Brown University Comparative Literature Journal

THE PROSPECTOR

Spring 2024 Issue 1

Bodies: The lustful, bestial, and abnormal

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Providence, RI 02912

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"As "a volume in perpetual disintegration"…, the body is always under siege, suffering destruction by the very terms of history. And history is the creation of values and meanings by a signifying practice that requires the subjection of the body."

"The boundary of the body as well as the distinction between the internal and external is established through the ejection and transvaluation of something originally part of identity into defiling otherness."

"For inner and outer worlds to remain utterly distinct, the entire surface of the body would have to achieve an impossible impermeability. This sealing of its surfaces would constitute the seamless boundary of the subject; but this enclosure would invariably be exploded by precisely that excremental filth that it fears."

- Judith Butler, Gender Trouble

Issue 1

Bodies

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A Note from the Founders

It is an immense pleasure to bring to you the inaugural edition of The Prospector, the undergraduate journal of Brown University's Department of Comparative Literature. The name of our new publication serves a dual purpose. First, "prospector" should be read as a nod to Prospect House, the home of our department and the host of fond memories from seminar discussions, office-hours chats, holiday parties, and the like. The word "prospector," however, also exists in English as a common noun. The most conventional definition of the word is someone who, particularly in an industrial context, searches an area for precious metals, minerals, or oil to later be extracted.

This inaugural issue revolves around the theme of bodies: the lustful, bestial, and abnormal. The essays presented excavate their respective literary analyses from the various bodies of text that center around the questions of physical and figurative bodies. Ranging from Freudian and fairytale definitions of maternal bodies to the lack of human bodies in writings on animals and the ephemeral, this issue lays itself bare - nude almost - to our readers, coyly exposing every crevice of the corpus to be consumed meticulously to satiate their cravings.

Of course, our goal as students of comparative literature is not to align our studies with the work of extractivists who profit from the pillaging of limited resources. Yet we can still note a degree of resonance between the task of the prospector and the various interpretive techniques that have come to shape our discipline. That is, our encounter with a text begins as a survey and is propelled forth by a desire to unearth and make meaning of the elements embedded in a text. If the prospector surveys a plot of land to estimate its potential extractive value, then we should think of literary analysis as an expansion of this gesture. Perhaps when we sit down to read a text, then, our ensuing interpretation should lead the text to be situated and understood within a broader set of theoretical, political, and even economical questions.

Ultimately, it is our hope that by starting a publication like The Prospector, we may begin to uncover the various currents of interesting ideas that course between our university's undergraduates in the humanities.

We humbly thank you for joining us on this nascent journey.

In love and literature,
Seoeun (Sunny) Choi with James Langan

Article One

Desire and Destruction: Unveiling Self-Sabotage in Sigmund Freud's 'A Special Type of Choice of Object made by Men'

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Introduction

In his paper 'On Narcissism: An Introduction,' Freud writes that "[t]he effect of dependence upon the loved object is to lower that feeling: a person in love is humble. A person who loves has, so to speak, forfeited a part of his narcissism, and it can only be replaced by his being loved (On Narcissism, 98). This statement demonstrates a kind of exchange that occurs during the act of loving another individual. While the 'Contributions to the Psychology of Love I,' and specifically the paper 'A Special Type of Choice of Object made by Men,' which will be the subject of this analysis, came almost a decade before Freud's paper on narcissism, hints of this self-sacrifice in matters concerning love already emerge. The earlier quote takes this exchange in a more positive light, where loving someone turns into a selfless act through which one can potentially be rewarded through the love of another. An intricate constellation of individuals connected by the act of loving and being loved can be construed with this idea. However, using 'A Special Type of Choice of Object made by Men,' this paper hopes to approach this relationship of exchange from a more cynical perspective, where an individual's choice in love-object causes self-destruction.

"On Narcissism: An Introduction" The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works, Edited by James Strachey, 1914. 67-102

This paper will begin by summarizing Freud's argument that he outlines in his paper on 'A Special Type of Choice of Object made by Men.' This will be achieved by highlighting the two preconditions required for choosing the love-object. Freud does not offer an explicit definition for the term 'love-object' in this paper specifically, but from the context and conditions that he proposes, the love-object can emerge nominatively as the object of desire — a woman in the

context of Freud's writing — that the individual is romantically or sexually attracted to. After listing the preconditions, this paper will also look at the effects that the love-object causes within the individual, which can be behavior patterns, phantasies or other accompanying emotions. After summarizing Freud's argument, this paper will attempt to connect the conditions and consequences of the love-object with the theme of self-destruction within the individual. To this aim, the paper will explore the effects of mental stress that the desire of love-objects causes to the individual's unconscious, as well as the loss of security in the individual's status, which they experience both emotionally and metaphorically. Overall, this paper will examine to what extent hints of sacrifice and self-sabotage through love are present in Freud's essay on love-objects, a decade prior to his composition of the quote mentioned above.

Summary of Freud's Arguments

Freud, Sigmund. "A Special Type of Choice of Object made by Men (Contributions to the Psychology of Love I)" Edited by James Strachey, 1910. 163-176

Freud lists two main preconditions in the choice of object made by men and acts that follow these preconditions: an 'injured third party' and the 'love for a prostitute.' The 'injured third party' requirement stipulates that the person in question would never choose as his love-object a woman who is disengaged, meaning that another man must have a claim right of possession as her husband, fiancé or friend (Freud, 166).

This is so significant in some instances that a woman can be ignored, or even rejected, so long as she does not belong to any man but becomes an intense object of desire as soon as she enters into a committed relationship with another man. The second condition is the 'love for a prostitute,' which states that a woman who is chaste and whose reputation is irreproachable never exercises an attraction that might raise her to the status of a love-object (Freud, 166). Only a woman who has a negative reputation in a sexual context and whose fidelity and reliability are open to some doubt is able to reach this status. As jealousy plays a meaningful role in love-object choices, it becomes a necessity that the woman's loyalty cannot be ascertained by the man. Due to these conditions, when the man is in love with this 'unavailable and unreliable' woman, the man will feel the compulsion to rescue his love-object from her state. The man is convinced that she is in need of him, that without him she would lose all moral control and rapidly sink to a lamentable level (Freud, 167). These relationships also contain a repetitive element, where the man meets a woman he feels is the only person in the world he can ever love and, following external events such as changes of residence and environment, the love-objects are constantly replaced one after the other so that a "long series of them is formed" (Freud, 168).

Freud attributes these conditions and impulses partially to an individual's infantile defiance towards the father but more importantly to his concurrently infantile fixation of tender feelings on the mother. The role of the mother in shaping the child's unconscious is highlighted through a comparison of a mother's physical shaping of a child's skull: "[how] the skull of a newly born child is shaped springs to mind at this point: after a protracted labor it always takes the form of a cast of the narrow part of the mother's pelvis" (Freud, 169).

The first precondition of the love-object's unavailability can be traced back to the individual's affections for his mother. In the individual's family constellation, his mother takes up the po-

sition of an unavailable woman, as she is engaged with his father. Therefore, the individual, who at this point in his adulthood has learned that incest is taboo, embarks on a search for women who can perform the role of mother or mother-surrogate for the individual — in other words, women who exhibit the same characteristic of unavailability as his mother. The injured party, then, is none other than the father himself. While the individual is constantly in search of a replacement for his mother, however, Freud argues that this position is irreplaceable, thus creating a continuous cycle of the individual replacing old love-objects with new ones in an attempt to satiate this desire. Every surrogate fails to provide the desired satisfaction.

One might be surprised to hear that there are connections to be drawn between the mother and the condition of 'the love for a prostitute,' as these seem to take up polar opposite positions in the Madonna-Whore complex dichotomy Freud briefly touches on in this paper. However, when explaining this phenomenon, Freud points out that "[w]hat is split into a pair of opposites often occurs in the unconscious as a unity" (Freud, 170). This concept, which was first brought up in his Interpretation of Dreams, is extremely applicable to the mental turmoil undergone by the individual as a young boy. Freud argues that it is exactly because of the young boy's difficulty to come to terms with his mother's sexuality and his parents' sexual history that these connections are being draw: "When after this he can no longer maintain the doubt which makes his parents an exception to the universal and odious normal of sexual activity, he tells himself with cynical logic that the difference between his mother and a whore is not after all so very great, since basically, they do the same thing" (Freud, 171). Freud explicates the desire for an unfaithful woman through the feelings of betrayal the child experiences when he realizes that his mother has been granting the favor of sexual intercourse not to himself to his father: "he regards it as an act of unfaithfulness" (Freud, 171). Thus, through the combination of desire and a thirst for revenge, the child prefers to conjure up phantasies of his mother's unfaithfulness with a partner that exhibits the features of the child's own ego or an older man with his own idealized personality.

Connection with Self-Destruction and Trauma

The preconditions for love-objects and their consequences on the individual highlight the destructive tendencies of love, which manifests in either extensive emotional stress or compulsions to revisit traumatic past events in his coming-of-age.

Loving a harlot woman, which is a more accurate translation of the German 'Dirne' that Freud uses in the original, is itself a difficult, distressing feat. Moreover, the individual places an unnecessary burden on himself to be the sole source of the woman's dignity and survival. It is generally stressful because he can never be sure of her loyalty to him, which puts the individual in a constant state of alertness and suspicion: two mentally straining emotions. Jealousy is also an intense negative emotion that burdens the psyche of the individual. The target of the individual's jealousy is, most importantly, not the original partner of this unavailable woman, which would be less overwhelming for the individual. "What is strange is that it is not the lawful possessor of the loved one who becomes the target of this jealousy, but strangers, making their appearance for the first time, in relation to whom the loved one can be brought under suspicion" (Freud, 167). Instead of simply being jealous of one person, the individual becomes

jealous of any other man that might take the woman away from him. The individual fears, as a result, the possibility of becoming the next injured party. It is evident that it would be less emotionally draining for the individual to love a 'chaste and loyal woman,' but according to Freud's observations, in an almost masochistic fashion, the individual subjects himself to this torture instead.

Moreover, the intensity by which the affection and desire is felt by the individual harms him as well, since he is unaware of the women's insufficiency. In many instances, the individual believes that the love-object is 'The One'. Freud writes, "Their love-relationships with these women are carried on with the highest expenditure of mental energy, to the exclusion of all other interests; they are felt as the only people whom it is possible to love, and the demand for fidelity which the lover makes upon himself is repeated again and again, however often it may be broken in reality" (Freud, 167). The act of love and their choice of difficult love-objects isolate the individual from other people or activities as it excludes them from all other interests and they feel as if this woman is the only one that they will be able to love. Self-isolation has significant psychological effects on the individual causing even worse emotions such as loneliness or depression in scenarios where the love-object is not present with the individual. As humans are social creatures, lack of social interaction can be detrimental to their psyche, cutting them off from support, validation, and connections that can come from these social relationships or activities that can be other sources of happiness. In the case of self-isolation, an individual places their entire emotional fulfillment upon the love-object. However, even with earnest efforts, the love-object alone often proves insufficient to satisfy this deep emotional need, resulting in a sense of deprivation for the individual.
The disconnect between what the individual actually desires and what is realistically available for him also brings distress to the individual in various ways. This disconnect is already hinted at in the beginning sentences of the paper as Freud highlights that it has been the creative writer's role to "bring the demands of their imagination into harmony with reality" (Freud, 165). By the mere fact that the creative writer has to attempt to bring imagination and reality in harmony implies that these are in disharmony in reality outside of fiction.

The disconnect in this situation originates from the reality that the individual desires to be with his mother but is unable to be with her. Therefore, he embarks on the Sisyphean search for mother-surrogates, unaware that the mother is irreplaceable and thus every partner in reality will not satisfy his desires. The profound emotional investment and relentless desire he experiences for the love-object necessitates constant repetition, resulting in a draining and ultimately unsustainable burden on the individual's well-being and psyche.

Rank, Otto. The Trauma of Birth. University Microfilms International Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978

Finally, a major trauma that an individual undergoes is birth. Returning to the physical imprint the mother leaves behind on the child's head, this act highlights the first and greatest trauma that an individual experiences according to Freud and Otto Rank. In his book The Trauma of Birth, Rank states that birth is extremely traumatic for the individual as a baby, who spends their whole life attempting to recover from the experience of being harshly excreted from the peaceful womb of the mother (Rank, 11, 22). This argument is furthered by the Trauma of the Second Child in which the creation of the younger sibling is devastating to the first child because it confirms for him that it is impossible to return to the womb that he

so desires: "It essential factor consists in the fact that the later coming child materializes the deepest wish tendency of the already present child to be again in the mother, and, as it were, spoils once for all the chances of ever returning there" (Rank, 26). However, through the rescue phantasy the individual unintentionally recreates the birth trauma. Even in this paper on love, Freud notes that "birth is both the first of all dangers to life and the prototype of all the later ones that cause us to feel anxiety, and the experience of birth has probably left behind in us the expression of affect which we call anxiety" (Freud, 173). According to Rank and Freud a patient's unconscious uses certain analytic healing processes in order to "repeat the trauma of birth and thus partially abreact it" (Rank, 11) and thus this repetition of birth trauma that the individual puts himself through could be seen in a positive light. However, this repetition seems to be more emotionally taxing for the unconscious as it attempts to create a competitor that would disturb its current peace, which it would generally wish to eliminate (Rank, 25).

Freud argues that when a child hears that "he owes his life to his parents, or that his mother gave him life, his feelings of tenderness unite with impulses which strive at power and independence and they generate the wish to return this gift to the parents and to repay them with one of equal value" (Freud, 173). Regarding the father, this can take up a more defiant response, where he wants to repay him so that he owes nothing to his father, "I want nothing from my father; I will give him back all I have cost him" (Freud, 173). Regarding the mother, however, this takes up more tender meanings. The gift that the individual wants to offer his mother then is "giving her a child or making a child for her — needless to say, one like himself… His mother gave him a life — his own life — and in exchange he gives her another life, that of a child which has the greatest resemblance to himself" (Freud, 173).

The wish to gift a child may at first seem like either an act of narcissism or a tender debt repayment to the mother. However, the creation of a child is the ultimate self-sabotage that the individual undergoes, and thus a desire to gift a child to his mother can be correlated with a desire to self-sabotage. We have already discussed how the Trauma of the Second Child causes distress within the first-born child when he realizes that he cannot return to the womb because of its occupation by the second child. Most importantly, however, the creation of a child moves the position of the individual from the child into that of the father. Freud writes that the individual "find[s] satisfaction in the single wish to be his own father" (Freud, 173). While this may be satisfactory, is this a happy conclusion? By taking up the position of the father, the individual moves himself from the safe position he used to inhabit as the child in the family into a vulnerable position where he may become the injured party and thus suffer the anxiety that comes from this new position.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a significant number of inferences to self-sabotage and self-destruction that follows a male individual's choice of love-object, which Freud elaborates further in his later papers. Due to the specific conditions in the love-object determination, the individual's unconscious undergoes lots of emotional turmoil, as he must withstand intense amounts of negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, loneliness, suspicion, and jealousy. Moreover, the act of love is

mentally straining, as he must worry about the various love-objects' fidelity, unavailability, and insatiability that he encounters repeatedly in his unending cycle.

This examination of an individual's love-object choice also opens the discussion to questions which can delve into what the connections between an individual's love-object choice and his masochistic behavior or love-objects and narcissistic behavior can be. Most importantly, it is fascinating to see Freud's analyses of the effect these love-objects can have on an individual, because it contradicts another one of his major theories: the pleasure principle, which states that an individual has an instinctive seeking of pleasure and avoiding pain to satisfy biological and psychological needs. A comparison of the extent of pleasure and the extent of pain, caused to the individual due to his preconditions for love-object choice in relation to the other, would be another fascinating extension of this work, although it is difficult to determine what factors should be considered for an objective and extensive qualitative evaluation.

Overall, it seems as though love and a man's choice in a love-object can be understood as a complex phenomenon influenced by early experiences, unconscious desires, and psychological conflicts within an individual with the potential for self-destructive tendencies to manifest in the selection, maintenance, and repetitions of romantic relationships.

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Rank, Otto. The Trauma of Birth. University Microfilms International Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978.

