

Storied Lives: How We Say Who We Become

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Editorial Appraisals:

Some qualified reviewers offer their own brief evaluation of the book. Otherwise most of our content represents the authors'-editors' own words as a preview to their approach to the subject, their style and point-of-view. <>

[Handbook of Autobiography/Autofiction 3 volume set: Volume I: Theory and Concepts, Vol. II: History of Autobiography/Autofiction, Vol. III: Exemplary Autobiographical/Autofictional Texts](#) edited by Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf [De Gruyter Handbook. De Gruyter 9783110279719]

Autobiographical writings have been a major cultural genre from antiquity to the present time. General questions of the literary as, e.g., the relation between literature and reality, truth and fiction, the dependency of author, narrator, and figure, or issues of individual and cultural styles etc., can be studied preeminently in the autobiographical genre. Yet, the tradition of life-writing has, in the course of literary history, developed manifold types and forms. Especially in the globalized age, where the media and other technological / cultural factors contribute to a rapid transformation of lifestyles, autobiographical writing has maintained, even enhanced, its popularity and importance. By conceiving autobiography in a wide sense that includes memoirs, diaries, self-portraits and autofiction as well as media transformations of the genre, this three-volume handbook offers a comprehensive survey of theoretical approaches, systematic aspects, and historical developments in an international and interdisciplinary perspective. While autobiography is usually considered to be a European tradition, special emphasis is placed on the modes of self-representation in non-Western cultures and on inter- and transcultural perspectives of the genre. The individual contributions are closely interconnected by a system of cross-references. This massive 2224 page in three volumes handbook addresses scholars of cultural and literary studies, students as well as non-academic readers.

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This handbook on Autobiography/Autofiction is a challenge — and a risk. When Manuela Gerlof from de Gruyter proposed to edit a handbook on autobiography, I hesitated at first. As I had already conducted quite a bit of research in the field of autobiography in the German speaking world and on the theory of autobiography, it did not seem all that attractive to undertake another book on autobiography. However, the project started to intrigue me when Dr. Gerlof suggested we publish the handbook in English and place it on the international book market. Having previously dealt mostly with German autobiographies and being familiar mainly with the Western tradition of

the genre, the idea of thinking about autobiography in a global and hence transcultural perspective became more and more fascinating. I realized that I did not know anything about autobiographical forms in non-Western cultures and I started to reflect on the question of the extent to which the notion of 'autobiography,' at least in the way we perceive of it in the West, can be considered as a specific Western product. Of course, autobiographies have been and are being written all over the world. Being aware that cultural exchange and hybridity are common features of a globalized world, one has to ask what this means for the genre of autobiography, its different cultural contexts and historical features. These and other enthralling questions finally got the upper hand of my initial skepticism. So, I accepted the challenge, although I have always been aware that it will be impossible to represent a genre as mutable as autobiography in a transhistorical global perspective. The idea that this project will allow and necessitate intensive collaboration with autobiography researchers from all over the world allayed the fears of failure. And of course, such a handbook combining all these different approaches — theory, history, and analyses of individual texts — does not yet exist and will be an invaluable tool for students and researchers alike.

The handbook presents the historical and conceptual variety of the autobiographical genre in three volumes. The outline of volume one is theoretical and systematic. Its first section looks at autobiography from the perspective of different disciplines and theoretical approaches. Although literary studies have been investigating the form and historical appearance of autobiography extensively, other disciplines such as history, psychology, religious studies, etc. use autobiographies as sources and have developed their own concepts of the genre. In order to foster the interdisciplinary discussion on autobiography it seems to be important to represent the views and concepts of different disciplines. If a reader has the impression that an article on literary studies is missing from the list of disciplines in the section on "Theoretical Approaches," however, this is certainly due to the blind spot of the editor's own disciplinary background. For a literary scholar, the

literary studies perspective constitutes the 'norm,' whereas 'other' fields are 'added' to make the picture complete. This unavoidable disciplinary centrism may be excused by referring to the different methodological approaches that are explained in this first section of volume one as well. They indicate, of course, not only the heterogeneity of approaches within literary studies but also forge connections to other disciplines and in this way promote interdisciplinary debate. The second section of volume one discusses categories which hitherto have been applied to the study of autobiography/autofiction. The chapters relate their focus on the autobiographical/autofictional to general literary and cultural studies approaches and elaborate transdisciplinary perspectives. It is the aim of the third section to display the multiplicity of autobiographical forms and genres in the course of history as well as in the present time. The chapters demonstrate the mutability of the genre with special emphasis on its media and intermedial aspects.

Volume two intends to trace the historical development of the autobiographical genre. As one might imagine, doing so on a worldwide scale raises a fundamental yet intriguing problem. Of course, it is not possible to tell the history of a genre in a global perspective by following a single timeline, as too many different cultural contexts would have to be considered simultaneously. Therefore, the presentation is structured by proceeding from continent to continent. This, of course, does not solve the problem of concomitance and heterogeneity, yet it helps us to come to grips with it. But where to start? Obviously, all the different options would be biased in some sense. How we start and the routes we take mirror the prejudiced ways we see the world. It is not possible to conceptualize any world order in a neutral way. The problem becomes even more complicated when we look critically at the subject under consideration: autobiographical/autofictional writing. The notion of autobiography that a European literary scholar might develop is formed, at best, by what she considers 'the European tradition.' Being academically and culturally socialized as European may cause her to think that the concept of autobiography is a European one. She might be

mistaken, or she might have to alter her idea of 'the autobiographical.' In any case, she must be aware of this specific Western view when looking for authentic forms of the autobiographical in other cultures. Most likely to be found when looking across the globe is a complex and multi-layered meshwork of different autobiographical and autofictional forms and traditions, as cultures today as in the past are much more entangled than we might suspect. This handbook, therefore, undertakes an experiment which may read to reconsidered notions of autobiography/autofiction. In the meantime, the researcher has to accept her Eurocentric focus and reflect critically on it, using it as a heuristic tool. In doing so, and not considering it as ontologically given, we might find different ways to present our material and develop new perspectives on the variety of autobiographical self-representation.

With the more systematic approach of volume one and the historical procedure of volume two in the background, volume three intends to provide closer looks at individual autobiographical texts. This is not meant to set up an autobiographical canon but to demonstrate the richness of the genre and the complexity of its systematic and historical aspects in individual autobiographical/autofictional texts. The reader may find here famous and less well-known examples side by side. This is intentional. I made suggestions to the contributors of the handbook but was open to their alternative proposals. The authors were asked to write essays on the texts they had chosen and were not given strict guidelines about how to structure the chapter. The essays are supposed to give an overview of the state of the research debate but should also be an enjoyable read and spark the reader's curiosity about the autobiographical work being presented.

The different approaches of the handbook's three volumes provide variable and multilayered access to the rich and complex autobiographical paradigm. As a matter of course, the nearly 70 contributors bring in their different individual, cultural, and disciplinary perceptions of their subject. The objective was thereby not to homogenize the chapters in favor of an overarching concept. This would certainly have been wrong, since it would create an illusion of

coherence. Instead, it is the aim of this volume to conceptualize the autobiographical genre as multi-perspectival, relational, and mutable. Thus, the three volumes of this handbook, with more than 150 chapters, allow many different paths into and through this fascinating genre. Standardization would also have meant to level out the different academic traditions that have been prevalent in autobiographical research in different parts of the world. Interestingly, the term 'life writing' that is common in the Anglo-Saxon world does not translate for example into German. As 'life writing' also covers the biographical genre, it is a wider category than 'autobiographical writing,' which is more common on the European continent. Here, the debate on 'autofiction' originating from the French context has recently played a major role in academic discourse whereas it has only reluctantly found entry into the English-speaking world. This demonstrates the broad spectrum of subjects, terms, and concepts within the global academic discourse on the topic and the handbook tries to do justice to these differences in dealing with the autobiographical. And, in order to document the academic Western European origin of this project in its very specific historical and conceptual conditionality, the handbook has been given the title *Autobiography/Autofiction* and not *Life Writing*. This reflexive, systematic approach distinguishes the handbook for instance from Margareta Jolly's comprehensive and most impressive [Encyclopedia of Life Writing. Autobiographical and Biographical Forms](#) in 2001. As can easily be seen, different academic traditions from all over the world enrich the global picture of the 'autobiographical genre.'

In order not to unify more than was necessary, the contributors to the handbook were free to decide whether they would choose British or American English for their chapters. For philological reasons, quotations from primary texts are given first in the original language and then [in square brackets] in an English translation. This procedure, astonishingly, has caused irritations among contributors, especially among those writing on non-European subjects and using non-Latin characters. Whereas it has not been considered problematic for contributors who wrote about autobiographical

texts in European languages, colleagues who are specialists for non-European literatures were somewhat reluctant to quote in Chinese, Japanese, or Arabic. They found that using non-Latin characters in the context of Latin script would make the text uneasy and the reading uncomfortable. This was quite an interesting experience for me, who, on the one hand, as a philologist, wanted to be as close to the original text, and, on the other hand, considers plurality and heterogeneity as something positive and thrilling. Well, compromises were made by using non-European characters in a somewhat allotted and attenuated form. This may seem a bit unmethodical, and indeed it is, yet it may be seen as a concession to both the diversity of the world and heterogeneous academic practices. Published translations in the running text are marked by double quotes and chapter authors' own translations are presented in single quotes...

The handbook is as much yours as it is mine! <>

Volume I: Theory and Concepts: Autobiography/Autofiction Across Disciplines by Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf

Excerpt: Autobiography is more than just a literary genre — if it is a genre at all. Its manifold aspects, which have been discussed by literary scholars from the nineteenth century up to the present day, are closely connected with the core features of literature itself. For a long time, up until the 1960s, autobiographies had been considered as a sort of historiographical writing, as texts that are 'true' or at least 'truthful' reports of a person's life. Since these life reports are written by the very person who has lived this life him or herself, autobiographies were often read as 'authentic' descriptions of what had really happened. This understanding of autobiography goes along with biographical readings of literary texts in general that are still being practiced, especially by nonprofessional readers, today. And can we blame them? — Certainly not, as literature is definitely not written for literary scholars, but for readers. Even if a novel does not depict the life story of its author it can hardly be denied that it has 'something' to do with the author. This 'something', indeed, is hard to grasp, and quite a number of literary theorists have pondered how to get hold of it. Yet the

efforts of the 1960s to do away with 'the author', which resulted in the declaration of his 'death', can be regarded as a symbol of the author's persistence — the more so his return in the 1990s. Paul de Man convincingly deconstructed the idea that one might be able to decide which texts should be read as autobiographical and which ones are to be regarded as merely fictional. He states: "But just as we seem to assert that all texts are autobiographical, we should say that, by the same token, none of them is or can be". This sentence addresses a concept which does not only concern the discussion of autobiography but which is of utmost importance for literature in general: 'referentiality'. The ways in which a literary text refers to 'reality' represents one of the most discussed problems in the study of literature and refers back to Aristotle's notion of [mimesis] and his discussion about imitation and representation.

From the 1960s onwards, the theoretical debate on autobiography has accelerated — and mirrored the general development of literary theory. On the one hand, of course, the evolution of literary theory affects the debate on autobiography as well. On the other hand, the theoretical debate on autobiography forms a model of general issues in literary theory, which become ostensive in the scope of autobiography.

Certainly, the naïve conception that an autobiography may be 'true' or 'truthful' has already been scrutinized and critically debated in the 1960s. Critics have argued that nobody can ever thoroughly report his or her life since, on the one side, human memory is deficient, and, on the other side, human beings are narcissistic, which means they are not at all neutral and objective when it comes to looking at themselves — and others. As early as in the 1960s, literary scholars have highlighted the fictional dimension inherent in every autobiography. German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) wisely called the first part of his autobiography, which was published between 1811 and 1833, *Dichtung und Wahrheit* [Poetry and Truth (1848)]. Goethe regarded his autobiography as the retrospective 'results' of his life and, as Johann Peter Eckermann records, viewed the 'facts' reported in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* merely as an affirmation of his life's

"höhere[r] Wahrheit" ["higher truth"]. Recollection and imagination are the forces behind the life narrative, and it is 'fiction' that purports the 'truth' of his life, Goethe wrote in a famous letter to the Bavarian King Ludwig. The use of symbols, references to the mythological and literary tradition, the freely designed narrative structure form the poetical character of Goethe's autobiography — in the service of the 'truth' of his life which he wanted to convey. Accordingly, Roy Pascal named his often-cited critical work on autobiography, which was published in 1960, *Design and Truth in Autobiography*. It is the 'design' of the autobiographical text, i. e. the necessity to structure the narration that is responsible for its fictional dimension — and for its attractive aesthetic value as well. How to tell the truth by fiction? This can be regarded as the primary concern of the art of autobiography. Self-evidently, there are as many ways in which 'truth' and 'fiction' are interconnected as there are autobiographical texts. They vary not only across history and different cultural contexts, but even within the autobiographical production of a single time period and nation. And it is this richness and variability that form the ongoing fascination of readers and literary scholars with autobiography.

Yet not only the forms and genres of autobiographical writing have changed over the centuries, but also the ways in which critics perceive of autobiography have transformed enormously. And of course, there is a connection between autobiographical writing and critical reading. Since the 1980s, critics and writers look differently upon fiction in autobiography. Whereas previously fiction was regarded as unavoidable and sometimes therefore as appealing in the art of autobiography, postmodern writers started to play with and deliberately perform the fictional element, thus giving birth to the concept of 'autofiction'. The French writer and critic Serge Doubrovsky, who coined the term when it was used on the back cover of his 1977 book *Fils*, assembled different aspects under the umbrella term 'autofiction'. First of all, it is the linguistic nature of every autobiographical report that causes autofiction. Furthermore, the insufficiency of human memory causes autofiction. Yet Doubrovsky also

thinks of the real-life effects of an autobiographical text as autofictional. This latter aspect is of utmost importance as it demonstrates that the autobiographical is not confined to the realm of the written text. The way in which the autobiographical project influences and even shapes the life of the autobiographer represents a very specific and important autofictional effect in the world of modern media. Autofiction transgresses the boundaries between autobiography and literature as well as the boundaries between literature and life. This, indeed, is not new at all. Of course, even former autobiographies, such as Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, may be considered as works of autofiction. Needless to say, Goethe and his critics did not know the term 'autofiction' and therefore they could not address autobiographical works as autofictional. However, Goethe's notion of poetry as promoting the 'truth' of his life comes fairly close to the current understanding of 'autofiction'. In questioning genre definitions and the borders of literature, autobiography and autofiction attest to the relevance of the literary for human life.

Significantly, 'autofiction' is not a unified notion. Critics have struggled to define 'autofiction' and various suggestions are under discussion. The fact that literary studies do not provide a consistent explanation of what 'autofiction' in fact means may be considered as a sort of epistemological weakness and an argument to abstain from the category at all. However, the very fact that 'autofiction' has come up at all in the discussion about the relation of autobiography and fiction demonstrates that there has been and still is an urgent need for a third term in order to grasp something that is pressingly at stake in the relation of life and literature.

As it seems to be difficult, if not impossible, definitely to decide whether a text is autobiographical or not, the French critic Philippe Lejeune, as early as in the 1970s, has suggested that we think of autobiography as based on the idea of an 'autobiographical pact' (Lejeune 1975 [1989]). This means that the text offers to the reader a 'pact' to read it autobiographically. This 'pact' is offered either if the name of the author on the book cover is identical with the narrator's and

the protagonist's name, or if the subtitle of the book reads 'Autobiography', 'My Life', etc.

If this is not the case, i. e. if author, narrator, and protagonist have different names, or their names are unknown, or the book tags itself as a novel, then this text offers the novelistic pact, which triggers the reader to read the text as a novel. This means that 'autobiography' is no longer an essentialist category but a dimension, or better: a constitutive element of the literary communication process. Many chapters of the handbook refer to Lejeune's concept, which was quite revolutionary in its time and to this day fosters the understanding of autobiography as a phenomenon of reception. Lejeune's in its time somewhat revolutionary approach has to be considered within the critical context of the late 1960s/early 1970s, when the 'theory of reception' (with its famous Constance protagonists Hans Robert Jauß and Wolfgang Iser) first appeared on the agenda of literary studies. Although it has frequently been an object of criticism, the concept of the 'autobiographical pact' has been productive also for the discussion about 'autofiction'. The comparatist Frank Zipfel for instance has proposed that we think of autofiction as an oscillation between the autobiographical and the novelistic pact. This means that, unsure of how to read the text, as an autobiography or as a novel, the reader oscillates between two attitudes of reception. As can easily be imagined, literary texts are able to make the best of this ambiguous situation and playfully gain creative perspectives from it.

As important and fundamental as the fact/fiction debate may be, it is also unproductive in the long run as it has become clear that there is no absolute distinction between fact and fiction. Therefore, recent critics, such as Arnaud Schmitt, have argued to abandon the discussion about autofiction altogether and to concentrate instead on 'auto-' or 'self-narration' as a form of autobiographical writing which focuses on the self and how it constructs its identity by relating his or her life. This, of course, is nothing entirely new, yet it remains relevant and gains novel qualities in the changing world of globalization and rapid medial transformation.

It is well within the development of literary theory in general that, after the era of poststructuralist criticism of essentialism and its productive awareness of the linguistic mediality of meaning, literary studies is again interested in the 'real-life' motives and effects of literary production. "Life Is Back!" writes Arnaud Schmitt in his latest book on autobiography. This, of course, does not mean that one should forget what critics such as Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, or Michel Foucault have taught in the decades before, namely the semiotic, cultural, and discursive constructedness of the sayable. Instead, these critical insights foster a better understanding of 'experience' and 'reality' as well as their functions in the field of cultural production. Signification, to sum up, does not contradict 'the real', but assists in the process of making it more intelligible. As Paul John Eakin writes: "[...] I think there is a legitimate sense in which autobiographies testify to the individual's experience of selfhood, that testimony is necessarily mediated by available cultural models of identity and the discourses in which they are expressed" (1999, 4). However, Eakin warns with Vincent Descombes against confusing the Cartesian subject, i. e. the subject as a metaphysical category, with the human person and the autobiographical 'I'. From this it follows that literary research has to take into account that the autobiographical I is an embodied I and to look at the specific 'experientiality' of this autobiographical 'I'. This shift to the embodied 'I' has not only initiated the inclusion of cognitive science approaches to literature but also a reconsideration of its political and ethical aspects which, obviously, are also relevant in the writing and reading of autobiographical texts. A striking example of how bodily awareness and contemporary medial form interact in life writing is Wolfgang Herrndorf's *Arbeit und Struktur* ['Work and Structure'] which had been published as a blog before it came out as a book. In this diary-like work, Herrndorf tries to cope with the diagnosis of a terminal brain tumor. The decaying body becomes a mighty antagonist in Herrndorf's intense digitally formatted self-inquiry, which demonstrates that digitalization has not at all done away with the 'real' and the 'really' experienced body. It goes without saying that the publication of the

blog, and later on the book, entails far-reaching ethical considerations.

The new awareness of the 'real' and of people's 'real-life experience' (that should not forget literary studies' critical knowledge of textuality) is not only due to the rapid developments in media and especially digital technology but also to the inexorable process of globalization which threatens to level out diversity and heterogeneity. The insistent diversity of autobiographical and autofictional production all over the world is an obvious and weighty counterpoise to these ongoing processes of homogenization which calls for thorough scholarly research. As Serge Doubrovsky already stated in the 1970s, autobiographies nowadays are not only authored by so-called 'big names' such as Augustin, Rousseau, or Goethe, but can be and obviously are written by everybody. Besides autobiographies by writers, politicians, academics, sports-people, managers, pop stars, etc., there are autobiographical texts from all sorts of minority groups, illness narratives, coming-out narratives, narratives of migration and exile, trauma narratives, diaries and blogs, biographical entries on social media sites, graphic memoirs, witness narratives, and so on. In their seminal study *Reading Autobiography. A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson provide an impressive list of "Sixty Genres of Life Narratives" that shows the breadth and variety of the autobiographical genre. All these documents of life writing do not only provide insight into specific historical and cultural contexts but are themselves part of diverse fields of cultural production. Therefore, autobiographical texts are studied not only by literary scholars but also by historians, sociologists, philosophers, anthropologists and other academics who look at the genre from their disciplinary perspectives and who address specific questions to the texts. There have been ongoing discussions about the relation of reading autobiographies as texts and/or reading them as sources, i. e. as documents. Despite Aristotle's famous phrase in [Poetics] (335 BCE) that it is the function of the historian to relate what has happened whereas the poet relates what may happen, it would be false to maintain that historians, sociologists, etc. read autobiographies as

sources whereas literary scholars investigate their textual form. It has become quite clear that an awareness of the medial qualities and cultural constructedness of autobiographical texts is also of utmost importance for scholars who read autobiographies for their historical, social, or political contents. Just as 'new realism' and (post)structural criticism should not be played off against each other but brought into a constructive dialogue, the 'textual approach' and the 'documentary approach' are equally to be handled and brought into relation with each other in a case-specific and subtle way. To look at how a text is made does not necessarily mean to deny the 'truthfulness' and the historical value of what is reported.

Interdisciplinary work on autobiography on a larger scale has only started. It is important for its future productivity that we do not stake disciplinary claims and insist on theoretical and methodological realms. Fruitful collaboration between the disciplines on such a sensitive genre as 'autobiography' requires critical knowledge, conceptual reflection, and the ability to shift and modify our perspectives. The interdisciplinary and international *Handbook of Autobiography/Autofiction* aims to prepare a basis for this kind of interdisciplinary endeavor across (academic) cultures. It enables the researcher and the student to collect information on manifold aspects of previous autobiographical research and combine it in a modular way according to her/his individual questions and interest. Therefore, volume one of the handbook is structured in three systematic complexes and, in order to make the information more easily accessible, the entries within these systematic blocks follow an alphabetical order. Thus, the first volume of the handbook can be used as a sort of dictionary. The first section (I.1: Theoretical Approaches) traces multiple theoretical approaches to autobiography, as for instance, hermeneutics, structuralism, deconstruction, and discourse analysis, and it informs the reader about the relevance of the autobiographical for different disciplines other than literary studies, such as history, anthropology, philosophy, religious studies and others. As it aims at promoting an inter- and transdisciplinary

comprehension of autobiography and autofiction, the handbook provides information about the prevalent methodological premises, the approaches, and theoretical references within the individual disciplines. The second section of volume one (I.2: Categories) discusses categories which have been applied in the study of autobiography/autofiction and which, obviously, are basically connected with the genre, e. g. 'authenticity', 'identity', 'subjectivity', but also 'gender', 'memory', or 'trauma'. The entries connect their focus on the autobiographical/autofictional with general literary and cultural studies approaches. It goes without saying that the authors of the individual chapters, as researchers with a specific academic background, may stress disciplinary preferences; however, they were asked to consider interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary perspectives. The aim of section three (I.3: Autobiographical Forms and Genres) is to display the multiplicity of autobiographical forms and genres in the course of history up until the present time. The articles demonstrate the mutability of the genre and, breaking with Lejeune, do not only look at autobiographical texts written in prose. They also open up genre boundaries by asking whether an autobiographical account could also be rendered in lyrical or dramatic, in musical or pictorial form, or also as film, or even as dance. Looking back in history, but also observing contemporary developments, the entries in this section put special emphasis on the media of the autobiographical and its multiple intermedial aspects. The general question that forms the motif of this handbook project on the whole, namely the question of what we address whenever we refer to 'autobiography', thus unfolds into a broad spectrum of historical forms, conceptual dimensions, and cultural functions. <>

**Vol. II: History of
Autobiography/Autofiction:
Autobiography Across the World, Or,
How Not To Be Eurocentric by Martina
Wagner-Egelhaaf**

Excerpt: Whereas the first volume of this handbook follows an alphabetical order and can be used as a sort of dictionary, the second volume intends to

present the history of autobiography/autofiction. 'The' history? What history? It goes without saying that literary history has become problematic. Since the poststructural critic François Lyotard proclaimed the end of grand narratives or meta-narratives, there have been numerous efforts to deconstruct historiography as a metaphysical, totalitarian and power-driven enterprise which colludes with colonialism and Eurocentrism. Especially the chronological structure of historiography as it was developed and practiced up until the nineteenth century, with its idea that history follows a progressive timeline, has come under suspicion. Furthermore, the legitimacy of the historiographical genre is under debate ever since critical scholars have raised the questions of who are the agents of history and historiography and who are the victims or the subjects whose voices are not being heard, in history as well as in historiography. Naturally, these critical considerations have affected literary history as well. The compliant idea that literature can be thought of as a process of continuous historical development has been unmasked as a discursive construction. And especially the notions of the

historical process of literary development have been recognized as constructions that reflect historically invested points of view or merely disciplinary conventions. Various alternative models

of particular groups, for instance women, migrants, working class authors, differentiated histories so to speak, or fore-grounding individual authors and texts, or specific dates as exemplary. However, all

implicitly retain the chronological model in one way or another. The same, of course, holds true for histories of autobiography. Georg Misch, the famous first historian of the genre, from whose

the end failed to finish his project (Misch 1949-1969), as he was overwhelmed by the sheer abundance of the historical material and his ambition to represent it in its completeness.

Fully aware of these epistemological problems and the acknowledged impossibility of presenting 'the history of autobiography', this handbook nevertheless undertakes such an effort once again.

Users of a handbook on autobiography/autofiction clearly do not only look for approaches, concepts and genre definitions, but also refer to the handbook for historical information. And, yes, they certainly look for historical information in a contextualized manner — i. e. in the form of historical narrative. Yet, this handbook does not have to present only the autobiographical production of a single country, language group, or continent, but its general outline suggests that we consider autobiography/autofiction on a worldwide, global scale. Definitely, this is as impossible as it is megalomaniacal. In any case, the handbook has accepted the challenge to do the impossible. But in what way should the phenomena be sorted? Should the chapters be arranged historically or geographically? For pragmatic reasons, and with critical reservations, the decision has been taken to use the historical narrative as, indeed, a specific culturally dependent narrative. Yet, having accepted chronological temporality, it seemed unfeasible to narrate one single holistic story of the world's autobiographical production. Not only pragmatic reasons hold sway against this option - who would be able to write about a certain time in history with expertise across languages and cultures? - but so too do mainly epistemological motifs. The heterogeneity of cultures, writing traditions, and concepts of time and history speak vehemently against the idea of a single and monolithic grand narrative.

Therefore, the somewhat unoriginal option has been taken to arrange the material according to continents, which is itself, admittedly, a fairly crude form of classification. But where to start? In Africa or in Asia? For a literary scholar trained in Germany this would be very unfamiliar and somehow odd. This unfamiliar idea, however, hints at a fundamental epistemological problem that deeply affects our scholarly worldviews. It should be kept in mind that although scientific research promotes the ideals of objectivity and neutrality, its notions, categories, and terminology are deeply culturally rooted and biased. Autobiography research as it developed in Western academia has dealt again and again with the same master texts: St. Augustine's *Confessions* (ca. 399) [*Confessions*], Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* (1782/1789),

or Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* [Poetry and Truth] have been interpreted as prototypes of the autobiographical genre by many scholars. In turn, the notion of autobiography has been conceptualized with reference to these and other prominent examples. Even if nowadays a variety of non-exemplary autobiographical texts have found scholarly attention, the notion of autobiography has been shaped predominantly with respect to texts of the established Western tradition. Here, certainly the notion of 'life writing' is much more permissive and innocuous than the genre specific term 'autobiography'.

The question arises whether 'autobiography' is at all a Western category. Certainly, the concept has been exported to other cultural regions of the world where it has been adapted to non-Western texts. Is autobiography even a colonial concept? And one might ask whether it would not be better to abstain from scholarly or scientific categories that carry with them their own cultural premises and ideologies and instead look at the texts as texts and not as genre paradigms. And furthermore: Is it politically correct to read and interpret texts from, for example, South-East Asia or Africa as 'autobiographies' - with a Western notion of 'autobiography' in mind?

On the other hand, scientific research needs categories and concepts to perceive, to differentiate, and to communicate knowledge. And besides, writers from all over the world produce life narratives and very often in critical exchange with traditional Western models. In the globalized and medially interconnected world, cultural forms and patterns migrate around the globe and are continually being adapted and transformed. Obviously, they should not be considered as the exclusive heritage of a specific cultural area. This, however, does not mean that we should disregard the geographical and historical contexts of cultural traditions. We have to take into account that cultural exchange is not an achievement of modernity, but has always taken place in various and context-specific forms. Just as Wolfgang Iser has defined 'transculturality' as a network of differentiation and identification, the autobiographical genre should as well be conceived of as a multifaceted and flexible

paradigm that can be adapted in more than one way. Yet, it must be clear that a text a Western reader or scholar may automatically address as 'autobiography' is not necessarily conceived as 'autobiography' in other cultural contexts. The relation between 'terms' and 'things' has always been a major epistemological problem which is not only pertinent in the field of autobiography studies. Even if people use the same word they may have different objects in mind - which not only hinders but also stimulates communication. However complex the situation in this context is, it should be mentioned that the International Auto/Biography Association (IABA) was founded in 1999 in Beijing on the initiative of a Chinese scholar, Zhao Baisheng, who, strikingly enough, is Professor of Comparative World Literature.

The handbook embarks on its historiographical journey of autobiographical writing in Europe, for it is that part of the world that has brought forth both autobiographical master narratives which are globally referred to and prominent theoretical reflection on the autobiographical genre by the likes of Wilhelm Dilthey, Georg Misch, Roy Pascal, Georges Gusdorf, or Philippe Lejeune. For pragmatic reasons, but also because it reflects the academic discourse on autobiography as well as literary history in general, it retains the conventional epochal structure, as unsatisfying as this may be. However, the epoch-based disposition enables the user of the handbook feasible orientation. Due to the specialized expertise of the chapters' individual authors, unfortunately not all European languages could be considered. Whoever looks for country-specific information may be advised to consult Margareta Jolly's comprehensive [Encyclopedia of Life Writing](#) (2001) that provides entries to almost every country in Europe and beyond - though they are often short and do not yield more results than a list of names for the most part. The approach of this handbook is not nation-oriented, but takes into account wider geographical and cultural regions. However, immediately another problem occurs: the problem of defining the limits of historical epochs. As is generally known, notions of historical epochs vary not only between disciplines but also within disciplines due to the distinct conceptions of

individual scholars. Therefore, the designations of epochs used in this handbook merely supply rough terms for the user's orientation. This explains why users of the handbook will meet overlaps between chapters, for instance between 'Modernity' and 'Postmodernity'. This, however, is not to be deplored, as notions of epochs are constructions - constructions that may be built differently. And it is possible that one and the same autobiographical text can be read as a modern or as a postmodern text - with good reasons for both options.

Perhaps the reader would have expected that the handbook, after striding across Europe, would continue its journey through the world of autobiographical writing by heading for the Americas as historical descendants of Europe's colonial and imperialist search for expansion. Such a conceptual itinerary, however, would not have been appropriate for two reasons: Firstly, by exporting its Eurocentric perspective there would have been the risk of overlooking the American native cultures by perceiving them in the line of European genre history. And, secondly, there have been much older historical influences — influences on Europe's intellectual world from the Arab world. These influences reach back to antiquity and, as Europeans have termed it, 'the Middle Ages'. Because of the long-standing cultural and intellectual relations between what was to become Europe and the Arab world, the second chapter of this geo-historical overview turns south-eastwards in order to discover the richness of autobiographical production in the Arabic language. And from there, the handbook travels on further into the African continent.

As Northern Africa is included in the section on autobiography in the Arab world, the 'Africa' section of this handbook deals with Africa south of the Sahara only. For a long time, Africa has not been considered as an area of significant autobiographical production by Western scholars. Only with the advent of structural and poststructural, especially postcolonial, approaches that have led to an awareness of autobiography as culturally constructed and the hybridity of genre boundaries, has the African continent found critical attention by life writing research. James Olney, in the 1970s, regarded personal contact as the best

means of learning about other cultures; however, he viewed autobiography as a sort of substitute as it "offers a way of getting inside a world that is inevitably very different from [the non-African reader's] own in its assumptions and values, in its attitudes and beliefs, in its practices and observances". This statement, indeed, demonstrates clearly the ways in which insight and the construction of difference are closely intertwined. As the division of the chapter into sections dealing with Precolonial Times, Colonial Times, Postcolonial Times reflects pragmatically, autobiographical writing in Africa is seen as deeply affected by the overall historical political development of and on the continent. Thus, autobiography in Africa, especially in Postcolonial Times, mirrors its critical entanglement with the so-called 'Western tradition' and an increased awareness of African political self-identity.

The next stops on the handbook's travel route are made in India, South East Asia, Indonesia, China and Japan as diversified scenes of autobiographical writing in Asia.

As regards the South East Asian sub-continent, the handbook has to confine itself to one exemplary country: to Laos, where autobiography is deeply intertwined with the trajectory of nation-state building and political tensions marked by ideologies, revolutions, and wars. Again, it is important to note that it is by no means the intention of the handbook to narrate unified stories of the autobiographical traditions in individual countries. Multiplicity of languages, manifold intercultural relations and traditions, differing self-conceptions and interconnections between the individual and the community have provided challenges for the historiographers who, on the one hand, are academic experts for the region they write about and, on the other hand, significantly enough, have been trained by Western academia.

Travelling further South-East, the historian of the autobiographical genre arrives in Australia and then in New Zealand. Here, the overlapping of indigenous cultures, European colonialism, nation-building, and postcolonial reflection again form political and cultural areas of conflict up to this day. And once more, one has to keep in mind that

the Western notion of autobiography as a written form of self-expression foregrounding the individual cannot automatically be applied to South Pacific native cultures. Moreover, as an effect of the colonial situation, the autobiographical genre frequently mingles with other forms of writing — which makes it all the more pertinent for this handbook. Finally, the handbook on its eastward journey reaches the Americas where it also meets critical Precolonial, Colonial, and Postcolonial constellations. Whereas Latin America, indeed, has a long and rich tradition of autobiographical writing which has not been extensively studied by scholars, the situation in North America is different. Especially in the United States, life writing is a lively and highly refined field of research. American research on autobiography was the first to look at life writing by minorities and it has highlighted many momentous aspects of the genre as life writing. Thus, numerous critical impulses as well as autobiographical texts have come across the Atlantic and enriched the European scene of life writing and its scholarship. And, in the last chapter of this volume, the handbook looks at autobiographies in the globalized world, that is to say, autobiographical manifestations of lives which were lived and written — transversally — in different parts of the world.

It should have become clear that it is profoundly worthwhile and productive to travel in different directions around the globe, studying influences and differences, comparing and finding new routes in the rich and still widely undiscovered field of autobiographical writing. As the academic world moves closer together, worldwide collaboration in the field of Autobiography Studies promises to find novel and intriguing topics, aspects, and approaches for further fruitful study. <>

Vol. III: Exemplary
Autobiographical/Autofictional Texts:
Exemplary
Autobiographical/Autofictional Texts, Or,
How not To Set Up A Canon by Martina
Wagner-Egelhaaf
Excerpt: Whereas the first volume of this handbook offers theoretical approaches to autobiography and autofiction, discusses categories and key terms,

while presenting a variety of autobiographical subgenres, and the second volume deals with the history of autobiographical writing across world cultures, one might ask now: What about the texts? Where are the individual autobiographies of individual authors presenting their individual lives? Is it not particularly the uniqueness of the text, its literary artfulness and intriguing quality of relating personal truths as well as writers' commitments that fascinate both readers and scholars alike? And is it not the rich tradition of multiform and highly versatile autobiographical works that triggers and promotes research in autobiography in the first place?

It goes without saying that numerous autobiographical and autofictional texts are mentioned in the course of the theoretical chapters of volume one and the historical overview of volume two. Yet, in the first and second volumes of this handbook, individual autobiographical examples are placed in service of an overarching systematic or historical perspective. However, this handbook wants to provide appropriate room for individual examples of autobiographical and autofictional writing, so as to permit deeper insights into their artistic complexity, the historically lived contexts of their origin, the reception, and the appeal they still have for readers today. Therefore, this volume of the handbook gathers essays on individual autobiographies that are considered to be of special importance in order to show this immense variety of autobiographical and autofictional writing all around the world.

However, the main difficulty was to decide which examples to include in the collection. The initial plan was to present about 30 essays on a sample of diverse autobiographical/autofictional documents. However, it soon became evident that the number of 30 essays would amount to a very limited selection in a handbook that claims to provide information about the autobiographical genre on a worldwide scale! And of course, a selection of 30 essays would unwillingly appear somewhat as a 'holy canon'. Canons, as we all know, may have far-reaching implicit and explicit effects. Even if they deny their own canonical status, the mere fact of their written form, their appearance in script, produces authority on its own. To set up a canon,

truly, was not intended. However, the appealing idea of presenting essays on individual autobiographical/autofictional texts rapidly developed its own dynamics: In discussing the project with different people, authors who already contributed to volumes one and two of this handbook, but also with other experts in the field of life writing, a plethora of suggestions came up - with the result that this third volume now contains 57 chapters! And, yes, it deliberately contains chapters on 'canonical' autobiographical works by authors such as St. Augustine, Rousseau, Goethe, Wordsworth and many more that the student of the autobiographical tradition would not want to miss.

Obviously, this European canon needed an expansion and an upgrade with regard to non-Western autobiographical/autofictional texts. Therefore, contributors were also asked to suggest unknown and unexpected examples of autobiographical and autofictional texts which they personally felt like writing about. As a result, the reader now finds chapters, for instance, on the Baburnama of Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur (1483-1530), the conqueror of Hindustan and founder of the Mogul dynasty; or on Sekhar: A Biography of Ajneya (1911-1986), the Indian political activist, journalist, writer and scholar; or on the French choreographer Xavier Le Roy's (born 1963) autobiographical/autofictional performance *Product of Circumstances*. It is the mixture of canonical representatives of the autobiographical/autofictional genre on the one hand and non-canonical examples on the other hand that forms the specific character of this volume which is dedicated to the particular and not so much to the typical. Certainly, every demanding text is much more particular than typical...

I also tried to gather essays from all continents and from as many countries as possible, although it was clear that not every single country could be represented. To do so, that is, to consider all countries for the sake of principle, would have counteracted the idea of the somewhat free-style presentation of 'musts', 'favorites' and 'oddities', apart from the fact that it would have been technically difficult, for instance, to find competent authors. And furthermore, this sort of 'completeness' and 'justice' would have been a chimera and would

undoubtedly have produced more problems on different scales, such as the question of representativeness. Fortunately, only a few of the essays agreed upon never came in. Yet the fact that against all efforts only about one third of the essays on individual autobiographical/autofictional texts are of non-European origin demonstrates how hard it is to uphold a consistent non-Eurocentric perspective. This refers back to the still unanswered question raised in the introduction to Volume Two: Is autobiography a European, or a Western concept? A tentative answer here would be: Autobiography's institutional and by no means ontological or essential 'Europeanness' or 'Westernness' is a product of cultural interplay between production, distribution, and reception, of reading and writing, artistic and scholarly framing. Today, one should say, its tradition-bound generic 'Europeanness' is a global one, which means that it does not at all belong to Europeans and Westerners but is open to adaptation, appropriation, and transformation on a worldwide scale. Yes, the genre even requires inter- and transcultural resignification in order to remain creative, fresh and relevant. By the way, one should keep in mind that St. Augustine, for instance, was not a born European, but as he adopted traditions and knowledge that in his time were not at all designated as 'European', he was appropriated as a person and an author by what developed as 'European tradition'.

The same restrictions hold true concerning the historical spectrum of autobiographical examples presented by this volume's essays. Historical 'representativeness' - whatever this may mean - was pursued, yet not attained. The reasons are the same, yet slightly reformulated, as those mentioned above. Much more problematic, and a cause of severe sorrow, is the fact that only about one sixth of the essays present texts written by women although more than half of the contributors to volume three are female authors. Here, I could and perhaps should have been more determined to enforce a political agenda and strive for gender parity; yet the price would possibly have been to lose authors and to accept a much longer processing time - and, finally, to draw a picture of the world's gender relations that might be wishful, but not at all (yet) the reality.

Enough of limitations: Against the backdrop of the great variety of autobiographical/autofictional writing and the way texts deal with and exceed their limitations, I wanted to present essays which are as free of strict regulations as necessary for appropriately dealing with their various subjects. Therefore, I did not impose strict guidelines for the individual chapters. The idea was to allow the authors of the following essays to be fairly free from formal restrictions and to encourage personal approaches and individual readings of 'their' texts. Nevertheless, the format of a handbook requires a basic agreement on what kind of information the reader may expect. Therefore, the authors of the essays were asked to provide short information about the author and the historical origins of the text as well as, of course, a summary of the content. The ensuing analysis should refer to theoretical approaches, categories and genre aspects dealt with in Volume One as well as to historical and cultural contexts provided in Volume Two. It was illuminating to see how differently authors dealt with the freedom of form on the one hand and the few basic instructions given to them on the other: Some retained the key notions of the instructions (author, origin, content, analysis) as subheadings of their chapters (which I had not intended), while others did not use subheadings at all or came up with their own. Editor and publisher finally decided not to homogenize the form of the essays and thereby document a spectrum of critical writing in autobiography/autofiction research. Diversity being a favored principle in the concept of this handbook with regard to, for instance, the diversity of theoretical approaches, genre concepts, but also the use of the English language within the individual chapters (see Preface), the presentation of various critical approaches in dealing with highly diversified autobiographical/autofictional texts seemed to make sense. I only intervened when I had the impression that the reader might need more information in order to grasp the general idea of the autobiographical/autofictional work in question.

Autobiography/autofiction remains a vibrant field on the literary market as well as in scholarly research. No other genre is driven so much by the relation of textuality and literary form on the one

hand and 'the reality of life' on the other hand as autobiography. It is the ever evasive line between text and life that remains effective in the performance of people's everyday life as well as in written autobiographical/autofictional texts. In the context of autobiography and autofiction, the term 'text' does not only refer to the written text, but includes other art forms as well, as it is the aim of this handbook to demonstrate. Paintings, photographs, films and even dance may be conceptualized as texts in so far as they are based on symbolic languages that communicate meaning by combining individual symbols or signs according to specific scripts or grammars. And even life may be conceived as a 'text', all the more so when it is narrated. Both life and text are, consciously or unconsciously, moved and activated by the sense of their limits. Autobiographical texts in this wider sense of 'text' display and draw on the productive forces induced by the gap between sign and referent, signifier and signified, wish and reality, past and future, self and the other, and so on, and thus provide an invaluable lens to view and reflect on what we consider our 'real' lives. <>

[Socrates in Love: The Making of a Philosopher](#) by Armand D'Angour [Bloomsbury Publishing, 9781408883914]

An innovative and insightful exploration of the passionate early life of Socrates and the influences that led him to become the first and greatest of philosophers.

Socrates: the philosopher whose questioning gave birth to the foundations of Western thought, and whose execution marked the end of the Athenian Golden Age. Yet despite his pre-eminence among the great thinkers of history, little of his life story is known. What we know tends to begin in his middle age and end with his trial and death. Our conception of Socrates has relied upon Plato and Xenophon--men who met him when he was in his fifties, a well-known figure in war-torn Athens.

There is mystery at the heart of Socrates's story: what turned the young Socrates into a philosopher? What drove him to pursue with such persistence, at the cost of social acceptance and ultimately his life,

a whole new way of thinking about the meaning of existence?

In this revisionist biography, classicist Armand D'Angour draws on neglected sources to explore the passions and motivations of young Socrates, showing how love transformed him into the philosopher he was to become. What emerges is the figure of Socrates as never previously portrayed: a heroic warrior, an athletic wrestler and dancer--and a passionate lover. Socrates in Love sheds new light on the formative journey of the philosopher, finally revealing the identity of the woman who Socrates claimed inspired him to develop ideas that have captivated thinkers for 2,500 years.

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Excerpt: Who Was Socrates?

Most people who know something about Socrates imagine him as a thinker, wise man, or philosopher of ancient Greece. Their image might be that of Rodin's Thinker, or that of an old man with a white beard dressed in a toga. To some, his name brings to mind a method of eliciting answers to questions popularised as Socratic questioning, and his declaration that the unexamined life is not worth living. Others imagine the drama of his execution: how, put on trial and sentenced to death, he was imprisoned and made to drink poison - a deadly draught of hemlock. Some will recall that Socrates had a devoted but demanding wife or mistress called Xanthippe.

The reader may imagine Socrates' life and death taking place against the backdrop of ancient Athens during its Golden Age, five centuries before the birth of Christ. During that period, ancient Greek civilisation attained great heights in many areas of thought, art, and literature - among other things, the Greeks invented philosophy, lifelike sculpture, magnificent architecture, and theatrical drama. The leading politician in Athens for many decades of the fifth century BC was Pericles, under whose direction Periclean Athens developed democratic institutions, became a maritime empire, and built the Parthenon.

Socrates is also associated with other great philosophers from ancient Greece, notably his successors Plato and Aristotle. But to many it comes as a surprise that Socrates himself left virtually nothing in writing. What we know of his thought relies largely on the writings of Plato, who was a young man in his twenties when Socrates died. Another admirer of Socrates of similar age to Plato was the soldier and author Xenophon, whose writings depict Socrates from a more everyday perspective. Neither author will have known Socrates well in person for much more than a decade, and both will have encountered him only as an older man.

Plato and Xenophon are the two principal sources for Socrates' biography. Of the two, Plato is generally considered more historically reliable. In his writings, a strong image emerges of Socrates in late middle age, as a sharp-minded, highly educated, original thinker, and a persistent, ironic, and often irritating questioner.

Plato also gives 'us glimpses of Socrates as an earthly sexual man, and portrays him as an exceptionally brave and capable fighter on the battlefield. In Xenophon's writings, by contrast, Socrates comes across more as an Athenian gentleman, witty, jovial, and a keen conversationalist.

Both writers make clear that Socrates was unconcerned about the material side of life and about his appearance. Indeed, he was someone who in his later years was widely recognised as being materially poor and physically unprepossessing, despite displaying undoubted

intellectual brilliance and associating on equal terms with leading thinkers and politicians in Athens. Writing from a largely philosophical perspective, Plato depicts him as a man devoted to ideas, whose external image mysteriously belied an internal beauty that captivated many of those around him; while in Xenophon's writings Socrates is humorously self-deprecating about his appearance, and self-confidently unconcerned with the trappings of wealth. The enduring image is of an extraordinary and original thinker who was always poor, always old, and always ugly.

This leaves a mystery at the heart of Socrates' story. What transformed a young Athenian man, allegedly from a humble background and of modest means, into the originator of a way of thinking and a philosophical method that were wholly original for his time and hugely influential thereafter? Later biographers of Socrates rarely look further than the pictures Plato and Xenophon create, and proceed on the assumption that Socrates' youth is irrelevant. They overlook crucial, if scattered, strands of evidence for his adolescence and early manhood, the very period in which the ideas and attitudes of the future philosopher were evolving. As a result, most accounts of Socrates' life fail to consider indications which, given the thinker's cultural context and historical circumstances, might credibly explain his personal and intellectual trajectory.

What can have inspired a young man of Socrates' place and time to inaugurate a whole new style of thinking, and to dedicate himself to a philosophical quest quite distinct from those thinkers who preceded him? At what stage did he embark on the career of a questioning philosopher, and why? What happened in Socrates' early manhood to bring about such a change? What was he doing, and what sort of person was he, in his teenage and adolescent years? What, in short, made Socrates Socrates?

These questions remain to be answered. To do so, one must unearth and ponder the clues in the manner of a detective investigator, piecing together Socrates' historical background and social milieu, and recreating a narrative of his early life that has been obscured and fragmented almost to

the point of oblivion. Many of the answers are, it turns out, hiding in plain sight. Their cumulative effect is surprising, fascinating, and even shocking to those who suppose that all there is to know about Socrates is already known.

