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# The Essence That Is Belonging Together: Identity, Embodiment, and Skillful Coping During the 2015 Greek Referendum

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## Abstract

In the forward of Heidegger's *Identity and Difference*, Joan Stambaugh proposes that in his statement "identity is belonging together," the emphasis ought to be placed on the word belonging. By emphasizing belonging rather than together, one is better able to jettison thinking that centers identity as a fundamental trait of Being, the traditional view of identity held by metaphysics. This article will explicate this idea by drawing from a series of unstructured interviews conducted with young people in Athens during the 2015 July 5th Greek Referendum. This article argues that with attention devoted to the practice of skillful coping, the essence of identity, rather than a reflective cognitive undertaking, correlates to what Heidegger refers to as the event of appropriation. When finding the self affected by the world, what becomes revealed is an intimate identification with the world and things within it as it unfolds. With mobile media technologies, we are privileged to witness a particular way of being affected by the world, one where material and immaterial locations (such as social media arenas) converge together and whose perceptual distinctions become inseparable. Subsequently, we can also witness how the act of skillful coping, the motivated relationship between the body and the object, stands as the principal site where engulfment and investment become unconcealed.

## Keywords

skillful coping, embodiment, identity, mobile media technologies, Greek referendum (2015)

to every being as such there belongs identity, the unity within itself.

—Heidegger (1957/1969, p. 26)

Some time ago, a colleague and I engaged in an inspired exchange over how to best situate the concept of identity in the era of widespread mobile social media use. Our criticisms centered on how identity was too often discussed in terms of its position within a system of exchanges, how it is affixed with various properties, or as something abstracted from day to day living (this is especially true of social media identities, which have too often been viewed as disembodied; see Moores, 2012). For my colleague and me, these approaches seemed stagnant and lacked something fundamental. It was not until I stumbled upon Heidegger's (1957/1969) *The Principle of Identity* that a solution to our concerns presented itself.

In this published lecture, Heidegger proclaims that identity is *belonging together*. When uttering this phrase, emphasis ought to be placed on the word *belonging* rather than *together*. Heidegger proposes that by stressing the former rather than the latter, one is better able to jettison thinking that positions

identity as a fundamental trait of Being, the traditional view of identity held by metaphysics (Stambaugh, 1969, pp. 12-13). Heidegger suggested for us to revisit the pre-Socratic philosophers, namely, Parmenides, to demonstrate that our attempt to understand identity with a metaphysically laden approach was an erroneous path to embark upon. Rather than consider identity as a facet of one's existence—something a person, upon reflection, declares allegiance to or lays claim over as one unifies the self with socially defined traits through performative actions (I have the identity of a student because I attend university)—Heidegger's statement encourages us to realize identity as a claim speaking from the Being of beings. Heidegger's entire philosophical project advocates that a human being's essentiality lies in his or her ability to remain open to being's claim and respond to it; "man is essentially this relationship of responding to being, and he is only this . . . a belonging to Being prevails within man, a belonging which

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listens to being because it is appropriated to being” (Heidegger, 1957/1969, p. 31).

Drawing from Heideggerian scholar Hubert Dreyfus, it is my assertion that our appropriation to being manifests itself with the most clarity when we find ourselves invested in and involved with the things that populate our immediate surroundings, when we find ourselves engulfed in our daily doings. Thus, to make sense of identity, as belonging together with being, we must remain attentive to skillful coping, defined by Heidegger (1927/1962) as that “kind of concern which manipulates things and puts them to use” (p. 95). Skillful coping is indicative of both engulfment into and investment with the world, as evidenced by how objects become revealed as both available and ready-to-hand-for-the-sake-of-which. This distinction is meant “to indicate the mostly smooth and unobtrusive responsiveness to circumstances that enable human beings to get around in the world” (Rouse, 2000, p. 8; see also Dreyfus, 2015). Upon reflection, when taking objects and putting them to use, one finds the self temporarily taken and affected by the unveiling world in that the person, the object, and the world seemed to have temporarily fostered a harmonious unity.

