JANUS UNBOUND

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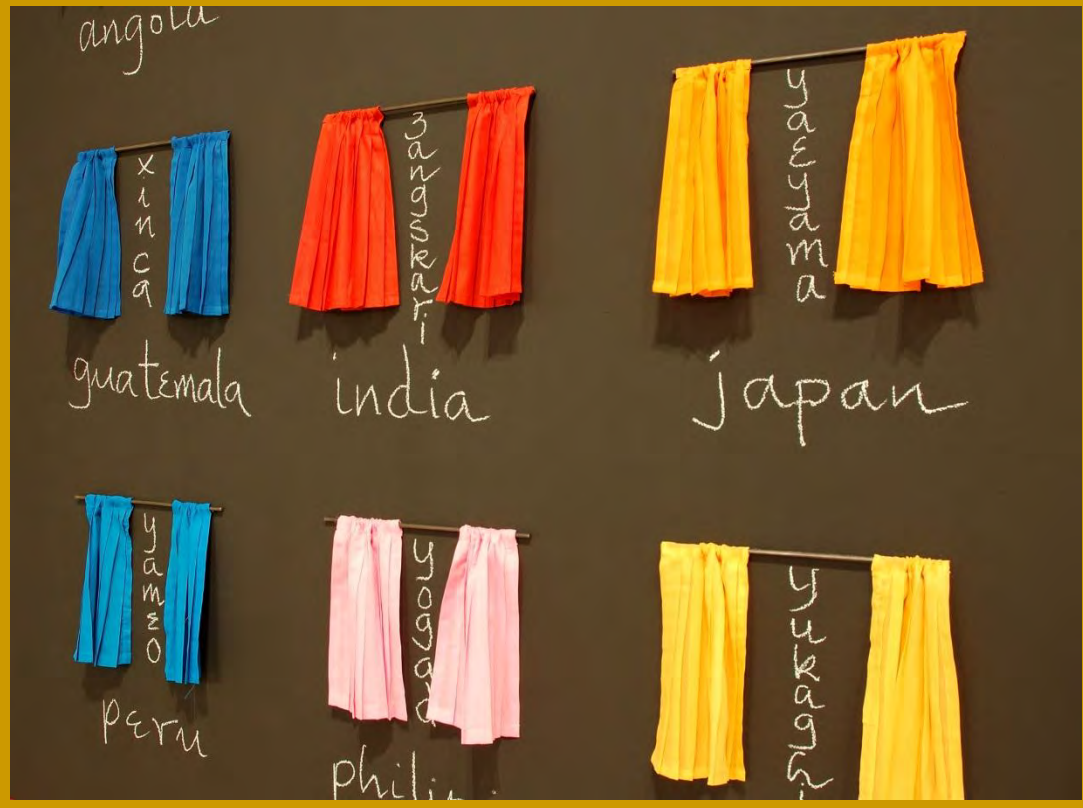

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"Displacement, Flight, Migration"

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Displacing Displacement: Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Peter Trnka

Avoiding

Let's start by being clear (and then muddying the waters): displacing in one sense sucks, it means getting kicked out, conquered, seized, dispossessed, made homeless, stateless, nomadic by force. Yet everything returns, repeats with a difference, ironically it happens (even): affirmative displacement, transvalued statelessness, generalized migrancy, a dialectic of accidents.

Avoiding is one way of displacing. If placing is setting into place, settling, marking territory, territorializing. Forgetting, forgetting avoiding and just forgetting, and masking: Nietzschean powers of the negative, Deleuzian becomings and lines of flight.

Setting nets of paradox, setting paradoxes as traps, cocking or loading them.

Repressing, denying, rephrasing, spinning, shifting.

Displacing, Fleeing, Migrating

Negation. And negation of negation. In this case two wrongs do make a right, or a positive, a difference; at least, two negatives, in some sense, acts of negating, cutting-off, or destroying something. Hegel's method of dialectic of negativity that Marx sticks with: positing or placing a thesis, its negation, its negation's negation, and so on, and so on, and so on. Negative infinity, or positive eternity?

The dialectic is a method but also an ontology. Criticism is the negative in pure formal mode. The text and its critical shadow a matter of a minor difference or detail. Repetition/exegesis *plus*. Plus at least a question, but the question, the doubt, is enough to throw the whole thing out. Criticism as close reading, the reading that reads against itself is also immanent critique. Deconstruction as double reading, as displacing displacement in practice. Analysis.

Bigger, richer, fuller. Another beautiful cover and package, thank you art editor Deborah Root, designer Abigail Broughton-Janes, and cover artist Sarindar Dhaliwal. Multimedic. Visual art: cover and statement, Sarindar Dhaliwal's *Curtains for Babel*. Thank you, Shani Mootoo, *It is a Crime*.

Sarindar's artist statement, a short essay on language and violence, violence and metaphysics, and artistic method as remedy. Basic existential displacement: where are you, what is real, this is the world. Where does one, they, start? "[T]he idea just comes from maybe a small line" (Dhaliwal 9), but note one starts with an idea and the idea has a genesis, however humble, accidental; "in this case,"

she continues, "I think I read that 600 languages were dying daily, and I found that intriguing (even though the number might not be accurate)" (9). And there we have it, the dialectic of real-imaginary-symbolic, or at least the combat of desire and truth. There is a location also: "I had a studio in Delhi and then because the wall wasn't that big, I decided to do something with just 28 curtains" (9). So scale is established. Then some kind of rule (constructing the abstract machine of art): "I was researching different languages and because there were so many, I decided they should all begin with X, Y, and Z" (9). And an interpretation of the meaning and force of (such) rules: "But whenever I give myself rules like that, I just break them, if my brain goes somewhere else" (9). A mini-manifest on the radical, to the roots, power of the imagination as the fundamental displacement operator, difference maker, differentiator, deconstructor, etceterator-disassociator: "The way I work is sometimes I just have an image in my head of how the work will end up looking—and then I don't really care about the truth. I care more about my imagination" (10). Truth can be a subset of the imagination, the skeptical Pyrrho and Hume doubting and negating, so upsetting and upsettling (along with the *Pantheismusstreit* of Spinoza) to the philosophers of the normal royal science, the ruling class ideas of the idealist state apologists and status quo illusionists. For Marx-Sartre-Castoriadis, not so much Kant.

For creative writing we feature four strong poets, thank you poetry editor Andreae Callanan. Sally Khader's "Complexities of Morning Coffee," wherein displacement is figured in families forcibly separated—"The soldiers tear us apart from each other and set us on different ships/Thousands of miles away from the home we once had"—and then internalized, introjected into the fragmentation of the imaginary: "I could be anything, build anything./No fears./When my dreams hadn't been ripped apart and shattered." "Memorial/Immemorial" by V. Varsam thinks of an ecological or Gaia-like displacement, wherein "we give to the earth/…/and she is indifferent to it all,/animate, inanimate, organic, inorganic." At the end of which "we will all be gone/a clean sweep." In "I Know a Place Where No Cars Go" Angela Tan tells of a "senselessness in a sullen hole marked onto the spot of utopia on a map. A map of blank locations, ready to be filled with only my imagination." We close our poetry section with "DITW" by Tanatswa Mushonga, in which the human, human flesh, is displaced by the pressure of the sea, such that "The sea refuted my form,/The sea demanded I be reborn."

We feature two scholarly articles both on literature and Palestine: Hania Nashef's "Suppressed Narrator, Silenced Victim in Adania Shibli's *Minor Detail*," Shibli's most recent novel, and Anna-Esther Younes' "Palestinian Zombie," a critical reading of select zombie movies and the literary work of Primo Levi and Yishai Sarid. Nashef, a member of our Editorial Board, author of *Palestinian Culture and the Nakba: Bearing Witness* and *The Politics of Humiliation in the Novels of J.M. Coetzee*, examines absolute victimization and abjection as the eradication of crime and victim, the annihilation of the place and space of and for complaint, for the acknowledgement of the cry of suffering, the wound, or the corpse. Shibli's novel is based on a real event of a horrible continuous rape,

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violation, and murder of a Bedouin girl that takes place in what is later called Canada Park: "Shibli's novel traces the story of a Bedouin girl in 1949 and her brutal slaying by Zionist gangs through a narrative of another silenced and young West Bank woman from Ramallah, who becomes obsessed with uncovering the burial site of the slain girl" (14). The figure traces the shadow to find its own figure: "Defining the land as empty entails the claim that the land is devoid of people; however, in the event that some may populate it, they are considered mere shadows and not fully human. They have been classified as *homo sacer"* (18). (Meanwhile, as we shall see, the zombie abstraction from the living worker chases its creator as its creator seeks to destroy her own image.) The fact that the scene of the crime is named Canada Park is not insignificant. In fact, no detail is insignificant, to follow one ethical and political connotation of Nashef's reading of Shibli's novel. The story of the Bedouin girl in Canada Park, and the imaginary resistance constructed around it, takes place in the seam between the name and the thing, exactly in that netherworld of free possibility where territory is undesignated. As yet unmapped. Not yet pinned down by a name. For good or ill. Mapping is a power and traversing unmapped territory adeptly is a power.

Unmapped territory is not the same as uninhabited, empty, or null territory, though the colonial doctrine of *terra nullius* (with which Nashef begins her analysis) is the global legal brand name for the denial of that simple truth, simple as it is the life of the nomads and migrants, the mobile ancient multitudes; the legal fiction made to displace the simple truth of the no fixed place of abode, no state, no nation:

> Although the systematic eviction of Palestinians from their homeland has been recorded at length since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, documentation of the latter practices has for the most part concerned itself with urban centres and villages. Thus, expulsion and removal of marginalized communities, namely those of the Bedouins, from their ancestral encampments or homes have been given scant coverage by mainstream media or even academia. (12)

To understand the full, explosive, transgressive value and significance of a minor detail, Nashef brings into her analysis a giddy arsenal of theorists of the marginalized, subaltern, silenced, displaced, and expelled and expunged, though without ever blurring the focus away from Shibli, her narrator, and the Bedouin girl. Nashef draws selectively and quickly from the works of Homi Bhabha, Judith Butler, Henri Lefebvre, and Edward W. Said, among others. It is through Hannah Arendt's work on Aristotle that Nashef introduces the idea of the *aneu logou*, or the being without word or language. The one-outside-of-discourse is the one who is beyond words, they bear no speaking to, it is not even worth trying. They are ex-political in the sense—here Nashef follows the French philosopher Jacques Rancière—of the *ex-polis*, what is outside of the political unit, the city, or the nation.

The mobile outsider is maligned: "a nomadic life is often stigmatized by the notion of constant movement, impermanence, and rootlessness. Such a life is

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rarely considered valuable when compared with other lives, its customary practices and laws rarely recognized" (12). The unmapped and remapped territory makes Shibli's narrator's quest a perilous one. "Armed with maps from different epochs, the silent narrator," Nashef writes,

> embarks on a journey to locate the murder site …. As the land composition has much changed, she can only rely on flashes from her memory of the place from earlier times and the descriptions afforded to her by colleagues in Ramallah who were exiled from these villages and towns, many of which have been eradicated. (19)

Becoming animal, becoming insect more so, is one way of putting the zombified adaptation to violence. Dehumanization is always an objectification, a reification or turning into thing, be it supposed animal-thing, or other piece of stuff: "The Bedouin girl, who was discarded as rubbish, may have been buried in the two-meter sandy shallow grave, but given the nature of the sand, the unmarked site would be difficult to locate" (17). From thing we go to animal-thing as it is hard to deny movement and something like agency: "The Bedouins' lives are not worthy. The Arabs … are presented as faceless entities whose existence is often juxtaposed against the presence of insects; when the surviving girl was found, she is described [by Shibli as] 'curled up inside her black clothes like a beetle' " (18).

Silencing is the part of rendering powerless that troubles recognition of that powerlessness and of the domination at its source. As becoming insect expresses the general degradation of the zombified, exiled creature, so silencing is the tactic of choice that specifies the isolation and alienation of the victim from all others, including the others of the grand halls of historical truth and justice (as the suffering, the cries and complaints, the events themselves in fact are wiped out): "During the rape scenes, we learn how the officer's right hand would seal the mouth of the Bedouin girl to subdue her cries and screams" (22).[1]

A thing is closer to nothing than a person, it is "just" a thing, a minor detail. As Nashef explains the matter of the minor detail in Shibli's novel, "[t]he obsession of the Ramallah woman with minor details manifests itself in her fixation to uncover the location of the burial site. Before she embarks on her journey, she describes"—and what is to come explains the pathological synecdoche figured in the novel's title, the irony of the minor detail that is everything and the everything that is shown in the minor detail—"how she is more concerned with dust particles landing on her desk than with the bombing of a building nearby" (21). To think and feel bodies burning is too much to bear, it is too real. The narrator's "compulsion with detail may appear insignificant" Nashef argues, "but it is through the detail that she tries to locate her own presence and feel less ashamed of her affliction. The woman is constantly resorting to chewing gum when she is nervous …" (21).[2] What is at stake for the narrator is everything: "if she is successful in locating the unmarked grave, this

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minor event could grant her own existence some meaning, enabling her to enunciate in order to assume a place in the world" (22).

Anna-Esther Younes, "Palestinian Zombie." Remember Ilan Pappé's point from *JU* I.I: "Palestinian? Zombie!", to transpose, "Palestinian now stands for all the colonized and forgotten." Palestinian is the paradigm, the zombie mold. Younes here follows Fanon and also Lewis Gordon shadowing Fanon in seeing the displacement of the colonized by the colonizer as a cultural zombification. As Younes puts it: "Zombies are the first embodiment of modernity's settler-colonial need to up-root and thingify people for its racial and economic projects. They are colonial capitalism's horror, the Janus-faced other of white modernity" (31). Capitalism's but not only capitalism's, as if occluding anything but capital was not an obvious extension of capital's subsumption: "Pop culture representations depict the zombie as deracialized and uprooted from its original Indigenous African and Indigenous Caribbean geopolitical landscapes. Consequently, the zombie is seen as yet another fantastic monster of capitalist modernity, representing labouring masses" (32). The zombie is capitalist dead labour but that is the zombie truth, the abstracted reified truth of dead labour. The living part of the zombie is the remaining concrete human individual, the as yet not completely dead or not completely subsumed by capital. The as yet outside of capital death. As Mark Fisher puts it, "[t]he most Gothic description of Capital is also the most accurate," and that means the description of dead labour as dead because the living concrete has been made abstract: "Capital is an abstract parasite, an insatiable vampire and zombie-maker … [and] the living flesh it converts into dead labour is ours, and the zombies it makes are us" (Fisher 2009, 21). Marx is super Goth: vampires, zombies, and so many ghosts, all real in a material world. Real but virtual. The abstraction of labour is the possibility for the reality of its zombification and for the abstract power of capital and commodities to appear alien, untouchable, and divine. For Younes the zombie is not originally or truthfully the zombie of capital, as the body of labour really subsumed by capital is an abstract limit, an ideological obfuscation of the enslaved and indigenous zombie, a concrete living person. How does the full death in full abstraction of complete real subsumption by capital take place? As Marx (1971) and following him Antonio Negri (1991) argue, by the extension and intensification of formal and so then real transformation of all and every aspect of living into commodity exchange by purchase-sale transaction; "Must there be something apocalyptic that announces the world of the non-human, the descent into Fanon's hell? Or is the idea of a spectacular break not a fallacy to begin with?" asks Younes (37). The microbiopolitical forces of control work in minute details on the ground and in cellular life, while abstract sovereign capital appears to hover weightless above the ground:

> What would happen if we started to think "repair," "labour," and "civilization" from the perspective of the zombie, those drowned and saved and written out? And what does it mean to start thinking from a world of the living dead, from death worlds? (39)

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We feature a new section in this issue: Critical Notes. Short, opinionated pieces. Perspectives on migration, lines of flight. On global warming, ecological catastrophe, and musical activism, Scott Stoneman's "Songs of Prescience" affirms the power of Tamara Lindeman and the Weather Station, and other likeminded musical activists. According to the Weather Station's lead singer Lindeman, music has the power to displace in a positive way, it has "the power to push through them enough to act." On drugs as liberatory, deterritorializing lines of flight, see Mohammed Hamdan's "The Gift of Drugs: Oriental Geographies and Decolonizing Space in Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*." Drugs are like art, for some: "Through the use of opium as a point of access into a wild, imaginative, or oriental space, De Quincey invites us … to rethink the colonial hermeneutics of spatial otherness by means of non-referential arabesque-ness" (63). Let us trip out in the freedoms of the abstraction of language, the abstraction of non-referential form. The revaluation of the margin, the abyss, the displaced, by way of movement and transience over settlement and stability: "the oriental arabesque in De Quincey's narrative adds other dimensions of space in which objects become fluid and relational … the arabesque characteristics in De Quincey's *Confessions* create what Maurice Blanchot calls the 'imaginary space' " (64). By drugs, or art, settled physical location is perturbed: "Locating London in its real or physical geographic sense on De Quincey's hyperactive, virtual, and psychological map seems to be an impossible mission because he frequently witnesses a drastic transformation of its material structures or a sudden change of his charted tour" (64). A pox on all charter tours. What applies to fixity or lack of fixity in place holds *ceteris paribus* for stability of identity: "Geographic barriers signify nothing in a globe where Arabs, Persians, and Chinese may emerge as Spaniards, Frenchmen, and Oriental English subjects, respectively, in De Quincey's opium dreams" (66).

Lastly, we have two book reviews. Liam Ó Ruairc on *Anois ar theacht an tSamhraidh*: *Ireland, Colonialism and the Unfinished Revolution* by Robbie McVeigh and Bill Rolston, that might be said to displace any logic from the idea that one can fight imperialism in only one country. Ó Ruairc examines the intertwining of colonialism and imperialism and provides valuable caution that: "There is the danger of projecting onto the past (say 12th or 16th centuries) the concept of imperialism as it was understood in the 19th or 20th century" (79). Louis Brehony, our illustrious book review editor, reviews an edited volume by Diana Allan, *Voices of the Nakba*: *A Living History of Palestine*: "Published during a period of intensifying resistance in colonized Palestine, *Voices of the Nakba* presents an essential collection of stories told by a cross-section of first-generation refugees expelled during the 'catastrophe' or the 1948 Zionist conquest of their land" (83). For Brehony, part of the work's value is the way it "restate[s] the validity of resistance as a category of analysis" (85).

JU also criticizes itself, so check out our erratum list for I.II, twice as long as last time but does that mean we made more errors or made fewer errors finding errors? Check out also our subject and name indexes for the past issue. We are still working on aggregating indexes—any ideas?

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Calling (Twice)

Coming out bold, two barrels blazing. CFP Four, *Marginalized Global South*: poverty, natural resource depletion, starvation, migration, refugees, extractivism, extreme weather, and biopolitical laboratories.

CFP Five, *Feminist Resistance*. We are thrilled to announce that our first ever SPECIAL GUEST EDITOR will be our very own Associate Editor Danine Farquharson for *JU* III.I *Feminist Resistance*: *Roe v. Wade*, #SayHerName, Masha Amini, Cis-Trans, Feminist Praxis, and Intersectionality. To begin with. Send us your ideas or finished work as soon as you want.

Leveraging Attrition

Welcome to new people, quite a multitude. Welcome to new positions/divisions of labour/responsibility portfolios/areas of expertise (new forms and scales of collective operation). Era of rapid growth, one could say cancerous (the administrative body is out of whack). Welcome to a dozen or so new paid part-time staff positions. Welcome to the many new talented young scholars and editors from around the world: Mariana Ramirez becomes Assistant Editor; three new assistant copyeditors: Amy Schneider, Yining Zhou, and Ericka Larkin; web designer Alexa Nicolle; assistant media editors Rishabh Mishra and Manan Verma; and two new JETS (junior editorial trainees) Colm McGivern and Inanç Kurtuldu. Welcome Fahrid Ahmed to our Editorial Board. Thank you Deans for funding now and for funding for the future (marketing merch even).

Magical collective powers not even shadow glimpsed yet—we are still on training wheels.

Concluding Unsettling Nomadic Postscript

Kierkegaard's ethical call or political action? What would double displacing be, or, how to displace the negative displacement? No forced refugee and immigration "problem." Valuing migration and nomadism. Rather, recognizing the long marginalized, occluded, mystified and maligned value of migratory nomadism.

Circulation of collective global intelligence, modes of feeling, with their safe spaces and times (a comfortable habitus so to say). A global citizenship, a neocosmopolitanism.

Biography

Peter Trnka is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Memorial University. He has taught at Karlova University, Prague as well as Toronto and York. He has published scholarly philosophical and transdisciplinary articles in various international journals, most recently the chapter "Disjoint and Multiply: Deleuze and Negri on Time" in the edited volume *Deleuze and Time*, as well as poetry and a cookbook. He also edits *Codgito: Student Journal of Philosophy and Theory* with Maxim Sizov.

