Remembering *Phoenix Rising*

Fragments of the Berlin Wall

Ioan Davies on Prison Writing

Barbara Harlow on Palestinian Prison Culture
Border/Lines is an interdisciplinary magazine about art, culture and social movements. We publish writing from many different positions and we are open to artists, musicians, filmmakers and readers. An indispensable companion to contemporary culture in Canada and elsewhere, Border/Lines is produced in a large format and is published four times a year by a Toronto-based collective.

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Brian Gable, Toronto

ERRATUM: The review, "Where Is Here? and Other Travels Through the Canadian Psyche" in Border/Lines #18 contained an error in the second paragraph. In the sentence that ends, "identity is portrayed as something that is contained within each Canadian solely by birthright," "birthright" should read "citizenship."
The Berlin Wall: Fragment As Commodity

Whoever has emerged victorious participates to this day in the triumphal procession in which the present rulers step over those who are lying prostrate. According to traditional practice, the spoils are carried along in the procession. They are called cultural treasures, and a historical materialist views them with cautious detachment. For without exception the cultural treasures he surveys have an origin which he cannot contemplate without horror.

Walter Benjamin, "Theses VII"

There is one kind of prison where the man is behind bars, and everything he desires is outside; and there is another kind where the things are behind bars and the man is outside.

Upton Sinclair, The Jungle

1929: Walter Benjamin likened commodity fetishism to the collection of souvenirs. The commodity as souvenir is seen as the result of the transformation of historical events into mass-produced articles. Ironically, fifty years later in his native city of Berlin, one finds great parties of people (Fest-Spektakel, wall-peckers as they are called in the West German press) hacking away at the Berlin Wall for the raw material, a new commodity/souvenir will be made from "authentic cuts from the Berlin Wall.

Benjamin's notes on the souvenir/commodity form part of his study of the now extinct Paris Arcades (the precursor of the modern department stores). When one now refers to the Berlin Wall fragment which appeared for sale in New York and Chicago only 48 hours after Egon Krenz announced free travel, one must see it in the context of the Berlin Wall as a fragmented/fallen monument. Benjamin's research on the Paris Arcades can be understood as a reconstruction of the form of modern capitalist circulation. It is useful, then, to invoke Benjamin's research not only because he was a Berliner (his sister-in-law, by the way, was justice minister in East Berlin at the time the Wall went up) but also because his particular take on the nature of the commodity-form, its aura and souvenir qualities, will hopefully help even the score amidst the cold war terminology appearing daily in the western press to "report" the events surrounding the Berlin Wall fragments.

The Wall, since its inception, has always been considered politically evocative, dangerous, symbolic. Not so long ago Erich Honecker claimed it would last another one hundred years. The East German SBD called it an "anti-fascist protection barrier." The justification, for better or worse, was that it served security interests. For the West, however, it symbolized the height of the cold war. It is difficult still for western journalists to describe it without using outright provocative cold war terminology. There has been no reluctance to crow about its demise as a triumph for liberal democratic capitalism. It has been called a "scar" and a "snake" which runs "through the heart of a once proud European capital, not to mention the soul of a people." (Time, 26.11.89) The Wall also became symbolic for artists, musicians, and playwrights. Lou Reed devoted an album to it, David Bowie sang about it ("Lust for Life"). On his Heroes album and the Sex Pistols themselves wanted to jump over it to the east side. Now, in the West Berlin press at least, there have been attempts to poke fun. One West Berliner said it looks like a piece of Swiss cheese. Another writer referred to those gaps in the Wall as a peep show. There are surprisingly few jokes about it in the Canadian or American papers.

West Berliners, noted for their ironic sense of humour, have lived with the Wall for twenty-eight years. Amerikanisms is, it seems, is alive and well in West Berlin too. Despite the sterility of view of the German obsession for cleanliness, the Wall has always been fair game for those with an urge for graffiti. The layers of inscriptions, painted over and over, lead the wall an aura of mystery. The prefabricated slabs of interlocking concrete are not without traces of human intervention. Indeed, according to the official publishing house at Checkpoint Charlie, "the Wall speaks." It's too late now, however, to study the allegorical messages written on the Wall.

Apparently, the writing on the Wall was in direct contravention to Honecker's prediction. Amidst the often conflicting messages two positions were relatively clear: there is evidence of a hatred of the Wall and belief in its transitoriness. We now see photographs of people taking a whack at the Wall; this sort of bravado is directly in line with the bold act of writing on the Wall. Both heroic deeds contain the same impulsive desire to alter the meaning of the Wall, both show a studied disregard of who it belongs to.
The Wall, in fact, is turned into the trophy reserved for the winners of the cold war. While the east side was carefully maintained and painted a high-gloss white, the west side was left the natural... colour of concrete but painted over by wannabe political pundits. Now the most highly prized pieces of the Wall are those colourful surface bits which contain traces of graffiti. The autentic quality (as Wall) is testimony now to the authenticity those rare blobs of painted concrete have in circulation. A piece of the Wall with graffiti on it assures the consumer that the structure really has fallen down. But more important still, for the souvenir collector, a fragment of the Wall with these fossils remains carries a powerful propaganda message.

We're reaching a time when some West Berlin reporters were scrambling to understand the significance of the Wall's becoming a commodity. In the West Berlin newspaper Die neue Berliner Zeitung (11.81) wrote how flexible capitalism is. With the selling of the Berlin Wall fragments we can see just how easy it is to extract profit from any situation. Another press report (12.11.89) pointed out that while there were people on both sides rippnig the Wall apart, those on the west side were doing it "as if" the Wall belongs to the West. An interesting twist. The East Germans built the Wall but the West Germans and their allies sell pieces of it as souvenirs. According to the West German magazine Stern, the Federal Republic's external affairs minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher presented George Bush with a nice souvenir piece during his last trip to Washington.

People now seem to have a soft spot in their hearts for the Wall, it's now become a novelty item. The German community in Winnipeg just purchased a huge slate of it. They intend to donate it to the historically significant "Forcks" development.

This is noted with some dismay by the Winnipeg Native community. While agreeing that the Wall is historically significant for the Germans, they see this purchase for the Forcks as indicative of a kind of imperialist practice; handing off the spoils. They would prefer to see Native artifacts at the Forks, preferably those that have been ripped-off and now find themselves in other countries.

The Wall as border lost its meaning on the evening of the 9th of November 1989. It is significant to note that the Wall came down on the day which is usually remembered in post-war Germany as the anniversary of Kristallnacht -- the night of the shattering glass (the night Naaz thugs were given permission to smash Jewish businesses, houses, synagogues, etc.). The western press, however, preferred to make another historical analogy: the storming of the Bastille in 1789. Both analogies are appropriate to remember except that, unlike the Berlin Wall, commodities were not made of the fragmentary remains.

One Canadian Wall fragment entrepreneur was cited in the Toronto Star (14.12.89): "I knew everybody in the world was watching history happening here and that's when I got the idea. I figured people would love to have a piece of that history, too. So I bought a hammer and chisel and started knocking off pieces of the Wall to sell back home." He apparently shipped 200 kilograms out of Berlin. According to Stern magazine (14.12.89) on the 18th of November nineteenth boxes carrying 10,639 kilograms left Hamburg airport for Chicago. Another American entrepreneur took 75 tonnes through the Berlin Tegel airport. These are, apparently, typical examples. The Chicago Tribune (reprinted in the Toronto Star 12.2.90) tells the story of an unnamed American promoter of the Berlin Wall fragments who claimed to have sold 90 tonnes of the stuff. According to an East German trade official the pieces marketed must be of questionable authenticity because that much concrete had not been removed from the Wall by private entrepreneurs.

"Declaration of Authenticity and Origin") a "fragment of freedom ... a part of which you now own." Included in the brick-sized box in which the rubble is sold is an "Informative Booklet." One line reads: "The Wall was erected, but somehow a ragged (sic) few managed to slip by." The "Informative Booklet," however, reads more like an owner's manual:

Grip the artifact and in your hand is the past and the future. Let your fingers wander slowly across its battered surface. You can feel the balance of our lives. You can feel the struggles and the triumphs, the grief and the joy, the hope and the fulfillment. You can feel the distant tremor of tomorrow's history gently unfolding in the palm of your hand.

Mara himself couldn't have found a clearer case of the promotion of commodity fetishism. Indeed, the "Informative a "fragment of freedom...

part of which you now own."
Culture and Agriculture

PART II: Monoculture

Life is plurality, death is uniformity. By suppressing differences and peculiarities, by eliminating different civilizations and cultures, progress with its career at mid-century, Disney was ideal of a single civilization for everyone, implicit in the cult of progress and technique, impoverishes and mutilates us. Every view of the world that becomes extinct, every culture that disappears, diminishes a possibility of life.

Octavio Paz

Life has previously termed "the Disneyfication of culture and agriculture" is much more than the robotic takeover through simulacra of species and nature at specific Disney-sites around the planet. It is more than the pervasive preference for the "life-like" that permeates post-modernity. Disneyfication might best be understood by reference to that term dreamed up by Wahl himself to name his overarching goal: "Imaginingering".

The word confuses three others - image, imagination and engineering - and it is thus a term entirely suited to this century: a century in which Descartes' metaphysical image of the cosmos, and all matter except the human body, as a lifeless clockwork or engine, became entirely concretized, i.e., literally lived out in every aspect of society. Through the triumph of Mechanism over Vitalism as the prevailing scientific and socio-economic paradigm, the machine became the highest value and most luminous symbol in the West.

Disney was thus the fulfillment of three centuries of Cartesian thought and rampant industrialization, but he was also the harbinger of the future: Reaching the peak of his career at mid-century, Disney was both sign and stimulus of a culture so thoroughly "imaginingered" that the ability to imagine alternatives different from the prevailing technological dictates had all but entirely atrophied.

In the immediate post-World War II period, Siegfried Giedion observed in Mechanistic Take-Command:

The assembly line and scientific management are essentially rationalizing measures. Tendencies in this direction extend relatively far back. But it was in the second decade (with Frederick Taylor as the central figure), it was scientific management that aroused the greatest attention: the interest of industry, the opposition of workers, public discussion, and governmental enquiries. This is the period of its further refinement and of its joining with experimental psychology (Frank & Gilbreth, central and most universal figure). In the third decade (Henry Ford, the central figure), the assembly line moved to the key position in all industry.

Writing in 1948, Giedion recognized the unquestioned power accruing to the key figure in the Mechanistic paradigm: the engineer. "In the time of total mechanization," he writes, "the production engineer gained sway over manufactures of the most diverse types, seeking every possible opening in which an assembly line might be inserted." Replacing artist, priest, shaman, and even politician as the most luminous figure of our time, the engineer (as Disney recognized) is the techno-magician fulfilling Descartes' dream.

But even such an astute observer as Siegfried Giedion could not have known that those "manufactures of the most diverse types" over which the production engineer would gain sway included literally every realm of life: Genetic engineering, or biotechnology, is in this sense the logical development of the rise to supremacy of technology as our primary metaphor and the engineer as the all-powerful technomagician. Jeremy Rifkin, the most outspoken opponent of biotechnology, writes: "Engineering is a process of continual improvement in the performance of a machine. It is essentially an industry resistant to any question of scientific or social ethics..."
a machine, and the idea of setting arbitrary limits to how much 'improvement' is acceptable is alien to the entire engineering conception."

The lack of limits in the engineering mind-set is reflective of boundary-problems in every area of the dominant, technocratic culture. Indeed, the degree to which the boundary between human and machine has blurred is noted by Bill McKibben in *The End of Nature.* Discussing the effects of global warming through the overwhelming release of "greenhouse gases" like carbon dioxide, McKibben writes:

Over the last century a human life has become a machine for burning petroleum. At least in the West the system that produces carbon dioxide is not only huge and growing but also psychologically all-encompassing. It makes no sense to talk about cars and power plants and so on as if they were something apart from our lives - they are our lives.

Even more disturbing, we must recognize that the last three words of McKibben's phrase, "cars and power plants and so on," actually encompasses those two huge interlocking areas known as "the culture industries" and "agri-business." The bullshit we must bite is that petroleum-based film, video-tape and audio-tape comprise the centerpiece of the former, just as petrochemicals are the basis for the latter. Our dependency on fossil fuels is virtually total. Most problematic of all, we have exported that dependency as the model of "progress" everywhere, encouraging some five billion others to similarly become "machines for burning petroleum."

Having already achieved a petrochemicals revolution in North American farming praxis during the World War II years, the corporate non-farm sector controlling agriculture sets its sights on the global market. During the 1950s and 1960s, scientists employed by multinational agribusiness developed new strains of hybrid seeds called high-yield varieties (HYVs) that were hyped as part of a so-called "Green Revolution" to end world hunger.

Susan George, author of *How the Other Half Dies*, has traced the Green Revolution back to 1943 when "Four American plant geneticists/pathologists financed by the Rockefeller Foundation were sent to Mexico" where they founded the forerunner of CIMMYT (Mexico's "non-profit" agricultural research centre) and developed corn and wheat HYVs from 1944 to the early 1960s. "With this success under its belt, the Rockefeller Foundation teamed up with Ford to repeat the performance in Asia - this time with rice - and founded the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines in 1962."

The Green Revolution was heavily promoted throughout the Third World, especially between 1965 and 1973. Countries were encouraged to abandon traditional farming methods and adopt the new HYV monoculture farming methods to produce cash-crops with mass yield to be sold on the world market. Such crops were highly dependent on massive use of petrochemicals - pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers - sold by the same companies which developed the "miracle seeds."

"As Jack Doyle documents in *Averred Harvests*:

In 1967, the Indonesian government contracted with Ciba-Geigy to provide the technical apparatus for an experimental Green Revolution rice production project. Following this contract, companies such as Hoechst, AIBT, Mitsubishi, Coopa, and Ciba-Geigy all worked with the Indonesian government in dispensing the ingredients of the Green Revolution - including fertilizer, pesticides, and management services, and the miracle seeds themselves.

As a result, more than twenty percent of Indonesia's wet-rice land - roughly 2.5 million acres - had become part of the Green Revolution by 1970. This transformation to HYV monoculture happened throughout the underdeveloped world as companies like Imperial Chemicals Industries (ICI), Monsanto, Bayer, and Dow also jumped on the monoculture HYV bandwagon of promotion. As Susan George documents, the main beneficiaries of Green Revolution hype were Mexico, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Afghanistan, Nepal, North Africa, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, which turned over millions of acres to the new wheat and rice strains. According to George, in many countries American interests pushed the Green Revolution "as an alternative to land reform and to the social change reform would require."

While increasing cash-crop yields, the new farming methods of HYV monoculture nevertheless had several serious repercussions. First, they almost completely replaced the subsistence crops by which a given region had previously supplied its own food base. This meant that peasant farmers and the local population were forced to rely on imported food-stuffs since the land had been turned over to cash-crops for export.

Second, the new farming methods of the Green Revolution threw millions out of work in the rural areas of underdeveloped countries. As Susan George notes, "In the beginning, the Green Revolution..."
In both agribusiness and "the culture industries" the same goals prevail: mass yield, cash-crops for export, uniformity of product increased the need for labour; there were fertilizers and pesticides to be spread; moreover, there were two harvests a year. Hired labourers saw the increased yields and increased the wage demands accordingly. "Tractors do not present this disadvantage, as wealthy farmers were quick to understand."

Similarly, rice HVVs introduced in Indonesia "changed harvesting practices" because the big landowners bought First World tractors for tilling, thereby replacing traditional jobs for women in the rice fields. As well, they invested in new rice milling technology, through which some two million women rice pounders lost their work. Made redundant by the new technologies which the wealthy landowners quickly adopted, millions of rural peasants across the Third World were forced to migrate to the cities to look for work.

Such disruption by agribusiness interests occurred throughout the underdeveloped world during the 1960s, mainly benefiting the multinationals of the First World and the tiny percentage of landowners in Third World countries. The Green Revolution was more than an increase in crop volumes through HVV monoculture; it was a fully technological revolution and intended as such by the corporate interests involved. Even more specifically, it meant that Third World agriculture would become just as addicted to petrochemicals as the First World.

But besides this vulnerability in HVV monoculture, there is another, initially unforeseen by the engineering-minded set enthralled by mass yield. Acres and acres of a single genetic strain of rice at one crop may adequately meet the agribusiness criteria of uniform plants all ripening at the same time, all same-sized for packaging, and all ideal for machine-harvesting, but such uniformity makes the entire crop fully susceptible to any new strain of pest or any other unforeseen factor. Ironically, the desire for total control of the crop through monoculture has often constellated its opposite: loss of the entire yield because of this uniform vulnerability. It is this feature of monoculture, as well as its dependency on petrochemicals, that is motivating many farmers to return to traditional practices involving mixed crops, crop rotation, and organic methods.

It should not surprise us to learn that the U.S.-exported Green Revolution in agriculture historically coincided with that country's effort to establish television networks throughout the Third World. During the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, U.S. corporate and network advisors convinced most of the underdeveloped world to invest in TV hardware, thereby becoming dependent on the glut of American programming available for export.

In both agribusiness and "the culture industries" the same goals prevail: mass yield, cash-crops for export, uniformity of product, but the composition is even more specific. Just as the Green Revolution "miracle seeds" brought with them an entire socio-economic transformation of the recipient countries — including a reliance on imported petrochemicals, foodstuffs, new technologies and a complete disruption of traditional culture — so, too, the simultaneous adoption of TV hardware (that "miracle seed" of U.S. enterprise) brought with it another layer of socio-economic transformation that included reliance on imported TV programming, consumer products, and a more decisive disruption of traditional culture.

In both instances, the underdeveloped world was enfolded into U.S. monoculture, as thoroughly as Canada had already been subsumed by the same processes. As U.S. anthropologist Edmund Carter once noted: "We use media to destroy cultures, but we first use media to create a false record of what we are about to destroy."

It is not surprising then that at the same time both the exported Green Revolution and TV revolution were utterly transforming the underdeveloped world, the Disney enterprises offered North American TV viewers a series depicting peoples and places around the world. Carpenter writes:

"Twenty cultures were chosen, scattered among tracts, desert, and jungle, but even though the people dressed in different clothes and ate different foods, they were all alike, members of a single culture. That culture was our culture — more accurately, our cliched image of ourselves that might be called the Hallmark greeting card view... The audience enjoys a painless, undemanding, mirrored image of itself, unillusioned that it is experiencing an alien culture.

All real differences were collapsed into those sentimental "universals" that reassured us, in Carpenter's words, that "though people differ in colour and creed, they all love, quarrel, protect their children, etc., exactly as we do." Disney had long done the same to animals through his TV series about nature that depicted wild animals as cute suburbanites in disguise. In terms of his people and places series, Carpenter writes, "The message is clear: we should love them because they are like us. But that statement has its questioning brother: what if they aren't like us?"

But Carpenter was writing in the late 1960s. The question has since become meaningless through the rampant spread of monoculture world-wide. It now can be said, with Bill McKibben, that human life is defined as a "machine for burning petroleum." Disney, with his obsession about death and his hatred of the land, must be smiling in his cosmic grave.

