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Issue Editor's Note

Throughout the period of nearly three years during which this issue was coming into life, our world was seriously shaken by numerous armed conflicts in Ukraine, in the Middle East, and Asia. Several other disconcerting issues of political, social, ideological, existential, or environmental nature have also emerged as troubling concerns often fomenting profound divides. The six international and four Hungarian contributions in the current issue of the *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies*—now published by the international publishing house Sciendo/DeGruyter—reflect on such conflicts from multiple perspectives.

The Brexit referendum in 2016 and the UK's consequential leave from the European Union revealed a great degree of fragmentation and division in British society—exposing multiple layers of social, economic, and political crises fueled by propaganda and manipulation that appealed to people's insecurities, fears, and (perplexed) sense of nationalism. The 51.89% vote in favor of leave served as a compelling experience, which has driven intellectuals in various fields to reflect on what happened and help discern and comprehend how Britain had got there. Scholars in the humanities have endeavored to offer a wide array of commentaries and analyses approaching the Brexit problem from multiple vantage points—as the first cluster of three outstanding contributions to this issue demonstrate.

These essays—generously recruited and pre-edited by Professor Tamás Bényei of the University of Debrecen, one of the authors himself—are extended and revised versions of papers given at the 2020 ESSE Conference in Lyon (postponed and held online in 2021 due to the pandemic) in the seminar entitled *Countdown to Brexit: Community and Body Politics in Contemporary British Fiction and Visual Arts*.

The first piece in this section, Catherine Bernard's "Reembodying Utopia: The Politics of Nature in Ali Smith's 'Seasonal Quartet'" probes Smith's well-known literary work—an exceptional attempt to portray what "Brexit reactivates and signifies culturally and politically" and to reflect on "the dialectics of past and future at work in the Brexit vote"—which looks at the deep identity crisis that had poisoned British society for long. Catherine Bernard's subtle reading of the novels focuses on how the quartet—transforming "the condition of England" genre—through the "affective

politics of nature" and inspired by artists such as Barbara Hepworth and Tacita Dean and their art as a "self-reflexive mirror," engenders "possible futures beyond the crisis." The cyclical patterns of the seasons in the quartet's symbolic universe, the dynamics of the temporal and physical changes of nature, the shape-shifting characters in the novels who mediate between and transcend beyond realities and subjectivities in space and time symbolically breaking down the divisions, the locks, the fences, the enclosures, and the hedges, as Bernard argues, affect, with a "utopian gesture," "the promise of collective redemption and change."

The second essay in this cluster also engages with Smith's "Seasonal Quartet," albeit with a focus on the second sequel, *Winter,* published in 2017. In "Figures and Grounds: Art and the Body Politic in Ali Smith's *Winter,*" Tamás Bényei offers an engaging and nuanced study of the novel—with a view to how it problematizes "Brexit by revitalizing the metaphor of the body politic." The essay discusses the role of landscape and how the aesthetics of various artistic representations in post-World War II British landscape painting and art, especially Barbara Hepworth's works, represent and (re-)negotiate the trope of Brexit—the experience of a gravely disrupted and dismembered Britain—the image of the "quartered kingdom." In a fascinating analysis, the essay also examines the novel's "intertextual conversation" with William Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and how it resonates with the contemporary British political and social scene—conclusively "addressing the ways in which the reimagining of the body politic is entangled with Smith's poetic strategies."

Wolfgang Funk's analysis, "Open Wounds and Physical Divisions: Pre-Brexit Visions of a Divided Kingdom," the third essay in this section, discusses three seminal pieces of the so-called pre-BrexLit novels, published well before Britain's leave from the European Union. Julian Barnes's *England, England* (1998), Tony Saint's *Refusal Shoes* (2003), and Rupert Thomson's *Divided Kingdom* (2005) demonstrate how these literary works, which showcase border imagery and various border discourses—borders "both real and metaphorical, mental and physical, external and internal"—anticipate and warn of many of the divisive "faultlines" that had come to light on the way to Brexit, and which had long hurt the nation, ultimately causing deep injuries so famously expressed by Anish Kapoor's illustration in the 3 July 2019 issue of *The Guardian* with the image of the British Isles and Ireland ripped apart by "a gouging and festering wound."

While Brexit manifested and affected a deep identity crisis in British society, the imminent ecological concerns and serious environmental

problems, such as global warming, biodiversity loss, air pollution, acid rain, or deforestation, are equally dire challenges that should force humans to engage in immediate action. Hatice Bakanlar Mutlu's inquiry "New British Nature Writing, or an Emergent Hope" discusses three notable pieces of the recently emerging genre of new British nature writing. These first-person, non-fiction works by contemporary British authors—which, as Mutlu claims, can be categorized as eco-memoirs—including Kathleen Jamie's essay trilogy *Findings*, *Sightlines* and *Surfacing*, Amy Liptrot's *The Outrun*, and Carol Donaldson's *On the Marshes: A Journey into England's Waterlands* challenge the Anthropocene, and with their transformative power could serve as an inspiration and alternative to enliven an eco-centered approach to the natural world and "cherish hopes for a livable future for our planet."

With a focus on how spatiality informs and engenders memory construction and text production, András Tarnóc's essay "'There is never any ending to Paris': Manifestations of Spatiality in Ernest Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*" analyzes one of Hemingway's classics, his memoir posthumously published in 1964, in which the author reminisces about the exciting and empowering years he spent in Paris between 1921 and 1926 as a young, yet unrecognized writer in an attempt to reconnect with his young self—in a subjective tour down memory lane. Drawing on a great body of theoretical background including, among others, Martin Heidegger, Henry Lefebvre, Pierre Nora, and Walter Benjamin, Tarnóc discusses Hemingway's spatial practices, the psychogeography of the author's Paris universe, how the city of Paris serves as a *lieu de memoire* for the author, how the dialectics of the here and there, the experience of in-betweenness negotiate Hemingway's identity, and how he discovers the actual and poetic geography in his attempt to seek refuge in the past—in Paris, a city that "for the rest of your life, . . . stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast."

The next essay in the issue by Yi Zhang, "'Asiatic Black Man': W. E. B. Du Bois and Langston Hughes in Soviet Asia," the first of two essays investigating Afro-American Eurasianism through the twin cases of W. E. B. Du Bois and Langston Hughes, puts Du Bois's views on Soviet Asia in the focus discussing them from a new transcontinental perspective. In an illuminating analysis, drawing on an impressive body of primary and secondary sources, Zhang discusses the influences on and the evolution of Du Bois's concept of the "Asiatic Black Man" and argues that Soviet Asia served as "a psychogeographical and geopolitical conduit" which engendered Du Bois's conviction that a Soviet-type socialism was the alternative

international world order—a utopia to "emancipate all humankind from racism" and shatter the color-line.

Due to its geopolitical and economic importance, the Middle East has always been a vital sphere of influence for the United States, a region that the US was determined to safeguard—even at the expense of coercion and war, especially so following the 1973 oil crisis. Rasha Awale's inquiry "Twisted Narratives: The Neoconservatives' Pursuit of War for Oil in the 1970s" offers a close reading of a series of public statements, articles, and various other publications from prominent neoconservative intellectuals—academics, political advisors, as well as journalists including, for example, Edward Luttwak, Robert Tucker, Norman Podhoretz, Eugen Rostow, Walter Laqueur, and Jordan Paust, who, as Awale contends, acted as the ideological masterminds behind schemes of confrontational foreign policy that rationalized the use of force and preemptive military action as means of conflict resolution—a strategy that defined the neoconservative approach to the region in the aftermath of 9/11. The analysis also highlights how such rhetoric in the 1970s was influenced by the Orientalist, anti-Arab discourse that positioned people in the Middle East as "the West's cultural Other"—essentially against democracy and liberalism—who "can only understand the language of force."

George F. Kennan, the legendary American diplomat, the father of containment, a highly esteemed expert on Russia, the uncompromising critic, the man who during his long, prolific, and influential career was unquestionably an unavoidable factor in American foreign policy. Despite his relatively early retirement from active service, he has been the subject of numerous historical analyses, and there is hardly any detail of Kennan's career that has avoided scholarly attention. Zoltán Peterecz in "George F. Kennan and Hungary: A Cold War Visionary and a 'remarkable people with rich civilizational qualities,'" however, relying on archival sources, the *Kennan Diaries*, as well as the valuable materials of the correspondence between Kennan and John Lukács, sheds light on a so-far rather neglected aspect of the diplomat's life and offers insights into Kennan's views on and attitude towards Hungary and Hungarian foreign policy—with a focus on Kennan's commentaries and evaluation of Hungarian affairs in the late 1930s, during the period after World War II, and in 1956, as well as in 1986 when Kennan paid a personal, unofficial visit to Budapest. The essay thus is a "unique addition" to the expanding scholarship on American–Hungarian relations.

The creed of American exceptionalism, the very core of American identity, has always served as an underlying ideology to justify US foreign

political conduct; therefore, it has oftentimes been contested and criticized. Atalie Gerhard's essay, "American Veteran Noirs: Investigating Exceptionalism and Its Post-World War II Trauma" offers a unique perspective on such critique by way of analyzing three film noirs: *Act of Violence* (1948) directed by Fred Zinnemann, *Angel Heart* (1987) by Alan Parker, and *Shutter Island* (2010) by Martin Scorsese. These cinematic narratives place American veteran soldiers suffering from traumatic war experiences and their consequences including PTSD, anxiety, and paranoia in the center. Through such troubled subjectivities, the films problematize and subvert the concept of American exceptionalism, destabilize the ethos of American moral superiority and heroism, and, as Gerhard demonstrates, question the righteousness of US foreign interventions following World War II, in the Cold War and beyond.

The Reformed College in the city of Debrecen, often designated as the Calvinist Rome, has been a powerful symbol of Reformation in Hungary since the 16th century. Throughout its history, however, the college has had to face several challenges including conflicts with the Catholics following the end of the Ottoman rule, when the Catholic Habsburgs asserted their political influence over the Kingdom of Hungary. As a result, the City of Debrecen, by the force of law, was forbidden to finance the salaries of the clergymen of the Calvinist Church and those of the college professors—forcing the institution to raise funds from abroad and solicit financial aid from Protestant brothers in the Netherlands, Switzerland, and England. Based on a rich body of primary sources, especially the Archives of the Reformed Church District of Tiszántúl [Trans-Theiss region], Réka Bozzay's "English Financial Aid for the Reformed College of Debrecen in Light of Hungarian Archival Sources" concludes the essay section by tracing the history of the English Protestant aid in a studious account.

The review section contains four insightful reviews offering their critical commentaries on recent publications, which cover a broad scope of topics including the second volume of Katherine Mansfield's collected letters, Sahar Ghumkhor's *The Political Psychology of the Veil*, twenty-first-century productions of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*, as well as *The Prison Memory Archive* project in Northern Ireland.

As the editor of the issue, I wish to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of all the blind reviewers and all the members of the editorial board of *HJEAS*—review editor Gabriella Moise, copy editor Mariann Buday, language editor Jared Griffin, and technical editor Kálmán

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Reembodying Utopia: The Politics of Nature in Ali Smith's "Seasonal Quartet"

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ABSTRACT
Ali Smith's "Seasonal Quartet" chooses to inscribe Smith's reading of Brexit in a long history of social and ideological fractures dating back to the 1980s. Transmuting the genre of "the condition of England" novel, she brings it into conjunction with the language of utopia and art. Her previous exploration of the politics of metamorphosis (see, for instance, "The Beholder," *Public Library and Other Stories* [2015]) is here harnessed to a reflection on the experience of collective crisis and of historical belonging. Exploring the affective politics of nature, and harnessing artists like Barbara Hepworth and Tacita Dean to a form of re-affected utopia, she elaborates a poetics of transmutation harboring the promise of collective redemption. Turning to the concept of hospitality as analyzed by Derrida, as well as the series' critical intermediality, this paper reflects on the poetics of affect crafted by Smith and the way her vision of a re-aestheticized body politic, fueled by the rhythms of nature, fashions a re-affected national community. (CB)

KEYWORDS: Ali Smith, Brexlit, Condition of England novel, utopia, eco-poetics, intermediality, body politic, community

"Intensely political seasons spawn
reveries of a different immediacy."
Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*

The run-up to the Brexit referendum and its aftermath have tested representation in its various acceptations and instances in exceptional ways, whether it be political or artistic representation. In that sense the period has been a forceful reminder of the imbrication of the life of the polis with the life of literary forms, bringing to the fore the political accountability of artistic representation, whether literary or visual.[1] Critics who have responded to Brexit have often emphasized such accountability. In *Brexlit*, Dulcie Everitt

insists, in the conclusion to her essay, that "the immediacy with which Brexlit was published demonstrates a fierce desire to grapple with the political moment in which English people find themselves—one defined by division and uncertainty not only about the future of their country, but also about their collective identity" (215). In *Brexit and Literature: Critical and Cultural Responses*, Sara Upstone asks the straightforward and urgent question—"Do novels tell us how to vote?"—and stresses the political pragmatics of fiction when she insists, in the wake of Tom Nairn's *The Break-Up of Britain*: "English nationalism is shored up by literary mythologizing" (46) and calls for a reconsideration of "the cultural imaginaries we create in ways beyond didactic intent" (48), and that might be more attuned to the contradictory relationality fashioning political identity.

Central to such exploration has been, for many observers, the dialectics of past and future at work in the Brexit vote. The deep sense of crisis vented during the referendum and expressed in its results has been analyzed as a symptom of an identity disjunction, a lack of cultural fit. Michael Gardiner, in his chapter for *Brexit and Literature*, highlights the "aesthetics of anachronism" that underlies the crisis and the historical faultline of a self-conflicted culture, caught between a form of protracted mourning and the insidious hope for a future that would suture the political tear. Borrowing from Mark Fisher's *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures*, Gardiner reads such inner tension as a form of "hauntological melancholia" (110)—"The desire for past collective political potential,"—mingled with "the desire for lost imperial privilege" (114). Robert Eaglestone reads such melancholia as also wound with traces of the glorious memory of World War II that compounds the "cruel nostalgia" (96) fashioning the Brexit vote. Most importantly, in order to understand fiction's accountability to the present sense of crisis, Eaglestone reads Brexit as echoing with the "affect-memory" of the War and its incumbent sense of a destiny to be experienced and invented collectively, as making national memory "visceral" (96).

Fiction opens a site for the voicing of such affect-memory, and some of the authors of *Brexit and Literature*, including Petra Rau, Gabriel Josipovici, and George Szirtes, opt for a mixture of autobiography and theory in order to understand their own experience of Brexit, as foreigners or Britons with a complex and hyphenated identity. Their own theoretical take on Brexit is, of necessity, also experiential; and such re-embodying of history in the making recalls us to the affective nature of history and of collective imaginaries. Crucial here is the capacity of narrative to confront the dereliction inherent to Brexit as a symptom of a hurtful "affect-memory" coming back to haunt

the present and determine the future. Representation is revealed for what it has never ceased to be, a process through which the *polis* mediates its own identity, collective wants, and suppressed conflicts. But what kind of representation does the crisis of political representation call for? Michael Gardiner, in "Brexit and the Aesthetics of Anachronism," argues that it will involve taking risks with form itself and will disqualify any opportunistic tuning in to the spirit of the times: "This may involve fragmentation, repetition, lacunae as story . . . . The language in which it speaks will probably seem largely unacceptable" (116). Such experimentation may also harbor the potential for seeing through the sad passions of the present and imagining alternative futures. As Caroline Edwards also argues in *Utopia and the Contemporary British Novel*, "tak[ing] seriously the premise that fiction intervenes into political discourse" (4) and giving "narrative expression to our experience of the contemporary" implies "the juxtaposition of literary styles, the sampling and mixing of older novelistic devices with newer formal developments" (5).

As might be expected in view of the "hauntological melancholia" voiced in the Brexit vote, time structures are key to any representation aiming at grappling with the historical fractures fragmenting today's Britain. Recent experimentation in the field of speculative fiction testifies to this desire for more flexible referential time structures, in which fiction may allegorize the tensions of the present. In *The Wall* (2019), John Lanchester chooses to rewrite Dino Buzzati's *The Tartar Steppe* (1940), and its narrative of a world poised between past and future, as it waits for an "invasion" of migrants from across the Channel. Lanchester here adapts the language of political fiction to allegorize the exclusionary identity politics that fueled the Brexit campaign of the UK Independent Party. The wall protecting the British Isles becomes thus both literal and allegorical, an ambivalent trope capturing the archaic binarism of cultural essentialism. In three novels published in 2021, Sam Byers's *Come Join Our Disease*, Rosa Rankin-Gee's *Dreamland*, and Sarah Hall's *Burntcoat*,[2] speculation transports us just the other side of reality in worlds that are uncannily relatable, yet that unhinge realism and hover on the frontier of dystopia.

The most sustained attempt at finding a language for what Brexit reactivates and signifies culturally and politically no doubt remains Ali Smith's "Seasonal Quartet," inaugurated in 2016 with *Autumn* and recently complemented with what might be seen as her afterthought addendum to the series, *Companion Piece* (2022), in which she reworks and inflects some of the structural motifs of the quartet. The saga's symbolical matrix, with its implicit

promise of a seasonal redemption to come, logically yields itself to critical readings in which time is the main political mover, both the enemy—when it harbors a deadly nostalgia for a past fantasied glory—and the agent of a utopian and visionary transmutation to come: "Time is at the heart of *Autumn*: its perception, its pace, its peculiar loops and cycles, its relativizing quality, its ideological uses as 'the past,' its waste as an abuse of power" (Rau 37).[3]

But throughout the quartet, time is no abstract principle or force, but a fully embodied dimension of historical experience. In *Artful* (2012) already, the spectral experience of mourning and loss, with its correlated yearning to go back, is mediated through the visceral experience of smell, as the narrator is haunted by the imaginary stench of the beloved's dead body. In the seasonal quartet, the passing of time is also experienced and mediated through physical encounters, or what, with Raymond Williams, one might understand as spatialized "structures of feeling."[4] Williams's notion has recently aroused renewed interest (see for instance Sharma and Tygstrup), no doubt because of its relocating the materialist analysis of power structures in affect and experience: "we are concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt . . . . We are talking about . . . specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships; not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought . . ." (132).

Throughout the quartet, time's redemptive, cyclical impetus is constantly re-mediated as experience, an experience itself enmeshed in the layered structure of collective imaginaries. Crucial to the exploration of such complex intrication of lived and imagined times, is nature, as the site and very medium of historical subjecthood. The seasonal matrix points as much to the embodied agency of nature as it does to the logic of eternal return. The utopian gesture delineating possible futures beyond the crisis nestles at the heart of a nature that bears the marks of nostalgia and also opens subjectivity to otherness, that is both of the past and of the future, precisely because it is the site of a contested now. As we will see, the promise of hospitality that Brexit has reneged on is tied to a long history written on the land, that of enclosures and hedges, of vagrants and migrants. Pastoral England comes to haunt the present, and reaffects it with the full force of its conflicted nostalgia and yearning for a lost—albeit fantasized—commonality. The pictorial intermediality of *Winter* and *Spring* endows the saga's politics of nature with enhanced self-reflexiveness. Barbara Hepworth's abstract, yet organic and biomorphic sculptures, and Tacita Dean's reappropriation of the visual language of nature's sublime agency, allow Smith to reflect on the politics of

imagination and cultural memory. The crisis of representation at the heart of the Brexit crisis is here revealed in all its entangled complexity. The immediacy of aesthetic emotion—whether it be fostered and mediated by nature or art—is thus repurposed for a critical reading of history in the making and of the embodied politics of representation.

Of hedges, frontiers, and locks

In chapter 4 of *Utopia and the Contemporary British Novel*, Caroline Edwards delineates the contours of a nascent form of fiction, apposite to our globalized late-capitalist sensibility: the "networked novel." The fictions "of the not yet" Edwards traces are fictions that reinvent utopia by profoundly disturbing the linearity of time and opening up windows into the future by also reconnecting the present to the past and to simultaneous presents. Imagining possible futures necessitates we connect and re-connect to plural, non-contemporaneous subjectivities in which we are intimately enmeshed. It necessitates we trust in mediations—among which is the novel—that produce and perform networks "between the levels of individual subjectivity, intersubjectivity relations and collective experience across history more broadly" (117).[5] Among recent novels achieving such utopian mediations, Edwards pays specific attention to Marina Warner's *The Leto Bundle* (2002), for its utopian capacity to enact

> a form of cross-cultural contact that connects twenty-first century Britain with its colonial history, using the narrative mechanism of transmigration to function as a kind of structural metamorphosis which, as Warner notes in *Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds* (2002), can "break the rules of time, place, human reproduction and personal uniqueness." (117)[6]

The political urgency of such potential to unhinge the illusion of a centered and stable subjecthood is, needless to say, key if the novel is to confront the essentialist ideology that nurtured the Brexit vote. In that sense, Smith's "Seasonal Quartet" also partakes of that ethics and aesthetics of the "networked novel." From the first installment of the series, Smith chooses to organize the narrative and its political imaginary around a character, Daniel Gluck, who is also a shape-shifter of sorts, able to mediate between time layers and subjectivities. The son of a German Jew, exiled in England before World War II, he weaves together the various narrative threads of the series; his slow descent into death underlies *Autumn*, as we see him hovering on the brink of death. He henceforth travels, between novels, characters, plot,

spaces, and time layers, relentlessly insisting on connecting past, present and future. Although Smith chooses to spell "glück"—German for "chance"—with a slight variation, Daniel is the messenger of happy serendipity. With fiction, of which he is a form of allegorical embodiment, he carries the promise of the liberating and redemptive power of imagination, at its most rebellious, when it staunchly refuses to bow to the law of hegemonic essentialism.

In later parts of the series, Daniel is joined in his symbolic work of networking and re-connecting by two other messengers of good will. Lux, a young woman from Croatia, whom we encounter in *Winter*, does odd jobs and lives rough in London, before she alights for a while in the lives of the protagonists and shines a light onto their sterile existences—here again Smith plays with allegorical onomastics, the character's function being encapsulated in her name—and brings the figure in the carpet of their connected lives into perspective. In *Spring*, the allegory of chance is embodied in Florence, a young migrant trying to be reunited with her mother and who, along the way, mysteriously succeeds in unlocking the doors of Immigration Removal Centers (IRC) and granting detainees unexpected freedom.

All three characters defy the legality of enforced frontiers. Across times and contexts they enact the potential of a shared, connected subjectivity that defies the laws of historical gravity and exclusionary identity-fashioning. Ailing from three different historical contexts and yet sharing in the same enforced relegation to the margins of political visibility—whether in Enemy Alien camps, in Daniel Gluck's case, on the street, in Lux's case, or in IRCs in Florence's—they act as emancipatory agents unlocking the doors of the political imaginary and opposing the counter-hegemonic potential of metamorphosis to the strictures of self-identity. They act out the possibility of what might be defined, using Jacques Derrida's notion, as unconditional hospitality. Derrida knows that positing such absolute hospitality is *per se* a task that is incumbent to utopia and the imaginary, although such a promise should trace the ethical and political horizon of our actual encounter with the other:

> It is as though hospitality were the impossible: as though the law of hospitality defined this very impossibility, as if it were only possible to transgress it, as though *the* law of absolute, unconditional, hyperbolical hospitality, as though the categorical imperative of hospitality commanded that we transgress all the laws (in the plural) of hospitality, namely, the conditions, the norms, the rights and duties that are imposed on hosts and

> hostesses, on the men or women who give a welcome as well as the men or women who receive it. (75–77)

The anaphorical bet reiterated with each "as though"/"as if" insists, in spite of the aporia, that the ontology of hospitality lies precisely in our obligation to such a hypothesis. It enacts, with each repetition, that the ethics of absolute hospitality resides in a leap of faith that is also a fiction, but a fiction that obliges us. Interestingly, Anne Dufourmantelle, at that specific juncture of her remote dialogue with Derrida, reads "unconditional hospitality" as pertaining to utopia: ". . . this 'utopia' can nowadays only be audible because it breaks its way in from the other, from that unexpected and always disturbing guest . . ." (74–75). Fiction allows that "always disturbing guest" in, by opening a space for the "no space" of utopia, thus enacting its possibility.

That Smith's series should allegorize such opening to the other via a poetics of space and nature seems only logical. Throughout, the deadly binarism informing the Brexit issue is materialized via images of locks to be opened, fences to be pulled down, or hedges neatly dividing space. This is Smith's response to the UKIP campaign with its infamous "Breaking Point poster" featuring queuing migrants supposedly threatening to pour into the UK.[7] Even before the motif takes on a structuring function in *Spring*, with Florence disturbingly unlocking doors, *Winter*'s plot revolves around twin images of fences and locks. One of the central characters, Sophia Cleves, a former businesswoman, now living in utter seclusion in her Cornwall country house, sees her life gradually invaded by her past that returns in the guise of her estranged sister Iris, her son, and Lux passing as her daughter-in-law. Iris, a former peace campaigner who was involved in the Greenham Common protests in the 1980s, has just returned from Greece, where she is doing voluntary work in a refugee camp. The same fence courses between historical moments and novels, from the enemy aliens' camps of World War II to today's IRCs, from Greenham Common to the political fences Brexit intends to erect against aliens.

The quartet's messengers of goodwill hold, on the contrary, the key to an imaginary and to a world potentially without borders, keys, and locks; with them "It is *as if* the stranger or foreigner held the keys. This is always the situation of the foreigner, in politics too, that of coming as a legislator to lay down the law and liberate the people or the nation by coming from outside, by entering into the nation or the house, into the home . . ." (Derrida 123). Allowing the other in implies navigating freely across walls and fences and

opening apertures in sealed-off partitions. In Sophia and Iris Cleves's house, collared doves were left to fly into the house freely in holes in the roof, before Sophia renovated the house. The reminiscence surfaces as Iris struggles to impart to her sister the brutal truth of the trauma the refugees she works with have had to endure (Smith, *Winter* 232–34). The doves—yet further messengers of peace—intrude in the text, as Iris denounces Theresa May's anti-cosmopolitan definition of citizenship as encapsulated in her 2016 Conservative Party conference assertion that "[i]f you believe you are a citizen of the world, you are a citizen of nowhere" (233). Even more radically, she questions the ethical and spiritual legitimacy of the very language articulating such exclusionary conception of identity:

> . . . what kind of vicar, what kind of church, brings a child up to think that words like *very* and *hostile* and *environment* and *refugees* can ever go together in any response to what happens to people in the real world. . . .
>
> Then she pointed at the ceiling above the window on the right.
>
> *That's* where the birds originally got in, through the rafters, she said.
>
> (233–34)

The *non sequitur* is of consequence, in its very incoherence. It opens a rift in narrative sequentiality that is also an opening for the other of utopia and its promise of liberation to intrude. The language of archaic nature symbols insists; it returns and with it the ancient quasi-mythical promise of redemption. The scene logically ends on the two sisters' reestablishing physical contact and achieving some form of makeshift reconciliation. In *Summer*, the same bird image returns, in the letters Sacha—a younger version of Iris—sends to Hero, a young Vietnamese IRC detainee already encountered in *Spring* watching clouds through the tightly sealed perspex window of his cell (Smith, *Spring* 160–61). The birds are no longer doves, but, in tighter congruence with the migrancy paradigm, swifts, migratory birds "that live some of the year in Africa and some of the year here and in other places in Europe and Scandinavia" (Smith, *Summer* 119). The symbolism is a spliced one, in which the messengers of freedom, that ignore fences and frontiers, are also memory messengers tying together past, present, and future, since a saying about the swifts "mak[ing] summer happen" is Sacha's motherly heirloom handed down from her great-grandmother: "Apparently her mother said it, and her mother's mother said it. I think that makes swifts a bit like a flying message in a bottle" (119). The metaphor woven here acts metamorphically, beyond even elementary chemistry, to transform the

migrant into a figure of hope and plenitude, a figure of summer, a swift-like figure of liberation, traveling across space and time.

Eventually, as Covid 19 hits the IRC centers and the authorities prefer to release the detainees, Hero finds shelter in the Cleves's home Iris has turned into a refugee safe harbor, a home appositely locks-free, as Iris explains: "There'll be no locking anyone in here, not in any lockdown of ours, Iris said. Not for people who've been locked up for so long" (Smith, *Summer* 347). Hero's reply to Sacha's letter brings the whole quartet to completion. In it he describes his life in the new commune Iris has opened for migrants and explains the meaning of his name in Vietnamese—ANH KIET:

> ANH: brother / you
> KIET: masterpiece
> When they are together they make a meaning like the English word hero. I am not a hero! I am not a masterpiece! But I am a brother. (378)

The work of translation is a work of de-cyphering that asserts a renewed sense of brotherhood in the form of a reply, of a shared address from the "you" nestling at the heart of identity.

Companion Piece reworks the motif of vagrancy and time-traveling in the guise of yet another young girl, an apprentice blacksmith living during the times of the Black Plague and who returns to haunt the present via one of the more sophisticated locks she came to craft, the Boothby Lock: "an English metal lock and key mechanism . . . way ahead of its time" (Smith 6). The Lock, which has been part of "a travelling exhibition of late medieval and early renaissance objects" (6) becomes an object of intense suspicion as it travels back from the exhibition and the assistant curator in charge of its safe return is stopped from entering the UK at border control. The lock is, needless to say, no mere medieval blacksmithery wonder. It is a complex mechanism in more than one way, as it locks and unlocks the metaphorical structure of *Companion Piece* and of the whole quartet that precedes it and that itself works like a sophisticated lock of sorts. With the figure of the genius blacksmith waif, Smith weaves the metaphorical strands already structuring the quartet into a tight utopian knot. After she has been raped and left for dead in a ditch, as retribution for her intruding onto a man's territory, the village forge, the young girl becomes a vagrant and befriends a bird she saves from near death. The two living dead, like Daniel Gluck in the quartet, have crossed the fence dividing life and death and are granted the freedom of those who can roam the open land. They cross the frontiers of time and space, and

metaphorically unlock the door to a politics of hospitality that embraces the far and the near, the past, present, and future into the migratory figure of the vagrant, the other within, the alien who also, like Lux, Daniel, or Florence can open doors and trespass onto free tracts of imaginary land.

Such border-crossing is what, on the contrary, Brittany Hall, an IRC's officer who, in *Spring*, befriends Florence, only to eventually betray her, cannot fathom. Towards the end of the novel, we see her cutting twigs from the boxwood hedges outside the IRC where she works. During her train journey back home, we see her "crunch[ing] one of the leaves and hold[ing] to her nose the smell of the green colour" (Smith 328). The twigs are left to dry on her bedroom table and eventually her mother disposes of them. Brittany's ambiguous attachment to the synaesthetic pleasure of the crushed boxwood leaves is itself allegorical of Britain's complex post-Brexit political imaginary. Brittany—and the Britain she is an obvious synecdoche for—allows her visceral and nostalgic attachment to nature's sensorial reality to become desiccated. The hedges are but hedges and their task is to dissect and organize space. As she sees the dry twigs in the bin, she castigates herself: "got to stop taking my work home with me" (Smith 329); but her innocent pleasure in the smell of the crushed leaves also reminds her, if only briefly, that one also needs to open one's home to suppressed emotions and let unexpected guests in.

Pastoral spectrality

The briefly-glanced hedges at the end of *Spring* rework one of the most powerful metaphors organizing the whole quartet, that of fences and demarcations as they organize the politics of natural space. Reappropriating the narrative of the commons, the quartet maps Brexit onto a long history of traumatic enclosing and of counter-hegemonic practices resisting spatial control. The fences erected by SA4A, the private company managing the IRCs around which part of the quartet's plot revolves, cut across open tracts of land that are the commons of old. In *Autumn*, Elizabeth's mother reads the double outrage of ecological disaster and of the privatization of the land in an old 1962 Ordnance Survey map of the coastal region she has relocated to and that still shows the contours of a long-departed England:

> The map is from 1962. Her mother has drawn a red line with a Sharpie all round the coast marking where the new coast is.
>
> She points to a spot quite far inland, on the new red line.

> That's where the World War II pillbox fell into the sea ten days ago, she says.
>
> She points to the other side of the map, furthest from the coast.
>
> That's where the new fence has gone up, she says. Look.
>
> She is pointing to the word *common* in the phrase *common land*.
>
> Apparently a fence three metres high with a roll of razorwire along the top of it has been erected across a stretch of land not far from the village. (Smith 54–55)

The fence cuts across both common land and common history, as inscribed onto the old map. Just as the coast is gradually eroded, the memory of the commons is eroded, the same history that the young vagrant blacksmith in *Companion Piece* spectrally embodies. The tragedy of the commons is not, as Garrett Hardin explains in his famous 1968 article "The Tragedy of the Commons" in *Science*, one of collective mismanagement, but on the contrary, it lies in the suppression of common agency and the denial of collective memory. It opposes the counter-hegemonic vibrancy of collective identity, beyond the here and now, to the politics of exclusion and fencing off, of partitioning and privatization. One may, in Raymond Williams's terms, read it as a powerful residual structure—as opposed to dominant and emergent structures—that lives on in the physical experience of shared spatiality:

> The residual, by definition, has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present. Thus certain experiences, meanings, and values which cannot be expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practised on the basis of the residue—cultural as well as social—of some previous social and cultural institution of formation. (Williams 122)

The fences of Greenham Common to which Iris Cleves and her friends fasten themselves, and also cut through in *Winter*, reproduce, across time, the enclosures rationalizing and privatizing the commons. Nature and space are thus no mere referential context; they materialize a dialectical relation to the past in which spectrality is also endowed with utopian potential: the capacity to imagine a common body politic grounded in the remembrance of the past that is also a promise. At the end of *Companion Piece*, we follow Sandy, the protagonist, as she takes her father's dog for a walk across the village common. The experience is a moment of closure and

opening, of anagnorisis, as Sandy, a painter, is at last able to immerse herself in the world that surrounds her and allows the colors and vibrancy of nature to wash over her:

> I walk the path myself under the trees with all their leaves open. The colour of things hits me like something I've lacked. The river, clay-colour close up, sky-colour far-off, widens and curves, like assurance, like something going its own road, an open road lit by the light it catches and sends back out from itself. (Smith 224)

The double simile—"like assurance, like something going its own road"—brings the pictorial evocation to veer off into allegory: the path dovetails as the imaginary path of a spiritual journey lit by the light of hope nesting at the heart of experience, when attuned to the synaesthetic rhythms of nature. With a keen eye to the painterly palette of the village common, Sandy lives that moment as the artist she is, but the moment is a moment of vision in more than one way. Looking and gazing, Sandy also sees at last what she was hitherto blind to: the "something [she's] lacked" and that the text will leave unnamed. The lack is a wanting as well as the locus of an encounter with the world, crystallizing in the impressionistic intensification of the gaze. What, with Lauren Berlant, might be read as a moment of "unforeclosed experience" (5), recalls Sandy—and the reader with her—to the interwoven politics of such anagnorisis? The open, shared tract of the common is apt ground for a reinvention of a self in tune with the world, a world that is open and "unforeclosed," a world to be freely contemplated and co-experienced. Brexit has been understood by some observers as also the expression of a longing, but, according to politist Alan Finlayson, a longing for a lost and nostalgic order, at odds with the future of cosmopolitan remainers, and that looks back into a distorted mirror:

> What Brexitism sees in the mirror is the past returning: the fishing industry, smaller farms, towns and cities, established gender roles, a place for everyone and everyone in their place. The philosophy behind this is familiar: there is an eternal order, hidden but indicated by . . . the stability of the natural order to which it gives rise. (603)

In *Companion Piece*, the natural order hidden in the pictorialist glory of the common is anything but nostalgic and reactionary. It looks forward to a re-encounter with a commonwealth that transcends selfhood itself into a togetherness caught in the last word of the novel: "Hello" (Smith 227);

"hello" the word that itself holds the promise of infinite story-telling: "Every hello, like every voice—in all the possible languages, and human voice is the least of it—holds its story ready, waiting" (172).

The pastoral motif thus refracts the nostalgia inherent in Brexit and deflects it into a utopian promise. Its spectrality returns to the cultural horizon in the form of a tomorrow to be re-invented. In it, the "residual," according to Raymond Williams is potentially transmogrified as the "emergent": those "new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationship . . . which are substantially alternative or oppositional to [dominant culture]" (123).

Towards the end of *Summer*, Grace, one of the novel's protagonists, who has embarked on a nostalgic journey along the memory lanes of her youth, loses herself in the lush nature of summery Suffolk. Her experience, like Sandy's, is a transformative one, in which her nostalgia morphs into a vibrant and liberating communion with the here and now. The "single track" she takes "opens up" (Smith 288) her experience as it immerses her in an experience that is both immediate and subtly mediated: "The light gold, dark gold of the fields spreading back away from the sea, and the green of everything, green, dark green, the trees ahead down the road throwing long English shadows, like if you imagine a summer" (288). For all its apparent genericity, nature's lushness strikes Grace as untimely English and the pictorialism of the description unfolds a complex visual palette that seems to borrow from the great tradition of English landscape painting, with its attention to the English landscape's varied nuances of green. The forcefulness of the encounter is layered and powerful because of its cultural intricacy. Vision is no innate experience, but one through which Ali Smith lays claim to a shared heritage that is also fertile ground for a commonality to be reinvented.

Art's immediacy

Throughout the Brexit quartet and *Companion Piece*, art works thus as a self-reflexive mirror that refracts and deflects Smith's political investigation into England's fractured selves. Each novel is structured around intermedial references that function as allegorical mediations: Pauline Boty, the largely misunderstood English Pop artist, in *Autumn*; Lorenza Mazzetti, the experimental film director and painter, in *Summer*. Barbara Hepworth, in *Winter*, and Tacita Dean, in *Spring*, become the centerpieces of Smith's layered reflexion on mediation. Within the quartet's politics of nature, these two artists act as dramatic and allegorical focalizers for her overarching re-

aestheticizing of politics. Their presence at the heart of the two novels' plots crystallizes Smith's "alternative or oppositional" (Williams 123) poetics and what might be defined as her politics of attunement.

In her monograph *Cruel Optimism*, Lauren Berlant delineates the contours of a politics of togetherness relying on "*the affect of feeling political together*" (224, italics in the original). Borrowing from Charles Hirschkind's *The Ethical Soundscape*, she appropriates moments of shared listening, or "attunement," to a compelling politics of the common:

> This process involves taking on *listening together* as itself an object/scene of desire. The attainment of that attunement produces a sense of shared worldness, apart from whatever aim or claim the listening public might later bring to a particular political world because of what they have heard.
>
> (Berlant 224)

Hepworth's and Dean's works in Smith's quartet capture and act out a similar desire, by eliciting in the protagonists a process of transformative, liberating attunement. In *Winter*, Sophia Cleves is slowly reconciled to a long-suppressed sense of lack, as she learns to co-habit with a mysterious, disembodied head. The vision eventually proves to have been triggered by a marble ball, part of a Barbara Hepworth sculpture, that had been given to her by Daniel Gluck, the saga's Hermes-like figure, and Sophia's long-lost lover and father of her son. As the novel retraces her memories, we finally read of her first encounter with the work, an encounter that is also an imaginary experience attuning her to the enlightening potential of vision, beyond facts:

> She walks round the sculpture. It *makes* you walk round it, it makes you look through it from different sides, see different things from different positions. It's also like seeing inside and outside something at once. . . .
>
> It is stone, two stones is all it is and one with a hole in it.
>
> (Smith, *Winter* 273)[8]

The sculpture's visionary and experiential potentialities are incommensurable to the tautological simplicity of its objective presence. The sculpture is, for the greatest part of the quartet, a divided whole and only at the end of the saga are the two pieces reunited at last. Its severing and reuniting offer an indirect allegory for England's divided selves. But the sculpture's allegorical function also opens onto a subtle repoliticizing of aesthetic experience. When discovering the work, Sophia is immediately hit by its visionary power, its capacity to make her see from apparently

irreconcilable perspectives. Seeing from irreconcilable perspectives is the task Smith sets herself in her seasonal quartet and Hepworth's work, through its successive metamorphoses enacts the series' utopian claim.

In *Spring*, Tacita Dean generates a different kind of attunement: one that chimes in with a more Kantian sense of bewilderment at the power of art to unhinge us, while grounding the novel forcefully in its context. The exhibition of Dean's work at the Royal Academy alluded to in the novel did take place and one of the centerpieces of the show was indeed *The Montafon Letter*, a chalk on blackboard polyptych of nine sections composing a 366 x 732 cm work, representing a monumental mountain of the Austrian Alps and an avalanche that shoots down one of its sheer flanks. The Royal Academy show was itself part of the "simultaneous exhibitions by [Dean] in major galleries all across London" (Smith, *Spring* 77) in the summer of 2018. Including Dean's RA show in the plot corroborates Ali Smith's claim to be writing to the historical moment. But the reference is far from being merely topical. It offers a sublime variation on the visionary politics already elaborated in *Winter*. When he finds himself faced with the overpowering presence of the mountain peak and the avalanche, but also with the series of images of clouds that surround the *Montafon Letter*, Richard, the forlorn and disenchanted scriptwriter at the heart of *Spring*, experiences a form of radical epiphany, a moment of vision imbued with subtle political implications:

> . . . he'd stepped back from the mountainscape and looked round that room again at the other things in it, and the pictures of clouds on the walls, done in the same materials as the mountain, had made something else happen, something he didn't realize till later, till he'd left the room, come out of the gallery and on the street.
>
> They'd made space to breathe possible, up against something breathtaking. After them, the real clouds above London looked different, like they were something you could read as breathing space.
>
> (Smith, *Spring* 78–79)

The clouds are the same clouds Hero, the Vietnamese IRC detainee, contemplates from the floor of his cell, through a grimy window: "What is like to breath real air?" he asks Brit. "*Breathe*, she said. What *is it* like. Why are you lying on the floor? Counting the planes?" . . . "I watch clods, he said. He meant clouds" (160–61).

From Richard to Hero, the same clouds travel. They weave a liberating elemental text that flouts the regulated lexicon but claims an emancipatory visionary power that allows Hero to escape and Richard to read

his sky at last as the space of breathing itself. A complex allegory is here imagined that re-articulates a shared experience, beyond nation and the exacting rigor of language. The clouds—to be read as not so distant variations on Constable's cloud sketches—prompt a layered response, both experiential and hermeneutic. The shared sense of wonder they ignite in both Richard and Hero becomes implicitly political. It speaks in the language of wonder back to the blind obtuseness of nationalism. In 2014–2015, as if anticipating Smith's political atmospheric musings, Tacita Dean had already drawn a series of cloudscapes, as she was artist in residence at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. Puzzled by the alien cloudscape of the Californian sky, she had produced a series of color lithographs and slate drawings that were the basis for a later exhibition to be entitled *my English breath in foreign clouds* and that took place at the Marian Goodman Gallery in New York, in 2016. Among the series was a slate drawing whose title, *Bless Our Europe*, reads like an uncanny prefiguration of Smith's clouds allegories in *Spring* and the series' response to Brexit.

At work, critically and experientially, in Smith's texts and Dean's drawings is a capacity to repoliticize wonder and "attunement." Against the divisive and exclusionary passions of Brexit, they both imagine a shared visionary experience that is the very work of a citizenship without borders. Here Brexit is the name for a politics of fear and denial that harnesses the dark drives of nostalgia to a systematic foreclosing of imagination. The "Seasonal Quartet," like Hepworth's biomorphic metamorphic shapes and Dean's elemental meditations, on the contrary, reclaim the hospitable powers of imagination for what might, with Lauren Berlant, be defined as a form of "performative belonging" (260). Gazing, imagining, reading, welcoming, and imagining again all partake of an intensely political experience of a shared present; a present without locks, fences, and borders that speaks again the common tongue of hospitable othering.

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Notes

1 For an in-depth exploration of the conflicted democracy rhetoric at the heart of the referendum, see Bell.

2 In *Burntcoat*, Sarah Hall also writes in response to the Covid pandemic and imagines a world in which rampant political strife is granted a lethal visceral instantiation through the virus coursing through the veins of the body politic.

3 Dulcie Everitt is more explicit in her emphasis on the optimism of Smith's seasonal structure, as *Autumn* already captures it: "Autum will turn to Winter—a time of darkness and cold, but after Winter comes Spring, and then Summer. As Smith intimates towards in this first of her "Seasonal Quartet," the infinitely repeating passage of a year has the power to revitalize and rebirth all things. Ultimately, hope prevails, and love overcomes hate in these extraordinary times" (155).

4 The notion was first introduced in 1954 by Williams in *Preface to Film* and was later elaborated upon in *The Long Revolution* (1961).

5 Edwards is not the sole critic to read fiction in such manner. As she notes, Peter Boxall, in *Twenty-First Century Fiction*, also identifies a class of contemporary novels that self-reflexively enact their connectiveness and thematize connection as one of the modalities of contemporary subjecthood. Among these texts, Boxall lists David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* (2003), and Roberto Bolaño's *2666* (2009).

6 Edwards is here quoting from Marina Warner's *Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds: Ways of Telling the Self* (27).

7 For an analysis of the politics of the gaze harnessed by the poster see art historian Francis Frascina's comments on the making of foreign bodies (2).

8 The work imagined in the novel is probably a compound. The last page of the novel includes a reproduction of a screenprint by Hepworth: *Winter Solstice* (1971) showing a round shape nestling within a series of embedded semi-squares. Another work by Hepworth may also have provided the inspiration for the novel's Hepworth sculpture: *Nesting Stones* (Serravezza Marble, 1937), now in the collections of Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum (Japan). https://barbarahepworth.org.uk/sculptures/1937/nesting-stones/.

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Figures and Grounds: Art and the Body Politic in Ali Smith's *Winter*

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ABSTRACT

The essay reads *Winter* (2017), the second volume of Ali Smith's "Seasonal Quartet," as a novel that engages with Brexit by revitalizing the metaphor of the body politic. Focusing on the role of landscape, the novel's use of art objects and its intertextual conversation with Shakespeare's late romance *Cymbeline* (ca. 1610), the essay also addresses the ways in which the reimagining of the body politic is entangled with Smith's poetic strategies, arguing that matters of form and aesthetics are indistinguishable from the novel's ethical and political concerns. Exploring parallels with post-'45 British landscape painting and art, especially Barbara Hepworth's works, the analysis is concerned with two striking intrusions of the irrational in the novel: a hallucinated lump of landscape hovering above the characters and a child's head floating in the air; both are crucial to the revitalization of the metaphor of the body politic as well as in the conversation the novel conducts with British art and with *Cymbeline*, a play that is an exploration of the idea of the body politic and of sovereignty in the context of the end of Britain's relations with Europe. (TB)

KEYWORDS: Brexit, body politic, landscape, British art, *Cymbeline*

In *Winter* (2017),[1] the second volume of Ali Smith's "Seasonal Quartet" (2016–20), Charlotte has a recurring nightmare in which she is cutting herself open with a pair of chicken scissors: "In my dreams—she says—I'm a quartered kingdom" (56). This is one of several images that evoke the trope of the body politic, reinforcing Catherine Bernard's claim according to which Brexit has resuscitated this metaphor in British literature, with all its concomitant tropes like purity and immunity (see Bernard). This essay will explore the implications of this resuscitation in *Winter*,[2] focusing on the role of landscape, the novel's use of art objects and its intertextual conversation with Shakespeare's late romance *Cymbeline* (ca. 1610), also addressing the ways in which the reimagining of the body politic is entangled with Smith's poetic strategies. Much of my reading will be concerned with two striking instances of the irrational in the novel: a child's head floating in the air and an apparition

during Christmas dinner. I shall argue that these hallucinated objects are crucial to the way the novel revitalizes the metaphor of the body politic.

Winter is a Christmas story featuring two alienated sisters, both in their seventies, who have not met for years. The younger, Sophia Cleves is a retired businesswoman living in a large house in Cornwall, the setting for the Christmas reunion orchestrated by one of Ali Smith's mysterious heroines, the young Croatian girl Lux.[3] Lux is picked up at a bus stop by Art, Sophia's son, who was to take his girlfriend Charlotte with himself to Cornwall, finally introducing her to his mother after three years. Falling out with Charlotte just before Christmas, he hires homeless Lux to impersonate Charlotte for the sake of his mother. Upon entering the house, they find Sophia acting oddly and shivering with cold, although she is wrapped in warm clothes, and the house is overheated. It is Lux's idea to call Sophia's estranged older sister, Iris, who arrives within a few hours, bringing loads of foodstuff. Chronicling the three days of Christmas, the narrative—as is usual in Smith—is full of flashbacks and flashforwards, as well as of descriptions of works of art: paintings and other graphic art, photographs, films, and books. From the flashbacks, it is possible to reconstruct a partial history of post-1945 Britain, a history in which the cold war looms large: Iris was one of the women who set up the camp of anti-nuclear protesters in 1981 outside the Greenham Common airbase. The novel evokes this specific historical crisis within the post-Brexit referendum context of the contrast between English isolationism and a more cosmopolitan view of Englishness. It is obvious that Sophia voted leave, while Iris, who has recently returned from Greece where she was working with refugees, is an ardent remainer. This contrast plays a key role in the way *Winter* conceives of the metaphor of the body politic.

A slab of landscape

Right in the middle of a far from cozy Christmas Day dinner, Art Cleves notices a chunk of Cornwall coastline floating above the dining table.

> The room darkens. The room fills, or Art's nose does, with a smell of plantlife, the smell of greenness you get when you snap the stem of something living. . . .
>
> He looks up.
>
> A foot and a half above all their heads, floating, precarious, suspended by nothing, a piece of rock or a slab of landscape roughly the size of a small car or a grand piano is hanging there in the air. . . .
>
> The underside of it is the colour that happens when black meets green. (215–16)

While this apparition is not a landscape in any traditional sense, the phrase "slab of landscape" is used advisedly, in line with the quartet's treatment of space. The fact that it is not seen by anyone else in the room suggests that the hallucination is tailor-made for Art, who is writing what he calls a nature blog called "Art in Nature." Later in the novel, we are shown a sample entry, a self-indulgent piece on puddles in the most hackneyed and watered-down Wordsworthian tradition (183–86), and Art admits to Lux that he had not even taken the trouble to visit any puddles before writing about them. The apparition, then, is most obviously seen as an intrusion of the Real, fate's revenge for the spuriousness of Art's "love of nature." This is reinforced by the fact that the phenomenon is immediately preceded by the only landscape description in *Winter*, a wishful fantasy Art indulges in during the dinner.

> He wants real winter where woods are sheathed in snow, trees emphatic with its white, their bareness shining and enhanced because of it, the ground underfoot snow-covered as if with frozen feathers or shredded cloud but streaked with gold through the trees from low winter sun, and at the end of the barely discernible track, along the dip in the snow that indicates a muffled path between the trees, the view and the woods opening to a light that's itself untrodden, never been blemished, wide like an expanse of snow-sea, above it more snow promised, waiting its time in the blank of the sky. (214–15)

This passage—like Art's puddle piece—is not a mental representation of anything in the novel, not least because snow remains a conspicuous absence in this Christmas narrative. This highly polished, very literary—or painterly—passage, something that would not be out of place in Art's blog, could in fact be an ekphrasis of the Hockney painting on the novel's cover. Landscape descriptions are rare and far between in the "Seasonal Quartet" anyway: although deeply concerned—to borrow W. J. T. Mitchell's words—not just with "what landscape 'is' or 'means' but [also with] what it does, how it works as a cultural practice" (1), Smith seems to be wary of such set pieces. Yet, landscape is an important term in her exploration of the mapping of mental spaces upon actual spaces, due to her awareness of the role the heavily ideological notion of the English landscape has played in the figuration of the body politic. As Stephen Daniels puts it, "the very idea of [English] landscape, its aesthetic integration of people and environment, offered an antidote to the fragmentation and alienation so often seen as uniquely modernist" (16). In the same vein, Simon Pugh notes that, recently, landscape has stood as "a

surrogate for more politicized notions of nationhood," a displaced expression of sentiments of attachment which are denied expression elsewhere (1).

Smith's interest in landscape, however, has other, aesthetic aspects, too, due to what one might call the paradoxical rhetoric of landscape. Usually providing the solid background against which English identity is figured, landscape itself has frequently served to figure this identity. An obvious example is the paean to the English landscape formulated by Mr. Stephens, the butler narrator of Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* (1989):

> The English landscape at its finest possesses a quality that the landscapes of other nations, however more superficially dramatic, inevitably fail to possess. It is, I believe, a quality that will mark out the English landscape to any objective observer as the most deeply satisfying in the world, and this quality is probably best summed up by the term "greatness" . . . it is the very lack of obvious drama or spectacle that sets the beauty of our land apart. What is pertinent is the calmness of that beauty, its sense of restraint. It is as if the land knows of its own beauty, of its own greatness, and feels no need to shout it. (28)

What this passage, which is of particular interest for Smith, exemplifies is what David Matless calls "the relational hybridity of the term" (12), which makes landscape a perfect example of Bruno Latour's "quasi-object," "impossible to place on either side of a dualism of nature and culture, shuttling between fields of reference" (12). "Quasi-objects are entities that we perceive . . . as objects, as given things," but they exist in ways that cannot be grasped in terms of the basic dichotomies of modern Western thought (subject/object, mind/matter, and so forth): "what they are depends on what has happened to them, on the various translations that they have become involved in" (de Vries 134). Accordingly, landscape is "already both natural and cultural, deep and superficial" (Matless 12). It "naturalizes a cultural and social construction, representing an artificial world as if it were simply given and inevitable, and it also makes that representation operational by interpellating its beholder in some more or less determinate relation to its givenness as sight and site" (2). Landscape, then, is crucial to Smith's aesthetics and politics not only because of its ideological burden, but also because it is both figure and ground, a perfect fit for Smith's textual strategies.

Smith's aesthetics of landscape, encapsulated by the floating chunk, is in tune with the rethinking of landscape in British painting as well as in theory—a rethinking that was a reaction to the manifold crisis of traditional landscape. As the rendering of landscapes suffused with symbolic meaning

was becoming fraught with difficulties, painters were faced with "the growing inability to transfigure the world convincingly even in imaginative illusion" (Fuller 26). With the hollowing out of symbolic meanings and the loss of any clear criteria for choosing one bit of earth rather than another, the representation of landscape "collapsed into topography, on the one hand, and abstraction, on the other" (Fuller 26–27)—a process that is not unlike a belated dissociation of sensibility in the field of landscape. A commanding view of landscape (with all that this implies) had become increasingly difficult to maintain and conceptualize, for epistemological, political, and ecological reasons: instead of occupying a superior position that would enable the viewer to grasp the whole, we are related to the landscape through a variety of sensory ways, affects and intensities.[4] The "slab of landscape" hovering over the dinner table can be seen in terms of the representational crisis of landscape. In defiance of the painterly mode, the apparition resists integration into the dominant English tradition of pastoral landscape evoked in Art's musings. First of all, it is looming above Art rather than below him, unamenable to being surveyed. Secondly, it does not give itself to vision: anything but painterly, it is a three-dimensional, complex sensory assault on Art, anticipated by its powerful earthy smell, and rendered as predominantly tactile; even the colors are described as events rather than simple objects for observation: "the colour that happens when black meets green." Alive, vegetal, and defiantly formless, this anti-landscape refuses to lend itself to totalizing representation, to being broken down into meaningful details or to being seen in terms of structure.

The hallucination is reminiscent of some of the experimental, semi-abstract, or surrealist 1950s landscapes of Graham Sutherland (especially his *Sea Wall* series), Peter Lanyon (*St. Just*, 1953), and Alan Reynolds, with their unsettling, macabre, and violent anthropomorphic or metamorphic qualities and abstract tendencies. The analogies between Smith's text and these painters—two of them working in Cornwall—are relevant not only because of the similarities between their representational strategies, but also because, as Fiona Gaskin argues, their departure from the Neo-Romantic school of English landscape painting was informed by Cold War fears (Gaskin 127; Jolivette 31–32) not unrelated to their inability not to see landscape as something unstable and contentious rather than a timeless, stable ground reflecting and grounding the peaceful development of English culture (see Jolivette 10).[5]

Although her link with the rethinking of landscape is not immediately obvious, the ideas of the most pervasive artistic presence in *Winter*, that of

Barbara Hepworth, are deeply relevant to this aspect of the novel, as is made clear in the Hepworth quote featuring as one of the epigraphs: "Landscape directs its own images" (n. p.). Hepworth herself viewed her abstract sculptures as inspired by and related to the Cornwall landscape. "Above all—she explained—there was this sensation of moving physically over the contours of fullnesses and concavities, through hollows and over peaks—feeling, touching, seeing, through mind, hand, and eye. This sensation has never left me. I, the sculptor, am the landscape. I am the form and I am the hollow, the trust and the contour" (qtd. in Jolivette 53). Hepworth's approach to space and to her own sculpture was decidedly phenomenological, as is obvious from another remark of hers: "For a few years I became the object. I was the figure in the landscape and every sculpture contained to a greater or lesser degree the ever-changing forms and contours embodying my own response to a given position in that landscape" (qtd. in Jolivette 53–54).[6]

It is, however, not the relationship between the artist, the sculpture, and the landscape that is stressed in Smith's treatment of Hepworth's art. *Winter* introduces a generic fictional sculpture by Hepworth, simply consisting of two round stones (one featuring one of the sculptor's trademark holes), two "strikingly beautiful stones . . . meant to fit together" (251). Daniel, the owner of the sculpture, the object of Sophia's *amour fou* and Art's father, describes it as "a sort of a mother and child pairing, the child stone the little one and the larger stone the mother. The larger stone has the hole in it and a flat place on it where the smaller one is meant to sit" (272). Geometrical abstraction, however, was not what Hepworth was after. As Daniel explains—and Sophia intuits—Hepworth wanted the viewers "to want to touch what she makes . . ., to be reminded about things that are quite physical, sensory, immediate" (272).[7] The effect, which challenges the dualities of subject and object, inside and outside, is described by Alex Potts as the ability of these objects to draw the viewer into their spaces, becoming momentarily "more like architecture than sculpture" (158), echoing Merleau-Ponty, who categorically denied the standard distinction between optical appearances and tactile form (Potts 244). The role of the sculpture—or, more particularly, of the smaller stone—extends beyond the aesthetic in a way that is typical of Smith's strategy. While with its abstract perfection it embodies an ideal of consummate aesthetic achievement (as Daniel says, Hepworth "wanted a universal language" [273]), the sculpture also resonates with many personal losses and relations in the story: Sophia's uneasy relationship with her son and with motherhood, as well as her decisions not to spend the rest of her life with the love of her life, and not to tell either

Daniel or Art about their kinship. While the stone is hovering between the abstract–aesthetic, the allegorical and the phenomenological, the other Hepworth work that is present in *Winter* is even more typical of Smith's general strategy, in which the abstract is always on the verge of spilling over into the representational dimension. The work itself, a screenprint entitled *Winter Solstice* (1971),[8] is reproduced on the inside of the back cover and remains a paratextual presence, as there are no direct references to it in the text. It is a haunting image of what seems to be a blue sun hovering in a space framed by angular lines, and, like the sun in it, it is itself hovering between the representational and the abstract. The image is based on the contrast between the dissolving angularity of the framing lines and the perfect circularity of the shape in the middle, and on a color chiasmus in which the sun and the frame have swapped intensities: the blue sun radiates coldness, while the frames are not only predominantly yellow, but also distended, as if with the borrowed or displaced energy of the sun, which is stretching the frame-like structure to a bursting point. While the print is not mentioned in the text, the image itself is evoked in several ways. In a rare moment of sisterly harmony, Iris recalls one of Sophia's school projects, a model "House of the Future," on which they were working together. "I drew the sun through the summer house window" (204), she says, evoking the Hepworth print of what could be a fractured, multiplied window frame around the sun. There is, however, another Winter Solstice moment in the novel, the one in which Sophia sees the floating child's head—the metamorphosed smaller stone from the sculpture—playfully frolicking in the open window: "the head, merry in the threshold of the open window, had played a game of inside/outside with itself to the steady toll of the bell . . . closed its eyes in pleasure at the place where the outside air met the warm in the room, swinging like a pendulum, bracing itself against the wind direction when the wind blew" (106–07). This scene, with its intensities and movement, is even closer to the atmosphere of the Hepworth print, but the important point here is that the novel produces two moments that could be seen as ekphrases of Hepworth's abstract image: the plot, as it were, passes through the image, the abstract pattern becoming representational, while, in turn, an abstract beauty is allowed to shine through these contingent patterns. These scenes are crucial in terms of Smith's poetics: in both cases, the diegetic layer of the text, as it were, passes through an abstract image which becomes the representation of a specific phenomenon. On the level of technique, this resonates with the imaging of the body politic through the image of a landscape that is figure and ground at the same time.

Before moving on to this aspect of Smith's envisioning of the body politic, there is one more landscape-related feature shared by Hepworth's sculptures and *Winter*—and of the entire quartet—that needs to be addressed. One of Hepworth's trademark strategies is the application of sets of—parallel or radial—strings in her sculptures. From a phenomenological perspective, these strings "simultaneously encourage and prevent entrance in that the viewer remains aware of the sculpture as a precious and uninhabitable object" (Rachel Smith). If Hepworth's sculptures can be seen as imagings of landscape and of the body politic, the motif in Smith's quartet that corresponds to them is that of the wire fence. In the context of *Winter*, this evokes Greenham Common, which, before being appropriated for military purposes, had indeed been a common (146). The Women's Peace Camp outside the base, a formative experience in Iris's life, was established outside the wire fence, with many protesters chaining themselves to it or appropriating it for their own subversive purposes.[9] They "will be threading coloured wool and ribbon through the fencewire and across between the gates in intricate webbing, they'll be cutting holes in the perimeter fence with wirecutters and breaking into the base almost every night" (278). While breaking into the base and cutting holes into the fence are obvious acts of transgression, the colored wool and ribbons threaded into the wire amount to a political and aesthetic reappropriation of the wire, transforming it into a means of connectivity and questioning the very dichotomy of inside and outside, not unlike Hepworth's ambiguous strings.