This piece will show that with attention devoted to the practice of skillful coping, the essence of identity, rather than a reflective cognitive undertaking, belongs to what Heidegger (1957/1969) refers to as the event of appropriation (p. 39). When finding the self affected by the world, what becomes revealed is an intimate identification with the world itself and the things within it as it unfolds through interaction. With our use of mobile media technologies, we are privileged to witness a particular way of being affected by the world, one where our *being-in-place* involves our material situatedness intertwining with immaterial locations (such as social media arenas). As these locations converge within our phenomenological horizon via the engagement with one’s mobile, their perceptual distinctions become nearly inseparable. Through this event (*Ereignis*), we can thus witness how the act of skillful coping, the motivated relationship between the body and the object, stands as the principal site where our engulfment and investment become apparent. This idea will be explicated by drawing from a series of unstructured interviews conducted with young people in Athens during the 2015 July 5th Greek Referendum.

In the summer of 2015, I took an impromptu trip to Greece to spend some time with a close friend. While there, Tsipras called for a referendum on the conditions of the European Union’s proposed financial package. Throughout the city, people could be heard debating about which avenue presented the best path forward. Although this trip was intended as a holiday, I felt that speaking with individuals during such a tumultuous period would allow me to gain some insight into the crisis. While walking with a friend through an assortment of Athenian boroughs, I asked people at random to discuss their experience of the crisis, how they acquired information about it, and finally their personal ways of coping with it.

Because these interviews were improvisationally conducted, they tended to adopt a semistructured approach (van Manen, 2016) and, at times, exhibited traits more fitting of a conversation. To draw from Merleau-Ponty (1962/2002, p. vii), I encouraged the participants to abandon abstract generalizations and causality, and instead offer direct descriptions of their experience, both as it happened in real time and via personal reflection. They were asked to consider themselves in the context of *the there*, of themselves as individuals *being-in-place*. By situating these individuals as Daseins,<sup>1</sup> we could better emphasize the immediacy of how they were experiencing that brief period, specifically to showcase how they found themselves uniquely involved in the crisis as they lived it. Specifically, my objective was to find commonalities between the individuals as it pertained to their mobile social media engagement as a *prereflective response* to the crisis. The following paragraph consists of general information gleaned from these conversations.

Because Tsipras’s referendum sprung up so quickly, those spoken with explained that they were detrimentally unaware about what exactly was at stake. People immediately took to their mobile to find and discuss information concerning the country’s economic instability and its possible *Grexit*. Although negotiations had been tense for months, until now never did any of the interviewees feel that Greece was in danger of being removed from the Eurozone. The potential for such an immediate shift in stability encouraged the utilization of the mobile as a tool to access a plethora of news outlets from both Greece (*Athens Voice*) and abroad (*Le Monde* in France, CNN or VICE in the United States, and the BBC or *The Guardian* in the United Kingdom). Social networks were another principal source to mine information. Facebook, in particular, was described as a dependable source because the discussions taking place were all from people *known* to the viewer. People were curious to know the opinions of those within their social circle, both close friends and distant acquaintances. One interviewee, named Eirini K. (personal communication, June-July, 2015), suggested that Facebook was an insightful avenue for information acquisition because of the diversity of shared articles and because it permitted the gauging of what people thought in the form of comments. Depending on the diversity of one’s friend group, one could see which side tended to accumulate the most support. After speaking to a number of people, it appeared that each would recursively turn to the mobile as the primary means to combat any confusion. This tiny instrument had gradually become their device of choice due to how their skillful engagement with it, the everyday tapping and swiping that accompanies this technology, fostered a portal-like opening that subsequently seemed to produce sense of community and a harmonious unity between the self and the world.