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Notes

1. Listen to the best album of the year, Ashenspire's *Hostile Architecture*: "I had grown silent before I could talk" and "when you can't see the stars, you stop dreaming of space," as the lived constructed feel of embodied, disciplined ideology ("Béton Brut"); to be thought with the "This is not a house of amateurs, this is done with full intent" of "Law of Asbestos."
2. An author has brought in chewing gum as a minor detail of geopolitical significance. I consider this an invitation to bring into print in the future a work of mine on the political and philosophical significance of chewing gum. This is a warning.

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Artist Statement

Sarindar Dhaliwal on her Installation: *Curtains For Babel*

Sarindar Dhaliwal

Like a lot of my work, the idea just comes from maybe a small line I've read in a book, and in this case, I think I read that 6000 languages were dying daily, and I found that intriguing (even though the number might not be accurate). And there was talk about if only three people spoke that language in 1972, then it would die. So that was the only thing that was there at the beginning. Then I went to India on a residency, and I decided to have these little curtains made. Before I left, I had been asked to do a piece in Kingston, in a porch, and the porch had lots of tiny windows so I had an idea that I could propose for that site, and so I had the curtains made for the size of those little panes. Anyway, I got to India, and I ordered these curtains, and I bought material. It was the same material that's used for turbans, so it comes in many colours. I had a studio in Delhi, and then because the wall wasn't that big, I decided to do something with just 28 curtains. In the meantime, I was researching different languages and because there were so many, I decided that they should all begin with the languages that were being lost, and should begin with X, Y, and Z. But whenever I give myself rules like that, I just break them, if my brain goes somewhere else.

The thing about this studio in Delhi is that there was a ladder made of little bits of wood that were tied to the vertical bits of the ladder that were also like bamboo poles which were just tied with string. I was too scared to go up to the top panel of curtains, so I decided to leave them closed and only put in names of countries or places that I had always wanted to visit, but never had. So they didn't require a lost language. Anyway, but then I liked this idea of these curtains being closed, so those countries were places like Australia, Botswana, Key West, Udaipur, and Dublin—over the years I managed to go to them, but I don't know if or when this piece might be reinstalled.

When I got back to Canada from Delhi, I did the piece for the porch but instead of languages underneath the curtains was a name with a date—so for example, "Hazel" 1954. This came from also reading a book about storms. They used to call typhoons and hurricanes by female names, and now that's not the case. So that piece on the porch was called *Call The Wind Virago* and it somehow connected to this book about storms. My idea was if you say to some-

body "Hazel" or "Katrina," everyone in Canada of a certain age will know exactly what you're talking about, because Hazel was a hurricane that was in Ontario in 1954. I never got good images of that piece.

Over the years installing *Curtains for Babel*, people had reactions to the colours of the curtains. I think I was telling you about these Japanese girls who said, "how did you know my favourite colour was yellow?" because where the Japanese language was the curtains were yellow. Dublin ended up with a light green curtain and people commented on that, talking about the Irish troubles. And then, instead of just X, Y, and Z, I would sometimes use W. So one language I had was Welsh, and the piece was going to be installed in Wales. When I got there, it was clear to me that Welsh was no longer a dying language, but the people in the gallery wanted me to still include Welsh. But I couldn't call it Welsh, I had to call it *Cymraeg*, which begins with C, that's the word for Welsh in Welsh. I didn't want to put a C in (I didn't mind every now and then adding a W or something, but C went too far in a way I didn't want to go). I was thinking I had to find another language that's not Welsh and I used Walloon, which is a language from Belgium. I was thinking, oh that will be safe, there's no one here who speaks Walloon, but then in the hotel I was staying in the receptionist spoke Walloon, so that was kind of funny. I think I kept Walloon.

And then another language came from Congo, but when I was installing this piece at Canada House in London (which you could say is a diplomatic venue), I learned that Congo had changed its name to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and that was just too long. But the Canada House people insisted because they said, "what if a diplomat from the Congo comes to Canada House, and then sees that I haven't used Democratic Republic of the Congo—they'll complain." So it was interesting, there were all of these things I had to contend with. The way I work is sometimes I just have an image in my head of how the work will end up looking—and then I don't really care about the truth. I care more about my imagination.

And also, really important for me is the aesthetic. I find—and I noticed this when I was in Venice—if I look at work and I don't like it, and I don't want to look at that work because I don't find it visually interesting, I'm not really interested in the ideas of the artist or the ideas the artist had. I saw lots of really bad work in Venice, and I decided that it was political—and I don't mean by that activist politics, but more like, um, Israel. I found their pavilion kind of horrible, I found lots of the pavilions horrible, but I thought, OK, some bureaucrat makes a decision about contemporary art, not knowing anything about contemporary art, and then they pick a curator who they know in terms of being connected to, then that curator picks a mediocre artist. I think that's why I found so much of the work really meaningless.

Biography

Sarindar Dhaliwal is a Toronto-based artist, born in the Punjab and raised in London, England, and has lived in Canada since 1968. Dhaliwal received her BFA at University College Falmouth, UK, and her MFA from York University. She graduated with a doctorate from the Cultural Studies Program at Queen's

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University in 2019. Dhaliwal has an upcoming solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2023, a selection of works from 1984 to 2022. Her most recent exposition in 2019, *Across Terrains: a Floral and Chromatic Study* at the Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre in Medicine Hat, brought together older works in conversation with four new pieces created that summer at the Medalta Ceramics residency. Dhaliwal's work has also been included in *Vision Exchange: Perspectives from India to Canada* which toured to three venues: Art Gallery of Alberta, U of T Art Museum, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery during 2018-2020. Dhaliwal has participated in the following shows: *India Contemporary Photographic and New Media Art*, FotoFest Biennal, Asia Society Texas Center, Houston, Texas in 2018, *Yonder,* Koffler Gallery, Toronto, *Form Follows Fiction: Art and Artists in Toronto*, Art Museum at the University of Toronto in 2016, and *Traversive Territories,* Varley Art Gallery, Markham in 2015. A survey exhibition, entitled *the Radcliffe Line and other Geographies*, curated by Marcie Bronson (Rodman Hall, Brock University in St. Catherines), was presented at Rodman Hall, the Reach in Abbotsford, BC, and the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa in 2015-16.

Notes

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Suppressed Narrator, Silenced Victim in Adania Shibli's *Minor Detail*

Hania A.M. Nashef

Introduction

Terra nullius, a term derived from the Latin, loosely meaning nobody's land, was a tenet in international law often employed to justify claims of occupation and settler-colonialism. The phrase was also used by some settler nations to allow them to designate areas as empty lands, in order to justify occupying and emptying territories of their indigenous populations. In addition, the term was "not only legal but also cultural, historical, and ultimately political," allowing for "stripping the indigenous people and their culture of their status as rightful owners of land, resources, and political power and legitimating such dispossessions by presenting the land as empty" (Kedar, Amara and Yiftachel 2018, 9). The Palestinians have long been at the receiving end of a 19th century Zionist slogan, perpetuated by British author and Zionist leader Israel Zangwill, which claimed that Palestine was empty, a land without a people, to be given to a people without a land. Not only did this rhetoric render the Palestinians invisible but it also pitted them against "a powerful story of erasure propagated by a Zionist settler project" (Nashef 2019, 1). Although the systematic eviction of Palestinians from their homeland has been recorded at length since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, documentation of the latter practices has for the most part concerned itself with urban centers and villages. Thus, expulsion and removal of marginalized communities, namely those of the Bedouins, from their ancestral encampments or homes have been given scant coverage by mainstream media or even academia. By the end of the British mandate, between "75,000–90,000 Bedouins, belonging to 95 different tribes grouped into eight tribal confederations (*qaba'il*), lived in the Negev" (Kedar 87). However, a nomadic life is often stigmatized by the notion of constant movement, impermanence, and rootlessness. Such a life is rarely considered valuable when compared with other lives, its customary practices and laws rarely recognized. In societies where nomadic people exist, a "hierarchy of personhood" often relegates the nomads "to an inferior status marked by devalued cultural identities, livelihood strategies, and capabilities" (Kingston 2019, 129). According to Kedar *et al.* (5):

> Most Bedouin localities in [Palestine] are officially classified as "unrecognized" and "illegal," and their populations are considered "trespassers" on state land. The lack of recognition of dozens of villages, though their inhabitants common-

> ly live on their ancestors' land, derives from state denial of the indigenous land regime that existed in the Negev before the establishment of Israel in 1948 and from Bedouin indigeneity.

Even though the Negev "was never officially designated as *terra nullius*," policies to empty the territory were initiated "through the distortion of the Bedouin past and the subsequent denial of their customary law, property regime, right to return, land control, freedom of movement, and collective culture" (Kedar 11). Israel's tactic towards the lands of the Bedouins, especially in its early years, "resembled the colonial legal geographic concept of *terra nullius*" (Kedar 9). Although the exact definition of *terra nullius* is complex, "the doctrine derives from the Roman legal concept of *res nullius* and evolved to represent lands belonging to no one, emptied of sovereignty, ownership, or long-term possession rights" (Kedar 9). In addition, the notion represents "practices used by European powers and settlers to dispossess indigenous populations, exploit their natural resources, and settle their lands" (Kedar 9). Meanwhile, the land was given the designation of *mawat*, which is derived from the word "death" in Arabic.[1] For centuries, the southern part of Palestine "had been inhabited [almost entirely] by Bedouin tribes, mainly seminomadic pastoralists," as noted in British archival reports stemming from 1933 (Nasasra 2017, 42). The establishment of the state of Israel not only led to the "the destruction of 531 villages, a minimum of 12 towns and urban centers, and the eviction of nearly one million Palestinians from their homes [causing them to become external and internal refugees]" but also to the appropriation of land, through erasure and deliberate concealment of atrocities (Nashef 2019, 6). A recent example of hidden massacres and ethnic cleansing is a film on Tantura, directed by Israeli filmmaker Alon Schwarz (Efrat, Schwarz and Schwarz 2022). Several Israeli veterans who served in the Alexandroni Brigade are interviewed in the film; their narratives reveal how Palestinians were forcibly evicted from their village: many of the inhabitants were massacred and buried in mass graves, which were turned into a parking lot to conceal the atrocity (Rubeo 2022). Many Palestinians have spoken of these atrocities but their narratives were always silenced. Like the rest of the Palestinians, Bedouins have been facing "repeated acts of house demolition, of expropriation, the systematic denial of tenure rights" (Kotef 2015, 3). According to Hagar Kotef, "Israel also annually demolishes approximately 1000 homes of Bedouins (who are state citizens), who live in the Negev/Naqab region within Israel's recognized international borders" (2020 121-39). In this paper, I will argue that Palestinian writer Adania Shibli's latest novel, *Minor Detail*, which was translated by Elisabeth Jaquette, a finalist for the National Book Award and longlisted for the International Booker Prize, is an important work that not only challenges the suppression of the Palestinian story and the erasure of a country but also sheds light on the precariousness of Bedouin lives, a maligned and marginalized group of people.

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Specters of the Past

The author's work, which skillfully pits two equal narratives, although separated by years, exposes a present that remains haunted by unacknowledged crimes of the past. Shibli's novel traces the story of a Bedouin girl in 1949 and her brutal slaying by Zionist gangs through a narrative of another silenced and young West Bank woman from Ramallah, who becomes obsessed with uncovering the burial site of the slain girl. Troubled by the news report she uncovers, the young woman becomes consumed with revealing the atrocity, especially when she discovers that her own birthday coincides with the day the Bedouin girl was killed. The psychologically-disturbed nameless narrator embarks on a difficult journey amidst checkpoints and Israeli designated areas forbidden to her people in an attempt to unravel the circumstances behind the death of the nameless Bedouin girl. Her expedition results in unearthing minor details relating to the ethnic cleansing of the girl's tribe along with their muted history.

The novel, which is divided into two sections, begins with the 1949 crime. The horrific incident is reported in third person through the point of view of a callous commander who, along with other members of his gang, set up a platoon near the Egyptian border. The first narrative, spanning three days from August tenth to thirteenth in 1949, provides a detailed account of the place and records the deeds and intentions of the occupiers: purging the area of its original inhabitants and erecting a settlement. The first part also sheds light on the psychological and physical deterioration of the narrator as he succumbs to bites by spiders, which he devotes much time to crushing. The quashing of the insects mirrors uncannily the actions of these soldiers as they scour the desert for Arabs to kill, ridding the land of its indigenous Bedouin population, despite their repeated claim that this was empty land. The Zionist narrative often portrays that "Palestinians are not only debris-making but are themselves debris, an environmental problem requiring some form of intervention and, eventually, disposal" (Roy 2021, 108). Settler-colonialism has often classified "nomadic peoples as "primitive" subhumans akin to parasites rather than full human beings, viewing them as "obstacles," while "settlers need for land and territory meant that the extermination of nomadic populations created opportunities for the control and exploitation of resources" (Kingston 2019, 132). In Shibli's novel, the officer tries to justify the crimes by citing backwardness of the indigenous population and their supposed neglect of the land:

> We cannot stand to see vast areas of land, capable of absorbing thousands of our people in exile, remain neglected; we cannot stand to see our people unable to return to our homeland. This place, which now seems barren, with nothing aside from infiltrators, a few Bedouins, and camels, is where our forefathers passed thousands of years ago. … No one has more right to this area than us, after they neglected it and left it abandoned for so long, after they let it be seized by the Bedouins and their animals. It is our duty to prevent them from being here and to expel them for good. (35-6)

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Between 1946 and 1949, 11 military posts were erected in the Negev, one of which is Nirim. Developed later into a *kibbutz*, it was built "in the spring of 1949 after the conquest of *al-Ma'in*" tribal lands following the eviction and killing of tribe members (Abu Sitta 2016, 314). In *Mapping My Return*, Salman Abu Sitta (263) recalls how these ancestral lands were appropriated:

> By the spring of 1949, the invaders of my land decided to settle on the hilly spot of my childhood playground. Prefabricated huts were installed on this piece of land that was precious for me. They called it Nirim. A little to the north, on my father's land and my mother's family land, another kibbutz, Ein Hashloshah, was set up.

In the meantime, the narrator in the first part of *Minor Detail* tells us in the early pages: "When they had arrived, they found two standing huts and the remains of a wall in a partially destroyed third. It was all that had survived in this place after the heavy shelling the area had experienced at the beginning of the war" (7-8). Representing the place as empty, with only deserted, destroyed shacks, re-emphasizes that this place is uninhabited and in need of populating by another people. During her quest to this location in the second part of the novel, the Ramallah woman later discovers that the person in-charge of the museum in Nirim settlement (constructed on the remnants of the destroyed Bedouin village) is an Australian. The recently created archives he was in charge of endorse the Zionist settler-colonialist project. The documents not only provide a record of the post-1946 *kibbutz* construction but also mark the beginning of a place by erasing an earlier time. The settler tells the Ramallah woman that he is "just fond of photography and history … that's why he founded this simple museum, in an attempt to preserve Nirim's history and archives" (84). Typical of settler-colonialist projects, history begins with the time of occupation and settlement and all previous history is erased or rendered irrelevant. The man tells her:

> Nirim's cornerstone was laid on the night of Yom Kippur in 1946. It was one of the 11 settlements established by members of Hashomer Hatzair and young Europeans who had arrived in the country at the end of the Second World War. They began constructing settlements in the Negev. (84)

Earlier narratives are silenced to allow for the one story to be told. Additionally, in his account of history the relationship with the Bedouins was cordial, even though "clashes did [occasionally] occur between members of the settlement and the few Arabs left in the area" (87). He adds that he only encountered one violent incident:

> [it happened when] he volunteered in a military unit formed after the end of the war, whose primary mission was to search for infiltrators in the area … one day, during a patrol, they found the body of a young Bedouin girl in a nearby well,

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> and explains to me that when Arabs are suspicious about a girl's behavior, they kill her and throw her body in a well. (87)

Not only is his version of the incident in line with Israel's myths that its army is "incapable of atrocities, and massacres involving rape," but it is also the occupier's way of blaming the victim for their crimes (Nashef 2021, 3). In spite of her fear, the Ramallah woman is determined to pinpoint the precise place at which the violation was committed. She hesitates at first, but eventually she uncovers the location of the crime, which now resembles "a little park" (89). The changing of "the Palestinian landscape has been the prerogative of the Israeli state ever since its inception" (Nashef 2020, 321). The excuse often cited is that the original inhabitants have neglected the land. The Zionist claim of making the desert bloom is not only part of the so-called civilizing project of the settlers but is "also a method of changing the natural vegetation by introducing foreign species to its soil" to conceal the earlier crimes committed against the indigenous people and their livelihood (Nashef 2020, 323). Canada Park, which extends over an area of destroyed and ethnically cleansed villages, is a blatant example [a point I will return to] of suppressing the crime. Basem L. Ra'ad (2010 189) writes:

> The old stones from the villages were sold to Jewish contractors to lend local tradition and age to new buildings elsewhere, and the whole area was turned into the tragic Canada Park, made possible by millions from a Canadian donator. These are only three of the more than 450 villages in geographic Palestine that were destroyed or emptied of their Palestinian inhabitants by the Israelis in and after 1948.

The "little park" the woman unravels is constructed on uneven and sandy ground (89). This exposes a troubled history. The eucalyptus trees and wooden benches scattered around only partially succeed in concealing the offence. Such landscaping is a form of green colonialism; according to VisualPalestine.org, "Only 11% of trees in Israeli forests are indigenous species due to Zionist groups planting vast areas of non-native trees," and "182 Palestinian villages depopulated by Israel are concealed in Israeli parks and forests, preventing refugees from returning" (VP 2022). Meanwhile, Ariela Azoulay (2013 215) writes that different labels are given to the demolished sites to hide the crimes, " 'Forest of the Righteous'," and so on—that conceal the violence of " 'ruination' as an active, ongoing process." On the other hand, the vast scene that unfolds before the Ramallah woman is composed of "sandy plains," an attestation to the earlier place (Shibli 89).

The first sentences of the novel state that "Nothing moved except the mirage," in "a great expanse of the arid Negev desert, over which crouched the intense August heat" (7). The latter description stresses the need to see the land as empty, and shows that any potential life is but a fleeting presence. Nonetheless, the assault on the *ephemeral* inhabitants of the desert disturbs the serenity of the place. Even though Shibli's account of the crime is told through the perception of the officer and later confirmed by the museum guard, the deed

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that was committed is an actual event. The perpetrator of the murder said in a report, "I killed the armed Arab and I took the Arab female captive. On the first night, the soldiers abused her, and on the next day I saw fit to remove her from the world" (Abu Sitta 264).[2] Abu Sitta reports the incident drawing on his sources and a report by the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*:

> The girl, between ten and fifteen, was captured by the Nirim platoon on 12 August 1949 and held captive in a hut. The soldiers, with the approval of the platoon commander, decided to rape her. They washed her, cut her long hair, and placed her on an army bed. Each of the three squads, A, B, C, and the drivers and medics, seventeen in total, would take her for a day. (263)

The above details are in concordance with the version of the story in *Minor Detail*. In the novel, the silence of the desert is often accompanied by the groaning of camels or the barking of the dogs, which form a part of its immense landscape. However, the stillness of the place is disturbed by the sound of a platoon's gunfire as they search for Arabs to kill. In the novel, we learn that the intended mission is to "cleanse" the territory "of any remaining Arabs," and when the "Air Force sources … reported movements," the commander set out with his soldiers to exterminate them like insects (8). The "slender black shadows," (15) which he could not capture at the beginning, eventually "yielded to reveal a band of Arabs standing motionless by the spring" (24), which he proceeded to eliminate along with their camels using heavy gunfire. The officer's inspection revealed that the blood of the six camels was sucked languidly into the depths of the sand, a symbolic return to the motherland (25). Towards the end of the first section, the girl's blood is absorbed by the sand in a similar manner: "Blood poured from her right temple onto the sand, which steadily sucked it down, while the afternoon sunlight gathered on her naked bottom, itself the color of sand" (50-1).

Earlier, upon the commander's instructions, a medic sterilized the girl with gasoline and cut her hair. Her body epitomizes dirt, on which "order" has to be imposed (Douglas 2002, 161). Dirt has to be dealt with first (Douglas 161). Metaphorically, the girl may still retain "some identity" and this could be construed as "dangerous: [her] half-identity still clings to [her] and the clarity of the scene in which they obtrude is impaired by [her] presence. But a long process of pulverizing, dissolving and rotting awaits any physical things that have been recognized as dirt" (Douglas 161). In order to deal with this "dirt," one has to recognize it as "out of place" and "a threat to good order" (Douglas 161). Therefore, their "unwanted bits," such as hair or clothing have to be destroyed, and ultimately "all identity is gone … having entered into the mass of common rubbish" (Douglas 161). The Bedouin girl, who was discarded as rubbish, may have been buried in the two-meter sandy shallow grave, but given the nature of the sand, the unmarked site would be difficult to locate. Moreover, it "is unpleasant to poke about in the refuse to try to recover anything, for this revives identity" (Douglas 161). As long as "identity is absent, rubbish is not

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dangerous" (Douglas 161). Having an unmarked grave prevents the identity being known.