The aim of this book is to offer a new, historically grounded, perspective on Socrates' personality, early life, and the origins of his style of thinking. Since direct evidence for Socrates' youth is thin, oblique, and scattered, circumstantial evidence and historical imagination must be used to flesh out the few precious indications in the sources about his background and early days. The answer to how his ideas changed and developed requires us to

'Perhaps what evidence there is could be extracted and a film made about the unknown Socrates,' I suggest.

Their eyes light up at the thought. 'It would make a wonderful story,' says one. The other nods vigorously in agreement.

The foregoing pages have laid out evidence for a picture of Socrates that has never before been drawn. What emerges is the story of a man whose life can be viewed as dramatic in more ways than one.

We have seen how Plato's *Symposium* shows him as espousing a personal philosophy revolving around Love, and no less as a courageous and even heroic figure on the battlefield. Instead of affirming his origins to be lowly and humble, the evidence has pointed to his being the child of a wealthy and successful middle-class artisan. Rather than imagining him solely as the unprepossessing thinker of his later years, the earliest contemporary evidence to his young years suggest the image of a captivating, athletic teenager with a love for learning. And instead of focusing simply on his declared love for Alcibiades, his obscure early marriage to Myrto, and his much later relationship with Xanthippe, the evidence has allowed us to rediscover his first intimate association as a teenager with Archelaus, and to define a period during which Socrates as a young man might have formed a close acquaintance and even fallen in love with Aspasia.

All these and other experiences will have laid the basis for the young Socrates to become the originator of the ideas for which, thanks mainly to Plato's unremitting industry and intellectual brilliance, he is principally remembered. Since the evidence clearly shows that Socrates was already following the path of philosophy by at least the age of thirty, what is clear is that his decision to direct his life towards philosophical rather than political or military achievements must have been taken before that age. How, then, might a version of Socrates' life be told which does justice to the vital experiences of his early years, as well as to the drama of his later ones?

Socrates: A Life

The Beginning

The story begins in the spring of 469 BC with Socrates' birth in the village of Alopeke. It is home to around a thousand Athenian citizens, along with their wives and children, as well as metics and slaves. Among the citizens is Sophroniscus the stonemason who, while not a man of elite birth or aristocratic status, is a respected and successful member of the community. His wife Phaenarete also comes from a good family, and his closest friend in the deme, Lysimachus, is the son of one of Athens' most distinguished statesmen, Aristides the Just.

Ten years have passed since the Persians withdrew from Greece after their resounding defeat at Plataea. The Athenians are busy rebuilding their lives and homes, with a proud new confidence in their democratic institutions and their naval power. The establishment of the Delian League under Athens' leadership has brought a renewed sense of security, and Athens' power as the leading city-state of Greece is being established throughout the Aegean.

In his boyhood days in the 460s, Socrates spends his hours observing his father supervising workmen in the stone quarries and on the marble blocks that will be transported to different sites around Attica. Sophroniscus expects his son to take up the family trade, and Socrates clearly has the strength and intelligence to be a successful stonemason. Sophroniscus also recognises the benefit of providing Socrates with the kind of education that the highborn youths of his deme enjoy. These are athletic, horse-loving lads who will go on to command armies and win glory on the battlefield.

However, Sophroniscus is often exasperated to find that his son is too preoccupied with leisure-studies to attend to his work duties. Whenever he can, Socrates slips off to town to listen to foreign-born thinkers, many of whose ideas the down-to-earth Sophroniscus considers worthless, impractical, and in some cases downright sacrilegious. He occasionally gives Socrates a beating for playing truant. The effect on Socrates is traumatic. He is torn between being a dutiful son and rebelling against his father's expectations. His own aspirations are more in line with his ambitious fellow-schoolboys - to be

a good speaker and a heroic fighter, and always to excel.

Socrates starts to hear an inner voice from time to time, sounding rather like his own father's admonitions, which warns him to stop doing what he is about to do. At first Socrates finds the voice to be a cause of alarm, but as time passes he persuades himself that it can be heard as a helpful companion, who can articulate his inner urgings about what to avoid and how best to act in any situation. He calls the voice his 'divine sign', and must sometimes stand still for long periods to work out what it requires him to do. Rather than thinking of the voice as an affliction, he sees it as a god-sent gift that will help him to live a good life and prevent him from taking the wrong path.

Young Socrates

As Socrates heads into his teenage years during the 450s, he imbibes the poetry of Homer, the lyric poets, and other classics, both at school and with a series of private tutors appointed by his father. He comes to know vast tracts of poetry and song by heart, and enjoys singing passages to the accompaniment of the lyre, for which he has some aptitude, having been taught by a leading musician of the day, Lampros. He is all the while developing

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hold court in the house of her brother-in-law Alcibiades the Elder, chaperoned by other exotic women from her home city Miletus whom jealous Athenian wives speak of as 'prostitutes'. Unlike other women who Socrates has encountered — and he has made it his business to get to know quite a few — the fiery Aspasia is unconcerned about being seen talking to men and telling them what she thinks.

Wagging tongues say that Aspasia is running a brothel, but Socrates has frequented many brothels in his time and knows otherwise. He starts to make occasional visits to her quarters with some of his high-born young friends and their wives, whom she impresses with her eloquent insights into the nature of love and relationships. She shares with Socrates a love of discussion and debate, and, since Socrates is already marked out as an unconventional young man, he is unconcerned by her status as a non-Athenian and the disapproval that some express about her activities. As it is, his own chances of making a respectable marriage are impaired by the general perception of his eccentric behaviour, such as when he stands still in the middle of the street for long periods, deep in thought.

When Socrates raises the subject of marriage with Aspasia, she makes clear that she knows better than he does what makes a good match: she is sought after by both sexes as a matchmaker, and for her advice about how to ensure a successful marriage. Meanwhile Pericles himself, though twice her age, is becoming no less captivated than Socrates by her beauty and intelligence, and Aspasia has her eye on making a beneficial liaison with Athens' most powerful man. In seeking to quell Socrates' disappointment, Aspasia presses him to answer what he thinks love really means, and presents him with her own doctrine of love and desire.

Love, she explains, begins with desire for a mate, but in the end it transcends mere physical desire. True love aims to bring out goodness in another person, and then to produce goodness that goes beyond that particular individual and makes an impact that lasts beyond one's own lifespan. Hard as it may be to accept the doctrine in practice, it

strikes Socrates with extraordinary force. It will shape his thinking about the nature of the world, the transcendence of moral ideas, and the transmission of wisdom across generations.

Socrates turns to philosophy

Socrates cannot dwell on his feelings for Aspasia. Shortly before he turns twenty-three in 447 he is summoned for his first tour of duty in Boeotia, on a mission led by Tolmides. Among the commanders of the force is Cleinias, son of Alcibiades the Elder; Socrates has occasionally encountered both men in the company of Aspasia. The battle that takes place at Coronea ends in defeat for the Athenians. Socrates is forced to beat a retreat, and does so with practised deliberation; lucky to return alive, he mourns the deaths of young men he has served with in Boeotia, as well as the death of general Cleinias, who leaves a widow with two sons in Pericles' care.

Young Alcibiades has lost his father and is now Pericles' ward. He will need tutors to guide him through his teens, in both intellectual and physical development, in poetry, dancing, and wrestling. Pericles' project to rebuild Athens' Acropolis has acquainted him with Sophroniscus, and he has heard from Archelaus and from Aspasia herself about Socrates' intelligence and cool-headed bravery during the disastrous retreat at Coronea. He summons Socrates to act as a mentor for Alcibiades along with other tutors, including the cranky Thracian Zopyrus and Alcibiades' great-aunt Aspasia.

Shortly thereafter, Aspasia moves into Pericles' house, and they live together as man and wife. By this stage Socrates has begun to forge his own branch of philosophical investigation, stemming from his conversations with Aspasia and his disaffection with the fashionable natural philosophy of his teachers. After Anaxagoras publishes a book on his theory of Mind, Socrates decides that he has no interest in the kind of doctrines represented by the philosophers of the day. Instead, he will take his cue from the questions raised by the great poetry and literature with which he has been brought up, and which he is surrounded by in symposia and at the theatre - accounts of personal heroism and choice, questions of courage, duty, prudence, and love. After a few years he discreetly marries his

childhood friend, Myrto, who has been widowed after her husband has died in battle; she will shortly bear him two sons.

Recognising his intellectual brilliance and unique presence, a group of followers starts to gather around him, among them the skinny, belligerent Chaerephon, whose clothes hang from his bony frame like the wings of a bat.

Meanwhile, with Aspasia now at his side, Pericles' political and military ambitions accelerate. At her urging, he embarks in 440 BC on the subjugation of Samos. Socrates is distressed to hear the reports of the brutal execution of the Samian commanders, among them his former host Melissus. In his eyes, it throws a dark shadow on Pericles' claim to virtue and wisdom. Rumours spread that the Athenians will surely be punished by plague for the offence given to the gods; but to the chagrin of Pericles' political opponents, the astute Aspasia arranges for a series of public sacrifices, and the gods appear to be appeased.

Shortly afterwards, Socrates and Chaerephon visit Delphi to consult the oracle. On their return, Chaerephon jubilantly tells all and sundry that the Delphic oracle has declared that no man is wiser than Socrates. Socrates, however, feels that he has been challenged to understand the god's meaning. He embarks on a life of questioning people of both high and low status, and concludes that he is only wiser than others because he knows that he does not know

During the decade of Socrates' thirties his father Sophroniscus dies, leaving a sizeable inheritance and some property from which Socrates can make a living and maintain his panoply. Socrates has by now decided that, apart from what is required to live and serve his city in battle, wealth and its trappings are of no importance, and are indeed an obstacle to his god-given mission. He will henceforth not care for his appearance or dress, but will use his years of physical training and self-discipline to go unshod and simply clothed, and to pay no heed to luxuries and creature comforts. He will leave the uses of prosperity to highly ambitious men such as his beloved Alcibiades, retaining the hope that they, too, will one day learn that the cultivation of their soul is worth more than anything

they can achieve in material or reputational terms. His own god-given duty is to examine the meaning of love, justice, courage, and beauty — the components of true excellence.

Socrates the hero

In the decade that follows, 440-430, Pericles comes under increasing attack from his political foes. Aspasia will hear no criticism of her loving husband, and at Pericles' bidding she more than once reproves Socrates for living the life of an itinerant thinker rather than engaging in politics. He points out that his continued service as a soldier shows his love of his city, but that he has an even more important duty of love to his fellow human beings: inspired by the very doctrine once imparted to him by Aspasia, it is his task to guide them beyond worldly concerns and in the pursuit of higher ethical ideals. He is by now pursuing philosophy with single-minded dedication, and his amatory feelings have been transferred to the young Alcibiades. He freely admits that he's in love with the dashing, impetuous teenager with whom he argues and debates, attends sophistic presentations, trains in the gymnasium, and wrestles in the wrestling-halls.

The moral questions that seem so pressing to Socrates come to the fore in an intensely personal way when he serves on the gruelling three-year campaign in Potidaea, part of the time with Alcibiades as his tent-mate. His rescue of Alcibiades in the Battle of Potidaea in 432 BC is an act of courage, performed out of love and concern but at the expense of military discipline. It's not something for which Socrates feels he merits a reward for heroism that Alcibiades says should by right be his. He is aiming to be a hero of a different kind, one who will be remembered for enlightening his fellow human beings. He will inspire them to follow the true path to the good life by forcing their assumptions to be constantly questioned and examined. Pericles and Aspasia disapprove, however, of Socrates' decision to turn his back on civic engagement, a choice to which Pericles makes a veiled reference in the Funeral Speech delivered in 431 BC.... <>

[Viscous Expectations: Justice, Vulnerability, The Ob-scene](#) by Cara Judea Alhadeff, Reviews by Avital

Ronell, Lucy R. Lippard, Alphonso Lingis, Sigrid Hackenberg y Almansa and Robert Mailer Anderson [Atropos Press, 9780988517066]

Orchestrating text and color photography through the lens of vulnerability, Cara Judea Alhadeff explores embodied democracy as the intersection of technology, aesthetics, eroticism, and ethnicity. She demonstrates the potential for social resistance and a rhizomatic reconceptualization of community rooted in difference—and a socio-erotic ethic of ambiguity that disrupts codified normalcy. Within the context of global corporatocracy, international development, the pharma-addictive health industry, petroleum-parenting, and arts-as-entertainment, she scrutinizes the emancipatory possibilities of social ecology, post-humanism, and the pedagogy of trauma. Confronting hegemonies of convenience culture, she lays the groundwork for a reticulated citizenry that requires theory-becoming-practice. Alhadeff's primary text and footnotes become parallel narratives, reflecting their intermedial content. As she integrates the personal and theoretical with the visual and textual, she mobilizes a comprehensive exploration of our bodies as contingent modes of relation. She cites philosophers and artists from Spinoza to Audre Lorde, Louise Bourgeois, and Édouard Glissant, who have explored collaborative and uncanny conditions of becoming vulnerable. In the context of multiple constituencies, creativity becomes a political imperative in which cognitive and somatic risk-taking gives voice to social justice.

Critical Appraisals:

"The pride of the European Graduate School, Cara Judea Alhadeff breaks new ground with her first book. Devoted to a radical engagement with embodied democracy, the work offers wide-ranging insight into precarious textual adventure and the artistic intercept. A bold and remarkable boundary-crossing on a number of crucial levels." —Avital Ronell, Professor of the Humanities, New York University, Jacques Derrida Professor of Philosophy and Media, European Graduate School Switzerland, author of *Loser Sons: Politics and Authority*

"In *Viscous Expectations*, Cara Judea Alhadeff offers an innovative hybrid of complex theoretical

discourse, performative photography, and timely political analysis. Her treatment of vulnerability is particularly provocative, as are her analyses of the collision of the hyperphysical with the hyper virtual. Alhadeff opens up new ways of thinking about contemporary life and sexuality, while delving deep into myriad subjects. Everything is embodied, endowed with a sensual visual or verbal presence--from dreams, to pregnancy and motherhood, to Occupy Wall Street. Alhadeff's work is a fascinating fusion of art and scholarship. Intricate theoretical text is paralleled by unexpected photographic imagery – sensuous, enigmatic, and layered. The book extends into new and fluid realms the still valid idea that 'the personal is political.' Intellectually rigorous and esthetically daring, the book is hard work, and worth it." — Lucy R. Lippard, art writer, curator, and activist. Author of 22 books on art and cultural criticism

"...With enormous energy and theoretical appetite, her thought exposes itself to the most difficult and most radical contemporary thinkers, contesting them with her own experience and insights...[Alhadeff's] thought is unlimitedly ambitious and vulnerable. It issues in putting vulnerability central, rather than individual autonomy or collective enterprise, rather than the subject of rights or the construction of institutions; and, opens a new perspective on justice and democracy." — Alphonso Lingis, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Penn State University, author of *Violence and Splendor, Dangerous Emotions*, *Trust*

"A radical provocation envisioning a 'collaborative emancipatory project' based on a 'dialectic of the unresolvable' and the 'becoming impossible.' Alhadeff's *Viscous Expectations: Justice, Vulnerability, The Ob-scene*, presents the work of an extraordinary individual whose fascinating auto-biography—an American, Spanish/Turkish Jew—breathes a renewed sense of urgency into a lived philosophy, 'perceiving the world through possibility rather than prescription.' Intimating an ae(s)thetics of contestation, intercession, resistance, and outrage, Alhadeff's project reinvigorates the scandal that is philosophy. A tour de force, whose intellectual and aes_(t)(h)etic bravura will stun the reader." — Sigrid Hackenberg y Almansa, Assistant Professor of Art and Philosophy, European

Graduate School Switzerland, Chair of Independent Studies, Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts, Portland, Maine, author of *Total History, Anti-History, and the Face that is Other*

“Viscous Expectations: Justice, Vulnerability, the Ob-scene by Cara Judea Alhadeff is exactly what an ‘art book’ should be, it offers a unique and singular world view, posing more questions than answers, but advancing lines of thought and arguments into uncomfortable territory in the form of photos and text to create a further understanding of ourselves. The first impressions of her work always offer uncertain footing, causing one to find their own balance of previously conceived notions and context, and then challenge them with the new information Judea Ahadeff offers with her sensual, beautiful and often disturbing pictures. This is important work by an artist that is unflinching with her camera and pen.”
—Robert Mailer Anderson, author of *Boonville*, producer of “Pig Hunt”

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Excerpt: Disentangling the roots of systemic psychic and social violence, “Viscous Expectations: Justice, Vulnerability, The Ob-Scene” investigates how the forces of body-phobia, misogyny, racial hygiene, and anti-intellectualism both undermine and produce conscious, holistic social relations. By scrutinizing the relationships among unchallenged assumptions of how we are socialized, this project reconfigures how perception and choice frame freedom. Political and ethical analyses of the interstices of cultural studies and corporeal politics enable a rhizomatic re-conceptualization of community rooted in difference and vulnerability.

This research offers a constructive strategy to challenge the inertia that perpetuates insidious body-phobic, convenience-culture hegemonies inscribed in the current crisis of agency in the US, and lays the groundwork for an emancipatory, performative pedagogy.

A radical democracy requires that theory becomes practice.

By examining the lived intersections of technology, aesthetics, eroticism, and ethnicity through the lens of vulnerability, my position offers citizen-subjects an opportunity to recognize their potential for transformative resistance. Although vulnerability is conventionally understood to mean being susceptible to harm, the foundation of this practice is rooted in encountering vulnerability and difference as physical and emotional strength—a roiling of ambiguity, the unknown, and the uncanny. Artists, scientists, and philosophers, ranging from Heraclitus to Elizabeth Grosz to Edouard Glissant, have explored this condition of becoming. In the context of multiple constituencies, creativity becomes a political imperative in which intellectual and aesthetic risk-taking gives voice to social justice—a collaborative becoming-vulnerable. I am proposing an embodied democracy in which social models become a practice based on recognition of the absolute necessity of difference: an infinite potential of our bodies as contingent modes of relation. By challenging how we internalize binaries and taxonomies, I investigate lived empathy4 within a matrix of an erotic politics—not a unified

merging which dissolves into an amorphous normativity, but as the fluid exchange of autonomy and interconnectedness.

Throughout my project, I undertake a homeopathic approach to this rhizomatic *lneinander* (entanglement) of cultural conditions. A Deleuzoguattarian anti-critique allows me to simultaneously use the very tendencies I am critiquing to more thoroughly scrutinize their multiple enfoldments—making a home in “enemy” territory—embodying the uncanny. I am explicitly choosing to examine the relationships among seemingly disparate subjects. As a practice of embodying theory, I simultaneously deploy a reticulated methodology of analyzing such an ensnarement, while striving to extricate the liberatory potential of this seemingly monolithic knot. Rather than solely addressing my subjects as autonomous, my inquiry disentangles pivotal junctions, interstitial nodes of relation, and philosophical congruencies that engage a *féminine écriture*. Precisely because “...the works of Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, and Hélène Cixous dramatize some of the contradictions that emerge when feminists seek to free women’s desires from the structures erected by psychoanalytic phallicism”, they evert, thus defossilize, arborescent schema of filiation. Analogously, Gregory Bateson’s “aesthetics of ecological survival” calls for a meandering, non-linear social agency and a conscious dis-ordering of sanctified normalcies. Systems of production maintain their interpenetrating oppressive influence because they are so insidiously interconnected.

I identify an “acentered, nonhierarchical nonsignifying system”—that of the rhizome—as a *raison d’être* of *féminine écriture*. I recognize the intellectual risks I take by committing to the strategic practice of *féminine écriture*:

...it is worth asking if Cixous’ model of feminine sexuality does not reduce women to precisely those qualities that have long been stigmatized in a patriarchal order. Consigned to the unconscious, to instinct, to the body, even to irrationality, this feminine libidinal economy bears an uncanny resemblance to familiar stereotypes of women.

By reorienting these essentialized characteristics through a homeopathic rubric, I am embarking on this project of feminine libidinal economy in order to draw wider attention to our internalized insidious layers of complicity with the forces of academic, institutional, and corporate coercion. This investigation of “co-implication” disengages how our bodies and psyches are embedded in contradictory social constructions that strip our identities of relationality, thus shackling our potential accountability to others and ourselves. Undecidability, like co-implication, “harbor(s) within itself (a) complicity of contrary values... prior to any distinction-making...” It has “no stable essence, no ‘proper’ characteristics, it is not, in any sense of the word...a substance”.

My project is intricately rooted in the potential of a rhizomatic uncanny—“reducible neither to the One nor the multiple.” By incorporating dates and geographical locations, I ground my theoretical investigations within narratives of personal experience. In her exposition of her friendship with the late Kathy Acker, and of the problematic of friendship itself, Avital Ronell self-interrogates:

I have to interrupt myself here and confess my uneasiness as I write: in the first place, so unaccustomed to saying “I” in my texts, so comfortable in the practice, nearly Zen, of the attenuation of the subject, the effacement of self and the radical passivity exacted by writing—it is very shocking to me to have to include myself in this unnuanced way. I could handle myself as a barely audible trace in the service of some alterity to be addressed, but saying, for me, brazenly, “I” makes me shudder. ...“I” is vulgar, or so goes my prejudice and practice.

In Chapter Five, I revisit Ronell’s “I” in her investigation of philosophers’ self-censorship within historical intertwinings of philosophy and sex. Grosz praises the “rare combination of openly expressed personal obsession and scholarly rigor, the rigorous reading and analysis of [Roger Caillois’ and Alphonso Lingis’] driving personal preoccupations”. Grosz continues, “[w]hat seems rare is not the combination of scholarship and personal obsessional—this could be said to characterize much if not all theoretical and scientific

discourse—but the open acknowledgement that the research is based on personal concerns”. Both the process and content of my photographs and of the writing of this dissertation demonstrate an uncanniness that marks the confounding of this polarity: of first-person and third-person discourse. But the instability is not just between narrative positions:

it is already within both of them...[the uncanny] is already busily at work at the heart and hearth of every home, contaminating and corrupting all authority, just as the style indirecte libre blurs the boundaries between authoritative third-person and engaged first-person narratives.

As a strategy to elucidate my theoretical queries, I refer both to my philosophical underpinnings and to the international public reception of my photographs—which has frequently led to censorship. In doing so, I practice an embodied theory¹ that advocates a political, philosophical, and pedagogical commitment rooted in everyday behavior and interaction. In his introduction to *On Nietzsche*, Sylvère Lotringer elucidates Georges Bataille’s practice of embodied theory: “Bataille never developed ideas that he didn’t backup with his life”.

I am aware of the precarious territory I tread by attempting to shift among elliptical performative language modalities. Like Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, I am unequivocally compelled to invoke the “blur of the theoretical and the auto-referential granted permission to make bodies matter”. I am explicitly choosing to engage in a counter-narrative to the politics of clarity. Giroux’s deconstruction of the politics of clarity elucidates how one-dimensional normalized forms of communication become entrenched in our daily lives.

I recall flushing and stiffening at what seemed to me democracy become mediocracy, at the looming sense of democracy as a science of the lowest-common-denominator, as competency trumping speciality, as random access to generic brands. I recoiled from the gray, undifferentiated space of this democracy. Here, it seemed to me, was the democracy of the Food Lion, Kmart, and superstores everywhere: Flatline consumption

disguised as purchasing power; democracy turned over to the bland multiplicity of bodies pushing identical carts up and down aisles promising equally bland satisfaction. In his argument against the ‘politics of clarity,’ Henry Giroux decries what he calls the ‘populist elitism’ implicit in such a view. Referring to the often smug tendency to privilege clarity in popular discourses of writing and education (how could anyone with any common sense not be for clarity?), Giroux argues, ‘clarity becomes a code word for an approach to writing that is profoundly Eurocentric in both context and content writing that conforms to presuppositions about standard language use and neglects the historical, political, and cultural specificity of diverse audiences or publics’.

The institutionalized illusion of neutrality reifies the myth of transparency. Trinh Minh-ha’s discussion of the tyranny of accessibility equally brings to the forefront how clarity is imposed; how the effects of “being clear”, “making accessible” exemplifies/materializes homogeneous ways of thinking and acting— further breeding intolerance and the politics of exclusion. Under the guise of communication, clarity and accessibility sabotage and eventually annihilate differential modes of being. My choice to unapologetically insinuate and implicate the “I” is not simply a reaction to our socially constructed reductive vernacular, but a vital commitment to embodied thinking.

In Part I, I examine de-historicized, neo-colonized middle-class forms of consciousness in which citizen-subjects fail to recognize their ability to witness the context of embodied energy, and how this failure to make corresponding relevant choices obliterates their socio-political potency. I designate this failure as the violence of the everyday—a violence that engenders and perpetuates convenience-culture. Embodied energy designates both the local and global cycles of extraction/production/representation/distribution/consumption/disposal/containment. Through an intimate re-examination of embodied energy as a Spinozian ethology, my argument offers a rationale for comprehending not only why, but how US society can become the democracy it purports to be. I will explore participatory citizenship through a conscious integration of embodied energy into the

everyday and how we experience the other within ourselves as a key to provoke social agency. In Chapter Three, I investigate how this integration of embodied energy manifests as the erotic.

The violence of the everyday can be characterized by the ways in which we embody constructed desires and fears of our own bodies and of difference. The hegemony of the everyday and the ostensible self-evident aim to deny, contain, control, and eventually extinguish vulnerability and difference. Neoliberal normative definitions of difference, what is considered obscene and deviant, shape the violence of “everyday” representations and determine how they are consumed: “We patrol gender expressly because our claim to normality (i.e. conventional humanness) has been made to rely on it.” Neoliberalism confines US citizens within the familiar, the “neutral”. They are inoculated against difference. My research attempts to unsnarl the contradictions embedded in the practice of equality—how the illusion of neutrality has given mediocrity, and its subsuming violence, free reign over every aspect of our lives:

This rhetoric constructs the most seemingly innocuous forms of personal and everyday life— of subjectivity, of citizenship itself...a structure, a rhetoric for being that orders and regulates Western social space and consciousness...that invite[s] citizen-subjects to faultlessly consume ideology, and to guilelessly reproduce ‘depoliticized’ and supremacist forms of speech, consciousness, morality, values, law, family life, and personal relations.

This utopic world of monolithic perceived perfection—automated assimilation—fuels the sanctity of normalcy and drives compulsive consumerism. Contrary to critical pedagogy in which value is context dependent, this axiomatic habit feeds on fear, on self-censorship leading to everyday taken-for-granted violences. Structural inequalities range from standardized testing to the medicalization of sexuality to humanitarian imperialism to eugenics. US society is rooted in this infinitely reproducible self-censorship—an internalized fascism and institutionalized anti-intellectualism that reifies the mediocrity of the status quo. We expect the lowest-common-

denominator of intellectual engagement as a justification for how we make decisions, for what should and should not be allowed in the public realm— firmly establishing a mediocracy. In Part III, Chapters Five and Six, I discuss in detail the imperatives of critical thought, dissent, social responsibility and civic courage in the context of the art market and educational institutions.

Entitlement and enforced equality have overtly and covertly become devices of social submission. Global democratization is an accepted, unquestioned euphemism for inequality. This equalization eradicates the subversive potential of the unseen, the private, the individual. Homogenization self-perpetuates by mimicking the model of the norm rather than challenging its terms. Equality is sustained because it renders invisible and eventually extinguishes socially subordinate identities and dismisses their potential for functioning through differential relationships with others. Entitlement— governmental selective restrictions, media representations, corporatized morality—restrains vulnerability and the rhizomatic field of possibility. Through taken-for-granted binary reductive thinking, entitlement denies any dialogic relationship, any genuine incorporation into the polity. We are taught that in spite of and because of our differences, we lack—we need more, because we are less:

Under [the regime of pan-capitalism], individuals of various social groups and classes are forced to submit their bodies for reconfiguration so they can function more efficiently under the obsessively rational imperatives of pan-capitalism (production, consumption, and order). One means of reconfiguration is the blending of the organic and the electromechanical.

Sandoval's characterization of "identification" parallels my analysis of equality as the result of constructed desire. Media-saturated fear-politics form and sustain "need", ownership, and entitlement. This fictional consciousness "seeks to equate all differences with itself". Under the imperatives of the first world cultural order that Roland Barthes inhabits, the other is recognized as a deceptive snare, a lure threatening to ambush with its duplicity the sense of self on which the

citizen-subject secures its own forms of humanity". The fantasy of equality, in which equality is reduced to homogeneity, "presents itself as 'natural' while being laden with the values, hopes and desires of the dominant social order" (ibid.). Barthes' exploration of equality-as-sameness intersects with Rancière's discussion of the Ignorant Schoolmaster: "Equality, writes Jacotot, is neither given nor claimed; it is practiced, it is verified". Equality manifests as assimilation/toxic mimicry.

In Chapter Two, I discuss the pathologized other in the context of our contradictory (both neutralizing and politicizing) technological age. Jewish peoples have inhabited a host-parasite historical space of alterity within their adopted countries over the centuries—an uncanny zone of the stranger within. As with any irreducible irritant, the host interrogates: What must be done with that which cannot be assimilated, that which will not submit to equality? As I investigate this question, vulnerability surfaces as a prostheticized "shared deterritorialization" between host and parasite — "a co-existence of two asymmetrical movements". Becoming-vulnerable means that we are in a continual state of transition. Because identities in this realm are unfixed and in flux, they become-relational. Difference establishes this condition of vulnerability. Vulnerability operates from the Law of Impermanence: "[it] sustains such continual disturbance between the essentially interrelated antitheses and does not allow them to come to equilibrium".

Again we are confronted with the aching paradoxes of post-humanism. Psychasthenia is the condition of the chiasma of post-humanism:

A disturbance in the relation between self and surrounding territory; a phenomenon in which the ability to define one's position in space is confused with, and by, represented space; an urban cultural condition which provides the dual experience of being everywhere at once while not really being anywhere at all.

In Chapter Two, I discuss in detail the contradictory relationships among our reifying phallo-centric, techno-capital discourses and their "systemic mutability". Contra détournement, explored throughout my project, the neoliberal prosthetic

ideology sabotages differential thinking. Wolfgang Schirmacher identifies modern technology as hostile to the natural body by attempting to render it ageless and even immortal, thus neutralizing differences and the unfamiliar. Bill T. Jones' choreography heightens our understanding of Schirmacher's position:

The body is at once the most solid, the most elusive, illusory, concrete, metaphorical, ever present and ever distant thing—a site, an instrument, an environment, a singularity and a multiplicity. The body is the most proximate and immediate feature of my social self, a necessary feature of my social location and of my personal enselfment and at the same time an aspect of my personal alienation in the natural environment.

I offer the challenge to inhabit the uncanny interplay of modern technology, media, and imagination. I define the uncanny as the potentiality of “a visual language that disrupts and extends beyond the dialectical disclosure of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis through the divergent interconnectivity of prosthesis”. Prostheses, like visualizing technologies, embody the contradictions of lived post-humanism. Rooted in a contemporary re-appropriation of the politics of clarity in which ambiguity no longer signifies a lack of clarity, but presents a multiplicity of clarities: Derridás “affirmation then determines the noncenter otherwise than as loss of center.”

My exploration of post-human dynamics in the context of postmodern globalization is inherently ambiguous and multi-pronged; rhizomatically unfolding into multiple paradoxical positions—reflecting on both its assimilationist tendencies and emancipatory potentials.

Post-humanism embodies and disembodies both a dissident manifestation of globalization and a myopic, totalitarian manifestation of globalized new world economy. How we choose to metabolize post-human dynamics delineates the difference between reification of the sanctity of normalcy and the possibilities of a radical citizenship/participatory democracy. We can co-exist within a neo-colonizing and within a

decolonizing postmodern version of cyberspace. This tension-filled conviviality is integral to post-human ethics, aesthetics, and corporeal politics. Conflict is irreducible. By no means am I suggesting a binary relationship between two versions of post-humanism. Rather, I am proposing a polysemic dialectic of possibility—an affinity through difference, an elliptical continuum which decodes, trans-codes, translates, and critiques “the real”.

Under the tyranny of normalcy, equality becomes a euphemism for assimilation—an identification with a shared identity. Vulnerability confronts this homogenizing force. In PART II, I explore the new field of research called “intermedialities” which offers an ethics of difference and a politics of transformation rooted in an investigation of how to privately and publicly/ ob-scenely (off-stage) and explicitly dissolve the calcified and calcifying tyranny of certainty—that which obliterates the possibility of difference, both lived and shared. This inquiry is not centered on attempting to find a resolution to our current global state of emergency, but is focused instead on engaging with the “as if” of a participatory universe—the torodial condition of continual non-arrival and its potential dissolution of social inertia and cultural somnambulism. PARTS II and III respond to Schirmacher's challenge to productively transform theory into practice. Eldridge Cleaver's indictment, “You're either part of the solution or you're part of the problem”, behooves us as cultural workers to commit to immediate and sustainable legislated justice.

In “Philosophical Congruencies”, I catalogue numerous philosophers' designations for the intricate interconnectedness of the in-between—another chiasmic web through which we can explore the social scientific concept of embodied energy. By accruing a list of congruencies, I draw attention to the philosophers' common preoccupation with de-solving the sanctity of normalcy. My research reticulates radical subaltern spaces: Baruch Spinozás enchantment and intuition, Friedrich Nietzsche's chiasmic unity, and Glissant's poetics of relation (to name just a few of the philosophers cited throughout my text). Additionally in Chapter Three, I target Audre Lorde's concept of erotic politics that identifies the de-colonizing, liberatory practice of nourishing relationships

among seemingly contradictory socio-psychodynamic forces.

Erotic politics are relational, requiring the ineffable, play, inquiry. This inter-dialogue cannot be contained or resolved. A dialectics of no resolution resounds with a commitment to art as erotic politics—one in which binary codes do not dictate our decision-making process; but rather, how anomalies, aporias, ambiguity, metaphor, aphorisms, the eternal not-yet lead us to the give-take of continual non-arrival—a vividly post-human condition. This condition yields the uncanny as the exiled stranger within. I associate the eternal-not-yet as Kristevás definition of the uncanny: an “ordeal of fundamental incompleteness: a ‘gaping’,...” The uncanny is my political strategy, an erotic ethic, a commitment to aesthetics and everyday politics as multiple and relational. The uncanny can never be de-cided—cut into dichotomous pre-digested wholes: “Every time you draw a line you are cutting through someone’s flesh” (Raymond Cadvera).

By inhabiting the unknown through ambiguity and contradiction (Chapter Three) we can invoke an order rooted in fluidity that is capable of confronting the current state of US democracy and its obfuscating humanitarian imperialism. Philip Slater’s Toilet Assumption identifies US democracy as that which functions through institutional concealment—the collusive concept “that unwanted matter, unwanted difficulties, unwanted complexities and obstacles will disappear if they’re removed from our immediate field of vision”. The public knows explicitly what is being hidden. The ob-scene, then, becomes a true marker of an advanced civilization. Ironically, the post-human tendency towards transgression in reality is not transgressive. In fact, it prescribes the norm and consistently mirrors non-Western concepts of the taboo. I describe these tendencies in greater detail in Chapter Three. When the private seeps into the public sphere it becomes a spectacle of its own invisibility. Since those who exist within the liminal zone of the taboo, those without a homeland are inherently ob-scene, off stage, off screen, elsewhere, I ask: How is u-topia (nowhere), different from the ob-scene? How can we deploy the state of being in exile, homeless, the unheimlich,

the unhomely, the uncanny—all markers of the sub-altern—to enable an emergent democratic republic?

Considered a danger to civilization, order, and the common good, the sub-altern is methodically dematerialized. Kristeva argues that our culture has ingested this “operation of the psyche through which subjective and group identity are constituted by excluding anything that threatens one’s own (or one’s group’s) borders”. The hegemony of industrial imperialism fears the disorder of the exotic/toxic other, bodily functions, the unpredictability of instinct and intuition. The sacred cannot be segregated, localized, or categorized; it is inherently messy, relational, post-human. “The sacred involves right or wrong action and is imbued with the opposing qualities of pure and impure, holy and sacrilegious”. Kristevás *carrefour*, boundary-crossing, is precisely what constitutes contradictory post-human art-making and corporeal integrity. Her concept of the *chora*, also explored in Chapter Four, invites a primal, interconnected materiality of being.

In Chapter Four, Kristevás analysis of Teresa de Avilás relationship of her devotion to the divine explicitly moves from metaphors to metamorphosis—a becoming inherent in embracing the unknown, the unfamiliar. The *chora* and the *carrefour* of the erotics of the uncanny constitute a transmogrification of becoming-animal. Becoming-animal performs the interpenetrations of the irreducible difference of erotic politics. In contrast, repugnance for the animal signifies ethnocentrism. In the context of this thesis, ethnocentrism is not affiliation with a nation (*ethnos*) but an affiliation with race, religion, sexuality, and in particular, a taken-for-granted ethos—a masquerade of morality that super-cedes the sacred. This masquerade effectively neutralizes difference:

...one strives on all sides to reduce the differences between beings to external difference, separate and apart from an active intention to surpass and destroy animal nature within us. On all sides, one strives to deny human value, because this value is essentially difference-between animals and manor between men; for this reason, one strives to reduce every

difference to the insignificance of a material datum.

Vulnerability, difference, and the sacred co-exist as a fertile uncanny opposition to the taxonomic reductionism of the public sphere. Within this hegemony, like Bataille, I identify the sacred as the uncanny, as a manifestation of art—that which is not taken for granted. In Bataille's philosophy of sacred destruction and excess, we can find a Dionysian opening which allows us to pay explicit attention to the contradictions embedded within our own psyches and bodies. Recognition of and exposure to these ambiguities roots us in the sacred—a paradoxical embodiment of the both/and status of the sacred, the ineffable, *neti-neti* (neither this-nor that). This sacred reflects Michel Foucault's investigation of *ars erotica*.

Using the body as a manifestation of relational-identity, my photographs/videos become sites that explore this schizophrenic slippage between violence and the sacred as a terrain for invoking individual and social consciousness. My photographs play with interrelating imbrications—concurrent multiple, contradictory tendencies. As I discuss in detail in Chapter Six, my photographs “figure the unfigurable by disfiguring figures” (Taylor 240). This rendering formless through image-making becomes a sacred act. The sacred plays out the complexities of the *carrefour* as embodied rhizomatic vulnerabilities. These tendrils form a Moebius-band simultaneity in which “... the libido suffuses everything. Keep everything in sight at the same time...”, a non-binarism of inside/outside, order/disorder, public/private animating the visible sacred.

De-solving the hegemonies of naturalized order, we engender an ever-shifting, polyvalent, performative politic. This erotic politic produces a new alignment by decolonizing what Ronell identifies as the “hetero-rhetorical unconscious of the social milieu”—one in which an expansive dialectics of pedagogical intervention repositions our everyday interactions. We practice immanent patterns of becoming this palimpsest of simultaneous global-local convergences. In “What is Critique?”, Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak explore this variation of social consciousness:

As a mode of radical questioning, of unsettling self-evident answers, of interfering in established relations of power, [critique] is simultaneously a self-critical process. ...Critique thereby becomes an intervention, a resistance to conformity, a tool that can bring the production of truths into crisis. It disrupts secure foundations, interrupts the functioning of discourses, not to substitute them with more accurate alternative epistemes, but to reveal the complexity, contingency and violence of our ‘regimes of truth’. ... [A]ccompanying processes of subject-formation... critique is an exploration of how it may be possible to think otherwise – persistently denaturalizing and historicising the order of things.... a crisis of the epistemological framing of our worlds. ... It is ruthless in the sense that it does not fear its own consequences (Butler and Spivak “What is Critique?”).

The fearlessness of unintended (and intended) consequences of the uncanny is precisely the practice of politicizing vulnerability as a ruthless impossibility. The impossible defies stupidity: our current state of emergency—US democracy's masquerade of morality in which our inherited culture of projected shame manifests in institutionalized suppression and self-censorship. Our “democratic” society is characterized by standardized and conformist laws of conduct which are reduced to the lowest-common-denominator: “To the extent that morality teaches hatred of too great a freedom, it implants the need for limited horizons and immediate tasks, teaching the narrowing of perspectives and thus in a certain sense stupidity, as a condition of life and growth” (Ronell). In opposition to stupidity, vulnerability can become a site for reterritorialized democracy.

Irigaray's call to becoming demands that we inhabit the impossible: “To become means fulfilling the wholeness of what we are capable of being”. Radical citizenship invokes “...this circumstance of resistance, [it] requires that the unspeakable be spoken and that the impossible be done”. In Chapter Six, I explore how the ineffable, *l'informe*, and the undecidable potentially decolonize our consciousness and our quotidian behavior.

Consciously becoming defies equality, as it refutes any and all invisible, internalized hierarchies. An embodied consciousness conjures an elastic dialectic of becoming in which difference pulsates with the impossible—the lived rhizome:

A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree is filiation but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree [taproot] imposes the verb “to be,” but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, “and...and...and...” This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb “to be.” Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading to? These are totally useless questions...[Rhizomes] establish a logic of the AND, overthrow ontology, do away with foundations, nullify endings and beginnings...the middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed.

In Chapter Four, I investigate how carnival and the festival suspend all hierarchical rank, prohibition, and privilege: they are the celebration of mutation. The anomaly or outsider (discussed in Chapter Three) offers the transformative potential of becoming. As I propose in Chapter Four, Kristeva unravels Teresa de Avilás becoming the impossible through the dialectic of the unresolvable. Because becoming refuses to merge/homogenate, and instead dissonantly seeps intermediality—preserving relational alterity and the never fully knowable. “[Mikhail] Bakhtin has characterized the grotesque body as a ‘body in the act of becoming’”. Thus, within the collaborative intensities of my photographic process, the grotesque becomes a mutually constituted private and public space for exploring contradictory interpretations and vulnerabilities. The tension created during the constructing and viewing of my images hopefully defies definitions because “it” is never fully knowable. Because this tension is part of an ongoing collaboration with the shifting positions between the viewer and myself, the work of art embodies *l’informe*—in a perpetual condition of becoming. Critical art, thought, action scandalizes the normative through such seepage. In both my art practice and commitment to the political domain, I investigate not the elimination of conflict, but how

to negotiate conflict. Redistribution of conflict invites a differential consciousness and behavior. Ekphrasis,⁵ a luminescent oscillation of cross-fertilizations, resounds with political potential. These promiscuous crossings have compelled me to collaborate with musicians and choreographers, poets and philosophers—to continually immerse myself in unfamiliar territory as the process of becoming.

It is a multiplication of connections and disconnections that reframe the relation between bodies, the world where they live and the way in which they are ‘equipped’ for fitting it. It is a multiplicity of folds and gaps in the fabric of common experience that change the cartography of the perceptible, the thinkable and the feasible. As such, it allows for new modes of political construction of common objects and new possibilities of collective enunciation...to produce a sensory form of strangeness, a clash of heterogeneous elements prompting a chance in perception (Rancière).

As a “citizen-warrior” inhabiting this rhizomatic liminal zone becomes a socio-erotic imperative. Because I recognize the complexities of the intersections of race, class, sex, gender, and aesthetics, and how they inform our daily interactions, I have lived difference as a point of departure, rather than as an end point in the deconstruction of antidemocratic normative behavior. In Chapters Five and Six, I explore the disfiguring potential of the festival as an emancipatory pedagogy. If used consciously, shedding the illusion of individuality can become an explicit strategy for erotic agency. In his book, *Sexuality: The New Critical Idiom*, Joseph Bristow challenges scholars to form a political project rooted in Deleuze’s rhizomatic and schizoanalytic lines. My pedagogical and art-based research explores possibilities of radical citizenship by actively cultivating vulnerability through corporeal inquiries. It explores the cross-fertilization of Deleuze’s enfoldments as disarticulated membranes. This awareness awakens the potential of fully inhabiting our bodies—bodies that pulse with the multiplicity of the ‘I’—bodies as inherently interdisciplinary. A commitment to heterogenicus

embodied curiosity decodes, thus ruptures cultural assumptions. It addresses the “ineluctable contiguities” (Ronell’s introduction to *Scum Manifesto*) of body-minds as conditions for participatory democracy—a lived erotic politics. A collaborative call and response revives the vulnerability inherent in the disfigurement, the écriture of the abject (which I explore in Chapter Six). Vulnerability becomes a textual jouissance.

My investigation of socio-erotic ethics generates the following questions: What if sexual and erotic relationships with oneself, one’s environment, and with others, became a condition for a just, humanitarian, compassion-based society? What if our bodies and the experiences they produce became models for active citizenship? Could social justice evolve out of an uncanny vulnerability? Ronell’s parallel investigation of sex in relation to philosophy guides me through my queries: “Sex is not bodies, as philosophy is not concepts; each is an act, a relation, and a language”.

Eroticism as a form of critique (critique via Butler and Spivak) aligns collisions of liminalities. Distinguishing and recognizing, not separating, self from other, we can encounter the unknown, opening up the potential for corporeal cognition and erotic play. Erotic conjunctions provide a framework for perceiving the world through possibility rather than habitual prescription. The nature of this collaborative emancipatory project transgresses the phallic lure of internalized, invisible, capitalist Oedipal structures. Reason and intuition become subordinate to perception.

Everyday mediocrity and contrived neutrality expose the intersection of entertainment, consumerism, and ethnocentrism as a collective violence through which we encounter our bodies and consciousness. Supreme Court Justice Douglas was emphatic on this subject:

The First Amendment was not fashioned as a vehicle for dispensing tranquilizers to the people. Its prime function was to keep debate open to ‘offensive’ as well as to ‘staid’ people. The tendency throughout history has been to subdue the individual and to exalt the power of government. The use of the standard ‘offensive’ gives

authority to government that cuts the very vitals out of the First Amendment. As is intimated by the Court’s opinion, the materials before us may be garbage. But so is much of what is said in political campaigns, in the daily press, on TV, or over the radio.

A proactive philosophical approach to sexuality resists these systems of identification/ equalization that co-exist within the rubric of the ostensibly typical and everyday. When we render these assumptions visible, we disrupt the status quo; we embody erotic politics. This un-settling is not a dialectical negation, but rather manifests as a co-existence. Although I make the explicit distinction between eroticism and sexuality (both metaphoric and literal), I position both as techniques for social emancipation—the circulation of radical citizenship.

In Chapter Five, “Rhizomatic Vulnerabilities for Radical Citizenship: Pedagogical Promiscuities”, my investigation includes a discussion of how pornography, prostitution, and other forms of sex-work in the US constitute active intensities of resistance. By re-examining our psychic and corporeal interiority, I invite the potential of the uncanny as a pedagogical strategy for social change. In this context, I explore women’s access to public sexuality, male multiple orgasms, female orgasm (which may imply multiplicity), and in particular, female ejaculation as models for becoming. Protean sexualities (ranging from sex activism to female ejaculation) suggest a conceptual shift that deconstructs patriarchal inscriptions on our bodies. As previously mentioned, my visual and theoretical works “figure the unfigurable by disfiguring figures”. Dis-figurement presents le déreglement de tous les sens—an invocation of Kristeva’s description of écriture: “What is unrepresentability? That which, through language, is part of no particular language:

rhythm, music, instinctual balm. That which, through meaning, is intolerable, unthinkable: the horrible, the abject". The anxiety of orgasm becomes the stranger within, just as écriture becomes a surrender to the unknown. Revitalization of both individual and social bodies produces enfoldments of psyche-somatic consciousness. No hierarchies survive these monstrous, heterogeneous, multiple entwinements of body intelligence and wisdom.