The tapping and swiping one does on mobile media technologies, similar to hammering a nail or stirring with a spoon, can be considered a form of skillful coping. We usually overlook such actions because they seem mundane, simple, and

routine to us. Moreover, they tend to be performed without cognitive contemplation. When questioned how we execute particular undertakings such as using an array of cooking utensils in a kitchen to prepare a dish, we often cannot adequately describe how we move with such confidence. As someone who cooks quite frequently, even I have difficulty explaining how I know the precise amount of a particular ingredient to add, the duration necessary to let something sit, or which of my utensils is best suited to stir sauce. As we confidently perform our tasks, we seem to know what is required. If the user is skilled enough in the sense that the user has experience with such matters, cognitive thought is rarely relied upon; rather, the user simply takes the object, molds with it, and puts it to use in ways that are specifically relevant. The individual is suddenly caught up in a flow of invested activity. What we are privileged to see with this phenomenon is that when inhabiting a world and encountering things with a phenomenal body, “they become the preliminary theme for a preview of a ‘knowing’ which, phenomenologically, looks towards Being . . . [they] are simply what gets used, what gets produced, and so forth” (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 95).

Skillfully interacting with objects equally affords us the opportunity to engage with their *thingly* qualities. The term *thing* holds much significance for Heidegger; he proclaims that the word’s original meaning best translates to what we call *gathering* (see Heidegger, 1971, pp. 163-180). Today, however, the word *thing* is too easily substituted with scientifically infused words like entity or object. When thinking of the term exclusively with a scientific mind-set, Heidegger frets that we lose sight of a thing’s fundamental thingy nature. It is imperative to recognize that thingly qualities have nothing to do with distinguishable properties, such as weight or color; instead, thingly qualities are meant to indicate the way that our interactions with a series of interrelated things permit the unobtrusive unfolding of a world suitable for us to inhabit. A formal dinner party, a concert, a sporting event, or a political rally are examples by which one can witness this unfolding. To reference the Greeks specifically, when my interviewees were inspired to take their mobile media technologies and interact with others, their investment in the crisis, their allegiance to being Greek, and their desire to participate with peers all seemed to intertwine through the mobile itself. A participant named Lydia K. (personal communication, June-July, 2015) remarked that although residing in Bulgaria, before coming home for the summer, she found herself feeling incredibly near to Greece and its troubles, a sentiment made possible in part because of her recursive, skillful utilization of the mobile. Following the instrument’s activation and unlocking, within a few short clicks, Greece, and the hectic commotions taking place there, ushered into her phenomenological horizon. She not only found herself virtually transported to Greece, à la John Urry’s mobilities paradigm (Urry, 2000, 2007), but equally experienced a seamless intermeshing of the digital with her material location, a fashion that provided the foundation for her

felt closeness to Greece. We ought to be aware that Lydia cultivates and thus nurtures this smooth intertwining by using her iPhone to explore media publications, social media sites, or even to speak with her friends and family via applications such as iMessage and Facebook Messenger. This happening is best exemplified with the term *poiēsis*. Although translated nowadays as poetry, *poiēsis* should be equated with its original ancient Greek meaning, *to make*, albeit not in the sense of production, but rather as poetic cultivation.

When Heidegger revisited the pre-Socratics, he discovered that this rendition of *poiēsis* was always correlated with *phusis*, a word the ancient Greeks used in place of the word being; “it was the name for the way the most real things in the world present themselves to us” (Dreyfus & Kelly, 2011, p. 200). Instrumental to the pre-Socratic use of *phusis* is that the word

names the sense of Being as such and not merely one specific mode of being, or a part of the whole as it was for Plato and Aristotle. This Pre-Socratic notion of *phusis* moreover contains an intrinsic absencing dimension which, therefore, is not reducible to pure presence. (DiPippo, 2000, p. 17)

This understanding of *phusis* is best demonstrated with the Heraclitus phrase, *Φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεί* (nature loves to hide itself). As explained in Tao Ruspoli’s (2010) *Being in the World*, for the Homeric Greeks, to be (as *phusis*) was to manifest out into the open via a temporal emergence or blossoming. This coming into presence would, inevitably, wither away and fade from one’s phenomenological horizon. The presence of *phusis* in our lives today can be viewed, for example, via one’s emotional expressions or a triumphant athletic performance. Hubert Dreyfus often refers to these phenomena as a whooshing up, moments where an individual person becomes so attuned to the particular mood or aura of their surroundings that they become compelled to respond in a specific way. In plain speak, following such a response, one might proclaim that they seemed to have temporarily lost control or were taken by an indescribable force.