Signifying the girl's body as dirt affirms that the such a life is not worthy of proper burial; and "will not even qualify as 'grievable' " (Butler 2004, 32). According to Judith Butler, "life becomes, or fails to become, a publicly grievable life, [which is] the means by which a life becomes noteworthy" (34). The Bedouin life "is not grievable, it is not quite a life; it does not qualify as a life and is not worth a note. It is already the unburied, if not the unburiable" (Butler 34). For a life to count as one, Homi Bhabha (2019 27:24 mins) argues that one needs to equate "burial rights" with "human rights," as "corpses are people who have human rights." Deserting the corpse in this manner emphasizes that her life was not considered a human life; she lacked human rights and is not entitled to a proper burial.

Unworthy Lives

The Bedouins' lives are not worthy. The Arabs in the first part are presented as faceless entities whose existence is often juxtaposed against the presence of insects; when the surviving girl was found, she is described as "curled up inside her black clothes like a beetle" (Shibli 24). Butler argues that those "who remain faceless or whose faces are presented to us as so many symbols of evil [in this case, the claim that the Arabs were armed and infiltrators] authorize us to become senseless before those lives we have eradicated" (xviii). To justify the killings, the officer has marked the lives of the Arabs both precarious and vulnerable, giving himself the right to define "the meaning of this precariousness" (Butler 135). The lives of these Bedouins are deemed superfluous and insignificant. Defining the land as empty entails the claim that the land is devoid of people; however, in the event that some may populate it, they are considered mere shadows and not fully human. They have been classified as *homo sacer*. The land must be cleared of them to allow for a *superior* people to inhabit it. According to Kedar *et al.* (10), "a parallel process to Judaization has been the de-Arabization of the Negev land, through eviction, destruction, renaming, legal denial, and coerced urbanization and spatial concentration, which continue to this day." Eradicating the original population allows the settler-colonial project to succeed; it empties the land of its inhabitants through "the creation of a 'sterile zone'," which is "emptied completely of Arabs" (Azoulay 2013, 198). This form of ethnic cleansing becomes "an ultimate solution for the creation of such a world because it strives toward a complete removal of difference and the eradication of that which is left" (Azoulay 198). Additionally, the "displaced and dispossessed are not perceived as a part of the body politic, and therefore what the regime does to them is not perceived as a part of the regime" (Azoulay 207). They are depicted as other, and not worthy of the status of being human.

The phrase "Man, not the tank, shall prevail" is repeated four times in the novel; it is ironic that the gunshots that disturbed the serenity of the place prevailed over the human, enforcing a second level of emptying and a redrawing of reality (36, 86, 89, 97). According to Kedar *et al.* (32):

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> *Terra nullius* and the related terms *res nullius* (object belonging to no one) and *territorium nullius* (territory belonging to no one) were used to denote several intertwined and sometimes contradictory justifications for colonial dispossession of indigenous land, territory, and sovereignty.

Defining a land as empty with support of legal geography has long aided settler-colonialism in its endeavors; the maps reify an "abstract space," and redefine the "tenurial relations in newly colonized territories" (Blomley 2003, 128). Through these imposed definitions, voices are silenced, and people are removed from history. Edward W. Said (1994 416) argues that "In the history of colonial invasion, maps are always first drawn by the victors, since maps are always instruments of conquest; once projected, they are then implemented. Geography is therefore the art of war but can also be the art of resistance if there is a counter-map and a counter-strategy." Armed with maps from different epochs, the silent narrator embarks on a journey to locate the murder site in the second part of the novel. As the land composition has much changed, she can only rely on flashes from her memory of the place from earlier times and the descriptions afforded to her by her colleagues in Ramallah who were exiled from these villages and towns, many of which have been eradicated. She must resort to a number of maps to reach her intended location; her maps reveal a fragmented land and contradictory renditions of the same place:

> I take the maps I brought with me out of my bag and spread them over the passenger seat and across the steering wheel. Among these maps are those produced by centers for research and political studies, which show the borders of the four Areas, the path of the Wall, the construction of settlements, and checkpoints in the West Bank and Gaza. Another map shows Palestine as it was until the year 1948, and another one, given to me by the rental car company and produced by the Israeli ministry of tourism, shows streets and residential areas according to the Israeli government. (Shibli 70)

Maps created by settler-colonialists enforce another reality on the ground; mapping is a way of fabricating a history to impose another narrative and to legitimize a presence. Israel has long claimed that Palestine "was never actually inhabited by Palestinians;" hence, "maps play a critical role both in the legitimation of Israel's settler-colonial practices and in the presentation to the world of a false image of the land in question" (Palumbo-Liu 2021, 138). Furthermore, as Eyal Weizman (2017 140) argues:

> the mode of operation of contemporary colonialism is to erase and cover up the traces of its own violence, to become so invisible as to no longer appear as power at all. To remove traces is also to erase the traces of erasure. Mapping is not only about plotting a crime built into a material reality, but about uncovering such acts of double erasure.

Colonial maps with their "cadastral grids, blocks, and parcels as well as 'keep out' signposts, barbed wire fences, and planted trees carve distinctive and de-

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fined properties out of indigenous space" (Kedar 36). The erected settlements and military posts "deny previous land relations and legitimate current ones" (Kedar 36). In her quest to find the burial site and the location of the crime, the Ramallah woman encounters many obstacles; she tells the reader that "after crossing so many borders, military ones, geographical ones, physical ones, psychological ones, mental ones [she] look[s] back at the Israeli map, searching for the first location [she] wish[es] to head to" (Shibli 75). She tries "to determine the best route there, relying on the various maps," and reflects that "in principle, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line," but this cannot be achieved, "not because the roads aren't straight but because, as several maps confirm, there are at least two checkpoints on the shortest route leading to Yafa" (70-1). By referring to Jaffa by its original Arabic/Canaanite name, the woman introduces a mental map she has of the city prior to its occupation and emptying of its original inhabitants. Yet, none of the maps in her possession can reflect the geopolitics on the ground, because of their inability to pinpoint "the locations of flying checkpoints, or are updated with the ongoing construction of the Wall, which continually leads to more road closures" (71). Negating the Palestinian space has been a priority for the settler Zionist project (Nashef 2020, 313).

Eventually, she rejects all the maps and relies on oral histories of these places by her acquaintances, which permit her "to have a sense of how many villages and cities there used to be between Yafa and Askalan, before they were wiped from the earth's face not long ago" (Shibli 80). The practice of depicting Palestinian lands as barren and empty continues to this day, albeit virtually. Both Google and Apple maps "show Israeli settlements and outposts … while erroneously depicting an empty countryside that in reality contains hundreds of Palestinian villages" (Palumbo-Liu 138-9). Meanwhile, during her trip, a new reality emerges as "names of cities and settlements appear along the road, as do shapes of houses, fields, plants, streets, large signs, and people's faces" (Shibli 80). Initially, settler-colonialists created maps "as a form of organized forgetting ... a conceptual emptying of space"; yet, "a native space" is forever "dense with meanings, stories, and tenurial relations" (Blomley 2003, 129). Picking up the 1948 map uncovers another reality, however; the narrator tells us:

> Next, I pick up the map showing the country until 1948, but I snap it shut as horror rushes over me. Palestinian villages, which on the Israeli map appear to have been swallowed by a yellow sea, appear on this one by the dozen, their names practically leaping off the page. (Shibli 81)

In his discussion on space, Henri Lefebvre (1991 299) argues that the "*concept of space is not in space.* … The content of the concept of space is not absolute space or space-in-itself; nor does the concept contain a space within itself." The woman's understanding of space unfolding around her is an imagined one that recalls an erased presence. Even though she notes that currently the "only two visible Palestinian villages are Abu Ghosh and Ein Rafa," the Palestinian map from 1948 tells another story, and she proceeds to list all the destroyed villages

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that now lie beneath Canada Park (Shibli 73). Through a reference to history and a pre-1948 existence, she was able to engender and produce a "(mental) space" of an obliterated country (Lefebvre 300).

Compulsion With Detail

The obsession of the Ramallah woman with minor details manifests itself in her fixation to uncover the location of the burial site. Before she embarks on her journey, she describes how she is more concerned with dust particles landing on her desk than with the bombing of a building nearby. Indeed, dust is also evocative of another reality, as it is "the precarious hanging-together of remnants, particles, fragments … the community that survives after an organic unity has faded away" (Marder 2016, 68). The narrator's obsession with dust is another manifestation of the fragility of her existence, as she holds onto the fragments of her life. She reflects that she is unable:

> to identify borders between things, and evaluate situations rationally and logically … to see the fly shit on a painting and not the painting itself … which could compel someone, after the building next to their office at their new job is bombed, to be more concerned about the dust that was created by the bombing and that landed on their desk than about the killing of the three young men who had barricaded themselves inside. (Shibli 59)

Her compulsion with detail may appear insignificant, but it is through the detail that she tries to locate her own presence and feel less ashamed of her affliction. The woman is constantly resorting to chewing gum when she is nervous, and while shame "takes place in the mind … it is communicated in and by the body" (Bewes 2011, 22).

The voiceless woman is in search of a space from which she can metaphorically and physically speak. If her quest to track down the burial site is understood to be in one sense a "human expression," in effect she is "putting [her] body on the line," and these "elements of space" form her "sense of belonging" (Palumbo-Liu 2). It is her way of reclaiming "the 'place' of speaking" for the muted victims of the Nakba and ultimately herself. Uncovering and marking the burial site allows her to "symbolically 'fill' " the actual place "with meaning" (Palumbo-Liu 2). The meaning she seeks is multi-layered, rendering a presence to the unnamed corpse of the Bedouin girl and a larger voice for the silenced tribe of the victim. In the event she succeeds in her endeavor, locating the burial site and linking it to the date of the murder, which coincides with her birth date, it may help her regain her own ability to speak. She remarks: "The incident took place on a morning that would coincide, exactly a quarter of a century later, with the morning of my birth" (Shibli 58). Linking the events both emotionally and mentally provides her with an impetus and desire to stay alive. She explains: "But since I do not love my life in particular, nor life in general, and at present any efforts on my part are solely channeled toward staying alive" (Shibli 58-9). Likewise, the memory of the Bedouin girl should be preserved. As she reflects on the shared date, she echoes a verse from Palestinian poet Mahmoud Dar-

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wish's poem "On this Earth," in which he writes "we have on this earth what makes life worth living" (Darwish 2003, 6), an insinuation that an insignificant presence, such as hers, or that of the Bedouin girl's, is worthy of acknowledgement and of life. Hence, if she is successful in locating the unmarked grave, this minor event could grant her own existence some meaning, enabling her to enunciate in order to assume a place in the world. Her own suffering "has stripped" her "of the tools for speaking" (Bewes 20). Timothy Bewes argues that shame "has a paradoxical structure born of the fact that, while it is intensely focused on the self, it is experienced … before the 'Other' " and "its experience is intensely isolating" (21). Even though the narrator feels her exploration is beyond her and "the fact that the girl was killed 25 years to the day before [she] was born doesn't necessarily mean that her death belongs to [the author], or that it should extend into [her] life"; nonetheless, she remains preoccupied with the death of this "nobody [who] will forever remain a nobody whose voice nobody will hear" (Shibli 65).

Hannah Arendt (1998 20) argues that those "without word," *aneu logou*, are according to Aristotle deprived of a place in the world. She claims that Aristotle:

> formulated the current opinion of the *polis* about man and the political way of life, and according to this opinion, everybody outside the *polis*—slaves and barbarians—was *aneu logou*, deprived, of course, not of the faculty of speech, but of a way of life in which speech and only speech made sense. (27)

The woman is struggling with an impossibility; she has to render speech to those who have been deprived of it because of their status as occupied people. They are akin to the "plebs" or "barbarians" and denied the right to narrate or speak. As victims of both ethnic cleansing and occupation, the Palestinians cannot speak because "they are beings without a name, deprived of logos—meaning," and whoever "is nameless cannot speak" (Rancière 1999, 23). With her agency and "revitalized political will" silenced, the Ramallah woman is attempting to "redesign political space," and find her place within her discovered space (Palumbo-Liu 22). She is in the process of a Deleuzian becoming. She needs to metaphorically give a name and a voice to the murdered Bedouin girl, as well. Bewes writes:

> The powerless … are those for whom no names exist, for whom ontology has not cleared a space. To speak for the powerless … the mute—is not to speak on their behalf, or in their place, but to speak, to be responsible, before them. (28-9)

The Ramallah woman feels responsible for the slain Bedouin girl.

In the novel, the Bedouin girl is silenced symbolically and physically. Traditionally, rape as a form of genocide and ethnic cleansing "has long been absent from Israeli and Palestinian retellings of the Nakba and its aftermath" (Nashef 2021, 18). During the rape scenes, we learn how the officer's right hand would seal the mouth of the Bedouin girl to subdue her cries and screams. For the

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most part, her utterances are muted with intermittent sobs: "Suddenly, the door opened and the girl stepped out, crying and babbling incomprehensible fragments that intertwined with the dog's ceaseless barking" (Shibli 34). The sounds emitting from the girl "are not recognized as speech but heard as mere noise"; considered less than human, her voice is equivalent to "noise produced by animals" (Palumbo-Liu 21). The emphasis on the distinction between the "human voice and nonhuman sound" (Palumbo-Liu 28) is evident in *Minor Detail*. In the novel, the incessant barking of the dog not only disturbs the sought-after stillness of the barren hills by the soldiers who want to use it as a justification for their actions but it is also a sign of revolt against this hegemonic narrative and a reminder that these territories belong to another people. Ironically, the barking of dogs in *Minor Detail* serves as a voice to those who have been silenced by history and occupation. It also serves as a revolt against the atrocities that the animal witnesses.[3] Towards the end of the novel, the Ramallah woman provides a lift to a woman in her seventies, who like herself remains silent throughout the ride; "both taking refuge in the silence," she wonders if "this old woman has heard about the incident, since incidents like that would have reached the ears of everyone living in the Naqab" (Shibli 102). The silence renders her mute, "tightens its grip" on her, as she finds herself unable to ask her "about the incident" (102-3). After the old woman gets out, retreating "toward a sandy path to the left, which no one traveling on the asphalt road would notice or imagine might lead somewhere. The old woman continues to walk on the path until every trace of her vanishes into the sandy hill" (103). The story of the Bedouin girl is submerged metaphorically by the sands, and the Ramallah woman once more finds herself unable to narrate.

Conclusion

According to Sara Roy (2021 108),

> In the context of Israel-Palestine, the act of ruination has come to be defined by something more malevolent: it is not damaged personhood that is primary (although it is created as fundamental to colonial order and control), but the denial of personhood and the psychological eradication of the person.

Stories of Israeli demolitions of Bedouin villages and denials of the right of their inhabitants continue to this day. Recently, Al-Araqib presents an example of a Bedouin people who reject expulsions and insist on rebuilding their homes following every destruction. They refuse to be eradicated as a presence and a people. According to press agencies, the village, which Israel refuses to recognize, has been demolished 199 times.[4] In *Minor Detail*, on the contrary, despite all her efforts to resurrect the story of the silenced Bedouin girl and in turn unmute herself, the Ramallah woman fails. Her psychological problems and the voice that she has long been denied by the occupation are forces that she is unable to contend with. By rendering her "memory incoherent or vacant," she is incapable of recalling both histories, hers and the girl's, becoming a "disembodied" soul "unable to locate" or secure her "place in the world" (Roy

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109). Nonetheless, she resurrects a minor detail of a narrative that has long been suppressed. Even though by the end of the novel, we learn that the gunshots have won and the tanks have prevailed, a minor detail in a long story of erasure has been conveyed.

Biography

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Notes

1. The Ottomans used the term *mawat*, which the Israeli legal authorities used to formulate the Dead Negev Doctrine, which involved "a set of legal assertions, based on putative geographic and historical assumptions, under which virtually all land held, used, inherited, purchased, inhabited, grazed, or cultivated by Negev Bedouins is considered 'dead,' with its 'rightful' owner being the Jewish state" (Kedar 11).
2. In a special report by Zena Tahhan to Al Arabiya News, the journalist writes, "She was abducted on 12 August 1949, 66 years ago this month, by Israeli soldiers near the Nirim military outpost in the Negev desert, close to the Gaza Strip. The unnamed Palestinian Bedouin girl, in her mid-teens, was then raped and executed" (2020).
3. Bhabha (4:45) argues that silence and stillness should never be underestimated, for they are also "a kind of movement" that "needs to be acknowledged."
4. On 26 March 2022, many Palestinians joined the villagers of Al Araqib in planting olive trees on the demolished site in solidarity as they marked land day (SAFA 2022).

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Palestinian Zombie: Settler-Colonial Erasure and Paradigms of the Living Dead

Anna-E. Younes

Abstract

The modern zombie is a horror story of the many-headed processes of land conquest, dehumanization, and production of surplus populations. It is argued that the zombie always bore the fate of at least two positions of subjection that trouble dominant class-based analytics: namely, the African and the Indigenous slave. From the plantations of Haiti, to Auschwitz, and eventually to today's Palestine, this article follows a different figure of the zombie in a cultural analysis of its history *and* a critique of its popular culture representations, focusing on land conquest and erasure in capitalism. From the 20th century onward, a white (genocidal) gaze eventually turned the zombie myth into a flesh/meat-eating figure, roaming the land without direction and in need of cleansing from the earth. Understanding popular representations of the Haitian zombie myth as enslaved *and* erased history, however, hints at today's cultural re-productions of civilizational erasure and land conquest, war and surplus populations, and a "clean slate" paradigm to create "New World" fantasies. In this essay, Haiti, Auschwitz, and Palestine will be treated as sites of Indigenous struggles against settler-colonial ideology and genocide. This article argues that incorporation into modern (racial) capitalism and its (warring) violence made the zombie appear everywhere.

Key words: Arab Jew, Indigenous, *Muselmann*, "New World," Palestine, race, settler-colonialism, War, Primo Levi

Zombies, believe me, are more terrifying than colonists. And the problem now is not whether to fall in line with the armor-plated world of colonialism, but to think twice before urinating, spitting, or going out in the dark.

—Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1963/2007

- Attention! *Zombie!*

- Quick march! Slow march! *Zombie!*

- Left turn! Right turn! *Zombie!*

- About turn! Double up! *Zombie!*

- Salute! Open your hat! *Zombie!*

- Stand at ease! Fall in! *Zombie!*

- Fall out! Fall down! *Zombie!*

- Get ready! Halt! Order! Dismiss! *Zombie!*

—Fela Kuti, *Zombie*, 1976

There is no theory of capitalism distinct from its history.

—Samir Amin, *The Liberal Virus: Permanent War and the Americanization of the World,* 2004

Introduction: Slavery, Settler-Colonialism, and the Working Un-/Dead[1]

The modern zombie rose into existence on Haitian plantations approximately 400 years ago, as the myth of the working un-/dead toiling the land and crops for white masters and the political project that "we" today call "The West." Originating as a slave myth from West Africa, this modern representation of the un-dead is an amalgam of creolized stories from different Indigenous and West African folktales and traditions dealing with French enslavement of Haiti. At the time, transatlantic slavery in Haiti also meant the horrific unfolding of reproductive technologies for capitalism: the gendered production of racial slavery via institutionally enforced rape and "slave breeding." The figure of the zombie thus needs to be understood as a modern and fantastic folktale emerging *because of* and *alongside* the colonial violence of transatlantic slavery and settler-colonialism. At the heart of the modern zombie myth lies the uprooting from one's indigenous land—or the returning to it, if possible. Today, however, most popular culture representations produce a constant stream of zombies: up-rooted bodies walking—reminiscent of the Indigenous/Enslaved abject—facing off against those who "struggle to survive" in order for them to once again "own" and "master" the land as humans.

In this essay, the different figurations and representations of the pop culture zombie are followed in a cultural analysis *and* critique from the plantations of Haiti, to Auschwitz, and eventually to Palestine. In particular, this essay follows narratives and depictions of dehumanization vs. humanization, as well as metaphors of "cleansing the earth" from contaminated landscapes, and "wiping

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the slate clean" for only a chosen few to survive. I read such phantasmatic world-viewing as *Lebensraum* (living-space) ideology unfolding through militaristic narratives that understand the killing of the contaminated non-human as essential to produce a humanity that can once again thrive on liberated, cleansed, free, and thus secured territory (Ratzel 1901; Amin 2004, 74-77). Thus the question of "land" is pivotal for understanding zombie mythology in order to tease out settler-colonial fantasies inherent in the post-apocalyptic "survival of the few." Finally, this essay brings to light Palestinian indigenous dispossession, thingification, and erasure as these are also expressed by the zombie myth today when seen through the lenses of settler-colonialism and militarism. In this reading, the zombie is thus not simply a laborious and exploited subject in capitalism, but the colonized Other, Indigenous *and* enslaved. I separate *Indigenous* and *African* based on geopolitical origins, not because Africans were not Indigenous. In fact, I will argue that an Indigeneity-attached-to-land (and not to identity solely) is often written out of modern representations of the zombie. Following this imagination thus produces the free-floating, thingified, non-/human in capitalism. Reading Indigeneity in connection with land thus also poses trouble for the conceptual up-rooting of the Black subject from its relationship to the earth and land, and in particular, Indigeneity.

