg.12-16*

***The walk***  
***-what is here now***

*Inspect each other-s attitude*

*Re-embrace your*  
*Queer Gaze.*

***The room***  
***-transforming our way of***  
***seeing potentialities***

*Watch.*  
*Share.*  
*Read.*

*Navigate yourself in the city of other-s*

***The city***  
***-inscribing a queer potential***

*Encounters are all around.*  
*What is future, what is possible?*

*How do we ritualize presence?*

## ***The walk***

*Document as you feel appropriate.*

*Collect and record ethically.*

- ***Find 3 things with queering potential & 3 things with anti-queering potential.***
- ***Create a Personal mapping.***

## ***The room***

*Respectful to each other's volume and space,  
relocate power dynamics;*

*this is a collective sharing of knowledge.*

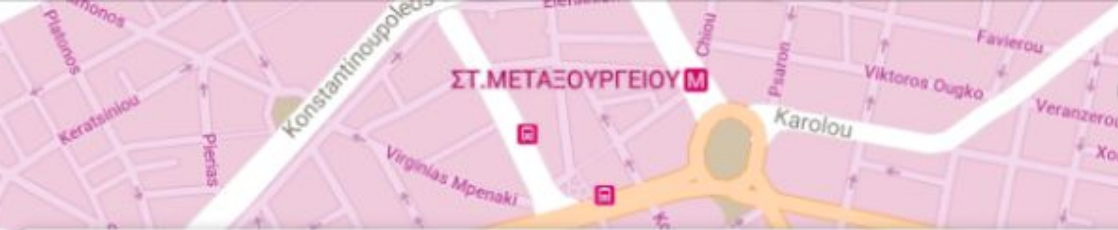
- ***Bring together written texts, personal experiences & reality.***
- ***Envision utopic Queerings of the City.***