Joyce Nelson's latest book is Suitcase of Sleaze: Public Relations and the Media, published by Toronto's Between The Lines. She wishes to acknowledge financial assistance from the Ontario Arts Council for the writing of this "Culture and Agriculture" series.

NOTES

WORKS CITED
The street performer's bug is like any other artistic addiction. You crave the excitement and the terror of putting yourself on the line every time you walk. Edith Piaf started on the street and continued to perform in Paris on her corner at times all through her professional stage career. For some it's just an easy way to make a few quick bucks when they move to a new town, but for most performers it's an art form.

In any city the lowly Pan Handler can make substantially more than minimum wage on the street. Determined ones with a plan can make a lot. Some pan-handlers have a straightforward method of creating capital, like the blind boy who sees a little, whose act consists of repeating the same line "got a penny nickel dime quarter dollar." The phrase ripples out in a staccato four-four rhythm in time with the tapping of his cane, and he goes home ten pounds heavier in change. Another nice compact begging act is the kid about 20 or so dressed in a heavy plaid shirt, jeans and half worn-out sneakers carrying a sleeping bag. He is every mom's runaway son. It's a fine-tuned act that works well as long as the kid is on the move and doesn't stick around the same neighborhood for too long.

Any busker who has reached the stage of their craft where a living is viable, i.e. they can afford a place to live, food, dental and health care, plus kids, is usually involved with some form of indoor entertainment. The gigs are usually far enough out of the mainstream club and concert hall scene, keeping the busker's spirit intact. Daycare centres, old folk homes, stores openings, anniversary parties and prisons are a few of the fringe gigs that could supplement a well-tuned and determined street act. Some buskers do make a living on the street, but they are the exception. It's a rare busker who has never worked indoors.

Top of the line street performers are to be found in cities all around the world. In 1987, Halifax invited buskers from Amsterdam, Paris, London, Boston, Key West, New Orleans, Toronto, New York, Montreal and Los Angeles to participate in the first International Buskers Competition. First prize was ten thousand dollars, with another ten thousand for categories including most photogenic act, children's entertainer, best music act, etc. The first prize, called the People's Choice Award, was determined by votes from the public.

One vote was included in a three-dollar picture brochure of all the acts. Thirty-eight busking acts, including jugglers, troupes, one-man bands, novelty comedy groups, a travelling family band, an organ grinder with monkey, and a story teller performed on the streets in some of the warmest sunny weather the city had seen in years. The people came out nightly in the thousands blocking the streets and enjoying each other's company while children ran from crowd to crowd to get autographs from overwhelmed entertainers.

Busing is usually a spontaneous answer to the need for self-expression and the desire for freedom from conventional forms of work. It is also a way to make money with very little capital investment. Equipment can range from a relatively expensive unicycle to a few pieces of coloured chalk, some metal claves for taps or nothing but the human voice. Some parents find their most valuable resource is their children. Four young girls from four to 14 with dad on guitar sang for their...
At St. Lawrence Market in Toronto there is a weekend busker who arrives at four a.m. He does a regular job during the week, so he's rating to go with the first light, full of all that pent-up job frustration energy. He has a spot that he likes and in order to get it he has to get there early. Market shoppers are up with the birds. After playing his classical guitar for eight hours he goes home with considerable cash. During a Saturday at the Market there will be 25 or so different acts including an old man playing spoons to rapped tunes on a boom box, another old fella playing his guitar singing the praises of his elixir, Cayenne pepper pop, three gents from Peterborough heerin' down some hot Siddle music, a complete South American ensemble, boom boom, toot toot, a Neil Young clone, an alley full of jugglers and a young girl playing haggipipes you can hear for a mile. All this and more within half a city block in Toronto the Staid.

One of my most memorable busking experiences was a place in Terrace Bay, a little town east of Thunder Bay. I just happened to stop for lunch after leaving Thunder Bay where I learned, for the first time, the rules about playing on liquor store properties in Ontario, a big no no. There was a liquor store in Terrace Bay right next to a movie theatre. I could play on the theatre sidewalk and still be close enough to get the people's attention and donations. I was enough of a novelty in town to do some good trade. Then a whole swarm of kids came to the maincne at the theatre. They were with a birthday party so I got them involved with a few sharers and noisemakers. The mom came up with a nice folding bill and I was set to leave town with plenty of cash money for the old Chev. It wasn't to be. The theatre manager came out with an offer to play that night before the main show. The theatre had just been refurbished and was having its grand opening. This was a real gig. I decided to play a bit more to fill up the free time when out of the liquor store comes a gay load up with rum and beer. He walks straight over to me and says, "It's me thirty-fifth wedding anniversary. Will ya come and play for me at my house party tonight? I'm a Maritimen, there's a priest who sings, he'll be there, all ya can eat and drink, and I'll pay ya thirty-five backs besides."

With the economy threatening to bottom out any day, more and more of us are looking for alternate careers to the 40-hour work week that seems to be fast disappearing. Busking certainly isn't the answer to a sagging economy, but it does make sense for those with a little time on their hands to get over the first few times out on the street. After that it's an addiction no matter what the hat pulls in, and it's no honest living. It's entertainment for the people who pay what they can see and what they get before they pay. There are usually no big line-ups to get in and the biggest pollution by-product from the industry is laughter. As the world appears to shrink under the blanket of communications systems and the word "international" comes to mean "next-door," street performers are beginning to see their art as a vital expression for people to counterbalance the megabusiness of global TV culture. Given the eccentric, anarchistic nature of the busker, a natural, spontaneous, unique, original folk entertainment can survive the drone of the mass-produced tyrannical pop show.

In the politics of fun, individual participation is the beginning and end of democracy. The watch phrase should be a musical instrument in every home, or better still, an instrument or piece of busking gear for every TV in the house. Despite their individuality, minstrel buskers remain public property. They are accountable daily to the people. They are naked, vulnerable, and open to judgment every time out. There is no free lunch, no hiding out in the washroom, or sleeping on the job while the homtry wash ticks away. This closeness to hand-to-mouth existence is what expunge the tyranny of the pop show and by example strengthens resistance to it.

Ron Parks has been a musician for 30 years, a rock drummer in the 60's and 70's, a one-man band in the 80s, and a concertina, clarinet, portable, acoustic street musician on-a-bicycle in the 90s. He currently maintains several careers in Toronto and Halifax.
The Canadian Penal Press

A Documentation And Analysis

The penal press is a world-wide phenomenon which reached the height of its achievement in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly in North America.

A survey taken in the United States in 1959 found that there were more than 250 penal press publications in Canada and the United States, reaching an estimated readership of two million (Collins Bay Diamond, January, 1959). Russell Baird (1967), in his study The Penal Press (which focuses exclusively on the United States), discovered that the penal press started in the late nineteenth century, with Samuery (1883) from Elmira Reformatory in New York State laying claim to being the first publication. It was followed by Our Paper (1885), Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Concord, and Prison Mirror (1887) of the Minnesota State Penitentiary at Stillwater (Baird, 1967). The Canadian penal press officially came into being on September 1, 1950 with the publication of Kingston Penitentiary's Telescope. Since then there have been more than one hundred separate penal publications produced and published by prisoners in Canada’s federal penitentiaries.

I have read and subscribed to numerous penal press publications since the early 1960s, but did not give them the serious consideration they are due until recently. My new interest was spurred by my doctoral research into the history of Canada’s prison system, and the dearth of available documentation which provides an account of the experience of criminalization and incarceration from the perspective of those subjected to it. While working on my reconstruction of the history of the development of Canada’s prison system (see Gaucher, 1982; Gaucher, 1987), I came to readily accept the arguments of historians such as George Lefebvre (1949) and George Rude (1970) concerning the necessity of taking into account what they refer to as “history from below.” In my research I discovered neither organized sources nor analytic texts which addressed this aspect of Canadian criminal-justice in its formative years, and I would argue that the same situation holds for the contemporary post World War II period. My interest has also been heightened by pedagogical concerns. Frustrated by having to rely on sensational commercial work by writers like Roger Caron (1978) and Steven Reid (1996), or spurious academic products whose editors force feed prison writers to reproduce the editors’ perspectives and prejudices (see Adelberg and Currie, 1987), I had almost given up assigning such ethnographic reading to criminology students. Upon re-examining some of the penal press publications I had accumulated over the years or currently receive, it became clear that they constituted an exceedingly rich ethnographic source of prisoner experience and prison life in Canada during the post-war period of prison reform and change.

A distinction needs to be made between what I define as “outside directed magazines” and “inside directed or joint magazines.” Outside directed magazines are intended to serve as a means of communication with the Canadian public, and therefore feature an analysis of contemporary criminal-justice issues and serious prose on the experience of criminalization, incarceration and recidivism. Joint magazines are directed at the population of a particular prison and focus on reporting institutional activities such as sports, social events and club endeavours, and on providing information on new programs and legislation, coming events and internal news. Both provide insight into the perspectives and understanding of prisoners and the everyday experience of prison life in Canada.

Penal press publications constitute a rich ethnographic source of prisoner experience and prison life in Canada during the post-war period of prison reform and change.
The problems of post-release, the stigmatization of a prison record and the need for post-release facilities and work opportunities for the released "former convict" were also addressed. More localized concerns were also thoroughly debated in these journals. For example, British Columbia Penitentiary's Transition (1951-1966) often focused on the area of drug, addiction, drug legislation, the legalization of drug use (following the British model of that period), and the use of the Habitual Criminal Act to control drug users.

Even the tiny "jail magazine" provided (in total) a fertile insight into the everyday activities of prison life and prisoners' concerns and problems. One also gathers a sense of the "tension and fear" of a particular penal institution through its publications. For example, Warkworth Institution's The Outlook (1972-1989) presents an image of a tightly controlled institution in which the inmates are somewhat subservient and pliable to the authority of the staff and administration. While publications from Millhaven Penitentiary (e.g., Ogden, 1978-1982) reflect the high level of tension, despair, and opposition which has characterized that institution's history.

Special publications produced by specific prisoner groups (and speaking only for those groups) such as Native Brotherhood groups, Lifers' groups, or Alcoholics Anonymous groups, provide a particular perspective on criminal justice and correctional issues. They also reflect the historical changes that characterize Canadian society in this period. In this regard, I have found the publications of Canadian membership in the International Penal Press

The widespread distribution of these publications and the support of public figures like Gardner heightened media attention and the Canadian penal press was acknowledged, refuted and analyzed in the outside media.

Native Brotherhood groups to be particularly interesting. As the people of Canada's First Nations' perception of their role and social position changed in the containing society, these changes were reflected in the move towards traditional ways, and spiritual understanding among Canada's large incarcerated Native population. The history of the Native Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods in Canada's penitentiaries can be researched through the penal press, as in doing so one encounters many outstanding Native leaders, such as Malcolm Morris (Deb's, 1981) and Art Solomon who were instrumental in their development.
to publications from all the remaining penitentiaries, with the exception of the Kingston Prison for Women. Saskatchewan Penitentiary's The Paradiser (February 1951) was the second subscribed magazine, followed closely by British Columbia Penitentiary's Transition (March 1951), St. Vincent de Paul's Pen-O-Rama (1951), Dorchester's The Beaux (July 1951) and Stoney Mountain Penitentiary's Mountain Echo (September 1951) and the Collins Bay Diamond (January 1952). This is the roster of publications that firmly established the penitentiary tradition in Canada. Each with its own individual style and focus, they clearly pinpointed Canada in the international network. Next to Tskaspe, Pen-O-rama (1951-1968) was the most successful, by 1958 having a paid subscribers list of 4,000 and numerous outside advertisers. A fully-bilingual magazine, all articles translated, it was noted for its outstanding prose on prison life and serious treatment of criminal justice and penology issues. Like all of the Canadian publications, it benefited from the stability and continuity of its editorial staff and their serious commitment to the standards of the International Press. Except for The Beaux (1951-1957), all were printed in institutional print shops as adjuncts to vocational training programs, giving the high quality writing within their pages a high quality presentation.

The importance of stable, continuous editorial groups needs to be stressed, for this stability enabled staff to learn their trade and maintain the quality that developed over a long period of time. These Canadian publications clearly reflect the high standards and abilities of their staffs. Mentioning only a few: Gord Mart, Cliff Bastine and Sam Carr of the first editorial group of Tskaspe, Vladimir Nekrassoff of Pen-O-Rama, George Constantine and Lyle Jennings of The Pathfinder, Blondy Martin and Gord Thompson of Transition, Tony Ricardo of The Beaux whose eight plus consecutive years as editor, 1953-1960 is the record, W. Lake and Bud Winters of Mountain Echo, and Nancy Ward-Armour of Tightrope. Outstanding writers and poets such as Doug Bevan, Harvey Blacklock, Frank Grinyer, G. Hjalmarson, Steve Reid and George Watson all appear in these pages, as do outside supporters of note such as Earle Stanley Gardner, whose eloquent support of the penal press in other publications was constantly reprinted in the International Penal Press. The widespread distribution of these publications and the support of public figures like Gander heightened media attention and the Canadian penal press was acknowledged, refuted, and analyzed in the outside media throughout this period. Some of Canada's major penal reformers were also enthusiastic supporters, and spokespersons such as Alex Edmson figure prominently in these publications.

The problems facing editorial staff were and are considerable. Confined by the isolation of incarceration, faced with the prospect of pleasing both administration and fellow prisoners, constrained by often uninformative censorship demands, and in the first two decades, by the prospect of being penned throughout the penal press network, editors had to walk a tightrope of conflicting demands and expectations in a situation where failure could have serious personal and, at times, possible legal consequences. As long as the right tone was attained, one which pleased the Commissioner's office, prison administrators and prison populations, the continuity of staff and publication required to maintain a quality product was forthcoming. This held throughout the 1950s, but changes in the mid-1960s spelled the end of this golden era of the penal press in Canada.

History And Development Of The Canadian Penal Press

The Canadian penal press got its tentative beginning with the publication of Tskaspe (1949-1954), a correctional staff-produced publication involving prisoner writers at the Federal Training Centre at Laval, Quebec. It was an occasional publication which focused on and lobbied for the new vocational training program being put into place within the federal penitentiary system, and which was already established in this prison. With the permitting of Canadian publications (1949), largely prisoner-organized, there was a tentative encouragement of prison populations to get involved in their own reform and to take some small measure of self-determination in prison life. This led to the creation of a weekly, Sports Bulletin, at St. Vincent de Paul in May 1950, the Kingston Penitentiary's Softball Review in the same year, and Sports West in April 1951 in Dorchester Penitentiary. Similar "joint magazines" may have been published in other penitentiaries at the time, though I have found nothing to that effect. The Collins Bay Diamond (1951-1968) exemplifies the process of their early development. Continuing as an inside sports magazine in 1950, it became an outside directed penal publication in April 1951, and started taking paid subscriptions in January 1952. Tskaspe established the credibility of this endeavour and served as a notice to the penitentiary authorities that penal publications were a positive means of selling the new "humanized reform-oriented prison" they were in the process of trying to create under the leadership of Commissioner R.B. Gibson. Magazines were officially encouraged and financially supported by both the Commissioner's office and senior management. The professional presentation of these publications, the production of vocational print shop programs, spoke highly of the scope and quality of the new vocational training component of the new penitentiary system. In short, these magazines were a valued means of publicity for the new penology, and their large paid subscription lists, advertisers, and country-wide distribution assured that the message got across to the public. News media and literary circles

Collins Bay Penitentiary

C.B. Diamond

Started as an inside sports magazine in 1950, then outside-directed magazine from April 1951. Monthly commenced publication April 1951 to April 1958.

Avatar


C.O.N.T.A.C.T.

An outside-directed magazine. Bi-monthly commenced publication October/November 1978 to 1981.

Ice Carrier

An inside magazine. Monthly commenced publication May 1986 to present.

C.O.N.QUEST

Ten plus Fellowship Group Newsletter. Monthly commenced publication February 1970; series information minimal.

Olympiad News

Newsletter of the "Exceptional People's Olympiad Committee." Quarterly commenced publication Spring 1978 to present.

Toxic


Tribalways


Fallacy of Life

An outside-directed magazine of the Infinity Lifers' Group. Occasional commenced publication October 1986 to present.

Spiritual Newsletter

An outside-directed religious magazine. Bi-monthly commenced 1986 to present.

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critical analysis of Canadian criminal-justice and penology. The articles from the penal press in the 1950s constitute an important critical mass of commentary and analysis on penal times in the formative years of Canada's modern prison complex.

By the late 1950s, the effectiveness of the new reformatory and increasingly rehabilitative (i.e., treatment oriented) penology was being questioned. For prisoners the promise of the continued development of vocational and educational opportunities was not being met. Nor was acceptance by, the reintegration into civil society of "reformed convicts" forthcoming. By this time prisoners who had "benefited" from vocational training (etc.) were returning to reformatories with a different story. Discovering that their vocational and trade credentials were not accepted outside, that stigmatization was as problematic as ever, and that promised employment opportunities did not materialize, they added an important ingredient to the developing cynicism vis-à-vis the new "reformatory" penology. And so, the tender and internal social relations within our penitentiaries started to change for the worse. Increasingly, reform programs were used by prison staff and the new parole authorities as a "hoop" through which the convict had to jump to win release. As the rising refrain from front line custodial staff, "The costs are running the joint..." started to have an effect on official and public perceptions, as well as staff actions and, therefore, internal staff-prison relations, the penal press came under a new, critical scrutiny. The growing interest in more biting, openly critical and oppositional, or muted and silenced. The key to keeping this penal press florilla in the water was their membership in the International Penal Press, and the network's intersubjectively shared conversation over the goals, focus and necessity of the penal press.

By openly discussing their problems, the International Penal Press provided support, answers and strategies for dealing with the changing circumstances of their publications. A fixation with the role of the penal press, and the role and function of the editor and editorial staff is highly characteristic of the Canadian penal press in the 1960s and indicates a number of important factors being addressed. First, as tension rose within the press rooms and prisoners increasingly rejected the new penal programs as a fraud masking the traditional goals of domination of the prisoner by the prison complex, the format, style and substance of the prisoners' publications became an important point of contention within prison populations. The population's demand that their magazines were not to be used as "point-of-sale" advertising, that outsiders' editorial suggestions were to be ignored, that a "joint-committee" form be used and that the "inside information" be shared was similarly on the issue of control. The ability to communicate and cooperate in the penitentiary became a major factor in the prisoners' ability to form solidarity on issues. This was play out in the pages of this press and the endless discussions and editorial commentary on these issues was now defined as "accountable staff," particularly their lobbying to move forward toward the originally stated goals of prisoner reform through training and opportunity, an essentially critical task expressed as front line experience. By the mid-1960s, the majority of the original Canadian penal publications had ceased publication or were going through their death-throes. In the winter of 1968, The Beacon reported that it was the only penal publication still operating from a maximum security prison in Canada, and was the last of the original group of publications. It then ceased publication later that year.