This essay further argues that settler-colonial narratives of national emancipation and racial liberation surface the fantasy that human conquerors come to a land devoid of humans, an un-free territory, waiting for the creation of a "New World" by those representing humanity and civilization. I will look at how zombie representations became free-floating non/humans amidst modernity's logic of replacement; their roots cut off from the land that anchors them, disappropriated of their bodies, and symbolically erased. While the idea of the "Indigenous" was born alongside the event of settler-colonialism, settler ideology also brought with it a *living-space ideology* of flora-and-fauna metaphors that identify what needs to be cleansed as weed, for instance, or as enslaved labour. However, such rigid and binary classification fails to account for people with expert knowledges of how to yield products and food from the land.[2] Property and land are so intricately linked that categories of the "Indigenous" are often eclipsed in White/Black narratives to obscure racial dispossession and land conquest by capitalism. Similarly, the zombie's position today—uprooted from its subject-relation to land—is also treated as a free-roaming category of all those un-dead cultures and peoples for whom modern hegemonic representations have "waivered" ethnic designations and precise geographic origins.

Since its rise in Haiti, the modern figure of the zombie has undergone many cultural turns, always depending on political currents and white-supremacist culture's need to "digest" and "project" at the time. For enslaved peoples for whom even suicide was not permitted, the figure of the zombie and its fate was one of the purest nightmares. And while white slave-owning Christianity forbids the self-destruction of its labour force, the Christian faith appears as a savior against zombification. Furthermore, with the event of the US occupation of Haiti in 1915, white popular representations of the zombie became a product for the consumerist masses. These were used to justify slavery, the US occu-

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pation in Haiti, as well as US Apartheid[3] and the repression of black people (PBS 2020). In the 21st century, the zombie on reel hence changes their innate qualities in comparison to the original myth by slaves and is depicted as uprooted and roaming. Accordingly, and along with capitalist production circuits, zombies today can run and are mainly shown as such. Zombie representation has also changed when it comes to their "initial transformation" into the undead. In the old Haitian myths and early 20th century representations, it was voodoo ceremonies that re-awoke the body of an individual that killed themselves and turned them into passive robot-like zombie workers without agency. In more modern representations, it is either a government conspiracy, nature, big pharma, or biotech companies that afflict the brains of masses of people—a trope born of popular culture and video games. Originally, however, the zombie was meant as a mythological warning, preserved for posterity by the bodies that have been labouring toward death—namely, that labour *as* property is *not* allowed to die and Indigenous relationships to land must be erased.

This relationship to land and to thingification thus troubles more Eurocentric philosophical engagements with the "monstrous." Its symbolic re/appropriation forecloses the material roots of the zombie's origins in settler-colonial land conquest, genocide, and militarism. It also gives way to a thingified reading of the racialized other: "As in effect people of the past, the dominated group is displaced out of the lived-reality of cultural life. Fanon calls this the 'zombification of culture.' They suffer a living death" (Gordon 2015, 87). Yet, when consuming the "modern zombie," common modern anxieties are sublated in a moment of mutual entertainment at the same time that the roots of understanding capitalist modernity also as settler-coloniality remain foreclosed and are rendered inaccessible. In a reading that already wrote out settler-colonialism while re/performing capitalism's death drive on a "new population," the zombie becomes yet another monster of global modernity alongside its many other uncanny doubles. However, I claim that zombification is still a cipher of settler-colonial violence and capitalism in a Fanonian world.

Today, in an "age of zombie movies" (Gordon 2021), the zombie figure is therefore cut off from its roots, wandering aimlessly, not knowing where it all started. We also witness new zombie narratives multiplying via capitalist doubles of a myth appropriated by a racial economy that is not interested in the cultures and bodies that produced it, but needs them, nevertheless, as psychological abjects for its own self-narrations. Today, zombies on reel portray the production and mystification of various narratives of (white) control societies. The power to define and call into being white freedom against black un-freedom via fiction (Morrison 1991) played these out against the larger meta-narrative of "zones-of-being" (Fanon 2007) and non-being where violence is used to secure and usher in regimes of being:

> Hence a bitter irony between the Haitian zombie and its American counterpart. The monster once represented the real-life horrors of dehumanization; now it's used as a way to fantasize about human beings whose every decision is exalted. … The original emerged in a context where humans were denied control of

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> their own bodies and sought death as an escape. And now in pop culture, the zombie has come to serve as the primary symbol of escapism itself—where the fictional enslavement of some provides a perverse kind of freedom for everyone else. (Mariani 2015)

Colonial Violence and the Production of Anxiety

Fanon's zombie is born of colonial violence, which is predominantly extractive of land and bodies and derives profit from thingifying the latter into modern global structures of market economies. Embodying the violence and mental trauma inflicted upon them, Fanon's zombification transfers the residues from said violence onto the next generation, perpetuating colonial mentalities for generations to come. That is why Fanon's zombies personify thingified psychic structures of colonial capitalism. The zombie vividly reminds us of our lives in landscapes ruled by violence, destroyed by profit, and of people between life and death on stolen land. Zombies are the first embodiment of modernity's settler-colonial need to up-root and thingify people for its racial and economic projects. They are colonial capitalism's horror, the Janus-faced other of *white* modernity. After death, they aimlessly search for what's left to eat without knowing their own place in a landscape destroyed by colonialism. And after extraction is "over," the few 1% of "survivors" have no use for these surplus populations other than to shoot them.

The zombie myth represents in an uncanny double-move: land conquest and disappropriation, as well as labour and death as processes. The uprooting from land and laborious death can take a short while or, indeed, a lifetime. After all, time (of "contagion," to "live," or to "die") is of the essence in the zombie myth and in capitalism; in states of permanent war, genocide as a process of settler-colonial rule can take a long time, too (Wolfe 2006). The time that defines one's ability to roam this world as an active human subject is an active engagement with and thus ability to imprint one's desire into the world. The non-human zombie, however, roams on feral instinct, without political intent or an understanding of time.

In his *The Uncanny* (1919), Freud points out two important aspects of what distinguishes the fear of the "uncanny" from other types of fear. First, any kind of repressed affect leads to anxiety when it returns to consciousness. Repressed affect returning to consciousness as "unknown anxiety" can thus have different roots and meanings, unrelated to "fear," at times something entirely different, or even its multi-layered opposites, love or hatred, desire or repulsion, for example. Anxiety thus becomes a "vessel" emotion, which reigns as long as its original reason for repression remains obscure. This "Uncanny" will haunt us as something ghostly, monstrous, deadly even. Second, Freud pointed out that the Uncanny (German: *das Unheimliche*) is something quite well known to the person feeling anxious, something "familiar" whose actual original feelings and historical context got lost.[4] For Freud, then, (signal-)anxiety surfaces in conscious everyday life when confronted with the symbols or words that remind us of the people or feelings that come from our world, yet remain abjected from it, repressed and "displaced out of the lived-reality of cultural life" (Gor-

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don 2015, 87). Freud writes one year later in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, where the death drive is intimately linked to the life forces: "Anxiety describes a particular state of expecting the danger or preparing for it, even though it may be an unknown one" (1920 12). Similarly, the undead, written out of cultural life, are living shadows and labouring bodies with no other purpose than producing incredible amounts of value (being traded as vast amounts of value in and amongst white slaving societies), value that was taken away, renamed, and reinvested by colonial masters and the political project of "the West." What built culture but is omitted from it—the repressed—thus returns in the uncanny walking dead.

Today, zombies represent capitalism's surplus populations: they are passive and excluded from political projects. Popular culture however also posits a productive site for said repressed affective figures: a tightly controlled manner of engaging with zombies is set up, taming our cultural anxieties via consumption. If "Capital's death drive" produces libidinal structures of pleasure through death (Khatib 2019), we can live out the psychic residues that remain and keep them from forcibly controlling the material world by transgressing phantasmatically and violently, for example, by entertainment on screen. Our desire seems to be to kill that which endangers a world as we know it, that which we cannot control. That which challenges our world and cannot be controlled is also that which is understood as persecutory and deadly. The military industrial complex on screen thus provides the weapons for phantasmatic self-defense; in real life, however, it uproots entire peoples, produces deserted landscapes, and turns people into targets of securitization, anti-terror laws, and border transgressions.

> In the world of regulative ideals, the world in which everything has to be governed by predictability, by the serialization of life, etc., the normative model—the value system—becomes, what I call, the "Living Dead." It's no accident that we are in an age of zombie movies. (Gordon, 2021)

Pop culture representations depict the zombie as deracialized and uprooted from its original indigenous African and indigenous Caribbean geopolitical landscapes. Consequently, the zombie is seen as yet another fantastic monster of capitalist modernity, representing labouring masses, probing our anxieties, or triggering unwanted memories. However, this story does not explain why we can find (consumerist) safety in the elimination of the newly zombified natives.[5]

Every fan of zombie movies knows that cities and other former densely populated areas are to be avoided by humans wanting to survive. Weapons that can shoot "around corners" are practical for those who want to re-/conquer the city or land from contagious non-humans. In Figure 1 below, we see Angelina Jolie handle an Israeli weapon, tested on zombified Palestinians, that can shoot around corners.

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Figure 1. Angeline Jolie in the movie *Wanted* (2009) from the documentary *The Lab* (Feldman 2013).

Why do we find (consumerist) safety in the elimination of the new zombified natives? Might it be that the anxiety triggered by symbols of death and mass murder as exercised on the uprooted and deracialized zombies on reel today, latches on to pleasurable fantasies of the creation of "New Worlds?" In this "New World" scenario, the zombie is eliminated in order to start civilization from scratch. "We" can henceforth enjoy zombie mass murder and massacres as a steppingstone for new beginnings, with a chosen few zombie survivors in pacified and cleansed landscapes. If genocide is a structure, then mass murder and massacres are its events. In his work on love, Tzvetan Todorov (1984 144) read colonial conquest as a love-attachment to the fantasy of money-making and a "New World" in the Americas. The advent of conquest and slavery ushers in the secularizing of Christianity and thus also new ways of killing, maiming, and producing: "Massacre is … intimately linked to colonial wars waged far from the metropolitan country. … If religious murder is a sacrifice, massacre is an atheistic murder."

White Zombies and White Narratives

Haitian zombification made it to the North American mainland bodily via slave trading, later through the US invasion of Haiti, and culturally through white popular literature and film. One might thus assume—given the history, culture, and racist brouhaha that ensued in American culture after the US military invasion and occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934—that the zombie would become a representation exclusively of Blackness in pop culture. Yet, what (white) US imperial militarism created was a reformulation of the zombie myth in the 20th century via a white gaze. *White Zombie* (1932, directed by Victor Halperin)—the first long feature film made about zombies shot toward the end of the US occupation of Haiti—features white people depicted as zombies and as zombies controlling other zombies. Given the transnationalism of racism and colonialism, it is reasonable to assume that this depiction is also an expression of racial anxieties when white apartheid ruled the US (1877-1965). Anxieties about Indigenous and African erasure and exploitation morphed into depictions of zombified white people. In the first seven years of the US occupation, 2500 Haitians were killed trying to escape or fight off the new slavery system re/introduced by the US (Gershon 2002). If dehumanization under colonial capitalism is an all-encompassing, multi-faceted project, *White Zombie* is a self-

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depiction of the many facets of such white rule: white supremacy in this movie simultaneously produces its own dehumanization *and* subsequently its own liberation.

Figure 2. "Zombie." A Zombie, at twilight, in a field of cane sugar in Haiti. By Jean-Noël Lafargue, Wikimedia Commons.

At the intersection of white sexism and racism, *White Zombie* shows its inherent anxieties concerning white rule: a rich plantation owner in Haiti who cannot get the white woman he desires, turns to a voodoo practitioner with a foreign Eastern European accent (Bela Lugosi), who owns a sugar cane mill operated by zombies. However, this voodoo practitioner is depicted as a white (Dracula-like/Master-like) figure; thus, the original African or Indigenous voodoo practitioner is erased from script. After the plantation owner's initial visit to the sugar cane mill, where he sees the laborious enslaved in a factory (and seems shocked), the protagonist eventually also zombifies the woman of his dreams. Such patriarchal domestication of women shows that even wealthy white females can turn into apathetic, obedient wives.

It is noteworthy that zombification is done by the owner of a factory for the owner of a plantation—and not the other way around. In this narrative, the laborious enslaved enter as uncanny blueprints of lost origin, as an "Africanist background" story of silenced Black bodies, foils for projection, as Morrison (1991) wrote. Africanist background stories in white fiction narratives operate by enabling tales of white suffering and subsequent heroism. At the end of *White Zombie*, the plantation owner, with the help of a white Christian missionary, saves the day by killing first the European factory owner (the voodoo-Dracula mix) and then himself, seemingly stopping zombification—for white people, at least. The white woman is eventually freed, and mumbles as she awakes something about a (bad?) "dream," only in order to be reunited with her true love (see Figure 3 below).

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Figure 3. The de-zombified New Yorker Madeline Short in *White Zombie* after her true fiancé Neil Parker, a bank employee in Port-au-Prince, freed her.

Together they will return to an otherwise "innocent" and safe American mainland where these "things" seemingly do not happen. Here, zombification for white people is limited in time and also by geography (Haiti). We learn very little about the Haitian slaves upon whose lives and myths this film revolves, or about the reintroduction of slavery during US occupation. Aside from the mill/factory scenes, the enslaved are only briefly introduced. At the beginning of the film, they are the ones who buried their dead underneath busy roads so that they would not be stolen. At the end, however, their characters are displaced out of narrative, which is why they seem dis-placed in the film. Neither the forced labour *corvée* system that demanded roads for the US military nor the white Western imperial warring over control of Haiti is given any context; instead, the enslaved are illustrations to the plot, not narratives of it.

In *White Zombie,* white people are dehumanized while the already thingified (the enslaved) are dehumanized *and* symbolically abjected from the plot, except through short, decontextualized glimpses. Since the original (sugar plantation) zombie is denied full narrative, a liberal white gaze can set it up as an example of an apathetic and obedient body and mind, devoid of any history, other than a white European one. Such narrative erasure makes non-white material culture and history disappear from the symbolic realm. The story that unfolds presents zombification as a product of modern industry and militarization. It does not understand the latter to be an outcome of settler-colonialism and enslavement, but as separate from them. And while the factory/sugar mill slave depiction in *White Zombie* seems to be an allusion to white class critiques, even representations like these later on disappear. Narratives of Indigeneity or stolen land are foreclosed entirely in *White Zombie*. The movie is set in 1932, at a time of already automated labour, accumulated property, and capital in the "hands of a few." During the Great Depression (1929-1939) with white Westerners battling over imperial control in Haiti, the labouring plantation zombie myth was not needed anymore: now black death becomes a narrative demand in order to make room for white death narratives to unfold. For the first and only time Haitian slavery

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is depicted on screens through a white liberal lens; it is also the moment where its full depiction is declared obsolete by that same white liberal gaze.

Zombification and the Conquest of Land

The original zombie figure was not able to own its body, before or after death. The reawakened zombie was thus unable to escape plantation labour or return to Africa; it did not feel pain, and was forced to repeat manual tasks that require a mind, yet one that is alienated, unfree, obedient, and mechanized. After the US military occupation of Haiti and the following appropriation of the zombie myth by white US American movie productions, the zombie on reel changes even more: in the second half of 20th century zombie film productions, the brain became the locus for zombification. Zombification as alienated labour on stolen land and slave plantations is obfuscated and written out.

In late capitalism, the mind defines the worker and not his body or the land where they come from. In the original myth, the return to African or non-alienated indigenous lands would end the nightmare of zombification on a plantation; yet in modern tales, the land and new depictions of Indigeneity become the background upon which the white fear of zombification unfolds. The big American series *The Walking Dead* is paradigmatic. Zombies occupy here the position of the new indigenous population. Presented with this un-dead enemy, humans unite across racialized divides in a survival fantasy against America's new indigenized enemies. There is an almost never-ending stream of zombies, expressing anxieties of settler-colonial re-/conquest of land and space. The remaining humans appear at times as the *reconquistas* of the land. In their fortified outposts, they remind us of a land once ruled by humans and surrounded by non-human enemies. In *The Walking Dead* these brave human warriors even have children who know how to handle guns like adults. At times, it seems as though the National Rifle Association (founded six years after the "abolition" of slavery in 1871) might have sponsored productions like *The Walking Dead* or other zombie movies.

This whitened zombie myth conjures up a figure that comes (from here and elsewhere) to conquer the land—a paranoid projection reminiscent of living-space ideology that imagines an Other "species" taking control over the space needed for one's own kind to survive. Today this figure aimlessly roams in lands the zombie no longer recognizes. The cynical return to the "mall" in George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* (1978) is depicted as a comical take on the residues of capitalist mechanized habit, but not of plantation work. The aimlessly roaming zombie pursues meat/flesh, not the reclaiming of indigenous territory. In *Resident Evil: The Final Chapter* (2012), Dr. Isaacs, the main villain and head of the Umbrella Cooperation, which invented the zombie T-virus, states his desire for a "world reboot" to his assembled board members:

> We are here to talk about the end of the world. We stand on the brink of Armageddon. Diseases for which we have no cure. Fundamentalist states who call for our destruction. Nuclear powers over which we have no control. … I propose that we end the world. But on our terms. An orchestrated apocalypse.

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> One that will cleanse the earth of its population but leave its infrastructure and resources intact. That was done once before—with great success. [*Pointing at a bible*:] The chosen few will ride out the storm. … And when it's over we will emerge onto a cleansed earth, one that we can then reboot in our image. (*Resident Evil: The Final Chapter* 51:40 – 53:01).

Whiteness here stands in for "divine rule" and carrying out the commands bestowed upon the "chosen people" (see also Amin 63). Zombie brain/mind imposes questions of death or life, of a fall or resurrection into civilization and humanity. Body becomes a metaphor for surplus matter, for bodies that do not matter. What matters is the creation of a new world, if only in fantasy.

Colonial Violence and the Zombies of Auschwitz: The *Muselmann*

The derogative word for Muslim. It came to name the figuration of the submitted and apathetic Diaspora Jew, but a memory monster that results from the latter—a zombified monster with a thinking mind. Primo Levi's book *Survival in Auschwitz* (1996) is one of the most well-known 20th century European narratives to describe in detail the life of zombification. When Levi starts his chapter on the *Muselmann*, "The Drowned and the Saved,"[6] he ventures into the cultural residues of colonial history available to him: "[*I*]n the face of driving necessity and physical disabilities many social habits and instincts are reduced to silence … there comes to light the existence of two … categories of men—*the saved and the drowned*" (1996 87). In this uncanny manner, Levi describes his landing in Auschwitz as a moment where his outlook on the world shifts. Levi describes being picked up by the police, who morphed suddenly from "simple policemen" into lethal threats. He concludes that "it was disconcerting and disarming" (19). The scene continues to unfold with limited information ("How old? Healthy or ill?") and stays quite "simplistic:" New policing categories appear (the SS), the surrounding is mundane and sterile (platforms, reflector lights, lorries), whilst people are being separated and selected, uprooted from their land, language, and families. Slave lodges, slave ships, colonial genocidal operations, labour camps, and death marches of the Indigenous operated quite similarly. All of this is also the material zombie movies are made of.