## ***The city***

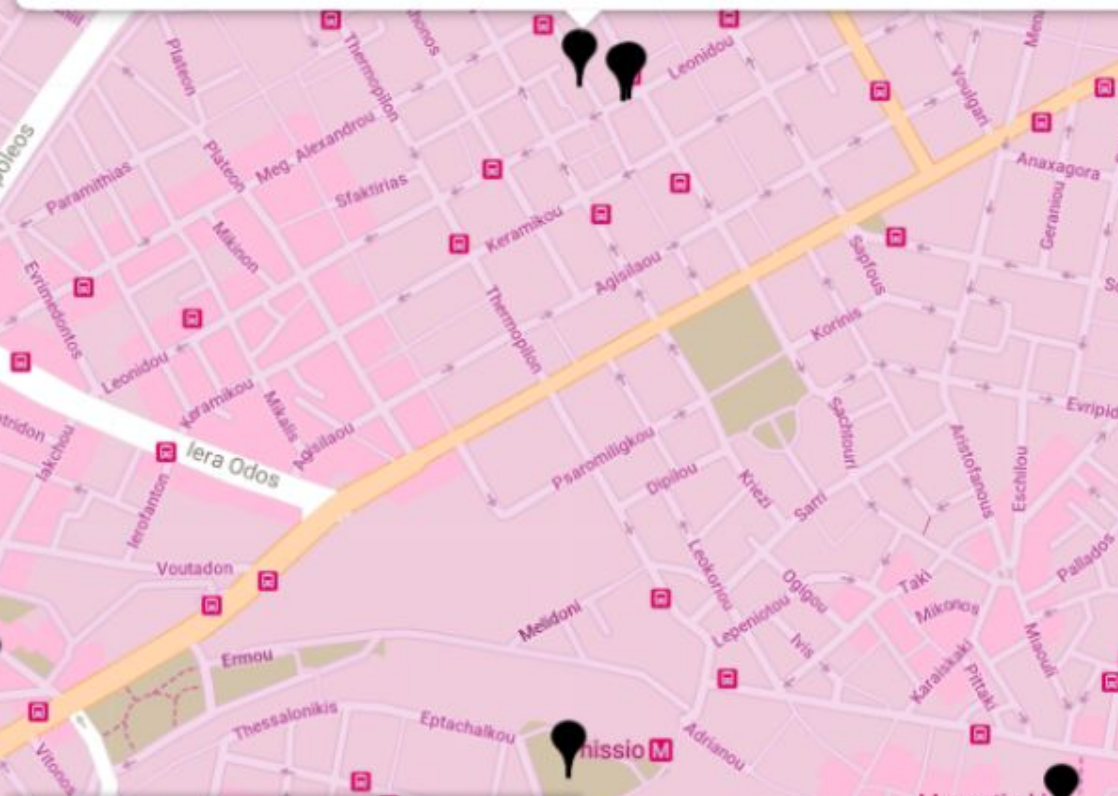
*Tag places.*

*Leave traces.*

- ***Channel a future metamorphosic process***
- ***Perform a ritualistic practice***



I forgot my bra at this lesbian bar. When I came to fetch it, they seemed a bit too excited to have held it for a while.



1. Find the location of your queer moment on the map
2. Click on it!
3. Add a description of your moment to the text box
4. Click the 'ADD' button

ADD

# QUEERING THE MAP



One more year that we went to Pride, but felt like it was not really for us. It was full of gay men dancing to gym music, and not the good kind.



## [!]t is the map that engenders the territory[.]

— Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulations*, 1983

Walking, ideally, is a state in which the mind, the body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three characters finally in conversation together, three notes suddenly making a chord. Walking allows us to be in our bodies and in the world without being made busy by them. It leaves us free to think without being wholly lost in our thoughts.

The rhythm of walking generates a kind of rhythm of thinking, and the passage through a landscape echoes or stimulates the passage through a series of thoughts. This creates an odd consonance between internal and external passage, one that suggests that the mind is also a landscape of sorts and that walking is one way to traverse it.

When you give yourself to places, they give you yourself back; the more one comes to know them, the more one seeds them with the invisible crop of memories and associations that will be waiting for you when you come back, while new places offer up new thoughts, new possibilities. Exploring the world is one of the best ways of exploring the mind, and walking travels both terrains.

Many people nowadays live in a series of interiors— home, car, gym, office, shops— disconnected from each other. On foot everything stays connected, for while walking one occupies the spaces between those interiors in the same way one occupies those interiors. One lives in the whole world rather than in interiors built up against it.

Walking is about being outside, in public space, and public space is also being abandoned and eroded in older cities, eclipsed by technologies and services that don't require leaving home, and shadowed by fear in many places (and strange places are always more frightening than known ones, so the less one wanders the city the more alarming it seems, while the fewer the wanderers the more lonely and dangerous it really becomes).

— Solnit, Rebecca, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*, 2000



Q u e e r n e s s i s n o t yet here. Queerness is an ideality. Put another way, we are not yet queer. We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality. We have never been queer, yet queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future. The future is queerness's domain. Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present. The here and now is a prison house. We must strive, in the face of the here and now's totalizing rendering of reality, to think and feel a then and there. Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for that minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds. Queerness is a longing that propels us onward, beyond romances of the negative and toiling in the present. Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing. Often, we can glimpse the worlds proposed and promised by queerness in the realm of the aesthetic. The aesthetic, especially the queer aesthetic, frequently contains blueprints and schemata of a forward-dawning futurity. Both the ornamental and the quotidian can contain a map of the utopia that is queerness. Turning to the aesthetic in the case of queerness is nothing like an escape from the social realm, insofar as queer aesthetics map future social relations. Queerness is also a performative because it is not simply a being but a doing for and toward the future. Queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world.

— Jose Esteban Munoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then & There of Queer Futurity*, 2009

“Cutting freely across urban space,” writes Simon Sadler, “drifters would gain a revolutionary perception of the city, a rational ‘disordering of the senses’, encountering both the city’s embarrassing contrasts of material wealth, and its clandestine glories of popular culture and history”.

— Christopher Keep, *Situationism, aestheticism, and psychogeography*, 2009

Our collective body, our queer corps, is too vulnerable and yet too unstoppable to not see an expansion in all spheres, both public and private.