Article Two

Pornotrauma: Archiving Wounds of Womanhood

by Dorrit Corwin
Literary Arts, Modern Culture and Media '24
ENGL 1900K Reading Sex
Professor Jacques Khalip

In his auto-theoretical book *Testo Junkie*, Paul B. Preciado defines pornography as media that "tells the *performative* truth about sexuality. It is not the degree zero of representation. Rather, it reveals that sexuality is *always performance*" (Preciado, 270). Preciado's suggestion that the highly contentious medium of pornography might reveal the truth about sexuality rather than detract from its essence is a revolutionary stance that is echoed by certain thinkers and challenged by others. Carmen Maria Machado's complex depiction of sexuality as informed by sexual trauma and porn consumption aligns with much of Preciado's analysis; In her short story "Difficult at Parties" a woman attempts to cope in the wake of a sexual assault by binge-watching porn. Ann Cvetkovich's analysis of sexual trauma as both physical and mental in "Trauma and Touch: Butch-Femme Sexualities" can be applied to Machado's character's experience rediscovering her relationship with sex amidst trauma.

Preciado, Paul B. "Pornpower." Testo Junkie, *Feminist Press*, 2013, pp. 265-317.

Around the same time period (mid 2000s), Jennifer C. Nash adds race to the conversation by focusing her studies on Black women's bodies in porn. In "Black Anality" she considers the abdication of power via Black women's anuses and introduces her readers to a different kind of archive: one which revolves around pornography. Similarly, Tim Dean begins his book *Porn Archives* by considering the inherent difficulty as well as the simultaneous necessity of including pornography in society's historical archive. In "Pornography, Eroticism" Constance Penley considers one scene in a Jean-Luc Godard film that was accused of containing pornography and pedophilia. When asked, "What is porn?" Linda Williams answers in "Power, Pleasure, and Perversion: Sadomasochistic Film Pornography," leaning on thinkers like Andre Bazin and Laura Mulvey to define the ontology of sadomasochism in film both of pornographic nature

and not. Ultimately, these authors and theorists center the female body as a symbol of power – one that suffers, adapts, and resiles. Rather than separating pornography from sexuality, a convergence is discovered amongst these texts; consumption of porn is established as a condition of human nature that informs behavior and identity, often as a sublimation of individual and cultural trauma.

Machado, Carmen Maria. "Difficult at Parties." *Her Body and Other Parties*, Graywolf Press, 2017, pp. 219-41.

Her Body and Other Parties is Machado's debut short story collection that confronts myriad triumphs and struggles of modern femininity and queerness via fiction that blurs fantasy, horror, and reality. Each of its eight stories stands alone, but they also interact with each other tactfully. "Difficult at Parties" closes the anthology with a powerful gut punch that meditates on many of the themes established in the stories that precede it. The unnamed protagonist of this story feels isolated and disconnected from reality; no one understands the acute pain she suffers in the wake of being sexually assaulted. She begins plastering social interactions with graphic language and imagery until her reality blurs with the dark fantasies conjured in her mind. She bluntly shares this in the very first sentence of the story: "Afterward, there is no kind of quiet like the one that is in my head" (Machado, 219). Her trauma manifests physically, affecting both her mind and body. She experiences the loudness and color of the world that continues to exist around her in a muted cloud of fog.

In addition to exploring the intricacies of sexual trauma and pornography as a coping mechanism, Machado highlights the societal symbolism contained within the female body. Modern media portrays distorted depictions of the female body and therefore subsequently distorted conceptions of love, intimacy, and femininity. Machado's visceral language highlights this deformity via personification and simile: "I peel my pajamas away from my body and they fall like sloughed skin to the tiled floor. I half-expect to look down and see the cage of my ribs, the wet balloons of my lungs" (Machado, 220). The direct comparison of pajamas to skin highlights this character's disassociation and defamiliarization with her own body. Similar to her loss of social cues, she faces an inability to separate the interior from the exterior—thoughts, actions, and even physical barriers like clothing. She cannot engage sexually with her boyfriend, but she orders porn DVDs to watch. She grows bored of these quickly and begins signing up to access similar videos online.

Cvetkovich, Ann. "Trauma and Touch: Butch-Femme Sexualities." An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures, by Ann Cvetkovich, Duke UP, 2003, pp. 49-82.

Pornography does not compensate for or automatically heals trauma, but it exists as a rethinking of sexual trauma and has the ability to create opportunities to dwell with sexuality in a different way. Similar to the way Machado's protagonist experiences the effects of her trauma on a mental and somatic level, Ann Cvetkovich defends sexuality as a simultaneously physical and psychic experience that alters both the body and the mind. In "Trauma and Touch: Butch-Femme Sexualities," she states that "just as the connections between genders and bodies are both material and constructed, so too are those between trauma and touch" (Cvetkovich, 51). The way we (women especially) experience and express gender through our bodies is both natural/intrinsic to womanhood and is manufactured by societal conceptions of femininity. Similarly, trauma can be caused and affected by physical touch; the two experiences elicit connected responses between the mind and the body.

Cvetkovich proceeds to discuss the importance of not just exploring sexuality and trauma through sex, but also documenting these experiences: "sexual practice serves as a vehicle through which trauma can be articulated and reworked, often in somatic ways, and writing about it makes those practices public" (Cvetkovich, 57). The personal writings of women, butch-femme lesbians in this case, can serve as invaluable resources for women exploring sex as a reworking of trauma. These written testimonies of sexual experience also exist as porn-adjacent material that explore eroticism without a visual image but through equally graphic words and imagery. Cvetkovich believes in making the traditionally private conversation about sex public, thereby opening the archive and diversifying its contents.

British academic Tim Dean concurs that sexual experience (in his analysis, via pornography) deserves a place in the historical archive. The title of his book, *Porn Archives*, "conjoins terms with opposing connotations: pornography evokes an ostensibly private experience, while the archive conjures publicly accessible records" (Dean, 13). He proceeds to list a multitude of other contradictions, such as the permanence of an archive versus the ephemerality of porn. Rather than viewing these seemingly opposite phenomena as incongruent, Dean believes they converge as functions of modernity. He calls into question the concept of cultural memory; how do we go about archiving content that is typically "forbidden," such as porn? We often view porn in private browsers, erasing the digital footprint of our viewership as soon as we press play.

Dean, Tim. "Introduction: Pornography, Technology, Archive." Introduction. *Porn Archives*, edited by Tim Dean et al., e-book ed., Duke UP, 2014, pp. 13-83. Books.

Dean dives deeper into the definition of the archive, pointing out that "the term *archive* refers to both a physical space for holding the sexually explicit and a conceptual system for grasping it (an archive in the Foucauldian sense)" (Dean, 17). Here he emphasizes the abrasive physicality of porn and the visceral experience of watching it in a way that recalls the experience Machado's protagonist has with the medium. A painful dichotomy occurs for the character when she throws her computer against a wall in a fit of fury; she experiences the ephemerality of the porn she watches and destroys concurrently with the physical foreverness of her trauma.

Preciado's complex book *Testo Junkie* adds important sexual material to the historical pornographic archive Dean and Cvetkovich aim to create. Via a masterful combination of memoir, fiction, and political history, Preciado introduces the term "pharmacopornographic" to the sexual vernacular. This word reflects the ways pornography, pharmaceuticals, and capitalism intertwine in today's society. *Testo Junkie* twists and turns, ultimately arriving at a lengthy chapter titled "Pornopower," which investigates the porn and sex industries. In alignment with Dean and Cvetkovich, Preciado shares, "We will speak of pornography as a device for the publication of the private" (Preciado, 266) – as a memorialization of the act of sex. He speaks to the convergence of sexual feelings and identities when he shares that "until now, desire, pleasure, sex, and gender were thought of as nontransferable essences or private property" (Preciado, 277). However, he defines how we presently experience life as the "Pharmacopornographic Era". All of these lived experiences feed off each other and have converged in the archive – from *Playboy* to the birth control pill and to the prison-industrial complex.

In reflecting upon the contemporary entertainment landscape, which provides unprecedented public access to a broader range of content than has ever been available before, Preciado comments on an important discrepancy:

> Today's entertainment industry, with its division of representation into categories, such as "G" (general audience—all ages admitted) or "NC-17" (no children under seventeen admitted) denies the performative value of pornography by reducing it to "hardcore sex," as if—from a theatrical point of view—there were an ontological difference between a kiss, a brawl, and anal penetration (Preciado, 271).

Penley, Constance. "Pornography, Eroticism." *Camera Obscura*, vol. 3, 1982, pp. 14-19.

These rating categories feel somewhat arbitrary, given that pornography contains a multitude of meanings and visual elements; it is not always strictly anal or vaginal penetration being shown on screen. Similarly, in "Pornography, Eroticism" film professor and author Constance Penley analyzes one scene in a Jean-Luc Godard film that was accused of containing pornographic and pedophilic content. She asks whether specific visuals in this one scene make the entire movie pornographic and argues that the type of shots chosen cause the film's categorization is ultimately ambiguous. She believes that "in pornography, a fantasy of control and mastery realizes itself through the spectator's visual negotiation of the scene" (Penley, 13). In the case of this scene, Penley believes it to be dominated by the male gaze, but not in a blatantly pornographic way that highlights hardcore sex. As Penley suggests, part of pornography's allure is centered around its spectatorship; We enjoy watching content we feel is not supposed to be seen by others.

Corwin, Dorrit. "Bodies Matter: Pornography and the MPAA Rating System." *The College Hill Independent,* 25 Sept. 2020, www.theindy.org/2088. Accessed 2 May 2023.

I wrote an article for The College Hill Independent that echoes Penley and Preciado's sentiments about the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) rating system being outdated and unreasonable, especially in conjunction with pornographic content being highly accessible. I use the theatrical release of *Lost in Translation* (Sofia Coppola, 2003) as an example: The film was rated R due to one brief scene that features a topless Scarlett Johansson. An excerpt from an MPAA meeting in which this scene was discussed at great length reads, "Topless nudity in movies is a problem and must be stopped, especially if the actors are particularly cold on the day of shooting…" Meanwhile, there are more than 20 pages of topless video content on Pornhub from the year 2003 alone. (Corwin)

The film rating system is rendered obsolete, due to the ability people of all ages have to stream adult content online and access hardcore porn within one click. The fact that one image of a woman's boobs radically alters the type of audience permitted to see an entire film that is mostly non-nude essentially pathologizes women's bodies.

Nash, Jennifer C. "Black Anality." *A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, vol. 20, 2014, pp. 439-56.

Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies Professor and author Jennifer C. Nash would likely agree; her article "Black Anality" seeks to include Black women's bodies in the pornographic archive, a field of study she recognizes as non-normative while still advocating for its existence. This piece is somewhat of an improvisation on American academic Leo Bersani's seminal essay, "Is the Rectum a Grave?" Nash argues that Blackness and anality contain an ideological link,

and Black female bodies provide the space for this convergence to occur. She acknowledges the same transitory nature of the pornographic archive that Dean and Cvetkovich discuss, even citing Cvetkovich:

> I highlight the archive's ephemeral nature both to underscore what affect theorists like Ann Cvetkovich have argued—that our understanding of an archive must shift to capture the fleeting, the transitory, the unstable—and to offer a sense of the digital universe my archive is part of, one where the web links that I cite in my footnotes might be disabled or removed long before this article goes to press (Nash, 447).

Nash spends a significant portion of her piece analyzing distinct porn videos she encountered on websites like Pornhub and Ghettotube.com. She closely examines the representation of the anus in these videos, despite acknowledging that many of these "films" are deleted only days after being posted online. Nevertheless, her discussion of them cements them into the archive, no matter what may happen to the original videos. She describes the anus as a "passageway" through which Blackness and "ghetto"ness, a term used in many porn titles that signifies filth, merge. She believes that the anus can also facilitate pleasure and desire, thus exploring the full spectrum of emotional responses different types of pornography may elicit in their viewers.

Nash cites film professor and author Linda Williams, who similarly traverses the fine line between pornographic pleasure and horror through the analysis of sadomasochism. In "Power, Pleasure, and Perversion: Sadomasochistic Film Pornography" Williams explores a double perversion of watching perverse acts and experiencing perverse pleasure from doing so: "We are watching (whether with fascination, pleasure, horror, or dread) an act that seems to be really taking place but with which we have no spatial or temporal connection ourselves" (Williams, 38). As opposed to a traditional film that intends to evoke one or several specific emotional responses from its viewers, pornography is much more difficult to watch with any understanding of intention. Violent depictions of sadomasochism may be arousing to one person and traumatizing to another, or in the case of the woman in "Difficult at Parties," the same person might experience both responses simultaneously.

Williams, Linda. "Power, Pleasure, and Perversion: Sadomasochistic Film Pornography." *Representations*, summer 1989, pp. 37-65.

Williams incorporates Laura Mulvey's famous term "fetishistic scopophilia" (perverse pleasure in the act of looking) to enhance the link between Bazinian ontology with pornography and explore the potential problems with allowing masochism to be so normalized. She shares, "Because women have so often been presumed not to have sexual agency, to be objects and not subjects of desire, masochism has often been taken as the 'norm' for women under patriarchy—as if women *only* suffered the sexual pleasure of others" (Williams, 53). Masochism caters to the gender roles created by the patriarchy; While it is still possible to engage in it in a feminist way, it is difficult to unravel the psychological reasons a woman might be drawn towards masochistic sex.

While porn can empower women, it also often degrades them, and due to a staggering lack of sex education, young men commonly derive their sexual knowledge from watching porn that features women as objects, rather than subjects. It is imperative to discuss pornography

in conjunction with the many sociological factors that interact with it, such as gender, sexuality, and trauma, as all of these authors do. Porn is often thought to exclusively portray unnatural and untruthful sexual encounters but it is important to reconcile the extent to which real-life sexual encounters often also contain traces of performance, as a result of this convergence of phenomena. Masochism, queerness, trauma, and pharmacopornographic analysis all enhance the archive. The only way to heal and develop healthy relationships with pornography and sex is by making the private public and engaging in this conversation.

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Article Three

Comedy as a Foil for the Uncanny in *The Double*

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In his novella, *The Double*, published in 1846, Fyodor Dostoevsky explores the slow descent into madness of the protagonist Mr. Golyadkin. The story follows short-tempered, awkward, and insecure Mr. Golyadkin as he eventually encounters an identical double of himself – a man with the same name, origin, and appearance. While for much of the novella, the narrator assigns a comedic tone to Mr. Golyadkin's character and his encounters with the double, the story's particularly uncanny effect arises following the transformation of the comedic tone into one of sympathy. With the comedy missing, the story retrospectively amplifies the uncanniness.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Double*. 1846. Penguin Books, 2003.

The narrator establishes the comedic tone early on through the cartoonish description of Mr. Golyadkin with his sporadic and silly nature. In the opening scene, the narrator exaggerates Golyadkin's movements of getting out of bed using diction like "stumbled", "spring", and "leapt" (127). These descriptions further highlight Golyadkin's reactions to relatively mundane things he encounters as "with great concern," "extreme delight," and "smiling significantly" (128). He is merely running around his bedroom, but the narrator's exaggerated illustration makes Golyadkin resemble the demeanor of a sketch caricature. At the end of the first chapter, the narrator then contrasts Golyadkin's behavioral description in assigning him the more serious epithet, "our hero," which repeats throughout the rest of the story (133). Golyadkin embodies zero archetypical heroic attributes: he is awkward, confusing, rude, and lacking confidence. Like an inside joke with the reader, the epithet becomes ironic in its contrast to Golyadkin's non-serious behavior. The story causes the reader to react with a confused smirk: how exactly is this guy a hero? Thus, the irony in conjunction with the narrator's silly illustration of Golyadkin's behavior ultimately frames the rest of the novel with a comedic tone.

As a result, Mr. Golyadkin's confusing logic and speech patterns seem humorous within the comedic frame. First, his logic makes no sense. One morning Golyadkin, talking to himself, says, "It would be a fine thing if something was wrong with me today" like he wishes for something bad to happen to himself (127). He continues as if he is disappointed nothing bad has happened to him yet, saying, "However, for the moment, it's alright" (128). The reader could see this logic as self-critical and depressing, but amidst the comedic tone, it becomes silly. In another scene, Golyadkin visits his doctor for no real initial reason other than feeling "an immediate need… to say something very interesting" (132). His logic for needing the doctor is unclear and becomes more obscured as he tries to explain himself. During the scene of their appointment, if the reader takes a glance over the pages of the book they will notice that the doctor's name "Christian Ivanovich" covers each page over twenty times in Golyadkin's nonsensical dialogue quotes. Golyadkin tells the doctor things like: "On the other hand, Christian Ivanovich, I act; I act, on the other hand, Christian Ivanovich!" (136). In its repetitive patterns and reversals in unsteady structure, Golyadkin's mechanical speech comedically delivers minimal substance or clarity. Even more humorously, Golyadkin seems to display a sense of accomplishment translated through the use of exclamation marks at the end of his dialogues, despite his speech rarely accomplishing anything. As the conversation between the two members continues for many pages, the narrator consequently makes Golyadkin the butt of the story's apparent joke.