After everyone has already "said farewell to life through his neighbor" on the train, Levi describes the arrival in Auschwitz. People—"the shadows" in Levi's words—came out to stand on the platform in fear, looking at the men in command. He recalls different languages being spoken by the people that were brought in, Germans barking commands that "seem to give vent to a millennial anger" followed by a haunting silence akin to "certain *dream* sequences" (italics added). Shortly afterward, Levi recalls the shock of the captives: "We had expected something more apocalyptic" (19). Must there be something apocalyptic that announces the world of the non-human, the descent into Fanon's hell?[7] Or is the idea of a spectacular break not a fallacy to begin with? For Levi there is a deep shock and disbelief in his description of

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being treated like *chattel* upon his arrival in Auschwitz: separated into those who are economically useful and those that are not. Levi continues by detailing the everyday life of labour in the camp. He remarks that the term *Muselmann* (Muslim) was used by the oldest (Jews) in the camp to name the people in decay—the labouring "masses" of the camp. The *Muselmann* here appears close to the original zombie myth and the colonial plantation life it lived off:

> Their life is short, but their number is endless: they, the *Muselmänner*, the drowned form the backbone of the camp, an anonymous mass, continually renewed and always identical, of *non men* who *march and labour in silence*, the *divine spark dead* within them, already too empty to really suffer. One hesitates to call them living: one hesitates to call their death death, in the face of which they have no fear, as they are too tired to understand. (90, italics added)

Their number was not endless, but in a confined space entirely controlled by others, it appeared so. The interpellated *Muselmänner* were "the weak, the inept, those doomed to selection," those ordinary people to whom no one will extend a helping hand (*Null Achtzehn*) (88-9). Why *Muselmann* was used as a name, Levi seemingly doesn't know (88), yet he nevertheless compares the selection and killing processes in Nazi concentration camps to imperialism:

> We are aware that this is very distant from the picture that is usually given of the oppressed who unite, if not in resistance, at least in suffering. We do not deny that this may be possible when oppression does not pass a certain limit, or perhaps when the oppressor, through inexperience or magnanimity, tolerates or favours it. But we state that in our days, *in all countries in which a foreign people have set foot as invaders*, an analogous position of rivalry and hatred among the subjected has been brought about; and this, like many other human characteristics, could be experienced in the Lager in the light of particularly cruel evidence. (91, italics added)

Later on, bare life sets in at Auschwitz; while people continue to get zombified, hierarchies amongst the zombies are re-/instituted. Levi explains that because "everyone is desperately and ferociously alone," yet dependent on the performance of the other, it was "in no one's interest that there will be one more *muselmann* dragging himself to work every day" (88). The zombie *Muselmann* has no "distinguished acquaintances" that could be used, no profitable work with the Nazi Kommandos, and "no secret method of organizing." Eventually, "in solitude they die or disappear, without leaving a trace in anyone's memory" (89). And although Levi's depiction of zombification is foreclosed from an optics of colonial violence, he nevertheless concludes with a life-lesson from the zombified camp: "[*T*]o he that has, will be given; from he that has not, will be taken away" (88).

The *Muselmann* of the camps represents the foreclosed colonized side of Judaism, the zombified Jew in Europe. Although Levi cannot trace its semantic origin, what remained was the "name"—Muslim—and the anxiety bound up with it: colonial submission and erasure. The *Muselmann*'s colonial roots were

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erased by assimilation into capitalist white modernity and thus foreclosed Levi's full understanding of reality. Today, said narratives of white zombified death often find expression in cultural repair narratives, which is the labour civilization is seemingly supposed to do these days. The world of the zombie, however, speaks to something more sinister: an understanding of the all-engulfing reality of capital's death worlds, namely that everyone can be a zombie (disposable), but some are more zombie (disposable) than others. What would happen if we started to think "repair," "labour," and "civilization" from the perspective of the zombie, those drowned and saved *and* written out? And what does it mean to start thinking from a world of the living dead, from death worlds?

Israeli Colonialism, The Arab-Jewish "Memory" Zombie, and the Killing of the Palestinian Zombie

More than 70 years after Levi, while describing Auschwitz Yishai Sarid (2017) writes in his book of fiction *Memory Monster* how Israeli-state organized holocaust memory has been weaponized to create a new type of zombified Jew, a memory zombie. This time, it is not the Jewish *Muselmann*[8] in Europe, but the Arab Jew in Israel. In this novel, his Arab-Jewish-Israeli protagonist slowly but surely goes insane given the weight of monstrous European history that has been passed on to its internal Arab-Jewish-Other inside Israel—one already colonized and now recognized yet again differently by European Jews in Israel. This Israeli memory zombie is within the realms of capital's production yet suffers from his non-alignment with a Zionist nationalist dream given the colonial nightmares still haunting him.

Much like Fanon's zombies that carry the residues of colonial hangover into the next generations, the Zionist memory zombie is born from the colonial military man in Israel without empathy for Arabs, or the Arab inside of him. In fact, as Ella Shohat demonstrated, stamping out the Arab from the Israeli Jew became mandatory for participation in the European political project that is Israel (Shohat 1988; Massad 1996). However, this assimilation process also leaves a cargo of bodies behind, bodies with "taboo memories" (Shohat 2006) and violated "spirits." Auschwitz, in Sarid's novel, thus becomes a site for mobilizing trauma to celebrate the emergence of an ostensibly "New Nation" in a "New World," also known as Israel in the Middle East. Sarid's protagonist, an educator and historian of the Holocaust, leads Israeli high school children through Auschwitz. The kids seem to have agreed that the trip to Auschwitz taught them "*To be strong*," "*to never forget*," and "*to be human*," which apparently sound like repetitive mantras the protagonist has heard before. All the while, the trope of being human echoes through the room. Suddenly, one of the tall, athletic guys in the group states:

> "I think that in order to survive we need to be a little bit Nazi, too," he said.
> A bit of chaos ensued. Not too much, though. He was just saying to adults what they usually only say among themselves. The teacher pretended to be shocked, waiting for me to respond, to do their dirty work for them, to take care of this monster that they and their parents had nurtured.

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> The kid looked perfectly normal; from a good family, with a loving mother and a functioning father.
> "What do you mean?" I asked.
> "That we have to be able to kill mercilessly," he said. "We don't stand a chance if we're too soft" …. It's hard to distinguish civilians from terrorists. A boy who's just a boy today could become a terrorist tomorrow. This is, after all, a war of survival. It's us or them. We won't let this happen to us again. (124-5)

In Sarid's novel and in Levi's testimony, the un-dead appear as zombified humans against the backdrop of cruel colonial violence: a Fanonian analytic. However, while Levi testifies to the zombification of the European in Europe, Sarid's protagonist as well as the Arab Jewish memory zombie trouble the colonial doubles of European zombification. Sarid's protagonist's last words are to the head of Yad-ve-Shem:[9] "There is a monster out there. It is alive and waiting for its time to strike again. Look at me. It has bit into my flesh, and I haven't stopped bleeding ever since" (169).

In July 2022, US President Joe Biden addressed the Israeli nation upon his landing. He talked about the necessity to fight anti-Jewish racism by referring to the past and briefly wonders, "Why weren't the tra- — tracks bombed? Why did we not—why, why, why?" He then goes on to infer "New World" paradigms and proclaims: "One need not be a Jew, to be a Zionist" (US Gov. 2022). In this vein, Westerners and others have written themselves into the modern affliction that understands Zionist settler-colonialism as the *humane* outcome of *human* history. Political Zionism thus becomes the political project of the human and *of humanity*— leaving everyone else as its non-human enemy. Joe Biden continued:

> From here, I'm going straight to a briefing on Israeli missiles and rocket defense capabilities, including the US support for the Iron Dome and Israel's new laser-enabled system, called the Iron Beam. We're going to deepen our connections in science and innovation and work to address global challenges through the new Strategic High-Level Dialogue on Technology. (US Gov.)

Violence is thus necessary to "birth" capitalist production circuits and maintain capitalism. In this regard, Israel is today one of the top arms dealers in the world and has, along with the US, Germany, and France, significantly increased its weapon's exports over the past decade (SIPRI 2021). Ehud Barak (former Israeli Minister of Defense) echoes what Biden said in 2022:

> The Israeli hi-tech industry started out under the auspices of the Defense Ministry. These investments have made Israel a superpower in defense export at almost 7 billion dollars per year. 150,000 households depend on the industry as well as mutual buyings of foreign currency and workplaces. It plays a principle role in our economy. (Feldman 2013, 57:04 – 57:41)

What was six billion dollars of revenue during the military Operation Cast Lead on Gaza (Feldman), rose to 11.3 billion dollars in Israeli arms deal revenues in

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2021 (Fabian 2022). In comparison, Germany (around 16 times the size of Israel) has had a national arms export average of around seven billion euros over the past years, with a high of around nine billion euros in 2021 (BMWK 2022). In Yotam Feldman's *The Lab*, a documentary on the Israeli Military Industrial complex, the allure of Israeli weapons is explained by them having "been tested" in densely populated Palestinian enclaves, ghettos, and cities. As Feldman comments on Israeli settler society: "War ceased to be a burden, and is rather an asset, which many depend on so much life can't be imagined without it" (56:38 - 56:43). If war and death are assets that produce "life," security, and humanity in this world of death, then zombification and zombie-elimination must continue as a gradual process for profit accumulation. While commenting on Gaza and Lebanon, the former head of the Northern Command of the IDF said to a group of what seem to be predominantly security and military personnel: "Quantity is more important than quality. One mistake the army makes is judging each case individually, whether the person deserves to die or not. Most of these people were born to die, we just have to help them" (Feldman 07:21 - 07:33). Here, the Arab and Palestinian appear as the "walking un/dead" who roam the world in order to finally find peace in real death at the hands of the IDF. In this world, humanity enjoys freedom, life, and security by embracing settler-colonial dispossession, genocide, *and* thingification. Such an embrace involves, for example, denying and limiting access to schooling, incarcerating those that think differently, restricting and controlling the ability to move or eat, destroying electricity and water systems, and killing medical staff. The Israeli settler-colonial state has turned Gaza into a confined and ghettoized space that is frequently bombed by air and sea, instilling political apathy, personal neglect, and suicidal tendencies in those at the receiving end of its violence. Political Zionism has become a process of perpetuating settler-coloniality through zombification. It categorized Arab Jews brought to Israel as laborious workers compared to the enslaved (Massad 1996), essentially assimilating and zombifying a not-quite human Arab Jewish memory figure through colonial militarism. Palestinians, on the other hand, are seen as entirely disposable zombies, not needed at all for any political project.

Figure 5. Lt. Colonel Naveh (retired) IDF Military philosopher showing an *empty* "Arab village" specifically constructed for IDF military training purposes. (*The Lab* 12:55-18:25)

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The film *World War Z* continues this representation in contemporary mass media of the Palestinian in the figure of the zombie. In order to find a cure for zombification, the main lead played by Brad Pitt (Garry Lane), a former United Nations investigator, needs to travel to the last standing civilization ruled by freedom and equality: Jerusalem. The Palestinian appears as a background story, thanking the IDF for saving the remaining survivors. The Palestinian and Arab zombie—outside the walls—becomes the foil upon which white human heroism unfolds. The overrepresentation of Palestinians as "subhuman," cruel, ugly, and terrorist is nothing new on reel (Shaheen 2003; 2006). "The viral apocalypse became a rhetorical form that allowed anxious producers and viewers to handle terrorist, disease, and other threats" as "discursive contamination" from "inside" and "outside" (Ghabra and Hasian 2020, 4). In *World War Z* the apartheid wall is already normalized as a security device for humanity, producing an acceptance of "apartheid on a world scale" (Amin 26) via popular culture. The Palestinian zombie is an expression of uprooted colonial experience, of living in walled-off confined spaces: A favela in Brazil, ravaged by colonial and militarized state violence and death, is already called the "Gaza Strip" (Feldman; Hubermann and Nasser 2019). The zombification of Palestinian life has by now reached such a globalized audience, that the killing of Palestinians for money and "security" has become nothing but philosophical ruminations (Weizman 2006), negotiation and diplomacy:

> While certain countries in Europe and Asia condemned us for attacking civilians, they send their officers here. … There is a lot of hypocrisy, they condemn you politically while they ask you what your trick is, you Israelis, for turning blood into money, that is, how to use precise weaponry, precise intelligence, selective use of ground forces where needed, thereby saving lives. (Yoav Galant, Head of IDF Southern Command, 2005-2012, in Feldman 53:05 – 53:51)

Today, killing Palestinians is part-and-parcel of sustaining the Israeli nation-state's survival by providing the bodily logistics upon which the violence necessary to maintain capitalism can be practiced. In an apocalyptic climate future, this process might produce spatially confined and separated "zones-of-being" (settlements) vs. "zones of non-being" (hordes of hungry humans in contaminated landscapes and deserted urban areas). Zombie death is needed for humanity to establish itself in "New Worlds" cleansed of non-humans. The Palestinian zombie in the 21st century operates in the zone of non-being, a ghetto life: drowned, displaced, and written out, with only a few extending a "helping hand" (Levi 88-9).

Under colonial capitalism, violence comes home to roost in Europe (Césaire 1955) as a social relationship that will eventually engulf the zone-of-being, too. Making "the connection thus means that … we need to trace the complicated circuits of global capital, the multiple lines of relay, the multiplicity of abuses and repressions that emerge if one follows a global supply chain. If one follows the Israeli Occupation far enough, one finds oneself on the streets of Ferguson, or in Standing Rock. One finds oneself inside a decrepit, overcrowded cellblock

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in California. … Solidarity, too, and the struggle—they must also follow the global supply chain" (Koram 2019, 418).

Biography

Anna-Esther Younes (she/her) is an independent scholar of race critical theories, working on the intersections of anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim racism in a post-socialist but not post-colonial Europe. Her main interest lies in "researching up to power" and in thinking through the "War on Antisemitism" alongside the "War on Terror and Drugs" as colonially constituted wars. Zombies, Horror, and Science Fiction are her favorite movie choices. Her work can be accessed on academia.edu or else on her personal website: www.annaestheryounes.net.

Notes

1. My thanks go to Ruth Orli Moshkovitz for helping me focus. To Prof. Alana Lentin for her comments and support across continents. To Josias Tembo for our conversation on the afterlives of zombification in capitalism. To Yotam Feldman for permitting the usage of his footage. To the unknown reviewers and editors for their valuable critique, comments, edits, and suggestions. And, last but not least, to C. Summerhill for commenting and proofreading versions of this piece.
2. In German, for instance, the word *Kraut* signifies the meaning of *weed* that can be eaten or not. Kraut is either usable or not. If it is not useable for human consumption, it is given the suffix "Un-" (see below Freud on the Uncanny). *Unkraut* in that metaphor is then weed that cannot be used and is thus in need of elimination to make space for those Krauts/ weeds that are usable, for instance.
3. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court pp. 3-4. Article 7.2, Crimes Against Humanity: ""The crime of apartheid' means inhumane acts of a character similar to those referred to in paragraph 1, committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime."
4. In German, Freud used the word "homely" (*heimlich*) as its counterpart, which collapses into its opposite "un-homely" or un-canny in English, while the German prefix "un-" stands in for the "repressed" (Freud 1919, 318)—the repressed from home. Put differently, the Uncanny is the "old familiar repressed" (319) *altvertrautes Verdrängtes*, the return of the repressed.
5. In 2011, the US American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) tried to convince an American audience of the need for emergency disaster health plans by using a zombie scenario to instill a sense of urgency: "A tongue-in-cheek blog post about what people should do to prepare for a zombie apocalypse and other emergencies

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attracted so many viewers that it crashed one of the agency's Web servers, went viral, and generated extensive media coverage" (Kruvand and Bryant 2015, 656). The CDC's Public Relations decision can only be explained via popular culture in the 20th century, played out against the history of land conquest, genocide, and slavery.

6. This analysis predominantly rests on Levi's chapter "The Journey" (pp. 13-21) and "The Drowned and the Saved" (pp. 87-100) in his book *Survival in Auschwitz*.
7. For Fanon (2007) colonial violence is the formative structure of and constitutive for zombification and descent into "hell."
8. Alexander G. Weheliye (2014) writes in his chapter on "Racism: Biopolitics": "Due to extreme emaciation, often accompanied by the disappearance of muscle tissue and brittle bones, the *Muselmänner* could no longer control basic human functions such as the discharge of feces and urine and the mechanics of walking, which they did by lifting their legs with their arms, or they performed "mechanical movements without purpose," leading the other inmates and later commentators to view becoming-*Muselmann* as a state of extreme passivity. Observers portray *Muselmänner* as apathetic, withdrawn, animal like, not-quite human, unintelligible—in short, as ghostly revelations of the potential future fate that awaited the still functional inmates in an already utterly dehumanized space where everyone was exposed to chronic hunger and death. Being forced to occupy a phenomenological zone that could in no way be reconciled with possessive individualism, the *Muselmänner* exemplified another way of being human and were, in fact, likened by several observers to starving dogs."
9. Yad ve-Shem is built on a hill-top where one can see 'Ain Karem, a former Palestinian village today inhabited by predominantly—non-Palestinian—Israeli citizens. This is also the outlook that one sees once one has left the exhibition on Nazi extermination and the (memory) hall of names. In this scenario, 'Ain Karem appears as the site that was not only a refuge for Jews, but also a land asking to be freed. The blank-slate narrative colonialism purported for centuries comes to find expression in this architecture and in the older Zionist mantra: "A land without a people, for a people without a land."

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Sally Khader

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Complexities of Morning Coffee

I wake up in the early morning and the first thing I think of is coffee.
My addiction to you points out my anxieties.
You act like you are at peace.
I just there sit jittering, worrying what you will think
Of me if I forget you.

Changes.
I had to try to stop drinking coffee. Politician's orders.
It reminded too much of my homeland.
But tea is not right for me.
Nor I right for it, but I can't help thinking
What if?
Then I remember you're everything I want.

My coffee spills and leaves splashes and stains all across the map.
Just as my coffee spills,
My family scatters and gathers their closest belongings
Before their home collapses.

You have a depth about you I would love to delve in.
An existential study.
That even the best critics would praise, but I haven't been there in a long time.
I cannot hold on to you without remembering separation.

The soldiers tear us apart from each other and set us on different ships
Thousands of miles away from the home we once had.
Your aroma haphazardly glues our memories together.
Messy, trying to see among all the dust,
Beauty with the confusion.
Our story is unfinished.

My destroyed home asks me
Where am I most at peace,
6 years old.
I could be anything, build anything.
No fears.
When my dreams hadn't been ripped apart and shattered,
I was the girl that wrote everything,

Until I felt the need to sensor my thoughts
Like a coffee filter
And silence my pen and paper,

Chaos.
I wish I was home.
The ghosts of war tell me that you like your women like your coffee.
Dark and bitter.
I wish life was simpler.
But then I would never get to know your complexities
Nor feel hate for war, fear of ghosts,
Or the burning chime of a pistol.

Exile.
You introduced me to offstage racism, your politics, and blaming eyes.
And how you can feel frequencies that everyone else can't.
I worry that you feel my fear in every sip, my voice and heartbreak with every word I speak.

War.
When were you going to tell me?
Or was that your plan all along?
To throw me out like yesterday's coffee grounds or cut up scraps.
Used and unwanted.
I want my old home, a place of peace, safety and family.
You want that plus things I can't give.
But you always take.

You are your coffee
Bitter, caffeinated, addicting.
The only patch that keeps me going is comforting words you never spoke.
We had many conversations of desires and mistakes,
But I was burnt by lies and gun shots
That left a harsh, acidic aftertaste.

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Biography

Sally Khader has a master's degree in English Literature specializing in Resistance Literature and Cultural and Postcolonial Studies with first-class honors. As a Palestinian-American raised in the United States, she is all too familiar with the concept of cultural clash, and her sense of displacement pushed her to be the writer she is and inspires her to be the writer she wants to become.

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V. Varsam

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Memorial/Immemorial

You will have forgotten me
you will
you can't disagree
because there is no you
there is no I
only a number
hard to remember
and shifting every day
of people rising and falling over mountains, valleys and flatlands
across rivers, seas and oceans
and another number, unknowable, vast yet no less significant
the readers of our heaving, shivering numbers
the long-distance viewers in front of small screens
with little clippings and short statements full of peremptory knowledge
watching
not us, but the fate of numbers
from regions probably unheard of for most
and never to be heard again
turning already into marks in dusty books
that keep track of our kind
of numbers
so many all the time, different every year
appearing briefly, and disappearing even more quickly
how
it seems long to you
every day, every hour the reports numb you further
while
every minute, every second we accept the pain more
no more
infinite futures of generations
no more
familiar footholds of the past to lean against on
slow evenings
no more
sweet nostalgia of homecoming
only a bitter, heavy stench of burning

flesh of humans and animals, food and fabrics, bricks and wiring
and all those little luxuries you and I daily prostitute our time for
in anticipation of the pleasure they will keep giving us
if time keeps going on
a smooth train running, a ship sailing on calm, translucent seas
suddenly usurped, overturned, interrupted
a funeral pyre in your living room
I walk out alive and that is all
I, no longer named but hidden in
a number, constantly moving

Who are these enemies that do the burning, the killing, the kidnapping?
(Yes, of course, I know, you know)
But what kind of war memories will he and she and they have
those faceless soldiers
the enemy
will sit at home one day, or in a bar, warm and cosy, and say
what they did in the war
or maybe keep it secret?
Can it ever not be a part of them?
I know it is part of me
a big, gaping hole
spewing
poisonous and painful fumes
to breathe
day and night and again
day and night
it's cold and hot
too hot and too cold
there is a constant moving
laboring up and down hills and fields
hiding in forests and river banks
into places of nature we too had ignored
but now cannot learn to love fast enough
in return
we give to the earth
our friends, old enemies, children, neighbours, ourselves
by force we make her fertile with our blood
and she is indifferent to it all,
animate, inanimate, organic, inorganic
all extinguishable,

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I am no different from you or any other number

one more,
one less

years of antagonism, hatred or struggle for peace
hundreds or thousands of years of presence
before

(call it)
a heavy broom of soldiers
a rainy season of bombs
a scorching fire

we will all be gone
a clean sweep

marks our passage.

