REVIEW
of International American Studies

# THE BORDERS OF THE BORDER

guest-edited
by Manuel Broncano Rodríguez

ISSN 1991-2773

RIAS Vol. 11, Fall-Winter Nº 2/2018

Review of International American Studies
Revue d'Études Américaines Internationales
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2/2018
ISSN 1991–2773

# THE BORDERS OF THE BORDER

## guest-edited by Manuel Broncano Rodríguez

ISSN 1991–2773

TYPOGRAPHIC DESIGN: Hanna Traczyk / M-Studio s. c.

PUBLICATION REALIZED BY:

UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA PRESS
IN KATOWICE

University of Silesia Press in Katowice
ul. Bankowa 12b
40–007 Katowice
Poland



ABOUT RIAS
*Review of International American Studies* (*RIAS*) is the double-blind peer-reviewed, electronic/print-on-demand journal of the International American Studies Association, a worldwide, independent, non-governmental association of American Studies. *RIAS* serves as agora for the global network of international scholars, teachers, and students of America as a hemispheric and global phenomenon. *RIAS* is published by IASA twice a year (Fall–Winter and Spring–Summer). *RIAS* is available in the Open Access Gold formula and is financed from the Association's annual dues as specified in the "Membership" section of the Association's website. All topical manuscripts should be directed to the *RIAS* Editors online via submissions website: www.rias-journal.org. General correspondence and matters concerning the functioning of RIAS should be addressed to *RIAS* Editor-in-Chief.

CONTACT INFORMATION and HARD COPY ORDERS

Prof. Giorgio Mariani
Dipartimento di Studi Europei, Americani e Interculturali
Università "Sapienza" di Roma
Via della Circonvallazione Tiburtina, 4
Edificio Ex-Poste, stanza n. 337, III piano
00185 Roma, Italy
Tel. +390688378085, e-mail: giorgio.mariani@uniroma1.it

WEBSITE: www.rias-journal.org

COVER ART: *Bordering Liberty* © 2018 Monika Grotek

# THE BORDERS OF THE BORDER
## guest-edited by Manuel Broncano Rodríguez

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# BORDERS AND VACUUMS

*Paweł Jędrzejko*
*RIAS Managing Editor*
*University of Silesia*
*in Katowice*
*Poland*

Whoever said that the more thresholds we draw, the more marginal spaces we create, was certainly right. The indefinite character of liminality seems to infallibly invite radical solutions: the margin is the *locus* of the aporia: a non-encounter with a non-language in a non-space. It is there that the Spanish conquistadors located the native peoples of the Americas, construing them as "out of place" in the place in which they had dwelled since the times immemorial; it is there that the thinkers of the Age of Reason would relegate phenomena defying rationalist argumentation or empirical proof, yet undeniably *felt as present*; it is finally there that individuals driven by empathy end  up today amidst the ruthless political tug-of-war between 21st century nationalisms and progressive advocacy of freedom and equality. The mirage of greatness, poisoning the minds of many, calls into existence discourses of degradation and deprivation; the self-proclaimed "righteous" need a scapegoat to purge their own sins; the necessary condition of "being great" is the legitimization of the fallacy of someone else's insignificance. with alt-facts ousting hard facts from the public space, with Orwellian media shamelessly creating realities based on the binarity of familiarity and enmity, with all visible attempts to silence the academic humanities, arts and letters by means of massive cuts in funding, the marginalization of those who find the "he who is not with us is against us" philosophy abhorrent gains significant momentum. But it is not in the margins that the monsters awaken: it is in the very heart of the well-defined center that fear rules unchecked while coercion, wearing white gloves, and walking hand in hand with blatant lies that boost fearful egos, facilitates turning a blind eye to cynical oppression, rendering the alleged winners actual victims of their own would-be "greatness." More thresholds, more limits, all designed to keep the Others

out, but all trapping those drawing the demarcation lines *within*, are being called into existence with increasing speed and intensity; yet the tighter the grip of the stultifying discourse is, the larger the space of the margin, the more obvious the aporias. In the non-space ruled by non-language, the non-encounter happens in art and "incomprehensible" philosophical musings: Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* invigorates common people to take up arms in 1776, Lluís Llach's "L'Estaca," written in 1968, did not only rekindle hope for the end of Franco's dictatorship in Spain, but also, translated into many languages, has since become a universal anthem of freedom fighters world-wide. When Wojciech Kalaga, Tadeusz Sławek, Tadeusz Rachwał and Emanuel Prower wrote their provocatively Derridian book *Tekst–Czytelnik–Margines* (*Text–Reader–Margin*) in 1988, the communist censors failed to understand the obvious message from the Margin, which, in fact, is a *speaking character* in the text, and because it *speaks*, it effectively dethrones the center, mocking the centralized political power, questioning the centralized communist economy, and ridiculing the centralized, structuralist, non-revolutionary, yet "revolutionary" humanities.

The margin, clearly, is far from voiceless: the larger it is, the more emphatically its voice revereberates; it is the "dangerous supplement" that has always had the power to overthrow the hegemony of the "main" text. Contrary to the fantasies of the center, the margin is not a vacuum: its torturous, aporetic, reality lies beyond (dominant) discourse and therefore is not expressible in a language comprehensible to those locked within the limits they created to keep "intruders" at bay. Pain is not translatable. But those who dwell in pain understand one another without words. Yet when their condition becomes utterly unbearable, like Lluís Llach's characters, together they pull the lines that tie them to the heavy stake that has kept them inert for too long:

| | |
|---|---|
| Si jo l'estiro fort per aquí | If I pull this way |
| i tu l'estires fort per allà, | and you pull that way |
| segur que tomba, tomba, tomba… | it will surely fall, fall, fall… |

Pulling together, in the compassionate spirit of IASA, with this issue of *RIAS* we celebrate the voice of the margin.

*Paweł Jędrzejko*
*RIAS Managing Editor*

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

## for IASA 8th World Congress
## Laredo TX, 12–21 July 2017

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President*
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

My dear colleagues,

Today is a very important day in my life, and certainly the most significant moment in the thirty years that I have dedicated to the study and the teaching of the literature of the United States and of the Americas at large. Today I am doubly honored by a rare coincidence that is a first in the history of IASA, since I appear before you wearing two hats. One is the hat of the president of the International American Studies Association, a hat that was passed on to me two years ago in Seoul by our former president and dear friend Giorgio Mariani, after wearing it for four hectic but highly productive years. The hat is well-worn and has been honorably carried by some of the best minds in our field of enquiry, most of whom happen to be here with us today, demonstrating their continued commitment to our association—as if any such demonstration were necessary. The hat was designed and made in the best Italian fashion, and acquired in June 2000 at one of the finest stores in Bellagio, northern Italy, after a long and at times heated debate among a select group of scholars from various countries across the world, who had a hard time reaching a consensus about the shape and the materials of the symbolic chapeau. The hat was first worn by Djelal Kadir, the "founding father" who envisioned what is IASA today back in the 1990s, if not earlier, and invested the best of himself until his long-cherished dream became a tangible reality. Djelal's vision

is now inscribed in our charter, declaring our mission and vocation: "to further the international exchange of ideas and information among scholars from all nations and various disciplines who study and teach America regionally, hemispherically, nationally, and transnationally." Paul Giles and Jane Desmond followed suit at the helm of the Association and have both kept our boat on course, despite contrary winds and stormy waters we encountered along the route.

Without Paul, and Jane, and Giorgio, I have little doubt that our boat would have foundered a long time ago, even perhaps in that ominous maiden voyage that set sail from Leiden in 2003, like a modern-day *Mayflower* bound for the Americas (and here I use a poetic license, for in truth it was the unseaworthy *Speedwell* that took the Pilgrim Fathers from Holland to England). Our boat was at the time but a humble vessel whose seaworthiness had not been tested yet, a boat equipped with rigging and sails not much stouter than those of the *Mayflower*, and a truly worrisome scarcity of provisions. Yet the *IASA* boat was manned by a superb crew of well-seasoned mariners who were fearless in their mission. The appearance of this peculiar vessel in the waters of an ocean dominated by the mighty fleet of national and continental associations was perceived by some as a true act of piracy, an act of flagrant defiance to the status quo enjoyed by academic societies whose territorial and even ideological dominion had gone unchallenged for decades. The *IASA* set sail with the white flag permanently displayed atop the main mast, a manifest emblem of its amicable and well-meaning mission. However, a number of scholars in the field of American Studies insisted, and in some cases still insist, on descrying instead of the white flag a black banner inscribed with the skull and crossed bones proper of buccaneers. Our boat took to sea with the explicit mission of exploring global waters that remained largely uncharted, and we have circumnavigated the globe twice already in the course of that exploration.

From Leiden, we sailed to Canada to convene in Ottawa in 2005, in what was our second world congress, "America's Worlds and the World's America. Our dear Patrick Imbert and his outstanding team put together an exemplary congress that proved beyond doubt the soundness and potential of our common endeavor. Patrick's scholarly stature and professional savvy

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President*
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

secured academic rigor in the papers presented as well as generous financial support through various grants and donations, which resulted in a number of outstanding publications. Equally important, I should say crucial, was the fact that once the final accounting was completed, Patrick managed to transfer to IASA an impressive amount of funds. So impressive, in fact, that they guaranteed the continuity of our association for quite a few years. Thus, the fragile vessel that arrived in Ottawa left the Canadian shores much better equipped and provisioned for the arduous voyage ahead. On behalf of the International American Studies Association, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to Patrick Imbert, who happens to be with us here today, for his unwavering and continued commitment to IASA.

I cannot revisit in detail, for obvious reasons, the subsequent layovers in the course of our navigation: From Ottawa to Lisbon, from Lisbon to Beijing, from Beijing to Rio de Janeiro, from Rio to Szczecin in Poland, from Szczecin to Seoul, and from Seoul to the banks of the Rio Grande/Bravo where we are convening today. Our voyage has been and continues to be a true Odyssey, even if our Ithaka is a place of the mind and our Mediterranean a textual sea that encompasses all the world's waterways and overland routes that lead to the Americas:

As you set out for Ithaca
Hope your road is a long one,
Full of adventure, full of discovery [. . .]

Keep Ithaca always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you're destined for.
But don't hurry the journey at all [. . .]
(From Costantin Cavafy, "Ithaka")

Long as the voyage has been, it has barely started. There still is ahead of us an immense *mare ignotum* whose intellectual treasures await to be revealed. Each of our conferences has had its unique story full of anecdotes and even comic situations, and I hope that intra-history gets written some day before it is forever lost to memory. We owe it to the future generations of scholars who will eventually replace those of us convening here today, for IASA´s seafaring will endure and will prevail, do not have the least doubt,

my dear colleagues. How to forget Paul Giles and his karaoke feats, or Ana María Mauad´s crash course on samba dancing during our last night in Río, while a group of elderly musicians drew from their old fashioned instruments the finest and most hectic of rhythms. And how to forget the sanitary emergency caused by the avian flu that awaited the *IASA* at the Beijing harbor, dictating a quarantine that forced upon the local organizers, to their great dismay, a mandatory change of venue from downtown Beijing to a conference facility miles away from the center, turning our congress into a peculiar retreat. And let me tell you how, despite the inconvenience of the relocation, the whole experience turned into a complete success, since the convivial proximity of participants and organizers allowed for an enriching academic exchange of ideas and perspectives inside and outside the conference rooms.

The International American Studies Association is, thus, alive and kicking. This year we celebrate its 17th birthday. IASA is about to become officially of age. However, the Association is still in its adolescence and, like all teenagers, suffers from occasional growing pains, especially because of the tall stature it is reaching. One additional reason for celebration is the momentous accomplishments achieved by our colleagues in the editorial board of *RIAS*, the *Review of International American Studies*, which is the official journal of IASA. On behalf of our Association, I want to express our heartfelt gratitude to those individuals who have made these achievements possible: Cyraina Johnson-Roullier for her eight years of invaluable service, first as associate editor and then as editor-in chief; Giorgio Mariani, long involved in the journal and our new editor-in-chief since January of this year; and György Tóth, associate editor since 2011. There are other names that deserve recognition, and I refer you to the *RIAS* website for a detailed history of the journal. It is our esteemed Paweł Jędrzejko, however, who deserves the warmest of accolades as well as our public recognition of IASA's profound indebtedness to him. Always working behind the scenes, and stealing long hours from his overcrowded agenda, Paweł has generously given, and continues to give, the best of himself to our journal. Ever since he picked up the gauntlet thrown down by the IASA Executive Council during a meeting at the Rothermere Institute in Oxford back

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President*
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

in 2004, which approved the proposal to create an academic journal for the Association, Pawel has been the heart and soul of our journal. Pawel, thank you, thank you, thank you!

During our General Assembly on Friday, Giorgio Mariani will provide more details of the current state of *RIAS*, but allow me to advance some of the feathers *RIAS* has added to its cap. The first, bringing the journal up to speed, so that there are no back issues stuck in the pipeline anymore, which had been a perpetual source of headaches for all those involved in the journal. The second has been the inclusion of *RIAS* in several academic indexes and databases whose rigorous criteria we finally meet. This inclusion provides *RIAS* with worldwide visibility as well as recognition of its quality. Scholars who in the past felt discouraged by the lack of objective evidence to demonstrate the impact of their articles, which universities and research centers increasingly demand, may now reconsider *RIAS* as their journal of choice. *RIAS* is quite unique, both in scope (since there is only one other journal dedicated to international American Studies that I am aware of), and in philosophy, for *RIAS* is the only academic journal in the field that grants full, unrestricted open access, with a print-on-demand option for a small fee, in case someone needs the physical volume. This means that IASA underwrites all the expenses involved, in the conviction that it is our duty and our mission as a worldwide association to disseminate innovative knowledge free of charge. And this commitment brings me to one of the most pressing issues imperiling the growth, even the survival, not only of *RIAS*, but of IASA itself.

As a worldwide association, IASA has suffered from an endemic malady that has proven almost impossible to eradicate, beyond some palliative treatment that has allowed us to pull through so far. with its constituency literally spread all over the world, and its itinerant vocation (or if you allow me to say, its "manifest destiny" of nomadism), our Association represents an "exceptional" case, for there is no other academic society in the field of American Studies that systematically rotates its conference venues so that we visit equally Asia, Europe, and the Americas. So far, we have been unable to secure enough support from any African country/university, and it remains as one of our major challenges to include

Africa in the rotation. The same can be said about Australasia, even though in this case we count some members from Australia and New Zealand, including our former President Paul Giles, who is currently serving at the University of Sydney. Let´s hope that in the coming years we are able to overcome this incidental blockade and encompass both regions in our navigation. As wandering scholars, we have the fortune to get first-hand exposure to the varied, and often competing, understandings of American Studies around the world, and thus expand our horizons with each new conference and each new publication stemming from them. An added and equally important benefit is the fact that by convening in such varied locations, IASA facilitates the participation in our reunions of local and regional scholars who would be unable to attend otherwise. We should be aware, however, of the fact that our inalienable mandate to academic vagrancy (and I use this term on purpose) carries along with it the inescapable reality of an unstable constituency, many individuals of which become transitory members, just for the purpose of admission to a specific IASA congress. We keep record of all present and past members, and distribute relevant information among all of them, regardless of their status. The real problem is budgetary, since we have recurrent expenses (especially relating to *RIAS* and the IASA webpage) while we can never forecast the funds that will actually be available in our coffers at any given time. We depend on those members who renew their commitment on a regular basis, and I want to acknowledge publicly their invaluable contribution to ensure the continuity of both IASA and the journal. The only other source of income is the surplus generated by our biennial congresses, and so far, each venue has contributed funds, in a varying amount, to the general IASA account. I can proudly say that no officer, past or present, has been reimbursed for any IASA o *RIAS*-related activity. This includes travel and accommodation at our conferences, as opposed to the usual practice in many academic societies in which the membership has to shoulder the expenses of their governing bodies. We can be truly proud that all members of the IASA governance have always covered their own expenses, oftentimes out of their own pockets, since

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President*
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

universities across the world are reducing travel grants dramatically. I think this deserves unanimous recognition from all of us.

***

Allow me now to change hats to address you as the chair of the local organizing committee. The fact that we are convening in Laredo, Texas, is a first for IASA, and a first of iconic significance for the history of the Association. Ever since its foundation, IASA made it its unwritten policy to postpone a conference on US soil because of the potential risk for such a young association to be coopted by any of the larger and more established associations in this country. Thus, the decision was adopted to delay such a visit until IASA had proven beyond doubt its true nature as as an international and independent association that was both global and hemispheric in its approach to the study of the Americas.. When the proposal for the conference that we inaugurate today was first submitted, few of us would have anticipated the geopolitical changes that were to take place in the United States in the interim between the Seoul and Laredo conventions. Before I continue any further, and on behalf of IASA, I want to extend our gratitude to Texas A&M International University for its enthusiastic and generous support to our 8th World Congress. I also want to warmly thank the City of Laredo and its Conventions & Tourist Bureau, whose logistic and financial support has been crucial for the success of our reunion. Joel Vazquez, our liaison with the Conventions & Tourist Bureau, as well as all the staff serving at the Bureau, deserve a loud round of applause for their commitment. I also want to recognize the International Bank of Commerce and its Senior Vice-President, Gabriel Castillo, for hosting the roundtable, "Living the Border," that we will celebrate on their premises this evening. And I want to express our especial thanks to all the individuals who have kindly accepted our invitation to participate in this event, which aims to explore the dynamics of daily life in our border region, beyond the stereotypes oftentimes displayed by the media: Carolina Zaragoza Flores, Consul General of Mexico in Laredo; Enrique Rivas Cuellar, President of the City of Nuevo Laredo; Nelly Vielma, councilwoman for the 5th district; Margarita Flores, IBC Vice-President for Marketing; Olivia Varela, Director of the Laredo Development Foundation; Minita Ramírez and Marissa Guerrero-Longoria,

representing Texas A&M International University and Laredo Community College, respectively, will engage in a conversation about the uniqueness of the transnational community composed by the two Laredos. There are many other names that I should mention in our acknowledgments and I apologize for not enumerating one by one all the individuals, companies, and institutions that have made this conference possible. To all of them, I convey IASA's gratitude and recognition for their support.

We find ourselves today in the vicinity of the Rio Grande/Bravo, in many senses the epitome of the border, of the frontier, of the "limen" in its etymological sense of "threshold," "doorway," or "limit." The general theme of our reunion is "Marginalia: The Borders of the Border," and the papers we are going to listen to address this theme from multiple perspectives, which will lead to very enriching discussions about one of the most written about topics in the scholarship of the last few decades. Such topic has rekindled new interest, especially in the light of the recent political transformations in many regions of the globe, which are leading to revived feelings of essentialist nationalism and its atavistic fears of the other, call it the immigrant, the dissenter or, if you want, the barbarian. It is happening in Turkey, it is happening in Poland, it is happening in Britain, it is happening in the US. In this context, borders and walls, both physical and ideological, are being erected once again.

In an article published by *The New York Times* on November 22, 2015, Hispanic journalist Manny Fernandez brought to the attention of mainstream America one of the starkest realities of the Mexican-American border. According to Fernandez, based on data provided by the Migration Policy Institute in Washington D.C., there are about 130,000 undocumented immigrants living in just two of the four counties that the Rio Grande Valley comprises in the state of Texas. This territory represents a true "no-man´s land," a space in which many lives are spent in perpetual entrapment, a twilight zone caught between two borders. One is the official that separates the United States and Mexico, and the other, the unofficial but equally effective frontier that separates from the interior of the US a stretch of land of a width that varies between 25 and 100 miles, from the banks of the Rio Grande

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President*
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

to the checkpoints that the Border Patrol operates in southern Texas. As Fernandez states:

> Those stuck here have little choice but to stay put. They cannot go north for fear of either being caught while trying to cross the checkpoints by car or dying in the vast expanses of brush while trying to walk around them. And they will not go south for the same reasons they left Mexico in the first place.

These individuals exist in a limbo, a "jaula de oro" or "golden cage" as some refer to this twilight zone, according to Manny Fernandez, which seems quite symbolic of the thousands, if not millions, of displaced individuals forced to occupy the margins, or peripheries, of the Americas and of the world at large.

*Marginalia* is a Latin term that in its origins referred to the inscriptions that monks and other amanuensis made on the empty space surrounding the body of text inscribed on a parchment. Romance languages are largely the product of marginal inscriptions on Latin manuscripts. Thus, the first manifestations of the Spanish language are found in the glosses that monks scribbled on the margins of those manuscripts to clarify and comment on words whose meaning was already obscure for the medieval reader, and those annotations were made in the new romance language, which was nothing but macaronic Latin. By extension, marginalia refers to those writings that do not belong in the canonical body of works of a culture or civilization, and is close in meaning to apocryphal. Furthermore, it can be understood as referring to the interstices that exist between two or more cultures, nations, or religions. In our usage of the term, marginalia refers to those areas of the world that are populated by displaced or uprooted individuals, limbic spaces in which mere survival may become an illegal activity. In this respect, marginalia is a synonym for Gloria Anzaldúa´s "third country," as she defines it in her classic work *Borderlands/La Frontera*:

> The US-Mexican border es *una herida abierta* [is an open wound] where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country – a border culture. Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them.* A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland

> is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. Los atravesados live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the halfdead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the "normal."

For Anzaldúa, the border is both a place *of* transit and a place *in* transit; the geographical, cultural, linguistic, political materialization of rootlessness; the space of displacement and impermanence; the realm of the freak and the queer, and the habitation of the grotesque. Anzaldúa´s border is both the negation and the reaffirmation of nationhood. It is the dumpsite where nations deposit their human dregs, their social detritus, and the debris generated by the construction of their national master plan. Anzaldúa portrays the US-Mexico border from her personal experience as a Chicana growing up in the Texan Rio Grande Valley. Her classic *Borderlands* was published in 1987 and the vision of the border it conveys largely responds to the reality of the frontier at the time. In 2017, however, the reality of that frontier is rather different. A reality resulting, among other factors, from the events of September 11, 2001 and the ensuing Patriot Act, the increased violence generated by the drug dealing business (violence exerted by the so-called "drug cartels" as much as by the State itself), and the renewal of nationalistic and isolationist fanaticism, especially in the United States of the Trump era. As a result, the border between Mexico and the United States has lost its fluid nature and, instead, has turned into an immense prison of sorts, confining within its limits a large number of individuals subjected to a permanent social political stasis, as Manny Fernandez describes in his 2015 article.

Herman Melville, perhaps the most visionary of American writers, already prophesied the (in)human condition in our contemporary world more than a century and a half ago. Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" is significantly subtitled "A Story of Wall Street," and walls play a conspicuous role in the narrative. Furthermore, Melville's allegory, or parable, is the perfect materialization of the marginalia, or of the space assigned to outsiders who do not belong anywhere, neither within nor without the walls, and who are thus perpetually trapped in between. Bartleby is forced to dwell in a modern-day version of the Platonic cavern, a simu-

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President*
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

lacrum of reality in which individuals become mere metonyms of their jobs; beings who only deserve a mere nickname, Turkey, Nippers, Ginger Nut, or whose family name is replaced by his job: "scrivener." Bartleby wastes his life away in the perpetual penumbra of the lawyer's office, his desk by a window that looks on a brick wall three feet away. Once the scrivener decides to cease all forms of labor, he becomes an embarrassing (if not dangerous) inconvenience for the almighty lawyer who exerts his patriarchal rule over that shadowy realm of puppets and puppeteers. Declared unfit for his job and thus a misfit for society, Bartleby is banished from the world of the living and secluded literally in a tomb, as the nickname of the New York jail makes explicit. Perhaps moved by pity or perhaps by remorse, if not by morbid curiosity for the fate of the employee who dared to challenge his rule, the lawyer decides to visit Bartleby in the Tombs:

> I found him there, standing all alone in the quietest of the yards, his face towards a high wall, while all around, from the narrow slits of the jail windows, I thought I saw peering out upon him the eyes of murderers and thieves.

Like a soul penancing in Purgatory, Bartleby confronts a blank wall that imprisons him in the Platonic simulacrum of the jail, a repetition of the lawyer's office, while the eyes of the inmates watch (like us readers) such odd individual in disbelief. He is thus displaced to the marginalia of the page containing the ordinances dictated by the lawyer and his peers, a page that Bartleby refuses to copy anymore, thus his death sentence. Bartleby is like the undocumented migrant who is allowed to enter a country through the backdoor as long as he is willing to undertake a most menial job and remain socially and politically invisible forever. Devoid of rights and deprived of an identity, the migrant Bartlebies of the world are denizens of the marginalia of the page written and enforced by the State, serving a life sentence from which there is no redemption, perhaps not even in death.

In his poem "Mending Wall," which should be one of the mandatory readings for all politicians, Robert Frost summarily declares: "Something there is that doesn't love a wall / That wants it down." While that "something" is never made explicit in the poem,

the attentive reader concludes that such resistance to walls stems from nature as well as from man, and to a great extent world history is an endless succession of walls that are erected and walls that are demolished. with subtle irony, Frost parodies the supposed wisdom of folk proverbs like "good fences make good neighbors," as the owner of the land next to his stubbornly intones like a mantra. with the practical and inquisitive mind proper of a good New Englander, Frost does not fail to observe: "Before I built a wall I'd ask to know / What I was walling in or walling out, / And to whom I was like to give offense." Trapped in the eternal return of the same blunders, humankind erects unwanted walls, only to see them down in due time. But walls are not only made of brick, or metal, or solar panels. The thickest walls are hardly visible in plain sight, but their presence is felt as much as the walls enclosing Bartleby, or the buildings that have trapped the Lomans and their dream in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, which could be aptly retitled "death of a delusion": "The way they boxed us in here. Bricks and windows, windows and bricks," Willy Loman bemoans in an epiphanic moment that has come too late for him and his family. Like Bartleby, the Lomans have also become forced denizens of the marginalia, as perhaps we all are in one way or another.

All the papers and plenary lectures in the program for the congress that we now inaugurate address this "marginal" space from multiple perspectives, and I heartily hope that you, all of us, finish our conference with a treasure trove of new ideas and projects.. From border studies to hospitality studies, from research in migratory movements to research in global relations, we already have a dearth of scholarship related to our theme, and I have little doubt this reunion will produce even more innovative contributions to the field.

I will leave the floor now to Giorgio Mariani, who will announce the winner of the Emory Elliott Award for 2017. Some of you may be unfamiliar with the late Emory Elliott, and Giorgio will explain in more detail why why IASA instituted the prize some years ago, after Emory's untimely death in 2009. Emory was one of our founding fathers and a very active member of the Association. He was also a truly generous scholar and mentor, and thanks

to his help hundreds of international scholars from all regions of the world could visit the US and thousands of students benefitted from his multiple visits to other countries. In many senses, he was the archetype of the wandering scholar that is the staple of our Association. I was honored by his friendship, like many of us here, and through him, I can assure you that I became a better professor and a more humble scholar. I want to thank Emory both personally and on behalf of IASA for having been such a unique person and scholar. In 2009 we lost the person, but his legacy will survive forever.

I welcome you all to Laredo and to TAMIU in hopes that your stay with us proves enriching and enjoyable. Many of you have traveled from abroad, from Europe, from Asia, from Central and South America, from Canada, despite the distance and despite the proverbial Laredo heat, at this time of the year called "canícula." We will do our best to prove your journey worth the while.

Thank you!

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President/Guest Editor*

*Manuel Broncano Rodríguez*
*IASA President*
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

WORKS CITED

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza.* Aunt Lute, 1987.

Cavafy, Costantin. ¨Ithaka." *Collected Poems.* Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard. Edited by George Savidis. Revised Edition. Princeton University Press, 1992. http://www.cavafy.com/poems/content.asp?id=74&cat=1

Fernandez, Manny. "Checkpoints Isolate Many Immigrants in Texas' Rio Grande Valley." *The New York Times*, November 22, 2015.

Frost, Robert. "Mending Wall." *North of Boston.* New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1915; Bartleby.com, 1999. www.bartleby.com/118/. [retrieved November 15, 2018].

Melville, Herman. "Bertleby the Scrivener." *The Piazza Tales.* Kindle Edition.

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman: Certain Private Conversations in Two Acts and a Requiem*. Penguin Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# NOTES ON THE ILLEGAL CONDITION IN THE STATE OF EXTRACTION

## How Not to Be an Informant

*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A & M University*
*USA*

Glenn Greenwald, one of the journalists who helped Edward Snowden in his whistle-blowing tasks, titled his account of that story *No Place to Hide. Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the US Surveillance State*. The notion that we live in a surveillance state, that the state is surveillant today, that it thrives on information, that information is its currency and content, should not obscure the obvious corollary that information is us, and we are the referent of information. Think NSA, yes, but think also of Google and Facebook, of Twitter and Instagram, of your email, of your annual reviews, of your post-tenure reviews, of your citations or lack thereof, of what is going to happen to you if the Trump manages to do away with coverage of pre-existing conditions.

You might find yourself trying to prove again and again that you are suffering from no preexisting condition, an impossible task of course, and then you will have to surrender your iPhone and laptop, together with their passwords, to the competent or incompetent airport authorities, and then to the highway patrol. And this is just the beginning. We become information, we are nothing but information—we are quantified, and our bodies are now, insofar as the state (or the work place) is concerned, the primary site for information extraction and information use: information glorifies or abjects bodies. We are good or bad information, and we will be rewarded, or punished, accordingly. For a surveillance state the extraction of information becomes the primary *modus operandi*, and extraction, the task of extraction, develops, is developing,

a logic of its own. Think about how weird it is that your mood may be so dependent on a given weekend on how many likes you received on the picture of your ailing cat with happy mother, ailing mother with happy cat. Or on whether you had more or less than, say, 40 visits to your latest blog entry. Or on the fact that nobody has retweeted your last five Twitter posts, even though you were as sincere as you could have been in them. And this, trivial as it may be, in spite of the fact that you are still a citizen in legal condition, that is, a citizen within the democratic law that can still find shelter in the Kantian notion of freedom as autonomy. Imagine if you were illegal: the illegal condition would be a form of radical servitude, a form of contemporary radical servitude, just one among others, but perhaps also something more than just one; to the extent that it could be said that contemporary legal conditions push us all towards the illegal.

We live, increasingly, in a state of extraction. My thesis is that we have not yet figured out the implications of a primary or fundamental logic of state extraction. We have not figured out its implications for our own predicament—for the predicament, that is, not of state functionaries as such, not of extractors and surveyors, which is a predicament of domination, but the predicament of those who would rather not be dominated, and who understand that giving up on domination is the logical price to be paid. These latter figures, those who refuse domination, those who prefer not to be dominated, hence not to dominate, they might in fact constitute the "borders of the border," that fantastic fringe territory of the human this conference has decided to thematize and, in some sense, to honor.[1] Let me then reserve that theoretical position, the position of border or hyperborder dwellers, to develop what follows. I will claim that the border of the border is today the site where information will not be shared—an opaque site of silence and secrecy, a place of radical reticence concerning unconcealment.

Another recent book on these issues, Bernard Harcourt's *Exposed. Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age*, goes beyond the notion

1. This paper was originally presented at the 8th World Congress of the International American Studies Association, *Marginalia: The Borders of the Border*, in July 2017. I have opted for leaving the traces of my oral presentation in the text.

*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A&M University*
*USA*

of a surveillance state to claim that we live today in what he calls an "expository society," which is itself a function of the fact that the surveillance state thrives on a social desire for exposition, for so-called transparency, for exhibition and shameless publicity. If the expository society has come to replace earlier figures of late modernity—the disciplinary society, the control society, the securitarian society—, even while it retains most of the features of those earlier models, it is because exposition can encompass them all. For Harcourt, the triumph of the expository society is a dialectical triumph: it marks the moment in which the infinite desires of the population are successfully channeled by the state's primary interests in information extraction: in fact, they are put at the very service of information extraction. Nobody forces us voluntarily to reveal everything we give away in an earnest Facebook discussion: but it will be used. with a caveat: the "state" in the expository society is not only the state of governance, the governing state, it is also the state of exchange, the economic state: we are all participants, willingly or not, and we are all exposed. Only infrapolitical or protopolitical life remains outside the expository society, to the precise extent that it does; only that in us which is infrapolitical or protopolitical escapes the state of surveillance. Which therefore merits some consideration.

What is it, in us, within us, that exceeds or sub-ceeds the position of participant, that is, the position of informant, which is the direct counterpart to the surveillance state, the surveillance economy, the surveillance or expository society? If there is surveillance, there are informants, willing or unwilling, or both. No surveillance without informants, no informants without surveillance. But what is, specifically, an informant? If we are all informants, how are we so? We might want to start developing this question through a minimal phenomenology of the informant—I say "minimal" because it will be unsatisfying, and there would be much more to bring up about this. I think it will be useful to develop this minimal phenomenology of the informant in connection with the phenomenology of evil developed by Immanuel Kant in his book *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. Please bear with me: my interest is not to denounce as evil any and every informant, that is, any and every denizen of our expository society. Yes, that

would enable us perhaps better to reserve the place of goodness for that theoretical position of the hyperborder dweller, always a temptation, always a moralistic temptation. But it would also be simplistic and plain wrong. It is not a matter of good versus evil—it is more a matter of how to isolate a kernel in the human that is resistant to the demands and satisfactions of expository life, and from which, therefore, it could perhaps be possible to preserve the promise of another present, hence of another future.