To associate *poiēsis* and *phusis* with identity, consider how instrumental a truly engaged person’s methodical progressions are for permitting the world to continuously presence itself not only as inhabitable but also as the site for an array of possible pathways to embark upon. Consider, for instance, the way the American transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau describes his mission to confront what he designates as the essential facts of life by secluding himself in the woods outside of Concord, Massachusetts (see Thoreau, 1964). Thoreau sought to adopt a very specific attitude during his time there, one where he could acquire an acute awareness of and attentiveness to the various manifestations that emerged because of his *being-there* with Walden Pond. Thoreau, to use Heidegger’s terms, attempted to become a master of his mood, to account for and contemplate the unique way that the world manifested itself to him (see

Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 175). Mood, or *Stimmung*, is Heidegger's method to illustrate Dasein's specific ways of finding itself attuned to the world—"ways of finding things that matter" (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 169). Each day when venturing out into the territory surrounding Walden Pond, Thoreau found himself not just noticing various alterations with more lucidity, but increasingly being captivated by them. Thoreau often described with remarkable clarity moments where he was taken or seized by specific unfoldings, thus demonstrating a temporal attunement to the tiny developments that accompanied spring's arrival. Instead of being isolated entities abstracted from one another, the melting snow, flourishing vegetation, and animals emerging from hibernation clearly took on newfound value.

As Thoreau found himself meaningfully engaging with the things that surrounded him, he experienced taking part in a cocreative phenomenon where he felt a unique identification with the world's offerings. He noticed the subtle differences each day and came to further appreciate how they collectively contributed not only to the emergence of spring but also to how he identified with them and with the rejuvenating power of spring as a whole. In essence, he accepted Periander's advice, *μελέτη τό πᾶν* (take into care beings as a whole; see Heidegger, 1981/1993, p. 3). Take note of how he keenly elaborated on how his attitude and general disposition underwent a sweeping alteration at the first sight of spring's arrival, and how he found himself attuned with the world in a perfect congruent unity:

At length the sun's rays have attained the right angle, and warm winds blow up mist and rain and melt the snow banks, and the sun dispersing the mist smiles on a checkered landscape of russet and white smoking with incense, though the traveler picks his way from islet to islet, cheered by the music of a thousand tinkling rills and rivulets whose veins are filled with the blood of winter which they are bearing off. Few phenomena gave me more delight than to observe the forms which thawing sand and clay assuming in flowing down the sides of a deep cut on the railroad through which I passed on my way to the village. (Thoreau, 1964, p. 544)

It is important to remember that Thoreau was not simply observing the unfolding world, but because of his specific investment with it and responses to it, was actively working to draw it out. In speaking on Thoreau's experience, Richard Gray (2011) writes,

The annual resurrection of nature figures the possible resurrection of human nature, his and ours. It is not just a figure, however: the rhythms of seasonal renewal ground the rhythms of spiritual renewal, they supply a resource and correspondence for the soul. (p. 65)

As the vegetation returned from its dormant state, it became an integral component for the emergence of spring and the transformation of Thoreau's mood, one significantly different

from what showed itself in winter. Thoreau's reflections indicate his world seemed to take on a particularly distinct quality as the things around him began to look and feel different. As the ushering in of spring coincided with winter's withdrawal, Thoreau's fading doldrums speak to how

self-hiding belongs to the predilection of Being. And the essence of Being is to conceal itself, to emerge, to come out of the unhidden. Only what in its essence unconceals and must unconceal itself can love to conceal itself. Only what is unconcealing can be concealing. (Heidegger, 1998, pp. 229-230)

In this instance, what occurred was the materialization of meaning independent of Thoreau, meaning that he as a perceiving entity was not a sole provider of, à la the Cartesian tradition. Rather Thoreau sensed and cultivated meaning through his active engagement with a collection of interrelated things situated *in place*, in the nature that surrounded his modest cabin. In cultivating and nurturing his identification with the unfolding world, Thoreau is, to use Heidegger's own phrase, delivered over to being—his being appropriated by it. Amid these experiences, we must remember that Thoreau's evident conviviality is not explicitly governed by his own subjectivity in that he did not directly assign meaning to it as it occurred. In hindsight, however? Yes. Reflectively, Thoreau did categorize and proclaim things *to be*, typically in ontic terms. When reflecting on the walk and the collectivity experienced, Thoreau could and often did categorize it in its parts. By now, one should know that this is not how he experienced things! Rather, the felt understandings emerged because of his innate receptivity to meaning that he was capable of sensing and thus cultivating through involved interaction.