In contrast to the institutional act of cutting, a pharmaceutical-free vaginal birth allows a woman's perineum to tear if necessary. This unmediated process opens up the liminal zone of birth. Throughout my project, I use this metaphor of self-splitting (as a deviation from hospital-enforced episiotomies and cesarean sections—de-cisions inflicted on the vulnerable body) to reflect on the potential euphoric détournement of the uncanny. The uncanny requires an openness to deception (Slavoj Žižek's

reading of Hegel's "cunning of reason"), an erotics of not knowing, in which we continuously re-assemble

ourselves: "Unless one is able to perform the Freudian Spaltung, protective self-splitting, many of [us] minoritized, evicted creatures spend ourselves staving off the pressures of social psychotization" (Ronell's introduction to *Scum Manifesto*). This conscious atomization asserts an ethics of the flesh, an emancipatory politic, a new aesthetic: "The new aesthetics aim to restore the fluidities between persons and things" (Johnson 259). Transformative fluidity implies an erotics of the uncanny, a socio-erotic ethic of instability and asymmetry—a "dialectic of 'embracing' and 'splitting'" (Rancière). In the last section of my dissertation I incorporate a series of schizo, non-linear anecdotes/narratives in order to occupy the visible. The etymology of schizo- is from the Greek irregular verb "to split". Throughout my project, I distinguish splitting/tearing (differential, relational oscillation) from cutting (deciding).

Self-portraits are central to my art practice. As a photographer, filmmaker/videographer, I am ob-

scene until I invite my body into the pictorial frame. "The image is affected as much by the body behind the camera as those before it".

Participatory aesthetics, a kinesthetics of physical and psychological commitment, become an eroticism of our interconnectedness—a "cinematic orgasm" which can potentially propel us into collaborative social change. Through this wabi-sabi détournement to thinking and creating, I scrutinize the fluidity between word and image—ars erotica, ars theoretica, ars politica. Similarly, Barbara Hammer discusses the potency of cinema, "I believe that an active audience engaged perceptually, intellectually, and physically...encourages its members to become more politically active in the world".

Franz Kafka invokes language as a psychic and corporeal redemption—a flesh-receptor that jars us out of our cultural somnambulism: "What we

need are books that hit us like a most painful misfortune". Being receptive necessitates

"THE SYSTEM REPRODUCES ITS EXISTENCE BECAUSE IT GOES UNRECOGNIZED." PIERRE BOURDIEU

the wounding of both the writer and reader, of inscribing the morcellated body with unresolvable questions, tearing it apart in order to open up the body-mind: "As long as I have questions to which here are no answers, I shall go on writing".

Examining the how instead of the what enables us to act through intuition—more conscious of our pre-determined agendas. This embodied thinking is not the product of thought, but thought itself. Embodied thinking is formlessness in constant flux.

My concluding chapter presents the current Occupy Movement as a literal and metaphoric manifestation of cultivating vulnerability into a poetics of the public sphere. The movement exhibits a creative, non-linear, techno-civil disobedience to social change. It exemplifies both the ultimate impossibility of Hegel's "cunning of reason" ("the manipulator himself is always-already manipulated") and a Deleuze-Guattarian schizo-analytic embodiment of provoking change through inscrutable multiplicities—non-unifiable

ambivalences. This *détournement* is an anti-critique of consumer society that recognizes critique as an illusion of control. Rather, by embracing the flux of capital, we displace the energy of capitalism (Lotringer Jean Baudrillard: *Reversability and the Emptying of the Symbolic seminar*, European Graduate School (EGS), 2009). Redistribution is an integral element in recognizing the “cunning of reason”.

From its inception, the Occupy Movement’s anatomy of dissent has evolved as a technology-based revolution. Social media has been a key organizational element. It is a particularly post-humanist movement— playing out its own ambiguous (interpreted as “amorphous” by mainstream media) agendas as it challenges interrelated modes of domination that are fluid, complex, contradictory. The Occupy Movement offers an attempt to inoculate the American public, who we, the protesters-citizen-warriors,⁶⁹ identify as the 99%, with the same kind of enfoldments that we endure through institutionalized everyday violences. Like Hannah Arendt’s banality of evil (discussed below), stupidity is ingrained into our quotidian expectations. Ronell cites Nietzsche: “To the extent that morality teaches hatred of too great a freedom, it implants the need for limited horizons and immediate tasks, teaching the narrowing of perspectives ‘and thus in a certain sense stupidity, as a condition of life and growth’ ” (2002: 3).

We are collectively embodying our awareness of interdependency—our lived “poetics of relation” (Glissant). The tens of millions of spokespeople for this movement “are not calling for reform, but for a massive rethinking and restructuring of the very meaning of politics” (Giroux, truth-out. org). Weber tells us that through critique, we

must open territories of reflectivity. I identify this critique, investigation, and reframing as an erotic politics that fosters a democratic republic. The formlessness of the movement invites a rhizomatic commitment to deep structural change. Education is critical to this democratic project. We are mobilizing our collective imagination as a form of social agency to undermine the power relations that inform hypercapitalism. We are resisting the

false assumption of transparency and the politics of clarity as we unravel how neoliberal authoritarianism and industrialization of our bodies-psychoes have become normalized. As we explore erotic politics as a form of public pedagogy, we comprehend our vast potential for practicing a democratic economy. Giroux incites us: “Democracy is always an unfinished project”. <>

[Jesus the Samaritan: Ethnic Labeling in the Gospel of John](#) by Stewart Penwell [Biblical Interpretation Series, Brill, 9789004390690]

"In *Jesus the Samaritan: Ethnic Labelling in the Gospel of John*, Stewart Penwell examines how ethnic labels function in the Gospel of John. After a review of the discourse history between "the Jews" and "the Samaritans," the dual ethnic labelling in John 4:9 and 8:48 are examined and, in each instance, members from "the Jews" and "the Samaritans" label Jesus as a member of each other's group for deviating from what were deemed acceptable practices as a member of "the Jews." The intra-textual links between John 4 and 8 reveal that the function of Jesus's dual ethnic labelling is to establish a new pattern of practices and categories for the "children of God" (1:12; 11:52) who are a trans-ethnic group united in fictive kinship and embedded within the Judean ethnic group's cultural traditions"

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Excerpt:

The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' JOHN 4:9
 The Jews answered him, 'Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?' JOHN 8:48
 ∴

This book will argue that the function of ethnic labeling in the Gospel of John is to enable the author of the Gospel of John to assert a trans-ethnic identity for the followers of Jesus. The Gospel of John's trans-ethnic identity is established by Jesus's broadening of traditional Judean ethnic

identity into the “children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12b–13). The primary examples of ethnic labeling for this book are John 4:9 and 8:48. In John 4:9, the Samaritan woman labels Jesus a “Jew” without explaining how that identification is made. There is only a comment in John 4:9b that the two groups (“Samaritans” and “Jews”) do not share things in common with one another. The Samaritan woman’s identification of Jesus as a “Jew” is significant here because it is the only place where the narrative identifies Jesus himself as a “Jew” and is one of the few positive portrayals of the “the Jews” in the Gospel of John. They otherwise frequently appear as the antagonists of the story. Later in the narrative, in the midst of a long discourse in John 8, “Jews” label Jesus a “Samaritan” (8:48).

The question that arises from these two passages and the Gospel of John as a whole, and sets the general basis of this book, is: How and why is Jesus identified, or identifiable, with either group of people? This question is particularly important since both groups use such labels in order to place Jesus outside their own group. In light of the history of discourse between “the Jews” and “Samaritans,” who both identify themselves as Israelites and the other as not Israelites, it is important to each ethnic group that Jesus is not categorized with their own group identity so that Jesus is not one of “us” but one of “them.”

Whoever this Jesus of Nazareth is in the Gospel of John, members from “the Jews” and “Samaritans” label him as a member of the other group.

A popular proposal for Jesus’s ethnic labeling in the Gospel of John is C. K. Barrett’s statement: “The Samaritans call Jesus a Jew [4:9], just as the Jews call him a Samaritan (8:48); in this world [Jesus] is never anything but a stranger.” However, it is, strictly speaking, incorrect. Jesus is not labeled a stranger, in the sense of an unknown entity. He is labeled by both groups with a known group identity. This fact raises the question that proceeds from the more general question regarding the portrayal of Jesus himself in these texts and that serves as the primary focus of this book: How does ethnic labeling function in the Gospel of John?

Chapter One offers a history of research on the relationship between John 4:9 and 8:48. It will conclude that the importance of these verses has been overlooked regarding our understanding of the portrayal of the identity of Jesus in the Gospel of John. As we will see, the majority of scholarship on John 4:9 focuses upon the explanatory statement “Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.” This explanatory comment draws attention for two reasons. The first reason is due to a text-critical issue concerning the absence of 4:9b. in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Bezae. The second reason is due to interpretive issues concerning the translation of συγγράομαι as either “share things in common with” or “share vessels with.” Notably absent in the discussion of John 4:9 are the implications of the ethnic labeling of Jesus as a “Jew” in the Gospel of John.

Similarly, the scholarship on John 8:48 has focused attention upon whether the two accusations (“a Samaritan” and “have a demon”) are in fact two charges (i.e. being a “Samaritan” is to have a demon). Past scholarship has focused on the likelihood that the charge of being a “Samaritan” is synonymous with the charge of demon possession especially because of the connection in later church history of Samaria and demons. Some scholars, however, note the tenuous connection between the charge of being “Samaritan” and demon possession and have instead focused on the result of the charge of being a “Samaritan” as meaning to be a “heretic” or an “apostate.” This book will largely follow this latter line of enquiry. There are, however, two problems that it will address. The first issue is that the current discussion overlooks how the label “Samaritan” means “heretic” or “apostate.” The second, and related issue, is that the discussion of John 8:48 overlooks how this charge functions within the context of John 8. Consequently, also overlooked are the implications resulting from the ethnic labeling of Jesus as a “Samaritan” within the Gospel of John as a whole. This chapter will therefore introduce these lacunae in light of the broader history of research on the relationship between John 4:9 and 8:48.

Chapter Two will present a methodology for understanding the Gospel of John’s portrayal of

the Samaritan woman labeling of Jesus as a “Jew” and “the Jews” labeling of Jesus as a “Samaritan” and how this labeling socially structures their interaction with one another. Since these labels were ethnic appellations, the social-scientific model of ethnicity will prove useful for considering the Gospel of John. Accordingly, Chapter Two will employ modern ethnicity theory in order to provide a theoretical approach to ancient perceptions of people groups. An important element in ethnicity theory is to identify ethnic groups’ cultural features in order to ascertain how cultural features form the basis for the norms of their group, how they are instilled into the individual group members’ own identity, and how they are used to identify non-group members.

However, in addition to ethnicity theory, we will also incorporate labeling theory in order to examine the proposal that “the Jews” label Jesus a “Samaritan” to mean that he is a “heretic.”

Labeling theory was developed as part of the research on social deviance wherein a person’s individual deviant behavior does not make them a social deviant until they are publicly or officially labeled a deviant. For example, many individuals break the law but they are not all labeled criminals. Likewise, heresy exists only when people and institutions label it as such. Chapter Two will demonstrate how labels function by structuring interactions between individuals by maintaining or establishing social boundaries.

Chapter Three will return to the questions concerning Samaritan and Jewish identities in the first century CE and, therefore, provide perspective on how “Samaritan” and “Jew” could function as ethnic labels. This chapter examines the history of Judeo-Samaritan relations, drawing upon passages from the texts of the Hebrew Bible, Josephus, the Synoptic Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. The specific questions driving this chapter are “What cultural features were made salient by texts for constructing the Samaritan-Israelite identity over against the Judean-Israelite identity?” and “How do the Gospel of Matthew and Luke draw on this discourse for their narrative portrayals of Jesus in their Gospels as well as Luke’s accounts of the early evangelists in Acts?”

This chapter will provide an appropriate socio-historical background for understanding the appearance of these terms in the Gospel of John by considering how the labels “Jew” and “Samaritan” were used elsewhere. Chapter Three will conclude that the texts of the Hebrew Bible and Josephus established social distance, or boundaries, between themselves (“Jews”) and the “Samaritans” by using labels that emphasize the Samaritans’ non-Judean ethnicity (particularly Josephus’s use of “Cutheans,” “Sidonians,” “Shechemites,” etc.).

Nevertheless, even though the texts of the Hebrew Bible and Josephus distance themselves from the “Samaritans,” they do not label the “Samaritans” as “gentiles” either. This chapter will conclude further, then, that Jewish authors of the relevant period simultaneously considered the Samaritans not to be Judeans (because they were adherents of the Israelite traditions fostered outside of the geographical area of Judea), but also not to be gentiles (because were still adherents of a Mosaic tradition [albeit fostered in the old northern kingdom of Israel]). Thus, among many Second Temple Jews, Samaritans fell into a liminal zone where their identity could be exploited rhetorically.

After establishing the previous understandings of the ethnic labels “Jew” and “Samaritan,” Chapter Four will examine how the Gospel of John participates in the discussion concerning the “Jews” and “Samaritans” identities by addressing the questions of the Samaritan woman (4:9) and “the Jews” (8:48) concerning Jesus. Frederick Dale Bruner describes Jesus as “the great Barrier Breaker” in John 4.10 This observation might be correct, but different people reacted differently to the barriers being broken. In this regard, the Gospel of John contrasts the portrayals of the Samaritan woman in John 4 and “the Jews” in John 8. The Samaritan woman’s affirmation of Jesus as Messiah leads the Samaritans of Sychar to confess that Jesus “is truly the Savior of the world” (4:42).

The interaction of Jesus with the Samaritan woman

ethnic identity. In particular, Jesus challenges the primacy that “the Jews” placed on Abrahamic descent (8:33, 37) by asserting that that to be “children of Abraham/God” is to do the things of Abraham namely receiving God’s messenger (8:39, 42).

Chapter Four also addresses the purpose for the Johannine Jesus’s boundary breaking. The Johannine Jesus’s dialogues in John 4 and 8 function to establish a trans-ethnic identity for the “children of God” that features elsewhere in the narrative (1:12; 11:52). The function of the ethnic labels in John 4:9 and 8:48 is to structure the social interactions by casting one another into prescribed social roles that prompt appropriate actions. This allows Jesus to appropriate the ethnic appellations “Jew” and “Samaritan” for the purpose of transforming Judean ethnic identity into a trans-ethnic identity—the “children of God.” The Gospel of John asserts the trans-ethnic identity “children of God” in the Prologue and defines it as “born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God” (1:13). John’s trans-ethnic identity reduces in importance, for example, both Jerusalem temple worship (John 4) and descent from Abraham (John 8) as necessary criteria for understanding and worshiping their God.

Chapter Five will apply the findings of this book to the vexed issue of the identity of “the Jews” in the Gospel of John. Previous Johannine scholarship explained “the Jews” in terms of “Judeans,” Jesus’s enemies, or generally as the religious authorities. Based on the main chapters of the book, I will argue that previous scholarship on the identity of “the Jews” has overlooked the significance of the Gospel of John’s portrayal of Jesus as a “Jew” who challenges “the Jews” seemingly static ethnic identity.

The conclusion will summarize the discussion, restate the main points, and raise future areas of research. In addition, this chapter will address how Jesus’s ethnic labeling as a Jew in 4:9 and a Samaritan in 8:48 affects our understanding of how the Gospel of John “is both Jewish and anti-Jewish.”

Key Methodological Terms in the Study

This book uses “the Jews” (with quotation marks) as the traditional translation for Ἰουδαῖος/Ἰουδαῖοι in the Gospel of John. Although “the Jews” (with quotation marks) is generally used to denote a particular group or recurring character in the Gospel of John, we use “the Jews” primarily to signify its use as an ethnic label just as with the label “Samaritan.” Chapter Three uses “Judeans” as the standard translation for in the texts of the Hebrew Bible (e.g. 2 Kgs 16:6; 25:25) and uses the label “Judean” (with quotation marks) to indicate its reference to the ethnic group. Chapter Four and Five will use “Judean” when referring to the cultural traits of the ethnic group. Finally, like Max Weber who said “religion” could only be defined after its examination, we will address the issue of the identification of “the Jews” in Chapter Five only after determining the purpose of labeling Jesus a “Samaritan” and a “Jew” in Chapter Four.

Regarding the purpose of labeling Jesus, we will use the term “trans-ethnic identity” to describe an identity that binds its members by their faith/belief in Jesus. Although those who believe in Jesus are still recognized as Judeans, Galileans, Samaritans, etc., their belief in Jesus transcends the importance of those distinctions. Those who believe in Jesus, the “children of God” (1:12–13), are united into a “fictive kinship” with God the Father and Jesus the Son (John). Yet, it is important to note that, although the “Samaritans” proclaim Jesus is “the savior of the world” (4:42), he asserts that “salvation is from the Jews” (4:22) to the Samaritan woman. Therefore, despite the fact that not everyone can be a physical “descendant of Abraham” (8:33), Jesus proclaims that anyone can become “children of Abraham” (8:39) if they receive God’s messenger (8:42) and, in so doing, he gives them power to become “children of God” (1:12–13). In this way, those “who believe in his name” (1:12), do not lose their ethnic group identity by gaining membership in the “children of God.” Nor does the base referent for the concept of “children of God” cease being the traditions and history of ancient Israel.

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[The Life of Saint Pankratios of Taormina: Greek Text, English Translation and Commentary](#) by Cynthia J. Stallman-Pacitti, edited by John B. Burke [Byzantina Australiensia, Brill, 9789004366213]

The Life of St Pankratios of Taormina describes the mission and martyrdom of St Pankratios, a disciple of the Apostle Peter sent to evangelize Taormina as its first bishop, and purports to have been written by St Pankratios' successor, Euagrios. The text was composed in the early eighth century and is of Sicilian provenance.

The Life contributes to our understanding of the Byzantine attitude to the past and of the novelistic approach to hagiography. It touches on the topography of Sicily and Calabria, ecclesiastical arrangements in Sicily, civil and military administration, the Sicilian language question, church decoration, liturgical rites, book production, and the attitude to religious images.

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Excerpt: That the Life of St Pankratios of Taormina has only attracted the attention of an editor some thirteen centuries after its composition is perhaps not surprising in view of its inordinate length and the verbosity and repetitiveness of the narrative in which the few episodes of interest are embedded, but it is nevertheless regrettable, given the considerable interest the text has for the Byzantinist.

The Life of St Pankratios was known to scholars as early as the seventeenth century through the efforts of Gaetani, who summarized it in his *Vitae Sanctorum Siculorum* (1657). The seminal modern study is that of Veselovskii (1896), which remains the most comprehensive study of the work. More recently, Pat-lagean (1964) has published an important, if controversial article which offers an analysis of our text, and Van Esbroeck and Zanetti (1988) have made an important study of it. A number of other scholars have commented on individual aspects of the Life, but have not given consideration to the work as a whole.

The Life of St Pankratios of Taormina describes the mission and martyrdom of St Pankratios, a disciple of the Apostle Peter sent to evangelize Taormina as its first bishop, and purports to have been written by St Pankratios' successor, Euagrios. It also records details concerning St Markianos, who was dispatched to Syracuse at the same time.

The text exists in three recensions. The edition princeps of the first recension is presented here, based on six manuscripts (Vat. Gr. 1591, Mess. S. Salv. 53, Crypt. B β V, Vat. Gr. 1985, Vind. Hist. Gr. 3 and Vat. Ottobon. Gr. 92), together with an introduction, a translation into English and a commentary. External and internal evidence has been used to argue that it should be dated to the early eighth century and that it is of Sicilian provenance.

The analysis of the sources of the text and its presentation of the apostolic era contributes to our understanding of the Byzantine attitude to the past and of the novelistic approach to hagiography. The Life is a product of an important but obscure period of Sicilian history, and it provides some

evidence from a local perspective concerning matters such as ecclesiastical arrangements and attitudes in Sicily, views about religious images, practices in church decoration, liturgical rites, book production, the development of legends concerning the apostles, especially St Peter, civil and military administration, the Sicilian language question, the topography of Sicily and Calabria and contacts with Lombardy, as well as curious references to Slavs and Avars in Sicily. The commentary is concerned with these questions and in general with the exegesis of the text. A summary of the use made of the Life of St Pankratios by later writers contributes to our understanding of the iconoclastic controversy.

English Summary of the Life of St Pankratios of Taormina

Principal Characters

The Apostles Peter and Paul.
 Pankratios, first bishop of Taormina.
 Maximos, bishop of Pankratios' native village.
 Markianos, first bishop of Syracuse.
 Joseph, a painter.
 Euagrios, assistant to Pankratios and his successor and biographer.
 Lykaonides, merchant captain, renamed Epiphanios at baptism.

Rhomylllos, merchant captain, renamed Theodoulos at baptism.
 Boniphatos, governor of Taormina.
 Aurelianos, politarch of Taormina.
 Xanthippos, philosopher and librarian, renamed Epaphroditos at baptism. Khryse, a pagan priestess, renamed Benedikta (Paulina) at baptism.
 Tatianos and Neophytos, deacons.

Rhemaldos and Akulinos (1), warring kings of separate parts of ancient Calabria.
 Tauros, successor to Rhemaldos and defeater of Akulinos.
 Menia, wife of (1) Rhemaldos, (2) Tauros, with whom she co-founds Taormina.
 Phalkonilla, descendent of Menia and mother of Phalkon.

Seleukos and Gordios, co-rulers of

the Apostles. The Apostle Peter continues to carry out his mission. 14: St Paul hears that he is in Cilicia and comes to see him. At a gathering of all the Apostles, St Paul persuades them to send bishops to the West, to Italy and Africa. The Apostle Peter asks Markianos and Pankratios to go to the West, just as Crescens, a disciple of the Apostle Paul, had gone to Gaul, and they are ordained in the presence of the Apostles Peter and Paul.

15–16: Going down to the sea, Sts Markianos and Pankratios find two ships, whose captains, in response to their questions, say that they are from Taormina and Syracuse. The crews are converted and St Peter gives the captains new names, calling one, previously Lykaonides, Epiphantos and the other, previously Rhomylos, Theodoulos. 17: Sts Peter and Paul both condemn the Jews for rejecting Christ. 18–23: St Peter performs many miracles, preaches a summary of biblical history from Adam to Abraham and gives spiritual advice to Sts Markianos and Pankratios. Each receives from him a Service book, Gospel, Apostle, chalice and paten, cedar cross and a volume with the patterns for decorating the church with representations of Christ and scriptural events. 24–25: The Apostle gives special counsel on the conduct appropriate to bishops, on church administration and on the scheme according to which church buildings should be decorated.

The Mission Begins at Taormina

26: Sts Markianos and Pankratios embark on the ships and eventually are driven apart. 27: St Pankratios's boat comes to land at a place called 'Phalkon', which is infested with demons. It had been the garden of Phalkonilla, mother of Phalkon, who was descended from Menia, wife of Tauros. Phalkonilla's qualities were recorded in the historians. The son, Phalkon, had died and a stone statue of him had become an idol, to which human and animal sacrifice had come to be offered. St Pankratios brings the activities of the demons to a halt. 28–29: Lykaonides' shipyard is nearby and St Pankratios and Euagrios take up quarters there. 30: Despite the warnings of Lykaonides, St Pankratios approaches the statue of Phalkon with the cross, the Gospels, the icons of Christ and the Apostle Peter, the epistles of Peter and the volumes

containing the patterns for church decoration. 31–32: He converses with the familiar spirit resident there and, at the saint's command, the familiar spirit and demons cast the statue of Phalkon thirty stadia into the sea.

33–35: Lykaonides goes to visit Boniphantos, the governor, in his Palace, bearing gifts. He begins to tell the governor about Christ, but is interrupted by a disturbance caused by the pagan priests. 36–37: Boniphantos puts on his insignia of office and hears from them of the disappearance of Phalkon. 38: He sends them away and promises an investigation. 39–45: Lykaonides narrates his experiences at length. 46–50: Boniphantos wants to meet St Pankratios and Lykaonides advises him to hold an adnourion of his troops after which he will meet the saint. 51–53: Lykaonides tells St Pankratios of these arrangements. 54–55: Boniphantos is attended by five hundred soldiers, and a group of two hundred paides under a paiditarchês is responsible for keeping order in the city. The priests again cause a commotion and are pacified by Boniphantos' representatives, although he lacks enthusiasm shown by the governor for the pagan cult disturbs them. 56: The pagan priests have an ally in the politarch Aurelianos, who has, however, been struck dumb. 57: The meeting takes place between St Pankratios and Boniphantos, both suitably vested, and Boniphantos is convinced. 58–59: There is a meal, then a service at which a miracle takes place.

St Pankratios Expounds the Scriptures

60: Euagrios reads the Gospel of Matthew and St Pankratios illustrates the narrative with the volumes containing the arrangement for decorating the church. 61–88: St Pankratios then expounds a substantial summary of Old and New Testament history and his own experiences. 89–90: Boniphantos believes and departs to order the affairs of the city, committing himself and his possessions to God and St Pankratios.

St Pankratios Overcomes the Demons

91: St Pankratios writes a letter to the god Lysson, the text of which is given in full, and Lykaonides delivers it to the god's shrine at the Tetrahippion. 92: St Pankratios visits Boniphantos in his Palace. 93–95: There is another confrontation between the

pagan priests and Boniphathios, in which Boniphathios is even less sympathetic than previously. 96–98: St Pankratios asks Boniphathios to build a church, chooses a position for it and the work begins, the purpose of the building being kept a secret. 99–100: St Pankratios consecrates the finished church and serves a liturgy there, causing idols to shatter. Boniphathios is perplexed because he is not given Communion. There is a dedication feast after the service.

101: The pagan priests think that the church is a shrine to Apollo. 102: The sacrifice of Lysson is at hand. 103–106: The idols in the temple of Zeus are found to be shattered and further disturbances ensue, with increasing hostility between the priests and Boniphathios. 107: The familiar spirit of Lysson informs the pagans of the arrival of a God more powerful than himself. 118–110: Nevertheless, lots are drawn and Boniphathios is chosen to be sacrificed to Lysson. He informs St Pankratios, who assures him that he will come to his support. 111–114: More idols collapse and the pagans' eyes are suddenly opened to see St Pankratios, whom they believe to be a god. This the saint denies, declaring his real position.

A certain Xanthippos, a philosopher and the keeper of the city's medical books, reveals to everyone that he had received a book, which turns out to be a copy of the Gospels, from a stranger, clearly an angel.

The pagans bind Boniphathios for sacrifice. 117–118: St Pankratios arrives, after having ordained Euagrios to the diaconate, frees Boniphathios miraculously with the aid of the cross and icons and destroys the demon and his attendant serpent. 119–120: The people of Taormina are convinced and shatter their idols. Aurelianos dies. 121: The people are told to prepare for baptism. 122: St Pankratios shuts the troublesome demons in a cave. 123: The Jews and Montanists have not converted, and St Pankratios destroys the idols of the Montanists too. 124: The people of Taormina are baptized and receive Communion, as do many from the provinces.

125: Boniphathios is again disappointed that he is not baptized and St Pankratios prophesies that his successor as bishop of Taormina will perform the

baptism. 26: Boniphathios offers his enormous wealth, ultimately owed to the metal-working skills of Menia, to St Pankratios, who allows the governor to keep it as there are no poor in the city. 127: St Pankratios preaches, reads from the book given to Xanthippos, and serves another liturgy.

Miracles of Healing

128–131: A priestess of the goddess, the daughter of Hero, Khryse, asks St Pankratios to heal her of leprosy, intending to test him. He heals her, but when she proves to be insincere, brings greater affliction to her. 132–133: She repents and is baptized and made a deaconess, renamed Benedikta. 134: She takes St Pankratios to her former temple where she destroys the idols and offers the great wealth thereto St Pankratios.

135–116: A tribune's widow with a swelling in her throat which has eluded the skills of the doctors is healed by St Pankratios. 137–140: There is another baptism, after which the believers receive Communion while the unbelievers witness a miracle from the top of the city. St Pankratios appears in the form of fire so that the people are afraid to draw near.

The Army is Converted

141: Back in the Palace, St Pankratios asks Euagrios to read from the Gospels received by Xanthippos, now called Epaphroditos. 142–143: Boniphathios announces that he intends to go on an expedition to show his bravery and overcome his enemies. St Pankratios gives him a reluctant blessing but refuses to administer the city himself, and this task falls to Aurelianos's son Elidos. Euagrios is to be ordained priest to go with the expedition.

144: Two orphaned sisters come to St Pankratios and ask to be made nuns and deaconesses. 145: The older sister is made a deaconess and both are entrusted to Benedikta. The deaconesses are given a cell in the church. A number of virgins and widows join the community. Paulina is mentioned as one of the community.

146–147: Boniphathios has gathered an army half a million strong from the surrounding provinces, and Boniphathios and St Pankratios go to the plain where they are assembled. 148–150: St Pankratios

serves a liturgy and all the troops are amazed. 151–153: St Pankratios returns to the city and the soldiers are brought to him to be baptized. Some of the past exploits of the troops of Taormina at Durazzo and Taranto and against the Macedonians and Akulinos, king of Cal-abria are mentioned to us. 154: St Pankratios prepares equipment for Euagrios to take with him and ordains him to the priesthood. 155–156: After a liturgy, St Pankratios tells Euagrios why he has not baptized Boniphathios. 157: The expedition then sails away.

The Martyrdom of Two Virgins

158–159: Elidos remains in charge. He worships the idol Skamandros and is led astray by a Montanist. 160–162: He conceives a desire for the younger of the orphaned sisters and asks the older for her. 163: Elidos meets the Jews and Montanists at a bath where an orgy takes place and the Montanists produce an erotic book. 164–165: He confides in them as to his desire for the young orphan. 166–167: Meanwhile the sisters have gone to Paulina, who has reported the matter to St Pankratios, who in turn has encouraged them to be steadfast. 168: St Pankratios ordains Epaphroditos to the diaconate.

169–173: Elidos meets in the Tetrahippion with the Jews and Montanists and the two sisters are summoned. The younger sister refuses Elidos, then the two are separated. 174–176: The elder is asked to persuade her, but instead encourages her to be steadfast and is then beheaded. 177: St Pankratios and the faithful bury her. 178–181: The younger sister is also beheaded and buried by the faithful and a festival is celebrated. 182: The Christians want to punish the Jews and Montanists, but St Pankratios dissuades them. An oratory is built over the mar-tyrs' tombs and the deaconesses are assigned to it.

183–186: St Pankratios chastises the Jews. 187: The Jews fear reprisals when Boniphathios returns and set sail for Syracuse. St Pankratios reassures them, but when they sail against his wishes, he prays that they drown and this transpires.

St Pankratios tells Elidos to prepare for the return of Boniphathios and the army.

The Avar Prisoners Convert

Boniphathios returns with the expedition and is met by St Pankratios. 190: There is a provisioning and distribution of spoils. Each reports his experiences to the other. 191–193: A liturgy is served, accompanied by miracles. The captives are amazed. 194–195: Boniphathios tells St Pankratios that his captives are Avars from Durazzo and Athens. They are to be distributed among the soldiers to be Christianized, and are to be taught Greek and Latin, the languages of Taormina at the time. 196: Through an interpreter they tell St Pankratios about their religion and their experiences in battle. 197–199: They are to be baptized, much to the disappointment of Boniphathios. At their baptism they receive the gift of the Greek language.

200: St Pankratios ordains priests for the provinces and instructs them to build churches which he will later consecrate. 201: The necessary books are copied for them and other equipment prepared.

Elidos is Tried

202–207: Boniphathios summons a court to judge Elidos. When the culprit remains obdurate, he is killed.

The Deacon Neophytos Dies

208–211: St Pankratios goes with Euagrios, Epaphroditos and Lykaonides, now the skeuophylax, to the provinces to consecrate the churches, regulate church life and apportion donations. 212–215: A deacon, Neophytos, is taken ill, and to everyone's grief, dies. He had been able to write and translate in Greek and Latin. The group returns early to Taormina.

Epaphroditos' Mission to Southern Sicily

216–217: St Pankratios hears a voice telling him to ordain Epaphroditos to the priesthood and send him to the South. 218: Epaphroditos departs and goes where his mule leads him. 219–221: He is seen by a farmer's wife, who reports to her husband. 222–224: Epaphroditos converts him and the farmer obtains a baptismal robe from an old woman who makes linen. When the farmer is baptized, Epaphroditos' portable icon seems to reach out and baptize him. 225–231: The harvesters employed by the farmer, as well as his

wife and children, are baptized. 232–234: Epaphroditos dispatches them with crosses to preach and heal in the surrounding area. 235: Many people, all Hellenes, are brought to Epaphroditos for baptism. 236–239: Epaphroditos instructs them concerning prayer and attendance at services. 240: They begin to clear a plot for a church.

A Jurisdictional Dispute

241–242: St Markianos hears of Epaphroditos' mission and, considering it an infringement of the apostolic ordinance that a bishop should restrict his activities to his own diocese, writes to St Pankratios a letter, the text of which is quoted in full. 243–246: St Pankratios replies, telling St Markianos of his divine instructions, and dispatches Euagrios with his letter, which is also quoted in full. 247–248: Euagrios finds St Markianos, hears his apology and then is told of St Markianos's experiences.

St Markianos' Mission in Syracuse

249: St Markianos has had trouble from the Jews and Montanists, and also from Median sorcerers. 250–251: Seleukos and Gordios are in charge of the city. St Markianos had destroyed the idols in a shrine of Apollo and the Jews had accused him to the pagans because he had baptized some of their number. 252: St Markianos had challenged the Jews, Medes and pagans. The Medes had responded by asking Seleukos and Gordios to put him in a row-boat so that they could send fire across the water to consume him. 253: They had dispensed the fire, but St Markianos had turned it back on the Median tower. 254: Seleukos and Gordios and many pagans had been convinced and baptized in a 'God-built' font.

255–256: A group had revolted against Seleukos and Gordios and had begun to build a temple of Artemis outside the city and to bury alive a virgin, revered as a goddess. St Markianos had prayed that their labours be confused and fail, and so it had transpired. 257–261: The separatists had wanted to kill St Markianos, but he had challenged them to a contest of strength between their idols and his Christian weapons, that is, the cross and icons, to be decided on the basis of their respective healing powers. 262–263: The idols had been ineffective, but the cross and icons had brought

about healing miracles. 264–265: All the city had believed, but after a little while some Jews and Montanists had gone where there was a settlement of Slavs to sacrifice at tombs and had intended to build a city and temple, but St Markianos had prevented this. 266–267: Euagrios goes to visit Epaphroditos and takes down his story in shorthand form.

St Markianos Visits Taormina and St Pankratios Visits Syracuse 268–269: St Markianos then goes to Taormina with Euagrios and is met at Phalkon by St Pankratios and some schoolboys. They go up to the church and talk. 270–271: Boniphathios and others come to visit and there is a liturgy, accompanied by a miracle. a7a: The two saints then withdraw to compare their respective versions of the ecclesiastical order which they had received from the Apostle Peter.

273–277: St Pankratios pays a reciprocal visit, going to Syracuse with St Markianos, but while he is there, he has a revelation about the threat of an attack on Taormina by Akulinos, king of Calabria. 278–279: Epaphroditos is summoned to see St Pankratios in Syracuse, and receives a letter of commendation.

The Story of Tauros and Menia

280–281: St Pankratios arrives back in Taormina and warns Boniphathios. 282: He asks the governor to read from the book containing the Life of Tauros. 283: We hear first of the areas occupied by Rhemaldos and Akulinos in Calabria and then of Tauros. 284–286: Tauros had been a Canaanite, descended from Nimrod, who had, with his mother, been taken captive in Syria, where he had been bought by a trader from Rome. He had later been sold at Reggio to Rhemaldos. 287: Rhemaldos' wife, Menia, had killed Tauros' mother out of jealousy. 288: Tauros had grown up to be a giant and warrior, successful in contests and remaining a virgin. 289–292: Rhemaldos had been killed in battle against Akulinos, and Tauros had taken over command and routed Akulinos. 293: The followers of Rhemaldos had requested that he become Menia's mate.

294–296: Akulinos had again attacked, and Tauros and Menia and their followers had escaped to Taormina and founded the city, gaining power

over the surrounding areas. 297: Menia had learned the art of metal-working and made the city very rich. 298–301: Akulinos had eventually crossed over in pursuit, but after a threatened mutiny by Tauros' adherents, had been challenged and defeated by Tauros in single combat. 302: Tauros had carried out reprisals against Akulinos in Calabria, founding the city of Tauriana. The name of the city of Taormina had been formed from the names 'Tauros' and 'Menia'.

Akulinos Attacks Taormina

303: St Pankratios announces that a current Akulinos, king of Calabria, is to attack in order to avenge the defeat of the earlier Akulinos. 304: Akulinos crosses with six hundred thousand men and surrounds the city. 305: The people of Taormina turn against St Pankratios and Boniphathos and threaten to kill them. 306–308: St Pankratios advises Boniphathos to dismiss the people to their homes. 309–311: St Pankratios ordains a certain Tatianos to the diaconate and together with him and Euagrios takes up the cross and icons, goes to an elevated position and prays. They hold up the cross and icons and darkness falls on the enemy so that they kill each other.

312: A group of four thousand begs for mercy and they are baptized. Some are ordained to serve in Calabria, which is subject to St Pankratios until the Apostle Peter, passing through Ravenna, ordains Stephen as bishop of Reggio. 313: The converts say that in battle they had seen suns shining in the darkness and are shown the cross and icons.

314: Euagrios is sent to report to St Markianos what has occurred. St Markianos tells Euagrios that he has consecrated Epaphroditos' 'Church of Peace' and ordered the affairs of his mission.

A Visit from St Pankratios' Slaves

315: Maximos, the bishop of St Pankratios' native village, having heard that St Pankratios was in Sicily, has sent former members of St Pankratios' household with gifts to find him. An exchange is begun and continues for many years.

Euagrios Receives His Commission

316–318: St Pankratios tells Euagrios that he is to be his successor as bishop of Taormina, to be ordained by the Apostle Peter in Rome. On his

return from Rome he is to baptize Boniphathos. 319: He then announces that a provincial priest has died and dispatches Euagrios and Tatianos to the parish.

The Martyrdom of St Pankratios

320–321: Boniphathos goes on an expedition against a rebel. After his departure, Artagaros, a Canaanite and the brother of Aurelianos, plots against St Pankratios. 322: St Pankratios hears a voice warning him. 323: Artagaros, an administrator at the Palace, invites St Pankratios to a meal. St Pankratios quickly takes Communion, then leaves. 324–325: The meal degenerates and an idol is produced and destroyed by the saint. Artagaros and his accomplices kill St Pankratios. This is witnessed by one of the Christians.

326: Euagrios and Tatianos return but are not initially alarmed by St Pankratios' absence. 327: Boniphathos then returns and sends for the saint. 328–330: A search is made, and a bright light leads them to a crevice containing the body of St Pankratios. All are stricken with grief. 331–332: They bury him secretly, fearing the reaction of the people of the city. 333: Boniphathos makes a gold and silver coffin. 334–338: The Christian who had witnessed the murder denounces Artagaros and Boniphathos kills him with his own hand. 339: Euagrios sees St Pankratios in a vision and is told to remove the metal coffin and rebury the body. 340–341: The body is found to be incorrupt and is moved to a new shrine, with an inscription on the tomb.

Euagrios is Consecrated in Rome

342–343: Boniphathos and Euagrios set out for Rome, where Euagrios is made bishop of Taormina by the Apostle Peter.

Boniphathos is Baptized and a Martyrium is Built

344: On their return, Euagrios baptizes Boniphathos, who resigns his governorship to devote himself to prayer. 345–347: A church is built at the shrine of St Pankratios and decorated with Old and New Testament scenes and an icon of St Pankratios. 348: A tithe is collected for the church, and Boniphathos is tonsured. 349: Many miracles are accomplished at the shrine. 350: A short list of pagan temples overthrown by St Pankratios. <>

[No Mercy, No Justice: The Dominant Narrative of America versus the Counter-Narrative of Jesus' Parables](#) by Brooks Harrington, Foreword BY John C. Holbert [Cascade Books, 9781532645822]

How can we be just and merciful? Are justice and mercy in conflict? Or are they aspects of the same truth?

Christians in America are presented with two conflicting versions of justice and mercy.

One version comes from the dominant secular narrative of America. Justice and mercy are contradictions. Mercy is devalued and discouraged.

But within the counter narrative of God revealed through Torah, the prophets, and particularly through the life and parables of Jesus, justice and mercy are aspects of the same truth and way of God. There is no justice without mercy. There is no mercy without justice.

In this book, Rev. Brooks Harrington draws on more than 40 years' experience as a criminal prosecutor, a pastor of an inner-city church in an impoverished neighborhood, and the founder of a legal ministry protecting indigent victims of family violence and child neglect and abuse. Through moving stories of women and children he has encountered, he shows the terrible toll of the dominant narrative's version of justice and mercy. And he offers Christians hope with new and startling insights into God's justice and mercy revealed in the parables of Jesus.

Critical Appraisals

"Brooks Harrington has given us an amazing book—at once personal testimony from his significant experiences as an attorney and a pastor to the marginalized, then creative and invigorating biblical interpretation, all cast by a Christian with a passionate commitment to the embrace of justice and mercy. This book will change how you look at our criminal justice system, the parables of Jesus, and the Christian life."

—Will Willimon, Duke Divinity School

"With the vivid illumination of personal experience, Brooks Harrington offers a trenchant connection between the twin pillars of justice and mercy. He shines a light on Christian witness which challenges even as it educates . . . The passion for ministry to

children in desperate need will take the attentive reader to new depths of both justice and mercy in the Lord." —Mike Lowry, resident bishop of the Central Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church

"In this engaging book, Harrington draws on his wealth of experience and deep biblical wisdom to demonstrate the inseparability of mercy and justice. It calls us to look anew at how we practice our faith in a society dominated by self-interest and a narrative of justice. Reading No Mercy, No Justice might just change the way you live the Gospel." —Elaine A. Robinson, Saint Paul School of Theology at Oklahoma City University

"Regarding the U. S. criminal justice system and poverty, Rev. Brooks Harrington has done much and perhaps seen it all. Prosecutor and minister, Harrington's qualified insight of these social issues rings disturbingly authentic. Many citizens believe 'the poor' are simply victims of public policy. In the spirit of Rauschenbusch and Gladden, No Mercy, No Justice exercises biblical norms and Jesus' gospel principles to inform believer's treatment of the poor—our American Achilles heel." —David Mosser, author/editor of Transitions: Leading Churches through Change

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Excerpt: “No MERCY, No JUSTICE” is a very powerful book and not for the faint of heart.

Brooks Harrington is a unique Christian person. He was, and is, an attorney, having tried numerous cases, many of which had to do with abuse and domestic violence often against children. And he is an ordained clergyperson, now serving as the director of a justice ministry connected to First United Methodist Church in Ft. Worth, Texas. Let me say, by means of full disclosure, Brooks was a student of mine at Perkins School of Theology in a class of introductory preaching. He was a truly outstanding student and preacher then, topping his graduating class. But what was startling about him was his enormous commitment to the ideas he has expressed in this book, namely, the need to address with full honesty the deep and complex relationships between justice and mercy in the life of Christian faith. He speaks again and again of his work in the courtroom and on the streets among the homeless and abused of his city, probing for ways to address those two central issues in Christianity. He writes of the “dominant culture,” the one we live in where justice is sought and applied often devoid of mercy. But also he addresses those Christians who would expect only mercy and never God’s justice against their refusals to show mercy to all. In rich biblical analyses, from the prophets of Israel

and especially from the potent parables of Jesus, he shows how justice without mercy may be calloused and cruel, while mercy without justice may be empty and simplistic.

I admit readily that the book was a real workout to read, not because the prose was not limpid and clear, but because I felt convicted again and again by my own complicity in the dominant narrative, and my own unwillingness to tender mercy to all and not to receive the justice from God that I should expect for my failings. I found the final chapter’s retelling of Mark 4–5 a beautiful summation of the book’s central claims. That chapter alone is worth the book’s price, but it will not have its full impact until the rest has been read.

When Brooks Harrington came to see me just before his graduation from seminary, he announced that he was going back into the work of the law. I was surprised, for he had been serving as a pastor (details of which you will read in his book), and I imagined he would continue to do that. But he went on to say that the study of theology had taught him how to use his great skills as legal advocate in new and richer ways. And he is doing just that now. I thank the God who called him to that work, and I thank God and Brooks for this book that challenges and provokes.

Torah, the Prophets, and the Gospels tell us that Jesus did not come just to open heaven for believers. Jesus did not come to be worshiped. Jesus did not come to sacrifice himself for us so that we needn’t sacrifice ourselves for anyone. Jesus did not come to give and suffer for us so that we needn’t give and suffer for anyone. Jesus did not come to found a church that would perpetuate itself by accumulating property and by keeping members comfortable and assured of God’s love just the way we already are and just the way we already live. Jesus came to give birth and blueprint to a people who would together with Jesus’ living spirit transform a world terribly broken. Jesus was sent by our Father to form and inspire a people who would build a community of justice and mercy that would challenge a world dominated by unjust and merciless competition for things, shallow pleasures, and the honor and power that comes

with their accumulation. Jesus' life and teachings are the perfect incarnations of God's will for such a community. Faith and belief alone are not critical for the people of God. Love, manifested in our justice and our mercy, is critical.

Despite God's eternal will revealed in Torah, the

Joe and I were looking for a homeless man named Willie who had only one ear and who had reportedly told his friends that he had seen the beginning of the murder before he ran away. We were hitting all the homeless shelters and outside in DC in the early morning dark, when we could look over and question the men we found there with less risk the potential witness would run from us.

This investigation was my first education into the lives of the homeless. We had been asking homeless men we found if they knew where Willie, a man with only one ear, might be sleeping. We were told about homeless men with only one leg, or only one foot, or only one hand, or only one eye. But nothing about a man with only one ear. We didn't know whether these men were telling us the truth or just didn't want to be involved. I was with Joe at a night homeless shelter while men were coming out of a shower. I remember being shocked by the wounds they carried on their bodies.

We were getting out of the police car to visit a homeless camp in a park, when a call came over the police radio for the closest police units to respond to a reported shooting scene with possible fatalities and the gunman still on the scene. The location was within a few blocks of our location, so Joe responded with me in the passenger seat. Ours was the first police car to arrive at the scene. It was a brownstone, three-story house on Capitol Hill. Joe ordered me to remain behind in the police car while he dived into the house with his weapon drawn, not knowing exactly what he was going to find. There was no way I was waiting in the car.

What I visualize to this day about that night was how very dark it was outside the house, but how every light inside was burning, with so many black faces peering out of every window at us. The house was once a grand, single-family home from the days when that neighborhood was prosperous. The neighborhood had changed. This shooting and our response was happening in 1980 before the gentrification of that neighborhood, before the poor had been pushed out into Maryland. An enterprising slumlord had turned the house into a kind of apartment building, with a family unit of a man and a woman and some number of children living in each of the rooms.

When we entered the front door, we saw a staircase leading from the entry way to the second floor and the bottom of another staircase leading from the second to the third floor. A living room was to our left with a curtain between the entry way and that room. A man had pulled open the corner of the curtain, and was looking at us, with a child of maybe four holding onto his leg. We asked where the shooting was in the house, and how many men with guns were there. The man just pointed up the stairs and pulled the curtain shut.

Joe went up the stairs with his handgun drawn, with me right behind him. On the second floor, we saw a series of bedroom doors, all cracked opened with people peering out. From every room we could hear the sound of children crying and screaming. And we could smell the residue of gun smoke. Joe started going into the bedrooms, yelling "PO—lice!" slamming the doors open and leaping into the room, his handgun sweeping from side to side to cover the entire room. This caused the children in those rooms to scream harder. Angry men were cursing and yelling for him to get out. A woman said there was only one gunman and pointed to the bedroom at the end of the hall.

By then uniformed officers had responded. About six police including Quantrille were lined against the hallway walls, their pistols in hand. A sergeant wanted to get a SWAT team in but Joe ignored him, speaking firmly but calmly through the door, asking the gunman to give up and no one else would get hurt.

Abruptly, a beautiful, naked ten year old girl opened the door and stepped back. She was trembling as if she was cold, but the room seemed sweltering to me. In the room there was a man lying on his back on the bedroom floor with the top of his head blown off, a shotgun lying across his legs. The top of his skull was stuck in pieces to the wall behind him, blood and holes plastered around it. There was a woman lying on a bed moaning and bleeding, a shotgun wound to her stomach, the blanket and mattress under her soaked with blood. And there was a three-year-old boy in the corner, wearing nothing but a T-shirt, gasping and crying so hard he couldn't catch his breath to make a

sound, tears rolling down his face and snot pouring out of his nose.