The landscape painting which best conveys Smith's envisioning of the body politic is perhaps Eric Ravilious's prescient 1935 watercolor *Chalk Paths*, which represents one portion of the chalk chills of the South Downs with a barbed wire fence—exactly like the one around the Greenham Common air base—slicing through it. While in a compositional sense the fence seems to harmonize with the undulations of the land, it is sinister and incongruous, especially in 1935. The monochrome coloring and the toneless sky intensify the unreality of the landscape, making it look like a rural counterpart to the metaphysical townscapes of Giorgio de Chirico. Although there are no human figures, the land bears upon itself the marks of human habitation in the form of the paths made by extended use, following no recognizable geometrical pattern or design. According to Christopher Neve, Ravilious might have been looking for a "design in the landscape" (33). Having neither beginning nor end, the wire fence looks endless. Following the central path (which we presume to be older than the fence), it duplicates, but also, as it were, constrains it: the path, emerging spontaneously after decades or

centuries of land use, is now running alongside the fence. With the landscape identical on either side of the fence, there is no apparent reason for the existence of this object—it is far from obvious what it is supposed to protect or to keep out. Ravilious's fence evokes the perimeter of the Greenham Common airbase as well as the pointless electric fence erected in *Autumn*, the opening volume of Smith's quartet, apparently separating the land from itself, and, more generally, the characterization of post-referendum Britain as a land traversed and cut across by all manner of divisions and fences. The significance of fences, however, extends further. Smith's "Seasonal Quartet" is a condition of England novel that, besides chronicling contemporary events after the Brexit referendum, expands its geographical and historical scope. What is particularly noteworthy about the temporal dimensions is that Smith, adopting a thoroughly European perspective, identifies the key moment that has determined European and global history and the politics of space in World War II rather than in the Great War. (For Sophia, who grew up internalizing her father's likes and dislikes, World War II is "the War" [113]). In Smith's sequence, the political geography of the world that is taking shape is defined by camps and their perimeters, which, according to Giorgio Agamben (166–80), constitute the par excellence biopolitical space that had come to dominate twentieth-century history.

The references to visual art suggest that matters of form and aesthetics are indistinguishable from the novel's ethical and political concerns, and these entanglements are in turn inseparable from Smith's exploration of the body politic metaphor. The trademark hole in Hepworth's sculpture is another case in point—especially if placed in the context of the multitude of other holes in *Winter*. As Sophia recognizes—keeping the remark to herself, afraid that Daniel would find it pretentious, yet practically quoting a comment of Hepworth's—the effect of the hole in the larger stone is that it makes the viewer feel as if she were "seeing inside and outside something at once" (273). Like the child's head romping in the window frame, the holes in/on the sculpture make the inside/outside dichotomy problematic, evoking Merleau-Ponty's remark: "to look at an object is to inhabit it" (79). The subversive function of holes, however, is not restricted to the sphere of aesthetics. Contemplating the sculpture, Sophia remarks that "it would be good to be full of holes" (273), which immediately evokes Lux, the mysterious stranger with all her body piercings which she obediently removes in order not to scandalize Art's hidebound mother. The tiny holes suggest a porous body not unlike Hepworth's sculptures. Before her departure, Art is watching the girl reinserting the piercings: "[Lux] probed

with the silver the inner tunnels of each hole in her skin" (304). Lux, who is not sure she can legally stay on in the UK because of Brexit, is the nomad, the free-floating agent who, by her sheer presence, violates the logic of what Deleuze and Guattari call the territorialized, striated or gridded, homogeneous space of the State apparatus (223, 362, 370–73), that is, the fenced-off and fence-infested space of Brexit Britain. She embodies the strategy of the Greenham Common protesters who are cutting holes into the fence, in the spirit of what Mark Neocleous says about the body politic: "Because the body is a model which can stand for any bounded system, its boundaries tend to represent spaces which are threatened or precarious. Bodily orifices thereby come to represent points of entry or exit to social units. The general interest in the body's apertures is replicated in the preoccupation with social exits and entrances, which easily come to be seen as escape routes and invasions ("The Fate" 35).

For all the radical implications of this image, it would be an exaggeration to make claims for Ali Smith as a Deleuzian writer. While she might be said to go along with Deleuze and Guattari to the extent of following their dictum of "freeing the line" (173), she is sufficiently Modernist to celebrate the possibilities inherent in aesthetic form, or rather, forming, formation.[10] If we want a relevant visual analogy for Ali Smith's poetics, we could do worse than recall the work of Paul Klee (a key inspiration for Deleuze and Guattari as well as for Alan Reynolds) with its playful motivic repetitions, patterns, rhythms, and chromatic gradations. Form, pattern, and order in Smith are fragile and evanescent, always liable to dissolve and morph into something else—like those precarious moments of harmony between the four characters during the Christmas holiday. Aesthetic form, however, is not offered as a transcendence of the world's chaos. This is evident from the treatment of vegetal motifs in *Winter*, especially from the many instances of plants or parts of plants becoming ornamental patterns. Examples include the Corinthian capital on Sophia's bank card with a flourish of stony leaves (32); the "feathery fernleaf shapes ice makes on some surfaces" (53) that Art is making notes about; the metal curlicues in the design of the station windows that have Lux transfixed (69); the fleur-de-lis backdrops to the frescoes on which the human figures had been defaced, recalled by Sophia (110); and the trick picture on the cover of a *Radio Times*, in which a Christmas tree, on closer look, turns out to be a village (124). These patterns are all different (some of them are not even intentional), yet they are all alike in that they are momentary crystallizations, patternings in the constant, contingent, and directionless morphing of Smith's world, without any transcendental

meaning outside the specific situation and the fascination of the respective viewers.[11]

On the other hand, and in line with Smith's rethinking of the body politic, vegetal motifs often have a contrasting, more deterritorializing function. Besides the slab of landscape with its vegetal smell and inchoate greenness and the "lacy green growth" (29) sprouting on the floating child's head, the most prominent such motif is the recurrent one of moss. It appears in the winter fairy tale told to Art both by Sophia and Iris, in which green is defined as a winter color: "The earth is made of it. Green. Moss, algae, lichen, mould: formless, subjectless, abject life. It's the colour everything was before there were flowers, the colour of the first trees, the trees that didn't have leaves, had needles instead, the trees that grew in the first hiatus between cold and warm" (101–02). At one point, Iris claims that, rather than involving herself any longer in active political protest, now she would be "happy to be nothing but the moss that takes hold on the surfaces" of "No access" signs and on CCTV cameras "and greens itself over their words" (298).[12] Several of the disparate functions of the vegetal motif are condensed in the "print of a flower that runs across two late pages in *Cymbeline*" (315) in the folio of Shakespeare Lux has seen in Toronto.[13] While it is the ethereal beauty of the form that captivates her and, much later, Art, "the ghost of a flower not yet open on its stem" (319) is also associated with the more archetypal function of vegetation: the *folio* edition itself consists of metaphorical leaves that—like this very metaphor—are revitalized, encapsulating one of the themes of this winter tale: the story is full of metaphors of hibernation, freezing (petrification), and thawing (melting).

The floating head

The body politic, at least according to its traditional conceptions, is also a form, and, once it is caught up in Smith's aesthetic strategies, it becomes like other forms: fleeting, fragile, often paradoxical. One reason for this is that, if the novel (and the entire "Seasonal Quartet") is an attempt to envision the idea or image of a livable and viable body politic, it embarks on this enterprise from a perspective that is partly external. The formlessness of the hallucinated slab of landscape is partly the result of the fact that it is an untotalizable, synecdochic vision—a part that does not stand for the whole. Towards the end of the novel, in a flashforward to summer, Art, over somebody's shoulder, is reading an article in the metro about British people crowdfunding for a boat that would intercept a refugee boat in the Mediterranean. As he is confronted with this piece of news, for a moment,

"the coastline swings into the tube train carriage" (313). The recurrence of the apparition in this moment suggests that its fragmentary and untotalizable nature can also be attributed to the fact that it is a piece of England or Britain glimpsed from the sea—for instance, from a refugee boat: it is the only possible glimpse of England for someone who will never see the whole. Thus, the hallucination forces Art to adopt the perspective of the refugee, the migrant, the stranger, of people who are outside the body politic, broken-off fragments, discarded shards, drifting and trying, as it were, to graft themselves onto another body politic. In *Winter*, this beyond-the-pale perspective is represented by Croatian-Canadian Lux. Coming from a "war-wounded" (246) family, she has dropped out of university and is working in a factory while living as a homeless. It is she who introduces into the world of the novel Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, *Winter*'s chief intertext, a play that is similarly obsessed with images and consequences of fragmentation (another important link is the claim in *Holinshed's Chronicles* [1577–87], Shakespeare's source, that Christ was born during Cymbeline's reign [see Moffet]). This is how the play is summed up by Sophia: "a play about a kingdom subsumed in chaos, lies, powermongering, division and a great deal of poisoning and self-poisoning" (200).

Although *Cymbeline* is not even mentioned in Bernard J. Dobski and Dustin Gish's *Shakespeare and the Body Politic*, the play is clearly an exploration of the idea of the body politic, of sovereignty and leadership in the context of the end of Britain's dependency on Rome (see Hunt).[14] Careful to provide an international context for events unfolding mostly in Britain, *Cymbeline* stages two contrasting views of Britain's role. Isolationism is represented by the scheming Queen and her son, Cloten, who is particularly defiant: "Britain's a world / By itself, and we will nothing pay / For wearing our own noses" (3.1.12–14).[15] In Smith's novel, isolationism is represented by Sophia, who maintains that the bad things happening elsewhere are none of our business. The more open-minded view of Britain's position in the world, held by Iris in *Winter* (139), is voiced by Innogen in Shakespeare's play[16]:

> Hath Britain all the sun that shines? Day, night,
> Are they not but in Britain? I'th'world's volume
> Our Britain seems as of it but not in't,
> In a great pool a swan's nest. (3.4.137–40)

Cymbeline, king of Britain as well as Innogen's father, eventually opts for the latter view: his pledge to pay Rome the tribute despite his military victory is a

token of acknowledging that Britain can thrive only as part of the larger international community.

Shakespeare's play is concerned with the premodern version of the metaphor of the body politic, with the king's body standing for the state and the nation. In the prophetic riddle sent by Jupiter and deciphered by the Roman soothsayer Philharmonus, Cymbeline appears as a "stately cedar" with two branches, his two sons stolen by the banished Belarius, lopped off, but the branches are now revived (with the identities of the two sons restored), "jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow" (5.4.440–41). The relevance of the allegory, however, is not limited to the monarch—or rather, the arboreal metaphor of the body politic is supplemented by a non-metaphorical clause: the prophecy makes it clear that the fate of the nation-tree is also linked to that of the young hero, Posthumus: "then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty" (5.4.442–43). The limited relevance of the tree metaphor suggests that the country is in the midst of a political crisis where it is not simply the identity of the monarch that is at stake but the very logic of how the monarch is chosen: one type of legitimation is being supplanted by another. The king has no sons—his two abducted sons, living in the wilderness, are unaware of their royal lineage; his stepson, Cloten is clearly unfit for the throne, while orphaned Posthumus is his foster child. Thus, this crisis demands the institution of a new kind of regime and political reality, where, instead of genealogy and bloodlines, the new monarch is selected by a symbolic act of bestowing power upon him. There is another aspect of the prophecy that indicates a shift: it is only in the larger political framework that characters can become aware of their own as well as others' identity. This is crucial as the play and the novel are linked by the many impersonations (Lux is pretending to be Charlotte, whom she has never met), misrecognitions, and misprisions. *Cymbeline* is pervaded by a crisis of misrecognition: the characters, "disassociated parts of dismembered families, do not recognize each other, or themselves, are confused about their roles, their 'parts'" (Nevo 95). The unreadability of "this tableau of headless masterlessness" (Mikalachki 132) emphasizes the confusion of British national identity at a particular historical juncture, with Cymbeline under the thumb of the domineering Queen, and his sons unaware of their lineage. As Lux remarks in *Winter*, in *Cymbeline*, "everybody is pretending to be someone or something else" (200). In fact, some characters are "someone else" without any pretense, simply because they are unaware of their own origin and identity. Such figures include Cymbeline's two sons, renamed and raised by Belarius, but the dead Cloten

might also be seen in this way: his corpse, although he was wearing Posthumus's clothes in order to deceive and to add insult to injury by raping his rival's wife in his rival's usurped clothes, no longer pretends to be someone else's, yet, Innogen "misreads" the body, even claiming to recognize the shape of her beloved Posthumus's calves. In both texts, there are fathers who are not fathers—Belarius is not the biological father of his two sons, while, in the novel, the gay actor Godfrey Gable passes as Art's father (82).[17] Art does not know who his father is—Sophia says she did not want him to inherit the history of Daniel's (Jewish-German) family, ignoring the obvious fact, noted by Lux, that Art has inherited all this anyway (254).

The position of Lux the stranger is occupied in *Cymbeline* by Innogen. Lux is compared to a "broken bird" (79) by Art, while in *Cymbeline*, Innogen (that is, "Fidele," the male page impersonated by her, who is presumed dead) is metaphorized as a dead bird by Arviragus (4.2.198). Still disguised as a page and sitting beside the decapitated body she believes to be that of her husband, she identifies herself to the Roman general Caius Lucius in this way: "I am nothing" (4.2.368). Innogen is like Lux also in the sense that she is both extremely loyal and keeps shifting her identity as well as her allegiances throughout the play: she leaves Belarius and his two sons, who love her dearly, abandons the corpse she believes to be that of her husband, and is ready to betray her kind master, the Roman Lucius. Like Innogen, Lux is working for the good under false pretences, while, also like Innogen, she is many things to many characters. In the novel, where *Cymbeline* plays the role of a Christmas tale, it is Lux who tells the story of the play during the family dinner (198–99).[18] Claiming that it was the beauty of *Cymbeline* that had impelled her to come to Britain (200), she concludes her summary by saying that she intended it as a kind of exemplary tale for the occasion: in the play, people are "living in the same world but separately from each other, like their worlds have somehow become disjointed or broken off each other's worlds" (201); in the end, however, they do realize they inhabit the same world.

Although *Winter* can be read as a rewriting of *Cymbeline*, and many of its themes and motifs echo those of Shakespeare's play,[19] it is pointless to search for systematic correlations, partly because the plot of *Cymbeline* is so chaotic that no single character within the play can articulate it (Mikalachki 132): it is not just the new body politic or community that requires cooperation, but also the articulation of its (hi)story. The point is precisely that both texts are about fragmentation, disarticulation, and wholeness, using the body politic metaphor, with personal and family relations standing for the state of the nation. What links the two texts rather than any particular set of

motifs is their very heterogeneity.[20] Castigated by Samuel Johnson for its "confusion of the names and manners of different times" (Warren 41), *Cymbeline*'s mixture of incompatible characters, plots, themes, conventions, and styles has been noted by many critics (Miola 206–07). Given the entanglement of aesthetic and political preoccupations in *Winter* (just as in many other works by Smith), the political theme of Shakespeare's play is indistinguishable from the formal balance achieved between these heterogeneous elements and impulses, while this equilibrium, in a way that is once again typical of Smith, is in turn inseparable from the effect it had on a character—in this case, Lux, who was attracted to *Cymbeline* by the way a "bitter mess" becomes "a graceful thing" in it (200), suggesting that an emotional and political chaos is resolved into a harmony that is aesthetic as much as political. The vision of cosmic harmony which closes the play is evoked ironically by details like Sophia's recollection of her visit to the London Planetarium (236) and to the Pantheon in Rome (267). While in *Cymbeline* Jupiter majestically descends riding an eagle, in *Winter*, we have an image of Laika orbiting in her capsule (237). The point made by Smith is that the body politic is both an idea that informs actual acts and policies and an aesthetically comprehended form.

On the level of imagery, the key to the way both *Cymbeline* and *Winter* revise the body politic is the image of the headless, dismembered body. Ruth Nevo describes the play itself as a jigsaw puzzle whose broken-apart and mixed-up pieces—like those of its families—must be matched and put together, while, in the political plotline, the confederation of an empire and its province is disrupted. For Nevo, the image of bodily dismemberment takes this fragmentation to a phantasmagoric extreme (95). The second half of the play is dominated by the gruesome image of what Innogen calls "[t]hat headless man I thought to be my lord" (5.4.300–01); earlier, when Posthumus is deceived by the story about Innogen's infidelity, his indignation is expressed in terms that anticipate this image: "O that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal!" (2.4.147). When Innogen realizes what her husband thinks of her, she reacts with a similarly violent image: "I must be ripp'd. To pieces with me!" (3.4.53). Smith's novel similarly abounds in images of dismemberment, more particularly, of decapitation; the rhyme "dead/head" supplies a sinister rhythm or beat to the first half of the text (106, 127). In the story of a murder that goes unpunished for decades, a tale told to Sophia by her old headmaster, that is, her "old head" (40), the murder weapon is "a stone as big as a head" (40). When Charlotte throws the battery of his laptop at Art, he notes that "the thing looked like it could, at the right angle,

decapitate" (60). The MI5 agent who wants Sophia to report on Iris and her friends shows her images of dismemberment and mutilation (133), making his request more emphatic by pushing her down the stairs. Sophia has nightmares of headless torsos and decapitated sculptures (109–10). Yet, the effect of this pervasive imagery is not entirely sinister, as these dismembered and defaced bodies are "more like statements of survival than destruction. They were proof of a new state of endurance, mysterious, headless, faceless, anonymous" (110).

This is precisely the point of the other hallucinatory or surreal element in *Winter*, the child's head floating in the air that becomes Sophia's companion during the days leading up to Christmas. The head starts its existence as a par excellence phenomenological object: as an "abrasion, degeneration, detachment, floater" in Sophia's eyes (19),[21] not even looking like a head, small as a fly or as a tiny sputnik, bobbing about like a helium balloon (20). As it gradually assumes the features of a child's head, it also begins to behave like a child "joyful" (19) in its ricocheting and bouncing to and fro. It is attracted to living things, especially to plants: it enjoys floating in and out between the dusty twigs of a collection of dead orchids on the lower landing (9); it floats to the windowsill to sniff at the thyme, rubbing its forehead against it (11); in the garden, it navigates towards the leylandii cypresses (20), and brings back a holly sprig, offering it to Sophia (22). Sophia sees it as "a smudged dusty child streaked with green, a child come home covered in grass-stains, a summer child in the winter lights" (19). At this stage of its incessant metamorphosis, the head itself becomes hybrid, assuming vegetal attributes: a "lacy green growth, leafy looking, a tangle of minuscule leaves and fronds, had thickened and crisped round its nostrils and upper lip like dried nasal mucus" (28), and the same growth is sprouting out of the ears (29). Sophia is reminded of Édouard Boubat's 1947 photograph (*La petite fille aux feuilles mortes*) of a young child, standing in a park and covered in dead leaves (8).[22] She treats the head as a person, as a child, mothering it as "her very own Christmas infant" (111), letting it sleep in her bed, rest on her chest and shoulder. Most importantly, the child seems to reawaken in her the numbed ability to feel, that is, to feel for, to empathize with someone else. Contemplating the floating head, Sophia suddenly thinks of its bodilessness as the outcome of some calamity, visualizing the torso with limbs that might be wandering around looking for its head, and thinks of the tragic loss that resulted in this truncated child (29). "Now she felt pain play through her like a fine-tuned many-stringed music and her the instrument. Because how could losing so much of a self *not* hurt?" (30). This is Sophia's moment of empathy,

a crucial factor in the affective economy of Ali Smith's imagined body politic. As Catherine Bernard suggests, empathy is the key to Smith's "democratic narrativity through which radical political loss and want may at last be articulated and felt. It is the tongue of the re-affected body politic."

The alteration of the head, however, does not stop here: it begins to lose its hair, becoming increasingly like the sculpted head of a Roman statue (108). The end of the process is the moment when it becomes a perfect marble sphere (141–42). (We are not in a position to know this, yet the object in fact regains its "original" form and identity as the smaller half of the Hepworth sculpture, the sphere stolen by Sophia from Daniel and kept in a secret place, under the floorboards in her wardrobe.) Despite the presence of disturbing images of headlessness, the child's head seems to be genuinely harmless—at least, this is how Sophia apprehends is. Rather than a ghostly or terrifying severed head, it exudes some essential serenity and benignity—or, to use one of Lux's words, "bounteousness" (157). This benignity is reinforced by the cephalophore figures in the text. Sophia recalls living near a place in her childhood where "someone called Newlina's father cut her head off because she wouldn't do what he said" (174). According to the legend, Newlina—a British princess—simply picked her head up and walked away. In legends, she became a fertility figure: she could "simply stick pieces of broken branch in the ground and they'd turn into trees with fruits already on them" (175). The figurative logic of the narrative suggests that the head is not a privileged part of the body: it can be lopped off like a limb—in fact, given the pervasive vegetal metaphorics of the story, decapitation looks like the cutting back of flowers or the pollarding of trees: a beneficial mutilation in order to facilitate growth and rebirth.

In *Cymbeline*, with its premodern idea of the body politic metaphor, headlessness signifies tragedy for the individual (body) and augurs anomie for the body politic. When, in the most striking scene of the play, Innogen wakes up from the drug-induced swoon only to find herself beside a headless torso, she embraces the decapitated body and grieves over it: "O Posthumus, where is thy head?" (4.2.321).[23] Smith's novel reimagines the body politic as essentially different: the head, like other organs and body parts, is something of a moveable feast inasmuch as it keeps changing both its place and its form. If a new body politic is conceivable or imaginable at all, it has to be radically different from the hierarchical body politic of premodern and early modern political theory. *Winter*'s use of the motif suggests an aversion to the idea of the organic, homogeneous, and impregnable body politic that lends itself easily to ideologies of purity, exclusion, and cleansing—the idea or image of

the English landscape has been put to use as a milder form of the trope, both figuring and grounding it. The political resonances of the image of the decapitated but joyful body evoke John Protevi's Deleuzian critique of what, following Gilbert Simondon, he calls hylomorphism, "the doctrine that production is the result of an (architectural) imposition of a transcendent form on a chaotic and/or passive matter" (8). From a non-hylomorphic position, "form must be seen as suggested by the matter rather than as the pure product of the mind of the architect. In other words, forms are not pure but already laden with 'variable intensive affects' and thus tied to 'material traits of expression', that is, actual properties linked with virtual potentials or singularities suggesting ways of working with and transforming the material" (7). In a non-hylomorphic conception of bodies politic, "changes in a field are attributed to changes in the arrangement of its immanent elements" (8) rather than to a superior, designing mind or, as it were, head. The political import of this theoretical metaphor is spelt out by Simon Critchley, paraphrasing Claude Lefort and Georges Bataille: "Democracy entails a disincorporation of the body politic, which begins with a literal or metaphorical act of decapitation. . . . In Bataille's terms, democracy is the headless community of *Acéphale*" (80).[24] While *Winter*'s proliferation of headless figures might indeed recall Georges Bataille's transgressive imaginary figure of the Acéphale (Headless), Smith's treatment of headlessness lacks the ponderous solemnity of Bataille. Yet, it might be claimed that her alternative body politic is a body without organs—that is, a body in which the constituent parts are not fully defined by their function in the organism or machinery of the state (for similarly radical but different models, see Protevi or Alphonso Lingis). Nor are these parts stable in the sense of having fixed identities. They keep changing—like the floating head—but this change is not so much metamorphosis, with its implications of a set destination and a trajectory, as an alteration: a more tentative and always unfinished process, like the "joyful" (19), bouncing, tentative, and directionless movement of the child's head. The alterations are the result of interactions with other entities. In this sense, the child's head—or the spherical stone which it seems to be—is as important an element of the community as any of the characters, among whom "the stranger, Lux" (153) is an ideal member or 'organ' of the new body politic. She is both a figure of autonomy and a figure of care, always acting upon the needs of whoever is most needful and attending to these immediate needs. This is clear from the scene of their arrival in the house. Finding his mother nearly catatonic and shivering in her warm clothes, Art wants to call a doctor, while Lux

immediately removes the heavy clothes and tries to soothe Sophia (84). It is due to the influence of Lux—and of the head—that the house is allowed to become, if only for a few Christmas days, something like an intimation of the body politic envisioned by Smith: the house, itself both a head and a body—its Cornish name, Chei Bres, means "House of the mind, of the head, of the psyche" (270)—that welcomes broken people, heterogeneous fragments and halves.

This is also where the Nativity story becomes relevant—a story that is told, however falteringly, by Sophia to the child's head (107). One distinctive feature of Smith's texts is their tendency to open up towards the archetypal, the mythical, and the metaphysical. Although, as we have seen, this opening up is questioned and partially revoked in the case of vegetal symbols, other motifs consistently evoke archetypal, archaic, even sacred resonances: storytelling and hospitality are prominent among them. According to Dominic Head, Smith's "central conceit" is "the guest who outstays his welcome" (103), the outsider "capable of puncturing the bubble of selfish privilege" (102). In *Winter*, given the context provided by the body politic and the Christmas setting, there is more to this motif. The Nativity story is relevant mainly because it is about the holiness of hospitality, of homemaking.[25] When Art and Lux arrive, Sophia, who seems unaware of any Christmas arrangement, says that they will have to sleep in the barn (85). Lux does settle into the barn, arousing evocations of the Biblical manger by her mere presence, while Art and Iris occupy the uninhabited, unfurnished rooms upstairs: they are all trying to create a makeshift shelter, a home from the materials that are at hand. The gesture of bearing gifts is part of this archetypal opening up: Iris arrives loaded with a cornucopia of vegetables and comes in last carrying a tree in a pot, "an ordinary little tree with no leaves" but covered with fluff not unlike that growing on the child's head; her "star magnolia" (156) is a vegetal or arboreal version of the star of Bethlehem. The playful climax of this archetypal expansion is the arrival of the busload of birdwatchers in search of a wandering warbler, a hoax invented by Charlotte in order to discredit Art's nature blog. The birdwatchers, unexpectedly, are all made to feel welcome by Sophia as well as the others: they are given food and drink, as well as free use of Sophia's otherwise sacrosanct laptop. They are like the three magi, flocking here because they have heard of a wondrous event (a first British sighting of a Canada warbler) and wishing to be part of this miracle that is no less wondrous for being secular.

This aspect of the novel also brings us back to the issue of aesthetic form—and the limits of the power of the aesthetic. Sophia's house has "many

rooms" (153), as many, perhaps, as Henry James's house of fiction has windows (James 45). To Art, for instance, the rooms seem to be innumerable (153). Thus, there is an internal infinity within the house, a diversity within its restricted space. If Chei Bres is a utopian body politic, it is also the house of fiction, of art—in the sense that the kind of beauty and harmony attainable within it is limited by the relevance of art. The aesthetic nature of the fragile equilibrium is indicated by the intimation of an overarching allegorical framework in the novel, one suggested by the names of the two sisters (in fact, of the four main characters). Sophia with her rationality might be said to stand for Logos, while Iris, who is routinely called a "mythologiser" by her sister (155), is a figure of Mythos, who, upon her arrival in Chei Bres, is seen by Art as "a myth of the bounteous world" (155). Art was raised by the two of them (the circumstances are not entirely clear), while Lux is necessary for the reconciliation of the two principles. The name "Iris" (she is Juno's handmaiden and messenger as well as a rainbow figure) does not simply evoke mythology: in her cameo appearance in the "Alcyone and Ceyx" episode of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book XI, Iris also embodies the faculty of imagination and fiction-making. King Ceyx sets out on a sea voyage despite the premonitions of his loving wife, Alcyone, and is killed in a sea storm, but his wife is hoping against hope that he will return. Taking pity on Alcyone, who is stuck between hope and grief, Juno commands Iris to go to the palace of Somnus and tell the god of dreams to send Alcyone a dream that will show her what happened to her husband. Thus, it is a false vision, a mirage that shows Alcyone the truth about her husband and sets off the process that will lead to the miraculous reunion of the couple in a metamorphosed form. In *Winter*, both Sophia and Art suffer from what Sophia calls "Iris nightmares" (240, 243), induced by her tales of nuclear holocaust, ecological tragedy, and the fate of Laika. Iris, the mythologist is, however, not enough to create the utopian body politic that is also an aesthetic form. Just like her mythological counterpart, she is only a messenger and not the source of the healing fiction.

Harmony is possible only in art, as in that of the two pieces that make up the Hepworth sculpture (251).[26] Contemplating the sculpture in Daniel's flat, Sophia recalls the famous anecdote about the drawing of a circle being the most perfect work of art. Learning that the artist in the story is Giotto, Sophia thanks Daniel "for making the story real, about a real person, not just a myth. It's a story I have known since I was little. I didn't know it was true" (274). Remarking that the story is probably apocryphal, Daniel adds: "We are all apocrypha" (274). That is, we are all stories left out of the definitive holy book—and therefore the factuality of stories does not matter so much. The

dichotomy between Mythos and Logos (Iris and Sophia) is subverted: what matters is the effect a story has on the listener. Like the Christmas story that, at one point, had been told to Art both by Sophia and by Iris, only for these distinct occasions to merge in his mind. Or like the fake tweet sent out by spiteful Charlotte from Art's account. It is not simply that the tweet fills thousands of birdwatchers with hope, but that the birdwatchers—the Christmas guests, the chasers of the Bethlehem star themselves who, through their willingness to give credit to the unlikely story, bring about the secular miracle, the gift of the good news: news of actual sightings of Canada warblers all over Britain.

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Notes

1 While *Winter* is linked to the other volumes of the tetralogy in multiple ways, both on the level of the plot and on that of motifs, a close reading of the entire sequence would be beyond the scope of this essay.

2 Smith's Scottishness plays a less prominent role in this text than in *Spring*.

3 Similar figures include Amber in *The Accidental* (2005) and the young girl called Florence in *Spring*—although in Smith's fiction any character can play a similarly and serendipitously liberating and self-revealing role for anyone else.

4 Smith's strategy is akin to those adopted by the new ecologically guided landscape poetry and New Nature Writing, and by ecocriticism.

5 It is especially the paintings of Alan Reynolds that offer instructive analogies to Smith's strategies. Initially celebrated as a Neo-Romantic landscape artist in the spirit of the English pastoral, but increasingly influenced by Klee's semi-abstract landscapes, Reynolds frequently adopts an unusual, ground-level perspective, with a meticulously detailed close-

up of a plant in the foreground, while other landscape details are stylized (139), which lends his works a surreal, faerie lightness of touch as well as constructivist effect (Gaskin 138–39).

6 For a phenomenological reading of Hepworth's art that reckons with the centrality of landscape, see Rachel Smith. See also Potts (213–34).

7 "The ways in which Hepworth was photographed with her sculptures indicate how she imagined the physical relationship between her works and the human figure. In most photographs where Hepworth posed with her works, she looks directly into them, makes physical contact with their inner forms or frames herself within their shapes" (Rachel Smith). As Smith notes, Hepworth was delighted to see the traces of visitors' touches on her works.

8 Hepworth made several, more or less different versions of this image over the years, some of them also featuring her trademark strings.

9 Set up in 1981 in protest against nuclear weapons, the camp existed until 2000. The base itself closed down at the end of the Cold War, its site a public parkland since 1997.

10 The ribbons and pieces of wool threaded into the wire are "lines of flight" that, rather than connecting two points, subvert the gridding (the garlands, the human chain, and so forth). On the textual level, puns might be claimed to play a similar role: they hijack the text, suddenly veering it off its track, creating loops and flourishes on the basis of acoustic coincidence.

11 Trees, like so many other motifs, also have an archetypal aspect in Smith, as exemplified by the small potted magnolia tree, Iris's gift when she arrives (156).

12 This passage also indicates that, while Smith has often been analyzed as an Ovidian writer and she herself has reinforced this impression (see Ranger 397–99), the metamorphic nature of her texts has as much, if not more, to do with Deleuzian becoming and Surrealist alteration as with Ovidian metamorphosis. The only properly Ovidian metamorphosis of the novel occurs in Art's nightmare, when, chased by giant flowers, he tries to escape by transforming into one of the prostrate stone figures above the tombs in a church (151–52). This scene is Ovidian both in terms of the excess of emotion that translates or transmutes into physical metamorphosis and in terms of its finality. There are also traces of the story of Daphne, a pervasive presence in *Autumn*. In the scene when she first meets Daniel, sitting on the circular bench around a giant tree, Sophia "can feel the ridges in its bark through her coat" (260). While this echoes the Ovidian text—"her tender bosom / was wrapped in thin smooth bark" (I.551–52)—and could in fact be the beginning of a metamorphosis, this is not the case: Sophia does not change. For an Ovidian reading of the *Quartet*, see Orosz-Réti.

13 Perhaps one more scene can be added to this list: when, during her eye test, Sophia is astonished and touched to see "the branchwork in her own blood vessels" (15).

14 Written in the period when England was transforming from a postcolonial nation to an empire state (Maley 31), *Cymbeline* has since been read as "a dramatic endorsement of the Roman roots of Britishness" (Maley 33) and as a play that aims to explore the complexities of early modern attempts to recover English national origins (Mikalachki 118).

15 The same view is expressed in the Queen's defiant celebration of Britain (3.1.18–22), which echoes Voadicea's speech in Holinshed (Warren 39).

16 I follow Roger Warren's OUP edition in the spelling of the characters' names.

17 *Winter* makes the connection with the Nativity story, referring to Joseph as the "father not a father" (107).

18 Among the others, it is Sophia who seems to be familiar with it: she quotes the dirge that reappears as a leitmotif in *Mrs Dalloway* (200).

19 One important motif linking the two texts is that of poison. In the novel, it is associated with ecological disasters (as in Jeanette Winterson's 1989 *Sexing the Cherry*, another novel that connects the contemporary and the early modern world), and with the gas used against demonstrators, that is, with systematic violence—including what Rob Nixon calls slow violence.

20 Lux's figure also evokes Posthumus Leonatus. Her hallucination at the age of seventeen, when, walking in Toronto, she suddenly feels the weight of all her ancestors upon her shoulders (287), is comparable to Posthumus's dream vision of his dead father and brothers (5.3.124–86).

21 That the vision is not unrelated to her sister is suggested by one of the questions she comes across when she is trying to find out what is wrong with her: "Do You Have a Spot on Your Iris?" (13).

22 The head is frequently apprehended through the filter of art (which is not surprising, given its provenance). When it settles next to the fruitbowl, this makes the table look like an art joke, an installation or a painting by Magritte, Dalí, De Chirico, Duchamp, and Cézanne (11).

23 The absence of a head on the body politic is also something to be remedied in *Titus Andronicus*, where Titus is called upon by Marcus to "help to set a head on headless Rome" (1.1.186).

24 Bataille's writings that expound the idea (see especially "The Sacred Conspiracy") are to be found in his *Visions of Excess*.

25 Home and homemaking are sustained metaphors throughout. When, for instance, Iris is telling Sophia about the refugees in Greece, she emphasizes how you need "experience in how to put together out of nothing a place for people to live in or sleep" (232).

26 In *Summer*, the stolen sphere is finally returned to Daniel by Art (who is his son, even though neither of the two are aware of this). Daniel is connected to many characters of the quartet in ways that are far from apparent to the characters themselves, including Daniel himself.

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Open Wounds and Physical Divisions: Pre-Brexit Visions of a Divided Kingdom

Wolfgang Funk

ABSTRACT

This article frames Brexit as the consequence of social and demographic fissures running through the United Kingdom, thereby arguing that Britain's exit from the European Union is symptomatic of a specifically English rather than British crisis of national identification. It shows how such internal faultlines within the UK's society intersect with the evocation and employment of various kinds of border imagery and border discourses in the run-up to the Brexit Referendum in 2016. For the main part of the analysis, the article sets out to broaden the by now well-established genre of "BrexLit" (Shaw, Everitt) by focusing on what could be called "Pre-BrexLit," that is, novels written well before Brexit became a term, let alone political reality. By way of three exemplary texts—Julian Barnes's *England, England* (1998), Tony Saint's *Refusal Shoes* (2003), and Rupert Thomson's *Divided Kingdom* (2005)—the analysis retraces how literary accounts of how to establish, maintain and control borders—both real and metaphorical, mental and physical, external and internal—prefigure some of the divisive issues around which the Brexit struggle would revolve, while at the same time avoiding the necessarily contentious and biased labels attached to post-fact Brexit literature. (WF)

KEYWORDS: borders, Pre-BrexLit, English national identity, Julian Barnes, Rupert Thomson, Tony Saint

Introduction: the trauma of Brexit

In April 2019, Anish Kapoor published his own reflections on Britain's exit from the European Union. Titled "A Brexit, A Broxit, We All Fall Down," the image which Kapoor created for *The Guardian* (3 July 2019), shows an aerial view of the British Isles and Ireland marked by a gouging and festering wound that cuts across Great Britain from the South East to the North West. While the artist himself has refused to offer any further comment on his work, preferring to literally leave it gaping back at us, *The Guardian*'s art critic Jonathan Jones observes how Kapoor's work has, in "an attempt to psychoanalyse the British, . . . captured our morbid obsession with the futile

chasm of Brexit, the perverse character of a nation that wants, in some sad corner of itself, to be back in the trenches" (2019).[1]

In order to provide a preliminary contextualization of my investigation of borders in pre-Brexit literature, I shall highlight three aspects in particular with regard to Kapoor's image. Most obviously, the United Kingdom depicted by Kapoor is anything but united, as the defining feature of the picture consists of a gash running right down the middle of the country, a raw and gory "trench of blood" which suggests little hope of healing anytime soon (Jones). Secondly, this dreadful cut has utterly reshaped the geography of the island as we have known it, most obviously by introducing a seemingly insurmountable barrier between the east and west of the country. Brexit, Kapoor implies, not only exposes what Jones calls the "bottomless void at the heart of Britain," but also the literal faultlines and divisions within this now riven island. And thirdly, on closer inspection one could assume that this horrible slash, which stretches roughly from the South Downs to the Forth of Clyde, seems to be an English rather than a British affliction, with Wales, Northern Ireland and (large parts of) Scotland remaining relatively unscathed.

With regard to the border imagery with which this essay will engage, one could thus argue that Brexit was not mainly concerned with solidifying and consolidating the demarcation line between the UK and the EU; it can also, to a greater degree, be ascribed to an English desire and compulsion to explain, define, and justify itself as a nation. Kristian Shaw observes, for example, that "Brexit is . . . often referred to as an English revolt or English nationalist movement, dominating the overriding perception of a Eurosceptic Britain" (59), while Dulcie Everitt notes that since the referendum, "a seismic shift has occurred towards a collective effort and desire to (re)discover the meaning of Englishness among those who consider themselves as part of the national group" (1). Fintan O'Toole likewise makes a powerful case for this view on Brexit as resulting from a particularly English identity crisis, an argument he supports by way of this rather astonishing statistic:

> When Scots and Welsh were asked to identity [sic] which layer of government had most influence over their lives, just 8 per cent and 7 per cent respectively cited the EU. This was very much typical of responses in regions throughout Europe from Bavaria to Brittany. The great exception was England, where 31 per cent of people cited the EU as the most influential layer of government . . . (190)

The presumed necessity to cut the UK off from the EU is, in O'Toole's reading, akin to a Freudian displacement activity, based on the failure to come to terms and define a proper English identity. "Unable to name the 'us' of England," O'Toole contends, "it was offered the chance to name the 'them' of the EU (and implicitly the real and imagined migrants that somehow embodied it) and took it" (191–92). Thus, eventually, the promise of cutting itself loose from the EU is "at heart, a liberation, not from Europe, but from the torment of an eternally unresolved conflict between superiority and inferiority" (8).

While Jones concludes that Kapoor's artwork depicts Brexit as an apocalyptic "trench . . . where meaning ends and reality dissolves," this essay will attempt to shed light on at least some aspects of the divisions and ruptures emergent inside the United Kingdom, divisions which have arguably not been engendered by Brexit but which the lacerating and, on occasion, even bloody disputes around it (forever linked, for instance, to the murder of Jo Cox MP) have made obvious. Taking my cue from Kapoor, I will frame Brexit as a topological engagement with fissures in and through the once United Kingdom, as a reshaping of the contours of, in this case, a specifically English rather than British national identity and geography. In this context, I will also show how the establishment of internal boundaries within the UK, which Kapoor depicts as Brexit's traumatic legacy, intersects with the evocation of various kinds of borders and border discourses in the run-up to the Brexit Referendum in 2016, with the result that Brexit has often been envisaged as a political manifestation of the hitherto concealed faultlines of English national identification. For the main part of my analysis, I will broaden the by-now well-established genre of "BrexLit" by focusing on what I suggest calling "Pre-BrexLit"—novels written well before Brexit became a term, let alone political reality.[2] By way of three texts—Julian Barnes's *England, England* (1998), Tony Saint's *Refusal Shoes* (2003), and Rupert Thomson's *Divided Kingdom* (2005)—I will show how literary accounts of establishing, maintaining, and controlling borders—both real and metaphorical, mental and physical, external and internal—prefigure, and as such contribute to historizing and contextualizing some of the divisive and trenchant issues (see Kapoor and Jones) around which the Brexit struggle would revolve. At the same time, however, this focus on BrexLit novels *avant la lettre* also constitutes an appropriate procedure precisely because these literary representations elude the influence of a standardized nexus between borders and Brexit. The novels under investigation potentially offer a new perspective on the underlying causes and preconditions behind Brexit.

What a difference four years make!—London 2012, Brexit and the borderlines of English identity

Both scholarly and literary narratives of Brexit often use the opening ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics as their starting point. Jonathan Coe's *Middle England* (2018), which has frequently been described as *the* state-of-the-(post-Brexit-)nation novel chronicling the political upheaval before and after the Brexit referendum in parallel with the life of protagonist Benjamin Trotter's extended family and circle of friends, thereby providing a particularly pertinent example in this regard. Watching the ceremony is one of the few moments in the novel which inspires a feeling of communality and shared delight, prompting even Doug, Benjamin's friend of yore and political pundit, to admit that "at this moment he felt proud, proud to be British, proud to be part of a nation which had not only achieved such great things but could celebrate them with such confidence and irony and lack of self-importance" (Coe 132). This sentiment of being simultaneously proud of the nation's achievements and ironically undermining this very pride, has by and large been mirrored by political, academic, and cultural critics. *The New York Times*'s reviewer Sarah Lyall was blown away by what she describes as a "slightly insane portrait of a nation" and specifically by how, with "its hilariously quirky Olympic opening ceremony . . ., Britain presented itself to the world . . . as something it has often struggled to express even to itself: a nation secure in its own post-empire identity, whatever that actually is."

At least partly, the almost universal appeal of the ceremony to its contemporary audience is, I would argue, due to the fact that Danny Boyle, Frank Cottrell-Boyce, and the creative team behind the event managed to suspend the notion of national identity as a grand narrative, as a historical pageant of the great and good, opting instead for what Catherine Baker refers to as "a 'mosaic' mode of representing the nation, which presents the nation as the sum of multiple and divergent personal biographies" (412). This triumphant exhibition of unity in and resulting from individuality and diversity—focusing on London, but very much intended to encompass the country as a whole—was the acknowledged objective of the event, as the ceremony's media guide unabashedly confirms: "This evening's ceremony celebrates the best of London's past, present and future. After centuries as a global centre for culture and commerce, London enjoys a diversity unrivalled anywhere in the world" (*Media Guide* 2012, 7).

In one dominant reading, the story of Brexit is being told as tracing a tragic trajectory from the halcyon days of inclusiveness, hilarity, and cheeky

self-deprecation of London 2012 to the bitter antagonism, vindictiveness, and utter lack of self-irony which came to surround both the referendum and the implementation of Brexit only four years down the road. Adopting Lyall's assessment of the opening ceremony, we can ask whether the opening ceremony was indeed so expressive of a confident national identity after all and if so, what was it exactly that happened in these years, which destroyed the nation's security "in its post-empire identity," eventually leading to the gaping wound which Kapoor so poignantly depicted.[3] This question has baffled, and continues to baffle, many critics, probably none more so than Frank Cottrell-Boyce, who had written the script for the ceremony and who—in a rousing article for *The Guardian*—recounts how, following the ceremony, "strangers would clasp my hand, stare into my eyes and thank me for helping them feel proud to be British, even for helping them to feel British at all." By painting "a portrait of a progressive, inclusive, innovative, funny nation stuffing an astonishing heritage into its backpack as it strode into a brilliant future," he claims, the ceremony "didn't depict a nation, it revealed it. It didn't describe Britain, it WAS Britain." Reading the subsequent "divisive orgy of fear and loathing that was the referendum campaign" as "a kind of anti-opening ceremony," Cottrell-Boyce ends his own account of the narrative arc from 2012 to 2016 with a serious and balanced inquiry into the potential reasons for this, on the whole lamentable, development. "The nation we saw in the opening ceremony and the nation we saw in the referendum are both real," he soberly notes. "One holds out the possibility of inclusion and ease. The other might be seen as a kind of scream of pain and fury that tells us how it feels to be excluded from that ease. We need to listen to both." Still, one could appropriate and slightly reverse Cottrell-Boyce's learning curve by asking whether the implosion of the self-image of Britain in all its post-imperial, diversified, inclusive, and self-mocking glory really was all that unexpected and unforeseeable if there really were, so to speak, no ominous signs on the wall.

Before retracing and maybe deciphering a few of these omens in the selected pre-Brexit novels, the question how and why borders and walls feature so prominently in the Brexit imaginary should be addressed. The most obvious case in point here is John Lanchester's novel *The Wall* (2019), which arguably represents the quintessential post-Brexit text to employ the metaphor of border control and threatened invasion,[4] with early BrexLit texts such as Ali Smith's *Autumn* (2016) and Zadie Smith's "Fences: A Brexit Diary" (2016) also frequently discussed in this context. In her attempt to map out the metaphorical potential of specifically geographical lines of

demarcation for defining (also a term with etymological roots in spatial differentiation) national structures of feeling after Brexit, Kirsten Sandrock highlights how "Brexit invites closer attention to the long history of hegemonic spatial politics that have shaped the nation" (142), arguing further that "borders exist everywhere where people of different geographical, cultural, or ideological backgrounds come together, and where this meeting leads to a clash of worldviews" (141). Coe's *Middle England* provides a literary illustration of this perspective when it notes how the citizens of the UK "might be living cheek-by-jowl in the same country, but they also lived in different universes, and these universes were separated by a wall, infinitely high, impermeable, a wall built out of fear and suspicion and even—perhaps—a little bit of those most English of all qualities, shame and embarrassment" (90).

Following Sandrock, I suggest that Brexit should be envisaged as "a semiotic space where border thinking can arise" (147). Let me pinpoint the most significant aspects of this form of "border thinking," which I would propose to call the "standard model of Brexit and borders": this model typically involves two separate but closely related arguments which pertain respectively to the dual purpose a border traditionally serves: first, it helps to keep different groups of people apart from one another, and secondly, it helps to deny certain groups or individuals access to the space within. The prerogative of how, and to what aims, to apply this model can be seen as more than just an academic exercise. Tim Oliver claims that Brexit, on the one hand, confronted "the UK with a series of questions and debates about its identity, society, political economy, trade, security, international position, constitution, legal system, sovereignty, unity, party politics and the attitudes and values that define it" (1), while, at the same time, also with the "lack [of] a clear narrative, making the fight to define that narrative the defining issue of UK politics" (101). If we accept this, then the discursive depiction of borders, which draws attention to and contends or reinforces various formations and mechanisms of internal and external exclusion, plays an important part in determining this narrative of Brexit.

Walls function to keep people apart, and walls and fences in the context of Brexit recurringly function as signs of a variety of internal rifts, along the lines of age, education, income, place of residence, among others, which the result of the Brexit Referendum has presumably helped to throw into sharper relief, and which David Goodhart has famously summarized as "two tribes," which he labels "Anywheres and Somewheres" with "Anywheres making up 20 to 25 per cent of the population, compared to

around half for Somewheres (and the rest Inbetweeners)" (4). More precisely, Goodhart claims that Brexit has contributed to a shift in demographic allocation, from the traditional socio-economic categories toward more lifestyle-oriented forms: "The old distinctions of class and economic interest have not disappeared but are increasingly over-laid by a larger and looser one—between the people who see the world from Anywhere and the people who see it from Somewhere" (3). And, of course, there is an abundance of statistics and diagrams which bear out this apparently "central divide in British society" (19), which Oliver summarizes succinctly, but with a certain lack of differentiation, by stating that "the average Leave voter left school before the age of 17, was above the age of 44, had few if any educational qualifications, worked in a less-secure, low-income job, lived in an area that had not seen high levels of immigration, identified themselves strongly as English and held an authoritarian-leaning political outlook" (84–85). Bearing in mind the assumption that Brexit is, by and large, the result of a psycho-pathological failure of England to properly define itself (see O'Toole and Shaw above) and in view of the etymological root of the word "define" in Latin *fines*, meaning border, it should come as no surprise that the symbolic representation of borders, and their physical manifestations as walls, fences, and other demarcation lines, has by now been established as one of the axiomatic characteristics of any analysis of BrexLit.

This "border thinking" gains additional dimensions when we turn to the second function that borders conventionally serve in the standard model. They serve to symbolize one of the central political issues underlying the Brexit campaigns, that of British sovereignty, in particular the kind of sovereignty which is epitomized by "taking control" of one's own external borders and so being able to decide who, and under which circumstances, is allowed to cross the (national) border. O'Toole again provides a helpful context to this when he analyzes how the rhetoric and image of a threatened "invasion" was being employed in the run-up to the Referendum, most fiendishly so in the UK Independent Party's infamous "Breaking Point" campaign. In tune with his underlying interpretation of Brexit, O'Toole asserts that the idea of invasion serves as "a structure of feeling that unites the two great neuroses—encompassing the unfinished psychic business of *both* the Second World War *and* the end of Empire." Seen in this light, "invasion," as a metaphor for the forceful and hostile penetration of one's own national borders, "does crucial work for Brexit: it fuses the war, the end of Empire, immigration and the EU into a single image" (92).[5] The presumed threat to both the impenetrability of national borders and the integrity of

national identity inherent in the notion of invasion can therefore be seen as one more indicator for the tenuous and painstaking attempt to define what it means to be English, or, as Everitt puts it: "Once again, the overlap between a declining Empire and the lack of a cohesive English identity leads to an almost desperate and morally void quest to unify the nation" (25).

Re-arranging Britain: Renegotiating borders in literature before Brexit

In order to investigate how literature has reflected this "void quest to unify the nation," let me now turn to novels written well before Brexit became an issue, but which still, to varying degrees, prefigure some of the notions and political consequences of Brexit, and which I would, following Everitt, tentatively propose to classify as "Pre-BrexLit" (63–112). It is arguably still too early to establish any clear-cut formal or thematic categories or classifications for this vast and potentially undeterminable body of works. One uniting feature, however, is that these texts, as Everitt argues, "provide vital insight into how Englishness is portrayed in literary texts in the two decades leading up to the Brexit referendum" (64) and thus, these texts also potentially offer a more unreconstructed view of the underlying causes and preconditions of the Brexit border imagery and thereby challenge some of the assumptions about the role and significance of borders—real as well as imaginary—in the post-referendum debates around Brexit.

The quintessences of a nation: Julian Barnes's *England, England*

The connections to Brexit with regard to Julian Barnes's *England, England* seem to be quite tenuous at first glance, but I still agree with Shaw, who argues that it "provides a frighteningly accurate foreshadowing of the post-Brexit fallout" (69). Everitt likewise points out the significance of Barnes's text in this context, claiming that "this novel is extremely valuable, and almost prophetic, in its engagement with Englishness, isolationism, and the invocation of history and myths as a tool of manipulation, making it central to the BrexLit discussion" (64). I argue that this text is of particular relevance when it comes to depicting the instability of England's national borders as well as English national identity, lamenting as it does, according to Nick Bentley, "the belief that we cannot access an authentic place of origin, whilst it simultaneously critiques those who celebrate the fact" (494).

The novel's plot departs from the assumption that England in its current, that is, late twentieth-century shape and form is not really fit for the purposes and demands of a consumer capitalist society at the brink of the twenty-first century. As one character in the novel pithily puts it: "So England

comes to me, and what do I say to her? I say, 'Listen, baby, face facts. We're in the third millennium and your tits have dropped'" (Barnes 37). In order to rectify this, to lift the tits, as it were, a businessman by the name of Jack Pitman comes up with the rather ingenious idea of radically redrawing the geographical map and recreating the gist of all that is considered to be English as a theme-park within the practical, and tourist-friendly, dimensions of the Isle of Wight. This is achieved by, for example, simply referring to the Isle of Wight's own Whitecliff Bay as the new White Cliffs of Dover or rebranding Osborne House as Buckingham Palace. On the back of Pitco's (Sir Jack's company) apparently inexhaustible financial means, and assisted by Martha Cochrane, the novel's protagonist, this theme-park version of England is put in place with breath-taking speed and efficiency, with the result that the replica, which is named "England, England," quickly becomes much more successful than the original, both in terms of economic revenue and with regards to its international reputation, to the point even that it eventually assumes England's former role on the global stage, while Old England renames itself "Anglia" and swiftly degenerates into a pre-industrial backwater.

Barnes's novel has been thoroughly analyzed from a large number of critical approaches already,[6] so I will concentrate here on how its redrawing of the political and geographical landscape of England prefigures some of the fissures subsequently exposed by Brexit. First, and rather generally speaking, *England, England* offers an obvious illustration for the assumption that national identity, and the "imagined community" it supposedly implies, to borrow Benedict Anderson's words (1983), are, and cannot be anything but an artificial and retrospective construction.[7] The vulnerability of this construction is based in equal measure on the unreliability of personal as well as collective memory, which in turn makes it prone to being used or misused for a variety of political and cultural purposes (as the instrumentalization of the insularity and invasion metaphor in the Leave-campaign would forcefully demonstrate). Firmly incorporated as it is into the logic of the "pure market state" of the theme-park "England, England" (183), this endeavor to display "Englishness as a series of signifiers" (Bentley 486) ultimately has the effect that these signifiers are literally consumed beyond recognition and become disinvested of any actual power of signification and identification. This is illustrated not least by the fates of both Sir Jack, who becomes replicated and impersonated after his death and ends up as just another tourist attraction in his own theme park, and Martha, who eventually loses her belief in the power of the simulation and resettles in Anglia, where she encounters a different

form of collective identification which, according to Dominic Head, symbolizes "a more positive construction of Englishness, rooted in humility" (17). In contrast to Anglia's humble and non-profit-oriented form of communal identification, what reigns supreme in "England, England" is cynicism and materialism, from which a "cruel nostalgia emerges that testifies to the impossibility of recapturing these fetishized artefacts and traditions—their very presence betray[ing] their absence" (Shaw 65). Consequently, the redrawn geographical and communal boundaries of this "fast-forward version of Englishness" (Mergenthal) which Barnes evokes in *England, England* can also be cited as evidence that any attempt to determine, control, and willfully manipulate this constructed identity will very likely end in failure and desperation.

In the novel, this failure to establish an inclusive and satisfactory form of (English) national identification is squarely laid at the door of a rampant postmodern consumer capitalism, since every interaction of the inhabitants/visitors of the theme-park with the signifiers of national identity on display there is solely aimed at generating economic revenue. While this makes *England, England* in its original context something like a state-of-the-nation-under-capitalism novel, I would like to highlight in particular two passages in the book, which reflect in their own way specific chapters from the Brexit narrative. The first concerns the process by which "England, England" gains its independence from Old England, its very own Isle-of-Wexit if you will. To keep this procedure on the straight and narrow, the historically authentic purchase of the Isle of Wight by England's king Edward I in 1293 is investigated and declared "manifestly dubious and quite possibly illegal" by the team of barristers employed by Pitco (126). This royal scheme is then—and here the parallels with Brexit set in—styled into an elitist "fraud on simple folk to whom the treaty had never been properly explained" (171). The move towards independence is thus justified as a case of "us" (the ordinary people) holding their own against "them" (the ruling elite), with the eventual consequence that "a bright and modern patriotism . . . engendered a proud new insularity" (203). Arguably, this kind of pretend class-bias prefigures certain aspects of how the Leave campaign were to attempt, successfully to all accounts and purposes, to construct a vote for Leave as a signal of resistance against a ruling, leftist, liberal, out-of-touch elite, thus deploying to great effect the idea that England as a nation is, and always has been, divided by invisible borders of class, worldview, and privilege.[8]

My second example of how *England, England* prefigures Brexit concerns the fate of Old England, which, after being made politically and,

more importantly, economically redundant, eventually finds itself on the wrong side of border controls:

> [T]here were enough documents leaking from Brussels and Strasbourg to confirm that many high officials regarded Old England less as a suitable case for emergency funding than as an economic and moral lesson: it should be portrayed as a wastrel nation and allowed to continue in free-fall as a disciplinary example to the overgreedy within other countries. Symbolic punishments were also introduced: the Greenwich Meridian was replaced by Paris Mean Time; on maps the English Channel became the French Sleeve.
>
> Mass depopulation now took place. Those of Caribbean and Subcontinental origin began returning to the more prosperous lands from which their great-grand-grandparents had once arrived. Others looked to the United States, Canada, Australia and continental Europe; but the Old English were low on the list of desirable immigrants, being thought to bring with them the taint of failure. Europe, in a sub-clause to the Treaty of Verona, withdrew from the Old English the right to free movement within the Union. Greek destroyers patrolled the Sleeve to intercept boat people. After this, depopulation slowed. (251–52)

Especially the final image of migrants from England being intercepted by Greek patrol boats renders this a very interesting intertext and counterpoint to John Lanchester's novel *The Wall*. What unites these two novels apart from their bleak and dystopian setting and outlook is that they illustrate the consequences of defining too unequivocally the confines (both spatial and notional) within which national identification is allowed to take place, thereby rendering national identity into a static and firmly determined and delineated provision rather than a potentially malleable process of becoming, such as depicted in the London-2012 Opening Ceremony.

Border control in Tony Saint's *Refusal Shoes*

The maintenance and control of Britain's external border, which Barnes satirically reverses in the passage just quoted, takes center stage in Tony Saint's *Refusal Shoes* from 2003. Unlike *England, England*, this novel does not present a dystopian future scenario of meaningless and cruelly nostalgic Englishness but is very much situated in the brutal reality of the here-and-now. Saint can claim to write from an unusually knowledgeable perspective when it comes to the policing of borders, insofar as he had worked for the UK Immigration Service (as it was known until its suspension in 2007) for

ten years before publishing his novel. The story, with its somewhat preposterous murder plot, involving a murderous gang of "'illegal" Chinese immigrants and the narrator's quest to uncover the systemic corruption inside the Force which enables their criminal activities, is clearly and pointedly fictional. Its setting, however, can claim a certain kind of informed authenticity and realism concerning its milieu and its protagonists who, as Immigration Officers (IOs) at Heathrow's Terminal C, quite literally embody, "weather-beaten but unbowed" as the novel has it (20), the borderline that the UK as a country has put in place to regulate who is admitted in and who is not.

Throughout the novel, everyday work at Terminal C is described in terms of a battle to stem the presumed "tide of illegal immigrants" who stop at nothing to cheat their way into the safety of Britain's supposedly lavish social benefit system. This self-stylization as Britain's "last line of defence" (20) has profound consequences for the "work ethic"—for want of a better word—of the officers in charge of policing the border. In view of the way the physical boundary of the UK, which it is their responsibility to protect, is conceived as a "trench" in a "stand-off" (78) against both illegal immigrants and the supposed bleeding-heart do-gooders who support them, it is small wonder that the IOs on the whole are not too much bothered with the nuances of Immigration Law and how it might be interpreted for the benefit of their customers. Instead, the prestige and position of the individual IO is the direct result of their refusal statistics and/or ingenuity, not to say preposterousness, of the reasons they can conjure up to refuse entry. This semi-official policy is conveyed to Henry Brinks, the novel's protagonist, in no uncertain terms by his superior, who informs him that "You are paid to refuse people. You're not refusing people, you're not doing your job" (192). That the EU, of which the UK was at this point still a subscribing and largely unquestioned member state with its policy of freedom of movement, is seen to be contributing to, and being part of, the problem of illegal immigration is repeatedly expressed in the novel: Henry relates that his colleague "Ken's darkest day came when we joined the Common Market, the day when Frogs and Eye-ties, not to mention your Dagoes, your Krauts, your Bubble and Squeaks, could walk into the country with a barrowful of bow ties and give him two fingers on the way. When European Community citizens became exempt from immigration control, a little piece of Ken died" (51).