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Biography

V. Varsam writes poetry and fiction. Her poems have been published in *Literature Today* and *Glass Zine*. She is currently based in Europe.

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Angela Tan

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2(1) 54-55

I Know a Place Where No Cars Go

It was an anomalous sighting, a lack there of a shock factor from the misty clouds I breathed in, yet my feet ambled the grounds like a passing memory. Each footstep ignited the echoes of seven generations of solitude hidden within the youth of a sympathetic heart. Burned, torched and heart of steel, a malfunctioning engine and most endearingly, my grip of leather to the touch. My heart, I cannot tell, but it is mine, and I am indebted.

The sun passed through the gaps of your fingers like fragments of time, disfigured, arranged, and controlled by my will. The will I fought formed a smoky mirage of 1974. There is no denying the simple complexity of a man's agency to kneel in shoddy disgrace beneath what he once believed in. If I did not besiege my country, my home and my state, what would I be left? I will to sacrifice myself as a martyr, but my will will not continue to harm the people I hold tightly at night. Pure will, sheer will, I am in myself. But I lack thereof an articulate thought to express the treated and the mistreated and stand as an anchor for the scarred faces, weakened eyes and soft smiles.

Continuously I am defined and redefined like a packet of undistilled powdered milk. A child's heart is most sensitive to a mother's scent, touch, and affection. But no matter how I wake up each dragging morning, I find myself unable to reiterate my senselessness in a sullen hole marked onto the spot of utopia on a map. A map blank of locations, ready to be filled with only my imagination. I carefully cut out a picture, gingerly through the inevitable suffering of the body failing to function. Like hard metal hitting the ground, a faulty left U-turn towards the traffic pole, my flesh is left to fend for itself; anomalously, I am still alive

Biography

Angela Tan is a student attending York House School interested in the metacognition of epistemology and 16th century literature. Her works on poetry and prose are recognized by Oxford Public Philosophy, and the Greyhound Journal. She aims to work with the curriculum in the future and the present education system to integrate a corporeal learning experience based on values, autonomy of expression, and intellectual craftsmanship.

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Tanatswa Mushonga

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DITW

—after Adrienne Rich

We read the book of myths and have the selfies to prove it:
Wearing healed scars from lacerated arms.
The armour we donned as we trekked down into the deep, flawed now, yet it clings to
skin like Sins of the father
We did this on our own
No Jacques and Co.
Me, myself, and I
Alone.

There was no ladder, no schooner,
There was no instrument of direction
There was no sign, but the water gleamed with a divine invitation
My ancestors at the bottom calling for a reunion
Going overboard needs no introduction
Our feet followed the voice of home and in we
Dove

Deeper my body fell
The light from the surface touching ghosts underneath
Figments of versions of what the deep would be
Vanish
My human flesh couldn't withstand the pressure
Consciousness and lucidity getting lesser
The sea refuted my form
The sea demanded I be reborn

Ventilated and breathing
My legs were no more
Arms turned to fins
Lungs to Gills,
My skeleton mirrored twin fish in the sky
Who knew why we came down here?
Was it to be renewed or to be free
Or both

It took a minute or three to get comfortable in your new skin,
You (we) could swim now but, where to?
The book of myths was only that, myths!
Getting acquainted with new milieu
Requires use of new information

This was always the place.
Beneath the eager glaring eyes from above
Far from patriarchal penetrative probes
Chanced with James Cameron kinda leisure
Roving and searching, a deluge of truth beginning to appear

And even then: it was easy to forget
why we ended up married to the seafloor
among the many who called the caliginous blue home
And just 'cause you're one a dem'
Doesn't mean there are no sharks circlin'

The thing I came for
was never clear from the start
Smeared fragments of heart
I, me, her, him
Us
Me,
Navigated spaces that our bodies couldn't breathe (nor our eyes could see)

We were the resurrected abomination of the deep
And courage sometimes was born of necessity
We who found a way
Map out the scene back to our authentic aquatic selves
We left the fictitious tales on the seafloor
Emerging with a blade, wearing sleek, rugged amphibious (skin) terrain

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Biography

Tanatswa Mushonga is an emerging performance artist and poet from Zimbabwe. He spent three years in school in Jamaica and also calls the Bahamas home. He has been a performer of poetry since grade school and is working on an EP in hip hop genres.

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Curtains for Babel (2006): (Mixed Media Installation, Variable Measurements)

Sarindar Dhaliwal

Biography

Sarindar Dhaliwal is a Toronto-based artist, born in the Punjab and raised in London, England, and has lived in Canada since 1968. Dhaliwal received her BFA at University College Falmouth, UK, and her MFA from York University. She graduated with a doctorate from the Cultural Studies Program at Queen's University in 2019. Dhaliwal has a solo exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2023, a selection of works from 1984 to 2022. Her most recent exposition in 2019, *Across Terrains: a Floral and Chromatic Study* at the Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre in Medicine Hat, brought together older works in conversation with four new pieces created that summer at the Medalta Ceramics residency. Dhaliwal's work has also been included in *Vision Exchange: Perspectives from India to Canada* which toured to three venues: Art Gallery of Alberta, U of T Art Museum, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery during 2018-2020. Dhaliwal has participated in the following shows: *India Contemporary Photographic and New Media Art*, Foto-Fest Biennal, Asia Society Texas Center, Houston, Texas in 2018, *Yonder,* Koffler Gallery, Toronto, *Form Follows Fiction: Art and Artists in Toronto*, Art Museum at the University of Toronto in 2016, and *Traversive Territories,* Varley Art Gallery, Markham in 2015. A survey exhibition, entitled *the Radcliffe Line and other Geographies*, curated by Marcie Bronson (Rodman Hall, Brock University in St. Catherines) was presented at Rodman Hall, the Reach in Abbotsford, BC, and the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa in 2015-16.


australia
botswana
chandigarh
cotswolds
dublin
hawaii
kyoto
madiera
pondicherry
umbria
varanasi
zangsibar
angola
brazil
britain
cameroon
canada
chad
china
colombia
congo
cote d'ivoire
ecuador
ethiopia
france
gabon
greece
guatemala
india
indonesia
israel
japan
kenya
malawi
mauritania
mexico
micronesia
myanmar
nepal
new caledonia
nigeria
papua new guinea
peru
philippines
russia
solomon islands
south africa
sudan
taiwan
tajikistan
tanzania
united states
vanuatu
venezuela

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It is a Crime (1995): (Art Photocopy 11"x14")

Shani Mootoo

Biography

Shani Mootoo was born in Ireland, grew up in Trinidad, and moved to Canada in her early twenties. A poet, fiction writer, and visual artist, Mootoo is the author of several novels, including her most recent *Polar Vortex,* shortlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize. Her first novel, the highly acclaimed *Cereus Blooms at Night*, is now a Penguin Modern Classic. She is the author of two books of poetry, *The Predicament of Or*, and the *Cane | Fire*. Mootoo is the recipient of a Dr. James Duggins Outstanding Mid-Career Novelist Award and has been awarded an honorary Doctorate of Letters from Western University. She has also been named a Writers' Trust Engel Findley Award Winner. Shani Mootoo lives in Southern Ontario, Canada.

It is a crime that I should

have to use your language

to tell you how I feel that

you have taken mine from me.

S. Moolao '92

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The Gift of Drugs: Oriental Geographies and Decolonizing Space in Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*

Mohammed Hamdan

Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821) marks a spatial turn in the 19th century history of cartographic romantic fiction. This autobiographical text, which expounds De Quincey's addiction to drugs from youth to maturity, and the effects of this practice on his life, celebrates the power of opium dreaming and its vast potential to grant the human mind easy access to an infinite imagination. De Quincey states that in this world of infinity one realizes other dimensions of identity, subjectivity, and space, ungraspable realms resisting exact definition. These dimensions reflect and reinforce the dreamer's changing perception of self-spatiality within a denationalized or decolonial setting. In such a setting, De Quincey's subjective national identity dissolves "into chasms and sunless abysses, depths into depths from which it seemed hopeless that I could ever re-ascend" (119). In order to demonstrate the opium-eater's terrifying descent into unknown spaces—here oriental geographies—and their unrecognizable meaning(s) during the process of dreaming, imagination, or hallucination, De Quincey employs an oriental arabesque language that subverts his imperial national discourse. Here, I contend that the employment of various elements of the oriental and arabesque in De Quincey's narrative expels traditional and idealized constructions of un-English spaces as alien, marginal, and *othered* in a stereotypical colonial fashion. Through the use of opium as a point of access into a wild, imaginative, or oriental space, De Quincey invites us, albeit unwillingly, to rethink the colonial hermeneutics of spatial otherness by means of non-referential arabesque-ness. The inability to outline and dominate space by following a certain English system of geographic mapping frustrates the inferior representation of distant oriental places, which are traditionally portrayed as uncanny and dangerous because they perpetually escape the cartographic manipulations of the regime of the English compass or map. De Quincey's introduction of "chasms" and "abysses" as uncharted or unfamiliar spaces offers an alternative arabesque geography that does not conform to conventional ways of English imperial mapping, either mentally or materially.

Carsten Strathausen defines the arabesque in romance fiction as "abstract depictions of various motifs and patterns such as flowers, geometrical figures

or other non-referential forms of ornamentation" (1999 374-75). The designation of these objects as arabesque originates in the old Arab industry of illustrative or decorative art which must not represent natural phenomena because it is non-mimetic. The fact that art should depart from mimetic expression, as noted in Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement*, implies that artistic objects cannot have direct references to certain concepts or notions. The arabesque "presupposes no concept of that which the object should be" (Kant 1976, 97). Hence, Kant associates the arabesque with non-representation or non-referentiality. Kant's view of the arabesque as a non-representational textual force transforms it into an excessive form of beauty that attracts Western writers because it opens up free and authentic possibilities of radical imagination. The arabesque, in Kant's terminology, signifies nothing in the human conceptual system that tends to fix and outline images in their totality. The human inability to define and perceive a totalizing meaning of the oriental arabesque in fiction is inherently rooted in its movement and changeability, which issues from human "attention [that] oscillates, movement [that] appears as an alternation of perception between various elements" (Behnke 1993, 103). Therefore, the arabesque always points to a state of aesthetic idealism or equivocal absolutism that cannot signify or materialize itself before our eyes as a real conceptual object. This idealistic state can clearly be seen in De Quincey's documentation of his experience of both urban wandering and spatial disorientation in the complex, intertwining streets of London. Even though De Quincey never chose the name arabesque for his autobiographical writings such as *Confessions*, he consciously employs arabesque qualities and fashions oriental imageries at various intersections of his imaginative, opium-fueled, and adventurous mapping of London, Wales, and the English countryside between the years of 1802 and 1804. If actual maps mean structural fixity, self-subjectivity, and colonial identity in highly nationalized literature, then the oriental arabesque in De Quincey's narrative adds other dimensions of space in which objects become fluid and relational, not absolute. Thus the arabesque characteristics in De Quincey's *Confessions* create what Maurice Blanchot calls the "imaginary space [where] things are *transformed* into that which cannot be grasped … where no longer is anything present, where in the midst of absence everything speaks" (1982 141). The transformation of London into an "imagiSnary space" in the eyes of the wandering opium-eater, De Quincey, creates other possibilities of meaning of the English colonial and national map which becomes de-hierarchized and mobile due to the constant shifting or reconfiguration of the walker's experience of space.

Locating London in its real or physical geographic sense on De Quincey's hyperactive, virtual, and psychological map seems to be an impossible mission because he frequently witnesses a drastic transformation of its material structures or a sudden change of his charted tour. After taking a dose of opium on a Saturday night, De Quincey

> came suddenly upon such knotty problems of alleys, such enigmatical entries, and such sphynx's riddles of streets without thoroughfares, as must, I conceive,

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> baffle the audacity of porters, and confound the intellects of hackney-coachmen. I could almost have believed, at times, that I must be the first discoverer of some of these *terrae incognitae*, and doubted, whether they had yet been laid down in the modern charts of London. (98)

De Quincey's careful spatial description of London seems to assert his strong national pride and attachment to its structure and geographic significance, which predominate the most crucial moments of his life in that "the first important event in De Quincey's life was the roaming life on the hillside of North Wales; the second, the wanderings in 'stoney-hearted Oxford Street' " (Rickett 1906, 9). In his writing, however, London always emerges as "*terrae incognitae*," a place that seems to violate modern mapping technologies. To De Quincey, the labyrinthine geographical structure of London presents itself repeatedly before his eyes as a rejuvenating experience. The multiple rebirths of London as new, irregular, or unprocessed cartographic adventures threaten the rational integrity of the wandering De Quincey who is haunted by fears, anxieties, and "the perplexities of my steps" (99). London, therefore, is reinvented as an *othered* space that is continually constructed as a non-absolute reality or simply a fleeting metaphor of space (Rogoff 2000, 24). The otherization of London is an effect of the extreme consumption of opium, which is "of Oriental earth." In *East End Opium Tales*, Thomas Burke suggests that opium not only comes from Oriental lands but also "works upon brain and eye in Oriental imagery" (Roth 2002, 88). The association between opium and De Quincey's feeling of spatial, moral, and psychological alienation in his *Confessions* inculcates an image of the Orient or the Eastern and its culture of arabesque-ness as vicious, perilous, and menacing. Despite the profits of ecstatic imagination De Quincey gains from opium during his urban wanderings, he underlines the perils that accompany this behavior as a consequence of inviting the *other* into secure imperial spaces.

In fact, De Quincey's fear of opium consumption emanates from the possible dissolution of his walking experience "into a dehistoricized, detemporalized, and despatialized idea" (Partridge 2018, 52). The unbearable horror of opium dreams, in other words, is directly associated with the invention of altered spatial states where the English eater/walker may possibly witness the conflation of all cultures, historical periods, and human societies in one location. The notion of bringing "together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, all trees and plants, usages and appearance, that are found in all tropical regions, and assembled … in China or Indostan," as stated by De Quincey (73), provides an alternative decontextualized vision that threatens the imperial construction of the English sublime and national subjectivity. These alien cultural signifiers such as birds, reptiles, trees, and other oriental or arabesque topographies destabilize the imperial ideal representation of place, time, nationalism, and unique cultural experience (Makdisi 1998, 195-6). De Quincey points out that East Indian or Turkish opium is easily attainable, but "if you eat a good deal of it, most probably you must—do what is particularly disagreeable to any man of regular habits" (90). Here, the consumption of East Indian and Turkish

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opium alienates De Quincey socially and morally since this product forces him to behave disagreeably to the standard system of English habits. The economic trafficking of drugs from East to West and the cultural connection of opium-eating with Easterners, which "was deeply implicated in British colonial activities in the East" (Milligan 1995, 5), reinforced the image of the Orient as a negative culture that supplied infections, ills, and immoralities. De Quincey highlights that his consumption of "dusky brown" opium intensifies his degradation and contempt toward the alien Oriental other (90). Yet, he perpetually relies on the *otherized* oriental arabesque-ness to reach a state of sublimity and ideal beauty, which implies that his sense of national and colonial pride and his attempt at creating a unique imperial discourse via his spatial mobilities in London are continually denied and challenged. Oriental materials such as opium, in other words, do not function as sources of cultural contamination as they turn into rich sites of self-identification inseparable from their Oriental origins. If De Quincey's opium dreams are indeed spatially torturous, it is only because "they erode the desired division between self and other even in the otherwise presumably inviolate sanctum of individual consciousness" (Milligan 47).

Despite his acclaimed delights of eating, De Quincey also experiences an unpleasant removal from pleasure through the awfulness of the terror of eating opium. This terror issues from the persistent return of the exotic otherness of the Orient: a return which reminds the eater/walker that distances between East and West, self and other, past and future, or subject and object can always dissolve in the process of opium eating. Barry Milligan even goes as far as to suggest that eating opium and the accompanying oriental imagery prove "to be a kind of infernal archaeological tool that uncovers the not-so-deeply buried Oriental within the English" (12). De Quincey's opium-eating experience embodies a crisis of self-identity, and the difficulty of mapping and *re*-mapping London transforms into a metaphor of finding his *own* true self in a world that seems too open and intertwined in a chasm-like sense only when he assumes it is divided by irremovable barriers. Geographical barriers signify nothing on a globe where Arabs, Persians, and Chinese may emerge as Spaniards, Frenchmen, and Oriental English subjects, respectively, in De Quincey's opium dreams.

Accordingly, the oriental arabesque elements used in De Quincey's *Confessions* as a result of his practice of eating opium bring him into full conversation with the oriental *other* and challenge his colonial views of the oriental culture as inferior. In fact, Oriental arabesque imagery transforms into a powerful psychological technology of decolonizing both the national cultivations of De Quincey's text and the production of London as a distinct imperial space, which is constantly *re*-configured as a shifty or mobile territory by means of a regenerative arabesque-ness. The presumption that the arabesque is an effect of opium-eating and is, therefore, an *othered* entity or concept that lies outside the contours of the English imperial text is deeply problematic. The arabesque geography produced through Western correspondence with the Oriental material world proves that the Orient is not self-consciously invited or introduced

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to emphasize and outline De Quincey's national aspirations and discursive colonial mapping. Milligan, in this regard, holds that the East and Orient "did not ever actually enter his [De Quincey's] body, consciousness, or even his country, but was instead always there to begin with" (48). Within this experience, opium provides De Quincey with a different, abstract form of self-perception by which he willingly decolonizes his continued reception of oriental spaces and cultures as uncivilized and peripheral. Hence his spatial experience remains too "exalted, spiritualized, and sublimed" (De Quincey 96), a host of epithets which are characteristic of abstract oriental geographies that substitute our material understanding of English scientific colonial mapping of other unknown cultures, objects, and places that have always posed a direct threat to all that De Quincey holds to be sacred.

Biography

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Songs of Prescience: Canadian Musical Activism in Climate Breakdown

Scott Stoneman

Since the 1980s, there has been a fiftyfold increase in the number of places experiencing extreme heat.

—Darin Barney and Ayesha Vemuri (2022)

If one were to search the phrase "heat waves" during the summer of 2022, one would likely be directed first not to information about the extreme heat events the world is facing. Instead, Google would likely anticipate that users were looking for a link to the Glass Animals' song "Heat Waves" from their 2020 album *Dreamland*. Despite their continual increase, year after year, the unprecedented and intensifying heat waves fueled by climate change are not nearly as ubiquitous as Glass Animals' "Heat Waves." The song has been played, as of the time of this writing, more than 433 million times on YouTube and over 2.1 billion times on Spotify. But that is only part of the story of this song. It is a record-setting "sleeper hit," having taken an unprecedented 59 weeks to reach number-one on the Billboard Hot 100. Billboard's analysis explains that the long duration of the track's ascent could be attributed to "a fanfic trend in late 2020," or more significantly, "a sense of seasonal appropriateness in mid-2021" (Unterberger 2022). The euphemistic phrase "seasonal appropriateness" is critical here. While Andrew Unterberger notes, in a curiously tone-deaf way, that the track "isn't a pop scorcher so much as a slowly enveloping temperature shift," it is essential to remember that "Heat Waves" first rose to the top of the charts in Australia in 2020, closer to its release date, after an apocalyptic megafire event dubbed the "Black Summer" torched 143,000 square kilometres (an area roughly the size of the State of New York) and drove several endangered species to extinction.

The experience of heat waves is now desperately common, with the threshold for survivability getting closer and closer to a regular threat in many parts of the world. It is already "the deadliest weather phenomenon in a typical year in the United States, killing an average of 158 people annually in the 30 years from 1992 to 2021" (Dhanesha 2022). That number is sure to shoot up as temperatures climb and the US shows no demonstrable interest in weaning itself off the death-dealing but highly profitable fossil fuels that propel its economy. It is oddly resonant for the country currently called Canada that a song

about heat waves references the "middle of June," specifically since June 2021 saw a lethal "heat dome" descend on British Columbia. According to the provincial coroners service, the heat wave killed 526 people, with 231 dying on 29 June alone. That equates to nearly 10 people an hour (Schmunk 2021). The heat dome also caused the loss of an incalculable number of sea creatures, in a mass die-off that is likely to contribute to rising sea temperatures. How can we reconcile the fact that, considering all of the current media available for receiving climate-related information, searching "heat waves" takes us to more links for Glass Animals' breakout track than to more pertinent or serious sources on threats to collective survival on Earth? Is our connection to the experience of climate change now hopelessly overdetermined by popular culture? Or is there reason to hope that the permeation of popular music by both climate grief and ecological optimism is potentially progressive?