Let me start by proposing that evil is for Kant in every case "illegal," to the very extent that it is always outside the law, outside the moral or unconditioned law. The subject of evil is in every case a subject to evil: "We call a man evil [...] not because he performs actions that are evil (contrary to law) but because these actions are of such a nature that we may infer from them the presence in him of evil maxims" (Kant 16). The evil may rise out of or in connection with so-called "propensities," of which Kant selects three, linked to "predispositions" defined as "elements in the fixed character and destiny of man" (21). The latter are, 1), the predisposition to *animality*; 2), the predisposition to *humanity*; and, 3), the predisposition to *personality*. The first one can be grafted with so-called "beastly vices" (22), which are in every case the vices of a "purely mechanical self-love" (22), namely, "gluttony," "lasciviousness," "drunkenness," and other. A propensity for "frailty" (24), where inclination is stronger than the heart, explains this first form of evil, which we may call *beastly evil*. The second one—the predisposition to rational humanity, which means that we all want "to acquire worth in the opinion of others" (22)—can be corrupted through "wickedness" (24) into "jealousy" and "rivalry," and it gives rise to "diabolical" evil (22), as in "envy, ingratitude, spitefulness." And the third one, the predisposition to *personality*, is probably the most interesting one: here there is an almost insurmountable and undecidable impurity that, at the limit, keeps us from deciding whether any of our actions can be properly registered as a free action, solely conditioned by the moral law, which is the law of freedom. The propensity here, which is to act as if we were acting morally, is radical evil, to the extent that it distorts the moral principle by overdetermining it with intentions that

*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A&M University*
*USA*

do not themselves conform to duty: pathological "vices concealed under the appearance of virtue" (29).

This is probably enough Kant for our purposes at this point. Three kinds of evil: beastly, diabolical, and radical. How do we map these different forms of evil onto a (minimal) phenomenology of the informant? Let us take, for instance, the example given to us by Salvadoran journalist Oscar Martínez in his *A History of Violence*. He will tell us the story of a fellow called Abeja, an informant. He prefaces it by saying:

> Without these murderers, hundreds more murderers would be walking the streets. Without these rapists, hundreds more rapists would be stalking the nights. The plea-bargain witness: criminals the state pardons in exchange for their testimony. Their lives in grave peril, many of these women are battling the most dangerous gangs of the continent. Nobody but the state backs them up, and often the state becomes their enemy. (Martínez 109)

This requires some explanation: a gang member, himself or herself having indulged in criminal activity many times, gets arrested and plea-bargains with the Salvadoran state to become a witness against other gang members. It is his or her way out of permanent jail time, but at the same time he or she risks becoming a target for the gangs themselves. If there is anything like a witness protection program in El Salvador, it is haphazard, thoroughly precarious, incompetent, and certainly never to be taken for granted or relied upon. These gangbangers, Abeja for instance, are taking their lives into their own hands. They have become informants. God knows, they will die for it, sooner or later, and sooner rather than later. How do we understand that? Coercion may be an explanation: they do not have a choice, the police have threatened to kill them unless they cooperate (in truth, given the state of affairs in El Salvador and other Central American countries, if there is successful prosecution of gang crimes, which happens rarely, it is usually through plea-bargain witnesses, not through proper police investigations) or to leak that they are traitors and give them no protection, expose them; so our gangbanger, take Abeja, must comply and hope for the best, which can be some additional days or weeks or months of life. This is mere opportunism—it does not rise to the level of evil behavior but it is

not necessarily moral behavior either. An informant has accepted to become an informant. At the moment, we cannot know what kind of an informant he or she is—just an undifferentiated one, like most of us in the surveillance state.

But Martínez, in his story entitled "The Most Miserable of Traitors," does not speak of coercion. He says: "In late 2011, Abeja, a twenty-something-year-old kid, sat in front of prosecutors from Chalatenango and, for an undisclosed reason, admitted to being a member of the Fulton Locos Salvatrucha. He said that his clique dedicated itself to extortion, murder, and drug trafficking in the states of San Miguel, Santa Ana, Sonsonate and Chalatenango. He told them many secrets, secrets that spanned sixty-three typed pages" (113–14). This was not a trivial case, since Abeja's testimony could be decisive for the Salvadoran state's prosecution of José Misael "Medio Millón" Cisneros, one of the top Mara Salvatrucha leaders deemed to be "the mastermind behind the country's cocaine exports" (112). The Salvadoran police imprisoned him in the tiny municipal police station of Agua Caliente and had him there for fifteen months of quasi-starvation and neglect, until Abeja decided to escape the prison and forfeit his plea-bargain witness status. No wonder. As Martínez put it, "Plea-bargain witnesses, especially former gang members, have to deal with the fact that their cliques have committed many crimes against the police. In other words, their guardians will often have a profound hate for them. Sometimes they're even forced to testify about the complicity of the police. Abeja did exactly that in Medio Millón's trial" (119).

We should not feel too sympathetic for the police or indeed for the witness. They are all bad, most of them anyway, and indifferently so. They simply fulfill their roles: some are police, some are gangbangers. Israel Ticas, "the only forensic investigator in all of El Salvador" (117), appreciates the importance of the gangbangers turned witnesses, since they enable him to find and exhume bodies that would otherwise remain disappeared. But Ticas also tells us that the witnesses are not devils turned angels. When Martínez asks him whether the witnesses feel sorry for their actions, Ticas says: "No. They're totally calm. I admire that about those fuckers. They're not even embarrassed" (118). And Ticas continues: "One

*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A&M University*
*USA*

time I pulled out a boy about five years old and a girl about eight. The witness said they promised the girl that they wouldn't kill her little brother if she let herself be raped by fifteen men. They raped her and killed them both. It was in Ateos, in 2006. I found the two bodies hugging" (118).

The informants are participants in what they inform about. Their information is testimonial. They speak up, risking their lives, but not because they are embarrassed about what they did, or others did. The reason for their informing, as Martínez puts it, remains "undisclosed" (113). We do not know, we cannot know. Is the informant himself or herself a subject of radical evil, diabolical evil, beastly evil? Or is the informant, to the contrary, after all a subject to the surveillance state, to the state of extraction, fulfilling the moral law, the unconditioned law, the categorical imperative? Under what conditions is it fair to say that the informant is, in fact, in truth, doing the right thing? Does it matter?

For the surveillance state, it does not. Undifferentiated informants are good enough, since only the information as such matters. That is why the state has no compunctions at the level of extracting it from anybody. Some of you may have felt as initially perplexed as I did just a few days ago reading in the *New York Times* an article about how the Mexican state very likely "targeted with sophisticated surveillance technology sold to the Mexican government to spy on criminals and terrorists" a team of international investigators appointed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to investigate the forced disappearance of the 43 students in Ayotzinapa in September 2014.[2] This happened a few weeks before the investigators published their final report, but certainly after the Mexican authorities had become aware that the commissions' report rejected the government's version of what had happened. According to the *Times*, the investigators, all of them endowed with diplomatic immunity but still targets of the cyberweapon known as Pegasus, which renders all anti-surveillance encryption useless in smartphones at the same time it turns the same smartphones—through their microphones and cameras—into surveillance tools against their owners, had complained that the Mexican

2. Re "forced disappearance" in Mexico, including important consideration on the Ayotzinapa events, see Federico Mastrogiovanni.

"government essentially obstructed their inquiry and then cast them out by refusing to extend their mandate." At the same time, "an investigation by the *New York Times* and forensic cyberanalysts in recent weeks determined that the software had been used against some of the country's most influential academics, lawyers, journalists and their family members, including a teenage boy." Surveillance runs amok, in excess of every law, in excess of every legal justification, just because it can. The surveillance state is itself a state in the "illegal" condition, certainly in the Kantian sense.

So perhaps we should alter the question and ask, not about varieties of evil in the informant himself or herself, but about varieties of evil in the surveillance state. Is it not the state of extraction the one who, through their many agents, indulges in antimoral behavior, in evil behavior, in illegal behavior? Would the surveillance state be a state of beastly evil, diabolical evil, or radical evil? Is the extraction of information a symptom of the frailty of the state, of the wickedness of the state, or of the impurity of the state? Or is the state, *de facto*, following its own merely opportunistic drive to do all it can do in its effort to fulfill its own mandate so as better to protect its citizens? Or, rather than taking advantage of an opportunity, is the surveillance state obliged to fulfill state functions to the most extreme possibility in the deployment of its own logic understood as categorically imperative? Is the surveillance state in fact, for the most part, and in general, a moral state?

Let me invoke one more example, this time Roberto Rangel's testimonio, edited and published by Ana Luisa Calvillo and entitled *Me decían mexicano frijolero* (2015). *Me decían mexicano frijolero* could in fact be a place where to identify the primary features of a degree-zero informant—that is, within the phenomenology of the informant, an undifferentiated, unwilling informant who could not be subject to any moral judgment either to adjudicate evil or goodness. Roberto Rangel would have or be entitled to the atrocious honor of configuring the most extreme type of informant, the informant who informs against his will, against his life, against his libidinal satisfaction, against anything that could be considered an aspect of his happiness; a slave informant, or informant slave, whose performance follows a deconstituent imperative. Rangel is told "inform, it is your law, you signed a contract, you

*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A&M University*
*USA*

have no option, and if you fail to do it we will gut your girlfriends, we will kill your children, and then we will get rid of you; after torturing you." Rangel does not have a life, although he seeks it. But it has been stolen. He knows he is serving rogues, he knows that the system surrounding him also serves those rogues, he has no resources, and the miracle is always the miracle of a precarious survival, after he fails as informant, in jail for fifty seven years for an imagined murder, fifty seven fake years, because Rangel cannot count, cannot serve, cannot be, or he can be only cannon fodder, that is, someone doomed just because, nothing else would be consistent, truth and justice are not part of the procedure. Only derision, only monumental mockery.

Sadistic mockery comes from the police officer than runs him as an informant and turns him into a sexual slave and humiliates and degrades him in every visit, the police officer that calls him "mexicano frijolero" at the moment of rape and makes him eat meat that has been spitted on the floor because beaner Mexicans who think they can come to the United States and expect to eat meat deserve nothing else. They are themselves meat, usable sexually or economically, usable for extraction, but beyond that they are nothing. They are only transcripts, screens for the deployment of a predatory drive that is ultimately owned by the surveillance state, the corps of police, all the corps of police, all the force of the state. Roberto Rangel falls into a machine for crushing bodies and spirits, after information has been extracted from them, whatever meager information they are able to provide, and he will not get out of it. Paradoxically, only jail brings on a certain measure of peace, and the possibility of learning how to read, learning how to write, how to give a testimonio that nobody will ever be able to believe, not really, it is probably a fiction, one cannot give it proper credit lest one enters the psychotic night: it is not just Officer Rivas or María from Immigration Services, it is also all the other agents who must disbelieve every word from Rangel, and also the lawyer, the state attorney, the judge, no one can stick to the testimonio, to Rangel's simple word, but what simple word, everything is a lie, it has to be, the truth of Rangel's story can only show itself through its own impossibility, which means it never will, it does not. It is the psychotic night of the world. From its

depth—but it is the depth of the state of extraction, of the surveillance state—Rangel hears that he is a bitch, nothing but a bitch, I will make you my bitch, you will become a bitch, I will give you proper existence as a bitch, your being must match your worth, your name is the name of a bitch, proper name, mexicano frijolero, suck my cock or I will gut your son. This was Rangel's testimonio, as told to Ana Luisa Calvillo.

Is that so different from our current US president when he demanded from Mexican President Peña Nieto to pay for the wall, pay for my wall, I know it is absurd but you must, or you will suffer the consequences, you have no option, and if you fail to comply I will gut your children, I will kill your girlfriends, I will make you my bitch, you already are my bitch: this is also the psychotic night in international politics, of which Kant would have spoken many years ago when he mentioned "the international situation, where civilized nations stand towards each other in the relation obtaining in the barbarous state of nature (a state of continuous readiness for war), a state, moreover, from which they have taken fixedly into their heads never to depart. We then become aware of the fundamental principles of the great societies called states—principles which flatly contradict their public pronouncements but can never be laid aside, and which no philosopher has yet been able to bring into agreement with morality" (29).

The surveillance state can and will always function in view of the maximization of its own libidinal cathexes, its own libidinal release, and its agents will take opportunistic advantage of it every time. This is the impurity of the state, of every state, its ongoing and ceaseless radical evil, which matches or mimics that of Officer Rivas, the Fresno, California, detective who has or can purchase the trust of his people, of the Drug Enforcement Administration, of the California Highway Patrol, of the district attorney, of the lawyers, the judges. Frankly, after all, Officer Rivas can access all the cocaine in the world, and the money, which is the reason he uses informants.

There are other kinds of informants. We could appeal to the fictional example of Butcher's Boy, the protagonist of Thomas Perry's *The Informant*, who informs a Justice Department agent because that information serves his own interests, his own calculations,

*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A&M University*
*USA*

his cold plan for revenge, or perhaps not revenge, just caution, those fellows should be in jail or dead as far as I am concerned. He, Butcher's Boy, is an assassin, a cool one, but he still cannot assassinate everyone, there are too many of them, so he helps himself, as an assassin, by becoming an informant, through calculation: this type is of course the radical informant, or the radical evil informant, since his informing actions do denounce criminals who deserve it but for opportunistic and immoral reasons. In Officer Rivas's case, his informant was the site of diabolical evil, not as agent but as patient. Butcher's Boy is an agent of radical evil.

There is a moment in Don Winslow's recently published novel, *The Force*, when the protagonist, Denny Malone, a very reluctant informer who is forced to betray his friends, becomes a different kind of informer. We can imagine a serious informant, a professional informant, the informant who informs out of duty, the informant who accepts a life of risk and constant betrayal, a life lived in infinite distance, because there is a law that must be fulfilled, a law that must be made fulfilled, so that to become an informant means to affirm freedom, to be totally within the law, hence totally free, no matter the price. This would be the moral informant, the radical opposite of Roberto Rangel's, a full-degree informant, perhaps the type that Robert Mazur's *The Infiltrator* presents or would like to present if we could take it at face value—the perfectly professional, the perfectly non-pathological actions of an undercover police officer who accepts to befriend and then betray any number of people at the service of the law. So we would have three primary types of informants, the zero-degree informant, Roberto Rangel, the undercover officer serving the true interests of the law, Robert Mazur maybe, full--degree informer, moral informer, and the radical-evil informant represented by Butcher's Boy in Thomas Perry's novel. This is to say that a typology or phenomenology of the informant can absorb the Kantian analysis of varieties of evil: there is diabolical evil, there is radical evil, and there is moral freedom, and perhaps all kinds of beastly evil in between. And there is nothing else.

But it is still a very precarious typology that settles nothing. We know little, we can only imagine, about those "undisclosed" reasons that marked Abeja's intentions, for instance. Why should

one become an informant? Why should one give his or her life over to the machinations of an extractive state? Why should one do it, really? Or in the best of cases, when one is not bound by duty, like the undercover officer, when one is not bound by diabolical wickedness, like it is the case for Roberto Rangel, and when one is not coerced by opportunistic calculations having to do with self-interest? Why is it the case that most informants in the surveillance state, or Facebook users, you yourself, for instance, give freely of their own bodies through a production of *jouissance* that, as we know, is far from being always pleasant? Perhaps because we want something back: the informant, any informant, is always in the position of Tobias, Tobit's son, the youth whose angel fled and who spent the rest of his life, until he died at 107 years of age, missing him, awaiting his return. It is perhaps not possible to live without an angel, or we can only do so in nostalgia for the angel. For Rangel the angel is perhaps the son he has never met and he will never meet, the second daughter of his other girlfriend he also loses, the children that come and go and from whom he cannot expect any returns, no longer, and then, if no longer, then when? Rangel wants to cross the border, wants to return after his deportation, he has a son, he wants to be received by his son, and he falls into the hands of a diabolical police force. Without proper papers, he becomes a slave, soon addicted to his very slavery, and he loses his very capacity to inform, since it requires a distance that is now lost.

One would think we are lost in the illegal condition, outside the law that is the law of freedom. One would think that the surveillance state has no respect for freedom's law. Informants—the subjects of the surveillance state are all informants, that is what they are, what we are, willing or unwilling, some of us innocent enough, some of us mired in the evil we are or are not embarrassed about—informants cannot make a claim to freedom, unless they find themselves in the improbable predicament of informing on the side of the categorical imperative, informing as a function of a universalizable maxim of behavior. Or, on the contrary, we might ask, is it, could it be, that, since the state is the only constituted authority, it is only being and becoming an informant to the state that will give us our freedom? Informing defines, in fact, our very

*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A&M University*
*USA*

legitimacy as citizens, even if we were to be informing an illegal state, whose illegality would not be our responsibility. Could it be that, today, the categorical imperative is best served by informing on ourselves and others as well we might, unconditionally, for the sake of coming into the law, for the sake of abandoning the abjection of the illegal condition? It is not less Facebook that we need, it is more Facebook, more sincerity, more exposure, more confession, and, yes, we should encourage university authorities to read all our emails, until, finally, we would have said it all, there would be nothing left to say.

At the beginning of this talk I mentioned that I could think of a place, the border of the border, where information would not have to be shared, where language and politics would not come together under the form of the imperative to inform, an opaque site of silence and secrecy, a place of radical reticence concerning unconcealment. I also indicated that such a place, if it exists at all, would be protopolitical or infrapolitical, it would be directly outside politics, outside the expository society, in exodus from the state of extraction, the state of surveillance. It is time for me to take that up in a more explicit way, and I will attempt to do it by honoring the late Werner Hamacher, who died only a few weeks ago. My interest is on one particular aspect of Hamacher's very rich 2014 essay "On the Right to Have Rights," to which I have to refer rather expeditiously for reasons of time.

Let us assume that the right to secrecy, which in the North American tradition, following US Supreme Court decisions, is frequently referred to as the right to privacy, is a human right. The surveillance state demonstrates once again what Hamacher, following Hannah Arendt's famous analysis in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, says about the state in general: "it is left to the 'good will,' and that is to say to political opportunism and, more precisely, to property, security, and private interests masquerading as interests of the state, to either adopt human rights as the measure of political decisions or to reject them altogether: human rights themselves could always legitimate any of their arbitrary manipulations" (Hamacher 183).[3] The universalization of the surveillance state,

3. Hamacher refers of course to the chapter in *Origins* entitled "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man."

however, immediately means that there is no room for the right to secrecy. To be deprived of the right to privacy is to be deprived of a human right that is also a citizen right. Once this process starts, Arendt says and Hamacher agrees, the human will be produced as "structurally worldless" (184), the human being will have become, from the perspective of the state, a hyperborder dweller, naked life as such.

Arendt's postulate of a "right to have rights," as is well known, is the demand of a right to politics, that is, a right to regulate human and public life through language, not violence. But the right to politics, which points to public life, is only the mirror side of the right to secrecy, the right to a private life. If the right to politics, as Arendt says, can be experienced only through its loss, the same is the case for the right to secrecy: the right to secrecy is the secret right to have rights, which the opportunism of the surveillance state will want to take away. Let me then propose that the right to secrecy is the same as the right to politics. Hamacher says that this right that grounds all rights and can only be perceived in its very loss is a "protopolitical right" (191), that is, a condition of politics, the very possibility of political determinability and determination. This, in Hamacher's words, is what takes place when the right to politics/secrecy, which is the right to rights, is lost at the hands of a rogue state (or of a rogue institution):

> Politics [is] not any more a lingual process of searching for a common form of life but instead the mere form of the self-reproduction of an established procedural schema that must have negated its provenance out of linguistic processes of deliberation, reduced language to acts of judgment, and eliminated its political relevance. If the *polis*—as Arendt assumes with Aristotle—was ever the place, free of definition, of the *being-human* in the sense of the speaking-being, politics became the procedure of grasping precisely this being as an already-spoken- and decided-being, as a fact and a fate, and the procedure for immobilizing its generative, redefining, and indefinite movement. Human existence is henceforth not anymore graspable as an *a priori* partaking in a political world through language but instead only as an existence at the threshold of politics (193–94).

But an existence at the threshold of politics, even before it becomes understandable as a protopolitical existence, is an infrapolitical existence. Hamacher talks about it as an existence constituted

by "a law without right" (197), "unqualified, mere existence" (197). Hamacher's extraordinary conclusion follows:

> The language of those who have no world can only be the language of the liberation of a world that is other than the world from which they were exiled: it can only be a language for such a world that is not meant, intended, and defined through intentions; not an already known world that is appropriated in its knowledge but rather a world released from aims and securities, a world let free by anyone who relates to it, and only for this reason, it is absolutely a world—free from all concepts of the world. (203)

The protopolitical position is indeed, for Hamacher, the beginning of another politics, a new beginning, but a beginning "that cannot be traced back to any other and that can be surpassed by none, since it is a beginning merely for further beginnings and is offered to them without commanding them. The beginning of language and law in the claim is an *arché an-arché*" (204). An an-archic beginning, a new politics after the destruction of politics that is the general consequence of the consummation of the state into a state of extraction—such is, maybe, the promise of protopolitics. In the temporal gap of the promise, neither believing nor disbelieving it, dwells infrapolitics.



*Alberto Moreiras*
*Texas A&M University*
*USA*

WORKS CITED

Ahmed, Azam. "Spyware Trailed Investigators in Mexico." *New York Times*, July 10, 2017, A1.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Schocken, 2004.

Calvillo, Ana Luisa. *Me decían mexicano frijolero. (El caso Rangel)*. Ficticia, 2015.

Greenwald, Glenn. *No Place to Hide. Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the US Surveillance State*. Picador, 2014.

Hamacher, Werner. "On the Right to Have Rights." *CR: The New Centennial Review*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2014, pp. 169–214.

Harcourt, Bernard. *Exposed. Desire and Disobedience in the Digital Age*. Harvard University Press, 2015.

Kant, Immanuel. *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, translated and edited by Theodore Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson, Harper One, 2008.

Martínez, Oscar. *A History of Violence. Living and Dying in Central America*. Verso, 2016.

Mastrogiovanni, Federico. *La desaparición forzada en México como estrategia de terror*. Penguin Random House, 2016.

Mazur, Robert. *The Infiltrator. The True Story of One Man Against the Biggest Drug Cartel in History*. Back Bay, 2016.

Perry, Thomas. *The Informant. Butcher's Boy, Book 3*. Mariner, 2012.

Winslow, Don. *The Force*. Harper Collins, 2017.

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter Nº 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# CHILDREN AND YOUTH

## Disadvantaged and Disenfranchised by the Current US Immigration Regime

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

INTRODUCTION

The emphasis on securitization in the US's current immigration regime has led to a wide range of developments that have had detrimental consequences for undocumented immigrants, including the convergence of criminal and immigration law (Stumpf), the emphasis on detention, deterrence, and deportation, as well as the extension of the US's immigration control across national boundaries (Messmer). Taken together, these measures have substantially expanded the number of deportable offenses, have increased the "liminally legal" immigrant population (Menjívar, Cebulko), and have often led to so-called "legal forms of violence" (Menjívar and Abrego). While these developments have affected all undocumented immigrants, they are particularly harmful for children and adolescents living in irregular or mixed-status immigrant families, a segment of the US population whose special needs have not yet been acknowledged sufficiently by current immigration laws and policies. In 2016, approximately 18 million (26%) of 70 million US children under the age of 18 lived with at least one immigrant parent (Migration Policy Institute), and according to Thronson, these children constitute the fastest-growing segment of the US's child population (240). Moreover, two-thirds of all children living in mixed-status families are US citizens (241). In absolute numbers this means that "[m]ore than 5.9 million

citizen children […] live with at least one family member who is unauthorized" (Mathema).[1]

To date, the complexity of the US's under-age population living in irregular immigrant or mixed-status families is just beginning to be explored. For far too long, US immigration policies have tended to regard children as "appendages" to immigrant adults (Bhabha, *Child Migration* 2). Yet these children raise a lot of questions that differ from the issues raised by adult immigrants due to their heightened vulnerability and complex legal position, but there are also specific challenges that are created by them. Not acknowledging these differences will lead to confused, unsatisfactory, or even oppressive migration policies. In an attempt to create awareness of the specific needs as well as the complex situation of immigrant children, several recent studies have focused on the so-called 1.5 generation, a term that was developed by sociologist Rubén G. Rumbaut to refer to undocumented children/adolescents who were brought to the US by their undocumented parents at a young age (Gonzales, *Lives* 6). Most of these studies draw a clear distinction between these undocumented youth and US citizen children born to undocumented parents because the second group—in principle—enjoys full citizenship rights. In this essay I will demonstrate, however, that US citizen children living with one or more undocumented parent(s) have much more in common with the so-called 1.5 generation than with their US citizen peers because in pretty much all areas of life, the irregular immigration status of (one of) their parents seems to determine their *de-facto* life chances, irrespective of their *de-jure* legal status. My central argument is that the current US immigration regime is too strongly adult-centered and in this way not only systematically disenfranchises immigrant children; it also structurally

1. Mathema also notes that "California, Texas, and Nevada […] have the highest percent of US-born population with at least one unauthorized family member living with them. But even states with smaller immigrant populations, such as Nebraska, Arkansas, and Kansas, […] have high percentages of naturalized citizens who have unauthorized family members living in the same household. […] These estimates are by their nature conservative since they do not include an accounting of the number of family members who do not live in the same household."

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

disadvantages US citizen children living in irregular immigrant or mixed-status families as the parents' irregular status in effect overrules and frequently extinguishes their childrens' citizen status. In *Means without End*, Giorgio Agamben argues that the refugee "brings a radical crisis to the principles of the nation-state and clears the way for a renewal of categories that can no longer be delayed" (22–23). In analogy to this, I would argue that analyzing the US's current immigration regime through the lens of under-age youth can bring a radical crisis to this system by revealing fundamental inconsistencies, calling into question seemigly clear-cut binaries, and challenging us to rethink the socio-lecal construction of "illegality" by problematizing overly facile assumptions and categorizations.

More specifically, I maintain that both immigrant children as well as US citizen children living in irregular immigrant or mixed-status families can function as an enabling prism to highlight the extent to which current US immigration laws and policies dominate, override, or collide with other national and international legal practices and produce inherently contradictory or paradoxical situations; they can throw into relief the extent to which children (even US citizen children) lack sufficient agency and voice in current US immigration law; and they can foreground the deleterial consequences of the current immigration regime's prioritization of deterrence and deportation for one of the most vulnerable segments of the US population. Drawing on sociological and ethnographic research that features migrant youth case studies, I will, in the following, first look at the situation of irregular immigrant children coming of age in the US. Building on studies of the 1.5 generation by Roberto Gonzales, Kara Cebulko, and Lisa Martinez, among others, who have identified the impossibility to attend college as one of the most crucial problems faced by this group, I will argue that not even DACA, which was introduced to eliminate this roadblock, can offer sufficient protection and alleviate this group's vulnerable status completely. In the second part I will then turn to US citizen children living in irregular immigrant or mixed-status families to highlight the extent to which US immigration law trumps other

(national and international) legal principles and in the process leads to a systematic devaluation of US citizenship rights.

## 1. NARRATIVES OF WASTED TALENT: 1.5 GENERATION IMMIGRANT YOUTH AND THE LIMITED PROTECTION PROVIDED BY DACA

On July 25, 2018, the Justice Department instructed US attorneys by email "not to use the term 'undocumented' immigrants and instead refer to someone illegally in the US as 'an illegal alien.'" The reason given for this rhetorical reframing was that "[t]he word 'undocumented' is not based in US code and should not be used to describe someone's illegal presence in the country" (Kopan). This change in terminology reverses the Associated Press's Stylebook initiative of 2013 "to not describe a person as illegal, only actions" (Kopan) and constitutes a recent example of the extent to which the debate on irregular migration has grown harsher. Much of the public and media rhetoric is currently dominated by terms that evoke seemingly clear-cut distinctions between "good" and "bad": legal vs. illegal; American vs. alien; deserving vs. undeserving immigrant. While such a reductionist form of classification fails to capture the reality of many immigrants' lives, it becomes particularly questionable in the context of child migrants who were brought to the US by their parents at a young age (the so-called 1.5 generation). As pretty much all studies confirm, most of these children and youth culturally identify as "American" because they were socialized during their most important formative years by the US public school system. In its 1982 verdict *Plyler vs. Doe*, the Supreme Court had granted all undocumented children access to the US's K-12 public school system by ruling that "unauthorized migrant children are people 'in any ordinary sense of the term'" and are therefore "entitled to state-funded public education for primary and secondary schooling" (Bhabha, *Child Migration* 249, 274).[2]

2. Cf. also "[T]he Supreme Court held that states cannot constitutionally deny students a free public education on account of their immigration status" (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 85). "Citing the 'pivotal role of education,' in the life of a child and the nation, Justice William Brennan noted in his verdict that, while education is not a fundamental right, denying K-12 education to undocumented children amounted to inflicting a 'lifetime of harships on a dis-

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

Thus, for many undocumented immigrant children who complete their K-12 education in the US, their country of birth is frequently nothing but a distant memory. As former President Obama confirmed in his DACA speech in June 2012: "These are young people who study in our schools, they play in our neighborhoods, they're friends with our kids, they pledge allegiance to our flag. They are Americans in their heart, in their minds, in every single way but one: on paper" (White House). For many of these 1.5 generation youth, the dichotomy American vs. alien thus does not make much sense. School, moreover, is seen by this generation of immigrant kids as a pathway to upward social mobility: these children were "raised with the expectation that as adults they would find better opportunities than those afforded to their parents" (Gonzales, *Lives* 7). They speak English fluently, they identify with American values such as meritocracy and hard work, and they have high expectations for their future, in many ways assuming they will have career trajectories similar to those of their US citizen peers.

Nothing could be further from the truth, however, for the majority of this group of young people, as has been documented in detail by Roberto Gonzales, Kara Cebulko, and Lisa Martinez, among others. Gonzales, who has devoted several studies to analyzing the life paths of members of the 1.5 generation, has observed that when these young people turn into adults, their coming of age leads to radical disillusionment. As children, not least because of their integration into the public school system, their undocumented status did not impede them in any significant way (Gonzales, "Learning" 605). When they get older, however, they realize that they cannot participate in many adult activities such as getting a driver's licence, taking part-time jobs, or applying for college (605; cf. also Gonzales, *Lives* xix-xx). In other words, when the children of unauthorized immigrants grow up, they experience a radical

crete class of children not accountable for their disabling status'" (Gonzales, *Lives* 11). Brennan continued: "It is difficult to understand precisely what the State hopes to achieve by promoting the creation or a perpetuation of a subclass of illiterates within our boundaries, surely adding to the problems and costs of unemployment, welfare, and crime. It is thus clear that whatever savings might be achieved by denying these children an education, they are wholly insubstantial in light of the costs involved to these children, the state, and the Nation" (qtd. in Bhabha, *Child Migration* 274).

shift in status from quasi-legal and socially integrated to illegal (Gonzales, "Learning" 602). This means that "undocumented children move from protected to unprotected status, from inclusion to exclusion" (602); from being just like other American kids to being a deportable alien; from being citizens-in-the-making (Lind 298) to being "a new, disenfranchised underclass" (Gonzales, "Learning" 603); or, as Gonzales phrases it, when they come of age, "they must learn to be illegal" (602). They thus acquire a paradoxical and contradictory status according to which they are "culturally integrated but legally excluded": there exists a gap "between individual feelings of belonging and the exclusion enforced by the society in which they live" (Gonzales, *Lives* 7).

The number of young people who experience this dramatic shift towards illegality and exclusion is quite substantial as "[a]n estimated 65,000 undocumented or legally uncertain students graduate from high schools throughout the United States every year" (Menjívar and Abrego 1411). One central problem faced by these young people is the fact that, due to their undocumented status, they are often unable to attend university or apply for jobs that are commensurate with their level of education. As one of Cebulko's interviewees formulated this dilemma: "[after graduating from high school] I felt like my life had come to a stop and I wasn't allowed to move forward, to reach my dreams, 'cause there was this huge wall in front of me. And my future didn't depend on me, but on the government, and whether or not they allowed me to go to school" (qtd. in "Double Jeopardy" 77). Another example is Rafael, whose parents migrated from Zacatecas, Mexico, to the US when he was six years old.[3] Even though he was lucky to be able to attend college on a full-tuition scholarship from a private fund in Colorado, he was only able to get a job in retail afterwards, unlike his friends with the same degree: "I can't really work in my field because everything that is in my field requires a background check and requires some type of traveling or something I am not able to do" (Martinez 61).