There is, I think, no need to stress the direct line that connects this form of border control with UKIP's "Breaking Point" campaign. What I would like to stress, however, is the recurrent invocation of the IOs working

environment as "the real world," a place where "people are segregated by nationality *only*," (48; emphasis in the original). Like Barnes's reference to "a fraud on simple folk," this very much anticipates the Leave-campaign's summoning of the ideological separation between "ordinary decent citizens" on one side and a presumed elite of privileged, out-of-touch liberals on the other, whose concerns are with the symbolic politics rather than the hard reality of immigration: "Just as the Home Office is out to discredit as many asylum seekers as possible," Henry remarks at one point, "so Miriam Cooper Associates maintain that everyone is a genuine refugee. Thus the trenches are dug and two equally absurd brands of moral indignation stand off" (78). In his novel, Saint does his level best to demonstrate that this "reality," where "hatred is the only thing we *do* have in common" (49; emphasis in the original), is a place which ferments mutual aversion, tribal thinking as well as all sorts of appalling behavior, thereby foreshadowing the apparently unbridgeable and inappeasable separation into the two distinct "tribes" of Leavers and Remainers that seemed to dominate how Britain was seen from abroad, and arguably to a large extent, how it saw itself, in the wake of the 2016-referendum.

What makes Saint's novel particularly interesting is that it can serve as a poignant and bitter illustration for the claim, voiced most compellingly by O'Toole, that the seemingly clearcut antagonism of the "us" of the legal citizens of the UK against those "Others" who are threatening the integrity of its borders (any "illegal immigrants" as much as the EU, whose open-border policies are very much seen as responsible for allowing them 'in') is undercut by an equally strong and irreconcilable division *within* the United Kingdom. For, as much as the Immigration Officers can be said to present a united front of suspicion, hatred and naked abuse against what they perceive and define to be illegal immigrants, there exist at the same time equally disdainful and obnoxious faultlines within the ranks. Following the internalized logic that "nationality" is the standard measure of identity, these run in equal, and perhaps even stronger, measure between the different nations within the UK, the notional "borders" of which are maintained by strategies of othering similar to those between the citizens of the UK and the immigrants. When Henry describes one of the senior officers, Sandy, as a "quintessential hard-drinking, hard-smoking, fat-sucking Caledonian" who "is a big wheel in the Jock Squad and is revealed for the contempt in which he holds his own organs and his loathing for foreigners, particularly the English" (96), Saint aptly illustrates that the strategies of othering involved in establishing the borderlines between "us" and "them" are by no means

restricted to the color of your passport. Paraphrasing O'Toole, one could argue that the IOs' uncompromising and often blatantly inhumane and unconstitutional treatment of the illegal immigrants can, at least to an extent, be seen as a displacement activity which can only scantily paper over the clannish cracks within the different parts and nations of the United Kingdom itself. On a rather superficial level, one could draw the conclusion from *Refusal Shoes* that a glorification, not to say fetishization, of external borders and their rigorous monitoring is indicative of internal boundaries, which do not appear as obvious or manifest as the external one, and which are therefore both harder to identify and more difficult to police. Or, in other words, maybe external and internal borders are two symptoms of the same underlying condition and any attempt to keep them apart only serves to blur the boundaries even further.

Divisions of temperament: Rupert Thomson's *Divided Kingdom*

The shifting focus towards the internal rifts inside the UK after Brexit is anticipated and fleshed out in extensive detail in the final literary pre-BrexLit example, which, like *England, England,* comes in the form of an imaginative and dystopian reorganization of the parameters by which national identification conventionally happens. The borders that divide the once United Kingdom in Rupert Thomson's novel *Divided Kingdom* (first published in 2005) are, however, of an entirely different nature. The demarcation lines they signify are, on the surface, not to do with political, racial, or economic separation; instead, they symbolize and unite different character traits. Like many other Pre-BrexLit novels (including *England, England*, or James Hawes's *Speak for England*),[9] *Divided Kingdom* also starts with the assumption that all is not well with the current state of Great Britain, a condition summarized as follows by the protagonist's teacher:

> [Britain] had become a troubled place, she said, obsessed with acquisition and celebrity, a place defined by envy, misery and greed. Crime was rampant: the courts swamped, the prisons overflowing. Divorce followed marriage as quickly and predictably as teenage pregnancies followed puberty. Homeless people slept in every doorway, ditch and underpass. Racism was more widespread and more firmly rooted than ever before. Violence lurked round every corner. . . . For decades, if not for centuries, the country had employed a complicated web of manners and conventions to draw a veil over its true nature, but now, finally, it had thrown off all pretense to be anything other than it was—northern, inward-looking, fundamentally barbaric.
>
> (Thomson 7)

To counter this sorry state of the nation, the so-called Rearrangement has been enforced: a measure introduced by the government of the day to contend with what they define as the continuing moral, economic, and social decline that had apparently been prevalent at the time. As the deplorable state of affairs has been diagnosed to be a consequence of repeated clashes of apparently mismatched character dispositions, a drastic and ingenious solution is found: the UK is carved up into four different countries, which are only referred to by their colors (red, blue, green, and yellow), with each representing one of the four traditional humors (sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic, and choleric), which for the best part of Western medical history, have been taken to be constitutive of the human individual's disposition. Overnight, the entire population is re-located to the country which best corresponds to their own individual disposition, a sledgehammer approach to demographic and social engineering which, in an eerie anticipation of Kapoor's image, has generated borders that "often had the look of a stitched wound" (59), but which all the same has resulted in twenty-seven years of relative peace and stability, at least according to its creators (80).

The novel's plot revolves around one Thomas Parry, who was a young child at the time of the Rearrangement and who in the course of the book embarks on a picaresque journey through the different parts of the now Divided Kingdom, a quest to recapture memories of his lost childhood and, by association, his own real self. Although his voyage of self-discovery is remarkable in itself, the implications the radical spatial reorganization of Britain can have for thinking about Brexit are to be highlighted. First of all, it needs to be emphasized that the novel's terms and practices of spatial separation can be understood as a simplification and absolutization of the inherently contingent and endlessly nuanced thing, that is, the individual human character, as evident in this description of the physical manifestation of these, as it were, metaphysical foundations of division: "Throughout the divided kingdom the walls of concrete blocks had been reinforced with watch-towers, axial crosses and even, in some areas, with mine-fields, which rendered contact between the citizens of different countries a physical impossibility" (24). The physical maintenance of the—once metaphysical—borderlines in this rearranged kingdom has rendered any form of exchange or interaction between the four states and their inhabitants well-neigh impossible, which means that everybody can, or much rather, is forced to live happily and uncontestedly in their own dispositional bubbles.

Even though, as Shaw points out, *Divided Kingdom* might also speak to contemporary "fears surrounding turn-of-the-century devolutionary reforms from an English perspective" rather than addressing or prefiguring the UK's temperamental separation from the EU (139), this enforced streamlining and equalization of individual personal characteristics and disposition offers at least some parallels to the aftermath of Brexit, when the individual voter's decision, influenced as it undoubtedly was by a very idiosyncratic and nuanced rationale in each individual case, came to be represented as a subscription to one of two opposing and mutually exclusive world-views, the "tribes" of Anywheres and Somewheres, which Goodhart identifies as essential for marking the individual's decision for or against Brexit (7). Until the very end of the novel, Thomas fails to fully acknowledge this ambiguous nature of the borders as being both protective and prescriptive at the same time, but the language he uses reveals that even though he himself presumably feels very much at home in his sanguine body and country, the sheer existence of the walls testifies to the fact that he—and the entire kingdom—is nevertheless not quite at one with himself:

> During my early twentieth I was gripped by the sense of history that emanated from such places [formerly used bridges; WF]; they were like abandoned gateways, entrances to forgotten worlds. Also, of course, I felt that I had stumbled on a physical embodiment of my own experience. There were bridges down inside me too. There was the same sense of brutal interruption. (69)

If we ask what this spatial rearrangement of the UK can tell us about the use and function of borders in more general terms, arguably the novel shows that borders, even when they work according to plan, as they undoubtedly do in *Divided Kingdom*, do not so much reflect a given socio-political or cultural *status quo* (as the IOs in *Refusal Shoes* would very likely argue), but rather, function as a means to constitute and preserve this presumed *status quo*.

Consequently, what I do want to challenge in the present analysis is the way in which both the deployment of borders and border thinking as a symbolic representation of Brexit is threatening to become a cliché in and by itself, an easy, maybe too easy, shortcut which solidifies and thus perpetuates such demarcations instead of putting them to the test. I argue that the borders we use as symbols for social division might not be self-fulfilling prophecies in themselves, insofar as they shape and uphold the self-image as well as the hetero-stereotype of those inside and outside of them.[10] This is an insight that

even Thomas eventually arrives at in *Divided Kingdom*, and this realization marks the end of his journey to enlightenment. His job for the Government provides him with the rare chance to cross into other countries. On a business trip to Aquaville, the capital of the blue, that is, phlegmatic part of the kingdom, he initially is forced to acknowledge that the reductive strategies of othering that have helped to maintain his own sense of humoral superiority are somewhat deficient and that "the reality of the Blue Quarter [is] more subtle and complex than I'd been led to believe" (71). Finally he even comes to entertain the possibility that the "famous differences" deployed to justify the partitioning of the kingdom could be no more than "convenient fictions" (153) brushing over the sense of a "divided kingdom [which] was united after all, by one thing: longing" (236), a longing for transcending precisely those artificially imposed boundaries that have kept it in its static state for so long. What the novel thus suggests is that Britain's borders are mere fictions, which—just like the convenient, straightforward, and often undifferentiated narratives that have too often been spun out of, and around, Brexit—tend to simplify and escalate divisions instead of acknowledging and embracing the idiosyncratic individual disposition in every individual and every voter.

As this sentiment presents a suitable conclusion for my argument, let me finish on a rather different note. Although bringing Brexit and the Covid-pandemic together may not seem innovative, I argue that this link has the potential to shed new light on the issues of borders and their transcendence. After all, one of the endlessly repeated facts about the virus has been its apparent disregard for any kind of border, as it has been able to effortlessly penetrate even the most rigorous line of national defense. On the other hand, however, the pandemic has also helped to reveal and strengthen new demarcation lines that have resulted from Brexit, be they external—as in the case of the vaccination disputes between the UK and the EU—or internal, as in the case of the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic. It is, of course, too early to say if and how the pandemic has the potential to eradicate, solidify or challenge both real political borders and the imaginary faultlines within Britain. If the representation of borders in the Pre-BrexLit examples in this article is anything to go by, however, we should at any rate refrain from accepting any too convenient fictions about them.

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Notes

1 Kapoor's image as well as Jones's comments on it can be found at https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/apr/03/anish-kapoor-brexit-artwork-britain-edge-abyss. Web. 30 Sept. 2022.

2 For the most comprehensive overview of the BrexLit genre, see Shaw (2021), who is also generally credited with coining the term BrexLit, Everitt (2021), and Eaglestone (2018).

3 For a more critical reading of the Opening Ceremony, see Karschay (2019).

4 *The Wall* imagines the entire island of Great Britain as engirdled by a wall "ten thousand kilometers long, more or less [with] a watch house every three kilometers: three thousand-plus of them" (Lanchester 2018, 14) and every citizen of the realm required to do two years of service defending this wall against any incursions from without.

5 This potential threat of invasion could fall on such fertile ground during the Leave campaign due to its long-established currency in English literary and cultural discourse. Most famously perhaps, "This sceptred isle" readily lent itself to being ideologized by Shakespeare's John of Gaunt in *Richard II* as a "fortress built by Nature for her self," implying that its borders are comparatively easy to define and defend, a time-honored misconception accentuated by the complexities of, for example, the post-Brexit status of Northern Ireland.

6 For a discussion of Barnes's novel in terms of its re-definition of Englishness, see Nünning (2001), Bentley (2007) and Everitt (2021, 64–82). For an analysis of the authenticity of the project, see Miracky (2004) and Funk (2015, 107–22).

7 The creators' main guideline for what aspects or markers of English identity to include in the theme park consists of the top 50 results of a survey among the public about the "quintessences of England" (Barnes 1998, 83–85), which is unsurprisingly topped by the "Royal Family," but also features somewhat more startling entries such as "Untrustworthiness" (33) or "Flagellation/Public Schools" (48).

8 The most infamous case in point here is probably the Enemies-of-the-People headline on the cover of the *Daily Mail* (Nov. 2016), which blamed the judges of the High Court of England and Wales for not following the will of the people when they ruled that Parliament had to be consulted and must consent to the triggering of Article 50.

9 For a more comprehensive account of this hilarious example of pre-BrexLit, see Berberich (2009), Funk (2012) and Palitzsch (2012).

10 Christine Berberich helpfully addresses this potential blind spot in the specific context of BrexLit when she claims that "it is probably unlikely that a convinced Leave voter

will pick up and read a BrexLit novel, most of which are at least covertly anti-Brexit and urge for multiculturalism and inclusion. Hence, much of the literary production *could*, potentially, further contribute to the already rampant division in the country, with the Remainers reading BrexLit for confirmation of their own opinions and Leavers eschewing it for contradicting them" (2019, 156; emphasis in the original).

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New British Nature Writing, or an Emergent Hope

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ABSTRACT
Since the first decade of the twenty-first century, Britain has witnessed the emergence of a new literary movement called "new nature writing." This paper aims to call attention to new British nature writing as an emergent genre marked by its practitioners' will to replace anthropocentrism with ecocentrism, present an all-embracing understanding of nature, and interweave the personal with the ecocritical. To this end, it offers insights into selected memoirs of contemporary British writers, including Kathleen Jamie's essay trilogy *Findings*, *Sightlines,* and *Surfacing;* Amy Liptrot's *The Outrun;* and Carol Donaldson's *On the Marshes: A Journey into England's Waterlands*. Such non-fiction first person narratives, labeled as eco-memoirs, may provide an eco-centered approach to the natural world in the Anthropocene, and thus cherish hopes for a livable future for our planet. (HBM)

KEYWORDS: new nature writing, eco-memoir, British nature writing, nature, hope

The global community is currently facing a profound ecological crisis, accentuated by the successive publication of scientific reports validating this critical situation. One of the most recent reports in the field, *The Global Climate 2011–2020: A Decade of Accelerating Climate Change*, issued by the World Meteorological Organization in 2023, stresses that rising temperatures have led to the prevalence of food insecurity, contributing to mass migration and impairing health at a cost of billions of dollars in loss and damage (50). In light of such facts, a livable future sounds but a matter of hope. It is, indeed, quite hard to be hopeful about the future of our planet when we consider even a fraction of the anthropogenic disasters we are currently witnessing, such as deforestations in the Amazon rainforests, Greenland's ice melting unprecedentedly fast, the sixth mass extinction accelerating, and an increasing number of deaths linked to air pollution in coal-powered countries. However, Maria Ojala, who has investigated the correlation between hope and pro-environmental behavior among a group of young adults in Sweden, suggests that if people trust their own and others' ability to influence environmental

problems positively, they are more inclined towards environmental engagement, but if they are unrealistically optimistic and ignore the threat caused by current environmental problems, they are less likely to take responsibility (636). Although Ojala's findings cover a limited number of young adults in Sweden, her research is significant in terms of highlighting the importance of the quest for hope in the context of current environmental problems: hope is required to act for the planet. Thus, hope emerges as an urgent need in facing the ecological crisis unless it involves the latter's denial. At this point, literature, specifically first-person narratives that voice ecological concerns may hold out some hope.

In fact, ecocritics have been trying to show that literature and the humanities can and should assume responsibility and take action for the physical world since the early 1990s, when "ecocriticism emerged as a recognizable critical school" (Glotfelty xviii). Cheryll Glotfelty made one of the earliest academic moves to bring literature and the physical world closer with her frequently cited remark in the introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996): "Literature does not float above the material world in some aesthetic ether, but, rather, plays a part in an immensely complex global system, in which energy, matter and ideas interact" (xix). Like Glotfelty, many ecocritics have drawn attention to the role literature and arts can play in the ongoing ecological crisis. For example, in his *The Environmental Imagination* (1995), the American critic Lawrence Buell argued that literature can help us develop eco-centric values and reorient "human attention and values to a stronger ethic of care for the nonhuman environment" (*Writing* 6). Timothy Morton, a British ecocritic, believes in the role of the arts in expanding the limits of our perception when it comes to beings other than us: "Poetry won't save the planet. Sound science and progressive social policies will do that. But art can allow us to glimpse beings that exist beyond or between our normal categories" (60). Echoing such sentiments, Richard Kerridge, a leading nature writer and ecocritic, also states that "[e]cocritics hope to influence readers and writers so that works concerned with environmental values will become more popular, and new works will emerge to inspire change" (361).

Apparently, the possibility that literary professionals can contribute to the saving of the world from a man-made crisis has been acknowledged, and in this context one promising inference is that although poets or writers have not necessarily been trained to decrease pollution, stop climate change, or increase biodiversity, they can help revisit humanity's deeply rooted anthropocentric attitude to the world. In this regard, the recent movement in Britain called "new nature writing" merits special attention. British nature

writing helps to challenge anthropocentrism and thus emerges as a hopeful movement due to contemporary writers' efforts to replace anthropocentrism with an eco-centric viewpoint, offering an all-embracing understanding of nature, and interweaving the personal with the ecocritical by rejecting the culture/nature and human/animal dichotomies.

This study offers insights into selected contemporary British writers' memoirs: Kathleen Jamie's essay trilogy *Findings* (2005), *Sightlines* (2012), and *Surfacing* (2019); Amy Liptrot's *The Outrun* (2016); and Carol Donaldson's *On the Marshes: A Journey into England's Waterlands* (2017), with the intention of introducing the different tenets of new British nature writing.

Jamie's essay trilogy has been included because of its comprehensive nature that lets the writer treat diverse topics such as climate change, extinct species, and loss of habitats showing that this new genre supports a broad definition of nature. Liptrot's memoir demonstrates that nature writing welcomes self-centered, therapeutic writings that expand into ecological narratives by presenting the author's attempts at connecting to the natural world in her hometown in Orkney, Scotland,[1] while struggling to get over alcoholism. Donaldson's book focusing on England's wetlands and the people living there illustrates that new nature writing regards humans as a species sharing an ecosystem with non-humans, and thus it promotes environmental justice discussions.

New nature writing in Britain

"New nature writing" was first used as a term by Jason Cowley in the 2008 special edition, "The New Nature Writing," of the British literary magazine *Granta* to refer to a recent movement in Britain (qtd. in Smith, "An Archipelagic" 3). This issue marks the beginning of the movement that has grown exponentially since then (Hampton 455). What Cowley means by "new nature writing" is clarified in his editorial note:

> When we began to commission articles for this issue we were interested less in what might be called old nature writing—by which I mean the lyrical pastoral tradition of the romantic wanderer—than in writers who approached their subject in heterodox and experimental ways. We also wanted the contributions to be voice-driven, narratives told in the first person, for the writer to be present in the story, if sometimes only bashfully. The best new nature writing is also an experiment in forms: the field report, the essay, the memoir, the travelogue. (10)

Jos Smith, who published one of the earliest book-length studies, *The New Nature Writing: Rethinking the Literature of Place* (2014), indicates that about ten years earlier than Cowley, Richard Kerridge had underlined the need for a new way of writing about nature by employing the same term ("The New" 270). Specifically, Kerridge states that "[e]nvironmentalism calls for a new nature writing, clearly differentiated from the conservative tradition and aware of its appeal and dangers" (qtd. in Smith, "The New" 270).

From both Cowley's and Kerridge's viewpoints, it is apparent that nature writing, which has largely been shaped by Romanticism, needs a distinct approach in the current millennium. The quest for novelty might result from the fact that some remarkable books such as Nan Shepherd's *The Living Mountain* (1977) and J. A. Baker's *The Peregrine* (1967) notwithstanding, British nature writing went through a period of stagnation in the twentieth century for diverse reasons. In fact, it was mostly trivialized, and the respect afforded to the genre in Romantic and Victorian literature was hard to find (Hampton 1). According to Robert Macfarlane, "[f]or much of the twentieth century in the UK, writing about wildlife or the countryside was regarded with suspicion tending to contempt" ("New Words" 166). In the first place, nature writers of the twentieth century were dismissed for being nostalgic for a Britain that never existed (Hampton 455). In his influential book *The Country and the City* (1973), Raymond Williams offers a Marxist reading of English literature and criticizes pastoral writing for idealizing rural life, which was, according to Williams, marked by feudal oppression rather than an assumed organic unity between people and the countryside.

In addition, Anna Stenning and Terry Gifford refer to the lack of philosophical sophistication in explaining the dismissal of nature writing in the twentieth century: "writing about the British countryside and rural life dwindled in the mid-to-late twentieth century, perhaps due in part to critical association with sentimentalism, or a lack of philosophical sophistication, while the international and urban travel narrative produced bumper crops" (1). Stenning and Gifford point out a technical problem intrinsic to the genre as well: "[F]inding a structure for a series of narratives about the external environment is problematic. It runs the risk of sounding, to the skeptical British ear, inauthentic and stagy on the one hand, or indulgently personal and egocentric on the other" (1). Also, Smith asserts that there has been a tension between the writers who believe an aesthetic look at nature distorts facts and those who oppose the endorsement of nature as an object as if it were something that we could know the true character of through science ("An Archipelagic" 114–15). Alexander J. B. Hampton argues that amidst this

discussion, the public voice of the individual who attempts to interact with nature has been gradually replaced by the objective voice of the expert, which left nature writing to scientists (455). In other words, twentieth-century British nature writing was shaped more by naturalists, geologists, and biologists than by writers (455). Thus, at the outset, it faced significant challenges, but it has managed to survive probably because of the well-established tradition it stood on, and because the writers of the twenty-first century have not been discouraged from writing about nature. Also, the urgent need to develop eco-centric ways of thinking to prevent the current ecological crisis from getting worse might have urged contemporary authors to write from a less anthropocentric perspective without muting themselves. Indeed, Hampton states that at the turn of the twenty-first century, a group of writers began to challenge the view that nature writing should be strictly neutral and scientific, and they have been trying to rehabilitate British nature writing and the voice of the individual that interacts with nature (455).

The resurgence of British nature literature is remarkable: Macfarlane highlights two factors to explain the rise of its popularity in recent years. One is the disembodiment people increasingly feel as they spend more and more time in "atmosphere-controlled environments," and the other is the global ecological crisis we are currently facing ("New Words" 167). From the standpoint of the reader, the estrangement from the natural world, stemming from the confines of their indoor-centric lifestyles, provides a rationale for turning to nature writing for solace amidst an ongoing ecological crisis.

Nevertheless, in the middle of this literary revival, some practitioners of the movement have opposed the use of the term "new nature writing" for defining the British literary scene. Richard Mabey, Robert Macfarlane, and Kathleen Jamie are equally worried that this label might lead some to assume that writing about the natural world is distinct from writing about culture (Smith, "The New" 267). According to Joe Moran, too, the term is problematic because recent nature writings are "thematically wide-ranging and stylistically digressive, combining personal reflection with natural history, psychogeography, travel and topographical writing, folklore and prose poetry, which makes them difficult to categorize" (49). In fact, umbrella terms such as "new nature writing" would sound deficient in any case because each and every single work of literature is worth separate attention, and books may not easily be compressed into a single category. However, given the recent upsurge in Britain, it is important and necessary to try to frame and thus recognize recent nature writing as an emergent movement even if it is done at the expense of using a term which fails to satisfy all the contemporary

representatives of nature writing. After all, as Macfarlane says, "[n]ature writing is an unsatisfactory term for this diverse, passionate, pluriform, essential, reviving tradition—but it is the best there is, and it serves as a banner to march beneath" ("Call").

Despite the lack of consensus on the use of the term to define the recent revival in British nature writing, I have chosen to employ it in this study, for it is the most commonly used one, and also because of the ecological crisis we are in. In fact, the writing emerging in response to this unparalleled crisis would necessitate the employment of a label that underscores the idea that its practitioners are in search of a new way of responding to the crisis. Deborah Lilley also suggests that the unmatched scale of environmental harm has caused British authors to respond with a new terminology and new possibilities by blending elements of autobiography, travelogue, natural history, and popular science to explore and critique the interweaving of human-natural forces (3). Indeed, the current age of the Anthropocene is traced back to the industrial and even agricultural revolution, thus, it is not new. However, the way writers and critics respond to it, their sense of anxiety is relatively new. This collective sense of anxiety is the reason why contemporary nature writers can be brought under a shared term; these writers are trying to raise their voices in their own individual ways, which could differentiate them from the nature writers of the previous centuries.

Yet it should be acknowledged that this sense of anxiety does not contain helplessness or despair. On the contrary, there is a will to cause an effect. As Cowley puts it: "They [the new generation of British nature writers] share a sense that we are devouring our world, that there is simply no longer any natural landscape or ecosystem that is unchanged by humans. But they don't simply want to walk into the wild, to rhapsodize and commune: they aspire to see with a scientific eye and write with literary effect" (9). Obviously, contemporary nature writers would like to trigger a change in our way of thinking about the natural world from both a scientific and literary perspective, which could hopefully result in a change in our actions. Jamie's essay trilogy comprising *Findings* (2005), *Sightlines*(2012), and *Surfacing* (2019), Liptrot's *The Outrun* (2016), and Donaldson's *On the Marshes: A Journey into England's Waterlands* (2017) serve to demonstrate that new nature writing embraces a broad interpretation of nature, evoking, simultaneously, the hope that the prevailing anthropocentric perspective can be replaced by a more eco-centric worldview, ultimately fostering more ecologically responsible actions by humanity.

Kathleen Jamie's essay trilogy: An eclectic look at nature

On first considerations Kathleen Jamie's essay trilogy consisting of thirty-seven essays on diverse topics such as climate change, whale hunting, and cancerous bacteria is a memoir that covers the last fourteen years in the writer's life with flashbacks to her youth. Jamie's writing presents her evolution from a young woman with caregiving responsibilities towards her children and elderly parents to a more carefree and independent middle-aged woman. Nonetheless, the essay collection embraces much more than Jamie's inward journey because of its relational aspect which has an ecological dimension. Relationality is a term commonly applied to autobiographical writing where, according to Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, it means that "one's story is bound up with that of another" (*Reading* 64). Mark Allister argues that it is possible to find life writing examples in which the relationality aspect includes the writer's connection to the natural world (3). In this kind of relational autobiography "ecology intertwines with culture, the author's life is metaphorically written on the land together with its inhabitants, human or non-human, and these writers create a new and important kind of life-writing by turning terrain into text, geography into consciousness" (3). Jamie's essays qualify as relational autobiographical texts, that is, eco-memoirs.

As an eco-memoir, the trilogy explores several human-induced ecological problems such as pollution, loss of biodiversity, climate change, raising the reader's awareness of the Anthropocene from diverse aspects. For instance, her essay "Findings" calls attention to the plastic pollution on Ceann Iar, an island to the northwest of Scotland. Ceann Iar, once a human settlement but currently a home to seals and birds, cannot escape the remains of a plane crash or loads of plastic waste driven by the winds and waves (*Findings* 53–59). Similarly, her essay "The Hvalsalen" in *Sightlines*, which reveals her experiences as a visitor and a voluntary worker in the whale museum in Bergen, Norway, focuses on the cetaceans, which had been there long before humans appeared, as a vulnerable species endangered by humans, who now desperately try to conserve their bones in museums. In her work she conclusively points at the absurdity of the situation, voicing her frustration and sense of shame no matter how much effort is taken now to protect them. While working on the whale bones, she notes, "I turned the rib in my hands, stroked it with the sponge. Shame and shame" (*Sightlines* 119).

"In Quinhagak," the longest essay in *Surfacing,* Jamie describes her work in the field as she assists a team of archaeologists trying to save the remains of the Yup'ik people in Quinhagak, an Alaskan village, a settlement

in danger of being flooded by rising sea levels. Ironically, the artefacts made by the ancestors of this indigenous community can be unraveled because the earth thaws early due to the rise in temperatures, and diggings get easier. When the hydrological, chemical, and biological balance of the soil that helps to preserve archeological remnants is disturbed, pieces of cultural heritage may be unearthed (Garcia 105). The Yup'ik people are encountering precisely this situation. The essay demonstrates the paradox that in consequence of global warming the artifacts buried in the frozen Alaskan land come to surface, enabling the indigenous people to reclaim their past; however, this process will ultimately leave them landless. Thus, Jamie points out the effect of global warming on cultural heritage and shows that nature and culture are inextricably intertwined. As a matter of fact, the impact of climate change on cultural assets has already been recognized by the international community. For example, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) certified in its 2014 Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) that climate change will affect culturally valued buildings through extreme events and chronic damage to materials (IPCC). Far earlier than this, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stressed the need to protect cultural and natural heritage together through the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, for they both face increasing threats of destruction not only by traditional causes of decay, but also by evolving social and economic conditions. Jamie's essay on Quinhagak serves as a convincing, local example of this global problem, urging the reader to recognize its emergency.

During her trips in Scotland, Norway, and Alaska, Jamie pays heed to non-human nature and highlights the wrongdoings and injustices that humans inflict upon their fellow creatures. However, the essay trilogy is not a requiem for a world that has been lost. Nor is it a curse on humanity. From *Findings* to *Surfacing,* Jamie tries to maintain her contact with the natural world by going on short and long expeditions in the middle of her caregiving responsibilities. She joins a team of scientists to track birds on a remote Scottish island, participates in archeological expeditions that global warming or erosion have made urgent, and observes dead body parts in anatomy and natural history museums. Through all these experiences, Jamie offers an ecocentric approach to understanding human beings as part of the broader ecosystem and chooses not to focus on them as central characters but refers to them just as one of the species in contradiction to the prevailing anthropocentric worldview.

In her essays, Jamie visits a great variety of places, such as her backyard, a pathology lab, an anatomy museum, an abandoned Scottish island, a newly discovered Neolithic settlement, and an Alaskan village, while she ponders what exactly is nature. From her first essay to the last, Jamie portrays nature from many different aspects including, but not limited to, island birds, whale bones, cancerous human cells, windswept islands, and rising sea levels. The diversity of the themes Jamie covers as well as the lack of a central theme overlap with the heterogeneity in nature. The classical ecological perspective contrasts heterogeneity with homogeneity, which means "the absence of variation," and defines heterogeneity as the "composition of parts of different kinds" (Kolasa and Rollo 2). In fact, ecological heterogeneity appears to be fundamental to the resilience of ecosystems, for it has been proven that the loss of ecological heterogeneity threatens biodiversity and prevents the proper functioning of ecosystems (Dzubakova, et al. 1). Given the essential role of heterogeneity in nature, Jamie's tendency to include a variety of species in her essays without prioritizing any single one merits recognition as an endeavor to mirror nature's complexity in writing, and fosters readers' appreciation for the diversity in natural systems, which does not privilege humans as a species.

Underlying this heterogeneous perspective, Jamie's concerns about the natural world and the anthropogenic harm done to the planet are salient. Of her own writing, she states: "You take notes almost like a naturalist who observes something, whether it is a flower or a street scene. It is not out of curiosity, but you almost respect what you are observing. You want to have what you observe accurately in its beauty and detail, and so it is almost like a mark of respect for it" (qtd. in Mackay 86). Jamie's caring respect and attentiveness to nature act as the connective force of her eclectic trilogy.

Jamie's rejection of binary oppositions, especially those of culture/nature and human/non-human, lies at the heart of most of her contemplations. Her discomfort with any exclusionary definition of nature is apparent. For instance, her essay "Pathologies" containing her observations in a pathology lab reveals that her mother is about to die and she has to let "nature to take its course" (*Sightlines* 21). By visiting the pathology lab, Jamie tries to open herself to all aspects of nature including pathology, cancer, and death, but she cannot bring herself to take her mother's death as a natural phenomenon no matter how expected it was. After the funeral, Jamie goes for a walk on the hills behind her town and comments: "The sky and the river were beautiful and glassy . . . . Nature was back in her accustomed place: outdoors, in the trees' colors, in the tidal flux of the river; in the fieldfares

arriving to the fields" (22), suggesting that when nature is in question, what comes to mind first is not death but trees, rivers, and fields. Despite her endeavors to embrace all facets of nature, including decay and death, she has a hard time positing death, particularly her mother's death, as a natural fact. At this point, she asks herself: "What was it [nature] exactly, and where did it reside?" (23). Jamie provides no clear answer to this question in any of the essays, but she makes an effort to look at the natural world as a whole without separating death from it.

Jamie's essays include events and situations she experiences in nature rather than theoretical discussions about it. To be more specific, her trips to places such as anatomy museums and pathology labs and her active participation in archaeological projects help to question dichotomies such as human/non-human, culture/nature, and present/past through tangible examples. Jamie's attempts to deconstruct dichotomies bring to mind Donna Haraway's criticism of dualism:

> [C]ertain dualisms have been persistent in Western traditions; they have all been systemic to the logics and practices of domination of women, people of color, nature, workers, animals—in short, domination of all constituted as others, whose task is to mirror the self. Chief among these troubling dualisms are self/other, mind/body, culture/nature, male/female, civilized/primitive, reality/appearance, whole/part, agent/resource, maker/made, active/passive, right/wrong, truth/illusion, total/partial, God/man. (59)

The essays in the trilogy aim to dismantle most of these dichotomies. For example, in "Pathologies," she looks at a cancerous colon through a microscope, and she writes, "[i]t was a natural artefact alright, but far from elegant, and if I hadn't been told I couldn't have said whether it belonged to an aquarium, a puppet theatre or a bicycle repair shop" (*Sightlines* 26). This example shows that for Jamie nature is not an aesthetic object for the human gaze, neither is it outside the human realm, hence questioning the human–nature dichotomy. In fact, her motivation underlying this visit to the lab is to look inward physically, to see nature because she understands "it's not all primroses and others. There's our own intimate, inner natural world, the body's weird shapes and forms, and sometimes they go awry. There are other species, not dolphins arching clear from the water, but the bacteria that can pull the rug from under us" (24). Likewise, in "Surgeons' Hall" in *Findings*, she examines dead human body parts, which she regards as intrinsic to nature.

As it can be seen in her frequently cited paragraph, Jamie intends to look for nature inside us, not necessarily outside:

> We consider the natural world as "out there," an "environment," but these objects in their jars show us the forms concealed inside, the intimate unknown, and perhaps that is their new function. Part art gallery, part church of secular contemplatives. "In the midst of this city, you think you are removed from nature," they say—"but look within." (*Findings* 141)

In a similar vein, "Three Ways of Looking at St Kilda" in *Sightlines* offers a thought-provoking perspective to question the culture/nature divide. St. Kilda, a Scottish island home to nearly one million seabirds, including the UK's largest colony of Atlantic puffins, used to host people until the 1930s, when islanders voted to leave the island (132). Jamie visits the island with a group of archaeologists to help them with their work. While on the island, she is particularly fascinated by cleits. A cleit is "a stone storage hut or bothy, uniquely found on the isles and stacs of St Kilda," which was used to store a wide array of products, including cured fish, eggs, hay, manure, and grains ("Cleit"). Cleits served as stores for the islanders to keep their resources (*Sightlines* 150). The archaeology team Jamie joined was trying to locate them accurately, using satellite technology because cleits cannot be positioned easily. They have been abandoned for about ninety years and have become embedded in the landscape, making it difficult to discern them. Also, as they are made of stone and turf, which are both natural materials, they look like part of the landscape rather than a building erected. Jamie's reaction to understanding the cleits is emotive, unlike that of the archaeology team that surveys them from a scientific point of view. Though she does not denounce the importance of measurements done by the archaeologists and appreciates their work, she complains about too much accuracy. She prefers to consider cleits as the remnants of a recent past rather than human-made structures to be scrutinized with tools and devices. She says, "I thought the cleits curious, half nature and half culture, with their stone walls and turf roofs shivered in the breeze. We could measure them all we liked, but they were still mysterious" (155). From the author's standpoint, a cleit embodies the intermingling of culture and nature.

Jamie's widely ranging themes defend an understanding of nature where dichotomies fail. Chitra Ramaswamy maintains that "[n]ature, for Jamie, is a broad church, welcoming in moths drowning in lochans, cancerous cells under microscopes, whale bones washed up on the beach, and the

people who clean them in dusty museums. She has no interest in romanticizing nature, or seeking out wild, untouched places" ("Interview"). Through such diverse views and landscapes, Jamie presents alternative perspectives from which to look at the natural world. While offering a heterogeneous account of the natural world, Jamie does not silence herself as a daughter, mother, wife, or independent woman, which makes her writing relational and familiar. As Eleanor Bell claims, "Jamie writes from a personal space which sees the value of recording the everyday within a grander order. It is perhaps these very human qualities of her essays on travel and nature, though—seeing the domestic within the wild, and vice versa—which are central to their appeal" (129). This is where hope lies since Jamie can appeal to her readers through her first-person narrative. Her direct experiences in nature, her participation in voluntary projects, and her non-authoritarian style in her questionings make the author easy to relate to. Seeing how Jamie does her share in shattering anthropocentrism, the reader is given hope that a less anthropocentric world is possible.

Amy Liptrot's *The Outrun*: From the edge of alcoholism to the edge of an island

In Amy Liptrot's memoir, *The Outrun*, which was awarded the 2016 Wainwright Prize and was shortlisted for the 2016 Welcome Prize (Cain), a familiar landscape serves as a cure for Liptrot's alcoholism and a context where she gains a new perspective. The memoir begins with Liptrot's arrival in the Outrun, her family's farm in Orkney, a Scottish island years after leaving it for London. The author starts her narrative from the moment she has already reached sobriety following her troubled years in the metropolis, and she focuses more on her time on the island than her alcoholism, which makes *The Outrun* an island memoir.

As in many other examples of new British nature writing, including Katherine Norbury's *The Fish Ladder* (2015), Olivia Laing's *To the River: A Journey Beneath the Surface* (2011), the author of *The Outrun*, too, has recourse to the natural world as part of her healing process. Such works within new nature writing can be categorized under the strand of "close natural history observation as psychotherapy and psychodrama," wherein authors take refuge in the natural world as a remedy (Oakley et al. 6). In these books the natural environment appears as a resource for human consumption "in danger of being unwittingly instrumentalized" (12). Some writers are concerned that nature could be objectified in such healing narratives. A nature writer, Mark Cocker expresses his concern over this tendency of self-

centered narratives, stating that "[t]he real danger is that nature writing becomes a literature of consolation that distracts us from the truth of our fallen countryside, or—just as bad—that it becomes a space for us to talk to ourselves about ourselves, with nature relegated to the background as an attractive green wash" ("Death"). However, Liptrot's *The Outrun* is a life narrative that transcends its author's personal life and expands to nature.

Without reducing the landscape to a setting for her life story, Liptrot reveals how she has recovered from alcoholism and reconciled with herself as she returns to the Outrun. Having spent her childhood and adolescence in close contact with the natural world on Orkney, she moved to London, where she expected not to be limited by geography and a small community: "I grew up in the sky, with an immense of space, yet limited by the confines of the island and the farm," she writes (19). Nevertheless, London overwhelmed her with its turmoil and chaos, and she ends up an alcoholic. Her addiction caused her boyfriend to break up with her and, over time, she is dragged into loneliness and despair: "Unsettled in London, I felt as if I was dangerously suspended high above crashing waves" (50). She spends dreary and purposeless days, during which she feels as if she was "just passing time, not living" (51). In those hard times, she relies on alcohol and cigarettes as an immediate solution, and she can neither continue her daily routine at work nor socialize with her friends who slowly withdraw from her due to her frequent sobbing fits and never-ending depressive mood.

Aware of what her addiction has cost her, Liptrot decides to recover and receives treatment in a rehabilitation center. Knowing that "coming out of rehab was not the end of the story but the beginning," she seeks a way to help her remain sober (80). She agrees to go back to Orkney upon her mother's encouragement, who suggests she could help her father on the farm. When she arrives on the island, she feels somewhat insecure: "I've washed up on this island again, nine months sober, worn down and scrubbed clean, like a pebble. I'm back home, at the end of a rough year, in the winds that shaped me and where the sea salt left me raw. I've got a fresh start but I'm not sure what to use it for" (88). Then she starts to help her father on the farm by carrying out physically taxing activities, such as building or repairing drystone dykes, taking care of the lambs, feeding the poultry, and cutting down uncontrollable thistles (116). Of her first months on the island, she notes, "I'm back under these decaying clouds and deep skies, living among the elements that made me. I want to see if these forces will weigh me down, like coping stones, and stop the jolting" (93). Though she is initially uncertain about what to do with herself on this island, which she derogatorily used to

call "The Rock" in her adolescence, the island teaches her new skills. She has a different kind of bodily experience there and she learns to use and take care of her body to be able to fulfill the tasks on the farm: "At the end of the day I attend to my body, thinking of how it will function rather than how it looks: getting rid of my hangnails that could get caught, letting the hot shower massage my muscles" (116).

Her bodily experiences on the island are not limited to exhausting farm work, however. Like her contemporaries Olivia Laing and Carol Donaldson, Liptrot also finds her way of healing through walking, and she notes, "AA [Alcoholics Anonymous] recommends meditation, which I find hard . . . . Instead I practice my own form of walking on the hill and absorbing my surroundings. When I walk, I am soothed by being in motion. My body is occupied and my mind free" (174). In fact, the therapeutic effect of walking has long been recognized, since at least the first recorded use of the Roman expression *solvitur ambulando*. This Latin phrase, usually attributed to Saint Augustine, means that problems are solved by walking (Pidgeon). For Liptrot walking is also a healing physical activity. When walking across the island, she touches her surroundings and gets to know the island more closely. She often holds, in her bare hands, whatever is left from the tide or a storm, such as a star fish dropped by a bird or a replica of Westray Wife, an archeological object peculiar to the island. She gleefully remarks: "I am free to collect any from below the tide line. After a westerly gale, I walk home with arms full" (175).

The bodily experience of walking gives Liptrot the opportunity to physically connect to the island, which she has long ignored, since her drinking years. Growing aware of her body along with its limits and capabilities, she gets immersed in the island physically. Thus, young Amy, first alienated from the island thinking that it was restrictive, gradually becomes a part of it. Her connection to her own body and the island is a step towards the sense of unity she felt was missing in London. Remembering her life in that city, Liptrot admits, "I am scattered and never at home" (93). Orkney, however, teaches her to be integrated with her bodily existence on the one hand, and with the surrounding landscape on the other.

Liptrot proves to be an eager and quick learner on the island. She joins the swimming group Orkney Polar Bears and enjoys this activity as "a way to experience the changing seasons and different parts of Orkney" (194). They swim in all seasons and in all kinds of weather conditions, by following the tide and wind directions. Their endeavor to adjust to the natural world foregrounds that humans are natural beings who need to and can learn to live

in tune with the natural world without causing harm to it; just like the curious seals that accompany Liptrot and her group during their swims. Liptrot's direct and continuous contact with the sea in all its states has a healing effect on her. She feels she belongs in the sea. In other words, she feels safe there: "By swimming in the sea I cross the normal boundaries. I'm no longer on land but part of the body of water making up all oceans of the world, which moves, ebbing and flowing under and around me" (199). She feels connected not just to the waters surrounding Orkney but to all the oceans in the world. The island, which she once thought confined her, now connects her to the world.

Liptrot's days on the farm are so busy that although she craves a drink from time to time, she can find a reason to turn her attention to the outer world and engage herself in some activity. One day as she is building a dike, she thinks she has to work with the stones available to her and cannot spend much time worrying if she is making the perfect wall (91). To her, living on the island is like building up dikes; she has to content herself with what she has. Therefore, she tries to leave her own vulnerabilities behind and shows interest in her surroundings to tell the story of the island with all its strong winds, bare soil, sheep, seals, birds, crashing waves, powerful tides, and dangerous cliffs as well as its human inhabitants, their myths, and sagas.

Her efforts to describe the island with all its elements serve as her tribute to the island, which apparently accelerated her healing. However, her interest in Orkney is more than personal. Current ecological issues like the energy production difficulty do not escape her notice, and she gives detailed information about recent investments in utilizing tidal and wave energy on the island. Admittedly, she supports renewable energy, yet she would not want to see the island turn into an industrial zone (275). Thus, her self-absorbed inward look gradually transforms into an eco-centered outward look. Her concerns about herself are increasingly replaced by her concerns about the natural world on the island. In other words, she intermingles her own account with the story of her birthplace where she grew up. Liptrot's ability to interweave both narratives have made *The Outrun* a fine piece of eco-memoir. As Will Self puts it, "[i]t's this aptitude Liptrot has for marrying her inner-space with wild outer-spaces that makes her such a compelling writer—and one to watch" ("The Outrun"). In this respect, Liptrot can be positioned alongside new British nature writers who have resolved the subjective-objective eye tension that marked the nature writing of the previous century, for she expands her narrative from her own life to non-human lives in Orkney. Liptrot metamorphosizes from a confused and disoriented young

woman to a responsible islander who can relate herself to the outer world to the extent that she takes responsibilities to protect her homeland, Orkney with all the lives it hosts.

What makes *The Outrun* a fitting example of new British nature writing is that in this autobiographical account, Liptrot gets out of her own experience of alcoholism, questions her past attitude to the island, and learns to see herself as part of a challenging ecosystem who should do her share to keep it alive. Long walks and cold swims heal her, and through all the bodily and material experiences she has within Orkney's harsh and beautiful nature, Liptrot achieves "the freedom of sobriety" and even takes up a one-year job for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSBP) on the Corncrake Initiative, a conservation project (Liptrot 123). She reaches transcendence in her own way through physical contact with the land and the ocean, and she is committed to a cause other than herself. From this perspective, *The Outrun* is a good and hopeful example of one's engagement with nature without instrumentalizing it.

Carol Donaldson's *On the Marshes*: Justice for the marshes

Another nature-based healing story comes from Carol Donaldson with her literary debut, *On the Marshes*, which describes Donaldson's one-year journey from Gravesham to Whitsable in the wetlands along the River Thames and the River Medway in the south-east of England. An Essex-born writer, Donaldson spends six years on the North Kent Marshes, where she lives and works as a warden for the RSBP. During this period, she not only shows a professional interest in the marshland's ecosystem, but also develops a strong sense of attachment to the place. While on the marshes, Donaldson learns to be self-reliant and to live as part of nature. Her love of the marshes encompasses birds, seals, birds, plants, and human dwellers, that is, all the human and non-human elements that constitute the marshland ecosystem.

However, Donaldson's self-sufficient and happy life on the marshes comes to an end after a forced eviction. Knowing that the marshes are under the threat of a project that aims to construct residences and an airport in the area, Donaldson decides to walk the marshes before they are lost to urbanization. On the surface, walking these waterlands is a way for Donaldson to pay tribute to the marshes, for the marshes have taught her how to live self-sufficiently as a human being in the modern capitalist world without forgetting that she shares an ecosystem with other life forms. Her walk is also a journey of self-confrontation as she reconsiders her choices in life after a series of losses: she loses her caravan, where she has been very

happy and proud to live, upon a legal constraint. She breaks up with her boyfriend with whom she has been together for a long time, and she leaves her job at the RSBP, which she loved. As she walks across the marshland and remembers her trekking and camping memories with her boyfriend on the very same marshes, she brings herself to accept the fact that they were never the ideal couple she had imagined them to be. She also considers her strong attachment to the caravan and accustoms herself to the fact that she would not be able to live in her caravan forever even if that legal order had not been issued. Walking the marshes helps her get over these losses more quickly, thus her journey gains a therapeutic dimension. As this healing journey unfolds, Donaldson's personal concerns are progressively interwoven with her worries about the marshes and the diverse lives they host, which adds a critical perspective to her memoir.

In her book, the non-human is outshined by human representation in spite of Donaldson's frequent and detailed references to bird species, insects, seals, and hares, which altogether contribute to the biodiversity on the marshes. Donaldson's specific emphasis on the human dwellers of the marshes might help posit her memoir within the realm of environmental justice, which has not been widely treated in new British nature writing so far. Rob White explains that "[e]nvironmental justice refers to the distribution of environments among peoples in terms of access to and use of specific natural resources in defined geographical areas, and the impacts of particular social practices and environmental hazards on specific human populations" (43). According to White, these specific human populations, mostly defined on the basis of class, occupation, gender, age, and ethnicity, are more affected by environmental ills than other people (43). It appears that within environmental justice discussions, human health and well-being come to the forefront, while non-human nature is situated as a resource at the former's disposal. In the United States, for instance, the environmental justice movement has been criticized by some mainstream environmentalists who argue that the movement can hardly be called environmental because of its focus on human justice and well-being rather than nature (Bakari 2). Nevertheless, the problems raised by environmental justice activists need tackling. Instead of insisting on purely ecocentric or purely anthropocentric concerns, a more flexible and holistic approach that can change from case to case and from region to region could be applied, and local factors could be allowed to determine the course of such a reconciliatory approach (Bakari 36). Moreover, considering the ecological principle that everything is interconnected, separating human well-being from the well-being of the non-

human and that of the planet and giving absolute priority to either of them would be unwise. Besides, ecocriticism in the twenty-first century is turning our attention to humankind's responsibility, calling on everyone to act upon environmental injustices (Buell, *The Future* 133). Hence, Donaldson's interest in the human condition on the marshes is as timely as it is necessary.

As a class-conscious writer, Donaldson observes that the socio-economic status of people currently residing in wetlands sharply contrasts with that of those living in residences overlooking the waters. There is a tangible tension between the two: "The hard-drinking boat owners were lowering the tone in the local pub . . . . People who lived in waterfront apartments inhabited a planet different from people who lived in a container, and the two didn't rub shoulders easily in the local boozer" (Donaldson 210). Donaldson feels sorry for the people living on the marshes because they might be evacuated one day just as she was. In fact, she has been informed that people in the new developments already have complaints about the residents of the boatyards (210). While certain people can easily claim the right to enjoy the beauty of wetlands from afar, those who live there and have developed attachment to the marshes may any time be forced out. Donaldson is pointing at a problem of environmental justice and rightfully raises the following questions: If somebody is going to decide about a landscape, who should that be? The ones living there, the ones watching it, or the ones making money over it? What about the muted non-human?

Donaldson is particularly worried about the decision-making processes concerning the north Kent marshes. The very reason for her intention to walk the estuary was that she wished to experience the land before it was too late; the area was under threat from the then London mayor Boris Johnson's desire to build an airport and from the government's plan to build roads and housing (Donaldson 16). Donaldson was sad that the area was the target of politicians and builders who did not care about the wildlife there (42). Her critique of the authorities in the airport and housing project is aimed at the idea of progress at the expense of human and non-human lives: "The government wanted this land paved with progress in a bid to make it profitable and sanitized and serve the needs of London. It seemed to think of progress in terms of money, with little thought for the quiet pleasures that enrich life, such as villages where sparrows can dust-bathe" (42–43). Donaldson prefers the north Kent marshes "as a place of sanctuary for the wildlife but also for people to come and experience the peace . . . to forget for a moment their urban cares and twenty-first century stress and remember that life wasn't always like this and didn't have to be" (87). She duly asks:

"Who's to say that people didn't 'need' that far more than they 'needed' another airport or Thames Crossing?" (87). Thus, Donaldson calls for a reconsideration of humans' relationship with the non-human world.

Similarly to Jamie's trilogy and Liptrot's memoir, Donaldson's narrative also contains autobiographical elements, especially when she revisits her relationship with her boyfriend and seeks closure, and her own story also fades into the background as she conceives the past and current dwellers of the marshes as members of the marshland ecosystem that needs conservation. Donaldson's elaboration on the fragile situation of the marshland people, her attention to the class conflicts around the marshes, her reaction to the government's and the developers' plans at the cost of the non-human and human lives provide her memoir with an environmental justice perspective that embraces both the human and non-human dwellers of the North Kent Marshes. As Ben Eagle observes, Donaldson is calling for England's preservation of its waterlands, which should be appreciated. "There is a fundamental need to protect these fluid, liminal English edgelands and avoid the dominant agenda of development at all costs. Carol Donaldson should be applauded for standing up for wildness on the edge of the metropolis," writes Eagle (46). *On the Marshes* harbors hope not just because it focuses on a conventionally downgraded landscape that has now become a target of economic and industrial interests and risks being lost to urbanization, but also because it shows that a personal journey can evolve into the criticism of current economic and political systems.

Conclusion

The memoirs by Jamie, Liptrot, and Donaldson examine different facets of the British landscape and offer different ecological insights. Although they write from disparate geographies and focus on distinct ecological problems, they share a passionate voice to describe and present disturbing phenomena in the natural world surrounding them, and they tend to combine their personal narrative with the story of the landscape. With their stories expanding from the personal to the ecological, they manage to draw attention to diverse ecological problems that impact humans and non-humans alike.

Highlighting ecological problems may not suffice in the Anthropocene, for they require a critical eye and immediate action. In such an emergency, first-person non-fiction narratives, which currently seem to mark new nature writing in Britain, may be more motivating and hopeful than fictional narratives, especially those of science-fiction. Timothy Clark warns

that "[i]mages of flooding, social collapse, drought, water wars and so on are clearly the expression of an acknowledged, and growing, social anxiety, and yet also and contradictorily, of its denial through its transformation into forms of spectacle and thriller" ("The Challenge" 98). The eco-memoirs examined in this study keep away from this paradox and pull readers in the writers' landscapes by encouraging them to do something just as the writers have done: Jamie and Liptrot participate in conservation efforts, while Donaldson has a professional interest in the marshes. They all write paying tribute to the land and the life forms it hosts in order to provide various lenses through which to look at nature. This is exactly the reason why new nature writing in Britain might instill hope. After all, life stories evolving from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism may convincingly show that it is still possible to take action for our planet and leave next generations a livable world.

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Note

1 I use the expression "the natural world" to refer to the environment as a complex of all the physical and chemical factors such as climate or soil as well as living entities. I avoid the term "environment" because of the idea of human-centeredness it evokes. Similarly, I embrace a comprehensive definition of nature which does not exclude humans as a species or human impact on it.

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"There is never any ending to Paris": Manifestations of Spatiality in Ernest Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*

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ABSTRACT
Ernest Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast* (1964) contains an array of his memories of the time he spent in Paris in the first half of the 1920s. The work provides an ideal vehicle to explore the connection of spatiality to memory and text production along with how imagined geography relates to empirical geography. The essay deploys a theoretical apparatus relying on the works of Martin Heidegger, Henry Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau, Guy Debord, Pierre Nora, and Walter Benjamin in its investigation of a psycho-geography composed by Hemingway. The essay aims to discuss how spatiality can contribute to the construction of personal history and in what way it can promote text production, and it will also explore the impact of space on the psychological and emotional condition of the individual. (AT)

KEYWORDS: space, heterotopia, lieux de memoire, flaneur, cognitive map, Ernest Hemingway

Introduction

Towards the end of his life Hemingway settled down in Cuba, at his ranch in San Francisco de Paula; this retreat inspired him to record his memories from his adult years in Paris. The collection of vignettes, *A Moveable Feast* (1964) centers on the period of his life spent in the French capital from 1921 until 1926. The title of the work resonates with Hemingway's first wife, Elizabeth "Hadley" Richardson's comment "[m]emory is hunger" (46), as the first term points toward spatiality, while the second can refer to earthly pleasures of food or sight, along with the metaphysical aspects of pleasant recollections. Hemingway's bittersweet reminiscence of his youth and the inevitable onset of old age are implied by the famous motto to the book: "If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then whenever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast." (1)

Drawing on a theoretical apparatus informed by the works of Martin Heidegger, Henry Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau, Guy Debord, Pierre Nora, and Walter Benjamin, this essay explores how various manifestations of spatiality trigger the workings of memory and argues that Hemingway engages in spatial practices both on the physical and the metaphysical level. Consequently, the essay analyzes how the combination of locomotion and remembering can create individual history, how the process of walking leads to text production, and the psychological impact generated by space.

Spatial practice: A theoretical overview

While the study of spatiality has provided an abundance of models and theories, the starting point of my inquiry is Martin Heidegger, who viewed space as a multiplicity of places in which humans strive for worldliness with the precondition of "having one foot on the ground . . . , knowing where one is, and being at home there" (189). Spatiality also implies circumspection, a perspective of the "acting person uniting the reality of the past to the possibilities of the future" (Kaelin 69). It must be pointed out that Hemingway looking back on his youth was certainly aware of the "reality of the past," while for him "the possibility of the future" tended to be limited at best.

What is more relevant to this study, however, is that by locating space between the *there* and *here*, Heidegger places emphasis on in-betweenness. Recognizing that all human activity is directed to a specific end, he also points to the need for "de-distancing" (Kaelin 85), or the elimination of the related physical or metaphysical distance. Hemingway takes a walk down memory lane, and it is the actual remembering or memory construction process that conquers the distance between his past and his present. Having taken into consideration the passing of the years, he has to realize that for him the *here* is the last stage of his life and the *there* is the days in Paris, when he and Hadley were poor but young and happy. I will demonstrate how Hemingway engages in this process of de-distancing while satisfying his hunger for memory both literally and figuratively.

Foucault's recognition of the heterogeneity of spatiality leads to the identification of a set of spatial relations eventually forming heterotopias, that is, the multiplicity of spaces that are "represented, contested, and inverted" (24). The combination of space and time results in the formation of heterochronies including several sites, which are incompatible with each other, while being isolated and penetrable at the same time (26).

Lefebvre, drawing a parallel with heterotopias, argues that any spatial perspective, physical, mental, or social, invokes binary patterns such as real and imagined, concrete and abstract, or material and metaphorical. In this way, all of Hemingway's memories or the episodes from his youth have actual, tangible, or physical connotations, while their imagined, abstract, and metaphorical aspects apply as well. It must be kept in mind that his memory is selective, and he is not immune to committing the classical error of autobiographical literature, known as the autobiographical lie.

Andrew Hudgins identifies the following uncertainties, or "lies" impacting most life writing: the lie of narrative cogency entailing the simplification of a given episode through "clearing out the narrative underbrush" (542); the lie of texture expanding the story with unnecessary details; and the lie of fictional convention implying that the writer was unduly influenced by a given literary tradition. Additional weaknesses include the lie of emotional evasion and the lie of the recreated self (544–46). Naturally, Hemingway, due to his well-known "iceberg style of writing," falls into the trap of emotional evasion and simplification.

A Moveable Feast contains restrained descriptions of otherwise disconcerting events in the author's life. One such example is Hemingway's reappraisal of his relations with Gertrude Stein: "But I could never make friends [with her] again truly, neither in my heart nor in my head. When you cannot make friends any more in your head is the worst. But it was more complicated than that" (89). In the same vein, he is equally taciturn about the extramarital affair eventually ending his first marriage: "The husband has two attractive girls around when he has finished work. One is new and strange and if he has bad luck he gets to love them both" (159).

Lefebvre's tripartite model of spatial practice includes the recognition of perceived, conceived, and lived space (38–39). Inspired by Lefebvre, Edward Soja develops his own trialectic approach, claiming that *Firstspace* emphasizes the physical aspects calling on the viewer or observer to read or interpret the given space either by describing the "surface appearances," or providing "spatial explanations" to social and psychological processes (75). Thus, Soja's *Firstspace* is virtually identical with Lefebvre's perceived space including material and empirical aspects. In Soja's view, *Secondspace* is "entirely ideational, made up of projections into the empirical world from conceived or imagined geographies" (79), which establishes a connection with Lefebvre's conceived space consisting of signs and language. *Secondspace* implies the visual re-presentation of the world in subjective imaginary structures eventually giving rise to symbolic spaces and cognitive maps. As a

consequence, Soja's *Thirdspace* connoting resistance to the dominant order via its "radical openness" (68) can be considered a representational space as described by Lefebvre.

While these approaches reflect a static perspective, movement within space is described, among others, by Walter Benjamin and Michel de Certeau. The former elaborated on the concept of the *flaneur*, "the strolling spectator collecting mental notes on leisurely city walks and transcribing them into written form" (Seal), while the latter considered walking in the city as a form of text production via choosing one's route either consciously or subconsciously. As Benjamin asserts, "the street becomes a dwelling for the flaneur; he is as much at home among the facades of houses as a citizen is in his four walls. . . . The walls are the desk against which he presses his notebooks; news-stands are his libraries and the terraces of cafés are the balconies from which he looks down on his household after his work is done" (37).

De Certeau views walking or "linking acts and footsteps" as a form of text production (162). By choosing a given direction, the walker operates as a writer or a rhetorician presenting or re-presenting the city. Walking in the city means reading the city through bodies following an urban text (158). Such an urban text is created by the imposition of order on the landscape or space, which is considered the actual geography. Simple locomotion in the city retraces the lines of actual geography, or the outlines of geographical space. A walker, however, can find refuge in poetic geography (162), or in a liberated space free from physical and social constraints.

A Moveable Feast is an account of Hemingway's, Hadley's, and their son's life in Paris, and it concludes with the description of their skiing trip in the Austrian Alps. The narration is chronologically removed from the actual events as there is almost forty years between the aging writer and his remembered younger self. At the same time, it must be noted that Hemingway was an expatriate, and to some extent an outsider, both in Paris and Cuba. The memories of places, bars, restaurants, and the dwellings of contemporary literary and cultural figures are clearly identified with exact directions and street names. Hemingway not only positively locates himself in Paris, but he reads the city and allows the reader to do so as well.

Heidegger's *Dasein* concept helps in the overall evaluation of Hemingway's Paris experience. Spatiality and memory construction are connected in manifold ways, of which the title of the memoir is but one example. The idea of *derivé* by Debord, and Benjamin's concept of the *flaneur*

can also add to this because the text includes both physical and metaphysical strolls in Paris. Lefebvre's three-part model is relevant as well since Hemingway experiences space on all its levels including material, conceptual, and "living," or representational dimensions.