Should we nonchalantly belittle Thoreau's heightened sense of awareness of the objects around his walking path as the by-product of habit, we will do him a disservice. We should rather be aware that his ability to detect changes is an indication of a willingness to be affected and drawn into action alongside things. As Dreyfus and Kelly (2011) suggest, "the achievement of skill involves more than the mere acquisition of a physical ability. Learning a skill is learning to see the world differently" (p. 207). For Heidegger, this is the work poets perform:

The artist or poet cannot do his work in any normal human way, in any way that already presupposes the world that he is to set up. He must be something like the vehicle of an impersonal force—art or truth or being itself. The artist must be "resolute," *entschlossen*, ecstatically "opened up" to this force. (Inwood, 1997, p. 127)

While Thoreau is not a poet in a strictly traditional sense, it is evident that he is absorbed in the practice of poetic activity in that he possesses the capacity to remain open to manifestations and, by consequence, being's embrace;

the idea that there is something there independently of me is something you have to cultivate and develop a sensitivity to, and . . . that is what a poet does. The poet is sort of the paradigmatic instance of the person who's learned a receptivity to things independent of us. (Thompson, 2010)

Instead of progressing along the path toward town with indifference, Thoreau's willingness to remain open to being affected allowed him to respond quite specifically to meaning independent of him and, moreover, actively cultivate being (*phusis*) through poetic engagement (*poiēsis*). In our modern age, one vastly more complex than Thoreau's, we are tasked with allowing skillful coping to deliver us over, to experience being's claim on us, and thus respond accordingly. Heidegger's own advice is that "we must experience simply this owning in which man and being are delivered over to each other, that is, we must enter into what we call *the event of appropriation*" (Heidegger, 1957/1969, p. 36).

By this point, it is fair to question how this philosophical chatter relates to locative mobile media use and the Greek Referendum. Before proceeding, it would be fruitful to provide a hypothesis about the relationship between technology and human beings in the modern technological epoch. As Ling (2012) insightfully shows us, mobile media technologies are now deeply embedded into the social fabric of most societies. Whether a person is an active participant is inconsequential because all people must deal with a world that has invited these technologies into the everyday social ecology. Because of such prevalence and omnipresent use, many people have come to take these technologies for granted. Their presence goes practically unnoticed unless one is faced with an inoperable instrument. One reason we fail to notice their presence is because, gradually, we have incorporated them into what Kalaga (2010) refers to as the *third of the body*, the portion of the body which "occupies a place both overlapping and bracketing binaries" (p. 4). When a person encounters an instrument that they feel comfortable handling, the object undergoes a process of internalization and steadily loses the distinction of being an object all together, eventually molding with the body, a phenomenon made evident through Merleau-Ponty's example of the blind man's cane; the stick "has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962/2002, p. 165).

Consider the different ways that these technologies are utilized in relation to the body: We willingly implant earbuds into our aural cavities, we take the mobile and strap it onto our arm to monitor various body-related measurements while exercising, and we employ applications to replace tangible objects like airline boarding passes, credit cards, and traditional cameras. When these technologies are viewed from a positive perspective, we phenomenologically project our future with them as though they were additional limbs. In fact, in previous work, I have associated a missing or broken

mobile with the phantom limb phenomenon (Battin, 2016). When observing the phenomena of projection, people exhibit qualities of what David Seamon (1979) refers to as a feeling-subject, an experiential stratum associated with attachment that is "*a matrix of emotional intentionalities within the person which extend outward in varying intensities to the centers, places, and spaces of a person's everyday geographical world*" (p. 76). A feeling-subject is driven by attraction and closeness to specific things encountered in the world. These examples, however, only speak to the mobile's material dimensions. The most fascinating aspect about the mobile concerns the concept of interface; "when cyberspace becomes an extension of mental space, when one beings to think cyberspace, the tool changes into an interface" (Kalaga, 2010, p. 17). In this specific era, we should be mindful of how multilayered our existence has become. Any consideration of our lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) ought to account for how mobile social media, as locations to be traversed, always in some way exist as possibilities within our experiential horizon.