However, the tone momentarily shifts around the arrival of the double to welcome the entrance of the uncanny. After fleeing a dinner ball where he embarrassed himself in front of the party's guests, Golyadkin runs onto the midnight streets of St. Petersburg. Here, the comedic tone temporarily vanishes as the narrator describes the "terrible night" with a "blizzard and tempest rage under the November Sky" (165, 166). The harsh drops of "snowing and raining both together" cause the "pricking and cutting [of] the wretched Mr. Golyadkin's face" (165). The atmosphere soaks in a sense of impending doom, shifting the tone from lighthearted and humorous to serious and fearful. That's when Golyadkin's double enters the narrative.

Utilizing the eerie atmosphere, the narrator plants a seed of the uncanny through the double's arrival for the later effect in the story. When Golyadkin's double appears out of the eerie night and silently crosses his path, the narrator interjects their sympathetic personal voice with ellipses, writing, "...His situation really was one of horror…" (167). A seriousness comes to light alongside the literal illumination of the double under the street lights. Then, the uncanny begins to arise in the interpretations of the double's existence. The narrator leaves room for some ambiguity, but arguably the sturdiest explanation of the double is that it is merely a hallucination of a mental illness Golyadkin has developed. When he sees his double, he is either assigning some person the doubled identity or at other times creating him out of thin air. Referencing the double, the narrator writes, "The fact was that the unknown now seemed to him to be somehow familiar" (170). This can be analyzed through Freud's idea that uncanniness arises when the "unheimlich," or foreign, becomes "heimlich," homely. While the double enters as an unhomely figure in the eerie setting, he is ultimately homely as he embodies Golyadkin's internal repression. He arrives at just the moment Golyadkin has fled the ball – a form of repressing and running from his shortcoming. In the continuation of the story, the double exhibits appropriate sociability and the ability to articulate himself clearly,

unlike Golyadkin; Therefore, the double serves as a constant reminder of Golyadkin's shortcomings. The double's uncanny effect is that it brings to light everything Golyadkin has been attempting to repress.

However, the comedic tone resumes following the double's entrance, often masking the uncanniness from the reader. In one scene, Mr. Golyadkin attempts to pay the waiter for his dinner of one fish patty, only to be told he owes much more because he had not one but eleven. There is comedy in the ridiculousness that one man would eat eleven fish patties, even more so he would not remember. The narrator describes Golyadkin in response turning "red as a lobster," an off-handed comparison made more humorous because this occurs in a restaurant that serves seafood (213). It is like Golyadkin becomes what he ate. Explaining the confusing situation, he then sees his double at a table. The double is "evidently in highest spirits" and takes on the demeanor of a jokester as he "smiled at [Mr. Golyadkin], nodded to him, winked his little eyes, shifted his feet and looked as if in a moment's warning he might efface himself" (214). It is as if the double is playing a prank on Golyadkin in some kind of comedy sketch, even getting the waiter in on the joke. A laugh track should ensue at the double's reveal. But if the double is merely Golyadkin's uncanny hallucination, it is worrisome for Mr. Golyadkin that he unknowingly ate so many patties and then blamed it on a hallucination. If the reader recognizes this, the moment is sad for Golyadkin as his delirium has begun to take a significant toll on him. However, the comedy distracts the reader from thinking too hard about the double's unsettling materiality amidst the light-hearted silliness. Through this, the narrator postpones the full extent of the uncanny effect.

Part of the conclusion's uncanniness arises in the replacement of the comedic tone with one of sympathy. Sadly, Golyadkin spirals into utter madness in the last scene of the novella and he is shipped off in a carriage to the asylum. The narrator asks, sharply shifting to a sympathetic tone "if compassion may be permitted," that the reader now sees Golyadkin "like a kitten that has been drenched with cold water" (186). He can be seen as sad, small, and helpless in place of caricature-like; thus, his condition and behavior cease to be funny. This change invites the reader to feel a deep sense of pity for him. As Golyadkin's delirium creates a devilish double of his doctor riding with him in the carriage, he powerlessly begs, "Christain Ivanovich, I… I think I'm all right, Christian Ivanovich" (287). Golyadkin's previously comedic speech patterns are still there, but now in the context of the sympathetic atmosphere, they are merely depressing. His failure to articulate himself leaves him no agency to escape the ill situation.

In the end, the story accomplishes an amplified and retrospective uncanniness as a result of the comedy's dissolution. In the last lines, the narrator once again uses the epithet "our hero" (287). Elevating Golyadkin sympathetically rather than ironically, the epithet attempts to compensate for his sad fate, imitating a forced eulogy at a funeral. And, the epithet takes on a doubled meaning: the narrator may have been providing sympathy in calling him a hero all those previous times knowing Golyadkin's unfortunate fate. The final sentence reads, "This was what he had known for a long time would happen!" (287). While the narrator encouraged the reader to laugh at the protagonist, Golyadkin on the other hand was repressing a deep fear his delirium would eventually take over. Thinking back through all the prior moments of the novella through the frame of the ending's sympathetic tone, Golyadkin was always descending

into madness, albeit the narrator's tone distracted from comprehending that fate. The process the reader undergoes in reflecting on Mr. Golyadkin's story to see it in a depressing light rather than a humorous one creates the ultimately compounded uncanny effect. Retrospectively, the comedy had served as a foil to the uncanny in order to highlight it all along.

Dostoevsky crafted a story of remarkable skill in utilizing comedy in contrast and conjunction with the uncanny to create its amplification. While Golyadkin may have initially been merely a silly and awkward man, by the end he becomes a receiver of deep sympathy for his unfortunate condition. Although the medical field may not have had the words to describe Golyadkin's schizophrenic episodes at the time of the novella's publishing, Dostoevsky demonstrates a clear understanding of the symptoms to reveal a deep dissection of the human condition. In a more general sense, everyone can relate to the fear of being incapable and therefore creating the ideal variation of yourself, wishing they could go about the world for you. *The Double* speaks to that phenomenon: instead of passing our lives over to a made-up external variation, maybe it is safer to just work on improving our internal as much as we can.

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Article Four

How to Have a Child Without Having to Eat It: The Comparative Pedagogy of Motherhood in 'Hansel and Gretel' and 'The Juniper Tree' by the Brothers Grimm and Hermann Vogel

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Introduction

Cultivated within intimate communities, across families and generations, the oral tradition of German fairytales was first transcribed by 19th-century folklore academics Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. Published initially as scholarly research, the tales soon exchanged pages of diligent annotations for spreads of fantastical illustrations. Ironically, the brothers aimed to recover the tales' authenticity of timeless communal pedagogy by 'polishing' them into capturing a "profound 'folk' essence related to myth" (Zipes *Note to the Expanded Third Edition* para. 3-4)[1] as well as "carefully remov[ing] every expression [...] unsuitable for children" (Grimm *Preface to the Second Edition* p. 2).

1 My edition of Zipes' collection is an Ebook, so I cite him per chapter and per paragraph number.

Out of this process, 'The Juniper Tree' and 'Hansel and Gretel' emerge as meticulously revised and manipulated textual mother figures for their audiences, especially when read in translation from *The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm* (2003) by contemporary academic Jack Zipes. In his own words, Zipes aimed to "recast them as *closely* as [he] could to the originals" by "respect[ing] their[1] historical character," yet felt "compelled [...] to make them [more] *comprehensible*" by "introducing contemporary vocabulary and terms when they were, *in [his] estimation*, more apropos" (para. 3-8). Comparing the tales – their literary text manufactured by the Grimms and their visual text manufactured by 19th-century illustrator Hermann Vogel – while keeping in mind their complex processes of translinguistic fabrication, allows for the unraveling of a layered didacticism of maternity, domestic femininity, and potential motherliness, alongside their immoral, unnatural, and unhuman antitheses.

Zipes, Jack, translator. *The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*. By Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. 3rd ed., EPUB ed., New York, Bantam Books, 2003.

First Mother and Mother Nature

The intertext of 'Hansel and Gretel' and 'The Juniper Tree' offers only one ideal motherly archetype, that of the first mother in 'The Juniper Tree.' "Beautiful and pious," in love with and married to a "rich man," she prays only to bring into the world "a child as red as blood and as white as snow" – colors symbolic of health, beauty, and virtue (1-3). Immediately, she is represented as *the* embodiment of domestic femininity, as her life centers around fulfilling the reproductive role of her household. A woman intimately linked to, even in teleological harmony with, *Mother* Nature, the first mother fertilizes the landscape of her home simply by spilling her blood, a gesture both resemblant of menstruation and metaphorizing impregnation. The latter reading is especially poignant because she releases her blood by cutting herself with a knife – a penetrative action performed with an object of remarkably phallic connotations. In organic exchange for bodily contribution to the environment, she ingests "juniper berries" (4), establishing a sustainable cycle of loss and gain, and implicitly, of consumption and production. Her apparently resulting pregnancy aligns with, or even determines, the fairytale's order of the seasons. For example, in her fifth and sixth months, she is "overcome with joy," strong, and "still," and so Nature is "sweet[], large and firm," bringing forth summer (4).

Tatar, Maria. *The Annotated Brothers Grimm*. New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2004. *The Internet Archive*, archive.org/isbn_9780739451731. Accessed 28 Feb. 2024.

Within this reproductive cycle, however, the role of the conventional father is nearly nonexistent, limited to 'longing' (1). His lack of involvement stands in direct juxtaposition to the involvement of the tree: the site of the (super)natural impregnation and the only explicit provider of food for the sustenance of the expecting mother and child. The tree emerges, moreover, as a subtextual source of emotional comfort for the woman. Wishing to remain intimately loyal to it even after death, her last wish is to be buried underneath it (5), rather than in a family burial site out of fidelity to her husband or in a graveyard out of devotion to God. Significantly, as noted by Maria Tatar in *The Annotated Brothers Grimm* (2004), "the juniper has a rich folkloric tradition. Its oil, ashes, berries, leaves, and bark are used in many cultures for healing purposes"; it possesses a "therapeutic power" (p. 208). Natural origins and multifarious modes of generative and regenerative care and tenderness align the tree with the feminine rather than the masculine parental aspect. As such, the "child as white as snow and as red as blood" – genetic desires never voiced by the father, only by the mother, and yet fulfilled perfectly – has two 'biological' mothers. After all, when the child is first introduced, it is "the little boy," not 'the father's son,' which directly contrasts the initial description of the child he has with his second wife as his "daughter" (para. 7). The first mother is thus a pedagogical archetype of domestic femininity only in terms of biological dedication to reproduction, an ideal of maternity rather than motherliness. Evading social and religious duty in favor of a relationship with Mother Nature, transgressing the boundaries of the human (domestic) and the nonhuman (natural), "she die[s]" the moment "she s[ees] the baby" (6).

Un-Mothers

The Stepmother

Originally, the first mother figure in 'Hansel and Gretel' is also biological, as remarked on by Tatar (p. 73). From the fourth edition onwards (1840), however, in line with the ideology of

their preface (1819), the Grimms revise her into a stepmother, a direct pedagogical gesture meant to separate her wickedness from tainting the ideal of 'real' motherhood within children's imaginations. The children's consequent 'real' mother is therefore never mentioned, in silence and in absence, she becomes a subtextual ideal of legitimate motherhood.

Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm. "Preface to the Second Edition of the Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm." Fairytales Collected By the Brothers Grimm, 1819. Jonathan Skolnik, translator. German History in Documents and Images, germanhistorydocs.org/en/ghdi:document-348. Accessed 28 Feb 2024.

'Hansel and Gretel' opens with the husband and father's literal failure as patriarchal breadwinner, speaking of "a poor woodcutter [that] could no longer provide enough for his family's daily meals" (para. 1). The vicious solution of the "wife" is to abandon 'her' children. This solution is ultimately implemented by the family, caused by the husband's emasculating complacency, which wins over him not having "the heart" to go along with it (4). The text clearly correlates anti-maternity (stepmotherhood) and anti-motherliness (desire to abandon children) with anti-womanhood (usurpation of the patriarch) and anti-femininity ('lack of heart'), exposing the defeminizing and corrupting danger of subverting gender power dynamics within the household – the initial setting of the fairytale and of its traditional (re)telling. Any of the stepmother's motherly gestures of feminized benevolence thus prove false. She is either sincerely cruel, commanding, or insulting towards Hansel and Gretel: "Get up, you lazybones!" (9), or deceitfully kind, letting them "lie down by the fire, and rest" (14) while planning to abandon them.

That the stepmother is rejected as a maternal, motherly, and feminine model emerges at the level of hostility of the narrative to her character. For example, when Hansel is "looking at [his] cat" (11), the stepmother says the cat does not exist, and that Hansel is merely seeing "the morning sun shining on the chimney" (12). The tale, nonetheless, validates Hansel's imaginative epistemology rather than the woman's adult authority. Admitting "Hansel had not been looking at the cat," but rather directing his attention to where he is spilling the pebbles so that Gretel and he can find their way back home, the narrator validates the existence of the cat, and thus rejects the wife's interpretation of reality (13). She is also never given a stable identity, fluctuating between titles of 'wife,' 'mother,' 'stepmother,' or just 'woman.' The didacticism of the tale thus denies her a coherent maternal, motherly, or feminine status, making it persistently impossible for the audience to relate to her in the terrifying struggle to save her household from famine.

This anti-ideal of stepmotherhood finds its even deeper embodiment within the second wife in 'The Juniper Tree.' While Hansel and Gretel's stepmother is ultimately driven by biological necessity in the face of starvation, the stepmother of the boy and Marlene's real mother is driven by socioeconomic opportunism in favor of her daughter, an anti-patriarchal, and consequently anti-domestic, envy over the primogeniture of the first mother's son: "whenever she looked at the little boy, her heart was cut to the quick[;] he would always stand in her way and prevent her daughter from inheriting everything" (7). Consequently, she resorts to overtly anti-motherly patterns of physical abuse, pushing, slapping, and cuffing the boy. The tale thus reiterates the didactic link of domestic corruption with destabilized gender structures ((step)mother over (first) son), an idea that solidifies when she successfully deceives the father about where his son is ((second) wife over (first) husband) (25-28).

Rather than abandonment, however, 'The Juniper Tree' stepmother turns to cannibalism: an act of bodily transgression usurping the instance of birth, rather than of bodily separation exaggerating the instance of birth. Though both figure as deadly gestures of distortion of natural

modes of motherhood, this stepmother's act is much more physically and culturally blasphemous, granting a dehumanizing, even anti-human, monstrous dimension to her unmotherly character. When the woman murders the boy, she cares not about her cruelty but her self-preservation: "How am I going to get out of this?" (17), subsequently reframing the nutritionally unnecessary consumption of the boy by the father as her only socially absolving and beneficial solution. All the while, she also grows unmotherly towards her real daughter Marlene, from whom she "snatch[es] away" an apple – the bait for her murder of the boy by cutting his head off with the lid of a heavy chest. Afterward, tying the boy's bloody neck with a "white kerchief" (17), the mother subtly perverts his original imagery of *red* over *white* (3), like the apple he desires before his death, to *white* over *red*, as well as baits her own daughter into "knock[ing] [her] brother's head off" (22), blaming her for the decapitation: "What have you done!" (23). The narrator uses an exclamation mark, rather than a question mark, typographically exposing the insincerity of her concern, her irrefutable failure as a mother.

The She-Devil

This tendency to dehumanize the stepmother into unfeminine, bestial anti-humanness throughout the tale of 'The Juniper Tree' is intertwined with allusions to her diabolical possession. Her initial violence against Marlene (11), the deceptive friendliness towards the boy that encourages him to approach the wooden 'guillotine' (13), and her decision to ultimately behead him (17), all are framed as compelled by "the devil." Further, when her crimes are finally exposed by the boy-bird, "her eyes bur[n] and flas[h] like lightning" (80), "her hair flare[s] up like red-hot flames" (101), and she dies in "smoke, flames, and fire" (102). As a pedagogical anti-ideal, the woman is not only morally condemned or monstrously defeminized, but supernaturally dehumanized and theologically punished, all for her failures as a mother, especially against her firstborn stepson.