Music is uplifting. A song can be energizing, musing, and palliative at the same time. One of the challenges that comes with writing critically about music is that "the omnipresence and widespread recognizability of music, as a set of performative acts and objects of inscription that invite particular modes of listening, can work to elevate its conceptual status above scrutiny" (Sakakeeny 2015, 113). Many of us lack the language to grasp and relate to the intensities of dread, insecurity, and grief that accompany knowledge of global warming. Music can be a tool for developing a political nomenclature (from the Latin *nomen* [name] and *clatura* [calling, summoning]) to expand the climate struggle. Music may under conditions of appropriate public support, diverse participation, and place-specific songwriting offer an indispensable sounding board and source of "shared agency," as Min Hyoung Song (2022 1) puts it: a felt sense of the "ability to act in ways that have intended effects." For this to happen, we need a broad palette of compositions that offer more than a rootless soundtrack to climate despair.

If we scrutinize the music of climate breakdown, we find that it resists the petrocultural inculcation of fatigue around the prospect of decarbonization. It communicates—through the inexorable surge associated with resonance and rhythm—the perhaps increasingly "fragile idea" that what we collectively do still "matters," as singer-songwriter Tamara Lindeman croons on "Tried to Tell You," a standout song from The Weather Station's iconic 2021 climate record *Ignorance*. Scientific models, manuscripts, infographics, and the overwhelming accumulation of video web live-stream of climate catastrophes, have proven inadequate to meet the cultural demands of environmental communication at a time of maximal urgency. Fossil fuel companies and petrostates "salivate over opportunities" for extracting, commodifying, and combusting this "black blood," as Tanya Tagaq (2016) sings on "Retribution."

Academic, scientific, and other professionalized forms of environmental communication have been challenged by messaging which asserts that fossil fuels are an unavoidable necessity. The difficulty of sustaining momentum in the multiscalar quest to phase out fossil fuels and achieve energy transition to avert climate catastrophe is evidenced by the number of people actively concerned with the imminence of climatic breakdown in overdeveloped countries

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like Canada. In 2019 Abacus Data found that, while over 80% of Canadians felt that climate change was a serious problem, only a quarter of the people surveyed thought about it regularly, and only half worried about the impact it will have (Coletto 2019). Clearly there is a disconnect here. It is not that the public at large, or in this case the Canadian public, does not *care* about climate change; the problem is that we do not know *how* to care or what to *do* with or about our concern.

The literature on the psychological impact of climate catastrophe reinforces the point that many of us are beside ourselves, struggling under both economic and ecological duress. For Deborah Seabrook (2020) and many others, music is a therapeutic means of coping with such difficult feelings. Seabrook focuses on individual coping strategies for climate anxiety. I am interested in an emerging musical language for collective impatience and antagonism. References to the "Anthropocene" tend to reduce the question of music's impact to individual psychology: for example, Seabrook draws from the work of Joshua Ottum, whose "Between Two Worlds: American New Age Music and Environmental Imaginaries" (2018) affirms the transformative potential of "the New Age genre" of music by inducing feelings of "relaxation, inner-peace, and ecological harmony," (193) and finding unity between the "philosophies of commerce and spirituality" (212).

What kinds of compositions might be better equipped, in our current moment, to create "vibrational spaces" for imagining pathways out of energy impasse and the climate emergency (Boon 2022, 212)? Some contemporary songs explore the devastation and political upheaval of global warming. Music fits with ecological imagining. Artists, compose music that conveys the need to care for nature. Songwriters and composers present to their own grief, fury, and political sense of disorientation can create sonic states of being that move listeners to action.

My goal is not to theorize all ecological sensitivity in music. Like Boon, I am moved by "scenes and cultures with … intense commitments to sound" that work to create spaces of transformative feeling through waveforms" (2022 17). If we adopt this expansive framework, according to Boon, we move rather quickly into a world where music asks "ontological questions" of us. The pursuit of "target states" through music is not a foreign concept in many cultures: for example, the idea of tapping into the "vibration of the land" in many Indigenous musical pathways is a vital practice in a settler-colonial context (2022 66).

I hope to open a conversation on which styles of music might be best suited to connect with diverse publics on climate emergency. When Anohni composed the song "4 Degrees" with Hudson Mohawke for United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP)21, she did so to provoke anger and action in response to dangerously commonplace climate defeatism. But what was the scope of the song's impact? What was the effect of its anger? Can certain songs and genres of music better address particular constituencies? Climate music must gauge the breadth of its influence. Determine a means of finding "sweet spots" between forms of sonic expression too broad or too rarefied. A principal

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way that artists achieve this is by speaking from a highly specific place lyrically, musically, and ecopolitically. Producing music from a rooted place can help artists evolve a musical vocabulary for climate breakdown.

Music is palpably binding in a scene, in participants at the local level. When it reaches a global scale, it tends to become bloated, commodified, and evacuated of meaning. Music produced to make a worldwide audience more "environmentally-friendly" has been notably frivolous in its scope and sense of purpose. Songs like Lil Dicky's "Earth" (2019) or Paul McCartney and Natasha Bedingfield's well-meaning but crass "Love Song to the Earth" (2015) are about nowhere and nothing, a form of NGO-driven cause marketing that may generate clicks and raise some money, but which "seem nostalgically quaint compared with the rapidity of … deleterious biophysical change" (Wodak 2018, 68). These songs fail to offer a compelling political language of feeling, shall we say.

The music I am curious about exists in counterpoint to the hollow spiritualism of high-profile environmentalist anthems like "Love Song to the Earth," where a cavalcade of celebrity singers represent a vision of the Earth as a "diamond in the universe / Heaven's poetry to us" and declare that "tomorrow's in our hands" so we must "make it better somehow." What would a musical language that expresses the unsettling feelings associated with climate change—anger, anxiety, mourning, vexation, helplessness—sound like? The climate music with the greatest resonance grows out of the attunement of artists to their imperiled places. Music more directly connected to the destruction of a particular place may not necessarily trigger a transformation, but it has potential.

The communication of climate grief, anxiety, and the need for radical change is at odds with the normative constraints of many genres of music, especially pop. As Pedelty puts it, a "pop show, a rite of spectacular excess, is inappropriate for communicating sustainability" (2015 204). There is little question that pop music is an awkward fit for "ecopolitical aesthetics," given that it is a veritable "soundtrack for overconsumption" (Pedelty 204). Even so, music is "an activity by means of which bodies are synchronized into a social body" (2009 44). Music that feels prescient or prophetic is typically participatory, while music dedicated to inspiring awe through the artist's mastery onstage tends to encourage a level of passive reverence. The collective experience of music appears to be fading. Jonathan Sterne charts historical shifts in music in *The Audible Past*, explaining that "as a form of expression becomes more legitimate and … prestigious, its audience quiets down;" eventually, the effect is that "the individuated listener comes before the collective sonic experience" (2003 161). In Western hyper-capitalist cultures, participatory music "tend[s] to be conceptualized as 'less-than' the more 'important' (i.e., professional and performative) spaces" (Walcott 2016, 9). Jeff Titon affirms the idea that participatory music "repositions culture workers collaboratively" and "help[s] to revitalize musical traditions and ... ensure their continuation" (2020 155).

The Weather Station's "Live at KEXP" performance has been viewed on YouTube just over 44,000 times since March 2022. This is a far cry from the

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stratospheric popularity of Glass Animals' "Heat Waves." However, the performance does give Lindeman a platform for explaining her reasons for writing the songs on *Ignorance* the way that she did. Her goal was to create earworms that might engage people on the climate emergency through sly danceability instead of dry diatribe, to insinuate a bridgeable but unmentionable ecological anxiety into the listener's consciousness. The groove that runs through all of *Ignorance*, evoking the glittery production of New Wave tracks, was a sort of calculation:

> I've noticed that there's something so wonderful about pop music. You can be in a Value Village or walking through the mall and you hear, like, an Abba song or something it just sort of burrows into your mind. And the lyrics are there with you, right? But you don't pay attention to them because it's so catchy. So I was like, wouldn't it be so interesting if I found ways to write songs that just sort of communicate and transcend genre in that way, where they're just so approachable, but then what would happen if I use that kind of songwriting and that catharsis and that movement to convey some of these more unsettled feelings? So I sort of loved imagining these songs being out there … secretly conveying some of this pain and difficulty in a very comfortable package. ("The Weather Station—Full Performance [Live on KEXP]" n.d.)

Lindeman's songs work as a "powerful mnemonic for attention," to use Song's phrase from *Climate Lyricism*, in part because they collapse the distance between the listener's comfort and an "always deferrable future" of escalating climate impacts in the energy-addicted Global North (5). Lindeman's "Atlantic" is unique in its acknowledgement of complicity with deferral, narrating the desire to "get all this dying off my mind." The temptation is to exercise self-care by "know[ing] better than to read the headlines" and to experiment with the political and theoretical question of whether it "matter[s] if I see it?" (Lindeman). Can the resonance of a song like "Atlantic" expose the all-too-common tendency to maintain a comfortable sense of distance from the inflection point?

On his award-winning opus *Wolastoqiyik Lintuwakonawa*, Jeremy Dutcher, a Wolastoqiyik member of the Tobique First Nation, makes a point of using his powerful tenor vocal range to project a heroic mood of cultural resurgence. Dutcher's album rekindles the Wolastoqey language and devises a prescient musical grammar for healing from ecocide by modelling a return to Indigenous land management and empowerment. In July 2022, I attended a free show that Dutcher organized as part of a tour focused on generating support for a land-based Wolastoqey school in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Dutcher started the show by honouring the land we were situated on, Mi'kma'ki, the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Mi'kmaq people. Localizing this welcome felt weightier than the land acknowledgements that have become commonplace in Canadian activist and educational gatherings since the 2015 Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Such acknowledgements often function, according to Theresa Stewart-Ambo and K. Wayne Yang, "to make

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the speaker and their institution appear blameless, to appear to be in solidarity with Indigenous nations, when in fact, the words may not reflect any meaningful relationships with Native communities and obscure institutional complicity with land occupation, resource extraction, and Indigenous dispossession" (2021 31).

In between songs, Dutcher spoke at length about how languages hold entire cosmologies and how his sense of responsibility to preserve the Wolastoqey language is rooted in saving that life-saving cosmology. Dutcher's compositions have a jubilant quality. They conjure up visions of rewilding, liberating, ending extractivism. Audience members were encouraged to overcome their presumed discomfort and sing together in Wolastoqey. The act of singing together felt unusual, even contrived, in music cultures that still privilege ideals of performative mastery. However, Dutcher pointed out our reticence about singing together and used his virtuosity to challenge it. This led to a discussion of preserving the Earth and a collective singing of the civil rights anthem "We Shall Overcome." One of the most significant moments in the show, for the purposes of thinking about the music of climate breakdown, was when Dutcher explained that in Wolastoqey culture, a "song carrier" goes where they are called and creates music as "medicine … for the spirit."

Music under hyper-capitalism has become, according to music teacher and percussionist Daniel J. Shevock, "an unsustainable monoculture ([with] fewer genres, fewer musicians). Musician is redefined," he says, "as *professional musician* (leaving the community musician as obsolete)" (2017 30). During "Climate Week NYC," The Climate Group was planning to stage the inaugural "Big Climate Thing" festival between 16-18 September 2022. A climate music festival of unprecedented size, it would have included lectures and panel discussions on the climate emergency. Headliners like Haim, The Flaming Lips, and The Roots were the main draw.

One of the artists slated to perform at "The Big Climate Thing" was The Weather Station, not surprising given the commercial and critical success of *Ignorance*. In the lead-up to the festival, Tamara Lindeman expressed optimism that, because

> music plays a primarily emotional role in people's lives … it has huge potential in pushing us to recognize our tangled emotions around this topic … a stadium full of people coming together for a climate event centered on music … is an enormous opportunity to feel a solidarity that has been so missing ... and push those in attendance to examine their *climate feelings* and *push through them* enough to act. (Martoccio 2022)

This was certainly a best-case scenario for the event. If music can offer a language of feeling and an invigorating sense of the importance of political will in an era of escalating climate catastrophe, then we need to recognize the ways that artists are working to create new methods of sonic expression suited to this moment. At a time when we need to act collectively with urgency to address climate collapse, music provides a form of environmental communication. The

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type of music that grows out of place-based engagement with ecocide uniquely communicates the sensoria of climate breakdown. A musical language for dealing with deeply unsettled states of being can help climate justice.

Biography

Scott Stoneman (he/him) teaches in the Department of Communication Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University in Kjipuktuk (Halifax). He is the host of the Pretty Heady Stuff podcast, which has included guests such as Raj Patel, Andreas Malm, El Jones, Judith Butler, K. Wayne Yang, Anna Tsing and many others. He's also the co-author of the forthcoming book *Widening Scripts: Cultivating Feminist Care in Academic Labor*.

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Review of *Anois ar theacht an tSamhraidh: Ireland, Colonialism and the Unfinished Revolution* by Robbie McVeigh and Bill Rolston

Liam Ó Ruairc

McVeigh, Robbie and Bill Rolston. *Anois ar theacht an tSamhraidh. Ireland, Colonialism and the Unfinished Revolution*. (Belfast: Beyond The Pale Books, 2021), 462 pages.

Robbie McVeigh and Bill Rolston have written an important book: "its aim is to reclaim the concept of colonialism as the central frame in understanding Ireland past, present and future" (xiii). For the authors, Ireland today is "still struggling with the complex legacies of imperialism and colonialism" (198). England's oldest colony is considered in the context of the history of colonization and anti-colonial politics throughout the world. The authors stand in solidarity with those who want to end colonialism and imperialism, not just in Ireland but globally: "there can be no such thing as anti-imperialism in one country" (406). While many studies that use a colonial and postcolonial framework to understand the Irish experience come from literary and cultural studies, this book focuses on political, historical, and socio-economic forces.

Most historians would accept that the conquest, plantation, and anglicization in early modern Ireland were colonial acts, but they would also stress that after 1801, Ireland was constitutionally part of the United Kingdom and therefore not formally treated as a colony, though it retained many of the features of such. The semi-detachment of the Irish Free State from the British Empire after 1921, and its exit from the Commonwealth in 1948, seem to indicate that the Republic of Ireland is a post-colonial state. For the authors, however, "the key issue is ... not whether Ireland was colonized but when or indeed if it was ever *decolonized*. Did this " 'first colony' become 'post-colonial,' and if so when and how?" (7). They argue that Ireland still needs to be decolonized.

According to the book, in the period of 1801-1921, "The Irish experience under the Union might be characterized as 'hypercolonialism' or 'hyper-imperialism.'… The Union did not free Ireland from Empire *but rather locked the Irish people within it*" (134). Likewise, 100 years ago, partition was based on a border that held "neither democratic nor ethnic legitimacy" and represented an "expressly sectarian anti-democratic land grab" (139), which "created two state

formations without any organic political or ethnic raison d'être" (140). Northern Ireland represented "a truly reactionary, hyper-imperial offshoot symbolizing the antithesis of independence" (143). In the Republic, a faction within the revolutionary leadership settled for the position of a white dominion. McVeigh and Rolston conclude that the Irish state "remains as dependent as it ever was. It broke free from a classical colonial form of dependence only to embrace others, including the EU and transnational capital" (203). However, the authors believe Ireland's accession to European Community membership in 1972 "was the opportunity to cut the umbilical cord of colonialism—the connection with England" (174). It represented "the key disjuncture in the history of the 26-county state" (175) and enabled the Irish state to break up its dependent relationship with the UK. "This change *was* epochal in nature" (176).

Anthony Coughlan (an Irish critic of the European project) would likely dissent from this fairly positive view of the EC/EU being the beginning of the end of economic and ideological dependency on colonial power. In *Ireland, Colonialism and the Unfinished Revolution*, the authors warn that "there is a danger in turning an anti-imperialist gaze on a post-colonial project" (201), and they emphasize that the Republic of Ireland today is far from being a "failed state." This claim is open to potential challenge from people coming from minority traditionalist republican currents such as Republican Sinn Féin. But while the authors are stressing that the Republic of Ireland has been insufficiently decolonized, they do not discuss whether it can be characterized, as some people have, as a "neo-colony" for at least some stage of its history. While the book discusses colonialism and imperialism, neo-colonialism as a concept is absent from it.

The authors stress the "*structural* reality of empire" (14) and pay central attention to the state:

> [it] is always an identifiable state structure doing something specific in its role of mediating between Englishness and Irishness, institutionalizing native/settler difference. However the character of English rule is formulated, the relationship is defined by English dominance and Irish subordination. In other words, it involves—definitely a colonial state structure. The core institutions of state—government, parliament, church and crown—all combine to make and keep Ireland institutionally subaltern. … This colonial state structure holds across 800 years—it is not until 1922 that any part of Ireland can even pretend to be free.

The relationship between England and Ireland "is defined by subjugation: this relationship is about 'conquering' and 'subjugating' and 'colonizing' 'Irish enemies' " (71), but there are problems with how the authors use the concepts of colonialism and imperialism. They broadly use the terms of colonialism and imperialism (like in the Irish republican song *Joe McDonnell*) to mean "plundered many nations, divided many lands, terrorized their peoples, ruled with an iron hand." But colonialism and imperialism, as the authors themselves are well aware, are conceptual minefields. The two words overlap and synergize, but never quite become synonymous. While for them the colonial relationship is

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defined by English dominance and Irish subordination, the difference between colonialism and imperialism is identified as the former constituting the act of theft, the latter the reframing of that theft as a moral rather than an immoral act (12). Imperialism is an ideological project (theory), and colonialism is primarily a material project (practice) (13). The book does not develop enough the conceptual differences between colonialism and imperialism, or how these impact the history of Ireland.

From the perspective of historical materialism, imperialism today is a *general* structure and only some *specific* countries are or have been affected by colonialism. The first "imperial" Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in the 12th century was part of a wider process of feudal expansion, not the result of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. When can the British conquest of Ireland be qualified as "imperial" rather than "colonial"? Other historical accounts of imperialism have started from the beginning of modernity and the capitalist world system in the 16th century to the present day. But even there, the authors quote the historian Nicholas Canny (1998 1) who pointed out in a discussion about the 16th and 17th centuries that the terms are far from exact: "The study of the British Empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries presents special difficulties because no empire, as the term subsequently came to be understood, then existed, while the adjective 'British' meant little to most inhabitants of Britain and Ireland." There is the danger of projecting onto the past (say 12th or 16th centuries) the concept of imperialism as it was understood in the 19th or 20th century.

Similar problems occur in the book's discussion of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. Is Irish "resistance to colonization" in the 16th and 17th centuries, such as the Confederation of Kilkenny, a form of "Irish anti-imperialism" (332-6)? This is even more questionable than attempts to present Wolfe Tone as some kind of proto-socialist because of his references to "the men of no property" in a journal entry dated 11 March 1796. The danger, then, would be to classify Giraldus Cambrensis's (Gerard of Wales) *Topographia Hibernica* (1187) and *Expugnatio Hibernica* (1189) as "imperialist propaganda" or Seathrún Céitinn (Geoffrey Keating) as some kind of 17th century Irish Edward W. Said; his 1634 history of Ireland *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* an anti-colonial classic.[1] Also, are there differences between "anti-colonial" and "anti-imperialist" positions? For example, leading academic Brendan O'Leary argues in his 2019 book *A Treatise on Northern Ireland (Volume 1): Colonialism: The Shackles of the State and Hereditary Animosities* that the Northern Ireland problem has colonial origins, but O'Leary explicitly rejects an anti-imperialist perspective. For the authors the choice that one must relate to is one single binary of "*empire versus republic*" (398), but bizarrely they do not mention Liam Mellows' view in his prison notes of 1922 of the so-called 1921 treaty as being between "FREE STATE – Capitalism and Industrialism – EMPIRE. REPUBLIC – Workers – Labour." The authors discuss John Mitchell's support for slavery (343-4), but do not mention Wolfe Tone's early project to colonize the Sandwich Islands (today's Hawaii) or James Connolly publishing articles defending German colonialism in Africa and viewing the German empire as "a homogenous

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empire of self-governing peoples," which contained "in germ more of the possibilities of freedom and civilization" than the British (*Workers' Republic*, 18 March 1916). There are a number of references to the "poetic" 1919 Democratic Programme of *Dáil Éireann* (e.g. 156), but without mentioning its deletion of any references to the abolition of classes and socialist rhetoric. But to their credit the authors discuss the internationalism of Irish republican militants and make the important point that: "In addition, in supporting anti-imperialist struggles elsewhere, Irish republicans were exploring a more sophisticated version of anti-imperialism in their own country beyond the slogan of 'Brits Out' " (369). They struggled for global justice and not just for getting England out of Ireland.