Gonzales observes that none of his interviewees "had been able to legally pursue an occupation that made use of his or her

3. This case has been documented by Martinez 57ff.

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

educational credentials or professional preparation" (*Lives* 191), and at some point, these young people realize that the only jobs they can get are similar to those of their undocumented parents.[4] In other words, no intergeneral progress, no social mobility is possible for 1.5 generation immigrant children (Gonzales, "Learning" 616). Gonzales thus concludes that at the turn to adulthood, illegality becomes "the most salient feature of their lives" (*Lives* 7), a kind of "master status" (15) that "trump[s] their achievements and overwhelm[s] almost all of their roles," irrespective of their educational background (178); it becomes a "stranglehold" that determines these young people's lives more than any other variable (179).[5] Gonzales also notes that frequently, such an "experience of shattered dreams and expulsion" (202) can lead to "anxieties, chronic sadness, depression, over- or undereating, difficulty sleeping, and [a] desire to 'not start the day'" (200). In one dramatic case, it even led to suicide. Gonzales reports that on November 25, 2011,

> eighteen-year-old Joaquin Luna Jr. of Mission, Texas, a teen who had come to the United States as a six-month-old infant, took his own life. Despairing that his undocumented status would block his ability to achieve his dreams to go to college, he drafted goodbye letters to relatives, friends, and teachers. In a letter addressed to Jesus Christ, he wrote: "I've realized that I have no chance in becoming a civil engi-

4. Janet, working for a maid service, said: "I cried every day after work for the first two months […] . I can't believe this is my life. When I was in school I never thought I'd be doing this" (qtd. in Gonzales, "Learning" 612). Cf. also Marita, who works the same job as her mum and wonders: "Why did I even go to school?" (qtd. in Gonzales, "Learning" 614).

5. Gonzales cites the example of Esperanza, who had changed "from an outwardly confident, wide-eyed university student with 'big plans for the future' to a socially withdrawn, inwardly focused adult who seemed to have the weight of the world on her shoulders" (*Lives* 197). She tells him: "I have grown up, but I feel like I'm moving backwards. And I can't do anything about it. I had much more freedom in school. Like, I had rights, you know. Now I can't do anything by myself and it makes me feel so helpless" (197). She continues: "I can't choose where I live. I can't choose where I work. And the worst thing is that I can't choose my friends"; "I can't do anything that is eighteen and over […] . I can only hang out where little kids hang out. I can't hang out with them [former high school friends]. I can't travel with them. I can't go out to dinner with them. I can't go to Vegas with them. If I want to go to a bar, I don't even have a drink" (197).

neer the ways I've always dreamed of here [...] so I'm planning on going to you." (qtd. in *Lives* 199)

In many ways, DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, an executive order signed into law by former President Barack Obama in August 2012, was an attempt to alleviate this problem by providing not only legal access to higher education but also a work permit for eligible young undocumented people. DACA "grants temporary reprieve from deportation as well as a work permit to youth who arrived in the United States prior to the age of fifteen and have completed high school" (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 52). DACA recipients can also get Advance Parole that allows them "to travel outside the United States for humanitarian, educational, or employment purposes" (Martinez 63). In this way, DACA seems to remove most of the roadblocks that many young undocumented immigrants experienced upon coming of age. Zaíra, a Guatemalan immigrant aged 21, expresses her excitiement about DACA thus: "It just feels like all of my dreams are finally opening up to me" (qtd. in Cebulko and Silver 1563). And Cebulko and Silver conclude that students eligible for DACA can now finally reap the benefits of their education and feel they are "legit" (1564).

The number of youth profiting from DACA is significant. To date, 800,000 so-called DREAMers have received DACA protections between 2012 and 2017, and 690,000 DREAMers are currently enrolled in DACA (Gomez).[6] Gonzales, however, notes that DACA has come too late for many of those 1.5 generation immigrants that he interviewed, and he also observes that by 2015, "of those potentially eligible for the program, more than half had not applied" (*Lives* 226). Some of the reasons included difficulties providing evidence of continuous residence or financial barriers (since DACA does not offer access to federal financial aid, college access without financial support remained illusory for many) (226). But Gonzales's main point of criticism is that DACA focuses so centrally on college access, in this way privileging educational high achievers and thus at least indirectly creating and maintaining a distinction between "deserving" and "undeserving" immigrant youth (26–27).

6. 97% of all DACA recipients are working or enrolled in school while 900 recipients serve in the military (Gomez).

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

Apart from Gonzales's important point of critique, I would argue that DACA also has several other serious limitations. In theory, as mentioned above, DACA enables recipients to travel abroad and return legally to the US, but in practice, many DACA recipients avoid foreign travel because they are afraid that they might not be allowed to re-enter. Roberta d'Antona, for example, a Brazilian immigrant, is covered by DACA but fears not being able to re-enter if she travels to Brazil to visit her relatives because in her view, much depends on the goodwill of the person conducting the re-entry interview (Cebulko, "Double Jeopardy" 81).

Yet apart from such potential risks, one of DACA's most problematic limitations consists in its temporary nature: DACA does not provide any path to citizenship, nor does it offer the possibility to extend protection to immediate family members. In this way, DACA cannot offer any security or stability in the face of the US's current emphasis on managing immigration flows through deterrence, detention and deportation. In his DACA announcement, former President Obama confirmed that this emphasis on temporariness was indeed a quite deliberate strategy to increase DACA's political acceptance: "Now, let's be clear—this is not amnesty, this is not immunity. This is not a path to citizenship. It's not a permanent fix. This is a temporary stopgap measure that lets us focus our resources wisely while giving a degree of relief and hope to talented, driven, patriotic young people" (White House). Given the current insecure future of DACA under President Trump,[7] the temporariness of this measure produces an even higher sense of vulnerability, threat, and anxiety among its recipients.

By legalizing the status of its beneficiaries, but only temporarily, DACA can be said to place eligible young people in a state of "liminal legality." This term was first introduced by Cecilia Menjívar in reference to Salvadoran and Guatemalan immigrants with Temporary Protected Status[8] ("a permanently temporary

7. Trump had announced to end the program on March 5, 2018, but the deadline has expired and still no permanent solution is in sight; renewals of protection are still accepted at this point, but no one can say for how long.

8. TPS beneficiaries have the right to work, but don't have access to social services; TPS also restricts international travel (Advance Parole is necessary) (Menjívar 1008, 1018).

status" [1001]).[9] Menjívar builds on Victor Turner's concept of liminality and defines it as "the gray areas between documented and undocumented" (1004). She argues that "[t]he immigrants' uncertain legality transforms them into 'transitional beings,'" a temporary condition "which for many Central Americans has extended indefinitely" (1007, 1008). In this way, "immigration law has effectively produced a population of longtime residents with suspended lives" (1015). She continues to argue that this form of liminal legality is currently on the increase and coexists with a "reduced access to permanent legality"; it is a result of "the tightening of immigration laws when national security is paramount" (1005) because "stiffer immigration laws seek not only to reduce the number of immigrants entering the country, but also to keep more of them in undetermined legal statuses" (1009). In many ways, one could argue that DACA has precisely this effect of keeping a specific group of undocumented immigrants in a liminally legal and hence indefinitely vulnerable position while reducing (or *de facto* negating) their chances to acquire permanent legality. As one DACA recipient termed it: "they are putting the rug under my feet but they can pull it out at any time" (qtd. in Cebulko, "Documented" 160).

A second aspect that seriously limits the benefits of DACA is the fact that it has been implemented differently in different states, which means that DACA recipients can experience radically diverse scenarios depending on where they live. On the one hand, this can be attributed to the fact that each state had to translate this federal policy measure into appropriate state-level applications. But in addition, many individual states have recently also started to take immigration matters into their own hands and have implemented state-level laws that openly and deliberately collide with federal-level regulations. Cebulko and Silver in this context talk about a "mounting anti-immigrant legislation at the state and local levels" (1554). As Gonzales has noted: "Between 2005 and 2011, state legislative activity focused on immigration increased more than fivefold" from 39 enacted bills in 2005 to 306 in 2011 (*Lives* 22–23). As a result, in many states "local restricitive

9. It has subsequently also been used by Karen Cebulko in reference to 1.5 generation Brazilian immigrants ("Documented").

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

laws can curtail access to employment, housing, higher education, driver's licences and identification, and social services and can facilitate local police cooperation in immigration law enforcement" (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 87).

Kara Cebulko and Alexis Silver have compared the implementation of DACA in two states: Massachusetts (an immigrant-friendly state) and North Carolina (a hostile one), and they note that in North Carolina, "state policies continued to impede mobility pathways and differentiate previously undocumented youth as outsiders even after the passage of DACA" (1553). This was accomplished by intruducing special driver's licences, for example, that contain the added, stigmatizing phrase: "Legal presence no lawful status" (1559). In this way, "immigrants can simultaneously experience movements toward inclusion at the federal level while they face exclusionary policies at the state level, or vice versa" (1557).

In addition to Massachusetts, one could add California here as an interesting example of an immigrant-friendly state. During the 1990s, California was known for its harsh anti-immigrant policy measures (e.g. Propositions 187 and 209), but in the meantime, the situation has changed quite substantially. California currently allows undocumented youth to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 87). Moreover, "[t]he California DREAM Act (2011) provided access to state financial aid at California state institutions of higher education; California AB-60 (2015) provided access to driver's licences for all undocumented migrants" (87); AB-263 and SB-66 "target employers who retaliate against workers by threatening to report their immigration status" (Gonzales, *Lives* 24); and AB-1025 even allows those undocumented immigrants who pass the state bar exam to become attorneys (24). Given this immigrant-friendly climate, it is perhaps not surprising that California currently has by far the largest number of DACA recipients: 424,995 ("DACA Recipients by State").[10]

While California has taken the lead in creating a more hospitable climate for irregular immigrants in general, several other states have followed suit in matters that are of special importance

10. In Arizona, the state with the second-highest DACA population, the number is 51,503 ("DACA Recipients by State").

to immigrant youth: 18 states have currently adopted in-state tuition policies, and as of mid-2018, 12 states (plus the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico) allow undocumented immigrants to obtain a driver's licence (Bray). State laws can thus be said to provide "pockets of inclusion or exclusion" (Gonzales, *Lives* 22) at one and the same time, and the diversity of regulations has a strong impact on how DACA is being experienced locally: "[R]espondents in North Carolina [for example] interpreted DACA as a more inclusive policy against the backdrop of a more hostile state climate, while respondents in Massachusetts found state-level policies to be more inclusive in the face of an insufficient federal-level action" (Cebulko and Silver 1561). Caught between state and federal policies, young people thus "simultaneously felt included and excluded in a complex and layered political environment" (1569).

What this diversity of state-level regulations, combined with a lack of effective and stable protection at the federal level, can lead to in a worst-case scenario is illustrated by young immigrants who fall prey to the US's current detention and deportation regime. According to Peutz and de Genova, deportation "has come to stand in as the apparently singular and presumably natural or proper retribution on the part of the state powers" against irregular migrants; it has become the primary way of enacting state sovereignty (1). In this sense, deportation is "a complex sociopolitical *regime* that manifests and engenders dominant notions of sovereignty, citizenship, public health, national identity, cultural homogeneity, racial purity, and class privilege" (2; emphasis in the original). Maira links the US's current deportation regime to neoliberal capitalism and imperial domination, arguing that it has become "part of the normative regime of controlling and disciplining bodies […] to ensure a docile workforce and target politically threatening dissent" (297–298, 299, 300).

Increasingly, under-age immigrants become the targets of deportation too once they leave the protected space of the public school system in their transition to adulthood. Jennifer Chacon in this context talks about a "school-to-deportation pipeline" (qtd. in Gonzales, *Lives* 27). And what is most problematic here is fact that not even DACA recipients with an active DACA status are

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

immune to the threat of deportation, as is illustrated by the case of Daniel Ramirez Medina. When his undocumented father was arrested in February 2017, Ramirez was arrested as well because US Immigration and Customs Enforcement falsely claimed that he was "gang-affiliated" (Bolt): "The agents argued Ramirez's tattoo, which reads 'La Paz BCS,' looked similar to a gang tattoo. Yet according to the *Splinter* report, the tattoo is a reference to his birthplace of Baja California Sur and does not share any similarities with gang tattoos" (Bolt). When Ramirez explained to the officers that he was legally in the country because of his DACA status, "the agent responded, 'It doesn't matter because you weren't born in this country'" (Bolt). In May 2017, however, federal judge Ricardo S. Martinez, who openly condemned ICE's racial profiling in this case, "ruled against ICE and accused the agency of lying to a federal court of law" (Bolt). "Martinez's final ruling bars ICE from detaining, deporting or terminating Ramirez's DACA benefits" (Bolt), but it cannot hide the fact that not even an active DACA status can provide a sufficient level of protection against the threat of deportation. On February 17, 2017, Juan Manuel Montes, 23, who had lived in the US since he was nine and also has an active DACA status, was actually deported to Mexico within three hours after being questioned by a US Customs and Border Protection Officer because he had left his wallet in a friend's car and couldn't produce his ID or proof of his DACA status (Gomez and Agren). According to *United We Dream*, an advocacy group working on behalf of young immigrants, at least 10 DACA beneficiaries are currently in federal custody and face threats of deportation (Gomez and Agren). And US Human Rights Network recently reported that Erold, another DACA recipient, has been detained at Stewart Detention Center in Georgia since August 4, 2018.

While thus not even an active DACA status can protect individuals against immigration-related detention and deportation, this risk is infinitely higher for those 1.5 generation youth who did not or could not apply for DACA. Once they turn 18, a minor traffick incident such as speeding or driving without licence can lead to deportation. This increase in the number of deportable offences can be traced back to the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), which recoded

"civil violations into criminal acts" while at the same time "expanding the categories of noncitizens eligible for deportation and […] restricting the ability of migrants to appeal deportation" (Hagan et al 1375–1376). According to IIRIRA, using a borrowed social security number, for example, was now classified as an aggravated felony (Menjívar and Abrego 1390). Peutz and de Genova in this context talk about "the sociolegal production of deportable populations" (2).

For young people who have spent most of their formative years in the US, getting deported to their country of birth often means returning to a country that they barely know and whose language they often do not speak. Due to their cultural identification as "American," many subsequently suffer from socio-cultural exclusion (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 184) when they find out that they "lack the linguistic, cultural, and social capital to successfully adapt to their countries of origin" (Silver 194). In the end, they often find they "lack social membership […] in spite of their citizenship status" (194). Moreover, their deportation records can also have a negative impact on their job or educational opportunities in their country of birth (194). A case in point is the story of Katy, who came to the US from Guatemala together with her parents and her sister when she was two years old.[11] While waiting for his asylum decision, Katy's father managed to start several successful businesses (which is permitted under US law): "He was able to buy a spacious home, purchase five cars, and pay his oldest daughter's college tuition" (Golash-Boza, "American Dreams" 134). Katy was 14 when her father's asylum application was finally rejected and her entire family was deported back to Guatemala. For Katy, returning to Guatemala meant a radical break with her prevous life in the US: "Katy went from living in a spacious, luxurious home in Louisiana to a one-bedroom shack with an outdoor toilet in Guatemala City." As a result, "[s]he fell into a deep depression" (136). And what is more, "with no record of ever having studied in Guatemala, the public schools refused to enroll her […] . Unable to read or write Spanish, she never went back to school" (136). Today, Katy works in a call center in Guatemala City.

11. My summary of this case follows Golash-Boza's documentation in "American Dreams" 131ff.

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

Katy's experience mirrors that of many young deportees who find out that the only work available to them is in call centers, due to their English language skills. Anderson has noted that "[t]ransnational call centers throughout Mexico actively recruit English-speaking deportees and facilitate their employment in ways that other industries and institutions do not" (206). As a result, "the call center sector has more than doubled in Mexico during the same period that millions of deportees have arrived in Mexico" (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 184). Anderson, who cites the example of a deportee working at TeleTech, a call center in Mexico City, also notes that "about 95 percent of his fellow workers had returned or been deported from the United States" (203). This development can also be observed in other Central American countries, including El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, but what is most worrying, according to Anderson, is the fact that in most cases deportees cannot depend on their own national or local governments to help with the reintegration process. In Mexico, for example, the government completely evades its responsibilities (207). Some countries such as El Salvador originally did introduce reception programs. El Salvador's *Bienvenido a Casa* (BAC) was launched in 1998, but the fact that it was co-designed by the US State Department meant that by 2008, its function had shifted from reintegrating deportees to monitoring the deportee population (Hagan et al 1379).

In other words, the US's current immigration regime that is dominated by national security concerns and an overemphasis on deterrence, detention and deportation, can be said to have vastly detrimental effects for a generation of culturally and socially "Americanized" young people who had been brought up to aspire towards successful futures in the US, thus producing what Gonzales has termed "narratives of wasted talent" (*Lives* 211). But this effect is not limited to undocumented or liminally legal immigrant youth but increasingly also affects US citizen children.

## 2. THE VULNERABILITY OF US CITIZEN CHILDREN IN IRREGULAR OR MIXED-STATUS FAMILIES: LACKING AGENCY AND VOICE IN US IMMIGRATION LAW

Several scholars have observed that the citizen children of irregular immigrants face several disadvantages vis-à-vis peers who

live in families with a legal immigration status. Often their parents' undocumented status limits their range of activities due to what Talavera has termed "solidarity in the face of unequal deportability" (186), which means that mixed-status families frequently only participate in activities that are considered "safe" for *all* family members. This can include sparetime activities, but frequently it also refers to a more limited access to social services. As Jacqueline Bhabha has noted: "children living with parents frightened of being arrested and deported […] risk being kept away from necessary medical services and other public situtations to avoid potentially devastating encounters with law enforcement and immigration agents" (*Child Migration* 7). In this sense one can argue that US citizen children growing up in irregular or mixed-status families are denied the full benefits of their citizenship status, despite their fully legal presence in the US, or more poignantly, that their parents' irregular status in effect eclipses at least some of their rights as US citizens. As will be demsontrated in this section, this heightened vulnerability of US citizen children becomes particularly visible in the context of securing or preserving family unity.

Bhabha has emphasized that almost all contemporary legal frameworks consider the notion of family unity as crucially important: "domestic, regional, and international laws consider the family the bedrock of society, and a key aspect of childhood" (*Child Migration* 22). Bhabha refers to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that: "The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State." She also cites the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child as saying: "The family [is] […] the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children" (22). In general, according to Bhabha, US law is committed to translating the principle of family unity into national legal practice. The US Supreme Court, for example, has established that "the Constitution protects the sanctity of the family precisely because the institution of the family is deeply rooted in this nation's history and tradition" (22). Moreover, US immigration law has, since the 1960s, specifically privileged family reunification, which is proven by the fact that "[a]bout two-thirds of all immigrant visas issued each year are allotted

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

to the family members of US citizens or lawful permanent residents" (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 69).

There are, however, situations in which the US's current immigration regime seems to produce the opposite effect: instead of facilitating family unity, it enforces family separation. And this inherently contradictory nature of family-related US immigration policies specifically manifests itself when US citizen children growing up in irregular or mixed-status families are faced with the deportation of (one of) their parents. In this situation, the children frequently have to choose between leaving the US together with their non-citizen parent(s), or living permanently separated from them: "At its extreme, immigration law [thus] functions to deny the possibility of children living with parents or forces the de facto exile of children from their country of citizenship" (Thronson 237). In such cases, as Thronson has argued, the state not only fails to protect citizen children from such harm, but it actually actively causes it (237). In this way, one can argue, citizen children are unable to exercise their full citizenship rights but are instead assimilated to the immigration status of their parents.

A major piece of legislation that has produced such inherently problematic effects is the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), which also tore apart the family of Ramón, a US citizen; his wife Lupita, a Mexican national and irregular immigrant; and their three US citizen children at the very moment when Ramón filed a family petition in order to legalize his wife's status.[12] Prior to 1996, irregular immigrants were able to adjust their status without leaving the US, but this 245 (i) provision expired with IIRIRA in 1996. For this reason, Lupita's immigration hearing was scheduled to take place at the US consulate in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. However, when Lupita left the US to attend her hearing, this automatically triggered a ten-year bar on re-entry (this regulation was also established by IIRIRA and applies to anyone who has lived in the US without authorization for a year or more). In other words, the process of legalizing Lupita's status enforced a ten-year separation of the wife and mother from her husband and children.

12. This paragraph and the next summarize the story of this family as it has been documented by Gomberg-Muñoz (67–74).

But things got even worse: Lupita's application for naturalization was eventually denied on the grounds that she had returned to Mexico to take care of her sick mother while living in the US. The fact that she had left the US and re-entered illegally afterwards made her permanently ineligible for naturalization because this automatically triggered a permanent bar on re-entry (likewise established by IIRIRA). As Gomberg-Muñoz notes: "Between 1996 and 2001, the US Congress would periodically suspend the requirement that undocumented applicants must leave the United States to apply for a green card, thus allowing them to change their status without triggering the bar" (71). But since 9/11, this is no longer possible. Lupita now lives in Mexico, trying to find work while the couple is struggling financially as Ramón has to take care of their three children on his own (72).

Lupita's case is far from being a particularly drastic exception, though.[13] Thronson has observed that between 1998–2007, at least 108,434 parents of US citizen children got deported, which has had a devastating effect on a vast number of families, but particularly so on their children, leading to trauma, insecure care, and very often also to the loss of a substantial part of the family income (246). Gomberg-Muñoz confirms that under current immigration law, bars on re-entry and/or removal procedures can be triggered very easily: "People can be barred from the United States for past drug and alcohol use, helping someone cross the border unlawfully, criminal and immigration violations, making a 'false claim' to US citizenship, and even having a 'suspicious' tatoo" (71). One can thus say that current immigration policy measures are designed in such a way that they can separate families—sometimes forever—at the very moment when these families try to stay together lawfully (73). In this way, US immigration law can potentially prevent many irregular immigrants from legalizing their status. On a more general level, one can thus note an inherent contradiction in current US immigration law "between a universal consensus on the critical importance of family unity for children and the reality of policy-in-

13. As Gomberg-Muñoz notes: "In 2011, Lupita was one of more than 20,000 undocumented people who left their US homes and families in an attempt to legalize their status; she was one of thousands who were then barred from returning" (68).

duced family separation" (Bhabha, *Child Migration* 24). On the one hand, such a contradicition can be attributed to the state's dual responsibility "to defend family unity and national self-interest" (25). But the main reason for this inherent contradiciton, I would argue, is the fact that children, in spite of their citizenship status, lack agency and voice in current US immigration law.

This becomes particularly clear in the ways in which people's *fear* of deportation is currently being exploited. Golash-Boza notes that "less than 2 percent of undocumented migrants are [actually] apprehended every year" (*Forced Out* 85), but nonetheless the anxiety induced by the threat of deportation forces many mixed-status families to "structure[] their lives around the fear of deportation" (87). As mentioned above, this process had started with IIRIRA in 1996, which increased the number of offenses for which an immigrant could be deported, but the situation has worsened since then. While the number of deportations had already dramatically increased under President Obama, the latter still focused on the deportation of individuals who had been *convicted* of crimes. President Trump's January 25, 2017 executive order "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States," on the other hand, now also includes immigrants who have only been *charged* with a criminal offense ("Executive Order"). As Gonzales cynically observes: "[I]n addition to terrorists, convicted felons, and gang members, parents and their children who do not qualify for asylum or other forms of relief remain a top priority for deportation" (*Lives* 228). The aim of these measures is, according to García, to spread fear, and to "advance attrition through enforcement" (90) by making it "'as difficult and unpleasant as possible to live here illegally'" (Thronson 245). Frequent traffic controls and workplace raids also play a major role in this context as they "produce precisely the sense of unease and fear that attrition advocates seek" (Thronson 245).

Yet while seemingly targeting adults, these fear-inducing measures in practice affect entire families and have seriously detrimental effects on children. Hagan et al. note that public school enrollment has declined as a result of parents being afraid of deportation, for example (1378), which is confirmed by Bhabha, who observes that when George W. Bush increased workplace



*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

raids, this led to declining school attendance in North Carolina and Ohio (*Child Migration* 275). But children also learn to live in constant fear: Talavera mentions the case of a 15-year-old teenager who is afraid of going out at all and stays home with her mum as much as possible (172). And Marta, a Salvadoran college student, admits: "Now, every day, I leave the house and don't know if me or my parents will be back. It could be any of us, any of these days, and it's so scary […] . We started to talk about what will happen with my little sister because she's a US citizen, but who is she going to stay with here if we get deported?" (qtd. in Menjívar and Abrego 1400). In many ways, (citizen) children have thus become pawns in the hands of immigration policy makers, and they are being instrumentalized to regulate and control their (undocumented) parents' lives and behavior. This is worrysome in any case, but particularly so when it curtails the rights and life chances of US citizen children.

Such rights violations regularly occur at the moment when deportation has become a reality: especially young citizen children often have no choice but to leave the US together with their parent(s). Prior to 1996, such an infringement upon the rights of US citizens could potentially have been averted by invoking the so-called "extreme hardship clause": "[A]n undocumented alien without any criminal convictions and seven years continuous presence in the US could receive a *suspension of deportation* if he or she could establish the deportation would result in *extreme hardship* to the deportee or a US citizen or permanent resident spouse, parent, or child" (Bhabha, *Child Migration* 87; emphasis in original). Bhabha confirms that the standards for such a claim had always been very high: "Economic loss, inadequate medical care in the country to which deportation was to occur, and lower standards of education have all been considered insufficient to establish extreme hardship" (88). But after 9/11, a suspension of deportation due to extreme hardship has become pretty much unattainable, and according to Thronson, hardship to US citizen children no longer counts as an argument at all (240). Bhabha cites the example of a Mexican father who described "the untenable situation his three citizen children would face [in case he got deported]: poverty, educational exclusion, and threats of violence

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

in Mexico, or economic hardship if forced to rely on the single income of their mother in the United States" (*Child Migration* 63), yet to no avail. Frequently such hardship claims are rejected with reference to the fact that "'Mexico is not Ausschwitz' but a middle-income country with infrastructure and employment opportunities, suggesting that deportation should occasion little real hardship" (63). However, as Bhabha notes, "[a]ccounts provided by deportees contradict this glib argument. American children ripped out of the only home they have known endure traumatic experiences that can create lifelong scars" (63).

The US's current emphasis on deterrence and deportation thus highlights the extent to which US citizen children lack enforceable rights in the context of US immigration law in order to preserve their family's unity. When citizen children have to leave the country together with their undocumented parent(s), one can argue that the deportee's irregular status has in fact overruled and eclipsed the child's citizenship status. While parents are routinely allowed to align their children's immigration status with their own, "children, on the other hand, are denied agency and opportunity to extend immigration status to their parents" (Thronson 238).[14] They cannot do so even in the context of preserving family unity, which is otherwise respected by both US national law as well as US immigration law, because "[t]he child's interest in family unity is assumed to be value free as regards location" (Bhabha, *Child Migration* 37).[15] According to Bhabha, this inherently contradictory legal situation can be attributed to the fact that "children only

14. Cf. also Bhabha: "A citizen child cannot generally use the fact of citizenship to block the removal of parents facing deportation or to secure entry for a parent abroad" (*Child Migration* 70). This was the initial goal of DAPA (Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents), which was announced in 2014, but blocked by a federal district court in Texas. The injunction has been upheld by the Supreme Court, so DAPA never took effect (Golash-Boza, *Forced Out* 52).

15. Thronson notes that "US citizens may petition for their parents only when they are no longer children and have reached age twenty-one" (239). Cf. also Bhabha: "It is a strange paradox of modern public policy, that children are considered to have a fundamental right to family life and yet no legally enforceable right […] to initiate family reunion or resist family separation" (*Child Migration* 79).

exist as parental possessions or rewards, not as active holders of the right to family life themselves" (58). But "[r]educing the citizen child to a 'mere bystander' in his or her parent's deportation-suspension proceedings denies the child constitutional due process rights" (89–90). In this way, the current US immigration regime structurally and systematically violates the rights of US citizens as "immigration law is designed not just to ignore the interests of children but rather to marginalize the role of children and thus the value placed on their interests" (Thronson 238).

Bhabha argues that this situation can be attributed to "a deep--seated modern ambivalence about what it means for a child to be a citizen" (*Child Migration* 64). She distinguishes between a "liberal conception of citizenship as a bundle of rights and obligations that is universal and inclusive—and that sets no age limit, no mental or physical competency requirement," and a republican one which "entails the ability to participate in public deliberation" (64). According to the latter—republican—view, "young children, are not able to contribute to the *res publica* and are therefore not citizens" (64). The liberal view, as Bhabha notes, is implicit in international law whereas the republican one dominates "much [of] domestic family and social-welfare practice. It subordinates citizen children's independent interests and agency to those of their adult mentors, reflecting the view that children belong to their families and depend on their protection, mentorship, and judgment" (65). For Bhabha, this constitutes a clear form of age-based discrimination. She compares this to earlier gender-based exclusionary practices[16]: "Obliteration of the woman's perspective [in US law] was justified by assumptions about her dependence—social, political, economic, and personal—on male relatives"; "she was considered an appendage of male agency and dependent on male protection," and therefore, "her legal status, and with it her citizenship and immigration rights, flowed from those of her male relative" (78). An analogous line of argumentation is implicitly applied when denying children important citizenship rights. However, as the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution states: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States,

16. Cf. also: there was also a time when women only had "legally sanctioned partical access to the benefits of membership" (Bhabha, *Child Migration* 65).

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States" ("Amendment XIV"). And one of the citizen-specific entitlements, as Bhabha emphasizes, is "the guarantee of nondeportability, irrespective of criminal offending. Even treason cannot lead to deportation of a citizen" (*Child Migration* 67). Yet currently, citizen children become deportable by proxy because "[t]he one-way descending flow of familial transmission of citizenship, from parent to child rather than from child to parent, is accepted as a natural rather than a constructed asymmetry, just as its gendered antecedent was" (79).

## CONCLUSION: SECURING THE RIGHTS OF UNDER-AGE CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN THE CURRENT US IMMIGRATION REGIME

As the examples discussed above have shown, the US's current immigration regime shapes the everyday lives and modes of integration of both irregular migrant children as well as US citizen children living in mixed-status families. The first group includes young people who both socially and culturally identify as "American," but when they turn 18, they begin to face multiple forms of legal exclusion. They thus encounter the paradoxical situation of being "simultaneously accountable to [US] law" but also excluded "from legal protections or rights" (Menjívar and Abrego 1385). Upon coming of age, many of these young people also find their hopes of upward social mobility thwarted—with the possible exception of DACA beneficiaries, but even an active DACA status cannot provide any long-term stability or protection. For this reason, Jacqueline Bhabha refers to this generation of immigrant minors as "children without a state" because "despite having a nationality, they cannot turn to the state in which they live for protection or assistance" (*Children without a State* Preface xiii). Even though these 1.5 generation youth are of course not literally stateless, they can be termed as such because "their lack of a legally recognized status denies them practical access to the critical life opportunities that only a state can supply" (Legomsky 217). As Gonzales has summarized their predicament: "These narratives of wasted talent are a heart-breaking illustration of a dysfunctional immigration

system that persistently denies the futures of aspiring teachers, doctors, engineers, and architects" (*Lives* 211). On a very basic level, the precarious condition of these minors highlights "the need for policies that provide access to citizenship" (Cebulko, "Double Jeopardy" 82) and hence access to more stability, protection, and long-term perspectives for the kinds of immigrants who have managed to radically deconstruct the seemingly clear-cut binaries between "American" and "alien," between "legal" and "illegal." Otherwise, as Gonzales warns, "a sizeable population of US-raised adults will continue to be cut off from the futures they have been raised to expect" ("Learning" 616). What is more, they will be cut off from utilizing to the fullest their education, socialization, and enculturation to make the most valuable contributions to the society they live in and identify with.

Laws are socially constructed, hence illegality is also a category that is historically and culturally produced (Menjívar and Kanstroom 5). 1.5 generation youth constitute a good example of a demographic group whose lived experience radically challenges the existing legal construction of "illegality." Despite Obama's assertion that young children brought to the US by their parents should not be held responsible for their parents' actions, child migrants are often seen as both, victims and perpetrators at once, and lawmakers are often "mired between the pressure to protect rights and the obligation to punish juvenile offending" (Bhabha, *Child Migration* 13). But these young people who are, in Obama's words, American in every respect but on paper (White House) defy the label of "offender" and deserve the opportunity to leave their state of liminal legality behind. Current developments show that access to college and a temporary work permit (as provided by DACA) are not enough; they have to be combined with long-term legal residency. While immigration critics often counter such proposals with warnings about "opening the floodgates," the number of eligible youth in this case is of manageable size. And while the benefits for the young people concerned are obvious, Legomsky also emphasizes the potential advantages for US society at large as "an underground shadow population is not healthy" in any case (231).

But although US immigration laws are in principle meant to only target irregular migrants, the second part of this essay

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

has illustrated that in effect they also target entire families, including US-born family members. In this way, US citizen children growing up in mixed-status families, for example, who would in theory have the right to enjoy the full benefits of citizenship, are in practice reduced to the irregular immigration status of their parents. If a young child's parent gets deported, the child often has no choice but to leave the US together with him/her. This vividly illustrates how citizen children's rights and protections are currently being curtailed and eclipsed in the interest of the US's national security priority and its empahsis on deterrence and deportation. A possible argument in favor of granting US citizen children more agency in removal proceedings, offering more protection for their familial needs and rights, and integrating their perspective more explicitly in the institutional decision making process could be based on the so-called "best interests" principle as articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 3 (1) stipulates that "[i]n all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration" (United Nations).[17] Even though this Convention has not yet been ratified by the US, its basic principles are consistent with a range of US laws and policies, including US child welfare policy, the standards by the American Bar Association, and not least US immigration law with its emphasis on family reunification. This shows that the US legal system is in principle not averse to protecting family unity and family reunification under specific conditions. Hence an adjustment of current deportation practices by reactivating the "extreme hardship" clause on the basis of the "best interests" principle could be seen in accordance with existing US legal practice, especially when the best interests concerned are those of US citizens.