As the rising refrain from front line custodial staff, "The costs are running the joint..." started to have an effect on official and public perceptions, the penal press came under a new, critical scrutiny.

This was a period of optimism throughout the penitentiary system, and prisoners were both affected by it and gave tenures, but real support to the liberalization of the regime (e.g., sports, outside visitors and groups) and to the promise of serious vocational and educational training programs becoming available. So prison editors were supportive of the direction of the new penalology in Canada, and came to constitute one of the most important and influential lobbies for its implementation in the federal system. Furthermore, these early editors accomplished even more by consistently presenting a substantial,
The Canadian penal press is transformed at this moment. Its focus on education and converting with the public, its strong identification with the International Penal Press, the regulatory continuity and regularity of its publications, its widespread distribution and large readership, and prisoners’ positive evaluation of their publication goals and achievements, disappeared. The lack of the Penitentiary Service’s continued financial support and curtailment of outside subscriptions and distribution was justifiably administration’s decision to purchase publications, the result of the reality of penal press publications. Tighter financial control and new rules in the form of Commission’s Direc- tion of Penitentiary publications to be much more “point-oriented,” amounting to inside informational newsletters, containing far less substantive writing by prisoners, particularly on criminal-justice and correctional issues. The highly characteristic irregularity of publication (mid-1960s to present) and constant change in format, style, quality, and even title, indicate the massive destabilization of prison populations and therefore prison publications, which was taking place at this time. The wholesale classification of prisoners and their redistribution into different types and classes of penitentiaries started seriously in the mid-1960s with the commencement of a major prison construction program. Later, a “rehabilitative system model” was put into place which encouraged, indeed demanded, that prisoners move through the system towards less secure institutions and gradual release through “community corrections”: temporary absences, day pa-roles, parole and mandatory supervision. This movement within the prison popula-tion was supplemented by the constant use of involuntary transfers. Though there were other important factors in the destabilization of the prisoner community (e.g., the new rehabilitation programs and new prison regimes) and its drift towards a state of social disorganization, it was the constant movement of prisoners which had the most debilitating effect on the editorial, continuity and regularity of publication for the Canadian penal press. Add to this situation a constant turnover of editorial staff and the closing down of publications because of disputes over institutional censorship and the growing turmoil developing in the larger peniten- tiaries, and the demise of the Canadian penal press in this period is easily understood.

The exceptional history of Tiga’tzera (1973-1989), the penal press publication of the Kingston Prison for Women, confirms the importance of institutional and editorial stability on the continuity of the penal press. A bi-monthly that started publishing in 1973, it represents the penal press of the past in terms of its consistency of policy, format and quality. It is the only Canadian publication of note which maintained its ties to the International Penal Press network into the 1980s. It presents a consistent analysis of the political and criminal-justice and corrections, and ably addresses the particular problems of women who are caught within the social control bureaucracy. I attribute the stability and consistency of Tiga’tzera to the lack of wholesale transfers and constant movement of this prison population (because no other federal facilities exist) and the minimal changes in the internal regime which have occurred. Constant changes in policy and program demands in federal (male) penitentiaries, under the guise of prison and prisoner reform, have contributed strongly to their social disorganization. This has not happened at the Kingston Prison for Women, and is reflected in the regularity and quality of Tiga’tzera’s 16 years of continuous publication.

There were a number of exceptional magazines in the 1970s. The Outlook (1972-1989) published from Warkworth Institution is the longest current, continuous publication. I especially enjoy Tarpaper (1971-1980) from Mactaquac Institution, with its exceptional graphics and cartoons, and a strong commitment to publish substantive analytical essays on social control issues. Taken collectively, the post-1960s era of Canadian penal publications presents a portrait of the changing composition of our federal institutional populations, their internal social relations and organization (increasingly disorganization) and the basis for current problems and debates.

The Canadian penal press has experienced something of a resurgence in the 1980s, and once again includes some high quality, outside-directed writing. A new understanding of the penal press has been developing, and its editors have provided it with a new format and style. Of particular note are special group publications, such as the Collins Bay John Howard Society Group’s Tazmic (1982-1989) or the “Innity” Life Group’s newsletter, The Fallacy of Life (1986-1989). Special Group publications can be traced back to the 1960s. In 1965, the Jaycee Group at the British Columbia Penitentiary commenced publishing Bridgemen (1965-1973), the first such publication which concentrated on its club activities and the Jaycee program. Many Native Brotherhood Groups had newsletters and magazines dating back to the 1960s. What is new is the specific and exclusive criminal-justice focus of some of these recent penal press publications. I have traced this strand back to its prototype, Quarterly-Century News (1973), the pioneer of a criminal-justice study and self-help group at Millhaven Penitentiary. It was followed by Odyssey (1978-1982), the magazine of a similar type of group at Millhaven. The latter is a highly critical, analytical and combative publication. Today these special group publications, along with a few more traditional (stable) publications like Tiga’tzera and The Outlook, constitute the core of prisoners’ writing on criminal-justice in the penal press.

NOTES
1. The latter is of particular note, having been started through the financial contribution and editorial support of a group of prisoners which included three of the infamous Younger Brothers, Cole Younger playing a major role in its production (see Baird, 1967).
2. To try and offer this problem we have recently started a new publication, the Journal of Prisoners on Prisons which presents the analysis of prisoners and former prisoners on various aspects of criminal justice and corrections.
3. Art Solomon, an Ojibwa spiritual leader and elder, has devoted the last two decades to

Stony Mountain Penitentiary

Mountain Echo An outside-directed magazine. Monthly commenced publication September 1951 to May/June 1965 (7).


Vanguard An inside magazine. Bi-monthly commenced publication in 1973 (7) to 1980 (7); series information minimal.

Stony Mountain Flyer An inside magazine. Monthly commenced publication in 1978 (7) to 1983 (7); series information minimal.

For the Record Series information minimal. Published in 1986 and 1987.


Phoenix Rising
Its Birth and Death

Phoenix Rising was a unique magazine, not only because it was the only anti-psychiatry magazine in Canada, but also because it was published by former psychiatric inmates. Phoenix began publishing in March of 1980 only to die in July, 1990 due to lack of funding. During its decade of publishing, the magazine was a supporter of the international psychiatric inmates’ liberation movement. Thirty-two issues were produced, including three double issues, exposing psychiatric abuses and challenging the tyranny of psychiatry over people’s lives. We focused on a wide variety of social, political, and human rights issues faced by psychiatric inmates and survivors. The magazine was a source of hope and solidarity for those working within the criminal-justice system.

For a current commentary on Kingston Prison for Women, see J. Mayhew (1988).

WORKS CITED

Inspired by these other publications, we believed that a magazine published by psychiatric survivors like ourselves could become a credible and powerful voice for psychiatric inmates and ex-inmates living in Canada and throughout the world. It could help to empower our brothers and sisters by publishing their personal stories, poems and artwork, by encouraging them to keep writing and speaking out, and by allowing them to establish contact with other groups and individuals. When Phoenix finally emerged, it became a creative outlet for many people who had been damaged and rendered voiceless by institutional psychiatry.

The first four issues were published in one year out of a two-bedroom apartment on Spadina Road in Toronto. A small, committed editorial collective gradually formed. The first collective consisted of Carla, Cathy McPherson, Mike Yale, Jo-anne Yale and myself. We held frequent meetings in the apartment, and one bedroom became the office where we did all the typing, editing and layout. At the time we had no word processor or computer. We began with very little funding, receiving a $5,400 grant from PLURA, a multi-denominational Canadian church group which gives start-up grants to grass-roots groups.

Our first issue came out in March 1980. The front cover featured an illustration of the mythical phoenix rising from its ashes, a symbol of the psychiatric survivor reborn after a kind of death by fire. In our first editorial we outlined our goals and philosophy and coined the term "psychiatric inmate" to replace "mental patient." A few excerpts from this editorial are worth quoting:

We’d like Phoenix Rising to serve as a rallying point for inmates and ex-inmates who want to bring about changes in the "mental health" system...
that is all too often damaging rather than helpful, and oppressive rather than liberating. We want to educate the public about the shortcomings and injustices of the present system, and challenge the myths and stereotypes attached to "mental illness." We've chosen to use the term "psychiatric inmate" rather than the conventional one of "mental patient." We were there ... against our will. We lost such basic rights as the right to choose our own therapists, the right to refuse treatment, the right to leave the institution - even the right to make phone calls or have visitors. These are all rights which medical patients take for granted. In short, we lost control over our lives, in the same way that inmates in prison do.

The fact that what happened to us was called "therapy" rather than "punishment" does not obscure this basic fact. Our hope is that by providing medical and legal information, and bringing into the open the problems of stigmatization and community rejection, by encouraging inmates and ex-inmates who have something to say to say it in Phoenix Rising by pointing out abuses and injustices in the "mental health" system, and above all by offering real and constructive alternatives, we can hasten the day when the terms "mental patient" and "psychiatric inmate" are things of the past.

Phoenix Rising was probably the first Canadian periodical to point out the close links between the psychiatric inmate and the regular prisoner contained in a hospital, prison, etc. The "etc." includes "mental hospitals" and other involuntarily entered institutions in which people's daily lives are totally controlled by the authorities.

People in prison and psychiatric inmates are deprived of many of the same civil and human rights. These include freedom of movement; the right to vote; the right to communicate openly with anyone; the right to privacy and confidentiality; the right to wear one's own clothes; the right to refuse any treatment or program, the right to be treated with dignity and respect; and the right to appeal any abuse or violation of these and other rights while locked up.

...In addition, people judged to be suffering from a "mental illness" and about to be involuntarily committed to a psychiatric institution are automatically denied the right to due process. They're denied the right to legal counsel before and during commitment procedures. Due process is the legal right to a trial or public hearing before loss of freedom. People accused of criminal acts are routinely given their day in court before imprisonment. However, people who have committed no crime but have been judged "insane," "psychotic," "suicidal" or "dangerous" by one or two psychiatrists are routinely denied the right to defend their sanity in court before being committed.

Prisoners are traditionally given a fixed, definite sentence; they know when they will be released. Involuntarily committed inmates generally do not know this...

An inmate ... is a person who is
Both prisoners and psychiatric inmates are victimized by forced "treatment." Unlike medical patients, inmates have no right to refuse any psychiatric treatments, many of which are dangerous and damaging. Refusal can easily be overridden by an appeal [by a patient] to a hospital board; it is often interpreted as just another symptom of the patient's "mental illness."

Regular prisoners are often placed in "behaviour modification" programs. Sometimes prisoners, especially those judged to be rebellious, trouble-makers, or trouble-makers, are used as guinea pigs in dangerous and even life-threatening psychiatric experiments. Stimulation drugs such as scopolamine and atropine, or "aversive conditioning."

The inmate who is probably the most abused and discriminated against is the person who is committed to a psychiatric institution through the criminal process, either as "out of control" or as "not guilty by reason of insanity." They share their cell with the guilty committed psychiatric inmate the uncertainty about when, if ever, they'll be released, and with the regular prisoner the lack of protection against the routine use of dangerous experimental psychiatric treatments.

To call people "patients" when they are locked up and treated against their will is not only insulting, but a lie. Euphemisms such as "mental patient, "mentally ill," or "mentally insane" obscure the fact that most hospitals are in fact psychiatric prisons; that the institutional psychiatrist is actually a judge-jury-warden; that psychiatric treatment is a form of social control over unco-operative or non-conforming people whose psyches (usually working-class) are too different from or threatening to that of the upper class white psychiatrician; that terms such as "diagnosis" and "treatment" are fraudulently applied to nonexistent "mental illness"; and that psychiatric treatment is specifically experienced as punishment.

We are not "patients." We share with our brothers and sisters in prison the experience of being an inmate: loss of freedom, loss of civil and human rights, loss of control over our own bodies and minds, and stigmatization for life.

In the early 80's we published our first women's issue, "Women and Psychiatry," in which we ran an interview with Phyllis Chesler, a prominent feminist psychologist, and the author of Women and Madness (1972), an examination of the abuses and sexism of traditional, male-dominated psychiatry. In our second women's issue we continued to highlight psychiatric sexism with the article "Mental Health and Violence Against Women,", a powerful feminist statement written by seven female psychiatric-activists. A feature article on psychiatric malpractice by Greta Hofmann Nemiroff described a woman's frustrating struggle to sue the hospital that similarly abused her. In this issue we also ran a compelling piece on women and the workplace written by a whole social worker Paula Fine which documents psychiatry's excessive use of electroshock on women and condenets it psychiatric rape.

The most powerful statement on electroshock in Canada was published by Phoenix Rising in April of 1984. This issue was part of an ongoing critique of electroshock aimed at the abolition of this bizarre procedure, with its effects of permanent memory loss, difficulty in reading and concentration, and brain damage. Shock doctors and other physicians still try to rationalize this procedure by calling it "electroconvulsive therapy" or simply "ECT."

In our Fall 1988 issue we ran a feature story on the tragic death of 19-year-old Aldo Alvarini. Although there was an inquest into Alvarini's death, the case simply served to whitewash a psychiatric crime. The Coroner's Jury decided the cause of Alvarini's death was "depressive misadventure," in other words, just a medical accident—after Alvarini was forcibly subjected to roughly ten times the usual dose of Haldol in less than 24 hours.

Phoenix Rising published a press release covering Alvarini's death as well as a report on the demonstration sparked by the news of his demise. This was Toronto's first public protest against psychiatric drugging and institutional deaths.

Because legal rights have been central to our cause, over the years we took particular interest in the Freedom of Information Act. In 1988 an Act was passed that permits the public to obtain from the public service information that has been produced by the government. Charged with the task of civil rights, the Women's Bureau, 15, the most active forerunner of the act, had a weekly radio show where it publicized the "physically fit person," the "female patient," the "Chosen" and more in an attempt to highlight the right to access to information...”

...are voiced in an analysis in a virtual psychiatrization of the ward in the article "Women are not the problem."

Further along, 12 of the 18 articles in the issue were to be sub-edited by the Coordinator and unedited. The last 18 articles and our print view of, our beliefs. The editors are both forced into a position of being a psychiatrist or medical professional, such as the Reader's Digest, a typical Canadian publication. The editors, or "Sympathizers" were asked to contribute to a new magazine, "Women's" World. After many months of work, the magazine was finally launched and, as we all know, it was a disaster..."
We believed that a magazine published by psychiatric survivors like ourselves could become a credible and powerful voice for psychiatric inmates and ex-inmates living in Canada and throughout the world.

*Kids and Psychiatry issue / cover: Michael Steven*

particularly interest in the legal implications of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and "The Charter of Rights and Freedoms vs. the Psychiatric System" was the title of a double issue published in August 1983. We were awarded a grant from the federal Justice Department to produce this issue which was largely written by supportive civil rights lawyers. The Charter spells out many of our fundamental civil, legal and human rights. Section 15, the crucial equality section, is particularly relevant to psychiatric survivors since it legally prohibits discrimination against people with "physical or mental disability." Section 7 of the Charter is of even more importance because it affirms "the right to life, liberty and security of the person...." These rights are violated every day in virtually every psychiatric institution or ward in Canada. Furthermore, Section 12 of the Charter affirms the right not to be subjected to cruel and unusual treatment or punishment." In our view, cruel punishment includes such things as forced drugging, electroshock, and chemical or mechanical restraints such as four point restraints, which, we argued, should be declared unconstitutional. Lawyer Harvey Savage wrote an excellent piece on the Lieutenant Governor's Warrant (LGW) legislation, which authorizes indefinite detention for those declared "unfit to stand trial" or "not guilty by reason of insanity." He criticizes the LGW as unjust and unconstitutional, and cites the case of Emerson Bonner, who was incarcerated for 17 years as unfit to stand trial for attempted purse-matching. Our "Charter" issue featured a reprint of the antipsychiatry movement's historic "Declaration of Principles," probably the most concise and powerful antipsychiatry/liberation statement produced so far. We also reprinted "The People's Charter," a down-to-earth translation of the Charter's legalese which was first published in *Fast Casual* (a now-defunct disability rights journal). In September 1988, the board of directors of *On Our Own*, the original publisher of Phoenix, tried to evict us. The board claimed that the magazine rarely paid any rent, which was untrue. We first moved to a warehouse, then a year later to new office space at Euclid and College. By incorporating ourselves as "Voice of the Psychiatricized of Ontario, Inc." we separated the magazine from *On Our Own*. Despite the odds, we brought out two more issues which rank among our very best.

Our May 1989 issue focused on the psychiatric atrocities suffered by prisoners. It scrutinized solitary confinement, forced drugging and the dangerous behaviour modification "programs" which still exist in Oak Ridge, the notorious behaviour modification wing of Penetang. In it, we established a Prisoner Network which prisoners and ex-prisoners could use for advocacy, legal advice, or support, and we identified over eighty prisoners' rights groups, newsletters and journals in the United States, Canada, and other countries, including thirty-seven in Canada. We made a special effort to reach out to more prisoners, to let them know that we care deeply about their issues and the injustices they, like us, have experienced.

Don Weitz is a psychiatric survivor, a freelance writer, a researcher and an outspoken critic of the psychiatric system. He is the co-editor, with Bonnie Burstow, of *Shrink Resistant: The Struggle Against Psychiatry in Canada* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1988). He wishes to thank Sarah Evans, Susan Falkiner, Sue Callie and Sally Lee for their editorial suggestions, and to acknowledge financial assistance from the Ontario Arts Council for the writing of "Phoenix Rising: In Birth and Death."

Will Pritchard drawing from 1990 Lesbian and Gay supplement

the existence of an anti-psychiatry magazine, I realized that other people felt the same way I did. I was not alone after all.

As its subtitle announces, *Phoenix Rising* was a "Voice of the Psychiatricized"— and oh, what a strong, relentless voice it was! For hundreds of years the frightening knowledge of the psychiatric inmate had been silenced by the medical jaiers who were its controllers and validators. In issue after issue of Phoenix, Inmates spoke out against the labelers, and everyday the survivors spoke, the tyranny and the lies of psychiatry became cleaner and clearer.

Like its sister, *Madness Network News*, *Phoenix Rising* allowed us to place anti-psychiatry out there so firmly it became something which stuck and would not go away. It was empowering for the survivors who read it, for it expressed loudly and clearly what many knew and still more suspected. It said, "Yes, the drugs are poisoning you. Yes, drugs and shock are making it harder to think." It said, "No, no, you are not alone; it happened to me too." It said, "No you are not crazy for thinking it; they really are stealing your life." It helped people have the courage of their convictions and break out of the system. It helped people reclaim their Selves.