There had been too much poverty, too much anger, too much alcohol, too many drugs. After an argument, the man had shot the mother, and then, facing the enormity of what he had done, put the muzzle of the shotgun in his mouth and pulled the trigger, all with the two children in the small bedroom.

I followed behind as two uniformed officers went through the rest of the bedrooms to make certain no one else had been shot and to find any witnesses. We eventually made our way back to the first floor. I stumbled into the kitchen at the end of the first-floor hall, and was shocked out of my wits to see a growing puddle of red, red blood on the floor. Next to the puddle on the linoleum floor was a bare mattress covered with a thin blanket. And under the blanket were two toddlers. At first, I panicked that one or both of them had been shot. Then I realized that the bedroom where the shootings had taken place was just above the kitchen. When the man shot himself in the head, his heart kept pumping for a time and much of his blood poured out onto the bedroom floor above the kitchen, leaking through the floor of the bedroom and through the ceiling and onto the floor of the kitchen below. As I looked up, I saw the blood leaking through the kitchen ceiling. The two toddlers, who were unharmed physically, were fast asleep. Had they heard so much gunfire in their short lives that they could just roll over?

Detective Quantrille and I followed the woman's ambulance to the Washington Hospital Center Trauma Unit, waiting to see if she could be revived enough to give her account of what happened. But she had already lost too much blood and died about an hour later.

What would happen to the ten-year-old girl and the three-year-old boy? What would happen to the toddlers asleep on the mattress in the kitchen?

The victim had died, but so had the perpetrator. Justice had been done by the perpetrator's own hand. But what of those child victims? Who would take care of them now? What of the emotional wounds they would bear for the rest of their lives?

Not our problem. Criminal case closed. Next case.

Through some of my thirty-five-plus years since that night, I have dreamed of those children. Strangely, I didn't dream or think about them at all for years after that night. Then they fought their way into my dreams. I have dreamed in particular of the three-year-old boy, always crying against that wall in that bedroom, unable to make a sound. And in some versions of this dream, that three year old takes me by the hand and leads me downstairs to the two, still sleeping toddlers on the mattress in the kitchen next to the blood. He doesn't say anything, and I still don't know what he wants me to do. Or I tell myself I don't know.

I don't know what became of these four children, but I can make an experienced guess. Maybe one of them turned out to be Superman or Wonder Woman and got out of that neighborhood without a criminal record, with his or her hope and possibilities tenaciously intact. But waiting for each of these three little boys and one little girl were lives of hopelessness and anger, drugs and violent crime, unemployment, illness, and multiple pregnancies with different unmarried partners. It is overwhelmingly likely that random, angry violence continued to be a routine in their "neighborhood." And the only response of the criminal-justice and predominant social systems was to assign a person like me, a prosecutor waiting at the end of the justice conveyor belt, insisting that they should be put in jail until they grew too old and tired to be angry and violent anymore.

During my year on the street investigating violent crimes in innercity DC, the parts of the District where the tourists didn't go, the only hopeful and empowering voice I heard was the proclamation of Jesus' way by the African-American churches. I didn't know it at the time, but the experience in that house that night and the year in the ghettos were my first steps toward this other Way. I hope that I am still walking toward it.

But why didn't I worry about those children at the time, when I could have gone back and found out their names and perhaps could have done something to help them? Maybe because the only version of justice and mercy I was hearing was the dominant system's. Under that system, those

In this provocative work, Sophia Heller challenges the assumption that we cannot be without myth, that myth is necessary to vital, soulful living. Indeed, Heller argues, we have been living in a world without myth for a long time. *The Absence of Myth* examines the loss of a religious mode of being-in-the-world and demonstrates how theorists who insist on the presence of myth deny its historical end.

Absence of myth may seem obvious: evidenced by our lack of cult and ritual, and by our de-animated natural world, as well as in the emergence of conceptual thought and psychological awareness, which could only arise with the dissolution of a prereflective (mythic) mode of being-in-the-world. But what appears to be straightforward becomes complicated when myth is intentionally conflated with thought and reflection, usually in the attempt to cultivate a “mythic consciousness” that aims to restore meaning to life and assuage the spiritual malaise of contemporary culture.

Myth cannot rest in peace. It must be continually unearthed, redefined, and recontextualized such that modern and postmodern notions of myth are made to substitute for something that has never been experienced, only imagined.

Contents

Arunta); “This is how the Nemu [the mythical Ancestors] did it, and we do it the same way” (Kai of New Guinea); “Because the Sacred People did it this way for the first time” (Navajo) (Eliade, “Toward a Definition” 4). Living myth, said Mircea Eliade, means living religiously. Myth is “a reenactment of fabulous, exalting, meaningful events; one is present once again at the creative works of the Supernatural Beings” (5). Living myth is more than telling a good story; it is the reality or truth of lived life, expressed in the form of narratives that are held to be sacred.

In contrast, myths today are studied rather than lived. Since the beginnings of Western philosophy in ancient Greece, myth has been used as a tool for political discourse and, in more recent times, the inception of analytical psychology has enabled the appropriation of myth as an effective means for understanding human nature. The function of myth is critical rather than existential. More often than not, contemporary usages of “myth” tend to be easily interchangeable with the words “theory,” “story,” and “ideology,” defined more by its methodology than by any stable content. Myth is more like a “parasitical form” (Barthes) that feeds on whatever it is applied to (culture, history, literature, psychology, etc.) in order to create a surplus of meaning that can claim for itself a mythic appellation. But as real substance, as the cosmological World Tree centering the individual to the collective and the collective to the gods, living myth has long been outside the ken of modern civilization and, as such, is irrelevant to the necessities of living. Transformed to a metaphorical and conceptual level, myth has lost its former status as an objective reality; it no longer originates in the inviolable domain of Supernatural Beings and instead has become a method to be adopted or discarded at will.

If myth’s ontological absence is self-evident, and arguing for the absence of myth subsequently redundant, what exactly is the reason for this study? Why spend time dredging up myth only to refute it, a task that carries the sneaking suspicion that the absence of myth is unacceptable and that there must be a way still to uphold myth as an existential force—even when it functions negatively, through its absence. Such an underlying

motivation does, in fact, infuse some of the current myth scholarship cited in this book. On the one hand, a demythologized, scientific world is accepted while on the other hand, this demythologization is subsumed under a larger notion of myth that includes a scientific understanding of reality but is not rendered obsolete because of it (e.g., “the myth of mythlessness”). Yet this is a modern notion of “myth,” guided not by divine dictates but swollen instead with humankind’s ideas about myth and the need for a comparable substitute, evidenced most conspicuously by the desire for a spiritual meaning in a world or religious tradition that is apparently not providing it.

It is this modern hunger for meaning, whether or not it is explicitly associated with the word myth that shows that the “non-statement” of myth’s absence has been turned into a statement to protest against. And for those who believe that the remedy for the spiritual void lies specifically within myth, protestations against myth’s obsolescence and redundancy are not quiet insofar as pains must assiduously be taken to prove and defend that which is collectively no longer self-evident. Myth then becomes more than an object of historical interest or a psychological tool; it becomes an unwitting pawn in the debate on the meaning of life. As I aim to explicate in this study, myth, in its emptied and malleable status, is thrust forward by scholars and psychologists, seekers alike, as proof that the sacred has not been secularized. And yet theories that have to work especially hard to show how and where myth is still alive usually point not to myth, but to the desire on the part of the theorist for something that is no more, and furthermore, to the unwill-ingness to accept what could be a rather ordinary, decidedly nonmythic life.

Our time is clearly experiencing a dearth of meaning and purpose. One need only look at the self-help, career, New Age, religion, and psychology sections at bookstores to see a deluge of information, all geared to help the forsaken individual find his or her sacred purpose, authentic job, soulmate, inner peace, outer abundance, happiness, God, or the God within. Perhaps this is a gross generalization, but I do not think it is inaccurate, given that this book is being written in a

time (early twenty-first century) and in places (Germany and the United States) that have witnessed such an overload of resources as to how to make one's life more meaningful that it would be impossible to cite all the cultural instances supporting this assertion. In any event, my starting point has little to do with the specifics of how to make life worth living. Rather, it is to take the observation that this need for a more worthy life exists and place it within the framework of myth, or, I should say, myth's absence, for what current civilization has inherited is not myth, but its absence. And to the extent that the ubiquitous search for something to fill the void of meaning is directed toward myth or God, it is worth examining this inheritance of absence more closely, because the search does not seem to be coming to any closure. On the contrary, the search for meaning and value has apparently found its way into a vacuum that must keep recycling infinite variations of the same product ("meaning") in order to calm and piece together our lonely, fractured selves. If this were not the case, the popular psychology/spirituality industry would have withered long ago, rather than exploding into a virtual smorgasbord where seekers can indulge whenever and wherever the urge strikes.

Myths are gone; the gods are dead. This, by the way, is not to attack one's personal religious beliefs and practices. It is to say that collectively and objectively, from the perspective of the world and not pockets of individuals, what was a source of metaphysical and religious meaning is no more. This godless and mythless state of the world is nothing new. Wolfgang Iegerich ("The Opposition of 'Individual and Collective'") and David Miller ("A Myth Is as Good as a Smile!") both cite Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale" as just one piece of evidence that by the fourteenth century myths and mythical figures had already withdrawn.

When good King Arthur ruled in ancient days
 (A king that every Briton loves to praise)
 This was a land brim-full of fairy folk.
 The Elf-Queen and her courtiers joined and broke
 Their elfin dance on many a green mead,
 Or so was the opinion once, I read,

Hundred of years ago, in days of yore.
 But no one now sees fairies any more.
 For now the saintly charity and prayer
 Of holy friars seem to have purged the air;
 They search the countryside through field and stream
 As thick as motes that speckle a sun-beam,
 Blessing the halls, the chambers, kitchens, bowers,
 Cities and boroughs, castles, courts and towers,
 Thorpes, barns and stables, outhouses and dairies.
 And that's the reason why there are no fairies.
 Wherever there was wont to walk an elf
 Today there walks the holy friar himself
 As evening falls or when the daylight springs,
 Saying his mattins and his holy things,
 Walking his limit round from town to town.
 Women can now go safely up and down
 By every bush or under every tree;
 Here is no other incubus but he,
 So there is really no one else to hurt you
 And he will do no more than take your virtue.

"What is lost," Iegerich writes, "(and irrevocably lost) is the natural world as ensouled, as animated, as spirited by all sorts of fairies, goblins, and little people). Though an animated, ensouled nature is just one aspect of living myth, what is relevant is that the "status of nature" is irreversibly changed such that a new mode or logic of being-in-the-world is initiated. In myth, natural phenomena are divinely personified (e.g., in Greek myth, the earth is Gaia, thunder is Zeus, the sun is Helios, the seas are Poseidon, and so forth), but when nature has been emptied of its animating forces, as Chaucer's tale claims, the conditions for myth are also depleted. There is little reason for myth to persist when the repository for divine truth is lifted out of nature and placed into the hands of the holy friar, who is the mere servant of the singular, true (now abstracted into Spirit) God of Christianity. And Christianity, far from being just another "myth," logically and historically represents an intentional overcoming of myth.

Although the absence of myth is

to happen. As long as there persists a yearning for meaning, the implications of the loss of myth and religion have yet to be comprehended and instead are to be resisted. For religion as well as myth has fallen out of conviction if the question of what makes life meaningful has to be asked. This discussion of the absence of myth, then, is not intended indirectly to reverse myth's obsolescence or rehabilitate the gods/God. It is to delve into the absence, to penetrate and be penetrated by the sense of mythlessness and find out what wants to be known through the loss. My approach is not merely to assume the absence of myth; it is to treat this absence as necessary in its own right, necessary to the very notion of consciousness that is so cherished in the prevalent desire for soulful living. And given that this absence is closer to our reality than myth ever was, it, perhaps even more than myth, requires attention.

This book is divided into four chapters, with each one successively pushing into the ramifications of the absence of myth. Chapter 1 articulates the case for this absence by presenting current myth theory and demonstrating not only that the extensive study of myth is made possible because of myth's absence, but also that the rise of mythology is founded on a profound lack. Whether one deems this a lack of foundation, center, God, or meaning, the point is that, what inspires modern and postmodern myth is the desire for something that is acutely felt to be lost. Although some of the scholarship I review incorporates the loss of myth into an expanded theory of myth, others betray the unwillingness to accept the loss in that the so-called emptiness is shown to be actually quite full—of myth!

Yet whether one subsumes the absence of myth into an overarching theory, or disregards the absence of myth by calling mythlessness just another myth, the modern notion of myth itself must be redefined and translated into contemporary experience to ensure its vitality and applicability. And though I try to place thought about myth in contradistinction to examples of archaic or living myth, the redefining of archaic myth into current myth only

confuses the seemingly straightforward matter of the absence of myth.

One problem with turning to myth for real sustenance, as indicated earlier, is that original myth is not part of modernity's experience. It exists more in anthropologists' reports and imaginings that can never be entirely objective. Current civilization is very far removed from an oral/aural and ritual-based tradition, and despite the awareness of mythical, cyclical aspects to life (e.g., the seasons, the moon, the calendar), humankind nonetheless lives linearly and progressively, outwardly striving to reach goals and acquire knowledge, determined, in a sense, to master life. Our narratives are not sacred, they are deconstructed; our rituals are public commodities or privately resurrected, belonging more to one's innermost being than to any collective at large.

Living long outside of myth, human thought has emptied the word myth of its original value and turned it into a concept that mirrors those who use and study it. Prior to its conceptualization, myth stood for the whole truth; it was the ritualized enactment of the whole of existence itself. But in ancient Greece, where the early philosophers critiqued myths while simultaneously bestowing their value, the distinction between two different periods of myth is absorbed into an already evolving definition of myth that comes to represent both truth and falsehood. And in much of the current, postmodern-influenced scholarship, generated in a time that extols the impossibility of an authoritative truth, myth is perceived as entirely fictitious and ideological. However, the equivocal usage of the same word, myth, proves problematic because it conflates the experience of living myth with imaginings about myth and dissolves the cultural specificity from within which myth is realized. This creates a split, or dissociation in psychological terms, between individual and collective, between the myth proponent's personal motivations (such as the desire for meaning) and the outer, objective reality that precludes what is yearned for.

To be sure, not all mythologists insist on the irrefutable presence of myth, nor is there concordance as to the exact manifestations of current myth. But the boundaries between detached

myth scholars and passionate myth defenders can be elusive. Modern myth resists precise definition because it has exploded into virtually all aspects of cultural communication. William Doty is one example of a mythologist who embraces an evolving, “polyphasic working definition” of myth, one whose purpose is to “foster a type of [...] appreciation that recognizes mythic multidimensionality in both origination and application.” Myth, in part, expresses “the primal, foundational accounts of aspects of the real, experienced world and humankind’s roles and relative statuses within it.” This, in turn, helps to elucidate “the political and moral values of a culture and provide systems of interpreting individual experience within a universal perspective”. Myth as a lens or template highlighting unseen aspects of a particular culture or political ideologies is no doubt a useful tool and, in this regard, much insight can be gained from mythology. But what I repeatedly noticed is that there persists this belief or hope that a thread remains linking archaic myth with modern (notions of) myth, unbroken even in its brokenness. The loophole is that modern myth, while not outwardly purporting to function exactly as its progenitor, is nevertheless presumed to be able to provide the culture and, even more so, the individual, with the same depth of meaning and purpose to life characteristic of archaic myth. Yet to the extent that modern notions of myth easily overlook the distinction between two distinct periods of myth, such a myth will be ineffective in fulfilling the needs of current culture precisely because it is fully grounded neither in antiquity nor in the present time.

Either arguing for the persistence of myth or acknowledging the failure of myth today demands contextualizing any definition of myth within the time that it is functional. This obligation, as well as the dilemma that erupts when historically distinct definitions of myth are muddled, is the subject of the first part of chapter 1. The second part grounds in contemporary myth theory what I have assumed to be a given, the absence of myth. However, my overall intent is to do more than back up the assertion of myth’s obsolescence. It is to uncover fallacies inherent in theory that must reconstitute

myth to fit modern sensibilities, and to suggest where the theory does the opposite of what the theorist ostensibly intends. This is indicative, for example, of a philosophical and psychological approach to myth, whereby myth becomes conflated with philosophy or psychology and is meant to serve as a means for uncovering truths about human nature and the nature of consciousness, how we see and understand ourselves and the world. This, however, is a kind of truth or insight apprehended through critical thought and analysis as opposed to the acceptance of truth as literal and embodied experience, such as was the condition of myth. One problem with couching current thought and analysis in myth is that myth becomes more of an obstruction and stunts the trajectory of an awareness or consciousness that can only come into its own after myth. The irony is that what makes the so-called return to myth possible or even desirable is itself only possible outside of myth. Consequently, any refutation or restructuring of the absence of myth in the name of consciousness becomes unconscious, answering a familiar call to comfort rather than accepting the rigors of reflection in a no longer deified world.

In chapter 2, I take a closer look at one phenomenon resulting directly from the absence of myth: personal myth. Personal myth represents a particular response to the collective loss of myth and religious meaning. Though it may profess otherwise, the personal myth approach does not and cannot seek to remedy this absence because it utterly depends on it. Its philosophy basically says that what the collective has lost, the individual can and should reclaim. And how one reclaims myth and meaning is through knowing and telling one’s personal story. However, what separates a personal myth from a mere autobiography, biography, or memoir is the underlying belief or hope that if a personal story is contextualized within myth, it carries an archetypal and numinous significance and, as such, is elevated and geared to replace the metaphysical void created by the departure and death of the gods. This method receives, in part, its inspiration from Jungian depth psychology, specifically, Jung’s notion of archetypes as mythological motifs patterning all of life. From this perspective, it seems impossible to be

devoid of myth—one need only root out the archetypes to find the myth. The same could be said (and is said) for personal myth: one need only identify the archetypes peopling whichever psychological complexes are constellated at any given moment to find the myth pertaining to the individual. But the transposition of myth from collective to individual is ambiguous and incomplete in that myth is simultaneously discredited (for the loss of collective myth is not disputed) and exalted insofar as myth's virtues are now upheld by the individual. Not unlike the redefining of myth to suit modern thought, the shift from collective to personal myth provides a surface solution at best for the prevailing existential concern: how is life to be meaningful.

Chapter 3 confronts the equivocal usages of myth evident in both the first and second chapters. Here I consider the questions, how does the equivocation of myth persist, and does it perhaps serve its own purpose? Expressed another way, how is it that myth lives on amid the general acknowledgment of the lack of a transcendent God? One persuasive answer is found in a postmodern style of thought, a style that opts for imagination and alternating perspectives over literalized and fixated assumptions as to the nature of reality. A postmodern approach to the absence of myth thus welcomes absence or negativity as a general principle because it undermines false or egotistical claims to that which ultimately remains unknowable and is therefore not for the taking. But an absent myth, in this case, does not mean the end of myth; it just adopts a different perspective on myth, meaning, and the divine. God as dead is just one perspective, but it is not to be mistaken for the perspective on God's status. Rather, this statement is reversed (e.g., "Nietzsche is dead"—God) and this playful, shifting consciousness creates a space or gap wherein both statements are just as true as they are false. The point is to incite a sense of unknowing, and to dethrone the individual who would claim to know. Ambiguity and equivocation are deemed necessary precisely because they resist a clear, rational approach and compel one to enter the murky "in-between spaces," those liminal spaces between all binary oppositions, such as present-absent, truth-falsehood, inner-outer, and so

on. The desirability and necessity of engaging the in-between spaces enable an encounter with the complex, paradoxical nature of life, a truth that can only be apprehended by standing outside of one's habitual mode of understanding.

In chapter 4, I try to give myth and the pursuit of myth the benefit of the doubt. Although I have been contending that one primary motivation for refuting the absence of myth arises from the desire for a meaning that is hard put to materialize, I also think that the persistence and variation of modern and postmodern myth point to another goal repeatedly surfacing in thought and culture: the striving to become conscious. Although the inability completely to relinquish myth can indicate an unwillingness to accept reality on its own, God-less terms, it also carries hints of the desire to reach a level of awareness that does bear a resemblance to mythical cultures insofar as a total consciousness and presence render questions of meaning and purpose irrelevant, the split into dualistic thinking is overcome, and one knows oneself to be held by something much larger and already whole unto itself, whether one terms this God, Being, soul, spirit, or something else. Yet rather than looking at how to redefine myth to meet the evolving demands of consciousness, this final chapter tackles the question—is the idea of pure consciousness itself a myth? Does the process of becoming conscious mean that we will eventually come back full circle and return to myth, not a phenomenal myth as in antiquity but a logical or psychological one? Will a "new myth" emerge, one that maintains the existential equivalency of archaic myth, but without need for concretization through ritual, sacrifice, or worship? In addressing these questions, I continue the progression into the logic of myth as well as its absence, to see if, in fact, the myth somehow contains within itself its own future demise or survival. <>

[Round Trip to Hades in the Eastern Mediterranean Tradition: Visits to the Underworld from Antiquity to Byzantium](#) edited by Gunnel Ekroth and Ingela Nilsson [Cultural Interactions in the Mediterranean. Brill, 9789004372665]

Round Trip to Hades in the Eastern Mediterranean Tradition explores how the theme of visiting the

Underworld and returning alive has been treated, transmitted and transformed in the ancient Greek and Byzantine traditions. The journey was usually a descent (katabasis) into a dark and dull place, where forgetfulness and punishment reigned, but since ‘everyone’ was there, it was also a place that offered opportunities to meet people and socialize. Famous Classical round trips to Hades include those undertaken by Odysseus and Aeneas, but this pagan topic also caught the interest of Christian writers. The contributions of the present volume allow the reader to follow the passage from pagan to Christian representations of Hades—a passage that may seem surprisingly effortless.

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Round Trip to Hades by Gunnel Ekroth and Ingela Nilsson

The possibility of visiting the realms of the dead and yet returning alive is an idea that has fascinated people throughout time and across cultures. The European tradition goes back to Greek and Roman antiquity, represented by such famous round trips to Hades as those undertaken by Odysseus and Aeneas, but it is clear that the Graeco- Roman tradition had older Mesopotamian antecedents. Starting with these early representations, visits to the Underworld are subsequently found in many guises in both literature and art – they served as inspiration for and were reflected upon by ancient, Late Antique and Byzantine authors and artists, and they still do in our modern times. When putting together this volume, we were particularly interested in how the ancient motif has been treated, explored, transmitted and transformed over centuries or even millennia. The contributors were thus encouraged to explore how the core of the motif was at the same time preserved and reworked, and how that

process may be seen to reflect an essential human concern in different cultural and social settings.

The round trip to the Underworld is one of the originally pagan topics that caught the interest of Christian writers. The importance of what happened in the afterlife made the motif relevant in a Christian context and meant that the numerous ancient representations could be explored in fruitful ways. The contributions of the present volume allow the reader to follow this passage from pagan to Christian representations of Hades – a passage that may seem surprisingly effortless. The actual location of Hades and the roads by which visitors travel there vary in both pagan and Christian traditions. The most common form of travel was some sort of descent (*katabasis*), but the traveller could also be made to travel to the very far East or West – beyond the outskirts of civilization and into the realm of mythical and fantastic creatures. Hades could even be located in Heaven or among the stars, which made the traveller perform an ascent (*anabasis*) rather than a descent. Both literary and artistic representations suggest that the round trip was reserved for mythical heroes of the past. For the living, the physical round trip was a more problematic undertaking: even if many sites in Greek antiquity contained entrances to the Underworld, there is little evidence for the belief in such practises. As a regular mortal, all you could do was to prepare for your journey to Hades in order to make the best of it once there, but you could never leave.

Hades was traditionally a dark and dull place, where forgetfulness and punishment seemed to reign simultaneously. However, since ‘everyone’ was there, it was also a place that offered opportunities to meet people and socialize. While Odysseus’ meeting with the dead was a rather gloomy experience, Lucian turned the Underworld into a place for intense and humorous discussions about life and literature. This theme was further developed in Byzantine literature, opening up for both playful parody and social satire. In the Christian tradition, a clear desire may be distinguished to interact with and transform the pagan Hades, both as a place and a character. While some things stay more or less the same, there are also notable changes. One is that Hades

becomes smellier as time goes by: stench and cesspools are staple ingredients in some Christian round trip accounts, as Hades is gradually transformed into Hell. Of course, Christianity also introduces Satan, who needs to be correlated with Hades, both as regards who actually rules the Underworld and how each of them is to be depicted in order to avoid confusion.

This development of the actual location is paralleled by that of the travellers’ own experiences, in particular the perception of the dead they meet in Hades. Following Homer’s accounts, in which they are sheer ghosts whom it is not even possible to properly embrace, the inhabitants of Hades subsequently acquire more and more of a physical body, with all the complications that follow if you are dead, that is, a corpse. For the ancient Greek traveller, the journey does not seem to have affected the body at all – or at least it is not noted in the representations. In the Christian Hades, by contrast, corporeality lies at the centre. According to some accounts, you may not be allowed to stay if you have too much flesh clinging to your soul, and when you leave you have to put your body back on, even if it has started to disintegrate and the bones have become exposed. It should be underlined, though, that literary and artistic representations vary widely, both in the ancient and the Byzantine tradition, and that one specific line of development thus is difficult to pin down. We think that the contributions of this volume will help in displaying and explaining some of that diversity.

Fritz Graf’s chapter opens up the volume with a wide panorama of Underworld visits, including some of the classics: Dante’s *Divina Commedia*, the fourth-century Vision of Paul, Vergil’s sixth book of the *Aeneid* and the so-called *Nekyia*, Homer’s account of Odysseus’ visit to Hades. To these are added some less well-known round trips like those in the Pythagorean and Orphic traditions. At the focus lies the internal relation between these representations: how they influenced each other and – more importantly – consciously interacted. Graf notes some common characteristics in the literary journeys to the Underworld, such as the fact that they are usually first-person accounts and eye-witness reports. Furthermore, the tradition is

very self-conscious and constantly refers back to earlier reports in order to underpin the reliability of the individual account. According to Graf, this is an argument for seeing round trip accounts as a literary genre of their own. He concludes that round trip stories aim at changing the world of the living who listen to the account, while underlining the gradual increase – throughout the centuries – in the horrors of Hades, Hell or however we are to designate this location.

The earliest European katabasis is the one undertaken by Odysseus, the *Nekyia* of the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*. Although highly influential, most notably for Vergil and hence later traditions, Odysseus never actually visited Hades but rather consulted the dead by means of a hole dug in the ground. To use a pit (*bothros*) for contacting and communicating with the Underworld, by the sacrifice of animals and by having their blood flow into the hole, followed by the burning of their bodies in a holocaust, is a practice explored by Gunnel Ekroth. Looking at the evidence for such rituals in Greek literary, epigraphical and iconographic sources, it is evident that the Homeric account was a strong source of inspiration or even a template for later stories of ritual uses of pits to access the dead, rather than a reflection of real, practiced rituals. This was the case until the later Roman period, when it seems that an oracle attempted to create a real ritual from the Homeric model. The fact that the pit ritual was not a part of living Greek religion, argues Ekroth, supports the explanation that the origin for this particular ritual is to be found outside of Greece: preferably in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly in Anatolia.

A specific part of Hades, namely Tartaros, is the topic of the next chapter. Ivana Petrovic and Andrej Petrovic here explore the descent into the Underworld by divine beings described in Hesiod's *Theogony*. This is a journey often linked to power struggles and rarely undertaken voluntarily, as when Zeus banishes the Titans to Tartaros to enable his rule over the world. Such an action was prone to being combined with bondage, in order to prevent an anabasis of these unwanted beings. Still, Zeus himself undertakes two katabaseis in order to access the potent forces of the Underworld: first to

liberate the Cyclopes so as to make use of their thunderbolts and lightning, and later to free the Hundred-Handers. He also sends down the goddess Iris to fetch water from the river Styx, as a means to make the Titans swear a binding oath. In Hesiod, the round trip to Hades is accordingly a means for divinities to procure resources, although – for some awesome and destructive powers – this has to be a one-way journey in order not to disturb the Olympian order.

In the next chapter, Scott Scullion discusses visits to Hades from the point of view of the Orphic or Bacchic *lamellae* – thin gold leaves bearing instructions given to those initiated in particular cults as to how their souls were to navigate the hazards in Hades and handle the judges of the dead. These texts are not to be taken as presenting a precise and clearly formulated theological doctrine, as has often been assumed, but rather as reflecting the teachings of individual ritual specialists. Scullion's detailed analysis of the wording of the tablets offers several new interpretations. The much discussed formula "I am from the starry heaven and earth," which occurs on several tablets, does not make obscure theological claims but means, quite literally, that the initiate comes from the world above, bounded by earth and sky. Scullion also proposes a new (or rather re-affirms an older) reading of the expression *καθάρᾳ*: referring to the initiate himself coming from the pure and turning to the queen of the Underworld, who is also pure (*kathara*), it creates a particular bond between them. Scullion also argues that the initiates in possession of these tablets did not perceive of themselves as ordinary disembodied souls, but as a kind of post-mortem version of themselves.

The gold leaves are also of central importance to Miguel Herrero de Járegui's chapter, which focuses on the role of the concepts *pathein* and *mathein*, 'to suffer' and 'to learn', in accounts of Hades and visits to the Underworld. He offers a review of the use and meaning of these notions in ancient literature and suggests that the gold leaves, as well as other stories of trips to the realms of the dead, aimed at giving mortals a glimpse of the Underworld before actually arriving there. However, the perception of the journey to Hades

differed according to its context. If set in the ritual sphere, as in actual initiation, the experience was of an extraordinary kind (*pathos*) that forever changed the initiated; in the literary sphere, the emphasis was on learning (*mathein*), through images and teachings of the doctrines of afterlife. Herrero de Járegui argues that the process of initiation, as evidenced by the gold tablets, could be characterized as either quick and vertical – a transformation into a god, which would explain the enigmatic expression “you fell, a kid, into the milk” – or progressive and horizontal, slowly learning by travelling the sacred road of the Bacchic initiates. In spite of discussions that began in antiquity, it remains unclear which of the concepts, *pathein* or *mathein*, should be considered the earliest.

A wide range of evidence, archaeological as well as textual, is treated by Sofia Kravaritou and Maria Stamatopoulou in a chapter on notions connected with journeys to the Underworld in Thessaly from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period. One of the most famous literary examples describes the Thessalian princess Alkestis’ *katabasis*, reflecting the eschatological perspectives of Athens in the fifth century BCE. A number of Thessalian cults, however, concerned divinities associated with the Underworld, such as En(n)odia, Dionysos and Persephone. Some of the most explicit gold lamellae come from this region. Thessalian funerary epigrams witness reflections of a particular status of the departed in the afterlife; some stress virtuous life, others follow the norms or *topoi* of the period, and some of them echo phrases of the Orphic-Bacchic reliefs. The authors stress that the exalted place promised or advertised for some dead in the afterlife is linked both to their virtuous lifestyle and to their individual status as intellectuals or physicians – members of an educated elite. Moreover, grave goods, in particular food remains, indicate that the departed was viewed as embarking on a journey, another sign of a particular concern among Thessalians for a safe passage to Hades.

Herakles’ experience of Hades is the focus of the following chapter, as Annie Verbanck- Piérard examines the literary and iconographical representations of his round trips. She underlines in particular the divergence between different kinds

of sources. The written and mythographic tradition focuses on Herakles’ violent and powerful actions, bringing Kerberos and Theseus back from the Underworld and even fighting Death to rescue Alkestis – themes that were developed in Athenian tragedies. The Attic iconography that concentrates predominantly on Kerberos and Herakles can here be represented as almost taming the feral animal, being patient and empathic. The motif becomes particularly popular in South Italian vase painting in the fourth century BCE, especially on vases placed in tombs. Herakles freeing Theseus is, on the other hand, never a very common motif in art. More frequent are representations of Herakles in the presence of a deity with a cornucopia, presumably a fertility god linked to the Underworld. According to Verbanck- Piérard, this composition could suggest a safer and less uneasy aspect of Hades, perhaps related to various mystery cults.

We then turn to Hades in Hellenistic philosophy, the topic of Adrian Mihai’s chapter. Greek philosophers expressed little interest in visits to Hades in the sense of heroic round trips. Instead, they were more concerned with the concept of Hades as such: where it was cosmologically situated, the nature of the souls and their abode after the demise of the body – on the whole, perspectives very different from those of poets. According to the Platonists and the Stoics, Hades was a place of transit, to be found either under the earth or in heaven, where souls were purified to be able to return to their divine abode. Tartaros, on the other hand, was a location for eternal punishment, a place from which no soul could escape. Considering the discrepancies in approaches to Hades in different intellectual traditions and settings, Mihai emphasizes that the relation between the philosophical and religious views of Hades would certainly profit from further study.

A more concrete aspect of round trips to Hades is dealt with by Wiebke Friese, who looks at Graeco-Roman death oracles from an archaeological perspective. Starting from Homer’s *Nekyia*, her chapter explores to what extent necromantic sanctuaries can be traced in the archaeology of the

ancient Mediterranean sacred landscape. Of particular interest are locations thought to be entrances to Hades and the so-called nekyomanteia or psychopompeia at Ephyra, Herakleia Pontike, Tainaron and Lake Avernus near Cumae, as well as sanctuaries where an intermediary interacted with the Underworld on behalf of the living, such as the cult of Trophonios at Lebadeia, the plutonia at Acharaka and Hierapolis, and the Bes oracle at Abydos in Egypt. There are apparent inconsistencies in the literary and archaeological evidence from antiquity to modern times as to how these sites functioned and what their precise purpose was. Friese argues that Homeric myth clearly influenced the invention and spatial formation of specific cults, rituals and sites connected to interactions with Hades, but that these accounts were never based on an actual historical ritual or topography.

A katabasis was not only an emotionally stressful experience, it was frequently also thought to be accompanied by particular sounds. The bellowing, roaring and hissing that could be heard when one went down into Hades is discussed by Pierre Bonnechere. This aspect of descents into the Underworld has been little studied previously and opens up new perspectives on the journey to Hades. Consultation of the oracle of Trophonios, initiation into the mysteries as described in Aristophanes' *The Clouds* and theurgic ritual for summoning a god – all these instances were accompanied by intense sounds. So was, apparently, each instance when the boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead opened up. Bonnechere shows how even possession could be linked to bellowing, as shown in, for example, Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, as well as in the use of magic. A particular aspect of this soundscape was the circularity of the noise and the sensation of whirling and spinning, perceptions of which can even be traced in ancient art.

An ancient author with a particular interest in Hades and round trips to the realms of the dead was Lucian, who used the Underworld as a setting in several texts. Heinz-Günther Nesselrath offers an overview of the many Lucianic variations of the katabasis theme. Some of his texts deal specifically

with the living visiting the Underworld, like Menippos, who was taken there by the "Chaldean" magus Mithrobarzanes in a copycat version of the Homeric *Nekyia*. After seeing the sights, Menippos learns the meaning of life from Teiresias before ascending into the cave of Trophonios. Lucian also provides many other accounts: how a hunter who saw Hekate descended into Hades and thereby managed to get a good view of the Underworld, or how a very sick philosopher who was taken down to Hades too early had to come back up again. A parabasis not involving a descent but a journey to the Western end of the world to reach the Island of the Blessed is found in the *True Histories*, while another text offers an anabasis of Charon, who is taken on a tour of the world of the living by Hermes, all the while complaining about the futility of the living in catering for the dead. Lucian thus demonstrates the more or less endless variations of the motifs, later to be developed by both Byzantine, early modern and modern authors.

In the next chapter, Zisis Ainalis takes us from the pagan Underworld into the Christian equivalent, which is still called Hades. The earliest narrative of a round trip to a Christianized Graeco-Roman Hades dates to the middle of the second century, initiating the renaming and rebranding of Hades as Hell in the Christian literary tradition. In the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, Jesus himself descends to the Underworld in order to recuperate the Righteous. The Vision of Paul (end of the 4th c.) narrates Paul's visit to the world below, where the sinners and unbelievers are imprisoned and punished – a proper Hell. The Life of Saint Macarius the Roman (end of the 4th or beginning of the 5th c.) is the rich and fabulous account of three monks' elaborate round trip to Hell, a place located beyond the end of the known world. This representation suggests that, by this time, Hell had become consolidated in the Christian imagination as a place of darkness, stench, heat and torments, with a cesspool and a typology of sinners.

Another famous visitor to Hades was the Virgin Mary, whose complex interactions with the realm of the dead and the deceased are discussed by Thomas Arentzen. The tradition of how the Virgin challenged and neutralized Hades spans the fourth to the ninth centuries and is evident in a great

variety of Christian contexts. In the ninth-century Akathistos Hymn, Mary breaks down the gates of Hades, opening up a gateway to Paradise through her own body, which becomes a gateway in itself. Andrew of Crete (late 7th to early 8th c.) instead imagines Mary's soul as actually going down into Hades after death, learning the lay of the land in order to guide Christians through the realm of the dead on to the other side. Romanos the Melodist (early sixth century) has Mary singing in the cave at Bethlehem, awakening the slumbering Eve and Adam in Hades, and then comforting them and promising them relief by taking them away from the Underworld. Arentzen shows how Mary's death could even be a cosmic event in which the whole world – including the dead – takes part, causing them to become invigorated.

The iconographic rendering of Hades in Byzantine art is then explored by Henry Maguire. There is a remarkable difference in the depiction of Hades in the Western traditions, where he is a fearsome monster, and the Byzantine images, where he has more or less normal human features and proportions. Within the Byzantine tradition, there is also a change from the earliest eighth-century portrayals of Hades, where his naked body was coloured black, conflating him with Satan, to later Byzantine paintings and mosaics where he has lost much of his dark pigmentation, thus differentiating him from the Devil. These distinctions are linked to the context where the images occur: the 'beautiful' Hades appears in the Anastasis (Resurrection) icons, while in Byzantine art at large, he was portrayed as a monster with a distended belly, claws and dishevelled hair. The explanation for the bodily appearance of Hades in icons, Maguire argues, is that they were objects of worship – images opening into the world of the spirit and giving direct access to Christ, but potentially also to other beings represented. In order to ease the sense of discomfort at the idea of possibly also worshipping Hades, the problematic parts of his iconography were played down – particularly his association with Satan and any possible identification with pagan idols – while still providing Christ with a credible adversary.

The continued interest in Hades in the Byzantine period is evident from Ingela Nilsson's chapter,

which discusses rhetorical and literary elaborations of the katabasis motif in twelfth-century literature. Visits to the Underworld could be used both as a literary parody of Lucian and as a way to satirize contemporary society. Sometimes the two were combined, as in the *Timarion* – a dialogue in which the protagonist Timarion describes a Hades populated by both ancient and Byzantine characters. Nilsson here focuses on two rhetorical exercises in which Nikephoros Basilakes employs Homeric and Biblical material in order to problematize how anyone can enter Hades and then leave, considering what happens to the body after death. When Odysseus visits the Underworld "in the flesh" in the first text under examination, his old adversary Ajax perceives an additional sign of Odysseus' dishonesty and deceit. In the other text, Hades' reactions to Lazarus being raised from the dead are likewise concerned with the relation between the dead body and the soul. Nilsson argues that the exercises in question offer a sophisticated reconciliation of pagan and Christian traditions in a partly serious, partly playful manner.

The character of Hades in the Byzantine satirical tradition is further explored by Przemysław Marciniak, who discusses the twelfth-century *Timarion* and *Against Hagiochristophorites* and the fifteenth-century *Mazaris*. Following Lucian's representation of Hades as a place where figures from various historical periods interact, the Underworld here offers an intricate mixture of pagan and Christian elements. Punishments include being bitten by Kerberos, tortured in Tartaros and burned by an unquenchable fire, the last a typically Christian feature. The judges of the dead are ancient Greek mythical kings next to a Christian emperor, but anyone can stick to the religion they prefer – hardly a reflection of official Byzantine ideology. Perhaps the greatest satirical twist is the emphasis on the fact that the judicial process in Hades is impartial and incorrupt – a clear sign that these round trips criticize contemporary conditions and express their wish for a different society.

In the final chapter, Sarah Iles Johnston takes us up to modern times, looking at contemporary stories of round trips to the Underworld and the effects that such journeys had on the travellers. Her starting

point is the ancient Greek imagination of those actually returning from Hades, not as ghosts but as reincorporated persons or revenants. In the mythical stories of revenants, they return to life as a favour bestowed by the gods or being raised by an exceptional mortal, sometimes fighting off Death, and with their bodies intact. There is no fear of those returning in embodied form and some even enter a new divine state. The contrast to modern twentieth-century stories of the West is striking, beginning with W. W. Jacobs' "The Monkey's Paw" (1902). Here, the return of the dead never ends happily and is perceived as something unnatural, with the body decaying and sometimes possessed by an evil force. The ancient Greeks feared the return of the soul as a ghost, while the body of those returning from Hades was of little interest. Christianity, on the other hand, viewed the rot and disarticulation of the body as a necessary step towards resurrection, but to return from Hades prematurely, as a reanimated corpse, was an evil thing. As Johnston shows, such ideas have offered inspiration for much modern fiction, ranging from H. P. Lovecraft to Stephen King.

The volume closes with an epilogue written by Eric Cullhed and Sigrid Schottenius Cullhed, offering a reflection on the volume's contents and theme – this curious human need to imagine and visualize journeys to the Underworld. To the material already discussed by other contributors they add the fifteenth-century Apokopos by the Cretan Renaissance poet Bergadhis, a work that spans both Eastern and Western Underworld traditions. With a focus on the emotional and cognitive workings of the katabasis motif, Cullhed and Schottenius Cullhed discuss how representations of death as a departure may function as a kind of vaccine: "a controlled exposure to emotional triggers that prepares the readers for future moments of death anxiety that might come." At the same time, we should not deny the power of artistic representation, which has the power to transform sadness into at least partial pleasure. Most importantly, all departures are not the same and the representations offer endless variations in which the individual details may play an important role.

As meditations on the human condition, narratives of journeys to the Underworld seem to have a

cross-cultural validity that few other stories have. This is probably also the reason why they have travelled so effortlessly through different societies and periods, all the way up to our own time. There is a winding but distinct line of imagination from the Near East onto Homer and Vergil via early Christian texts and Dante to such recent representations as Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (2000) or David Bowie's *Lazarus* (2015). More work remains to be done, but we hope that this volume will offer a useful selection of material and analyses and thus a fruitful point of departure for future studies. Since this volume spans two periods that are rarely treated together – the Classical and the Byzantine – we had to negotiate two different academic traditions. In the contributions dealing with the Classical world, there are usually no indications of critical editions, as these texts are usually well established and easily accessible. The situation is very different for the Medieval and Byzantine material, so in chapters dealing with those traditions all editions are listed in separate sections of the bibliographies. A related issue is that of transliteration of names. We have adopted the now rather common spelling of Greek names, words and places (Herakles, katabasis, Nekyia), but kept the more traditional Latinized/Anglicized forms for some Classical authors (Aeschylus, Lucian, Hesiod) and places (Mycenae, Attica). The latter goes also for some titles of works that are known primarily under those names (Bacchae, Gospel of Nicodemus). Byzantine names have been transliterated according to their spelling in the Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium. With the exception of those guidelines, we have allowed the authors themselves to decide whether to write in American or British English. We have also let them decide how much original Greek to cite and/or transliterate, which means that contributions look different depending on the contributors' disciplinary belonging. <>

[Greek Writers and Philosophers in Philo and Josephus: A Study of Their Secular Education and Educational Ideals](#) by Erkki Koskeniemi [Studies in Philo of Alexandria, Brill, 9789004384835]

In *Greek Writers and Philosophers in Philo and Josephus* Erkki Koskeniemi investigates how two Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus, quoted,

mentioned and referred to Greek writers and philosophers. He asks what this tells us about their Greek education, their contacts with Classical culture in general, and about the societies in which Philo and Josephus lived. Although Philo in Alexandria and Josephus in Jerusalem both had the possibility to acquire a thorough knowledge of Greek language and culture, they show very different attitudes. Philo, who was probably admitted to the gymnasium, often and enthusiastically refers to Greek poets and philosophers. Josephus on the other hand rarely quotes from their works, giving evidence of a more traditionalistic tendencies among Jewish nobility in Jerusalem.

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Excerpt: This book collects the passages in which Philo and Josephus quote, refer or mention Greek poets and philosophers and asks what they tell us about the writers' own level of education and about the society in which they lived. Philo and Josephus illumine the unique world of Alexandria in the Hellenistic and Roman periods and life in first century C.E. Jerusalem: The Jewish élite in Alexandria was well-versed with Greek literature, and their tradition produced a champion like Philo. Josephus' use of the poets and philosophers, in turn, reveals that although Greek was commonly spoken in Jerusalem and moreover that it was possible to advance in Greek studies there, there was a traditionalistic segment in the city which did not appreciate this kind of culture. Josephus, a young and talented man of noble birth, originated from this section of society, and thus knew Greek writers and philosophers markedly less well than has mostly been believed in recent scholarship...

The Task of the Study

The task of this study is to investigate how two Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus, quoted, referred to and mentioned Greek writers and philosophers, and to ask what that tells us about their Greek education and their contacts with Classical culture in general. Simultaneously, this study also asks what this reveals about the societies in which Philo and Josephus lived.

A Brief History of the Research

Neither Philo nor Josephus explains unambiguously how their secular education was gained, but their works deliver some material containing quotations from Classical texts, biographical passages, or they may reflect on educational ideals. Careful deduction is needed, and scholars disagree at many crucial points.

The easier task seems to be to define Philo's education. Alan Mendelson investigated Philo's view on the role of the secular education of his time (*Secular Education in Philo of Alexandria* [Cincinnati: Hebrew University Press, 1982]), and briefly showed an appreciation of the Greek education, but also its limits in Philo's thought. No scholar denies that Philo knew Greek authors well. However, his use of these authors is seldom thoroughly investigated, and it is certainly useful to do it now. Who and in which contexts were the Greek authors mentioned by Philo? How does he deal with the dramatist and other poets? Which philosophers does he mention and how are they presented? The most important question is, however, what this reveals to us about Philo's own education and his contacts with the Greek culture. Together these insights help to illumine the life of Jews in Alexandria, the cultural capital of the Hellenistic world. The new Roman rule changed the way of life in the old Ptolemaic city, and Philo saw drastic changes in the options open to his people, and his works may also reflect and offer insight into these events.

Although scholars agree that Philo received a good secular education, there is no such agreement concerning Josephus. He belonged to the Jewish nobility, obviously received a thorough education in Jerusalem, and was, according to his own words, considered a great talent. In *Life* Josephus tells us about his own studies, but says nothing about the Greek authors or Classical education. Earlier, scholarship considered Josephus' Greek education to be poor, and his contacts with Greek ideas to be very shallow, particularly after the influential PRE-article by G. Hölscher (1916). This understanding changed, however, after Martin Hengel's monumental *Judaism and Hellenism*, when scholars realized how Greek thought had penetrated the

Middle East throughout the centuries after Alexander. While several scholars do continue to state that Josephus received only the rudiments of the Greek education, most recent scholars attribute him a much better or even an "amazingly broad" knowledge of Greek texts. One's first hour with Josephus' works reveals that he quotes Greek eagerly, and sometimes even quotes Latin authors, almost exclusively in his *Antiquities* and *Against Apion*. Recent scholarship tends to emphasize Josephus' good secular education, apparently disproportionately. Scholars today actually disagree on the educational options Jews had in Jerusalem. It is certainly important to ask the question and investigate thoroughly how Josephus used and referred to Greek authors; particularly because there is no comprehensive list or analysis of the authors he quoted or referred to. The discussion goes on, and it is reasonable to seek a wider perspective, especially now when the Classicists have revised the earlier view of education.⁷ We have large works written by Philo and Josephus. How well did they know the Classical culture and how good was their education? Did they visit a gymnasium and did they serve as ephebs? Are we able to conclude where they first encountered the writers and philosophers they mention?