Ultimately, the examples discussed in this essay emphasize the extent to which current US immigration laws and policies neglect or openly disregard the perspectives of one of the most

17. Cf. also UNHCR's *Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child,* which offers concrete and detailed advice on how to apply this principle in practice.

vulnerable population groups: children—both immigrant children as well as US citizen children. Securing the rights of under-age youth and granting them a more audible voice in the US's immigration system by developing more age-sensitive policy measures is thus of paramount importance. And in the end, such a more child-inclusive migration regime will not only benefit the children concerned, but also the nation as a whole.

*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

WORKS CITED

Agamben, Giorgio. *Means without End: Notes on Politics*. U of Minnesota P, 2000.

"Amendment XIV." Legal Information Institute. Cornell Law School. https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/amendmentxiv. Accessed October 2, 2018.

Anderson, Jill. "Call Centers, Transnational Mobility, and (Neoliberal) Citizenship." Golash-Boza, pp. 203–213.

Bhabha, Jacqueline. *Child Migration & Human Rights in a Global Age*. Princeton UP, 2014.

Bhabha, Jacqueline, ed. *Children without a State: A Global Human Rights Challenge*. MIT Press, 2011.

Bolt, Allison. "ICE Tried to Deport a Legal DACA Recipient By Claiming He Was 'Gang-Affiliated.'" Paste Maganzine.com. May 17, 2018. https://www.pastemagazine.com/articles/2018/05/ice-tries-to-deport-a-legal-daca-recipient-due-to.html. Accessed September 25, 2018.

Bray, Ilona. "Can Undocumented Immigrants Get Drivers' Licences?" Lawyers.com. n.d. https://www.lawyers.com/legal-info/immigration/citizenship/can-undocumented-immigrants-get-drivers-licenses.html. Accessed September 25, 2018.

Cebulko, Kara. "Documented, Undocumented, and Liminally Legal: Legal Status During the Transition to Adulthood for 1.5 Generation Brazilian Immigrants." *The Sociological Quarterly*, vol. 55, 2014, pp. 143–167.

Cebulko, Kara. "Double Jeopardy: Deportation and the Life-Course Rituals of Twin Sisters." Golash-Boza, pp. 75–83.

Cebulko, Kara, and Alexis Silver. "Navigating DACA in Hospitable and Hostile States: State Responses and Access to membership in the Wake of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals." *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 60, no. 13, 2016, pp. 1553–1574.

"Executive Order: Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States." White House. January 25, 2017. https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-enhancing-public-safety-interior-united-states/. Accessed October 2, 2018.

García, Angela S. "The Law Doesn't Care About Love: Intimate Relationships in Cities with Restrictive Immigration Laws." In Golash-Boza 89–96.

de Genova, Nicholas, and Nathalie Peutz, eds. *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement*. Duke UP, 2010.

Golash-Boza, Tanya Maria, ed. *Forced Out and Fenced In: Immigration Tales from the Field*. Oxford UP, 2018.

Golash-Boza, Tanya Maria. "When American Dreams Are Shattered." Golash-Boza, pp. 131–138.

Gomberg-Muñoz, Ruth. "'Til Law Do Us Part:' Immigration Policy and Mixed-Status Family Separation." Golash-Boza, pp. 67–74.

Gomez, Alan. "Who Are the DACA Dreamers and How Many Are Here?" USA Today. February 13, 2018. https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/02/13/who-daca-dreamers-and-how-many-here/333045002/. Accessed September 23, 2018.

Gomez, Alan, and David Agren. "First Protected Dreamer is Deported Under Trump." USA Today. April 18, 2017. https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/04/18/first-protected-dreamer-deported-under-trump/100583274/. Accessed September 25, 2018.

Gonzales, Roberto G. "Learning to Be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Shifting Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood." *American Sociological Review*, vol. 76, no. 4, 2011, pp. 602–619.

Gonzales, Roberto G. *Lives in Limbo: Undocumented and Coming of Age in America*. U of California P, 2016.

"DACA Recipients by State." Governing.com. March 2017. http://www.governing.com/gov-data/other/daca-approved-participants-by-state.html. Accessed September 23, 2018.

Hagan, Jacqueline Maria, Nestor Rodriguez, and Brianna Castro. "Social Effects of Mass Deportations by the United States Government, 2000–2010." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 34, no. 8, 2011, pp. 1374–1391.

Kopan, Tal. "Justice Department: Use 'Illegal Aliens,' Not 'Undocumented.'" CNN. July 25, 2018. https://edition.cnn.com/2018/07/24/politics/justice-department-illegal-aliens-undocumented/index.html. Accessed August 31, 2018.

Legomsky, Stephen H. "Undocumented Students, College Education, and Life Beyond." Bhabha, *Children without a State*, pp. 217–236.

Lind, Jacob. "The Duality of Children's Political Agency in Deportability." *Politics*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2017, pp. 288–301.

Maira, Sunaina. "Radical Deportation: Alien Tales from Lodi and San Francisco." de Genova and Peutz, pp. 295–328.

Martinez, Lisa M. "Becoming American." Golash-Boza, pp. 57–65.

Mathema, Silva. "Keeping Families Together." Center for American Progress. March 16, 2017. https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2017/03/16/428335/keeping-families-together/. Accessed September 10, 2018.

Menjívar, Cecilia. "Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants' Lives in the United States." *AJS*, vol. 111, no. 4, January 2006, pp. 999–1037.

Menjívar, Cecilia, and Leisy J. Abrego. "Legal Violence: Immigration Law and the Lives of Central American Immigrants." *AJS*, vol.117, no. 5, March 2012, pp. 1380–1421.

Menjívar, Cecilia, and David Kanstroom, eds. *Constructing Immigrant "Illegality": Critiques, Experiences, and Responses.* Cambridge UP, 2013.

Menjívar, Cecilia, and David Kanstroom. "Introduction: Immigrant 'Illegality.'" In Menjívar and Kanstroom 1–33.

Messmer, Marietta. "Detention for Deterrence? The Strategic Role of Private Facilities and Offshore Resources in US Migration Management." *Borders Permeable and Liminal: Ethnicity, Identity, and Place in the United States* ed. by Susanne Berthier-Foglar and Paul Otto. Berghahn Books [forthcoming 2018].

Migration Policy Institute. "Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States." By Jie Zong, Jeanne Batalova, and Jeffrey Hallock. MPI. February 8, 2018. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states#Children. Accessed August 20, 2018.

Peutz, Nathalie, and Nicholas de Genova. Introduction. de Genova and Peutz, pp. 1–32.



*Marietta Messmer*
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

Silver, Alexis M. "No Place Like Home: From High School Graduation to Deportation." In Golash-Boza 193–202.

Stumpf, Juliet. "The Crimmigration Crisis: Immigrants, Crime, and Sovereign Power." *American University Law Review*, vol. 56, no. 2, 2006, pp. 367–419.

Talavera, Victor, Guillermina Gina Núñez Mchiri, and Joshiah Heyman. "Deportation in the US-Mexico Borderlands." de Genova and Peutz, pp. 166–195.

Thronson, David B. "Clashing Values and Cross Purposes: Immigration Law's Marginalization of Children and Families." Bhabha, *Children without a State*, pp. 237–254.

United Nations. *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. 1990. https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx. Accessed October 2, 2018.

UNHCR. *Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child.* Geneva, 2008. http://www.refworld.org/docid/48480c342.html. Accessed October 2, 2018.

US Human Rights Network. "Why Is ICE Deporting Dreamer Erold." N.d. https://www.ushrnetwork.org/take-action/why-ice-deporting-dreamer-erold. Accessed October 4, 2018. Accessed October 12, 2018.

White House, The. "Remarks by the President on Immigration." June 15, 2012. https://www.aila.org/infonet/wh-president-speech-deferred-action. Accessed August 23, 2018.

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# PLACING TIME, TIMING SPACE

## Memory as Border and Line of (Hi)Stories in Richard McGuire's Graphic Narrative *Here*.

*Alice Balestrino*
*Sapienza University*
*Rome*
*Italy*

> *The city [of Zaira consists] of relationships between the measurements of its space and the events of its past: the height of a lamppost and the distance from the ground of a hanged usurper's swaying feet; the line strung from the lamppost to the railing opposite and the festoons that decorate the course of the queen's nuptial procession [...]. As this wave from memories flows in, the city soaks it up like a sponge and expands.*
>
> Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

The idea of the border is quintessentially American. In 1839, John L. O'Sullivan announced the "manifest destiny" of the United States as "far-reaching, [...] boundless future;" as an "onward march" to which nobody could dare "to set limits" (427). At the turn of the century, Frederick Jackson Turner famously theorized the existence of the American Frontier only when it reached its natural limit, the Pacific Ocean. Thirty years later, Robert Frost meditated on the border as a homey fence, as the limit "walling in and walling out" and he alluded to the Sisyphean task of "mending," together with his neighbor, the stony wall delimiting their properties by placing back, spring after spring, the boulders dropped by the winters (1880). In the second half of the 20th century, the Beat Generation depicted life as an aimless journey and the American, endless roads became at one time setting and metonym of wandering without limits of any sort.

As this briefly sketched scenario suggests, the border defines the American experience only insofar as it initiates its own questioning and ultimate negation. In other words, the border is part of the American state of mind if it does not actively bound this state but, on the contrary, it passively spurs the mind to cross this very border, to perceive itself as unbounded. Thus, the border as a threshold, as a permeable edge, as a tension towards an ideal limit continuously pushed further, renegotiated, crossed. The border is a *praesentia in absentia,* an assertion that oxymoronically denies itself, a condition that is set only to be invalidated, the prerequisite needed to ignite the dynamic of its own transgression. Therefore, despite its many historical, cultural, political and literary formulations, and its ubiquitous presence as a principle of reference in the American imagination, this border is, to a large extent, necessarily ephemeral. In considering the transience of the American border, the topographical aspect is probably the most evident—its prototypical image may be found for instance in the divergence between the twisted boundaries of the Northeastern states and the straight geometry of the Southwestern "Four Corners." However, it would be ironic for such a comprehension of the border to have strict meta-borders and to be restrained to geography. Cardinal points, extrapolated from the compass, are indeed turned into landmarks that define whole cultural and literary *genres*—the literature of the Frontier and Western movies, for example.

In this article, I will propose a reading of the border that transcends spatiality and enters the realm of temporality, thus uniting these two dimensions in one, composite operative category. This interpretation of the world has its visual and narrative transposition in the work that I mean to analyze, Richard McGuire's graphic narrative *Here* (2014) that, it seems to me, perfectly outlines the porosity and the ultimate disappearance of the spatiotemporal borders in contemporary reality. *Here* is a 300-page comic book that has only one setting, while the time frame shifts continuously, superimposing on the same page images that range from 3,000,500,000 B.C. to A.D. 22,175 and preventing the construction of a coherent plot. The figurative pattern, as the author himself has suggested, resembles the interface of Microsoft Windows

*Alice Balestrino*
*Sapienza University*
*Rome*
*Italy*

where the user can see several panels all open at the same time, all displayed on the same screen (Martin 2014).

McGuire envisions the three temporal domains (past, present, and future) as unbound and depicts them without any sequential order, as an unrestrained flow flooding the narrative space.[1] The latter is, instead, both fixed and volatile, always the same and yet changing: a point of Earth that, at the beginning of the 20th century, gets walled off the surrounding space and acquires artificial boundaries that turn it into a specific place, the living room from the author's childhood home in New Jersey.[2] McGuire elaborates a temporal simultaneity that soaks a particular space in its time and represents the margins of contingency that supposedly separate—but in this work, in fact, unite—what pertains to the magnitude of History, what to peculiar, personal stories and what gets forgotten instead. I also argue that this phenomenology, grounded in the frictions engendered by a stable viewpoint on unstable views, may be profitably read in the light of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's speculations on reality and on the interconnectedness between space and time produced in *Mille Plateaux. Capitalisme et Schizophrenie* (1980), with particular reference to their comprehension of memory as the liminal condition between temporal dimensions and as the measure

1. In *Here*, an image set in 2111 depicts the main setting of the book, the living room of McGuire's childhood home, literally flooded by a waterfall from the window; a scene that may be read as a visual metaphor of the flooding of the narrative space throughout the whole graphic novel. In Here there are no page numbers, this is the reason why I cannot localize more precisely the aforementioned example and why I will not be able to provide such a reference in the following passages of this article.

2. Despite the difficulty in identifying the main theme of such a heterogeneous and diverse narrative, it is probably safe to state that the extraordinariness of the ordinary and the presence of the universe mirrored in the little, domestic things of everyday life play a key role in the unfolding of the narrative. As McGuire himself states in an interview for the National Public Radio: "It does center around my family in a way, even though it's not a memoir by any means. But I did want to talk to touch on all the universal things that we go through—love and death and the major themes. I was looking at a lot of family photos for reference, but I also looked at the archive of a collector." (Martin 2014)

determining the spatial coordinates of the stories that we come to recognize as ours.

Beyond the pages, McGuire engages with borders on a meta-narrative level as well. *Here* indeed posits itself at the margins of the cultural and literary canon, since it belongs to the relatively young and popular *genre* of comics that has only recently acquired the status of academic field of study. Comics, especially when developed in graphic novels, are more and more challenging the narrative strategies that got to be crystallized through centuries of (more or less) traditional literature, by disputing its constitutional norms and introducing a new form of language where the visual and the textual dimensions merge. As claimed by Will Eisner, one of the first cartoonists who tried to systematize this art, comics are indeed a "language—a literary form, if you will—[whose] disciplined application [...] creates the 'grammar' of Sequential Art;" a consequentiality that relies on "a series of repetitive images and recognizable symbols." (8)

*Here* can be considered as cutting-edge text even within the sphere of comics itself because it expands the *genre*'s expressive potential and radically transforms and enhances its narrative techniques, thus pushing farther the boundaries of conventional graphic representation.[3] McGuire succeeds in doing so by revolu-

3. *Here* was first published in 1989 in the ninth issue of the experimental comics magazine *RAW*, edited by Art Spiegelman and Françoise Mouly; fifteen years on that first appearance, it was published in the format of a graphic novel. This expanded version of the original short story represents a further overcoming of the narrative borders in terms of medium (from magazine to book), as well as of genre (from graphic short story to novel) and plot. There exists also an interactive e-book version, in which the panels (i.e. the pages) are arranged randomly, building on the arbitrariness of the sequential order with reference to memories as well as on the agency of single individuals. McGuire himself explains: "I did toy with the idea of having each book, have the pages of each book shuffled so that each book was a unique experience, but I couldn't work it out. And then when I was working on the e-book version, I thought to myself that that's what the e-book is for, to let the e-book be what it does best and let the book be what it does best." In the same occasion, McGuire always reflects on the different reading experiences conveyed by the different media he has resorted to for his narrative: "The original strip you would have nine panels on a page. So, you're seeing the room nine times per page. And your

*Alice Balestrino*
*Sapienza University*
*Rome*
*Italy*

tionizing the key element of comics' textual economy: the panel, whose contours are completely re-conceived. Each book spread serves as the main panel, a domain that is overlaid with smaller panels depicting moments from other times, both past and contemporary and even future, but set in the same spot—the graphic limits of each main panel hence coincide with the book edges. This composition by superimposition calls into question the already mentioned comics' sequential order that, in this work, explodes into dis-ordered units: *Here* does not display classical strips because its panels are not arranged according to a linear progression—in terms of both intelligibility and visualization—but according to simultaneous juxtapositions.

This entangled (cor)relation between panels complicates the conception of the "gutter," which is the empty space that in comics separates one panel from the other. Actually, this space is not empty at all, in that it is "the limbo [where] human imagination takes two separate images and transforms them into a single idea"–as pointed out by Scott McCloud (one of the major comics theorists). In other words, the gutter functions both as temporal and spatial fracture that enables the reader "to connect [distinct panels] and mentally construct a continuous, unified reality" (66–67). This effect of observing the parts but perceiving, imagining, or assuming the whole is called "closure" and in *Here* it becomes exponentially amplified due to the elimination of the main panels' margins and the re-elaboration and re-collocation of the gutter. The latter indeed ceases to be visible and becomes ideal, broadened to the extent of going beyond the inter-panel focus and reaching an inter-page dynamic. The readers are spurred to fill with their own agency a way wider interpretative gap than in traditional graphic narratives, to try to construe images in the light of other images presented throughout the whole book, to create mental associations, albeit flimsy, on the basis of themes that come to be denoted over several pages.

---

eye can move around that—in a way that it can't in the book. But the book has other strengths to it. And then the e-book has further strengths. And, you know, I can see maybe in another 20 years doing it the virtual reality version of the room where you walk into the room and you're experiencing it. I mean, that's a possibility." (Martin 2014)

Moreover, McGuire subverts the convention according to which in comics time is perceived spatially only in relation to a linear progression—the graphically longer a panel, the temporally longer the moment it depicts; the longer the horizontal, spatial lines delimiting a panel, the longer the timeline covered by this panel. McCloud provides a brilliant example of this perception by noticing that adjectives such as "short" and "long" can refer both to the first and to the fourth dimension, but in comics this distinction often blurs and vanishes (102).[4] In *Here*—where some panels do not have boundaries and others are superimposed on the former without any visible gutter—time gets substantiated in and by the space because it acquires a sense in the narrative economy only on condition that it literally "takes place" in that particular space. Time is no longer a line but a square or even a cube of which space is a constitutive part; it breaks the banks of any chronological logic and flows free, without following any progression, only the associations based on spatial coincidence. In my view, "coincidence"—in its both temporal and spatial meaning—is the notion that best conveys the perception of reality that McGuire draws in *Here.* A diachronic synchronicity synthesized in and by one spot, time mapped on space, a simultaneous grasp of vectors pointing in different directions.

This comprehension of the human experience complicates the Modern Era model of a three-dimensional space inevitably related to the fourth dimension of linear time. René Descartes and Isaac Newton described a universe where space and time, albeit inseparable, are distinct units; according to this conception, the individual cannot exist only in space or only in time, they exist in both,

4. Scott McCloud's discourse on the practice of spatializing time (i.e. the panel's length conveys the passing of time despite the use of a limited space because its dimension is temporalized) is a classic of comics studies; it particularly pertains to comics strips, and more specifically, to those comics which are forced to rigid editorial limits. This convention emerges in the first superhero strips published in the first half of the 20th century, such as in Will Eisner's *The Spirit*, and Robert Kane and Bill Finger's *Batman*. Moreover, in relation to the experimental graphic interpretation of time and space in Here, more examples come to mind, for instance Joe Sacco's *The Great War. July 1, 1916: The First Day of the Battle of the Somme* (2014), a panoramic text which spatially represents 24 hours of battle in the First World War.

*Alice Balestrino*
*Sapienza University*
*Rome*
*Italy*

in a bijective dimension of space/time where, though feeble, there is a slash between the two. This border disappears in the 1910s due to Albert Einstein's theory of relativity that postulates the existence of only one monad, the "spacetime"—without any slash—composed of what used to be perceived and got to be systematized as two discrete functions: spatiality and temporality. The image suggested by the physicist Brian Greene of the "spacetime loaf of bread" explains the understanding of the universe as a continuum whose length is time, while height and width are space. Greene's analogy goes on to identify the slices cut out of this loaf as moments: time ceases to be represented as an arrow laid out on a Cartesian plane; time is now conceived as a series of blocks intrinsically spatial, subject to the physical law of the time-reversal symmetry that considers time as moving both forward and backward.[5]

Greene's metaphor of the spacetime loaf of bread perfectly applies to the universe of *Here,* the two being different media representations of the same phenomenon; two photos of the same subject taken with two filters; two shapes carved out of the same material. McGuire's panels seem to me to possess the same ontological status and epistemological intent of Greene's slices of bread, informed as they are by the same spatiotemporal reciprocity that triggers the dynamics of "placing time" and "timing space." These two mechanisms are the cornerstones of *Here* and may be better apprehended if analyzed as forms of the two processes that Deleuze and Guattari identify as pivotal in their conceptualization of the rhizome: the re-territorialization and the de-territorialization. These two vectors constitute the mechanism of the spacetime in *Here*: on the one hand, the re-territorialization captures moments scattered in the flow of time, and places them again/back in the space of the present; on the other hand, the de-territorialization transcends spatial contingency and projects space into a temporal continuum.

If we think about it, the experience of remembering functions in the same way. Memory has the power to establish a cognitive

5. The spacetime seems to be the paradigm of contemporaneity, of our everyday experience characterized by shortened and almost nullified spatial distances and temporal instantaneity; it is the epitome of the postmodern (and even more of the post-postmodern) condition of "time and space compression" elaborated by critics such as Fredric Jameson and David Harvey.

and emotional connection between distinct temporal dimensions; it makes distant times and places converge in the *hic et nunc* of the present, thus breaking the spatiotemporal borders. Memory re-territorializes when it abstracts a moment from the past and relocates it into the present; it de-territorializes when the present fades away into its juncture to the past. According to Deleuze and Guattari, memory is the intersection between these two axes, the point that makes "every present refer simultaneously to the horizontal line of the flow of time which goes from an old present to the actual present [re-territorialization]; and the vertical line of the order of time which goes from the present to the past [de-territorialization]" (294).

Therefore, to a certain extent, remembrance seems to both search for and leave a trace in Derridean terms: a mark of the absence of a present, an always-already absent present. Considered in the light of the *déjà-là*, *Here* is a "punctual system" (294) generated and organized by memory that proves to be both the border and the line of the construction of the narrated (hi)stories. On the one hand, memory is the border that determines which moments flow into our narrative and it delimits our story from that of others'; it contains and exceptionalizes the content of our past and our perception of history. On the other hand, memory is the line that connects the dots of different moments eventually forming a coherent story; it serves as form and *raison d'*être of the narrative of the past itself. The dynamics of placing time and timing space and the faculty of remembering as both border and line are movements always interconnected, precisely as the Deleuzian de-territorialization and re-territorialization "are caught up in one another" (10) thus merging into one perspective for explicating and assessing the world. These tensions may be imagined as coordinated by a parallax that makes visible and activates a specific mechanism depending on the perspective from which a phenomenon, or a moment, is observed.[6]

6. In his review of *Here* for *The Guardian*, the cartoonist Chris Ware recalls: "Sitting on that couch, I felt time extend infinitely backwards and forwards, with a sense of all the biggest of small moments in between. And it wasn't just my mind: *Here* blew apart the confines of graphic narrative and expanded its universe in one incendiary flash, introducing a new dimension to visual narrative that radically departed from the traditional up-down and left-right reading of comic strips." (Ware 2014)

*Alice Balestrino*
*Sapienza University*
*Rome*
*Italy*

In the last section of this article, I will discuss some panels excerpted from *Here* as examples of de-territorialized or re-territorialized memories and I will try to highlight how these dynamics engage the reader in the construction of a multilayered, synchronic phenomenology. Several main panels from *Here* are set in 1775 and portray Benjamin Franklin (who, before entering the narrative as an historical figure, is presented as Halloween costume and mentioned by a man in 1990) and a lady, from a natural and unbounded point of view (at the time, the McGuires' house was yet to be built). On one of these main panels, a panel from 1998 is overlaid, showing a leaking ceiling from an artificial and bounded position; this superimposition possibly implies the idea of erosion contextualizing the historical disintegration of the British Empire in America. This narrative, based on inter-panel, specular references, goes on for a couple of pages that seem to delineate other related themes: for instance, the intensification of the leaking process in the 1998 living room is counterpointed by the exasperation of the pre-revolution, political situation; a black-out in the house corresponds to the impossibility of seeing others' points, as in others' opinions, in 1775. Analyzed from the perspective of the main panels, the shifts to the superimposed panels perform a re-territorialization, while from the opposite viewpoints the same shifts produce a de-territorializing effect.

Another very interesting example of inter-panel references relating also distant temporal domains can be found on a main panel set in 1986 in which there is a dog barking at the mailman, while in a superimposed, smaller panel from 1954 a man sat in an armchair, comments: "Every day the mailman comes, the dog barks, the mailman goes away. The dog thinks he has protected us once again from an intruder." In the next page, on the book spread set in 1970 there are two minor panels: one is from 1959 and portrays a woman asking a man (presumably the woman's husband) "Do you have your keys? Watch? Wallet?" And he replies: "Check." In the other panel we see the same man in the armchair in 1954 once again commenting on a situation from a dislocated temporal dimension: "It's a symbolic relationship. It's a little ritual they do, a little performance…" The compelling aspect of this juxtaposition of panels is the relevance that the second comment from 1954 may have not only for the scene on the same book spread (that

of the couple), but also for the scene in the previous page, the one depicting the relationship between the barking dog and the mailman. Therefore, the reader's interpretative effort seems to be led to function according to an inter-panel as well as inter-page logic, a dynamic which strengthens the multilayered vision of reality constructed in *Here*.

A scene set in the McGuires' living room in 1986 occupies another main panel; a woman lies on the couch while the doorbell goes "DING. DONG." Next to an armchair there is a panel from 1609 in which two Native Americans interrupt(ed) their sexual intercourse in a forest because one of the two says/d: "I heard something." Superimposed on the panel of a man falling from a chair, a panel from twenty-nine years earlier shows a woman who asked/asks: "Did you lose something?" This book spread is followed by a section dealing with loss, matching panels from different years when people lost wallets, self-control, the hearing, an earring and so on—all against the background of desert wastelands both from Prehistory and a distant (possibly post-apocalyptic) future. After a series of these juxtapositions, there are four main panels without any superimposition: even the very narrative logic of the book seems to be lost but eventually the thematic superimposition returns.

The key role of memory in the development of the narrative and, more specifically, of its spatiotemporal, cubic comprehension of reality is made explicit in *Here* thanks to several passages when/where the theme and the act of remembering are explored. The archetypical struggle of man against Time in order to save moments from its inexorable flow (almost an act of *hubris*) is introduced in a series of seven book spreads: in a main panel set in 1959 four children (presumably siblings) are sat on a couch in the living room, while a woman tells them how to look like and a man (presumably their parents) is ready to take a picture of the four of them. The same scene is presented in the next page, while in the following five book spreads there are minor panels from 1962, 1964, 1969, 1979, and 1983 in which presumably the same children from the photo in 1959 (but with the addition of a new member) are depicted as they grow up, always while being photographed—a detail that the reader understands from

*Alice Balestrino*
*Sapienza University*
*Rome*
*Italy*

the recurring voice out of the picture: "Smile." The sequence of photographs (themselves the epitome of the human tension towards the preservation of nice, family moments) is correlated by statements in other panels (but on the same main panel) which may function as captions: "You're going to remember this day for the rest of your life;" "What do you want to be remembered for?" "Where did the time go?"[7]

To conclude, I have previously stated that in *Here* "time is no longer a line but a square or even a cube of which space is a constitutive part." However, time and space constitute two of the three dimensions necessary to build a solid, so which is the third dimension of the above-mentioned cube? It is memory. Memory, being at the margins of contingency, pushes farther the limits of experience thus bridging temporal and spatial distances; this comprehension creates a cubic measure, or rather, a three-dimensional lens on reality that allows to isolate previously invisible, unexpected nexuses between phenomena.

These connections broaden our perception of reality and call into question the limits of the narratives we construct out of it, thus producing a peculiar spacetime; a simultaneity which is effectively summed up by an image set in 2213, where/when a tour guide explains: "Through our reconstruction and visualization program we have been able to access that a home built in the twentieth century once stood on this site," while showing a fan projecting several images of the McGuire's living room as it came to look like through the years to a group of tourists. The fan projects a consistent image of the living room (thus showing only one spacetime) that contains the sequence (an occasion in which the reader does experience a sequential order) of the changes undergone by the room; an expedient which hints at the passing of time as spatialized in the everyday life of the author's family.

7. The simultaneity of time(s) in this series of photographs, which is also the cypher of *Here*'s narrative economy, may be defined as a Deleuzian line of becoming (although memory per se functions as a punctual system) which "is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes between points, it comes up through the middle, it runs perpendicular to the points first perceived, transversally to the localizable relation to distant or contiguous points." (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 293)

This distant future seems therefore to resonate with the words pronounced by a woman placing a yellow book on the living room table in 1957,8 in the very last panel of the work: "…now I remember;" the epilogue of the spatiotemporal journey, or quest even, through which *Here* takes the reader.



8. Interestingly, 1957 is also the year in which the author was born and McGuire himself seems to be a character in his own narrative: in a panel from 1990, the face of a man that very much resembles him is drawn while stating: "I took a nap, and when I woke I didn't know where I was."

*Alice Balestrino*
*Sapienza University*
*Rome*
*Italy*

WORKS CITED

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Translated by Brian Massumi, University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

Eisner, Will. *Comics and Sequential Art.* Poorhouse Press, 1985.

Frost, Robert. "Mending Wall." *Norton Anthology of American Literature,* edited by Nina Baym, W.W. Norton & Company, 2003, pp. 1880.

Greene, Brian. *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality.* Arnold A. Knopf Publishing, 2004.

Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity. An Enquiry into The Origins of Cultural Change.* Blackwell Publishers, 1989.

Martin, Rachel. "Billions of Years Go By, All in the Same Room." *National Public Radio Website,* 2014, http://www.npr.org/2014/12/07/368721852/billions-of-years-go-by-all-in-the-same-room. Accessed 13 June 2018.

McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics. The Invisible Art.* Harper Collins, 1994.

McGuire, Richard. *Here.* Pantheon Books, 2014.

O'Sullivan, John L. "The Great Nation of Futurity." *The United States Democratic Review,* vol. 6, no. 23, 1839, pp. 426–430.

Turner, Frederic Jackson. "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." *The Frontier in American History,* Henry Holt and Company, 1921, 1–38.

Ware, Chris. "Chris Ware on *Here* by Richard McGuire—a Game-Changing Graphic Novel." *The Guardian,* 17 December 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/dec/17/chris-ware-here-richard-mcguire-review-graphic-novel. Accessed 13 June 2018.

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# THE CANVAS AND THE MAZE

## Deconstructing the Wall and the Frontier in Contemporary American Science Fiction

*Chiara Grilli*
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

In his 1974 article "Who Is an SF Writer?," Philip K. Dick describes the author of science fiction (SF) as "a dreamer with one eye open, always coldly appraising what is actually going on" (75). In this sense, despite the escapist tendency about which many critics complain, this genre is rooted in the empirical experience of our natural, historical, and social environment. Starting from reality, SF ventures into the almost infinite possibilities of the 'what if,' to the extent that, in periods of crisis and new social anxieties, it gains new strength, informing literature and art. The plethora of SF movies in recent years can be easily explained as an attempt to define, analyze, and reinterpret the most significant issues of our times. In particular, the recent sociocultural upheaval caused by the migration crisis—along with the restored interest in the semantic fields of 'wall' and 'frontier'—has redefined the role of the Other in Western society and deeply influenced recent SF productions. Jonathan Nolan's and Lisa Joy's TV series *Westworld* and Denis Villeneuve's movie *Arrival,* two of the most acclaimed works of 2016, stand out for the highly symbolic representation of the relationship between the individual and the Other, a relationship addressed through a complete re-elaboration of two of the most controversial elements of today's international politics: the frontier and the wall.[1] By considering the different

1. This essay was written and presented before the second season of *Westworld* was released in 2018.

declensions of the myths of the frontier and the Wild West along with the idea of "wall as canvas," I will discuss the compelling perspectives concerning the relationship between the individual self and the Other provided by *Westworld* and *Arrival*.

Providing a fair definition of SF is beyond the purpose of this work and rather controversial. All the attempts made so far by writers and critics to give a comprehensive definition of the genre have only demonstrated the difficulty of enclosing SF within the boundaries of rigid categories, images, and styles (Sobchack 63). Nonetheless, as Darko Suvin pointed out in his famous *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction,* what deserves particular consideration is the difference between SF and mythic narratives. According to Suvin, SF "sees the mythical static identity as an illusion, usually as a fraud, at best only as a temporary realization of potentially limitless contiguities" (7). The common denominator of SF narratives, then, lies in the rejection of stability as an indisputable trait of identity and in the affirmation of change and movement as the essential factors upon which life is based. As a result of its dynamic nature, SF has very often been connected to real and metaphoric frontiers, symbolizing the progressive movement of the human race towards the future. Of course, this has been especially evident in the United States, where, particularly after John F. Kennedy's idea of the New American Frontier, SF has become synonymous with the concept of regeneration by means of discovery and conquest. And yet, the *Star Wars* saga of the Seventies, as well as films and TV series like *Star Trek* and *Battle Beyond the Star*s, were not simply representing the "final frontier" on a metaphorical level. Rather, they were concrete examples of the conflation of SF tropes and Western movies archetypes, in what might be called SF Western (Slotkin 635). By means of their wasted landscapes, the futuristic spaceships, and the high-tech blasters of their heroes, these works were reinterpreting elements typical of the Western genre (the canyons, the horses, the guns), reintroducing the old myth of the American frontier into the present.