For me personally, Phoenix was an act of solidarity with our sisters and our brothers who are being and have been labelled, drugged, shocked, stigmatized, incarcerated, and lied to. It was a joining-with. It was education. It was love. It was also a hell of a lot of work. Year after year, I found myself writing articles, helping plan issues, speaking with funders and writing some more. There were a number of times when I was concerned with the amount of time being spent, and when I withdrew temporarily to address other issues and other parts of my life. Inevitably, however, after a very short retreat, I would think of the psychiatric holocaust, and I would think of Don blasting the system with every breath he drew and every word he spoke; and I would pick up my pen again. It was hard and demanding work all right. But it was also a great thing— a mitzvah. It is always a mitzvah to participate in a genuine awakening. I am proud to have been a part of Phoenix. And I know that whether it is being published or not, Phoenix remains a part of me.
Early on the morning of 3 October, Riad Malki, a professor of engineering at Birzeit University, was arrested by Israeli military authorities in the Occupied West Bank.

Malki, who was taken from his Ramallah home following a two-hour search of his premises by four Israeli intelligence agents, had been scheduled that day to attend a press conference at East Jerusalem's National Palace Hotel on the "tax war" that had been taking place since 20 September in the West Bank village of Beit Sahour. One hour before the conference, that would have begun to penetrate the communications barrier surrounding the besieged village, was to begin, the Israeli army declared the entire area surrounding the hotel to be a closed military zone, thereby condoning off public discussion as well as disclosure of the events ravaging the villagers of Beit Sahour. The simultaneous arrest of Dr. Riad Malki served as an additional stratagem in this military cordon designed to interrupt and ultimately foreclose alternative information, its political analysis, and their popular dissemination.

The forcible obstruction of communication, its coercive appropriation and the attempted reformulation of the organizational narrative of the Palestinian resistance has been a crucial and escalating dimension of the Israeli political and military response to the Palestinian intifada since it began on 9 December 1987. It targets as well cooperative efforts between Palestinians and progressive Israelis. Michel Wambachsky, for example, the head of the Alternative Information Center, was recently, following a long trial, sentenced to a non-parole jail term of 20 months and ten months suspended arrest, with a fine of 10,000 NIS (US $2,500). His crimes were providing typewritten services to "illegal organizations" and holding printed material belonging to "illegal organizations." This printed material was a booklet for Palestinian activists that included guidelines of how to resist torture and interrogation by the secret service.

A critical and contested institutional site in this struggle over the control of the communication of information is the Israeli prison apparatus which, during the two decades of occupation, from June 1967, and preceding the intifada, had...
housed, for varying periods of incarceration, more than 20,000 Palestinian political detainees. In the first two years of the intifada this number has increased dramatically, with over 40,000 arrests, putting great pressure on the prison facilities themselves and necessitating the opening of new prison camps such as Ansar 3 (Kerziv) in the Negev desert, and detention centers like Daharriyya, just outside of Hebron, and even using the militarily-closed Palestinian schools as temporary holding stations.

As a penal system, one of whose major targets is identified as the Palestinian people and its resistance to Israeli military occupation (and indeed the prison population in Israel can be largely distinguished as Israeli criminal and Palestinian political prisoners), Israeli prisons function on multiple levels not only to incarcerate individuals, but to destroy the collective and organize Palestinian popular resistance and its networks by isolating and containing alternative information systems through the imposition and attempted enforcement of bureaucratic, disciplinary and “official” channels of information and discursive exchange. From the inaccessible location of Ansar 3 in the Negev desert, to conditions of detention that include holding the prisoner incommunicado, with no contacts with lawyer, Red Cross representatives, or family, for the first 18 days of arrest, to the practice of administrative detention that allows for the holding without charge of a suspected dissident for six months (renewable indefinitely), to the significance of the confession as constituting sufficient evidence in and of itself to convict the detainee, to the practice of torture during interrogation and the use of informers (‘aṣafr), inside the prison cells as a means of extracting information and undermining prisoner political solidarity, the Israeli prison apparatus is constructed in such a way as to perform the combined functions of both repressive and ideological state apparatuses.

In prison, however, and within the framework of the collective work of political opposition, counter-strategies of communication, instruction, mobilization and organization are exercised and developed as critical weapons in the struggle itself. The theoretical and practical reconstruction of the site of political prison as a “university” for the resistance, a training ground for its cadres, is more than a literary topos or metaphoric embellishment in the writings and “prison culture” of political detainees. This holds true whether in occupied Palestine, South Africa, El Salvador, Northern Ireland or in the United States. Examining the relationship, for example, between the policing system in Britain with its various definitions of criminality and the recent history of legal and cultural constructions of English national identity through and against the laws promulgated with respect to immigration, Paul Gilroy has argued in There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack that “new kinds of struggle can be solidified by the very institutions which are deployed to answer their demands and to channel them into fragmented solutions into separate cases and claims.” Similarly, in his reading of “Marxist Theory and the Specificity of Afro-American Oppression,”
Cornel West has described the processes whereby this deployment of what are presented as "structural constraints" are reconstructed through the analytical practices of political engagement as "conjointural opportunities." The institutional and physical restriction of political detention are thus forcing the outlines of the dichotomizing definitions of a separate relationship between communication and cultural practices on the one hand and institutionalized state repression on the other. They also establish the discursive grounds for launching a frontal challenge to a dominant history of the state-sponsored suppression of internal and external dissent.

Waild al-Falham is a Palestinian lawyer in Israel and the Occupied Territories and an advocate for Palestinian political detainees. In *These Chains Must Be Broken*, a collection of writings originally published in newspapers between 1976 and 1977 on the prison situation under Israeli occupation, al-Falham, who began his legal work in the offices of the Israeli human rights lawyer and activist Felicia Langer, recounts an exchange that he had with one of his clients. The two men, from their respective perspectives, are discussing the unsatisfactory prison conditions and the lawyer comments to the prisoner on the excessive crowding inside the cell. The crowding is so extreme, he says, it is as if the detainees were "packed like sardines in a can." The prisoner, however, responds, "No, my friend," and when al-Falham expresses surprise at his answer, the prisoner adds, "we are like matches in a book of matches." Asked to explain, he replies, "Saddors are arranged next to each other in the can with the head of one next to the tail of the other. With a book of matches, the heads of all the matches are facing in the same direction." Al-Falham, from outside the prison and despite his own political commitment, sees at first only the physical crowding of the prisoners. The prisoner, inside, discards instead, through his own participation in it, the active ideological counter-organization of the prison population against the prison system itself. The dominant "communications frame" with its demand for objectivity, neutrality, and distance occluded, often even surpressed, the representation of alternative paradigms of resistance. "Popular insurrection," however, according to Don Patock in his study of "culture and communication" in South Africa in the 1980s, "demand(s) acute peripheral vision."

While the dominant autobiographical tradition in Western literary history has valorized the personal trajectory, the Bildung or socialization of the individual, prison memoirs, and in particular those of political detainees, reformulate that trajectory as a collective and counter-constitutive response to the ascendant forms of social and cultural domination that require privatization, isolation and atomization of the individual-oriented social system. "We organized ourselves collectively," wrote Nizam Aboullejheh in his Portrait of a Palestinian Prisoner, "because the prison officials wanted us to remain as isolated individuals." Two Palestinian prison memoirs from the pre-invasion period outline some of the issues at stake in political organization within and against the occupation, forms of organization that served critically to maintain the resistance in a period of disfranchisement.

One, *Cell Number 7*, is a story of apparent failure, the other, *Cell Number 7A*, a history of success, but both are major contributions to a larger strategic narrative.

"The ratting of chains reached our ears, and then silence fell on our cell." Fadl Yunis's prison memoir opens with the transfer of himself and a group of his comrades from Asqalan prison to Gaza Central prison. In Asqalan Yunis had been among the organizers of a hunger strike and it was the intention of the prison authorities to undermine the solidarity of the prisoners by removing the "booths," or *nuw lamps*, that are the heart of the prisoners' struggle. But it is only later that Yunis and his fellow transportees understand the nature and full extent of these machinations. When the narrative of *Zinaza reeqa* (*Cell Number 7*) begins, the prisoners are still in their cell at Asqalan, about to be sheaded to prepare for the move. The fetters which bind the prisoners two by two make it difficult for them to move together, to walk in step with each other. The chains of bondage enforced by the prison system are still another manifestation of the regime's effort to undermine the prisoners' own forms of solidarity.

The gatekeeper stumbled with the heavy prison door and opened it in front of us. Several soldiers led us out and surrounded us with several others walking behind us. One soldier opened the door of the *basta* (the cell used to transport prisoners) and with difficulty Adnan and Abdallah walked over to it, followed by Hasan and Muhammad. Yunis and I told the guards to desire the grovendstucrecled to do our heavy possessions toward the door of the *basta*. With his left hand Yunis lifted up his belongings and put his foot on the first step, lifting his right foot, he had to yank roughly at mine which I then lifted and placed it next to his, so that he got to the second step. I pulled myself and my belongings up with great difficulty while the sergeant shouted to me, "Hey... Hey..." It wasn't easy to make my steps match with Yunis's.

The lessons of solidarity and collective action that had been learned in Asqalan prison are out of place in Gaza, which was repurged in the prison system at that time for its lack of discipline. Yunis wrote, "Are we truly this the 'we' of silence? Are we still the 'we' of silence?"

Once again, therefore, the narrative of political struggle is a story of personal and group identity, order to map the trajectory of the political universe: - such as violence, conflict, and two sides, another side, another group, another division of the self. By the last of the 1970s, even in the place of the prisoners' understanding of the prison universe and the laws they are subject to, it was clear to us that these were different, that what we had to do, we had to be, and that what we had to do, we had to be.

The struggle continues, and the struggle is not to criticize or denounce the prison, but rather to learn how to live in it. As we continue to learn about life in the prison, we will continue to learn how to live..."
for its lack of prisoner interaction, and Yunis wonders to himself on arrival, "Is this the way they're going to treat us, and will we remain silent like these others are silent?" Adnan, Abdallah, Hassan, Muhammad, Musa and Adel (Yunis's name in the narrative) adopt instead a policy of organization amongst themselves and a strategy of passive resistance in order to secure the minimum comforts they require — such as some fresh air for Musa who suffers from asthma. Even this minor resistance is met by the intransigence of the prison guards and their superiors and two of the prisoners' number were transferred to another cell. The effort to divide the prisoners against themselves is endemic to the prison system, and in Gaza prison as it is evident, even in the questions put by the interrogators who seek to coerce the prisoners into accounts of themselves that would be consonant with the system's hierarchical and authoritarian narratives. "How many prisoners are in Asqalan?" "About 200." "No, 290. But how many of these would you suppose are hotheads?" Yunis's answer: "All the prisoners...."

Paramount among the issues that confront the newly arrived prisoners is the question of whether or not to continue in Gaza prison the strike they had left behind in Asqalan. But what can six of them do alone? No, there shall be a strike if no one has heard about it. Public awareness is required. The focus of Za'man ra'am 7 is the issue of collective organization, how to develop it and then the struggle to maintain it against the divisive pressures exerted by the prison authorities: separate interrogations, unannounced, for unpredictable reasons, at different times and of varying length; nights punctuated by screams of the man from the cell directly above; the use of female warders to tempt the prisoners into lassitude and collaboration; visits from the families who try to convince their sons to be less "troublesome;" and, finally, the permission to receive newspapers — so that the prisoners can learn of the Arab defeat in the October 1973 War. While the efforts on the part of the transfers from Asqalan to organize the Gaza inmates ultimately meet with failure, the internal cohesion within their own group and their ability to integrate into that group new prisoners introduced into their cell remains steadfast and effective. But in Asqalan prison too, the strike has failed to achieve any of the prisoners' demands, and the Egyptian prisoners captured in the October War are looking forward to their return home as the result of a prisoner exchange. The Palestinians remain behind; as the guard tells Yunis, "You're not prisoners of war." But in his final words, Yunis reminds him, "I've learned, my friend, that you know now that Palestine costs dear."

Like Fadi Yunis, a member of Fatah within the PLO arrested in 1970 for carrying out operations inside Israel and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment spent in various Israeli prisons, Jabril Rajoub came to know in the Nafha and Jaisd prisons the diverse features of the Israeli prison regime. Rajoub's prison memoir Za'man ra'am 704 (Cell Number 704) recounts too a narrative of struggle and collective organization. Although the political and cultural conclusions remain much the same in Cell Number 7 and Cell Number 704, Rajoub's narrative, which relates events a decade later, comes to a different ending from that of Za'man ra'am 7. According to Samih Khan'an, another inhabitant of cell number 704 who wrote the preface to Rajoub's account, "Jaisd" and its struggle, framed a turning point, a very specific leap forward in all the preceding tactics of the struggle. Za'man ra'am 704 tells the story of the "battle of Jaisd" in 1983 and the 34-day hunger strike in Nafha prison begun on 14 July 1980 that provided important lessons and precedents for the prisoners' organization in Jaisd. The chronology of hunger strikes (idahr al-ta'ati) has acquired a conscious historical significance in the Palestinian narrative of Israeli prisons. Their success and development articulates the progressive evolution of the resistance being formed inside the prison. For Rajoub, furthermore, as for the other political detainees, the "struggles and resistance of the prisoners of the Palestinian revolution inside the prisons is the natural extension of the struggle of our revolution and our people." His narrative proper begins accordingly with the beginning of the Palestinian resistance: "With the outbreak of the Palestinian revolution on 1 January 1965, led by the Fatah movement..." Za'man ra'am 704 describes the transformation, through the hunger strike, of a collection of individual prisoners into a collective front challenging the sway of the prison system. The successes achieved by the prisoners' movement are due, according to Rajoub, not to any humanitarian consciousness on the part of the prison authorities but to the organized resistance of the prisoners. The Jaisd strike must itself be understood as continuous with the previous strikes in Asqalan and Nafha prisons, and each of these are seen as an active part of the larger history of the Palestinian resistance. Two prisoners, Ali Jaafari and Rasem Halaweh, were added to the list of martyrs of the resistance when they died from forced feeding dur-

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ing the Natah strike and, in the end, twenty-six prisoners were transferred. Meanwhile Natah had become known as the "address of the prisoners' movement," the "academy for revolutionaries." Natah, to which the detainees were later transferred, gave "new meaning to the words "modern deluxe." Natah prison, opened in Nablus on 7 June 1994 to relieve the overcrowding in other prisons, was designed to house even more than 1000 political and common law detainees. Most of its prisoners at the time were under 40 and serving sentences of more than ten years. The hunger strike, began on 23 September, was a protest against the "modern deluxe" conditions provided to the prisoners by this new facility: overcrowding, deprivation of exercise, lack of medical services, poor food, use of gas to control the cells, physical punishment, lack of religious worship, and isolation from the outside and social contact. The organization of the hunger strike involved the organization of the prisoners and the prison itself. A central committee was formed and a working paper issued. The strike committee inside the prison further reflected the dynamics of the resistance organization outside and consisted of three members from Al-Fatah, one from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and one from the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). Sajja, however, refused to participate. Indeed, the internal structure and workings of the prisoners' movement, while maintaining its organizational connections with the confiscations of the different factions of the PLO outside, is importantly conditioned by the fact of the prison regime and the need to confront its authority collectively. As Fadil Yunes had already described his own experience with a fellow prisoner from a different faction: "He was from Popular Front General Command and I was from Fatah, but we were members of one revolution." The Natah strike that ensued was to be, according to Rajoub, a "battle of the power of the will against the 'will of power.'"

The isolation that a decade earlier had confined the resistance activity of Fadil Yunes and his comrades in cell number 7 in Gaza prison was transferred in Natah in 1994 into an extensive and effective network, drawing on the now developed history of hunger strikes by Palestinian prisoners and penetrating both inside the prison and across prison walls. Participating in the strike were 678 prisoners who succeeded in mobilizing support through letters, lawyers and news agencies, not only in the town of Nablus, but throughout the Occupied Territories, in Israel and abroad, and enjoining solidarity strikes in Hebron, Natah, Asqalan and Ramla prisons. As Marzio Hector wrote from death row in a Jamaican prison, "the free flow of letters is crucial to the intelligent and calculated struggle for life on the Row."

For Hector, however, a "criminal prisoner" imprisoned for a murder that he did not commit, the emergence from a private grievance to a politicalized resistance came gradually, until "during daily discussions through the ventilators with these brothers, the need for an organized struggle group in the prison to keep the struggle alive and unify the prisoners' common objectives under an organized system of struggle arose." The prisoners' struggle, in the early days, was a struggle for self-preservation and representation in society, but it soon evolved into a struggle for the release of the prisoners' condition and for international recognition of their struggle. The political threat posed by that struggle to the state is the success of an alternative social organization and popular communications systems that would challenge the dominant historical narrative.

Jibril Rajoub's narrative is structured then by the three consequential stages to the Jibril hunger strike: first, preparation for the strike; second, the strike itself; and then, consolidation of the organization. The Jibril hunger strike, begun on 23 September 1984, ended twelve weeks later, on 4 October, with the capitulation of the prison authorities to some of the prisoners' demands. And although the system later refused to follow through on many of the promises and agreements made to the hunger strikers, the prisoners' movement had emerged decisively as an effective counter-organization to the prison system itself. Rajoub was released from prison in the May 1985 prisoner exchange, only to be re-detained without change in November 1993, the year of the inter-territorial prisoner exchange (the fate of many of the exchanged prisoners who choose to remain in Israel or the Occupied Territories) and held in solitary confinement.

Jibril Rajoub's 1995 hunger strike again elicited widespread support and the Campaign to Free Jibril Rajoub that was formed at the time eventually became the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist. Rajoub was the first to happen, was also among the first deportees to be forcibly removed by the military authorities from the Occupied Territories to the border to southern Lebanon in the early months of the intifada.

**Nakba Day** The prisoner exchanges in 1983 and 1985 between the state of Israel and "intermediaries" for the PLO released several thousand Palestinian political detainees from Israeli prisons and detention centers. The prisoners, many of whom were permitted to return to their homes and to remain within the Occupied Territories (although subjected to persistent harassment,监视, arrest and even assassination), brought with them their "prison culture": strategies of resistance elaborated, not only organizationally, but culturally as well, in memoirs, poetry, drawings and stories of organized cultural opposition against a state system of political detention. "Prison literature" flourished again, now "beyond the wall."

A new corpus, a genre defined less by formal criteria than by historical circumstances and political exigencies, was constituted itself. The prisoner exchanges, however, had the further effect of decapitating the leadership and dismantling the resistance inside the prison - a consequence that may help to explain why these prisoner exchanges were managed in the first place. Palestinian political detainees inside Israel had been remaking the resistance within the walls, a resistance that was in turn mobilizing the popula-
tion outside in support of its hunger strikes, work stoppages and protest actions demanding improved conditions, if not release. But as Eshel Yafa'i noted as far as to argue in the article, "Israel's Prison Academies," "The uprising's Unified National Command [known to Palestinians as the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU)], which has received the intifada by means of periodic handbills, is constructed along the same lines as the special committees formed by the Palestinian security forces." Palestinian universities and schools in the Occupied Territories have, since December 1987, been militarily closed more often than they have been opened. Indeed, in order to accommodate the massive numbers of detained protesters since the beginning of the intifada, the Palestinian education authorities have for certain periods used the closed schools as makeshift prison centers. The threat that prison and universities pose to the state if not properly policed or effectively disciplined is told, for example, in a short story published in May 1989, by the Israeli Matt Nerszky. "The Game's Up" relates a Navy frogman attack on a boat moored in international waters off the coast of Israel. None of the commandos involved in the operation know what they will find there. "Military intelligence hasn't determined if it's drug-smuggling, gunrunning, white-slavery or terrorism. But we do know gambling is a front for something big and our job is to find it. Any more questions? Okay, men, after me - and good luck." The attack is carried through successfully and the ship's gamblers are herded into the central lounge. But there is still the locked door below deck. This is then opened with plastic explosives and the Israeli frogmen confront there 40 West Bank pupils and their teacher. "I suspected as much!" Bar-Barian snorted. "A clandestine matriculation class! In the name of the Civil Administration, I hereby arrest you for illegal education."