The Outline of Graeco-Roman Education

Today, a scholar inquiring into how a Jew acquired or could acquire a Greek education in the early Imperial period hears the echo of Heraclitus' phrase: *panta rhei*. In recent times, the earlier views on the ancient Greek education have been questioned. This is also true concerning its most important institution, the gymnasium. Moreover, scholars have not found agreement on the relation between the gymnasium and school. We also find opposing views on the number of non-Greeks who were admitted to the gymnasium, and also on how many Jews were willing to step through the doors which were opened to them. Moreover, the huge sociological role of education educational systems should be scrutinised more carefully, and the rise of Rome and its impact on the status of Jews, especially in Egypt, should also be taken into account. The situation in Palestine includes even more open questions.

The main elements of the Classical education were developed in Classical Greece. They were adopted in the time of Alexander and overall retained much of the tradition throughout the centuries. The history of education in antiquity has been frequently investigated. Older handbooks, however, may present the course of education in the ancient world in a manner which is no longer appropriate today. The classical work of Henri Marrou was the first comprehensive book on Greek and Latin education and it is widely used even today. It should, however, be used with caution, particularly after the deconstruction presented by Teresa Morgan in [Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds](#). Numerous smaller works help to give an overview of the Greek education, and Andrzej S. Chankowski's important book pays attention to the Hellenistic ephebate, something which had previously been badly neglected for decades. Moreover, *Das hellenistische Gymnasium*, edited by Daniel Kah and Pete Scholz (Wissenskultur und gesellschaftlicher Wandel 8; Berlin: Akademie Verlag,), contains more than twenty papers presented in a conference held in Frankfurt and offers updates on several important aspects pertaining to the hellenistic gymnasium.

Former scholars tended to reconstruct a general pattern of education and assumed a more or less fixed curriculum in studies, advancing from lower to higher level. However, the allegedly ancient educational pattern was collated from different regions and nations of the Mediterranean world, and sometimes sources from different periods were used quite freely. No ancient writer gives even a nearly comprehensive presentation of the education in the Mediterranean world. Sometimes authors openly proclaim their educational ideals, stating how the education ought to be. Other sources, especially the fragmentary evidence from gymnasiums and ephebate in literary and non-literary sources and around 400 school-papyri, give us a distant glimpse of how it actually was. Biographical passages and the brief mentions in papyri and inscriptions complete the picture. Classical antiquity lasted for quite a long time, however, and it is vital that chronological, geographical and especially social factors are

observed and taken into account more carefully than was done earlier. The curriculum of a rich Greek or Roman (Cicero, for example) aristocrat differed from the first steps taken by a young man living in an Egyptian rural town, and not only because the young aristocrat advanced further. Moreover, the pictures drawn by some scholars merging, for example, Greek sources with Quintilian's testimony, leave practically no room for the diverse forms of the gymnasium, which was a very important part of the Greek education. If all sources are investigated critically, a more colourful picture of the education can be drawn, even if it is full of lacunas. This does not mean denying that some elements and even institutions were traditional and typical everywhere. It does mean, however, recognising that the educational systems were not identical at every time and in every place. Most crucially, it is not possible to define a fixed curriculum, or claim that everyone studied identical things, as , which all too often has been considered an early and clearly defined set of studies. It might be wise, therefore, to start by briefly presenting the gymnasium, because it is important to ask later on how many of the Jewish youth attended.

Our knowledge of the Greek gymnasium is based on broad archaeological and literary evidence, and although many questions remain open, it is easy to present the main points. The glorious military history of the Greeks was based on units of heavily armed troops operating under strict discipline. This required a lot of training; and the roots of the gymnasium are found on the large fields outside the cities, mostly in places where there was a river or wells for bathings. The old phenomenon of a male between childhood and the status of a grown up, usually from the age of 12–14) was closely connected with the gymnasiums. In all its diversity, in the various Greek poleis, it meant a period in which the youth born in certain year were gathered for common training. The service in Athens of the Classical period which, exceptionally, ordered free men as old as 18 and 19 into military service, is best known to us: Other cities used to gather their youth earlier and perhaps for a longer period, up to three years. However, the practice varied enormously geographically as well as

chronologically. After the conquest of Alexander the Great the Athenian model of the ephebate was generally followed where there was no other ancient tradition (Sparta and Rhodes did not need the Athenian models for their education).

The gymnasiums did not remain training camps, but rather became places where people spent their time, and when the demand met the supply the early sophists started to teach the youngsters. Later, the Athenian gymnasiums: Academy, Lyceion and Kynosarges became schools of philosophers and subsequently became famous in their own right, and henceforth gymnasiums ceased to be merely places where naked men undertook physical training and washed and relaxed afterwards, but rather became centres for cultural education—if not actually schools.

Archaeology shows the triumph of the gymnasiums. More or less uniform constructions were built wherever the Greeks formed the majority, and after Alexander, wherever the rulers governed non-Greeks and were willing to retain and show their Greek identity. Because the cults of Heracles, Hermes, or rulers replaced the original cult of heroes and ancestors, gymnasiums were no longer built in connection with the cemeteries outside the cities, but were built inside the cities instead, and thus they became parts of the cities' luxurious architecture: According to Pausanias, a city without a gymnasium should not be called a polis at all. The usual plan of a gymnasium demon

strates how important the physical training was throughout the centuries: It consisted of palaestra with exedras, and a place (or places) for sports requiring much room, such as a stadion for running, decorated with porticoes, and other typical parts. The palaestra and rooms connected with it were meant for wrestling, boxing and similar arts, and the exedra(s) for baths and culture, such as the libraries or places to hear the classical texts (akroateria) read. Although temples rarely appear in gymnasiums, the cult of gods was never absent. The ephebs usually served at festivals and religious feasts.

Wealthy benefactors may have built the gymnasiums, but they were governed by the cities³⁰ which annually appointed gymnasiarchs: the old quaestio vexata is whether the gymnasiarch actually ran the gymnasium or simply paid the remarkable costs, and it is clear now that his—or sometimes her—task varied chronologically and geographically. The gymnasiums were built to train the young, free men, and many cities were wealthy enough to offer distinct buildings for different ages: Pergamum, for example, distinguished between and *veoí* (i.e. young men after their ephebate). As previously stated, Athens gathered only young adults and merely for a period of two years (at the age of 18–19). This means that in Athens other forms of education were given earlier. Apparently, the training before the ephebate varied and was mostly private in the Hellenistic period.

The gymnasium was a typical Greek institution, and it gained importance when built in regions where the population lived among non-Greeks. It was a significant part of the Greek identity and for that reason also very traditional, retaining, for example, the martial training even after mercenaries had taken over the military role from the citizens. Greeks trained for sports in gymnasiums, but this layer of the population was too noble to ever make careers as professional athletics. During the early imperial period, when Roman *thermae* became commonplace everywhere in the Roman world, the gymnasium slowly started to lose its role. The pogroms in Alexandria (38 C.E.), however, demonstrate the role of the cultural buildings in the city: when the riots started they moved from the gymnasium and advanced via the theatre to the streets.

How, then, was the gymnasium linked with the school? Sadly we know very little in general about the ancient Greek school, and consequently, only deductive answers can be given about the link between the school and the gymnasium. Several scholars, Marrou and Nilsson among them, have assumed that the gymnasiums were practically schools; a place children went after receiving a private elementary education. Morgan is, however, sceptical of the evidence for this. The gymnasiums used to have *akroateria*, i.e. auditoriums, and

libraries, and sometimes altars, but this only proves that they were cultural centres, which no scholar doubts. The fact that Classical Athens gathered the youth for the two-year ephebate at the age of 18 clearly demonstrates that the fundamentals of the cultural education had been given earlier, although the ephebate undoubtedly improved the learning of the youth. The long Athenian inscription from 100/99 clearly shows the rich training which the ephebs had gone through, including also the instruction of philosophers. A gymnasiarch was said to have hired a rhetor for “boys, ephebs and others” in Eretria (τοῖς τε παισὶν καὶ ἐφήβοις καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῖς βουλομένοις). Several inscriptions quoted by Oehler show how the gymnasiarchs tried to train both the mind and the body of the ephebs: music, grammar and philology are also mentioned in these inscriptions. Moreover, the Hellenistic age seems to have emphasised culture even more. Although, admittedly, the fragmentary evidence is not very strong, it is hard to claim that the gymnasiums did not resemble our schools in some ways. Christes’ words on the ephebate (“Ephebengymnasion”) in the Hellenistic poleis may be too bold (“Sie ist die erste staatliche Schule”), because the (mostly private) instruction before the gymnasiums should be emphasised, and military service is clearly a better analogue than a school for the ephebate due to all its political and religious obligations.

Unfortunately, many if not most scholars of early Judaism have overlooked a very important feature of the gymnasium: i.e. the goal of the institution. It certainly served as a centre of the Greek spirit and culture, especially where the Greeks lived among non-Greeks, and thus it delivered the Greek way of life to younger generations; but more importantly, the gymnasium and the ephebate were there to train citizens and to sort them out from other people. Since Chankowski, in particular, scholars can no longer use ephebate lists as mines of prosopographies, but nonetheless the institutional training citizens received there must be taken seriously. Not all ephebs received citizenship, and

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Greek the population was not very eager to include the masses into its body: The non-Greek layer certainly varied and it was not very strong in general.

The gymnasium was thus a very important institution in the Greek world, but it was certainly not identical everywhere and at every time. The duration of the training varied greatly and apparently the number of non-Greeks attending differed, too. Moreover, education prior to the gymnasium was not uniform, and sadly, we know very little of it. It is apparent that the 'schooling' was mostly private. Actually, as self-evident as the word seems to be, the question as to what we mean by the word "school" must also be addressed here. That the instruction was private did not necessarily mean that it was given only to one child at a time, and few scholars are ready to reflect on how many pupils are needed before any group can be called a "school", private or otherwise. At any rate, uniform, public institutions clearly belong to a later era. Part of the Greek education was given in gymnasiums, and some outside of them, and non-Greeks may have imitated the gymnasiums if they were excluded from this institution. In general, it is much easier to describe the content of the education given than the place where it was received, although a fixed curriculum, where all pupils allegedly started with the same studies, some continuing with their studies stage after stage, belongs to the history of research. The studies of the administrator in a small provincial state in Egypt differed from that of a Greek noble man from their boyhood, and not only because the élite continued their education longer. It is wise, therefore, to be careful with terms like "primary" and "higher", or even "primary", "secondary" and "higher" education, and likewise with the speculation as to who has or has not attended "Rhetorenschulen". As already stated, it is much easier to define the content of the education than the institutions where it was received. The first education meant the elements of literacy, reading and writing, and the instruction in this was mostly private. These skills were often also acquired by girls, because their role as the first teachers of their children was acknowledged, and by poor people, often even slaves. These studies started with

lectures in Classical literature, especially Homer. In general, Classical literature continued throughout the entire education. The next stage was to advance in reading and writing, and the lectures consisted mainly of the study of Homer and other Classical authors. These were roughly the same overall, although this is not precisely as thought in the past. The pupils subsequently started with elements which a little later on were known as a fixed pattern of so important in the history of research. Today, however, we know that most of the occurrences of this phrase originate from the first century C.E. or are later, and moreover, that the diverse characterizations do not allow an unambiguous definition of the term. Consequently, it can no longer be interpreted as a fixed set of studies in a curricular form. It did, however, consist of a list of elements, commonly given in the Hellenistic period, of which some were more central than others. Philo often mentions and the elements listed by, for example, Quintilian (Inst. 1.10,1); i.e. the skills to read and write, grammar, literature, geometry, astronomy, the principles of music and logic.

The institutions thus varied, as did the content of the studies, but the elements Philo refers to as or were studied everywhere, and rich people were able to pay the costs required by professional teachers or philosophers, or could afford to send their youth to the great cultural centres, to Athens, Rhodes or even Alexandria.

A More Precise Definition of the Task

The question of how well Philo and Josephus, two Jewish writers, knew the Greek culture can be investigated from several points of view.

We may investigate the production of the authors and collate what they themselves tell us about their own education and their educational ideals. Both writers give some biographical information, which either contains information about their study of Greek authors or is silent about it. This information is useful, but, in all cases, it is insufficient to define their secular education. Philo says very little about his studies directly, but he does express his educational ideals clearly enough to allow conclusions. Josephus tells us quite a lot about his Jewish education, but nothing about the secular.

However, some passages in his works are very helpful. Biographical notes may thus complete our information, but they do not give very much.

A concrete and good method is to investigate the Greek language they used, because the style of the author reveals a lot about his education. A thorough Greek education meant that anon-Greek received a new identity from his earliest childhood, and this was heard in his speech and seen in the quality of his texts. Surprisingly, it is difficult to find consensus even here. Usually, Philo's language is considered good. Josephus, for his part, needed helpers and it is not easy to define their role; at any rate, his skills are rated differently. Investigating the language is an important method; however, the language of the authors cannot be the objective of this book except for brief surveys, although such studies are observed.

A further option, which is the method of the present book, is to investigate the writer's contacts with Classical writers and philosophers. The question arises, however, as to how we can be sure that a writer has known a certain Classical writer. There are several ways of approaching the question.

- The writer uses a term that is typical to some writer(s) or a movement.
- The writer quotes or refers to a writer or philosopher.
- The writer mentions a writer or a philosopher.

Each and every one of these ways is useful and necessary in the research. However, the present study is limited to the second and to the third, which are described below in detail.

i) The first way—that the writer uses a term that is typical to some writer or to a philosopher of a movement—is an important method to investigate, for example, Philo's writings. A good example is the way Philo writes of love and divided halves seeking union as does Plato in *Symposium*. The idea is clearly taken from the tradition. Philo also uses terms frequently used by Plato or the Stoics: every one of his treatises indeed contains terms useful for a comparative study. Called and still call for important studies, and when Philo recommends a life led agreeably to nature, it is a clear reference

to the Stoics. He even happens to mention Zeno here (Prob. 160). However, Philo's numerous works and his broad contacts do not allow treating them in a single study. A good example of the accuracy required here is the great work of David T. Runia on how Plato's *Timaeus* influenced Philo. This kind of method gives good results, and has resulted in numerous detailed and thorough studies. However, the method belongs to the detailed special studies, and space does not allow for it in this book.

ii) The second way—collecting and analysing the quotations, references and other mentions is also important, but a very challenging one. It certainly proves that the writer knew the text, either directly from an author's works, or indirectly. All quotations collected allow one to ponder on where and how the author learned the text he quotes. It is certainly useful to collect the passages where Philo quotes Homer or Josephus Herodotus verbatim.

It is, however, far from clear what scholars mean by the terms 'quotation' or 'reference', and it is preferable not to be satisfied with a "generous definition". Is it enough that a passage in Philo or Josephus resembles a passage in a Classical author? Moreover, how similar should the passages be to convince a modern scholar: Did Josephus, as claimed, indeed hint at Sophocles' tragedy when presenting Elijah? The wide production of Philo and Josephus, in particular, easily leads a scholar to an area which cannot be controlled: Anyone, who writes as extensively as Philo and Josephus, also shows some similarity to ancient and modern authors. This easily leads to abstractions and associations which are impossible to prove or disprove. Methodologically, a good example is Theophil Middendorp's book on Ben Sira: Middendorp found numerous contacts with Greek authors, especially with Theognis, and supposed that the book was written to be a florilegium of the Greek literature. However, because Ben Sira wrote in Hebrew and not in Greek, none of the passages is a verbatim quotation. Moreover, Gentile authors are never mentioned in Ben Sira. For this reason few scholars accepted Middendorp's view.

How then should the terms 'quotation' and 'reference' be defined? To start with "quotation": Jan Fredrik Kindstrand, who studied the use of

Homer in the Second Sophistic, presented the work of several scholars and showed the methodological problems in their works.⁸² Scholars have proposed different definitions, mostly intending to distinguish between more or less accurate quotations and reminiscences. Obviously, it is not enough to distinguish between two main categories (a quotation in a stricter /wider sense). Several scholars have, therefore, aptly used three categories:

a) An exact quotation of a writer, in which the writer quotes, for example, Euripides' lines. He may or may not name the author, but the identification is obvious, as when Philo quotes the line. (Prob. 21–22) or as found in Josephus' large passage from Choerilus. Of course, the metre makes poetry easier to recognize than prose. It is worth asking, where possible, whether the writer took the quotation directly from the writer he quotes or whether he does so indirectly, using mediator(s).

Some necessary reservations must be made here. Firstly, we cannot be certain, how, for example, the text of Pindaros was known to Philo, and basically, we can expect textual problems in all parts. In what form or condition was the text which Philo may have seen in Alexandria, and precisely how was Philo's text transmitted? Were all dialectical forms of ancient lyrics preserved in all phases? More problematically, it was usual in Classical antiquity to quote from memory and perhaps freely: Philo himself may take a verse of the poet from memory, or even correct it, and it could still be called a 'quotation'. Actually, Philo himself may give different versions of a text, and the problems are even worse in Josephus' works, both because of the poor manuscript tradition and because he may quote a particular text in two of his works, using versions in each which differ from each other.

A less exact, but a clear use of a writer's words, is what can be called 'reference'. Although it is not a verbatim quotation, it may be a paraphrase or a summary, as, for example, when Philo refers to Pindaros' words concerning eclipse, or when Josephus refers to Plato's words that a poet should not be admitted into the city. The writer may or may not mention his source by name, and may simply refer to him as "the author of the line" (Prob.

21–22). These kind of reference can often be called 'summaries'; and at any rate, the reference is obvious and the writer himself may help the reader to follow the lead. The texts which are not transmitted in Greek but rather as Latin or Armenian translations, however, form a special problem: Even if the writer initially quoted a text word for word, it is changed in translation, for example, in the Armenian as translation of Quæstiones in Genesin 1.17.

Most problematic are what maybe called 'allusions' or 'reminiscences', which are not direct quotations, and where the writer does not make the identification himself. How and when may we claim that the ancient writer had intentionally alluded to another author? On the one hand, in a learned world, only a few words were enough to refer, for example, to a passage in Homer, whose verses belonged to the common property. On the other hand, however, it is very difficult for us to enter the world of the author and know what his intention was and whether his readers could follow the link or not. A good example is that of Louis H. Feldman who compares a passage in Josephus with Vergil's Aeneid and, argued that Josephus assumed that the readers could follow the link. This requires a chain of assumptions: Did Josephus know Latin as Feldman supposes? Did Josephus know the Aeneid and was it indeed his intention to refer to the work? Were his readers able to follow the link? Feldman also points to Sophocles' Oedipus Coloneus and assumes that both Josephus and his readers could link this drama to Elijah's death. But had Josephus ever read Sophocles and precisely that tragedy? Did the readers understand the message and recognize the similarity? These kind of assumptions are very difficult to prove. In this present study these kinds of similarities maybe mentioned in footnotes, but I do not claim to have handled all of them.

The task of identifying the quotations, references and allusions has traditionally belonged to the work of those scholars who have edited the original texts; and in most cases—with regards to Philo and Josephus—the editors have done their work well. At any rate, it is useful to collect all these passages, and investigate how the Gentile authors are referred to. Such a mention of the writer or the

work or even a quotation, however, does not necessarily mean that the author had personally studied the entire work. Some phrases had become proverbial and lost the original contact with the writer and the context in which it is found in his work—in the same way as the words ‘to be or not to be’ do not necessarily mean that the writer has read Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Moreover, some passages may hint at the Jewish writers knowing fragments of Greek works from collections. This certainly tells us much about the attitudes of the Jewish societies who led their learned people to select suitable parts of the Greek treasures for their own ends. Philo and Josephus may help us to ask whether there were Jews who had collected these quotations and if there were, where and when they lived. In many cases, however, it is not possible to define whether Jewish writers used a direct or an indirect source. Nonetheless, the names and works mentioned are of great interest.

iii) The most problematic cases are those passages in which the writer mentions a man, most usually a philosopher, but we cannot be sure his authentic work had ever been seen. Sometimes such a philosopher—as Pythagoras, Bias or Socrates—cannot be called a writer at all, in spite of his great influence. Not every tradition was written, and ancient writers often—more or less clearly—refer to such traditions, especially to anecdotes. Although it may not always be easy to trace the traditions, it is also important to collect the mentioning of the famous teachers—Socrates, Diogenes, Anacharsis—regardless of whether they could be called ‘writers’ in the strictest sense or not, or even if the historical figures never said or wrote anything attributed to them in the later traditions. However, these mentions, including anecdotes, reveal knowledge of the tradition, oral or written, learned in the school, from the handbooks or on the streets. Sometimes a philosopher or a writer is named or otherwise clearly mentioned or referred to—Philo, for example, speaks of the philosopher seeking a human being with a candle (Gig. 34), which was a clear reference to Diogenes of Sinope. This kind of reference testifies to a far clearer evidence than a possible distant echo of a passage.

It is mostly obvious what the term “Roman writer” meant in the times of Philo and Josephus. Authors

writing in Latin may have been born in Rome, Verona (like Catullus), or in Spain (like Martialis born in Bilbilis in ancient Spain). If Josephus happened to meet Martialis in Rome, and he probably did, he most certainly would have considered him a “Roman”. The age in which people, like Augustine from Thagaste, may have written in Latin, in spite of not having a Roman identity, was yet to come. In contrast, the term “Greek” had been ambiguous for centuries before Philo, Josephus and Paul. Firstly, ethnic Greeks had already been scattered around the Mediterranean world in the age of colonisation, and thus “Greek” cannot be taken to mean only the people living in Greece, in much the same way as Martialis, born in Bilbilis, in Spain could not be excluded from the Latin writers. But, as previously noted, Isocrates already spoke of “Hellenes by education”, and throughout the subsequent centuries, the elite of many foreign nations took up a Greek identity and produced numerous important writers, such as Apion, Manetho, Berosus and Lucian. In many cases the cultural identity may be in doubt—many Romans wrote in Greek; Marcus Aurelius was soon to write his autobiography and apparently Vespasian his *Hypomnemata*—but others merely wanted to address those people who read Greek, although they may have retained their own culture. This book covers people writing in Greek as well as the few writing in Latin regardless of their own national identity. Some marginal figures, like Anacharsis, the legendary Scythian philosopher, who left no texts but played a role in the Greek philosophical tradition, are observed too. References to the numerous Jewish writers are, however, excluded, regardless of whether they wrote in Greek or not, as are also the few Samaritan writers known to us. Similarly, the numerous resolutions of cities and states, which Josephus refers to, are excluded, because the focus is on the use of literary sources and traditions.

The point of view in this study is very narrow. However, it may cast light onto the backgrounds of the writers and help scholars choosing other ways neglected in this book. This book can certainly offer a fresh view to the discussion about the education of Philo and Josephus and their knowledge of the Graeco-Roman culture. <>

[Erotic Subjects and Outlaws: Sketching the Borders of Sexual Citizenship](#) edited by Serena Petrella [At the Interface / Probing the Boundaries, Brill, 9789004392281]

This book examines the intricacies of emergent sexual citizenship. Designed for academics and broader audiences alike, the collection covers the theorization of sexual citizenship, the exploration of case studies in law, the relationship between sexual citizenship and bio-politics, and finally the erotic dissidence of sexual outlaws. The borders of sexual citizenship are traced, as authors investigate what it means to be 'inside,' as erotic subjects, or outside, as 'sexual outlaws.' The issues of inclusion and exclusion are approached through diverse methodological and analytical lenses: some articles are theoretical and philosophical, others are empirically based, presenting the findings of sociological and ethnographic research projects; some are textual analyses, of religious texts, film texts, and of legal discourse. Contributors are Abidemi Fasanmi, René Hirsch, Elene Lam, Jaclyn Lanthier, Todd G. Morrison, Nick J. Mulé, Elly-Jean Nielsen, Serena Petrella, Olivia Schuman and Deww Zhang.

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Excerpt: the Sex and the State and the Persons and Sexualities Projects

The Interdisciplinary.Net research hubs on Sex and the State (SS) and Persons and Sexualities (PS) have been active since 2004 and 2008

respectively, meeting over the years in diverse locations across the globe. They are just two of the many branches of the fruitful Interdisciplinary. Net tree, an international and interdisciplinary forum for the exchange and interaction of ideas, research and points of view on a wide range of issues of concern and interest in the contemporary world. SS and PS are international collaborative projects that span across disciplines and stretch beyond scholarly boundaries, engaging scholars, educators, policy makers, members of the medical and the therapeutic professions, and activists who do critical work on sexuality across a broad range of subject areas and institutional settings, using varied research methodologies, and operating in diverse national and international contexts.

The two hubs have become essential to the critical evaluation of debates on sexuality, and interrogate taken- for- granted attitudes and assumptions on erotic practice. They have been actively engaged in subverting the often tenacious and stereo- typified misunderstandings on gender identity, the orientation of desire, and the nature of sexual practices. Over the last twelve years, these research clusters have become irreplaceable hubs for the mobilization of critical research on sexuality, in many cultural settings, and across varied social contexts.

The 4th Global Conference on Sex and the State and the 7th Global Conference on Persons and Sexualities were held in Montreal in October 2014. The first conference focused on the regulation of sexuality by the state and government agencies' role in framing regulation on sexuality, enforcing

prohibitions and extending permissions for sexual behaviour. The conference wished to flesh out the complex ways in which states and state governed social institutions regulate sexual conduct in contemporary societies. Specifically, it set out to explore the ways in which the Law and other forms of governance have been used to police and repress certain desires and pleasures, and the ways in which such prohibitions and regulations have been changed, subverted, challenged or transgressed, bringing about new and more inclusive versions of sexual citizenship.

The themes explored in the meeting critically engaged with the ways in which proper sexual citizenship, or 'erotic civility,' and sex crime, or 'erotic incivility,' have been articulated and regulated, in ways that moved beyond a simple disciplinary focus on policy, social norms and values. Presentations delved into the ways in which the Law defined 'good' and 'bad' sexual behaviour in disparate national contexts, and explored the ways in which ethical considerations were mobilized to distinguish between licit and illicit sexual behaviour. At the hearth of this conference was the examination of sexual citizenship in terms of belonging and exclusion: many of the presentations examined the ways in which 'sexual outlaws' had challenged their marginalization and had eventually gained the status of full citizens, inevitably transforming the parameters of sexual citizenship itself.

The second conference, *Persons and Sexualities*, focused instead on the relationship between sexuality and personhood, and specifically sought to understand how sex and sexuality shape belonging, identity and expression. Presentations' themes gave primacy to practices related to sex, the interplay of identities, orientations, desires, pleasures, taboos, and sexual behaviours in a global context, and across a range of critical, contextual and cultural perspectives. The papers presented particularly addressed notions of embodiment and embodied practice, investigating how they were tied to social systems of belonging and exclusion, inevitably becoming part of political and legal debates on sexual citizenship.

The issue of belonging was especially important: many of the presenters examined how desire and pleasure shape the identity that people take on, and the practices they engage in, by which they define who they are and how they interact with others, thus entering into social clusters framed through a certain kind of 'identity politics.' Some presentations troubled accepted sexual norms and probed the dichotomies of 'normal' and 'abnormal,' or 'deviant' or 'perverse.' Inevitably they questioned the ways in which desires, identities, behaviours and practices interplay in sexual expressions in contemporary life, making evident how power permeates these exchanges, and problematizing which bodies are afforded the 'right' to be sexual, and to participate in sex.

They questioned the meaning of 'embodiment' through sexuality, making evident how such 'temporary crystallizations' could at times replicate cultural expectations that surrounded that particular sexuality or orientation, entrenching old structures, but in other instances they departed from the 'normal,' forging new possibilities for understanding and living sexuality. The delegates observed that our embodiment and sexual citizenship (or lack thereof) occur in the context of specific social spaces and social structures, such as gender, class, ability, age, and race and ethnicity.

It was at this junction that this collection found its genesis: delegates became fascinated by the insight that the erotic dissident, the 'bad' illicit persona of the sexual outlaw, was always in discursive and political struggle with and in juxtaposition to the erotically civil subject, the 'good' sexual citizen. These dichotomous figures, one inside, one outside, each struggling to 'get in' or to 'stay in,' brought each other to crisis, thus precipitating the reconfiguration of sexual citizenship itself. This insight became the guiding theme for our collection: participants embarked on many fruitful conversations on the topic of belonging, exploring the tropes of being 'inside' and 'outside,' with the promise that their musings would be published in a volume dedicated to exploring the 'borders' of sexual citizenship. The reflections that have emerged from their dialogues, which are compelling and vital, are found collected

in this volume, which comprises a selection of essays drawn from both meetings.

The collection comprises nine chapters, each expanding and reelaborating ideas originally presented at the conferences and debated at the forums. Sexual citizenship and exclusion are approached through diverse methodological and analytical lenses; some of the articles in the collection are theoretical and philosophical in nature, others are empirically based, and present the findings of sociological and ethnographic research projects; finally, some are textual analyses, of religious texts, film texts, and of legal discourse. These essays are the culmination of exchanges of ideas among the delegates during the conference and, in the months following, the additional conversations they had with one another. They are now presented to you, the reader and, as the title suggests, they attempt to trace the borders sexual citizenship, investigating the effects of what it means to be 'inside,' as erotic subjects, or outside, as 'sexual outlaws.

The Chapters: Sketching the Borders of Sexual Citizenship

The collection is divided into four sections, organized thematically to cover the theorization of sexual citizenship, the exploration of case studies in Law, the relationship between sexual citizenship and bio- politics, and finally the erotic dissidence of sexual outlaws. The first section, titled 'Theorizing Shifting Sexual Citizenship Rights,' discusses the evolution of sexual rights politics from a theoretical perspective. The second section, titled 'Shaping and Constraining the Sexual Citizen in the Law,' closely analyzes legal texts, examining how sexual citizenship has been configured in different contexts over the course of human history; two case studies are examined, one that looks back into our distant past and one that studies present times. The third section, titled 'The Bio- political Governance of Sexual Citizenship,' is concerned with bio- politics, or the governance of life, and examines how 'experts' are able to mobilize specific definitions of sexual citizenship that in turn affect modes of intervention, that have real life effects on the lives of the people they have acted upon. Finally, the fourth and final section, titled 'The Erotic Dissidence

of Kinksters and Queer Outlaws,' explores sexual 'abjection' and examines those left 'outside,' the 'sexual dissidents' and the 'erotic outlaws,' examining whether they hold aspirations for inclusion, thus problematizing the borders of sexual citizenship itself, through a process of generative mutual constitution.

Theorizing Shifting Sexual Citizenship Rights

Mulé's first contribution to the collection, titled 'Evolving Sexual Citizenry: Developing Queer Liberation Theory,' examines the evolution of the concept of sexual citizenship within theories on sexuality. The author pays particular attention to queer theory because, he argues, it has gained ascendancy and dominance in the realm of LGSTQ debates over the last two decades. A review of important currents within queer theory and LGSTQ social movements is undertaken, with special attention to a decidedly progressive and critical scion within queer theory, a politicized queer contingent that over the last decade has called into question trends of homonormativity and cisgenderism, in the context of Neoliberalism, espoused by a more conservative segment of the movement. In his chapter, Mulé outlines the political agendas of LGSTQ's on one hand and radical queers on the other, providing a critical analysis of each group's ideals for life, their emancipation goals and the praxes they choose to adopt to achieve them.

Departing from his experiences and involvement with the queer social justice group Queer Ontario, the author adopts an 'emergent' theorization approach that is firmly based in activist praxis, yet is intellectually conceptual. He is thus able to sketch the frame of a new form of sexual citizenship that can maintain revolutionary impetus and transformative power, even in the precarious climate of Neoliberalism. Mulé proposes a framework that is respectful of the movement's historical past and returns to the tenets and principles of gay liberation, yet masterfully re-contextualizes them so that the multiplicities that make up gender and sexual diversity in present times are taken into account. Mulé's engagement and effort to 'theorize anew' are particularly

meaningful in a period that has seen a strong trend of homogenization in the LGSTQ movement, a turn towards 'homonormativity.'

Increasingly the movement has lost its radical edge and is being assimilated, professionalized, and mainstreamed, or co-opted into the political agendas of privatization of Neoliberalism, that tout a specific form of self-governing citizenship based on personal responsibility. In the conclusion of his chapter, Mulé reminds us that progressive, critical, and radical queer voices, striving for emancipation and liberation hold an important place in the movement: they not only espouse the value of political engagement, but also provide the occasion and drive to reimagine sexual citizenship anew, for the benefit of all members of society.

The second chapter of the collection, by Jaclyn Lanthier, tackles the issue of same-sex marriage, which has come to signify one of the most important thresholds for inclusion into sexual citizenship. Titled 'Broadening and Complicating Sexual Citizenship by Applying the 'Post-Gay' Third Way and the Minimal Marriage Model,' this essay opens by discussing the polarization of the LGSTQ movement into two scions, that coalesce around a pro-marriage stance on one hand and an anti-homogenization position on the other, echoing Mulé's analysis of the evolution of sexual citizenship proposed in the first chapter of this collection. Lanthier reflects on political processes of polarization that have crystallized same-sex marriage debates in North America into a struggle between two socio-political factions, represented on one hand by 'traditionalists' demanding traditional marital rights, and on the other by 'progressivists,' radical queers fighting for the abolition of marriage, considered oppressive, homonormative and undesirable.

In light of what appears to be an irreconcilable tension, the author proposes a possible way forward from the ideological impasse that separates the two groups politically, and, finding her roots in philosophy, she focuses on ethics. Lanthier suggests a model that combines Alan Sinfield's concept of the 'Post-Gay Third Way' and Elizabeth Brake's concept of 'Minimal Marriage,' to move political debates forward.

Having shown the usefulness of adopting this combined framework to resolve the ideological gridlock on same-sex marriage debates in North America, she proceeds to explore its usefulness in an international context, pondering whether it can be appropriate for advancing the struggle for sexual citizenship in non-Western countries, using South Africa,

Uganda and Zimbabwe as case studies. Drawing on the research carried out by Butler, Alpaslan, Strümpher and Astbury on the struggles towards emancipation for legal recognition, and the multiple paradoxes that are encountered by LGSTQ activists in these countries, she concludes that the 'Post-Gay Third Way' and the 'Minimal Marriage' model can be helpful in advancing their political struggles, despite very important differences in the North American and African contexts, provided human rights education be the essential and seminal first step to guide its implementation.

Sometimes the debates on the legitimacy of same-sex marriage are not put to rest, even if a nation has passed laws to protect its legality. This is the case in Canada: same-sex marriage legislation was passed in 2005, and still ethicists continue to debate its legitimacy, especially in relation to the issue of reproduction. An influential Canadian ethicist, Margaret Sommerville, has proposed arguments against same-sex marriage, by leveraging another contested topic, the right of same-sex parents to have children. The third chapter of this collection, by Olivia Schuman, addresses these issues and is titled 'Sexual Citizenship and Reproduction: Do Children Have a Right Not to Be Conceived via New Reproductive Technologies (NlT's)?' This essay delves into debates on the legitimacy of same-sex marriage as they are complicated by reproduction.

As a bioethicist, specializing in the study of the ethical challenges that the science of medicine faces as new technologies emerge, Schuman chooses to analyze the legitimacy of same-sex marriage in terms of sexual rights, as the basis for inclusion into sexual citizenship. Sexual citizenship, she argues, is a status that entails specific rights claims, related to sex and sexuality, bundling together conduct-based claims as well as identity-based claims. For

instance, in Canada same- sex marriage has already been buttressed by more than a decade of legal recognition, not only legalizing a specific form of sexual conduct, but also extending marital status to same- sex couples, thus awarding full sexual citizenship to individuals who identify according to a specific sexual orientation.

Nevertheless, debates on its legality are far from over, especially in cases where the rights claims of one group cannot be upheld because they come into conflict and violate the rights claims of other groups. According to ethicist Somerville, the legality of same- sex marriage precisely finds itself into this kind of conflict and thus should be repealed. She argues that same- sex marriage is unethical because it affects the rights of the potential future children that might be born to these unions. Inevitably, reproduction for these couples would require the use of new reproductive technologies (NRTs), which in turn would 'unlink' the direct biological bond of the parents to their children. This 'unlinking,' for Somerville, is unavoidably harmful, because it violates what she considers to be two fundamental human rights of children: the right to know their biological origins, and the right to be bonded with those biological parents. Taking these arguments to their most extreme logical conclusion, she calls for the annulment of same- sex marriage and the repealing of laws that currently extend full sexual citizenship to same- sex couples.

In this chapter, Schuman seriously engages with Somerville's argument, closely examining the main thesis that same- sex marriage should not be allowed because it undermines the basic 'biological origins rights' of children. She proceeds to tease out the inconsistencies in Somerville's arguments, illustrating how she applies ethical standards inconsistently among heterosexual and same- sex couples, also pointing out the problematic outcomes of her position when it is taken to its logical conclusions. Schuman refutes Somerville's claim that all children have a right to have 'unmodified biological origins,' making evident the incoherence of this argument, and proving that this right is not automatic, and that its retraction is not inherently harmful to them. She goes on to refute Somerville's second claim that all children have a biological origins right to know their biological parents,

demonstrating that the implications of this right are much more limited than Somerville suggests. She concludes by fully rejecting Somerville's assessment that same- sex marriage is unethical and harmful to children, and thus should not be allowed.

Shaping and Constraining the Sexual Citizen in the Law

The second section of this collection examines how sexual citizenship is defined in the Law. The section presents two case studies, from very different historical periods and contexts. The fourth chapter of the collection, by René Hirsch, explores the very first codes of Law from Asia Minor, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Assyria and Ancient Israel, including The Oresteia, The Laws of Lipitishar, The Laws of Hammurabi, Hittite Laws, Middle Assyrian Laws, The Laws of Ur- Nammu, including The Old Testament and Deuteronomy. Hirsch's contribution, the fourth chapter of the collection, is titled 'Gender Procreative Roles in the First Codes of Law.' The essay discusses the procreative principle around which sexual citizenship was organized and legislative institutions' understanding of proper gender behaviour in the East between the 3rd and the 1st millennium BCE of our history.

The 'procreative vision' that dominated antiquity, according to Hirsch, probably found its origins in animal and plant domestication: procreation was believed to be a uniquely male ability, and attributed solely to his seed; conversely, women were not believed to have any creative role, were reduced to a passive nurturing function, and conceived as 'the soil' in which the seed was planted. The first books of law that appeared in this period in the East collectively confirmed this gendered order of subordination imposed on women. Hirsch provides a detailed analysis of the laws that regulated sexual offences, revealing how lawmakers conceived of gender roles according to the prevailing procreative principle of the times. Sexual citizenship was extended solely to males: they were considered to be the sole creators of a child, and thus the law granted men exclusive procreative rights. Women, conversely, were stripped of any exclusive access and control to their progeny. In order to demarcate paternal procreative activity with the utmost certainty, Hirsch

argues, the law sought to impose very strict boundaries on female sexual activities, considered 'necessary' to prevent women from engaging in any promiscuous relationship.

The books of law clearly outlined gender roles according to the procreative functions of each sex, entrenching and consecrating the normative foundations of the patriarchal family, and eradicating previously tolerated marital practices, such as polygamous marriage structures. For instance, a law dating to around 2,400 BCE forbid the practice of polyandry, which had been previously tolerated in Sumer until that period. Hirsch speculates that the particularly high number of laws regulating sexual offences in the first Eastern codes of law indicate that the enforced norms might not have been completely shared or accepted. Additionally, he reasons, the fact that the laws in the Old Testament were more extensive and restrictive than the laws preceding them might indicate a process of crystallization and stricter regulation of the sexual interaction between men and women.

And yet, Hirsch argues, such a regulatory intensification might have been influenced by shifts in the membership of the population for which they were intended. While the older codes were meant to regulate sexual behaviour in the first kingdoms and empires of Antiquity, Hirsch explains, the laws found in the Old Testament were written for a pastoral people who lived at the margins of the 'urban revolution,' and whose sexual heritage might have been less 'normalised' and regulated than that of their urban contemporaries. The author concludes that further study of the sexual mores of the last millennium BCE in Eastern Mediterranean regions might shed more light on these legal trends.

The second contribution of the section dedicated to the examination of the Law skips ahead many centuries to present time in Canada, and examines a legislative area that strongly constrains the sexual citizenship of sex workers, Municipal Regulation, effectively circumventing and neutralizing the protections that Federal Law affords them. The fifth chapter of the collection, by Elene Lam, wishes to bring attention to the plight of Asian sex workers employed in massage parlours in

the city of Toronto, whose struggles are ignored and voices go unheard. The essay, titled 'Micromanaging the Massage Parlour: How Municipal Bylaws Organize and Shape the Lives of Asian Sex Workers,' is an essential contribution to sex work research and aims to alleviate a serious lacuna in the literature in the juridical space of the municipality.

Lam opens her discussion by making the point that debates on sex work in Canada have focused on its criminal aspects, its harms, and the 'nuisance' it posits for communities. Not much attention, she argues, has been devoted to more subtle forms of regulation that take place in other juridical spaces, such as the legal apparatus of municipalities. And yet a growing number of cities are restricting sex work and using micro-regulation to police, constrain and control the activities and lives of sex workers: local governments use bylaws to constrain sex work and prosecute sex workers, using a myriad of rules that severely constrain the range of activities that can take place in massage parlours, effectively crating barriers to sex work. Lam reminds us that the power to legislate on and regulate sex work does not fall to municipal constituencies, because its governance is the responsibility of Federal jurisprudence: cities do not have the power to prohibit or constrain in any way the sale of sexual services, which is decriminalized and legal. Lam presents ethnographic data collected during a practice-based research study conducted in Toronto in 2014. Her findings show that municipal bylaws have been draconically used to crate barriers to the practice of sex work in the context of holistic centres, barriers that push sex work underground, endangering sex workers and exacerbating their stigmatization and exploitation. She sheds light on the impact such micro-regulation has on the lives of Asian women who work in massage parlours, effectively making the case that these bylaws create barriers to the practice of sex work.

In conclusion, Lam argues that municipal micro-regulation has a very different ideological basis from Federal regulation of sex work, which supposedly is attempting to mitigate its harms and the levels of exploitation of sex workers. The irony, Lam shows, is that current criminal federal laws

assume that sex workers are 'victims' and their primary goal is to specifically reduce victimization and the risk of exploitation. Municipal regulation, in contravention of the latest iteration of the Federal Criminal Code, opts instead to conceive sex work as a 'nuisance' and sex workers as a 'criminal element;' it assumes that the exchange of money for sex is problematic and should be curbed, conflating the culpability and criminality of the recipient of sex services and the sex worker providing them. Municipal law creates barriers to the practice of sex work in the context of the massage parlour, barriers that ultimately endanger, stigmatize and push sex work underground, generating conditions of greater and more severe exploitation for the sex workers involved.

The Bio- political Governance of Sexual Citizenship

The third section of collection examines how the medicalization of sexuality has shaped sexual citizenship, by investigating processes of bio-politics and the exercise of bio- power. It is necessary to provide a short digression in the works of influential philosopher and historian Michel Foucault, to clarify the meaning of these terms, in order to give context and provide a frame to Fasanmi's and Mulé chapters in the collection, which explore how sexual citizenship has been organized through the medicalization of sexuality. Foucault has argued that sexuality, over the last two centuries, has become the entry point for multiple and decentred forms of governance, processes that he has described as a deployment of 'bio- politics' and the exercise of 'bio- power.' For Foucault governance through bio- politics takes place along two modes of intervention, or bio- power, which allow the control of individual lives as well as entire societies. The first practice is 'the anato-politics of the human body,' which is primarily concerned with economics and aims to maximise an individual's usefulness; the second practice is 'the bio- politics of populations,' and is primarily concerned with biology, and is characterised by all practices concerned with health, life expectancy and longevity of a population; it specifically intervenes into reproduction.⁵ Bio- power then can be thought of as an 'explosion' of interventions and practices,

justified through bio- political ideologies, or 'techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations.'

Since the 1850s sexuality has been under increasing scrutiny and the object of rigorous scientific study. This has gone hand in hand with a massive proliferation of management practices for its amelioration, as well as a great explosion of systems of control and surveillance strategies. The management of sexuality has become essential, because it provides an entry point for the exercise of biopower not only into every person's individual life, but also to the well- being of the entire species. Governance of sexual practices is thus tied to the economic maximisation of the individual's body, and the overall fostering of the populace, and medical science has been one of the most effective authorities over such practices, gaining ascendancy in the production of knowledge on sex and its 'care.' Foucault argued that these operate at the abstract level as 'speculative discourses,' and take the form of concrete arrangements, or 'technologies of power,' which have colonised our social, political and economic lives.

This section presents two case studies of the bio-political management of sexuality, showing the negative effects that the deployment of bio- power may have and questioning the ways in which the two practices combined have fashioned the parameters for 'proper' sexual citizenship. These have ended up marginalizing without cause a section of the populace, creating barriers to the healthcare of some of the most vulnerable groups in society. The sixth chapter of the collection examines the manner in which the scientific discipline of psychiatry has defined sexual perversion, and specifically delves into its definition of the 'paraphilias,' or those acts that are now known as BDSM practices, offering a critique of the its diagnostic manual. The seventh chapter of the collection looks at the United Nations and the World Health Organization's global interventions on reproduction for the reduction of mother- to- child transmission of HIV, practices that have the 'benign' goals to maximize the health of the world's populations. Fasanmi offers a critique of such strategies, discussing the high failure rates of these programs, and addressing the barriers they

inadvertently set and their harmful effects on the most at-risk groups that they attempt to help, mothers and children.

The advent of the era of bio-power during the eighteenth century was marked by the emergence of the sciences of life, disciplines that produced knowledge on subjects, and that were equipped with diverse techniques to achieve the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations. These functioned, in Rose's terms, as 'great machines of morality,' working both at the abstract level, by producing knowledge in the form of speculative discourses, and at the concrete level, in the form of programs for intervention. This marked the beginning of the medicalization of sexuality and one of the most influential

among these disciplinary machines are what Rose has termed the 'psy sciences.' Psychiatry was particularly influential in the governance of sexuality because it introduced the first 'taxonomies of perverse behaviour,' making deviance not simply a discrete event or temporary aberration, but a perversion of the moral fibre of an individual, one that needed intervention and treatment. Psychiatry then was instrumental in categorizing perversion and offering the first portraits of 'sexual abjection,' while at the same time outlining its desirable licit opposite, 'erotic civility.' As such, Psychiatry helped to form and presently continues to define the healthy, desirable and licit parameters of 'sexual citizenship,' while inevitably also setting up the contours of abject sexuality, postulating on all the perverse behaviours that should be repressed, controlled or criminalized, thus codifying 'erotic lawlessness.'

In his second contribution to this collection, chapter six, titled 'Regulation of Kink: Pathologization of BDSM in the DSM- V,' Nick Mulé takes on the Scientific discipline of Psychiatry. He examines its bio-political efforts by studying the American Psychiatric Association's (APA) medical knowledge production, and offering a critique of its diagnostic tools. Mulé shows how effectively the authority of Psychiatry has been in shaping sexual citizenship, especially through the production of its diagnostic tools, including the series of Diagnostic and Statistical Manuals of Mental Disorders that it has

been publishing since the 1950s. They remain today some of the most influential texts used by medical professionals and other experts in the therapeutic sciences, by criminal investigators and legal adjudicators, to identify and treat, but also to criminalize and discipline those who suffer from these mental 'disorders.'

Mulé deconstructs the fifth edition of the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM- 5), to tease out the classist, racist and heteronormative biases found therein. He particularly focuses on the section of the manual on the Paraphilias, which encompass fetishistic sex, forms of sexual activities and practices that APA deems to be 'abnormal' 'pathological.' Mulé interrogates the APA's heteronormative and cisgender notions of sexuality, gender identity and expression, offering a queer liberationist analysis and critique. He buttresses his arguments by discussing at length the works of other researchers who have found little substantiation to the claims that BDSM sex is harmful or pathological. Such findings seem to severely undermine the legitimacy of including paraphilia-based desires in the DSM-5: this diagnostic 'over-reach' is not only unnecessary, Mulé argues, but dangerous.