The stepmother of 'Hansel and Gretel' is cruel from the outset; however, she is never demonized to the extent of her counterpart in 'The Juniper Tree.' Parallel narrative gestures of dehumanization, nonetheless, define the second anti-mother figure of 'Hansel and Gretel' – the wicked witch – who initially appears as a foil to the children's cruel (step)mother. Introduced as a harmless and lovable " old woman leaning on a crutch" (36), the narrator at first frames her into a motherly, feminine image of generosity, elderliness, and submissiveness. Rather than abandoning them, she implores the children to "stay with [her]" (37). Rather than seeing them as unnecessary mouths to feed with scarce rations of bread, she serves them "a good meal of milk and pancakes." Rather than violently waking them and then leading them into the unsafe unknown of the forest, she makes them "two little beds" (37). Just like the ideal biological mother of 'The Juniper Tree' balances out the evil stepmother, this maternal old woman emerges as a foil to Hansel and Gretel's own evil stepmother. As represented in the color illustration of the tale by Hermann Vogel (Figure 1.), the witch initially appears curious but gentle in her attitude towards Hansel and Gretel.

Figure 1. Hermann Vogel,
Color Illustration to 'Hansel and Gretel' (1892)

Of humble size, especially in the context of the children in the foreground, presented with big glasses and the cane, she blends seamlessly into the delicious polychrome of her gingerbread house. Like the other non-real mothers of the tales' intertext, however, the woman "only pretend[s] to be friendly" (39), her kindness and generosity being just another deceitful form of bait to further abuse and ultimately eat the children. This mirroring, rather than foiling, of the corrupt character between stepmother and witch can be read from Vogel's opening illustration of the tale (Figure 2.). The stepmother is represented as sleeping furthest from the children, accentuating her unmotherly distance and hostility. She is thus closest to – in fact, compositionally intersecting with – the tree branch outside, hinting at her proximity to the motives embodied by the dangerous forest – the setting of the witch's house. As such, though the witch's house is made of food and she is its sole owner – she is nutritionally and socioeconomically provided for, she still indulges her purely selfish cannibalistic desires, perverting the peaceful and comfortable image of children sleeping "sweetly with full rosy cheeks" into a grotesque signifier of "a tasty meal" (40). As it soon emerges, the witch especially wants to eat Hansel, fattening up the firstborn boy first, while having Gretel only help her in the process, implicating the girl in the murder and consumption of her brother. This reiterates 'The Juniper Tree"s gendered dimensions of cannibalistic violence, solidifying an educationally blatant condemnation of women's potential usurpation of household laws of primogeniture as expressed via the two fairytales.

Figure 2. Hermann Vogel,
First Illustration to 'Hansel and Gretel' (1893), p. 69

The dehumanization of the witch, however, ventures even further. She "cannot see very far," instead having a "keen sense of smell, *like animals,* [being able to] detect when *human beings* are near" (39), and meeting her end as "the godless witch [who] miserably burned to death" (51). In Vogel's fourth illustration of the tale, moreover, she has monstrously grown in size, revealing a wrinkled and deformed physiognomy, as well as exchanged the humble cane for a murderous knife (Figure 3.). Replacing motherly and feminine bodily generosity and self-sacrifice in favor of bodily self-indulgence and corruption, the witch is intertextually and didactically narrated into dehumanizing, near-demonic similarities to animals and beasts. Through gendered dimensions of nature, nutrition, social status, and personal desire, the two tales represent and educate about the dangerous multiplicity of forms of motherhood gone wrong.

New Mothers

For the sake of a 'moral' – the climactic, instructive, fundamental message of the story – the tales, nevertheless, still offer good feminine role models and educational archetypes by their endings. These motherly ideals, however, are not discovered within the feminized subject positions embodied by adults, but rather by children; Little sisters and young daughters underscore the youth-focused pedagogy of this intertext. Throughout the fairytales, both Marlene and Gretel traverse a heuristic trajectory, from submissive complicity in the perverse motherhood of their elders, through rejection of these anti-maternal and anti-feminine tendencies, and ultimately to development of their own potential for motherliness via a reframing of relationships with their fathers and brothers – present and future patriarchs of their households.


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Gott, hilf uns doch," rief sie aus, „hätten uns nur die wilden Tiere im Wald gefressen, so wären wir doch zusammen gestorben." „Spar' nur dein Geplärre," sagte die Alte, „es hilft dir alles nichts."

Frühmorgens mußte Gretel heraus, den Kessel mit Wasser aufhängen und Feuer anzünden. „Erst wollen wir backen," sagte die Alte, „ich habe den Backofen schon eingeheizt und den Teig geknetet." Sie stieß das arme Gretel hinaus zu dem Backofen, aus dem die Feuerflammen oben herausschlugen. „Kriech hinein", sagte die Hexe, „und sieh zu, ob recht eingeheizt ist, damit wir das Brot hineinschießen können." Und wenn Gretel darin war, wollte sie den Ofen zumachen, und Gretel sollte darin braten, und dann wollte sie's auch aufessen. Aber Gretel merkte, was sie im Sinn hatte und sprach: „Ich weiß nicht, wie ich's machen soll; wie komm ich da hinein?" „Dumme Gans," sagte die Alte, „die Öffnung ist groß genug, siehst du wohl, ich könnte selbst hinein", krappelte heran und steckte den Kopf in den Backofen. Da gab ihr Gretel einen Stoß, daß sie weit hineinfuhr, machte die eiserne Tür zu und

Figure 3. Hermann Vogel,
Fourth Illustration to 'Hansel and Gretel' (1893), p. 75


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sed: „Myn Sachn, wullt du enen Appel hebben?" un seeg em so haftig an. „Moder," säd de lüttje Jung, „wat sühst du gräsig ut! Ja, gif my enen Appel." Do wörr ehr, as schull se em toreden. „Kumm mit my," säd se, un makd den Deckel up, „hal dy enen Appel herut." Un as sit de lüttje Jung henin bückd, so reet ehr de Böse, bratsch! slög se den Deckel to, dat de Kopp afflög un ünner de roden Appel füll. Do aewerleep ehr dat in de Angst, un dachd: „Kunn ik dat von my bringen!" Do güng se bawen na ere Stuw na erem Dragkasten un hal ut de bäwelste Schuflad enen witten Dok un sett' den Kopp

Figure 4.
Hermann Vogel, Second Illustration
to 'The Juniper Tree' (1893), p. 139

Bad Role Models

Marlene's gender expression is initially confined to imitating the anti-maternal anti-femininity of her mother. Not only implicated in the killing and eating of her brother in accord with her mother's advice and instruction – she knocks his decapitated head off (20) and is present during the preparation of the "stew" (23) – she herself is violent towards the boy and boxes his ears (22). As portrayed by Vogel in his second illustration of 'The Juniper Tree' (Figure 4.), the girl quite cunningly looks down on her brother, as she is about to physically disturb him. Though she walks up with a desire for his apple, her eyes are piercing into the boy's head, seemingly anticipating his 'inevitable' consumption with subconscious craving, as expressed by her hand – human flesh – already entering her mouth. The newly-educated vileness of the girl's posture, gesture, and motive grows especially morbid given that the boy represented in the image is already dead, reduced to 'human meat.' Notably, the instance of the murder is also the moment the narrative reveals Marlene's name. It is now that she ceases to be just a 'daughter' or a 'sister,' becoming the only named character in the tale. This establishes the pedagogical significance of this event of the adult's absolute usurpation of motherhood and womanhood for the formation of the girl's new, good or bad, identity.

Gretel's anti-maternal tendencies emerge instead when the children have "a taste" of the witch's house, mirroring her closest mother-archetype's patterns of unmotherly unsustainable consumption. Just like Hansel, Gretel "[does] not bother to stop eating" (37). Similarly to Marlene, she is also made complicit in fraternal cannibalism, as the witch states: "*we*'ve got to fatten

him up" (41). Even as the girl ultimately triumphs over the perverted mother, she does so by pushing her into the oven and bolting the door (51), succumbing to violence mirroring the witch when she locks Hansel behind a grilled door (41). Such correlations between the witch and Gretel are suggested by Vogel in the first illustration (Figure 2.), where the initial designating the first letter of her name – the first element signifying her personal identity – is formed out of a witch-like shape. In the fourth illustration (Figure 3.), moreover, while Hansel looks out grotesquely from the shadows of his oven-cage, Gretel does not look scared at all, instead mirroring the compositional placement of the witch from the color illustration (Figure 1.). Even more so than Marlene, Gretel both textually and visually verges on succumbing to the corrupt parental patterns of the elder generation.

Maternal Children, Child-Mothers

Nonetheless, both girls showcase growth into feminine, potentially maternal, benevolence, and self-sacrifice for the sake of patriarchal domestic order. As opposed to her mother, Marlene does not indulge in cooking or consuming her brother, instead crying into 'his' stew (24). Her production of tears, which "completely soa[k]" her handkerchief (78), mirrors, the fertilization of the landscape and restoration of seasonal order by the first biological mother and her blood. Marlene chooses to sustainably contribute to rather than selfishly benefit from the bodily economy of the text, reviving the original mother's values of teleologically cyclical reciprocity of the reproductive process.

As represented by Vogel in his first illustration of the tale (Figure 5.), the girl saves and wraps her brother's bones into "her best silk handkerchief" (32) – a potential bridal image, especially given her portrayal in the picture in all-white, an aesthetic choice that contrasts with the second illustration, where her attire is characterized by darkening texture (Figure 4.). Marlene then buries the bones under the juniper tree – the boy's original seed and site of impregnation chosen by his mother, weeps onto them – provides bodily fluid into the fertilized environment, and ultimately resurrects him into a bird – literally reproduces the firstborn son of the tale. By the end, "little brother" happily reunites with "father" and "Marlene" (102) – the girl lacks an explicit descriptor of her place in the family. This familial non-text leaves the heuristic space for both Marlene and the young audience to deduce her new motherly role, based upon organic care, bodily investment, and patriarchal restoration, in the inevitable absence of adult mother figures.

Gretel follows Marlene's (re)productive example in generating tears in the face of acts of unmotherly destruction. When the parents abandon the children for the first time, Gretel weeps, and it is Hansel who provides the proactive solution to their survival by scattering pebbles on their way into the forest (13). The boy's mature and proto-masculine protectiveness over their sibling-family is poignantly represented by Vogel in the bottom-right corner of his color illustration, where he can be seen caringly embracing the weeping Gretel (Figure 1.). The second time they get abandoned, however, the boy proves wrong by confusing the distinct functionalities of pebbles and breadcrumbs, losing both their way back home and (witch). Instead, she "share[s]" with him the bread she hid under her apron, a maternal image of proximal intimacy

Figure 5.
Hermann Vogel,
First Illustration to 'The Juniper Tree' (1893), p. 137

Figure 6.
Hermann Vogel, Fifth Illustration to
'Hansel and Gretel' (1893), p. 76

of nutrition (bread) and reproduction (womb).

While returning home and asking a duck to help them get across the river, Hansel proves wrong yet again. In a dominating gesture, he proposes they cross at the same time. Gretel emphatically remarks, however, that this action would overburden the duck (61). In the fifth illustration of the tale (Figure 6.), she looks on lovingly but cautiously from above at her brother crossing the river, her arm ready to push her up into running to the water to save him if necessary. Like Marlene, left with a father and brother yet no alive adult mother figures, Gretel grows to embody the feminine benevolence and harmony with nature of one instead, providing a didactic image of a courageous and caring young motherly archetype.

Conclusion

The intricately constructed and layered verbovisual intertext of 'The Juniper Tree' and 'Hansel and Gretel' offers a plethora of norms, perversions, and initiations of natural maternity, familial femininity, and patriarchal motherliness. Literarily, aesthetically, and emotionally representing a cast of feminized and defeminized characters diverse in personality, age, and morals, the Grimms and Hermann Vogel formulate a comparative pedagogical discourse of the teleological status of proper motherhood in the lives of feminine subject positions.

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Article Five

Wine's Own Deep Meaning: Paired Opposition in Ancient Chinese Drinking Poems

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From the earliest Chinese poets onward, alcohol was often the companion of poetry. As both an inspiration and central theme, drinking recurs as a poetic image and practice across dynastic Chinese literature. The ancient expression, 钓诗钩, or "fishing poetry hooks," was an idiom for wine, with the character for poetry 诗 held inside of it. If alcohol was the hook that snagged onto poetic thought, then the poems were the bounty harvested and gleaned after sobriety, a cache of words produced during and after the alcoholic experience. In drinking poems from the Six Dynasty Period and the Tang Dynasty, several opposite-paired social functions repeatedly appear. These pairs, solitude/companionship; deep thought/simple pleasure; and memory/forgetting, appear in the drinking poetry of Tao Qian, Yuan Zhen, and Li Bai. Their poems, through the subject of alcohol, express the contradictions, conflations, and oppositions of these six social concepts in ancient China, knitting together an image of a society that stretches beyond its drunken experiences to the greater sea of culture and poetic thought-churning beneath it.

In ancient Chinese poetry, drinking is a social site for desolate solitude and deep companionship. A modern Chinese idiom, 酒肉朋友 (lit. alcohol-meat-friends), refers to friends who spend time drinking, eating, and having fun together, but who lack a serious, deeper relationship. Though modern, this idiom illustrates an apparent contradiction in the drinking culture represented in Chinese poetry, and in modern social circles: Alcohol can engender friendship, but it also accentuates loneliness. This contradiction emerges in "Drinking Alone Beneath the Moon" /《月下独酌四首》, one of the most well-known collections of drinking poems in the Chinese canon, written by eminent Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai. Li Bai's speaker drinks alone, with "no kith or kin near". Yet despite the titular isolation, the poem's main thrust is not soli-

tude, but a search for companionship. By the third line the speaker has "invite[d] the moon to join"; by the fourth, he invites his shadow, and together they form a group of three, or "三人". These characters resonate with the Confucian precept "三人行, 必有我师", which describes how three companions can always learn from each other and describes true friends; thus, the solitude announced in the title turns on its head to become the invention of a deep, meaningful form of companionship. And yet at the same time, the speaker laments that "[w]hile sober we seek pleasure in fellowship" but "when drunk we go each our own way," describing an inherent loneliness in drinking that cannot match true sober friendship, despite his communion with the natural world. An earlier poet, Tao Qian, wrote twenty poems in impressive fashion titled "Drinking Wine" /《饮酒》about experiences with alcohol. In one, he describes how "alone, I pour myself a goblet of wine / when the cup is empty, the pot pours for itself". This salient image of the empty cup, waiting to be filled, evokes the image of an empty person searching for connection; however, the pot pouring for itself suggests the reflective self-reliance attained through drinking — the cup can fill itself without assistance. In both examples, solitude and companionship stand in opposition, but each also begets the other.

In addition to the counterplay of solitude and friendship, Chinese poets also write of genuine companionship formed through drinking. Another Tao Qian poem from《饮酒》describes a group of "old friends" who "bring wine whenever they come by". The lively, raucous images of "old men chatting away—all at once" as they "sit under the pines," "passing the jug around" characterize a deep friendship of equals who recognize each other. The speaker says "老 友 赏识我志趣," translated by Liu Wu-Chi as "Old friends know what I like". However, this also means that his old friends are able to recognize and appreciate (赏识) the worthiness of his aspirations (志 趣)[1], a meaningful level of intimacy. The poet Tao Qian himself found connections through alcohol; in a mythologized historical anecdote, Tao's friend Wang Hong sent him a container of alcohol just when he needed it. This tight connection, formed over drinking, is linguistically immortalized in the chengyu 白衣送酒, with the broader meaning of a friend who brings you something, just when you need it most.[2] The fixed phrase with the character 酒 carries in it alcohol's connective force in social culture and language. Another poet, Yuan Zhen of the Middle Tang, wrote a brief poem "Recalling when I was Drunk" /《忆醉》, in which he laments a past drunken connection. The speaker states that while "today we chance to meet," now "sober we part". This connection formed over alcohol cannot be pursued further, resulting in the speaker's attempt to preserve the companionship in poetry. As it is today, alcohol can be both the bond and the breakage, and ancient Chinese poetry displays this contradiction in full force.