— Gordon Brent Ingram, *Queers in space: Towards a theory of landscape and sexual orientation*, 1993

### AN ARMY OF LOVERS CANNOT LOSE

Being queer means leading a different sort of life.

It's not about the mainstream, profit-margins, patriotism, patriarchy or being assimilated. It's not about executive directors, privilege and elitism.

It's about being on the margins, defining ourselves; it's about gender-fuck and secrets, what's beneath the belt and deep inside the heart; it's about the night.

Being queer is "grass roots" because we know that everyone of us, every body, every cunt, every heart and ass and dick is a world of pleasure waiting to be explored.

Everyone of us is a world of infinite possibility.

We are an army because we have to be.[...]

Remember there is so, so little time.

And I want to be a lover of each and every one of you.

Next year, we march naked.

— Queer Nation's, *Queers Read This!*, New York Pride 1990

"[...] And that radical potential, I think, inheres in spaces like cruising bathrooms and parks, where the categories by which we organize our lives, like race and class, get scrambled by desire, which is a reason why our culture is so terrified by desire, because it scrambles those things".

— Garth Greenwell, 2016

Living as we did -on the edge- we developed a particular way of seeing reality. We looked both from the outside in and from the inside out. We focused our attention on the center as well on the margin. We understood both. This mode of seeing reminded us of the existence of a whole universe, a main body made up of both margin and center. Our survival depended on an ongoing public awareness of the separation between margin and center and an ongoing private acknowledgement that we were a necessary part of that whole.

Understanding marginality as position and place of resistance is crucial for oppressed, exploited, colonized people. If we only view the margin as sign, marking the condition of our pain and deprivation, then a certain hopelessness and despair a deep nihilism penetrates in a destructive way the very ground of our being. It is there in that space of collective despair that one's creativity, one's imagination is at risk, there that one's mind is fully colonized, there that the freedom one longs is lost [...]

I want to note that I am not trying to romantically re-inscribe the notion of that space of marginality where the oppressed live apart from their oppressors as "pure". I want to say that these margins have been *both* sites of repression and sites of resistance. And since we are well able to name the nature of that repression, we know better the margins as site of deprivation.

We are more silent when it comes to speaking of the margin as site of resistance. We are more often silenced when its comes to speaking of the margin as site of resistance.

— Bell Hooks, *Marginality as a site of resistance*, 1990

Ideally, a queer gaze would create a world completely free from binary notions of desire and storytelling, creating space for plural identities and possibilities.

— Molly Moss, *Thoughts on a Queer Gaze*, 2019

City readers invent techniques to transform reading, walking, dreaming, and cruising the city into a praxis of amplified perception and cognition.[...] With reactivated insight, they interrogate capitalism's (re)production and domination of the metropolitan era in revealing constellations of space, and they do not shy from exposing the dissembling phantasmagorias of gay mecca. [...]

Queer historiography relies on [queer city] representations to document the existence of queer presence, experience, and appropriation of the city and to draw queer urban reality into historical visibility. Cruising subjects [can be read] as deconstructive figures on location –that is, as figures of a counterdisciplinary, antidiscursive practice whose wayward and wanton flâneries permeate, traverse, and transgress the boundaries and grids of urban architex/cture.

"Queer space crosses, engages, and transgresses social, spiritual, and aesthetic locations, all of which is articulated in the realm of the public/private, the built/unbuilt environments.... A queer space is an activated zone made proprietary by the occupant or flâneur, the wanderer. It is at once private and public... Our cities and landscapes double as queer spaces... The squares, the streets, the civic centers, the malls, the highways... are the place of fortuitous encounters and juxtapositions. It is the place in which our sensibilities are tested, it is the place of "show." The public space is the space of romance, seen as landscape, alleys, and cafés. The public space is the space of power in the form of corporations or factories. It is the (blue, white, or pink collar) ghetto of the everyday. This fluid and wholly unstructured space allows, in its publicity, a variety of readings, re-readings, and misreadings, given the observer's individual propensities toward power, mystery, and how these desires fold into the passive space of Eros... a space where desire intertwines with visceral sensibility, in the space of the everyday"

— Dianne Chisholm, *Queer Constellations Subcultural Space in the Wake of the City*, 2005

Decriminalizing sex and empowering women and queers would cause an explosion of decadence, perversity, dirty talking, intuition, fetishes, intelligence, sex toys, satire, makeup, promiscuity, blasphemy, celebration, bangles, art, nudity, weird hair, and political upheaval. For the first time we'd get to take a look at what's really inside the Pandora's Box of human sexuality.