The author goes on to examine the disagreements that exists on the putative 'harms' of paraphilias both within and outside the APA, debates that took place during the review process of the manual before it was published in its present form, as well as debates that are currently ongoing. He points out that the mere inclusion of such fetishistic paraphilias in the DSM- 5 can have labelling consequences: individuals who end up being diagnosed with these conditions, are inevitably classified as 'deviant' and in need of therapeutic intervention and 'care.' Such diagnostic labels participate in the oppression of alternate forms of sexuality, through pathologisation; they contribute to the regulation of sexual desire that serve to further marginalize kinksters and LGSTQ populations, in particular through systemic forms of stigmatisation. Mulé calls for the APA to end the conflation of BDSM with pathology, and demands that all forms of paraphilic and fetishistic behaviours be removed from the DSM, because

there are other forms of regulation through criminal Law that are already able to catch and prosecute any BDSM acts that are inappropriate or harmful.

The seventh chapter of the collection, titled 'Bio-Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa: Re-Examining Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission Strategies for HIV,' by Abidemi Fasanmi, offers a systematic analysis of PMTCT strategies' 'benign' bio-political agendas and their effects on the lives of marginalized women. Fasanmi courageously undertakes a critique of some of the most influential governance bodies in the world, the United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organization (WHO), who engage in the bio-political governance of populations. Adopting a Foucaultian lens, Fasanmi approaches bio-politics as all practices that seek to improve the health, life expectancy and longevity of a population, and she specifically focuses on reproduction.

Since the discovery of HIV, the UN and WHO have benignly put in place medical intervention strategies that attempt to maximize the health of the world's populations. One such strategy has been the fight to reduce the rate of transmission of HIV in the developing world, but alas – HIV infection has continued to spread unabated despite these efforts, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, and has reached pandemic proportions. An insufficient decrease in the rate of infection has led authorities to go through cycles of re-examinations of their strategies and numerous revisions in their programming and guidelines for prevention and the treatment of HIV infection in many countries. Still, Fasanmi argues, what appears to be missing from these new strategies is the resolve and willingness to take seriously the fact that infection is taking place in specific socio-cultural contexts, through local norms for sexual behaviour, that impact infection rates. As long as the specific cultural practices and traditional values that impact infection are ignored, the most vulnerable groups in these societies, especially women and children, will continue to be disadvantaged and make choices that put them at increased risk for HIV infection.

Fasanmi offers a systematic analysis of PMTCT strategies' 'benign' biopolitical agendas and their effects on the lives of marginalized women. She

teases out their ideological and epistemological shortcomings, and their dire and harmful effects on the vulnerable populations that they seek to help. She offers an intersectional examination of the societal norms, the marital and familial structures, the traditional customs, and the moral and religious values of the region, to illustrate the ways in which biomedical interventions fail to address the socio-cultural contexts that shape the sexual and reproductive choices that place women and their children at greater risk of HIV infection, providing an exhaustive explanation of how and why PMTCT strategies, so far, have had such low success rates.

Fasanmi powerfully illustrates the effects of bio-political interventions in the lives of women living with HIV in the administration of PMTCT care. To a certain extent, these programs have been able to provide some opportunity for agency and have improved the survival rates of women and their babies living with HIV, but on the other hand, these programs have made possible the subjugation of their bodies to a set of disciplinary interventions and actions, informed by narrow definitions of 'sexual citizenship,' 'proper' sexual behaviour, 'good' health, and 'desirable' reproductive choices. In conclusion, Fasanmi calls for a critical dialogue for the development of appropriate and sustainable interventions that address the socio-economic, cultural and political peculiarities that these women face, so that PMTCT interventions and public health strategies can better serve one of the most vulnerable groups in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Erotic Dissidence of Kinksters and Queer Outlaws

The final section of the collection explores erotic dissidence, and delves into two case studies about those who inhabit the liminal spaces of sexual lawlessness. Chapter eight presents an ethnographic study of the world of BDSM and the kinksters of New Zealand; the ninth and final chapter studies the film text *Bottom*, an ethnographic documentary that gives a rare glimpse into one of the most secretive and misunderstood sub-cultures within the gay community, barebackers, or men who purposely choose to have unprotected anal sex with one

another. These essays provide accounts of the ways in which these erotic

dissidents negotiate their experiences of being 'outside,' at times fully embracing their status of outlaws, at times expressing ambivalence. Inevitably, the 'bad' and 'illicit' persona of the sexual outlaw comes into discursive conflict with the 'civil' and 'civic' erotic subject, the 'good' sexual citizen. The mere existence of the outlaw inevitably calls into question the processes through which its doppelganger is constituted, interrogating the exclusionary practices that have solely given legitimacy to sexual citizenship in the first place, precipitating a reconfiguration of erotic citizenship itself.

The eighth chapter of the collection, titled 'Kiwi Kinksters: An Ethnographic Exploration of the Auckland BDSM Scene,' by Deww Zhang, presents the testimony of twenty-one self-identifying BDSM practitioners in the Auckland scene. They shared their kinky journeys with the author and reflected on their status of 'outsiders.' They offered their thoughts on the mainstreaming of kink, pondering whether this would soon translate into full acceptance into sexual citizenship. Zhang provides an analysis of the trajectory of BDSM from lawlessness into 'pseudo-legitimacy.' She departs for the rise of sexology and psychiatry in the 1860s, which saw the pathologization of kinksters and BDSM practices. These sciences produced the first taxonomies of 'perverse sexual behaviour,' and marked the advent of the vilification of paraphilic practices in psychiatry and medicine first and to society at large soon after. The consequences, to present times, have been dire for BDSM practitioners: kinksters have experienced social, legal, and medical persecution and prosecution, the ramifications of which have included losing jobs and child custody battles, the breakup of marriages and other intimate relationships, the dissolution of friendships, and even a denial of medical treatment for fear of outing if the body presented the marks of kink. Zhang argues this pathologization continues to haunt BDSM, and even though there has been a positive turn in the representation of kink in popular media, it continues to pose barriers to the inclusion

of BDSM practitioners into legitimate sexual citizenship.

Should kinksters strive towards sexual citizenship? Will they organize and engage in a struggle for recognition to achieve this ultimate goal? Zhang sets out to establish whether this movement 'into the light' is something Auckland kinksters are interested in pursuing. She discovers that the issue of identity politics is fraught with difficulties for kinksters, because differently from other sexual minorities who are more publicly visible, BDSM practitioners can inhabit an 'invisible closet.' The ability that kinksters have to 'blend in' with the heteronormative mainstream has fragmented the community: not all are interested in joining a political struggle for sexual emancipation and recognition into sexual citizenship. Zhang explores the ways in which Auckland kinksters grapple with the status of 'sexual outlaw,' testing out to what extent they have reached the status of 'sexual borderline acceptable minority.'

Aware of the more positive 'aura' that kink currently enjoys in the mainstream, Zhang shows, this paradigmatic attitude shift is monitored with some ambivalence and caution. The author closely analyzes how kinky 'outlaws' perceive and navigate the 'vanilla' world, and their attitudes on popular (mis)representations of kink, what she terms the Fifty Shades of Grey 'effect.' In some cases, Zhang argues, kinksters engage in their own forms of stereotyping, exaggerating the differences between practitioners and non-practitioners, to maintain a separation between the 'in' group and the 'out' group, thus enhancing and celebrating the 'specialness' of BDSM practices. In conclusion, Zhang finds contradictory attitudes about emancipation, and discovers a resistance to full recognition into sexual citizenship, because the status of 'outlaw' would be unavoidably compromised, and it is essential and constitutive to kinksters' sense of self.

The ninth and final chapter, titled 'Barebacking as a Form of Homosociality? Notes on Bottom,' by Elly-Jean Nielsen and Todd Morrison explore the practice of bareback sex, the deliberate omission of condoms during anal intercourse between men. There has been no shortage of backlash against

this practice, propelled by the belief that gay men should 'know better' given their recent history and the devastation that the AIDS virus waged on the community, until the introduction of antiretroviral drugs. Barebacking has been the object of moral panics, which have added to the demonization of gay men's sexuality and bodies, already the targets of a long history of vilification: what could possibly make such a persecuted community risk the mortal dangers of purposeful contagion?

Medical experts and researchers are puzzled: some have harshly condemned this practice as 'suicidal,' but some have taken a more permissive attitude, and attempted to unearth the logic or function this seemingly irrational recalcitrance might have for gay men. Nielsen and Morrison approach the issue from this second optic, and explore the discourse surrounding bareback sex beyond the initial monolithic view of this sexual practice as 'dangerous' and 'destructive,' to the more nuanced view of bareback sex as a form of communal bonding and a challenge to gay assimilation and homonormativity. They explore various theories on barebacking, effectively extracting from these a grid for analysis that they then project onto the ritualized sex acts depicted in a filmic ethnography, the pornographic documentary *Bottom*. Basing themselves on the practices portrayed in the film, they are able to provide essential insights into this greatly misunderstood subculture. The authors devote a significant hermeneutical effort to the spoken word among barebackers: they discover that the local subcultural vernacular is ontologically constitutive, and integral to the often unacknowledged intersection between homosocial bonding and homosexual identity.

The authors offer the concluding argument that sex is foundational to gay male identity and gives them a sense of community. Men who fuck each other without rubbers are not just 'misguided' sexual outlaws who engage in dangerous sex to get 'high' on risk; their acts deliberately create a new subculture, their bonds to one another forge a new community, an outlaw socio-cultural enclave in which, finally, they can feel a sense of belonging. In this sub-culture the true reality of current or impending seropositivity can be transcended: it is

no longer a 'death sentence,' and it no longer means the 'end' of their erotic lives. The label 'barebacker' becomes an ontological affirmation and is, in and of itself, a source of pleasure. The barebacker is a new 'sexual outlaw,' a new option for alterity, a transgressive form of queer sexual citizenship, one that openly resists and contests the ever present heteronormative gaze. Barebackers' outrageous sexuality is purposeful, it is an act of emancipation from bourgeois respectability: their agentic transgression allows them to re-invent their erotic destinies, take charge, and create new circumstances and possibilities. In conclusion, Nielsen and Morrison call for a change in the management of HIV prevention, asking that it be reframed in view of the creation of new modes of identity that are organized around homosociality, given also that there has been a significant survival rate increase thanks to the introduction of new treatments. The medical community should desist its facile and reductionist pathologization of sexual risk-takers and consider the ways in which these communities negotiate a sense of communal belonging and intimate friendship.

[Exploring Erotic Encounters: The Inescapable Entanglement of Tradition, Transcendence and Transgression](#) edited by John T. Grider and Dionne van Reenen [At the Interface/Probing the Boundaries, Brill, 9789004382299]

Erotic encounters have assumed a myriad of shapes and forms throughout the histories of the world and, at many stages of those histories, have been understood as possessing the potential to take us closer to some ultimate mode of being that the everyday, in all of its artless modesty, seems unable to do. In this volume, discussions of the erotic as an extraordinary part of the human condition, manifest in examples such as: exoticised voyages to faraway lands; the thrills of ancient combat; the escape and enchantment of eroticized performance; transgressive notions of the female jouissance; the delights of the sexual pursuits in the virtual domain; the political possibilities of stigmatized, queer pleasure; and perceptions of 'fetishes' which include relationships with inanimate beings. It would appear that what is required for these out-of-the-ordinary quests, are pointed actions – movements away from the monotony of

life's rhythms and outside the shelter of an otherwise predictable materiality. Contributors are Jon Braddy, John Dayton, Rita Dirks, John T. Grider, Billy Huff, Maciej Musiał, Naomi Stekelenburg, Dionne van Reenen and Tianyang Zhou.

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Excerpt: A possible way of thinking about the nature of the erotic encounter is to conceptualise it within the contradictory landscape of sex and desire. People may be desiring subjects and they may be objects of desire, both of whom may recognise themselves and others as such but both are forever altered in the desiring relation. If readers will allow, for a few moments, a sort of Derridean indulgence in considering the subject matter of this volume, it becomes evident that many possibilities concerning relationality itself are thrown up in the air. In the erotic encounter, both

subjects and objects enter into equivocal modes of existence that fluctuate between somewhat familiar, yet seldom deliberated, binary attributes of what Visagie has recognised as:

- one and many
- finite and infinite
- continuous and discontinuous
- sameness and change
- knowable and unknowable
- universal and individual
- necessary and contingents

The erotic encounter can be elucidated as 'specifically an encounter with the estrangement and intimacy of being in relation. Sex is exemplary in the way it powerfully induces such encounters, but such encounters exceed those experiences we recognize as sex'. Like most every human modality, while subject to different kinds of personal, social, critical and political judgment, (erotic) encounters offer subjects and objects the possibility of discovering new ways of being, of being with the other, or others, and of being in the world. In the moments of the encounter, actors begin to destabilise, reconfigure, or even empty out, fixed notions of the self, the other, identity, subjectivity, intentionality and autonomy. In this volume, the authors share reflections that not only explore the internalities and boundaries of erotic exchanges but, at the same time, reach beyond them, revealing that erotic encounters may introduce humankind to some of the more fruitful outcomes of intimate acquaintance with difference and desire – often experienced in the most unexpected ways.

In these kinds of encounters, humans seem to want to move beyond the logics of rationalism with its emphasis on the mind and scientific explanation, as well as beyond empiricism with its emphasis on experience, of the world. Both of these guiding principles seem directed towards goals of stasis engendered in the former attributes of the binary pairs listed above. In other words, the securities of the one, the finite, the continuous, the same, the knowable, the universal and the necessary, are all elements of traditions that are directed at producing definitive answers to that ever-present question posed by subjects in the most ordinary of worldly circumstances: What must I do? Traditions, whether manifested in form or content, carry with

them the notion of a fixity, an established order, a contract between individuals that is known and enacted with expectation of outcome. Traditions are enclosed, either from within or without, by understandings of boundaries or limits which may be physical, normative or legal in nature. Of course, there are many possible neutral responses to the question – What must I do? – which seem to reside in the very greyness of the everyday: the ordinary administrative organisation of one's daily life that simply form the nuts and bolts of human social interaction. These activities possess no inherent, moral or ethical, values of light or darkness, good and bad, just or unjust – they are simply things one must do in order to participate in the business of living. This everyday administration may be a source of mild frustration in that they simply have to be taken care of in order that social life may function. They do not offer a pathway to any grandiose successes or satisfying rewards; they do go some way towards facilitating the ticking over of general living.

While one cannot count out the possibility of some erotic experiences being placed within the ordinariness of the everyday, it would seem that the pursuit of the erotic encounter is, more often than not, expressly aimed beyond it. From the earliest human narratives and representations, one may detect a need to foster greater meaning, creativity, and intensity, over and above the mere functionality and survival of the human race.

These endeavours have assumed a myriad of shapes and forms throughout the histories of the world and, at many stages of those histories, have been understood as possessing the potential to take us closer to some ultimate mode of being that the everyday, in all of its artless modesty, cannot do. In this volume, designs of the erotic as the extraordinary, manifest in examples such as faraway voyages and exposure to exotic lands and cultures (John T. Grider); the dominance, conquer and voracity of ancient combat (John Dayton); the escape and enchantment of eroticised performance (Dionne van Reenen); expanding female *jouissance* to include BDSM or prohibited sexual practice (Rita Dirks); celebrating the messy corporeality of sex (Naomi Stekelenburg); negotiating the delights of the sexual pursuits in the

virtual domain (Tianyang Zhou); exploring the political possibilities of stigmatised, queer pleasure (John Braddy and Billy Huff); and widening various perceptions of 'fetishes' to include relationships with inanimate beings (Maciej Musiał). In any event, it appears that what is required for these out-of-the-ordinary quests, are pointed actions – intentional movements away from the monotony of life's habitual sequences and outside the shelter of an otherwise predictable reality. This is where the notions of transcendence and transgression become particularly interesting. On one hand, transcendence has an inherently positive association attached to it often referring to some sort of ascendance above the materiality of the world which is often traditionally viewed with disdain. On the other hand, transgression has had a particularly negative connotation attached to it, in that it is understood to be wrong or harmful. Both, however, entail moving beyond the boundary that contains what is considered to be normal, ordinary or accepted practice. One would presume, then, that in order to transcend or transgress boundaries or traditions, one would pursue the concepts contained in the latter terms of the binaries listed above – the many, the infinite, discontinuity, change, the unknowable, individual and the contingent – as they seem to naturally connect with notions of mobility and crossover.

What authors in this volume have highlighted, is the following paradox: in the same way that humans have formulated normative understandings of what is normal, accepted and ordinary, they have also formulated anti-normative understandings of what is abnormal, unacceptable and extraordinary. In the case of the erotic, these may perform the same function – creating room for the extraordinary. In responding to the question What must I do?, postures cannot be grasped without their counterparts even if they can be enacted separately. The illusions of either- or modes of being are substantially obscured when one considers the possibility that the erotic encounter demands an interconnectedness between either side of the binary pairs (listed above) in order to heighten the usual modes of experience in the world.

In simplistic, binary understandings of ethical and moral conduct, humans have been led to believe that certain modes of behaviour are acceptable and certain modes of behaviour are not. The domain of the erotic is no exception and, falling within the spectrum of the human condition, this mode of being has not escaped the trap of personal, social and political judgment. Many of these behaviours are set in laws and rules and many of these are just acceptable conventions entrenched in our social structures. If people enact the acceptable ones, they will be able to fulfil ambitions of the good life successfully. The notion of the good life is intimately connected with ideas of victory or achievement which further link to notions of success, power, fulfilment, perfection and popularity, all of which are assumed to enhance agency, subjectivity, autonomy. Traditions very often imply that, if one pursues the good life, then one contributes to forming a strong, stable society. In the social contract that exists between society and person or between persons, one may enjoy the benefits thereof. Edelman has commented on this kind of rhetoric:

... we can never be reminded often enough that the political program of happiness as a regulatory norm is less a recipe for liberation than an inducement to entomb oneself in the stillness of an image. It is to seek, as I wrote at the outset, 'the stability of a knowable relation,' where the fantasy of knowing the relation seeks to stabilize or mortify precisely what has made it living and relational in the first place.

Conversely, people who habitually operate outside of these structures and norms are not included as full members or beneficiaries of the societies in question. Moreover, their social relations may suffer if they cannot conform to these received structures. Furthermore, convention has suggested that a life will be permeated with meaninglessness, suffering and guilt should one persistently fail to assume traditionally good postures and practices.

Yet, and again with a sense of paradox, many narratives of ecstasy in erotic encounters are replete with instances of transgression and suffering. Engaging in deviant or perverse forms of sexual conduct, pushing the boundaries of sexuality,

intimately associating with socially sanctioned anathemas are, in many ways, incredibly thrilling and satisfying. It is in the knowing of the tradition, as well as in the transgression thereof, that the exhilaration resides. Moreover, on the surface, pain, struggle and terror may seem undesirable or innately negative but they are also associated with positive ideas such as overcoming, endurance and redemption. Together, these form universal conditions of being human. They all seem to add to the spectrum of human experience and understanding; they do not seem to take away from it.

The work exhibited in this volume has shown that, while erotic pursuits serve to go beyond acknowledged limitations of nature, knowledge, power and personhood, the players in these narratives are, at the same time, pertinently aware of what is contained in enclosures of what they are trying to transcend. These enclosures may be as different from one another as home and country (demonstrated in the work of John T. Grider); civilian life (John Dayton); conventional forms of movement, relationality and expression (Dionne van Reenen); habitual male- female interaction (Rita Dirks); conformist person- to- person sexual contact (Naomi Stekelenburg) face- to- face meeting and conversation (Tianyang Zhou); customary forms of socialising and attraction strategies (John Braddy and Billy Huff); or routine human- to- human intimacies (Maciej Musiał). In many instances, then, players occupying these ordinary enclosures may not want to transgress limitations in a bad, negative or harmful way. They may simply want to disrupt the routines and conventions that permeate everyday life and life worlds. This exit from reality may be for an instant, a short time, an extended time or even a lifetime of any individual. Either way, people are probably aware of what they want to transcend or transgress and they are probably aware that they cannot do it within the confines of the boundary alone.

One might consider transcendence or transgression, in this sense, as an intentional act of freedom. Players in these narratives are actively releasing themselves from binds, restrictions, codes, scripts, norms, frames, expectations, conventions, and so on, which seek to produce and reproduce a status quo.

Oftentimes, a status quo is accepted as a fact of existence or a given state of affairs, without considering for a moment whether these conventions are actually beneficial to, or meaningful for, the lives of the individuals who trade in such social economies. Transgression or transcendence here would both take on values of a specifically positive posture. In the same way that limitations are created and maintained by members from within the boundaries, so individual actors may free themselves from such limiting forces and choose to move beyond it. These kinds of affirmative or reformatory encounters have often been the source of progress and development in individuals, societies and the world.

Encounters are inextricably linked to the traditions from which they originate but they also change, expand and amplify these arrangements when disrupting them. On many levels, worldviews divide different peoples about the nature of traditions and transgressions, the relationship between them and the ultimate forms of reality that people are assumed to be charting. Erotic encounters are not unique to any one tradition and perhaps they embody the middle ground (Derrida and his followers would refer to this space as the *différance*) between exemplary binaries listed at the beginning of this introduction. Thus, when one considers ways in which to understand the erotic, one may see it as enduring in encounters that exist in facile spaces – spaces which offer no simple, either- or choices and no assurances. They may be the most fulfilling adventures, or the biggest disasters, of a lifetime. What they seem to demand, though, is a posture of risk, of chance and of intimate engagement with the self, the other(s) and the relationality between them. Erotic encounters will, for better or worse, disrupt the sequences of everyday life. <>

[Beat Literature in a Divided Europe](#) edited by Harri Veivo, Petra James, Dorota Walczak-Delanois [Avant-garde critical studies, Brill, 9789004364110]

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Everpt: The chapters in this book analyse how American Beat authors and their works were received in Europe and how they spawned creative appropriations that can be characterised as “local” or “European” Beat. They confirm the inscription of the Beat Generation in the genealogy of the avant-garde in Europe, the Beat legacy conserving its poetic innovativeness and critical countercultural perspective in all geopolitical contexts existing on the old continent. They also illustrate the great number and variety of creative works that

emerged from the crossing of the Atlantic, analysing in what ways local and national factors determined how intellectuals and writers in different countries understood authors such as Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and Lawrence Ferlinghetti and used their works as a basis to develop their own poetic and/or political projects. The focus here is thus neither the study of American Beat authors and the time they spent in Europe nor the references to European cultures and literatures in their works since these topics have been tackled in recent research. This book is not about the “original” Beat; it is about the Beat on the move, the dissemination and transformation of the Beat.

The twelve countries studied in the chapters that follow – Iceland, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Greece, Portugal, Poland, Spain, Hungary, Austria, Norway and Belgium – represent different kinds of social, political and cultural contexts in different corners of a Europe that was divided by many frontiers. We have deliberately decided not to discuss countries such as France, Great Britain, or the Netherlands where the central American Beat authors were very much present and where they had close contacts with local literary circles. Likewise, we have excluded Italy where Beat literature profited from the strong support of influential critics and poets like Fernanda Pivano and Giuseppe Ungaretti from relatively early on.

As this book demonstrates, the numerous creative and critical responses to American Beat literature were more or less well informed, depending on the author’s access to original sources and willingness to use these in his or her work. In Cold-War Europe, Beat-related books, articles and rumours surfaced on both sides of the Iron Curtain and even crossed it, but not in equal measure and not in the same discursive, political and media environment. Personal contacts with American writers and translations of their texts were inextricably tied to national and sometimes quite local fields of literature, art and politics. The European literary and artistic works that claimed an affiliation with the Beat movement – or their involvement in a critical dialogue with it – emerged first and foremost at a specific moment in the evolution of literature, art, and society of their country of origin. In these contexts, the Beat movement helped to

mark a rupture with tradition and express aspirations for new poetics and politics, thus playing a ground-breaking role. Accordingly, the chapters in this book contribute to the literary history of the twelve countries included in the volume – however, these contributions are of a special type. The Beat movement was a decisive vector of internationalisation as well as of social and political change. This function emerges from the socio-cultural and geopolitical reading of Beat writing across Europe from the 1950s to the beginning of the twenty-first century, which is our focus in this book. References to Beat Generation authors and to their texts help us recognise similar interests and transformations in countries that developed within very different historical circumstances and thus contribute to the creation of a truly transnational and comparative European perspective, to a period in literary and cultural history that is often thought of in terms of strong divisions. Each chapter in this book pursues this objective and broadens the focus of research beyond personal recollections or connections between American Beat authors and particular groups such as “The Angry Young Men” in Britain and the British Beat scene; the “Vijftigers,” Simon Vinkenoog and Jan Cremer in Holland, the “Wiener Gruppe” in Austria or a handful of West-German authors that have thus far been discussed in recent scholarship. Here the reader will encounter Portuguese surrealism and the censorship organisation PIDE, Estonian punk and Samtökin 78, the National Queer Organization of Iceland, and many authors who played an important role in the literary and cultural history of their country.

Within Beat studies, this book takes part in the transnational turn that has gained importance over the past few years. Researchers working on American Beat authors have been increasingly interested in their connections with foreign literatures and cultures and the communities they visited during the long periods they spent abroad, bringing forward worlded reading practices to unearth these connections and promote a transnational understanding of cultural production in American literary studies. Our aim is to follow this trend in research beyond national frames, while getting to know another perspective, told through

the eyes of the European authors, artists and intellectuals who appropriated Beat in their works, even though there seemed to be hardly any direct contact with American authors. Beat as a transnational phenomenon was a collection of texts, images, discussions and rumours that spread out to numerous countries, acquiring a nearly global scope. It gathered people from different contexts around a core of canonical authors and texts, and yet, it also prompted creative and critical appropriations that opened up the opportunity for Beat to develop in new directions. Beat literature as conceptualised in this book constitutes a network or a rhizome that brings together what may seem to be a disparate collection of local cases. Following the Beat track gives coherence to this collection and opens up a new perspective for European literature. Yet, whether as a network or a rhizome, it dissolves questions of originality and influence into multiple genealogies, nodes and lines of continuity.

Giving up discourses of originality and influence and focusing on appropriation, transformation and emergence means giving up a principle of distinction (operating with the logic of “original” vs. “derivative” or “primary” vs. “secondary”) and opening up a moving field of relations and processes. This leads to a double questioning of the canons and hierarchies in the literary field. Firstly, while the internationally best known authors such as Kerouac, Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti and William S. Burroughs are very much present in this book, many chapters point to the fact that other, less well-known authors played important roles in specific contexts. Differences that may seem important from an American perspective – such as the distinction between the New York poets John Ashbery and Frank O'Hara and the Beat Generation, or between “Beats” and “beatniks” – may ultimately prove insignificant when seen from specific European perspectives. This challenges, to a certain extent, the established Beat canon that traditionally focused on a limited group of white male writers and marginalised female and non-white authors. The book at hand thus continues the work done in publications that have sought to question these selection criteria in the past years. Secondly, authors and intellectuals from different European

countries used the concept of “Beat” in a struggle to renew national literatures and bring down old hierarchies. The American Beat authors were part of this questioning of literary and cultural canons and of the established norms in literature and life in various national contexts – sometimes consciously, sometimes not, sometimes presented as a coherent group, sometimes dissolved into a motley crew composed of contemporary and historical figures. This can be rather confusing and lead one to wonder whether all the protagonists understood what Beat was about. However, it is necessary to understand that, as a truly transnational phenomenon, Beat has been defined differently in different contexts. These definitions do not necessarily match between each other and may differ from the canonical American interpretation. The elasticity of the concept of “Beat” is interesting in its own right.

As mentioned earlier, the inscription of Beat literature into the genealogy of the avant-garde characterises the European reception and creative appropriation of the movement discussed in this book. This inscription takes place in a complex moment of history, at the intersection of numerous lines of continuity and points of rupture. The Beat Generation authors' interest in pre-World War ii modernism and the avant-garde on both sides of the Atlantic as well as their willingness to attempt a revolution in American literature is well known. There are many direct and indirect links that connect, for instance, Burroughs's cut-up technique with the radicality of Dada collage and its subversive aesthetic, social and political implications; the orality and the performative force of Ginsberg's 1955 Six Gallery reading with the soirées at the Cabaret Voltaire; or the interest in bebop in New York in the 1940s and 1950s with the fascination Black jazz musicians exerted on writers and intellectuals in Paris in the 1920s. After World War ii, the situation was, however, fundamentally different and marked by an increasing questioning of the master narratives of modernity on the one hand and by efforts to interpret the avant-garde as defence of freedom and of the American way of life on the other. In this context, Beat Generation authors can be considered as representing a “postmodernist” “neo-

avant-garde” characterised by an “antiteleological drive” that undermines efforts to take a leading artistic or political role and establish new hierarchies of values. This suspicion towards the basic tenets of the historical avant-gardes and high modernism does not necessarily mean full-fledged eclecticism and the end of the political in art. “Postmodernism” can be understood as a specific perception of modernism created by a displacement in space and time, and “neo-avant-garde” as a continuation of the institutional critique initiated by the historical avant-garde and as a reworking of its legacy through new cultural-political strategies and social positioning (see Foster 1996). The prefixes “post” and “neo” thus denote specific critical positions towards modernity and the experimental artistic movements it has engendered, but they should not necessarily be understood as marking a rupture. Indeed, Ginsberg’s “Howl” can be read as a poem that honours the principles of modernism but in ways that were rejected by major modernist critics when it was first published.

Beat was not, as a movement or an “ism,” founded on a manifesto or a programme, but rather Beat was a “Generation” defined by friendship, “collective biography” and family resemblances in style, taste and way of life. The Beat authors situated their work at these two moments, the “post” and the “neo,” and cast a critical eye on the legacy of pre-World War ii authors and artists. Yet they also developed their predecessors’ experimentation with new poetic directions and new political connections. The importance of these new connections has emerged gradually and the historical role played by Beat authors in promoting them remains open to debate. The perception of the Beat Generation’s position as “anti-politics” (Barsky 2005: 62) may be correct if we consider the context of the dominant ideologies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but their works, defined as “predictive of political futures” (Lee 2004: 382), may prove more meaningful when related to the emerging political concerns of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It is clear that Ginsberg, Burroughs, Ferlinghetti, along with Diane di Prima, Gary Snyder and Anne Waldman (just to mention the most obvious ones)

questioned normative conceptions of life and prefigured crucial issues such as the peace movement, the gay liberation movement, and critical reflection on biopolitics and environmental activism, although part of their legacy is also highly problematic in some respects.

The reception and appropriation of Beat literature in the countries discussed here can also be analysed in terms of the cultural geography and historiography of literature and the arts in the twentieth century. An important body of recent research suggests that the history of modernism and the avantgarde is – when seen from a large perspective that pays equal attention both to the “peripheries” of cultural geography and to its “centres” (such as Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century and New York after World War ii) – a multi-layered and fragmented story bringing together actors in different positions in the field of literature and arts and with different agendas in culture and politics; it is a montage and a negotiation of acts of anticipation and perceptions of belatedness. This story undermines any pretension of establishing a transparent and unified time of modernity; it also questions the very idea of unambiguous centres and peripheries in the cultural geography of modernity and imposes a consideration of geographical realms with more complex and finely-jagged edges, much as the Pacific Rim was for Gary Snyder. Seen from this perspective, locations are inseparable from discourses and media since a specific place is always situated in a discursive field and a mediascape.

In Europe, Beat literature was received directly and through different kinds of filtering discourses at the same time. The Europeans who read Kerouac or Ginsberg had barely ever travelled to the United States or met the American authors on the old continent, but often they had read articles published on Beat in *Life*, *Reader’s Digest* and the general and specialised magazines available in their own country. They sought to connect Beat authors and their works not only, and not even primarily, with the American tradition or the contemporary society of the United States but also with the pressing concerns of the society they lived in, that is, with the real or imagined evolution of

their national culture as well as with the European and international tradition of modernism and the avant-garde with which they wanted to connect. In this process, works written by Beat authors acquired significations and functions that stemmed from the receiving culture and reflected the positions and aspirations of writers, translators and critics in that field. In Iceland for example, the initial reception labelled Beat literature as an example of modernism and included it within a large international canon containing authors such as Comte de Lautréamont and Saint-John Perse. In Finland and to some extent in Greece, it was perceived as distinct from high modernism and related rather to local avant-garde or neo-avant-garde initiatives. In Spain, Beat authors were associated with contemporary critics and philosophers such as Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno and Umberto Eco. The chapters in this book seek to explain these connections, arguing that they should not be regarded as random encounters, but as justified understandings and creative appropriations. They belong to the history of Beat literature on the same level as the connections to American culture, with the special advantage that they offer insights into the transnational history of avant-garde and (post)modern literature. The image that emerges from these interrogations is not a simple one, but rather a complex “assemblage” (Bennett 2014) in which the connecting nodes are instances of negotiation, conflict and transformation.

The rhizomatic constellation we propose in this book also involves working within particular historical contexts. The determining factor that stands above the others is the Cold War context – which is worth recalling more than a quarter of a century after the fall of the Iron Curtain. From 1945 to 1989, Europe was divided between West and East, that is, between two economies, political systems and military alliances, with a few neutral states that found themselves between the two hostile blocks. Although it was the most obvious one, the Iron Curtain was not the only dividing line. Despite a shared ideology, the People’s Democracies in the East were not all the same. Certain factors such as pre-war experiences of independence, nationalism, industrialisation and urbanisation introduced

significant variations into a political constellation that appeared uniform when seen from outside. On the other hand, the Iron Curtain cut age-old communication channels in the Baltic Sea region, while at the same time economic integration between the Nordic countries promoted cultural cooperation and a sense of shared identity. In the South, the Southern European NATO member states Spain, Portugal and Greece were under dictatorial rule. Many chapters in this book show how arbitrary and confusing the notions of the political Left and Right were in totalitarian contexts. As it turns out, the concrete practices of censorship were quite comparable despite the different political contexts such as fascism in Portugal in the West and communism in Czechoslovakia in the East.

These observations on similarity and difference are also relevant when it comes to the connection between Beat, the underground and counterculture scenes in different countries. The targeting and questioning of “middle-class” values was frequent on both sides of the Iron Curtain, even though the economic and political systems in which the middle class evolved were quite different. Likewise, the writers, artists, musicians and intellectuals who were interested in Beat often worked in alternative, heterotopian and even utopian milieus. The blues-singer László Földes, one of Ginsberg’s links to Hungary, distanced himself from the commercial “socialist” Hungarian rock business and went underground in order to preserve the connection with original rock in his music. In Norway, the gallery Zum blauen Apfel and the artistic community at Skippergata offered the same kind of supportive and receptive context for young artists and poets as The 6 Gallery and other similar venues in the United States. Ginsberg’s meetings with Polish intellectuals often took place in private flats to which unwanted ears had no access. All these cases exemplify the same willingness to create a distinct alternative to official music business, the conservative artworld or the state-controlled literary field, yet they also show clear differences in position taking, composition and the objectives pursued. The venues in Oslo were public, whereas the flats in Warsaw were not; the young people who gathered in Zum blauen Apfel and Skippergata were moving beyond old hierarchies

and distinctions, whereas Polish intellectuals and university teachers were eager to preserve the “high” culture threatened by the ruling Communist party and its official aesthetics. Being “underground” or “counter” always makes sense in the relational field, according to who you want to dissociate from and ally with. This also conditions the strategies employed in artistic expression, reception and translation. The underground art in the West was often openly provocative. In the East, artist and writers had to resort to double coding, allegories and indeterminate references. In a similar manner, the critical edge of an American Beat author depended not only on what he or she wrote, but also on how the text was reframed in the receiving culture. The figure of an individual rebel or the literary motif of a trip to Mexico in search of something authentic and primitive does not have the same signification in a collective culture such as Turkey’s or when perceived from the position of a Mexican modernist. The Beats’ almost global spread urges researchers to discuss their underground or countercultural status in ways that pay close attention to both local and transnational contexts.

Interestingly, what seems to divide the countries from the two sides of the Iron Curtain is the status Beat literature and its authors have today. In countries like Austria or Portugal, Beat still represents a marginal countercultural alternative, whereas in some of the ex-Eastern Bloc countries, it has become part of the official literary canon since 1989 and entered the university programmes in American Literature Studies. Czech Beat translators are either themselves respected writers and well-known translators (Jan Zábřana) or university professors (Jiří Josek). The institutionalisation of counterculture and its entry in the mainstream was an important feature of post-communist cultures in Central Europe in the 1990s. We owe part of this transformation to former members of the local underground scene and of the dissidence who became eminent members of the new cultural elites. In cases like that of the Czech Republic and former Czechoslovakia, the Beat connections gave local actors symbolic capital that could be transformed into positions of power after the collapse of the communist regime. It explains the official and

festive nature of the post-1989 Beat visits to Czechoslovakia and later to the Czech Republic. In 1993, Ginsberg, Anne Waldman and other Beat authors were officially received by the president and former dissident writer Václav Havel; the visit had an obvious political dimension. In Poland, however, the trope of the “road,” essential to Beat poetics and mythology, can be related not only to the dream of mobility and liberty of the 1950s and 1960s, but also to older traditions and rituals, thus acquiring a constructive function rather than a subversive one.

In the case of Portugal the culturally mediating role of France cannot be under-estimated. The concomitance of the Beat movement and French existentialism in the Portuguese reception turns out to be a very interesting example of cultural transmission, showing how the geography of modernism in the 1950s and 1960s was polycentric in its structure. A specific and original feature of this case is the strong criticism of the Vietnam War, which is omnipresent in the work and civic activities of Beat authors. In fact, it seems that the Portuguese writers and translators were using Vietnam as a synecdoche of Portugal’s own military actions in Africa in the territories of their former colonies, knowing that this theme could not be directly discussed. In general, the Beat Generation was perceived as a representation of an “alternative America” that could be distinguished from the global superpower and invested with positive significations that had not been soiled by the war in Vietnam, for example. This interpretation could receive further contextual meanings,

the quest for *l’autre Amérique* being, in a way, a similarly subversive quest for *une autre Francophonie* in Belgium where the French-speaking population sought new ways to build their own identity in a country in which internal divisions were a heavy burden to bear, while the external context was mostly peaceful.

It is also important to note that the perception the Beat Generation had of Europe and of the different countries of the Old Continent did not necessarily match the self-perception of European authors. Paradoxically, the American and British Beats arrived to Greece as to an idealised place,

almost unaffected by Western civilizations just like Mexico or Tangier, whereas the Greek Beats were escaping the suffocating Greek society in big Western cities such as Paris and London. What we find here are two opposing pulls that characterise the tradition of modernism and the avant-garde: the “orientalisation” of peripheral locations and the centripetal force of the great metropolises. On the other hand, the Beats’ perception of Europe seems to be laden with melancholia, as when Allen Ginsberg visited communist Poland and met his readers expressing a bit of jealousy and admiration. Ginsberg seems to search for a dreamland of “simplicity” and “authenticity,” of living and breathing poetry as a form of liberty in a country where censorship is actually everywhere, even though the society is not yet touched by bourgeois materialism. This obviously did not correspond to the Polish intellectuals’ traditional conception of poetry or of the poet’s place in society.

The particular approach to Beat developed in the following chapters highlights and mirrors these kinds of tensions. Nevertheless, the divisions in Europe should not be overestimated. The fact that the Beat authors generated and continue to generate such widespread interest testifies not only to the cultural hegemony of the United States, but also to parallelisms in the cultural and social evolution of different countries that made it possible for Beat writing to become a “model for resistance or dissidence within Cold War cultures”. The feeling of frustration triggered by the local conservative society and the Cold War context at the global level was shared by many. Likewise, the young poets in Europe shared the traumatic experience of growing up during World War ii or amid the ruins of its aftermath. This may have created a particular sensitivity to the “displaced violence” that can be seen at the heart of “Howl”. Throughout Europe, and from the 1950s onwards, the “youth” emerged as a new social, economic and political group. This occurred as a result of the high birth rates in the post-World War ii years and the demographic changes it caused in the 1960s, combined with other factors such as the parental authority crisis, wider access to education, continuing economic growth and large-scale

urbanisation. The bourgeois consumer society and the popular and countercultures it co-existed with – the context of rebellion of the Beat Generation – were not just a feature unique to the United States or Western Europe. In Estonia, Poland and other Eastern Bloc countries, a socialist petty bourgeoisie started to develop after the post-World War ii years, characterised by a pragmatic worldview focusing on personal well-being (owning a house, a car, etc.) and seeking to remain as unaffected as possible by any ideology. Almost everywhere, supported by the local jazz, rock and blues scenes, counter-forces to conformist aspirations emerged, thriving on records and texts moving from West to East. Yet it is obvious that long hair and hitchhiking, for example, could not be understood the same way in the West as they were in the East due to the differences in the economic and political systems, even though they aimed at confusing the bourgeois sensibilities in similar ways. The word “Beat” encompasses these contexts and reveals similarities and differences that go beyond common assumptions; its history and meaning reside in these multiple connections.

The chapters are organised so as to highlight similarities, parallelisms and differences that go beyond the symbolic “Cold-War” image that Europe had taken on, and other simple geographical arrangements. The first articles show the predominance of the reception of the Beats within the frame of modernist and avant-garde aesthetics in two Nordic countries. Benedikt Hjartarson discusses how Beat literature entered the Icelandic literary system and the different functions it took on there from the 1960s up to the present day. The story he tells is interesting in the sense that it shows the ambivalent status Ginsberg and the other authors had, being first treated as belonging to a large international canon of modernism and, as such, as a key component of the renewal of Icelandic literature through translations, and then, in a second move, as marginal or even detrimental to modernism and its desired effect in the national field of literature. Later on, they voiced subcultures and alternative lifestyles. The history of Beat in Iceland is thus very much a history of local appropriation that shows the many and shifting valencies Ginsberg and his fellow artists

had and continue to have. It also serves as a textbook case for the study of translation politics.

Harri Veivo's analysis of Beat reception and appropriation in Finland focuses on the same period and on similar questions as Hjartarson's discussion on Iceland. Here again, Beat participated in the modernisation of the Finnish literary field and especially of poetic discourse, but it arrived at a pivotal moment when a rupture with traditional poetic conventions had already happened and the new poetry that followed had begun to attract criticism. Hence,

Beat aspirations came with a renewal of literary modernism in a period of rapid social change along with a rise in global consciousness. It is one of the links in a network of multiple connections, pointing as well to the tradition of American and European modern and avant-garde literature, contemporary Russian poetry and the emerging underground. And it was not just an issue of literature, but also of a stance towards life that could be appropriated and performed with a critical liberating function in a society that remained largely conservative with regard to moral issues. Unlike in Iceland, the Beats provoked considerable public debate in Finland in the 1960s.

Petra James's chapter on Czechoslovakia and Czech literature confirms the existence of a dominant pattern of authors and works in the reception of the Beats in Europe. Indeed, the names that mostly come up in the translations throughout

for close collaboration, the almost orientalist approach of the Beats towards Greece and its culture nevertheless betray a colonial aspect in the conception they had of this part of Europe (comparable in this sense to North Africa and Mexico). The Greek writers that had interest in Beat literature on the other hand had to negotiate their position in a complex field where multiple political tensions interfered heavily with aesthetic ideas and creative work, thus conditioning the appropriation of Beat writing. Aesthetic conservatism was the rule both on the right and on the left sides of the political spectrum, leaving only a narrow space for other options. Today, these issues are still being dealt with by writers who declare themselves as belonging to the continuity of the Beat movement and have a critical perspective over the past 40 years of development in the Greek society.

Nuno Miguel Neves's chapter on Portugal focuses on the long 1960s, looking at how Beat authors were represented in Portugal and translated into the Portuguese language and how some of their writing techniques were adapted to local conditions, this reception taking place partly in the wake of the Portuguese surrealist movement. Neves's analysis shows the influence that a conservative cultural policy can have (due to the long dictatorship) on the field of literature. On moral grounds, the Beat culture was obviously dubious in the eyes of the authorities, but interestingly their criticism of the political sphere went partly unnoticed since it did not correspond to the grid of reading literature that prevailed at the time in Portugal. That is why Beat writing on the Vietnam War could be read and interpreted as a critique of the colonial wars led by the Portuguese, a topic that could not be addressed directly. The Portuguese authors that were inspired by the American Beats are still excluded from the official literary canon and thus perpetuate the original marginal counter-cultural position of the Beats. The situation is more or less the same for Austria.

Dorota Walczak-Delnois explores the Polish case. The Communist regime of the country adopted similar conservative aesthetic models as the right-wing dictatorships did in other countries. The interest in the Beats was thus connected to a quest for liberty and the will to carve out one's own free

space in a society that was experienced as suffocating. This was often accompanied by a struggle to retain an alternative lifestyle. Hitchhiking, for instance, was regarded as an important element of the specific Polish way of being "on the road," and it was adapted to local circumstances in which the trope of "the road" already had deep resonance. As she goes on to describe those circumstances, Walczak-Delnois also traces the reception of Beat literature in Poland, analyses the parallels between Polish writers and their American colleagues and discusses written testimonials of encounters – successful or not – between Polish intellectuals and Ginsberg. She also shows how, like in many post-communist countries in Europe, the Beat movement revived in the 1990s when it was entered into the canon of American literature and texts were published by renowned publishing houses in new editions.

Santiago Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan discusses the reception of the Beat Generation in Spain in the 1970s and 1980s. The political situations experienced in Spain before and after the death of Franco lie at the core of the Spanish reception of Beat. As in Poland, Czechoslovakia or Estonia, Beat authors represented the freedom for which Spanish writers longed. And interest in Beat literature stemmed from this experience and emerged in the countercultural and alternative milieus in Spain, nourished by the first-hand contact that young Spanish authors had with Beat authors. The examples of Ginsberg, Burroughs and Kerouac were thus instrumental in the creation of a movement that rejected Spanish mainstream social values both before and after the transition to democracy. At the same time however, the Beats were introduced in Spain through more mainstream channels belonging to the tradition of American modernism or to the constellation of contemporary intellectual movements.

The last four chapters discuss cases in which the reception of the Beats took place either in a national context situated between the zones of influence of hegemonic powers or in alternative contexts and venues that sought to contest the official institutions. They also address the question of the (non)integration of Beats into official artistic canons and thus of their continuing countercultural

potential. József Havasréti focuses on the case of Hungary, showing how important it is to go beyond general and unproblematised geographical and historical frames and to treat every case individually. Indeed, even if Hungary was part of the Eastern Bloc, significant differences emerge when compared with Poland, Czechoslovakia or Estonia. The reception of American beat literature in Hungarian literary circles began in the early 1960s, which is contemporaneous to other European countries. The first works to be translated were Ginsberg's "Howl" and Kerouac's *On the Road*. The anthology *Howl – Confessions about the Beat Generation* published in 1967 had a significant role to play. Most Hungarian critics objected to the irrationality and instinctiveness of the movement, while the laudatory voices emphasised the Beats' rejection of the American establishment. Both opinions reflected Hungarian intellectuals' positioning of themselves as Central Europeans between the West and the East. In the 1970s and 1980s, liberalism gradually expanded to reach the Hungarian political sphere, which resulted in greater freedom in the official translation process of the Beats. Indeed, the 1970s saw an increase in the number of Hungarian publications in the field of Beat literature, thus slowly killing off controversy. The interest in Beat literature continued in the 1980s, nourished by Ginsberg's visits to Hungary where he established close relationships with blues musicians in Budapest. After the fall of communism, Beat literature seems to have lost its sensational appeal. Nevertheless, Ginsberg's reputation hasn't faded away, especially among the members of the alternative cultural scene of the capital.