A second social opposition found in Chinese drinking poems lies between deep thought and simple pleasure. This shallow/deep, or simple/profound distinction characterizes the interrelated social functions a night of drinking might entail. In Li Bai's《月下独酌四首》, the character 酌 carries the meaning of drinking wine, but also of careful deliberation. And sure enough, Li Bai's speaker finds both pleasure and contemplation while drinking. First, Li Bai writes that "Pleasure must be sought while it is spring / I sing and the moon goes back and forth / I dance and my shadow falls at random". Singing and dancing, expressions of simple pleasure, become part of the drinking experience. But later in this collection, Li Bai explicitly details profound drunken thoughts. He writes that "Three cups penetrate the Great Truth /

1
My own translations.

2
An example of the idiom and the original story from Chinese artwork can be found in the cited references at the end of the paper.

one gallon accords with Nature's laws," with Great Truth being 大道, the Dao or the Way, and nature being 自然, a central tenet of Daoism. Thus in alcohol, one might enter a Daoist journey of understanding. In the following couplet, Li Bai says "但得酒中趣, 勿为醒者传"; translated by Irving Yucheng Lo as "Simply find pleasure in wine: Speak not of it to the sober ones". The pleasure and understanding found while drinking, then, also cannot or should not be passed on to others while sober. In this poem, Li Bai seemingly fuses the pleasure found in drinking with the deep thought it provokes; the discovery becomes the pleasure itself. In Tao Qian's《饮酒》poem about old friends connecting over wine, the friends become "lost in these deep thoughts" in the final lines, wondering: "Unaware that there is a 'self,' How do we learn to value 'things'?" In the Chinese "不觉世上有我在, 身外之物何足贵?", a more literal translation might be: "Not knowing the world has me within it, how do the things outside my body have so much value?"

Drunk reflection produces a dissociation from self, but also, conversely, a recognition of self as distinct from the exterior. Tao Qian reaches a similar realization in another poem from this collection, with the speaker asking "Why should I tie myself to this worldly bondage," since "Life alternates between dreams and illusions"? Through alcohol, both speakers question the value of materiality and the illusory nature of life, adding a Buddhist tint to the drunken discourse. Like Li Bai finding the Dao in wine, Tao Qian may find a Buddhist truth communicated in the social experience of drinking. Because of their Buddhist roots, these instances of deep thought separate material pleasure from meaningful understanding; once again, the true pleasure is found in the discovery itself.

Alcohol, with its power to influence memory and mind, also manifests the painful opposition between forgetting and remembering in ancient Chinese poetry. In "Drinking Wine," Tao Qian's speaker plucks an "autumn chrysanthemum" and then "float[s] this thing in wine to forget [his] sorrow / To leave far behind my thoughts of the world". With "dew in [his] clothes" evoking the image of tears, the speaker finds refuge from sorrowful memory through wine. Yet as he seeks to "leave far behind [his] thoughts of the world," he also engages in re-discovery through alcohol, and by the end of the poem he has "found again the meaning of life," or "聊复 得此生," as if he has, through forgetting "thoughts of the world," re-obtained his life itself (此 生). But at the same time, as alcohol allows leeway to forget, it gives rise to memory, both of past experiences as well as the painful recollection of drunken experiences. In《忆醉》, Yuan Zhen's speaker writes: "I sigh to myself I am traveling far / Curse the wine that delays my return / Today we chance to meet, sober we part / Wind dries my tears as I recall being drunk". The drunken experience — the inscription of a poem, the pleasure and discovery found either alone or in companionship — necessarily implies an after-state, in which reality and memory return. In opposition to《月下独酌四首》, here the companionship develops while two people are drunk, not sober. Yuan Zhen chooses to excavate not the romantic or platonic connection, but the painful memory, with its inevitable end in separation. The "heady taste" of wine that Tao Qian describes in "酒中自有深意味," or wine's own deep meaning[3], manifests not only in the drinking experience but also in the memory imprint of alcohol. Poetry, then, is this imprint left behind from the experience, a forever memory written into paper and time. Through these preserved memories of poems, it is possible to see the interwoven threads of certain social functions in Chinese society. Of course, memory and forgetting; companionship

3 My own translation of 酒中自有深意味 would be "Wine has its own deep meaning"

and solitude; and pleasure and philosophy are all present not only in drinking spaces, but in all of the spaces and practices where ancient Chinese thought and social practices manifest. Yet in the drinking space, and in this after-image of poetry, a more concentrated depiction of these social functions emerges. The search for companionship in loneliness, the conflation of pleasure with discovery, and the preservation of memory in ancient Chinese society all rise to the surface, caught on the hooks of poetry.

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Article Six

The Nature of Promiscuous Love in Classical Novels

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Lust, arriving from an innate genetic need to sustain one's lineage, is a feeling more primal than all others. The yearning for companionship is so deeply ingrained in human culture that the first recorded story, *Gilgamesh,* centers upon it. This thread continued throughout time and was no less pertinent in the Classical world than it is now. At its core, *Satyricon* is a commentary on the wavering nature of love, whereas both *Chaereas and Callirhoe* and *An Ephesian Tale* attempt to portray the ideal couple. Each piece of literature seeks to push its views of the perfect relationship upon the reader. Looking at these novels together, a sharp distinction can be drawn between homo- and heterosexual love in the purpose-driven nature of heterosexuality versus the obsolescence of homosexuality. Moreover, the natural dichotomy of submission/dominance was thought to prohibit a sense of mutual respect in gay relationships, thus relegating them to an inferior role associated with temporary infatuation as opposed to emotional attachment. By analyzing the characters, one can construct a facsimile of the model Roman relationship.

Arbiter, Petronius, and Sarah Ruden. *Satyricon*. Hackett Publishing Co, Inc, 2000.

Reardon, Bryan P. *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*. University of California Press, 2019.

In order to examine a "perversion" of love in classical novels, it is first necessary to understand what the optimal couple looked like. Both Chaereas and Callirhoe as well as Habrocomes and Anthia exemplify this in their unerring fidelity. After each horror they face, each couple strives above all to protect their chastity. This can be seen most explicitly when, upon the threat of separation, Habrocomes says, "Let us swear to one another, my dearest, that you will remain faithful to me…and that I should never live with another woman" (Xenophon 1.11, Reardon p. 156-57). Further evidence can be seen when Callirhoe attempts to preserve herself from Dionysius' advances. "On all sides Callirhoe proved invincible; she stayed true to Chaereas

alone. Fortune outwitted her, though: Fortune, against whom alone human calculation has no power" (Chariton 2.8, Reardon p. 53). Here, Chariton clarifies that only the power of the deified "Fortune" could halt Callirhoe's faithfulness. These quotes demonstrate the sanctity of loyalty within heterosexual partnerships.

The rationale for chastity can be attributed both to love, but also to the "purpose" of a relationship: that is, procreation. Extension of the familial lineage was the heart of a marriage. Seeing that the goal of a partnership was to produce heirs, any infidelity would introduce debate regarding the child's ancestry. Thus, fidelity was of the utmost importance. With this context, it can be concluded that heterosexual relationships were not seen as purely emotional connections, but rather as purposeful efforts to create successors. This 'goal-oriented' view is seen when Chariton writes, "Their first contact was passionate; they had an equal impulse to enjoy each other, and matching desire has made their union fruitful" (Chariton 2.8, Reardon p. 53). Here, "fruitful" implies an inherent intention of this coupling. Later on, Callirhoe writes to Dionysius, saying, "I am with you in spirit through the son we share" (Chariton 8.4, Reardon p. 135), indicating the child as the source of their bond. This is paralleled somewhat humorously by the child's biological father, Chaereas, saying, "It will be commanded by the descendent of Hermocrates [Callirhoe's father]" (Chariton 8.8, Reardon p. 144). To both men, this child is their connection to their wife.

The last aspect of a heterosexual relationship was the household system. Though a man held formal power, his wife, as materfamilias, would influence behind the scenes and run the household. For example, one of the wives at the dinner party talks about "how much work it took to run a household" (Petronius 67, Ruden p. 51). All in all, classical novels idealize loyal heterosexual couples in an effort to sustain a household and familial lineage.

Seeing that the goal of a relationship is producing heirs, it is clear that homosexuality is inherently pointless by this metric. Removed from this burden of childbirth, these relationships lack the consequences of sex. This results in a sexual freedom promised by the lack of ways to prove faith. This promiscuity is illustrated when Lichas meets the disguised Encolpius aboard the ship. "He [Lichas] did not examine my hands or face, but turned his eyes to my genitals… and said, 'Hello Encolpius'" (Petronius 105, Ruden p. 84). By recognizing Encolpius through his genitals, this interaction indicates that the focus of their previous relationship was overwhelmingly sexual. Though the extent of their former link is unknown, it is still important to note how much import is placed upon his sex. Mere minutes after this, a fight breaks out, which is only brought to an end by Giton, who "held a razor posed above his manly organs and threatened to lop off the cause of so much misery" (Petronius 108, Ruden p. 86). The author points explicitly to Giton's genitalia as the origin of everyone's problems. Rather than having concern for his well-being, the combatants worry about his sex.

Similarly, Giton's path through this novel is driven wholly by his lauded physical attraction. He is passed between Ascyltos and Encolpius as seen when "[Encolpius] threw [himself] …at him [Giton]" and "[Ascyltos] attempted to rob me [Giton] of my chastity" (Petronius 9, Ruden p. 6). There is barely a thought spared for fidelity, as most characters are seen as having multiple male sexual partners. Even the two protagonists, Ascyltos and Encolpius, were together, as ref-

erenced when Ascyltos said, "'You were my bum-buddy in the pleasure garden, the same way this kid here in the boardinghouse is yours'" (Petronius 9, Ruden p. 7). This lewdness is again observed towards slaves, as with the keeping of deliciae as sex toys. At one point, a woman at the cena spoke to her friend, "loudly sharing…his [her husband's] preference for his pet slave" (Petronius 67, Ruden p. 51). A similar situation occurs again when "a boy particularly easy on the eyes [entered the room]. Trimalchio descended upon him and kissed him rather persistently… Fortunata…calling him [Trimalchio] a piece of filth…with no control over his libido" (Petronius 74, Ruden p. 57). As can be seen, the lack of accountability within a homosexual relationship bred carnal looseness. Homosexuality was expressed in brief bursts of infatuation rather than long-lasting emotional closeness.

The other issue with homosexuality stems from their innate imbalance of power. Sex requires one partner to act as the dominant penetrator and the other as the passive receiver. This presents a problem in that passive homosexuality was seen as effeminate and thus as an affront to one's dignity. This is epitomized in Quartilla's orgy when a man "seized our [Encolpius' and Ascyltos'] flanks and pounded away…we swore to each other in the most solemn terms that the terrible secret would die with us" (Petronius 21, Ruden p. 14). In being penetrated, they both suffer disgrace and agree to carry that knowledge to their grave. They are repeatedly debased at the orgy, worn "to pieces with kissing and humping" (Petronius 24, Ruden p. 16). Relationships are meant to be partnerships, but the inherent dishonor of existing in a homoerotic context precludes respect. The closest example of a real homosexual relationship in *Satyricon* is between Encolpius and Giton, who seem to bear some semblance of love toward each other. Encolpius does form an emotional attachment, as seen in his heartbroken reaction to Giton's choosing of Ascyltos. However, even in their partnership, an imbalance exists: Encolpius is the dominant player, whereas Giton is a submissive plaything. As soon as Encolpius finds a more proper partner, Circe, in this case, he leaves Giton. Upon their first meeting, Encolpius, without a hint of remorse, offers to "sacrifice my little friend [Giton] to you [Circe]" (Petronius 127, Ruden p. 110). How is one supposed to read into this, except as a complete betrayal of Giton? The very base of their relationship must have been faulted in order to come to an end as abruptly as this. Petronius exposes society in this view that love cannot exist between two men; instead, only lust.

Taken together, it can be concluded that the vast difference in treatment between heterosexual and homosexual relationships results from the value assigned to their partnerships. In a society of ancestor worship, the perpetuation of familial descent took precedence over all. Thus, the fertile coupling and continuing relationship between heterosexuals was to be idealized. On the other end of this spectrum stands the innate futility of gay sex. The classical association of promiscuity with homosexual relationships is derived from the fact that these relationships are, in effect, "useless." Furthermore, the duality and opposition of submissive versus dominant partners impede respectful coexistence. By designating an inferior and superior role, a romance is thus doomed from the start. For this reason, so many characters turn to their slaves or deliciae, who are already lower class, to engage in sodomy. This proclivity towards displaying homosexuals as licentious exists even to this day. The stigmatization of gay culture perseveres in its portrayal as unnatural and unfruitful. Only through an effort to understand one another can society heal past its wounds and move toward tolerance.

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Article Seven

Modernity and Contemporaneity in Late Beethoven: A Literary Perspective

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Delving into Ludwig van Beethoven's works and influence, one risks being swallowed by an immensity of voices and sounds. Today, one can hear his music played throughout the world in concert halls, television advertisements, and national anthems. The uber-famous Ninth Symphony was played at the fall of the Berlin Wall and has become a recurring ritual of New Year's Eve in Japan. Beethoven has also been a touchpoint for successive generations of artists of all disciplines. The literary modernists of the early twentieth century (especially the Bloomsbury Group: T.S. Eliot, E.M. Forster, and Virginia Woolf) were fascinated with the composer, as were philosophers and thinkers later in the century (Theodor Adorno, Isaiah Berlin). Above the stage of Boston's storied Symphony Hall, a gold plaque is set bearing only the word Beethoven. He literally and figuratively sits above all artistic creation in the hall. The profusion of admirers professional and casual makes any attempt to comprehensively chronicle the composer's influence difficult. Moreover, this practical deification makes it a challenge to critically examine the "real" composer. As Theodor Adorno phrases the difficulty of writing on Beethoven's music, here describing the Missa Solemnis specifically, "to speak seriously about it can only mean, in Brecht's sense, alienating it, breaking the aura of unconnected veneration that encloses and protects it, and thus perhaps contributing something to an authentic experience of the work beyond the paralysing respect of the educated sphere" (Adorno 142). Perhaps this is why, paradoxically, there is a relative absence in critical writing on Beethoven outside the currents of traditional musicology.

The challenge of writing on Beethoven becomes acute with respect to his late works, referred to as his late period. Writers and musicians have lauded the compositions of this period, between

1812 and Beethoven's death, for their complexity and formal experimentation. These compositions also possess a seductive subjectivity that presages the Romantic movement in classical music and in broader artistic movements. The late works' radical approach to form as well as their chronological position at the beginning of the 19th century have prompted writers to hesitantly identify them as belonging to an early modernism. Others, namely Theodor Adorno, who approached Beethoven from a perspective *sui generis*, have examined these works as suggestive of a late style as relating to the composer's period of life. This essay seeks to examine Beethoven from a distinctly literary perspective in two ways, firstly, by "reading" Beethoven" as a figure of a broader artistic era, and secondly, through a literary analysis of certain of his compositions, with a focus on the affective qualities of the music.

The first mode of understanding late Beethoven is through the lens of modernity. It was just as Goethe was writing the second part of *Faust*, itself a pioneering portrait of the modern man, that Beethoven ruptured countless boundaries of form and genre in his late works. If Stravinsky's starkly avant-garde Rite of Spring provoked a riot in its first performance, Beethoven's premieres a century prior were equally met with bewilderment and hostility. But just as the early nineteenth century was associated with nascent modernism, these decades witnessed a shift from Classical to Romantic musical "periods" (as they are traditionally classified) that did not entirely operate in unison with the developments of modernist literature (and other forms of expression). Furthermore, rather than a move towards the avant-garde, Beethoven's late works, (in)famous for their complexity and a singularly startling subjectivity, can also be interpreted as indicative of a certain "late style" according to Theodor Adorno's classification.

The "late style," as coined by Adorno and further expanded on by Edward Said, is a phenomenon apart from the processes of modernism. For Adorno, the formal innovations of Beethoven's late works demonstrate a tension between objective and subjective, and Beethoven "does not bring about their harmonious synthesis. As a dissociative force he tears them apart in time" (Adorno 126). That Beethoven tears apart the objective and subjective is suggestive to Adorno of a late style brought on by the existential implications of old age. Yet Adorno also understands the tension between late style and the modern. Said writes succinctly in *On Late Style* that "the reason Beethoven's late style so gripped Adorno throughout his writing is that in a completely paradoxical way, Beethoven's immobilized and socially resistant final works are at the core of what is new in modern music of our own time" (12). In hopes of regaining some measure of clarity in this matter, we will turn to the compositions themselves.