Even if it does not address the trope of the space odyssey, *Westworld*, the highly praised 2016 TV series written by Jonathan Nolan and Lisa Joy, represents a good example of the SF Western genre. Set in an indefinite future, the series portrays a Western-

*Chiara Grilli*
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

themed amusement park called Westworld. The park is populated by highly technological, human-like androids called "hosts" who (or that) interact with human visitors, the "guests." Two main features characterize Westworld. First, each android, as a non-player character in a video games, is provided with its own "life story," written by a professional writer and played on a loop every day. Second, following Isaac Asimov's three laws of robotics, each android is programmed not to injure the guests and to protect its own life insofar as it does not harm human beings (85–86). In this sense, despite the human-like perfection of their bodies and the vividness of their emotions, the hosts are stuck in their eternal return, unaware of their programmed experience of life.

Episode after episode, however, two of the androids (the beautiful, naive Dolores and the prostitute Maeve) begin to perceive the unreality of their world.[2] Following the typical plot of SF movies, their newfound consciousness leads to the revolt of the robots against their fathers/creators. This theme was also chosen by director Michael Crichton in his 1973 movie *Westworld*, which inspired Nolan and Joy for their TV series.[3] While the robots' sudden outburst of violence in Crichton's film is due to a technical malfunction, Nolan's and Joy's androids revolt against the artificiality of their existence by following the impetus of their newborn consciousness. As a result, the audience is not supposed to identify with human beings, threatened by the violence of the machines. Instead, following a trend that emerged in the Eighties, androids are humanized to allow the viewer to identify with their existential anxieties and uncertainties. This increasing emotional sympathy for the mechanical Other is connected to the alienation that people experience in a society in which life is mediated by technology

2. The role women play in contemporary SF movies and TV series is becoming more and more important. As both *Westworld* and *Arrival* suggest, the new hero of the future is a woman whose presence in the story is no longer that of a passive object, affected by the actions of a male hero or villain. Rather, she is an active protagonist, very often embodying the last hope for the redemption of the human race. For further recent productions addressing this topic see also Cuaròn and Miller,

3. Even if one of the most famous examples of the typical trope of the robots' rebellion against human beings is represented by Fritz Lang's 1927 movie *Metropolis*, its origins lie in Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein.*

and virtual reality, and in which "everyone is less conscious of existence than of its image" (Sobchack 229). In other words, what the audience experiences on the screen is its own artificial life.

The issue of the artificiality of human existence is further developed through an insightful investigation of the myth of the American frontier. In fact, thanks to the complex representation of its fictional future, *Westworld* provides the viewer with three different frontiers: technological, simulated, and inner. In the first case, the frontier corresponds to the condition of technological perfection that humanity has finally reached in this fictional future. After debunking the myth of human unstoppable progress, scientists' attention is now directed towards the only field in which significant improvements can still be made: artificial intelligence. The last frontier of science, in this sense, is represented by the 'creation' of consciousness.

The second frontier is associated with the simulated experience of the guests. Drenched with the narrative lore of the mythic American West, the park is meant to resuscitate the old spirit of the pioneers and the rejuvenating force of the frontier. Frederick Turner underscores the essential role of westward expansion in the formation of American democracy in *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*; however, rather than focusing on the historical significance of the West, President Theodore Roosevelt spent his whole life celebrating the tough, adventurous experience of the frontier. Cowboys and hunters were the rough heroes of the West, "tall and sinewy, with resolute, weather-beaten faces, and eyes that looked a man straight in the face without flinching" (18). As a consequence, a whole collection of symbols and narratives was created and consolidated even before the American frontier closed in 1890. Contributing to the formation of a collective repertoire of glorifying narratives and legendary *lieux de mémoire*, the American myths of the Old West were populated by men and women that resembled the types and the heroes of ancient mythology. One of the most popular cantors of this Pantheon—still vividly present in today's collective consciousness thanks to literature and, most of all, Western movies—was Buffalo Bill, whose Wild West Show contributed to the diffusion of the American myth throughout the Old and the New worlds.

*Chiara Grilli*
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

According to Richard Slotkin, his "reenactments were not recreations, but reductions of complex events into 'typical scenes' based on the formulas of popular literary mythology" (69). The stories performed by Buffalo Bill's company, in other words, set the free, pure life of the frontier in opposition to the conventional, false existence of the industrialized world (Wrobel 51).

In a similar way, *Westworld*'s theme park blends history and myth, authenticity and sensational fiction to exploit the visitors' need to escape the constrictions of modern society and everyday life. In Nolan's and Joy's park, the typical features of the Old West turn even wilder: freedom is replaced by vicious lust and individualism by egotism, while adventure meets with grotesque violence. In this sense, *Westworld*'s portrayal of the myth of the frontier evokes the criticism that Jean Baudrillard expresses against the distorted reality built by artificial worlds like Disneyland. In his essay "The Procession of Simulacra," Baudrillard denounces Disneyland's entertainment for allegedly representing an escapist immersion into the real pleasure of American society while masking a "simulation of the third order": the park exists to "hide that it is the 'real' country, all of 'real' America that *is* Disneyland" (461). The ways in which Westworld alters the perception of the frontier are similar. First, the park's artificiality indelibly turns the frontier not only into a simulacrum of reality but into a reality that looks even more authentic and vivid than real life. In other words, the simulated frontier replaces both the historic frontier and the outside reality. This is made possible because, as Louis Marin suggests, visitors are not mere spectators but active performers of that simulated reality (54). This first-person experience induces the guests to perceive the life inside the park as the real life, even if what they actually taste is nothing more than a "real *'imaginaire,'* a fixed, stereotyped, powerful fantasy" (56). Consequently, the experience of the park deceives guests into believing that in Westworld they are weaving a thoroughly personal story, a self-narrative freed from the entanglements of social conventions. On the contrary, their freedom is constrained by the narrative itineraries provided by Westworld's writers and "contained in a stereotyped system of representations" that the guest is unconsciously forced to borrow in order to spin his/her own 'real' self-narrative (59). Visitors

are attracted by the possibility of finding their 'real' selves, but, hidden behind the thick curtains of inculcated dispositions and social conventions, the only thing they can obtain from a simulacrum of reality is a simulacrum of identity.

Finally, the third frontier consists in an inner, dynamic itinerary leading the individual towards a full comprehension of the self and a firm demystification of the simulacra of reality. This inward frontier is explicitly addressed in the last scenes of the series by the park's creator, Dr. Ford. In fact, after admitting that human beings are irreparably lost within the unreality of simulation, Dr. Ford confesses that Westworld is

> a prison of our own sins. Because you don't want to change. Or cannot change. Because you're only human, after all. But then I realized someone was paying attention, someone who could change. So I began to compose a new story for them. It begins with the birth of a new people and the choices they will have to make and the people they will decide to become.

Therefore, what *Westworld* portrays is more than a rebellion against the god/father. Rather, the audience witnesses (and identifies with) a revolution of the self against the modern anesthetization of consciousness, a rebellion that, of course, also includes the assassination of the creator. To achieve this new awakening, androids have to follow "the maze," a symbolic labyrinth hidden inside Westworld and gradually unveiling an interior itinerary, a frontier moving inward. Dolores, the oldest android of the park, ventures into a quest for consciousness that will eventually help her to demystify her own Wonderland, a place of the imagination caging the blond protagonist within a dream of the consciousness.[4] Waking up from that dream means follow-

4. Dolores' resemblance to *Alice in Wonderland*'s protagonist is striking. Not only do her physical features and clothes evoke Lewis Carroll's heroine, but the writers of the series overtly underline the connection with the novel by making Dolores herself read a passage from the book. In the third episode of the first series, Bernard Lowe, head of the programming division of the Westworld Project, recommends that she read a few lines from Carroll's novel: "Dear dear, how queer everything is today and yesterday things went on just as usual. I wonder if I've been changed in the night." While suggesting that Dolores is living in a dream-like reality similar to Alice's

*Chiara Grilli*
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

ing the frontier inward, reaching the center of the maze, and being able to distinguish the simulacrum from reality.

The labyrinth, however, is an ambiguous construction, involving at the same time order and disorder, logic and chaos, clarity and disorientation, linearity and circularity (Doob 1–2). The double nature of the maze depends on the opposite spatial and, most of all, temporal points of view of its creator and its "visitor." While the architect has a comprehensive view of its intricate structure, which s/he has built linearly and logically, the visitor loses the conventional sense of linear time. From the inside, the maze is perceived as a cluster of 'befores' and 'afters,' switching, alternating, and repeating themselves in a hallucinatory way. The narrative of the maze Dolores experiences is a schizophrenic juxtaposition of autobiographical events from her past and her future, emerging from her unconscious in the form of mirages and phantoms. No longer a straight boundary extending through space, the inward frontier becomes an intricate network of narrative threads that, once ordered, will solve the enigma of Dolores' identity.

The controversial relationship between self-narrative and perception is likewise essential for the development of *Arrival*'s plot.[5] A first-contact story, Denis Villeneuve's movie introduces another female protagonist, Louise Banks, a university professor of linguistics, as the main mediator between humanity and alien visitors. Generally, in American first-contact narratives, aliens represent the external threat to the American way of life, a threat that, as Susan Sontag suggests, satisfies the "hunger for a 'good war'" (219). However, as previously underlined, a trend that emerged during the Eighties has turned the fear of the "Diverse" into a feeling of sympathy for and identification with the "Alien" (Sobchack 293).

---

Wonderland, this association turns Dr. Ford into the Red King of the novel *Through the Looking Glass*, in which Alice is again facing a reality "dreamt" by the King.

5. The movie *Arrival* is an adaptation of Ted Chiang's 1998 short story "Story of Your Life," which won the prestigious Nebula Award for best novella in 2000. See Chiang.

Human beings are not only "embracing the alien," but they have finally realized that they themselves *are* alienated.

In *Arrival*, however, the aliens (called heptapods because of their anatomical structure) are more than friendly visitors, since their primal interest is to communicate a message to the inhabitants of the Earth. Interestingly, the movie draws new attention to the issue of language and incommunicability in a two-fold way. First, unlike in previous SF movies, in *Arrival* the heptapods' language is represented in all its complexity. In fact, apart from Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*—in which, according to Vivian Sobchack, the English spoken by the characters was expressive, realistic, and, most of all, actively learned by the viewer—SF movies have hardly ever addressed the problem of future or alien languages (147–149). On the contrary, while watching Villeneuve's film, the viewers deal with the heptapods' language from both a visual point of view—for they are overtly shown the unintelligible signs used by the aliens—and a theoretical point of view, in that they follow Banks and her team in their analysis of the alien linguistic system.[6] Second, the fact that Banks has to teach her language and, at the same time, learn several basic words and everyday expressions from the aliens has a powerful symbolic meaning. In so doing, the director hints that, while serving as a point of contact between two cultures, the process of learning a language also puts the individual and the Other on the same level.

Nonetheless, no form of physical contact between the human teamwork and the aliens is expected. Resembling *2001: Space Odyssey*'s monolith, the spaceships are dark shells made of pure, soft lines, transcendental and, in a way, hallowed. Inside the womb of the vessel, both human visitors and heptapods have to make compromises in order to establish a productive communication. On the one hand, human beings have to adapt to the different gravitational forces present inside the spaceship. In one scene, in particular, the shift from the gravity of Earth to the vessel's gravity forces Banks and her team to walk on the 'roof' of the internal corridor. Besides the fascinating construction of the scene, what is significant is that human beings have to see reality from

6. The aliens' language is defined as semasiographic, a linguistic system in which symbols do not represent sounds but only convey meaning.

*Chiara Grilli*
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

a different perspective to make successful contact with the alien. On the other hand, a glass wall divides heptapods from the visitors, so as to provide human beings with an environment suited to their biological functions. However, this opaque boundary is turned into a screen or, better, a canvas on which the heptapods can write their obscure, circular characters with the black substance spurting out from their limbs. A symbol of division and incommunicability *par excellence*, in *Arrival* the wall is presented as the *conditio sine qua non* of communication. No longer a barrier, the wall connects addressers and addressees in a one-to-one relationship, involving not only linguistic but also cultural, psychological, and emotional factors.

It is possible to find some examples of this symbolic transformation of the wall in real life. The Berlin wall and the Belfast Peace Wall show how barriers may turn into canvases, with graffiti serving as enduring symbols of collective memory and mementos of social traumas, grief, and hope. Moreover, the recent works of the popular British graffiti artist Banksy on the Israeli West Bank Barrier have shown the borderline position of this form of self-expression, caught between illegality and art. What is significant in Banksy's case, however, is the importance given not only to the message conveyed by the images themselves but most relevantly to the channel, the actual public space where his works are drawn. Potentially, the wall is a highly symbolic element.

Nevertheless, despite being invested with new powerful meanings, the wall still represents a physical, linguistic, and cultural barrier that has to be crossed. Banks, who is aware of the importance of physical contact in interactions, is the first person to take off her hazardous material suit, used to prevent any contamination caused by interaction with the Other. In her white T-shirt, Banks walks toward the screen and eventually puts her right hand on its surface. One of the aliens does the same, thereby demonstrating that the long limbs on which the creatures seem to walk are similar to fingers and that, anatomically, aliens have the shape of enormous hands. Henceforth, the symbolism associated with the concept of 'hands' (both human and alien) is repeatedly emphasized throughout the movie as a reminder of the importance of contact in the creation of a fruitful communication among

individuals and among cultures. This symbolism is particularly evident in the dream-like visions Banks begins to experience right after this episode. The woman's hallucinations are like scattered memories of a past not yet occurred, predicting the death of her not-yet-conceived daughter. Just like Dolores, Banks perceives these visions as blurred images of her autobiography, visions she has to arrange chronologically to discover the purpose of the aliens' arrival as well as her role in this story.

Interestingly, the experience of the canvas faced by the protagonist recalls what viewers experience in front of James Turrell's light artworks. Primarily concerned with the ambiguous, malleable "thingness or physicality of light" and its perception, Turrell tries to demonstrate that "we create reality by the way we perceive" (FAIchannel). Even though our perception of reality and of the Other is inevitably prejudiced, he suggests, we can *learn* to perceive differently. In particular, Turrell's 1976 work *Acton*—evocative of his experience as a pilot in the foggy skies of the homonymous Californian city—exploits the deceptive nature of light to make the viewers see a "false canvas" hung on the wall of the museum. Surprisingly, the closer the visitor moves to the foggy, gray canvas, the more s/he realizes that what s/he thought to be a plain surface is nothing but a hole in the wall, the delusive result of an artful projection of lights (Newfields).

What Banks experiences in the final part of *Arrival* is remarkably similar. While, after a misunderstanding with the aliens, the Chinese government is preparing to launch a preemptive attack against the spacecraft, the heptopods lead Banks to the other side of the screen.[7] Inside the misty canvas, Banks realizes that what the aliens are offering is a gift in return for which they will need humankind's help in three thousand years. Their gift is their own language, which, as Banks realizes, is "free of time" because

7. Once more, the adventures of Alice in Wonderland prove to be an interesting instrument of analysis. Bank's crossing of the opaque screen reminds one of Lewis Carroll's 1871 novel *Through the Looking Glass*, in which the young heroine reaches a dream-like realm by walking through a mirror. As in *Westworld*, the overlapping of dream and reality leads the protagonist towards a condition of intense bewilderment, thanks to which the heroine is able to reach the truth and solve the puzzle of her identity.

*Chiara Grilli*
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

it is characterized by a non-linear orthography: each written sign has no forward or backward direction, no beginning or end. Banks understands that, while learning their language, "you begin to perceive the time the way they do." No longer constrained by a linear, progressive conception of existence, human beings would be able to open time up, to unfold it, and see the past, the present, and the future simultaneously. *Arrival*'s wall, thus, is a glass canvas overlooking the flux of time: by glancing "through the looking glass," individuals are enabled to perceive reality in its wholeness, just like, when looking a maze from the outside, it is possible to see the entirety of its structure, its dead ends and center.

*Westworld*'s and *Arrival*'s depictions of alternative futures demonstrate how SF is drenched with the social dilemmas of our time. The attention paid to the relationship between the Other and one's self shows that issues of otherness and diversity affect not only the political sphere but also the perception the individual has of his/her identity. Even though they address two different symbols and deal with different aspects of the self/Other relationship, the analyses of society and of individuals offered by *Arrival* and *Westworld* have at least two main points in common. First, by means of a process of assimilation, deconstruction, and reconstruction, they celebrate the malleable nature of symbols. In so doing, they remind the audience that symbols, even when associated with negative values and memories, can be transformed into new creative inputs. As such, they can serve as meaningful instruments for transcending the collective boundaries that affect the individual's perception of identity. One of the main points highlighted by these works is thus that consciousness of one's self and of the Other is based on perception; as a result, it is possible to adapt one's perception of reality and learn to perceive the 'I' and the 'you' in a more conscious way.

The second element shared by *Arrival* and *Westworld* is strongly connected to the idea of a newfound self-awareness. They both express a desire to perceive life in its wholeness, to be aware of one's "being in time," to gain back the authority to write one's own self-narrative. The frontier and the wall, reinterpreted as canvas and maze, help the two female protagonists to solve the puzzle of their autobiography, guiding them to a deep and fruitful knowl-

edge of the 'you' and the 'I.' As in Marin's description of the "real *imaginaire*," the inner maze showed in *Westworld* and *Arrival* is made of walls directing the visitor towards wrong solutions, fake perceptions, and deceitful truths (56). As a system of walls and boundaries, the labyrinth symbolically represents the way in which external, collective forces shape individual identity, the direction that one's life might take, and people's perception of reality. In this sense, the heroes portrayed in *Arrival* and *Westworld* celebrate a new form of self-empowerment of the (female) individual, struggling to become aware of the deceitful reality in which she lives and chasing her identity within the maze of time and memory.

*Chiara Grilli*
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

WORKS CITED

Asimov, Isaac. "Runaround." *I, Robot,* Bantam Spectra, 2004, pp. 61–104.

Baudrillard, Jean. "The Precession of Simulacra." *Media and Cultural Studies*, edited by Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner, Blackwell Publishing, 2006, pp. 453–481.

Chiang, Ted. "Story of Your Life." *Stories of Your Life and Others*, Vintage Books, 2002, pp. 91–145.

Crichton, Michael, director. *Westworld*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1973.

Cuaròn, Alfonso, director. *Children of Men*. Universal Pictures, 2006

Dick, Philip K. "Who Is an SF Writer?" *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick*, edited by Lawrence Sutin, First Vintage Books, 1995, pp. 69–78.

Doob, Penelope Reed. *The Idea of the Labyrinth*. Cornell University Press, 1992.

FAIchannel. "AISTHESIS. Intervista a Robert Irwin e James Turrell." *YouTube*, 14 Oct. 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiziWM0meTc.

Marin, Louis. "Disneyland: A Degenerate Utopia." *Glyph I*, edited by Samuel Weber, John Hopkins University Press, 1977, pp. 50–66.

Miller, Bruce, creator. *The Handmaid's Tale*. Hulu, 2017.

Newfields. "Acton, James Turrell." *YouTube*, commentary by Sarah Green, 29 May 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mfNrwtRFT8.

Nolan, Johnathan and Lisa Joy, creators. *Westworld*. HBO Entertainment and Warner Bros. Television, 2016.

Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Rough Riders*. Collier and Sons, 1899.

Slotkin, Richard. *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*. Harper Perennial, 1993.

Sobchack, Vivian. *Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film*. Rutgers, 2001.

Sontag, Susan. "The Imagination of Disaster." *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, Picador, 1965, pp. 209–225.

Suvin, Darko. *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre*. Yale University, 1979.

Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*. Bobbs-Merrill, 1893.

Villeneuve, Denis, director. *Arrival*. Paramount Pictures, 2016.

Wrobel, David. *The End of American Exceptionalism: Frontier Anxiety from the Old West to the New Deal*. University of Kansas, 1993.

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter Nº 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# THE NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH AS A PATRON OF EUROPEAN SCHOLARS

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio*
*and*
*Isabel María García Conesa*
*Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena*
*Spain*

## INTRODUCTION

The New School for Social Research in New York is not an art school in the traditional sense. Its real importance during the post-World War I years up to and beyond the Abstract Expressionist[1] period was as a haven for artists and intellectuals of all disciplines to gather and discuss controversial matters without fear of political censure.

During World War I, a small and outspoken group of professors working at Columbia University were censured by the school's president, Nicholas Murray Butler, for speaking out against US involvement in the war effort[2]. These professors resigned from Columbia and decided to establish their own school, which they opened in 1919 in the lower Manhattan neighbourhood of Chelsea, and called it The New School for Social Research (or commonly known for short as "The New School"). The original faculty of The New School, as gathered by Craig Calhoun[3], included Charles Beard, James Harvey Robinson, Wesley Clair Mitchell, John Dewey, and Alvin Johnson, the university's first president.

1. The Abstract Expressionism is a post-World War II art movement in American painting, developed in New York in the 1940s. It was the first specifically American movement to achieve international influence and put New York at the centre of the western art world.
2. Nicholas Butler himself had been an opponent of US intervention in the war, but changed this position in 1917 when he established the Student Army Training Corps.
3. See Calhoun 194.

The University in Exile was established as the graduate division of The New School in 1933, founded as a sanctuary for academics escaping persecution in Europe during the initial stages of the Second World War. In the 1920s Alvin Johnson was appointed to co-edit the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences.* In order to compile this work, Johnson travelled frequently to Germany, Poland and other European countries to consult with colleagues. While abroad, Johnson became acutely aware of the growing threat of National Socialism in Germany, posed by the relatively new Nazi political party and the rising dictator Adolf Hitler.

The so-called University in Exile was an important node for émigré academics during the 1930s and 1940s. Established as a graduate school for the New School, it sponsored 183 academic émigrés and became a centre of European intellectual life in the United States at the time. Created in 1933, it served as a refuge for European intellectuals facing persecution by fascist regimes (Franco's in Spain or Nazi's in Germany). It was the brainchild of Alvin Johnson, the co-founder of the New School for Social Research in New York, and it made possible the immigration of many European scholars who would go on to enrich the American academic landscape and to deepen connections between Europe and the United States in numerous disciplines.

Between February 14 and 16, 1936, the First American Artists' Congress Against War and Fascism was held at The New School for Social Research. The first meeting of the Congress had taken place elsewhere the previous spring, but this 1936 gathering constituted the first official congregation of Congress members to sit in on lectures and discussion panels. Attendees at the 1936 Congress included Alexander Calder, Adolph Gottlieb, Isamu Noguchi, David Smith, James Johnson Sweeney, Ilya Bolotowsky and Yasuo Kuniyoshi. Among the 34 lecturers who spoke at the three-day event were artist Stuart Davis and critic/historian Meyer Schapiro. The prevalent themes centred around the opposition of Fascism in Europe, and the need to band together and promote the importance of free creative expression during times of war and hardship.

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio*
*and*
*Isabel María García Conesa*
*Universidad Politécnica*
*de Cartagena*
*Spain*

## THE NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

The New School for Social Research is rooted in a legacy of theoretically informed, historically grounded scholarship. Rigorous graduate programs are offered in the social sciences and humanities that go beyond mainstream thought. The New School's diverse community further enriches students' education. This university is home to world-renowned scholars, practitioners, and innovators who open minds and doors to civically engaged inquiry and opportunities.

The New School for Social Research provides an education grounded in history and informed by a legacy of critical thought and civic engagement. The school's dedication to academic freedom and intellectual inquiry reaches back to the university's founding in 1919 as a home for progressive thinkers and the creation of the University in Exile in 1933 for scholars who were persecuted in Nazi Europe (Lamberti). The interdisciplinary education offered by The New School for Social Research today explores and promotes global peace and justice as more than theoretical ideals.

The mission of The New School for Social Research derives from American progressive thinkers, the legacy of the University in Exile, and the critical theorists of Europe. It is grounded in the core social sciences leavened by philosophical and historical inquiry. In an intellectual setting where disciplinary boundaries are easily crossed, students learn to practice creative democracy—the concepts, techniques, and commitments that will be required if the world's people, with their multiple and conflicting interests, are to live together peacefully and justly.

The New School for Social Research was founded in New York City in 1919 by a distinguished group of American intellectuals. Some of them were teaching at Columbia University during World War I. For instance, we can mention scholars such as Charles A. Beard (1874–1948), James H. Robinson (1863–1936), Wesley C. Mitchell (1874–1948) or John Dewey (1859–1952), among some others.

In conjunction with a circle of dissident intellectuals, among whom we should underline the editor Herbert Croly (1869–1930) or the economist Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929), they were dissatisfied with the state of social sciences and the academic freedom in the United States.

With donations from well-wishers in liberal circles, the New School for Social Research opened for classes in the spring of 1919 in a set of rented row houses in the district of Chelsea (New York). In the opinion of Claus Dieter Krohn, the original founders envisaged an institution of higher learning simultaneously capable of serious and independent research which was, on the one hand, accessible to the intelligent lay public, but on the other also engaged in progressive social and political reform (Krohn 53).

However, when they took a public stand against the US entry into the war, they were censured by the Columbia's president. Bitter disagreement led to a sharp crisis that culminated in a jumble of resignations that nearly finished the school.

The outspoken professors resigned from Columbia University and joined with other progressive educators to create a new model of higher education for adults. In essence, a school where ordinary citizens could learn from and exchange ideas freely with scholars and artists representing a wide range of intellectual, aesthetic and political viewpoints.

The outbroken reins fell into the domain of Alvin S. Johnson (1874–1971), a former academic economist and editor of "The New Republic,"who set forward the school's focus on the "continued education of the educated" (Fanton 351), bringing in a host of leading lecturers from the social sciences, arts, and other related fields.

At a time when adult education was narrowly thought of as the teaching of basic education or technical skills, the advanced academic fare the New School for Social Research offered was a real novelty for the American public. And this was mainly due to Alvin Johnson's will to uphold the need to revitalize their roots into an academic research centre.

When, in 1933, the Nazi Party began its elimination of the German academia, Johnson helped form a rescue committee to place the expelled academics in American universities (Goldfarb 88). The fact that Johnson himself was familiar with many of the scholars turned out to be a decisive aspect when the response from the American institutions to Johnson's plea was rather cool.

Then, Alvin Johnson decided to have the New School for Social Research host the European scholars itself, something which seemed natural at the time. As a consequence, in 1943, the New

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio and Isabel María García Conesa*
*Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena*
*Spain*

School for Social Research had been reorganized and undergraduate degree programs had been introduced so as to accommodate the tide of European scholars coming in.

After the war, there came an increasing academic specialization in the 1950s. This meant that fewer graduate faculty professors were willing to cross the lines from research to adult education. As a result, the New School for Social Research organized its own curriculum, offering lecture courses in psychology, philosophy, anthropology, contemporary politics, and literature and in the arts.

As the decade of the 1960s arrived, the faculty struggled to transform itself into a regular American graduate school without losing the distinctiveness of its acquired continental legacy. In the 1970s, it further established two music divisions to the already existing programs.

The New School for Social Research currently enrols more than 1,000 students from all regions of the United States and more than 70 countries. It offers masters and doctoral programs in anthropology, economics, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology.

It also offers interdisciplinary master's programs in historical studies and liberal studies. The list of recent doctoral degree recipients and their dissertation titles hints at the range and depth of topics studied at The New School for Social Research.

Today, many decades removed from the world in which The New School for Social Research was founded, it remains true to the ideals that inspired Alvin Johnson and his colleagues to create an academic home that welcomed diversity of ideas and nationalities and beliefs, a "new school" willing to take intellectual and political risks.

## DATA ANALYSIS: THE ROLE OF THE NEW SCHOOL AS A PATRON OF EUROPEAN SCHOLARS

From the beginning, The New School for Social Research maintained close ties to Europe, as it was recorded by Dorothy Ross (365). Its founders had, in part, modelled the school after the Volkshochschulen for adults established in Germany. Then during the 1920s, Alvin Johnson, The New School's director, became co-editor of the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. While working on this massive undertaking, Johnson collaborated regularly

with colleagues in Germany and elsewhere in Europe. It was they who made him aware of the danger the Nazi movement presented to democracy and the civilized world before many in the United States had grasped the seriousness of the situation.

In 1933, when Hitler came to power and began to purge Jews and politically hostile elements from German universities, Johnson responded. with the financial support of philanthropist Hiram Halle and the Rockefeller Foundation, he obtained funding to provide a haven in the United States for scholars whose careers (and lives) were threatened by the Nazis. All in all, it is estimated that between 1933 and 1945, the New School actively helped over 183 displaced European scholars and artists find their way to the United States (coser 197).

The New School gave refuge to a whole coterie of remarkably talented and employable European intellectuals exiled by European fascist governments. From the early 1920s to the mid-1950s, The New School had the foresight and courage to bring to the United States German, Italian, French and Spanish intellectuals whose lives were endangered because they were unwilling to submit to the demands of totalitarian states.

The first wave of European scholars came in the fall of 1933 and included the following: the economists Eduard Heimann (1889–1967), Gerhard Colm (1897–1968), Karl Brandt (1899–1975) and Arthur Feiler (1879–1942); the sociologists Hans Speier (1904–1990) and Albert Salomon (1891–1966); the jurists Hermann Kantorowicz (1877–1940), Arnold Brecht (1884–1977) and Erich Hula (1900–1987); the economists Hans Staundinger (1889–1980) and Fritz Lehmann (1904–1956); the political scientists Hans Simons (1893–1972) and Max Ascoli (1898–1978); and the philosophers Felix Kaufmann (1895–1949), Alfred Schültz (1899–1959), and Leo Strauss (1899–1973) (Fermi 254).

Beginning in 1934 and continuing throughout the 1940s, faculty appointments were selected from among émigré scholars. with the addition of these and other new appointments, the faculty was constituted into 5 departments: sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology, philosophy and political science.

In the years 1934–1939, the faculty's concerns and problems were theoretical and practical, scientific and political, Euro-

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio and Isabel María García Conesa Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena Spain*

pean and American. Coming from a European intellectual milieu, the faculty focused on topics such as the following: fascism, democracy, freedom, public opinion, economic policy, mass psychology, and social-political psychology.

The New School and sponsored more than 180 individuals and their families, providing them with visas and jobs. Some of these refugees remained at The New School for many years and some moved on to other institutions in the United States, but the influx of new people and new ideas had a an impact on the US academy far beyond any particular university's or institute.

Alvin Johnson created faculty positions for nine distinguished scholars: five economists (Karl Brandt, Gerhard Colm, Arthur Feiler, Eduard Heimann, and Emil Lederer); two psychologists (Max Wertheimer and Erich von Hornbostel, who was also a leading musicologist); one social policy expert (Frieda Wunderlich); and one sociologist (Hans Speier). A year later, in 1934, the University in Exile received authorization from the Board of Regents of the State of New York to offer masters and doctoral degrees. The New School became a university, and the University in Exile became the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science.

Other leading figures of Europe's intelligentsia joined the Graduate Faculty, representing the breadth and depth of social sciences and philosophy and further enhancing the reputation of The New School for Social Research. Several members of the Graduate Faculty, including economist Gerhard Colm, political scientist Arnold Brecht, and sociologist Hans Speier, served as policy advisors for the Roosevelt administration during the Second World War.

As a group, they helped to transform the social sciences and philosophy in this country, presenting theoretical and methodological approaches to their fields that had been poorly represented in American universities. When, for example, Max Wertheimer came to the United States and joined the faculty at The New School, he challenged behaviourism, the dominant paradigm in American psychology, with his Gestalt, or cognitive, psychology (Adorno 348).

Cognitive psychology has become a major subfield in the discipline today. Similarly, the work of Hans Jonas was virtually ignored

when the philosopher first came to the Graduate Faculty after the war, but it now frames many of the questions of scholars writing on bioethics and the environment. Hannah Arendt, who came to The New School after the war, had tremendous influence on theoretical and policy debates about revolution, totalitarianism, and democracy. Many other German scholars associated with the Graduate Faculty remain influential today, including philosophers as Alfred Schutz, Leo Strauss, and Aron Gurwitsch, and economist Adolph Lowe, who introduced his critical analysis of classical economic theories and developed his institutional approach to the study of economics.

The New School also promoted French scholarship in the American intellectual community by giving a home in the early 1940s to the École Libre des Hautes Études. with an official charter from de Gaulle's Free French government-in-exile, the école libre attracted refugee scholars including the philosopher Jacques Maritain, anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, linguist Roman Jakobson, and political thinker Henri Bonnet, the father of the European Economic Community. After the war, this institution returned to Paris, where it evolved into the École des Hautes Études *en Sciences Sociales*, which, to this day, maintains close ties to The New School for Social Research. In recent years, several distinguished members of this French institution have come to teach at The New School (Loyer 94).