Thomas Antonic offers an interesting view on how Beat literature was received in Austria. In the post-war years, the country was at the forefront of the Cold War frontier that divided Europe. Opposition to communism was considered more important than a critical confrontation with the country's recent Nazi past. This particular position resulted in highly conservative cultural life that left little space for writers looking for alternative forms of expression or subversive ways of living. Austria was, however, also closely connected with Germany and thus exposed to Germany's translations and discussions

of the Beat. The 1960s and 1970s also saw the emergence of talented, non-conformist young writers who cultivated an interest in the Beat authors and their writing methods. Later on, this interest developed into a more organised cooperation as some Austrian authors crossed the Atlantic and, conversely, as several writers from the United States visited Vienna and even regularly taught there. Despite these numerous connections, the Beats continue to hold an ambiguous institutional status in Austria.

Frida Forsgren explores the evolution of Norwegian literature and visual arts that were, according to the young authors of the time, only slowly catching up with recent European and American movements in the post-war years. As in other Scandinavian countries, such as Finland or Iceland, the translations of Beat authors served as vectors to introduce modernist and avantgardist discourses and practices into Norway. But the reception of Beat was not only a literary and artistic process; it was physically tied to the bohemian, <>

[William S. Burroughs: Cutting Up the Century](#)

edited by Joan Hawkins and Alex Wermer-Colan, Contributing Editors: Charles Cannon, Tony Brewer, and Landon Palmer [Indiana University Press, 9780253041333]

[William S. Burroughs Cutting Up the Century](#) is the definitive book on Burroughs' overarching cut-up project and its relevance to the American twentieth century. Burroughs's *Nova Trilogy* (*The Soft Machine*, *Nova Express*, and *The Ticket That Exploded*) remains the best-known of his textual cut-up creations, but he committed more than a decade of his life to searching out multimedia for use in works of collage. By cutting up, folding in, and splicing together newspapers, magazines, letters, book reviews, classical literature, audio recordings, photographs, and films, Burroughs created an eclectic and wide-ranging countercultural archive. This collection includes previously unpublished work by Burroughs such as cut-ups of work written by his son, cut-ups of critical responses to his own work, collages on the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal, excerpts from his

dream journals, and some of the few diary entries that Burroughs wrote about his wife, Joan.

[William S. Burroughs Cutting Up the Century](#) also features original essays, interviews, and discussions by established Burroughs scholars, respected artists, and people who encountered Burroughs. The essays consider Burroughs from a range of starting points—literary studies, media studies, popular culture, gender studies, post-colonialism, history, and geography. Ultimately, the collection situates Burroughs as a central artist and thinker of his time and considers his insights on political and social problems that have become even more dire in ours.

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Excerpt: It's an interesting time for the Burroughs legacy, fifteen years into the new century. Ongoing debate on Joan's accidental death, the William Tell

shooting and William's accountability and his light sentence in Mexico ... irredeemable? A young woman at the Jack Kerouac School at Naropa recently wrote her Master's thesis on Joan Vollmer, both a feminist defense and creative piece written in the presumed voice of Joan.

Some are also still troubled by the homoerotics of the Burroughs' old Nike ad (1994) ... his gaze at the young players—the unspoken complications of sports, power, and homosexuality, not to mention sports addiction ... combined with the whole panoply of sports ads in general with their sperm-bursting cans of beer. What is Burroughs supposed to represent here? A voyeur? A difficult trope—who is he to these worlds anyway? Hardly a fan of football. Where is our *homme invisible* man, this *éminence grise* as a commercial trope now? Regulated to pale movie renditions? Does his ghost sell sneakers? Controversies continue alongside the work itself, which is kept thankfully in print and continues to be studied and critiqued, and has had greater intellectual textual response overseas for decades with the likes of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. The bar has been raised in regard to the intellectual and linguistic power of the writing itself.

Recent portrayals of Burroughs keep his unmistakable voice in culture's sound tracks ... I am relieved to see that his iteration as a cultural icon is not occluding the writing. It is still odd to see depictions of him on the silver screen. Viggo Mortensen in *On the Road* (directed by Walter Salles, 2012) does an aspirational job, and Ben Foster is also salient in *Kill Your Darlings* (directed by John Krokidas, 2013) to say the least of an ethically ambiguous film. Who speaks and acts? It is always a multiplicity.

Deleuze and Guattari discuss Burroughs in a text called *A Thousand Plateaus*: "Why have we kept our names? Out of habit, purely out of habit. To make ourselves unrecognizable in turn. To render imperceptible, not ourselves, but what makes us act, feel, and think. Also because it's nice to talk like everybody else, to say the sun rises, when everybody knows it's only a manner of speaking. To reach the point where one no longer says I, but the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I. We are no longer ourselves.

Each will know his own. We have been aided, inspired, multiplied". This is one of the keys to Burroughs they say: not to reach the point where one no longer says "I," but to reach the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I. The set has changed. We are in a reality that does not value imagination's conservative identity or ownership of experience as we are no longer stable ourselves. Who are we?

"Deleuze and Guattari would say that 'Burroughs' is no longer just the name of an author, a celebrity, or an artist; it is the name, rather, of a set of potentials, an effect that propagates itself from medium to medium by the force of its difference, bringing into contact incompatible functions, incommensurable concepts, and unrelated materials. Even when Burroughs is no longer able to serve as the focus

for this force, it will continue to reverberate, indefatigably sounding its critical imperative: listen to my last words everywhere". Something about the patient etherized on the table? Welcome to the Anthropocene—the geological time under the iron hand of man that Burroughs predicted everywhere with his preternatural insight and imagination and investigation. "Human beings can't be expected to act like human beings under unhuman circumstances".

There's the idea from French critical theorist Foucault that the body is the last site of resistance (see Pickett 1996). But what happens when the body's mind goes beyond itself? When the consciousness travels—astral projects—move in dreams? What are the limits of control in these instances? His work continues to disrupt comfortable narratives including the master narrative, patriarchal and normative in terms of its form and content and sense of history—literary or otherwise. Burroughs' work as unstable consciousness finds itself restlessly outside modern and postmodern parameters. And the dream, the timeless dream, has been a source for much of his writing, defying strictures about a place in the "canon." He is more a scientist of mind.

I want to close with a personal investigation—from his dream book *My Education*, published in 1995,

two years before he died. The title of the collection arose from this dream:

Airport. Like a high school play, attempting to convey a spectral atmosphere. One desk on stage, a gray woman behind the desk with the cold waxen face of an intergalactic bureaucrat ... Standing to one side of the desk are three men, grinning with joy at their prospective destinations. When I present myself at the desk, the woman says, "You haven't had your education yet."

A big party. Ian is there and Anne Waldman, the Naropa Mother, You need a place to stay? You got a dose of clap? Take all your troubles to the Naropa Mother. She gives all the satisfaction.

He goes on to describe being junk-sick, needing a fix. A shot of Jade that turns to stone in his body. And the dream turns to nightmare.

I have been flattered to make it into a Burroughs' dream, into his psyche, and also, for a time, resisted these lines. Did I need to reconstruct, deconstruct this identity of Naropa Mother? I cut up the dream. I am both a character—a principle in his script as it were—and a figure of control or archetypal matriarchy. But the dream encouraged me to continue as long as I can, to be aware the bigger arc of the Naropa experiment in radical poetries and poetic community, where we can enter each other's psychic and dream spaces, and I decided to embrace the dream's assurance that "she gives all the satisfaction." When we founded the university, we founded a place very much on feminine principle—from the Buddhist perspective that relates to atmosphere and environment—what is called *prajna* in Sanskrit—or womb-like wisdom. So I chose to investigate my identity within one of *prajna* and investigate the mind that posited as such.

"Do you realize you are the only woman in the room?" William taunted playfully as he came toward me after a long night of talk and drink and smoke. In many instances, when all these alternative cultures and communities and lineages and affinities were coalescing and trembling and forming and reforming, I was often the only woman in the room and that urged me to open up all the doors to all the women in the projects I would help create and

build. But I often found that I was one of the few women—certainly in high school, and in college, and later in small poetry circles—checking out the Burroughsian landscape who was deeply into his work. It seemed for a time I was the only woman in the room of his work.

Root Face

Inevitably, this anthology is only going to scratch the surface of Burroughs' oeuvre. That is partly the point of this anthology: to show how much detective work, as well as archival and editorial labor, would be necessary to provide a full account of even those materials currently available for perusal (not hidden away in private holdings). In a more fundamental sense, this anthology also brings into relief how no conclusive anthology of Burroughs' work could be possible.

As Burroughs put it, "all my books are essentially one book". From his first conception of a "word hoard," Burroughs always imagined and discussed his work as an organism undergoing metamorphosis, each published novel or collage a different port of entry, a mosaic of perspectives onto intersection points of power. By showcasing the archive, we only bring into relief just how many holes remain for most readers approaching Burroughs. If anything, it has become yet another a tantalizing aura surrounding Burroughs' work, that we always fall short of capturing the heterogeneous nature of his failures and his accomplishments.

We would be remiss, however, to not discuss Burroughs' experiments as a painter throughout his life. For Burroughs, painting and drawing became an extension of cutting up text; calligraphy offered an entry point for Burroughs (and Gysin) into the space where words became images and vice versa. Burroughs had experimented with making "art" since the 1960s, but it was not until late in his life, as captured in a series of gallery exhibitions and Robert A. Sobieszek's *Ports of Entry: William S. Burroughs and the Arts* (1996), that Burroughs began to hang up not just his scissors, but his pen. Especially in his notorious shotgun paintings, where the aged writer would shoot paint at wooden boards, his art works, like his writing, functioned by puncturing holes into and breaking his medium, to

disclose hidden interconnections, while sounding the echoes of what remains irrevocable and irrecoverable.

In his late works, especially his confessional writings on cats and lemurs in, respectively, *The Cat Inside* and *Ghost of Chance*, Burroughs explored through words the themes and perspectives that would become central to his art. In the following art work, "Root Face," an ink and photo-collage on a sketchbook page, created in 1987, Burroughs has collaged an image in the center of his painting that is itself a photograph of another painting. Yuri Zupancic notes that the work depicts a part-plant, part-human mutant akin to the "humanoid mandrakes" in *Cities of the Red Night*. In one of the novel's stranger scenes, the character Jimmy asks whether a mandrake is a "screamer" and "What happens if we hang its green ass, roots and all?" (1981, 234). He receives the following ominous response, one that can act as an annotation for this work of art: "Son, you'd be doing what mankind has always trembled to do. You'd be upsetting the balance between the animal and the vegetable kingdom. He'd scream the planet apart. It would be the last scream".

If this anthology can't provide the last word, or scream on Burroughs, perhaps the closing note for this collection, besides this humble painting, appears in Burroughs' earliest published work, his terse, autobiographical novel, *Junky* (1953). After attempting to create the book's glossary of underworld slang, Burroughs eventually abandoned the task by invoking Wittgenstein's final postulation in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1922), "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent." In his appendix to his sociological account of the underworld's argot, Burroughs concluded: A final glossary, therefore, cannot be made of words whose intentions are fugitive". <>

[Left of Poetry Depression America and the Formation of Modern Poetics](#) by Sarah Ehlers [The University of North Carolina Press, 9781469651286]

In this incisive study, Sarah Ehlers returns to the Depression-era United States in order to unsettle longstanding ideas about poetry and emerging approaches to poetics. By bringing to light a range

of archival materials and theories about poetry that emerged on the 1930s left, Ehlers reimagines the historical formation of modern poetics. Offering new and challenging readings of prominent figures such as Langston Hughes, Muriel Rukeyser, and Jacques Roumain, and uncovering the contributions of lesser-known writers such as Genevieve Taggard and Martha Millet, Ehlers illuminates an aesthetically and geographically diverse matrix of schools and movements. Resisting the dismissal of thirties left writing as mere propaganda, the book reveals how communist-affiliated poets experimented with poetic modes—such as lyric and documentary—and genres, including songs, ballads, and nursery rhymes, in ways that challenged existing frameworks for understanding the relationships among poetic form, political commitment, and historical transformation. As Ehlers shows, Depression left movements and their international connections are crucial for understanding both the history of modern poetry and the role of poetic thought in conceptualizing historical change.

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Excerpt: Chapter Outline

Left of Poetry is at once an in-depth study of interwar poetry and part of a cultural history of the idea of poetry. While my chapters focus largely on single figures, each examines a literary-historical problematic in order to illuminate how the 1930s is a moment crucial to our understanding of the history of poetry—and crucial to our understanding of poetry's assumed role in historical and political change. The book is divided into three sections, each of which takes up a mode of writing that predominated thirties discourses and that has stakes for the current landscape of poetic interpretation and left literary/historical practice: documentary, lyric, and rhythm.

The first two sections focus, respectively, on documentary and lyric: modes that were significantly reimagined during the interwar period but that became clichéd stand-ins for the poles of history and poetry. Indeed, if in the twentieth century "lyric" became synonymous with "the essence of poetry, the poem at its most poetic," then "documentary" became a signifier for a counterinsurgent mode that ground down the poetic under the weight of historical fact." Placing documentary and lyric next to each other, I treat the confrontations and slippages between the two as points of orientation from which to understand both.

Part I turns to two canonical Depression-era poets, Langston Hughes and Muriel Rukeyser, in order to explore how radical poets' engagements with other media allowed them to address questions of representation in their interwar political poems. Chapter one, "Photography and the Development of Radical Poetics: Langston Hughes in Haiti, Mexico, Alabama," examines Langston Hughes's overlooked archive of photographs and scrapbooks from his 1931 trip to Haiti. I argue that Hughes's photographic encounter with Haiti reveals significant aspects of how he imagined the poem in relation to other technologies for representing political subjectivity. Chapter two, "Fusing an Alloy: Muriel Rukeyser at the Limits of

Poetry/Documentary," charts the historical formation of the documentary poetry tradition vis-à-vis a consideration of Rukeyser's *The Book of the Dead* and her subsequent efforts to adapt the poem sequence into a documentary film. I demonstrate how Rukeyser pushed the boundaries of genre and media in order to imagine modes of expression that resisted traditional notions of liberal subjectivity and embodied modes of self-expression.

In part II, I explore how radical writers reinvented the parameters of the lyric subject. Genevieve Taggard, one of the poets at the center of chapter three, "Lyric Effects: Singing the Futures of Poetry with Genevieve Taggard and Edwin Rolfe," wrote that she considered herself a poet who "could never stop experimenting with lyric effects." The chapter explores the formal and rhetorical strategies that Taggard and Rolfe used to reconstitute lyric and provide a competing "lyric ideal." Their work speaks to a prevailing suspicion on the left that romantic and modernist versions of the poetic lyric and the lyric subject ran counter to radical utopian visions of revolutionary community and, in many ways, to poetic attempts to document scenes of working-class, antiracist, and anti-imperialist struggles. In chapter four, "Lyric Internationalism: Jacques Roumain and His Committee," I consider the work of the Haitian communist poet Jacques Roumain and his reception in the United States. I argue that the distinct version of internationalism that Roumain posited in the 1930s and 1940s provides a means to interrogate what it meant for poetry to circulate globally and to represent conditions of human life. Analyzing the production, circulation, and reception of Roumain's writings and his authorial persona in the United States, I explore several connected variants of a communist internationalism that is imagined through the idea of "lyric" or "lyricism," and I demonstrate how these international imaginaries are tied to developing conceptions of history.

In part III, I turn to the role of the archive in left literary studies through a recovery of the Jewish American communist poet Martha Millet. Chapter five, "The Left Needs Rhythm: Popular Front Poetry, Antifascism, and Counter-archives of Modernity," extrapolates Millet's claim that the left "needs

rhythm in all its implications, in order to combat the profit system in its latest manifestation, the totalitarian state." For artists such as Millet, rhythm was an essential formal component of revolutionary art because it was at the root of human experience and, as such, contained new possibilities for collective representation. As the chapter unfolds, I use materials from Millet's previously unknown archive to reiterate the claim that the history of American poetry—and criticism about it—cannot be fully understood without fuller knowledge of poets who were marginalized on the basis of politics, gender, and ethnicity.

Before moving into chapter one, I want to suggest the relationship between the methods I pose here and what might be considered the debts we owe to the hopes of a radical past. Projects that emphasize recovery, more often than not, are premised on the notion that we might owe missing work to the historical record. 'While such methods and the resulting scholarship are an important part of our critical history, I argue that considering this missing work more on its own terms might complicate the logic of history to which many scholars tend to genuflect. The archive of left poetry has been destroyed alongside the destruction of lives and careers. It has been suppressed by political formations, modes of interpretation, and the fears of the writers themselves. It is a brittle puzzle that, even as we try to put it together, breaks into more pieces at our very touch. Putting the story back together means looking for some sort of coherence out of that which is dispersed, fractured, broken. So on one level, we must, to paraphrase Jack Halberstam's introduction to Stefano Harney and Fred Moten's *The Undercommons*, learn how to live with brokenness without blindly following the fantasies of respectability and recognition that deny rights to those who have been disenfranchised or forgotten. But, at the same time, we must ask if, out of that brokenness, we can establish what Halberstam describes as "another sense of that which is owed that does not presume a nexus of activities like recognition and acknowledgment, payment and gratitude " Or maybe Agee says it best, when he asks in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, "Who are you who will read these words . . . and through

what cause, by what chance, and for what purpose, . . . and what will you do about it?"

But then again, as Agee would also say, this is only a book at best. < >

[Song for the Unraveling of the World, Stories](#) by Brian Evenson [Coffee House Press, 9781566895484]

Brian Evenson: The shortest story, which opens the collection, is called "No Matter Which Way She Turned" and is the story of a girl who seems to have been transformed by otherworldly visitors into a girl who has two backs and no front. It's a strange story, very atmospheric, and tries to do a lot in a minimal number of words. That story was written because a website called People Holding asked me to write a piece in response to a photograph. They gave me a photograph that seemed to be a kind of religious revival meeting in which everyone's face was visible except one central girl. I think they expected me to write a story related to what the actual situation was, but as I stared at the photograph the thing I kept thinking about was the faceless girl.

That will probably give you a sense of whether this collection is for you.

Excerpt: No Matter Which Way We Turned

No matter which way we turned the girl, she didn't have a face. There was hair in front and hair in the back—only saying which was the front and which was the back was impossible. I got Jim Slip to look on one side and I looked from the other and the other members of the lodge tried to hold her gently or not so gently in place, but no matter how we looked or held her, the face just wasn't there. Her mother was screaming, blaming us, but what could we do about it? We were not to blame. There was nothing we could have done.

It was Verl Kramm who got the idea of calling out to the sky, calling out after the lights as they receded, to tell them to come and take her. You've taken half of her, he shouted. You've taken the same half of her twice. Now goddamn have the decency to take the rest of her.

Some of the others joined in, but they didn't come back, none of them. They left, and left us with a girl who, no matter how you looked at her, you saw her from the back. She didn't eat, or if she did, did so in a way we couldn't see. She just kept turning in circles, walking backward and knocking into things, trying to grab things with the backs of her hands. She was a whole girl made of two half girls, but wrongly made, of two of the same halves.

After a while we couldn't hardly bear to look at her. In the end we couldn't think what to do with her except leave her. At first, her mother protested and bit and clawed, but in the end she didn't want to take her either—she just wanted to feel better about letting her go, to have the blame rest on us.

We nailed planks across the door and boarded up the windows. At Veri's request, we left the hole in the roof in the hope they would come back for her. For a while we posted a sentry outside the door, who reported to the lodge on the sound of her scrabbling within, but once the noise stopped we gave that up as well.

Late at night, I dreamed of her, not the doubled half of the girl we had, but the doubled half we didn't. I saw her, miles above us, in air rarefied and thin, not breathable by common means at all, floating within their vessel. There she was, a girl who, no matter where you turned, always faced you. A girl who bared her teeth and stared, stared.
<>

[How to Read a Japanese Poem](#) by Steven D. Carter [Columbia University Press, 9780231186834]

How to Read a Japanese Poem offers a comprehensive approach to making sense of traditional Japanese poetry of all genres and periods. Steven D. Carter explains to Anglophone students the methods of composition and literary interpretation used by Japanese poets, scholars, and critics from ancient times to the present, and adds commentary that will assist the modern reader.

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Excerpt: Poets asked to define poetry, especially good poetry, often throw up their hands. "I can no more define poetry," said A. E. Housman, "than a terrier can define a rat." The medieval Japanese poet Shōtetsu (1381-1459) says something similar, albeit less colorfully: "A truly excellent poem is beyond logic.... One cannot explain it in words; it can only be experienced of itself." With that in mind, my title, *How to Read a Japanese Poem*, may seem a bit audacious. How does one dare to tell people how to read poetry if it is hard to even define what poetry is?

So perhaps my project would be better stated as, "How to begin to read a Japanese poem." My purpose is not to dictate a destination but to give a few signposts as readers walk the road. This book, then, offers my advice on how to approach Japanese poems in traditional forms, according largely to analytical methods established by Japanese poets, scholars, and critics over the centuries. Obviously there are other ways to approach such a task, but this one seems to me a wise one for beginners.

Each of my seven chapters focuses on separate genres of Japanese poetry and proceeds by analyzing examples in chronological order. In each case, I first give short notes about authorship, along with other details of context, including variously the time of composition, physical setting, social occasion, and textual setting—things to which particular attention has habitually been given by participants in Japanese poetic discourse from the earliest times. Then I move on to a short commentary. My decision to proceed from context to commentary is dictated by a central feature of

Japanese poetic discourse—namely, that poems are so often occasional. In other words, Japanese poems were often written in specific situations—social, political, and historical situations, in the broad sense—that need to be described for them to be understood in their own milieu.

Throughout the book, I employ the technical vocabulary of Japanese poetic discourse to frame my comments. Thus readers not familiar with the subject will encounter new technical terms such as *kakekotoba* (pivot word) and *honkadōri* (allusive variation), the meanings of which should become clear through usage. (For those who want more detail, I have included appendixes.) Beyond that, however, I have not been bashful about using other terms that are of broader scope, such as "metaphor," "symbol," and "prosody." While reducing Japanese poems to some Platonic notion of poetry writ large would be a mistake, not showing ways in which Japanese poetry is similar to poetry in other cultures would be equally foolish.

GENRES

Terminologies always do some harm to what they are meant to represent, and this is particularly true in the study of Japanese poetry. Throughout history, for instance, Japanese poets, critics, and scholars have often used the generic terms *waka* and *uta* almost interchangeably in reference to Japanese poetry in a general sense, while confusingly using those same terms to refer specifically to the highly canonical 5-7-5-7-7 genre that remained central to poetic discourse from the 700s to the 1800s. For the sake of clarity, in this book I use *uta* in reference to the general category of Japanese poetry and *waka* in the narrower sense of thirty-one-syllable poem—a defensible choice, I believe, however much it rankles the medievalist in me personally.¹ The first six of my chapters are in that sense devoted to what might be termed subgenres within *uta* as an overarching but untidy discourse, in the rough chronological order in which they emerge in history: *kodai kayō* (ancient song), *chōka* (long poem), *waka* (short poem), *kayō* (popular song), *renga* (linked verse), *haikai* (unorthodox poems), *kyōka* (comic *waka*), and *senryū* (comic *haikai*). I have also included a chapter on Chinese poems by Japanese poets (*kanshi*; also *karauta*, in contrast to

yamatouta), a genre that was intertwined with Japanese-language poems throughout its long history. If this conception seems confusing I can only say that it is no more so than the reality I am trying to represent.

Kodai kayō (ancient song) refers to our earliest Japanese poetic texts, usually called songs (the Japanese term used is, again, and frustratingly, *uta*) because they were often sung to instrumental accompaniment. The reader will notice, however, that on the page they often look no different from *chōka* or *waka* and use many of the same rhetorical techniques. By grouping all these forms—songs, *chōka*, and *waka*—together in a beginning chapter I am suggesting that in the earliest times the boundaries between them were not yet solid. However, as it is common practice to refer to these forms as they appear in early texts like *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters, 712) as "songs" while referring to later examples in *Man'yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, ca. 759) and later texts as not songs but *chōka* or *waka*, I follow that practice here.

Chōka (also read *nagauta*; literally, "long poem") are poems of indeterminate length, made up of alternating 5- and 7-syllable lines, concluding with a final 7-7-syllable couplet and often accompanied by a separate *hanka*, or "envoy," in 5-7-5-7-7 format. Poems of irregular prosody mostly predate the standardized form as employed in its heyday by Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (fl. ca. 680-700), Yamabeno Akahito (early eighth century), and others around the turn of the eighth century. At its zenith, the *chōka* allowed for more variety of subject matter than the *waka* form, but from the late ninth century on the *chōka* was employed primarily for elegies. Our primary sources for *chōka* are early histories and chronicles, the *Man'yōshū* and later imperial anthologies (*chokusenshū*), and the collections (*shū*) of individual poets. Poets writing in the form tend to employ parallelism and other kinds of repetitive syntax, formulaic phrasing such as fixed epithets or modifiers (*makurakotoba*, "pillow words"), and homophones and puns (*kakekotoba*) that function as syntactic pivots joining two predicates or clauses.

Waka (also referred to as tanka, meaning literally "short poem") are poems of five lines, following the syllabic pattern 5-7-5-7-7, with a caesura appearing at the end of any line but most often at the end of the third line. Our earliest examples of waka come from the same time as our earliest choka, and most of the writers of the latter wrote in both forms. The general topics of love and the four seasons dominate the waka canon from the eighth century onward, but other broad topics also appear, such as travel, Buddhism, and lamentation, and poems were also written in the context of correspondence and for ritual occasions. Our primary sources for waka are various kinds and sizes of collections, including those of individual poets, salons, or other kinds of groups, the largest being an entire "court" memorialized in an imperial anthology. Also important are poems inscribed on screen paintings, poems composed for poem contests, and poems contained in prose works (histories, talcs, diaries, travel records, critical writings, etc.). Poets writing in the waka form employ parallelism only rarely but do use pillow words, pivot words, and other kinds of wordplay, while also using elliptical phrasing and other devices that allow for semantic expansion, such as borrowing phrases or lines from earlier poems.

Kayo (popular song): Throughout history, poems in Chinese or Japanese were often chanted. However, we also know that popular songs—i.e., lyrics written to be sung melodically or to instrumental accompaniment (kayo)—were a feature of Japanese culture from the earliest times. Four of the major subgenres are saibara (folk song), some of which may have had Chinese origins; kagurauta (sacred song), associated with Shinto rituals; taueuta (rice-planting song); and imayō (modern song) of the sort popular among the nobility from the mid-1100s onward. Later, beginning in the late medieval era, came kouta, or "little songs," a term that is also used to refer to songs to samisen accompaniment in the Edo period, which for reasons of length I have not included here. Songs often consist of alternating 5- and 7-syllable lines but are of varying length. That we rarely know their authorship hints that they evolved over time and changed greatly as they circulated. Topics are also various, but in a general way Japanese songs

tend to express emotions of all sorts, from elation or passion to amazement or frustration. As is the case in other forms, love is a common subtheme, but all one can say beyond that is that songs tend to document the vicissitudes of human existence, often humorously and in dramatic terms.

Renga (also read rsuraneuta; literally, "linked verse") are made up of alternating long (5-7-5) and short (7-7) stanzas, any two of which would make up a waka, in formal terms. At its zenith in the late fourteenth through the mid-sixteenth centuries, the standard form of renga was one hundred verses (a form known as the hyakuin). Generally speaking, hyakuin were composed by a group of poets at a sitting, although for practice and sometimes on social occasions poets often composed just tsukeku (linked "couplets" or simply "links"), which is in that sense the basic unit of renga composition. Renga collections, whether made up of works by one poet or many, generally offer only tsukeku and hokku, or "first verses." In a broad sense, the subject matter of the subgenre is the same as the subject matter for waka, although some variations in vocabulary and thematic material did occur over time. There were elaborate rules (shikimoku) involved in directing the composition of a sequence, the aesthetic and social purposes of which include thematic variety and highly regulated change. Many full hyakuin remain from the early 1400s onward, and the record also includes two imperially commissioned anthologies and the collections of the works by individual poets. Also important are tsukeku and hokku included in diaries and critical works. Renga poets use all the literary devices mentioned for waka and, -as one might expect given the shortness of the form, go farther in the direction of enjambment and elliptical phrasing.

Haikai is a word used to refer to both "unorthodox" and "humorous" sequences and to the first verses (hokku) of such sequences. Links or first verses involving wordplay or bawdy subject matter were produced in renga meetings from the earliest days of that genre, but they began to be recorded and anthologized only around 1500, and then usually without their author's names being recorded. Not long after that, some renga masters became known for their haikai efforts and developed a new

subgenre—haikai renku—"haikai linked verse"—that in time gained its own canons that departed from those for waka and renga and were in that sense unorthodox. The standard venue of composition was the hyakuin, although from around the time of Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694) the kasen, or thirty-six-verse form, gained acceptance.

Composition of tsukeku for practice (maekuzuke) was common; later on, as first verses gained independent artistic status, hokku contests were also important. Our source for haikai is again collections

wa (f)6.5ei-8.3 (n)-8.2 (r)0.5 (l)-3.7 (c)-4.4 (o)-3 (r)0.5d(g)-7.8nd noro 2 , ao 2 r (fo)-3 (r)0.5m(w)-6.5s. E(n)-8.2lip a4

the richness and diversity of Japanese poetic expression. <>

[The People v. Ferlinghetti: The Fight to Publish Allen Ginsberg's "Howl"](#) by Ronald K. L. Collins and David M. Skover [Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 9781538125892]

Lawrence Ferlinghetti's name does not appear in any First Amendment treatise or casebook. And yet when the best-selling poet and proprietor of City Lights Books was indicted under California law for publishing and selling Allen Ginsberg's poem, *Howl*, Ferlinghetti buttressed the tradition of dissident expression and ended an era when minds were still closed, candid literature still taboo, and when selling banned books was considered a crime.

[The People v. Ferlinghetti](#) is the story of a rebellious poet, a revolutionary poem, an intrepid book publisher, and a bookseller unintimidated by federal or local officials. There is much color in that story: the bizarre twists of the trial, the swagger of the lead lawyer, the savvy of the young ACLU lawyer, and the surprise verdict of the Sunday school teacher who presided as judge. With a novelist's flair, noted free speech authorities, Ronald K. L. Collins and David Skover tell the true story of an American maverick who refused to play it safe and who in the process gave staying power to freedom of the press in America. *The People v. Ferlinghetti* will be of interest to anyone interested in the history of free speech in America and the history of the Beat poets.

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Excerpt: The "Self-Made Man"

I am a self-made man
And I have plans for the future —
Lawrence Ferlinghetti, *A Coney Island of the Mind*

American Maverick.

Stop the frame there—behold the man!

Those two words portray much about the man who devoted decades to perfecting the art of freedom writ large. As a poet, painter, playwright, social activist, environmentalist, bookseller and book publisher, he charted his own life course with creative imagination and pragmatic conviction.

College man, Navy man, newspaper man, businessman, artistic man, and dissident man—it's all part of his DNA. His modus operandi: Quiet when many are shouting / outspoken when most are silent. His words: "Poetry is the shadow cast by our streetlight imaginations." More words: "Pity the nation whose people are sheep, and whose shepherds mislead them." Still other words: "I am waiting for the war to be fought which will make the world safe for anarchy." There is yet more—a life cast large on a canvas unwilling to yield to the limits of its borders.

The man, the American maverick of whom we speak: Lawrence Monsanto Ferlinghetti.

At five score, there is still poetic breath left in his literary lungs. The streams of his consciousness pour out into his latest novel, *Little Boy*, published this year. It is the story of one man's extraordinary life and the madness of the century in which that life was situated—"a story steeped in the rhythmic energy of the Beats, gleaming with Whitman's

visionary spirit, channeling the incantatory power of Proust and Joyce," said his publisher. "This is Lawrence Ferlinghetti's last word." In *Little Boy*, Ferlinghetti ventures homeward to where he began his career as a writer, journalist, and short story author—one who took his first impressionistic cues from Thomas Wolfe and Henry David Thoreau, among others.

Quiet and detached, words were his window to the world. He traded in them in the marketplace as an unrepentant poet, alternative bookseller, and fearless book publisher. Print gave him his voice. In those ways, and so many others, Ferlinghetti stands proud on his island of liberty. Its shores beckon a world gone mad to heed the words of the poet Emma Lazarus: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

'His fame as a poet is vast (millions of copies of his books have been sold); his talent as a painter is widely recognized (his works have been displayed in galleries and museums throughout the world); and his manifesto as an activist is manifest ("Poets, come out of your closets"). Many awards rest on his mantels, and popular culture has tapped into both his beat and bravado. He was a major figure in the cultural revolution known as the "Beat Generation," and gave a publishing presence to several of the great figures of that movement. And, of course, he was the man who in 1956 breathed publishing life into Allen Ginsberg's poetry. All of this and volumes more have been and will continue to be chronicled by historians. Important as that is, our charge is not to add to that bounty.

How, then, to paint his portrait? How to sketch his life? Color him what?

Turn here, turn there, turn where? To the law and the outlaw, to the poet and the publisher, to the crime and its consequences. Yes, start there: that story, our canvas.

Lawrence Ferlinghetti. Tag him an outsider. His name is absent from the pages of the law. It does not appear in any First Amendment treatise or free speech casebook. It is not a name law students learn about, or one that lawyers or judges tout. The Supreme Court has never cited his name as a precedent for press freedom. And yet, like

Benjamin Franklin Bache (1769-1798), the rebel colonial printer and publisher, Ferlinghetti buttressed the tradition of dissident expression. He did so at a pinpoint in the modern era when many minds were dosed, when candid literature was still taboo in many circles, when selling banned books was still a crime, and when even the publication of a poem could bring a criminal indictment.

Click the dock back 62 years and you'll find the story of *People v. Ferlinghetti*, a most unusual one. It is a story about a rebellious poet, a revolutionary poem (Allen Ginsberg's "Howl"), an intrepid book publisher, and a bookseller unintimidated by threats from federal and local officials—the purported keepers of our moral canons. There is much color in that story: the bizarre twists of the trial, the swagger of the lead lawyer, the savvy of the seasoned ACLU lawyer, the sway of the young ACLU lawyer, the absence of the poet-author Ginsberg, and the surprise verdict rendered by a Sunday school preacher who presided as judge. There is also the remarkable record of a book publisher who combined an erudite calm with an ardent conviction to protect principle. The precedent set by that publisher (and bookstore owner and poet) first changed his world and then reconfigured ours—it set in motion a new era in press and poetic freedom. Though that precedent never found its way onto the pages of the Supreme Court Reports, it did, nonetheless, weave its way into the quilt of the American culture. Since then, the precedent has stood, though Ferlinghetti's work remains unfinished—the rock of the law remains to be pushed.

The *People v. Ferlinghetti* is the true story of a maverick American who refused to play it safe and who in the process gave staying power to freedom of the press in America, first in 1957 and then again in 2007—his "howl" for liberty. It is a story of two friends: a poet (Allen Ginsberg) and a publisher (Ferlinghetti). It is a story easily lost to time—in the shadows of those whose company Ferlinghetti kept (great literary figures), or in the aftermath of the movement (the "Beat Generation") he helped launch. Beyond those borders, however, there lingers the story of a most unusual man who foresaw the great potential of a poem to change the culture and the law. Our aim is to retell that

slice of his life story, not in tried-and-tedious lines but rather with the brio with which it was lived.

The greatest debts are often owed to those whose sacrifices are like the air we breathe—essential but unnoticed. This is the case of Lawrence Ferlinghetti—a name known in poetic circles but largely unheard of outside those quarters. Yet, for those who value the freedom of American mavericks—the liberty to rail against repression of the kind that robs men and women of their true worth—that name deserves a place in the American mind and in the annals of our free speech history.

Call him radical, rebellious, or revolutionary. Brand his City Lights bookstore a gathering place for lonesome outcasts, excitable poets, road-weary literati, Percy Shelly devotees, restless radicals, gender-benders, feisty feminists, and for the rest of the avant-garde crowd. Still, to stand there on Columbus Avenue in the shadow of the man and his San Francisco shop is to relive those moments when liberty first took refuge there and then spread across space and time to successive generations ... including those yet to be born.

America's free-spirited book publisher / defender of the outsider / uninhibited bookstore owner / dissident poet / democratic socialist / mild-mannered anarchist-like firebrand / Walt Whitman visionary / American maverick: this is his story, the story of a quiet man who has long had more than a streak of Tom Paine in the fighting folds of his soul.

Excerpt: Onward: "Where Are Whitman's Wild Children?"

Great Oracle, sleeping through the centuries,
Awaken now at last
And tell us how to save us from ourselves
and how to survive our own rulers
MP who would make a plutocracy of
our democracy
in the Great Divide
between the rich and the poor
in whom Walt Whitman heard America
singing —Lawrence Ferlinghetti,
September 20, 2001

A brave man and a brave poet. —Bob Dylan

It is an astonishing fact: a poet wrote the first major treatise on freedom of the press in the modern era. Before Benedict De Spinoza, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Justices Oliver Wendell Holmes, Louis Brandeis, Hugo Black, William O. Douglas, and William Brennan expressed any of their thoughts on the topic of press freedom, there was John Milton and his celebrated *Areopagitica: A Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing* (1644). Few works capture its insights in defense of freedom of the press; few works rival *Areopagitica's* condemnations of censorship—a pamphlet addressed "To the PARLIAMENT of ENGLAND." It was a bold move coming as soon as it did on the heels of the Licensing Order of 1643 whereby Parliament compelled authors to obtain a government license in order to publish any print matter.

Milton, like Ferlinghetti, was a maverick. If the poet Milton was a friend of the Enlightenment, then the polemicist Milton was also an enemy of the Church and its rule over the lives of its subjects. If he helped advance the cause of truth in the marketplace, his broadminded polemics made it possible for that truth to be fiercely attacked. If his notion of a free press pointed to its use in furtherance of the rule of law, the radical in him defended the killing of the king. And if high values took refuge in his thought, what appeared to many as low ones (such as his defense of divorce) found sanctuary in his writings. Little wonder, then, that he coined the word "pandemonium."

To be sure, the spiritual Milton was far more conservative than the spiritually unconventional Ferlinghetti. Nonetheless, both were radical for their times. And even if the author of *Areopagitica* might not countenance the gospel of Howl, there is something about Ferlinghetti's defense of it that would ring true to Milton. That something has to do with the imperative to contest the "corruptions of power," to be skeptical of convention, and to be free to challenge authority. Their common bond was that both poets "detested rigidity, stasis, withdrawal, timidity, small-mindedness, indecision, ... [and blind deference] to authority." It

is at that juncture that the worlds of Areopagitica and Coney Island of the Mind meet.

This point is borne out in an irony that has escaped many, though not Ferlinghetti. The case of *People v. Ferlinghetti* centered on what the Collector of Customs, Chester MacPhee, and Captain William Hanrahan found objectionable—those crude words or obscene implications let loose in Allen Ginsberg's poem. That was the charge, the so-called threat to society; that was the central issue of the trial; and that was the point that *Roth v. United States* was examined to settle. Gauged by that narrow focus, the victory for freedom of the press was one linked to the right to say in print whatever one wished when it came to so-called offensive language. What is ironic is that such objections represented the poem's least dangerous threats to the societal norms of the time. The real dangers posed by *Howl*, by contrast, went far beyond its colorful words and its suggested sexual indiscretions. There was much more at stake here; there was a subterranean message far more extreme and far more objectionable to anyone who viewed *Howl* through the lens of the poet who wrote it and the publisher who printed and distributed it.

Howl was a manifesto of the powerless and the penniless and their countless attempts to restructure the evil world ordained by Moloch, the god of money, greed, exploitation, and more. The poem was a rant against capitalism, commercialism, militarism, authoritarianism, racism, and the sexual moralism of the day. It celebrated queers of all kinds coming out of their closets and into the rebellious streets to reclaim their dignity and proclaim their liberty. Ginsberg's poem pointed to nothing short of a cultural revolution, one that traced back to the poetic consciousness of Walt Whitman.

The *Howl* victory thus represented something far more significant than a triumph in the arena of the law of indecency and obscenity. Given its radical underpinnings, Ginsberg's lines were more akin to seditious messages, that is, calls to overthrow the established order. True, they were not explicit and their threat was not imminent. Still, those who first heard *Howl* read at 6 Gallery and those who thereafter celebrated its "Pocket Poet" edition

probably saw in it what Ferlinghetti relished in it—its uninhibited call, to redefine the codes by which we live. In 6 Gallery, Ginsberg gave voice to that call; in the "Pocket Poet" pamphlet, Ferlinghetti gave it permanence.

Dating back to antiquity, poetry has a long record of posing a threat to the established order. Plato noted as much in his *Republic*; Aristophanes revealed as much in his *Lysistrata*; William Blake confirmed as much in his *Jerusalem*; Percy Shelley demonstrated as much in his *The Masque of Anarchy*; Charles Baudelaire proved as much in his *The Flowers of Evil*; Maya Angelou disclosed as much in her *Still I Rise*; Gil Scott-Heron communicated as much in his *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*; and Lawrence Ferlinghetti said as much in his *Poetry as Insurgent Art*. Ginsberg's *Howl* is part of that rebellious tradition, at once dangerous and inspiring.

To write such poetry is one thing; to publish it yet another. The latter, after all, requires a willingness to be held legally responsible for the messages of the former. The nexus between the two forged in *People v. Ferlinghetti* represents a triumph for the Madisonian vision of free speech and free-press freedoms championed 228 years ago with the ratification of the First Amendment. Even beyond that, it represents a vindication of the principle defended 375 years ago in *Areopagitica*.

There is yet more in the mix of what made the victory in *People v. Ferlinghetti* the cultural landmark that it became. There was the role of the San Francisco press. Recall, as noted in Chapter 5, San Francisco Chronicle columnist Abe Melinkoff's attack on censorship in his "Iron Curtain on the Embarcadero." Recall, as well, that the Chronicle's book review editor turned over his Sunday column, "Between the Lines," to Ferlinghetti to allow him to respond publicly to the government's attempts to censor *Howl*. Then there was the Chronicle's editorial with the damning headline, "Making a Clown of San Francisco," along with a column titled "Orwell's 'Big Brother' Is Watching over Us," followed by a cartoon portraying a bulldog-faced policeman pounding a notice on a bookstore door. The caption: "Hanrahan's Law—All books must be fit for children to read—SFPD."

Think of it all from a First Amendment perspective:

A poet dared to write a poem condemning the guardians of the societal canon, a publisher dared to print that poem, a bookseller dared to sell and circulate that poem and then defend it in court, a newspaper dared to rally to the cause of the poet, publisher, and bookseller, and finally a god-fearing judge dared to protect the poem and the publisher in the name of the law. For those several months in 1956 and 1957, the cultural and constitutional stars aligned in a way to give staying power to a principle boldly embraced by a poet, a publisher, a bookseller and his clerk, a civil liberties organization, a local newspaper, and a municipal judge. It was a Madisonian moment if ever there were one.

But there is yet more to the story.

* * *

Censorship struggles to persist when the will of courageous men and women place it beyond the bounds of the acceptable. That was the creed of Whitman and Emerson, poets who celebrated the howls of the nonconformist, the iconoclast, the dissident, and the sexual outlaw who from time immemorial have been thees of blu7 (h)-8.28.3 (n)-8.1 (o)-3 (se)-3 ()TJ0-1.193 TD((o)-3 (rt)-4.7 (h)-8.2 (o)8.4 (d)-7.8 (o)8.3 (x)-

the dissentr." Let it feed on the spirit of the romantic that struggles

mind of the man and his life view. Here is how it opens:

In paths untrodden,
In the growth by margins of pond-waters,
Escaped from the life that exhibits itself
From all the standards hitherto publish'd,
from the pleasures,
profits, conformities,
Which too long I was offering to feed my
soul,
Clear to me now standards not yet
publish'd, clear to me that
my soul

Those "untrodden paths" await freethinkers, skeptics, and nonconformists. Those future travelers yearn to live life free of "standards hitherto publish'd." They are the ones destined to remove themselves "from the clank of the world." Little wonder that Ralph Waldo Emerson was so taken with Leaves when his eyes first rested on its text: "I greet you at the beginning of a great career." Recall, it was that passage from Emerson's July 21, 1855 letter to Whitman that Ferlinghetti echoed in his telegram to Ginsberg after hearing "Howl" performed at 6 Gallery.

Much of the same Whitmanic thinking finds expression, though reconfigured a bit, in Ferlinghetti's "Populist Manifesto #1" poem, which opens with these words:

Poets, come out of your closets,
Open your windows, open your doors,
You have been holed-up too long
in your closed worlds

Ferlinghetti's poets do not retreat from the world; nay, they launch themselves into it with vigor. In this manifesto, there is the same Whitmanesque skepticism, the same nonconformity associated with the bearded poet with the wide brim hat. But in Ferlinghetti's hands, that nonconformity points outwards to social action—toward political justice, racial justice, gender justice, "queer" justice, economic justice, and environmental justice. It is in that spirit that later in the poem Ferlinghetti asks: "Where are Whitman's Wild Children, where [are] the great voices speaking out?"

Indeed, where are such voices in these times of our American crisis? In that crisis (the kind that tries our souls), one of Whitman's wild children continues to

speak softly but forcefully: Lawrence Ferlinghetti, painter, poet, publisher, bookstore owner, and social activist—

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d'évènements: performances musicales et théâtrales, lectures de poésie, et exposés.

This is a bilingual English/French edition.

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"Les porteurs de mots" festival program

Excerpt: Pierre Joris: An important question for these conversations: how do our artistic practices — poetry, music, performance — infiltrate & displace our fields of action, whether these fields are cultural or other. Our course of action: I will converse with Adonis for a while first, and will then open up the conversation, first to those actively participating in this meeting, and secondly to the audience.

I would like to start off by considering the text we listened to yesterday, i.e. *Histoire qui se déchire sur le corps d'une femme* [History Torn Apart on the Body of a Woman]. It's the title itself that immediately calls out to me. "History," is that history with a capital H? Or historical small talk of the legendary, mythopoetic kind? That's the first part of the question, the second part being why history is torn apart on the body — wouldn't it rather be the body that's ripped apart in history, that is ripped apart by history? Echoing yesterday

evening's presentation: Hagar's exile settles the score of the feminine in all the monotheistic religions. And by following you, Adonis — "neither prophet, nor magician" —, how to open up our fields of investigation to these exilic sources, without plunging into a sedentary male / female binary? To use Nicole Peyrafitte's term, how to create an expansive, rather than an extensive space, a space that remains in question?

Adonis: Thank you, dear Pierre, for your praise, and many thanks to our hosts, and thanks also to those who are with us today. History here is the fate of monotheism, so it is a point of view on monotheism, but one seen from a woman's stance, from the stance of what has been rejected. The monotheistic god has only created man in his own image, not woman. As woman was not created in the image of god: she was created from a rib of man, which is why woman was originally rejected by monotheism. This vision, incarnated by the entire history of the three monotheistic religions, is what the poem tries to revise, by giving to woman a voice to criticize it radically. I don't know whether I have succeeded, or whether the poem is beautiful. But it is a critique of monotheism, as I think monotheism has to be revised, and I think, personally, i.e. this is my personal opinion, that the monotheist vision is a starting point of human beings' decadence. Strong stuff, harsh even, but that is what I believe.

PJ: So it is history with a capital H that starts off your text, not legend, even if, and we'll return to that, it is often the effect of legend and anecdote, as covered by certain people, which then canonically turns into law. In that respect, then, I would like to ask you whether the fait that for about 95% of the poem you take a woman's voice, whether that is not an experimental form of working, vis-à-vis classical, or even contemporary Arabic poetry?