Spatial practice and personal history

Hemingway's spatial practices, that is, a series of figurative visits to the locations of his formative experiences in Paris provide the milestones of his memory construction process. Inspired by Pierre Nora, I assert that the city exists as a *lieu de memoire*, or sites of memory for the author. Arguing that each individual is the historian of their life, Nora distinguishes three dimensions: the material, the functional, and the symbolic, that is, the actual physical remnants of the past, the aim of memory production, and the potential interpretations, respectively (18–19). Nora posits that what we call memory is in fact the "gigantic and breathtaking storehouse of a material stock of what it would be impossible for us to remember, an unlimited repertoire of what might need to be recalled" (13). In his view "an order is given to remember, but the responsibility is mine and it is I who must remember" (15). Hemingway is internally compelled to preserve his recollections. Indeed, in Paris he amassed a "storehouse of material stock," which must be sorted and protected from "the work of forgetting" (19). It is not simply a coincidence that he recalls dear memories and events from his youth while living with his first wife, when during the actual remembering process he is married to his fourth wife, Mary, with whom he has an estranged relationship. Of this tension-filled relationship with and marital alienation from his fourth wife Hemingway remarks, "Mary was nice and solid and courageous but . . . married couples could find themselves on roads that diverged and that it had already happened" (Mellow 555).

In Hemingway's work, material memory is connected to buildings, cafés, statues, and landmarks, or places of habitation that are fully anchored in the author's mind. At the same time, since the text is a collection of memories, the book becomes a *lieu de memoire* as well. Memories also have a "seductive power," expressing a "subtle enchantment with the past" (Nora 20), promoting an escape from the present. Such a "subtle enchantment" is implied by the acerbic remarks tempering the author's nostalgia about their visit to Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas: "I felt that they forgave us for being in love and being married—time would fix that" (Hemingway 17). Hemingway's Paris is also a topographical *lieu de memoire* "owing everything to the specificity of their location and to being rooted in the ground" (Nora

22)—enabled with the author's clear description of the location of the given building or facility so much ingrained in his memory.

The functional aspect refers to the purpose of the given memory "dedicated to preserving an incommunicable experience that would disappear along with those who shared it" (Nora 23). The Paris experienced by Hemingway only exists for him, it is truly incommunicable, perhaps the only other person who would be privy to it was Hadley, who had been divorced from him since 1927. Also, in line with Nora's distinction within the subcategory of symbolic memory, dividing it into dominant and dominated, or imposed from above and from within, Hemingway's "silent pilgrimage" (23) can be considered as a figurative sojourn to the scene of his youth.

The text reflects a psycho-geography based upon the combination of spatiality and memory. The city appears as a heterotopia, the combination of sites that are represented, contested, and inverted. The first episode, "A Good Café on the Place St-Michel" provides an apt example for such a location. On the one hand, the Café des Amateurs, the counterpart of the "good café," is described as a "sad, evilly run" establishment, even a "cesspool" which Hemingway kept away from because of the smell (9). On the other hand, this café of questionable quality is located on the rue Mouffetard, a "wonderful narrow crowded market street" (9). Consequently, the concept and location of the café include opposing descriptions, as the unnamed café appears the inverse of the named one. It is in this unnamed café where he asserts his status in a Heideggerian way, echoing the idea of *Dasein*: "all Paris belongs to me" (12). Being a writer, Hemingway is also heterotopic as after finishing a story he feels both sad and happy and "always empty" (12).

The same applies to the portrayal of the couple's flat as at first Hemingway aiming to escape the cold walls of the home walks along the boulevard St-Michel to the boulevard St-Germain, eventually to a good café "that he knew on the place St-Michel" (11). Despite the clear geographical identification, the café remains nameless. The idea of the home, again in the form of a heterotopia, also becomes applicable as he places their apartment in the rue du Cardinal Lemoine where he and his wife "ate well and cheaply and drank well and cheaply and slept well and warm together and loved each other" (41).

Hemingway's Paris forms a parallel with Lefebvre's representation of space and representational space concepts. Representations of space or conceived space refer to the transformation of the given space from an actual location to a combination of sites reflecting memories. Contested or challenged spaces are also connected to memory or the process of

recollection. The contested aspect is manifested by the city hosting a multiplicity of discourses. In fact, the primary motivator of Hemingway's spatial perspective is the contestation and inversion of the given concept. The cafés also form heterochronies, which are accessible and impenetrable at the same time. Accessibility is implied by his familiarity with and frequent attendance at such facilities. Nonetheless, despite knowing the waiters by their first names, he remains an outsider. In the same vein, his home is in stark contrast with the well-arranged appearance of the café: "Home in the rue du Cardinal Lemoine was a two-room flat that had no hot water and no inside toilet facilities except an antiseptic container, not uncomfortable to anyone who was used to a Michigan outhouse" (31–32).

The spatial practice implies the perceived, conceived, and lived space. In all cases one can discover the tension between the material and the metaphorical, the concrete and the abstract. The unnamed café in the opening section becomes an ideal location for writing as it is juxtaposed against the Café des Amateurs, which is primarily serving a clientele representing the lower classes, alcohol and drug addicts. Whenever Hemingway loses inspiration, a specific café atmosphere can facilitate the writing process.

The writer as a walker, the walker as a writer

Acting as a twentieth-century manifestation of the Baudelairian *flaneur* combining the role of "the asthete and the dandy" (Seal), Hemingway takes both a physical and metaphysical walk in the Paris of his youth. The text is dominated by the motif of walking in the city, in other words, observation via locomotion. Nevertheless, the direction of Hemingway's walks or text production is retrospective as he looks back at a period four decades away. In effect, he and the reader read the city retrospectively together. His recollections center on cafés, restaurants, but he mentions racing grounds, museums, and bookstores, too. Hemingway's life in Paris has three primary locations: his home, cafés, and restaurants, but the most frequent locations are the cafés as they provide him with the space he needs for writing.

Contestation is also present in Hemingway's function as a walker creating an urban text wavering between accessibility and inaccessibility. A closed park compels him to give up his established route. It is also noteworthy that despite the detailed outline of any route the author takes either to or away from home the reader is not familiarized with the actual features or attributes of the particular street. In fact, while Hemingway creates a mental map, he is stranded on its surface, and he is unable to make significant inroads either in the physical or figurative sense into the fabric or culture of the host

community. He primarily communicates with expatriates and members of Paris society consider him an intriguing or charming foreigner at best. It thus follows that he is restricted to being an outsider either as a *voyeur* or a *flaneur.*

The chapter titled "People of the Seine" provides a good example of voyeurism: Hemingway, himself an avid fisherman, just watches those casting in the Seine as he "did not want to become involved in the fishing" (37). He reiterates that "he did not fish," that is, he did not take part in the activity intentionally. While Hemingway uses the third person plural in his description, the statement: "With the fishermen and the life on the river . . . I could never be lonely" implies a desire to establish a virtual community with the former (37).

Fishing, however, has a prioritized position in Hemingway's life and art. Suffice to mention the protagonist of the *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) Jake Barnes finding momentary respite from emotional turbulence at the Irati River in the Basque country, or the struggle of Santiago with the marlin in *Old Man and the Sea* (1952). In this vein he is not simply a watcher of the fishing in Paris, but also an expert, who evaluates the given activity and the respective equipment: "the fishermen used long, jointed, cane poles but fished with very fine leaders and light gear and quill floats and expertly baited the piece of water that they fished" (36).

Hemingway's routes in Paris cover both actual and poetic geography. He almost flaunts his familiarity with the topography of the city, and he provides the exact location for all the important facilities or places he visited or stayed at. The following sentence aptly illustrates how he reads, and at the same time, creates his text of Paris: "If I walked down by different streets to the Jardin du Luxembourg in the afternoon I could walk through the gardens and then go to the Musée du Luxembourg where the great paintings were that have now mostly been transferred to the Louvre and the Jeu de Paume" (16).

Hemingway also establishes a connection between writing and walking as locomotion not only leads to the formation of a metaphysical, but to that of an actual text: "I would walk along the quais when I had finished work or when I was trying to think something out. It was easier to think if I was walking" (36). Also in a form of a *mise en abyme,* an image within an image or a story within a story, in this case presenting remembrance within memory, the very act of writing and motion on the metaphysical level are conflated: "Some days it went so well that you could make the country so that you could walk into it through the timber to come out into the clearing and work up on to the high ground and see the hills beyond the arm of the lake" (69). The

term "it" in the first line refers to the writing process as an early form of metafiction. The description of course reminds one of the route Jake and Bill took to reach the Irati river. Since Hemingway was working at this time on the manuscript of his first great novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, we are allowed an insight into the actual writing process.

Walking evokes a heightened sensory capacity for him: "It was a lovely evening and I had worked hard all day and left the flat over the sawmill and walked out through the courtyard with the stacked lumber, closed the door, crossed the street and went into the back door of the bakery . . . and out through the good bread-smells of the ovens and the shop to the street" (75). In an earlier example, instead of submerging himself in the fragrance of food, Hemingway avoids all the eating establishments while roaming. He asserts that when strapped for money and suffering from hunger, "the best place to go was the Luxembourg Gardens where you saw and smelled nothing to eat all the way from the place de l'Observatoire to the rue de Vaugirard" (53).

Walking for Hemingway could also serve as an experience of *derivé* or drift during which "one or more persons . . . let themselves be drawn in by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there" (Debord 62). The remark "I walked in the early dusk up the street and stopped outside the terrace of the Négre de Toulouse restaurant where red-and-white checkered napkins were in the wooden napkin rings in the napkin rack waiting for us to come to dinner" (75) reveals how intensely he immersed himself in the sight down to its smallest details.

When forced to change his walking direction due to a closure of a park, Hemingway was compelled to alter his "text," which demonstrates a connection between spatiality and emotion manifest in his recollections: "It was sad when the park was closed and locked and I was sad walking around it instead of through it and in a hurry to get home to the rue du Cardinal Lemoine" (23). Yet the physical geography of a given location can be elevated to poetic geography as his description of a route leading to a "good café" demonstrates:

> I walked on in the rain. I walked down past the Lycée Henri Quatre and the ancient church of the St-Etienne-du-Mont and the windswept place du Panthéon and cut in for shelter for the right and finally came out on the lee side of the boulevard St-Michel and worked on down it past the Cluny and the boulevard St-Germain until I came to a good café that I knew on the place St-Michel. (10–11)

It is here that not only can he find refuge from the rain, but he also gains inspiration as he proudly states that "all Paris belongs to me and I belong to this notebook" (12).

Paris as a space is composed of a multiplicity of places and Hemingway's assessment of the City of Lights suggests the relevance of Lefebvre's three-part model to the aggregate space. "But Paris was a very old city and we were young and nothing was simple there, not even poverty, nor sudden money, nor the moonlight, nor right and wrong, nor the breathing of someone who lay beside you in the moonlight" (47). The empirical aspects of the perceived space are alluded to by the term "very old city," the conceived space manifested in mental images, or cognitive maps, is suggested by the expressions "nothing was simple," or "nor the moonlight."

While Lefebvre applies spatial practice or perceived space to society, Hemingway's text bears relevance to such practice at the individual level. It includes the "repetitive routines of everyday life," among them "routes, networks, workplaces, private life, and leisure enjoyments" (Soja 66), which Hemingway and, to a limited extent, Hadley definitely took part in. In Lefebvre's view, conceived space is the dominant space in any society and it is laden with ideology conveyed by "the written and spoken word, or language, discourse and text" (Soja 67). In this instance Hemingway, referring to the fluctuation of privation and wealth, makes an allusion to poverty both on the macro and micro level, in other words, to the lower social strata of Paris and his own socio-economic status respectively.

Spaces of representation or representational spaces are "directly lived" (Soja 67), and they can appear in the form of the dominated or passively experienced space "that imagination wants to change or appropriate" (68). The term "nothing was simple" in fact forms the opposite of the triumphal appropriation of Paris expressed in the statement "Paris belongs to me." Thus, Paris as represented and described appears as the passively experienced space in contrast to Hemingway's boastful declaration implying active control of the given space.

The psychological impact of space on the individual

In the chapter titled "Une Génération Perdue," Hadley, recalling their visit to Gertrude Stein's home, offers a telling example of how space can generate a negative psychological or emotional impact on someone. While at first Hemingway appears to appreciate the advice he gets from Stein, her derogatory remark categorizing him as part of a lost generation (28) and the

realization of Stein's sexual orientation makes him feel ill at ease, and he develops a gradual resentment. The dialogue between him and Hadley aimed at summarizing their shared experience is most instructive:

> "You know, Gertrude *is* nice, anyway."
> "Of course, Tatie."
> "But she does talk a lot of rot sometimes."
> "I never hear her . . . I'm a wife, it's her friend that talks to me."
> (29)

It is noteworthy that Hadley uses a term of endearment to name her husband, as the fact that they are both expatriates, strangers in a strange land, brings them closer to each other. In fact, Hemingway's description of Stein's flat is heterotopic as well. At first, he says "it was like one of the best rooms in the finest museum except there was a big fireplace and it was warm and comfortable and they gave you good things to eat and tea" (16), but as he becomes disillusioned with her he notices the "new worthless pictures hung in with the great pictures" (89).

Although the spatial practices are dominated by the author himself, there are interspersed episodes when he appears with his wife, such as this visit to Stein's home during which the young married couple in love is contrasted with the stern approach of the host. Even the title, "Miss Stein Instructs" places Hemingway and his wife into the position of children learning from a strict teacher. In this case Lefebvre's lived place, and especially that of the dominated space, may apply as both Hemingway and Hadley are passive recipients of the simultaneous charm and admonition Stein and her home represent. The couple also visits the races together and they both start to reminisce recalling pleasant memories of various trips taken with their friend, which functions as another example of the *mise en abyme*.

Heidegger's concept of spatiality elicits the question whether Hemingway has achieved the state of being at home or the condition of *Dasein* in Paris, and if the same applies to Hadley as well. It must be kept in mind that the text is produced by the established, internationally respected and celebrated writer recalling his younger, ambitious, yet insecure self. Most of the figures he met—Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, Jules Paschin, Wyndham Lewis, and F. Scott Fitzgerald—are acknowledged and accomplished artists. At this point in his life Hemingway is a struggling writer, who constantly seeks inspiration and faces an ever-present fear of not being able to complete his work. Thus, he feels especially at home in cafés, where he can gain

motivation. Hemingway judges a given location, either a café or a home, according to its propensity to facilitate the writing process. His account reveals that despite being married he spends most of his time alone as Hadley appears in the role of a supporting wife or companion at best. Consequently, he is the one who authors the text of his life and of the city, in other words, Hemingway and Hadley rarely read the city together. Therefore, the mental or cognitive map implied by the conceived space is only formed for him. According to Ulrich Neisser, while traveling the hero forms or attempts to form a cognitive map. Cognitive mapping, or constructing "an orienting schema, an active information-seeking structure," involves three steps: becoming acquainted with the new physical surroundings, finding and exposing routes, and identifying landmarks until everything becomes familiar (110–11).

Obviously, Hemingway meets all these requirements as he almost boasts with his familiarity with Paris, and he reveals new routes regularly as he recalls his way home and when facing obstacles, such as the closure of the park, he can modify his route immediately. He is also oriented in Paris by the statue of Marshall Ney. Hadley, on the other hand, rarely walks alone and she functions as a classic Hemingway heroine limited to being the object of desire and the companion at the same time. Ironically, while Hemingway is in his element in Paris, Hadley recalls the trips away from Paris with excessive fondness. In one of the classic scenes of the episode titled "A False Spring" the couple nostalgically reminisces about shared experiences in the Alps while standing on a bridge spanning the Seine. Hemingway's recalling the episode and especially Hadley's comment is instructive: "Standing there I wondered how much of what we had felt on the bridge was just hunger. I asked my wife and she said, 'I don't know, Tatie. There are so many sorts of hunger. In the spring there are more. But that's gone now. Memory is hunger'" (46). The expression "many sorts of hunger" implying unfulfilled desires or frustrated efforts at acceptance suggests that she did not feel at home in Paris.

Since Heidegger's concept primarily refers to Being in the world, which implies being at home in the world (*Being* 233) or understanding oneself in the terms of one's existence (32), Hemingway's Paris experience can be interpreted on the physical and the metaphysical level as well. As far as his personal status is concerned, he is an expatriate, which implies a certain amount of rootlessness. This limited ability to integrate into the host society is partly underscored by keeping company with representatives of the primarily Anglo-Saxon literary world or the superficial relations forged at café tables. If *Dasein* is interpreted in light of the understanding of the self, the

Paris years contribute to self-acceptance, but only in a retrospective sense. It must be noted that Hemingway spent most of his life away from America and the actual autobiographical impulse of *A Moveable Feast* does not only evoke pleasant memories preserving the remnants of his youth; the city itself becomes a metaphor for a sanctuary, a place of internal calm and tranquility he was seeking throughout his life.

Conclusion

Edward Soja's description of *Thirdspace,* "where all places are, capable of being seen from every angle, each standing clear; but also a secret and conjectured object, filled with illusions and allusions, a space that is common to all of us yet never able to be completely seen and understood" (56), can fit Hemingway's Paris. The memoir represents a futile effort to control or maintain a hold on this city constantly changing both on the literal and figurative levels. Nonetheless, Hemingway's creative imagination-fueled spatial practice represents an attempt to transform the cafés a home away from home in a city proving to be a much sought-after psychological refuge. The author's illusions recall and mourn fleeting youth, while the allusions remind the reader of the unreliability of one's memory. Judith Butler's assumption that "the more I narrate the less accountable I prove to be" (67) resonates with Hemingway's skeptical caveat in the Preface concerning his reminiscences: "If the reader prefers, this book may be regarded as fiction. But there is always the chance that such a book of fiction may throw some light on what has been written as fact" (n. p.).

Mary Hemingway's introductory remarks to the book are indicative of her tension-filled spousal relationship and shed light on the marital estrangement implied by Hemingway's previous comment on "diverged roads." What is striking at first glance is that although written by Mary, the segment displays the very emotional evasion Hemingway is famous for. In fact, Mary's passage describes the stages of the writing process virtually in third person singular, and the term "we" appears only once when it refers to the couple's trip to Spain. The distancing intent on the part of Mary is not hard to discern. The text itself is referred to simply as "this book," which suggests her reluctance to become familiar with the respective content. The same conclusion is suggested by the last sentence: "It concerns the years 1921 to 1926 in Paris." Once again, the neutral pronoun and the mere chronological delineation helps Mary "to keep emotions at arm's length" (Virágos 380) regarding the fact that her husband excluded her from his world.

Hemingway's choice to reminisce about his first experiences in Paris as his main theme underscores the formative aspects of the time he spent there. Aiming to slow down the "work of forgetting," he made a last-ditch attempt to reconnect with his youth fading into the chronological distance. "There is never any ending to Paris" (160), he writes, acknowledging the eternally lasting impression the city made on him. The analysis demonstrates that despite acquiring an impressive familiarity with the topography of the city and developing a first-name-based acquaintance with the café and restaurant personnel, he was not able to find a true home in Paris. Most of his time was spent alone either writing or searching for inspirations to write. Hemingway remained "a stranger in a strange land" where home meant the intimate companionship of his wife. The detailed description of Hemingway's everyday routes with the exact directions and enumerated street names verging on the obsessive gives the impression that the author may be compensating for the weakening of his memory.

The construction of *lieux de memoire* implies a chronological definition of the self, a search for a stable point from which a retrospective look can be taken. One of the unique aspects of *A Moveable Feast* is that it describes how the author fondly and warmly, yet ironically recalls his early years, which also include memories of events preceding his stay in Paris. Yet the latter memories are jointly summoned with his wife. In some sense Hemingway's life can be seen as heterotopic since throughout his years in Paris he truly represented, contested, and even presented the inverse of himself. Thus, the expression, "nothing was simple," alludes to a man on an eternal search for tranquility and escape from a spiritual and psychological hunger, from which an occasional stroll or later a fishing trip could provide only a temporary respite.

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Captivity Narrative as the Cornerstone of the American Founding Myth] (Eger: Lyceum, 2015). His recent research focuses on the literature of Modernism, especially the works of the leading figures of the Harlem Renaissance and of Ernest Hemingway.

Note

1 The veracity of the *A Moveable Feast* has long been the subject of controversy, and Hemingway's remark "[n]o one can write true facts in reminiscence" (Mellow 592) has deepened the respective quagmire. Furthermore, the author's comment concerning omissions and ellipses in the very text suggests ambiguity both in the textual and literary sense: "You could omit anything if you knew that you omitted, and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood" (58). The respective ambiguity inspired J. Gerald Kennedy and Mark Spilka to search for signs of androgyny "behind public displays of virility and fictional provings of masculine integrity" (Spilka 2). While such contentions certainly fall in line with research results emphasizing a shift from toxic to anxious masculinity in Hemingway's works, my essay prioritizes the role of memory and its capability to form and re-form space both literally and figuratively in *A Moveable Feast.*

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"Asiatic Black Man": W. E. B. Du Bois and Langston Hughes in Soviet Asia
Part I—The Shifting "Double-consciousness" of Du Bois

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HJEAS

ABSTRACT

This essay seeks to revisit the curious case of the "Asiatic Black Man" by demonstrating how this identity, inherent in the collective unconsciousness and shared by Muhammad Ali, W. E. B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, and Paul Robeson, could be consolidated as an "imagined community" through the microhistory of African Americans experiencing Soviet Asia. The essay proposes Afro-American Eurasianism as a transcontinental approach to converge the transnational, transatlantic, and transpacific perspectives in the Eurasian landmass, wherein the consilience of the Soviet overarching ambition of becoming the only world power as well as various themes that connected the micro-narrative of African Americans with the big history[1] of Asia rendered Eurasianism as a shared political ideology, to be exploited by each side as a grand strategy in ending global racial politics. By positioning the twin cases of Du Bois and Hughes, this paper aims to show how the Soviet Union's divergent endeavors of the "world revolution"—with Hungary and China as their primary targets for exporting revolutions in order to control the Eurasian "heartland"—and "socialism in one country"—with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as the in-the-making products of the Soviet nation-building experiments so as to convey the raceless image of Potemkin villages through Central Asia's window to the world—could draw them away from their initial embrace of Black nationalism and shape their radical thoughts toward the Soviet cause. Moreover, this study posits that Soviet Asia functioned as a psychogeographical and geopolitical conduit that facilitated the elaboration of the Afro-American "Asiatic Black Man" fantasy and imagination of the communistic utopia as an alternative international order, while it unexpectedly resulted in a new "double-consciousness," compelling Du Bois and Hughes to oscillate between Moscow and Beijing/Tashkent. (YZ)

KEYWORDS: Afro-American Eurasianism, Asiatic Black Man, Langston Hughes, Manchukuo, Soviet Asia, W. E. B. Du Bois, Hungary, China, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Introduction: Repositioning the "Asiatic Black Man" in the Soviet Eurasian context

During an ordinary day amidst the Vietnam War, the former World Boxing Champion Muhammad Ali made a less publicized, yet unique revelation about his identity in a radio appearance in Louisville: "I am not a Negro . . . I am Muhammad Ali . . . . And I am an Asiatic Black man" (qtd. in Deutsch 194). Ali's deliberate quest for inspiration from Asia in his identity making process led Nathaniel Deutsch to interpret his "Asiatic Black Man" as "the pan-Asiatic racial identity which tens of thousands of African Americans began to embrace in the first few decades of the twentieth century" (198).

As Deutsch suggests, the idea of this identity might have originated from Noble Drew Ali, who established the Moorish Science Temple in 1913 and described the African Americans as "olive skinned" and "Asiatic" (196). Indeed, Drew Ali, in his pamphlet *The Holy Koran of the Moorish Science Temple of America*, invited African Americans, whom he imagined to be "the fallen sons and daughters" of ancient Moabites, to embrace Islam and to build "the Asiatic Nation of North America" (56). Subsequently, with the *Ahmadiyya* movement in the United States and the establishment of the Nation of Islam by Wallace Fard Muhammad in Detroit in 1930, African Americans automatically assumed an "Asiatic" identity by converting to Black Muslims. Later, as Pauline Guedj in her article "Des 'Afro-Asiatiques' et des 'Africains'" [The "Afro-Asians" and the "Africans"] points out, "Afro-Asian" Muslims gradually realized their African origin was no less important. The rise of Afrocentrism in the American academia in the 1980s eventually cast Islam out of mainstream Black nationalist ideology, for it was considered as a religious tool once used by the Arabs to enslave Africans—the same way as Christianity was turned into a tool of subjugation by the Europeans—and so Afro-Asians became Africans again.

However, the Muslim identity of Muhammad Ali did not prevent him from sympathizing with the atheist Viet Cong, suggesting that the construction of the "Asiatic Black Man" identity should be understood as primarily influenced by factors other than religion. Alternatively, there was another trend among African American intellectuals and artists in developing the identity of the "Asiatic Black Man," based on the "imagined" shared cultural heritage and bloodline between Asia and Africa, rather than on religion. Already in the 1930s, bass baritone and civil rights activist Paul Robeson stated that the purpose of his artistic creation was "to show my poor people that their culture traces back directly to the great civilizations of Persia,

China and the Jews" (qtd. in Boyle and Bunie 284). W. E. B. Du Bois, however, claimed that "[t]he Asiatic and African blacks were strewn along a straight path between tropical Asia and tropical Africa," where the Chinese, Japanese, and Arabs were considered as mixed-race populations exhibiting a blend of Negroid and Mongoloid traits (*The World and Africa* 115), thus revealing his Afro-American version of *Drang nach Osten*. A term similar to "Asiatic Black Man" appeared in Langston Hughes's autobiography *I Wonder As I Wander*, published in 1956, where he depicted a Pamir Red Army friend he met in Ashgabad, Turkmenistan, as "a Chinese Negro, very brown" (130). Even though Deutsch mainly uses "Asiatic Black Man" as a metaphor, the term in fact embodies what Carl Jung in his *Von den Wurzeln des Bewusstseins* [From the Roots of Consciousness] calls "archetype," which is the representation of the collective unconscious, brought into reality through the *schöpferische Phantasie*, or "creative imagination" (94–95). Consequently, the "Asiatic Black Man" became one of the "imagined communities," which are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (Anderson 6).

Transnational American Studies is prompting a rediscovery of historical, political, and cultural connections between African Americans and Asians (see Ho and Mullen), and it offers three prevailing analytical frameworks for contemporary scholarship. The first framework explores the intricate relationship between Black nationalism and Black internationalism, bridging the objective of empowering African Americans within the US with Asian diplomatic, ideological, and even military endeavors for racial equality, involving countries and regions such as Imperial Japan, Maoist China, and Soviet Central Asia, as a global resistance campaign against what Roderick Bush identifies as the "white world supremacy" (Baldwin; Bush; Frazier; Gallicchio; Horne). Nevertheless, this framework essentially mirrors a Black Atlanticist perspective that treats Afro-American internationalism as a strategy without considering the self-perceived "Pan-Asiatic" identity within the African American community. Furthermore, the emphasis on "Black" overlooks the nuanced perspective some African Americans hold toward color. For example, Langston Hughes identified himself as "Brown" rather than "Black." It was also "Brown" that connected Muhammad Ali with the Vietnamese, as he stressed: "Why should they ask me to put on a uniform and go ten thousand miles from home and drop bombs and bullets on brown people in Vietnam while so-called Negro people in Louisville are treated like dogs?" (qtd. in Deutsch 193).

The second analytical framework is particularly championed by scholars with East Asian backgrounds advocating for a transpacific viewpoint that underscores the connections between African American leftist thinkers, including Du Bois, Robeson, and Hughes, with East Asian nations, such as China, Manchukuo, Japan, and Korea, and disclosing the shared East Asian-Afro-American experiences of a cross-racial collaboration against racial discrimination in the 1930s and 40s (Gao; Huh; Taketani). However, this transpacific perspective is no more than an antithesis to the transatlantic one; it neglects the internalization of the "Asiatic" identity in African Americans' historical interactions with Asia as well.

The third is the so-called "Afro-Orientalism," defined by Bill V. Mullen in *Afro Orientalism* as "a counterdiscourse that at times shares with its dominant namesake certain features but primarily constitutes an independent critical trajectory of thought on the practice and ideological weight of Orientalism in the Western world" (xv). Accordingly, Afro-Orientalism is a post-colonial version of Edward Said's Orientalism that provides African Americans with a conceptual platform to narrate their "subaltern" experiences in the Western capitalist world so that they could foster cultural understanding with the "colored" people in the Orient. This approach convincingly captures the Afro-American fantasy of Asia and seems to partially solve what concerns G. C. Spivak in her article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" when she claims that "in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak"; yet she dismisses the point that "the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (287). Still, it underscores the one-sided perception of Asia in the Black Atlanticist narrative and glosses over that the Occident and the Orient might not be perceived as fundamentally distinct, as Du Bois "began to see the race problem in America, the problem of the peoples of Africa and Asia, and the political development of Europe as one" (*Dusk* 23–24). Like the previous perspectives, Afro-Orientalism primarily deals with the dynamics between the East and West but fails to take notice of the conflicts between the developed North and subaltern South in the African American narrative.

What is missing so far is a perspective that can reconcile, unite, and transcend the transnational, transpacific, and transatlantic approaches "as one." Considering the inadequacies of existing frameworks in addressing the curious case of the "Asiatic Black Man," I would propose here the framework of Afro-American Eurasianism as a transcontinental approach to fill this vacuum in literature, with a primary focus on Du Bois's writings centering on the Asiatic part in his Soviet trips, and on Hughes's detailing his encounters

in Soviet Central Asia, for analysis. By demonstrating how the microhistory of African American experiences in Soviet Asia can be tied to the narrative and strategy of Afro-American Eurasianism, I argue that Soviet Asia served as a psychogeographical and geopolitical medium through which the identity fantasy of the "Asiatic Black Man" could be further developed to connect the cultural identification of African Americans with Asia, to align their struggle against the racist, capitalist world with the communistic cause, and to deepen their imaginative exploration and pursuit of an alternative international order.

Soviet Asia is defined here as the Asiatic part of the Eurasian USSR in the narrow sense, as well as the "Asiatic" countries that adopted the Soviet system in one way or another in the larger sense, such as Manchukuo and the People's Republic of China, or even Hungary, as I will show in the case of Du Bois. Although Robeson visited the Uzbek SSR to attend the International Festival of Films of African and Asian Peoples in August 1958 (Duberman 468), the heat in Tashkent proved to be so intense, while his cold persisted, that it ultimately forced him to seek recovery along the Black Sea coast, instead of exploring the country (468–69). Hence, Robeson's experiences in Soviet Asia are only briefly mentioned to echo the narratives of Du Bois and Hughes, and to support the construction of the approach of Afro-American Eurasianism.

Eurasianism emphasizes the role of geography in shaping a country's cultural identity and geopolitical positioning, the latter of which could be attributed to English geographer Halford J. Mackinder's strategic idea, expressed in "The Geographical Pivot of History," that gaining control over the Eurasian landmass ("Heartland") is the key to dominating Afro-Eurasia ("World-Island"), and the entire world, subsequently. While Eurasianism as a political ideology is commonly found in Eurasian states like Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkey, it has also assumed similar forms in Hungarian Turanism and Japanese Pan-Asianism.

Eurasianism was introduced to America when Russian-born American historian George Vernadsky began to teach Russian history at Yale University in 1927. In his *A History of Russia*, first published in 1929, he traces the origins of the Russian state to the Eurasian nomadic political organizations of the Scythians, Sarmatians, Hunnic tribes, Avars, and Altaic Turks (14–30) and states that the Russians were direct political successors of the Turko-Mongols (9), making Eurasian Russia "the only real unity possible" (5). Vernadsky's historiography of Russia from a Eurasian perspective led the English-speaking academia to reexamine the influence of Asia on Russia, exemplified by English historian Arnold J. Toynbee's recognition of Russian

Cossacks' borrowing military tactics from the Eurasian nomads to remake Russia as "the first sedentary Power to bring the Eurasian Nomadism into lasting subjection" in his *A Study of History* (374 n2).

As Du Bois used *A Study of History* as a source in his *The World and Africa*, he could not regard Russia as anything but Eurasian. Du Bois's Eurasian view of Russia was further supplemented by his observations of the USSR during his five trips to the country between 1926 and 1962. Although Russian Eurasianists initially opposed the Bolsheviks, by the mid-1920s, with the repatriation of Russian expatriates to the USSR, they either embraced a form of Eurasian totalitarianism within the USSR or adopted a strategy of establishing close ties with the regime, which led to an informal incorporation of the ideology of the government (Shlapentokh 136). By the time Du Bois first visited the USSR in 1926, the country had essentially transformed into a Socialist Eurasian Empire.

Another source that influenced Du Bois's worldview is *Histoire de la Civilisation Africaine* (*The World and Africa* 51), a French translation of German ethnographer Leo Frobenius's *Kulturgeschichte Afrikas* [The Civilizational History of Africa]. The uniqueness of Frobenius's studying Africa involves his combining the concept of *Kulturkreis*, or "civilizational circle," which considers civilizational development within specific spatial and temporal boundaries, with *Kulturperiode*, or "civilizational period," which likens the development of civilizations to the progressive phases in the biological life cycle, to highlight the developmental role of universal value in advancing the regional civilizations toward a "cosmic" one (29; 163). Frobenius's *Kulturperiode* resonates with Du Bois's embrace of Karl Marx's historical materialism, wherein history proceeds toward the emancipation of all mankind.

The civilizational discourse was indeed a by-product of World War I, as it dismantled the myth of nation-states and gave rise to influential thinkers such as not only Frobenius and Toynbee, but also Oswald Spengler. Spengler in the second volume of *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* [The Decline of the West] criticizes *Das Volk*, or the "people," a nationalist product of German Romanticism, which exalted folklore, mythology, and the shared elements of language and history in the formation of national identity in the 19th century, and refines *Rasse*, or "race," not as *Das Volk*, but as *der Mensch*, or the "universal people," formed in history through the *Zusammenhang des Blutes*, or "consanguinity" (132–33). In this vein, Du Bois's emphasis on the shared blood ties between "Asiatic and African blacks" was an attempt to move away from his previous Black nationalist idea of the *Black Folk*, pronounced in his

The Souls of Black Folk (1904) and influenced by the Germanic *Das Volk* he studied at the University of Berlin in the late 1890s, toward Spengler's *Rasse*. The imagined consanguinity prompted Du Bois to cite Hughes's poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" to stress Africa's civilizational links with Europe and Asia, symbolized in the confluence of ancient rivers: "I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins. / My soul has grown deep like the rivers" (qtd. in *The World and Africa* 61).

One should not neglect Du Bois's employment of German geographer Friedrich Ratzel's work to support his reconstruction of Africa's relations with the world. In *The History of Mankind*, the English translated version of *Völkerkunde* [Ethnology] that Du Bois read, Ratzel perceives Central Asia as a region inhabited by people of mixed European and Asian ancestry and hypothesizes that Central Asians' migration westward and southward spread its civilization to Africa (Vol. 1 ix; 12). Russia, after its conquest of Turkestan and Siberia, is seen by him as "both European and Asiatic, which also ethnographically stands on the threshold and is fortunate enough in no relation to be measured purely by a European standard" (Vol. 3 568); and Russian influence reached as far as America through its "Asiatic coasts of Behring Straits" (Vol. 2 107). Facilitated by Ratzel's macroscopic synthesis of anthropology and geography, Du Bois's comprehensive worldview of uniting the regions of America, Africa, Europe, and Asia by blood and civilizational ties was born through his Afro-American reading of Eurasianism.

The creation of the Soviet Union served as a watershed in Du Bois's intellectual transformation as well as in Hughes's perception of world affairs. The configuration of the USSR as a union of socialist countries within the Eurasian landmass could be seen as both a post-colonial epistemological shock and a post-nationalist political one. Epistemologically, it reversed Imperial Russia's policy of favoring Europe's domination over Asia, and instead linked the Eurasian civilization with Marxist ideology, leading to the formation of a Soviet proletarian identity as a universal human identity against the racially defined colonial hierarchy. Politically, it fostered domestic Soviet nation-states in Central Asia, while endeavoring to export its socialist revolution worldwide.

Given the shared discontent among African Americans with domestic racism and international colonialism, Afro-American Eurasianism emerged, through Du Bois's, Hughes's, and Robeson's encounters with Soviet Asia, as a micro-narrative, as well as a grand strategy. As a micro-narrative, it sought to encourage Afro-Asian solidarity in Soviet Eurasia

through their personal experiences in actualizing the self-identity of the "Asiatic Black Man" to gain a greater sympathy from the Asians who embraced socialism. As a grand strategy, it aimed to leverage the geopolitical design of the Eurasian landmass, the superpower status of the USSR, the shared history of the colonized subaltern South and the post-colonial socialist South, and the communistic teleology of emancipating all the humankind from racism and colonialism from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the Jim Crow US, the industrialized North, and global capitalism.

By intertwining its solidarity narrative with transcontinental strategy, Afro-American Eurasianism evolved into an organized political ideology that aligned the African American anti-racist struggle with the Soviet revolutionary stages of transitioning from Mackinder's Eurasian "Heartland" to the Afro-Eurasian "World-Island" so that both the Pacific-Atlantic divide and "color-lined" intercontinental distance would be overcome for the sake of a communistic world order. However, in the Soviet practice of Eurasianism, there was still an imbalance in the power structure between Europe and Asia, contributing to the dialectical relationship between the "Asiatic Black Man" and the Afro-American Eurasian Narrative, evident in Du Bois's and Hughes's dilemma in making a choice between aligning themselves more closely with Moscow for ideological reasons, and with Asia for imagined cultural affinity and blood relationship. As a result, a new "double-consciousness," that of "an Asiatic Black Man, a leftist/socialist/Communist," was born against the geopolitical split between the European Kremlin and Soviet Asia.

Due to the complexity of the topic, this paper is divided into two interrelated parts, with the current one serving as Part I to analyze Du Bois's intellectual trajectory from the Russo–Japanese War to the Cold War and his perception of Afro-American-Eurasian relationship revolving around his Soviet trips, to be followed by Part II later on, with Hughes's escapade in Soviet Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in its focus. By aligning the twin "Asiatic Black" cases of Du Bois and Hughes in parallel in the Eurasian context, the impact of Soviet practices of "world revolution" and "socialism in one country" on African Americans becomes more apparent, molding their perceived black nationalism and internationalism into the Afro-American Eurasian discourse as a vehicle for embracing cosmic universalism, exemplified in their case through communism.

From Japan to Soviet Russia: The Eurasian paradigm shift in the "double-consciousness"

In his *The Souls of Black Folk* (1904), Du Bois invoked the conception of "double-consciousness," disclosing the dual nature of African Americans' self-consciousness:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness: an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (3)

Not coincidentally, the "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" correlates with Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic concept of the "gaze." The Lacanian "gaze" initially emerges in the "mirror stage," which can be understood as a process of self-identification, where the subject observes himself in the mirror when he assumes a specular image. This specular image then gives rise to the ideal self, forming the *imago*, or what Lacan calls the "Ideal-I," which situates the agency of the ego in conflict with the subject's own reality ("Mirror Stage" 1–2). Accordingly, the "two-ness," emphasized by Du Bois, not only suggests a unique dualistic phenomenon in African American consciousness, but it also indicates the awakening of Black consciousness, manifested in their introspective quest for an idealized ego, even amidst internal conflicts.

As vision establishes connections between the self and the other, allowing them to view each other in the framework of represented figures, there is always a possibility that "something slips, passes" and "is transmitted, from stage to stage, and is always to some degree eluded in it" (Lacan, "Split" 73). The elusive nature of "gaze" consequently occurs when the self is scrutinized insufficiently by others, leading to the external underappreciation of the internal ideal ego and the subject's anxiety for self-fulfillment. This eventually results in the split between the vision and the gaze, where the endoscopic, self-satisfied imagination clashes with the alienating reality brought about by the exoscopic perspectives. Putting Du Bois's "double-consciousness" in Lacan's psychoanalytic framework, it becomes evident that African Americans, in Du Bois's time, were acutely aware of the "gaze" directed at them by white others, which substantiates the very existence of racial discrimination. Their reflections on the exclusion of "Blackness,"

enforced by the external white order, from "Americanness," in turn, hindered their attempts to reconcile the "double-consciousness" of being "an American, a Negro" into a coherent, idealized self-identity, and cast the two *imagos* in a perpetual state of discord.

Nevertheless, Lacan regards the split between the vision and the gaze as a window of opportunity, opening for the subject to engage in a "scopic drive," which enables him to actualize his *weltanschauung* by demonstrating visionary distinctions from the others ("Split" 78). Similarly, Du Bois seized upon "double-consciousness" as a space for maneuvering and put forth his vision for the Black community, namely, "to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self" (*The Souls* 4). The remarkable aspect of Du Bois's proposition lies in the way that he sought a worldly engagement with the pervasive issue of racial discrimination and segregation, merging the consciousness of "measuring one's soul by the tape of a world" with his prediction that "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line" (*The Souls* vii). Ultimately, Du Bois's strategy corresponds to the dynamic interaction, proposed by Lacan, between the *Innenwelt*, symbolizing the subjective inner world, and the *Umwelt*, representing the environment or the physical world. According to Lacan, the temporal dialectic of the "mirror stage" propels the subject from a recognition of their insufficiency toward the anticipation of a coherent mental self-image, whose process involves the spatial identification of fantasizing the fragmented body-image into a form of totality, referred to as "orthopaedic," and culminates in the mental development of a synthetic "alienating identity" that bridges the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt* ("Mirror Stage" 3).

Du Bois's apprehension of world politics turned out to connect the unfolding events occurring along the racial fault lines of the *Umwelt* with the "double-consciousness" rooted in the *Innenwelt*. Shortly after the publication of *The Souls*, the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) broke out, and Japan as a rising "yellow" power in the Far East quickly arrested the attention of many a spectator in the then racially hierarchical world. In his essay "Atlantic University" (1905), Du Bois promptly acknowledged the "epoch-making" Japanese challenge to a white imperial power even though the result was not certain at the time of his writing: "To-day for the first time in a thousand years the great white nation is measuring arms with the yellow nation and is shown to be distinctly inferior in civilization and ability . . . . The foolish modern magic of the word 'white' is already broken and the color line has been crossed in modern times as it was in the great past" (*From Servitude to Service* 197).

Contrary to the anxieties of Russian sociologist Jacques Novikow, who popularized the term "Yellow Peril" in the late 19th century but prioritized the economic concern of cheap Chinese labor over possible Asian military threats (*Le péril jaune* [The Yellow Peril] 1), the Russo–Japanese War heralded an era in which armed struggles were gradually adopted as a means for the "colored" people to achieve their emancipation. As August Meier and Elliott Rudwick suggest, the Japanese victory together with the Irish Easter Rebellion in 1916 made Du Bois believe that "no people ever achieved their liberation without armed struggle" and "a race war in which Negroes, allied with Asians, would overwhelm the white race" (241). Other Black leaders, such as Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey, found common ground with Du Bois in considering the Japanese as potential allies for racial emancipation during World War I (Horne 45–46). Through the fantasy of a potential racial/martial alliance with Japan, African Americans incorporated Asia into their "double-consciousness," establishing an agreement on an Afro-Asian solidarity and developing the alter ego of the "Asiatic Black Man."

One of the consequences of the Russo–Japanese War was the creation of a climate of discontent, paving the road for social upheaval and political change in Russia, while the anti-war sentiment triggered by World War I played a crucial role in undermining the authority of the Provisional Government and consolidating the Bolshevik rule after the October Revolution of 1917. Instead of concentrating exclusively on how Japan would lead the way in dismantling global racial segregation, Du Bois soon developed an interest in the Russian Revolution, as a fragment of Du Bois's manuscript on the Bolsheviks testifies (*The Bolsheviks* [fragment], ca. 1917). The unexpected collapse of Imperial Russia provided Du Bois with a new opportunity to re-evaluate Russia, this time from the angle of revolutionary socialism.

Without first-hand knowledge of the situation in Russia, however, Du Bois in the July issue of *The Crisis* (1921), speculated that "time may prove . . . that the Russian Revolution is the greatest event of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and its leaders the most unselfish prophets" ("Negro and Radical Thought" 103). Rather be a silent observer than an adventurer, he sat "with waiting hands and listening ears, seeing some splendid results from Russia" (103). However, in 1924 a letter from James C. Jackson, an African American expatriate in Russia, disrupted the tranquility in Du Bois's editorial life:

> One must visit Russia to understand and appreciate the many beautiful social developments which are taking place in this strange land! Here at this colony are students from all the darker races—all except that of the Negro. And I am daily asked why no Negroes have come. There is a perfect spirit of internationalism here. Women from the various Circassian republics and Siberia, men from China, Japan, Korea, India, etc. all live as one large family, look upon one another simply as human beings. . . . Under the old regime Russia was burdened with many race problems, but today under the Soviet System there are no race problems. . . . Stanislaw Pestkovsky, former president of the Kirghiz Soviet Republic, and I spend many leisure hours together, and he never tires of telling me how Russia alone of all countries has solved her racial problems.
>
> (*Letter from James C. Jackson to W. E. B. Du Bois,* 15 July 1924. 1–2)

Motivated by his desire to learn about racial equality in Soviet Russia, Du Bois conceived the idea of visiting the country. Concurrently, he held a strong interest in the socialist political economy. With "ethical, economic," and "psychology" questions outlined in his research plan (*Russia Research Questions, ca. 1926*.), Du Bois embarked on his first visit to Russia in 1926.

It should be noted that Du Bois's trip coincided with the recall of Stanislaw Pestkowski, a Polish revolutionary working for the Soviet Union, mentioned by Jackson as "Stanislaw Pestkovsky" in his Russian form of name, from Mexico City to Moscow. About one month after Jackson wrote the letter to Du Bois, on 24 August 1924, Mexico became the first country in the Americas to recognize the USSR. Consequently, Pestkowski not only served as the Secretary of the Kirghiz (Kazakh) Regional Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (1919–1920), but also as the first Soviet ambassador to Mexico (1924–1926). His role of ambassador involved representing the Soviet Union as a genuine "worker's state," financing revolutionary oppositionist newspapers, encouraging the Mexican railway workers to organize a strike against the industrialists, and seeking to cultivate friendly relations with Chinese diplomats by demonstrating sympathy and offering solidarity to the oppressed and discriminated-against Chinese nationals in Mexico. All of these actions were in line with his mission to neutralize what he saw as the "petty-bourgeois" Mexican government or even to challenge the hegemony of US "capitalist imperialism" in Latin America for the goal of world revolution (Spenser 38–44). As the Japanese government was not committed to exporting a racial war, envisioned by African Americans, on a global scale, Mexico served as the first testing ground for Du Bois's hope of "seeing some splendid results from Russia."

Given this context, it is reasonable to assume that Du Bois bode his time from 1924 to 1926, letting the two-year term of Pestkowski's ambassadorship influence his decision to visit the Soviet Union.

Curiously, in his *Istoriya meksikanskix revolyucij* [History of the Mexican Revolutions], published under the pseudonym of Andrej Vol'skij in 1928, Pestkowski furnished the Marxist theory of class struggle with the theory of identity politics to analyze the revolutions in Mexico. In his view, Mexican Indians, constituting 50% of the population, belonged primarily to the peasantry class, the Mestizos of mixed European and indigenous ancestry spanned across the classes of workers, intelligentsia, and petty-bourgeois to represent 40% of the Mexicans, while the small percentage of Criollos (10%) formed the elite classes of intelligentsia and petty-bourgeois (8–9). The 1810 Mexican War of Independence against the Spaniards unfolded as the Criollo elites joined the Amerindians in participating in the identity construction of "Americanness," and the Mestizos aligned with their cause due to their shared opposition to the Spanish colonial monopoly on trade (42, 46). On the other hand, the 1910 Mexican Revolution occurred as a result of the concentration of capitalism, which marginalized the urban bourgeoisie, turned Indians into semi-serf peons, and led to the widespread proletarianization of Mestizos and Criollos in the countryside (94). Pestkowski thus illustrated the Latin American version of "double-consciousness" of Mestizos and Criollos as "a Latin European, an American," coinciding with Du Bois's Afro-American identity of "double-consciousness." For the realization of the world revolution, currying favor with Mestizos, Criollos, and African Americans alike into the united front against global capitalism was important for him. Through Jackson's correspondence with Du Bois, Pestkowski's endeavor in the "world revolution" reached a tacit accord with Du Bois's concept of "race war," and a rosy picture of Soviet Eurasia was painted to indicate a classless and raceless future for the Americas.

Blurring the reality: Du Bois's evaluation of Soviet Russia as a projection of Eurasian fantasy

Despite his visit to the Soviet Union, Du Bois seemed to be swayed by a strong observation bias; his account of Soviet Eurasia is no less a documentary writing than a projection of his idealized fantasy of the country, whose temporary predicaments surrendered to the teleological purpose of communism. After returning to America, Du Bois put out a release through the channel of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to confirm Jackson's finding that there were no racial issues

in Soviet Russia (*No Race Prejudice in Russia Declares Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois,* 24 June 1927). In the release, he was particularly attentive to the diverse, multiethnic composition of the largest country in the world and noticed Russia's distinctive Asiatic nature: "seven Iranians, ten varieties of Finns, twelve groups of Turks and Tartars, two sets of Monguls; besides Jews, Gypsies, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and five or six other races" (1). He wished to remind the American audience that "[n]o such tremendous mixture of race under one government has been seen elsewhere in the world, not even in the United States of America"; and his pertinent question was: "How does the new revolutionary government of Russia face the question of Race?" (2)

"Local governmental autonomy," as Du Bois pointed out, was the key answer: "Russia consists of ten autonomous soviet socialistic republics; and within these republics, are various partially autonomous governments based on race and language" (2). In "The Conservation of Races" (1897), Du Bois, given the bitter reality of racial segregation, called for the construction of a political community based on the distinctions of racial groups, and proposed Black nationalism as a solution to the "Negro problems" so that the consciousness of African Americans "shall unswervingly follow Negro ideals" (56). Duly, Soviet autonomous republics fulfilled Du Bois's dream of the Black nation state.

Furthermore, "Russia does not force racial segregation," he continued, "[a] Tartar may send his child to a Tartar school or to a Russian school, just as he pleases" (*No Race Prejudice* 2). To be sure, his description of Soviet Russia's practice of national autonomy contains implicit criticism of the Jim Crow laws in the South, which segregated education to limit Black aspirations. Du Bois once supported the guidance of race ideals in education for achieving a common national life ("Conservation" 58). However, in "The Field and Function of the Negro College" (1933) delivered at Fisk University, a historically Black liberal arts college and Du Bois's alma mater, he changed his educational philosophy: "If a group has a stable culture which moves, if we could so conceive it, on one general level, here would be the ideal of our school and university. But, of course, this can never be achieved by human beings on any wide stage" (84).

The ideal of national education cannot be attained as long as the privilege of receiving education persists in the mind of the youth within the group and nation ("Conservation" 85). Therefore, an ideal education system should be as inclusive in terms of class and race as possible to make the pursuit of knowledge shine: "Only a universal system of learning, rooted in the will and condition of the masses and blossoming from what manure up

toward the stars is worth name" (99). The Soviet education system, by granting ethnic groups the right to decide which education system best suited their interests, offered two options: either the participation in the national education for the fulfillment of their racial ideals or the integration of various ethnic groups into the educational experience, striving for inclusivity in the forging of a Soviet identity. Thus, owing to the Soviet shock, Du Bois found socialist internationalism as an alternative for Black nationalism and envisioned a future reform in American education aimed at enabling every African American to "merge his double self into a better and truer self": "If the college can pour into the coming age an American Negro who knows himself and his plight and how to protect himself and fight race prejudice, then the world of our dream will come and not otherwise" (101).

In a broader context, the European sense of "nation state" with one dominant ethnic group governing the rest was found by Du Bois to be out to destroy the minorities' cultures: "Usually nations have tried to suppress variant groups. They have hammered and pounded them into submission and disappearance as the Germans sought to do with the Poles, as the Hungarians treated the Slavs and as England, France and Spain have treated numerous smaller groups" (*No Race Prejudice* 3). Even in America, a nation built by immigrants, the Anglophone culture dominated: "we are trying to make Germans, Irish, Hungarians and Italians ashamed of the race that gave them birth" (3).

Conversely, Du Bois saw in Soviet Russia that every ethnic group was allowed or even encouraged to be proud of their culture and identity: "The colored peoples of the East—the dark Tartars, the Chinese and the Monguls within the bounds of the Russian republic—are given every encouragement" (3). The manifest representation of ethnic diversity at international events further impressed Du Bois. "There were not only Russians of all sorts and kinds but over one hundred Chinese and many Tartars, Caucasians and people from Turkestan and two or three Negroes," as Du Bois observed at the tenth annual celebration of Youth Day in 1926, "I have never seen a greater variety of human types" (4).

As a "colored" guest from America, Du Bois was quite satisfied with Soviet national policy in the 1920s and with his knowledge of Russia refreshed after the trip: "Russia has taken a firm stand for racial equality. She has demanded decent treatment for Africans and persons of African descent throughout the world and has gone out of her way to treat Negro visitors with courtesy" (*No Race Prejudice* 4). Picturing the future, Du Bois's paean to Russia bore a striking resemblance to his pro-Japanese sentiments voiced at

the beginning of the twentieth century: "Today Russia is the hope of Asia. She is the backbone of the present Chinese revolution and the hope of nationalism in India . . . . The solidarity of white Europe toward the colored world has been broken by Russia" (4). The Bolshevik revolution, as it was revealed to Du Bois, was also a great racial revolution of toppling the racist Russian Empire and replacing it with a union of autonomous ethnic republics under the red banner.

While praising Soviet Russia for its achievement in racial equality, Du Bois did not forget other philosophical questions that he had jotted down before the trip. He published the article "Judging Russia," in which his favorable disposition toward the Soviets was evident, as he held hopes for Russia's efforts to develop "a workingman's psychology" (189), which would position the working class as the protagonist of the state and thus break down the monopoly of the rich over capital resources. In other words, the invocation of working-class consciousness would reshuffle the ethical and economic structures within a nation state. Du Bois had tried to address the racial issue in the class struggle as early as 1921 and held that the class struggle of the Black is not identical with that of the white: "Theoretically we are a part of the world proletariat in the sense that we are mainly an exploited class of cheap laborers; but practically we are not a part of the white proletariat and are not recognized by that proletariat to any great extent" ("The Class Struggle" 151). However, this kind of tapestry of threads woven from race and the class struggle did not appear in "Judging Russia." It is safe to infer that the Soviet experience left Du Bois with an impression of a union of white and "colored" workers.

From 1926 to 1936, economic hardship hit the magazine business of *The Crisis,* and amid the Great Depression Du Bois was active in seeking opportunities to travel abroad in search of a solution that would redress the capitalist dilemma. After being asked to carry out academic research in Europe and invited by the Japanese to attend conferences, Du Bois in 1936 set his foot on the Eurasian landmass again. Between his two chief destinations of Germany and Japan lay the Soviet Union and Manchuria, where Du Bois spent some time transiting; he could not help but engage in a new round of reflections of socialism. In his letter to publisher Alfred Harcourt right after his return from the trip in 1937, Du Bois revealed his ambition of writing a book titled *In Search for Democracy*: "I want to see how far I can induce Democracy, Fascism, and Communism to speak the same language and to draw into the picture the colored peoples of the world; the people of China, Japan, and India, and the peoples of Africa" (*Letter from W*.

E. B. Du Bois to Harcourt, Brace and Company, 11 February 1937). The book was never completed, despite the survival of a draft manuscript. In the draft *A World Search for Democracy*, chapter 11 is reserved for Russia but missing in content. It is possible that Du Bois reused materials of this section for the writing of another unpublished project *Russia and America* in 1950 since he retold many of his experiences in the USSR from his first two trips in the manuscript of *Russia and America*.

In *Russia and America*, Du Bois's thoughts, as expressed in "Judging Russia," were further elaborated upon in chapter 2, titled "The Soviet Union in 1926." As Du Bois recalled, isolated by the international society, the Soviet people turned to the US for potential cooperation since democracy in America was supposed to stand with the working class, the "colored," and those without economic privileges: "The Russians in 1926 were determined to believe that the fundamental American democracy, bursting up from a land of workers, who had freed slaves and made the lowly rich, would eventually sympathize with and support the struggling Russian state" (44). Insinuatingly, he was denouncing capitalists, racial segregationists, and the administrations of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover for their joint effort to withhold recognition of a regime based on racial and economic equality, in contrast to the pro-Soviet attitude of former Mexican President Plutarco Elías Calles. In chapter 5, "The Reign of Roosevelt," Du Bois overtly criticized the National Recovery Administration (NRA) for not covering Black labor in the industrial codes, while the establishment of minimum wages only played the role of replacing Black workers with white labor in certain places so that the white standard of living would at the least be secured (183–84). The New Deal, according to Du Bois, "had not international aims and small transfer of wealth" (190). The hidden reason, he argued, lay in President Roosevelt and his advisors' lack of knowledge of economic development in the world and "they paid no attention to Karl Marx, St. Simon, Fourier, Robert Owen or Louis Blanc" (172). Contextually, he was suggesting that the Soviet system would be a suitable alternative for America because there was no racial prejudice there, and workers were masters of the state.

The aim of his 1936 trip to the Soviet Union was "to see how the experiment, which I had seen briefly and broadly in 1926, had succeeded in practical effort" (*Russia and America* 109). Yet Du Bois confessed that a transit of ten days was not enough for him to realize his goal. Therefore, he mainly drew on sources from his personal contacts and from what he read for making judgments. What he did observe were "dirt and bad manners" (107) of the Russian mass and their admiration for people with power and influence

(108). However, Du Bois regarded all these as initial obstacles to a grand project. He then, mostly by interpreting Soviet sources, delineated how Soviet democracy worked, how politics, business, and industry were managed by the government, how peoples with different origins and colors associated with one another, how sexual equality was promoted, how atheism freed people from religious persecution and paved the way for science (110–25). After all, he was certain that "it [the Soviet Union] has earned its right to exist and carry on its task" (125).

Notably, in 1937, the year of Du Bois's return to America, also marked the arrest of Stanisław Pestkowski. Du Bois's account of the 1936 trip and his subsequent reflections on Soviet policy in the 1930s evidently downplayed the severity of the Great Purge, orchestrated by Joseph Stalin. When Stalin died on 5 March 1953, Du Bois published a eulogy in *National Guardian* on 19 March, disregarding the entire issue of red terror and praising Stalin as his "judgment of men was profound" and "he suffered under continuous and studied insult; he was forced to make bitter decisions on his own lone responsibility" ("On Stalin"). Accordingly, Stalin's "greatness" was partially attributed to the Du Boisian view that ordinary people could hardly comprehend his clairvoyance, thus making any expected critique to the leader a "studied insult." Du Bois's hagiographic portrayal of Stalin as a great man reflected his fantasy for an all-knowing, charismatic leader. Indeed, this was in accordance with his personal history: he grew to admire German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck during his studies at Fisk University and might even have fancied himself as a "future black Bismarck" for the Black nation (Marable 12). While the Bolshevik revolution facilitated Stalin's meteoric rise from a humble Georgian villager to an Asiatic Caucasian leader in the Kremlin, the American racial hierarchy, in contrast, barred Du Bois from actualizing his political potential and deconstructed his idealized self-identity. Correspondingly, Stalin was the role model for the "truer self" that succeeded in overcoming the "double-consciousness."

In Seminar VII, Jacques Lacan proposes the "formula of fantasy": $\$ \diamond a$ (*Transference* 315), where $\$$ represents the "barred subject," the subject who "does not grasp himself as desiring" (361), a represents the Lacanian *objet a*, or "the object in fantasy" (269), and $\diamond$ represents the "constitutive fragmentation" that allows "a mutual identification between the subject and the object" (214). As Lacan emphasizes, the formula should be applied to the situation where the cathexis of the desired object is transferred to the traumatized subject (361). Fitting the case of Du Bois, whose lost political ambitions rendered him the Lacanian "barred subject" and in turn nurtured

his fantasy rhetoric of Stalin's charismatic mythos, in the formula, it is possible to reconstruct the mechanism of Du Bois's flight of fancy in the formulaic way as: *Du Bois* ◇ *Stalin/Soviet system*, where the Stalinist Soviet Union was comprehended by him as a desired, inclusive regime, open for a full spectrum of social class, ethnic, and racial political participation. Through the revealing medium of Soviet Asia that substantiates the punch ◇, Du Bois identified Stalin with the consummation of his "scopic drive," and his eulogy of Stalinism was no more than a defense mechanism of the ideal ego.

Between Soviet Russia and Japan: Manchukuo as the microcosm of a raceless international order on the Eurasian Pacific Rim

Du Bois's pro-Soviet stance influenced his assessment of Manchukuo and Japan to a certain extent. Manchuria was the homeland of the Manchus, who founded the Qing dynasty in China and became the point at issue between Japan and Russia at the turn of the twentieth century. Fearing Russia's encroachment on the East, Japanese Pan-Asianists established the paramilitary, ultranationalist organization *Kokuryū kai*, or the "Black Dragon Society," in 1901 with the purpose of expelling the Russians from the Amur River, known to the East Asians as the "Black Dragon River." During the Russo–Japanese War, Russian journalist and ethnographer I. S. Levitov in his monograph *Zheltorossiya, kak bufernaya koloniya* [Yellow Russia as a Buffer Colony] proposed the Russification of Manchuria as a "yellow" buffer colony for Imperial Russia to counteract growing Japanese influence and British and American commercial interests in the Far East. However, the Japanese victory in 1905 chased the Russian influence out of the region. Subsequently, the increasing Japanese influence in Manchuria led to the confrontation between Japan and the Republic of China.