Uncertainties of form and concept lie at the heart of one of Beethoven's most curious works, the Op. 95 string quartet in F minor, titled *Quartetto Serioso*. This is an extraordinarily compact piece, the shortest of the string quartets and one that is curiously absent, other than a few indirect references, from the book-length collection of Adorno's detailed works on composer. Despite this, the *Serioso* is a landmark, for just as Beethoven himself stood on precipices figurative and literal, this work is positioned chronologically at the transition between the composer's middle and late periods. Written in 1810, seventeen years before the composer's death, the Serioso is usually excluded from the set of six pieces referred to as Beethoven's late quartets. Instead, musicologists place it at the end of the composer's Classical middle period, despite it being very much out of place in this setting. The quartet begins with what amounts to a proc-

lamation of late style, a wild staccato figure played in union by all instruments. Throughout the rest of the first movement, these furious outbursts return, interspersed with phrases of floating beauty reminiscent of the Violin Concerto. As he does in most of the late works, Beethoven swaps the traditional *adagio* or *andante* tempo for an *allegretto ma non troppo* second movement, eschewing the traditional slow tempo second movement. Here, sections of Classical refinement are bisected by a jarring fugue. Of Beethoven's use of unison and the fugue forms, Adorno writes "it is really the splitting into extremes: between polyphony and monody. It is a dissociation of the middle. In other words: the withering of harmony" (Adorno 156). This withering, neatly parallel to the composer's failing health at the time, is a quality Adorno sees as characteristic of Beethoven's late style.

Less easy to categorize is the fourth movement, which has perplexed listeners, performers, and musicologists since its conception. The movement begins in the home key of F minor with a traditional slow introduction before proceeding into a solemn rondo in 6/8 time marked *allegretto agitato* that concludes after a few minutes with a whisper. But as the rondo fades to an end, a new section bursts forth, totally out of place in F major, 2/2 time and blindingly fast. It finishes practically as it starts and the listener is left entirely disoriented. The incongruity of this finale–as well as the incongruity of the larger work itself within Beethoven's oeuvre–has important implications for the ways we understand the relationship between the composer's Late Style and modernism. Beethoven was conscious of this work's radical nature and reached out to conductor George Smart to caution him about its publication, writing "The Quartet is written for a small circle of connoisseurs and is never to be performed in public" (Ong 212). This may have been one of the first instances in classical music where a work was explicitly intended to thwart popular comprehension. This realization informs how we conceive about the late works. Perhaps influenced by his trepidation of life's end or his increasing detachment from the world due to deafness or mental health, Beethoven was nonetheless intentionally experimenting, systematically pushing back the constraints of form.

This understanding of Beethoven's late works exposes an uncertain relationship between the composer's nascent modernism and late style. Rather than attempting to separate the two, it is helpful to examine Beethoven and his legacy from the perspective of twentieth century art and artists. The major musical development of the twentieth century was serialism, a formal innovation composed of tone rows, non-repeating sets of notes that mark a break with tonality. Many critics and composers view Beethoven's departures from the Classical style in the last piano sonatas and string quartets as finding their natural successor in composer and pioneer of serialism Arnold Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique. Schoenberg himself was keen to promote this narrative as a way to legitimize the twelve-tone technique, citing particular Beethovenian excerpts as a predecessor. Fascinatingly, in a 1955 article, musicologist Hans Keller not only unearths a bevy of tone rows in Mozart but demonstrates that Mozart showed a far more complete use of this technique than Beethoven. Keller, writing at a time when debates about the merit (or lack thereof) of nascent serialism raged, is more interested in a defense of serialism than in its significant implications for Classical composers. If Mozart was more interested in writing tone rows than Beethoven, the way Beethoven is positioned as the logical predecessor to the avant-garde is disrupted. This rethinking is aided in part by understanding how Beethoven approached his musical predecessors. Specifically, it has been documented that Beethoven

turned to the Baroque and pre-Baroque as he entered his late style and began putting pressure on formal conventions. The musicologist Martin Cooper writes "Beethoven turned with renewed interest during the last decade of his life not only to such academic devices as canon and fugue, but even to the polyphonic masters of the sixteenth century (especially Palestrina) and to what seemed in 1820 a musical archaeologist's interest, namely the modes" (Cooper 126). It seems almost paradoxical that a composer would turn to the past as he begins to write his most visionary works. Of course, it is an interest with form that characterizes Beethoven's archaeology of the pre-Baroque and his latest works. This marks Beethoven as avant-garde in much the same way as twentieth century artists like T.S. Eliot, who unearthed countless classical texts in "The Wasteland." Moreover, it suggests that the timeline the composer inhabits is less than linear. Freed from his place as a predecessor to the serialists and as a successor of the Classical, Beethoven and his music demonstrate the particular fluidity with which musical forms move through time.

It is in the words of Stravinsky, whose avant-garde compositions for the Ballet Russes in the early 20th century endure today, that we can further explore Beethoven's late works and their relation to past, present, and future times. Stravinsky, in *Dialogues and a Diary*, writes of the *Große Fuge*, Op.133 (a work of staggering polyphonic complexity and one of Beethoven's last completed works) as "an absolutely contemporary piece of music that will be contemporary forever" (24). Significantly, Stravinsky does not write that the *Große Fuge* is a "modern" piece of music. Instead, he employs the word contemporary in an eternal sense, as in an "eternal presentness" to the music. This reflection was published in a chapter under the heading "Thoughts of an Octogenarian," which perhaps indicates a preoccupation with late style and its existential significance. But this use of the word "contemporary" leads us further in our inquiry, specifically to Giorgio Agamben and his essay "What is the Contemporary." In it, Agamben writes that contemporaneity is "a singular relationship with one's own time, which adheres to it and at the same time, keeps a distance from it" (Agamben 41). If this sounds familiar, that is because this idea of contemporaneity bears a remarkable similarity to Adorno's theory of late style. Edward Said, reflecting on Beethoven (and Adorno) some years before Agamben, writes "Late style is in, but oddly apart from the present" (Said 24). Both "late style" and Agamben's "contemporary" possess a particular temporal sense of the eternal present, a divine *nunc stans* that has fascinated writers from Saint Augustine to Walter Benjamin.

Returning to a question asked before, how do the contemporary and the modern coexist together, and more urgently, do we as readers and listeners risk mistaking one for the other in our understanding of Beethoven's late works? Above all, these symbiotic yet conflicting ideas of presentness and modernity necessitate a radical reworking of how we understand chronology. Both Agamben's "dys-chrony" of contemporaneity and the avant-garde reliance on excavating and repurposing past forms explode traditional measurements of periodicity, casting doubt on the separations between Classical and Romantic, or traditional and the modern. Examining the Serioso Quartet or Grosse Fuge, these works elude analysis precisely because they seem to occupy many chronologies simultaneously. "Late style" would suggest that, faced with existential uncertainty, artists have always strained chronologies and repurposed the past for their own. Perhaps it is the modernist feat that has drawn our attention to this and made the present acutely aware of its own incongruities.

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Article Eight

The World Without Animals

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Modern Culture & Media Studies '25
FREN2190A Animals and I: Literature, Philosophy and the Question of the Animal
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Early on in Jacques Derrida's *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, he stakes his text upon a hypothesis which appears central to his lecture: that we are amidst a radical transformation, an acceleration of the subjugation of animals by modern means of "industrialization", "artificial insemination", and "manipulations of the genome" (23), all of which amount to a certain structure of organization and production of animals purely "in service of a certain being and the putative human well-being of man" (23). But following its initial formulation, Derrida leaves this thread aside, moving away from this material reality of animals towards their place in the history of philosophical thought. Despite staking this concrete transformation as the ground of his seminar, it lives largely in the underbelly of the text, implicitly present but gone from the material and tangible subject of his writing. This whole matter of the material subjugation of animals resurfaces concretely essentially only once — around fifty pages later, where Derrida broaches the question of the "ends of the animal", a discussion which emerges from Descartes' hypothesis of a man who "would have never seen any animals other than men" (79). This question of the "ends of the animal" takes, for Derrida, two crucial formulations, or two "ends".

The first is more or less the scenario described by Descartes — a "phenomenological end" (80) or speculative fiction that "ends" the animal by questioning what being-in-the-world would be without being-with-animals, whether "being-with-the-animal [is] a fundamental and irreducible structure of being-in-the-world" (79). The second, more tangible, historical "end" — a "horizon of a real hypothesis" (80) — is where Derrida brings back the entire matter of the subjugation, organization, and production of animals. He does so by putting forward a proposition that this "devitalizing or disanimalizing treatment" (80) of the animal leads to a certain "denaturing of animality" (80), "the production of figures of animality that are so new that they appear monstrous enough to call for a change of name" (80). It suggests an animality

Derrida, Jacques. *The Animal That Therefore I Am.* Edited by Marie-Louise Mallet. Translated by David Wills, Fordham University Press, 2008.

Simon, Claude. *The Flanders Road*. Translated by Richard Howard, The New York Review of Books, 2022.

not "put out of its misery", to use the phrase often lofted at animals, but an animality kept in a "virtually interminable survival" (26) in which it appears suspended between life and death. It is therefore from this point — the contrast between these two "ends", one supposedly real and one supposedly imagined, that I propose the stakes of the animal's subjugation reach a critical yet precarious conjunction. The question, then, is the following: To what extent are these two "ends of animal", one speculative and the other historical, differentiated and in what ways might they intersect, or at the very least graze each other? And in doing so, what does this reveal about the stakes of this "end" or of the animal — stakes that, once again, Derrida implicitly bases (or as I have said, "stakes") his whole seminar upon? I posit that the border between these two separate "ends" trembles the most in two registers: the rendering of the end as a *phantasm* and its escape from time, and the position and role of *knowledge* in relation to materiality. Along the way, I also propose that we look briefly but closely at the image of the horse decomposing in Claude Simon's *The Flanders Road*, which I believe highlights these key moments of instability between past and future, between thought and material, which brings into concrete view this closeness and tension between Derrida's two separate "ends" of the animal.

First point: When characterizing the historical "end", Derrida makes a special note to describe the end as one that can develop "only as the symptom of a desire or phantasm" (80). The question of desire is, as we have explored, the desire to prosecute a war against animals with which to eradicate "any animal worthy of the name and living for something other than to become a means for man" (102). But the mention of the phantasm is a bit more slippery — the ghostly presence invoked here seems to imply not only the projection of this spectacle into a material future, but a recursion, a specter that disputes the linear path of this history in favor of the "interminable" state of the "denatured" animal. In *The Flanders Road*, we see this very same intersection of temporality occur in the ghost-like decomposing image of the horse. This recurs again and again as if haunting Georges, constantly being torn apart and being put back together in an endless cyclical return, watching "what was not a rough mass of dried mud but a horse, or rather what had been a horse… and reverting now, or already reverted to the original earth" (Simon, 65). The horse is made and then destroyed, it takes form from its surroundings but then disappears again, as if migrating, so to speak, back into the ground from which it came. In this way, the phantasmic reference in Derrida takes "concrete" form in the spectral recurrence of Simon's horse, which assumes the state of "virtually interminable survival" (Derrida, 26) that the subjugated animal is forced into. Simon's horse is decomposed and recomposed constantly throughout the progression of the novel, as if "haunting" Georges, forced into this interminable state outside of time itself. The interminability of the horse is perhaps another way of thinking of Derrida's concept of the "denaturing" of the animal — a denaturing which coerces the animal outside of its existence in time, defining it purely by its function with reference to the human. Positioned as a purely functional entity, the animal exists only in this world of production and extraction, it is forced outside of the flow of time itself.

Georges, staring at this horse which has been severed from the flow of time, can only interpret it in the past tense, a stagnant state of the past which exists outside of time — what "*had been* a horse (that is, what you knew, what you could recognize as having been a horse) was no longer anything now" (Simon, 15, emphasis mine). This historical "denaturing" of the animal asserts the animal's condemned existence in this suspended past — "this denatured-animal *used to*

be an animal", we might imagine hearing, even as the animals materially are being produced and harvested in an endless cycle of the present. As Derrida writes, the animal is "destined in always increasing numbers for the same hell" (26), its fate predetermined upon its inception. But this animal's spectral suspension outside of time suggests, paradoxically, a flight from the linear history of this denatured end, as if it escapes into the atemporal, speculative first end that Derrida describes. The animal, having come to an end through its ghostly, interminable survival, cannot be re-inscribed into the linear progression of historical time. It does not just cease to be, it ceases to *have ever been*, forever rendered in this past-tense deferral. Simon's horse is always what *had been* a horse, even as it is constantly being made and remade, rendered flesh and then earth again. The animal becomes an embodied phantasm constantly imposing itself upon the present, but always doing so from this atemporal suspended state outside of time.

Second point: Derrida invokes the question of *knowledge*, and the relationship between a knowledge of reality and its material outcomes. We see this most clearly in his description of the changing relations of *knowledge* of animals in the last two centuries as compared to ancient forms of treatment of the animal, which warrants a longer quotation:

> "It is all too evident that in the course of the last two centuries these traditional forms of treatment of the animal have been turned upside down by the joint developments of zoological, ethological, biological, and genetic forms of *knowledge*, which remain inseparable from *techniques* of intervention *into* their object, from the transformation of the actual object, and from the milieu and world of their object, namely, the living animal." (Derrida, 25)

Derrida suggests quite radically that the difference in the treatment of the animal today does not stem from their material realities, but originates from the increasing scientific and technological forms of knowledge that create the possibility of this standardization, subjugation, and production of the animal. It is this very claim to "know" the animal in its scientific entirety — biological, genetic, etc. — which enables the question of controlling and manipulating the animal in service of purely human ends. Most crucially, this knowledge is entirely inseparable from these "techniques of intervention", from the "transformation" of the actual object, that is to say, inseparable from the material reality which this knowledge claims to describe.

The speculative end, then, which purports to be an immaterial, atemporal reality, necessarily reinscribes itself into the material conditions which it claims to disavow. The methodological fiction of the "world without animals" is not one that remains speculative but in fact prescribes its "knowledge" onto material reality. Descartes, we might notice, claims that the man who "would never have seen any animals other than men" would "nevertheless be capable, as *homo faber* or *technicus*, as engineer, of manufacturing automatons that resemble humans for some, and animals for others" (Derrida, 80). This man who occupies this fantasy world free of animals is nonetheless capable of enacting into material reality an effective facsimile of an animal purely by sake of his all-encompassing, abstracted, *speculative* knowledge of the nature of an animal, even as that animal is entirely decoupled from the material world he inhabits.

In this way, we might see how the supposedly "immaterial" end of the world espoused by Derrida always takes on material form through the imposition of its knowledge, a blurring of the border between these two conceptions of animal end. The speculative end of animals is a method of knowledge, or a conjecture about this world-without-animals, a sort of ideological justification or underpinning irreducible from its material analogues of the animal's genetic mutations or industrial subjection. The speculative end threatens, always, to materialize the historical one.

It is this very same notion of a materializing knowledge that Georges deploys in order to hold the horse back from its sublimation into the ground, his maintenance of a sort of mental whole of the horse as it is or *was* to stop it from disintegrating, as seen in the quote from earlier: "And after a moment or so he recognized it: what was not a rough mass of dried mud but…a horse, or rather what had been a horse (whinnying, snorting in the green fields)" (Simon, 65). This speculative knowledge of what a horse is, the fantasy (might we say *phantasm?*) and imaginary image of it whinnying in the green fields, is what pulls the horse back into being, what wrests it away, if only temporarily, from its seemingly inevitable transmutation into the ground.

The stakes, then, of this dualistic conception of the "ends of the animal", emerge from this struggle between knowledge and materiality. Put plainly: any imaginary of the end threatens to set that end into tangible motion, such that any speculation of the end cannot be separated from the material desires, techniques of intervention, or transformations that put it into place. It is this very claim to having *knowledge* over the animal, knowledge enough to speculate its ends, that provides the basis for the historical *denaturing* of the animal. The "interminable state" of the animal suspended outside of time suggests the possibility of a pure, abstracted knowledge of the animal as a whole — the animal not as a living being moving through the world, constantly changing, but one that is graspable in its static entirety. Derrida's "denatured animal", outside of time and biologically controlled, ultimately boils down to a figure of animality that can be modified and restrained to such an extent that one has full knowledge over it. These new mutant "figures of animality" (Derrida, 80) are defined by their complete and utter transparency, their existence as purely a property of human cognition, human fabrication, or human time. The stakes of this blurring of the lines between fiction and history is that the knowledge of fiction presupposes an ability and technique to enact into history its speculative possibility.

In this sense, we see why Derrida leaves behind the material conditions of his hypothesis aside for an analysis of the history of philosophy. It is the very claim to this *knowledge* over the animal latent within this history of philosophical thought that presupposes, or forces into being, the historical process with which we find ourselves in the midst of today and which threatens to "end" the animal in the horizon of a near future. It is therefore, in the same breath, this very same recourse to the deconstruction of these unwavering claims to knowledge that is crucial, for Derrida, in acting against the historical process, undermining its speculative structure.