Location is a concept that is markedly different from world, both spatially and temporally. Whereas world is defined by its encompassing and enduring character, location instead speaks to Dasein's immediate reading of and responding to what populates that world. Conceiving location as an experientially derived point draws further emphasis to the unfolding of Dasein's horizon, made evident with the use of the words *here* and *yonder*. Foundational to Dasein's existence is that its understanding is derived from being appropriated by the immediacy of the *there* (the Da of Sein) and how that *there* allows Dasein to progress free from existential obstructions from *its here* toward *the yonder* (or towards-which). Heidegger writes,

The "here" of an "I-here" is always understood in relation to a "yonder" ready-to-hand, in the sense of Being towards this "yonder"—a Being which is de-severant, directional, and concerned. Dasein's existential spatiality, which thus determines its "location," is itself grounded in Being-in-the-world. The "yonder" belongs definitely to something encountered within-the-world. "Here" and "yonder" are possibly only in a "there." (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 171)

This very Heideggerian quote invites a particularly insightful reading, being that because Dasein is not closed off, in the sense that the world is open and made available to Dasein via forthcoming disclosures, Dasein is always driving forward, typically toward something that develops into a *location* through our invested activity. Reflect upon a question raised in *Building Dwelling Thinking* (Heidegger, 1954/1977). After asking what it is to dwell, Heidegger's (1954/1977) second question becomes, "in what way does building belong to dwelling?" (p. 329). The answer, Heidegger proclaims, is that the act of building generates *locations*. The constructed Heidelberg Bridge creates

conjoined riverbanks that, now united by the bridge, come to take on new significance once traversed by inhabitants. The bridge and the riverbanks create implications for the worlds of the conjoined towns, their populaces, and their surrounding regions. Please note, also, that my use of location is not akin to place, a concept which tends to be associated with the nebulous and ambiguous characteristics that provide human inhabitants with a range of emotions and feelings like attachment or repulsion (see also Cresswell, 2004; Malpas, 1999; Tuan, 1977).

In my view, mobile social media applications are also locations available for our traversing. Like the bridge in Heidelberg, they are built things that gather seemingly unrelated areas together. Whereas the riverbanks come to take on a new meaning due to the presence of the built bridge, the unknown whereabouts of others (friends, family members, etc.) come to take on increased relevance in how the application draws them nearer. Moreover, like inhabitants departing Heidelberg who find themselves guided toward the bridge, mobile phone users may find themselves steered toward an application to engage with those on the other side. Each of these, mobile users and travelers from Heidelberg, move along with a state of mind that guides them toward their destination. Because mobile media technologies allow us to draw immaterial locations nearer (social media arenas, news outlets, etc.), we are privileged to see how “the subject’s corporeal experience and awareness reaches beyond the limits defined by physical boundaries” (Kalaga, 2010, p. 5). In other words, in the modern world, we now think in terms of interface; we are always already thinking beyond our own corporeality (see also Farman, 2012; de Souza e Silva, 2006). For instance, Lydia, the Greek residing in Bulgaria, adamantly stated that Greece never felt far away because of an embodied awareness of her ability to access others within immaterial locations. By simply possessing a mobile, knowing its capacities and feeling its penetrating presence in her life, Lydia world now gathers in a very specific way, one that seems to provide confidence through the embodied understanding of her place within a communal world; she never felt isolated or alone.