The Mukden Incident of 1931 was the pretext for Japan to take full control of Manchuria, and the puppet state Manchukuo was established in 1932 with the support of the Japanese Kwantung Army to contain the potential Soviet expansion and China's irredentism. Notwithstanding Japan's geopolitical gains in East Asia, it faced severe isolation in international society, exemplified by its withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933. Du Bois once, in his "Manifesto to the League of Nations (1921)," held hope that the League of Nations would wield the "moral power of world public opinion" to advance "peace and justice among men" (63–64). However, the organiziation failed to meet his expectations. Therefore, Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations indicated its ambition to establish a raceless international order, particularly when considering the US rejection of Japan's

submission of the Racial Equality Proposal as an amendment to the Treaty of Versailles during the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. As African Americans generally held a favorable view toward Japan's cause, Japan secretly approached Black leaders for their political understanding. For example, in 1932, Japanese intelligence agent Nakane Naka, a member of the Black Dragon Society and known to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as Satokata Takahashi, reached out to Wallace Fard Muhammad and Elijah Muhammad to express Japan's solidarity with the Nation of Islam and African Americans, highlighting that they should consider aligning with Japan in the event of a war between Japan and America (Evanzz 106–07). Against this background, the Japanese invitation to Du Bois could be seen as another attempt to gain intellectual and moral support for their propaganda campaign.

Du Bois was not an unknown figure to the Japanese. In 1928, Japanese journalist and scholar Mitsukawa Kametarō published the book *Kokujin mondai taikan* [A Broad View of the Black Problem,] providing an overview of the African American political movements for the general Japanese audience. An illustration of Du Bois appeared in the front endpaper of the book, listing him as one of the "Warriors of Black Emancipation Movement" (*kokujin kaihō undō no senshi*). A section of the manifesto, "To the World," which Du Bois delivered at the Second Pan-African Congress in London in August 1921, was translated into Japanese in a sense-for-sense manner and quoted by Mitsukawa to illustrate Du Bois's endorsement of mutual respect among racial groups in the broader context of humanity (5). As Mitsukawa understood Du Bois, there was a strong sense of justice in the rhetoric of racial equality, yet the injustice of racial discrimination persisted as a harsh reality. To address this issue, Du Bois's proposition for the convergence of the "horizon line of the black people" (*kokujin no suiheisen*) and the "white-line" (*hakujin no sen*) into a unified perspective was more than critical (6). Evidently, Du Bois's prediction of the "color-line" problem reached its ideal target audience in East Asia.

Du Bois's stay in Manchukuo was as brief as a week. Although the Manchukuo regime was anti-Soviet by nature, and the Soviet influence was absent in this former Russian sphere of influence, Du Bois's pro-Soviet stance did not prevent him from recognizing the Japanese puppet state for he believed that the Japanese military presence could save local people from the loot of bandits and, more importantly, defend Asian peoples from the invasion of Western powers (*Russia and America* 131–32). To ease interethnic tensions and promote collaboration among the Manchus, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Mongols, the "Five Races Under One Union" (*gozoku kyōwa*)

was adopted as the state motto of Manchukuo. Du Bois seemed to take this to heart and concluded with the finding of no racial problems in Manchukuo: "It was a new world. My color was nothing unusual" (129).

Several months before he visited Manchukuo, Du Bois in his exchange with N. S. Subba Rao, a professor of economics and political science at Maharaja College, Mysore, expressed his wish of seeing an organized union of the "colored" people in the future:

> If now the Asiatic and African worlds are going to think of themselves only as appendages of the European world; if they are going to refuse to envisage a future quite independent of Europe, if necessary—and even in opposition to well-known European aims—the result is bound to be weakness, defeatism and lack of all organized power. On the other hand, if the coloured world wants to meet the white world on a plane of real equality and effective brotherhood, and without compromise and doubt evolve and establish a real union of all colours and of races, then first of all the coloured world must be a strong world, strong in its own inner organization, strong in its power of thought and defence.
>
> ("The Union of Colour [1936]" 151–52)

Correspondingly, Manchukuo as "a new world" fulfilled Du Bois's vision of the "union of color," contrasting with the European world, and hinted at the advent of a raceless international order where the Afro-Asiatic worlds run crisscross.

After immersing himself in the multiracial environment in the Japanese-orchestrated new Manchuria, Du Bois's interests soon shifted to "how far it [Manchukuo] would follow some form of socialism" (*Russia and America* 132). His curiosity was not baseless because one month earlier (October 1936) the Manchukuo government in Hsinking announced the implementation of a Five-Year Industrial Development Plan (Nagaharu 326). While Du Bois's confidence in the regime was bolstered by the prospect of socialism taking root in Manchukuo, he, in a conversation with Japanese diplomat Matsuoka Yōsuke in Manchuria, was more than content to learn that "in some ways Japan was the most communistic of modern states," and that the Japanese had "through the family and clan a strong sense of common ownership of all wealth, of willingness to give to others and sacrifice for the common good" (*Russia and America* 133). Japan thus became not only the beacon for all "colored" people to rebel against white international order but it also, like Soviet Russia, provided a political economic alternative for the US capitalistic system. "Russia and Japan," as Francis L. Broderick summarizes

for Du Bois, were "the fountain of socialism and the first-born of budding 'colored' world powers" (193).

Nevertheless, Du Bois in "What Japan Has Done (1937)" expressed concern about Japan's alliance with fascism. He noted that Japan found itself in a precarious position, "between the devil and deep blue sea" (157). Europe's desire to acquire Manchuria compelled Japan to seize the region preemptively, fearing Europe might do so first, while the following Sino-Japanese conflict as the result of the establishment of Manchukuo played into the European strategy of exploiting the "split between colored people" to deter Japan from seeking rapprochement with China. Thus, Japan had no option but to form an alliance with Germany and Italy (157). Additionally, he saw Japan's diplomatic rupture with Soviet Russia was the "worst of all" because the Soviet attack on family and religion contradicted Japanese traditional values, while Japanese industrialists, fearing communism, were more willing to ally with international capitalists (157–58). For Du Bois, Japan's future was enigmatic enough to elude clear predictions, leaving him with a sense of intrigue about the nation's path.

Closing the "double-consciousness" of world order: Du Bois's theory of Hungary as a Soviet fusion of Turanism and historical materialism

When Du Bois was lamenting on Japan's parting with the Soviet Union, Hungary became a culturally congenial ally for Japan. In his 1936 trip, lesser known is the fact that before reaching the Soviet Union and Manchukuo, Du Bois passed through Hungary from Germany, as he mentioned in an unpublished draft around 1956, titled "The Theory of Hungary": "I have been in Hungary twice, in 1893 and 1936" (1). Du Bois first traveled to Hungary when he was studying at the University of Berlin. According to him, Hungary in 1893 bore "a far-off likeness to my American South" and noticed that "the Hungarians were asserting their desire for independence" from Austria, while the death of Lajos Kossuth—the governor of the Kingdom of Hungary during the revolution of 1848–1849, who toured America in the early 1850s—in Italy in 1894 intensified this sentiment (*Autobiography* 174). Apparently, Du Bois's Black nationalism resonated with Kossuth's Hungarian nationalism during the 1890s, as both of them were striving for the self-determination of their respective nations.

Hungary in 1936 was under the regency of Miklós Horthy where the influence of the ideology of Turanism prevailed. As the country lost a significant portion of its pre-World War I territory and population because of the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, there arose a social demand for Turanism

as an alternative ideology to shape national identity and shift foreign policy focus away from the West for retaliation (Ablonczy 83). While the term "Turan" is somewhat ambiguous, it serves to explore the Asiatic origins of the Hungarians by categorizing them as part of the Finno-Ugric peoples within the Ural-Altaic ethnic family and establishing ethnic and linguistic connections between them and the Samoyeds, Turkic-Tatars, Mongols, Manchus, Japanese, and Koreans (Farkas 861).

Consequently, four of the "five nations" of Manchukuo could be considered as relatives of the Hungarians. This was observed by Japanese Turanist Nozoe Shigetō, who, in his 1932 pamphlet *Nippon minzoku shidōgenri toshite no Han Tsuranizumu* [Pan-Turanism as the Guiding Principle of the Japanese Nation], regarded Manchuria as the spiritual homeland of all Turanic peoples, to be guarded against European and American invaders (25–31), while seeking to collaborate with Hungarian Turanists simultaneously by revealing the Hungarians' perceived betrayal by the Indo-Germanic Europeans during and after World War I (44-46). As a response, Hungarian Turanist István Mezey in his work *Az igazi Japán* [The Real Japan] (1939), which recounts the journey of Hungarian journalist and writer János Kovrig to Manchukuo and Japan in 1933, arrived at a conclusion similar to that of Du Bois regarding Japanese activities in Asia "for the rights of self-determination of the Asian peoples" (qtd. in Zimándi 605). Eventually, Hungary, under the influence of the Japanese Turanian lobby, partnered with Manchukuo to join the Anti-Comintern Pact, initially signed in 1936 by Germany and Japan, in 1939 (Wintermantel and Sally 136–37).

On the other hand, Turanism colluded with Pan-Turkism in countering Russia's influence. In his poem "Turan," Turkish sociologist Ziya Gökalp romanticized the unification of Ottoman Turkish and Turkestani Turkic peoples under one homeland of Turan: "The homeland is neither Türkiye for the Turks nor Turkestan / The homeland is a vast and eternal country: Turan" (qtd. in Jäschke 5). While the Turkic peoples in the Russian Empire endeavored to standardize their languages by modifying Ottoman Turkish as a universal language to foster a Pan-Turkic identity, as evident in the correspondence of Hungarian Orientalist Ármin Vámbéry in his "A Tatárok kultur-törekvései" [The Cultural Aspirations of the Tatars] with Yusuf Akçura, an Ottoman ideologist of Volga Tatar descent, both the Turanists and the Pan-Turkists found Western powers and, particularly, Russia, as barriers to the cultural awakening of the Turkic peoples (375–76). With the anti-Russian sentiment and anti-Bolshevik stance in support of the "Turanians" in mind, Regent Miklós Horthy asked in his letter to Adolf Hitler

regarding the "Bolshevist Peril" in mid-April 1941, on the eve of Operation Barbarossa, "why must the Mongols, the Kirghiz, the Bashkirs, etc., or the Ruthenians be Russians," and answered the question by himself: "Today there are Soviet republics, if all of them were turned into independent states, the problem would be solved" (180).

Despite Horthy's insight into nationalism as a disruptive factor, the disintegration of the Soviet Union did not occur during World War II. In contrast, the reverie of Turanism and the aspiration of constructing Manchukuo all became pipe dreams after the defeats of Hungary and Japan in 1945. With the victory of the USSR, the Soviet impression as a raceless socialist country resurged for Du Bois, leading him to advocate: "The world had to be recast with Russia as one of the main partners, with Asia starting toward autonomy not simply in political control but in economic independence" (*Russia and America* 198). World War II had also made Du Bois realize the danger of the "race war," prompting him to integrate the race problem into a single line of thought instead: "Peace on Earth" (*Autobiography* 287). The Cold War soon ensued, and Du Bois made a brief visit to Moscow in 1949, where he attended the All-Union Peace Conference from 25 to 27 August as a foreign guest to convey his message for peace (Panova 96). Around the time of his third Soviet trip, the Hungarian People's Republic and the People's Republic of China were established in succession, occupying the westernmost and easternmost parts of the socialist Eurasian landmass, with the Soviet Union serving as the connecting link between the two. However, the US Department of State became suspicious of Du Bois's activities, questioning his political beliefs and refusing him a passport from 1951 to 1958 (*Autobiography* 11). Consequently, Du Bois did not attend the Budapest Meeting of World Peace Council in person in 1953, while leaving a draft of his speech to the World Peace Council, wherein he managed to "wipe away all memory of ill to my people of the Negro race" and "speak as an American" ("To the World Peace Council, Budapest (1953)" 270), blaming the US as "an hysterical nation" that was militarily threatening the civilizational designs of the Soviet Union (266).

The regret of not being able to visit Hungary rekindled Du Bois's personal memories of the country and invigorated his intellectual pursuits: "From these brief glimpses, and from reading and listening, I have evolved a theory of Hungarian history" (*Theory of Hungary* 1). As Du Bois anchored his sources in "reading and listening," he could not have cast off the influence of Turanism in the historiography of Hungary. Therefore, the history of Hungary in Du Bois's version began with the movement of the Huns from

the East to the West, with the settlement of the Magyars in the valley of the Danube marking the nation's birth. When Stephen I was crowned king by the Roman Catholics, Hungary became a feudal country where magnates and bishops held land, while other inhabitants were made into serfs. The unsuccessful peasants' revolt led by György Dózsa against the Church resulted in the loss of liberty and "eternal servitude" of all peasants. The serfs further suffered from the Catholic attempt to counter the Protestant Reformation and the constant struggles between the Turks, Germans, and Slavs for control of the country when the Habsburgs came in 1526 (1).

The revolutions in Hungary in the next three centuries did not liberate the serfs because they were "in essence the attempt of the middle class to wrest recognition from the magnates and to enjoy their privileges and their right to exploit the labor of the peasants" (*Theory of Hungary* 2). The twentieth century witnessed the migration of Hungarian peasants and workers to America, where they became the "exploited labor of the coal and iron mines," while those who remained in Hungary faced the imposition of martial law by landlords and their attempt to import Chinese coolies to lower wage levels (3).

The assassination of Franz Ferdinand led the Austrians to draft the Hungarians in World War I, while the subsequent defeat forced Hungary to sign the humiliating Treaty of Trianon. Nevertheless, the treaty brought peace as well as a political reorganization that turned Hungary from a kingdom to a republic. By quoting Count Karolyi's words, "[o]nly under the Russian shield can a Slavonic Europe feel safe," Du Bois sympathized with his effort "to construct Hungary on a basis of ties to Slavs, replacing oligarchy with a federation of Slavic nationalities" (*Theory of Hungary* 3). Through the Slavic connections, the Hungarian Soviet Republic, led by Béla Kun, emerged in 1919 as an echo of the Russian Revolution. However, it only lasted four months and was overthrown by the concerted effort of the Hungarian nobilities and Romanian soldiers, resulting in the establishment of the Horthy regime with the support of Hungarian nobles and American bankers (3-4). Yet the Hungarian nobles' underestimation of Soviet Russia's resistance to Hitler's invasion led the country to declare war against the USSR and the Allies. When the Soviet troops struck back westward, they occupied Hungary and established a provisional government that initiated land reform, nationalized industries and banks, and assumed control of the schools from the Catholic Church (5–6).

Subsequently, the Soviet advance of socialism in Central Europe was opposed by the US, which launched the Marshall Plan in 1947 to subsidize

its capitalist allies and boycott socialist nations, and formed the North Atlantic Alliance in 1949 as the "containment" of further socialist expansion, clandestinely collaborating with the Hungarian magnates, lesser nobles, and the Church to overthrow the socialist regime in Hungary (*Theory of Hungary* 6–7). Despite that, socialism continued to make progress in Hungary until "foreign propaganda" exacerbated the social change to the clash between the Hungarian demonstrators and the socialist government on 23 October 1956 (7–8). In the end, Du Bois viewed the reappearance of Soviet troops in Budapest as another battle for the "freedom to build socialism" and the stand-off between the USSR and the US in Central Europe a dangerous sign of a possible "Third World War" (8–9).

Intelligibly, Du Bois's intellectual trajectory evolved as the history of Hungary unfolded. The dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary in 1893 appeared to Du Bois as a reincarnation of the "double-consciousness," with Hungary representing America's Black rural South and Austria symbolizing the white industrialist North. However, when Hungary realized its independence after World War I, its nationalism, as mentioned in Du Bois's 1927 release, led to the mistreatment of its Slavic minorities, which contradicted his celebration of interracial solidarity in Soviet Asia. When the Turanist Hungary in 1936 looked east, as Du Bois traveled east, to Manchukuo and Japan, he unfortunately found their opposition to Eurasian Russia. Therefore, in the formulation of the "theory of Hungary," Du Bois intentionally hinted at the Asiatic origin of the Hungarians to stress their ties with Russia, while he utilized Karl Marx's historical materialism to emphasize the role of class struggle in shaping history against the religious and capitalist "reactionaries." Hence, the Hungarian People's Republic was theoretically reconstructed as the extension of Soviet Asia to justify the Soviet intervention in 1956. Du Bois thence regarded safeguarding socialism as a solution to overcome the Cold War structure, wherein socialist Eurasia struggled with capitalist and racist Euro-America to merge the "double-consciousness" of world order with the Communist political order.

Crossing the red axis of Budapest–Moscow–Tashkent–Beijing: The "Long March" to communism

Like Paul Robeson, upon receiving his new passport in 1958, Du Bois immediately embarked on a trip to the socialist countries between 1958 and 1959. "But today there is sunshine over the 150,000 square miles of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic" (*Autobiography* 40), Du Bois thus distinguished his fourth trip to the USSR from his previous visits. In

Tashkent, he attended the Afro-Asian Writers Conference, where the "interrelation of all cultures was stressed," and he was surprised to find that his work was "known to many of the delegates" from 36 countries across Asia and Africa and the Soviet Republics (41). After Sharof Rashidov, Chairman of the Uzbek SSR, declared that "[o]ur Conference is unfettered by any racial, political, geographical, ethnic, or other limitations . . ., it forms a firm bridge for the development of friendly ties between the literatures and cultures of all countries throughout the world" (qtd. in Graham Du Bois 1), Du Bois in his address to the Conference, *I am an American—I am an African*, reinstated his African American identity and advocated the "patriotic sacrifice" for the collective welfare of all the peoples (Graham Du Bois 2). "It is doubtful," as his wife Shirley Graham Du Bois summarized for the Conference, "if any more appropriate place for this history making Conference could have been found than the sunny tree-lined city of Tashkent, deep in the heart of Eurasia" (2). Considering the Afro-Eurasian context of the Conference, what Du Bois meant by "patriotic" was not directed solely at the US but at all continents. Indeed, in Tashkent, he became an "Asiatic Black Man," merging his "double-consciousness" of an African American into the broader Eurasian world and, accordingly, revealing his "truer self" (*The Souls* 4).

When Du Bois was about to leave the USSR for China, he particularly criticized religion, reflecting on it during the two months he lived in Moscow opposite the inscription of Marx's words on the "Second House of the Soviets" (historically and contemporarily known as "Hotel Metropol"): "Religion is the opium of the people" (*Autobiography* 41). In Du Bois's view, religion was "worse than opium," and he believed that the Soviet effort to keep religious influence out of public education should be encouraged to prevent people from believing in "conventional lies" (42–43). The theme of religion recurred during his subsequent trip to China in spring 1959. While Du Bois stayed at the border between Tibet and Sichuan province, he witnessed the 1959 Tibetan rebellion in which "the landholders and slave drivers and the religious fanatics revolted against the Chinese" (48). To express an equivalent level of support as he did for the Soviet military intervention in Hungary, Du Bois endorsed the Chinese People's Liberation Army's military suppression of the Tibetans: "Let 'Divine Slavery' persist in Tibet until China kills it" (53). Conversely, he commended the state-run education, which aimed to reduce the influence of religion, for Tibetan minorities in Kunming, Yunnan province (48); at Peking University in Beijing, he celebrated the inclusion of "the 50 or more races of China" (47).

Comparing it with his perception of Shanghai in the Republic of China era as "an epitome of the racial strife" (45) during his transit from the "new world" Manchukuo to Japan in 1936, Du Bois attributed the coherence of the multiethnic structure of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to its Soviet-style competence in uniting its Inner Asian minorities with East Asian majorities economically and doctrinally: "The Communists linked the two [China Proper and Tibet] by roads and began reforms in landholding, schools and trade" (48). Like the Hungarian People's Republic, the People's Republic of China is a twice-born socialist regime, succeeding the Chinese Soviet Republic (1931–1937). As the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) faced encirclement by the Kuomintang government in the civil war, the Communist Red Army undertook the great retreat, known as the "Long March," which "had just ended its 6,000 miles from Kiangsi [Jiangxi] to Yenan [Yan'an]," when Du Bois visited China in 1936 (46). The spirit of the "Long March" was borrowed by Du Bois to intimate the *Zeitgeist* in the unfolding of historical materialism "from feudalism, past capitalism and socialism to communism in our day" (50).

When Du Bois returned to Moscow to prepare his next trip to attend the tenth session of the World Peace Council in Stockholm, Sweden, he on the way visited several socialist countries in the Eastern Bloc and referred to the Central Europeans as "Pawned People whose future depended so absolutely on the outcome of this war [World War II]" (*Autobiography* 28). Fearing Central Europe's potential shift of allegiance to the Western side and the restoration of bourgeois rule there, Du Bois reiterated his judgment of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 as an "age-old strife between the Roman Catholic church and landholding aristocracy in one group; the rising bourgeoisie supported by Western enterprise and capital in another group; and the great mass of degraded peasants who, as I saw them in 1893, were distinctly below the level of American Negro serfs." He "was glad when the Soviet Union intervened and thus served notice on all reactionaries that the Russian revolution was still unwilling to yield its gains before a show of force" (25–26). Du Bois's positive comments about the USSR's resolution in securing satellite states were favorable for the Soviet-backed János Kádár's regime, and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences granted him a corresponding membership (26). Eventually, Du Bois embraced the ideologies of socialism and communism in his analysis of world affairs following his travels through Tashkent, Beijing, Moscow, and Budapest in 1958 and 1959.

This was not a mere coincidence. As early as 1933, Du Bois hypothesized his becoming a Communist in the USSR, stating in his Address to the Rosenwald Economic Conference, "Where Do We Go from Here?": "If I were in Russia, I should be an enthusiastic Communist" (124). As Du Bois celebrated his birthday in China in 1959, Chinese writer Mao Dun, who had translated the patriotic poem "Nemzeti dal" [National Song] of Hungarian poet Sándor Petőfi into Chinese and met Du Bois at the Afro-Asian Writers Conference in Tashkent, published an article in the *People's Daily*, titled "Yuan yueyuan renshou, guangming de geng guangming! Buxiu de geng buxiu" [May the Moon be Full, May You Live Long, the Bright one even Brighter, and the Immortal one even more Immortal!], on 23 February 1959, Du Bois's birthday, associating the beautiful prospect of socialism with Du Bois's anti-imperialist efforts and employing the Chinese saying "yueyuan renshou" ("May the Moon be Full, May You Live Long") to suggest that Du Bois should exploit his remaining years to become a Communist so as to achieve a satisfying conclusion to life, much like the full moon (565). In Wuchang in August of the same year, Du Bois met Mao Zedong, the Chairman of the People's Republic of China. Du Bois confided in Mao that he had consistently been misidentified as a Communist, although he was not one. In response, Mao half-jokingly expressed that he would gladly recommend Du Bois to Karl Marx, who would be willing to accept Du Bois as a Communist (Xu). With the statement, "Communism—the effort to give all men what they need and to ask of each the best they can contribute—this is the only way of human life" (qtd. in Kihss), Du Bois joined the Communist Party at the age of 93 on 23 November 1961.

The next year Du Bois paid his last trip to both the People's Republic of China and the USSR. The Soviets noticed that Du Bois seemed to have been ideologically influenced by the Chinese Communist Party leaders, as he demonstrated a sense of alienation from Moscow this time. Despite that, his fifth visit to the USSR marked the canonization of African American literature in the Soviet translation community (Panova 102). However, the Eastern Bloc carefully adapted Du Bois's works to align with their censorship requirements and sought to create the specific image of an ideal hero who was dedicated to combating American racism (Beck). Similarly, the Chinese propaganda machine portrayed him as a stereotypical Black hero battling American imperialism, even though the translation of Du Bois's works did not occur until he visited the People's Republic of China when most of the Chinese populace were far from knowing him. Ironically, just as Du Bois needed an ideal image of socialism to serve as a foil to America's racial issues,

the image of Du Bois was idealized as an anti-racist, anti-imperialist symbol by the socialist countries.

Two days after Du Bois's death, Chinese poet and historian Guo Moruo, who also met Du Bois in Tashkent, wrote the poem "He duboyisi boshi wenda" [Q&A with Dr. Du Bois] on 29 August 1963 in honor of his legacy and published it in the *People's Daily* on 8 September 1963. In the poem, Guo fictionalized a dialogue with the deceased Du Bois and emphasized his conversion to communism as a consequence of China's proselytization:

> Q: Dr. Du Bois, is it true that you are about to leave this world?
> A: No! I will not leave! I am just transforming myself into a red flag,
> to be planted in the place where the oppressed nations and oppressed peoples reside, and where justice is upheld for national liberation and lasting peace. (A4)

With the onset of the Sino-Soviet Split in 1961 and the PRC's aspiration to replace the USSR as the leader of the socialist world, Guo appropriated Du Bois's concept of the "color-line" to categorize the continents by colors, while he emphasized his support for China's role in guiding the oppressed people worldwide:

> A: Indeed, I agree. I've already transformed into a red flag, into a torch,
> into the bugle call of the "March for Freedom," into the fervent waves of sound.
> I want to shout to the people of the world, shout forever and tirelessly:
> "No matter the black continent, the yellow continent, the red continent, or the white continent, all oppressed people can receive the most friendship and sympathy from China." (A4)

As a result, the image of Du Bois was redesigned as an "Asiatic Black Man" by the People's Republic of China in order to monopolize the interpretation of his symbolic value with its cause, distinguishing him from the Eurasian influence of the Eastern Bloc.

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Note

1 The term "big history" exists in the discipline of history to refer to the "mega-paradigmatic" historiographical approach in interpreting world history. For further details, see *Teaching & Researching Big History: Exploring a New Scholarly Field,* edited by Leonid Grinin, David Baker, Esther Quaedackers, and Andrey Korotayev, and *Big History: Between Nothing and Everything*, by David Christian, Cynthia Brown, Craig Benjamin.

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Twisted Narratives: The Neoconservatives' Pursuit of War for Oil in the 1970s

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ABSTRACT
Following the oil crisis of 1973, President Nixon and other American officials made statements on the possibility of resorting to force in the event of OPEC's actual "strangulation of the West" (*Oil Fields as Military Objectives* 1). Such statements were followed by a set of articles that rationalized taking military action to seize the oil fields in the Middle East. This paper argues that academics, political advisers, and news commentators who later became known as neoconservatives were the leading voices behind these calls for war. Their arguments and detailed plans of attack initiated a serious discussion of the military option in various decision-making circles and in different media outlets. By revisiting these articles and analyzing their narratives, this essay draws a connection between the neoconservatives' war rhetoric in 1973–1975 and their war rhetoric in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks. The essay contends that in the effort to maintain US hegemony and dominance over a volatile and strategically vital region, neoconservatives reemployed an orientalist discourse that transformed the Middle East and its "natives" into the West's cultural Other, namely, an opponent to democracy, modernity, and liberalism that can only be dealt with through the use of force. (RA)

KEYWORDS: Neoconservatism, United States, Middle East, oil crisis, oil embargo, Orientalism, clash of civilization

Introduction

To commemorate the 60th anniversary of *Commentary* magazine in 2005, a symposium was organized under the title "Defending and Advancing Freedom," in which the participants were asked to evaluate the Bush Doctrine and discuss the American position in the world. In his contribution to the symposium, Edward Luttwak reflected on the American invasion of Iraq; he stated that "almost all Iraqi—including Kurds" believed that "control of the oil fields" was the prime motive behind the war. This is, he claimed, because "they [Iraqi Arabs and Kurds] would never dream of invading another country except for loot, they exclude the possibility that Americans

and British are expanding blood and treasure to establish a democratic and prosperous Iraq" (qtd. in Peretz). Luttwak is usually presented as an American historian, strategist, and expert in the Middle East, but rarely as a former officer in the IDF (Israel Defense Force) and a long-term consultant for both the IDF and the Pentagon. This paper demonstrates how Luttwak and other like-minded neoconservatives, including among others Robert Tucker, Norman Podhoretz, Eugen Rostow, Walter Laqueur, and Jordan Paust, played the role of expert in the service of an ideological project.[1] The analysis shows that their views on what is the best course of policy the US needs to adopt toward the Middle East, since the 1970s, have constantly been presented as political and strategic; and it argues that a more thorough background check would have proven their ideological motives and undisguised prejudice.[2] In fact, Luttwak's dismissal of Iraqis' conviction that oil was the prime motive behind the American intervention is even ironic given the fact that his article "Seizing Arab Oil," published in *Harper's Magazine* in 1975, is, as this paper demonstrates, probably the most brutal and detailed account of oil looting in history.

The neoconservatives' prejudices against Arabs and Muslims, and their links to and connections with the Israeli government and lobby in the US, have been extensively discussed in numerous books and articles.[3] Therefore, this article solely focuses on analyzing the neoconservatives' warmongering campaign against Saudi Arabia and Arab countries in the Gulf between 1974–1975.[4] The paper shows how the oil embargo and the subsequent oil crisis were seen by the neoconservatives as an opportunity to revive the post-World War II alliance and mobilize the public against an external enemy. They called for the US to attack and occupy the Arab oil fields in the Gulf as a way to prevent further increase in oil prices and prevent their use as a weapon in the hands of the Arabs. The article suggests that the neoconservatives articulated their response to the oil crisis by advocating a proactive foreign policy centered on military intervention to take over the Arab oil fields. Their logic rested on the following three cohesive assumptions: First, the ability of the US to control oil flow and prices is the glue that preserved the foundation of the Western alliance that is "the delicate network of monetary and commercial relations linking the advanced Western societies to one another" (Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky, *The Great* 83). Second, the Arab–Israeli conflict is secondary to the prime issue of the Soviet takeover of the oil fields; hence, to reach a peace settlement that is not in favor of Israel is to send a message that the US surrendered to Arab oil blackmail. Third, the Middle East is an unstable area, its inhabitants are

irrational, inherently anti-Western, and can only understand the language of force.

The article provides a close reading of some of the prominent neoconservatives' contributions in what became a campaign calling for a war for oil as a remedy for the economic, political, and cultural crises afflicting the West in the 1970s. The most notable accounts are Edward Luttwak's "Seizing Arab Oil," Robert W. Tucker's "The Issue of American Intervention" and "Further Reflections on Oil & Force" in *Commentary*, Walter Laqueur's *Confrontation: The Middle-East War and World Politics*, Paul Seabury's "Thinking About an Oil War" in *The New Leader*, and *The Great Détente Disaster: Oil and the Decline of American Foreign Policy* by Edward Friedland, Paul Seabury, and Aaron B Wildavsky. Additionally, the paper presents statements from other neoconservative journalists and politicians to demonstrate that a collective effort—only compared with the neoconservatives' effort to target Iraq in the 1990s and following 9/11 and currently against Iran—was initiated by neoconservatives in the mid-1970s to justify the use of force against the Arab countries as part of a larger attempt to advocate a confrontational foreign policy approach as opposed to détente and interdependent relations. The oil crisis was significant for the neoconservatives ideologically, as it presented an opportunity to revive the post-World War II alliance and mobilize the public against an external enemy. A war in the Middle East was seen by the neoconservatives as beneficial to prevent concessions of territories occupied by Israel in 1967 and as a remedy for the economic, political, and cultural crises afflicting the West in the 1970s. The crises encompassed the momentum gained by anti-war, women's rights, gay rights, and environmental movements, along with the emergence of Euro-communism in Europe, and neo-isolationism and anti-war sentiments in the US. Moreover, the war was perceived as a means to reestablish a formidable image for both the US and Israel after the former's quagmire in Vietnam and the latter's early setback during the 1973 war. The article also provides a close reading to the narratives used by neoconservatives during this period to show how notions such as militarism, unilateralism, preemptive war, and anti-Arab/-Muslim discourse have been part of the neoconservatives' narratives since the 1970s.

The neoconservatives' "gunboat diplomacy"

In order to put pressure on the international community to compel Israel to fulfill the Security Council resolutions 242 and 339, which stated the withdrawal from the Arab occupied territories of 1967, the Arab oil ministers

gathered in Kuwait on 17October 1973, and announced their intention to reduce their oil production by a recurrent monthly rate of 5%, and to halt oil supplies to the US and states that supported Israel during the 1973 war until Israel withdrew from the Arab occupied territories. (See "OPEC Resolution and Other Documents" in Paust, Blaustein, and Higgins, *The Arab Oil Weapon* 41–46). This action, historically known as the Arab oil embargo of 1973, was followed by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) decision to more than double the already hiked oil prices from $5.11 to $11.65 per barrel. As a result, the shortage of oil and the increase in its price exacerbated the economic crisis plaguing the Western world due to the collapse of Bretton Woods. All over Europe, inflation driven by high oil prices created a high deficit, almost doubled the cost of living, increased foreign debt, and raised the unemployment rate to the highest since World War II (Cooper, chapter 6; Stein 125–29). In the US, despite not being dependent on Middle Eastern oil, the economy "experienced its steepest decline since the 1930s" (Stein 101–17). Already struggling due to conditions largely unrelated to the oil price—such as the drain of the federal budget due to the Vietnam War, the lower growth rate, and increasing competition with Japan, Germany and other industrial countries—the American economy was hit hard by global inflation. Unemployment reached 9.2 percent; the mismanagement and panic over the availability of oil translated into long lines at gas stations and the disruption of the American oil market.[5] In 1974, the American economy entered a recession, which culminated in 1975–1976 (Stein 101–17). Moreover, the economic crisis prompted political unrest and social discontent. It led to the rise of Euro-communism in Western Europe and the collapse of the right-wing dictatorships in Spain, Portugal, and Greece (Stein 101–17).

A call for war loomed amidst this atmosphere. Several articles appeared in the American media with the notion of taking over the oil fields of the Arab countries in the Gulf. The authors of these articles shared similar views, were active in the same political circles, and in many cases worked for the same think tanks and magazines. This group of intellectuals, known as the neoconservatives, believed that keeping oil, "the world's greatest prize," in the hands of the Arab countries was an ill-formed strategy and the use of force was the only way to alter the new realities imposed on the West by oil producing countries represented by OPEC.[6] The neoconservatives' advocacy of a militant response to the use of oil as a weapon commenced before the oil embargo was imposed, and it persisted even after it. For instance, the Godfather of neoconservatives, Irving Kristol, noted:

> [I]nsignificant nations, like insignificant people, can quickly experience delusions of significance. . . . Smaller nations are not going to behave reasonably—with a decent respect for the interests of others, including the great powers—unless it is costly to them to behave unreasonably. . . . What is not comprehensible is the apparent Arab belief that they have both the right and might to use their oil to destroy the economies of Western Europe, the U.S. and Japan, to "bring these countries to their knees," as the Arab press puts it. And what is least comprehensible of all is the apparent impotence of these same nations in the face of such extreme behavior. . . . In truth, the days of 'gunboat diplomacy' are never over. . . . Gunboats are as necessary for international order as police cars are for domestic order.
>
> (qtd. in Chomsky 6)[7]

Walter Laqueur who, like Luttwak, was a former IDF officer, suggested in an article in *The New York Times*, a month into the embargo, that the US and its allies should take "military action" against the Arab "oil blackmail" ("Détente: What's Left of It?").[8] If Kristol and Laqueur's intentions were not clear, Daniel Pipes was more blunt in his request for the US to "Be Prepared to Seize Arab Oil," in a letter under this title to the editor of the *Boston Herald,* and he called for the US "to employ some 20th century gunboat diplomacy," in order to "dispel the preposterous idea that this super-power will allow denial of a vital commodity at the whim of desert sheikhs." The list of neoconservatives who used a similar narrative is endless. As this article demonstrates, the response that neoconservatives suggested to the oil crisis was almost exclusively militant. However, it is important to note that the neoconservatives' campaign for invading the oil fields of the Arab countries reached its peak long after the oil embargo of 1973 was lifted, which indicates that the main goal of this war campaign was not in any way a spontaneous response to the Arab countries' declaration of halting oil sales to the US.

Between the period of February 1974 and March 1975, the possibility of the United States engaging in war in the Middle East for the purpose of acquiring or securing oil resources was widely discussed in the American media. The most notable of these accounts was Robert W. Tucker's "Oil, the Issue of American Intervention" and "Further Reflections on Oil & Force," in *Commentary*, the neoconservatives' most prominent publication. The international relations professor expressed astonishment over the "apparent absence of force as an element in the crisis" and insisted that it was not just "excessive to insist that before using force one must exhaust all other remedies," but if it was forced to, the US should act "unilaterally" and not

wait for Western Europe's "attitude toward intervention" to be altered and for their "illusions" to be shed ("Oil"). His articles offered a detailed plan to occupy the area from Kuwait to Qatar, which he described in "Oil: The Issue of American Intervention" as a barren, unpopulated part of the Arabian Peninsula containing more than 50 percent of proven OPEC reserves, which makes it an easy target for a military Offensive:

> The one area that would appear to satisfy [military intervention] requirements extend from Kuwait down along the coastal region of Saudi Arabia to Qatar. It is this mostly shallow coastal strip less than 400 miles in length that provides 40 per cent of present OPEC production and that has by far the world's largest proven reserves (over 50 per cent of total OPEC reserves and 40 percent of world reserves). Since it has no substantial centers of population and is without trees, its effective control does not bear even remote comparison with the experience of Vietnam.

Following Tucker's lead, the American Israeli strategist Edward Luttwak anonymously published his detailed plan "Seizing Arab Oil" in *Harper's Magazine*. In this, he outlined a military "operation" to invade and occupy the oil fields of Saudi Arabia along with those of Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, and Kuwait—with the help of Israel and possibly Iran. The military operation suggested by Luttwak required a total force of 14,000 soldiers to carry the invasion and a resupply of another 40,000 soldiers to control and manage the oil reserves. The entire operation, he explained, would be finished within ninety days, "if not sooner." And in the aftermath "OPEC members would be faced with US control of Saudi oil reserves," which, if worked to the full, "could put all of them out of business for fifteen years." To operate the oil facilities after the invasion, Luttwak suggested importing a labor force from Texas and Europe to replace the uncooperative workers. For managing mobility in the desert, he suggested confiscating "every available truck and Cadillac found on the ground ("Seizing Arab Oil"). Taking into consideration Iran's strong position in OPEC and its interest in maintaining high oil prices, Luttwak argued that Iran posed the only serious opposition to this military operation:

> [W]ith a large army of 175,000 men, well-equipped and heavy in tanks even if poorly trained and worse led, with an air force that includes 100 Phantoms, with more coming, and with a navy already not insignificant, Iran could in theory do a great deal to oppose intervention. ("Seizing Arab Oil")

To overcome Iran's opposition to the war, he suggested offering Kuwait as a compensation to the shah of Iran in return for Iranian cooperation and as a way to offset Iranians' loss of revenue on their own output as prices declined. This cooperation, Luttwak explained, may result in a potential confrontation between Iran and Iraq or a Russian invasion of northern Iran; however, he concluded that the shah "would most probably accept an American action he cannot prevent, for the alternative would be war with Iran's only protector." According to his military plan, the scale of Luttwak's "operation" (at best) or "limited war" (at worst) would have stretched to include occupying the oil fields in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE, and a potential war with Iran—if Iran refused to join the military intervention—or between Iran and Iraq. If that was not enough, Luttwak proceeded to suggest a preemptive attack on the military forces of Syria, Egypt, and Jordan, and economic warfare against Libya, Algeria, and Iraq ("Seizing Arab Oil"). In other words, his small and easy military operation was nothing less than an open-ended war against almost every country in the region.

Laqueur's "Détente: What's Left of It?" was another account that suggested a military action to take over the oil resources of the Arab countries; Laqueur, however, presented his military operation as a humanitarian effort to internationalize the oil resources. The aim was not to steal the Arab oil, he argued, but rather to safeguard the lifeblood of modern societies and allocate a share to poor and developing countries. Laqueur acknowledged that the repercussions of his proposed military action might affect "some desert sheikdoms"; however, its benefits, he charged, would extend to "the rest of mankind" ("Détente"). The authors of *The Great Détente Disaster* did not share Laqueur's courtesy; instead, their account directly called for using the claim of serving the international community's interests only as a deceptive tactic to gain support for US military actions from the American public and US allies:

> Like other aggressors, the United States could claim that it is acting not only in its own interest, though that is sure, but for world welfare as well. It could set up an international consortium to sell oil at 6 dollar a barrel, with 4 $ a barrel going to the exporters and $2 a barrel set up as an immense development fund to be allocated in lump sums through the World Bank, the United Nation Development Fund or any other agency set up by recipient poor countries. (Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky 189)

In contrast, the editor of *Commentary* magazine, Norman Podhoretz, did not even consider the US invasion of the oil fields to be an act of aggression. In his view, the Arab countries were the aggressors by threatening the "nation's sources of raw materials" (*Breaking Ranks* 357). Irving Kristol agreed with Podhoretz. In a contribution to *Commentary* magazine's symposium "America Now: A Failure of Nerve?," which the magazine arranged to discuss the American failure of facing the challenge posed by OPEC, Kristol considered the use of the word "aggression" to describe a military action against the Arab countries as being "simple-minded," for, he argued, "there are circumstances when a nation may justly initiate military action against another." To proceed to consider overlooking these circumstances by decision makers would hinder the US' ability to act decisively when deemed necessary (Barrett et al.).

The call for war by neoconservatives was not an undercurrent or a reactionary response; rather, it was a coherent and calculated effort. In the majority of their articles, neoconservatives presented the call for military action as a preemptive measure to protect and control the lifeblood of the West. This initiative extended beyond preventing another oil embargo or ensuring a stable flow of oil; it aimed to prevent the continued control of oil by the Arabs. Tucker and Laqueur explained this viewpoint respectively:

> [T]here are those who nevertheless are now prepared to draw a line here and to insist that an embargo would be a just cause for force. But if the price for oil promises the same effects ultimately as an embargo, it is not easy to see the legal or moral basis for the distinction thereby drawn.
>
> (Tucker, "Oil")

> Middle East stability, Israel quite apart, is deceptive; economic strength does not necessarily translate into political and military power. What power the Middle East oil producers have acquired is basically destructive: they are certainly in a position to cause a great deal of harm to the industrialized nations and the undeveloped countries that lack oil (i.e., the majority of mankind). (Laqueur, "The West in Retreat")

The vitality of the Middle East oil, thus, transformed the oil embargo from a threat into an opportunity. It provided a legal framework for justifying military action against the oil producing countries. This argument was the basis of another important neoconservative contribution to the 1970s war campaign. "The Arab Oil Weapon" by Jordan J. Paust and Albert P. Blaustein offered an in-depth analysis of the Arab embargo from a legal perspective.

The article argued that the oil embargo was part of an "Arab strategy" that coordinated the use of force against Israel with the employment of "an economic instrument of coercion (the oil 'weapon') against other states and people in order to place intense pressure upon their freedom of choice" (Paust, Blaustein, and Higgins, *The Arab Oil Weapon*). As such, the authors argued that the Arab strategy posed a violation to the United Nations Charter's goals and Article 4 (2), which pledged for all members "to refrain in their International relations form the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political dependence of any state, or any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nation" (Paust, Blaustein, and Higgins, *The Arab Oil Weapon* 72). Moreover, the authors drew up a list of effects that might result from the employment of the oil weapon; the inspected effects ranged from threatening the stability of the world economy, through undermining the UN's authority, to threatening the survival of the developing countries and causing the death of 20 million people (90–95). The legal case built by Paust and Blaustein showcases the way in which neoconservative academics operate as advocates or facilitators of US interests on a global scale.

Building a legal case to justify the use of US military force thus continued to be part of the neoconservatives' war advocacy. The same analogy presented by Paust and Blaustein in "The Arab Oil Weapon," in 1977, was employed by Paust in 2002 to justify US military action against Afghanistan in 2002, and against Iran in 2014.[9] In his article "Use of Armed Force against Terrorists in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Beyond," Paust argued that

> [the US] can use military force in self-defense against ongoing processes of armed attack while executing the U.S. right to do so in accordance with the U.N. Charter, with or without congressional authorization, and whether or not there is any special Security Council authorization of enforcement action or NATO authorization of regional action. (439)

By the same token, his "Armed Attacks and Imputation: Would a Nuclear Weaponized Iran Trigger Permissible Israeli and U.S. Measures of Self-Defense?" in 2014 addressed the rights of Israel and the US to take military action against Iran. Paust argued that Iran's anti-Israel rhetoric, its support to Hamas and Hezbollah, and its intention to produce nuclear warheads provided the base for a preemptive act of self-defense:

> It is evident that an attack would begin not merely when Iran has fired a missile with a nuclear warhead toward Israel, not merely when Iran has "drawn" a missile with a nuclear warhead and aimed it at Israel, and not merely when Iran has pulled a missile with a nuclear warhead out of its "holster." In context, given the facts that (1) Iran has been publicly gunning for Israel, (2) Iran has been continuously complicit in ongoing armed attacks against Israel by Hezbollah and Hamas in violation of international law, and (3) Iran is bound by treaty law to not produce weapons grade nuclear material and nuclear weapons, one can recognize that a process of attack would be underway at least when Iran continues to violate international law, creates a nuclear warhead that it is bound to not produce or otherwise acquire, and starts to load the warhead onto a missile without backing down and making such clearly known. (45)

These statements show the neoconservatives' ability to construct a legal case to support arguments in favor of war and, how, after building such a legal case, neoconservatives and like-minded individuals who have had interests in maintaining the US imperial project relied on such legal frameworks to justify otherwise unjustifiable acts of imperialism. The fact that in the case of invading the Arab oil producing countries, this legal argument did not authorize or lead to a military action by the US, does not negate the danger and the influence the neoconservatives had. This is evidenced by the fact that Paust and Blaustein's legal framework was considered and recycled within the political circles in the US. For instance, it constituted aspects of Luttwak's testimony during the "Prospects for Peace in the Middle East" Congressional hearing. In this hearing, when asked by Senator McGovern whether international law would permit an act of aggression against the Arab countries, Luttwak argued that the embargo was itself an act of aggression; therefore, it provided an opportunity for the US to use force as a legal response:

> [T]here is no case for using force against someone who charges high prices. That is a case that cannot possibly be made. The use of force against someone who denies you a vital supply probably can be made.
>
> ("Prospects for Peace in the Middle East")

Never mind that the testimony was made more than two years after the embargo. Senator Henry Jackson also relied on Paust and Blaustein's arguments—especially the part related to the impact of the oil price increase on developing countries and the claim that the oil crisis would lead to the

starvation of millions of people (Mitchell 82–83).[10] Similarly, the neoconservatives' articles precipitated several statements by President Ford, his Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense, in which the use of force was considered as a possibility only in the event of the "economic strangulation of the West" (*Oil Fields as Military Objectives* 79). These statements were fortified by a press release from the Pentagon that indicated the alteration of the Seventh Fleet and by leaks about the US Marines' preparation for a potential invasion of desert countries (*Oil Fields as Military Objectives* 77–82; Stone, "War for Oil").[11] In *The New York Review of Books*, I. F. Stone in "War for Oil?" suggested that the leaks and articles that considered war in the Middle East seemed to be "part of a deliberate strategy to frighten the Arabs." However, the most important documentation of the neoconservatives' active role in making the subject of military action against oil producing countries a major foreign policy concern was the 111-page long study by the Congress Committee on International Relations under the title *Oil Fields as Military Objectives: A Feasibility Study* (1975). The introduction of the study made a direct reference to Luttwak and Tucker's articles in explaining its rationale. It considered potential military actions to occupy the oil fields of all OPEC members, from Venezuela and Nigeria, through Saudi Arabia and the Gulf sheikhdom, to Algeria, Libya, and Iran. It included strategies and tactics, the risks entailed, and the benefits gained by carrying out such operations. However, while the suggested military options for the rest of OPEC countries were cursorily discussed, the only detailed plan for an active military invasion was offered in the case of Saudi Arabia. For the oil fields in Saudi Arabia alone, the study indicated, "comprise[d] a simple, compact area in a single country," and because Saudi oil facilities were already managed by an American company "Aramco," which would make it easier to reallocate the company and analyze its data (*Oil Fields as Military Objectives* 42). The plan to occupy the Saudi oil fields included an in-depth analysis of the forces and logistical support needed as well as maps for the military routes, the oil facilities, and the potential war theater (*Oil Fields as Military Objectives* 41–73). One of the study's main theses was that sustained sanctions by the Arab states, even if assisted by Iran, would disrupt the US economy and degrade its security; however, "not even a full-scale OPEC oil embargo would threaten U.S. survival, our only vital interest." (5) Hence, the study concludes:

> [M]ilitary operations to rescue the United States (much less its key allies) from an air-tight OPEC embargo would combine high costs with high risks wherever we focused our efforts. This country would so deplete its strategic

> reserves that little would be left for contingencies elsewhere. Prospects would be poor, with plights of far-reaching political, economic, social, psychological, and perhaps military consequence the penalty for failure. (76)

The Feasibility Study, however, left the door open for alternative conclusions if some of the circumstances should change. The importance of this analysis lay in the fact that it gave the war rhetoric an official character that fortified the psychological warfare the neoconservatives had started in their articles, and it reflected the extent to which contingency plan threats were taken seriously by high-level officials. Having demonstrated that the call for invading the oil fields of the Arab countries were largely promoted and rationalized by the neoconservatives, I will continue to discuss the rhetoric used by the neoconservatives to describe the region of the Middle East and its peoples. Analyzing the neoconservative rhetoric creates a better understanding of the ideological underpinning of what we may consider to be the neoconservatives' foreign policy.

The neoconservatives' rhetoric toward the Middle East and its inhabitants

In his acclaimed book, *Orientalism*, Edward Said describes Orientalism as "a Western style [concept] for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (3). By limiting the Orient to the realm of Orientalist discourse, the Orient, according to Said, was managed and produced "politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively" in a way that would serve the West's political and cultural needs and interests—such as justifying colonialism and affirming Christianity—without providing a nuanced characterization of the Orient (3).This construction of the Orient perpetuated "[s]tereotypes such as primitivism, irrationality, terror, chaos, perversion, sexuality and death," which facilitated the shaping of the Orient as the strange, the East, or "them," in relation to the West characterized as the familiar, Europe, "us" (Mozes 196). Said argues that the "Orient," just like the "Occident," does not exist in itself as a united or coherent subject that can be studied, analyzed, or characterized.[12] With that in mind, it can be said that any produced knowledge about the Orient as a coherent unit is neither sufficient, nor accurate. In the last chapter of his book, titled "Orientalism Now," Said posits that post-enlightenment Orientalism, which provided the moral ground for the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European colonialism and imperialism, dispersed itself in what is now known as Area studies. "[T]raditional

European Orientalism," according to Said, was "if not taken over, then accommodated, normalized, domesticated, and popularized and fed into the postwar efflorescence of Near Eastern studies in the United States" (285, 295–96). Many perceived experts in the field recycled Orientalist narratives about Islam and about the Arab/Muslim "native" being the villain on a perpetual quest to subdue and destroy the Western non-Muslim, non-Arab Other. These new Orientalists constructed narratives that would become the framework according to which the Middle East region is viewed and studied, their views providing a perpetual justification for what would otherwise be considered a blunt display of power and hegemony. The call for military action to seize the Arab oil fields in the 1970s is like the call for war against Iraq, Iran, and Syria following the 9/11 attacks. In this section, I argue that following the 1973 war, neoconservative politicians, academics, policy planners, and journalists represented the new American Orientalist; they were instrumental in pillorying the Arabs as unequivocally responsible for the worldwide economic crisis and the rise of Communist parties in Europe. In the oil crisis, the neoconservatives found an opportunity to discredit the Détente policy, turn the Arab–Israeli conflict into ideological warfare, and unite the American domestic alliance while fragmenting the Western alliance, against which they constructed to be the Western civilization's "cultural other." By analyzing neoconservative accounts, we can see how what Said considered as Orientalist dogmas were on display. These dogmas 1) represent the Middle Eastern "native" as the West's irrational, undeveloped, inhumane, and inferior opposite; 2) recycle and reproduce static and abstract classical Orientalist views and narratives about "Arabs and Muslims" to explain economic and political issues, instead of examining the geopolitical realities of the region and their social and political impacts on people and on decision-makers; 3) present biased ideological Western views as "scientifically objective," while ignoring what the "natives" offer as explanations for their acts. Finally, perhaps the most important dogma of them all is that the only way to deal with the natives of the Middle East is to subdue and control them (Said 300–02). In what follows, I enumerate several essential themes that the neoconservatives employed systematically in their war campaign discourse to justify invading oil producing countries following the 1973 war.

The "vital interest" rhetoric

There is no denying the fact that the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of the Middle East makes it a region of vital interest for the US. The high concentration of oil fields at cheap extraction cost is normally

highlighted in any discussion of US foreign policy goals in the region. However, by calling for direct military action to seize control of the region's oil fields, the neoconservatives' rhetoric transcended the common American goals of preventing communist expansion and securing the oil flow to West Europe and Japan at reasonable prices. Both of these goals were achieved, to a large extent, if not fully, under the Nixon Doctrine and his Twin Pillars policy, and through the US' political and military aid to Israel and the moderate Arab states.

Nevertheless, the neoconservatives used narratives that convinced the American public that Arab oil can neither be abandoned, nor replaced, and only by force can it be protected from a Soviet takeover or an irrational act by the Arab countries. In his article "Oil: the Issue of American Intervention," Tucker talked about the "impossible alternatives" to Arab oil, while Luttwak, in "Seizing Arab Oil," emphasized (without providing any evidence) the impossibility of expecting "major new [oil] discoveries."[13] Moreover, with an army of experts, the *American Enterprise Institute*, a prominent neoconservative think tank, claimed that the Middle East oil was going to be the primary source of US energy.[14] In its publications, conferences, and round tables, the AEI asserted the impracticality of seeking alternative sources to Middle Eastern oil, citing the following reasons: low chances of finding new oil reservations; the high cost and the long lead time required to put any new sources to work; the environmental problems related to the use of nuclear and coal energy; the cost of developing renewable technologies; and the projection of faster depletion of non-Middle Eastern oil sources. The vitality of oil for Western allies, therefore, justified military action. In "Making the World Safe for Communism," editor Norman Podhoretz of *Commentary* stated: "Middle Eastern oil is a convenience to this country, but it is not a vital necessity . . . [It] is, however, vital to Western Europe and Japan, a matter quite literally of economic life or death." By using such narrative, the neoconservatives aimed to create a sense of urgency, when in reality the claim that the Gulf oil's vitality for the US mounted the risk of suggesting a war in the Middle East was illusive and fraught with dangers; the Middle Eastern oil resources—in contrast to Canada and Mexico, and to a lesser extent Venezuela, Indonesia, and Nigeria—were the most distant from the US and the hardest to secure.[15] For this reason, the US was reluctant to consider the Middle Eastern oil at any time of its history as a main source of energy. Nevertheless, the US was actually dependent on Arab oil. The only hostile act toward the US from the Arab oil producers was the oil embargo, and the experience of 1973 proved the inability of Arab governments to

control the distribution of oil or to prevent it from reaching the American market; hence, its impact could justify a drastic action like war that could cause far greater damage. A similar logic can be applied to the Soviet Union and the exaggerated claim of its interest to take over the oil fields of the Gulf. The USSR was entirely dependent on its own energy resources. Geographically, the Gulf countries were out of the Soviets' direct reach, and, strategically, the region's vital importance to the Atlantic alliance did not justify a drastic Soviet engagement. Moreover, historically, the Soviet Union did not carry out the threats to intervene in the region with actions: not during the Suez crisis, or the 1967 war, or the War of Attrition, not even at the peak of the 1973 war. Hitherto, there was no reason to assume that the Soviet Union was planning to take over the oil fields at a time when negotiations between the conflict's main parties were ongoing, nor was there any indication that the Soviet Union would risk a confrontation with the US over the Arab countries at the time of Détente. In light of these considerations, the neoconservatives understood that it was almost impossible—especially at the time of the Vietnam war—to induce the public to tolerate another military adventure, let alone a military occupation. Tucker asked, "Could the public be induced, in the shadow of Vietnam, to support a military intervention that bore no apparent or tangible relation to the containment of Communism, itself a factor of diminishing importance in determining the public's disposition?" ("Oil"). Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky, the authors of *The Great Détente Disaster* provided an answer:

> Armed force in defense of American national interests in maintaining oil supplies at affordable prices for the domestic economy to fight inflation and battle unemployment might well receive substantial popular support; a long-term occupation of alien land would not. (178)

Framing the war as necessary for self-defense, protection of national interests, or global security as these statements suggested, was used by the neoconservatives to gain public support and to justify the war.

"The Arab oil" narrative

As stated earlier, almost all of the invasion scenarios were written by the neoconservatives after—and not before—the oil embargo was lifted. These scenarios were evoked not just by the deterioration of the economic situation in Europe and the fear of another price increase, but by the fear of the power and wealth brought by oil to the Middle East, the "other" of the

West. The rhetoric used—mainly but not exclusively—by the neoconservatives reflected a tendency to equate the price increase with the use of oil as a political tool even though the price increase was a pure economic matter. Moreover, the rhetoric reflected an insistence on using expressions such as "Arab oil prices," "Arab oil extortion," "Arab oil regime," and "Arab curtail," regardless of the fact that non-OPEC oil producers also increased the price of their oil—Canada was charging the US a price slightly higher than the OPEC price at the time (McCracken et al. 39). The leading voices for price increase in OPEC were mainly non-Arab members (Iran and Venezuela), whereas the key to lowering oil prices were Iran and Saudi Arabia. While Iran held the leadership of OPEC and constantly called for a price increase, Saudi Arabia, along with the small Gulf countries (with the exception of Kuwait), repeatedly pronounced support for lowering the prices. Moreover, oil revenues benefited Western oil companies and a fraction of the Arab elite, whereas the majority of Arab countries imported their energy needs and were strongly affected by the economic crisis and the inflation due to the increase of the price of oil, food, and other commodities in the 1970s.[16]

The use of the term "Arab oil" reflected a calculated effort to pin Arabs as solely and unequivocally responsible for the worldwide economic crisis.[17] Neoconservatives, as I argue, understood the "Arab oil" policies within a civilizational framework. Arab oil policies were not motivated by economic or even political calculations, rather, they were ideologically motivated by the desire to defeat the Western other. Daniel Pipes, in "Oil Wealth Confers New Dignity on Islam" provides an example for this:

> The many defeats and humiliations that Muslims have endured since the 18th century have been severely trying. European technology, political ideals, military organization, economic structures, and cultural forms have overturned their traditional ways. . . . Then in the 1970s came the oil boom. Suddenly, Muslims could stand up to their Christian nemesis.

Oil policies, hence, became entangled with questions of Persian/Arab/Muslim identity. Oil, the neoconservatives argued, cannot be extensively controlled by "them," nor can it be negotiated outside the realm of confrontation between two cultures: the civilized, rational, democratic West versus the irrational, greedy, uncivilized non-Western Middle East. What was at stake then was not just the few extra dollars the West had to add to its energy bill, but the "fate of civilization" (Friedland, Seabury, and

Wildavsky 71). According to this narrative, the "natives" are not to be trusted with the oil wealth (or any other source of wealth for that matter) for its grave danger makes them a persistent threat, and they as well as humanity will be better off so long as they are kept at bay.

The immoral right of oil producing countries to their oil

In order to rationalize their call for war, it was important for the neoconservatives to use a language that would strip the Arab oil producing countries of their rights to sovereignty and natural resources. The neoconservatives presented the oil producing countries as countries that have no "skills, culture or work of their own." Pipes commented that the mere geographic coincidence of having oil in their otherwise "empty" deserts was what provided them with the power, wealth, influence, and prestige that allowed them to blackmail Western countries. He claimed that if it had not been for Western technology, these countries would have been a barren desert ("Iran's Good Fortune").[18] In contrast, Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky in *The Great Détente Disaster* protested against the Arab states being called "oil-producing states," for, they argued, these countries "do not produce oil; rather, they remove it from the ground. Western industry provides all the technology, the refineries, the shipping facilities, to see that the product moves properly to its ultimate destinations" (78–79). In a similar manner, Luttwak contends: "Men whose only claim to importance was that they had successfully cartelized a natural resource found and developed by Western money and Western talent were thus taught the personal lesson that the way to fame and power was more extortion" ("Review of *The Great Détente Disaster*").

What the neoconservatives were saying in effect was that the central role of the Western companies in finding oil and developing the technology that allowed it to be extracted and refined granted the West a rightful share in the oil producing countries' wealth. Only the West was capable of finding and investing the Arab wealth. What this rhetoric ignores is that the only reason Western companies were able to find oil in the Middle East were conditions related to the fact that the region was colonized by Western powers. It disregards the fact that Western talent is not what allowed the West to extract and process the oil in the region, rather, it was the region's weakness that allowed its resources to be exploited and taken advantage of. The agreements and contracts which allowed Western companies to explore oil prior to the oil crisis were not consensual, for these countries had no authority to reject, modify, or imply their own conditions when signing these

agreements. In addition, Western companies and governments had not only benefited—for decades—from Middle Eastern cheap oil, but, even as the oil crisis unfolded, they also benefited from the oil money—as the prices paid by consumers for oil included the profits of oil companies as well as the taxes imposed by governments.[19] Moreover, the claim of Western talent and technology is absurd for science and technology is an accumulated process and what we now consider to be Western technology cannot be stripped of the scientific contributions of non-Westerners.