With the Palestinian schools and universities militarily closed, despite international accolades recognizing education as a basic human right, and with many of the schools transformed into prisons, the task of the education of Palestinian youth was assumed, in significant part, by the popular committees. This "popular education," or al-ta'alum al-sha'b, which included not only the basic skills necessary to pass the tarziyyah, or Jordanian secondary school leaving examination, but a Palestinian nationalist content as well, was itself declared by the Israeli government to be "illegal education" and the teachers and students who were discovered and caught promulgating and practicing it were in their turn arrested and detained. The educators were seen to constitute a serious danger to the sway of Israeli dominion. In Ramallah, for example, according to a report published in the "irregular" journal Fanoos in July 1989, there were over 600 students enrolled in these popular education schools, and in the nearby village of Birzeit, 150 students and pupils had completed eight months of schooling. "A clear indication of the intifada's determination to continue and to realize the potentials of the intifada to transform the very life of the mass of the people."

Critical to the grounded development of the intifada and its persistent continuation, even escalation, have been the emergent infrastructural and social organizational networks of which popular education is a part. These networks are established at various levels, from the coordinating direction of the UNLU (with its equal representation of all fractions from within the PLO, Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Communist Party, and including a representative of the Islamic movement), to the "popular committees" created at the local and grassroots level in towns, villages, neighborhoods and refugee camps to facilitate the distribution of health care, agricultural production, education and labor activities.

Instrumental in the constructive interaction of these several political and social arrangements have been the communications networks that include the transmissions between the Occupied Territories and the organizations in the international community. Among these the most distinguished is perhaps that of the shayana, or communiques in leaflet form disseminated regularly, every ten days to two weeks, by the UNLU. These contain reports on general developments in the different aspects of the intifada, political analyses, solidarity messages, and specific instructions for general strike days, planned actions, etc. As a critical archive in their own right, these shayana represent the political and strategic intersection, as a communications weapon, of "form" and "content." Even as they issue, and are reproduced

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*Israeli troops in occupied Gaza*
"No taxaton without representation."

Taxes," and other demands goals, that call to "Close the Prisons" or that are connected to the educational institutions and the holy sites, etc. This is what brings the people to mobilize around these slogans and to struggle, even in the face of death, for their realization. The concerns of all the factions are clearly expressed in these slogans without ever forgetting the general goal. That general goal, however, was not altogether clear or pronounced in the first days of the intifada, but varied according to the points of view on the correctness of what was proposed by the general slogan. The slogans articulating demands, however, are the goals around which the different points of view encounter the national forces and all the factions of the Palestinian people.

Murtada's reading of selected hijamaat begins from the early days of the intifada and examines the evolving political relationship formulated in these texts between the levels of the general and the specific and their strategic importance in establishing and maintaining the Palestinian struggle as a collective enterprise.

The effective and systematic use on the part of the intifada of alternative communications structures to reorient the popular sentiments and collective strategies of resistance has in more recent years from the Israeli occupation authorities a series of attempts, both discursive and coercive, to penetrate and intercept the networks of the emerging counter-discourse. Such attempts have included, for example, the use of an isolated Palestinian editor, a "misanthrope" whose writings in the pages of the right-wing Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv are analyzed and sharply criticized by Assaf Salim in his Fasat article, "Those Who Have Fallen into Cooperation with Zionists' Propaganda," as the calculated manipulations by the authorities of a self-constructed and individualized "native informant" in order to contradict the collective project of the intifada. Similarly, as Salim Tamari has described in a forthcoming article, "Eyeless in Judea," the Israeli government has, in its new in-famous "leaflet war," sought to appropriate and deflect the intifada's concerted counter-hegemonic means of communicating through the production and distribution of counterfeits leaflets that, even while initiating, at times anticipating by having intercepted preliminary transmissions of the proposed communications between the Occupied Territories and the PLO. This is the style and format of the UNL's authentic hijamaat, aimed to counter-read and absorb the directives and goals of the intifada and instigate factional dissonance and sectarian contradictions in the organized objectives of the popular mass uprising.

This effort on the part of Israel both to penetrate and to capture the uprising's popular communications apparatus, appropriating thereby its own discourse and deforming its political discourse and its operational messages, also functions through the military occupation's creation of extended multitudes of collaborators. These collaborators, as many as 5,000 according to the New York Times, are drafted, armed and paid by the Israeli Shabbiha, and have in recent months become the target of organized reprisals from the Palestinian populace, some spontaneous but most coordinated by the uprising's leadership. The collaborators are used by the secret police to gain substantial information about the plans and projects of the uprising as well as to identify members of its leadership. According to a report in News from Within, published by the Alternative Information Center, "Without the collaborators, the 'wanted list' [of leaders] would have existed and there would have been no meaning to the army's 'initiated actions.'" While the many reprisals, including assassination, against the collaborators have been much publicized and self-righteously condemned by the US media and administration spokespersons in particular as evidence of the internal disintegration of the uprising, News from Within goes on to argue the contrary, that "killing is the last step in a long line of efforts to convince the collaborators to sever their connections. The aim is to bring the collaborators back from their bad ways. First, the suspect is warned. Then they are beaten or their property is damaged. Sometimes the family is approached with the suggestion that one of its heads take the responsibility of improving the collaborator's behavior. Only when there is no other choice do they kill." And according to an Israeli journalist from Haaretz, Ron Kishel, "With every assassination, the flow of information that streams to our security forces dwindled" (13 September 1989).

Especially significant in Israel's formation of these marauding bands of collaborators is the conscription, through threats, bribes, physical coercion and promises of early release, of informers (or azamah, as they are called) from amongst the Palestinian detainees inside the prisons. Such conscription ultimately designates two levels of operation: first, to intercept the organized clandestine dissemination of political education within the prisons, and second, to create a fractional "ally" within the ranks of the uprising "outside."

**For the following months, we will teach them a lesson. We will break Beit Sahour, even if we have to impose a curfew for two months.**

Yitzhak Shamir, Israeli Defense Minister.

No taxation without representation.

Beit Sahour residents.

The example of the small town of Beit Sahour, just outside of Bethlehem and with a population of approximately 12,000, mostly Christian inhabitants, that was besieged by the Israeli army for six weeks, ostensibly to enforce the collection of unpaid taxes, recapitulates in large the lesson of "prison culture" as a strategy for countering the occupation. According to Don Pinnock, writing about the 1980s South African context, "Popular communications systems — those means by which information is communicated and organized symbols and are, themselves, a social relationship." The permanent curfew and the cordoning off of the town of Beit Sahour imposed by Israeli occupation authorities attempted to
interrupt those “popular communication systems” and the “social patterns” and “social relationships” that they transmit, both internally and in connection to the outside world. The statement distributed by the IDF to the inhabitants of Beit Sahour following a month of military siege and relentless popular resistance, is this intent. On the one hand, the military sought to interrupt the collective program of the town:

There are quite a number of residents who are worried about the future, and they want to stop this kind of confrontation that brings them nothing but harm. However, a group of irresponsible individuals incite the inhabitants to break the law, in addition to certain elements from outside Beit Sahour who wish to gain opportunities for political profit from what is happening in the town.

By restricting access to the area, on the other hand, the authorities attempted to cut off not only food but external communications as well. The statement went on:

The attention given by the mass media to what is going on in the town will soon disappear and the town itself will no longer have its name in the news headlines, just as the attention to events in the territories has decreased and no longer excites the world media.

Indeed, when an elderly woman whose house was being ransacked by soldiers suffered what was later diagnosed as “stress-related heart blockage,” a soldier ripped a telephone from the wall in order to prevent the woman’s daughter-in-law from calling a doctor.

For over a month, Israeli soldiers accompanied tax collectors through the town of Beit Sahour, confiscating the personal property of its residents to be sold as tax payment at auction in Tel Aviv. An estimated three million dollars worth of property was pillaged from the town by the military, in excess of the taxes owed. A report by al-Haq, a legal aid service in Ramallah, to the state signatories of the Fourth Geneva Convention expressed grave concerns at the human and civil rights violations being perpetrated in Beit Sahour. The report emphasized especially: arbitrary assessments, the militarization of tax collection, confiscation of third party assets, confiscation of identity cards, and the isolation of the area. The tactic of the “confiscation of third party assets” was, it would seem, designed in particular to disrupt the internal social organization and property relations of the town. According to testimony by the victims collected by the Arab Studies Society in East Jerusalem, when there was nothing in a house deemed valuable enough to confiscate, the soldiers insisted that it was not the “right house.” According to the witness report of Habib Hanna Habib Kheir, for example:

When the soldiers and taxmen entered my house, they seized my identity card, and checked my name against the list they were carrying. They did not find my name, but they found my father’s name. They claimed that my father owned a restaurant in the city. They asked me to show them how my father’s house so I got into the jeep with them. We arrived at my father’s house and entered. There, they did not find anything worth confiscating. So they told me this was not my father’s house, although I protested that it was indeed the house. They told me that they knew my father’s house, so I told them if they knew it, they could go there.

Similarly, if the person being questioned by the soldiers was discovered by them not to owe any taxes, the money in that person’s possession was declared to belong to another person who did owe it. This too is reported by Habib Kheir:

When they searched one of the rooms, they found 10,000 shekels (US $5,000) in one of the drawers and confiscated it. When they found that there were no legal reasons for confiscating the money, they claimed that the money belonged to my neighbor Elias Sahal. I denied that and told them that the money belonged to me and that they had taken the house allowance and asked how I was going to live after they confiscated the money. The officer said that they were going to investigate the matter and see. I was taken to the camp again and there I was given a receipt under the name of Elias Sahal.

While the Israeli military and tax authorities were thus systematically refusing to acknowledge, and thereby admitting their recognition of, the existing property, social structures and history of the town of Beit Sahour, the inhabitants were themselves transforming, under the occupation’s institutional pressure, the traditionally separate social patterns into a strategy of collective resistance. For the Israeli government, it was not simply taxes that were at stake and had to be collected, but the exemplary history of resistance being written in Beit Sahour, the counter-history that needed to be interrupted. In the words of Yitzhak Rahin, “We will teach them a lesson. We will break Beit Sahour, even if we have to impose a curfew for two months.” But according to the inhabitants of Beit Sahour, “They can come again. They can come a hundred times. We will not pay a single cent.” In other words, “No taxation without representation.”

Palestinian prison culture, both inside and outside the prison walls, is designing even now the liberatory possibilities of that representation.

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Arab Studies Society information packet on Beit Sahour, 31 October, 1989.

INTIFADA INDEX

Number of Palestinians detained during the first six months of the uprising: 8,362
Number of Palestinians imprisoned in Ketzir tent-prison in the Negev desert: 2,722
Prison sentence imposed on Israeli soldier for killing a Palestinian resident of Gaza by firing nearly a dozen bullets into his stomach at point-blank range: 1 year
Prison sentence imposed on Palestinian youth for throwing stones at passing cars: 2 years
Sentences imposed on four Palestinians for throwing stones at passing cars: 8-10 years

Sentences served by Israeli soldiers Ya‘ir Nisim and Dror Cohen for using a bulldozer to bury Palestinian Arabs alive: 2½ months

From Middle East Report, September-October 1988

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"There is no document of civilization," wrote Walter Benjamin, "which is not at the same time a document of barbarism."

In many respects the experiences of incarceration, slavery, deportation, war and physical annihilation are at the centre of that barbarism. Benjamin continued: "And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from one owner to another." The most pertinent case study in this thesis is that of prison writing, which is written against the barbarism but which is then appropriated by "civilization" for its own purposes.

There has been writing out of prison since at least the third millennium B.C., of some of it (particularly that relating to ethnic deportations and slavery) entering into the ritual narratives of Western civilization, while in some societies (the Soviet Union, the United States, France, South Africa, Ireland and Palestine/Israel are particularly notable) the experience of incarceration has become the site of contesting narratives.

For example, the Old Testament, which contains a large amount of material relating to deportation, exile and imprisonment has not only become integral to both Jewish and Christian narratives but, by adaptation, to the narratives first of black slaves, then subsequently of black populations in the United States, Jamaica and Britain. In this sense the meta-narrative is turned back against itself, though ultimately it could be argued that it is rejuvenated (certainly the persecution of the Puritans in the 17th century and the Black evangelicals in the 19th led to a reaffirmed Christianity rather than to its demise). What is clear is that Judeo-Christianity, because of its incarceratory origins, shows innate capacity both to be extremely cruel and to give hope to those whom it locks up and damns: we should not forget the grisly spectacle of the Pilgrim Fathers sailing to freedom in the "Mayflower," and then the ship sailing on to deliver slaves to the West Indies.

The idea of prison is at the heart of Christianity, and Dante's Divine Comedy, with its stratified level of punishments and rewards, perhaps its most telling document. As George Steiner said of the Inferno:

The concentration and death camps of the twentieth century, wherever they exist, under whatever regime, are Hell made manifest. They are the transference of Hell from below the earth to its surface. They are the deliberate enactment of long-precise imagining. Because it imagined more fully than any other text, because it argued the centrality of Hell in the Western order, the Commedia remains our literal guidebook—to the flames, to the ice-fields, to the meat-hooks. In the camps the medieval pornography of fear and vengeance cultivated in the Western mind by Christian doctrines of damnation, was realized (Steiner, 1971: 47-8).

Thus at the core of Christianity there is a lunatic logic which not only allows for annihilation, imprisonment and banishment, but also for resurrection, self-affirmation and transcendence. The present situation in South Africa provides ample opportunity for meditating on such a paradox, where the African Nationalist, themselves victims of large-scale incarceration (for them the British invented the concentration camps), have, ostensibly in the name of a white Calvinist sense of
Genet recognized that prisoners everywhere shared a common fate, whose definition ultimately had to be conceived of in political terms.

Bird's-eye view of Millbank Prison

This brings us closer to the nature of prison experience and the politics that may flow from it. There is no politics out there onto which the prisoner might latch, though there is politics. Every prisoner lives as a supplement to all the other politics. But is there no connection between the common experience of prisoners? This depends on how we ask the question. The commonest answer is that as a counter-narrative there is a commonality. So many stories in so many countries at so many different historical periods sound as if they were penned by a collective hand, so much so that when prisoners (particularly male prisoners) write their own autobiography they end up claiming for themselves stories that have been circulating for centuries.

At last I should call it a day, there are only stories left, old stories, repetitions, nothing else, if I am not repeating my own story, I repeat those of others. I remember a story by a Spanish author, or he may have been a South American... Well now no repetitions, let's have done with old stories. (Bienen, 1972: 59)

But many of these stories exist on the surface, as if the prisoner wanted to be
The feminist case is based on building from the ground up, rather than establishing a grand narrative that will redefine not only prisoners' existence but that of all of us.

I am afraid not of what they will do to us, but what they can make us into. For people who are outlaws for a long time may feed on their own ruminations and emotions which, in turn, strangle their reason and ability to see reality. I pray that we do not return like ghosts who haunt the world, cannot understand it, and are unable to live in it. I pray that we do not change from prisoners into prison guards. (Michnik, 1985:99)

If this might seem (because of its source) yet another resignation to the dominant narrative (which it is), there are clearly some shifts. The sentiments expressed by Michnik (and Havel and Mandels and Breytenbach) are those of Ghirardi, and therefore a different (Third World, non-Christian) sensibility has entered into our discourse around the politics of prison. In the prison game nobody wins. The strategy to overcome the Prisoners' dilemma, as the mathematical games theorists put it, is Tit-for-Tat, where I assume that my opponent is rational and that his strategy is not predicated on mutual self-destruction. It presupposes that his objective, like mine, is self-preservation. Thus I assume in any negotiation that he is honest. If he fails to keep his bargain, I will change the rules of the encounter, not by assuming that he will remain duplicacious, but by providing another clue towards regaining mutual trust. I force his hand by turning him back towards recognizing that his ego is at stake because he cannot win by duplicity. (See Hoffsader, 1985: 715-734 for an account of the logic behind this.) Thus the Christian game in which all will be risked in one final zero-sum Armageddon is exposed as illogical.

Such metanarrative theories are confirmed in many ways by women's writing out of prison, where the real politics is not based on creating a totalizing alternative, but in producing accounts where the realities of being locked up are explored against the every day experiences of a fractured society. Most of women's writing out of prison (see Gelland, 1983 and Scheffler, 1986) is about resisting the meta-narratives, but doing so by patiently exploring the worlds of being incarcerated, in order to plot a violent overthrow of the social system, and in order to establish the very mundane reasons for being where they are. Judith Scheffler quotes from an American, Patricia McCool, who writes fiction.

An extremely important element in my motivation to write these stories is to give the reader some sense of the reality of this form of social madness—that these are real human beings being destroyed by a machine designed and run by madmen, for the most part. In spite of this dark theme, most of the stories are life-affirming in some way. I am impressed, all these years afterwards, at the resiliency of the spirits of the women I knew.

Victorian-era women's prison.
My stories are about women struggling to preserve their wills, their self-respect, in a system intent on destroying them. (Scheffler, 1986:261)

The feminist case is therefore based on building from the ground up, rather than establishing a grand narrative that will redeem not only prisoners' existence but that of all of us. And yet this case is compounded with the problems of doing anything either about prisons or the conditions that put them in place.

The truly problematic feature about prisons is their universality, the fact that, in any society, the female, the indigent, the racial minorities will be discriminated against by a judicial system that is only concerned with replicating a form of social order which conforms the dominant elements of society.

This prison is not about presenting crime, but ensuring that the middle classes feel safe. Equally, in societies where the free-flow of ideas is perceived to be a threat, intellectuals and others who contest the status quo will be incarcerated or executed in order to maintain the social order. And yet when intellectuals are freed, much of the philosophical underpinnings of prison remain untouched.

When VACLAV Havel became president of Czechoslovakia he freed all political prisoners but none of the regular ones, thus ushering in a new political order, but not a new order of criminal justice.

Havel (and perhaps Mandela) can therefore begin to alter aspects of the meta-narrative without the penal system changing one jot. The tension that Foucault noted in Genet's attitude to political prisoners is thus at the core of understanding what prison is all about: Censorship may be (more-or-less) abolished in civil society, but it is ever-present in prison; indeed the existence of prison is predicated on censorship. (An excellent recent study of Simon Fraser's Prison Journal is devoted exclusively to censorship within Canadian prisons, both by the administration against prisoners and prisoners against themselves.)