Below we can find a list of European scholars who were aided by The New School for Social Research between the years of greatest upheaval in Europe (1933–1944), sorted out by the countries of origin:

| Country | Number of scholars |
|---|---|
| Austria | 22 |
| Belgium | 5 |
| Czech Republic | 7 |
| France | 21 |
| Germany | 74 |
| Hungary | 7 |
| Italy | 12 |

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio and Isabel María García Conesa Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena Spain*

| Country | Number of scholars |
|---|---|
| Poland | 10 |
| Russia | 16 |
| Spain | 4 |
| Switzerland | 3 |

Source: List of European Scholars Helped by the New School for Social Research (1933–1945)

These 182 European scholars can be grouped, at the same time, accordingly to the following disciplines of knowledge:

| Discipline of knowledge | Number of scholars |
|---|---|
| Languages and Literature | 12 |
| Political science | 12 |
| Medicine | 20 |
| Sociology | 14 |
| Arts & Music | 26 |
| Law | 15 |
| Philosophy | 12 |
| Psychology | 11 |
| Economics | 28 |
| General Studies | 16 |
| Education | 8 |
| History | 8 |

Source: List of European Scholars Helped by the New School for Social Research (1933–1945)

We should always bear in mind that these scholars' work in America continued the investigations which were already well begun in Europe. And for sure, their ideas changed in the context of their experiences in the American Diaspora. It was this mix of life experiences that provided the source of the school's creativity, a creativity which was fostered by the social and intellectual marginality these scholars were put into (Said 356).

In 1940 the British Surrealist artist Stanley William Hayter, who had previously founded the Atelier 17 studio in Paris, came to The New School and held several painting and printmaking workshops. One of Hayter's most famous techniques was using what he called a "drip can."

Not long after Hayter's arrival as a lecturer at The New School, Gordon Onslow Ford, another British artist who had trained and studied with André Breton and the French Surrealists in Paris,

also joined the faculty. Ford was best known for his "poured canvases," a technique wherein he poured paint onto a canvas placed flat on the floor.

Between January and March of 1941, Ford delivered a series of lectures on Surrealism at The New School. In attendance were Motherwell, Baziotes, Tanguy, Jimmy Ernst, and many others. It was rumoured, although never confirmed, that Pollock, Rothko and Gorky attended the lectures as well. The flier for the Onslow Ford's lectures read:

> Surrealist Painting: an adventure into Human Consciousness… Far more than other modern artists, the Surrealists have adventured in tapping the unconscious psychic world. The aim of these lectures is to follow their work as a psychological barometer registering the desire and impulses of the community (Rutkoff and Scott 277).

To accompany each lecture, a sequenced series of small exhibitions were held in an adjacent studio space. The first exhibition was devoted to Giorgio De Chirico; the second featured works by Max Ernst and Joan Miró; the third exhibition was by Margritte and Tanguy; the fourth and final exhibition showcased contemporary Surrealist works by Wolfgang Paalen, Jimmy Ernst, Esteban Frances, Roberto Matta and Gordon Onslow Ford himself.

Beginning in 1936, Meyer Schapiro started delivering regular lectures at The New School for Social Research. Unlike the Surrealists Hayter and Ford, Schapiro catered his lectures more to Hegelian philosophy, emphasizing style and form over matters concerning the human conscious and unconscious.

Throughout Schapiro's tenure at The New School, emerging artists and critics such as Helen Frankenthaler, Fairfield Porter, Joan Mitchell and Thomas B. Hess attended his sessions. Schapiro also gained acclaim in the late 1930s for calling attention to European modernists like Picasso, Braque and Miró, who had up until that point remained relatively unknown to New York artists who would make up the Abstract Expressionist movement.

Following the collapse of fascism in Europe and the Allied victory in World War II, the University in Exile was renamed the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science. (In 2005 the name

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio and Isabel María García Conesa*
*Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena*
*Spain*

was changed once again to The New School for Social Research, in honor of the academic institution's original name in 1919.)

In 1940, shortly before the war's end, New School President Alvin Johnson invited German theatre director Erwin Piscator to come and open a theatre workshop at the New School. Simply called the Dramatic Workshop, from 1940 to 1949, the school Piscator operated was a first-rate theatre school, and it educated such students as Marlon Brando, Harry Belafonte or Tennessee Williams.

In 1994 the New School partnered with the highly renowned Actors' Studio, and established its first Master of Fine Arts program in the theatrical arts. Also beginning that year was the popular television program Inside the Actors' Studio on the Bravo network. This New School-Actors' Studio partnership was dissolved in 2005 due to contractual issues, at which point the New School established its own theatrical college, The New School for Drama, whose teachers were well aware of the power of art:

> In a Fascist form of government some one person, usually with a silly face, a Hitler or a Mussolini, becomes the model which every subject must imitate and salute... Anyone who laughs at those stupid mugs, or incites other people to laugh at them, is a traitor. I think that is the reason why dictatorships fear artists. They fear them because they fear free criticism.... The time has come for the people who love life and culture to form a united front against them, to be ready to protect, and guard, and if necessary, fight for the human heritage which we, as artists, embody. (Mumford)

Mumford's sentiments seem to reverberate also in Ford's words:

> Tonight I have given you a brief glimpse of the works of the young painters who were members of the Surrealist group in Paris at the outbreak of the war. Perhaps it is not by chance that all of us except Brauner and Dominguez have managed to find our way to these shores... I think I can speak for all my friends when I say that we are completely confident in our work and slowly but surely with the collaboration of the young Americans we hope to make a vital contribution to the transformation of the world. (Ford)[4]

Following Hitler's ascent to power in 1933, many prominent Jewish and left-leaning academics were dismissed from their

4. Gordon Onslow Ford, concluding remarks from his lecture, March 5, 1941. See Ford.

university positions. By some calculations, over 39% of all university teachers in Germany lost their positions, with this figure considerably higher among economists and social scientists (Krohn 1993, 12). Organizations including the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars in the United States, the Academic Assistance Council in Great Britain, and the Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland in Switzerland were founded to help scholars affected by this purge find academic positions at foreign universities.

Though the United States was not the only or, in the early stages, the most common destination for displaced scholars—many took positions in Great Britain, Turkey or Palestine—an increasing number crossed the Atlantic as the political climate worsened in Europe and with the outbreak of the war.

One of the most highly concentrated groups of émigré scholars in the United States was at the newly-founded University in Exile. Efforts to bring European scholars to the New School were spearheaded by its director, Alvin Johnson. The son of a Danish immigrant, Johnson was familiar with the academic landscape in Europe and in contact with some of its most prominent figures through his work in the 1920s on the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, a multi-volume collection that he coedited with his former teacher, Columbia economist Edwin R.A. Seligman. Among the many German authors to contribute articles to the Encyclopaedia were economist Emil Lederer and sociologist Hans Speier—two individuals who would later collaborate with Johnson to bring European scholars to the United States.

Having observed the 1933 purge of German universities, Johnson seized the opportunity to strengthen the New School, a small progressive institution founded in 1919, as well as to protest both the injustice of the Nazi regime's actions and the slowness of the American government and universities to respond. He proposed the establishment of the University in Exile as a graduate program with a focus on the social sciences. Its creation would serve the purposes of introducing American students to some of Europe's preeminent social scientists and of providing those scholars an academic home in the United States (Gemelli 108).

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio and Isabel María García Conesa*
*Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena*
*Spain*

Johnson's plan explicitly aimed at a transatlantic transfer of people and ideas. By the time he began contacting European scholars and extending offers in June 1933, some had already accepted invitations to teach in Britain or elsewhere. Nonetheless, with Lederer managing hiring from his temporary home in London and Speier delivering invitations personally within Germany, the New School was able to assemble a faculty in time for the fall 1933 semester. Johnson, who was committed to a broadly defined New Deal agenda, had sought out scholars whose work, he hoped, would provide new and realistic strategies for dealing with the problems facing depression-era America.

As a result, the original group of twelve scholars—eleven German and one Italian—included six economists: Karl Brandt, Gerhard Colm, Arthur Feiler, Eduard Heimann, Frieda Wunderlich, and Emil Lederer who would become the program's dean. The remaining faculty members came from related disciplines.

Among them we can include the following scholars: Hermann Kantorowicz (law); Hans Speier, Albert Salomon, and Erich von Hornbostel (sociology); Max Wertheimer (psychology); and the sole Italian, Max Ascoli (political science) who joined the program in the winter of 1933. Upon opening, the University in Exile was renamed the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science and, though it began with only 92 students in the fall semester of 1933, by 1940 this number had risen to 520 and the Graduate Faculty had gained the right to award master's and doctoral degrees.

From the beginning, the University in Exile was on uncertain financial footing and dependent on donations and grants for its continued existence and growth. Johnson initially struggled to collect the $120,000 needed to begin the project, asking around within academic circles for donations.

It was only after the "New York Times" ran an article about the proposed University in Exile that Hiram Halle, a businessman in the oil industry, offered to provide the necessary funding. Following the establishment of the Graduate Faculty, Johnson was able to secure grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Emergency Committee and other organizations to pay salaries, create additional teaching positions and fund projects. Though the size

and frequency of these grants varied, the program continued to grow.

Among the émigré scholars added to the faculty roster were the German political scientists Arnold Brecht and Hans Simons; economic psychologist George Katona, Alfred Kähler and later Adolph Lowe; Italian historian Gaetano Salvemini; Hans Staudinger, a German Social Democrat, economist and second dean of the Graduate Faculty; and Erich Hula, an Austrian political scientist.

## CONCLUSIONS

The New School for Social Research was conceived as a safe haven for artists, professors and intellectuals to freely exchange radical ideas on politics and aesthetics, and it has continued to operate in that tradition to this day. While many of the great Surrealist and abstract artists of the era trained at formal art schools like the Art Students League, they ventured to The New School to learn about the very theories and philosophies that are most commonly associated with Abstract Expressionism, i.e. Freudian psychoanalytic theory and the human consciousness, Existentialism, and Marxist aesthetics.

The New School was not the place where artists like Motherwell and Baziotes perfected their craft, but it was where they honed their minds in the philosophies and formal theories that informed their art. The man who was largely responsible for establishing New York University's (NYU) Institute of Fine Arts was often heard to remark: "Hitler is my best friend; he shakes the tree and I collect the apples" (Johnson 95).

The 1930s and 40s brought to the United States an unprecedented harvest of refugee scholars, far eclipsing the earlier immigration of German refugees who fled to America after the failed revolution of 1848 and exerting a proportionately greater influence on American intellectual life.

The impact of these scholars from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and other countries was twofold: They instilled a high degree of professionalism in many fields and, more important, they helped deprovincialize the American mind.

The outbreak of World War II not only meant the arrival of a new and more intellectually diverse wave of displaced scholars from

*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio*
*and*
*Isabel María García Conesa*
*Universidad Politécnica*
*de Cartagena*
*Spain*

across Europe, it also signalled a shift in the Graduate Faculty's place within American politics. While historians have at times dismissed the New School as a closed-off European ivory tower, or a "gilded ghetto" (Coser 1984), recent scholarship has emphasized the impact of the émigrés on contemporary American thought.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal was influenced by the Kiel School of economic thought on structural growth economics, which combined traditional progressive era ideas and Keynesian economics to leave a significant mark on American economic policy.

With the United States' entry into the war, many of the Graduate Faculty's European scholars—including Arnold Brecht, Hans Speier, and Gerhard Colm—were also called on as consultants by the US government. The Office of Strategic Services in particular recognized the émigré intellectuals at the New School as experts on the political and social conditions in Europe, and benefited greatly from the research done by scholars like Gaetano Salvemini on the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy.

In the post-war years, the Graduate Faculty gradually became less distinctly European and was eventually integrated more closely into the rest of the New School. The university as a whole focused less on exerting influence on US public policy and turned its attention more strongly to teaching.

It did, however, continue to employ prominent émigré intellectuals, including the political theorist Hannah Arendt, who taught at there from 1967 until her death 1975. Others, like Thomas Mann and Paul Tillich taught guest lectures or were involved in seminars at the New School.

While many émigré scholars stayed in the United States following the end of World War II, some returned to Europe to visit, if not to stay. Many refused to return to their old institutions because of the schools' failure to remove former Nazis from teaching positions or because the émigrés now considered the United States, not Germany or Europe, home. Nonetheless, the visits made by University-in-Exile scholars to Europe allowed for a cross-fertilization of European and American ideas and ongoing transatlantic intellectual exchange.

WORKS CITED


Adorno, Theodor. "Scientific Experiences of a European Scholar in America."*Perspectives in American History*, vol .2, 1968, pp. 338–370.

Calhoun, Craig. *Sociology in America: A History*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007.

Coser, Lewis A. *Refugee Scholars in America: Their Impact and Their Experience*. Yale UP, 1984.

Fanton, Jonathan. *The University and Civil Society*. New School UP, 2002.

Fermi, Laura. *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe, 1930–1941*. U of Chicago P, 1971.

Ford, Gordon Onslow. *The Independent*, 20 November 2003. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/gordon-onslow-ford-37492.html. Accessed October 31, 2018.

Gemelli, Giuliana. *The "Unacceptables": American Foundations and Refugee Scholars between the Two Wars and After*. Peter Lang, 1948.

Goldfarb, Jeffrey C. *After the Fall: The Pursuit of Democracy in Central Europe*. Basic Books, 1993.

Heilbut, Anthony. "The Intellectuals' Migration: The Emigré's Conquest of American Academia." *Change*, vol. 16, no. 5, 1984, pp. 24–25, 32–36.

Johnson, Alvin S. *Pioneer's Progress: An Autobiography*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1960.

Krohn, Claus-Dieter. *Intellectuals in Exile: Refugee Scholars and the New School for Social Research*. U of Massachusetts P, 1993.

Lamberti, Marjorie. "The reception of refuge scholars from Nazi Germany in America."*Jewish Social Studies,* vol.12, 2006, pp. 157–192.

Loyer, Emmanuelle. *Paris a New York: Intellectuels et artistes français en exil*. Pluriel, 2005.

Lyman, Stanford M. "A Haven for Homeless Intellects: The New School and Its Exile Faculties." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, vol. 7, no. 3, 1994, pp. 493–512.

Mehlman, Jeffrey. *Emigré New York: French Intellectuals in Wartime Manhattan*. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 2000.

Ross, Dorothy. *The Origins of American Social Science*. Cambridge UP, 1991.

Rutkoff, Peter M., and William B. Scott. *New School: A History of the New School for Social Research*. The Free Press, 1986.

Said, Edward W. *Reflections on Exile*. Harvard UP, 2000.



*Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio*
*and*
*Isabel María García Conesa*
*Universidad Politécnica*
*de Cartagena*
*Spain*

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# "WE ARE SLIDING INTO UNCHARTED TERRITORY, AND WE ARE ALONE IN THIS."

## A New Look At Political Disorientation

*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

We are lost. We can't find our way anymore. We are disoriented, anxious, fearful. No, we are not talking about our feelings in the wilderness, without a GPS and a telephone to comfort us and no landmark to show us the way. We are at the ballot box, with a ballot and a pencil, completely at a loss about the choice we have to make in the next minute or two, as million of American voters felt on November 8, 2016:

> I cried when I left the polling location because I don't like Trump at all. I was deeply saddened to vote for him. His personality, his mannerisms and his inexperience repulse me. I wish there had been another conservative choice without simply throwing away my vote… I am deeply saddened by these options and I am not proud of our president in the least. (Fishwick)

The same uncertainty was well caught in this vignette of the UK referendum in 2016:

> In the morning of 23 June 2016, Rosamund Shaw still wasn't sure if she wanted Britain to leave the European Union. During the preceding weeks, she had been in turmoil. She absorbed a stream of negative stories about the EU in the *Daily Mail*, but wasn't sure they were reliable. She trusted Boris Johnson, but loathed Michael Gove. Her family was divided… In the voting booth, Shaw finally made her choice: she voted leave. "To be quite frank, I did not believe it would happen," she says. "I thought I'd put in a protest vote." (Lynskey)

These two voters' predicament has become quite common: today in the industrial democracies, from Seattle to Athens, most

of us are disoriented. Also, as Zygmunt Bauman said in the quote we borrowed for our title, "We are sliding into uncharted territory, and we are alone in this" (Bauman). The purpose of this article is to look at political disorientation from a new angle, as a phenomenon that has striking similarities with the physical disorientation created by an alien landscape. Getting lost, wrote Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, provokes "extreme anxiety,"

> Orientation in time, space and status are the essentials of social existence, and the Balinese, although they make very strong spirits for ceremonial occasions, with a few startling exceptions, resist alcohol, because if one drinks one loses one's orientation. Orientation is felt as a protection, rather than a strait jacket and its loss provokes extreme anxiety. (Bateson and Mead 11)

What makes the act of voting akin to getting lost in foreign lands is this: both experiences are *individual*[1] and *infrequent.* True, we vote more often than we abandon the well-marked trails of Yosemite or Yellowstone but going to polls remains a once-in-a while action even in the most democratic regimes. This means that many citizens, who follow the daily political developments with a mix of detachment and disinterest, are not at ease entering the voting booth.

As a matter of fact, the political landscape is well-travelled only by professionals: politicians, journalists, lobbyists, top civil servants, some academics. All the others, having decided a long time ago that politics may be tremendously important *at certain times,* but that it usually makes no difference to our daily life, try to guess what would be the reasonable thing to do, basing their action on minimal information (more on this below).

The problem springs from the fact that politics in a complex society would require not only constant attention but also the study of disparate and unfamiliar matters like foreign policy, nuclear weapons, tax loopholes, health insurance, or retirement systems. To complicate the matter further, political news usually reach us packaged in an unfamiliar jargon that obscures their meaning. It is perfectly reasonable to prefer playing with children, going

1. While it is possible to get lost as a group, we deal here only with the psychological experience of being alone, as we are in the ballot box.

*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

to the movies, reading a good book, or maybe watching sports, gossip, and entertainment news. When summoned to the polls, however, this attitude leaves us uncertain and confused, like someone confronted with a new territory.

"It is never a good idea to leave a marked trail in wilderness. Our fragile understanding of where we are can collapse quickly, leaving us lost, disoriented, and in peril" (Ellard 4).We know that the first action of the lost travelers who need to find their way back is searching for landmarks, "significant physical, built or culturally defined objects that stand out from their surroundings:" a mountain, a tree, a river, a building that one could recognize (Golledge). Travelers remember that they were there some years ago but today the landscape appears different to them: maybe last time it was a different season, or a different time of the day. We remember that there was snow, now absent, or a busy road, now closed, or crowds moving in a well-known path, now disappeared. Is this the valley we crossed, or is our memory at fault?

In politics today, we have left the marked trail, and reliable landmarks are in short supply. As Zygmunt Bauman said shortly before dying,

> We are living in an open sea, caught up in a continuous wave, with no fixed point and no instrument to measure distance and the direction of travel. Nothing appears to be in its place any more, and a great deal appears to have no place at all. (Bauman and Mauro 7)

We may add that while the disoriented traveler is supposed to be the same person who was in the mountains five years earlier, this is not necessarily true of the disoriented voter at the ballot box. *Politically, he may well be a very different person*: angry at the real, or perceived, corruption; fearful of new immigrants; disappointed by the lack of job opportunities; wounded by "unjust" decisions by local or national politicians. In other words, even if the political landscape were the same, our disoriented voter might perceive it differently because of his own inner changes, adding to the confusion.

If we want to answer the question why people today feel more disoriented than yesterday, our analysis needs to be more systematic and we need to look at the *strategies* people have

used to orient themselves in voting. Basically, we can distinguish three historical phases:

- men[2] as guides in politics
- parties as guides in politics
- men as guides in politics, again

In the 19th and early 20th Centuries, many countries used single-seat constituencies like the American ones, and more often than not these were small enough to allow voters to be personally acquainted with the candidates. The franchise was restricted and politicians tended to be figures of importance in the local society: land owners, merchants, lawyers, judges. Deference toward the "important citizens" was a fact of life, and political parties in the modern sense were either absent or newborns.[3] Voters used those personalities as we may use guides in a mountain tour: we don't know the path but we trust the group leader to protect us from dangers. It was not by chance that the father of attachment theory, John Bowlby, wrote: "All of us, from cradle to grave, are happiest when life is organized as a series of excursions, long or short, *from the secure base provided by our attachment figure*" (Holmes, my italics).

Even after the birth of modern political parties and the introduction of proportional representation in Europe, *local* politicians have always been important to the disoriented voter, who was often more inclined to trust someone belonging to his town, or region, than someone else.

The second phase begins when large, national, parties appeared on stage. These parties could be more or less centralized, and ideologically coherent, but in any event, they usually had well-defined positions on the issues of the day. They appealed to the voters who wanted their (real or perceived) interests defended by the party, like tariffs on foreign goods, the conquest of colonies, or the 8-hour

2. Historically, most politicians have been male, which is not to deny the existence of powerful women leaders, from Golda Meir to Angela Merkel.
3. This was the situation at the Philadelphia Constitutional convention in 1787, and the delegates made every effort to keep it unchanged, shaping the Constitution to this purpose. From that choice sprang institutional problems that haunt the United States to this day.

*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

workday. The disoriented citizen was reminded through meetings, parades, speeches, leaflets, and the like, that the party indeed was the champion of his interests: deference and personal connections became marginal, while political campaigns were the equivalent of simple maps in a difficult landscape. Parties were our true landmarks.

Parties were able to flourish, or at least to remain competitive, because they offered the voter a comprehensive vision of the world: liberal parties defended free trade and individual rights; nationalist and conservative parties emphasized the importance of glory abroad, order and tradition at home; labor, social democratic or communist parties fought for different shades of socialism. These political *Weltanschauung* were more important than specific proposals: people voted their dreams more than the policies debated in Parliament.

However, parties were enormously important in citizens' democratic education (Pizzorno, *democrazia* xxii). After World War 2, the Labour party in the UK had 1 million members.[4] In Italy, where in 1950 a substantial proportion of Southern population was illiterate, the Communist Party had about 2 million members and remained a fundamental instrument of cultural and political education for decades. In 1961, the Communist, Christian Democrat and Socialist parties together had more than 3.5 million members, that is an astonishing 10% of the adult population. In the 1948 elections, 92.23% of Italian adults went to the polls, which means that every single citizen who was not sick, insane, or emigrated in some faraway land, actually voted. Nobody felt alone, left behind, or disoriented.

It is also important to note that parties were an almost perfect tool for the less-committed, or disoriented, voter. They simplified complex or controversial issues, giving voters the opportunity to avoid the difficult and time-consuming task of making their own opinions about specific issues like tax policy or land reform.

This "Age of the Parties" lasted quite a long time, essentially covering the entire 20th century, not only because parties were a useful tool but mostly because citizens developed strong emo-

4. Parties have been more important in Europe than in the US, where most of the time they have been mere election machines.

tional attachments to their organizations (Pizzorno, *Politics*). They listened to slogans and marching tunes during meetings and rallies; they voted straight tickets from school board member to president. Their feelings passed from fathers and mothers to children, creating persistent political loyalties, as any history of elections in American states easily shows. This is relevant to understanding the feeling of loss and betrayal when parties have seemed to abandon their supporters.

It is this "loss and betrayal" that explains why today they are vastly unpopular, sometimes even hated, in many countries? Why do the voters reject this political instrument and choose to navigate the political landscape with few, or no landmarks? The answer is that in the last 40 years mainstream parties changed, disorienting the citizen. Not only in the United States, but in most industrial democracies, almost all parties converged on market solutions, approved the limitation of welfare, supported opening the borders to investments, goods and immigrants, eased the hiding of money in fiscal paradises abroad. Policy nuances between center-right and center-left parties were often lost to the average voter.

However, if free trade was supposed to bring prosperity to all, this expectation was not fulfilled. If globalization was supposed to offer opportunities to everybody, in the industrial democracies that did not happen. Salaries stagnated, inequalities skyrocketed. In the US in 2013, for example, the top 10% of families held 76% of the wealth, while the bottom 50% of families held 1%. (see Piketty, Formisano, "Trends"). It is hard to overestimate the sense of betrayal felt by citizens accustomed to see their condition, or at least that of their children, to steadily improve.

Voters reacted by looking for new leaders: in the US, "presidential elections are essentially candidate-centered, and the political party is relegated to the background" (Fabbrini). Back in 1992, well before Trump, H. Ross Perot scored a significant success as a third-party candidate.

Another aspect of our political disorientation is the refusal to participate: today voters often stay at home on election day, like would-be travelers who find the journey offered by the tour guides unappealing. Election turn-out has plummeted everywhere, except in special circumstances: citizens feel like lost travelers,

*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

angry at the tiny group that left them stranded. Representation is fragile, and not only in the US, where barely 50% of voting age population go to the polls.

In France, only 48.5% of potential voters bothered to take part in the elections for the Assemblée nationale in 2017. In Romania the percentage was 39.4% (2016). In Croatia, it was 60% (2015), in Poland it was 50% (2015), in Greece 56.6% (2015), in Portugal 55.8% (2015). From Rome to Stockholm, when citizens ventured to the ballot box, they expressed their disorientation choosing new parties, even when the platforms looked weird, the leadership incompetent, and the chances to govern marginal. Sometimes they voted *en masse* for xenophobic or quasi-fascist parties, as it happened in Germany, Austria, Hungary, The Netherlands and Finland (Kaltwasser et al.).

They were like the disoriented and enraged trekker who tries to cut straight through the wood, or up the mountain, even if there is no real reason, no definite strategy in doing so. Frustration, anger, inability to think and evaluate alternatives are the reasons behind this behavior, which of course was at its zenith in the 2016 successes of Donald Trump in the US and "Brexit" in the UK.

Now we need to take into account another important factor in voters' political disorientation: we are stressed by a deluge of contradictory messages and images on line. In this case, the appropriate comparison would not be a wilderness landscape but the urban jungle: in a foreign city we see and hear messages that we don't understand. What we would need are few and clear signs, like an oversize trolley placard indicating the baggage claim area at the airport: on the contrary we are confronted with a blizzard of messages that we are not able to interpret correctly because we lack the "tacit knowledge" of the political environment that elites possess.

While in the past the communication environment had a small number of recognized landmarks (the "serious" press, the two or three mainstream TV channels like CBS, NBC and ABC) in the last 25 years internet transformed the landscape in a kind of Wild West, with billions of messages that cross each other, all trying to win our attention for a few minutes, or seconds.

Brian McNair remarked that

> today we see increased incidence of panics of all kinds (moral, food, health), scandals and feeding frenzies, usually centered on elites, and volatility of the political agenda as reflected in the public sphere. Public discussion on all kinds of issues has become fast and frantic, the media agenda unstable and unpredictable. In feeding frenzies of the type that engulfed Bill Clinton in 1998 [...] we see loss of governmental, official and corporate control over information flows, leading to heightened competition for control of the media and public agendas.

Without much time, and effort, it is almost impossible to find the *relevant* political information we need. For the disoriented voter, this is the equivalent of a metro hub with hundreds of signs in different styles, shapes, and colors pointing to opposite directions: no hope of making sense of them.

The collapse of credibility of mainstream media is part and parcel of this new situation: if yesterday citizens would look for political clues in the endorsements of the *New York Times, Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post* in the US and *Le Monde, Frankfurter Allgemeine, The Times,* or *Corriere della Sera* in Europe, today half of the electorate in industrialized countries seems to mistrust, indeed revile, the national newspapers of reference. When and why this happened?

In the USA, Donald Trump's success has exposed a fundamental weakness of the mainstream news media whose professional model was based on "objectivity." This was a weakness that had been apparent during the rise of Senator Joe McCarthy (1948–1956) but had been forgotten in the post-Watergate era. The point is that exaggerations, empty accusations, and barefaced lies may be a liability for conventional politicians but they are an asset for demagogues who rise in time of (real or manufactured) crisis. They understand journalists' working routines and use them to their advantage: news media hunger for novelty practically compel them to report about "hot" topics, all the more so when colorful personalities like Joe McCarthy, young Richard Nixon or Donald Trump are involved. This way, skilled demagogues are able to manipulate the mainstream media with a confrontational strategy that would be fatal to traditional candidates and, at the same time, tap into the widespread resentment against media elites.

Distracted voters may be passive and uninterested, but they are perfectly aware that political elites and media elites are

*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

not only connected, but mostly overlap. This happens for reasons of industrial efficiency, more than servility or malice: there is simply no elite newspaper that can be published if government sources do not cooperate.

Political journalism was born as an arm of political action, and even when it has tried to free itself, it has been living in an incestuous relationship with power for the better part of the last 250 years. Guy de Maupassant's 1885 novel *Bel-Ami,* whose protagonist George Du Roy is a reporter, remains to this day a perfectly realistic description of the profession: "When he gained the threshold he saw the crowd collected—a dense, agitated crowd, gathered there on his account—on account of George Du Roy. The people of Paris were gazing at him and envying him. Then, raising his eyes, he could see afar off, beyond the Place de la Concorde, the Chamber of Deputies, and it seemed to him that he was going to make but one jump from the portico of the Madeleine to that of the Palais Bourbon."[5]

*Bel-Ami* was published 133 years ago, but the revolving door between politics and journalism remains well-oiled to this day.

Since the mid-1970s, the mainstream press has been promoting market solutions over public services, attacking welfare recipients, supporting globalization as a sure path to prosperity for all, and ignoring the wages stagnation. This process was accelerated by the fact that "Journalism has become obsessed with the processes of government, but incurious about any complex problem that cannot be blamed upon some hapless minister" (Toynbee). Unfortunately, the issues that matter to the average citizen—unemployment, wages, prices, bureaucracy—are not those whose solution depends on the ability of any single individual in government. No surprise, then, if disappointment and rage toward politicians slowly spread into disappointment and rage toward journalists: in many cases it may be unfair, but it is so.

5. George Du Roy, the main character in the book, is a journalist. Palais Bourbon was the seat of the Chamber of Deputies, now the French Assemblée Nationale.

Newspapers are private firms which, in a capitalist society, exist only as long as they make profits.[6] Before being paladins of Free Information and servants of Democracy, editors and reporters are either politicians-in-waiting, or humble wage-makers who deal with what the publisher and the editor decide to deal. If the publisher wants to credit George W. Bush's lies on Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, with disastrous consequences for the United States and the world, neither the young reporter nor the prestigious pundit will change the front page.

It was not lost to American citizens that the establishment media had accepted, promoted, and even embellished Bush's crude lies about Iraq: in the US not a single antiwar personality was to be seen on TV during the buildup to that war, whose human and financial costs have been staggering. And in 2002 it was the *New York Times*' Judith Miller, and not Fox News or yet-to-be-founded Breitbart News, who was at the forefront of the warmongering.

We live in an era of instant communication, with billions of web sites offering free information about everyone and everything. But it is precisely this overcrowded internet landscape that does not offer us clear paths to a decision; on the contrary, it is a serious obstacle to any meditated choice. Contradictory claims about important topics like global warming or vaccines often paralyze public policy. Anthony Giddens was in advance on his times when, writing in 1994, he noted that, "The very skepticism that is the driving force of expert knowledge might lead, in some contexts, or among some groups, to a disenchantment with all experts" (as quoted in Beck 87). And this is precisely what we see today (Welch).

Therefore, disoriented voters now try to go back to the 19th-Century strategy to make political choices: looking for leaders. There are two reasons for this: first the disillusionment, and anger,

6. The exceptions are very few indeed: the *Guardian* is owned by a trust that has no daily control of the product and covers the losses: this arrangement, however, could end in a few years, when resources will be depleted. *Le Monde* used to be controlled by a cooperative of journalists but this solution was abandoned a few years ago, always for financial reasons. *Il Manifesto* still is in the hands of its journalists, but it occupies only a tiny niche in the Italian newspapers market.

*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

toward *all mainstream parties*, perceived as corrupt, or at least complicit in the mismanagement of the country. If parties are bad, let's look around for some honest men and women.

As Pierre Rosanvallon has noted, reputation has become

> the cardinal principle in democracies of opinion [...] In this respect, contemporary democracies bear a curious resemblance to older societies, which were regulated by honor. Indeed, honor is also a form of symbolic capital and is also constituted by social judgment. (Rosanvallon 49)

We are back to trusting persons whose reputation appears to us as a promise of good behavior because we recognize our "inability to compel governments to take specific actions or decisions." (Rosanvallon 49).

The second reason of the new faith in leaders instead of organizations is that, in the cacophony of messages, we fall back on one all-important human ability that we have: the capacity of recognizing, and judging, a face. Kin or stranger? Friend or foe? This has been a very useful tool for millennia, allowing our ancestors in the savannah to make quick decisions: fight or flee? Cooperate or keep at a distance?

Researchers have shown that humans express the same emotions with the same facial muscles and expressions everywhere in the world. Our brains are hard-wired to recognize empathy, friendliness or anger in every situation. Everywhere, people show anger with the same bared teeth and close-knit eyebrows, and they know that others making this face are angry (Bargh).

However, we tend to overestimate our ability to use this wonderful biological power, as many psychology studies show. First of all, many confidence men present themselves as trustful companions (actually, this is a prerequisite *to be* a confidence man). Second, nothing guarantees that an honest person will be a competent leader, or that he would defend *our* interests against other competing interests.

Indeed, looking for a leader to guide us out of the woods, or the urban jungle, seems to be the *least rational strategy*, because this choice is based on an exceedingly small amount of politically relevant information, practically zero. We put our faith in a man, or a woman, setting aside the programs, the constraints, the dif-

ficulties of politics, and policy, in a complex society. The task of would-be political leaders surfing these waves of disorientation is facilitated by our disposition to be enslaved by images. As we are "preponderantly visual beasts" (Ellard), our ability to resist emotionally-laden images is minimal. Who would remember human rights and due process when confronted with the pictures of victims of violent crime? If we are shown the images of dead women or children, our only reaction is asking for prompt and savage retaliation.