The medieval and the democratic "native"

The neoconservatives also argued that the West had a right to the Gulf countries' oil, based on the fact that oil producing countries could only survive due to Western protection and support. In all of their narratives, oil producing countries were described as "reactionary," "feudal regimes," "military dictatorships," and "royal despotisms," and the like (Tucker, "Oil"; Luttwak, "Seizing Arab Oil"; Laqueur, "The Gathering" and *Confrontation* 47). To give an example, the following passage from Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky's *The Great Détente Disaster* well illustrates such sentiments:

> [T]hese feudal regimes—out of pace with modern political developments, either Communist or Western—rest on a precarious base. They have no tradition of democratic civility and are not based upon the consent of the governed. They are the remnants of a late-blooming feudalism which, elsewhere in the Middle East, has been overthrown in favor of revolutionary movements and parties. Ironically, in the recent past the survival of these feudal remnants has been due in great measure to Western aid, particularly that of the United States. (80)[20]

Such rhetoric imposed originally Western notions (democracy and modernity) on non-Western communities without a basic understanding or acknowledgment of the traditions, history, or culture of these communities. For instance, feudalism as a medieval European concept did not exist in the Arab tribes of the Gulf, which were not agricultural communities (*Gulf to Gulf Relations* 23). Similarly, "consent," known as the *Al-baiaa* (allegiance) system is the equivalent of democracy in the Arabic/Islamic context; it was a basic rule in the tribal political system that had prevailed in the Arab sheikdoms of the Gulf before British colonialism. Even after the British empire subdued the locals, it chose to sign the so-called "friendship agreements" with local representatives that had enough credentials to be accepted as rulers by their

people.[21] The fact that the political units that existed in the Gulf did not fall under the banner of "democracy" as understood in the West—itself a complex and conflicted concept—was used by the neoconservatives to question the legitimacy of Arab political systems and the moral qualification that permitted the Arabs to be in charge of such a vital commodity, and as a consequence, allowed them to threaten the civilized, free, democratic, and morally superior West. From the political and moral delegitimization of the Middle East, the neoconservatives drew the conclusion that military action to seize the oil fields could be morally justified.

Additionally, if we take the above quote at face value, the "feudal regimes" in the Gulf survived revolutionary movements and parties due "in a great measure to Western aid, particularly that of the United States." The right question then is not whether these countries are undeserving of their oil due to their undemocratic nature. Instead, what should be asked is whether these "feudal remnants" would have a better chance to turn into democracies if it was not for Western aid that granted them survival. And, what are the chances for countries to turn into democracies without revolutionary movements and parties, which in the case of these countries, with the authors' admission, were hindered by Western aid? If anything, this question proves that the US was complicit in the historical development of these repressive regimes. Be that as it may, ascribing features like backwardness, feudalism, authoritarianism, or totalitarianism to countries in the Middle East at the time was impetuous and flat; not even the slightest attempt was made to acknowledge that the entire region was undergoing massive political changes and, consequently, it was in the process of developing its own political culture, evidenced by various political movements and trends that marked the development of a political consensus beyond what was established by colonialism (Pan-Arabism, the Gulf solidarity movements, anti-imperialism movements, Arab Renaissance, Pan-Islamism, and so forth).[22]

The rhetoric of moral superiority aimed to disguise the ideological ground of the neoconservatives' war campaign, which had more interest in achieving hegemony and dominance, and in controlling these countries resources than it had in bringing them democracy and enlightenment. In other words, the neoconservatives in the 1970s turned to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Orientalism for justifying colonialism under the banner of civilizing missions and used such rhetoric to appropriate Middle Eastern oil as rightfully belonging to the West (Herbstreuth 137). Despite their criticism of the political regimes in the region, none of the neoconservatives' accounts provided even the slightest indication as to the form of government

that would be imposed on the countries after the presumed invasion. This was not only because there was no way that a free and fair election would have brought a pro-occupation government to power anywhere in the world, but also because the neoconservatives had no issue with supporting and advocating aid to authoritarian regimes so long as those regimes allied themselves with the US (Velasco 90–93; Vaïsse 117–25). Needless to say, none of the neoconservatives' accounts of the oil crisis offered any acknowledgement of the inhabitants in the Middle East countries beyond their leaders, except to refer to their numbers. Luttwak talked about the "very few men," and "the population in the main zone of operations" (Luttwak, "SeizingArab Oil). Tucker, Laqueur, and the authors of *The Great Détente Disaster,* respectively, described the oil producing countries in the Gulf and Libya as being "vast desert areas," "sparsely populated areas," "mini-mini-states," "nice little oligarchies," and areas that lacked "substantial centers of population" (Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky, *The Great* 190; Tucker, "Oil; Laqueur, *Confrontation* 43). In contrast, neoconservative talk about Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Iran always included a reference to their "large" populations or armies, as if the people of these countries were but mere statistical figures. The only threat posed by the inhabitants was related to their numbers.

Arabs and Muslims are irrational beings

A common theme in neoconservative narratives was the Orientalist portrayal of the Middle East as a place in which irrationality is not an undercurrent, but rather the normal state of mind. By deeming the political and economic choices made by the Arab countries irrational without any attempt to understand their motives and the logic behind them, an imperial power can find it easier to plan strategies, predict events, and take actions to support their strategic interests without replacing assumptions with facts. In the case of the oil crisis, for instance, the neoconservative narrative explained the oil embargo by claiming that it was motivated by the Arab desire to destroy Israel—not by Israeli occupation, nor by the US airlift to Israel. Conversely, the oil price increase was not instigated by economic reasons but rather by the Arabs' hatred of the West and their desire to destroy it economically. The irrationality of Arabs ruled out the possibility of reaching a political solution, a peace settlement, or an economic agreement, leaving the military option as the only way to deal with "them." The neoconservatives' military experts, strategists, and political scientists provided not one but several potential scenarios for the war and rationalized them. "Why should men be 'reasonable,' according to Western lights, when they have come so

far and so fast by being unreasonable?" asked Tucker ("Oil"). In the meantime, Laqueur described the Arabs as people who live in an "unreal world" and are willing to sacrifice millions of their people in their desire to destroy Israel:

> [A]t the most the Arabs could destroy Israel at the price of their own suicide. In the unreal world in which they live, it seems not to have occurred to them that, if faced with the destruction of their state and the annihilation of their people, the Israelis, like Samson, would probably prefer to die with the Philistines, bringing down with them more than the "ten million" which some of the Arab Maoists are willing to sacrifice. Today these are apocalyptic visions, fairly soon they may be reality. (*Confrontation* 233)

Kristol elaborated on this idea of irrationality in his essay, "Notes on the Yom Kippur War," published in the *Wall Street Journal*, on 18 October 1973:

> [I]t is wishful thinking to expect, in our lifetime, that the Arabs are going to be "reasonable" vis-à-vis Israel, or foreign oil companies, or anything else which they regard as an infringement of their historic rights over the areas settled by the Arab people (or assimilated, by conquest or conversion, into the Arab world). Their idea of "reasonableness" is utterly different from ours. They are less interested in making money or in the world's good opinion than in reviving a lost grandeur.
>
> (Kristol, *The Neoconservative Persuasion* 202)

This narrative takes up a binary logic, for the irrational Middle East is in opposition to the rational West. Irrationality, then, is any act that is in opposition to Western interests (for instance, those of Israel or foreign oil companies). Such an act is thought to be irrational because it stems from a deep-rooted historic rage carried by the Middle Eastern "native" against the West. In the meantime, the West—as represented here by "Israel," "foreign oil companies," and "oil consuming nations"—is supposed to be rational in retrospect, for its actions are in alignment with their political and economic interests rather than with their ancient history or ideology. According to this logic, hatred persists regardless of the Western exploitation of oil resources, Israeli occupation, American military intervention, or anything else because it is ingrained in non-Western consciousness. In *The Great Détente Disaster,* the authors explained:

> In the oil game, no Israel, no America, because without Israel America has no cards to play with the Arab members of OPEC. The elimination of Israel, in fact, could easily confirm the Arab OPEC nations' confidence in their capacities to persist in their enrichment, and would display to a watching world an enfeebled West the more vulnerable to further contrived depredations originating elsewhere.
>
> (Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky 183)

Whether or not the Middle East is ruled by US allies, its oil cannot be secured so long as the oil is not fully under the dominance of the West. Constructing a narrative in which the Middle Eastern person is an "enemy by default" justifies policies that would be unjustifiable anywhere else because they are imperial in their nature. Hence, in service of the imperial project, neoconservatives played the role of experts, in other words, the same role previously played by their Orientalist predecessors.[23] For instance, during the 1976 Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Hearing "Prospects for Peace in the Middle East," Luttwak, upon delivering his testimony, was introduced to Congress members as a professor in the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. There was no mention of his—then current—work as advisor for the Pentagon, nor of his previous work as a military strategist for the Israeli army. He provided what was perceived to be an "expert" opinion, where he stated, among other things, that

> [i]t is absolutely preposterous to suggest that in the long term the entire energy basis of the Western economy can be predicated upon developing a relationship with Saudi Arabia. It is preposterous because of the *nature* of Saudi Arabia as a country, the *nature* of its society, the *nature* of its politics and the fact that it exists in the Middle East.
>
> (*Prospects for Peace in the Middle East, 1976* 204–24; emphasis added)[24]

The references to "the nature of Saudi Arabia" as a country, to its society, and its politics, cannot be overemphasized, it is that which supposedly opposes the "nature" of Western countries, societies, and politics. The prospect of maintaining good relations with the region's people, even if by treating them as guarantors of Western interests, becomes "preposterous," simply impossible due to the very "nature" of the "natives." In other words, Luttwak pretends that the direction of US foreign policy toward the region does not impact the reaction of its inhabitants to the US, as if their "hatred" toward Western values, culture, and people were "natural" and deeply seated in their consciousness. What purportedly holds true for Saudi Arabia can be

applied to any and all of the other countries in the Middle East—with the obvious exception of Israel.

The "clash of civilizations" narrative

Not surprisingly, the neoconservative narrative of the Middle Eastern "native's" thirst for vengeance on the West already existed and was circulated well before the oil embargo. For instance, a year before the oil embargo and the oil price increase, Eugen Rostow argued that

> the US allies in the Middle East] realize that the idea of revenge against Israel is sterile and self-destructive and that its true purpose is not the destruction of Israel but the radicalization of Arab politics in Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf area. But few can publicly oppose the dream of a holy war when opinion is inflamed by the call to battle. (252)

According to Rostow, the desire for a "holy war" is so prevalent among the "native" subjects that only a "few" of them have the power to publicly oppose it. The theme of the holy war/ Jihad was also used by Laqueur when he referred to the embargo as being used by oil producing countries to heed to the outcry of Jihad: "Had war not broken out, the Arab oil producers might not have made such effective use of the oil weapon; in the general climate engendered by the Jihad they could do no less" (*Confrontation* 106, 225–26). The use of terms such as "the holy war" and "Jihad" presented the conflict as religious, not political, which makes it unsolvable. It evokes an old fear of Muslims taking over the world, possessing the oil power, and thus posing a deadly danger to the West. As such, in the hands of the Middle Eastern "natives," the wealth brought by oil is a threat because their desire to prevail over the West overrides their desire for peace and prosperity. This makes them incompetent to handle wealth brought by oil or other resources. If these resources and all the wealth were in Western hands, the world would be better off. Once this analogy is constructed, the conflict turns into one in which only one side can prevail; the two sides cannot coexist peacefully. The alternative to seizing Arab oil would be to live in a world in which the West was at the "mercy of the Arabs" (Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky 72–73; Luttwak, "Seizing Arab Oil"; Tucker, "Oil"). In "Notes on the Yom Kippur War," Kristol indicated the "profound conviction" among Arabs that their newly found power would soon revive the glory of their past and the desire to defeat the West:

> The Arabs, in contrast [to Jewish people] believe that it is *unnatural* for them to be politically or militarily inferior to any other people. Centuries of subordination, even of foreign occupation, have made only a small impression on this profound conviction. For Arabs, the glories of medieval empire are like yesterday; the intervening centuries are a lamentable hiatus, of no intrinsic significance or even of much interest, and "soon" to be annulled by foredestined triumph.
>
> (Kristol, *The Neoconservatives* 202; (emphasis added)[25]

Kristol's "foredestined triumph" is the newly found power of their oil or what Pipes referred to as the "oil boom" that would allow Muslims "to stand up to their Christian nemesis" ("Oil Wealth"). If evoking the menace of Jihad was not enough, Luttwak in "Seizing Arab Oil" drew a gloomy picture of a world in which oil remains in the hands of the Arabs and Muslims:

> For if we do not do it [take control of oil fields], Project Independence will in fact be Project Isolation, with a somewhat impoverished America surrounded by a world turned into a slum. Almost everywhere, this would be an authoritarian slum, the product of utter hopelessness among the poor and mass unemployment among the former rich, all of us being forced to finance the executive jets of the sheiks and the fighter bombers of the dictators.

For the neoconservatives, no manifestation of opposition to what Tibor Glant aptly labeled as "the rise of the US as European colonizer" is viewed as a response to US hegemony or as a result of political and economic circumstances that are subject to development and transformation. Instead, it is perceived as a reflection of the monolithic, regressive, irrational, and unstable nature of Muslims (507). Consequently, the clash between Muslims and non-Muslims (the clash of civilizations) is inevitable, and the use of force is the only way for the West to prevail. These hypotheses about the Arab/Muslim hatred of the West were presented by the neoconservatives as an objective reality. Their rhetoric transformed an entire region with its mixture of cultures and traditions into a potential enemy that has nothing in mind but to seek the destruction of Western civilization. There are several problems with this rhetorical framework, the least of which is that it is very simplistic; for neither the Middle East nor the West is monolithic, mono-ethnic, mono-religious, or mono-ideological, and such massive generalizations about the "Muslim East" versus the "Judeo-Christian West" are unrealistic. They cannot but lead to persistent conflict and antipathy

toward one another. Moreover, if we speak of the West as a "Judeo-Christian" civilization, then we should also speak of a Judeo-Christian-Islamic and "otherwise" Middle East, as all these religious and cultural traditions play an integral part in the region's history.[26] It remains to say that the assertion of Muslim "hatred" toward the West is a grave and dangerous call for there are close to two billion believers of Islam, including many Westerners, practicing its teachings and rituals in almost every corner of the World. Additionally, the fact that in pre-colonial times the region enjoyed long extended periods of peace—even when conflicts appeared, they never reached the extent of full-blown wars similar to those between European countries—and various ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities have coexisted in harmony for centuries, refutes the claim that Islam is in a constant state of conflict or that peace is incongruent with the mentality of the region's "natives."

Ironically enough, neoconservatives share the same view about Muslims being in a permanent state of war with non-Muslims, with Muslim radicals, and fundamentalists, who charge that peace and coexistence cannot endure in a world that antagonizes Islam and unceasingly seeks its destruction. Fundamentalists use the same narratives utilized by neoconservatives about the clash of civilizations to justify their resorting to violence against other Muslims. With its claim that Islam is in a state of war with the West and those who do not share the radicals' views are not Muslim enough, this narrative is precisely what leads to a great number of terrorist acts in Muslim-majority countries, often perpetrated against Muslim communities.[27]

Conclusion

The neoconservatives' war machine targeted the Arab oil-producing countries in the 1970s. The immorality and illegality of invading sovereign nations on economic bases were dismissed for being misguided and the fear of public opposition was discounted, for oil from the Middle East was the lifeblood of the West. This essay demonstrates how the neoconservatives' response to the oil crisis of 1973 was neither economic nor political, but ideological; this response spoke more of neoconservatives as intellectuals in the service of the American imperial project rather than as objective experts. Contrary to their perceptions, an overwhelming majority of the American people rejected the idea of fighting a war for oil (Herbstreuth 169).[28] No bipartisan consensus for war was achieved, as both the Democrats and the Republicans were more involved in domestic issues—Watergate and the anti-

Vietnam war movement—than in foreign policy debate. The allies and the oil companies opposed the idea of war on the basis that it could only worsen the economic situation and increase the volatility of the oil market. However, the neoconservatives' war campaign evidently had a political and psychological impact on the attitudes and decisions of the countries in the region. It drove the regional powers to increase their arms spending and expand their military buildup, which on the one hand impacted the power dynamics between these countries, and on the other hand, affected these countries' development and economic growth plans—especially those of Iraq and Iran. Additionally, this war campaign created a state of ambivalence, cynicism, and suspicion among these countries, as well as in their attitudes toward the US. Finally, it prolonged the Arab–Israeli conflict, fueled anti-Americanism, and empowered repressive regimes and radical movements in the Middle East and beyond. This paper has also demonstrated that it was the neoconservatives who rationalized and made respectable the concept of war for oil; they reemployed the old Orientalist tradition of transforming the Middle East and its "natives" into an irrational, unstable, and untrustworthy "other"; an opponent to democracy, modernity, and liberalism that can only be dealt with through the use of force—a narrative that continued to be used as a way to justify the political interventions in the region.

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Notes

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1 Figures I refer to as neoconservatives were considered as such by seminal works on neoconservative historiography or were self-proclaimed neoconservatives.

2 For more on Edward N. Luttwak's service and work with the IDF, see Edward N. Luttwak and Daniel Horowitz, *The Israeli Army 1948–1973* (Cambridge, Mass.: Abt Books, 1983). On Luttwak's role in neoconservatism see Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs 1945–1994* (178, 204); Vaïsse, *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement* (110,119, 161,197); Velasco, *Neoconservatives in US Foreign Policy Under Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush* (66).

3 The unwavering support of neoconservatives for Israel can be explained by a combination of different factors. These include religious influence, especially among Zionist Jews and evangelical neoconservatives who view Israel as a key player in biblical prophecy. Additionally, geostrategic considerations play a role, as many neoconservatives perceive Israel as an embodiment of Western capitalism, democracy, and individual freedom in the crucial Middle East region. On a moral level, the neoconservatives often see Israel as a symbol of liberalism's triumph over Nazism and fascism and view any criticism about Israel as a manifestation of anti-Semitism. For more on Israel and the neoconservatives see Adam L. Fuller, *Israel and the Neoconservatives: Zionism and American Interests* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2020); Murray Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shaping of Public Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005); Stephen J. Sniegoski, *The Transparent Cabal: The Neoconservative Agenda, War in the Middle East, and the National Interest of Israel* (Virginia: Enigma editions, 2008); Muhammad Idrees Ahmad, *The Road to Iraq: The Making of a Neoconservative War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2014); John J Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

4 For the purpose of avoiding controversy between "Persian Gulf" and "Arabian Gulf," I used the term "Gulf" to refer to the body of water positioned between the Arabian Peninsula and Iran, spanning approximately 600 miles in length and varying in width.

5 The global increase of oil prices led to an increase in the prices of other businesses and goods.

6 The description of oil as the world's greatest prize was used by the US Department of State during Truman's presidency, see Perkins, Goodwin, Evans, and Prescott, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1943, The Near East and Africa, Volume IV*.

7 See also "American Notes: Remember Gunboat Diplomacy?"

8 Walter Laqueur spoke of his time in the Israeli Army in his collective biography *Generation Exodus: The Fate of Young Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004). See also Laqueur, "Détente: What's Left of It?"

9 See, Paust, "Use of Armed Force Against Terrorists in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Beyond," *International Law Journal* 35.3 (Winter 2002): 533–58; and Paust, "Armed Attacks

and Imputation: Would a Nuclear Weaponized Iran Trigger Permissible Israeli and U.S. Measures of Self-Defense?" *Georgetown Journal of International Law* (Feb. 27, 2014): 411–43.

10 Senator Jackson did not refer to Paust and Blaustein's paper; however, the date and the arguments the senator used matched those used by Paust and Blaustein in their analysis.

11 See also Hibbeln and Howard, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume E-9, Part 2, Documents on the Middle East Region, 1973–1976*.

12 In the sense that numerous cultures and nations existed, exist, and will exist in what is considered to be the geographical location of the Orient, whose histories, cultures, and languages are greater than any knowledge that was produced or can be produced about them in and through the discipline of Orientalism.

13 Similar arguments can be found in Laqueur, *Confrontation: The Middle-East War and World Politics* (199).

14 See Anthony, John Duke, ed., *The Middle East: Oil, Politics, and Development* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975); Paul W. McCracken, et al., *The Energy Crisis* (Washington D.C., the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1973); Paul W. McCracken, *The Energy Crisis Contrived?* (Washington D.C., the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1974); Mervin R. Laird, et al., *Energy Policy: A New War Between the States?* (Washington D.C., the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975); Tom Bradley, et al., *Offshore Oil: Costs and Benefits* (Washington D.C., the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976).

15 While Venezuelan oil transitions to the US were secured by the American forces in the Caribbean, and oil from Indonesia and Nigeria was protected by the US fleets in the Atlantic and Pacific, the US had no active power in the Indian Ocean up until 1995 when its fifth fleet was reactivated.

16 The Saudi minister of Foreign Affairs reported his objection to the use of "Arab oil prices" by American officials and in the US press. See Belmonte and Keefer, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume XXVII, Iran; Iraq, 1973–1976*. The bread riots in Egypt in 1977 and the working-class upheavals in Tunisia (1976–1978) are but two of the examples of the impact of the economic crisis on the non-oil producer Arab countries.

17 In many cases OPEC was used as a synonym of "Arab." On Iran and Venezuela's role in the OPEC price increase, see, among others, Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky, *The Great Détente Disaster* (183) and Feith, "The Oil Weapon Demystified" (24).

18 The same narrative was repeated in almost all of the articles and books written by neoconservatives regarding the oil crisis, the 1973 war, and the second oil crisis in 1979. To give but one recent example, David Frum, President George W. Bush's speech writer stated in his *How We Got Here: The 70s: The Decade That Brought You Modern Life—For Better or Worse* that "[t]he oil companies . . . found the oil, the oil companies . . . invented the technology . . . [and] brought the oil to the surface, oil companies . . . preserved and extended the useful lives of the fields, the oil companies . . . built the pipelines, refineries, and docks that brought the oil to market. The only contribution of the locals was to have had the good luck to have parked their tents atop a raw material that Western ingenuity had found uses for" (167).

19 Oil companies were complicit in the oil embargo because they preferred a higher oil price and did not want to risk antagonizing oil producing governments. See US Congress, Senate, Committee on Government Operations, The Permanent Subcommittee on

Investigations, *Current Energy Shortages Oversight Series, Cutoff of Petroleum Products to U.S. Military Forces* 93rd Cong., 2nd sess., Apr. 22, 1974. Part 8 (885–89).

20 See also Friedland, Seabury, and Wildavsky, *The Great Détente Disaster* (22, 43, 73, 77).

21 Oil companies and colonial powers did not invest in developing the oil producing countries, nor did they enhance the living standards of the locals. For instance, up until 1969, there was only one hospital in Qatar, very few schools and not a single university in the entire Gulf region. See Sampson, *History of Persian Gulf States*. On the Arab Gulf countries' resistance to European colonialism, see Saleem Taha Altakriti, *The Arabic Resistance in the Arabian Gulf* [سليم طه التكريتي. المقاومة العربية في الخليج العربي. (بغداد: دار الرشيد، ١٩٨٢] (Baghdad: AL-Rasheed, 1982).

22 These movements include the Popular Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, established in 1974; the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf, established in 1969 in Oman; the National Unity Front, established in 1963 in Qatar; the People's Democratic Party, and the Arab Socialist Action, established in 1970 and 1972 in Saudi Arabia, respectively. For more examples, see Sampson, *History of Persian Gulf States*.

23 Oil producing countries, Arab countries, and different points of views and narratives are also presented in these congressional hearings. In the case of the oil price increase, for instance, we find testimonies from Middle Eastern economists and scholars as well as officials, including Professor Hisham Sharabi and Professor Fouad Ajami, Saudi Arabia Oil Minister Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, and the Iranian Ambassador to the United States Ardeshir Fazlollah Zahedi. However, the difference between the testimonies of the neoconservatives and those of the others is that the views of the latter can be taken as political, that is, favoring their countries' interests as opposed to those of the US. In contrast, the neoconservatives present themselves as neutral experts and their notions as scientific, objective, and favoring US interests even when it is evident that they are ideological in nature.

24 For the full statement see US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, "Prospects for Peace in the Middle East" 1976. 94th Cong., 2nd sess., June 30, 1976 (204–24).

25 Kristol uses the word "Arab," although he is clearly talking about Muslims, for there is no such thing as an Arab medieval empire. The Islamic Empire, on the other hand, controlled the Middle East, North Africa, parts of Asia and India, and parts of Europe as far as Spain; in its history it was often led by non-Arabs.

26 It is worth noting here that Christian Arabs played an important part in the movement of Pan-Arabism and in the struggle against imperialism, especially in Palestine, Egypt, and Lebanon. In fact, all the major communist parties in the region were established by Christian Arabs.

27 The US Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2011" stated that "In cases where the religious affiliation of terrorism casualties could be determined, Muslims suffered between 82 and 97% of terrorism-related fatalities over the past five years." See Bureau of Counterterrorism, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2011," *U.S. Department of State*, July 2012.

28 The calls for war in 1974–1975 provoked the first "national conversation about blood and oil in the United States," and polls at the time indicated that the overwhelming majority —to be precise, more than 80% percent—of American people rejected the idea of using military force for oil. See Herbstreuth, *Oil and American* Identity (169).

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George F. Kennan and Hungary: A Cold War Visionary and a "remarkable people with rich civilizational qualities"

Zoltán Peterecz

ABSTRACT

Although George F. Kennan hardly needs an introduction, this article revisits his career. He was the "father" of the containment doctrine, even if he did not accept that title because he believed the successive American governments debauched his murky idea about how to oppose the Soviet Union. Many things are known about Kennan—both his professional and private life—but some small additions are still missing. This essay investigates his relations with, and ideas about Hungary, which so far have earned passing mentions at best. This is not surprising because Hungary rarely became a central issue during the Cold War—with 1956 as an obvious exception—so scholars focused mainly on Kennan, the Russian expert and cold warrior. Still, occasionally Hungary received Kennan's attention throughout his long career: he made observations and took notes on Hungary, Hungarian foreign policy, and Hungarians as early as the eve of World War II, and he continued to do so as late as Hungary's joining NATO at the end of the 1990s. These were sometimes indirect assumptions, long-distance observations, or the results of on-site experience. It is interesting to see how the famously realist Kennan approached Hungary and the Hungarian questions throughout more than half a century. His relationship with either Hungary or Hungarians, however, has never been within the scope of an academic study, so this article serves as the basis for possible future endeavors into that direction. By introducing Kennan's episodic views and impressions regarding Hungary in the larger part of the twentieth century, the article fills a small but important gap in the growing field of the history of American–Hungarian relations and adds to the portrait of Kennan. (ZP)

KEYWORDS: Cold War, George F. Kennan, Hungary, Hungarian–US relations

Introduction: Kennan's short biography and career

George F. Kennan's name and personality are well known to people interested in twentieth-century history, since he was one of the best known American Soviet experts, and he played a crucial role in shaping American foreign policy at the beginning of the Cold War. What is more, even if he

took issue with that questionable fame many times, his name is inextricably interwoven with the doctrine of containment, that is, with bolstering democratic countries in the face of possible communist encroachment, which formed the main pillar of American foreign policy from the late 1940s until the end of the Cold War. Kennan's general and foreign political views are well known since throughout his long life and prolific career, the graphomaniac Kennan produced an abundance of writings in the form of books, articles, presentations, and diary notes.[1] In addition, from the 1980s a long line of books has been published about Kennan, many of them written while he was still alive.[2]

During his time in the diplomatic service Kennan served through an unparalleled string of momentous times and events: in Moscow, in the second half of the 1930s; in Prague, in 1938 and after the Munich Pact, where he witnessed the disappearance of Czechoslovakia, and with it the Versailles peace order. He served in Berlin from the start of World War II until Germany declared war on the United States and America became a party to the European war; during World War II also in Lisbon, where he managed to obtain American forces use of the Azores—the Portuguese capital was a perfect place for intelligence gathering and secret talks between the western allies and Nazi satellite countries. In 1945–1946 he was again commissioned to the Soviet Union where he witnessed the very beginning of the Cold War; then he took an active role as leader of the Policy Planning Staff in Washington, DC, overseeing the formulation and implementation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan in 1947. Kennan was appointed as US ambassador to Moscow in 1952 and to Belgrade in 1961–1963, respectively. During his active years in the diplomatic service, and even more so following it, Kennan was a lecturer, historian, and publicist.

Most historians agree that Kennan was a realist when it came to his approach to foreign policy. That is, Kennan believed that relations among states in general, and between the United States and other countries in particular, must be based upon interests and possible agreements in contrast to values and ideologies; he was led not by legal and moral principles, but by what would be beneficial for his country in order to achieve its goals. Furthermore, in order to have a reasonable goal, one must clearly be aware of the country's available resources. Kennan, who idealized eighteenth-century diplomacy, would have liked to see something similar in the twentieth: creating a balance-of-power system and guarding it by synchronizing great power interests, which can only be done through negotiations and mutual understanding. Despite the supposedly realistic

nature of his analyses, as Frank Costigliola claims, "Kennan's rhetorical strategies in the [Long Telegram] worked so effectively because the Truman administration was looking for a clarifying statement and because Kennan—with the authority of his expertise and his ostensible realism—was able to appeal to emotions in the name of reason" ("George Kennan's Formation of the Cold War" 1338). Throughout his long career Kennan focused on Europe; he did not deem the rest of the world as vital to the United States, and the other parts of the globe could only play a peripheral role in the contest between the two superpowers in the latter half of the twentieth century. Such views and convincing argumentative style guaranteed that Kennan would not only write but profess.

Following his retirement from active diplomatic service, Kennan immersed himself in academia. For Kennan, teaching was "an act of faith."[3] This was what he saw as his main job and passion, and he thought that educating the American public was his karma. His official biographer also labeled him as a teacher, but the eccentric Kennan went farther and also considered himself "a prophet." As he claimed: "It was for this that I was born" (qtd. in Costigliola, "Is This George F. Kennan?"). A prophet naturally teaches, but this type of teaching has its negative side—and this was true for Kennan as well—namely that the tremendous knowledge that such a person possesses through experience is sometimes used for self-assured guesswork and revelation-like declarations. Kennan was sensitive to change and in his political and general outlook was rather conservative; he believed in traditions and deep human traits. Exactly on account of this feature, his ideas were often misunderstood or outright rejected, and he could rarely boast of the anticipated effect that he wished to achieve. His deep thoughts on history that were often verging on the philosophical were just as often misunderstood and not appreciated, yet he never gave up.

Kennan's thoughts on Hungary and Hungarians

Probably everybody who is interested in Kennan is aware of the fact that Kennan's father, Kossuth Kent Kennan (1851–1933), was named after Lajos Kossuth, the famous Hungarian patriot. This was a result of Kossuth's unprecedented popularity with Americans during his successful tour in the United States in 1851–52 in the hope of finding support for the failed Hungarian War of Independence. Also, the family had Scottish ancestors and their resistance to the English may have played a part in choosing a freedom fighter's name. In any case, Kennan, who was well versed in his own clan's history, respected this choice for his father's name, and had some notions

from early on about Hungarian history. There were four occasions in Kennan's life when he became more closely involved in either Hungarian foreign policy or Hungary itself. The first such occasion came in 1938, while he was stationed in Prague, while the last one happened half a century later, in 1986, when he went on a private trip to Budapest. The following analysis will deal with Kennan's ideas and opinion about Hungary, Hungarian foreign policy, and Hungarians during this long period of time to shed more light on his worldview.

Prague

Prior to the outbreak of World War II and during the conflagration, Kennan was relatively close to Hungary and Hungarian affairs. After he spent his first years as a secretary at the embassy in Moscow (1933–1937), the State Department sent him to the Legation at Prague.[4] Only a few days after his arrival, the Great Powers (Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy) signed the Munich Pact on 30 September 1938; as a result, Czechoslovakia gave up territories with overwhelming German minorities (the Sudetenland). This act can be seen as a continuation of the Anschluss (12 March 1938) in that the western powers could not resist German demands and insisted on the illusory belief that if Germany was satisfied, war could be avoided. Czechoslovakia hoped for western protection in vain: the following March the remaining independent Czech territory was occupied, and a German protectorate was established, while Slovakia created its own state but was in reality an obvious puppet of the Third Reich. Therefore, one of the successful pillars of the Versailles peace system crumbled and interwar Europe faced imminent changes.

Because of the changed circumstances in Prague and Czechoslovakia in the fall and spring, Kennan—in a somewhat indirect manner—followed Hungary's steps after the Munich Pact. As is well known, Hungary made the most of the aftermath of the Munich Pact and—by the decision of Germany and Italy—regained some of its lost territories in the north, in line with the First Vienna Award, which was signed on 2 November 1938. Hungary received about 4,600 square miles along a northern strip in Slovakia with about almost one million ethnic Hungarians.[5] Kennan as a secretary of the US Legation in Prague often wrote about the political, economic, and military situation in this corner of the world. Actually, the Munich Pact did not shake Kennan; what is more, initially he felt relief. This was partly due to the fact that he disagreed with the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the wake of World War I. In contrast to many liberal Americans,

he was not a great fan of Beneš's foreign policy or the circumstances created in the Danubian region by the Paris peace conference. In his *Memoirs* he noted that "I deplored the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian Empire" (98).[6] Other American diplomats in the neighborhood shared this sentiment. John Flourney Montgomery, for instance, who served in Hungary as minister from 1933, expressed his appreciation for the historic role the Monarchy had performed, and expressed this thought after World War II: "I am not of the opinion that the Austro-Hungarian Empire was a political monstrosity. Everything I have learned since I have been here convinces me to the contrary."[7]

Kennan's analysis of the Ruthenian issue provides helpful insights into his views on Hungarian foreign policy at the time. The First Vienna Award was mostly accepted in Western Europe and seen as a moderate and sober rectification of the inapt Trianon Treaty. The future of Ruthenia hung in the balance, though. Even before the Slovak state was declared in March 1939, Kennan held the view that neither the Slovaks nor the Ruthenians had "the prerequisites for an independent political existence."[8] A little later he expressed his belief that the Ruthenians were basically constituted of "half a million primitive Slav peasants in the foothills of the Carpathians."[9] In light of this it is hardly surprising that Kennan shared the general view of international observers that the territory would soon be incorporated into Hungary, which—in his opinion—was justified and natural both on political and economic grounds.[10] In a matter of days after Kennan wrote these lines, and when Czechoslovakia ceased to exist, Hungary lived up to such expectations and occupied Ruthenia on 15 March 1939. As for the Germans' foreign policy aims in the region, Kennan thought Berlin was trying to make Slovakia and Hungary as antagonistic toward each other as possible, thereby abetting the German agenda.[11] In July 1939, Kennan took a short trip by automobile in Slovakia. Based upon his fresh experience there, he reported to the State Department that it would not be startling to see Hungary gain further territory from Slovakia. But in exchange it would also have to help German military efforts against Romania by allowing the German troops to cross Hungarian territory.[12] Although the latter did take place, Hungary took no more territories in the north. All in all, Kennan saw the situation realistically, and the Hungarian move in March 1939 met his expectations.

World War II—Lisbon and Moscow

After his assignment in Prague, Kennan was sent to Berlin, where he stayed until the German war declaration on the United States was issued, but

he could actually return to the United States again only after six months of internment. Washington sent him back to Europe in 1943, this time to Portugal. There, although geographically farther, still in a more intimate way and only briefly, Kennan dealt with Hungary and Hungarian foreign policy.

By 1943 it was clear that it was only a matter of time before Nazi Germany would lose the war—the Battle of Stalingrad and the developments in North Africa made that inevitable. For this very reason the German satellite countries began to look for a way out of the war. Part of such a step was to establish secret contacts with the western powers, hoping to ensure better conditions for themselves at the end of the war. These efforts were concentrated in the neutral countries of Europe—Switzerland, Turkey, Sweden, and Portugal. Lisbon was definitely a center of such activities. That is how Kennan got into contact with Hungarian peace feelers in the fall of 1943. After Kenneth Bert Fish, the American minister to Portugal, died in July, Kennan assumed the leadership of the legation until the new minister arrived in November. In this post, his most important task was to secure the use of the Azores, which belonged to Portugal, as a base for the US Air Force. Following a somewhat unorthodox path, Kennan was successful in this.[13]

During the fall, Kennan gave the green light to the American attaché in Lisbon to make contact with Hungarian diplomat Sándor Hollán, who was at that time serving in Portugal. In order to keep to clandestine contact unbeknownst to the Germans, the American military attaché met with Hollán through a Portugese diplomat. Hollán was told that the American side wanted political and military information, but it was not willing to make any promises as to the future. Hollán, for his part, said to his counterpart that Hungary was ready to break with Germany at the first appropriate moment and cooperate with the Allied troops in case they approached the Carpathian Basin. The Americans replied that they could negotiate only on the basis of unconditional surrender, and Hungary had to offer this surrender to the three Allied powers at the same time (Borhi, *Dealing with Dictators* 23–24). The talks must have seemed promising because toward the end of September Andor Wodianer, the leader of the Hungarian legation, met with Kennan. Although the meeting did not produce much new development—Kennan kept repeating that Hungary should make some spectacular move soon to influence American public opinion in her favor—it is more revealing the notion Kennan expressed about democracy. Kennan had many reservations about democracy in general, and American democracy in particular. His sentences to Wodianer strengthen this view. As the Hungarian minister reported, Kennan articulated his belief that democracies had "many

advantages, but also the great drawback that considerable time was needed to formulate a common opinion. And when it comes to a common opinion shared by two democracies . . .!"[14]

The secret talks in Lisbon produced nothing in the end, and Kennan was soon sent to London to participate in the work of the nascent European Advisory Commission, an inter-allied body to plan the postwar world. In the next summer he was again back in Moscow, so Hungarian questions came to him indirectly. But since the Soviet Union was pressing westward keeping larger and larger territories under its control, including Hungary from the spring of 1945, issues pertaining to Hungary were constantly on his radar and he knew what was happening in the country.

Toward the end of the war, and again only indirectly, Kennan had to deal with Hungarian problems. For example, Kennan reported from Moscow that, according to a person arriving from the Hungarian capital that was under siege by Soviet troops, the situation was critical and all expectations were that by the end of the siege the city would lie in ruins, which would have a major effect on slowing down postwar reconstruction.[15] A year later Kennan again sent a report, this time about the Hungarian economy and a possible Soviet attitude regarding it. As he stated, the Soviets failed to share with their western allies the economic problems in Hungary and were not willing to find a solution on a common basis. The high reparation costs that the Soviets demanded and the occupying Soviet forces, together with the destruction of the war, created a dire situation for the Hungarian economy. Kennan believed the Soviets must be called upon to cease this behavior and allow Hungary to succeed on its own in the general European reconstruction.[16] He articulated this opinion just two days prior to the publication of the Long Telegram, but already here, as in many other reports, he used harsh language concerning Soviet foreign policy.

After World War II and with the onset of the Cold War, for the United States Eastern Europe in general, and Hungary in particular, were not crucial points of interests. Obviously, there was the desire to see democratic countries after the war in this region, but altogether they understood and accepted the strategic and defensive point of view of the Soviet Union, and thereby they reluctantly gave the upper hand to Moscow. Washington concentrated more on economic issues and wished to see the whole continent integrated along reconstruction and economic consolidation. In sharp contrast to this American view, for the Soviets the whole of the Central and Eastern European region, and Hungary especially, was important strategically, and they saw the defeated and occupied countries as economic

prey. In the case of Hungary, the Americans only managed to somewhat alleviate the amount of reparations that Hungary had to pay to the Soviet Union. The decrease from $400 to $300 million, however, was only symbolic, since in the next period the Soviets took from Hungary many times the equivalent of this amount. Moscow's aim was economic colonization, which the American side could not stop, nor did it put up a serious fight.[17]

The 1956 Revolution

The next occasion when Kennan—and practically everybody else in the world—paid close attention to Hungary was the 1956 revolution and freedom fight. By this time Kennan had left the main current of the decision-making process of American foreign policy and was spending his time at Princeton, somewhat in exile. This, however, did not prevent him from thinking and discussing American foreign policy, its history, the US relationship with Russia and the Soviet Union as well as Germany, and the diplomatic history of the long nineteenth century and World War I. The two major European problems—Germany and the Soviet Union—affected the other countries situated between them since neither in political nor in economic questions could these smaller countries be separated from their giant neighbors. At the same time, Kennan never gave up hope that with the right strategy the Soviet iron grip could be loosened around the socialist countries behind the Iron Curtain, which in a best-case scenario would go parallel with the inner decay of the Soviet Union. In light of all this, it might be illuminating to revisit Kennan's reaction and opinion concerning the events of 1956, when for an all too brief moment, it seemed that one of those countries—Hungary—might win independence from Moscow.

Naturally this is not the place to give a detailed analysis of the Hungarian revolution of 1956, which has been discussed in great detail in many works. Suffice it to say, the 1953 East German uprising clearly showed that one of the campaign slogans of the Eisenhower government inaugurated shortly before the events—liberation of the captive nations in Europe—was only pure rhetoric and became hollow when it came to implementation. And similarly to the 1953 scenario, Washington was totally unprepared for the events in Poland and Hungary in the fall of 1956, but especially in the case of the latter. It was beyond doubt that the United States was not going to intervene and risk a military showdown with the Soviet Union. Despite all the American rhetoric and political propaganda, Hungary was in the Soviet sphere of influence, and although detaching Hungary from the Soviet bloc would have been an enormous success, American national security interests

did not leave room for the Eisenhower government to seriously toy with the idea of military intervention, especially a few days prior to the presidential election. What is more, for a short time after the revolution started in Budapest on 23 October it seemed that Moscow might prove lenient toward Hungary.[18] A few days after the October revolution, the Suez crisis began, which was much more important for the United States; it somewhat diverted the international community's attention. In Egypt, Washington had to act against its own western European allies, and the Hungarian question was relegated to a less important category. When the Soviets in the end used military force to crush the revolution in early November, aside from diplomatic protests, there was no serious challenge to the Soviet step.[19]

Kennan naturally followed the events in Hungary that fall, especially so since at first it seemed that the situation might play out his earlier vision regarding the breakup of the Soviet system. His diary preserved his thoughts about the situation: there are two types of entries from these weeks dealing with the Hungarian Revolution. One documents two telephone conversations of his with John. M. Maury, on 1 November 1956, and on 19 February 1957, respectively.[20] These are typed texts, in all likelihood verbatim notes of the conversations. In addition, there are also typed and handwritten diary entries about the unfolding events in Hungary between 7 and 15 November 1956, presenting Kennan's thoughts about the events in Budapest and their consequences.

From his telephone call with Maury on November 1, it is clear that in Kennan's mind the initial Soviet troop withdrawal stemmed from Soviet domestic political problems. He suspected that the Red Army's chiefs had had enough of being used for police actions in satellite countries if discontent rose too high. Kennan believed that a Tito-type regime was acceptable for Moscow if such a government was firm about becoming more independent of the Soviet Union, but what happened in Hungary was humiliating and could only take place because there were serious debates within the highest Soviet leadership. "I cannot believe," he said, "that this withdrawal under the threat of the Hungarian air force would be the result of deliberate policy, it is the result of some confusion."[21] At the same time, Kennan did not give much significance to the Suez crisis regarding the solution of the Hungarian situation. This demonstrates how confused Kennan himself was about the visible and hypothetical Soviet steps; he even admitted: "What has happened in Budapest doesn't fit at all with anything I have believed or said. If that is bona fide as an act of policy, I don't know a damn thing about those things."[22] Still, the situation gave Kennan some hope: if the Soviets did withdraw from

Hungary, this might be the forerunner of a general withdrawal from the other satellites, and if that took place in East Germany, the communist regime there would collapse in a matter of days. This scenario, however, went so much against the Soviet policy up to that point that for Kennan the whole thing was "bewildering"; as he put it, "there is something in this that does not meet the eye."[23]

On 4 November 1956, the Soviet troops attacked Budapest and some bigger cities in the countryside, and ruthlessly eliminated resistance. Starting on 7 November, throughout a whole week, Kennan reflected on the situation in his diary entries. This is fortunate since in the year 1956 there were longer hiatuses in his diary. For example, prior to 7 November, for three weeks he did not make a single entry. The 7 November entry was provoked by Eisenhower's reelection victory the day before. The Republican victory meant that there was no possibility for a new approach to American foreign policy, which disturbed Kennan since, as the events in Hungary proved without a doubt, "my own fears and warnings, both with regard to 'Liberation' and with regard to the appeal to UN majorities and the effort to cultivate popularity with the new nations, are being vindicated beyond my wildest dreams."[24] Kennan was afraid that there might be war, but he also felt self-pity at being neglected by Washington. As usual, he felt that his expertise on the Soviet Union ought to be indispensable for the administration. This is somewhat surprising since in the phone call with Maury a week earlier he admitted that he was not sure what was really happening on the Soviet side.

As on cue, the very next day his friends in the government called him to ask for his opinion. In Kennan's view the Russians did not want war, but they would use the situation in Egypt both to deflect attention from Hungary and strengthen their position in Egypt while the Western powers were bickering. If this came to pass—and Kennan was convinced that Washington did not understand the country's true interests—then the Soviet Union, with its partial dominance over the Near East oil, might be able to blackmail the United States and its allies. But Kennan added, "the situation was partly out of hand, from their standpoint as well as ours."[25]

The United States used the United Nations to keep the Hungarian question alive, thereby putting pressure on Moscow. When the UN wanted to send observers to Hungary, the Soviet-backed Kádár regime refused them entry to the country, although this was the only act on part of the organization that Kennan deemed positive. The obstinate Hungarian obstruction proved, however, what Kennan had always believed: the United Nations was a paper tiger and had no real constructive role in world politics. Its superficial

symbolism was distasteful to Kennan, mainly because he was sure that the majority of Americans was of the opinion that the government had done well. This meant in turn that "our real interests in the world may be sacrificed to the final point of utter and complete isolation and that we will find this entirely in order provided it all occurs legally and that we vote virtuously and high-mindedly in the case of all United Nations resolutions."[26] Kennan, as always, thought that the great powers should solve their problems among themselves. The United Nations was a fine idea, but as to practical decisions, it was basically useless. Realpolitik worked differently, and the Hungarian events only deepened his conviction on this.

A few months after the October–November events in Budapest, there was another telephone call between Kennan and Maury. The confusing mist of the fall had somewhat disappeared, so with admittedly little time after the events Kennan tried to evaluate what had taken place on the Soviet side and what consequences it would have. He concluded that despite the Soviet effort to "show self-assuredness and smile a lot," in fact they were very nervous since their policy in Eastern Europe had gone bankrupt to a large degree. The Soviets did not and could not give up the region, and Kennan observed that "behind this policy of friendliness there [was] also a mailed fist."[27]

For Kennan the Hungarian Revolution meant the hope that a mortal wound might be afflicted on the Soviet Union, which might also bring about the breakup of that country as he had also hoped for and anticipated. Therefore, it is understandable why he felt so disappointed that this came to naught. It must be seen as well that Kennan—as a realist would—always considered American interests, at least what he saw as such, to be of the highest importance. That is the reason why he accepted the division of Europe with a Soviet dominance over Eastern Europe, as well as the incapability of the United States to initiate any fundamental changes in that status quo. He strongly believed that the pressure must not cease on Moscow, but he was also convinced that real changes would only start inside the Soviet sphere. The events thirty years later did prove this view correct. As for his analysis regarding Hungarian foreign policy, there is little to say. The Revolution was a mass-based national movement, and no independent Hungarian foreign policy existed during the late 1940s and 1950s, and even beyond.

After the Hungarian Revolution, Kennan did not closely deal with Hungarian questions for three decades. It is interesting that his most personal

and lasting experience about Hungary came in his old age when he visited Hungary in the spring of 1986.

Kennan's 1986 visit to Hungary

By the middle of the 1980s, American–Hungarian relations had significantly improved compared to the early phase of the Cold War, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. At the beginning of the 1980s, Soviet–American relations, however, took a turn for the worse one more time, and the Reagan administration gently encouraged the satellite countries in Eastern Europe to try and work for some degree of democratization. In addition, at the beginning of the decade the Hungarian economy was on the brink of collapse and could only survive with the help of western loans. In order to ensure such a lifeline, Hungary became a member of the World Bank in 1982. At that time Hungary had a relatively good reputation in Washington, and throughout the decade the American cultural influence further grew in Hungary (through the distribution of American books, movies, and TV series), the first joint venture companies were created, and Hungary was seen as a kind of mediator between the United States and the Soviet Union. During these years, Hungary enjoyed a more independent foreign policy than in the previous decades. Vice President George Bush's official visit to Budapest in September 1985 was constructive and successful, just like that of Secretary of State George Schultz toward the end of the year. The George Soros Foundation started its beneficial work around this time as well, which also helped to soften the prevailing system.[28] It was in this political-diplomatic-cultural milieu that the former diplomat and number one Soviet expert paid a visit to Hungary.

The main reason for George Kennan's 1986 visit to Hungary was health related: he had suffered from his rheumatic knees for a long time, and he arrived in Budapest looking for a treatment. The Hungarian doctors had a good reputation in this field, and it was "far cheaper than what one would receive at any first rate spa in western Europe."[29] He spent three weeks at Hotel Thermal on Margaret Island. At the same time, naturally, Kennan wanted to see close up "a bit of one of the two most interesting countries in Eastern Europe," and instead of spending "the dismal month of March" at Princeton, he looked forward to this "strange excursion."[30] Through Vencel Házi, the Hungarian ambassador to the United States, Kennan informed the Hungarian government about his impending visit in order not to create any discomfort by his appearance in Budapest; Házi, on his part, gave a book on Budapest to Kennan before the latter's departure.[31] Kennan's presence made

waves on either side of the Iron Curtain. The Cold War was still going on, antagonism between the Soviet Bloc and the West was as strong as ever, and aside from a very narrow intellectual circle in Hungary, the name of Kennan did not mean anything. All these notwithstanding, his visit—at least to those affected by it—was an event in itself.

Naturally, the Hungarian newspapers did not tout Kennan's visit to Budapest. Only a short news item by the Hungarian Telegraph Agency appeared in some dailies:

> Mátyás Szűrös, the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Party, met with George F. Kennan, the well-known American public figure, in the Parliament building Thursday afternoon. During their warm-hearted talk, they exchanged ideas about the main currents of international as well as some of the present theoretical and practical questions of East-West relations. Also present was András Balogh, the president of the political department of Hungarian Political Science Association.[32]

The reason for the lack of official interest on part of newspapers was that although for some people his name meant a lot, Kennan came strictly on a private visit. Also, when he was American ambassador to Moscow, he was expelled from the Soviet Union, and after all he was the father of containment, the official Cold War policy of the United States to that day, therefore the Hungarians did not wish to make a spectacle out of his visit. Although in 1986 the thaw had begun thanks to Mikhail Gorbachev's reform politics in the Soviet Union, on the surface, and especially in the official state propaganda, Hungary was very cautious. At the same time, those who were well-informed about the situation and his position recognized Kennan as a long-time critic of his country's foreign policy. No wonder that important people, for example, Mátyás Szűrös, were willing to meet him while he was in Hungary. Kennan had a long list of people he wanted to meet and exchange ideas with, but from the surviving documents it is not clear how many of those people he managed to talk to, but in all probability just a handful. On his list that was put together on the advice of the Hungarian ambassador, the State Department, Kennan's daughter, and his close friend, the Hungarian-born John Lukacs, among others, the following names appeared: János Berecz, member of the Central Committee; Péter Várkonyi, the incumbent foreign minister of Hungary; U.S. Ambassador to Hungary Nicholas Salgo; György Baló and János Hajdú of the Hungarian State Television; Ágnes

Sárvári, Director of the Archives of the City of Budapest; literary historian Mihály Szegedy-Maszák; and historian András Balogh.[33]

During Kennan's stay in Hungary, Balogh was the official contact person. The two men took long walks on Margaret Island, where they sometimes switched from English to Russian. Balogh told of his experiences in the Soviet Union, which Kennan enjoyed, and Balogh thought this might have played a part in Kennan becoming more open to him. According to Balogh, Kennan was friendly, collegial, and in full command of his acute mind at the age of 82. He always read *Pravda*, the main Soviet daily newspaper, while in Budapest. Kennan praised Gorbachev and his endeavors at reforms, but he was doubtful whether this would be enough, and whether it was not going to cause more problems than solutions. The breakup of the Soviet Union was also something Kennan did not anticipate at this point. When Balogh posed the question of what Kennan thought about the possibility of the breakup of Yugoslavia, Kennan replied that such an event would signify the end of the current international order and would bring in unforeseeable and tragic consequences.[34] This would indicate that Kennan believed in a bipolar world, accepted it as the norm, and was afraid of seismic changes in it.

Kennan took short trips in Budapest, and based upon these he gained certain impressions. He paid a visit to the Opera, where naturally he watched Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, even though it was in Hungarian. He took two excursions outside the capital city to touristic destinations: to the trio of Szentendre–Visegrád–Esztergom, north of Budapest, and to Eger. Regarding these trips he noted that it was almost impossible to glean information about the historical buildings.[35] On his way to Eger, the good quality of the highway and its facilities, plus the well-tended vineyards made Kennan formulate a surprising and false conclusion: "The general impression was that the Hungarians, in their unostentatious manner, had found ways to make a nominally socialist system work just about as well as a 'capitalist one or those of the welfare-state' systems of the West."[36] This is a good reminder of how superficial features can trick even the most experienced and sharp-eyed observers.

Thanks to Kennan's diary entries and his correspondence with Lukacs, one can get a glimpse of his impressions about Hungary and the people living there. Kennan prepared well for the visit, especially regarding the country's history. Due to his earlier career and work, he was well versed in twentieth-century Hungarian affairs, but the earlier times were obscure to him. He had read some books available on the subject and these, combined with his experience, made him note that Hungarian history was "heart-

breaking" as it was "punctuated with dreadful set-backs." Kennan could "think of no city that [was] so often and so terribly destroyed as Budapest. The wonder is that people have had the impulse, and the stubborn faith, to re-build it"[37]—this features as an often-recurring theme in his diary entries while in Budapest.

In the first two weeks neither Kennan nor his wife, Annelise, felt too well physically—mainly due to the different time zone and Kennan's lumbago—and hardly went out. Instead, they enjoyed the spa hotel's services, took long walks on the island, and Kennan read intensively as was his wont. The busier part of his stay was the last week when he met with Szűrös or Várkonyi. These two meetings in particular worried him, because he believed these men were "presumably too deeply involved with their political movement and with its relations with the Soviet Union to be able to talk freely about Hungary's international position and its complexities."[38] Still, during his talk with Várkonyi the two men "laughed over the fact" that they were both expelled from their respective host countries, the Soviet Union and the United States, almost at the same time.[39]

Kennan's impressions gained in Hungary were favorable. As he put it in his diary: Hungarians were a "remarkable people with rich civilizational qualities: gifted in almost every way: intellectually, technologically, musically, with the ability, when given the chance, to do a great many things very well indeed."[40] The level of civilization was always a crucial aspect for Kennan, and the Hungarians gave him a positive impression in this regard. As a concluding remark on the people, he wrote to his friend Lukacs that the Hungarians were "a people which, despite all the schmaltz of the gypsy music and the beauty of Budapest, does not wear its heart on its sleeve, and which has an inner pride, or self respect, which saves it from being either obsequious or arrogant—although in its heart, it is aware of its many unusual talents."[41] He attributed it to the country's history and geography that he found "the more thoughtful of the Hungarians somewhat subdued, bewildered and depressed."[42] Kennan had the feeling that the impressive Parliament building was yet another reminder and symbol of the discord between Hungarian aspirations and dreams and the stark historical reality. Because of these ambivalent observations Kennan was somewhat confused concerning the nature of Hungarians. He considered the unique Hungarian tongue to be both an advantage and disadvantage: a plus in national unity in a small country, but a distinct drawback in establishing relations with the West, and what it meant for Hungarian nationalism. He held the opinion that the talent of this people would have required a larger territory, and it was "a pity that

their connections with Croatia and with the greater part of Transylvania were so brutally and abruptly terminated as was the case after these two world wars."[43]

He happily took part in an event organized by the Hungarian Political Science Association, where about three dozen selected audience were present, who expressed their opinions with perhaps surprising openness and posed questions without feeling inhibited. This meeting meant a physical and mental challenge for Kennan:

> These meetings, instructive as they have been for me personally, have served one sad purpose: namely, to persuade me that I must never again visit, so long as the present political situation endures, another country of the Soviet bloc. It puts us all, myself and the local American representatives, into an ambiguous position, but myself in particular. I am looked to by people in the host country for things I cannot deliver—for words of hope in which I do not, myself, believe. Yet to tell what I know to be the truth: that they have nothing to hope from the United States, is to cross up the local American diplomats, who are only doing their duty and being personally kind to me in the bargain, and to put myself in the position of seeming to be working against my own government in a foreign country—a position in which I never hope to find myself.[44]

The seven-hour effort drained his energy, and this sort of duality always troubled him while in Hungary. This episode harkens back to the period after World War I when Hungarians—together with basically every country in the region—looked to the United States as their possible savior.

Margaret Island offered beautiful surroundings, and the hotel was fine, although impersonal. The musicians entertaining the guests were superb, but Kennan thought they did not play real Hungarian folk music but rather what the mostly elderly German guests wanted to hear. Although sixty years earlier he found a similar experience in Germany pleasant, "now I get no pleasure from having my table surrounded and myself serenaded, by these soulful fiddlers, as though I meant anything to them, or the music meant anything to them."[45] Since at the hotel nothing signaled that they were in a communist country, Kennan made the conclusion that he had discovered "one extreme bit of evidence of some thing has been obvious now for some years: namely, that as an object of belief, enthusiasm, or even interest, the Marxist-Leninist ideology was embarrassingly dead throughout all of Central and Northern Europe."[46]

Two weeks later, back in his home environment in the United States, after he had some time to process what had happened to him, Kennan once more wrote to Lukacs, this time a longer letter, about his experiences in Hungary. Hungarian talent—as he saw it—was not utilized. That meeting with the participants' unrestrained opinions and questions led Kennan—who always had his extra sensors on when observing the world around him, especially people—to the conclusion that he saw "in them a great restlessness and unhappiness—primarily over their restricted position under the shadow of the Russian tree, but also for a deeper reason, I thought: namely, brought with their recent relative prosperity, which had brought them closer to the West, they had also begun to experience something of the empty dissatisfactions of a boring materialist affluent society, and did not know what to do about it."[47]

The last occasion when Hungary drew Kennan's attention was at the time of Hungary's accession to the NATO. When in 1997 Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland joined NATO, Kennan was appalled. All throughout his life he had been sensitive to and considerate of the Russian/Soviet point of view and did not endorse his home country's hegemonic efforts in the world, its enlarged demands for defense, and therefore he was very much against the three Central-Eastern European countries becoming members of the military organization. In his views, geography also contradicted the logic of enlargement. Already back in 1949, when NATO was founded, Kennan resented the fact that Greece and Turkey could soon become members, since "North Atlantic" did not apply to these countries. He was convinced that "the only sound standard for membership in the Atlantic pact was indeed the geographic one. This was the only one that was without ambiguity and could clearly be shown to have only defensive connotations" (Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925–1950* 434). And fifty years later he still held this opinion. The enlargement was accepted of course at the NATO summit in Madrid, Spain, in July 1997. This, however, also contradicted what President Bill Clinton had promised Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president. He had given guarantees that only political enlargement would take place, but one could regularly hear about modernizing the weapon system in the former socialist countries. Kennan on principle could not accept the American move and held the view that Russia was unnecessarily humiliated. He had an opinion piece published on account of this NATO enlargement in which he criticized the Clinton administration's foreign policy. In this writing he mainly evoked the "Lippmann gap," according to which in foreign policy there must be a balance of resources, power, and the nation's commitment. Kennan also

thought that neither Congress, nor public opinion supported Clinton's enlargement agenda.[48] Kennan, the realist was in full force again.

Conclusion

George F. Kennan had a long and productive life, which ran along the whole of the twentieth century. He was often at the right place at the right time, and, thanks to his talent, he managed to get close to the center of American foreign policy decision making. He could boast of shaping and practicing American diplomacy, but he mostly watched it as an astute observer and a sharp critic. Some of his most intelligent views were formed when he was outside the government service. It was unavoidable that the diplomat-historian, who concentrated on and venerated Europe all his life, would be engaged, however remotely, with Hungary.

The occasional run-ins with Hungary, Hungarian foreign policy, and Hungarians reflected the very nature of Kennan and his views. When it came to Hungary as a state and its foreign policy in the last year of peace, and then during World War II, he analyzed and evaluated Hungary's position in the realistic mold: Hungary's interest and the reality of the surrounding conditions made both the First Vienna Award and the occupation of Ruthenia a necessary and acceptable step. When it came to Hungary's almost desperate effort to leave the war in 1943, he followed the realistic American policy view in demanding unconditional surrender in exchange for possible favors later on. The events in 1956 well proved that even a sharp-eyed analyst can be perplexed when cut off from reliable information: Kennan could not read the Soviet cards well enough in order to predict their next move although he well understood the underlying motives of the Russian political and military leadership. His three weeks in Hungary toward the end of the Cold War brought him the closest to the fabric of (Socialist) Hungary. The then elderly, but still very acute observer Kennan sensed and experienced certain features mainly about the Hungarian people, their outlook, and opinion, rather than official Hungarian foreign policy. His observations and opinions formulated thereupon were mainly spot on, which aligns well with so many other comments about other places and people in Europe that Kennan made during his long life. The small episodes and Kennan's thoughts concerning Hungarian foreign policy and Hungarians presented in this study give a unique addition to the ever-growing literature of the history of American-Hungarian relations.