The fact of regular prison writing (as opposed to that by prisoners of conscience or political prisoners) is that most of it does not deal with the grand scheme of things, but with the everyday living struggles of minorities to survive in a predatory world. In that sense a far stronger narrative has to be written. As a black prisoner from Attica wrote in 1988:

"That the criminal justice system of the United States is a facade for gross and shocking violations of the legal and human rights of Third World people and poor citizens can be confirmed by an examination of the prisons of the society. The prisons and jails in the United States have become bulging warehouses for Third World people, the unwanted, and the unemployed. They provide a legally sanctioned instrument for social, political and economic control... We who have nothing to look forward to but long years of enforced idleness, coupled with programs designed to destroy our bodies, minds, and spirits—designed to render us incapable of any future assistance to our people— have the historical duty... to change the relationship of forces between the prison administration and us by gaining effective control of as many areas of prison life as possible. (Carrio, 1989:69)

This story is surely ultimately more significant than embellishing the old one, because it stirs the belly of hell itself. As with women's writing, it is decentralised and specific, but unlike theirs, it is highly politically charged. It also suggests that the collapse of the meta-narratives will occur only when the Damned finally take over, and prisons, all forms of deportation and extermination are abolished. Then Heaven and Hell, in William Blake's sense, will be merged. But that day will not come until the voices of our prisoners reach a crescendo so loud as to cause the walls to crumble. This will be done, of course, country-by-country, maybe even prison-by-prison. Meanwhile, more and more people are incarcerated, and our technology assures that the jails are more and more electronically secured. Meanwhile, the meta-narrative censors the accounts of those inside. Meanwhile, everything we write is supplementary."

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NOTES

1. Meta-narrative is used here much in the sense that Hayden White does, or in the generation that Levi-Strauss used to find the Central Myth, that is a story that binds together all the other ones. A somewhat different version of this is Gramsci's use of hegemony, which gives a particular political inflection to an interrogating net of beliefs and symbols on which we draw to legitimize struggles for power. Meta-narrative is the literary version, nyth the anthropological, and hegemony the political.

2. Havel's transition from prison to presidential palace has become one of the most striking cases of the late year. However, it is a transition that has some unique features of its own. Havel did not become president reluctantly. His career shows that he systematically built himself up as a political figure, even using prison, drama, and Charter 77, to achieve this end. As Ivan Klina notes in a recent interview with

The most that any political prisoner can do is chip away at the walls of the concept of imprisonment

Philip Roth, "Right from the beginning, when I got to know him, Havel was, for me, in the first place a politician, in the second place an essayist of genius, and only lastly a dramatist... Havel was for a long time the only active representative of the line of thoroughly democratic Czech politics represented by Tomas Masaryk," (New York Review of Books, April 12, 1990:21) The genius of Havel was knowing that Time, and the West, was on his side. The problem is that, apart from his grasp of prior Czech experiences and philosophies, as well as his vision of George Orwell's 1984 as a metaphor, does he have a political philosophy? He certainly has no philosophy of prison which is not linked to his personal desire for power. All of his essays and plays are anecdotes on some sort of gaining control. Surely the strategens of political thought should be to recognize that as the central starting-point, rather than being mesmerized by his metaphoric rise.
Border/Lines: You have been the mediator of intellectual ideas in the press and on radio and TV, especially on TV, and one thing that’s really struck me is the way in which in England writers and intellectuals like Jonathan Miller, Melvin Bragg and yourself are hosts and directors of programs, whereas in Canada the media people make their way up to taking these jobs. Do you have a sense of why this should be?

Ignatieff: I think there is an intellectual history to be written of the British television and radio audience, and the key thing must be to go back to the BBC Radio’s Third Programme (which was very much before I was born). I have a sense that in its heyday at the BBC an audience was created from the educated and liberal middle classes. I don’t think it’s a simple left-wing audience, but an audience that’s catholic in its politics, that listens to classical music on the radio. All of us in my generation derived from the audience that was created around talks in the twenties and thirties in the early days of radio. In other words, what makes us possible is that we inherit a public service broadcasting tradition together that goes back 60 or 70 years. Before that there must surely be some Edwardian antecedents: the popular libraries, the quality press. At the other level there’s the Workers Educational Association. The ability not to be self-conscious about talking about ideas on television and radio has a historical and cultural preparation and it’s all in the audience. Once you’ve got an audience, then whether it’s Ignatieff, whether it’s Miller, whether it’s Bragg, doesn’t really matter. They are bound to emerge to that audience need. If they work in a broadcasting culture which isn’t always looking at the numbers, or the advertising revenue, then the fact that my audiences are, by television standards, small is never brought up against the shows. Instead, the arguments I fight within the BBC are a bit different, a bit like: “you should have gone for him and then you didn’t get him,” good sound producers’ questions, and questions about the content and intellectual approach of the shows, but never questions about numbers. In other words, there are two variables here. One is the historical creation of audiences and secondly, a public broadcasting ethos which doesn’t look at the numbers and therefore presents you only with the discipline of doing a decent intellectual job.

I understand and I think that is important in understanding what is going on here in Canada. For example, let us take Realizer with Robert Fulford and Richard Gwynn. One of the interesting things it seemed to me, as a contrast with what you or Bragg or even Miller have done, is that Fulford and Gwynn weren’t really concerned with getting to the point of the idea of the person they were interviewing, but rather with translating it as if translation was absolutely essential. I wonder if that’s to do with two totally different cultures! It was actually assumed that if you were interviewing Bertrand Russell (and I remember one interview on BBC radio in the early sixties) that everybody would know who he was, whereas in Canada if, for example, Chomsky is interviewed, it is assumed that no-one knows who he is, and therefore the interviewer has to start from scratch.

In the kernel of that question is a question about translation, that is, what’s a person like me doing? Am I translating high falutin’ abstract intellectual questions into words of one or two syllables for an audience? Am I a translator or am I a mediator?

I see the roles as being different. I see my role as being a mediator between the audience and often quite abstract and difficult and obscure thought. It’s talk or thought that speaks only to the tribe out of which it comes. If I’m talking to a philosopher the problem with the philosopher is that what a philosopher says is so goddamn difficult to understand, but that a philosopher is not used to talking to people who aren’t philosophers, who do different things. My job is to moderate between self-
referral intellectual groups, between specialists and a general audience, to get those specialists to speak the language that reaches groups who don't read the specialist journals, who don't know the lingo, who don't know the jargon. I'm constantly stopping someone in mid-flight and saying, "Now what did that word mean?" That's where I'm doing my job. I don't think my job is to say "What you really mean by some extraordinarily complicated sentence is x or y," except when they really aren't making any sense at all. Then I'm struggling to understand what I mean myself. I do translation, but it's for me, not just for the audience. I make myself the text of what has to be translated. I think of my role in terms of mediation, not simplification, and that cuts to the heart of what I think people like me ought to be doing in the media, and why I'm working in the media at all. The modern world's talk is balkanized to an inconceivable degree. Historians debate among historians, literary critics among literary critics, journalists among journalists, politicians among politicians. The one arena, the one public place where all of this balkanized, self-referential, enclosed jargon can reach beyond the converted, is in the media. Most times it doesn't happen. The media can become a stage which is as self-referential as any other, but the ideal to me is quite clear.

Can I just pick up on that for a moment? I have a tape of you interviewing Raymond Williams. I'm not sure where it came from but...

That was at the ICA (Institute for Contemporary Arts, London, England).

I also heard Robert Fulford interviewing Raymond here for TV Ontario. The interesting difference between them is that you actually let Raymond talk, and Raymond was quite capable of talking in his own right and exploring his own ideas, whereas Fulford was only interested in his sense of Welshness. He did the same thing with Edward Said... Although those are important parameters relating to what Raymond was about it's a curious - shall we say Canadian? - way of getting Raymond's project. It struck me that the difference between your interview and Fulford's was basically that there was a kind of party agenda, there were certain things one shouldn't allow Raymond, or said, to say. I've been concerned about whether that is a different style in Canadian and British thought.

I feel strongly that my role is not to take up the airwaves. My role is to get other people to talk. I have another role in my life and I play it all the time: I am interviewed, I have my own views, I write books, but that's a separate thing. I can keep both roles quite distinct. When I'm doing one job I don't need to do the other job. There's an American style of interview in which the only star is the host. Nobody ends up talking but the host. In effect, nobody ends up being heard but the host. Again, the audience is crucial. When I interviewed Raymond Williams at the ICA I could take for granted that the audience knew about Williams and that it would not be appropriate for me to set an agenda.

Again, being a mediator depends on a very intimate set of relations with each audience. I get into real trouble if I think they don't know anything. That's when it starts to go bad because then you get pedagogical, you get heavy with an audience, and they will immediately turn to baseball if you start to do that.
"We think television in Canada is the same as in Britain or France. But you only have to change national context to see how this medium is radically different from context to context, and nowhere more different than in the style and culture of a talk show."

One example, Bernard Pivot's *Apostrophe*, a talk show about books in France, is unrepeatable anywhere else. It depends upon a whole set of cultural contexts which we cannot reproduce. In answer to your question, the first thing I'd do if I did a show here on the CBC or TVO is watch a lot of the local product and figure out how it works when it works and how it fails when it doesn't work.

Of course, in a way, if you were doing it here you'd have the Americans over your shoulder. A lot of the stuff here gets listened to in the States. I think that most Canadian programs don't think of that, they just do it, and that's probably what's right. This actually raises another interesting question, the whole question of the academic or the writer in the media. I suppose that in some ways it's perfectly appropriate that someone like yourself who is of Russian origin and comes from the country of Marshall McLuhan should want to do it in every conceivable way. And yet very few of us actually dare to do it, very few dare to take on the media if they come from academia.

I didn't particularly dare. I wasn't just asked. But your question raises the issue of the extreme professionalization of intellectual life in North America. I'm not a media person, I'm a sort of freelance intellectual. I use the media to sustain myself outside of academia. I do lament the passing of a kind of writer who was both a fiction writer and a non-fiction writer, both an essayist and a specialist. It's not merely that everybody has a job in academia now, and so teachers have to grind out a very standardized product for institutional acceptance to the university, with all the consequences to their intellectual integrity, independence and freedom of expression that goes with it. It's also that writers themselves are more specialized. Novelists stick to their novels - one comes out every five years. They never deviate, they never move, partly for market considerations because they feel that once they have established their niche as a novelist, the marketing of anything else is just impossible. There are very few people who have the range of a John Updike. What I worry about is that this professionalization of the intellectual produces a kind of balkanization of intellectual life, each person acquiring all the professional deformations that go with their specialty, ceasing then to be able to speak to the enormous audience out there, people who subscribe to Harper's, who read Esquire, who follow PBS, who may be lawyers, doctors, Indian chiefs, school teachers, skilled union people, people who just have a hunger for what could be called a general culture. That audience is not being spoken to as well as they should. I enjoy working in the media because I'm reaching that audience which is refusing those specialized series.

Let's be clear about the cost and the risks. The pathos about my kind of position is that you know less and less about more and more. Your legitimacy, your authority as an intellectual diminishes to the degree that you intervene stupidly on issues and subjects about which you really have no distinct competence. This role of the general intellectual requires a kind of discipline and a certain amount of renunciation. There are some subjects that you shouldn't touch because you don't know what the hell you're talking about. I don't talk about science for example because I just feel a kind of incredible stupid. I try and choose a number of areas where 15 years of professionalized learning actually helps me to see more clearly. There are tremendous advantages in refusing professional specializations and trying to be a general intellectual. There are tremendous opportunities as well as dangers.

There is also another problem with that because, as we know, the media is high profile. Everybody watches or listens to it, or reads it, whereas nobody bothers to look at all the academic journals unless they're professionally involved in it. In the media, when one, I think, almost feels obliged to make connections, connections between culture and politics and so on, it seems to me that what you do as an outsider, bystander or observer, is to make a stab at the connection, whether it's on TV or the occasional column.

You have to acknowledge the fact that books that are read by hundreds of people often make a more fundamental change to how we see the world than any number of television programs seen by millions. John Rawls' *Theory of Justice* is a book for specialists...
that has transformed the language of politics in the last 15 or 20 years. If you are a “media intellectual” you must respect people that have no media savvy at all. People like John Rawls, who are, as they say, “terrible television.” There’s a lot of vital intellectual argument in the world which doesn’t play on the small screen because it’s “terrible television.” So the media gives you a very skewed picture of the intellectual agenda at any one moment. At any one moment there will be Umberto Eco everywhere because Umberto is good on television. There will be George Steiner wall to wall. What there won’t be is the immense impact of, say, Quine’s linguistic philosophy, or Rawls’ theories of justice, or some absolutely explosive new theory on particle physics or something which is “terrible television.”

In the piece in the Observer published during the European elections you tantalizingly called yourself a postmodernist Green and a Canadian, and there was this classy picture of the virgin snow.

A self-portrait greeted with guffaws at the breakfast tables of the nation.

Sure, but how does travelling between two or three countries work? I was intrigued with the whole postmodern thing, but I was much more interested in the Canadian Green.

The more time I spend in England, the less I actually understand the culture. I don’t understand the place anymore. Whenever I’m given a public opportunity I find myself almost unconsciously declaring that I am a Canadian. I think there must be some connection between being Canadian and being increasingly Green. I think that political legions like greenery spring out of emotional and personal experience in almost every case, and mine springs from memories of the Canadian landscape, a sense of the unspoiled and the untarnished, and therefore the pure and the unfeigned. These feelings are constitutive of that sense of indignation that pollution of the environment arouses. In the piece that you referred to I mentioned that my image of purity is white snow, clear white snow, snow so clean that you scoop it off with your mitt and suck it through your teeth. I’m sure Scandinavians would have analogous ones but there are very few places in England where that image of purity would resonate. For an Englishman the images of purity are clouds or willow trees over a flowing brook. They are very powerful reservoirs of English indignation at the despoliation of their own natural environment. Each culture has its own image of purity against which they test the despoliation that is occurring, and mine are Canadian, and I think that’s why Canadian Green is not a fortuitous culmination.

As for the postmodern question?

As for the postmodern question, I’m dubious about the word “postmodernity” because I can’t distinguish between whether we’re talking about another stylistic variation of the modern adventure: which is to say that the Promethean trip we’ve been on for the past 400 years seems far from exhausted to me. There is a certain contingent style of exhaustion and of irony: what new can we possibly say? Hence, lets make clever variations on everything that’s been said before. This is very much in the postmodern style. Yet I can see that pose of exhaustion in a host of earlier moments. I can see it in Vienna in the late 19th century; exhaustion is very much in the work of Klimt and Schiele. I can see it in Weimar in the twenties. What might be new about our exhaustion is our irony towards Bauhaus modernism, towards the hard edge futurist kind of modernism. Yet after every episode of hard-edged utopian modernisms of a Corbusian or Gropian kind there is an ironic recoil. These seem to me styles, oscillations in an essentially modernist project and that’s why I don’t take postmodernity seriously. We’re still on the “Twentieth century Express” in my view, and we will be into the 21st. I think I’m unsympathetic to these poses of exhaustion because I am a Voltairean. A rationalist. I like science. I like progress. I like growth, damn it, I like a world in which people have more consumer goods, I’ve got no problem with it. I’ve got great problems with environmental despoliation, but that’s a very traditional set of modern problems. It doesn’t cause me to despair about modernity or think it’s all been a dreadful mistake.

Michael Ignatieff, broadcaster, writer, is the author of A Just Measure of Pain, The Needs of Strangers and The Russian Album.
Childhood Fantasies
In this context, Jay rightly highlights the contributions of the ecological and feminist movements. And he mentions, in the space of one page, a number of recent political events all adduced as evidence for the relevance and success of this new pluralistic politics with its new appreciation of the values of political democracy: the anti-apartheid movement; Solidarity in Poland; the overthrow of Marcos; the yearning for democratization in places like China; and the improved human rights record of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev. However, one wonders about the importance or interpretive power of a conception of democratic politics that is so easily applied to so many complex events. If intellectual history rests on combining Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau and Adorno, then it threatens to become banal. This new emphasis on democracy and pluralism is said by Jay to be apparent in social theory, and not just in the world of politics. Jay paints a picture of the happy family of theories, where Habermasians, Budapest School Lukacsians, Trotskyists, New Left Review (ex and still) Leninists converge with Frankfurt School devotees and Habermasians, all affirming the value of democratic politics.

The melancholic paralysis that has accompanied the fins of modernity's siècles had raised the hopes of many thinkers that the century around the corner (i.e., our century) would usher in a time in which their hopes could be realized.
Many of Jay's speculations occur in the context of his first essay, "Fin-de-Siècle Socialism." Here Jay draws a number of parallels between the 19th century and the waning years of our own century, in order to find suggestions for the kinds of social thought that might appear in the 21st century. He holds that the melancholic paralysis that has accompanied the fin of modernity's siècle had raised the hopes of many thinkers that the century around the corner (i.e., our century) would usher in a time in which their hopes could be realized. However, our no-longer-Western and no-longer-bourgeois fin-de-siècle movements differ from previous ones.

First, Jay distinguishes late 19th century socialist theory from late 20th century bourgeois or other fin-de-siècle movements. He/she misleadingly calls the latter "fin-de-siècle socialism" (mistakenly because both can claim the title fin-de-siècle). Jay maintains that the latent fin-de-siècle socialists are true to their own aspirations of modernity and modernization. He/she properly mentions in this regard the work of Habermas whose attempt has been to extend and complete the emancipatory aspirations of modernity. He/she states that the two fin-de-siècle movements are distinguished above all by the fact that our current one (if it has not already ended) is a utopia, one that is utopian but in the yearning for totality which inspires utopian thinking.

Accordingly, Jay says, we have to accept some "inevitable imperfections of whatever social order humans might create." While such a cavalier attitude might disturb many readers, Jay insists that such lowered expectations do not necessarily lead to political paralysis. On the contrary, for Jay, a new kind of redeemer and revolutionary socialism may accomplish more as a rainbow coalition, "a counter-hegemonic bloc of disparate protest groups." Released from the constraints of having to measure all achievements against the daunting model of a "nominally totalized, fully redeemed social order," our new fin-de-siècle socialist theory can [Jay claims] build on the better parts of the socialist tradition (such as enlightenment, emancipation), preparing "for the challenge of a new century — or to be more precise, of a new millennium, in which the millennial hopes of the last are finally laid to rest."

Fortunately, most readers should be able to recognize that in the absence of any concrete discussion of specific "achievements," or any criteria for discussing the "bitter parts" of something as broad as the socialist tradition, Jay's effort in this book amounts to little more than an uncritical capitulation to postmodernism. In the course of drawing out some of the implications of the parallels he finds between the two fin-de-siècle socialisms, Jay mentions a number of thinkers who represent significant landmarks in the move from the grandiose ambitions of a messianic redemptive avant-garde to the contemporary suspicion of holism and totality. These thinkers, or the debates surrounding their work, then become the subjects of the book's individual essays. Such a practice is meant to give the book a certain coherence. However, because most of the essays were not specifically written for this collection, there is a sense in which they are forced to provide answers and responses to questions posed by the first, introductory essay, written after the others. The message is that the later essays seem murky and directionless in comparison with the first essay, which ironically points to them for support.