Some individuals were, unsurprisingly, inspired enough to attend the rallies in Syntagma Square. To include those not permitted to attend (some parents felt that the event could be dangerous), individuals maintained an open line with others by uploading posts to Facebook and Twitter, predominantly in video and photo format. One interviewee named Nikolas P. (personal communication, June-July, 2015) proclaimed that the reason for sending out messages to absent others is because he found himself compelled to include them, to allow them a purview into the actions taking place on the ground. Nikolas’s description indicates how his identification with the specific world at this particular junction fosters a welling up; he found himself overcome with an irresistible urge to provide an avenue for others to join in the emerging collective. The important aspect to remember is that people

attending the rallies in the city center were not disinterestedly retrieving their mobiles and broadcasting for the mere sake of it. A combination of the unfolding scenario, their relationship to others, and an embodied allegiance to Greekness motivated their actions. Moreover, when Nikolas prereflectively retrieves his mobile to invite others into the *mêlée*, he reveals an intertwining of Heidegger’s here and yonder unique to this age. The mobile, as a modern artifact incorporated into the body’s third, acts as a locational portal bridging the here (material) and the yonder (immaterial). Influenced by those populating his immediate copresence, in addition to his present mood, Syntagma Square, as a geographical, spatial, and temporal scene, had come to take on greater significance for Nikolas and his world, thus encouraging him to respond accordingly.<sup>2</sup> Somewhat like the Heidelberg Bridge, albeit with an immaterial dimension, his mobile media applications prove to be a distinct junction containing their own uses and values that contribute to the evolving character of that world. Finally, his experiences lend support to the notion that we still exist in an intimately and affectually bound mobile society, aptly exemplified with Weber’s reformulation of Tönnies’s notion of *Gemeinschaft*. In perpetually feeling others and being drawn to them, each stands opposite *gesellschaft*, a society defined by its impersonal, obligatory ties. This awareness demonstrates the sort of conditioning by the world that we should remain attentive to, not simply for the sake of doing so, but because we are better capable of seeing how we identify with a world that existentially matters to us and how, in this era, we are always situated among others, regardless of physical proximity.

Somewhat similar to how Thoreau found himself caring and identifying with a world he himself helped cultivate, the Greek interviewees declared that they suddenly found themselves identifying with their nation, with Athens, with the country’s rich history, and most importantly with its ensured continuation. The general consensus from the interviewees is that Greece was under attack, as a nation, as a culture, and as a tradition. People even began to question whether Greece ought to be considered a European nation. The interviewees agreed that the future seemed decidedly murky. The mood permeating throughout the region, particularly within the Athens city center, is one that could be felt by each person. Its unavoidable presence lingered through crowded squares, quiet alleys, and half-empty cafes. Anywhere one traveled, one was faced with an intermixture of glaring uncertainty, outright frustration, and, in some instances, utter contempt for the European Union. According to Iris K. (personal communication, June-July, 2015), one of the interviewees, each person was faced with the undeniable reality of needing the other. To successfully move beyond this crisis, the realization of a rich community was necessary. Iris suggested that this understanding is the primary reason each individual recursively took to their mobiles. Although not necessarily clarified with dense terminology, the interviewees disclosed that their persistent retrieval of the mobile followed by the

tapping of buttons and icons were in fact skillful actions that encouraged the cultivation of social cohesion. By using the mobile and keeping it readily available, they all concurred that they suddenly felt more Greek. Their persistent retrieval of the mobile helped to temporarily establish a closer relationship to other Greeks and, consequently, a revival of their shared sense of Greekness. Actions like the typing of a comment within an ongoing thread or scrolling down the screen to read an article seemed to bring the individual, the immaterial locale, and those that populate it closer together, particularly when sharing the articles on social media to stimulate dialogue. Their prereflectively grabbing of the mobile to open a portal to others would not have been performed had they not become attuned to the world in a specific way.<sup>3</sup> Like Thoreau in Walden Pond, the participants too found themselves affected by, responding to, and drawn into a world, albeit one uniquely Greek at this moment in time.