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Notes

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1 George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy, 1900–1950* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1951); George F. Kennan, "America and the Russian Future," *Foreign Affairs* 29. 3 (Apr. 1951): 351–70; George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925–1950* (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1967); George F. Kennan, *Memoirs 1950–1963, An Atlantic Monthly Press Book* (Boston, Toronto: Little Brown and Company, 1972); George Frost Kennan, *From Prague After Munich. Diplomatic Papers, 1938–1939* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1968); George F. Kennan, *The Kennan Diaries*. Ed. Frank Costigliola (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014).

2 The most important and useful books on Kennan include Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986); David Mayers, *George Kennan and the Dilemmas of US Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988); John Lamberton Harper, *American Visions of Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994); *George F. Kennan and the Origins of Containment, 1944–1946: The Kennan-Lukacs Correspondence*, Introd. John Lukacs (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri P, 1997); John Lukacs, *George Kennan: A Study of Character* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007); Lee Congdon, *George Kennan: A Writing Life* (Wilmington, DE: ISI, 2008); Nicholas Thompson, *The Hawk and the Dove: Paul Nitze, George Kennan, and the History of the Cold War* (New York: Henry Holt, 2009); John Lukacs, ed. *Through the History of the Cold War: The Correspondence of George F. Kennan and John Lukacs* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2010); John Lewis Gaddis, *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York: Penguin, 2011); and Frank Costigliola, *Kennan: A Life between Worlds* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2023).

3 George Kennan to John Lukacs, 23 Feb. 1984, in John Lukacs, ed., *Through the History of the Cold War. The Correspondence of George F. Kennan and John Lukacs* (91).

4 On his Prague days see, Kennan, *From Prague After Munich*; Gaddis, *George F. Kennan* (120–31).

5 For a comprehensive study on the First Vienna Award, see Gergely Sallai, *Az első bécsi döntés* [The First Vienna Award]. Budapest: Osiris, 2002.

6 See also the same opinion from 1938 in Kennan, *From Prague After Munich* (5).

7 John Flournoy Montgomery to Homer M. Byington, 14 Sept. 1939, Folder 1, Box 3, John Flournoy Montgomery Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, USA.

8 Excerpts from a personal letter of 8 Dec. 1938, in Kennan, *From Prague After Munich* (9).

9 Report on conditions in Ruthenia, Mar. 1939, in Kennan, *From Prague After Munich* (58).

10 Report on conditions in Ruthenia, Mar. 1939, in Kennan, *From Prague After Munich* (74).

11 Report on conditions in Slovakia, 1 May 1939, in Kennan, *From Prague After Munich* (137).

12 Report of 13 July 1939, on conditions in Slovakia, in Kennan, *From Prague After Munich* (206). Although Gaddis in his monograph *George F. Kennan* claims that Kennan reached Budapest during this trip (130), Kennan does not mention this. If he did visit Budapest, it is not known what he saw there, because he made no mention of it in his report or in his usually long diary entries.

13 On Kennan's service in Portugal, see Gaddis, *George F. Kennan* (158–66).

14 Wodianer's report from Lisbon, 1 Oct. 1943, Folder 19, Roll 1, MF 53671, P 2066, Bakach-Bessenyey György Papers, Hungarian National Archives.

15 George Kennan to Edward Stettinius, Jr., 8 Feb. 1945. 864.5017/2-845, Roll 20, Hungary 1945–1949, Internal Affairs of Hungary 1945–1949, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter cited as NARA).

16 George Kennan to James F. Byrnes, 20 Feb. 1946, 864.60/2-2046, Roll 20, Hungary 1945–1949, Internal Affairs of Hungary 1945–1949, NARA.

17 About the immediate postwar Americans steps in the economic and political field and their unsuccessful nature in the region and Hungary, see Borhi, *Dealing with Dictators* (58–83).

18 On the Soviet Presidium's secret talks concerning the Hungarian revolution, see Szereda, Vjacseszlav, and János Rainer M., eds. *Döntés a Kremlben* (26–99); János Rainer M. "Döntés a Kremlben—Kísérlet a feljegyzések értelmezésére" [Decision in the Kremlin—An Attempt to Interpret the Notes]. *Döntés a Kremlben*. Eds. Szereda and Rainer (111–54).

19 On the Hungarian Revolution in the international arena, see Csaba Békés, *Az 1956-os forradalom a világpolitikában* [The 1956 Revolution in International Diplomacy] (60–115).

20 John M. Maury (1912–1983) was an American diplomat, who also served in Moscow before World War II. Between 1954 and 1962, he led the CIA's Soviet-Russian department. Kennan referred to him in his diary as "a friend in Washington."

21 Notes from a telephone conversation between Mr. Kennan and John Maury, 1 Nov. 1956, Folder 4, 1956, Box 233, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *George F. Kennan Papers*, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, United States (hereafter cited as *Kennan Papers*).

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Diary entry, 7 Nov. 1956, Folder 4, Box 233, *Kennan Papers*.

25 Diary entry, 8 Nov. 1956, Box 233, *Kennan Papers*.

26 Diary entry, 13 Nov. 1956, Box 233, *Kennan Papers*.

27 Notes of the telephone conversation between George F. Kennan and John Maury, 19 Feb. 1957, *Kennan Papers*.

28 In more detail, see Borhi, *Dealing with Dictators* (327–57).

29 George Kennan to William Leurs, 28 Feb. 1986, Folder 2, Box 96, Subseries 1C: Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1939–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

30 Diary entry, 9 March 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

31 George Kennan to Vencel Házi, 15 Jan. and 3 Feb. 1986, Folder 2, Box 96, Subseries 1C: Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1939–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

32 *Magyar Hírlap*, vol. 19, no. 74, 28 Mar. 1986; *Magyar Nemzet*, vol. 49, no. 74, 28 March 1986; *Népszabadság*, vol. 44, no. 74, 28 Mar. 1986.

33 "List of Names of Various People to See while in Hungary," Folder 2, Hungary Trip, Box 96, Subseries 1C: Miscellaneous Correspondence, *Kennan Papers*.

34 Author's interview with András Balogh, 14 Feb. 2017.

35 Diary entry, 18 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

36 Diary entry, 29 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

37 Diary entry, 9 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

38 Diary entry, 23 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

39 Diary entry, 28 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*. Kennan was named persona non grata by Moscow in September 1952, while Várkonyi was expelled from the US in the summer of 1951 only after a two months' stay. It is perhaps of interest to note that from August 1989 Várkonyi served one more time as ambassador to Washington for ten months. It is not known whether he met with Kennan during that time.

40 Diary entry, 23 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

41 George Kennan to John Lukacs, 27 Mar. 1986, in Lukacs, *Through the History of the Cold War* (119).

42 Ibid.

43 Diary entry, 23 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

44 Diary entry, 28 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

45 Diary entry, 11 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

46 Diary entry, 13 Mar. 1986, Folder 2, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*.

47 George Kennan to John Lukacs, 16 Apr. 1986, in Lukacs, *Through the History of the Cold War* (123).

48 George Kennan, "U.S. Ambitions Outstrip Its Domestic Appetite." *International Herald Tribune* 10 July 1997: 8; Diary entry, 11 July 1997, Folder 5, Box 326, Subseries 4C: Diaries, 1924–2004, *Kennan Papers*. On the Lippmann gap, see, Walter Lippmann: *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of Republic* (9).

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American Veteran Noirs: Investigating Exceptionalism and Its Post-World War II Trauma

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ABSTRACT
This essay looks at some of the American film noir that focus on traumatized veterans in the post-World War II era, up to the twenty-first century and argues that noir thrillers centering on mentally disturbed veterans of World War II allow for both commemoration and criticism of the global interventionism that American exceptionalism legitimized during the Cold War and the Wars on Terror. Paradigmatic noirs construct traumatized veterans to investigate their symptoms of amnesia and paranoia as responses to historical interventions. While the analysis of Fred Zinnemann's *Act of Violence* (1948) challenges idolizations of members of the Greatest Generation as morally superior immediately after their return home, that of Alan Parker's *Angel Heart* (1987) probes into how the projection of a Faustian tale upon amnesia connects a post-World War II identity conflict to an anti-communist climate ripe with social tensions. The third veteran noir, the post-9/11 film *Shutter Island* (2010) by Martin Scorsese, conclusively reveals how two paranoid narratives overlap in the films under scrutiny, aiming to deconstruct the patriotic trope of American heroism in their subtexts. (AG)

KEYWORDS: Veterans, noir cinema, American exceptionalism, trauma, World War II

The Puritan John Winthrop first preached to colonists aboard the *Arbella* in 1630 that they had been redeemed by God to build an exceptional "Citty upon a Hill" that would either be celebrated or judged for its moral standards by the rest of the world (Winthrop 303–04). Two centuries later, Alexis de Tocqueville first applied the term "exceptional" to the new American Republic in 1835 referring to its checks-and-balances system, in which even the President's executive power could be limited by his own federal government (Tocqueville 205–06). In 2007, Donald E. Pease took a very different approach and defined American exceptionalism as "a multilayered academic discourse," "an explanatory framework," "a political doctrine," and

"a regulatory ideal" that have especially guided how international scholars have approached the study of American identity since the onset of the Cold War, while affirming American nationalism and imperialism (Pease 108–09). At first, the so-called "'Myth and Symbol'" school of historians and literary scholars defined foundational tropes such as "the melting pot, the endless frontier, American Adam, Virgin Land," which expressed the presumed exceptionalism of American culture to legitimize foreign and domestic policies (110). By the end of the twentieth century, however, scholars had replaced the notion of exceptionalism with that of globalization, as reflected in expressions that no longer privilege an American point of view, exemplified by the increasing frequency of the terms "borderlands" and "contact zone" rather than "frontier" and "melting pot," respectively (111). Despite this paradigm shift in scholarship, Pease considered the discourse of American exceptionalism to be far from outdated and pointed to then-President George W. Bush's justifications of global American interventionism as a divine mission (112). This essay takes its cue precisely from the fact that discourses justifying American interventionism with exceptionalism date back to World War II, and always came at a cost for veterans and the national psyche, as evidenced by the films to be discussed.

The belief traced by Pease to the Lovestoneite faction of the Communist International that the US is unique on the world stage, American exceptionalism indeed gained new tropes following the intervention to liberate Europe from the genocide and terror of the Third Reich (Pease 108–09). Formed around Jay Lovestone, this group was expelled from the Communist International in 1929 by Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, because they suggested that, unlike European nations, the US was exceptional as it had avoided both a socioeconomic collapse and working-class rebellions (108). Rather than aspire toward social peace, Pease argues, Americans could since then unify missions to extend their culturally specific ideals of liberty and equality to embattled countries worldwide (109). Paradoxically, constructing the history of the US as the global redeemer required military violence abroad, which at times failed to implement the Western democratic system, for example, during the Vietnam War (1955–1975), Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003–2011), and Operation Enduring Freedom (2001–2021) in Afghanistan.

American interventionism has been viewed differently by Americans than by the citizens of, for example, European countries. Thus, it can be helpful to consider Marc Chenetier's observations on the state of the discipline of American Studies in Europe as of 2008, which famously started

with the goal to redeem foundational republican-democratic values after World War II. While American Studies explicitly encouraged ideological imperialism in Europe and worldwide during earlier days of the discipline, debates have increasingly focused on domestic issues in the US (Chenetier 1). Yet, Chenetier suggests that American imperialism could persist in a type of European scholarship that still perpetuates American influence beyond US borders by amplifying American voices (6). Unlike their American counterparts, however, as Chenetier contends, Europeans have longer histories of approaching class hierarchies, as well as experience with alternative state forms, to the effect that European observers might be able to envisage social redemption by means other than internalizing American exceptionalist notions (4). In light of such divergent perspectives across the Atlantic, Chenetier recommends that in the future Americans should seek solutions to national issues by listening to Europeans rather than the other way around (8). Indeed, this suggestion could point to a shift away from an age when the exceptionalist concept of America promised redemption to global onlookers who sought inspiration for social change.

Considering the implications of post-World War II American exceptionalism for occupied peoples beyond Europe, Amy Kaplan highlights how anti-totalitarian agendas obscure the problem of global imperialism in research on American history (12). At this point, it should be noted that in this essay, reflections on American global imperialism take World War II as their starting point instead of focusing on the ongoing colonization of the Americas by European colonists and their descendants, which has affected Indigenous peoples there since 1492. Such historical blind spots, Michael Rogin suggests, allow the mainstream media to sensationalize the violence of, for example, the Iran hostage crisis (1979–1981) or the attacks of 11 September 2001 and demand retaliation rather than global commemorations of totalitarian histories from North America and beyond (527–28). Thus, the specific symbolism of American victimhood is highlighted, while potentially unifying similarities between experiences of military occupation go unaddressed. Instead, media images contribute violent tropes to the American exceptionalist imaginary, trying to legitimate the omnipresence of American soldiers worldwide; soldiers whom citizens expect to embody national virtues such as those of John Wayne's cowboy and soldier-types in post-World War II cinema (Barker 49–51). The personal qualities that Wayne brought to his roles can be assumed to have produced a stereotype that has

maintained its appeal across time. However, the production of the Wayne cowboy/soldier is less relevant than its contestations from the post-World War II years until the Wars on Terror.

In various noir films, investigators expose power asymmetries by detecting corruption, tyranny, and torture that counter foundational American values while reflecting totalitarianism. In this context, my argument that film noirs can challenge the hegemonic doctrine of American exceptionalism by reconsidering the legacies of World War II through the lens of veterans' trauma, follows social science scholarship, which unsettles any binary between America's home front and the war zones. Notably, anthropologist Joseph Masco attributed the work of conjuring up the same future that it seeks to prevent to the counterterrorist images of the US military. He blamed US counterterrorist technology and bureaucracy for facilitating surveillance of their own citizens and producing a "self-colonizing" domestic state (13–14). Masco puzzled over the question of "how to define [the] boundaries, battlefields, and home fronts" of a country, that is, the US, whose borders are increasingly eroded under potentially endless states of emergency (35). Yet, the 1950s saw Americans habitually imagining the destruction of their country in order to prepare for terrorist attacks (46). According to social scientists such as Masco, in this persistent cultural context, the three films discussed here can be understood to voice complex problems about the legacy of the global American empire that took shape during World War II but has increasingly been called into question as being morally flawed.

This essay's choice of films that deal with the aftermath of World War II is justified by the fact that both the American counterterrorist state and its superpower status actually date back to the early years of the Cold War just after America's victory over Nazi Germany. In his famous article in *Life* magazine, "The American Century," the American press magnate Henry R. Luce claimed that the dictators of the 1940s were already responding with aggression to the global popularity of American democratic ideals, which must not be equated with colonialism (Luce rpt. in *Diplomatic History* 167). As a self-declared internationalist, he dismissed any isolationist criticism of President Franklin Roosevelt's support for Great Britain as "Nazi propaganda about fighting somebody else's war" (164), since the worldwide spread of American influence represented an opportunity to him that the previous President Woodrow Wilson had failed to seize after World War I (166–67). On the one hand, Luce pointed out that American internationalism was already a reality due to the international popularity of "American jazz,

Hollywood movies, American slang, American machines and patented products" (169). On the other hand, Luce called on American readers "to seek and to bring forth a vision of America as a world power which is authentically American and which can inspire us to live and work and fight with vigor and enthusiasm" (169). He went on to list tropes of America's global role that persist and have meanwhile come under scrutiny, such as "America as the dynamic center of ever-widening spheres of enterprise, America as the training center of the skillful servants of mankind, America as the Good Samaritan . . ., and America as the powerhouse of the ideals of Freedom and Justice" (171). In this context, Luce absolutely rejected the isolationist prediction that an American involvement in World War II would harm the country's democratic system and economy to the point of the US becoming indistinguishable from the enemy (162). Thus, representations of the American experience of intervening in World War II, along with its aftermath, can reveal the ideological underpinnings of the nation's imperial power on the world stage as well as its implications for veterans, who experienced both the military and the home front at this significant moment. Yet, rather than position itself for or against American interventionism in general, this essay is interested in the cultural work through which Hollywood films have critically reflected American exceptionalism since the second half of the twentieth century.

It is precisely this tension between national doubts and international pride that characterized the ideological climate of the American World War II in noirs that investigate the troubled minds of members of the Greatest Generation, who appear as heroes and perpetrators at the same time. Such politically subversive narratives unsettle the hegemonic tale of brave Americans drawn by a moral calling to offer personal sacrifices for their destined triumph over the evil Axis Powers. Although the three films discussed invoke these patriotic tropes when they introduce audiences to the veteran stories, moral flaws are also attributed to the metonymic American veteran characters. Rather than call into question the overall justice of America's involvement in World War II, the noir genre allows the films to tell a political fable about the cost of war to individual veterans, whose integrity (or lack thereof) is constructed as representative of the state of national cohesion. Besides being veterans, the protagonists are "the object of" criminal investigations and are depicted in great psychological detail. Although this essay is primarily interested in the relationship between the veteran stories at the surface and the ideological critiques in the subtext of

the selected films, it should be mentioned that the resulting political fable can by no means be found exclusively in Hollywood noir cinema.

In fact, the figure of the traumatized American ex-soldier already invites challenges to the ideology of American exceptionalism. The condition of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was itself only recognized by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War with typical symptoms matching those of "shell shock" and "combat stress," among others (Caruth 3). Yet, in the same way as the latter two terms which Sigmund Freud had already applied to World War I veterans, this psychological crisis relates not only to a particular wartime event, but to the survival thereof (9). By contrast, patriotic accounts of wartime experiences cast the survivor in the role of hero who came home a winner against all odds. Yet, as Cathy Caruth summarizes, PTSD constitutes a delayed response in the shape of "repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviors stemming from the event, along with numbing that may have begun during or after the experience, and possibly also increased arousal to (and avoidance of) stimuli recalling the event" (4). Instead of appearing as heroes who recount memories, traumatized veterans embody vulnerability, since "[t]he traumatized . . . carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess," in Caruth's words (5). Besides the obvious changes in behavior, mood, and self-image that might make traumatized veterans appear post-heroic, however, the delayed resurgence of events for them means that they perpetually revisit history critically (8). Thus, although they are the ultimate historical witnesses of the recent past, they are unreliable narrators of the present, in which they are only partially rooted.

As an additional facet lending them socio-critical significance, traumatized veterans in the noir films discussed are engaged in criminal investigations. Of course, noir films belong to the genre of detective fiction which had been established by Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle, whose stories criticized social hierarchies in the Victorian era (Cawelti 348–49). However, since the 1940s, the character of the detective has undergone a transformation from an amateur investigator to an underdog professional, according to Tzvetan Todorov and Ulrich Schulz-Buschhaus (Todorov 59–60; Schulz-Buschhaus 125–26). In addition, Todorov distinguished the noir thriller as incorporating the subjectivity of the investigator to guide the narrative while the latter is placed at existential risk (60). Whether this risk emanates from suspects, the tortured psyche of the investigator, or society at large, noirs' linkage of crimes on the home front to the aftermath of World

War II points to unfinished business. Furthermore, the flashbacks that the veterans experience erode the binary between the overseas warzone and the American home front. In any case, the traumatized veteran himself poses a serious threat to the ideology of American exceptionalism with its notion of the US as a redeemer.

Displaced rationale in the new world order: *Act of Violence* (1948)

Act of Violence by the Austrian Jewish documentary filmmaker Fred Zinnemann is an early noir that drew on the German Expressionist art movement by representing psychosis in surreal aesthetics but rejected rational solutions to moral conflicts (McDonnell 72). Such a view explicitly runs counter to the foundational American frontier spirit of the European settlers, which the historian Frederick Jackson Turner described as resourceful, pragmatic, and creative amid the perceived wilderness of the frontier (137–38). After the American veteran Frank R. Enley's (Van Heflin) celebration as a builder in Santa Lisa, California, on Memorial Day, his former fellow prisoner of war in Nazi Germany, Joe Parkson (Robert Ryan) resurfaces hunting for revenge and threatens Frank's wife, Edith (Janet Leigh). Presumably to depict Frank's memories and thus his interiority on screen, Zinnemann layered the sampled voices of characters referencing the past, for example, Frank's own words "Don't do it, Joe!" when he tried to dig an escape tunnel during captivity, as he flees from Joe into a tunnel and his vision blurs. The theme of confusion manifests as Joe's voice from the past emerges as being closer to Frank, whose view of Joe in the present is fleeting. Frank thus appears lost between past and present. The film's focus on interiority is aided by props such as Mary Astor's wardrobe assembled off-the-rack, the stains on her clothes, and her smudged makeup, giving the impression of Pat's character as a prostitute, as "'a poor alley cat'" (Astor qtd. in Dixon 43). Frank meets her in the bar he fled to from his builders' convention, and she introduces him to a gangster who suggests arranging Joe's assassination. Because Frank suffers from moral conflicts taking the center of the narrative, Pat primarily serves to embody poverty through visual clues—an early example of the camera's documentary gaze used as a storytelling subtext in noir (Dixon 46). Through this strategy, even minor characters like Pat can embody the social criticism of the filmmakers, although she herself lacks any backstory.

Act of Violence above all problematizes idolizing the Greatest Generation that just returned from World War II. The film does so by positioning Frank R. Enley as a metonym of the American dream, who

appears to have a perfect life after having survived his deployment to Germany and having served his country. The noir plays upon the literary roots of its genre with its lack of a hard-boiled detective; instead, it depicts Edith interrogating Joe and Frank. As part of a possible criticism of conservative gender roles after World War II, Edith could be seen as an underdog who, while lacking power herself, uncovers the secrets of men with power. Partly because Edith is a typical young, blonde housewife of the 1950s, who could be a gangster's trophy in hard-boiled fiction (Schulz-Buschhaus 128–29), and who could be accused of naïveté. For example, she does not protest like a feminist would when Frank literally tells her, "Edith, a lot of things happened in the war that you wouldn't understand, not myself either" (Zinnemann). However, she glances up at Frank in confusion. Once again, the aesthetic of the noir film is imbued with a socio-critical gaze that is not explicated in words and could thus appear all the more realistic to viewers who must take note of visual cues themselves. When Edith raises a gun, like Grace Kelly's character in *High Noon* (1952), to defend her husband, she further highlights how vulnerable even American heroes can become when they are threatened by outlaws from within their own nation (Cawelti 87–88), in this case, an embodiment of World War II guilt.

Still, the women of *Act of Violence* cannot prevent Frank's assassination at the hands of the hitman he hired to shoot Joe, and hence the film uses the noir class-consciousness of the noir and the gendered gaze to interrogate the post-war US glory personified by Frank. After all, his appeal to them appears as a less powerful factor than the personal guilt toward Joe that entraps him. His work constructing suburban houses and his use of sophisticated technology, for example, when he escapes in his rowboat from Joe, highlight his privileged status but also link him to the materially superior Nazi SS colonels to whom he betrayed his fellow prisoners of war. He regrets this materialism when confessing his past to Edith:

> The Nazis even paid me a price. They gave me food and I ate it. I ate it! I hadn't done it just to save their lives. I talked myself into believing it that he'd [the Nazi SS colonel] keep his word [to "go easy" on the men]. But in my guts, from the start I think I knew he wouldn't.
>
> (Zinnemann; comments added)

Therefore, his plot to eliminate Joe and evade judgment equally reflects egoism and parallels the arrogance associated with Nazi élites in postwar popular culture (Beard 210). In the counter-communist context of the Cold

War, *Act of Violence* revisits World War II to focus on Frank's moral conflict and ask who truly deserves to be venerated as a war hero and be financially rewarded by contrasting the Enleys' spacious house with Joe's and his fiancée's miniscule suite. Not only is Joe's physical disability depicted, but also Frank's mental trauma through layered media, which suggests that he can yet become a martyr-hero like President Abraham Lincoln, whose assassination, Robert N. Bellah argues, established sacrifice as a virtue for any American leader ("Civil War and Civil Religion"). Immediately, Joe volunteers to announce Frank's death to Edith with his declaration seemingly redeeming his violent intentions and unveiling the suffering of the postwar American soul personified by the respected veteran builder for whom there was no escape from moral judgment. The dichotomy between Frank and Joe could reflect what Harold Bloom identifies as Jewishness in Freud's psychoanalytical interpretation of drives as either sadistic or masochistic, or either externally or internally directed forms of violence shaping the cultural memory of an exiled people for whom there is no means of reversing time (138; 143–44; 152). By this logic, had Frank returned alone to the US, he would still have remained forever connected with Joe because of their shared captivity in Germany. This helpless situation is highly symbolic within the American exceptionalist context that could have inspired *Act of Violence*. The Hebrew Scriptures, Bloom suggests, already reveal emotional trauma as a source of profound knowledge that has most probably influenced Freudian psychoanalytic discourse, for instance, with the idea that pain requires testimony, which surfaces—to provide but one example—when the prophet Jeremiah decides he must speak in God's name as a retribution for unjust temptation (140–41). His testimony is both his revenge and redemption because he refuses to live a morally flawed life and thus receives God's grace. *Act of Violence*, like the tale of Jeremiah, addresses revelation and disgrace, in this case of an American veteran and his self-sacrifice, because Frank taking the bullet ens Joe's desire for revenge and allows Frank to become a martyr and atone for his betrayal. In contrast to his actions in Germany, Frank finally assumes his assigned role as a leader who is guided by responsibility, instead of egoism. If this ending signifies the victory of humanity that the US claimed following World War II—despite their experience of isolation until the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii (1941) and domestic inequalities—*Act of Violence* documents interior tensions as a noir through a transatlantic lens. Yet, the transatlantic dimension connecting Frank and Joe is only referred to, rather than visually depicted, which in itself can allude to the dissociation that follows traumatic experiences. In addition, the paradox of temporal

proximity, despite spatial distance that is visualized by Frank's flashbacks to war scenes in Germany, explicitly represents his character as deeply fragmented, neither able to completely commit himself to his postwar life as a veteran nor return to the scene of his original crime and clear his conscience.

Amnesia and paranoia as legacies of "the American century": *Angel Heart* (1987) and *Shutter Island* (2010)

When Luce proclaimed the American Century in 1941 and advocated global interventionism, his ideas invited the view of the US as the redeemer nation and glossed over internal turmoil, which remained politically unaddressed until the Civil Rights Movements of the 1960s–1980s (Pease 111). As Pease points out, this timeframe during the Cold War saw the proliferation of contestations of American exceptionalism from the margins of US society, which inaugurated a paradigm shift in scholarship that proposed globalization instead as the goal (111). Since then, scholars of American culture have continued to seek diverse perspectives on American exceptionalism, which thrives, as can be seen in two more noirs, more recent than *Act of Violence,* through amnesia and paranoia connected to the nation's military interventionism. In the immediate aftermath of World War II, Zinnemann's film staged moral conflicts that subtly suggested overlaps between American interventionists and the Nazis, but *Angel Heart* by Alan Parker and *Shutter Island* by Martin Scorsese ambivalently deduce morality from personal histories while associating the psychological suffering of American veterans with uncanny evil.

Whereas *Act of Violence* was produced immediately after World War II, in the 1940s, *Angel Heart* dates to the 1980s, and *Shutter Island* to the 2000s. Thus, more recent international conflicts, such as the Cold War and the Wars on Terror, are reflected in the producers' choices of plotlines as well as their storytelling practices. Unlike World War II—during which American soldiers were deployed to combat zones overseas and those who returned, or remained at home, might have viewed their wartime experiences with paranoia—the postwar institution of the Central Bureau of Investigations (CIA) during the Cold War and the Wars on Terror mobilized fears of nuclear attacks on ordinary Americans by foreign powers (Masco 9). However, ahead of America's victory in World War II, significant numbers of Americans had resisted their country's involvement (Luce 161–62), and afterwards domestic disputes revealed the systemic blind spots of American exceptionalism (Pease 111). Both of these challenges to the status quo could be interpreted as anti-American in a paranoid imagination that precludes the voices of traumatized

veterans who experienced both the war and its aftermath. Therefore, affected veterans are uniquely positioned to stand at the center of contemporary criticisms of American exceptionalism for denying shortcomings at home while commemorating heroic performances abroad (Pease 110). Unlike *Act of Violence* where Frank attempts to suppress but keeps recalling his dark secrets, *Angel Heart* and *Shutter Island* expand their projections of alleged American moral ambiguity beyond individual veterans by invoking the trope of amnesia.

Although the novel *Falling Angel* (1978) by William Hjortsberg is set in the year 1959, the British director Alan Parker decided to move the plot of his filmic adaptation *Angel Heart* into 1955 in order to strengthen the story's reference to World War II ("Audiokommentar mit Alan Parker" [Audio Commentary with Alan Parker]). At first glance, the story matches Parker's description of a "fusion of the two genres . . .: the detective story with the Faustian tale" because its underdog protagonist Harry Angel (Mickey Rourke) investigates the disappearance of the Blues crooner Johnny Favorite, who it is revealed possessed the former's body and soul ("Audiokommentar"). The two men's destinies became conflated during World War II when Johnny was deployed to North Africa as part of the Special Entertainment Services but returned with amnesia and wounded to the point of disfigurement. Since Johnny feared that in the event of his death, the devil would collect his soul, which he had sold to him for fame at the beginning of his career, he sought out Harry just after his own deployment when the latter was celebrating New Year's Eve in Times Square in 1943. Then Johnny transferred his amnesia to Harry with the effect that as a private detective, he accepted the request of the devil Lucifer masquerading as Louis Cyphre (Robert De Niro) to uncover his own fate and thus validate the Faustian bargain. At a second glance, the partial setting in New Orleans to invoke a "European sensibility" that would "not [be] American really," lends additional meaning to Parker's cited summary of "Raymond Chandler meets *The Exorcist*" in a reference to the author of paradigmatic noirs from the 1930s–1950s, and his own transatlantic horror franchise since the 1970s ("Audiokommentar"). Indeed, Parker has a magical realist approach when he explains his inclusion of the figure of the devil in his noir thriller as completely coincidental to the story and thus reflective of the postwar society he depicts ("Audiokommentar"). After all, in their final confrontation, Cypher admits to having secretly orchestrated the murders of several sources close to Johnny—whom Harry interviewed about his life and whom he killed but did not remember doing so—including Johnny's own illegitimate mixed-race daughter, Epiphany Proudfoot (Lisa

Bonet), with whom he, appearing as Harry, previously had incestuous sexual intercourse. Since Lisa Bonet was famous for playing the relatable teenage daughter of a wholesome middle-class African American physician on *The Bill Cosby Show* (1984–1992) prior to *Angel Heart,* her casting could imply that Epiphany's role as the amoral veteran Johnny's daughter is equally metonymic.

As a social commentary from the Cold War era, *Angel Heart* can therefore be understood to associate the moral state of a representative veteran, who embodies the American dream of success and sacrifice, with that of the devil himself. Like Lucifer in the Bible, who seeks to inversely mirror the love of the Christian God, Harry's violence in Algiers, New Orleans in *Angel Heart* could mirror the violence that Johnny exercised in Algiers, North Africa. Thus, violence is redirected to the American home front.

Here, the original German surname of Johnny, "Liebling," which he himself translated into his stage name "Favorite," along with Harry's comment about his birthplace, "That ain't Algiers in Africa. That's Algiers in New Orleans" (Parker) could invite associations with the Nazi occupation of Algeria during World War II. In fact, *Angel Heart*'s portrayal of the persistence of racial segregation in New Orleans with the slogan "For colored patrons only" printed inside tram cars dismantles patriotic narratives of liberation during World War II, and mirrors the way Cypher cracks the shells of eggs to devour their insides that symbolize souls to him. During his life, Johnny can be assumed to have complied with the racial hierarchy of the Old South, suggested in how he schemed with his white fiancée, Margaret Krusemark (Charlotte Rampling) and how he abandoned his African American mistress, Evangeline Proudfoot, who died waiting for him. After his transformation into Harry, his double standard is reflected by his paranoia regarding an African American satanic church in Harlem and his dismissiveness towards the Voodoo rituals he secretly watches Epiphany conducting. Although Harry repeatedly justifies his atheism by saying "I'm from Brooklyn," he shares a passion for Satanism with Margaret during his life as Johnny to the point that she and her father Ethan aid him in choosing a person Ethan disparagingly calls "Just a boy. Just a soldier out celebrating New Year's Eve in Times Square," whose heart he would eat to dodge his pact with Lucifer (Parker).

Thus, Ethan and Margaret embody refinement and complicity with evil. With her dark red lipstick and matching long nails, Old Hollywood blonde wavy hairstyle, opulent pentagram choker, and tight-fitting tailored

suit, Margaret could appear as a classic femme fatale of the upper class. Besides having a Germanic surname, she could seem to be of European origin when she addresses her Black maid in fluent French or when she names herself "Madame Zora" and opens a fortune-telling shop on Coney Island, New York. Most importantly, Margaret is established as the opposite of her romantic rival, Epiphany. Unlike Margaret, Epiphany wears loose-fitting rags that accidentally reveal her body, and she dances with wild passion while she sacrifices a chicken during a Voodoo ceremony in the forest. On the one hand, when Epiphany is found in Harry's bed, the police officer accuses him of miscegenation and suggests that his "n——" clean up his mess (Parker). On the other hand, after Margaret is found murdered with her heart cut out, the same police officer reprimands Harry for killing a woman "from a Louisiana money family, white money" as if this made her murder more deplorable (Parker). Paradoxically, Cypher subversively appears to level racial and class hierarchies like a Communist in a Cold War setting, since he presumably stole Margaret's pentagram choker and impregnated Epiphany, as the gleaming golden eyes of her baby suggests and as she herself had claimed to Harry that the Voodoo Gods impregnated her. Unlike Margaret, who sought a relationship with the devil, Epiphany further cites her mother, a Mambo priestess like herself, as saying that "Johnny Favorite was as close to true evil as she [Evangeline] ever wanted to come" (Parker). Yet, the film frames Epiphany sympathetically, since her death by gunshot constitutes Harry's/Johnny's final crime, for which he will definitely be executed and will "burn" "in hell," since he placed his military dog tags around her neck (Parker). Epiphany was only seventeen years old when a gun was fatally fired into her vagina when she was taught to mourn her father who had allegedly died in the war, and when she had told Harry that she preferred Voodoo to Christianity because "nailing a man to a cross ain't so cute either" (Parker). At first glance, the murder of Epiphany symbolizes the irrational amorality of Cypher, who compelled Harry/Johnny to kill her, because she represents a guileless innocent victim. At second glance, her treatment by Harry/Johnny and Cypher is matched by the wealthy white Satanist Ethan's statement of moral relativism, "Evil is a dunghill, Mr. Angel. Everyone gets on his own and speaks about someone else's" after confessing to sacrificing Harry so that Johnny could escape his Faustian bargain (Parker). Apparently, Margaret was equally indifferent to American soldiers during World War II, since she helped Johnny choose a random soldier on New Year's Eve on Times Square,

New York. Indeed, Harry might be betraying his identity as Johnny when he summarizes his deployment in casual, callous terms, without expressing any sympathy for the cause of America's intervention:

> I was in for a short period of time. But I got a little fucked up, real quick. Excuse my language, you know. And they shipped me back home. And I sort of missed the whole shebang, you know. The war, the medals, and all. Nine yards. And I guess you could say I was lucky. (Parker)

Against the patriotic Cold War backdrop of *Angel Heart,* Harry's lack of American exceptionalist enthusiasm about World War II, combined with his treatment of Epiphany and his paranoia regarding Voodoo rather than actual Satanism, anticipate the revelation of his moral depravity. Fittingly, Parker chose to open his film with a night take of an abandoned alley in New York where an old woman's bloody corpse lies in the snow amid rats, to the sound of a saxophone improvisation ("Audiokommentar"). Parker justified his aesthetic choice with a reference to Cypher's rhetorical questions that could morally relativize his killings: "But what gives human life its worth anyway? Because someone loves it or hates it?" (Parker). In this sense, *Angel Heart* can be understood as requiring the historical backdrop of the immediate aftermath of World War II to voice its late Cold War-era social criticism, since the remembrance of American veterans' sacrifices serves as a barometer for morality, while indifference coincides with a willingness to accept ongoing racial inequality under domestic Jim Crow laws. In the case of Harry/Johnny, who is both an antagonist and the center of identification in the film, the trope of amnesia provides a bridge between Harry's past as a soldier, who was drafted to support America's intervention, and the present of Johnny, whose selfish theft of Harry's body and soul caused the depicted murders in the first place. Harry's/Johnny's metonymic identity conflict is illustrated by what Cypher tells him when he smashes a mirror with his fist after almost fatally choking Epiphany during sex: "However cleverly you sneak up on a mirror, your reflection always looks you straight in the eye," in contrast to Harry's/Johnny's futile insistence that "I know who I am" (Parker). In a 1950s setting, amnesia might suggest that America had just liberated Europe from Nazi racial policies, but still upheld racial segregation in its Southern states.

The early twenty-first century noir *Shutter Island* revisits the mode to criticize establishments in the US, which thrive on the politics of paranoia—a condition that the final film analyzed here weaves its plot around. Yet,

paranoia is sublimated through the trope of amnesia. The film's opening situates the plot in the Boston Harbor Islands in 1954, but according to Dana and Gerhard Poppenberg, Martin Scorsese connects four eras in American history, those of the Civil War, World War II, the Cold War, and the Wars on Terror (60). On a former Civil War base, ex-detective Edward "Teddy" Daniels/Andrew Laeddis (Leonardo DiCaprio), who liberated Dachau, is investigating counter-communist brainwashing experiments by Nazi psychiatrists. The film's subtext, however, could also contain more recent ideological criticism, since most of its musical score is from the time of George W. Bush's presidency (60). Dr. John Cawley (Ben Kingsley) finally persuades the ex-Marshal Teddy that he, together with his partner, "Chuck" Aule/Dr. Lester Sheehan (Mark Ruffalo), has staged an investigation into the disappearance of an inmate to realize that he (Teddy) is the missing inmate, and it was him who killed his wife after her infanticide. Cawley's prescription of a lobotomy for Teddy ambivalently ends the story, offering two equally coherent interpretations.

The first possible interpretation is that Teddy is captured, and his psychosis was fabricated by Dr. Cawley and Dr. Jeremiah Naehring (Max von Sydow) to use him as a test subject. In Teddy's conspiracy theory, Dr. Naehring is an ex-Nazi in hiding. As in the case of the underdog detective who fears for his survival, Teddy's enemies belong to an élite with refined tastes and the power to eliminate their opponents. In this reading, Teddy is disposable within multiple institutions, first as a soldier in the US Army, then as patient number 67 in Ashecliffe Hospital. While confined, Teddy empathizes with incarnations of bare life from corpses of concentration camp inmates in Dachau to the Communist psychiatric inmate George Noyce. Such characters represent bare life or the *homo sacer,* which was the status that excluded convicted criminals from being sacrificed in religious rituals in the Roman Empire, according to Giorgio Agamben (3; 12–13).[1] In his argument, Nazis used the same logic to justify why they would murder concentration camp inmates as if they were parasites (127). Paradoxically, the veteran Teddy suspects that after the end of World War II, a fugitive Nazi physician has continued to exterminate Communists at Ashecliffe Hospital in the US.

The second possible interpretation is that the psychiatrist, as Teddy suspects, does perform experiments to try to modify the inmates' social behaviors. Dr. Cawley, because of Teddy's rejection of surgery and pharmacology, stages a "radical, cutting-edge role play" for him to uncover that his pseudonym Edward Daniels and the name of the fugitive psychiatrist Rachel Solando are actually anagrams concealing his civil name, Andrew

Laeddis, and that of his wife, Dolores Chanal (Michelle Williams). Although flashbacks reveal that Dolores was mentally ill and drowned their children and Teddy confesses to Chuck that he deliberately ignored her instability, he still dreams of passionately embracing her and receiving her loving encouragement for his investigations. In his denial of the past, Teddy blames her death (which he actually caused) on a fire set by their building's maintenance man, who happened to be named Andrew Laeddis. Through his revisionist remembrance, Teddy attempts to suppress his regrets for having failed as a husband, who denied his wife's psychosis and then murdered her, as well as a father who neglected his children. The only healing possible for his metonymic psyche is to overcome amnesia through a personal acknowledgement of his guilt. When the plot shifts its focus to Teddy's family life as the center of the mystery, it personalizes criticism of American interventionism since World War II, which occurred at the cost of suppressing rather than resolving domestic conflicts, especially struggles for equal rights, for example, for men and women within the nation (Pease 110).

Set during the Cold War and abounding with performances of amnesia and paranoia, *Shutter Island* features transhistorical criticism of the Wars on Terror rhetoric as well. For instance, Masco recognizes that President Bush's response to 11 September 2001 mobilized American citizenry based on paranoia when he conjured up the images of an atomic "mushroom cloud" that had been circulated during the Cold War (72). Indeed, Dennis Lehane situated the paranoid character of Teddy as confined amid Communists in the 1950s in his novel *Shutter Island* from 2003—the same year that the US invaded Iraq. Teddy's paranoia further connects the Cold War to World War II, given his memory of how his participation in the war challenged his patriotic values of fair and equal treatment. He tells Chuck, "When we got through the gates at Dachau, the SS guards surrendered. . . . We took their guns. We lined them up. It wasn't warfare. It was murder" (Scorsese). In a flashback that visualizes both the paranoia and guilt that he is about to confront, Teddy sees his daughter standing in the snowy concentration camp of Dachau. His regrets are shown to further haunt him when he shrieks at a male nurse and pictures the identical man in a Nazi SS uniform lying wounded on the floor at Dachau while Teddy removes his suicide revolver so that he may die in pain. Significantly, Teddy reminisces to the music of Mahler's Piano quartet in A minor, which is also his psychiatrist's favorite composition. This stands out from the film soundtrack because it is the only non-contemporary musical piece which, in addition, was composed by a Jewish artist, who, as the Poppenbergs suggest, would be an unlikely

choice for any Nazi to play (64). Yet, to underline the Poppenbergs' understanding of *Shutter Island* as inconclusive about whether Teddy's symbolical paranoia masks his guilt or vice versa (65), Adorno's comment should be recalled that Nazi officials would have used any type of classical music to drown out the screams of tortured prisoners (Adorno qtd. in Felman 40).

Conclusion

Shutter Island deploys the noir mode to criticize post-World War II American dominance through military interventionism and its continuation during the Wars on Terror, as the contemporary audience is invited to join a member of the Greatest Generation investigating his own traumatized psyche. Thus, the film represents the most recent example of what this essay terms "American veteran noirs." Here, they center on members of the Greatest Generation who are confronted with moral guilt relating to their deployment, which is sublimated by the psychological conditions of paranoia or amnesia, which in turn allow the films to negotiate their contemporary political contexts. When writing about the genre, this is the feature the historian Saverio Giovacchini also stresses: "the 'veteran noir,' whose convoluted plot and visually deceptive atmosphere were particularly effective for rendering the contrasting commitments of the progressive Hollywoodians in regard to the former servicemen" (195). However, he limited his discussion to the immediate post-World War II context and representations of veterans as "rather positive—if embattled" (195). With a focus on the veterans' disillusionment as symbolic for American society just after World War II, Stanley Orr also referred to the "returning veteran's noir." (108) although he optimistically concluded that these films culminate in "the protagonist's successful reintegration, itself punctuated by the reconciliation of the veteran hero with a lover," since "the classical Hollywood narrative demands a conclusive kiss, embrace, or promise of commitment to the nuclear family" (109). In addition, he claimed that "[c]inematic returning veterans find both trauma and redemption in the realization that a fight for democracy will persist into the postwar universe" (111). By contrast, Jacob T. Sager identified "a left-influenced antifascist sensibility . . . in films noir with larger-than-life antagonists, films that warned of the resurgence of contemporary racism and anti-Semitism and touched upon the impact of the war on returning veterans" in films like *Act of Violence* from the 1940s (112).

Rather than politically positioning my findings regarding the exemplary films discussed, I argue that besides the noir-esque vulnerability of

veterans involved in professional or amateur investigations, their irresolvable traumas further allow them to serve as metonyms for the cost of military victory that hold a mirror to American exceptionalism in the decades following World War II. With its roots in social criticism, the noir mode enables the stories that target the moral fiber of America to reveal the emotional sacrifices this global intervention required. The tropes of paranoia and amnesia recur in veteran noirs since they constitute a strategy of making sense of the similarities between contemporary American society and its World War II-era antagonistic "others" the viewers see through the eyes of the protagonists. To cite another example beyond the films discussed in this essay, the theme of mental disorder also features in the subversive comparisons of the US with Nazi Germany in Philip K. Dick's dystopic novel, *The Man in the High Castle* (1962), which is set in an alternative reality where the Axis Powers have won World War II. As the merchant of American memorabilia in Dick's book, Robert Childan observes, "[I]t had taken two hundred years to dispose of the American aborigines, and Germany had almost done it in Africa in fifteen years" due to "science and technology and that fabulous talent for hard work" as well as "what the Nazis have which we lack . . .—nobility" (Dick 30). Paradoxically, Childan's example for Nazi greatness is the genocide they committed. Meanwhile, the values of progress, industry, and sophistication that Childan attributes to the Nazis are also embodied by villains such as Frank in *Act of Violence,* Cypher and the Krusemarks in *Angel Heart,* and Dr. Cawley and Dr. Naehring in *Shutter Island,* in key scenes that invite paranoid questions as to their American-ness. In these film noirs, similarly to the postwar thriller *The Man in the High Castle,* sexual deviance functions as a symbolic threshold to threatening "otherness." For example, Dick's heroine Juliana Frink indicts Adolf Hitler's sexual disorder when she concludes that "the present-day German Empire was a product of that brain. First a political party, then a nation, then half the world" (Dick 40). Considering anti-miscegenation laws that persisted into the 1960s in the US, it may appear ironic that Juliana's description only mocks Nazi sexuality for its obsession with stereotypical Nordic features, and practices of amnesia towards white supremacy in the US that predated the fictional Nazi occupation. Significantly, performances of sexual perversion can be traced in Frank's relationship with his barely adult wife in *Act of Violence,* Harry's incestuous sex with his daughter from his past life in *Angel Heart,* and Teddy's romantic hallucinations of his wife in *Shutter Island.* In a post-World War II context, these examples represent American irrationality precisely because they cannot be rationalized within any of the

political agendas of racial hygiene that characterized the era. Accordingly, the Nazi defector Baynes criticizes Nazi expansionism in terms of insanity in *The Man in the High Castle:*

> Do they ignore parts of reality? Yes. But it is more. It is their plans. Yes, their plans. The conquering of the planets. Something frenzied and demented, as was their conquering of Africa, and before that, Europe and Asia. Their view; it is cosmic. Not a man here, a child there, but an abstraction: race, land. *Volk. Land. Blut. Ehre.* Not of honourable men but of *Ehre* itself, honour; the abstract is real, the actual is invisible to them.
>
> (Dick 45; emphasis in original)

Besides victory in World War II, Baynes's words attribute cosmic conquests and ideological grandeur to the Nazis which inspire his conclusion that "[t]hey want to be the agents, not the victims, of history. They identify with God's power and believe they are godlike. That is their basic madness" (Dick 45). In reality, of course, it was the US and not Nazi Germany that ventured upon the "New Frontier" of outer space under President John F. Kennedy and expanded to a global superpower after winning World War II. Therefore, Baynes's description of Nazi insanity can be read as a critical inversion of American exceptionalism since World War II. Even if on an individual level, the films discussed in this essay all have characters at their center who are associated with Nazi-like amorality, but they would rather align themselves exclusively with the patriotic ideals of American heroism at which they ultimately fail. Frank hides from his guilt in the American suburbs in *Act of Violence,* Johnny tries to escape his deal with the devil as Harry in *Angel Heart,* and Teddy conflates his drowned children with those he found dead while liberating Dachau in *Shutter Island*.

In terms of generic features, it is useful to consider Martin Barker's advocacy for a Proppian reading of Iraq War films in terms of shared sequences that drive their formulaic plots (28). Analogously to Vladimir Propp's morphological approach to Russian folktales that Barker cited, Barker identified nine recognizable aspects of films about American soldiers' deployments in Iraq (42)—a framework that I could modify to describe post-World War II film noirs, in which veterans are haunted by their pasts as well. As for the first aspect of Iraq War films, according to Barker, "soldiers are authenticated by being shown as ordinary" (42), while in the American veteran noirs discussed, the protagonists are depicted as morally flawed, rather than heroes set to solve a dangerous, socially symbolical mystery. The

second aspect for Barker is that "the moment they [the soldiers] step out of their bases, they become naïve innocents, stunned by the hostility they encounter" (42)—a transformation that occurs in veteran noirs when the mysteries surrounding the protagonists begin to connect them to past deployments, thus revitalizing contemporary moral dilemmas. Barker identified the third aspect in the fact that "[r]eturning home to America, what they take back is the personal impact of that split, carried as stress and disconnection from civilian life" (43). This is applicable to post-World War II veteran noirs as well, when the metonymic protagonists become aware of how their experiences still impact their surroundings. As for Barker's fourth aspect, "officers are presented as placement, driving their men cynically into terrible situations, but primarily concerned with protecting the military's reputation" (43), which happens in veteran noirs too, with the exception that the threatened protagonists are themselves preoccupied with preserving their self-image. The fifth unifying aspect of Iraq War films produced during the Wars on Terror is that they "commonly show ordinary soldiers expressing confusion about the purposes of the war, sometimes directly challenging why they are there" (43), which can equally be applied to post-World War II veteran noirs, since their doubts in themselves mirror doubts in their country's idealized image. Barker's sixth aspect emphasizes that "[o]ften intruding without a diegetic role (for instance, on television screens), they (and we) catch glimpses of other forces in play—political, economic, bureaucratic—which are working behind their backs" (43). This strategy is also manifest in post-World War II veteran noirs, except that the omnipresent forces of evil are intricately tied to the protagonists' identities. While Barker's seventh aspect sees Iraq-bound "soldiers . . . bonding with each other, giving this as their first loyalty," since "[t]hey are effectively alone, unwanted, sacrificial victims" (43), only emotional isolation and being misunderstood are shared by World War II veterans. Concerning the social criticism offered by noirs, both active-duty soldiers in Iraq and World War II veterans are equally "presented as struggling to hold on to values in the face of all that happens around them," as is suggested in Barker's eighth aspect (43). Nevertheless, the ninth property identified by Barker, namely that "special figures—perhaps representatives of minorities of one kind or another—will stand out, who can embody perfectly a new kind of soldier: the hero-victim" (43) in Iraq does not hold true at all regarding post-World War II noirs, since mentally disturbed veterans might well deliver retaliatory justice, but do not embody moral innocence or heroism.

Shutter Island follows in the footsteps of *Act of Violence* and *Angel Heart.* Significantly, all three films address military conflicts as subtexts of criminal investigations through the noir mode: in *Act of Violence,* a veteran is forever freed from his survivor's guilt; in *Angel Heart,* the devil himself applies retaliatory justice to a defector; and, in *Shutter Island,* self-doubt haunts a war criminal.

These noirs challenge American exceptionalist interventionism through their preoccupation with the themes of amnesia and paranoia as traumatic responses to suppressed moral conflicts. Unacknowledged secrets have also become the pillars of counter-communist and counterterrorist discourse by American officials, according to Masco, who views evocations of hidden knowledge by the Bush administration as their legitimation for warfare and espionage (140–41). He charts how vague prognoses about atomic and terrorist threats condition paranoia in citizens with the goal of creating the national cohesion necessary to support global military enterprises (166). In the noirs discussed, however, the fictional investigators neither inspire fear nor possess superior knowledge. Paradoxically, plotlines pointing back to American interventionist histories complicate any simplistic discourses of American heroism in line with the typical noir underdog status of detectives, who are themselves targeted. To the extent that the haunting of representative veterans by their actions during World War II takes on further pathological dimensions disrupting their identities, thus the social criticisms of contemporary American exceptionalism by veteran noir cinema gain virulence.

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Note

1 Agamben draws on Roman jurisdiction to explain how such bare lives could be simultaneously excluded from religious sacrifice and declared as available for assassination by any citizen (10; 14).

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English Financial Aid for the Reformed College of Debrecen in Light of Hungarian Archival Sources

Réka Bozzay

ABSTRACT
At the end of the seventeenth century, following the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from the region, the whole of the Kingdom of Hungary came under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Habsburgs, who introduced a number of measures that restricted the rights of Protestants. One of these measures affected the city ministers and the professors of the Reformed College in Debrecen, when they were forbidden by the Chamber of Szepes to have their salaries financed by the city. In such a situation, the leaders of the college had to seek financial help from Protestant-friendly countries such as Switzerland, the Netherlands, and England. Drawing on primary sources available in the Archives of the Reformed Church District of Tiszántúl, the aim of this paper is to present the history of the financial aid the Reformed College received mainly from England (and to some extent Ireland and Scotland) from the seventeenth century to the end of the twentieth century with a focus on how the money was collected and how it was transferred to Hungary. (RB)

KEYWORDS: Chamber of Szepes, English financial aid, Reformed College of Debrecen, salary of the professors

Introduction

Located at the crossroads of important trading routes, Debrecen embraced the Protestant Reformation movement quite rapidly in the first half of the sixteenth century. A college was established in 1538 and from that year on, the school was under the leadership of the Protestant "Reformers." From the 1540s onwards, the city and the school became a site for the Helvetic branch of the Reformation. At the end of the seventeenth century, following the retreat of the Ottoman Empire in Hungary, the Hungarian Kingdom was reunited under the rule of the devoted Catholic Habsburg dynasty, which led to conflicts between Catholics and Protestants. In 1752, the Chamber of Szepes, a financial management body in Early Modern Hungary, forbade the City of Debrecen to finance the salaries of the clergymen and the professors

at the Reformed College. In this situation the professors turned to their Protestant brothers in the Netherlands, Switzerland, and England for financial support. The professors commissioned two students of the Reformed College to contact Swiss, Dutch, and English Protestants. All Dutch and Swiss aid received in the eighteenth century was mostly used to pay the professors. In England, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Canon of Salisbury helped to collect money for Debrecen. English aid also came in the eighteenth century, but it was not transferred on a regular basis and was used for other purposes than paying the salaries. With shorter and longer interruptions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (due to wars, political causes, and the negligence of partners), English aid continued arriving till the end of the twentieth century. Financial support from Protestants abroad was of cardinal importance from the point of view of church policy, because on the one hand it drew the attention of foreign brothers and sisters to the difficult situation of the Church and the Reformed College of Debrecen, and on the other hand it provided the College with a substantial and continuous income for decades or even for centuries.

English-Hungarian relations in the Middle Ages: A brief overview

It is worth taking a closer look at the rather complex set of political, educational, and cultural relations in the framework of which aid from England could materialize.

English aid, established in the eighteenth century, was an important part of the connections between Hungary and England, but this relationship dates back to much earlier, to the eleventh century. It was under the reign of King Stephan I of Hungary (1000–1038) that Hungarians became an integral part of European Christianity. The pilgrimage route to Jerusalem through the country was opened under the first king of Hungary (Laszlovszky, *Angol–magyar kapcsolatok* [Anglo–Hungarian Relations] 8). Two English princes came to Hungary at the time of the struggle for the throne after St. Stephan's death. Edward the Exile, the son of King Edmund Ironside and of Ealdgyth, with his brother Edmund, was sent by Canute to the Swedish court after the Danish conquest in 1016. From here they fled to Kiev in 1028. Prince Edward married Agatha, the niece of Henry III, Holy Roman Emperor (1046–1056). The princes came to Hungary with Andrew of Hungary, a descendent from the younger branch of the ruling Árpád dynasty of Hungary (Laszlovszky, "Angolszász hercegek" [Anglo-Saxon Princes] 53). Andrew's son, Solomon, King of Hungary (1063–1074), married Henry III's daughter Sophia, Agatha's niece (Laszlovszky, "Skóciai Szent Margit" [Saint Margaret

of Scotland] 73). Edmund might have died in Hungary, but Edward was recalled to England in 1057 as a possible heir of King Edward the Confessor (*Angol–magyar kapcsolatok* 33). One of Edward's daughters, Margaret (Saint Margaret of Scotland) married Malcolm III of Scotland ("Angolszász hercegek" 42). After the Battle of Hastings, the Anglo-Saxons who did not accept the Norman rule (*Angol–magyar kapcsolatok* 60) settled in the Black Sea region and the Crimea and came into contact with the Transylvanian bishopric in the Eastern part of Hungary (Laszlovszky, "A keleti Új-Anglia" [Eastern New England] 123–24). In the second half of the twelfth century King Béla III of Hungary (1172–1196) sought new political contacts in the West and married Margaret, the daughter of Louis VII of France (1137–1180), the widow of Henry the Young King, the son of King Henry II of England ("Angol–magyar kapcsolatok" 153). The marriage of Béla III and Margaret of France was of decisive importance for the strengthening of Franco–Hungarian relations, but it was also an important milestone in Anglo–Hungarian relations, fostered by the Hungarian clergy, who appeared in Lincoln and Oxford in the 1190s after having previously studied with Englishmen in Paris, and many of whose masters were English. As a result of the wars of Richard I and Philip II, they left Paris with the English and sought out England's new and increasingly famous centers of learning. Their choice may have been helped by their knowledge of the country's dynastic connections as well as their attraction to its ecclesiastical community, whose illustrious representative, Thomas Becket, was particularly well respected in Hungary. (Laszlovszky, "Magyarországi Miklós" [Nicholas of Hungary] 193). In the second half of the thirteenth century, a couple of citizens of London and of rural England are mentioned in historical sources as being of Hungarian origin (Papp 228–31). The English public was also well informed about the Tartar invasion (1241–1242) from letters extracted by Matthew Paris and from his *Chronica Majora*, and Vincent de Beauvais' *Speculum historiale* (Bárány, "A tatár veszély" [The Tartar Threat] 115–19). The idea of an English participation in a crusade against the Mongols on the territory of Hungary was raised in the 1250s (121). In the early 1290s, the Hungarian Andras III also offered 1,000 knights and mounted crossbowmen and planned to join the crusades led by Edward I of England (149–50). In the second half of the thirteenth century, on several occasions, Hungary and England were on the same side in the German alliance systems. In many cases, the perception of German imperial relations and membership in German parties determined the foreign policy stance of the kingdoms. English politics were very active in the Holy Roman Empire in the 1270s and

1290s, and their Habsburg relations go back to earlier decades, as did the Habsburg relations of the Hungarian crown (Bárány, "Magyarország Anglia kontinentális politikájában" [Hungary in the Continental Politics of England] 255). From the fifteenth century onwards, relations were strengthened between England and Hungary. English envoys attended the Council of Constance. In the English *natio*, Sigismund of Luxemburg, King of Hungary (1387–1437) and Holy Roman Emperor (1433–1437), found valuable allies in the fight against the heretics (Bárány, "Magyar-angol kapcsolatok a konstanzi zsinaton" [Hungarian–English Relations at the Council of Constance] 8). During the Council of Constance in 1416, Sigismund even visited England (Bárány, "Zsigmond király 1416-os" [King Sigismund's Visit] 73). The kingdom of Matthias Corvinus (1458–1490), and even the kingdom of the Jagellos (1490–1526), were on a par with the Christian princes of the West. Matthias aimed primarily at establishing Central European (imperial) alliances, but if these relations did not provide sufficient stability, he inevitably turned to Western Europe. Matthias sought to make the country an inescapable power, and as part of this, his Western, English, Burgundian, Neapolitan leagues were necessary for him to be able to resist Ottoman aggression (Bárány, *Magyarország nyugati külpolitikája* [Hungary's Foreign Policy in the West] 2). Later Henry VII, who initially distanced himself from the 1500–1502 Franco–Hungarian alliance against the Turks, sent a draft treaty and financial aid to Ulászló II of Hungary (108). British envoys regularly reported on Hungary's preparations for war against the Turks in the period before the Battle of Mohács (1526) (285). From the sixteenth century onwards, educational relations between universities were revived (Gömöri, *Angol–magyar kapcsolatok* [Anglo–Hungarian Relations] 8), and, from the seventeenth century onwards, Protestant Hungarians regularly visited English universities (84).

Reformation in Debrecen: A historical background

Debrecen features among the main municipalities of the Hungarian Kingdom in medieval documents already in the thirteenth century. The Franciscans founded a monastery school in Debrecen in 1322. Around the same time, the Dominicans also arrived in Debrecen and took possession of the St. Andrew Church and its parish in 1324–1325 with the support of the secular landowners of the city. One year later the Dominicans were expelled, and a municipal school was founded in the former building of the order. While the Franciscans offered mainly religious education, the municipal school trained the boys for offices in the city administration (Bölcskei 9).

Although endowed with the rights of a market town from 1361 (Orosz 28), Debrecen was not allowed to build a city wall and fell under the jurisdiction of its landlord. However, from the fifteenth century onwards, the town was exempt from customs duties throughout Hungary (Bölcskei 11).

Located at the crossroads of important trading routes, Debrecen rapidly became the center of the Protestant Reformation movement. According to archival sources, in as early as 1529, the first Peregrinus from Debrecen, by the name of Gregorius Johannis Debrecinus, was registered in Wittenberg, while a new landowner of Debrecen, Bálint Enyingi Török, proved to be a great patron of the Reformation; he invited the first reformed preacher to settle in the city in 1536 (Bölcskei 11). The Reformed College of Debrecen was established in 1538. From that year on, the former municipal school was under the leadership of the Reformers. From the 1540s onwards, the city and the school became a site for the Helvetic branch of the Reformation (Bölcskei 12).