The second essay on the dispute between Habermas and Hans-Georg Gadamer, while not the best to have been written on the subject, is at least one that tries to put the debate in the context of philosophical speculations on language, communication, and understanding. From the 20th century theologians, for whom revelation is intimately connected to speech, through Anglo-American ordinary language philosophers, to semioticians and post-structuralists, semanticists and action theorists, Chomskians and intentionalists, language has been seen as the central mediating entity, insight into which would also give insight into something special about humans. For Gadamer, language is central because all human reality is in the last analysis shaped by its linguistic nature. This represents a twist on the older Geisteswissenschaft tradition for which Spirit or collective mind provided the context for knowledge. Habermas is interested in Gadamer's work as it challenges both transcendentalism and subjectivism, as well as the notion of language as a technological instrument of manipulation. But for Habermas, (self) reflection is more binding; it can appraise distorted communication because it is tied to a pragmatic universe of discourse — it is, in a word, evaluative. Jay doesn't give enough of a sense of the profound disparity between a critical theory (Habermas) that emphasizes critical reflection based on validity claims that allow us to transcend and criticize tradition, and a hermeneutic rehabilitation of tradition and prejudices (Gadamer) that necessarily subordinates anything like Habermas' communicative theory of social action to a dependency on the authority of a pre-understanding and a non-evaluative tradition. Nor does Jay highlight what Habermas has learned from his exchange with Gadamer. Habermas learned that the possibility of a neutral social science is an illusion, a notion to which he has added the stronger claim that there can be no act of understanding or description of meaning without critical judgment.

Jay fares a little better in the third and fourth essays and the postscript, which are thematically linked. Here he teases out the implications of Adorno's late remarks on how this century has shattered the faith in the redemptive powers of high culture. Several practitioners of cultural criticism who are highly suspicious of hierarchy in general, and in particular that hierarchy implied by the high culture/mass culture split, come under Jay's scrutiny. He concludes with a subtle version of the argument that hierarchy, rather than being something to be blindly and violently opposed, is a "conservative idea with radical implications." Pleading neither for a timeless canon of any kind in the humanities and arts, nor a flattening out of esoteric and aesthetic art one into the other, Jay argues that even if there are "genealogical reasons to beseech the specific implications of the types of hierarchy that now exist, and that I think that there are, there are also lots of reasons to be thankful that we have not entirely lost our capacity to make distinctions of quality and rank."

Aspects of high art, an art that Jay maintains is nonetheless renewed from below, exercise a kind of criticism over and against the world of mundane objects. The blurring of all hierarchies would destroy the capacity for art to serve as the guardian of the distinction which relies on

**Language has been seen as the central mediating entity, insight into which would also give insight into something special about humans.**

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the alienation of high art from society in general to sanction whatever emancipatory role art can play today. Adorno expressed this best when he wrote that truth is the antithesis of every and any society.

The next seven essays — on Vico and Western Marxism, the Horkheimer/Kraeauer debate, two on Gaudron (the late "outlaw" Marxist), two on Habermas, and one on Blumenberg — continue the theme of the challenges to orthodox Marxism.

Once again a discussion of art is central to the essay. Art and its relation to culture has consistently represented a problem for Marxist criticism of culture which confines art to the superstructure. Jay's essay on Vico draws attention to Vico's ambiguous legacy to Marxism, a legacy which was fertile in "liberating that tradition from the scientific delusions of the Second International" but which "now appears to be entirely spent." Vico was the key to the distinction between the "mede" and the "discovered," where the former refers to human history and the latter to a nature somehow outside of human influence and hence knowledge. Jay notes Vico's problematic reduction of praxis to making, which bequeathed a dubious legacy to Western Marxism, and which "oversimplifies the complex ways in which men are active in the world." Correct as Jay is on this score, he offers little insight, and one has the impression that this essay is included here only because it wasn't good enough to be included in the four very strong essays on Western Marxism. And in all his discussions, Jay ignores pragmatism and the tradition of social democracy and critique that often intersected with pragmatism. While he also discussed briefly with the Naturvissen-
schaffen/Gottesscience/ exercising split in the first essay, noting that it inspired Marxism to conceive of the process of totalization as emancipation from human disembodied roles, he is not at all concerned with the concept of totality by excluding the natural from it). Jay again fails to mention pragmatism. Pragmatism has the merit of working with a notion of holism without any metaphysical splits between categories like the social and the natural, and so avoids reducing mental or any other activity like language to either "producer" or "product" of the world or "mirror" of reality.

The next essay deals with a topic that hasn't seen much press — the Horkheimer/Kraeauer debate, and it is to Jay's credit that he resurrects it as an important example of the conflict between modernism and the avant-garde with respect to attitudes towards mass culture. Relying on the work of Peter Burger, Jay writes that modernism originated as a reaction to "art-for-art's sake" movements, calling into question "the traditional image of the coherent, closed organic work of art by problematizing its formal and linguistic assumptions." While it called these assumptions into question, modernism uncritically accepted the model of aesthetic autonomy: like L'art pour l'art, it was largely complicit with an institution of art contrasting with "other social and cultural practices by its utter indifference to ethical, institutional, utilitarian, or political concerns:"

- The avant-garde, in contrast, attacked the very institution of art itself, challenging its allegorical differentiation from the larger life world from which it arose.

- Both Horkheimer and Kraeauer reacted against the category of Bildung (intellectual development or formative educational process), which had dominated all Western discussions of culture, art, and education for over one hundred years. But they reacted in different ways and by different means. Horkheimer adopted the position now associated with Adorno and held that affirmative high culture implicitly contained a protest against social conditions by maintaining a utopian moment in art. Thus Horkheimer was drawn to modernist art, and was suspicious of overtly political art, such as Brecht's which he accused of creating a false harmony. Kraeauer took the opposite track and championed the view, now called "avant-gardist," that the distinctions between art and the life world should be collapsed with the intended consequence that a reconciliation of art and life "would be a way-station to a rational future." Jay is a sure guide through what he calls the "sobering lessons" of the dispute over art and its utopian potential, and this chapter, though one of the shortest, is one of the most interesting.

- Jay's Ein-de-Süle Socialism and Other Essays testifies to the vitality and importance of the debates surrounding such topics as intellectual history, the future of critical theory, post-totality politics, the relationship between art and society, and Western Marxism and fin-de-siècle culture. At a time when many efforts at cultural and theoretical interpretation and critique amount to little more than chic, it is to Jay's credit that he has set high standards for debate even as he struggles to reach them himself.

To be continued...

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MARK DRISCOLL

Hip or Hippie? Old and New Cynicism

Critique of Cynical Reason
by Peter Sloterdijk


Part Foucauldian genealogy, part Nietzschean volume of apologetics, Sloterdijk's Critique of Cynical Reason is mainly an attempt to marry the melancholies of critical theory to the textual free-play of French post-histoire, with a revived Heideggerian ontology informing the ceremony. Sloterdijk is writing against and with Adorno and Horkheimer's Dialectic of Enlightenment, a major critical theory text that explores how the pernicious effects of Enlightenment rationality turned enlightened "progress" into barbarism and fascism.

Sloterdijk critiques cynicism as the predominant mode that is making post-modern man's (there are hardly any women present in the text) body more docile than ever. We have inherited the Enlightenment's negative strains and, as a result, are lobotomized victims of what he calls "enlightened false consciousness; that modernized, unhappy consciousness on which enlightenment has labored both successfully and in vain." Postmodern cynics are "borderline melancholics" who can barely keep themselves together long enough to get to the office or boardroom/bedroom every day.

Aspiring to more than a history of the Diogenic impulse, Sloterdijk seeks to counterpose the cultural and political malaise he finds dominating the Zeitgeist of the postmodern 1970s and 1980s with the paradigm of Diogenes the Cynic, the exemplar of an embodied strategy of cynical resistance. I find this Diogenic impulse problematic, for it spoils what is otherwise a daunting intervention into the present passive space of cultural historicizing.
According to Sloterdijk’s reading, it is unfortunate that the more kyriakal and utopian aspects of the Enlightenment have been repressed and forgotten. Still, he is hopeful that they can be reactivated. His salvage project offers an Voltaire and Heine dressed up in tight 501 Levi’s, cruising the derelicts of the postmodern world. In an attempt to revivify the Frankfurt School’s moribund configuration to a “dangerous life,” Sloterdijk produces a theoretical tracking of historical anti-theoretical tendencies. These tendencies are what one might expect: Diogenes, Rubelais, Dada and Surrealism, and the 1960s student movement and counter-culture. Thus, the critique of cynical reason hopes to cheer us up, whereby it is understood from the beginning that “it is no more a matter of work but of relaxation.”

According to Sloterdijk, Adorno was not a relaxed, laid-back kind of guy. Sloterdijk relates the famous scene at Frankfurt University in 1969 when members of a student action group rushed onto the podium during Adorno’s lecture, the women baring their breasts, and “attacked” Adorno with flowers and erotic currents. Sloterdijk seems gleeful in telling us it was not “naked force that reduced the philosopher to utterance, but the force of the naked,” only a radical nakedness and bringing things out in the open can free us from the compulsion for mistruthful impositions.”

Adorno was terribly unnerved and humiliated and left the lecture hall to the chorus “as an institution, Adorno is dead.” We are told that Adorno died four short months after this incident. Instead we are warned that leisurists of “naked truth” and “disparate seriousness” will be pursued throughout the book.

In his introduction to the Critique of Cynical Reason, Andreas Huyssen warns us that the reproach leveled against Sloterdijk is that “he constructs a merely binary opposition between cynicism and kyriakism which simply misses the mark.” Sloterdijk, Huyssen continues, postulates “the split within the cynical phenomenon itself, which puts the cynical reason of domination and self-dominion against the kyriakal revolve of self-assertion and self-realization.” Is Sloterdijk defining these terms in opposition? Clearly he is no repressing into a space solidified during the Enlightenment where one system of thought always has to designate its Other as weak, inferior, and dark. Post-structural protocols have demonstrated how antipodal systemic structures always privileges one term over another. Sloterdijk does show his awareness of binarism. However, there are many instances in which he falls back on a binary logic to make his argument: the sexually liberated sixties New Left salvages Adorno’s repressive Voltairean masculinity; Plato’s idealism versus Diogenes’ corporeality, etc.

In a book as good as this one, such reductions are surprising. I admit to being seduced in my initial reading of the text by the free-play of the signifiers and the kyriakal textual economy. But it was during my second reading that certain subtextual themes such as “return to reason” and “reclaiming a tradition of rationality” made me suspect that while employing French methodologies of esprit, Sloterdijk is basically a Hermetic rationalist, who simply appropriates French style to illuminate and ground a space of rational truth. Hermetism en français?

For Sloterdijk it is with Diogenes the something like a celebration of male sexual privilege.

What does Sloterdijk propose as answers to postmodern cynicism? For me his strategy of a return to a kyriakal body, although provocative, poses some problems. Adorno spoke of a Western body that is subjected to markings and tattooed by instrumental reason and the administered world of the culture industry. How could Diogenes counter the disciplinary technologies and symbolic terror of Western scripting apparatuses? How, indeed, would Sloterdijk respond to a Foucauldian claim that “the resistance of the self-

For one who concerns himself with contemporary politics and culture, Sloterdijk seems to show no concern with real social change.

Cynical that the resistance to theory in Western philosophy begins. Sloterdijk names Diogenes as the original hippie freak: he’s the one who masturbated, urinated, and defecated in public. Sloterdijk even claims that Diogenes, living outside, was unshaven and slovenly of speech and cloth, and that he was a “forerunner of the modern proponents of raw foods and a natural diet.”

Against Sloterdijk’s eregesis of this hippie, we are presented with a very different picture of Diogenes in Diogenes’ Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers. Here, Diogenes is violently misogynistic and materialistic. After seeing a woman hanging dead from an olive tree, he said, “would that every tree bore similar fruit.” Upon seeing a peasant woman kneeling before an altar, praying in “an ungraceful attitude,” he felt it his kyriakal duty to warn her that she was just begging to be done from behind by any passing god. Originally a native of Sinope, Diogenes was run out of that city, accused of abounding with funds and of countering in his role as cary treasurer: adulterating the coinage,” as it were. This picture of the Kyria, Sloterdijk’s man, is far from the anti-social, counter-cultural drop-out that Sloterdijk evokes in his book.

A kyriakal philosophy of the body might be located more easily in paradigms of women dancing around nuclear missiles at Greenham Common, or with the sacrifice made by the Central American activist and Vietnam vet Brian Wilson, who blocked a train bearing arms for the Contras with his body. Rather than looking for places of real resistance to domination, we get, in Sloterdijk’s version of Diogenes,
Against Polarization: Fluid Oppositions

The Oppositional Imagination: Feminism, Critique and Political Theory by Joan Cocks

Radical feminism's romanticization of women as essentially innocent or good may be more benign than the dominant culture's degradation of women, and it may be more well-meaning than that culture's idealization of women as a backhanded way that suggests they are really the weaker and less dramatic sex. Still, it is absolutely infantilizing and emasculating.

Joan Cocks, The Oppositional Imagination

From the feminist perspective, Joan Cocks' The Oppositional Imagination: Feminism, Critique and Political Theory is an unusual work because instead of critiquing dominant patriarchal structures, Cocks focuses on the fault lines in the populist "common sense-isms" of radical feminist politics which, she argues, are apparent in women's newspapers, etiquette at women's gatherings, popular music, fashion, approved pairings, and some works of the feminist canon. The Oppositional Imagination is not an anti-feminist work, but rather an attempt to reveal and rectify a shift towards increasing polarization of the sexes, a reappraisal of the "Masculine/Feminine regimes" in a new but no less restrictive form. Feminism resists dominant culture by identifying radical feminism as a network of political communities with an identifiable ideology containing certain fundamental flaws. Cocks places herself in a counter-resistance to the alternative hegemony. The salient irony evident to any reader is that Cocks risks rejection from the very community to which she claims citizenship.

Jean Yoon

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Her book is important precisely because she addresses issues troubling the very centre of the feminist movement and does so successfully.

Cocks' principle argument is really quite simple. Feminism began on the premise that sexual difference is culturally created. Difference, she argues, rests on the harsh, systematic fashioning of brute bodies into masculine and feminine selves. Or to cite de Beauvoir, women are not born, they are created — and so, by extension, are men. If the regime of Masculine/Feminine is a cultural imposition upon the body to reveal an anatomical truth, then both women and men are capable of escaping it. Contemporary radical politics, however, promotes an ideology based on the implicit belief that men are biologically and environmentally violent, oppressive, technocratic, that they have been so through time, and may always be so. According to this ideology, women are pacific, truth-producing and connected with wild natural forces; they are victims of an organized male conspiracy. This conspiracy theory is, however, "unable to account for any persuasiveness not only for dominant power's advances and slippages in the sexual domain, but for feminism's own appearance and development as an oppositional tendency."

Cocks is not the first feminist critic to point out the fallacy of the "patriarchal conspiracy." According to literary theorist Toril Moi, the "theory of sexual oppression as a conscious, monolithic plot against women leads to a seductively optimistic view of the possible weaknesses for full liberation." The enemy is identified, targeted, externalized. It is the other that can be severed completely from the "good" and destroyed. This reverse essentialism, which gives rise to innumerable practical and ideological paradoxes, stems from an inadequate understanding of how power operates in the cultural domain.

Drawing from Gramsci and Foucault, Cocks contends that cultural power is perpetuated or transformed on the "organic" or "molecular" level, rather than from a center or a top-down authority. Only such a model allows for resistance movements such as feminism to appear or even continue. But with few exceptions, Cocks argues, radical feminism falls into the trap of assuming that the "patriarchy" is centralized and deliberrate. It "uncover[s] men as the ghost writers and secret agents of social life." Women were "blind" while men had "clear vision," women the victims and men the manipulators. By ascribing all the evils or weaknesses of women solely to male authorship, radical feminism rewrites herstory as a demeaning puppet show.

Cocks scours the notion that "any subordinate is incapable of thinking and doing ugly things of its own accord." This idea accompanies the misguided belief "that every ugly thing a subordinate actually thinks and does can be traced back to the evil genius of its dominator." The crimes of white supremacist women against blacks then, cannot simply be ascribed to the authorship of white men, or

in Adrienne Rich's terms, "patriarchal fragmentation." This approach is not only simplistic and "monotonous," it also inadvertently flatters men with virtual omnipotence and hamsters women "in a way that rivals all the contemptuous things men have said against them."

 Needless to say, in recent years feminism has shifted dramatically from a naive representation of racism as a phenomenon of male authorship, but the underlying mandate that sisterhood should override racism remains.

If cultural power is evident in the "common-isms" of daily life, then its prime target is sexuality — how pleasure is achieved and with whom. The "truth of the body" is a cultural-political regime. Drawing from Foucault, Cocks argues that the body is an arena where domina-
tive power has been exercised through a system of punishments and rewards that exaggerate or even create the apparent differences between male and female. She goes half a step beyond Foucault in arguing that "the modern regime of truth of Masculine/feminine is not pre-eminently a drama of lineal connection, inheritance rights, and familial authority and obligation; but of sexual sexuality."

The radical feminist version of the body's meaning fails, however, to disarm the dominant culture's portrayal of the "phallic personality." Men, by virtue of having a penis, are assumed to be aggressive and violent. Feminism, which holds as one of its primary tenets the assumption that anarchy does not represent ontological truth, violates its own founding principles in its analysis and interpretation of the male sexual experience. The male genital organ is assumed to be synonymous with the phallus, a cultural idea of male-centred power; they are not, in fact, the same thing. Nor can it be assumed that all male passion and exclusively male passion is fuelled by a phallic "will to power." Evidence of the failure of the assertion that the "will to power" in the sexual realm is directly linked to male genitals lies in the very existence of lesbian sadomasochism. Heterosexual passion is not necessarily violent and phallic; nor is it necessarily non-violent and reciprocal.

The radical portrayal of the lesbian erotic is one of reciprocity, mirroring, non-aggressive and yet non-passive; lesbianism is the "ideal" sexuality. Cocks refutes this with the counter-assertion that passion is "endemically unsexual," and that the radical feminist stance must be understood as an alternative cultural hegemony. She preaches to pass judgement, or make any gesture that seems to favour one sexual preference at the expense of another, but underlying her text is an implicit political resistance to any cultural political determination. Even lesbian S/M, an issue that is dividing the feminist community into unforgiving factions, is treated as an issue of political resistance and a further example of the instability and private nature of desire and pleasure between consenting adults.