The authors correctly "emphatically reject" Brendan O'Leary's notion that the Belfast Agreement represents the "final decolonization" of Ireland (8). The authors argue that since the 1998 Belfast Agreement there "is certainly no sense in which (Northern Ireland) provides any kind of inspiration regarding outstanding questions around decolonization" (366). Decolonization in Ireland today for the authors remains unfinished business: "Our review of the two Irish states that emerged from partition clearly signals that the Irish anti-imperial revolution remains unfinished" (282). The book begins by giving readers a choice, "whether to stand in solidarity with other victims and survivors of colonialism and imperialism … in 2020, as much as 1800 or 1918, we have to decide whether we should remain subjects or become citizens" (37). How does one finish the "unfinished revolution"? The authors propose to end partition, dismantle the two partition states in Ireland, and establish a democratic Republic as the way forward. What is required is "a bolder popular front strategy to take us towards reunification. As we have suggested, the historical model for this is there in the Parnellite 'popular front' (of 1879)" (404-5). This "bolder popular front" in the authors' contemporary version, ranging from liberal journalist Fintan O'Toole to so-called "dissident" republicans (404-5), is too broad to be likely. The authors bizarrely conclude that "Ireland is in a revolutionary moment in 2020" (402). As Lenin wrote on the revolutionary situation: "For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for the lower classes not to want to live in the old way; it is also necessary that the upper classes should be unable to live in the old way" (1964 213-4). However, the situation in Ireland 2020 or today—north and south—is far removed from that.

The title of the book uses the expression in Irish *Anois ar theacht an tSamhraidh*: "Now the summer is coming," which its authors counterpose to the *Game of Thrones* well-known "winter is coming" (284). But I have a much more pessimistic view that we live in a Thermidorian period with the collapse of emancipatory projects and where the morbid symptoms are dominant. After all, even McVeigh and Rolston note that: "The attack on the World Trade Centre in New York in September 2001 spelt the death knell for anti-imperialist struggle ... now there was little space for claiming anti-imperialism as one's political motivation" (ix). Only practice and history will prove if McVeigh and Rolston are right about what Lukács (1970 13), writing about Lenin, called "the actuality of revolution."

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The book is an ambitious attempt to rethink Irishness. What is Irishness? The authors quote Conor Cruise O'Brien who famously debunked more traditional accounts of Irishness: "Irishness is not primarily a question of birth or blood or language; it is the condition of being involved in the Irish situation and usually of being mauled by it. On that definition, Swift is more Irish than Goldsmith or Sheridan, although by the usual tests they are Irish and he is pure English." For McVeigh and Rolston this characterization "retains the virtue of de-essentialising the subject—it is an invitation to engage with Irishness and Ireland dialectically" (27). In their project to decolonize Ireland, the authors intend not only to dismantle the opposition between settler and native, Planter and Gael, but also to carry out a critical deconstruction of Irishness and whiteness through what they call "*mestizaje*" ("pronounced mess-tease-ach-ay") (25-7). This is their more materialist take on what postcolonial theory calls "hybridity" (382). The authors have been heavily influenced by the work of Noel Ignatiev on "how the Irish became white," and the book is a serious attempt to continue his project (there are many references to the "Black Irish" and the Irishness of colour). The authors could have boosted their argument by mentioning that most remarkably by 1916 Roger Casement (the greatest Irish person that ever lived in this reviewer's opinion) stated that: "I had come to look upon myself as an African" (Brief to Counsel, 8 June 1916).

This book should be welcomed for putting questions of empire, colonialism, racism, and decolonization at the heart of the debate about Ireland and also to rethink what it is to be Irish. While this review had a number of critical points to raise against the book, this should not detract from the fact that this is essential reading which is to be recommended to a wide public.

Biography

Liam Ó Ruairc is a widely published writer and author of *Edward W. Said as Critical Intellectual: Speaking Truth in the Face of Power* (2020) and *Peace or Pacification?: Northern Ireland After the Defeat of the IRA* (2019).

Notes

1. For example, Declan Kiberd (1995 14) noted that Céitinn sounded "at times like the Edward Said of his era."

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Review of *Voices of the Nakba: A Living History of Palestine* Edited by Diana Allan

Louis Brehony

Diana Allan, ed. *Voices of the Nakba: A Living History of Palestine*. (London: Pluto, 2021), 341 pages.

Published during a period of intensifying resistance in colonized Palestine, *Voices of the Nakba* presents an essential collection of stories told by a cross-section of first-generation refugees expelled during the "catastrophe," or the 1948 Zionist conquest of their land. As well as having the potential to deepen scholarly understandings of orality, memory, and anti-colonial histories, contributions to this edited volume make clear their relevance to the present. The "rumbling present" of a continuing Nakba, as Mahmoud Zeidan (xx) describes in the foreword, shapes how narratives of ethnic cleansing project into the 21st century. Though most of the storytellers are elderly or deceased, theirs is a language of unflinching hope that the right of return will be a reality for new generations of dispossessed Palestinians. The arrival of this English-language collection marks 20 years of the Nakba Archive, now situated at American University of Beirut, based on the recorded (video and audio) collection of stories from Palestinians exiled in Lebanon. Edited segments from 32 refugee contributors, ranging from peasants to artists, resisters, and collaborators, are translated from original interview material and grouped thematically, with each of the 13 chapters introduced by an expert in the field. The latter include preeminent academic voices whose own work has contributed to preserving and furthering the narratives of the Palestinian people. Their contextual and ethnographic analyses are sympathetic, expressing shared commitments to solidarity and decolonization.

Woven through interview material are sketches of pre-Nakba Palestine, of cross-confessional, communal organization, celebration, and experiences that persisted into the period of British occupation (from 1917), despite its implementation of sectarian rule. The reader learns from Hamda Jum'a, interviewed near Sur (Tyre) in 2003, that pilgrims came annually from Beirut to the Ziyarat al-Nusf festival and the shrine of al-Nabi Yusha' in the Palestinian village of the same name. 15 days of celebration, *dabke* dancing, song, and music were also days of exhibiting traditional garments, love, and flirtation: "What can I tell you, it was better than a wedding!" (70). Other occasions in the social calendar included the *mawasim* (festivals) of al-Nabi Rubin, Nabi Saleh, harvest,

Eids (feasts), and seasonal events, involving those from cities and rural areas (242). Though historic Palestine is the subject of understandable romanticization, many of these accounts do not paint over the struggles of the poor. As Umar Shihada testifies in his interview found in Chapter Five "Motivations and Tensions of Palestinian Police Service Under British Rule," in years of low crop yields, "We were surviving" (113).

That this social fabric was torn asunder by colonization is evident in the frequently graphic recollections of both the British repression of the Palestinian revolutionary movement of 1936-39 and of the Zionist onslaught in 1948. Salman Abu Sitta writes in Chapter Eight "The Roots of the Nakba" that by 1939,

> Palestinian society was dismembered, defenceless and leaderless. The year 1939 can be identified as the year of the British-inflicted Nakba. Ben Gurion found this to be a prime opportunity for pouncing on Palestine and prepared what he thought would be a long-term plan. (168)

There is appreciable focus in refugee narratives and analysis on the pernicious role of British imperialism and the crushing significance of its counter-insurgency campaign against the Palestinian revolution. This is especially evident in Chapter Six "Storying the Great Revolt." Offering a premonition of the Nakba itself, according to the testimony of Abd al-Rahman Sa'ad al-Din, British terror inflicted on al-Zib served as the rule, not the exception:

> [T]hey kicked everyone out: the man, the woman, the child. They spoiled kerosene, wheat, barley, bedding, full gallons of oil that they broke and spilled on the ground. I'm telling you the whole village was blackened like a charcoal factory, like coal that had burnt. I swear, it was completely charred. (136)

In what may be seen as the blueprint for later Israeli crimes, the British colonial regime carried out assassinations, torture, collective punishment, the burning of villages, internment, deportation, checkpoints, attacking of food supplies, the denial of medical attention, and many other methods which drew on British imperialist campaigns terrorizing native populations from India to Ireland.

But this book also serves to add weighted testimony to the spirited resistance of the Palestinian liberation movement that Britain sought to exterminate. There are reminders, too, that the 1936-39 movement was a broad Arab struggle, drawing fighters from Morocco, Syria, and other colonized regions to Palestine. In fact, via English reference to the "triangle of terror" in the Palestinian north, we get a sense that the British feared the unity of this resistance (143). Speaking to historic traditions of Palestinian music, poetry, and storytelling, the vivacity of the colonized is brought to life in lyric stanzas learned during this period. Husayn Lubani in Chapter Seven "Songs of Resistance" remembers the words of revolutionary poet Nuh Ibrahim:

> You Zionist, you do not scare us
> Our flag floats above the clouds

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> Commissioner, go tell your country
> London is our horse stall. (152)

Informing us that "this song was sung against the British," Fatima Abdallah recites:

> [W]e bid you inform your government that we have taken over
> its forts.
> Oh our country, we wish you prosperity, and their forts will never deter
> us. (158)

What is perhaps missing in the analysis of these sections is a sense of how such lines were transmitted and popularized across Palestine as the confrontation with imperialism gathered steam. Lubani, for one, sang the lines to al-Thalathat al-Hamra' ("The Bloody Three"), dedicated to three men executed by the British at Akka prison in 1930, yet references to this musical transmission existing in Mahmoud Zeidan's interview in Lubani do not come across in the book format. That such poetry was sung to melodies found in heritage song forms like *'ala dal'una*, for example, is revealing of the new connections made through grassroots political culture in the first half of the 20th century to rural traditions existing centuries prior.[1]

In light of Orientalist 21st century analyses that seek to problematize or relegate armed struggle in ways that lecture or dismiss the fightback of the oppressed, contributors to *Voices of the Nakba* proudly restate the validity of resistance as a category of analysis. The latter includes Laila Parsons' Chapter Seven "Remembering the Fight" (213-7), with spirited resistance taking place in Sha'b, Lydd, and Tarshiha, which served as a base for Jaysh al-Inqadh (Arab Liberation Army) fighters. Yet, with Palestinian forces fatally crushed by British-led repression in the 1930s, the mold for the Nakba was already set. Numbering the villages destroyed by the Zionists at 531, Jawad writes that "the well-planned, carefully orchestrated practice of massacres and terror was central to the systematic ethnic cleansing of Palestine they perpetuated" (193). Of 68 confirmed massacres, several are presented graphically in the refugee accounts. Reflecting at Burj al-Barajneh refugee camp on the loss of al-Birwa village after a heroic battle, 79-year-old Mahmud Abu al-Hayja says simply, "This is history, and history is merciless!" (232).

Narratives of struggle in the text are interweaved with discussion of social memory, class, gender, and all of the contradictions felt by a nation under colonial domination. Stories of the Nakba, writes Silmi in Chapter 3 "The Margin and the Centre in Narrating Pre-1948 Palestine," provide evidence that:

> what we remember is not what really happened in the past, but rather how we lived it, our experience of it, the changes it imposed and its enduring effects (both tangible and intangible) on our lives. In this way, multiple events from multiple time periods become confused and intertwined in our memory; the stories of different wars and battles ... become tied together with the loss, destruction and displacement that they continue to entail. (64)

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Silmi finds in the narrative of "colonized bourgeois" Muhammad Jamil 'ilmi, for example, an "ideological blindness" towards Zionist violence, as he attributes all such acts to the British (67). For Allan, resistance to the ongoing erasure of Palestine is still a "struggle of remembering" (18).

If there is to be any criticism of this important text, improvements may be suggested in enabling the smoother reference between the English interview translations and their pinpointing as videos in the Nakba Archive; this may be a sticking point for Arabic speakers, but could enhance the archive's accessibility more broadly. Politically speaking, *Voices of the Nakba* enters an English-speaking world where anti-Zionism is routinely smeared by pro-Israel forces as being antisemitic. A major weapon in the hands of this ruling class campaign has been the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) set of definitions, which blacklist opposition to the Zionist state. In this context, the questions of Jayyusi on how traumatic memories of the Holocaust resolve in such a radically exclusionary way in Palestine reads like a concession (241). As Rosemary Sayigh (2007 200) once wrote, "The Holocaust is irrelevant to Palestine."

Herself credited as being the "North Star of Palestinian oral history" (xii), Sayigh summarizes in the Afterword the significance of the voices presented in the book:

> Excised from most Western studies of the Middle East, including university curricula and textbooks, Nakba stories not only restore a vital human perspective to our understanding of the region, but also subvert imperialist hegemony over knowledge and teaching of Middle Eastern history. (300)

Drawing back on the *farah*, or joy, of pre-Nakba sociality, this human perspective also carries optimism for the future. Against all odds, an enduring message of the volume is that those forced out of their country in the Nakba refuse to give up hope that Palestine will be liberated. Born in Mi'ar, Palestine in 1921 and interviewed in Sayda (Sidon), Lebanon in 2003, Husayn Mustafa Taha expresses the undying sentiments of his generation:

> If God Almighty wishes, Inshaʾ Allah these arrogant oppressors who kicked us out by force, Allah will send them someone who will take revenge on them, and return us home. We will return by force, Inshaʾ Allah, we shall return to Palestine, and to Miʿar, and to Safsaf, and to ʿAkkbara, and to al-Damun, and to all Palestinian villages—and to Shafaʿ Amr, and to all villages, Inshaʾ Allah. We have hope. I am not losing hope. Even if it's the last day of my life I'm not losing hope, Inshaʾ Allah. (178)

Voices of the Nakba brings a rich depth of material for those wanting to understand the situation first hand and, crucially, bolsters the array of references available to Palestinians and their supporters. Giving human voice to those on

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the receiving end of the long-suffering oppression on which the post-1948 regime was built offers, above all, material for decolonization.

Biography

Louis Brehony is an activist, musician, researcher, and educator from Manchester, UK. He is the author of an upcoming monograph on Palestinian musicianship in exile and is director of the award-winning documentary film *Kofia: A Revolution Through Music* (2021).

Notes

1. See the video interview at https://libraries.aub.edu.lb/poha/Record/4313 (1:28).

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Errata
Janus Unbound: Journal of Critical Studies 1.II
Settler-Colonialism and Indigenous Communities

• pp. 2, 4 For "Schlomo Avineri" read "Shlomo Avineri."

• p. 4 For "*Captialism*" read "*Capitalism*"; for "*Captial*" read "*Capital*."

• p. 14 For "community" read "community partnerships."

• p.15 For "Kuokkannen" read "Kuokkanen"; add omitted period after departures (two lines down).

• p.16. For "Montreal" read "Montréal."

• pp. 20, 22 For "Metis" read "Métis."

• p.21 For "Vescara" read "Vescera."

• p.33 For reference "Kuokannen, R." read "Kuokkanen, R."

• p.37 For "MacIntyre" read "Macintyre."

• p.44 For "Yen'an" read "Yan'an"; omit quotation marks after "during" in the sentence beginning with "these would prove."

• p.44 For "Pinar del Rio" read "Pinar del Río."

• p.45 For "(Castro 2002)" read "(Castro 1992)."

• p. 50 Add closing quotation marks in note 18 after the word "yard."

• p.69 For "ruble" read "rubble."

• p.72 In the "Ethnic cleansing" column of table 4 for "designatton" read "designation."

• p. 78 In note 4 for "riht" read "right"; for "atribute" read "attribute."

• p.87 For "Emilie" read "Emelie."

• p.96 For "chapters titles" read "chapter titles."

• p. 101 For "builing" read "building" (5 lines down).

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ABOUT JANUS UNBOUND: JOURNAL OF CRITICAL STUDIES

Janus Unbound: Journal of Critical Studies is a double-blind peer-reviewed open access journal, aspiring to occupy a unique niche among journals of critical studies. Published by Memorial University Libraries, *Janus Unbound* is envisioned as a transdisciplinary platform for scholarly writing and academic research and exchange within the field of World Literature in particular, and Cultural Studies, Philosophy, and the Humanities in general, and a medium of intercommunication for students, teachers, researchers, critics, intellectuals, scholars, and artists all over the world.

Published bi-annually, *Janus Unbound* offers lively and informative reading for a broad community and focuses on innovative perspectives. *Janus Unbound* is particularly attracted to works that challenge prevailing views and established ideas and encourages thought-provoking research topics, debate, and criticism. It seeks to foster transdisciplinarity, participate in the ongoing reconfiguration of knowledge, and challenge received conceptual frames and perspectives.

Janus Unbound aims to be a venue for unpublished works, both academic and creative (poetry, art, film), and is a platform for originality, excellence, and talent. It appeals to all those interested in transdisciplinary approaches and is designed for adepts at groundbreaking interpretations, critical provocations, and profound philosophical and theoretical discussions.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

JU accepts submissions on a rolling basis and publishes reviews, essays, articles, criticism, interviews, notes, commentaries, book reviews, short communications, and short articles. It also welcomes poetry, long, short, or in-between. *JU* will also be accepting photographs, short videos, and films. Authors are required to submit their work online and to check the status of their submission. If you have any queries, please email the editorial office: info@janusunbound.com.

The editors welcome letters on all subjects, especially if they discuss or comment on the works published in *Janus Unbound*. Please read our Guidelines for Authors prior to submitting your manuscript.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

- All citations and references must conform to **Chicago's author/date style (in-text parenthetical citations)**. A quick guide to this format can be found **here**.
- All notes must be formatted as endnotes.
- References must be complete (and include full page ranges for articles, chapters of books, etc.).
- Submit articles or reviews in 12 point, Times New Roman font.
- Double space at time of submission.

CALL FOR PAPERS (FOURTH ISSUE)

Janus Unbound*: Journal of Critical Studies* is pleased to announce a call for papers for issue 2.2, scheduled for **Spring/Summer 2023 publication**. The deadline for submission is **15 March 2023**.

We are a double-blind peer-reviewed open access journal published bi-annually by *Memorial University of Newfoundland*, occupying a unique niche among journals of critical studies. A transdisciplinary platform for scholarly and creative writing, and academic research and exchange, within the field of World Literature, in particular, and Cultural Studies and the Humanities. In general, we provide a medium of intercommunication for students, teachers, researchers, critics, intellectuals, scholars, and artists all over the world.

The theme for our fourth issue is:

The Marginalization of the Global South

Natural resources are depleting and global economic demand is increasing. As global capitalism consumes the resources of the Global South, the impact on people of the south may be devastating: poverty, starvation, migration, violence, war, and erasure.

Issues include:

- Diaspora, Exile, Nomadism
- Refugees
- Living Dead Labour
- Energy and Information Extraction Fields
- Queer and Trans Rights in Marginalized Countries
- Biopolitical Laboratories

Non-themed submissions are always welcome.
JU invites original research articles, essays, review articles, critical notes, commentaries, book reviews, and poems, long, short, and in-between. Multiple submissions are welcome. Poems should be original. We accept short films and videos. We do not consider work that has appeared elsewhere (this includes all websites and personal blogs) or that is being considered for publication elsewhere. Interested parties should send their works to info@janusunbound.com.

We value *excellence* and *originality*. *Janus Unbound* is particularly attracted to works that challenge prevailing views and established ideas and encourages thought-provoking research topics and debate. Based on "If not now, when?" as a motto, we foster transdisciplinarity, participate in the ongoing reconfiguration of knowledge, and challenge received conceptual frames and perspectives for the sake of the power, health, and wealth of the multitude.

Why publish with us? We are:

- a hospitable venue for excellence and originality;
- an eminent editorial and advisory board;
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We look forward to receiving proposals or finished work in response to the call and are happy to respond to inquiries from interested parties.

CALL FOR PAPERS (FIFTH ISSUE)

Janus Unbound: Journal of Critical Studies is pleased to announce a call for papers for issue 3.1, scheduled for **Winter 2023 publication**. Deadline for Submission is **15 July 2023**.

We are a double-blind peer-reviewed open access journal published bi-annually by *Memorial University of Newfoundland*, occupying a unique niche among journals of critical studies. A transdisciplinary platform for scholarly and creative writing, and academic research and exchange, within the field of World Literature, in particular, and Cultural Studies and the Humanities. In general, we provide a medium of intercommunication for students, teachers, researchers, critics, intellectuals, scholars, and artists all over the world.

This is a special issue edited by Danine Farquharson, Associate Professor of English at Memorial University of Newfoundland and one of our three Associate Editors.

The theme for this fifth and special edited issue is:

Feminist Resistance

Roe v. Wade. Repeal the 8th. #SayHerName. MMIWG. Masha Amini … the list feels endless and ongoing. Women, female-identifying, and non-binary people continue to resist the violence, the barriers, the misogynies. We seek submissions that describe, analyze, and document feminist resistance. Our focus is on the role of cis women, trans women, and non-binary identified individuals in resistance against systems that disadvantage feminist agency, identity, and politics. We include those populations that have historical strife as the result of misogyny.

Topics include:

- Intersectionality
- Feminist Praxis
- Queer, Trans, Women of Color, and Other Minority Populations
- Decolonization

We welcome submissions that fit ideas of "traditional" academic essays, but also encourage creative writing, personal narratives, and creative non-fiction.

Non-themed submissions are always welcome.
JU invites original research articles, essays, review articles, critical notes, commentaries, book reviews, and poems, long, short, and in-between. Multiple submissions are welcome. Poems should be original. We accept short films and videos. We do not consider work that has appeared elsewhere (this includes all websites and personal blogs) or that is being considered for publication elsewhere. Interested parties should send their works to info@janusunbound.com.

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