Adonis: Our history, ours as Arabs, is very complicated, especially with Islam. I think, first of all, we need to rethink Islam. I can't talk about Judaism, or Christianity, it's up to Jews and Christians to do that. But I can speak of Muslim monotheism. In order to better understand the poem, or better respond to your question, I must

call to mind that Islam is, as you know, the last monotheism, but it was the most complete and the most closed-off system, and it was above all founded on a vision of power, and thus of violence. I'd say it's been founded on three pillars. The first one being that the prophet of Islam is the so-called seal of prophethood, the last of prophets, there will be no more prophets. So this is the first closure. The second pillar: the truths relayed by this prophet are ultimate truths, and there will be no other truths. That's the second closure. And the third: the world consists of two peoples, Muslims and non-Muslims, Jews or non-Jews, Christians or non-Christians. Essential here is therefore not the human being as human being, but the believer. The fourth pillar, if one pursues this train of thought, if one pushes it a bit further along still, is that God himself has nothing left to say, because he has said his last word to his last prophet. As far as Islam is concerned, I would say this vision is organically related to power. And power is organically related to violence. So it is a world of power and of violence. The prophet was the messenger of God, but in practice, God has become the messenger of the prophet. He is but a means to obtain what power has on its mind. Religion, properly speaking, is but a means, an instrument, to achieve the history of power and of violence. And I think that what can be said of Islam in this respect, can also be said of Judaism and Christianity, with a small difference I'd like to point out. I make a difference between the person of Christ and the church, and when I say Christianity in this context, I'm talking about the church and not about Christ. Christ was God, who died to save man, and it was God who set woman free. He was the first. With Judaism and Islam it is, on the contrary, man who has to die to defend God. That's completely the opposite. I'll end here, with that difference.

PJ : But you weren't going to talk about other monotheistic religions. Coming myself from one, Christianity, even if I rejected it at a very young age, I'd say the Christian church is in some respects quite jealous, because Islam is, indeed, the perfection of the other monotheistic religions, and in that respect it is the most advanced point of the same thought, of the same desire for absolute power.

Adonis: Absolutely. The proof is that we're experiencing this history. Monotheism is always a beginning, and if we head into the future, what is to come is always behind us, never ahead. In all monotheisms, if one progresses, one has to go back, to Moses, to Mohammed, to Christ, the future is always the past.

PJ : So actually it is the father of all, i.e. Abraham, who is also the father of Ishmael, so the consort of Hagar, who ...

Adonis: I don't know; I daresay maybe one has to rethink Abraham, too. Perhaps he, too, is a pure invention, a legend, which therefore is to be rethought. But that doesn't change anything, he's there, more alive than ever, like Mohammed, and like the prophets from the Bible that are still there. And it's not us, but they who rule the world today.

PJ : So the definition of the Arab nation that you give, so to speak, that you put into Hagar's mouth — "My bed, a slave nation that breeds by night and tears apart its children during the day" — can be applied to all monotheistic religions?

Adonis: Just look at a living example: Jerusalem, the sacred city for the three monotheistic religions. So if there's only one God, if the word of God is one for the three monotheisms, then that city should at least be an extraordinary example of living together, of peace, of humanity, etc., whereas it is nearly the most savage city in the world — for which saving the human being is not the goal at all. Stone itself, stone is dearer to it, more human, than human beings themselves. It doesn't defend the human, but rather an imaginary world of power, of interests; it doesn't defend the human.

PJ : Can I return once more to something you have Hagar say: "Between me and myself, my exile, and my question about myself, remains unanswered." Why does it remain without answer, and whom does she address it to? And is she entitled to an answer from someone other than herself?

Adonis: One should always see non-subjectivity in monotheism. There is no subjectivity in a monotheistic religion like Islam. There's always the group, what we call today the umma. The individual is but a leaf on a tree. It doesn't have any meaning. Its meaning is to be there, on the

branch of that tree, but as an individual it doesn't exist. So there's no subjectivity as such in Islam. Islam says: "If you interpret even the Quran individually, you can't do that." The interpretation of the Quran is a collective interpretation; it is the abstraction of the umma. So the individual, especially woman, doesn't exist. It is a word, and not a being that is master of itself and master of its destiny. And thus it doesn't exist.

PJ: So in this respect there wouldn't be a difference between women and men?

Adonis: No, one can't compare women and men. A woman is an absolute dependence; she has no independence whatsoever. None.

PJ: When you say "Woman, a tongue asleep that hasn't woken up yet. She is always ..."

Adonis: It's an image to wake up women. Because I always say, that if the Arab world wants to be free, wants to free itself, it is women who have to liberate Arab men and the Arab world. If women free it, the Arab world will restore itself. Subjeéted, in fetters, it isn't in any case against that. So the conflict, the real war throughout Arab history, is the war between the apostates and the believers. Or those who have been called apostates. It was the war between poets and the so-called doctors of law, between mysticism and orthodoxy, between philosophers and religion. And that is our history. And its richness. But unfortunately, up until now, it is forbidden to see our history from that perspective.

PJ: Hope almost arises when you again have Hagar say: "The grass is lines, / the earth a notebook, / and I am the ink of this place." And at the same time, the idea came to me that, yes, she's the ink, but there isn't yet any kalâm, there isn't yet a pen, that rather phallic thing if you will, that should canalize the ink. Can she become kalâm, too?

Adonis: It's an extraordinary thing that those who have created what we call Arab civilization were not the orthodox, the believers, the men in power, with some exceptions, there are always exceptions, but generally speaking, and as far as institutions and power go, it's always been the poets that aren't believers or weren't believers, the philosophers that weren't believers, the mystics that

shook up the orthodox religious vision, it's they who built this great civilization. And, for example, we absolutely do not see, in all of our poetic history, a single poet of whom we can say that he's at once a great poet and believer, as we can say of the likes of [Paul] Claudel, for instance, or Mario Luzi. All the poets were anti-religious. And if you read from this point of view, then mysticism was a great revolution. They've changed the very conception of god.

God in mysticism isn't an exterior force that directs the world from the outside. In Islam's mysticism, too, God is not an abstract force, he's immanent, he's part of the world, of things, of trees and of mountains. And mystics have even changed the conception of identity. In Islam and the monotheistic religions, identity is: we're Christian, we're Jewish, we're Muslim. The mystic says: no, we're human, and that identity is created gradually by man. And the human being creates his identity in creating his work. So the mystics have changed everything. Even in terms of writing, so-called automatic writing, for instance, has been called an unconscious dictation. They've changed the conception of reality, etc. It was a revolution inside of Islam, but that revolution has been rejected.

PJ : In fact I want to return to that specific question in greater detail during the second hour. For the time being, I'd like to return to the desert. Hagar is an important figure for me, too — look (shows Adonis a tattoo on his left forearm) — you see, I have tattooed, inscribed on my arm, the Arabic word for exile, h.j.r. — also the title of one of my books — and of which the three consonants also spell out the Hebrew name of Hagar. But I would like to go back further than Abraham, he who comes from Ur; I want to go back to the Sumerian side, and above all to the figure of Inanna, that goddess on whom Nicole and I have worked a lot, more specifically through the historical figure of Enheduanna, perhaps the first poetess whose name has come to us as well as some texts

— superb ones at that. She was the daughter of King Sargon and the priestess of Inanna at Ur. And there, for example, on a poetological level, there's still a lot of work to be done, much to be uncovered, because it would appear that all her

poems were written in two voices, one for the man and one for the woman, so a certain equality and at once also a great proximity. All of this mythology...

Adonis: ... was upset by monotheism. Woman was the foundation not only of daily life, of society, but was also the foundation of thought. Like men. There was no difference in that respect. But imagine a prophet, the father of prophets, who leads his child and his wife into the desert. He lets them go and she leaves, remember.

PJ: Wouldn't that be the job of the poet, to go back to these anterior myths and to bring them back, i.e. to not let the history, and the poetry and poetics of Enheduanna be lost or buried under male sand for centuries to come?

Adonis: Absolutely. And that is, at any rate, what we've tried to do in our journal. That is to say, for us, Islam yes, but that was part of our universal history. It entered as an essential element, but was then transformed in mysticism, in poetry, in philosophy, and thus is part of things at that level. That's what we thought — but the reality of things is something else again.

PJ: Yes, and that's why at the end of this book — we're still talking about History Torn Apart on the 'Body of a Woman — the woman is stoned to death. Why? Isn't it precisely, as I've just said, the job of the poet to rewrite history? That is what I have tried to affirm in a play that was staged in 2016. The play stages Ingeborg Bachmann, the Austrian poet, in her barzakh, her coma, her passage from life to death — that took three weeks — during which I have her meet the important men of her life, among whom Hans Werner Henze, the composer, with whom she works on an opera that also tells the story of Orpheus and Eurydice. And in my text, Bachmann says that when Orpheus turns around, he drops dead because he sees Eurydice well and alive and in union with the cosmic serpent that Nicole [Peyrafitte] spoke of last night. And Eurydice steps over Orpheus's corpse and enters the light of the world. Evidently, there's Henze who says: no, no, you can't rewrite the myths of old, myths are myths, but Bachmann insists that such is precisely the job of

the poet, to rewrite, to write, to compose the myths that we need.

Adonis: A lot of anthropological studies are needed. Why did monotheism change the position of women in society and life, and in thought? It's something to be examined, and I haven't seen any studies of this problem. Why did monotheism change the situation of women in our existence, and in daily and social life? I can't answer that question. But I notice it's been like that. Why did they separate the human into a body and a soul? The body is the dwelling place of sin that one should absolutely loathe, and man ... or they said there's an other world in the heavens where he'll have all that a human being wants. What is illicit on earth becomes licit. In every sense, even homosexuality. Why do we do that? Why does a person believe this, why did he turn into a believer? These are things to examine. Monotheism has succeeded in splitting up the human being, in dividing the world. I once asked a priest: but if the body of a woman is the dwelling place of sin, why then do you accept that a woman could beget the prophet?

PJ: A God even!

Adonis: For example. He didn't say anything. So there are questions that up until today do not have answers. And that I try to criticize or answer, but poetically speaking. A lot of other studies are needed, but unfortunately I don't see any. I don't have any answers to these questions.

PJ: So, let's move on a bit. I don't know where we're at in terms of time, but let's move on toward the second section, that I defined somewhat as ...

Adonis: ... sorry, for instance, what is contradictory is that Islam believes that the prophets in the bible are the prophets of Muslims, too. But why then such a war between both? If your prophet is mine, why would I wage war against you?

PJ : Because he wants power.

Adonis: Indeed! So monotheism and Islam were economic and political coups d'état. It's as simple as that. But they needed an ideology. Islam was the first that used poetry as an ideological instrument. But it failed.

PJ: So then, how can, how should we, as poets, musicians, artists, respond? What is our job?

Adonis: First, to rethink monotheism, and I have done what I can. I am anti-monotheist in every respect. Radically so, and totally so. I think being monotheistic is being against oneself, against the human being, because the world is a movement, and the world is an opening unto infinity, and what is essential for a human being is the other human being. It's not a world that doesn't exist that is the ... a person who is monotheistic doesn't live on earth, he lives in his imagination. So monotheism is actually a psychological case; it isn't a social case or one of civilization; it's rather psychological to me. How is it possible someone, a young man enters a church or a mosque and blows himself up, or sets about killing people he doesn't know, children ... where does this conviction come from? Where does the idea come from? And a Muslim does today in the name of Islam, what a Christian did during the inquisition, and a Jew, too. Not amongst themselves, that is different, though. The Jewish people have managed well to live together in peace, in spite of contradictions. I once saw a demonstration of Orthodox Jews with banners saying "Zionism is a new Nazism." A Jew did that! So there is a certain peace amongst the Jewish contradictions. But we don't see it in Islam or among Christians. That is to be re-thought, too. All the monotheistic religions. We need to question ourselves again.

PJ : You say it's a psychological question, which is true. But I'm trying to see whether, on top, one shouldn't try to connect that psychological question with more down-to-earth questions, social and environmental ones?

Adonis: Pierre, look at it this way... First of all, you and I, we're two different civilizations, from two different countries, two different historical moments ... What is essential between — not between you and I — no, between humans, is believing, it's not the human side. If you are a believer like me, then you're closer to me. Why isn't the human that which you and I have in common? The human side even separates us; what unifies us are the ideas concerning belief, faith. This is essentially false — and we live inside that falsehood. And each one of us is responsible for

this, each one of us. Power takes advantage of it, politics take advantage of it, uses it. The case that strikes us all, is the case of Islam and Judaism. Islam is but a new version of the Bible! This conflict, why this conflict, why? There you go.

PJ : We've said so. For me it's essentially a matter of power. Adonis: It was the conflict between brothers.

PJ : That's very biblical, the conflict between brothers. At this point, I'd like to proceed to the second theme I've proposed for these conversations, and which for me is precisely: how to create ... because we also know that the basic materialism that the 20th century has tried to install on all levels doesn't work either. That there is a spiritual element somewhere. How, then, create an a-religious spirituality, a spirituality not stuck in monotheism, or faith. How can a spirituality serve poetry today — and here we're obviously approaching Sufi thought. When we heard you talk in New York a month ago, you used this lovely phrase: "Religion is an answer, poetry is a question." How can Sufism, which is usually seen as the counterpart, the mystical side of Islam, and is in a certain way,

and most certainly interlinked with the religious, with matters of faith — as, for example, by the repetition of the name of God to get into a trance —, how can such a spirituality lead us toward an a-theological spirituality? How can Sufism be freed from the religious?

Adonis: Perhaps one should find a different word for spirituality. Spirituality brings us back to religion, to monotheism, so we should find a different word. Because when we say spiritual, there's what is bodily, there's religion, there's paradise, etc.; there's an entire imaginary that links to this word.

I can't think of a different one, so let's use it by default. But the fact of writing, the fact of writing poetry, the fact of loving ... man ... one should first look at the place of man in this universe. Do we have a final answer as regards our existence within this universe, within this world? Religion tells us yes, but all that is a-religious tells us no. The world is infinite, and a human being is finite, and what a

human being should be beyond the world that's distorted living in. It should be everything, experiences, and not on ideas. And that is the mystical revolution — instead of founding the universe on ideas, on a system of beliefs, they found it immediately so easy when you say it, experience. And the Adonis but what the hell we even have this huge and there's no answer and go beyond all of these complicated Sufi texts, own experience. And they're all speaking different question I've been there's no mystic alike asking a self for a long time and to which you may great experience, like an ocean, and it's the question of the difference in that ocean, each has his own experience, poetry and in Sufism. In each his own force and his own image, what is too illuminating. There are friendships, but each one is his own of God or of the absolute, and so it allows us to see something. For poetry, on the other hand, there's no need for a God or a master, and habits ... It's a world founded on these ideas. It isn't so the image cannot, or doesn't need to have that function of veiling a light that is too dazzling for us and by trying to poor humans. It is therefore supposed to illuminate say, each one of us, what we really experience meaning, the world — but at the same time, why inside our bodies, not inside our heads. I think that our intimate life can help us a lot. I think that in terms of the relations between women & men, if we get closer to our bodies, we will live better and have a deeper understanding. And as long as we are far away from our bodies and closer to our heads, we're in trouble.

And there isn't an instant, in the act of loving, in love, when we feel that ... we never know whether we are alive or whether we are dead, when there's no presence of the head's reason. That can help us see that what's essential isn't the idea, that the idea is an abstraction that changes over time — the essential is our presence within our bodies. When we try to see the world through this experience, everything can change, I think. And one isn't close to someone else by means of communal ideas. I do think so, take poetry for instance, when you write a poem, and you read this poem, you touch people, the masses, the audience, with all that is communal in that poem, and you touch the individual with what isn't communal. One should avoid what is common in that experience. Common is trite, repeated, it is everybody. It is like death. Death is trite because everybody dies. And it doesn't change anything really. But what is essential, what is problematic, is life — so the problem of a human being is death.

by asking these questions,

the word, what is the essence of the word? What is the essence of a thing? A flower has an essence or it is only a form before us. Generally speaking, Arabs, Semites, believe there's an essence of the word, so there's a form. In order to explain or understand this essence better, you should, or you need to have a language full of imagery. A language that can create new relations between you and the thing, or the essence. That creation of images, the language founded on the image can in a certain sense reveal, and it can in a certain sense conceal, too. Because an image also conceals an aspect of the essence, all the while revealing an other aspect. That is why in mysticism the essence is said to be the image as presence, but the essence exceeds any image. In that sense the image veils and doesn't unveil. But in another sense, one can only know the essence by way of the image. And here the image is veiling, a veil.

PJ: Like written ink on the white page, which reveals meaning. Because you've just written a beautiful poem, to my ears, in French, where essence and meaning become the same. Can essence and meaning be the same thing?

Adonis: No, meaning is an aspect of essence. But seen through the image, by way of the image. So poetically speaking, poetic language is essentially the image. A poetry without the image, or founded on an imageless language, a direct language, becomes narrative, anti-poetic, according to our Arabic tradition. But I believe that the reality of poetic writing is something else. In the United States, for example, there are no images in most of the poetry.

PJ: There's a certain tradition in what we call Modernism, going back to the beginnings of the 20th century, and still very important in the so-called New York School in the 50s / 60s, a tradition that insisted on a very necessary action of stripping bare an old-fashioned, and even outdated poetic language, Victorian, with very traditional, worn-down images. These poems criticized a writing that marked itself as "poetic" simply because it contained a lot of metaphors, refined and/or strange images, which didn't actually mean anything except for stating "I'm a poem." As a reaction to this Victorian and Edwardian poetry

— we could even go back to Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams, even if they, too, worked with images, be it in a new way —, we've had a much more radical reaction toward the middle of the century, that of the very New York group, which stripped bare language, by using language and actions drawn from everyday life, something very clear, and very precise. What is wonderful, however, about Frank O'Hara putting, say, a pack of cigarettes in his poem, is that that pack is there as an everyday object, without wanting to be a metaphor that veils something or marks something other than itself.

Even if that pack obviously winds up by becoming an image. Or else when Jack Spicer, on the West Coast this time, said, "I would like to make poems out of real objects. The lemon to be a lemon that the reader could cut or squeeze or taste — a real lemon like a newspaper in a collage is a real newspaper." And not just an image, or a metaphor.

I think this had to be done, a bit like what you did with classical and neoclassical Arabic poetry, which you had to revamp, strip bare of the all too many repetitions, both at a formal level (too restrictive rhymes and meters), or at the level of content (too limited or conventional themes). There's work to be done for a new image to arise from that. And, by the way, a new take on the image emerged with the American poets, too — I can't really say for the French poets —, a bit later on (i.e. as of the sixties), with poets like Robert Kelly or Jerome Rothenberg. They spoke of the deep image, and their goal was to look for a new, more real, and more serious image than the aestheticizing image, the discovery and use of which would lead toward a renewal of the poem.

Adonis: I think there's a tradition in Arabic — to begin with, our first tradition is poetry. There was only poetry. The poet was the journalist, the politician; he was everything. And poetry expresses the whole of society and its culture. Before Islam, the poet pretended it was he who expressed, or who could express, what is called truth. Once Islam was there, it said the opposite: religion is the only revelation expressing the truth. And so poetry is but an error one should reject — much like Plato said, really.

PJ: Exactly, I was about to say so, too: Mohammed and Plato, même combat, same thing.

Adonis: Fortunately, the poets didn't listen to Plato. They, the poets, resorted to the image, because they couldn't convey their truth directly, or only at the risk of their lives. They resorted to a language full of images, to the image, and it played a very important role in our tradition, even in the conflict with, or, rather, the refusal of religion, of Islam.

PJ: Isn't there also the linguistic fact that in Arabic — more than in other languages — a word can easily mean two very different, even opposing things — auto-antonyms or contranymy. Which, precisely, allowed some poems to be written and shown to the caliph without the poet being decapitated, whereas other readers or listeners of course understood it meant the opposite.

Adonis: Exactly — there's the addad, where a word says one thing and its contrary at the same time. But that has to be seen within the context of the word. Context changes everything.

PJ: So the word can have a context within which it has to function with one or the other meaning. But in a poetry that plays with that, with that ambiguity, it must have been very complicated ...

Adonis: ... at that moment, there are problems with the so-called audience. The audience, or, rather, the reader only understands what is expressed directly. When the poet has an image-based poetry, or a poetry full of images, the reader doesn't understand. The ordinary person demands a direct & clear poetic language, which expresses what the ordinary person sees, experiences, and understands. This is the beginning of how the image-based poets and the general public drift apart.

PJ : And so you think that those people who heard the poems of Imru' al-Qais or of Ibn Tarafa — my favorite, among the pre-Islamic poets! —, the people of the village or of the encampment didn't understand everything? Because this poetry is of a great complexity after all.

Adonis: No, not in the Pre-Islamic period, there wasn't any writing; everybody was an intellectual in his own way, everybody knew and understood

poetry. It started with life in the city. It started in Damascus, then in Baghdad, where there was a different culture, exchanges with and influences of other civilizations. They changed. And Abu Tammam was the first in Baghdad to create what we call an urban language, of the city, like Baudelaire, here in France, and he created a poetry of everyday life, not in the desert, but in the city.

PJ : So, do you then think the city dwellers in his day fully understood him?

Adonis: Absolutely. But the conflict of ideas of civilizations began. Abu Nuwas, for example, wrote all of his poetry against religion, and did so, therefore, in a language full of images — so as to not be killed for it.

PJ : We no longer run that risk in our regions, for the time being, we are no longer killed for what we write in poetry. In the West at least ...

I would like to return to matters connected to Sufism. We haven't yet ventured there ... I was going to bring up

the whole history of the metaphor against the symbol, that entire tropology ...

Adonis: ... that's a little technical.

PJ: Yes, it's a little technical. Perhaps we'll keep it for later on. In *Le Fixe et le Mobile* [The 'Fixed and the Moving; a collection of essays not yet available in English] you say, for instance, that metaphor is the artistic form of thought. Do you mean by that that the poet should think, or thinks, by means of metaphor, whereas the philosopher thinks through the straight and narrow of prose ?

Adonis: That's right ... even if he also resorted to narratives, to symbolic stories ...

PJ : Yes, indeed — in Plato, the story of the cave is a metaphor. Symbolism is often used in Arabic thought, not to elucidate, but to hide, (I've already hinted at this) to limit. I'm thinking of Ben Jaafar, whom you cite: "Someone uses a symbol while talking, in order to hide the meaning of what he says from those he's talking to, and inform only a few."

Adonis: Not to forget, for instance, the doors of law, I mean the conformists, or the orthodox, who refused and still refuse to this day to acknowledge that there are images in the Oran. One has to understand the Quran literally. No images, because as soon as there's imagery, there'll be a lot of interpretations, and if there are a lot of interpretations, the text slips away. One has to understand the text of the Quran textually, literally. There's no image, there's no metaphor, and God wouldn't use such ... luckily. (Laughter.) That's another aspect of the conflict between religion and poetry.

PJ: When you name your second journal *Mawāqif*, I immediately think of Sufism, but was that a dire reference to an-Niffari ...

Adonis: ... direct ...

PJ: ... or was it more metaphorically, in the sense of a station, a stop, a meeting point, where you collect texts?

Adonis: There's a glory behind that, which is worthwhile retelling here. I read an-Niffari for the first time in 1965, in an English translation, and it was the orientalist [A. J.] Arberry who published this manuscript [of the *Kitāb al-Mawāqif*, The 'Book of Halts']. And I saw that this manuscript — an-Niffari' lived in the 4th century AH, i.e. the 10th century of your time reckoning — had been waiting for 1,000 years to be found again and published in London. Then it was republished in Cairo in 1965. Once, while writing in an American university library, I came upon this manuscript by accident. And I read an-Niffari's *ul Tawāqif*. I was overwhelmed by what I read, I saw a text that reminded me of Lautréamont, and of the great Western poets I knew. I was so overwhelmed that I didn't sleep that night, reading this text. By the way, this text will be published soon — in September — by Belles Lettres Press — together with Donatien Gray we've made a new French translation, we've translated it together. And the publisher was delighted.

So it was to celebrate an-Niffari that I called the journal *Mawāqif*.

PJ: About fifteen years ago, a Jordanian poet, Amjad Nasser, gave me a photocopy of the Arberry edition of Niffari's book, because that version obviously no longer exists, it's out of print.

Adonis: Today it's a bedside favorite.

PJ: It's strange how things come back. We talked about it yesterday, when I said how, in France, interest in the troubadour poets was raised again thanks to the American poet Ezra Pound, who had translated some of them. Then Paris says because Pound has said so, it must be interesting, valid.

An-Niffari returns to the Arab world in the same way via Arberry. Poetry is nomadic.

Adonis: That is what is essential to us, poets, human beings, what we found ourselves upon — and not upon ideas, beliefs, interests.

PJ: Because there's been, in a rather interesting way, I think, moments at which Sufism entered the thought of contemporary American poetry.

Adonis: Islamic Sufism, or?

PJ: No, Sufism. And a very specific one ... It was Robert Duncan and Charles Olson who had read Henry Corbin and who had started thinking about the ibn-Arabi-based concept of *ta'wil*, i.e. about what Henry Corbin defines as "the exegesis that leads the soul back to the truth." And it's become a rather central thought to that American poetry. Robert Kelly, for example, developed a poetics in which he describes the poem as a *ta'wil*, i.e. as an exegesis, of the first line, a first line that can be given by a dream, or as an inscription, a part of a word, on a passing truck, it doesn't matter where you find it, but the development of the poem is the *ta'wil*, an at once both active and passive way for the poet to work with that first given, that first line.

Adonis: *Ta'wil* or *tauwil*?

PJ: *Ta'wil*, interpretation, exegesis. I don't know whether this means anything to you, but it interested me greatly, Corbin's entire oeuvre, really, and his reflection on Avicenna and then on Ibn Arabi ...

Adonis: He's a great mystical thinker, Henry Corbin, like Massignon. Massignon wrote a truly great

book on al-Hallaj. I haven't read Kelly or Olson's poetry, to answer your question: I don't know.

PJ: Here too there are movements, transfers that will have to take place, because I think there's not enough translations between the various poetic continents, continents that would enrich each other so much, and get to know each other so much better on those levels.

Where are we at? We've been talking for nearly two hours. Are there any questions from our poet friends?

Serge Pey: I don't have any question, rather some afterthoughts.

Adonis: Yes.

Pey: I obviously have questions, because thinking is always putting oneself in danger, and as my friend Henri Meschonnic said, to think is always to think in the unknown. It's hard to quickly summarize my thoughts on twenty years of teaching poetry, religion, Islam and monotheistic religions.

Thanks to Adonis, moreover — when you published me in the journal *Mawāqif* nearly 30 years ago —, I set about reading the *Oran*. And I read it with my friend Jamel Eddine Bencheikh, who translated the stories of the *One Thousand and One Nights* for the *Pléiade*, and who thought of himself as an atheist, culturally speaking a Muslim, but philosophically an atheist. And he made me aware of something that completely enlightened me: that in Mecca, hung up around the Kaaba, the black rock that has been celebrated ever since prehistory, there used to be a magnificent gathering of poems in the pre-Islamic period.

Adonis: The *Mu'allaqat*...

Pey: But the first ad of the "thought general" that was the "prophet," was to prohibit hanging up poetry. That to me was remarkable, because poetry was in competition with prophecy. It made me think about other monotheistic religions, and about Spinoza, for example. That is to say that I wasn't able to interpret theological political religion — a very barbaric word, but one that renders well what it means, that is that the religious brings about a difference between the sacred, the divine, and the religious, three very different

concepts. Obviously, religion being only the confiscation of the sacred and the divine, with a political aim.

And then something also struck me, and that's the origin of Sufism. And I know speaking of origins is always tricky, but with a group of intellectuals that also included your friend Abdellatif Laâbi, by the way, we thought that Sufism had been the refuge of poetry that didn't have the choice to exist otherwise, that by pretending to "espouse" the theological political, and thus to develop in the name of Islam, or alongside Islam, or against it, in an underground manner, this beautiful poetry.

The third thing that astonished me is that when I read the passage on the poets in the *Quran*, the status that we have inside the theological political is not the same as that of Plato. Plato says the poets should be expelled from the polis, which has nothing to do with the *sura* of the poets. The difficulty for us, as poets and philosophers, who think a poem within society, is that relation between life and language that mutually alter each other, life alters language, and language will alter life. To think of movement, and to think of a concept within movement, is always difficult. And so we have a tendency to think of poetry as an unmoving corpus, with an eternal & infinite beforehand knowledge. Yet the concept of the poem itself is something that has profoundly evolved over time, which is contradictory. Poetry in Africa isn't the same as poetry in Latin America etc., etc.... If it's only that point of view, and here I agree with Adonis, then it's precisely animism that causes man, a human being, to have in all its infinity a relation to the infinite, an absolute liberty, and he will invent that relation like a mirror. That is to think of movement, and the poetry that Plato speaks of, who is himself a poet, as denouncing other poetic currents, who were transmitters of myth and not of truth. It's an eternal debate.

To come back to monotheism, it's important to bear in mind that Christianity has nothing to do with that inquisitorial Catholicism, that it was at first a feminist liberation movement. Just have a look at the amount of women who are martyrs, who fought for their freedom, it's an anti-slavery movement; one must never forget that. ...

I also think that polytheism did the same thing [as monotheisms] — in America, for example, with the Aztecs, that's a monstrous thing... Animism, on the other hand, is something that is also opposed to polytheism, and I think the animist, the traditional poet, who was also a shaman, a healer, etc., that he is our fundamental brother, or sister, in the very history of poetry's movement itself, but I would like to thank Pierre, who is moderating this debate in an exemplary manner, and who leads us into thinking what we're thinking, and thanks again also to Adonis.

PJ : Adonis, would you like to say something in response to the scope of such a poetic encyclopedism?

Adonis: No, I agree entirely with him, especially with respect to movement and change. And, you know, our grandfather & great poet, Heraclitus, said: "You can't cross the same river twice." Life is continuous movement, continuous change, and I think that a human being is essentially a poet. Every human being is a poet, and the farmer before all, as the farmer works the earth, and thus changes the earth. He creates new relations between himself and what that soil engenders or will engender, and poetry therefore isn't just writing a poem — it's creating new relations between man and the universe, between man and man, between man and the cosmos. That is poetry. Changing, creating new relations, to give a new, deeper, and more human image of the universe, that is poetry. We're all poets, one way or another. Why not continue and stay that way? Why believe in ideas, in an other world? Why? Our world, life, is the most beautiful, the most beautiful of existing worlds, it's life that matters, and we should change that life for the best. That is poetry. Even love is poetry; even politics is in a way poetry. A human being is a poetic being.

PJ: Voilà! I don't think there's anything to add to this now. Thank you all. We'll pick up again in the afternoon. <>

[Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan](#) by Benjamin Gatling [Folklore studies in a multicultural world, The University of Wisconsin Press, 9780299316808]

This eloquent ethnography reveals the daily lives and religious practice of ordinary Muslim men in Tajikistan as they aspire to become Sufi mystics. Benjamin Gatling describes in vivid detail the range of expressive forms—memories, stories, poetry, artifacts, rituals, and other embodied practices—employed as they try to construct a Sufi life in twenty-first-century Central Asia.

Gatling demonstrates how Sufis transcend the oppressive religious politics of contemporary Tajikistan by using these forms to inhabit multiple times: the paradoxical present, the Persian sacred past, and the Soviet era. In a world consumed with the supposed political dangers of Islam, Gatling shows the intricate, ground-level ways that Muslim expressive culture intersects with authoritarian politics, not as artful forms of resistance but rather as a means to shape Sufi experiences of the present.

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Expressive Culture, Past and Present

For many of the men I knew, the Soviet era stirred up some of their strongest feelings. Still, it has already been almost three decades since Moscow ruled Dushanbe directly. The majority of the population has no direct memory of a time when Tajiks held Soviet passports. The nearest past to which Rahmon and other governing elites harken is not a Soviet one but instead the 1990s and its civil war, a time of lawlessness to which they caution against a return. At the same time, institutional and ideological legacies left by the Soviet experience remain cogent features of the political landscape. I

have already alluded to some. Soviet legacies loom large, not just in the architecture of Dushanbe's streets but in terms of the state's approach to Muslim life and how many Tajiks imagine the contours of nation and history. "Post-Soviet" is the frequent label, or more generally "post-Socialist," to account for what remains after the transition and the institutional afterlives of the Soviet experience.

Post delimits rupture, a concept with a certain appeal. In many ways, 1991 was a watershed year. It ushered in new geopolitical orientations, a neoliberal economic transition, and, for Tajikistan, most significantly a civil war. At the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of independence in 2016, President Rahmon called independence "a life-changing and holy day ... the most valuable achievement of the civilized Tajik nation." Rahmon justifiably hailed the monumental changes that had occurred between 1991 and 2016. Independence Day, in marking the moment of rupture, seemed to capture the "post" moment neatly by celebrating the linear progress toward the sort of society Rahmon envisioned. Yet still, as the decades of state socialism become more and more distant from the present, the utility of post-Soviet as an analytical frame needs more justification, not least because it potentially limits the questions we ask and magnifies the alterity of those that still live it. That is the critique that *Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan* builds upon, particularly because Central Asians' alterity exists as an order of magnitude greater when the object of analysis is Islam.

An emphasis on historical continuities and discontinuities has plagued ethnographic writing about Muslims in Central Asia. Scholars have alternatively emphasized *longue durée* continuities or abrupt, post-Soviet discontinuities between what they see today, what might have come before, and the relationship of both to other places and times. The most egregious have argued that Sufis practice vestigial traces of historical shamanism, while others have stressed the novelty of contemporary Islam, a-historically foregrounding its alleged distinctiveness and foreign influences. With respect to Sufi pasts, both modes remain fraught, obscuring the changes Sufis have continued to experience long after

independence and the ways that past times have remained vital to Sufi self-understandings.

The Nobel laureate Svetlana Alexievich evokes just such a sentiment of lingering and relived pasts in her 2013 book *Secondhand Time*. Alexievich powerfully instantiates the present moment by chronicling her interlocutors' relived pasts. That is the same way many of the Sufis I met encountered their pasts, not as a simple choice between continuity and rupture. Indeed, both options take for granted the durability of the past. Sufis live in the present by partially reinscribing events from the Persian sacred and nearer Soviet pasts, calling special attention to others and attempting to account for the paradoxes that remain. These are plural pasts. Sufis judiciously invoke disparate pasts, even in the same interaction. They strategically inhabit multiple times: the paradoxical present, the Persian sacred past, and nostalgic visions of the Soviet era. It is an everyday that is pointedly asynchronous. Recursion emphasizes how Soviet and other pasts don't live on in wholes but only in part. That is one contribution that this book makes to Central Asian studies because neither explaining contemporary Islam in terms of its continuities with the past—no matter how near or distant—nor in terms of its distinctiveness fully captures how past times remain relevant.

Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan interrogates the persistence of the Sufi past in the present by exploring the specific expressive forms that animate it: memories, stories, artifacts, rituals, and embodied behaviors. The book's chapters successively consider each one. Although the past is deeply implicated in each form, these are not histories, nor are they manifestations of Sufi collective memory. They are more akin to "history-tellings" or expressions of "communicative memory". This is significant because history-tellings and communicative memories exist in the interstices between people, in what folklorists call performances, marked situations, and settings that call special attention to acts of communication. I focus on the events in which history-telling and communicative memory occur, for example, times when Sufis express memories, tell stories, enact rituals, participate in group teaching, and more.

Folklore studies has long been concerned with the durability of the past in the present, most often under the rubric of tradition. The performance turn of the 1960s and 1970s transformed folkloristic thinking away from artifact to process, from the thing of tradition to the ways in which humans traditionalize their presents. This wasn't so much an analogue to Hobsbawm's "invented tradition" as a recognition that there is no immutable heritage passed down from time immemorial and that the genuineness of any tradition is always judged in the present). Folklorists most often see tradition as a temporal ideology, an authorizing discourse, or a potent means to expose discourse to critique. In this vein, Henry Glassie complementarily described tradition as the making of the future out of the past.

Sufis do traditionalize the present, actively molding the future by mobilizing expressive building blocks from the past. Yet, the implied linearity of folkloristic concepts related to tradition doesn't easily encompass Sufi recursive histories. The "temporal sedimentations" of Sufi expressive culture didn't always exist evenly. Sufi history-tellings connected the men at once to multiple times, people, and situations. Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan charts how Sufis expressively move in and out of the sedimentations of time and the visions of the present that such temporal linkages produce. This book seeks to expand tradition's rubric to include space for nonlinear modes of living, the sorts of alternative temporalities and asynchronies that characterize the Sufi present. A focus on Sufi histories and the expressive forms that support them doesn't just render moot the debate within Central Asian studies about historical continuity and discontinuity. It also forces folklorists and fellow travelers interested in expressive culture to take temporalities seriously. One additional disjuncture that the book attempts to mitigate is the implied hopefulness that runs in tandem with concepts of tradition as the past enables the construction of the future. For Sufis in Tajikistan, the future remains a difficult proposition.

The Politics of Expressive Culture

The state always lurked in the background during my interactions with Sufis. Just like with the video,

Sufi memories, stories, artifacts, rituals, and embodied behaviors all bore traces of a malevolent other, real or imagined, waiting to strike. On a practical level, the ramifications were legion. When I first arrived in Tajikistan in 2010, the political climate had justifiably put everyone on edge. Security officials had begun indiscriminately shaving some men's beards on the street. Legislation had passed the year before expanding the state's already tight regulation of religious groups. Though enforced unevenly, the law effectively criminalized all unregistered religious activity. Sufis were reticent to welcome me to events in which the presence of a foreign researcher was conspicuous. Some pirs had dismissed their disciples entirely until circumstances proved more agreeable to meeting in public.

The situation modulated, and I was eventually able to build rapport. Still, many of the men with whom I worked were afraid, not so much of active surveillance or possible retribution, but mostly of what might happen if state security services co-opted the topics we discussed, to my knowledge something that never occurred. They talked candidly, sometimes shockingly so, in person, but worried about my recorder. As such, I have had to rely on my field notes to reconstruct many of the quotes that I use. To allay the men's fears, I have also changed all their names, with the exception of those outside the government's reach, already prosecuted, dead, or otherwise sanctioned, and altered a few details in several stories to protect my collaborators' anonymity. "The pir" in my ethnographic vignettes isn't a composite character, but each instance references a different man, eleven in total.

While it was impossible to ignore Sufis' anxiety about the Tajik state and its security services, it was less apparent how to account for their lurking presence in the memories, stories, texts, rituals, and embodied behaviors of my Sufi friends. It was tempting to see Sufis' asynchrony and the multiple temporalities that they inhabited as forms of expressive resistance to the overarching ideologies inherent in state modernizing projects, the sorts of temporal narratives that provided authorization for tearing down Dushanbe's Soviet era buildings, erecting new national mythologies, and securitizing

Islam. Indeed, folklorists and anthropologists have frequently celebrated resistance. The folk, understood as nonmodern others, wield their lore as a weapon of the weak to stand up to cosmopolitan elites and voice their opposition to homogenization, globalization, neoliberal integration, commodification, and so on.

This is not a story of resistance, if for no other reason than the Sufis with whom I worked would shudder to use the term. *Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan* doesn't celebrate the Sufi will to exist, to refuse the will of the state security apparatus, or to shove off the pejorative characterizations that those who commented on the video put forward. Sufis like Parviz expressed bafflement—sometimes feigned, sometimes not—at the hostility they faced. They often insisted to me that their activities should not be construed as threats. After all, they weren't advocating for regime change, political parties, or specific government policies, a fact all the more significant due to the political legacies of Sufi history in Central Asia. In the centuries before the Soviet experience, Sufis did cultivate close relationships with rulers, commanding vast economic influence and shaping the sociopolitical landscape. Beyond cursory references to the saints, who embodied this synthesis of worldly and mystical power, most of the men with whom I worked never explicitly attempted to connect their activities to these larger histories.

Appeals to power or purposeful opposition were not how the Sufis I knew imagined their politics. Still, men like Parviz charted life worlds, at the least, notionally at odds with ideas put forward by members of the Tajik governing elite. That is the central paradox *Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan* attempts to unravel: how tradition—what I have glossed as the persistence of the Sufi past in the present—enabled forms of life that transcended the state and the lurking presence of its security apparatus, not as artful forms of resistance, hidden transcripts, or performative masks but as media for action. Tradition articulated both the state's presence and what it meant to be Sufi in its midst.

The agency expressive forms lent symbolically restructured Sufis' experiences of the present. It

reconfigured the possibilities of action and changed the premises on which Tajik Muslim histories turned. In moving in and out of the sedimentations of time, narrating asynchronies, and inhabiting multiple temporalities within the reflexive spaces of performance, Sufis ultimately transcended the times around them. This is the intervention *Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan* makes to folkloristic discussions about the relationship between expressive culture and politics. It was Sufis' expressive connections to past personages, situations, and worlds that gave them agency over the lurking presence of the state and its homogenizing narratives, enabling Sufis to deal with the exigencies of life in contemporary Tajikistan. Tradition provided agency's grammar.

Plan of the Book

In chapter 1, we meet Muhammad Ali, a Sufi teahouse owner, and Ibrohim, an ex-Sufi academic, in order to think through the contours of the recent Sufi past. For both Ali and Ibrohim, the past worked as a potent communicative resource ever ready to judge the authenticity of the Sufi present. The chapter introduces the histories most resonant to men like them and the metrics of Sufi authenticity they saw as most valid—lineage, miraculous power, and mystical knowledge—through a discussion about some of the pirs they revered. Finally, Ali and Ibrohim's histories and notions of authenticity didn't exist in a vacuum. As such, the chapter also touches on how the political environment has inextricably shaped both.

Chapters 2 and 3 build on the temporal and political maps of the first chapter by focusing on the specific ways that Sufis talked about the past. Twenty-first-century Sufis face a paradox. All around them, they hear about their alleged freedoms. They supposedly live in a time of revival, a time when Islam has reentered the public sphere. Instead, they have experienced repression and declining numbers. Chapter 2 discusses the nostalgic memories of men like Firuz, an increasingly pious unemployed musician, disgusted over the relative paucity of devotion around him, and Khurshed, a businessman, who looked back longingly at the piety of his ancestors. The asynchronies of Firuz and Khurshed's nostalgia strategically bridged the

paradoxes of their lives, even to the extent that for them nostalgia became a core feature of what it meant to be Muslim.

Chapter 3 begins with a story Firuz told me about a cat. Firuz's story and others like it were the primary expressive forms that Sufi nostalgia often took. Like memories, stories traversed the ruptures inherent to the contemporary moment. Firuz and his friends drew on resources from the Central Asian narrative tradition to lionize new saints and make nearer, atheistic pasts sacred. They manipulated the tools that genre and intertextuality provided to move through these distinct times. Their stories, which I term historical narratives, were affective histories that variously asserted visions of continuity and discontinuity and worked as persuasive counternarratives to the temporal ideologies expressed by the Tajik governing elite.

In chapter 4, we visit a shrine with Shavkat, a middle-aged bureaucrat struggling to make sense of the social changes occurring around him and his distrust of the government he served. Shavkat and I browsed the books for sale at the shrine day market and displayed inside the shrine. The focus of chapter 4 is these books, the texts Sufis read and write. Like narratives before, the books—poetry collections, hagiographies, prayer manuals, government-sanctioned religious histories, touristic shrine literature, and more—bridged asynchronous time. Chapter 4 demonstrates how Sufi books work as material communication. At the shrine, Sufi memory existed in tangible form, materializing all of its paradoxes. For Shavkat and others, books even materialized sainthood itself and carried with them special traces of saintly power.

Chapters 5 and 6 move into the intimate contexts of the Sufi lodge and build on the discussions of nostalgic memories, historical narratives, and books. Within the Sufi lodge, ritual performances and embodied behaviors like pious comportment and dress ultimately allowed for temporal transcendence—the creation of new Sufi times. Chapter 5 explores rituals like the one with which the book began. In ritual, the past came alive for many of the men with whom I worked. Ritual offered a reflexive space for change as pirs from

the sacred past spoke directly into the men's present.

The final chapter opens on a mountainside not far from Dushanbe, where Sufis worked to construct the foundations of a mosque. It discusses the men's embodied nostalgias and anachronisms—their dress, manners of comportment, and quietist concerns, which were all so out of step with the rest of Tajik society. In earlier chapters, Sufis expressed visions of the sacred past in story, disseminated it through books, or invoked it within the bounds of ritual. In chapter 6, they cultivate an ethical life through participating in group teaching events. They embody memory as they learn how to be Sufi.

During the spring of 2014, I had hoped to chat with several bookseller acquaintances at Dushanbe's central Hoji Yaqub mosque. I wanted to get a sense of how things had changed for them since my last visit several years before. There were many new books I had not seen previously, and I couldn't find many of the most popular texts from earlier years. I had been chatting amicably with one bookseller when I asked him about these changes. Quite surprisingly to me, he ended our discussion.

"Would it be okay if I came back and talked to you about some of these things again sometime?" I said, thinking maybe he would be more forthcoming in private.

"We shouldn't talk anymore. It's all political;" he replied offhandedly in a manner uncharacteristic of our earlier chats.

"I'm not asking about politics. I just want to hear about what's changed in the past three years:"

As if answering some of my potential questions, he told me, "There used to be lessons and freedom. Now there are neither lessons nor freedom. See, our conversation has come back to politics:"

The bookseller's comments succinctly captured the politics of talking about the past and, by extension, of the Sufi expressive memories I have documented. It was obvious to the bookseller that his talk about the past made a pragmatic claim on the present. By just talking about what was, he implicitly offered an evaluation of what is. Pious Tajiks used to meet in teaching circles freely, unofficial

madrasas operated without the interference of the state religious bureaucracy, and those that wanted to could easily purchase texts for teaching and personal study. By the time of my conversation with the bookseller in 2014, most unofficial madrasas had been shuttered, and pirs no longer met as easily with their disciples. The bookseller was not alone in his pessimism.

In 2010 I had been surprised to learn that Rustam and his friends had started preparing a DVD to send to President Rahmon. They were encouraged by what they had heard in some of Rahmon's speeches; he occasionally gestured toward mystical themes. The government had even sponsored the restoration of a few shrines. I heard several of the men in Rustam's group confidently say that Rahmon knew about Sufism. It almost seemed as if the president was somehow already familiar with what they were doing. They intended their DVD to include recordings of some rituals along with supporting verses from the Qur'an and other stories. They felt that if the president could only learn about what they truly did, they wouldn't have any more problems.

During my last visit, I asked Rustam if they had ever sent the DVD. "No," he chuckled. "That wouldn't have been a good idea:

Rustam and his friends have since tried even harder to deflect unsolicited attention, Rahmon's included. Rustam went to Russia for a time, but he moved back home. Ibrohim no longer works at the institute. He took a higher-paying job outside academia. He said it didn't have anything to do with the politics of it all. It was just about making more money. But it definitely didn't hurt that he no longer had to worry so much about what he said and wrote. I still occasionally talk to Firuz. He plays music whenever he can get a gig and continues to tell stories. I'm not sure what happened to Khurshed. I worry about him, not least because several of his friends were arrested along with Eshoni Temur in 2015. Khurshed's limited social media presence is gone. The last time I was in Dushanbe, he wasn't staying in the same house as before, and both his cell phone numbers had been disconnected. It is possible he is just working in Russia. Or maybe he was arrested along with the others. I don't know.

Since the time of my last fieldwork, I have heard about a number of village pirs who have been fined or harassed for giving informal lessons in their homes. As the case of Eshoni Temur demonstrates, the story is perhaps even bleaker for more prominent pirs. Even Shaikh Bahodir was killed in Kabul, a victim of entirely different political circumstances. Bahodir's death reverberated among his Tajik followers. The idea that Afghanistan, a place of seeming hope to some Tajik Sufis, where Sufism could flourish in the midst of extreme insecurity and unhindered by state interference, was not immune to anti-Sufi violence struck a nerve and led some to question the way they imagined their futures in Tajikistan.

That is the rub in Sufi tradition. Tradition, in the sense of making the future out of the past, carries with it a hopeful strain. As tradition mines the past, it also points toward a future trajectory. It is precisely this future that remains more oblique for Tajikistan's Sufis and holds even less promise than it has in recent memory. Instead, it is the past that holds real possibility and lends the opportunity for taking action and reconfiguring Sufi experiences of the present. That is why Sufis need recourse to recursive histories. Purposeful anachronisms, inhabiting multiple times, and nostalgia remedy the paradoxes that Sufis live. Sufis continue to look to the past as their cultural reservoir, not to the future, because the hopefulness required to envision a future remains foreclosed and only the province of the governing elite. <>

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