Being attentive to such marginal practices, while seemingly insignificant if understood superficially, is important because, as Dreyfus and Kelly state,

The fact is, whether you know it or not, you already care about a whole range of goods. Just as the world is pregnant with meanings waiting to be revealed, human beings are filled with modes of caring that they have hidden from themselves. This may seem surprising. The idea that our cares exceed our understanding of them seems to be an affront to the fundamental principles of knowledge. Surely, if I can care about something than I am in a position to know I do. The Enlightenment tradition suggests such a principle, and contemporary philosophy takes it virtually as an article of faith. But to be an embodied being as we are, open to moods as meaningful, just is to be a being who extends beyond what we can know about ourselves. The project, then, is not to *decide* what to care about, but to *discover* what it is about which one already cares. (2011, pp. 215-216)

This last statement is one I find pertinent in the modern world, particularly for understanding identity in its essence. By finding one's self delivered over to being, one is able to see *two* forms of belonging together. As discussed, one is ontological. In taking these technologies for granted, we often forget about how unique our relationship to others has become, in addition to how we initiate, maintain, and nourish our bonds with others through them (see Licoppe, 2004, for an overview of connected presence; see also Ling, 2008, for an insightful analysis of mobile rituals and how they relate to social cohesion). These inspired actions are indicative of an identity unique for today's skilled mobile user, one where the self is generally understood by its ability to weave material and immaterial domains together, each populated with the presence of others. In being compelled to reach out to like-minded others, particularly through electronic means that have, through recursive use, seemingly molded with the corporeal body, one demonstrates the observable manifestation of being delivered over to being's embrace, of belonging together with being in this particular epoch. The second form

of belonging together concerns, of course, being together in the embrace of the *digital Gemeinschaft* (see Ling, 2012, p. 191). Being together in the communal sense is something we, as Dasein, inherently care about.

If we are to understand identity, particularly in an era of widespread mobile social media, we must give consideration to how our fundamental mode of existence is not one where we stand over the self, examine it, and then assign it with properties. Before labeling one's identity with ontic properties, one first must recognize how they are delivered over into a world where such claims can be made and make sense—where they arise out of *being-there*. Through this sort of phenomenological disclosure, we are better equipped to recognize how *poiēsis*, the term Aristotle used to describe creative production/cultivation, is a constitutive feature of Dasein; it is the means by which we become absorbed into worlds that we ourselves nurture due to our identification with and investment in them. For the Greeks enduring confusion brought about by the referendum, this is yet another instance where we should carefully take note of the invitation we have received, an invitation to recognize how our purposive movements simultaneously allow and reveal how we become involved with and invested in worlds, particularly those populated with like-minded others. For such investment to shine most brightly, we must, in some fashion, remain attentive to the way our everyday taken-for-granted skillful practices permit a poetic opening where our temporal identification with the world manifests with clarity. Such being delivered over unveils the way we, as Daseins, possess a unique ability to respond to manifestations in ways that matter to us, to sync ourselves with the world in a congruent unity, and to thus remember that we belong together with being.

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### Notes

1. As a refresher, in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1927/1962), Heidegger's entire reconfiguration of human being as Dasein makes it explicit that the world *matters* to us by way of our absorption into the world.
2. See also Saker and Evans (2016), who propose that the location-based app Foursquare functions as a form of technological memory and digital preservation. In his article, Saker and Evans draw on interviews with app users to suggest that, in a rather Bergsonian way, the locative past has a tendency to permeate the present. More pertinent to this study, however, concerns the users' ability to share their previous check-ins with others and revisit them at a later date. The locative-inspired media sent via Syntagma Square can also be revisited by users



at a later date, as social media functions as a digital database or dossier. Despite the recent calls to abandon Heidegger (see Fuchs, 2015), Evans (2015) further validates Heidegger's place in media studies by drawing upon the notion of affectedness, or mood (*Stimmung*), to position mobile media technologies as "things." Such a combination allows us to better understand mobile media technologies as instruments that contribute to the gathering of existential locales.

3. While this piece does advocate for positioning identity as performative, it takes a Heideggerian, phenomenological approach and, thus, sees performative identity as Dasein being appropriated by and with a world manifesting itself within Dasein's own temporal horizon. In my view, this particular positioning of identity provides a unique way to further understand Goffman's front stage/back stage theatrical metaphor (see Goffman, 1959), in addition to how we pre-reflectively read and engage with environments.

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