One final point, an opening of sorts, before we finish: Even as Georges wrests the horse back into being, it almost immediately begins to disintegrate again, it folds back into the contours of the earth. Unlike the animals held in factory farms, who are entirely "known", the horse on the battlefield is constantly escaping from Georges' knowledge of it, "reverting now, or already reverting to the original earth" (Simon, 65), refusing to be kept whole in this state of

idealized suspension. Georges can only hold onto the horse in his moment of clarity for a brief instant before it disintegrates into the ground, as if exposing the impossibility of this notion of a perfect and all-encompassing knowledge of the horse. And in this failed attempt to assert complete knowledge, Georges himself becomes implicated, beginning to identify with the decomposition of the horse: "reverted, then, to the state of crumbling lime, of fossils…watching, impotent, the slow transmutation of his own substance starting with his arm that he could feel dying gradually" (Simon, 149). The only way Georges can assert control — that is to say, the subjection of the horse as a means to his own (human) end, is to exist in relation to it, a relation which threatens to pull himself in with it, to drag him materially into the ground as well. We might interpret this moment as the horse's refusal of its complete form of subjugation under a knowledge independent of this moment of relation — it refuses to be understood "as such", to use the Heideggerian formulation, and Georges' failure to do so implicates himself materially in its decomposition. For like Georges trying to hold onto this knowledge of the horse, Descartes' speculative fiction, which attempts to hold onto this idealized "world without animals", we might say an abstracted knowledge of the world "as such", shudders as its boundary grows more porous. Like Georges, the very limits of Descartes' confidence with which to assert this speculative fiction, to claim knowledge over not only the animal but the world "as such", threatens to figuratively drag him (or his figure of the human) into the ground.

For as Derrida broaches at the end of his seminar, the human ability to say "as such" is also not clear — "the human is, in a way, similarly 'deprived'… there is no pure and simple 'as such'" (160). The whole problematic of a speculative world-without-animals, deprived of any pure "as such", thus renders the question of whether the world-without-animals is possible without the removal of humans as well. That is to say — without having the world "as such", how can one take away animals from it so easily or cleanly? As Derrida writes, the ability to say "as such" implies the absence of its perceiving figure: "I relate to the sun such as it is in my absence, and it is in effect like that that objectivity is constituted, starting from death" (160). The precursor for the human's relation to the world-without-animals "as such", independent of the relation between human and animal, is the disappearance of the human figure itself. Like Georges, who can only grasp the horse based on his relation to it, by being dragged into the ground with it, we cannot so easily claim this perfect knowledge of this world-without-animals without engulfing this figure of the human, too, in this impenetrable void of the "without".

To therefore put it as plainly as I can — the whole problem of whether the speculative world-without-animals is possible puts into question the entire material human project of "denaturing" animality by means of this biological, industrial, and genetic subjugation. Because even as humans construct abstract modes, structures, and systems of animal capture, they remain in relation with animals by virtue of their desire to control them. The impossibility of the "denaturing" of animals independent of the maintenance of some human relation with animals, subjugation as a form of relation, keeps the human itself always implicated within this process. This necessity of being-in-relation with animals confines the human to a paradox — at once hoping to annihilate those last vestiges of animality, but in doing so threatening their very own being. This human thus remains haunted by this last specter of the animal, which escapes the inscription of its interminable time, this endless recursion of a phantasmic presence of relation.

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Article Nine

Uncertain Bounds: Leaky Bodies in *Fierabras and Floripas*

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COLT2822L, Gender and Political Control in Medieval Literature
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> Though he be healed, his wounds are seen before God, not as wounds, but as worships.
> — Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*

> Although the so-called "Reconquista" was fought protractedly over a porous frontier, with all the resulting cultural mixture, the fictive nation that it led to was imagined as a pure, contained space.
> —Barbara Fuchs, *Exotic Nation*

When the English mystic and theologian Julian of Norwich received sixteen visions from God on a spring day in 1373, she saw before all else an image of Jesus bleeding on the cross:

> The great drops of blood fell down from under the garland like pellets, seeming as if it had come out of the veins... The abundance is like the drops of water that fall from the eaves after a great shower of rain, which fall so thick that no one may count them with their bodily wit (Norwich, 39).

Just as a swollen sky pours forth torrential rain, so the Christ of Julian's vision bleeds uncontrollably from his wounds, flooding the room in which the holy woman is soon expected to die. Like many of her late medieval contemporaries, Julian practiced a form of private devotion that emphasized Christ's humanity and thus also his suffering. The pain endured at the crucifixion and the blood then shed was understood as part of a soteriological arc, a hinge in Chris-

tian time that marks the salvation of all. Julian describes precisely this restorative function of Christ's suffering, for the blood that leaks out of his punctured body cures her physical illness, brings her back from the brink of death, and shows her an immense love by which devilish "fiends" are overcome. It is through "these medicines" that "every soul should be healed," Julian writes, and it is by wounding oneself in His image that God is most fittingly worshiped (89). Written around the same time as Julian's *Revelations*, the Middle English poem *Sowdone of Babylone* (c. 1400) offers a similarly injured figure, equal to Christ in bravery, valiance, and "bloody woundes fyve" (1450).[1] Most unlike Julian's Christ, however, the wounded protagonist of *Sowdone*—Fierabras in the modern English translation—is a monstrous "Saracen"[2] who violently sacks Rome, kills the Pope, and steals the precious relics of the Passion. He acquires his stigmatic lacerations not on the cross but while dueling the valiant Frankish knight Oliver, one of Charlemagne's twelve peers, whom he insistently desires to destroy. It is strange indeed, then, that this deplorable criminal should be paralleled with Christ through, among other things, the five holy wounds. How is the glorious Man of Sorrows in Julian's vision to be reconciled with this sacrilegious heathen?

Far from being a novel conundrum, the ease with which "Saracen" characters cross cultural-religious boundaries in medieval literature—epitomized, in this case, by a direct identification with Christ—has been famously problematized by Sharon Kinoshita as a "crisis of non-differentiation." The possibility of conversion, Kinoshita theorizes, exposes the instability of category divisions and unveils the nauseating notion that the Other need not be so different from the Self (79-80). By paying close attention to moments in the text where non-differentiation and inter-identification manifest, I argue that such crises occur most viscerally on and between the surfaces of the body, which themselves in*corp*orate—i.e. include, combine, engulf, but also make into a body—boundless multiplicities.

In order to speculate on the opening, closing, slashing, and cicatrizing of bodily boundaries, it should first be noted that the body itself is indiscrete and operates on multiple real and symbolic scales. In Thinking the Limits of the Body, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Gail Weiss give the lie to the pre-given ontology of the body as "a bounded and autonomous entity," arguing instead that, like a Moebius strip, the body knows no clear, irreversible limits between inside and out, beginning and end (1-4). Judith Butler similarly sullies the presumed purity of body-as-self by tracing the origin of the abject "outside" to the "inside" of the Subject "as its own founding repudiation" (3). The "exclusionary matrix" that constitutes a contained body is, in its spectacular failure, dependent upon the very beings it renounces as dirty—its morphogenesis occurring "through a series of repudiations that simultaneously sustains and destabilizes [it]" (Cohen and Weiss 4). In Fierabras, one such exclusionary matrix works to define the body

1 *The Middle English Romaunce of the Sowdone of Babylone and of Ferumbras his Sone who conquered Rome is translated from two twelfth-century French chansons de geste, originally written by a single anonymous author in Picardy dialect, titled La Destruction de Rome and Fierabras. Based loosely on ninth-century Arab invasions of the Italian peninsula, the chansons were immensely popular in the Middle Ages (likely due to the widespread fame of Saint-Denis abbey, which housed relics of the Passion and attracted countless pilgrims) and were translated into multiple languages and dialects throughout Europe. Unless otherwise noted, the present essay quotes from Michael A.H. Newth's modern English translation of the original French texts: Fierabras and Floripas: A French Epic Allegory.*

2 The term "Saracen" is problematic and requires qualification. In her essay "The Depoliticized Saracen and Muslim Erasure," Shokoofeh Rajabzadeh argues that "with few exceptions and unless it is a direct quotation, all qualified and unqualified uses of Saracen should be replaced with the word Muslim in scholarship on European representation of Muslims in the Middle Ages" (4). I strongly agree that collapsing Muslim identity with the highly pejorative "Saracen" must be avoided as it perpetuates racist, Islamophobic rhetoric. Yet to categorically replace "Saracen" with "Muslim" obfuscates the fundamental differences between the terms. "Saracen," as Geraldine Heng's etymological gloss demonstrates, is an invented identity that only very poorly represents Islam in the Middle Ages. Can and should the polytheistic, icon-loving, and physically monstrous "Saracen"—an invention of racist exegetes—be represented under the sign "Muslim?" There is no easy answer to this question, which is why this essay employs "Saracen" only when necessary and always under quotation marks. Less charged but similarly inadequate terms such as "enemy," "pagan," and "non-Christian" are sometimes used when relevant. Since Muslim characters are made to perform the duplicitous "Saracen" while also being accused of "trying to pass," it is only appropriate for an essay on passing boundaries to treat such terms with sensitivity and care. passing boundaries to treat such terms with sensitivity and care.

of Latin Christendom (variably reduced to and represented by Christ, Charlemagne, Oliver, Rome, and Frankish territories) from its repudiated other, Islam (Mohammad, Balan, Fierabras, Aigremore, and Iberia), highlighting the scalability of the body to encompass not only the essence of individual Subjects but also that of collective subjects to the state.

Applying these theories to the Middle Ages, Suzanne Conklin Akbari and Jill Ross demonstrate how permeability, instability, and impurity prevail at geopolitical levels. They posit in *The Ends of the Body* that, throughout the Middle Ages, the "body was not only that which was most intimately personal and most proper to the individual, but also that which was most public and representative of the interlocked nature of the group" (Akbari and Ross 3). This is, of course, drawing on the age-old notion of the body politic, famously described by Thomas Hobbes and theorized by Ernst Kantorowicz in his canonical *The King's Two Bodies*.[3] In the context of *Fierabras*, Christendom and *dar al-Islam* collide as geopolitical bodies at the threshold of Iberia, whose complex history of hybridity renders it a perfect "contact zone" (Pratt 4), "neighbor" (Houlik-Ritchey 46-57), or "zone of uninhabitability" (Butler 13). That is to say, the contested identity of "Spayne"—a topos used across *chansons de geste* to construct Iberia as the last remaining Muslim polity ready for Frankish conquest—renders it a brackish estuary where communities and individuals meet.

As Akbari and Ross' summarize, to the extent to which the body represents *community* in the ecclesiastical and proto-national sense, "the 'ends' of the body demarcate the boundary line of the group, the line that divides those who are included from those who are excluded" (6). In *Fierabras*, this "end" is the boundary between Christendom and Islam as constructed geopolitical "bodies," as well as the physical and cultural-religious frontiers that separate Frankish territory from pagan Spain. On the other hand, the *individual* "ends of the body mark the limit separating inside from outside, that which is whole and clean from that which is fragmentary and dirty" (Akbari and Ross 6). These are the dermal membranes of Oliver and Fierabras, whose uncontainable bodies overflow as if the proverbial cup that runneth over. Through a close reading of text that examines first the geopolitical bodies of Rome and Aigremore, then the bleeding, Christ-like bodies of Oliver and Fierabras, this essay argues that *Fierabras and Floripas* rips wide open any ostensibly integral body, allowing for spillage, intermingling, and expansion across uncertain bounds.

Unraveling the Geopolitical Body

The story of *Fierabras* opens on a shore—the most uncertain, perhaps, of all geological boundaries—where the reliability of land gives way to shifting sands then falls off the continental shelf and plunges into fluidity. On this shore, the emir of Spain Balan comes across one of his own merchant vessels at port, having just returned from a trade trip during which the Romans plundered its cargo and slaughtered its crew. More than serving as the driving impetus behind Balan's brutal vengeance against Rome, the appearance of this merchant ship also testifies, as early as the opening scene, to the porosity between Muslim and Christian domains. For Balan's vessels to be in Rome in the first place, as Houlik-Ritchey points out, there must exist already in the world of *Fierabras* a kind of mercantile economy "where Muslim ships call at Christian

3
According to Kantorowicz, the "king" consists of a superior, immortal body politic and an inferior, perishable body natural that contain one another (9). This duality can be traced back to the double nature of Christ, which manifests after the twelfth century in the separation of corpus mysticum (the Sacrament) and corpus juridicum (the Church). The latter behaves as a "supra-individual collective body" that gradually crystallizes into the collective body of the king.

ports with the expectation of peaceful transactions" (42). Across the borders separating Iberia and the rest of Europe, one can imagine a steady flow of people, merchandise, and cultural knowledge that invariably accompanies commercial exchange. From the outset, then, *Fierabras* belies the fiction of a pure, contained nation; the hybridity and permeability of Rome and Iberia serve as fundamental narrative conflicts, sown here on the shores of Aigremore and blossoming throughout Balan's invasion and Charlemagne's counterattack.

If the tale of Balan's ship demonstrates the possibility of osmotic exchange across geopolitical bounds, his subsequent military campaign does away with such man-made confines altogether. Medieval warfare is, first and foremost, predicated upon the erection and destruction of physical obstacles that delineate, circumscribe, and fortify space. Walls and ditches envelop Rome like armor, but even the strongest metal is not impermeable to intrusions of the impure. Known stereotypically for their mechanical feats, Balan's engineers "filled the city's ditches with lumber from their loads / Then, placing platforms on them, made sure that they would hold / One hundred knights in armor who strode on them or rode" (948-50). Horrified to see that "the Moors could come and go exactly as they chose!" (953), Christians then watched helplessly as "pagans picked to pieces the sturdy walls of Rome" (977). The text concerns itself in this passage with the futility of self-assembled boundaries, wherein ramparts carefully laden and moats diligently dug fail utterly to segregate the "inside" of the holy see from its terrifying "outside." To use Judith Butler's term, the "zone of uninhabitability"—a periphery aswarm with monstrous "Saracens" rejoicing in their murderous rampage—presses here against the purified inside, threatening to break down its bulwarks and befoul its sacred content.

The imminent phagocytosis of Rome's porous body by its Muslim enemy, highlighted by the telling exclamation "the Moors could come and go exactly as they chose!," is furthered by an act of deception. Scheming to break into the city once and for all, the aptly named King Lucifer draws up a cunning plan:

> We'll alter the devices upon our shields and coats
> To those of Rome, and bear them and wear them as a cloak!
> When Savari goes fighting, as is his daily wont,
> Then I and my companions will gallop forth to Rome.
> The city guard will see us, I know, as we approach,
> And, opening their entrance, will welcome us back home,
> For we shall be arrayed as the Savari they know! (1004-10)

Upon entering the city by this very trick, Lucifer makes "certain the outer gates were closed" (1054) and proceeds to massacre Rome's hapless inhabitants. "The pagans [are] inside there," the Christians lament, "God rot their blighted bones, / And sturdy steel made certain no others could encroach!" (1068-70). The duplicitousness of Lucifer's clever plan—an intertextual gesture, perhaps, to Odysseus' Trojan horse—and the language of "rot," "bones," and encroachment frame his troops as viral pollutants that deceive, penetrate, and hijack the body of Rome. Yet this great inflow of "contaminants" is far from unidirectional. Rather, it relies on an impersonation and displacement of Savari's Christian troops, which pour forth from their own city and are locked out. Effectively, by donning Roman symbols on their shields and

coats, Balan's men elicit a category confusion—one predicated upon the crisis of non-differentiation—that facilitates *reciprocal* leaking across porous walls. What unsettles here, in other words, is not simply Lucifer's falsity or his violent massacre of innocents, but also the exchange, or even replacement, of inside and out that troubles the presumed integrity of erected bounds. The disturbing power of this act also manifests on the level of narrative, where it serves as *the* turning point of Balan's attack: "Alas! The dice is thrown! If pagans have the city, they've struck a mortal blow!" (1070). Devastated, Rome sends a belated message to Charlemagne, bewailing how "the Spanish Moor, King Balan, has seized us by the throat / And threatens now to throttle our faith until it chokes!" (1175-76). Described explicitly here in bodily terms, "Spain" as pathogenic body penetrates the supposedly sealed, organic body of Rome, endangering the coherence of Latin Christianity itself (for which Rome is a metonym). Further, the body natural of the Pope perishes in the attack, leaving his body politic scattered, wounded, and in desperate need of its next king Charlemagne. A septic transgression thus unravels Rome as geopolitical body, reducing it to a perforated, *holey* city "covered with blood from Christian veins" (1256).