This is why some images, or symbols, are powerful enough to obscure any rational debate. In 2016, for many American voters, the mental image of a long, solid, impassable wall was stronger than any reasonable objection about the wisdom, the feasibility or the cost of such a barrier at the border between the United States and Mexico. In 2012, the pictures of 64-year-old Italian entertainer Beppe Grillo swimming from Calabria to Sicily were meant to show a physical fitness that "validated" his insurgent political campaign in Italy.[7] The political successes of anti-establishment leaders are strongly linked to the possibility of pushing simple, powerful, images to the forefront of the media environment, something that would have been difficult in the era when mainstream journalism was the gatekeeper of the public debate.

New leaders also take advantage of the kind of magical thinking that modernity was supposed to have erased but which, in fact, never went away. This is the idea that a strong leader will bring peace and happiness to his people, a myth so ancient that we find it everywhere, from the Bible to the tales of King Arthur and the Russian legends of the "hidden" tsar who will come back one day. What is the expectation of a Messiah, or Mahdi, coming at the end of times to bring justice on Earth if not political hope dressed as religious belief?[8]

The faith in the coming of a messiah is not exclusive to Jews: for most Shia Muslims, a redeemer called Mahdi was born on Earth,

7. One year later, in 2013, M5S, the party founded by Grillo, became the first party in Italy, with about 25% of the popular vote.

8. Of course, one could claim that the opposite is true: excessive political hopes in a leader are a form of religious cult, think of Adolf Hitler. The two visions, however, are not contradictory.

*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

then disappeared and will remain hidden until he reappears to bring justice to the world. It appears that modernity never really suppressed this kind of beliefs that have strong universal cultural roots, and are ready to surface in war, or in critical times.

Apparently, our inability to really comprehend the complex society in which we live magnifies the desire for simple solutions, notably the solution of One Man "doing it right."[9] As Bernard Manin notes, "the personalization of political choices has given a prominent role to the personality and image of leaders."

The bureaucratization of late capitalism (Graeber) finds its odd companion in the idea that such a leader could cut through red tape, expel special interests, bring prosperity and justice to the common people in no time. What did Donald Trump's slogan "Drain the Swamp" mean, if not this? It is a bad mistake to underestimate the enormous political power of that resurgent popular aspiration.

So, here we are at the ballot box, with a ballot and a pencil, at a loss about the choice we have to make in the next minute or two: is there a solution to our predicament? Unfortunately, the answer is "no." The reason is that rejecting parties, or other politically active organizations, makes voting a lonely act, a choice burdened by our deep disorientation. We could find again our path only by looking at the ballot box as the *final act* of a continuous process of self-education.

Just as like finding *one* path back to safety when lost in the wilderness is impossible (we need to make dozens of right choices in a row before reaching our home), we can defend our values, and our interests, at the ballot box only when we are involved in a collective exercise of self-government. Only if we *practice* the search for relevant information as part of a community, we will acquire the skills needed to navigate the muddy waters of 21st-century politics. In other words, democratic *action* is the sole prescription to heal political disorientation.

9. For a different interpretation, see Brown.

WORKS CITED


Bargh, John. *Before You Know It: The Unconscious Reasons We Do What We Do.* Touchstone, 2017.

Bateson, Gregory, and Margaret Mead, *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis*, New York Academy of Science, 1942.

Bauman, Zygmunt, and Mauro, Ezio. *Babel,* Polity Press, 2016.

Beck, Ulrich et al. *Reflexive Modernization.* Polity Press, 1994.

Bowlby, John. *A Secure Base.* Basic Books, 1988.

Brown, Archie. *The Myth of The Strong Leader*. Vintage Books, 2014.

Ellard, Colin. *You Are Here. Why We Can Find Our Way to the Moon But Get Lost in the Mall.* Doubleday, 2009.

Fabbrini, Sergio, and Edoardo Bressanelli. "The Presidentialization of American Political Parties." *The Presidentialization of Political Parties*, edited by Gianluca Passarelli, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Formisano, Ron. *American Olygarchy.* U of Illinois P, 2017.

Golledge, Reginald, ed. *Wayfinding Behavior: Cognitive Mapping and Other Spatial Processes.* Johns Hopkins UP, 1999.

Graeber, David. *The Utopia of Rules: On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy.* Melville House, 2015.

Holmes, Jeremy. *John Bowlby and Attachment Theory.* Routledge, 2014.

Kaltwasser, Cristobal Rovira, et al. *The Oxford Handbook of Populism.* Oxford UP, 2017.

Lynskey, Dorian. "'I thought I'd put in a protest vote': the people who regret voting leave." *The Guardian,* 25 November 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/nov/25/protest-vote-regret-voting-leave-brexit

Manin, Bernard. "La democrazia del pubblico è in pericolo?" *Comunicazione politica*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2014, pp. 575–80.

McNair, Brian. *Cultural Chaos: Journalism and Power in a Globalised World.* Routledge, 2006.

Piketty, Thomas. *Capital in the XXI Century*. Belknap Press, 2017.

Pizzorno, Alessandro. *La democrazia di fronte allo stato. Una discussione sulle difficoltà della politica moderna.* Annali della Fondazione Feltrinelli, 2010.

Pizzorno, Alessandro. "Politics Unbound" in C. Mayer (ed.), *The Changing Boundaries of Politics*. Cambridge UP, 1987.

Rosanvallon, Pierre. *Counter-democracy. Politics in An Age of Distrust*. Cambridge UP, 2008.

Fishwick, Carmen, and Guardian readers. "Why Did People Vote for Donald Trump? Voters Explain." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 9 Nov. 2016, www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/09/why-did-people-vote-for-donald-trump-us-voters-explain.

Toynbee, Polly. "Breaking News,"*The Guardian,* 5 September 2003. https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/sep/05/david-kelly.media

"Trends in Family Wealth, 1989 to 2013." Congressional Budget Office, August 18, 2016. https://www.cbo.gov/publication/51846. Retrieved November 29, 2017.

Welch, Stephen. *Hyperdemocracy.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.



*Fabrizio Tonello*
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter Nº 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# "THE THIN DELIGHTS OF MOONSHINE AND ROMANCE"

## Romance, Tourism, and Realism in Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

Hawthorne's engagement in the discourse of tourism dates back to the very beginnings of his literary activity. In the early 1830s, following various failed attempts to place his fictional work with publishers[1], the young author was investigating other avenues that might further the literary aspirations he had been nurturing for some years[2]. The early setbacks with the publishing industry pushed the young Hawthorne to experiment with other narrative forms and, in the summer of 1832, he resolved to undertake a tour of upstate New York, New England, and Canada to collect new materials for a projected collection of travel sketches. Hawthorne probably thought that the extraordinary popularity of this genre might help to win over publishers and gain the public recognition he needed to launch his literary career. A letter to Franklin Pierce, dated 28 June 1832,

1. For a reconstruction of the beginnings of Hawthorne's career, see Baym 1976 and Thompson. For a recent interpretation of Hawthorne's early phase, see also West. Hawthorne's problematic relationship with publishers began as early as 1828 when, as is well known, he published anonymously and at his own expense, *Fanshawe*, a novel he would later repudiate.

2. In a well-known letter written to his mother at the age of sixteen, he confessed, in a mixture of serious and humorous tone, his intention to become an author with a capital A: "What do you think of my becoming an Author, and relying for support upon my pen. Indeed I think the illegibility of my handwriting is very authorlike. How proud you would feel to see my works praised by the reviewers, as equal to the proudest productions of the scribbling sons of John Bull. But authors are always poor Devils, and therefore Satan may take them," in Hawthorne 1984, 139.

clearly indicates the motivations behind his decision:

> I was making preparations for a northern tour, when this accursed Cholera broke out in Canada. It was my intention to go by way of New-York and Albany to Niagara, from thence to Montreal and Quebec, and home through Vermont and New Hampshire. I am very desirous of making this journey on account of a book by which I intend to acquire an (undoubtedly) immense literary reputation, but which I cannot commence writing till I have visited Canada.[3]

As Beth Lueck points out, Hawthorne's itinerary was based on the picturesque tour, a practice originated in England in the late eighteenth century which became "enormously popular in the United States in the 1820s and 1830s" (154). According to Alfred Weber, "all the places and itineraries mentioned by Hawthorne in his two letters [concerning the journey] and in the relevant travel sketches lie, without exception, on one of the three routes described in the tourist guides" (10). Both critics underscore Hawthorne's indebtedness to travel guides as well as travel writing in general, such as Washington Irving's *Sketch Book*, which he read avidly in his youth.

Alfred Weber, Beth Lueck and Dennis Berthold, editors of *Hawthorne's American Travel Sketches*, agree that "My Visit to Niagara" (1835) is the most significant piece. In Lueck's words, it "is the climatic sketch in Hawthorne's series of travel sketches from his 1832 tour, and it may well have originally been intended as the climatic piece of the framework of 'The Story Teller,' just as Niagara Falls often served as the climax of the northern tour for nineteenth-century tourists" (169). The sketch tellingly captures the transformation of travel into a touristic experience and identifies several structural features that typify the tourist logic. However, it is my contention that the importance of this sketch goes well beyond documenting either the emergence of mass tourism (which found in the Niagara Falls an iconic attraction), or its prominent role in the early stage of the writer's career. The reflections on the discourse of tourism that Hawthorne presents in this text form an illuminating report on his working of a new rationale and a new aesthetic for fiction

3. Quoted in Weber 2.

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

writing, which he would later formalize in the prefaces to his major romances and, above all, in *The Marble Faun*.

The sketch centers on the slow, complex process by which the narrator first manages to overcome the initial disillusionment when coming face-to-face for the first time with the renowned tourist attraction that are the Niagara Falls and then succeeds in appreciating the beauty of the place, as well as recognizing the symbolic and cultural significance of his experience there. What enables Hawthorne to attain a different perspective on the Niagara Falls is, I want to argue, his deployment of a specific aesthetic gaze produced as an alternative to the prevailing attitude towards the place–the tourist gaze.[4] The process through which the narrator conveys this new aesthetic gaze on the Falls bears a surprising resemblance to the process through which, in "The Custom House," Hawthorne articulates a kind of specific fiction writing he calls "romance."It is on this basis that he, again in "The Custom House" as well as in other Prefaces to his novels, claims a higher status for romance-writing, making romance distinct from the popular fiction of his day.[5] I will then explore how the discourse of tourism resonates in the romance which takes tourism as its central thematic concern: *The Marble Faun*. Hawthorne's last completed long work of fiction, which received mixed acclaim from critics, is, in my view, a moment of artistic and personal crisis for the author who finds his notion of romance writing caught in a sort of double bind created by the touristic nature of his stay in Italy. As the plot of the novel suggests, in his efforts to extricate himself from the situation, Hawthorne, envisioned and experimented with a new kind of writing that led him to revise and alter radically the romance form he had previously elaborated in favor of a much more realistic style of fiction.

4. John Urry coined the definition "tourist gaze" to indicate a way of seeing the attractions and the reality in general experienced by tourists as individual, but actually "socially organized and systematized," that is to say largely framed by the institutions, discourses and practices which govern tourism itself. The tourist gaze is thus inevitably less a reflection of the reality seen and more a projection of a specific protocol of seeing upon a given reality (Urry 1). This concept continues to be a staple of tourist studies, even though it has been subjected to criticism and revision (see especially MacCannell 2011).
5. On this, see Brodhead 1986, 48–66; and Arac.

Some years ago, Winfried Fluck wrote that "In the emergence of the study of American literature and the formation of a separate discipline called American Studies, the 'invention' of the concept of an 'American romance' has played a crucial role" (415). Fluck's statement can be taken as the end point of a powerful revisionary process experienced by the category of romance. From being regarded as a foundational and axiomatic tenet of a supposedly unique American tradition—the bedrock of the sister disciplines American literature and American Studies—the concept became increasingly untenable when new research exposed both its historical inconsistencies and the underlying vested interests. From the 1980s on, the "romance hypothesis" was parsed as a critical mystification, an ideologically inflected paradigm obfuscating behind its seemingly intellectual and critical guise a vision of the American literary and cultural tradition that was male-oriented, based upon the repression and exclusion of a substantial number of other subjects—primarily, but not exclusively, women—and historically and theoretically flawed.[6]

Yet, romance as a category is far from having disappeared from critical discourse. Along with Fluck, other scholars have begun to investigate romance from a different angle: notably its social use, as well as its cultural and literary functions within the literary field. Jonathan Arac, in particular, has maintained that "Hawthorne called his long narratives 'romances' to claim their difference from the novels of the day," which enabled him "to establish an independent imaginative space, to gain for his work freedom from compromising involvement with his personal political commitments as a Democratic party loyalist or with larger, national controversies with slavery" (135). In other words, both through the definitions of "romance" presented in the Prefaces and the kind of fiction used in his major works, Hawthorne articulated a call for recognition of the special cultural and artistic authority of specific forms of fiction he called romance. For Hawthorne, then, the element distinguishing romance from common

6. Among the most relevant critiques and revisionary interventions into the "romance hypothesis," see Baym 1984; Dekker; Ellis; McWilliams; Fluck.

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

novels lies precisely in the literary status it aspired to, an aspiration which the critical establishment later elevated into orthodoxy.

It must also be remembered that the context in which Hawthorne developed his vision of romance was characterized by the rise of the market as the dominant economic force. Its pervasive influence grew so rapidly that the very concept of literature in its modern sense evolved in response to the advent of the market. Given the extremely fluid, not to say chaotic, state of the antebellum literary scene, the increasing force of the market, and the virtually complete absence of other institutions capable of supporting literature, it is hardly surprising that Hawthorne tried to steer a middle course between the demands of literature, on the one hand, and those of the market, politics, nationalism, and other external determinants, on the other. Among the forces that were exerting their influence over literature, tourism played a significant role, for it was a crucial agent in the transformation of the cultural scenario of antebellum America.

Since Dean MacCannell's groundbreaking book, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976), tourist studies have become an established field of research and an interesting example of the cross-fertilization generated by the intersection of different disciplines. In addition to sociology, geography, anthropology, ethnography, and economy, other areas of inquiry have converged to create the multi-disciplinary field of tourist studies as it appears today. Among these other disciplines, literature figures prominently for various reasons, the most evident being the investment in the imaginary and the symbolic that literary and touristic activities share. Both entail similar questions concerning the value they attach to the representational practices in which they engage. From a historical point of view, literature, in its current meaning, and tourism emerged around the same period, between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. As James Buzard noted, tourism and literature, at least during the second half of the nineteenth century, have a similar approach towards culture, its representation, and the ways in which readers and tourists can achieve varying degrees of "'acculturation.'"[7]

7. Buzard 5.

Taking my cue from the recent debate on romance and combining this with the tourist studies developed in the pioneering work of, among others, MacCannell, Urry, and Buzard,[8] I would like to suggest that the tourist experience recounted in "My Visit to Niagara" functioned as a testing laboratory through which Hawthorne undertook a reconfiguration of fictional writing, equipping it with the symbolic status he thought it deserved.

The sketch presents a typical touristic experience that was already a well-established reality as early as 1835. The narrator arrives at the Niagara Falls full of expectations derived from his readings and the hearsay about the Falls: "never did a pilgrim approach Niagara with deeper enthusiasm, than mine" (Hawthorne, 1989, 55). It could be argued that in a virtual but, at the same time, very realistic sense, when Hawthorne arrived at the Falls, he had already been there. He had seen Niagara in thousands of representations, both visual and verbal, that a booming print industry had disseminated all over the country, making the site into a worldwide tourist attraction and national symbol. This is why, upon arrival, the narrator does not rush to see the Falls in person, but delays his visit for fear that they might not meet his expectations, as indeed actually happens. After a rather flat, unemotional description, Hawthorne asks: "Were my long desires fulfilled? And had I seen Niagara?" Here is his answer:

> I had come thither, haunted with a vision of foam and fury, and dizzy cliffs, and an ocean tumbling down out of the sky—a scene, in short, which nature had too much good taste and calm simplicity to realize. My mind had struggled to adapt these false conceptions to the reality, and finding the effort vain, a wretched sense of disappointment weighed me down. (58)

The disappointment the narrator experiences is hermeneutic: the image of the Falls he had formed in his mind through the countless reproductions had assumed a consistency, even a reality, of its own that now clashes with the actual perception. He finds it impossible to reconcile his idealized presupposition derived from guidebooks and other travel writings with the Falls he actually sees. Imagination appears here in the guise of a standard-

8. See MacCannell 1999; 2011; Urry; Buzard.

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

ized, commercialized, and counterfeit product, a fake or forgery for the consumption of a mass public of tourists and readers alike. This experience provokes a crisis of authenticity, while a sense of inadequacy overwhelms the narrator who confesses to feel "unworthy to look at the Great Falls, and careless about beholding them again" (58). Sightseeing appears to him as a debased form of experience—an all too common stereotype in tourism studies.

There are some asterisks between this first section of the sketch and the second section that starts with a transformation in the middle of the night when the narrator's dreams are intermixed with the tumult of the Falls. Hawthorne describes it at length:

> The noise of the rapids draws the attention from the true voice of the Niagara, which is a dull, muffled thunder, resounding between the cliffs. I spent a wakeful hour at midnight, in distinguishing its reverberations, and rejoiced to find that my former awe and enthusiasm were reviving.
>
> Gradually and after much contemplation, I came to know, by my own feelings, that Niagara is indeed a wonder of the world, and not the less wonderful, because time and thought must be employed in comprehending it. Casting aside all pre-conceived notions, and preparation to be dire-struck or delighted, the beholder must stand beside it in the simplicity of his heart, suffering the mighty scene to work its own impression. Night after night, I dreamed of it, and was gladdened every morning by the consciousness of a growing capacity to enjoy it. (59)

What comes after this transformative process is no longer a mere travel report, but an aesthetic description of the place, a "contemplation." Other tourists are perceived as an annoying interference but also a structural element of the picture Hawthorne depicts. This process culminates at the end of the sketch, when the narrator, about to leave and now at some distance from the Falls, is finally alone:

> My enjoyment became the more rapturous, because no poet shared it—nor wretch, devoid of poetry, profaned it: but the spot, so famous through the world, was all my own! (61)

By sublimating the tourist gaze into an eminently aesthetic one, the narrator is finally able to enjoy the Niagara Falls, which now appear to him as a natural and aesthetic object at the same time. Sightseeing is thus transformed, in Hawthorne's narrative, into

a powerful, subjective aesthetic gaze able to transcend the limits of the tourist gaze and regain the sublime quality of the landscape.

The change in perspective effected by the nightly process appears remarkably similar to another, much more famous, change in perspective found in "The Custom House," the sketch which introduces *The Scarlet Letter*. In an effort to present the specific qualities of romance writing, Hawthorne contrasts the daytime routine of his business at the Custom House—boring or interesting as it may be—among the various characters that keep him company there with the action of daydreaming in which a romance writer is involved at night. If during his daily working hours his "imagination was a tarnished mirror" (Hawthorne 2008, 29), in the dead of night it was magically rekindled, and became creative again. "If the imaginative faculty refused to act at such an hour, it might well be deemed a hopeless case. Moonlight, in a familiar room, falling so white upon the carpet, and showing all its figures so distinctly—making every object so minutely visible, yet so unlike a morning or noontide visibility—is a medium the most suitable for a romance-writer to get acquainted with his illusive guests" (30). Hawthorne's transformation of the "domestic scenery," the ordinary, daytime life into "things of intellect" (30), closely follows the process through which he had rescued the Niagara Falls from the tourist gaze to reinstate them in an aesthetic realm.

This special space is described as a "neutral territory, somewhere between the real world and the fairy-land, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet, and each imbue itself with the nature of the other" (30). The narrator might have been able to fabricate other forms of writing while working in the Custom House,[9] but not romance. For romance requires a dedication of its own, incompatible with his position as a surveyor: "I had ceased to be a writer of tolerably poor tales and essays and had become a tolerably good Surveyor of the Customs" (32). However, Hawthorne had to be either an author with a capital A or a public officer, he could not be both. In other words, it is not the profession of authorship as such, but that of the author as an artist (the romance writer), which is incompatible with any other occupation. To transmute

9. "I might for instance have contented myself with writing out the narrative of a veteran shipmaster" (Hawthorne 2008, 31).

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

an imaginary piece of "fine red cloth, much worn and faded" (27) into a work of literary art requires for Hawthorne an unconditional commitment and strict adherence to the rules of aesthetic production.

## "A CHARMING ROMANCE WITH INTRINSIC WEAKNESSES"?

Hawthorne's last finished romance, *The Marble Faun*, takes its inspiration from his first, long journey outside America. First, he went to live in Great Britain, where he served four years as US consul in Liverpool. In 1857, when president Pierce—a lifelong friend to whom he owed the appointment—was not reelected, Hawthorne resigned from the highest paying job he ever had. However, at the insistence of his wife, Sophia, he decided to prolong his stay abroad. The Hawthornes traveled first through France and then Italy, where they settled for a year and a half. In spite of the length of time spent in Italy, from January 1858 to the middle of May 1859, Hawthorne seems to have been rather uncomfortable there. His notebooks suggest that he was not interested in social life, in the customs and manners of the places he visited, nor in the events that were taking place in the country. He seems to have been indifferent to the "actualities" (Hawthorne 1990, 3) of Italy at that time, characterized by the dramatic events of the Risorgimento. For him, the country appears to exist only in its aesthetic dimension: "the sum of the art works and art history assembled there" (Brodhead 1986, xii). Even Italy's artistic treasures apparently left him, on the whole, unresponsive, if not plainly distressed and baffled, as this passage from his notebooks shows: "I soon grew so weary of admirable things, that I could neither enjoy nor understand them. My receptive faculty is very limited, and when the utmost of its small capacity is full, I become perfectly miserable" (Hawthorne 1876, 50). Apparently, Hawthorne was not fascinated by Italian art, which induced in him a peculiarly touristic form of shame,[10] which recalls the reaction he had been

10. "He often failed," Brodhead observes, "to experience the ecstasies mandated by touristic expectation, and his notebooks show him afflicted with two emotions generated by such failures: what Dean MacCannell has called touristic shame, painful inward self-criticism for his inability to feel the magical power in works that often bored him to stultification; and what

experiencing upon his arrival at Niagara Falls and definitely made him "not a very successful tourist" (Brodhead 1990, xii).

Brodhead's comment reiterates a commonly held view of Hawthorne's sojourn in Italy first proposed by Henry James who, in his 1879 study, defined his compatriot's approach to Italy "simply that of the ordinary tourist–which amounts to saying that he was extremely superficial" (1984, 439). Proof of this is, for James, the persistent "impression that Hawthorne was a good deal bored by the importunity of Italian Art, for which his taste, naturally not keen, had never been cultivated" (440), as well as "his curious aversion to the representation of the nude in sculpture" (441). In his typical, subtly acrimonious ways ("one feels that the brightness or dinginess of the frame is an essential part of his impression of the work" [441]), James insists on his countryman's ineptitude in appreciating Italian art, and ascribes this shortcoming to the fact that Hawthorne represents "the last specimen of the more primitive type of men of letters" (442). "An American as cultivated as Hawthorne," James observes, "is now almost inevitably more cultivated, and, as a matter of course, more Europeanised in advance, more cosmopolitan" (442). This lack of acculturation did not, however, prevent Hawthorne from producing a book from his stay in Italy, which by the time James writes his biographical essay had become "part of the intellectual equipment of the Anglo-Saxon visitor to Rome and is read by every English-speaking traveler who arrives there, who has been there, or who expects to go" (444).

I wish to expand a little on James's comments, because they have contributed significantly to the course of the subsequent critical debate on *The Marble Faun*, but also, more importantly, because they are indicative of the conundrum in which Hawthorne found himself when he wrote the novel. After having exposed the limitations of Hawthorne's aesthetic perception, the paucity of his cultural capital in classic art, his being, in a word, nothing more than an "ordinary tourist" in Italy, James moves on to discuss *The Marble Faun*, which he considers a less accomplished romance than Hawthorne's previous work, on account of its

might be called touristic aggression, a satirical rage against the structure of expectation that made him feel such incompetence and remorse" (Brodhead 1990, xii–xiii).

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

huge popular success and its status as a travel guide for tourists. James remarks twice (with a touch of envy?) that although this "moonshiny romance" was "the most popular of [Hawthorne's] works," on the whole, "the thing remains a charming romance with intrinsic weaknesses" (445). These weaknesses originate in its touristy appeal, which, in James's eyes, impairs any serious artistic intent it may have aspired to, and makes it "something second-rate and imperfect" (445). Myth replaces history, pushing the balance between the real and the imaginary too much toward the latter and turning the narrative into "an almost fatal vagueness" (447).

James's criticism, however, takes on a different value when read less in terms of the qualities of *The Marble Faun* itself and more with regard to the function the tourist discourse plays in the novel. In this perspective, I would suggest that the Italian experience caused a deep personal and artistic crisis in Hawthorne, a crisis epitomized in his status as a tourist. Interestingly, Hawthorne's reaction to the Italian environment was completely at odds with that of his wife, whose notebooks testify to her joy and delight at being in Italy. This disparity, I suspect, lies precisely in their divergent attitudes. Sophia, herself a painter and copyist, did not seem to resent her tourist status, while for her husband, this condition was highly problematic, since it presupposed a debased form of perception and experience that was essentially incompatible with the specific artistic project he was pursuing. If, at first sight, *The Marble Faun* might seem partially to replicate and partially to combine the perspective deployed in "My Visit to Niagara" and "The Custom House," the scene portrayed marks an obvious difference. Set in the Old World, the novel does not focus on a natural panorama or American history, but on the monuments from Italy's past, the remnants of a history as old as Western society itself, and on some of the most renowned works of art in Western society.

From this point of view, Italy represented a formidable challenge for Hawthorne. It constituted a sort of ultimate test for his romance theory, which, in this country, faces a paradox: how can a writer deploy an aesthetic gaze able to "remove farther from the actual and nearer to the imaginative" (Hawthorne 2008, 31)

what is an already highly aestheticized, imaginary reality? While in *The Scarlet Letter* the "rag of scarlet cloth" is only imaginatively a "ruin," the result of a "now forgotten art" (27), in the Italy portrayed in the novel and experienced by Hawthorne himself, the object of sightseeing is an actual, already highly wrought artistic landscape of almost unfathomable historical depth.

I propose to read *The Marble Faun* as symptomatic of Hawthorne's dilemma. The aesthetic gaze codified in his romance theory gets caught between sightseeing, on the one hand, and the much more sanctioned aesthetic gaze protocols of Italian high art, on the other. What function can romance still perform in this context? These seem to be some of the key concerns at stake in Hawthorne's last published work. *The Marble Faun* is witness of his changing perspective on the functions of literary writing under the impact of the developing tourist industry within a very unstable and mobile cultural panorama. The preface to the novel, in which Hawthorne records and deplores the disappearance of an idealized figure of the reader is emblematic of his predicament. Although, he admits, he never "personally encountered, nor corresponded through the Post, with this Representative Essence of all delightful and desirable qualities a Reader may possess," nonetheless he had always maintained a "sturdy faith in his actual existence, and wrote for him year after year during which the great Eye of the Public (as well it might) almost utterly overlooked [his] small productions" (Hawthorne 1990, 1–2). Now, by contrast, Hawthorne seems inclined to tolerate the fact that his idealized reader figure, if she or he ever existed, is more likely to be found "under some mossy grave-stone, inscribed with a half-obliterated name, which [Hawthorne] will never recognize" (James 1984, 2). The new reader he is now addressing appears to be much more similar to the tourists he had come across during his stay in Italy, rather than the intimate friend he had in mind for his previous works.

In fact, in the second half of the Preface, Hawthorne openly connects romance with tourism.[11] He does so, however, by fur-

11. According to Nattermann, the well-known passage from the Preface in which Hawthorne specifies that "Italy, as the site of his Romance, was chiefly valuable to him as affording a sort of poetic or fairy precinct, where

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

ther expanding on an aesthetic protocol he had already brought up in his earlier novels: the picturesque. In two of the three prefaces to his previous longer works of fiction, this aesthetic protocol is invoked to connote either positively or negatively, i.e. as picturesque or unpicturesque, the subjects of his writing as well as the kind of writing he was striving to produce. A similar function of the picturesque occurs also in all three previous texts. In *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester's strong "spirit" is marked "by its wild and picturesque peculiarity," just as "this beautiful woman"'s "attire and mien" appears "so picturesque" (Hawthorne 2008, 44). Pearl also is characterized by the "brilliant picturesqueness of her beauty" (James 1984, 162). For the sake of brevity, I only reference these examples, but similar cases can be found in both *The House of the Seven Gables* and *The Blithedale Romance*. Therefore, Hawthorne's notion of romance appears to overlap with the category of the picturesque. However, as Lueck noted, in employing this concept, Hawthorne rather had the model of the picturesque tour in mind than the aesthetic protocol theorized by William Gilpin and Uvedale Price. The picturesque was already outmoded by the time Hawthorne was writing his novels, but it had seen a powerful comeback thanks to the tourist industry, which made it a popular component of sightseeing.

As the Preface to *The Marble Faun* illustrates, Italy now seems to offer the favorable conditions to overcome the historical and social impediments which made romance writing so difficult in America. At the same time, the artistic landscape of Italy far surpasses the code of the picturesque, thus again destabilizing and complicating the task of the romance writer. In Italy, art is not encased only in museums, where it is exposed to a highly codified aesthetic gaze, but is part and parcel of everyday life. How can the romancer hold out, when confronted with such a complex reality?

My suggestion is precisely that *The Marble Faun* exposes both the personal and artistic crisis that Hawthorne faced as a result

actualities would not be so terribly insisted upon, as they are, and must needs be, in America" (Hawthorne 1990, 3), "represents the realm of American tourist expectations about Italy" (Nattermann 64). The article is an early, extensive treatment of the functions of tourism in Hawthorne's novel.

of his tourist status in Italy. Since publication in 1860, criticism has mostly focused either on the moral conflict and the guilt theme at the center of the plot or on the peculiar tourist guide quality of novel, which resembles a sort of Murray travel guide with a literary twist. Beside the obvious drama of Donatello and Miriam, there is another case that unfolds in the artistic aspirations of the two American protagonists, the sculptor Kenyon and the painter Hilda. Both come to Italy to hone their talent and perfect their art, but also to achieve social recognition and a form of consecration. Their artistic aspirations constitute a core aspect of the plot. From this point of view, the novel is the story of an artistic failure, since neither Kenyon nor Hilda manage to attain recognition as successful artists, while their inability to achieve artistic success is ultimately related to their tourist status. These two characters mirror the "rise to prominence in American life of the Europe of tourism and high art, in inextricable alliance with a certain program of class assertion" (Brodhead 1990, xv). Hawthorne realizes that their artistic aspirations are linked to social status. The ability to appreciate Italian art was rapidly becoming a class marker, identifying a new, cosmopolitan, affluent class, which found in acculturation and familiarity with European art a standard of legitimacy.

The novel opens with a scene which epitomizes a tourist gaze in action. In the Capitoline museum, "four individuals" (Hawthorne 1990, 5) are engaged in admiring works of art and, at the same time, gazing out from a huge window towards the Forum, the Coliseum, and, further away, the Roman Hills. The scene encapsulates a "must-do" of the eternal city. Thus, the first picture of the protagonists of this story portrays them as tourists intent on admiring a world famous tourist attraction. The narrator then informs us that three of them are "artists, or connected with Art" (7), while the fourth is a young Italian whose "connection" with art is of a different sort. He is a rather mysterious character, appearing to be a strange combination of aristocratic and rural attributes suspended midway between human and animal life. He also bears a striking resemblance to the statue of the faun they are admiring in the museum. While the other three are, or would like to be, artists, Donatello seems an object of art: a living combination of classic beauty and rustic

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

life, he materializes the picturesque, a quality which makes him a desirable companion, a sort of tourist attraction himself.[12]

What kind of artists are the other three protagonists of the story? Miriam is also a mysterious figure, a young and beautiful woman of rather obscure origins, partly Italian, partly English, but also possibly Jewish and African-American. On a card which she has on the door of her studio, she calls herself an "artist in oils" (39). Although she seems to possess genuine talent, readers are offered only sketches of possible future works in oil which seem to remain at the stage of mere attempts. Hawthorne's characterization of the two American protagonists, Hilda and Kenyon, is particularly interesting. They are defined by a curious double standard. On the one hand, they present themselves as artists, while, on the other, the narrative undermines this designation by insistently suggesting that they ultimately do not measure up to their aspirations. Kenyon, for instance, perhaps the most promising of the three, is reported to have set up his studio in the same rooms Canova had occupied in the past. Unlike his illustrious predecessor, however, he can count on "chiefly the attempts and experiments, in various directions, of a beginner in art, acting as a stern tutor to himself, and profiting more by his failures than by any successes of which he was yet capable" (117). This is not exactly a flattering judgment. Kenyon is basically portrayed as a "wannabe" artist. This definition applies also to Miriam and Hilda. Much as they are always busy working, none of the three ultimately manages to produce a finished piece.