Cocks indirectly rejects separatism as a viable political option. Men who successfully escape the pull of the dominant culture can become "traitors" to their own sex. Similarly, women and men who maintain a native belief in the Masculine/feminine regime are "loyalists." The "native" loyalist is the "key" to the continued perpetuation of the old order, by leading a life without political resistance. The "real woman" who pickers birth control clinics is a living paradox. The "rebel" lives a life of revolt, the "critic" interprets, and the "maverick" (a rare species) lives entirely outside all orthodox sex/gender classifications. These stances to the Masculine/feminine regime, even in this truncated re-telling, clearly demarcate a field of political resistance that is not determined only by gender. The "question of political alliances," she concludes, is "very complex."

Although women are far more likely than men to become critics and rebels of Masculine/feminine, they are not more likely to become critics and rebels than to become loyalists. And of course they are not the only possible critics and rebels around. Thus it is that women who are actively as odd with the dictates of Masculine/feminine may be closer in their sensibilities to the few men who are traitors than to the many women who are loyalists. Any sexual politics of resistance ultimately will be brought into play with that. What woman has not dealt with a mother fretting about marriage, or a female co-worker who turns chalk white at the mention of "lesbian" or "abortion" and at the same time has a far more liberally-minded male friend? Who can argue that Mary Wollstonecraft did not have an intellectual partner, a "traitor" in Cock's terms, in William Godwin? While most feminists would be able to supply examples of "traitors" in their own social sphere, Cock's argument is an exhaustive thorough critical rebuttal of a growing populist movement towards separatism which maintains the hegemonic classifications and becomes a "living negative" of the regime.

The form of The Oppositional Imagination was a writer living in Edmonton.

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Great Expectations

by Susan Musgrave

Scarbrough, Canada 1963

At first glance, the title of Susan Musgrave's Great Expectations, accompanied with the image of a gravestone on its cover (what fun!), would seem to announce the end of the road. On closer inspection, you discover that this is not the case at all. You might even say the reverse. The eye of the reader suggests the debate over the nature of art, the nature of the artist, the nature of art and non-art, and non-art and art, in an endless loop, like a cruel and beautiful detective novel. The author still possesses her own voice, but she is also a part of the world outside of art. Susan Musgrave, who is the author of letterpress, is, then, a part of the world outside of her own art.

As such, her vision is not that of the artist or that of the artist as a subject, but that of the artist as a persona. Her poems and her stories deal with the world outside of art, as well as the world inside of art. Susan Musgrave is, then, an artist in her own right, as she is also a part of the world outside of her art.

Hence, the title of this collection is not a reference to the Dickens novel, but rather to the world of art, in which the artist is a part of the world of art itself, as well as a part of the world outside of art.

NATHALIE COOKE

Inventing Herself

Great Musgrave
by Susan Musgrave


At first glance, Great Musgrave is a collection of Susan Musgrave's recent essays, with their trademark blend of the confessional and the sensational, full of Musgrave's playful exaggerations and sense of fun. On closer examination, however, it becomes apparent that these essays are at the eye of the storm of current literary debate on such topics as the status of the self, the significance of the increasingly problematic boundaries between fiction and nonfiction, poetry and prose, high and low art. But Musgrave cuts such a colourful figure in her writing that she distracts her readers, tempting them to look for the author in and behind the work, and not at the work itself. That, however, is where Musgrave is to be found; she is a woman of letters, the creator and the product of her own creation.

As such, she and her method are reminiscent of another colourful figure, Heminway. The name conjures images not only of the things he wrote, but also — and perhaps more so — of the things he did, the places he visited, the people he knew, the man he was and the man he made himself out to be.

Hemingway's contribution to the tradition lies in the stylistic and technical innovations of his work — the famous iceberg principle — and in the Hemingway persona he described and came to represent. For both these reasons, he makes fascinating reading. So too does Susan Musgrave's Great Musgrave, and for similar reasons, since the book's title refers to its subject as well as to its author. Indeed, Susan Musgrave's writing has become more and more intimately connected with her person, her personality and her various personas.

The subject of the book is threefold for Musgrave constructs at least three selves:

1. Musgrave's persona

Critics dubbed this author of ten books of poetry, two novels and two children's books, the "tormented sea witch with 'medusa-like hair' who explores sexuality at the primal level of bone hurt" (Musgrave's own summary). "Tormented," because Musgrave began writing poetry while secluded in a psychiatric institution after a failed suicide attempt. Her poems were discovered and published by Robin Skelton, professor and then editor of The Malahat Review. "Sea witch," both because of the title of her first collection of poetry (Sings of the Sea Witch, 1970) and because of the mystical nature of those poems whose symbolic language grows out of her life on the west coast where she was raised, and where she has now returned to live.

2. Musgrave the personality

One newspaper headline read "witch gives way to woman," suggesting that Musgrave had come down to earth, so to speak. (The original title of the book was Musgrave Landing, a play on the name of a small boat mooring on Salt Spring Island, just as Great Musgrave is a play on the name of a village in Cumbria, England that borders on another called Lesser Musgrave.) But Musgrave's life is no let-down for her readers. She has been married three times once to lawyer Jeffrey Green; once to Paul Nelson, the alleged drug smuggler Green successfully defended; and now to Stephen Reid, a bank robber turned author. Her wedding to Reid received considerable publicity, being aired on television, as well as being described by, among others, Musgrave herself.

3. The personable Musgrave

Musgrave now lives with Reid and her two daughters in Sydney, B.C. where she has become a journalist, writing columns for the Toronto Star Ottawa Citizen, Vancouver Sun and Victoria's Cut to Magazine. Her columns contain thoughts on writing and motherhood, usually introduced with an anecdote gleaned from a writer's biography. Great Musgrave is a collection of her recent newspaper columns, together with "Wages of Love," an article she first published in Vancouver Magazine, and an explanation of why she posed nude for Saturday Night (something that should not be spoiled by paraphrase).

Musgrave's anecdotal style and her personal, almost casual, tone are deceiving, however, for these essays are highly self-conscious. Not only does Musgrave write about her three different selves in these articles but (and here is the really tricky part) she does so on at least four different levels.

1. Most obviously, she describes her experiences directly, explaining first hand what it is to be a writer and a mother. She confesses to the time spent sharpening pencils and sorting paper clips. She describes the dullness of her writer's life, the minor interruptions of loud radios and bored children.

2. Interpersed throughout such direct confessions are indirect descriptions of her writing. She describes an interview in which she provided a summary of her 1980 novel, The Charcoal Burners: "It was about a commune of cannibals living off a commune of vegetarians in the north of British Columbia," or so she says she said.

3. More often and more indirectly still, Musgrave describes the ways in which others describe her or her work. She repeats introductions ('Whenever we hear the name Susan Musgrave in Toronto we automatically think of seaweed'), responses to her novel ("a chilling tale"), as well as critical classification of the poet ("the chance daughter of Allen Ginsberg and Sylvia Plath") and her oeuvre ("dangerous in the extreme").

4. She provides her own responses to such descriptions.

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Of course, one advantage of such an elaborate system of narrative frames is that it allows Musgrave to have the last word. And this is part of the fun. For example, to the question, "It's pointless to criticize Musgrave for being Musgrave," she replies, "Rhetorical black may break my bones but no Envious Prig, no ennui, no blasted jelly bromide of a slimy belly-wriggling slovening, drizzling, dithering, palmed, pointless book reviewer would be going to hurt me."

But the complex layering of narrative forms also situates Musgrave's work at the center of current explorations (most of which are considerably more tedious) of the first-person singular as literary device. And then this, I suppose, is where the innovation of Musgrave's fictional form:

A self-declared "performer" in person, and an "ironist" on paper, Musgrave is quite aware of the power of the first-person pronoun. Indeed, Ken Adachi noted as early as 1987, Musgrave was already witting with problems of personal expression and identity in her poetry. "A few of the poems," he wrote, "conjure up a sense of a poet looking for a new approach to the problem of personal identity and not having much success in finding it." However, what Adachi did not notice in *Galliard at the Mausoleum* (1985), Musgrave's most recent collection of poetry, was at the back of the book. There, in a section entitled "Notes on Poems," Musgrave was beginning to discover the potential of nonfiction as a vehicle for exploring the very issues that (as Adachi quite rightly pointed out) had defeated her in the earlier poems and novels.

"Notes on Poems" marks a significant shift in the emphasis, as well as the genre, of Musgrave's writing: with them, she moves from text to context. Since "Notes" Musgrave has concentrated not so much on the subject (and in all Musgrave's work, to the criticism) but rather on the way it can be written and read, presented and perceived. I have written notes on many of these poems," she writes at the beginning of this section, "in the way that I might introduce them at a poetry reading: this gives them a context, I feel, without attempting to explain them away."

Illustration: Kimberly Hart

Little tongue-in-cheek), but rather with her daring escape. And in this book, she makes her break in "The Wages of Love," the longest and most entertaining piece in the collection.

The Great Musgrave's Disappearing Act

Originally published in the fashion supplement of *Vancouver Magazine* (March 1986), this article appears to be a light and entertaining record of Musgrave's romantic encounters with a lost luggage article. It is divided into seven sections, each one containing a thumbnail sketch of a particular man, his environment and the quest for the failure of the relationship. The last section is an exception since it centers on Musgrave's ongoing relationship with her present husband, Stephen Reid. The names seem to be unchanged: Stephen Reid is Stephen Reid, Susan Musgrave is Susan Musgrave. And, despite the necessity brevity of the descriptions, the piece appears to give us a chance to learn more about Musgrave and her love life, two things that were previously attracted much media attention.

The problem is that the character within the story is very unlike the Musgrave who narrates it. In fact, she is part of the host. Musgrave removes herself from the story and puts, in her place, a native innocent who seems ill-equipped to succeed in the sophisticated world in which she travels. Her first relationship, for instance, is with a lost luggage agent. She chooses him by default; when she gets off the plane she is too nervous to leave the lost luggage counter. Still later, when clothed designer Sebastian tells her that she "goes both ways," she thinks he means that he is a "unisex designer." To be sure, her nature is part of the fun, but we would be very wrong to take it as an indication of Musgrave's own perspective: the character is the vehicle for Musgrave's irony, not Musgrave herself.

We can easily fall into the trap of equating the two though, because Musgrave both erases her presence from the story and disguises her controlling hand. The characters within the article all seem to be written and directed by the men within them. It is she who decides on location and setting -- a deserted Indian village, a 15th century castle. They describe the characters too. When Sebastian calls himself a "spic-and-span sort of person," for instance, Musgrave cleans his castle. And when Hank calls her an incompetent, she becomes the one. Even worse than losing control over the relationship however, is Musgrave's inability to extricate herself from it. When her friends tell her that there is something "unsound about a relationship with a man who suggested [she] have every part of her body surgically removed and replaced with a new one," Musgrave does no more than record the comment.

Critic dubbed this author of ten books of poetry, two novels and two children's books, the "tormented sea witch with 'Medusa-like hair' who explores sexuality at the primal level of bone hurt"
The final irony, however, is that "getting" Musgrave's point is a dubious privilege. Once we realize that her voice is posed, and that she toys with the men, we might also realize that she is toying with us as well. In particular, we cannot ignore that these anecdotes are fictionalized enactments of the dreams upon which fashion magazines base their sales—dreams of glamour, wealth and romance. The article's byline is particularly telling: "Some were dangerous. None were ordinary. The men who loved Susan Musgrave in their fashion led to the one beyond anyone's reach but hers." As we read the article, though, we find that Musgrave pokes fun at these hollow aspirations. She tells us that a bank robber—in jail—is her dream man. Mythic characters—Ulysses, Adam, the all-American boy, and Earl-to-be—all fall short of the mark. And the bank robber is surely symbolic of someone who aspired to a life of wealth and excitement but now, as a prisoner in the story, and as a writer in real life, he has inevitably lowered his standard of living and his financial expectations.

This article is a series of put-ons, in other words. First, Musgrave suggests that she will reveal her past life and loves; instead, she distorts them. Next, she describes herself as a victim of youth and idealism, dominated by the men in her life; but really she reduces them in print. Finally, she promises to write of adventure, glamour and romance, only to reject the values that make these things attractive. What this article reveals to us are our own expectations as readers and as dreamers. Certainly, we do not get a clear and reliable portrait of Musgrave emerging from her work. She is hidden, after all, disguised by the past she created for herself and clothed in the garb of the fashion magazine female. Herein lies Musgrave's great escape.

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The integration of adventure ideology into bourgeois thought ultimately informs all social practice from primitive accumulation to the most ruthless and violent forms of imperialism.

In an age when any object is potentially an art object (Warhol), when any sign can be appropriated (advertising) and when institutions like the family, the church and the state, along with art and literature, are undergoing transformations so fundamental in nature that the production of images (of themselves) is rumoured to be in a kind of ultramodern crisis, it would seem that now, more than ever, we need to question the genesis of our social imaginary. This question calls for a reflection on the potential dangers of transculturalism; that is, not that which is common to all cultures, but rather that which crosses cultures, that which arrives toward the universal through difference, and therefore challenges identity, negates power, and complicates tradition. There is no culture or language that is not already populated by a trace of some other foreign element. Mikhail Bakhtin argues that culture is a kind of open dialogue in which we are always anticipating the words and expressions of others, our evaluations, their judgments, their ownership claims. Anticipation of the word of others is as much about curiosity as it is about semiosis or language games. Is not the paradox of curiosity that witnesses the birth of culture?

It seems reasonable to assume that a certain curiosity about the culture of others has always existed. Even in neolithic societies that were unfamiliar with such metaphysical notions as "humanity" (as Levi-Strauss points out, outside the tribe there are only savages), the possible exploration of the other's culture would have been a central narrative in the imaginary representation of one's own sense of place, of belonging, of being. In a continuous development from the most traditional to the ultramodern, travel still contains this element of evaluation and, as such, is always bound as much by its cognitive as by its affective accomplishments to a social imaginary and its construction of others. The question that this theoretical position suggests is: What has travel between cultures contributed to the shift in the social imaginary of societies as they develop? Moreover, what has the image of travel as adventure contributed to social change?

It would also seem safe to assume that the curiosity that accompanies travel manifests itself differently in traditional and ultramodern societies. The first women, children and men who walked across the top of the world experienced travel in the context of a purely mythical view of the world. Here, the strange is accounted for through symbolic laws and not through a polyvalent imaginary (Chah Medh). To be sure, each culture deals with its own excess through ritual sacrifice or some form of carnival, but in the ultramodern excess becomes the norm. For traditional culture, symbols provide a complete fiction for interpreting that which is not known. Everything can be accounted for through a coherent and,
at Jurgen Habermas points out, not necessarily irrational, order. Here, curiosity is communal as in the shamanism or magic that obscures the relation between signs and what they refer to. The question that the social sciences and humanities have been posing, at least since the Enlightenment, is how to account for the incredible set of processes that have accompanied the mutations of insensitiveness, of curiosity, and the "spirit" of adventure that informs the shift in the cultural practices of modern life.

Nerlich challenges conventional views from both the left and the right concerning the genesis and development of cultural modernity. He pushes back the Eastern Bloc's official interpretation, which situates the origins of capitalist society in the industrial revolution of the 19th century. He goes much further back than Weber, Sombart, and other western scholars who would place the origins of capitalism in either the French Revolution or in the birth of Protestantism in the 17th century. Nerlich demonstrates that the practice of adventure is a much studied but widely misunderstood motor force driving the shift from traditional symbolic culture to modern sign-based culture. His project is ambitious. He seeks to situate the origins of modernity as much by reducing it to social structure as by following through a meticulous critique of the evolution of what he calls, variously, "adventure desire," "adventure thought," "adventure mentality," and "adventure practice."

As Nerlich argues, from its very beginning, adventure ideology includes qualities, values, and activities that "transgress boundaries between social groups and classes." At the same time, what we might call "adventure culture," or the sum of all the different nuances he attributes to the term, is seen as a central legitimizing force in the process of modernity. For Nerlich, this legitimizing force affirms the acceptance of the unknown as a positive value, allows for the incorporation of economic and social change, as well as the creation of order from disorder, and, ultimately, facilitates the reduction of risk and the minimization of chance for the purpose of gain. The integration of adventure ideology into bourgeois thought ultimately informs all social practice from primitive accumulation to the most ruthless and violent forms of imperialism. The curiosity of adventure carries with it a recognition of the other (language, race, ethos, sex). But in the same moment — and this is perhaps Nerlich's most impressive insight — in modernity one appropriates the other, whether by peaceful means or not, for one's own interest; the other is either destroyed or transformed into a business partner.

Nerlich locates the literary imaginary of adventure in 12th century France with the birth of the chivalry in the verse romances of Chrétien de Troyes and in the legend of King Arthur and his Round Table. Here the meaning of adventure is strictly confined to the medieval context. In old French it signifies fate, chance, and above all, the surprising event "that the knight must seek out and endure ... Indeed it is only in experiencing adventure that the (knighthly) human being realizes himself in his true essence." In a phrase, Nerlich's book is about how this older sense of adventure as fate is transformed into the modern notion of adventure as adventure.

Nerlich traces this transition across literary, philosophical and historical documents over a period of more than six hundred years, tailing off with the split between the progressive ideology of adventure during the French Revolution and the aggressive English imperialist appropriation of the notion, finally showing how it appeared in Spain and Italy in a variety of representations.

Although Nerlich refuses a deeper existential critique of the medieval "man in the man," he does provide a rigorous explanation of the historical conditions that accompany shifts in the ideology of adventure across the epoch. Each shift is introduced with extensive but selective quotes from Marx and Engels which describe the social conditions of the representations under consideration.

An initial glance at Nerlich's book leaves one disturbed by what would appear to be yet another vulgar literary sociology based in socialist realism and reflection theory. But further reading reveals that a more traditional, though multi-layered, historical methodology is being employed one that establishes the link between the literary and the social in a discursive and documentary framework rather than through correspondence, homology, negation, or deconstruction.

We do not only see an interpretive regression of the "hysterical male" in Lacan's mirror stage, nor of the sign systems operating at a Round Table dinner party (an equally interesting thesis topic).

Instead, Nerlich develops a political economy of the rise of knighthood as a social class in the 9th century, of how a mode of production is reproduced within certain historical conditions, and of how, in the pre-capitalist mode, agents are already forced to seek out new territories in order to support their class base. His *societé* combines the historian's fetish for argument, proof and refutation, and the literary historian's passion for the recovery of meaning at the cost of abandoning objectivity. The result is a curious critique of texts. On the one hand, his investigation ranges from medieval philosophy and literature to selections from Rabelais, Shakespeare, and Defoe; while on the other hand, he provides a materialist critique of the ideology of adventure as it accompanies the development of capitalism. *The Ideology of Adventure* stands out as a landmark work of a master scholar, one that offers an original look at the sources of our social imaginary. ♦

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George Jackson

Vaclav Havel

Ruth First

Rosa Luxemburg

Primo Levi

Victor Serge

Lady Constance Lytton

Oscar Wilde

Antonio Gramsci

Constance Markievicz

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Writers in the Prison

Ioan Davies

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