Rome, however, is not the only breachable body in *Fierabras*. Similarly defended and thus equally vulnerable, the stronghold of Muslim Spain Aigremore (Bitter-Moor or Bitter-Death) is also fringed by a porous and permeable border: the great bridge Mautriblez (Tribulation). Encountering it for the first time on their quest to rescue the captured knight, Oliver, Charlemagne's peers describe the bridge as protected "like a fortress" by "thirty marble vaults," with "ten defensive ports from end to end" guarded night and day by "a dozen soldiers each." The city walls on the other side of the river Flagot are "solid and enormous," accessible only via "a causeway / that they can raise, or drop for access to be thwarted." Surveilled by circling eagles, the riverbank itself "is twelve feet off the water, / Which flows with greater speed than arrow from its drawstring." Completing this unimpeachable defense is "a wicked giantess" who patrols Mautriblez, wielding "a giant mace of steel and copper" to knock down any foolhardy interloper.

In Rome as in Mautriblez, the excessive extent to which the author of *Fierabras* equips a threshold only serves to ironize the hubris of its creator, for all such boundaries are always already full of holes. Charlemagne's men, in fact, cross the river Flagot no less than four times throughout the story, talking their way past greedy porters (3996-4048), fooling them with clever disguises (6234-78), and galloping across miraculously parted torrents (5830-75). Just as Rome's pagan-infested outskirts mark a "wilderness" beyond containment, so the borderlands of Aigremore form an un-delineated contact zone between geopolitical entities. The protective membranes that swathe both bodies fail simultaneously to keep their contents from spilling *out* (Rome loses its relics and Aigremore its captives) and their enemies from advancing *in* (Balan's men "could come and go exactly as they chose" and Charlemagne's knights pass in and out of Aigremore like child's play).

The porousness of such bounds lies not so much in their physical weakness as in their ontological undifferentiability. Rather than simply critiquing the debauched feebleness of Rome or the heathen foolishness of Aigremore, the ease with which people leak in and out of such symbolic bodies—representative of Christendom and *dar al-Islam* themselves—explodes the existence of any coherent separation in the first place. The inability of both sides to distinguish Self from

Other, to keep inside from out, exposes the arbitrariness of category divisions and anticipates "reunification"—the final and predetermined goal towards which the narrative hurtles. Instead of discrete zones with irreconcilable differences, therefore, geopolitical bodies in *Fierabras* can perhaps be conceptualized as assemblages: entities with volatile perimeters that are impermeable because always already permeated. What this means is not that differences are entirely ignored by the author of Fierabras—who, in fact, makes racial, cultural, and religious differences abundantly clear—but rather that such differences are emphasized and dissolved strategically to facilitate the violent conversion and reincorporation of Spain.

"What happens if [Charlemagne] crosses the bridge at Mautriblez?," inquires a distressed Balan, "What action can be taken? I fear for what will be!" (5170-71). The "what if" of this question, the emphatic concern with what can be done and "what will be," gestures simultaneously toward the anxiety of crossing over and the uncertainty of stubbornly defended bounds. As the penultimate scene of *Fierabras* demonstrates, the "what will be" of Balan's Muslim Spain begins with the decapitation of its king. Through this ultimate act of severance, in which the ruler's body natural is sliced through with one clean stroke, Spain's last geopolitical threshold is dissolved. Immediately after Balan's decapitation, his converted daughter Floripas strips naked "in everybody's sight / Revealing skin as fair as summer flowers are white! [...] The Frenchmen, looking on, were filled with fierce desire," and even "The emperor himself could not subdue a smile" (7459-64). Ripe for the taking, Floripas' exposed body becomes a perfect mirror for the unraveled body of Spain—vulnerable, fatherless, and proffered up for Frankish enjoyment (her marriage to the French knight Gui, in fact, marks the definitive annexation and conversion of Iberia). Permeability and boundlessness are thus exploited by the author of *Fierabras* to render possible, even unavoidable, the violent incorporation of one geopolitical body by another. Refocusing the narrative gaze onto the individual bodies of Balan and Floripas, however, the "end" of *Fierabras* as literary *corpus* points to another level of body politics at play, one not bound by walls and bridges but by skins and bones.

Bleeding the Heroic Body

If non-differentiation and boundary-crossing are deployed in *Fierabras* to unravel the fiction of contained *geopolitical* bodies, then bleeding and identification with Christ are used to expose *human* bodies as equally uncontainable. Through a radical triangulation of Fierabras, Oliver, and Jesus, geste two of the *chanson* disrupts any clear separation of Christian and non-Christian bodies at the limit of skin. It mobilizes the leaky, curative body of Christ—conceived of by Julian of Norwich as a salvific medicine that not only absolves all human sin but also cures physical illness—to reconfigure heathen bodies as healable, assimilable, and ultimately desirable to consume.

As Emily Houlik-Ritchey points out, Fierabras' journey from sinner to saint is metonymic for the annexation of Spain in constituting the overall narrative arc of *Fierabras and Floripas*. The second geste, which tells of the duel between Fierabras and Oliver, is entirely devoted to this dramatic transformation. Swollen with vanity, the "Saracen" prince approaches Charlemagne's camp in the borderlands of Spain, demanding to duel one of his twelve peers. Of these, Roland

stubbornly refuses to fight on account of being slighted earlier by his uncle, and the others also hesitate to engage the fearsome giant. Only Count Oliver volunteers to meet the enemy head-on, even though he is already seriously wounded—"the pagan's lance had sheared / His flesh below the breastplate and all his side beneath" (1473-74). Here, on the battlefield stained red with heroic blood, Christ erupts from the textual body in multivarious forms.

Before the duel, Oliver declares to Fierabras:

> Whoever battles Jesus will always be at fault!
> The bravery that fills you, is wasted, rest assured,
> Since you've rejected Jesus, who died to save us all.
> Brave monarch, shun Mahomet, your weak and wicked lord,
> And be baptised for Jesus and live for evermore. (2229-35)

This proselytizing warning repeatedly invokes Jesus, placing special emphasis on his soteriological function, such that his divine presence hovers spectrally over the battle from the beginning. The claim that "Whoever battles Jesus will always be at fault" not only condenses all Christendom under one sign—to spar with any Christen knight, let alone to sack Rome, is to battle Jesus himself—but also initiates the identification of Oliver—the wounded and bleeding opponent with whom Fierabras is literally about to battle—with the tortured martyr "who died to save us all." With this speech act, in other words, Oliver manifests Christ's presence on the battlefield at the level of language, while simultaneously enforcing the anxiety of non-differentiation that lies at the heart of all conversion narratives. Although wasted in paganism, bravery nevertheless "fills" Fierabras, whom Oliver refers to two lines earlier as "Good brother nobly born;" despite following a "weak and wicked lord," Fierabras is still a "brave monarch" who needs only be baptized to "live for evermore." In the same breath that produces Jesus, therefore, Oliver also casts Fierabras as a perfect candidate for conversion and paves the way for his identification with Christ and with himself.

The conjuring of Jesus, however, is not limited to this invocation before the duel, but rather proliferates in numerous prayers, oaths, and objects throughout the scene. Adjacent to the battlefield, for instance, amidst the sparks of sword and shield, is a chapel within which a physical icon of crucified Jesus stands. "Ah Jesus, king of kings," Charlemagne addresses the figure as the knights spar,

> Take pity, I beseech, on Oliver, my friend,
> So I may see him here unharmed and whole again!
> [...]
> Embracing Jesus' feet upon the cross, he begged
> The Lord with humble heart to strengthen and protect
> Young Oliver his friend, who fought there in his stead. (2270-77)

Evident in Charlemagne's prayer here is a preoccupation with bodily wholeness. His desire to see Oliver "unharmed and whole" not only betrays an eschatological fear of fragmentation, but also mirrors the Frankish mission to reincorporate Iberia, a severed limb, "back" into the

body of Latin Christendom. As an apostrophic prayer that involves the physical mediation of an icon, Charlemagne's plea also highlights Christ's physicality in the vein of Julian's vision. "Embracing Jesus' feet upon the cross," the king brings the savior of mankind into the material plane, where his presence is corroborated by a divine intervention that ends the evenly matched duel in favor of Oliver. Adding relics into the mix—Fierabras carries with him barrels of the balsam used to embalm Christ's corpse, which can still heal the wounds of anyone who drinks it—the author makes abundantly clear that this duel is no simple conflict between Oliver and Fierabras, Charlemagne and Balan, or even France and Spain. Rather, it is a battle of belief where the very body of Christ is at stake; a body that, in its suffering and porosity, lends itself to identification with the leaky knights who, similarly, never stop bleeding.

Like Rome's bulwark and Aigremore's keep, the protective layers that envelop Oliver and Fierabras' bodies are continuously punctured: "The flashing blade tore open four thousand chains of mail / And cut away one half of the neck guard's sturdy plates. / The Frenchman bled profusely, his body wet and maimed" (2348-50). Chainmail, breastplates, and skin, evidently, fail to separate inside from out, allowing blood to seep through the perforated body and spill abundantly across the plains. This sanguine imagery serves as a conduit linking Oliver's sacrifice with the passion of Christ. His initial side wound, for example, finds a perfect Christological equivalent in John, where the pagan Longinus pierces Christ's side with a spear. This comparison explicitly comes to light during the duel when, already bleeding profusely, Oliver narrates the bible from genesis to resurrection, paying special attention to the wounding episode:

> Your blood ran down his lance and lit his eyes like teardrops.
> This pagan, blind from birth, the holy Bible teaches,
> Was chastened by your blood and straightaway saw clearly.
> He beat his sorry breast and begged You to reprieve him,
> As you forgive us all, with loving heart and eager. (2455-59)

Addressing Christ with heartfelt lyricism, Oliver animates holy blood as an agent of healing and imbues each drop with palliative potential. Mere contact with Christ's blood, the story teaches, can transform a contemptible pagan into Saint Longinus, "chastening" and "enlightening" him at the same time. Inserting this Christological narrative into the battle scene, *Fierabras*' author effectively equates Oliver's blood—similarly leaking from a wound pierced by a pagan's lance—with the salvific and conversionary blood of Christ. To the extent to which Oliver *is* Christ, then, Fierabras is the "blind" and "diseased pagan" who eventually begs for conversion (i.e. becomes enlightened, sees) after contact with holy blood.

The deplorable "pagan" himself, however, is also tied to the bloody Jesus of salvation through a seemingly paradoxical resemblance. For all of his salvific bleeding, it is not Oliver but Fierabras who ultimately lies dying on a hill reminiscent of Golgotha. Using Fierabras' own sword, aptly named Baptiser, Oliver delivers a near-fatal blow to the pagan prince by piercing his side "as far back as his spine" (2994). What follows is a scene that can only be described as a *Passion*:

> The crimson blood erupted upon his wounded side.
> My friends, attend the moment that changed this hero's life:

> In mortal pain the pagan looked up towards the sky,
> And suddenly he filled with the consciousness of Christ,
> As heaven's Holy Spirit lit up his heart and mind. (2997-3001)

Blood gushing from his side wound, body "contorted with pain" (3051), and gaze piously directed heavenward, Fierabras perfectly embodies here the typological depiction of martyrdom that proliferates in medieval hagiography. The model of this image, of course, is the ultimate martyr Christ, who fills Fierabras' consciousness and lights up his heart and mind. Effectively, the weaving together of Fierabras and Christ confirms his conversion as ethical, desirable, and legitimate (Houlik-Ritchey), at once overcoming the crisis of non-differentiation and relieving the latent anxiety over unstable transformations. Just as the crucifixion marks a hinge in Christian time, so Fierabras' painful conversion brings the *chanson* to its apogee, proving by way of Biblical resemblance the convertibility of all Spain.

Pulsing beneath the surface of this conversionary moment is the fundamental porousness of Christ-like bodies, as well as the devotional practice they engender. As Caroline Walker Bynum elucidates in her study of medieval blood devotion, it became increasingly popular after the eleventh century to worship "the bubbling, roseate, and organic life of an immutable deity, the complete exsanguination of a Christ whose tiniest particle would in itself save the world" (185). As the instrument of salvation, the "wonderful blood of the lamb—shed, sprinkled on the altar, and lifted to God" (Bynum 189) is understood to cure, absolve, and convert (verbs with similar valences in the Middle Ages) all those upon whom it falls. Medieval culture differentiated, moreover, between two kinds of blood: inside blood, *sanguis*, which forms the stuff of life, and outside blood, *cruor*, which is intentionally shed through artificial orifices as a form of sacrifice (as is the case of Jesus, Fierabras, and Oliver). The latter is prioritized for its connection to masculinity, martiality, and martyrdom, and its veneration constitutes a significant part of the physical turn in later medieval devotion (which emphasized Christ's embodied humanity). Nailed to the cross, riddled with wounds, and leaking its life force, the body of Christ explodes the assumed integrity of heroic individuals, replacing it with permeability as an alternative ideal.

An episode from Christ's ministry in the Gospel of Mark demonstrates this wonderful porosity. A woman who has suffered uncontrollable hemorrhages for twelve years encounters Jesus in a crowd and, having heard about his miraculous powers, comes up behind him and touches his garment:

> "And immediately the flow of blood dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone forth from him, immediately turned about in the crowd, and said, 'Who touched my garments?' (Mark 5:27-30)

As New Testament scholar Candida Moss illustrates, this moment is unique in its depiction of Jesus as entirely porous and not in control of his bodily bounds (514-18). In grabbing his clothing, the bleeding woman is able to absorb power from Christ's body via osmosis, a testament to the fact that neither medieval medicine nor spirituality conceives of bodily surfaces as

sealed boundaries; instead, they are permeable membranes across which movement frequently occur, whether voluntarily or not. Physically unable to contain himself, Christ cures the sick woman's bleeding via an unstoppable leaking of his own: "Just as the woman's body hemorrhages blood, so also Jesus' body leaks power" (Moss 511). In his multifarious presence on the battlefield and his triangulation with both knights, Christ transfers this curative porosity to them, shaping the substances that flow across their own epidermal membranes as powerful, transformative, healing.

Leaking as Morphogenesis: A Conclusion

Upon witnessing his enemy's wretched change of heart, "the Frenchman wept openly" and embraced his new brother, "whose wound was very grave," and "tenderly laid him upon the lookout's rise" (3014-17). Then, swearing "I'll never leave your side," Oliver "took the pagan's coat and helmet that he'd worn, / To wear above his own" (3112-13). Apparent in this poignant tableau is the complete blurring of bodily bounds. As Oliver's eyes overflow with tears and Fierabras' wounds brim with blood, the two leaky, Christ-like bodies collapse in each other's arms into one singular assemblage. Not even armor and weapon—highly personal symbols of individual knighthood—can differentiate the men any longer. Oliver's devotion to Fierabras is mirrored in Fierabras' desire for baptism, which only Oliver can provide. Thus physically and affectively entangled on the battlefield, drenched in fluids that once belonged to their respective "insides," the heroes are finally united in blood, desire, and belief.

Here as in the Frankish incorporation of Spain, however, union is not the same as equilibrium. The dissolution of Fierabras' own non-Christian body, a predetermined outcome much like the geopolitical conquest of Iberia, is only able to occur *on Christian terms*. The two knights are not so much cross-dissolved into one hybrid entity as Fierabras alone is *subsumed* by the overwhelming body of Oliver (a metonym for Christ, France, and Latin Christendom). His own mutable body, like the aggregate body politic of Muslim Spain, gives form to a Butlerian zone of uninhabitability that troubles the Self's interior and exists to be slashed open, infiltrated, devoured (or gentrified, to use Houlik-Ritchey's term), yet is never fully extinguished. The leakiness of such abject bodies, and their inability to contain themselves and to prevent contamination, ultimately facilitates their consumption on granular and geopolitical scales.
Christ himself, however, also leaks, as do Oliver and Rome. Porosity in *Fierabras* is not, therefore, a categorically unfortunate occurrence, for it serves as a "cure" for fragmentation; it disintegrates all boundaries, legitimizes all violence, and gives birth, so to speak, to a new, amorphous body that no longer knows any limits. Such a body is able to stretch its bounds indefinitely, to encompass all zones of uninhabitability, and to swallow up, as Latin Christianity does to Iberia, all that it encounters.

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