At the end of the seventeenth century, after the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from Hungary, the Hungarian Kingdom was reunited under the rule of the Catholic Habsburg dynasty. Over the interpretation of the patronage right, as well as the resulting obligations, there was a long dispute between the city, the state, the Reformed, and the Catholic Church. The city wished to preserve its Calvinist character, while the royal power insisted on reopening the city's doors to Catholics. In 1693, Emperor Leopold I elevated Debrecen from the status of a market town to the status of a royal free town on the condition that Catholics could settle again in the city. In the middle of the eighteenth century, it was prescribed that one third, and later even half, of the senators in the city self-government had to be Catholic. Furthermore, the city was expected to fulfill its patronage obligations and was required to pay for the renovation of the Catholic Church, as well as to secure the accommodation of priests and teachers. These demands, however, were refused since even in 1780 only 2.5% of the city's inhabitants were Catholic as opposed to 97.5% Calvinist (Rácz 131–32).

The operation of the Calvinist Church and the Calvinist College, however, was severely affected by an ordinance set forth by the Chamber of Szepes, the financial management of the eastern parts of the Kingdom of Hungary in territories far from Pozsony (Pressburg/Bratislava in today's Slovakia) in January 1752. Established in 1567 with residence in Kassa (Košice, Slovakia), the Chamber of Szepes extended its jurisdiction to the counties east of Liptó, Hont, and Nógrád, and ensured that royal income should be used for the wars against the Ottomans, while it was also to finance

the political and military administration of that part of the country.[1] As the letter of the Chamber declared, the city was forbidden to pay the salaries of the clergymen of the Calvinist Church and the professors of the Reformed College of Debrecen (Balogh, "Debrecen város segélye" [The Aid of the City of Debrecen] 684). According to the ordinance, the clergy had to be paid by members of the congregation, whereas the professors' salaries were to be covered by the College foundations. The letter made it clear that if the city did not pay the Catholic priests, then the salaries for the Calvinist professors and pastors could not be paid by the city either (Rácz 131–32).

Providing a regular income for the gradually increasing number of professors at the Reformed College of Debrecen was difficult for the city. From the year of its foundation in 1538 to 1636 there was only one chaired professor, while between 1636 and 1660 there were two such positions (Bölcskei 31). Until 1704 there were three chairs (Bölcskei 52), whereas in the eighteenth century, except for a period of 27 years, (*A Debreczeni Református Főiskola alapítványi törzskönyve* [Documents of Foundations] 403), there were four (Tóth 74) chairs at the College. Although Prince of Transylvania György Rákóczi I established a foundation in 1636 to support the establishment of the second professorship, from 1658, the chair was financed by the city. For the third professorship, the Transylvanian prince Mihály Apafi donated 300,000 kilograms of rock salt, which was supplemented with money, natural resources, as well as a flat offered by the city. The money from Apafi's foundation, however, flowed so irregularly that the responsibilities to fund this chair had to be undertaken by the City of Debrecen again. The regulations of the Chamber put the College in a difficult situation because the salaries of the four professors, the nine teachers (praeceptores), the librarian, and the other staff of the institutions of the College amounted to a total of 2,000 Forints per year, which had to be provided by the city (Tenke 45). The College had little capital, from which salaries and other expenses could not be financed. It was calculated that if the salaries were to be paid by a foundation, they would need a capital of 33,000 Forints (Rácz 131–32).

The city tried to restore the original financial situation on all sorts of forums but did not succeed. The parish of Debrecen introduced a kind of church tax, the so-called "salary of the minister," which ensured the pay of the parish priest; however, it was much more difficult to collect money for the professors of the College. The board of the College could count on the support of the townspeople and the patrons, yet the help from private individuals was insufficient in this case. They also tried to collect money in Transylvania, but the commissioners came back empty-handed (Rácz 133).

Finally, the Reformed College of Debrecen was able to borrow money from the College in Enyed (Aiud, Romania) to pay the professors. In addition, the administrator of the Reformed Church Sámuel Szeremley together with his wife, as well as Pastor István Sződi, established a foundation to support a chair financially (Rácz 685).

Foreign support

Evidently, the College could not survive on domestic support, therefore on 28 July 1753, the Debrecen Church Council made a decision to seek assistance abroad. The Churches of Protestant countries including England, Switzerland, and the Netherlands were contacted with the request to provide financial aid to Debrecen. The Peregrinatio Academica of College students in the previous centuries allowed for establishing good relations with the Churches of these countries. Hungarian and Transylvanian students visited English universities, although they did not enroll at the universities in the Early Modern Period. First, because they could not pay the enrollment fee, and secondly, they would not take an oath of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. Despite this, Hungarian students regularly received financial aid from the universities according to account books. (Gömöri, *Magyarországi diákok* [Hungarian Students] 6–7). It was only in the nineteenth century that regular university contacts were established with Scotland. During the nineteenth century the Scottish Presbyterian Church had undergone a revolutionary transformation, strengthening its external relations and seeking cooperation with universities abroad. In 1862, the Church of Scotland decided to establish scholarships for Czech and Hungarian Reformed theological students to further their studies at New College, Edinburgh. Four endowments of £50 each were set up to pay for the education of two Czech and two Hungarian students a year (Hörcsik 167). Between 1865 and 1914, eighty-two Hungarians were given scholarships to study in Scotland (Sárközi 120–21). A special scholarship opportunity for Unitarian ministers from Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca) was offered by the Manchester New College in England. Eighteen students studied at the college between 1860 and 1918, seven of whom later became bishops, eighteen of them became theological professors at the Unitarian College of Kolozsvár, while three students pursued their careers as priests and writers respectively (Sárközi 124–25). To complement the Manchester New College Foundation, in 1911 Emily Sharpe established a second such foundation in memory of her father, Samuel Sharpe. For many years, the Sharpe Hungarian Scholarship provided financial security for Transylvanian clergymen to pursue their

education in England at the annual cost of £110. The opportunity to study in England was further extended by the Unitarian Home Missionary Board, founded in 1854, now known as the Unitarian College, Manchester (Sárközi 126).

In the Early Modern Period, Protestant countries had already supported Protestant churches in Hungary; for instance, the Reformed College of Enyed was rebuilt with English help (Csűrös 207). Interestingly, no German Churches were contacted for help, although the number of Hungarian, among them Debrecen, Peregrini at German universities was considerable. Moreover, the Reformed College of Debrecen, like Protestant Colleges in Hungary in general, followed German examples in their organization and in the charters of the College. Foreign policy issues and conflicting interests between the Habsburg Empire and Prussia explain why this was the case. During the War of the Austrian Succession, the Habsburgs turned against the Prussians and the Saxons. After the loss of Silesia in 1748, tensions increased between Queen Maria Theresa, the ruler of the Habsburg dominion, and the Prussian King Frederick the Great, and their allies, which ultimately led to the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). There were also cultural differences between the two warring states. Frederick the Great forbade his subjects to study at foreign universities in 1749 and 1751. This was mainly directed against Maria Theresa, who in response disallowed her subjects to attend German universities. Studying abroad for Hungarian Protestants was bound to a corresponding royal permit in 1725, reissued in 1742 (Klein 6). The royal authorities issued passports only to non-belligerent or allied countries (Klein 9). Most of the German territory was hostile territory from a Habsburg point of view. The Debrecen Church Council would have committed treason if it had sought support from German principalities in school or church matters. However, there is no evidence in the archival sources whether Debrecen had seriously considered seeking financial support from Germany (Rácz 135).

The petition letters requesting financial aid were written jointly by the City and the College, while college students—István Weszprémi, a medical student then studying in Switzerland, later a famous physician in Debrecen and Ferenc Kalmár, later minister of Halas—were entrusted with the delivery of the letters. The envoys received strict instructions. They had to act with great care and were authorized to speak only to those who were involved in their case. During their meetings, they were prohibited from portraying the situation of the College better or worse than it was. Neither were they allowed to take the collected donations, but had to lodge them to a not-yet-specified

place which ensured the collection of interest annually. The order stated that the money should not be stored in England, but either in the Netherlands or in Switzerland so that the interest could be transferred to a not-yet-identified Viennese merchant. The representatives were instructed to accept a receipt confirming the amount of money collected. A most interesting detail of the mandate was that the envoys should write encrypted messages in their correspondence with the professors, so that their letters, should they fall into the wrong hands, would remain incomprehensible to the reader. For further precaution, the letters had to be addressed to a Debrecen merchant instead of the professors (Nagy 42–43).

The first sum of financial support arrived from Switzerland. In his letter of 21 May 1757, the Zurich secretary Salamon Hirzel reported that the Reformed orders had decided at their meeting the previous summer to send 400 Swiss forints to Debrecen every year for six years.[2] The money transfer was reconsidered every six years until 1781 when it was discontinued,[3] yet, the archival sources preserved in Debrecen do not reveal why it was terminated after 1781.

In the Netherlands, Willem van Irhoven, Dean of the Faculty of Theology in Utrecht, promised to support the cause of the Reformed College of Debrecen.[4] In his letter to Professor Sámuel Szilágyi, Van Irhoven reported that he had presented the request of Debrecen to the faculty as well as the provincial Synod of Utrecht on 7 September 1756, and could raise one hundred and ten forints.[5] The money, each year a different amount from the Netherlands, was transferred regularly to Debrecen till 1792 with the assistance of Dutch merchants Raymond and Theodor Smeth, Frederik Hendrik Wetsteen, and Abraham Clemens and his sons.[6] Unfortunately, no documents about the reasons for the suspension of payment are known. But as long as the money was paid, the Synod of Utrecht, the Deanery and the Council of Churches of Amsterdam, and the Synod of North Holland were the most generous benefactors.[7]

With regard to the English support, Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Herring was addressed by the Church Consistory in a letter dated 2 October 1753 to deal with the financial aid to the Reformed College of Debrecen. Weszprémi and Kalmár, who were also commissioned to handle this matter, often commuted between the Netherlands and England. On 12 July 1755, Archbishop Herring wrote in a letter of recommendation that two Hungarian students had called upon him and had described to him the miserable state of their academy. The archbishop expressed his hope that the Hungarians would get help from people they ask for financial support. On

12 August 1755, Weszprémi was already in Utrecht, from where he sent a letter home to merchant Albrecht Gerstenfeld and informed him about financial matters and local markets. In his letter of 17 November 1755 to John James Majendie, the Canon of Salisbury, the archbishop promised to promote the cause of the Hungarians and asked the representative of the College to return to England. Weszprémi complied and wrote a letter from London to Kalmár in Utrecht on 8 December. He mentioned that he visited Majendie and enclosed Majendie's letter to Kalmár. Weszprémi planned to visit the archbishop in the following days.

Although the College initially assigned Weszprémi and Kalmár the duty of seeking financial help for the College, Miklós Sinai, a student from Debrecen, and János Mező, a Hungarian in service of the Duke of Cumberland, visited the Archbishop of Canterbury. No further relevant information can be traced about this visit than what we know from a letter from Weszprémi addressed to the Debrecen merchant, Albrecht Gerstenfeld, on 8 March 1756. This letter reveals that Weszprémi resented Sinai's and Mező's involvement in this case because he thought that they would harm the cause and further help for the College was hopeless. His misgivings, however, are contradicted by the fact that a large sum, 261 pounds and 15 shillings (2626 forints), was raised on 14 March from the donations of the archbishops of Canterbury and York and another twenty-four bishops.[8] According to the agreement, the amount was not sent to Debrecen, but it was deposited at 3% interest in a bank in London, which yielded a significant sum (Balogh, "Az angol alapítvány története" [History of the English Foundation] 578).

Weszprémi reported to Gerstenfeld on 25 April 1756 that 113 and a half pounds had been raised at Cambridge University, but no money was gathered at Oxford. Meanwhile, Miklós Sinai informed his professor Sámuel Szilágyi in a letter from late March or early April that he had been granted admission to the bishop of Oxford through the help and advice of János Mező. The bishop accepted his letter of recommendation, tested him in language and theology, and recommended him to the members of the university so that Sinai would learn English.[9]

In his letter of 28 June 1756, Weszprémi wrote to Gerstenfeld that he would return to Utrecht five-six weeks early, planning his trip back to Hungary. He asked Sinai to try to collect money at Oxford, and therefore Sinai received a recommendation from Majendie. The Canon wrote in his letter of 27 June 1756 to Sinai that Kalmár had asked for two confirmations of the amount of the collected money. These should then be sent to

Switzerland and Holland to encourage the other benefactors to enter a small competition so that they would donate a little more money to the Hungarians. According to Majendie, no further funds could be expected from England.[10]

These letters demonstrate that in England a certain sum of money was collected, yet it failed to reach Debrecen. Therefore, in a letter dated 15 March 1758, the professors in Debrecen requested the professors in Utrecht to forward the College's petitions to the Canon of Salisbury and ask him for his help to transfer the money raised in England to Utrecht and then to Debrecen.[11]

The same request was reiterated in the professors' letter dated 20 January 1761 to Dutch merchant Wetsteen. They explained that they had asked for the support of the English clergy five years before and they knew that four years before some money had been collected for Debrecen, which they did not receive. Therefore, they asked Wetsteen to send a letter to London as a matter of urgency.[12] On the same day, in a letter the professors at the College asked the Canon John James Majendie about the amount of money raised at Oxford and asked him to send a certain sum from the interest of the money via the merchant house Wetsteen to Vienna to their representative.[13]

There was also concern about the management of money, which can be concluded from Sinai's letter to the Oxford Canon Edward Bentham dated 7 December 1762. A few days before this letter was dispatched, the professors were informed by their London friends that Viennese merchants had warned a member of the Debrecen City Council that the money collected for the Reformed Church of Debrecen in England was in danger, therefore the capital or its interest had to be taken urgently. In order to remedy this problem, Sinai asked Bentham if the money could be deposited in the name of the Reformed Church of Debrecen instead of the name of the Reformed College of Debrecen, which was independent from the Church. The deposited capital had paid £108 in interest since the last payment six years before. He trusted Bentham to transfer this sum of money as well as the interest earned to Debrecen directly via Vienna to Sámuel Szeremley, the curator of the College. Interestingly, the Amsterdam merchants' assistance was not mentioned in the letter. Furthermore, Sinai asked Bentham to send a receipt in English or in French to the four Debrecen professors to sign and return. He also wished to know the name of the bank where the money was deposited and requested a confirmation of the deposit.[14]

A reply came quickly from London. The secretary of the Russian envoy, Ludovicus Sontag wrote to Professor György Szathmári Király that

600 pounds (5,400 Rhenish guilders) had been collected for the Reformed College of Debrecen and deposited at 3% interest at the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.[15] On the recommendation of its President and the Bishops, in 1761 the Society in accepted the trust of the fund, undertaking "to remit the dividends upon it from time to time to the professors of the University in such manner as they shall desire and direct" (Pascoe 735). If the College wished the money to be paid, which Sontag recommended, the secretary would send them an authorization form. The secretary's letter did not seem to reassure the professors. In a letter dated 11 April 1763, Sinai asked Oxford Professor Nathanael Bliss to approach Edward Bentham about the previously sent letter and to ask Majendie about doctor Coverath, who was in charge of managing the money of Debrecen. On 28 June 1763, the Debrecen professors requested Majendie to send 18 pounds via Amsterdam and Vienna to Debrecen and to capitalize the rest of the money.[16]

Debrecen presumably needed more money, thus Mező, who was in the service of the Duke of Cumberland, was instructed to talk to the Archbishop of Canterbury with the purpose of seeking financial aid in Scotland and Ireland. It was settled that Mező would inform the College and in case of the archbishop's disapproval, the College would take no further steps in this matter. In the end, the College addressed the Archbishop of Canterbury directly with a request to raise money in Scotland and Ireland and deposit it in the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Letters were also enclosed to Hugo Percy, Duke of Northumberland and viceroy of Ireland, to John Stewart, Count of Bute and Chancellor of Aberdeen, and to Samuel Chandler, Presbyter of the Scottish Church. It was stated that the money collected should be given to Mező.[17]

Arguably, Mező continued to play an important role in these transactions. In a letter dated 19 January 1765, the professors at Debrecen asked Majendie to provide Mező with a portion of the money and to send the rest to Debrecen. Five years later, on 31 March 1770, the professors asked Majendie to pay 60 pounds to Mező for a purpose not identified. The fate of this money is unknown; it probably remained with Mező. On 23 July 1776, 54 pounds and 6 shillings arrived in Vienna through the mediation of the British envoy, as a copy of an invoice issued by the professors of Debrecen proves.[18]

As William Morice, the secretary of the Society informed the professors in his letter of 21 July 1779, the money under the supervision of the Society was regularly paid to the English bank: 1,200 pounds of capital

yielded 36 pounds of interest annually. According to a receipt dated 18 September 1779, 130 pounds came to Debrecen via the British envoy in Vienna.[19] According to the report of 5 February 1780, this sum earned 918 Rhenish guilders and 20 kreutzers.[20] The interest on the capital was not drawn annually, as stated in a letter to William Morice dated 28 March 1780. If not notified otherwise from Debrecen, the interest had to be added to the capital. In the letter to Morice, the professors also ordered books from England. The book list was sent by Morice, and he reported that on 16 July 1781, he had bought government papers in value of 100 pounds. Only six years later, books bought by Morice came along with a record of interest between 1782 and 1786, which amounted to 39 pounds annually. The last letter pertaining to the financial aid from England dates back to 5 December 1787. The professors of the College wrote to the head of the student government of the College that from the interest of the money that arrived on 5 July 1786, 1,000 Rhenish guilders should be paid for the salaries of the professors and 766 Rhenish guilders and 20 kreutzers should be devoted to covering the expenses of the books.[21]

The French Revolution (1789–1799) brought a longer interruption in the flow of English financial aid. On 17 January 1803, Professor Gábor Szilágyi asked the Society for the money to be transferred again.[22] Although it was transferred, according to the minutes of the faculty on 12 April 1804, the interest arrears since 1786 should have been 663 pounds, yet only 326 pounds and five shillings, amounting to 4,029 forints, were received.[23] Professor Szilágyi took action again, and in April contacted the Society managing the foundation, the secretary at the British Embassy in Vienna, as well as the Protestant agent in Vienna, József Vitéz.[24] Though the Society's reply arrived on 17 March 1808, no money was sent with it.[25] In 1817, the professors asked for the aid that had been overdue since 1803.[26] In 1824 another letter was sent to the Society,[27] but money—in this case 11,464 forints and 30 kreutzers—was transferred only in 1826.[28] Another letter, written in 1824, also explained the necessity of the interest arrears being sent so that the number of students that could travel abroad, as well as that of the professors would increase, along with the library collection enriched.[29]

Regarding the correspondence with the Society managing the English funds, in November 1826 the Royal Council of Governors ruled that if the Reformed College of Debrecen wished to receive the interest, it should first send their requests to the Court Chancellery.[30] Because the College did not receive the money, in February 1831 the professors asked the Viennese Protestant agent István Szűts to act on their behalf to that effect.[31] In April,

the professors informed the agent that 5,058 forints and 53 kreutzers had arrived from England, but the Society had not informed them how much the capital and interest were, so they asked the agent to check it.[32] The Society's treasurer, James Heywood Markland, wrote to the College in November 1832 that 150 pounds was the interest due on two years' arrears, which could be paid at any time in installments of 75 pounds within a year or even half a year.[33] In Debrecen, a letter of appreciation for the support was drafted in April 1833 and it was requested that the Society send the interest every three years from the end of 1833.[34] On behalf of the College, Baron Miklós Vay appealed to Archduke Joseph of Austria, the palatine (the viceroy) of Hungary so that the school could receive the money through a money changer,[35] which, following lengthy negotiations,[36] finally came from 1835 to Miklós Vay's father-in-law (Vay–Lévay 17), Baron Henrik Geymüller, a banker in Vienna,[37] who sent it further on to the wholesaler István Megyaszai.[38] In 1836, interest of 375 pounds was demanded, which in 1837, after the exchange of the money into 750 silver forints, was transferred to Geymüller, who, after deducting 3 forints 45 kreutzers as his fees, handed the money over to Megyaszai.[39] In February the following year, they were also expecting 75 pounds interest, but the superintendents' meeting a year earlier had failed to submit a bill of exchange, so they could not receive the money, and it was decided that the bill of exchange would be sent to Vienna.[40] According to the minutes of the church district in January 1842, Professor Mózes Kalós reported that the sum of 75 pounds for 1841 did not reach Debrecen in the usual way, so a proposal to transfer the money through the Sina [Szina] merchant house was accepted.[41] The merchant house accepted the order and sent the money to Debrecen.[42] In the same year, the bishop suggested that the interest on the money sent to Debrecen, which was already kept separate from the money raised, should be collected. Only the interest was used; the capital was not touched.[43] The history of the English aid is mentioned again only in December 1849 in the minutes of the professors' councils when bills of exchange were sent to England for 1848 and 1849.[44] In the following years the arrival of the money is rarely mentioned in the minutes. According to a receipt presented in February 1874, 850 forints and 50 kreutzers had been received in the previous year,[45] then 873 forints and 75 kreutzers in January 1879,[46] and 891 forints in 1883.[47] In 1889 the Society notified the College that the annual allowance had been increased to 87 pounds 8 pence, and for 1888 the professors could also claim 34 pounds 6 shillings 2 pence in income tax but the Society asked for a special receipt for

that.[48] In December 1895, and again in June 1896, semi-annual interest payments were received.[49]

In 1890, the idea of bringing the capital of the English aid to Hungary was first raised, thus the College director submitted a proposal to the economic council, but they did not yet find the time appropriate to adopt it.[50] In 1897, Ferenc Balogh, professor and archivist, contacted the Society managing the fund about transferring the money to Hungary. The Society did not oppose the export of the money, but as it was explained in their letter, the English High Court was authorized to make a decision in the matter. Balogh also contacted a Hungarian living in London, Theodor Duka, whose son was a lawyer. According to Duka Jr., starting the procedure would cost about 1,000 Hungarian forints, and in his opinion the court would not approve the money to be exported from England.[51] In the end, the College abandoned the plan to bring the money to Hungary. The interest rate on the capital was 3 ½% in 1838–39,[52] 2 ¾% in 1889, and 2 ½% before 1914, which was withdrawn every six months in April and October by means of English-language bills of exchange through the Debreceni Alföldi Takarékpénztár [Debrecen Great Plain Savings Bank]. The last interest payment was received by the College on 28 May 1914.[53]

No money arrived in Debrecen during and after World War I, but in April 1922, Sándor Karai, the director of the College, wrote a summary of the history of the money and the payments, and in December of the same year he sent a letter to the Debreceni Hitelbank [Debrecen Credit Bank], requesting a bill of exchange for three semesters' interest, which he addressed to the Society managing the English fund. The credit bank promised to notify the College when the money was received. There was some confusion afterwards, as the Hungarian Property Management Committee informed the Society on 17 January 1923 that it should not have transferred the 198 pounds 5 shillings 8 pence to the College and asked for the money to be returned. The matter was, of course, investigated, and it turned out that the claim against the British-owned Society under Article 231 of the Treaty of Trianon was legitimate. Thanks to the personal intervention of Consul General Henrik Cockburn, the sum did not have to be returned, while the aid, which was paid at an annual rate of 76 pounds 5 shillings and 4 pence, was sent in semi-annual cycles until 1940.[54]

The foundation seems to have been forgotten for a few years, when Zoltán Péter, the director of the College started to explore the English aid again in December 1948. He wrote a letter to the Hungarian National Bank informing them that during his research he had found a document about an

English foundation which stated that the last payment to the Reformed College had been made on 30 June 1940, although the money should have been paid continually. He also added that he had contacted the Society managing the funds and was expecting its response. Lajos Sz. Gavallér, a lawyer acting on behalf of the Hungarian bank, suggested that the Hungarian National Bank should be asked to settle the amount in Hungarian forints, and that a surcharge could be applied. He referred the director to László Pap, professor of theology in Budapest for further clarification. He also informed Péter that the money could not be used abroad, only in Hungary. At the end of the year, the bank confirmed that the College could retain its right to claim payment.

In January 1949 a letter from the Society informed the College that the foundation was under the control of the Board of Trade at the Enemy Department. The Society requested the appointment of a representative who could be authorized to act in the matter. Also in January, Gavallér proposed to the director of the College, Péter that the money from the English aid should be used for setting up a hall outside the College in honor of Bishop Dezső Baltazár (1871–1936), who was one of the active supporters of the cause to establish a university in Debrecen, and who raised funds in 1924–25 in the US, which helped to establish a foundation for the reconstruction of the Reformed College of Debrecen after World War I. In the meantime, the College director received full authority from the College's governing board to proceed with the case. It was not until July 1954 that a letter from the Financial Services Center in Budapest affirmed that the Society acknowledged the claim, and it enquired about the time and method of payment. The director of the College, however, reported to the Center that the money had not yet been received. The Bishop of the Tiszántúl Reformed District János Péter was then asked to look into the matter and the director of the College, Endre Tóth, collected and sent the files to the finance office.[55]

The subsequent fate of the payments could only be reconstructed from the archival documents which suggest that the payments were only resumed from 1961 onwards.[56] Except for a few years, the Society transferred the money on an annual basis until 1990.[57] After 1961, the English aid is no longer mentioned in the College files, instead, it is listed both in the files of the Theological Academy and in the minutes of the Faculty Council, as preserved in the archives. The receipt of the money is carefully recorded here until 1967, while the income pages of the cash registers provide information about the subsequent years until 1983, and the receipts until 1990.[58] Little is

known about the further use of the money, except for one entry in 1984, when a Greek Bible was purchased with the English grant.[59]

Conclusion

Due to the severe measures introduced in 1752 by the Chamber of Szepes, which forbade the City of Debrecen to pay the salaries of the clergymen of the Calvinist Church and the professors of the Reformed College, an unprecedented effort was made by the Western European Protestant brethren to help the Reformed College of Debrecen. The College professors commissioned two students to contact Swiss, Dutch, and English Protestants and convince them to support the College financially. The Dutch and Swiss aid was specifically intended to finance the professors' salaries but could only partially cover them. The Archbishop of Canterbury was contacted by the students; with his support and with the help of the Canon of Salisbury, a considerable amount of money was collected in England. The English aid, however, failed to arrive in Debrecen regularly in the eighteenth century, nevertheless, the amount received during the following two centuries did not merely increase the professors' salaries, but also contributed to the enrichment of the library collection. The financial support from England was collected and deposited in a bank, while the money was managed by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. Due to diverse circumstances (wars, political issues, and the negligence of the partners), the money transfer was interrupted for several decades in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This notwithstanding, uniquely, the English aid was still disbursed to the Reformed College of Debrecen until the end of the twentieth century. In Debrecen no more information about the history of the fund after 1990 could so far be traced; future research in the archives of the Society may, however, reveal further details.

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Notes

1 Archive der Ungarischen Kammern (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára) [The Hungarian National Archives]. https://mnl.gov.hu/nemet/mnl/ol/archive_der_ungarischen_kammern . Web. 27 July 2022.

2 II. 22. a. Box 13, Tiszántúli Református Egyházkerület Levéltára [Archives of the Reformed Church, Trans-Tisza District] (hereafter cited as TtREL).

3 II. 16. a. Box 1, TtREL; II. 11. e. Boxes 1, 2, 3, 4, TtREL.

4 II. 22. a. Box 10. Nr. 157, TtREL.

5 Willem van Irhoven's letter to Sámuel Szilágyi without date, Ibid.

6 II. 11. e. Box 8, TtREL.

7 II. 16. a. Box 1, TtREL.

8 II. 22. a. Box 1, TtREL.

9 Miklós Sina's letter to Sámuel Szilágyi (end of Mar. 1756), Ibid.

10 Canon Majendie's letter to Miklós Sinai (27 July 1756), Ibid.

11 Letter of the professors of Debrecen to the professors of Utrecht (15 Mar. 1758), II. 22. a. Box 10. Nr. 157, TtREL.

12 Letter of the Professors of Debrecen to Merchant Wetsteen in Amsterdam (20 Jan. 1761), Ibid.

13 Letter of the Professors of Debrecen to Canon Majendie (20 Jan. 1761), II. 22. a. Box 1, TtREL.

14 Miklós Sinai's letter to Canon Edward Bentham (7 Dec. 1762), II. 22. a. Box 10. Nr. 157, TtREL.

15 The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) was chartered in June 1701 as the official overseas missionary body of the Church of England. It was founded by Thomas Bray, a former Ecclesiastical Commissary for Maryland, for promoting religious interests. The SPG was not an official agency of the Church of England, but "it had a quasi-official status owing both to its membership and to its purpose and activities. The Archbishop of Canterbury served as President" (Diffendal 4). The SPG's most important activity was to carry the Christian Gospel beyond England. During the 18th century the SPG's activities were confined to the British colonies of North America, and after 1823, to non-Christian regions of Asia and Africa (encyclopedia.com). Already in 1702, the Society had begun to communicate its good designs to other Protestant Nations in Europe with a view of exciting a "Spirit of Zeal and Emulation" among them. As a result of this fraternal correspondence, over forty eminent members of the Lutheran and other Reformed Churches in Holland, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, and other countries were admitted as members, some of them went so far that they accepted the English Liturgy in their churches.

Furthermore, the influence of the Society was enlisted with a view to ameliorating the condition of the Protestant galley slaves in France (1702, 1705), obtaining religious freedom for the Protestant inhabitants of the Valley of Pralegas (1709), securing the Church in the Palatinate from religious persecution by the Roman Catholics (1710), and befriending the Palatines who about that time had been driven out of their country. (Pascoe 734–35) The services rendered to the cause of education in Europe by the Society consisted of the support of a School at Constantinople, 1860–80, the holding of a Trust Fund for the Reformed College of Debrecen, the training of Missionaries at St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, Warminster Mission College, and at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and the education of Missionaries' children (Pascoe 774).

16 Letter of the Professors of Debrecen to Canon Majendie (28 June 1763), II. 22. a. Box 10. Nr. 157, TtREL.

17 The Letter of the Reformed College of Debrecen to the Archbishop of Canterbury (2 June 1764), Ibid.

18 The SPG's letter to the Reformed College of Debrecen (23 July 1776), Ibid.

19 William Morice's letter to the Reformed College of Debrecen (21 July 1779), Ibid.

20 II. 11. e. Box 2, TtREL.

21 Letter of the Professors of the College to the Senior (5 July 1786), II. 22. a. Box 1, TtREL.

22 Gábor Szilágyi's letter to the SPG (17 Jan. 1803), II. 1. d. vol. 2, TtREL.

23 Ibid. (12 Apr. 1804).

24 Gábor Szilágyi's letter to the SPG, the Secretary of the British embassy, and József Vitéz (26 Apr. 1804), Ibid.

25 The Letter of the SPG to the Professors of the College (17 Mar. 1808), II. 1. d. vol. 3, TtREL.

26 The Letter of the Professors of the College to the SPG (12 Mar. 1817), Ibid.

27 The Letter of the Professors of the College to the SPG (29 May 1824), Ibid.

28 Ibid. (9 Feb. 1826).

29 A Debreceni Kollégium angol alapítványa [The English Foundation of the Debrecen College], II. 1. c. Box 23, TtREL.

30 II. 1. d. vol. 3. (28 Apr. 1827), TtREL.

31 Ibid. (2 Feb., 2 Mar. 1831).

32 Curator Imre Péchy's letter to the Agent (25 Apr. 1831), II. 22. a. Box 1, TtREL.

33 James Heywood Markland's letter to the Professors (23 Nov. 1832), I. 1. b. Box 87, TtREL.

34 II. 1. d. vol 4. (15 Apr. 1833), TtREL.

35 Miklós Way's letter to the Palatine of Hungary (24 Dec. 1834), II. 22. a. Box 1, TtREL.

36 Agent Imre Barkasy's letter to the Professors (4 Aug. 1835), Ibid.

37 II. 1. d. vol. 4. (11 Oct. 1835), TtREL.

38 Ibid. (3 Apr. 1837).

39 Ibid. 40 Ibid. (3 Feb. 1838).

41 I. 1. a. vol. 17., 95–96, TtREL.

42 Ibid., 134.

43 Ibid., 394.

44 II. 1. d. vol. 11., 111–12, TtREL.

45 II. 1. d. vol. 32. (7 Feb. 1874), TtREL.
46 II. 1. d. vol. 37. (31 Jan. 1879), TtREL.
47 II. 1. d. vol. 41. (5 Feb. 1883), TtREL.
48 II. 1. d. vol. 47. (18 June 1889), TtREL.
49 II. 1. d. vol. 54. (6 Dec. 1895, 5 June 1896), TtREL.
50 II. 1. d. vol. 47. (21 Feb. 1890), TtREL.
51 Ferenc Balogh's letter to the Economic Council of the College (12 Nov. 1897), II. 22. a. Box 1, TtREL.
52 II. 15. b. vol. 196., 14, TtREL.
53 Summary of the College Director (11 Apr. 1922), II. 22. a. Box 1, TtREL.
54 Letters of the Royal Hungarian Clearing Office to the College Professors (17 Jan., 4 May, 21 June 1923), Ibid.
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REVIEWS

Visiting the Louvre

Janka Kascakova

Davison, Claire and Gerri Kimber, eds. The Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Letters of Katherine Mansfield, Volume 2. *Letters to Correspondents K-Z*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2022. 880 pages. ISBN: 9781474445481. £195.

This is the second installment of the new, four-volume collected letters of Katherine Mansfield, featuring the correspondents from K to Z, except for the letters to her husband John Middleton Murry, which would be published separately.[1] Thanks to the mysterious rules that govern coincidences, while the first volume was predominantly peopled by her relatives, this one promises a wider range of better known, even famous acquaintances from the pantheon of early twentieth-century public and cultural life. And here lies both the immense attraction and the disappointment, albeit fleeting, of this volume. The table of contents does feature such names as Bertrand Russell, Lytton Strachey, Frank Swinnerton, Hugh Walpole, and, of course, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, but the introduction also discloses that many letters, either partially or in their entirety, did not survive. Undoubtedly, the greatest regret is attached to the complete lack of any letters to D. H. Lawrence, and there are just two drafts to his wife Frieda. Equally unfortunate is that only one letter to the editor of *The New Age* survived, addressed to A. R. Orage, the man Mansfield saw as her mentor and a major professional and personal influence. Correspondence with her close friends, writers J. W. Sullivan and H. M. Tomlinson is missing too. One cannot help but wonder what she wrote or, seeing her signature chameleonic style, even more importantly, *how* she wrote to them, especially to Lawrence, the man she had a very turbulent relationship with but never stopped admiring, despite his difficult nature. He is present in many of her letters to other correspondents though, most memorably in the graphic account of the domestic violence she witnessed while staying with the Lawrences in Cornwall, sent both to S. S. Koteliansky (11 May 1916; 55–57) and Ottoline Morrell (17 May 1916; 168–70). To her, experiencing Lawrence was "like sitting on a railway station with Lawrence's temper like a big black engine puffing and snorting. I can think of nothing, I

am blind to everything, waiting for the moment when with a final shriek – off it will go!" (55–56). Yet in one of her later letters to Koteliansky, while reminiscing about Christmas with the Lawrences in 1914, she ponders: "Wasn't Lawrence awfully nice that night. Ah, one must always love Lawrence for his 'being'. . . . And how strange it is, how in spite of everything, there are certain people, like Lawrence, who remain in one's life for ever, and others who are forever shadowy" (79–80).

However, this feeling of frustration and disappointment with what might have been soon passes and gives way to immense satisfaction. On the one hand, the reader cannot help but be drawn by Mansfield's irresistible style, which is made even more powerful by her desire to be liked and her intention to charm her correspondents by alluding exactly to the things that particular person was likely to respond to. Her letters are warm and imaginative, full of colors, smells, and sounds; even her business correspondence with publishers sometimes goes beyond the dry exchange of information. It is also obvious how precious and important the letters were to her and how she savored every one of them to their fullest, especially during the last years of her life, when she was away for extended periods of time, chasing a cure for her terminal illness. As she wrote to her old friend, the painter Anne Estelle Rice: "I walked through your letter once & then I just idled through it again & took my time and stopped to look & admire and love and smell and hear it all" (506). Probably the most visual ones were sent to the legendary society hostess, Ottoline Morrell; they are full of gardens and flowers, and the tensions that were so common in the Bloomsbury and Garsington circles are often muted, and thus could easily be overlooked if not for the meticulous editorial footnotes. One could surely find their favorite individual letters or whole batches. Those to Koteliansky, Morrell, and Mansfield's first lover Garnett Trowell are possibly the most rewarding as they are also the largest sets, and one gets the satisfaction of being immersed in their individual stories while seeing the same, yet also a very different Mansfield every time. Of course, the letters to Virginia Woolf cannot be forgotten either. They are witnesses to the fragile but irresistible connection the two writers shared, a bond that, due to their different circumstances, was never allowed to grow strong and flourish. The last letter, although sent two years before Mansfield's death, is a telling as well as moving conclusion to their relationship:

> Oh, how beautiful Life is – Virginia, it is marvelously beautiful. Were one to live for ever it would not be long enough. Sometimes I sit on the wall watching the sun & the wind shake over the long grass & the wild orchid cups & I feel – – – simply helpless before this wonder. Farewell dear friend. (May I call you that). (773)

The other source of pleasure in this volume, as satisfying as the letters themselves, are the introductory essays preceding the letters to each correspondent. They are a worthy counterpart to Mansfield's writing and go way beyond mere factual information, the depth and breadth of which, in itself, is spectacular. They are both fascinating stories and masterpieces of their own, drawing one into a very gratifying rollercoaster of competition with Mansfield's texts.

This collection also features some freshly discovered material, letters that sometimes still keep appearing in unexpected places. As the editors state in the introduction, there are more than thirty previously unpublished letters as well as substantial revisions to the existing ones (3). Rather surprisingly, the list of correspondents also includes two non-human "recipients" who are accorded equal treatment: they too have their respective essays introducing the postcards Mansfield sent them: her Japanese doll *Ribni* (short for Captain Ribnikov) and cat Wingley.

All in all, reading this volume cover to cover is like visiting the Louvre: one is first in awe of all that there is to see and explore, yet after a while even the most wonderful painting by an old master threatens to become just "another picture." That is why this book, just like the visits to expansive museums, is best enjoyed in installments, not chronologically, just opened randomly time and time again. Its very nature invites circular rather than linear reading. I cannot but repeat what I have already expressed in the review of the first volume: the unusual ordering by correspondents offers an incredibly different experience and is more in line with modernist aesthetics than any work of this kind I have read before. And, as with the Louvre, you do not need to be an expert to enjoy what it has to offer; it is suitable for all those who want to learn more about modernism, the early-twentieth-century life and intellectual atmosphere in Britain and France, and especially for those who enjoy excellent (letter-)writing.

As mentioned at the beginning, the last two volumes will solely be dedicated to Mansfield's correspondence with her husband, the literary critic and writer in his own right, John Middleton Murry. One wonders what this

uninterrupted reading would do to the perception of arguably one of the strangest relationships in literary history: that of a generally disliked, emotionally shallow, yet intellectually brilliant man and an equally smart, highly original, and vivacious woman increasingly restricted by debilitating illness.

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Note

1 For my review on Volume 1, see "Katherine Mansfield's Many Windows." *Hungarian Journal of Enaglish and American Studies* 28.1 (2022): 226–29.

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Acknowledging Shakespeare's Others as Ours

Ágnes Matuska

Sokolova, Boika and Janice Valls-Russell, eds. *Shakespeare's Others in 21st-Century European Performance: The Merchant of Venice and Othello.* London, New York, Oxford, New Delhi, Sidney: Bloomsbury, The Arden Shakespeare, 2022. 295 pages. ISBN: 978-1-3501-2595-7. HB. $115.

The essays in this volume discuss twenty-first-century productions of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*, which serve as on-stage laboratories defining and re-defining the Other and exploring attitudes towards Shakespeare's contemporary relevance in a wider European context at the turn of the millennium. Dilemmas about the present function of the theatre as a social institution are also investigated. The collection published under the umbrella of Arden Shakespeare is part of the "Global Shakespeare Inverted" series, exploring the ambiguities within the "center vs. periphery" dynamics. According to the series editors, the aim is to establish "new and alternative methodologies that invert the relation of Shakespeare to the supposed 'other'" (on the verso of the title page). The book's choice of the two dramas under scrutiny fits this philosophy perfectly well since these plays specifically explore controversies lingering around the social construction of the Other.

The volume, consisting of an introduction, ten essays, three interviews, a coda, and a short introductory text drawing parallels within each of the three parts, offers a thorough and thoughtful picture of diverse European productions. It covers Europe's East, West, and—through the lens of the chosen plays—draws out tensions rooted in the changing versions of the Other. The twenty-first-century stage adaptations tend to center on broad philosophical and epistemological questions, reflecting topical tensions at a precise historical moment, regardless of whether the Other in a given context is defined through political, geographical, cultural, or linguistic markers. As the editors point out in their Introduction: "The long shadow of anti-Semitism still dominates *The Merchant of Venice,* as racism does *Othello*, but the challenging world in which performances exist continues to reformulate the tensions, dynamics and identification points with characters and their environments" (3).

The authors put productions of the two plays into dialogue in diverse ways. The Italian, Bulgarian, and Portuguese examples each discuss two versions of *Othello,* and two adaptations of *The Merchant of Venice* are analyzed in the chapters presenting the French, the Romanian, and the Hungarian examples; four chapters deal with a combination of the two plays, either discussing a production of each of the plays, as in the examples from Serbia, the Netherlands, and Germany, or presenting a production that is already a combination of the plays, which is the case of the Polish adaptation. While the essays give intriguing and valuable insights into specific national productions, they allow for larger, overarching themes and questions to emerge. One such recurring topic targets the relevance of productions that may be rooted in both the topicality of the adaptations and the fact that they make the audience reflect on actual social and political dilemmas—a potential, however, not always fulfilled, as shown in Natália Pikli's and Francesca Rayner's contributions, discussing the Hungarian and the Portuguese *Merchant*s respectively. As other contributors in the volume suggest, relevance may come from the fact that the plays are capable of rearranging existing tensions or even rewriting their significance by aiming at a "deep disturbance of the spectators" (105). Such productions strive to create an encounter with the Other to acknowledge the Other's humanity through a theatrically created event that is more direct than the encounters coded within the existing, ideologically defined scenarios—as Zorica Becanovic Nikolic suggests in her piece dealing with Serbian performances.

While theatre adaptations may create spaces in which it becomes possible for the audience to disengage themselves from ideologically coded perspectives, one wonders what it is that such adaptations can ultimately offer. The question is not merely whether Shakespeare is or should be made meaningful for present day audiences, but rather how (or whether) theatres as institutions in the twenty-first century can remain relevant in the given cultural and political climate. Although not an answer, Bettina Boecker's essay discussing German Shakespeare productions as well as the reactions of theatres to the 2015–2016 refugee crisis, offers a revealing insight. It appears that re-claimed political relevance was achieved specifically by non-theatrical means, by theatres venturing into diverse social projects rather than remembering their "archetypical task," namely, "text, ensemble, the art of acting" as director Michael Thalheimer formulated it (222). The productions analyzed in this chapter present bleak dystopias of un-othering the Stranger, with the host-culture displaced in one, and emptied out in the other. As Boecker concludes, "[a] certain discrepancy between the way the productions

approach the Stranger on stage and the way the institutional policies of the two theatres approach the Stranger in real life is hard to overlook" (223).

Ambiguities, unsolved problems, lack of center, or missing points of reference are ideas permeating the interpretations. Janice Valls-Russel closes her essay by saying: "Unanswered questions are the stuff [*The Merchant of Venice*] is made of, perhaps because they remain unanswerable" (123). Similarly, talking about the Polish production, Aleksandra Sakowska concludes: "The questions raised . . . are numerous, but they remain unanswered. Questioning itself is of importance. And there, in [director Warlikowski's] method, lies the role of theatre, and of Shakespeare" (82). It seems that one goal of posing such questions is to "re-sensitivise" the audience consisting of "desensitized individuals" (81)—an idea that is comparable to the "deep disturbance" of the audience already mentioned.

Such a disturbance, or perhaps "re-sensitivisation," can be achieved, as several essays suggest, by showing the relativity of the idea of the Other by flipping stereotypes, or in some cases literally turning tables on the audience, as in the Romanian *Merchant of Venice* production discussed by Nicoleta Cinpoes. In several of these instances, characters earlier seen as dominant, or features and characteristics belonging to those at the top of the social hierarchy, are suddenly presented in a way that the setup is reversed, allowing for a reinterpretation and reevaluation of attributes or representatives of social groups. This is the effect of the southern accents in the two Italian pieces referred to in Anna Maria Cimitile's essay, in which she points out that "dialectical translations of Shakespeare aim to consolidate a sense of belonging to regional communities, raising questions of cultural authority that concern both Shakespeare and the regional dialect and culture appropriating it" (39). An obviously disturbing version of destabilizing the assumed order between authority and other is offered by the "other-within," revealing invisible traumas, as discussed by Boika Sikolova and Kirilka Stavreva, as well as the Warlikowski adaptation in which the three Others (Lear, Shylock, and Othello) destroy the lives of their daughters and wives. While it may seem a convenient position to choose, as Coen Heijes points out, "the moral high ground of the tolerant 'us' versus the critics of multiculturalism" (186), these insightful essays show that we are not up for an easy solution.

So what are we left with? I feel that the volume itself does give us points of reference, or perhaps even guidance, beyond the nuanced picture it offers of the contested scenes we are faced with. This point emerges implicitly, in my understanding, towards the end of the collection, in a combination consisting of the three interviews with theatre directors, and the

Coda, revealing Péter Dávidházi's reading of the essays. Dávidházi sees a warning in these pieces according to which "we cannot afford to alienate the Other much longer" (277). Indeed, it is not that we cannot afford it, but we cannot escape the challenge of dealing with what we alienate from ourselves. Throughout the volume, chapters give us diverse examples for how this task is carried out more or less successfully, or hopefully, how it is carried out by audiences, societies, theater critics, directors, as well as Shakespeare and theater scholars. But what emerges beyond the heap of problems, or perhaps lies below the unresolved ambiguities, unfulfilled potentials, confusing or lacking reference points is the pain caused by alienation, the pain that ultimately affects all parties concerned. It seems to me that Bulgarian director Plamen Markov stresses precisely this. He refers to the motto of their company: "We are not the answer to a problem, we are the raw pain" (267). Perhaps before we rush to find an answer, we as individuals and as societies must acknowledge the pain of alienation. While this pain is very difficult to lean into, the "mythical sensibility" (270) Dávidházi implicitly calls for is something that may help us in our endeavor. The volume as well as the scholarly tradition it follows both attest that if such a sensibility is what we seek, then theatre, as well as Shakespeare are not the worst bets to turn to.

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Fantasies of Unveiling Flesh and Freedom: Post-9/11 Desires for Truth and Security

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Ghumkhor, Sahar. *The Political Psychology of the Veil: The Impossible Body.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. 274 pages. ISBN 978-3-030-32060-7. Pbk. €90.94.

There are few matters as controversial and heatedly debated as the practice of veiling in the Global North—exerting pressure on an author willing to contribute to this widely researched phenomenon as well as raising the expectations of the reader. Sahar Ghumkhor's *The Political Psychology of the Veil* is not an exception to texts accompanied by this strained anticipation. As the author's first monograph, published in 2020 as part of The Palgrave Studies in Political Psychology series, it sets out the goal to generate discussion on current issues and perspectives concerning world politics, local and international conflicts, and fluctuating political movements and ideologies.

The cover presents a sketchy drawing of a woman holding her own quasi-mirror image made out of her own flowing hair in her hands. The focal point of the illustration is the two faces—a strikingly white and a shadowy black—of the same body staring at one another, which depiction sets the ground for Ghumkhor's in-depth analysis of a desire for bodily wholeness and the intense need to see and know the disturbingly (familiar yet) unknown other. As a lecturer at the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne, Australia and a journalist at *Al Jazeera*, Ghumkhor integrates areas of psychoanalysis, social sciences, and Islamophobia into her research. She intends to enrich the already extensive literature on the veil, even though she does not seek to answer questions such as what the veil is or why women veil, rather, she proposes to investigate why and how these questions themselves transpire in western societies. Her motivation lies in her position as a Muslim having grown up and studied in New Zealand and Australia, as well as in the increasingly hypersensitive post-9/11 environment. As a result, she thoroughly analyzes the west's fixation on the veil and the western fantasy of freedom that foregrounds the visibility of the subject's body thus further othering the veiled (Muslim) woman. Positioned at the intersection of psychoanalysis and postcolonialism, the concepts of knowledge, freedom, and truth gain considerable attention in Ghumkhor's

exploration of what she refers to as the west's "unveiling imaginary"—"the hypnotic belief in the revealed flesh as a signature of freedom" (ix).

For the most part, the seven chapters of the volume neatly build on each other, beginning with the comprehensive introduction, "Bodies Without Shadows," which effectively delineates the book's objective "to identify the imagery of the veiled-veil*ing*-unveil*ing*-unveiled as powerful metaphorical expressions and coordinates of agency, autonomy and freedom in the post-9/11 and postcolonial world of national security, multiculturalism, human rights and women's rights" (7, emphasis in the original). The author recognizes the obsessive preoccupation with the veil as a form of preoccupation with the body that is imagined possessing and, significantly, revealing knowledge about the subject. The introduction approaches this imagery through a *Times* cover from 2010 depicting an Afghan girl, Aisha, whose face is disfigured by her maimed nose, and argues that the picture exemplifies the power of images through linking violence (specifically that of Islam) with the veil as its symbol par excellence for the western secular audience. Ghumkhor applies Wendy S. Hesford's term "ocular epistemology," a seeing-is-believing paradigm that proposes (only) the visible as validated truth claiming that "this is what happened here" (185). This notion is carried on in the subsequent chapters to undergird the capability of images to secure the western subject's position as a witness to social injustice, which grounds human rights campaigns and—by the repeated circulation of certain images—has the power to construct and sustain the Muslim woman imperiled by Brown men and, at the same time, imperiling for the west's integrity (75).

The second chapter, "The Unveiling Body" dives into the desire to see the body uncovered, to expose its naked truth in a cultural landscape where seeing has also come to signify knowing. Being the first truly analytical chapter, perhaps this is the most illuminating of the author's goal, and the concepts discussed here are pivotal to the understanding of the oncoming chapters. It reads the veil as a shadow on the body obscuring what could be known, hence the unrecognizability of the subject generates anxiety in the western subject. The chapter goes on to dissect the body tackling the problematic notion of the pre-discursive, natural body stripped of its symbolic meanings, giving way to a universal body that is "naturally" unveiled. However, a body that could be placed beyond culture shall then also be unmarked by race or sex, as no body is less substantial than another in the making of the subject. Borrowing Giorgio Agamben's terminology, Ghumkhor points out the threat of this universalizing tendency to reduce

bios (social and political life) to zoe (natural or biological life), while a propensity for progress pinpoints western civilization as the "apotheosis of human development" (56)—the example to be followed—and recognizes the secular body (evolving from the natural) as more authentic, desirable, and free. By securing hierarchies of cultures and ideologies, unveiling becomes a means of perfecting humans and grants the body its rightful desires and freedom.

The conflict encountered here is further elaborated on and is best clarified by looking at the history of the unveiling imaginary going back to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which appears rather belatedly in chapter six, "The Confessional Body." The author here outlines the genealogy of modernity, along which she contends that the world is flattened into "a singular narrative across time, culture and space" (209) exalting the acquisition of knowledge and pursuit of universal truths by a dynamic and secular agent. The idea(l) of social and political progress is interlocked with this accumulative knowledge and promises a greater freedom. Therefore, inasmuch as the rejection of "the veil of tradition" (204), that is, non-secular beliefs and practices are associated with the expression of all modern values, the possibilities of attaining freedom are delimited for the unveiled.

The impossible promise of a natural body seems to be at the heart of the remaining text, especially in chapter three and four. The former, "The 'Pure Defence of the Innocent' and Innocence Lost" gives a psychoanalytic reading of the human rights discourse depicting the western free subject already endowed with human rights, yet endlessly desiring more. Images through their ocular epistemology are fundamental for disclosing a lack (of rights, freedom, truth, enjoyment) and inciting a desire to fix it and to restore wholeness; as such, the overrepresented Muslim woman wearing a veil is conceptualized as injured and fragmented. Ghumkhor turns to the critique of human rights discourse for endorsing pity instead of empathy, which establishes an unbalanced power dynamics favoring the progressive, secular body. "The Woman Question" revisits the age-old query of who a "Woman" is and what she desires, by building on the previously delineated universalizing tendencies and the western desire for unveiling. It narrows its focus on feminist perspectives providing the veil's interpretations in feminist discourses and examining Jacques Lacan's emotional assertion that "Woman does not exist" (qtd. in Ghumkor 136). The previous chapters defining "the west as the agent of secularism, modernity and freedom" (118) prepare the ground for the argumentation that in western discourses only the secular body can provide the necessary foundation for the real Woman who is free

in her desire, thus instantly excluding the veiled female subject. Nevertheless, the ontological crisis of the essential "Woman"—the fear of not existing and being the other to Man due to the lack of the phallus—propels the line of reasoning that western women's concern for the other (veiled) women functions as a way to overcome the inexistence of Woman by projecting their lack onto the non-white and non-secular veiled other.

The volume's contribution to the postcolonial and post-9/11 discourse is the most evident in chapters five and six, which take the most careful look at the postcolonial legacy and the exchange of power and knowledge. The former achieves it by describing a crisis of knowledge stemming from the postcolonial condition and giving way to a paranoia over the desire for knowledge that is driven by a conscious and unconscious desire for mastery. The author draws on Neil Macmaster's and Toni Lewis's notion of "hyperveiling," according to which Islamophobia is understood as the hysterical or hypochondriac imagining of ways to locate "other" bodies that imperil "us." In the period of this heightened need for security, a western hysterical demand is satisfied by the confessional narratives of women of Muslim women.

Chapter six investigates the rhetoric of these declarations and labels the confessors as native informants confirming western preconceptions about Islam, this way performing the unveiling of the truth of "unfreedom" (209) and complying with the preconditions of becoming "good Muslims" (217). Ghumkhor calls attention to how these testimonies are imbued with the language of the war on terror engaging the western reader's anxieties and ensuring the authenticity of the natural body. In addition, this chapter also includes a short inquiry into the unveiled-veiled woman or "the hijab-wearing Muslim 'cool girl'" (237) in the west, "whose sole preoccupation is not with disclosing the horrors of Islam and her community, but with redeeming the hijab for a western audience by verifying its liberating qualities" (237). The expression of individualism through the immersion of consumer culture, fashion, modernity, and exercising a dynamic agency render these women more relatable or—in Ghumkhor's phrasing—consumable for a western secular and unquestionably consumerist audience (238). A profoundly engrossing argument as it is, the undeniable shortcoming of the text is precisely the lack of elaboration on this part, leaving the reader on the edge of their seat.

Nevertheless, *The Political Psychology of the Veil* accomplishes its designated mission and sheds light on the dynamics of western fantasies and anxieties over Islam embodied by the veil. Ghumkhor puts forward

convincing arguments supported by ample sources from numerous scholars and theorists of diverse cultural backgrounds. As such, the volume certainly makes a valuable analysis of the existing literature on Islamophobia, body and sexual politics, as well as psychoanalytic, postcolonial, and feminist criticism, which is the work's primary merit. For the same reason, as can be expected, it is extremely loaded theoretically, but it surely provides an indispensable perspective on the entrenched conflict between Muslim and secular values for any researcher in the field of postcolonial feminism.

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The Prisons Memory Archive: A Multi-Disciplinary Lens on Northern Ireland's Peace Process

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Mairs Dyer, Jolene, Conor McCafferty, and Cahal McLaughlin, eds. *The Prisons Memory Archive: A Case Study in Filmed Memory of Conflict*. Wilmington, DE and Malaga: Vernon Press, 2022. 276 pages. ISBN 978-1-64889-440-4. £65.

Northern Ireland, its conflicted past, and its peace process since 1998 have been at the center of a variety of publications. At the 25th anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, the peace treaty bringing a formal end to over three decades of violence, *The Prisons Memory Archive: A Case Study in Filmed Memory of Conflict* offers new insights into the topic. It is a refreshing book presenting a variety of different angles on what can seem like a messy and entangled post-conflict environment.

Due to Northern Ireland's contested memory landscape, the adopted piecemeal approach to reconciliation and dealing with the past has resulted in a plethora of different legal and non-legal mechanisms that frequently have not been successful in bringing conflicted communities together. The Prisons Memory Archive (PMA) constitutes a societally beneficial exception. The project successfully combined the filmed testimonies of ex-prisoners, prison officers, university tutors, chaplains, and others associated with the contested prison sites of Armagh Gaol and Maze Prison/Long Kesh in one place. By adopting an approach based on the pillars of inclusivity, co-ownership, and life-storytelling, interviewees were able to freely recall their memories of the prison sites, most of them whilst walking through them. Participants from all groups of society were then allowed to retain the rights over their own recordings. As a final product, the project has created an accessible archive allowing anyone to access memories and evaluate their own experiences without judgment or privilege. Fifteen years after the filming of the project, this book, edited by Jolene Mairs Dyer, Conor McCafferty, and Cahal McLaughlin, allows for a reflection on the project's many impacts. The editors have all worked on the project and the book often reads like an intimate self-reflection. As such, it is also a commentary on the on-going debates around dealing with the past in Northern Ireland, showcasing the

current state of play as much as contemplations on the recent past and possible future avenues.

As Laura McAtackney notes in her prologue, the contested Northern Ireland prisons are part of collective memory; their "long and entangled connection to the conflict" is present to everyone in Northern Ireland (xx). Seeing the variety and breadth of contributions to this book, the impact of the PMA has also touched upon all levels of society. Through the window of an initially contested prisons project, it reflects on recent social developments in Northern Ireland. With chapters contributed by ex-prisoners (6, 7), project workers (1, 2), different film makers (1, 8, 9, 14), an artist (5), a barrister (4), archivists (13, 15, 16), and academics giving glimpses into their research (3, 10–12), the book is widely inter-disciplinary. It makes a contribution to the field of film studies, provides insights into memory studies and transitional justice, employs gender studies and the fine arts, and allows for personal cogitations of coping with the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland. Across the sixteen chapters, the impact of the archive is assessed from different perspectives, often considering individual experiences. Authors use plain language, making the book widely accessible to both academic and non-academic audiences. Even the unknowing reader will intuitively understand the symbolic power the PMA holds.

In general, the chapter structure is broadly chronological and allows the reader to understand how the PMA has developed. The first two chapters, written by archive director Cahal McLaughlin and Lorraine Dennis, who has long worked for the archive, provide an insider perspective on working with a variety of potentially conflicted stakeholders. The careful explanations of strategies, project development, and personal feelings working with the PMA draw the reader in and transport a personal understanding of Northern Ireland. Hickey's third chapter on the changing prison architecture allows the reader to understand how Northern Ireland's architectonical landscape has mirrored the country's troubled past. The following four chapters (4–7) turn to direct experiences of life in prison and its impact on the writers' lives. Chapters four and five describe the experiences of a barrister and an artist temporarily visiting the prisons. Their outside experience of accessing the sites during the Troubles brings the reality of lived conflict closer to the reader. The following two chapters focus on two prisoners' stories which show, despite one being republican, the other loyalist, remarkable similarities. It becomes clear why the PMA's filmed material is so impactful: both contemplations are touching in their intimacy and vision. Chapters 8 and 9 then describe film making from the archived material, with chapter 10

emphasizing how it is received by audiences, contributing to reconciliatory work. Chapter 11 emphasizes through the example of audio-description how long-term accessibility with such contested material can be achieved. Lenox's chapter 12 serves an international comparison to a prison site in Germany. With this stage of showing the immersive impact of the archive on society in Northern Ireland and beyond, the last four chapters, 13–16, elaborate on these opportunities and their future potential. They are, however, mindful of the remaining sensitivities and contestations around the material. Keane's chapter 13 speaks of the transformative potential of archival spaces whilst ensuring to safeguard victims and survivors. McSorley's chapter on film making shows how new generational views (in his case on making the prison experience humorous) might not be shared across the board yet. Chapters 15 and 16 explain how the archive is stored, guaranteeing that marginalized experiences are preserved long-term.

The chapters are drawn together by incorporating the methodological pillars of inclusivity, co-ownership, and life storytelling. Each chapter mentions and evaluates these principles, showing how important they have been for everybody working with and participating in the PMA. Most chapters are followed by reflections of participants of the PMA, comprised of a couple of pages. Offering their thoughts on how the process has had an impact on them, their lives, and their wider communities, these considerations provide a connecting thread. They allow the reader to understand the participant-focused agenda better and offer glimpses into the enormous socio-political developments Northern Ireland has seen in the past decades.

As is often the case with edited volumes covering such interdisciplinary topics, most readers will not be equally interested in all chapters. Due to its simple language and well-constructed sections explaining the purpose of the archive, even the casual reader will gain important insights. The limited scope of the chapters and the emphasis on personal evaluation will however be restricting for those aiming to immerse themselves in academic debates. For these readers, the book merely offers a starting point, similar to an encyclopedia. Its relevance for international readers is thus also the shortcoming of this book. It provides an insight into the variety and differences between ways of dealing with the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland without requiring much previous knowledge of the region: the book's many perspectives highlight the different narratives and contestations in society well. It makes for an interesting and enjoyable read but does not offer

a sustained critique of specific academic theory. In general, the book's academic contribution to conflict studies lies in its self-critical assessment of memory in post-conflict societies. It is a great starting point for anyone looking to get to know Northern Ireland and its post-conflict developments better.

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