Hilda is certainly the most interesting of the three.[13] When still in the US, she had evinced "a decided genius for pictorial art," but "since her arrival in the pictorial land, Hilda seemed to have entirely lost the impulse for original design, which brought her thither" (56). She is so overwhelmed by the richness and beauty of the Old Masters that she suffers from something that recalls the Stendhal syndrome. Her very talents, the deep feelings

12. For a reading of Donatello's picturesqueness in connection with his problematic classification in terms of race and national identity, and how it echoes in James's perception, see Johnson 25–59.

13. Hawthorne may, perhaps in some measure at least, have taken inspiration for the character of Hilda from Sophia herself and her sisters. On this, see, Valenti 191–199.

enabling her to establish a special relation with the works of art, and, above all, her reverential attitude towards the unapproachable greatness of their art, turned out to be obstacles much more than assets. According to Brodhead, Hilda "represents the bearer of a militant high-cultural spirit. She is the exponent of a canonical attitude, the attitude that identifies art with an exclusive group of transcendental makers" (Brodhead 1986, 73). In embodying "the sort of forces that, in *The Marble Faun*'s own decade, worked to stratify a previously unified literary expression into separated literary and popular categories" (Brodhead 1986, 73), she "belongs to a historical transformation of art into an object of reverence" (Hawthorne 1990, 74). However, the consecration of art to which Hilda cedes can only be attained at the cost of relinquishing her own artistic ambitions. "Reverencing these wonderful men so deeply, she was too grateful for all they bestowed upon her—too loyal—to humble, in their awful presence—to think of enrolling herself in their society" (Hawthorne 1990, 57). In the end, she resolves to confine her skill to the profession of a mere "copyist" (57) of Old Masters: "All that she would henceforth attempt—and that, most reverently, not to say, religiously—was to catch and reflect some of the glory which had been shed upon canvas from the immortal pencils of old" (57).

While Miriam and Kenyon insist on attempting to create original productions, Hilda, with a much more practical approach, turns to simply making copies. However, in "sacrificing herself to the devout recognition of the highest excellence in art" (60), Hilda is achieving something beyond the sacralization of art. Her devotional, reverential attitude transforms the work of art into a tourist attraction, as much as her reproductions, faithful as they are, convert the work of art into a commodity disseminated and sold almost everywhere. She is similar to that "class of men whose merely mechanical skill is perhaps more exquisite than was possessed by the ancient artificers, who wrought out the designs of Praxiteles, or, very possibly, by Praxiteles himself" (115). They transpose the artist's idea into a reality of hard marble, whereas Hilda glorifies the original picture by translating it into a marketable commodity.

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

Her powers of appreciation and her empathy with the masterpieces are the prerequisite upon which she builds the *aura* of the works she reproduces. By copying the productions of the Old Masters, she authorizes their authenticity, their meaningfulness, their almost sacred status. However, when the originals become tourist attractions in their own right, the copies operate as tourist markers, which make the work of art recognizable, popular, and, paradoxically, attest its authenticity as an attraction.[14] On the one hand, Hilda wants to establish a canon of consecrated artists; on the other, she accomplishes her mission by producing what are basically souvenirs of the Old Masters. *The Marble Faun* seems to suggest that when the work of art is turned into a tourist attraction, all that remains for modern artists is the sublime sterility of Italian art and the classical tradition, which, at best, can be admired, venerated, and copied, but which can hardly generate new creative inspiration.[15]

The predicament in which Hilda finds herself is, in many ways, the same predicament Hawthorne had to face in writing his romance in and about Italy. The solution he devised was at Hilda's and Kenyon's expense, so to speak.[16] For he projects onto their story his own dilemma, thus making it the subject of his literary production. He exorcised both the artistic and the existential fears

14. On the notion of marker and its function in tourism, see MacCannell 1999, 109–131, and Culler.

15. A recent article argues that the novel "is Hawthorne's attempt to solidify the United States' position as a major nation on the rise [...] by demonstrating that nineteenth-century Americans have more of a right than their contemporary Roman counterparts to claim Italy's historical legacy" (Ochonicky 222, 223). According to the critic, by presenting themselves as inheritors of classic Rome, by appropriating Roman cultural heritage, the American protagonists make visible "Hawthorne's national identity-building project" (Ochonicky 223). While I agree that Hilda and Kenyon betray "the imperialistic dictates of transnational tourism," I find the the critic's assumption that the novel confers them "the status of rightful heirs to Italy's past greatness" (Ochonicky 229) much more problematic, as the ending of the story suggests.

16. In a similar perspective, Jonathan Auerbach interestingly sees Kenyon as "Hawthorne's scapegoat" (Auerbach 1980, 119). The author "attempts to purge his anxiety by sacrificing another model, transferring all of his confusion and frustration to the figure of Kenyon, his fellow artist" (Auerbach 1980, 119).

that his experience as a tourist in Italy had engendered by instantiating them in the story of his four protagonists. The Americans Hilda and Kenyon treat Donatello as a native informant who can assist them in making their experience of the country more real and interesting, but who remains "other,"a "faun," something radically different from them. Despite their benevolence and consideration, they maintain a non-committal attitude towards him typical of tourists. In the concluding pages of the novel, we learn that Donatello is in prison serving a probable life sentence, while Miriam is left alone drifting with the burden of her family's past. Nevertheless, despite the many tragic events, the novel ends on a positive note, when Kenyon eventually finds the courage to confess his love to Hilda. The confession immediately leads to the subsequent decision to return to America: "Oh, Hilda," exclaims Kenyon in the concluding pages of the novel, "guide me home!" (Hawthorne 1990, 461). Having had enough of Italy, Kenyon and Hilda are now ready to go back to their country, leaving behind Donatello and Miriam. Their prospected return to America, though, entails yet another resolution, namely to relinquish the artistic ambitions that they are now ready to exchange for the real life of business and comfort. "When I go back to my dear native land, the clouds along the horizon will be my only gallery of art" (265), Kenyon says at one point midway in the novel, prefiguring his decision to relinquish his interest in sculpture altogether.

The happy ending of the story might at first seem an effort to reinstate the romance atmosphere undermined throughout the plot, but closer inspection suggests a different picture. The way out of the artistic and experiential impasse Italy posed to Hawthorne is no longer provided by a return to the spirit of romance with its ivy, lichens, and historical ruins, but rather by immersion into contemporary life, into a modern perception, a modern relationship with those ruins, i.e. an immersion into the contemporary world of modern international tourism, its discourses, practices, and rituals.

The novel records Hawthorne's keen but discomforted awareness of the increasing importance of tourism in the social, historical, cultural and literary fields. As a premonitory of the incredible impact tourism was bound to exert on the literary world, we need only

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

to think of Hawthorne's de facto invention of the transatlantic, international theme that would prove a corner-stone of much realistic fiction of the early phase. In this light, the overarching presence of tourism in the novel is far from being a mere reverberation of a major contemporary social phenomenon, or Hawthorne's way of putting aside the anxiety caused by the impending threat of the Civil War by seeking refuge in an aestheticized, foreign land. Rather, in addressing the touristic logic in detail, Hawthorne is actually laying the premises of the new realistic writing that would boom in the US shortly afterwards.[17]

We are still a long way from realism as such, but it is precisely through the emphasis on the touristic dimension that Hawthorne points the way in this direction. It can hardly be a coincidence that just a few years later, in a text regarded as a landmark of realism in fiction, we once again find the figure of the copyist of Old Masters. In one of the most famous and hilarious passages of *The Innocents Abroad*, Twain describes his visit to the "most celebrated painting in the world," Leonardo Da Vinci's *Last Supper*. "I could not help noticing how superior the copies were to the original […]. Wherever you find a Raphael, a Rubens, a Michael Angelo, a Caracci or a da Vinci (and we see them every day), you find artists copying them, and the copies are always the handsomest" (Twain 2002, 135–136). The veneration of the Old Masters now occurs within a touristic ritual in which art is adored through the liturgy of consumption that Hilda and Kenyon had, albeit unintentionally, helped significantly to establish. Hawthorne's narration of their story laid the foundations for the house of realistic fiction that other American writers would erect in following his footsteps through the streets of Rome, Italy, and old Europe.

17. For a reading of the problematic emergence of realism in relation to conflicting vision of pictorial art in *The Marble Faun*, see Glazener 51–92.

WORKS CITED

Arac, Jonathan. "Hawthorne and the Aesthetics of American Romance." *The Cambridge History of the American Novel*, Leonard Cassuto (general ed.), Clare Virginia Eby and Benjamin Reiss (associated eds.), Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 135–150.

Auerbach, Jonathan. "Executing the Model: Painting, Sculpture, and Romance-Writing in Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*." *ELH* vol. 47, no.1, 1980, pp.103–120.

Baym, Nina. "Concepts of the Romance in Hawthorne's America." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 38, no. 4, 1984, pp. 426–443.

Baym, Nina. *The Shape of Hawthorne's Career*. Cornell University Press, 1976.

Brodhead, Richard H. *The School of Hawthorne*. Oxford University Press, 1986.

Brodhead, Richard H. "Introduction." Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun* (1860), with an Introduction and Notes by Richard H. Brodhead, Penguin Classics, 1990.

Buzard, James. *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to "Culture" 1800–1918*. Clarendon Press, 1993.

Culler, Jonathan. "Semiotics of Tourism." *American Journal of Semiotics*, vol. 1, no. 1/2, 1981, pp. 127–140.

Dekker, George. "The Genealogy of American Romance." *ESQ*, vol. 35, 1989, pp. 69–83.

Ellis, William. *The Theory of the American Romance: An Ideology in American Intellectual History*. UMI Research Press, 1989.

Fluck, Winfried. "'The American Romance' and the Changing Functions of the Imaginary," *New Literary History*, vol. 27, 1996, pp. 415–457.

Glazener, Nancy. *Reading for Realism: The History of a US Literary Institution, 1850–1910*. Duke University Press, 1997.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Letters, 1831–1843*, ed. by Thomas Woodson, L. Neal Smith, Norman Holmes Pearson, Ohio State University Press, 1984.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "My Visit to Niagara" (1835). *Hawthorne's American Travel Sketches*, ed. by A. Weber, B. L. Lueck, D. Berthold, University Press of New England, 1989, pp. 55–61.

*Carlo Martinez*
*Università*
*"Gabriele d'Annunzio"*
*di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books*. James R. Osgood and Company, 1876.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Marble Faun* (1860), with an Introduction and Notes by Richard H. Brodhead, Penguin Classics, 1990.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), edited with notes by Brian Harding, Introduction by Cindy Weinstein, Oxford University Press, 2008.

James, Henry. "Hawthorne" (1879), *Henry James*. *Literary Criticism I*, ed. by Leon Edel and Mark Wilson, The Library of America, 1984, pp. 307–457.

Johnson, Kendall. *Henry James and the Visual*, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Lueck, Beth L. "Hawthorne's Ironic Traveler and the Picturesque Tour." *Hawthorne's American Travel Sketches*, ed. by A. Weber, B. L. Lueck and D. Berthold, University Press of New England, 1989, pp. 153–180.

MacCannell, Dean. *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976). University of California Press, 1999.

MacCannell, Dean. *The Ethics of Sightseeing*. University of California Press, 2011.

McWilliams, John, "The Rationale for 'The American Romance.'" *boundary 2*, 1990, vol. 17, pp. 71–82.

Nattermann, Udo. 1994 "Dread and Desire: 'Europe' in Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*." *Essays in Literature*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 54–67.

Ochonicky, Adam. "'A Better Civilization' through Tourism: Cultural Appropriation in *The Marble Faun*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol. 70, no. 2, 2015, pp. 221–237.

Thompson, Gary Richard. *The Art of Authorial Presence: Hawthorne's Provincial Tales*, Duke University Press, 1993.

Twain, Mark. *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), with an Introduction by Tom Quirk and Notes by Guy Cardwell, Penguin Classics, 2002.

Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze* (1990), Sage, 2002.

Valenti, Patricia Dunlavy. *Sophia Peabody Hawthorne: A Life, Volume 2, 1848–1871*. University of Missouri Press, 2015

Weber, Alfred. "Hawthorne's Tour of 1832 through New England and Upstate New York," *Hawthorne's American Travel Sketches*, ed. by Weber, B. L. Lueck and D. Berthold, University Press of New England, 1989, pp. 1–23.

West, Peter. *The Arbiters of Reality: Hawthorne, Melville, and the Rise of Mass Information Culture*. The Ohio State University Press, 2008.

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# ABSTRACTS
# AND NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

**MANUEL BRONCANO RODRÍGUEZ**
*Texas Ao-M International University*
*USA*



**Presidential Address for IASA 8th World Congress**
**Laredo TX, 12–21 July 2017**

Laredo is located in the vicinity of the Rio Grande/Bravo, in many senses the epitome of the border, of the frontier, of the "limen" in its etymological sense of "threshold," "doorway," or "limit." The general theme of our reunion was "Marginalia: The Borders of the Border," and the contributions the IASA members made addressed this theme from multiple perspectives, thus leading to most enriching discussions about one of the most written about topics in the scholarship of the last few decades. Such a topic has rekindled new interest, especially in the light of the recent political transformations in many regions of the globe, which are leading to revived feelings of essentialist nationalism and its atavistic fears of the other, call it the immigrant, the dissenter or, if you want, the barbarian. It is happening in Turkey, it is happening in Poland, it is happening in Britain, it is happening in the US. In this context, borders and walls, both physical and ideological, are being erected once again. *Marginalia*, in turn, is a Latin term that in its origins referred to the inscriptions that monks and other amanuensis made on the empty space surrounding the body of text inscribed on a parchment. Romance languages are largely the product of marginal inscriptions on Latin manuscripts. Thus, the first manifestations of the Spanish language are found in the glosses that monks scribbled on the margins of those manuscripts to clarify and comment on words whose meaning was already obscure for the medieval reader, and those annotations were made in the new romance language, which was nothing but macaronic Latin. By extension, marginalia refers

to those writings that do not belong in the canonical body of works of a culture or civilization, and is close in meaning to apocryphal. Furthermore, it can be understood as referring to the interstices that exist between two or more cultures, nations, or religions. In our usage of the term, marginalia refers to those areas of the world that are populated by displaced or uprooted individuals, limbic spaces in which mere survival may become an illegal activity. The present address seeks to explicate the essence of the basic concepts underlying–and driving–the theme of the Congress.

**Keywords**: IASA, International American Studies Association, the future of American Studies, borders, limits, society, ethics, Laredo TX, marginalia, US-Mexico border, *Bordelands*, Anzaldúa, Melville, Bartleby, Frost, Cavafis, Frontier(s), Migration

Manuel Broncano Rodríguez (PhD Salamanca 1990) is a Regents Professor of English at Texas A&M International University. He is currently the president of the International American Studies Association (IASA). Before moving to Texas, he taught for two decades at the University of León (Spain). Broncano has published a number of scholarly works on various American authors such as Flannery O'Connor, Willa Cather, Faulkner, Melville, Poe, etc. His latest book was released in 2014, *Religion in Cormac McCarthy's Fiction: Apocryphal Borderlands* (Routledge). Broncano has also kept an active agenda as translator. His latest translation is Giannina Braschi's *United States of Banana* (*Estados Unidos de Banana*, AmazonCrossing 2014).

**ALBERTO MOREIRAS**
*Texas A&M International University*
*USA*

## Notes on the Illegal Condition in the State of Extraction
## How Not to Be an Informant



We live, increasingly, in a state of extraction. My thesis is that we have not yet figured out the implications of a primary or fundamental logic of state extraction. We have not figured out its implications for our own predicament–for the predicament, that is, not of state functionaries as such, not of extractors and surveyors, which is a predicament of domination, but the predicament of those who would rather not be dominated, and who understand that giving up on domination is the logical price to be paid. These latter figures, those who refuse domination, those who prefer not to be dominated, hence not to dominate, they might in fact constitute the "borders of the border," that fantastic fringe territory of the human this conference has decided to thematize and, in some sense, to honor. Let me then reserve that theoretical position, the position of border or hyperborder dwellers, to develop what follows. I will claim that the border of the border is today the site where infor-

mation will not be shared—an opaque site of silence and secrecy, a place of radical reticence concerning unconcealment.

**Keywords:** the US surveillance state, state extraction, information, domination, border

Alberto Moreiras is professor of Hispanic studies at Texas A&M University, where he has had an appointment since 2010. Before that he was the Sixth Century Chair in Modern Thought and Hispanic Studies at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland (2006–2010), the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of Romance Studies and Literature at Duke University, where he taught from 1992 to 2006, and an assistant professor of Spanish at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (1987–92). At Duke Moreiras directed a program in Latin American Cultural Studies, the Center for European Studies, and an Interdisciplinary Seminar in Race in the Americas; in Aberdeen, he directed the program Literature in the World Context. He has been a visiting professor at Emory University, Giessen University in Germany, Johns Hopkins University, Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil, University of Chile, and University of Buffalo. His work focuses on contemporary political thought, Latin American cultural history, and subaltern studies. He has published over 110 essays, and his books include *Interpretación y diferencia* (1992); *Tercer espacio: Literatura y duelo en América Latina* (1999), *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (2001); *Pensar en la postdictadura* (2001), *Línea de sombra: El no sujeto de lo político* (2007). He has also published about ten edited monographic collections of essays in journals or multivolume works. He is coeditor of the Latin American section of a multivolume *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*. Moreiras has been involved over the years in the creation of three journals, namely *Nepantla: Views from South*, *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, and *Política común*. He is coeditor of the last two. He is also coeditor of *Res publica: Revista de pensamiento político*, and coeditor of a new University of Texas Press book series entitled "Border Hispanisms." He created and runs the Facebook group *Crítica y Teoría*, and is a founder of the Texas Research Group on Luso-Hispanic, Caribbean, and Latino/a Thought. He is or has been a member of the editorial boards of an additional 20 publishing ventures, from *Diacritics* and *Cultural Studies* to *Traces* and *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*. He is a frequent reader of manuscripts for five major US academic presses and routinely reads essays for a dozen journals beyond the ones already mentioned.

**MARIETTA MESSMER**
*University of Groningen*
*The Netherlands*

## Children and Youth Disadvantaged and Disenfranchised by the Current US Immigration Regime

Focusing on undocumented immigrant children who were brought to the US by their partents at a young age (the so-called 1.5 generation) and US citizen children living in irregular or mixed-status immigrant fami-

lies, this essay argues that the current US immigration regime is too strongly adult-centered and in this way not only systematically disenfranchises immigrant children but also structurally disadvantages US citizen children living with at least one undocumented parent because the parent's irregular status in practice tends to extinguish the child's citizen status. Analyzing the US's current immigration regime through the lens of under-age youth can thus function as an enabling prism to highlight the extent to which current US immigration laws and policies collide with both national and international legal practices and produce inherently contradictory or paradoxical situations; it can throw into relief the extent to which children (even US citizen children) lack sufficient agency and voice in current US immigration law; and it can foreground the deleterial consequences of the current immigration regime's prioritization of deterrence and deportation for one of the most vulnerable segments of the US population for whom not even DACA can provide sufficient protection.

**Keywords:** irregular immigrant children, 1.5 generation, limitations of DACA, constructions of illegality, US citizen children's rights, family unity, best interest principle

Marietta Messmer is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Groningen (The Netherlands). Her publications focus on the political and cultural relations between the US and Latin America; Mexican and Central American migration to the US; gender and violence in the US-Mexican borderlands; as well as theoretical debates on human rights, citizenship, and integration. Her current research project examines the US's ways of outsourcing and privatizing immigration control measures and the social, economic, legal, and ethical consequences this has for specific migrant and refugee populations, in particular children and adolescents. Her book publications include several co-edited collections on inter-American political, social, and cultural relations, including, most recently, *The International Turn in American Studies* (2015, with Armin Paul Frank) and *America: Justice, Conflict, War* (2016, with Amanda Gilroy). Messmer is managing editor of the peer-reviewed book series *Interamericana,* devoted to publications on the literatures, cultures, and societies of North, Central and South America (Peter Lang Verlag). She also served as President of the Netherlands American Studies Association (2011–2014), as executive board member and treasurer of the International Association of Inter-American Studies (2009–2012), and as Dutch representative on the board of the European Association for American Studies (2009–2016).

**ALICE BALESTRINO**
*Sapienza University of Rome*
*Italy*

## Placing Time, Timing Space
## Memory as Border and Line of (Hi)Stories in Richard McGuire's Graphic Narrative Here.

This article interrogates the Cartesian understanding of time and space in narratives grounded in memorial endeavors. It focuses on the lines that define the interconnectedness between these two dimensions in relation to the introduction of the phenomenological category of memory as a third element providing a perspective on reality and blurring the borders between present and past; here and there. This composite, operative category is tested in the analysis of Richard McGuire's graphic narrative *Here* (2014) that, both on the level of the format and on that of the story, outlines the porosity and the ultimate disappearance of the spatiotemporal borders by means of memories. This work conceives of a historical simultaneity that soaks a particular space in its past and of the margins of contingency that separate what pertains to History, what to individual stories and what gets forgotten instead—a representation which is studied against the background of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's speculations on memory in *A Thousand Plateaus.*

**Keywords**: Spacetime as a narrative category, Richard McGuire, *Here*, the American border

Alice Balestrino is a PhD candidate in American literature at "Sapienza" University of Rome. She holds a BA and an MA in Modern European and American Literatures from the University of Turin. Her research focuses mainly on Holocaust fiction published in the aftermath of 9/11. She has published on Jewish-American Holocaust literature and post-memory: "Living in the Presence of an Absence. The Puzzling Holocaust Legacy of the American Post-Holocaust Generation" in Ricognizioni. Rivista di Lingue e Letterature Straniere e Culture Moderne; and "'Radiant Darkness Leaked out Through Her Crack:' Cracked Families and Leaking Trauma in Michael Chabon's Moonglow" in CoSMo – Comparative Studies in Modernism. She has also written on the literary genres of alternate history ("Alternate Geographies for Alternate Histories. The Diagonal Space in Michael Chabon's The Yiddish Policemen's Union," upcoming for Iperstoria) and dystopia ("From Atwood to Trump: Female Bodies in the Age of Political Reproduction," upcoming for Costellazioni).



*The Borders of the Border*
*RIAS vol. 11,*
*Fall–Winter,*
*№ 2/2018*

**CHIARA GRILLI**
*Independent scholar*
*Italy*

**The Canvas and the Maze**
**Deconstructing the Wall and the Frontier**
**in Contemporary American Science Fiction**

This paper analyses how Denis Villeneuve's movie *Arrival* (2016) and the TV series *Westworld* (2016) challenge the evocative symbol of the wall and the myth of the American frontier by turning them respectively into a canvas, conceived as the primal source of communication between two cultures, and a maze, metaphorically alluding to the search for new, inner spaces. Both works express the need for new forms of introspection and interaction with the Other, giving the individual the chance to wander through visionary predictions of the future and hallucinatory mirages of the past, and to re-build his/her own self-narrative.

**Keywords**: science fiction, wall, American frontier

Chiara Grilli is an independent scholar and was awarded her PhD at the University of Macerata (Italy) in April 2018 with a dissertation in Italian American and Diaspora Studies. She was awarded several international fellowships offered by associations such as EAAS and BAAS. She has published essays about Italian American writers, Opera, cinema, and TV series. She is also fondly interested in Science Fiction, comic books, and pop culture.

**ANTONIO DANIEL JUAN RUBIO AND ISABEL MARÍA GARCÍA CONESA**
*Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena*
*Spain*

**The New School for Social Research**
**as a Patron of European Scholars**





The New School for Social Research was founded as an institution where intellectuals and artists could openly exchange ideas and theories, free from censure or political pressure. The school's founders believed that in a world engulfed by political turmoil and modern warfare, the free exchange of different ideas regarding politics, aesthetics and other intellectual pursuits was key to ensuring a just and sane world. Since its inception, The New School has maintained close ties with European ideas and philosophies of Rousseau, Kant, Goethe, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, among many others. Sensing a dire need to provide safe haven for many of Europe's scholars and intellectuals, Alvin Johnson established a new graduate department in 1933 (coinciding with Hitler's appointment to German Chancellor), called the University in Exile. with the financial assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation and other

philanthropy groups, the University in Exile was founded as a new graduate division within The New School and, more importantly, as a rescue program. Nearly two hundred European scholars and professors received visas and teaching jobs in the US from the University in Exile. While many of them taught at The New School, there was never any stipulation from the University in Exile that they were required to do so. Alvin Johnson's main goal was simply to get people out of harm's way.

**Keywords**: European scholars, patronage, rescue program, interdisciplinary pursuits

Antonio D. Juan Rubio has a degree in English Studies from the University of Murcia and a PhD from the National University of Distance Education (UNED), being given the Extraordinary Doctorate Award. He is currently working as a professor at the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena in Spain. His main research interests include: cultural studies in the United States; gender issues associated with the role of women; the teaching of English from a historic perspective.

Isabel María García Conesa has a degree in English Studies from the University of Alicante and a PhD from the National University of Distance Education (UNED), being given the Extraordinary Doctorate Award. She is currently teaching in the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena in Spain. His main research interests include: the role of women in the literature and culture of the United States, and the study of the history of the teaching of English.

**FABRIZIO TONELLO**
*University of Padua*
*Italy*

## "We are sliding into uncharted territory, and we are alone in this" A New Look at Political Disorientation

In the United States and in European democracies most citizens feel disoriented when required to vote, as shown by high electoral volatility, reduced turnout, and the successes of unconventional candidates, or brand-new parties. The purpose of this article is to look at political disorientation under a new angle, as a phenomenon that has striking similarities with the physical disorientation created by an alien landscape.

**Keywords:** disorientation, political communication, political participation, political parties, neoliberalism

Fabrizio Tonello is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Padua. As Fulbright scholar, he taught at the University of Pittsburgh and was a visiting fellow at Columbia University. His main research interests are neoliberalism, the his-

tory of the American political system, and political communication. His most recent books are *Desolation Row* (Fondazione Feltrinelli, 2017) and *La Costituzione degli Stati Uniti* (Bruno Mondadori, 2012).

**CARLO MARTINEZ**
*Università "Gabriele d'Annunzio" di Chieti-Pescara*
*Italy*

## "The thin delights of moonshine and romance" Romance, Tourism, and Realism in Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*

Hawthorne's involvement with the logic of the tourism of his day is a key aspect of his development as a fiction writer. Starting from a discussion of the early sketch "My Visit to Niagara" the article argues that the discourse of tourism, with its protocols and practices, is for Hawthorne a fertile breeding ground and conceptual framework for the elaboration of a new rationale and a new aesthetic for the fiction writing he calls "romance." It then explores how tourism resonates in the romance which takes it as its central thematic concern: *The Marble Faun*. Hawthorne's last completed long work of fiction represents a moment of artistic and personal crisis for the author, who finds his notion of romance writing caught in a sort of double bind created by the touristic nature of his stay in Italy. As the plot of the novel suggests, in his efforts to extricate himself from the situation, Hawthorne, envisioned and experimented with a new kind of writing that led him to revise and alter radically the romance form he had previously elaborated in favor of a much more realistic style of fiction.

**Keywords:** Nathaniel Hawthorne, tourism, Italy, *The Marble Faun*, romance, realism

Carlo Martinez is professor of American literature at the Università "Gabriele d'Annunzio," Chieti-Pescara, Italy. Author of two books and several essays and articles, he has worked mostly on nineteenth-century US literature and on the relationship between literature and tourism. His most recent publication is an article on E. A. Poe, "'The heresy of The Didactic': Poe, the Literary Field, and the Aestheticization of the Market," which appeared in *Arizona Quarterly*.

*Review of International American Studies*
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2 /2018
ISSN 1991–2773



# *RIAS* EDITORIAL POLICY AND *RIAS* STYLE



## *RIAS* EDITORIAL POLICY

- *RIAS* is an electronic, print-on-demand, open-access, peer-reviewed journal.
- *RIAS* appears twice a year, in Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. Copy deadlines for unsolicited submissions are, mid-November, and mid-February respectively. While calls for papers are not always disseminated for upcoming issues, when made, such calls will be announced at least 9 months prior to the scheduled publication date for each issue.
- *RIAS* welcomes submissions from all disciplines and approaches and from all parts of the world, provided that they pertain to the study of "the Americas" in the broadest implications of that term.
- Submitting a text to *RIAS*, the Author accepts that if accepted, their contribution will be distributed in the Open Access formula under the provisions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) license. (The full text of the license is available under the following hyperlink: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0)
- Please, send your submissions via our OJS system at the website http://www.rias-journal.org. Please, log in as "Author" and follow the instructions provided by the system. Please note, that submissions with incomplete metadata will be automatically rejected.

- *RIAS* seeks articles (up to 5,000 words) of general interest to the international American Studies community. If you have a proposal for an article, please contact the editor-in-chief with a brief synopsis (200 words). Suggestions for special issues, position papers, or similar initiatives should also be addressed to the editor-in-chief.
- *RIAS* solicits two types of contributions: *commissioned texts* (undergoing open peer reference) and *non-commisioned submissions* (undergoing double-blind peer reference). Each submission is reviewed by two independent referees.
- *RIAS* accepts reviews of academic monographs pertinent to the broadly understood field of American Studies. Reviews, including 300 dpi reproductions of covers, should be submitted via our OJS system. Book reviews are not refereed. Book reviews cannot have been published previously.
- Every submission should be accompanied by the Author's name, institutional affliation, and brief biographical note, in addition to an abstract of up to 200 words and an attachment bibliography.
- In principle, we accept contributions in all major languages of the Americas (i.e., English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, etc.). Accompanying abstracts should be in English (and, if appropriate, in the language of the article's composition).
- *RIAS* will publish short position papers (approximately 1,000 to 2,000 words) that deal with topical issues in the international arena of American Studies. Only four or more position papers, submitted together, will be considered. These papers will typically be derived from conference panels, colloquia or other kinds of scholarly activity. They should be gathered and edited by one contributor, who will arrange for them to be peer-reviewed prior to submission. The submitting contributor will obtain and submit all author information, and will submit along with the papers a brief explanation or synopsis of the debate that is treated, for the purposes of orienting the reader with regard to the questions or problems to be discussed. The submitting contributor will also obtain and provide a brief (100 words) abstract for each paper submitted.
- Authors retain the copyright to their contributions. This means that the Authors are free to republish their texts elsewhere

on the condition that acknowledgment is made to *RIAS*. Authors who wish to reproduce materials already published elsewhere must obtain permission from the copyright holder(s) and provide such permission along with their submission. This includes all photographs, graphs, diagrams, or other illustrations accompanying the submission.

- Sumbitting a text to *RIAS*, the Author accepts the *RIAS* policy of Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice. (For full text of the statement visit: http://www.journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/RIAS/about/editorialPolicies#custom-0).

STYLESHEET FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Please observe the following editorial guidelines when submitting a text for publication in *RIAS*:

- Submit your document in the MS DOC or RTF format.
- Start with your name, followed by your affliation between brackets, and the full title on the next line.
- Pre-format your text in Times New Roman or Unicode font typeface, 12 point and 1.5 line spacing.
- For emphasis, use italics only. Do *not* underline words, do *not* use boldface.
- All text should be justified with last line aligned left, without kerning or any special text formatting.
- For page setup, use borders of 2.5 cm or one inch at all sides, format A4.
- Minimum resolution for images is 300 dpi.
- Keep titles, subtitles and section headers as short as possible to conform to the technical requirements of the new *RIAS* template.
- Keep in mind that many readers will want to read your text from the screen. Write economically, and use indents, not blank lines between paragraphs.
- Those writing in English should use American spelling (but quotations should remain as they are in the original spelling).
- Those writing in languages other than English should observe the stylistic conventions (capitalization, alphabetical listing of personal names, etc.) linked to these languages.
- Quotations from other languages should be either in translation or appear both in the original and in translation.
- Please, follow the MLA style for citations and the attachment bibliography of works cited. Cited publications are referred to in parenthetical references in the text (please, follow the MLA 8th Edition style manual).
- Use double quotations marks. Use single quotation marks for quotations within quotations.

- Longer quotations (exceeding three lines) should be indented and single-spaced.
- Use single quotation marks around words used in a special sense.
- Periods and commas that do not appear in the original text should be placed inside the quotation marks.
- As to abbreviations, use neither periods nor spaces after and between letters (the US), except for initials of personal names (T. S. Eliot).
- Use em dashes without spaces before and after.
- Footnotes should be numbered automatically 1, 2, 3, etc.
- List your references in alphabetical order of authors' names (type: Works Cited) at the end of your document and format them in accordance with the MLA style as described in the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook*, published in 2016 (https://style.mla.org). Online information also available at the EasyBib websites: http://www.easybib.com/guides/citation-guides/mla-8/

- The general format of citation: Author. Title. Title of container (self contained if book), Other contributors (translators or editors), Version (edition), Number (vol. and/or no.), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages, paragraphs URL or DOI). 2nd container's title, Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location, Date of Access (if applicable).

- For detailed information concerning particular instances of documenting various types of sources in accordance with the MLA 8th Edition format, please consult EasyBib: http://www.easybib.com/guides/citation-guides/mla-8/

UNIVERSITY OF SILESIA PRESS
IN KATOWICE

Review of International American Studies
Revue d'Études Américaines Internationales
RIAS Vol. 11, Fall–Winter № 2/2018
ISSN 1991–2773
PRICE: 30 EUR/43 USD/40 CAD/26 GBP