— Pat Califia, *Sluts in Utopia: The Future of Radical Sex*, 1994

### **“Cities began as places of ritual Athens formed around the rituals of Athena”**

Disruptive performances of dissident sexualities on the street are therefore about empowerment and being ‘in control’. These actions are also not only transgressive, in that they trespass on territory that is taken for granted as heterosexual, but also transformative, in that they publicly articulate sexualities (both lesbian and, by exposing its taken-for-granted presence in everyday spaces, heterosexuality) that are assumed to be ‘private’ (and in the case of lesbians also invisible) and thus change the way we understand space by exposing its performative nature and the artifice of the public/private dichotomy.

— Gill Valentine, *The Urban Geography Reader*, 2005

Cruising sites are spaces of gay censure and celebration alike, tense with the possibilities of danger and connection at the same time.

They straddle the boundaries of the public and private, the respectable and the reviled. Cruising spaces may never be wholly resolved - and thus they remain ripe for art.

— Steven W Thrasher, 2016

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What would it take for you to be free to be  
 who you are in Athens,  
**burn it all down to build it back up?**

...

## Potential tools to Create Temporary Autonomous Queer Zones

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[...]cruisers **comprise a subculture with its own mores and codes of behavior.** There is almost always some kind of **physical barrier** – between the participants in public sex and the outside world. This barrier screens out the uninitiated.

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### Use of body Signs

Small tweaks, signals, nudges to others,  
 to build up private spaces in clear sight of the public  
 shared non-queer spaces.  
 Technologies harnessed to the Intangible Queer spaces.

### Use of Tags

Symbols and signs to leave for one another, to be able  
 to identify queer territory. Writings, scriptures on the  
 urban fabric, a certain permanence in temporal.

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## Use of dress Code

In a time where a discreet means of finding other queers and a means of quickly identifying interests was needed, bandanas or hankies which were readily available in a variety of colours and prints.

Worn wrapped around biceps or tucked into the back pockets of pants and, both their colours and placement, left side or right, became the key in a system of coded messages signalling an individual's sexual proclivities, tastes and kinks: the 'hanky code'.

## Use of language Code

Kaliarda, slang, wording, naming and re-appropriating. Language anew, in other contexts, signifies spaces within spaces, private/public to public/private.



## Use of Displacements

Transformations, relocation an act of subversion: Any object -a vase, a chair, a garment- may be extracted from everyday practice and suffer a displacement which will transform it by transferring it into a monumental space; the vase will become holy, the garment ceremonial, the chair the seat of authority.



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**How to create a ritual for establishing the  
potentiality for a future queer Athens:**

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Choose the place (why this space?)

Definite the intended queerifying transformation

Select the ritual objects (why these objects?)

Design the ceremony

Leave a trace.



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## Subvert Dominant Narratives

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## Use Intentionality

Find the queer in public. Claim it.

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## Enact sequences of encounters

reclaimed from the  
commodified version of love

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Expand in this city  
Expand in other cities

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**Develop Tools on how to  
Queer the city together**

Share them,  
as commons

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**Queer the place, make  
everyday rituals a practice**

Write love letters,  
Read them loud.

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**Share experience**

#queerthecity #cruisetogether

**Keep in touch**

mail: [subsumption@tutanota.com](mailto:subsumption@tutanota.com)

fb: @Athens Subsumption

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*What is a Queer gaze?*

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*What is a Queer future?*

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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a yellow headscarf with floral patterns, a dark blue long-sleeved top, and a red skirt with yellow floral designs, is sitting on a stone ledge. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. In the background, the Acropolis of Athens is visible, including the Parthenon, under a blue sky with white clouds. The overall scene is a scenic view of the ancient city of Athens.

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