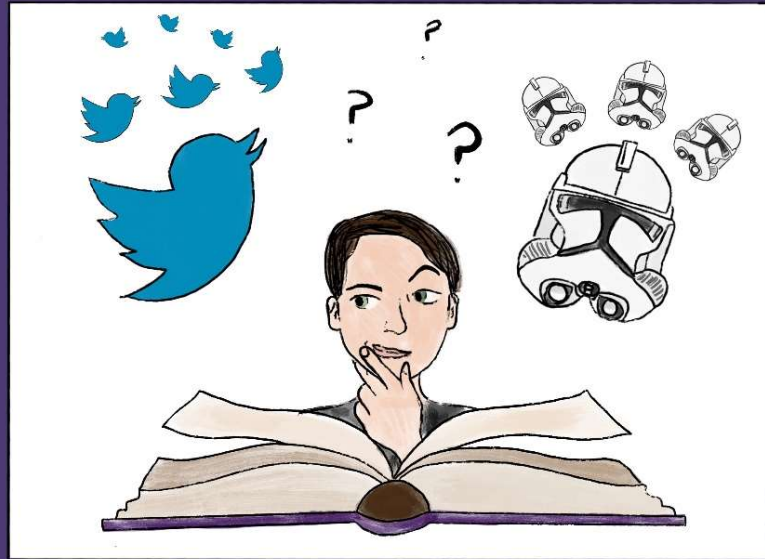


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Ruth Walbank is a masters student at Lancaster University, writing her dissertation on literature, space, and hell. Her essay on ‘Gender, Space, and #MeToo’ was recently highly commended in the Global Undergraduate Awards. She has previously presented a creative-critical adaptation of Dracula and a paper on ‘Oriental Monstrosity’. She was also editor of SCAN, the university newspaper, and co-founded the Literary Lancashire Award.

Jake Street is an English Literature and Creative Writing student with an interest in posthumanism and literature, especially in the study of speculative fiction, science fantasy and fantasy genres. He is also interested in studying gender non-conformity in gender conforming spaces.

Sravudh Tanhai is a second-year English student at Lancaster University going into third year. His interests are on the more philosophical of literature and he tends to gravitate towards works that answer the piercing questions to human existence. His focus over the past couple of years has been on Lacanian analysis.

Leksa (Xinyuan) Zhang is a sociology student at Lancaster University. She has worked on a dissertation exploring the concept of identity, tracing the forcefield between German Idealism and Michel Foucault’s political and ethical thought.

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Staff Endorsement

Reading the fifth issue of *LUX* makes me realise anew what a fabulous department English Literature and Creative Writing is at Lancaster University. Through a global pandemic, the Executive Editor, Sarah Hughes, and her team of Assistant Editors, have put together another wonderful issue of topical, wide-ranging, and fascinating articles. The issue is of the highest artistic and professional standard and bodes well for the lucky employers these students go on to grace with their abilities. The 'Afterword' gives some sense of the difficulties encountered during these strangest of times but the issue itself is testament to the fact that these have been overcome with style and poise.

I loved reading the essays, which really speak to the interdisciplinary and open-minded topicality of the English Literature and Creative Writing's staff and students. Ruth Walbank offers an important discussion of the ways that the #MeToo Twitter campaign needs to recognise and move away from the divisive politics of the past to embrace the possibilities that 'digital space' may offer. Jake Street's essay presents an equally important demonstration of how the TV show *Star Wars: the Clone Wars* demonstrates the inequalities of the present and the possible advances that could come with the future. Sravudh Tanhai alerts us to the ways that Clarice Linspector's novel *The Passion according to G.H.* explores the existential crisis of paranoid psychosis using Lacan as a lens. Finally, Leska Zhang historicises and assesses competing accounts of instrumental reason, with a particularly topical discussion of monumental history.

I am full of admiration for the work of the Executive and Assistant editors (including the shadow Executive Editor, Kathryn Poole, who will be responsible for the next issue), the contributors, the artist who provided the excellent cover work, Katrina Read, and the anonymous peer reviewers who read and commented on the essays. This work was done in what were previously unimaginable circumstances, not able to meet in person, during episodes of ill health, and a general pervading atmosphere of anxiety and worry. I am proud to give this endorsement. I hope that the issue finds many readers and that it takes its place among the many successes of *LUX*.

— Professor Sharon Ruston, Head of Department of English and Creative Writing

Editors' Introduction

The editorial team are pleased to welcome you to our fifth issue of *LUX* journal. I'm sure it comes as no surprise that we faced many challenges this past year, as the pandemic has left no corner untouched – even in academia. What stands here, however, is a testament to the dedication of the department and student body at Lancaster University. We have had the pleasure to work with an incredible group of authors on articles that span a diverse range of topics and interests. The uniqueness and diversity of their work truly makes the issue a critical and provoking illustration of the working mind of our department.

Ruth Walbank's fascinating exploration of the #MeToo movement features a highly original analysis of several tweets, elevating them to the status of a 'literary source' and uncovering the linguistic issues inherent in their construction. Walbank brings a contentious debate into conversation with the theories of Judith Butler and Doreen Massey, hypothesising 'a space where the relational times between individuals become the grounds for gender equality.' **Jake Street's** enlightening essay explores the concept of expendable life, taking a posthumanist perspective to the Sci-Fi universe of Star Wars. Street ruminates on the distinction between 'being' and 'becoming', and using a vast range of theorists, the article explores what is meant by 'human' now and what it might mean in the future. **Sravudh Tanhai's** essay on Clarice Lispector's *The Passions According to G. H.* employs a Lacanian framework to examine the psychological breakdown of the novel's protagonist, seeing the novel as a realisation of the concept of jouissance, 'the annihilating energy of life' that speaks volumes about 'what being human in a disorienting world means.' From here, we move through another process of disorientation: **Leksa Zhang's** essay on Horkheimer's notion of instrumental reason places the term in a historical lineage with Kant's practical reason, outlining the way in which the latter morphed into the former through the 'corruption and degeneration' of the dominant capitalist ideologies of the nineteenth century. Zhang ultimately suggests that modern capitalism seeks to bring about 'the eclipse of reason', offering a way of resistance through instigating 'a reconciliation between men and nature.'. We end then in a similar place to where we began with Walbank's essay: with a unification, a place where the question of being meets a space of relationality, of connection in opposition.

Our articles, then, may stand apart (shall we say, two metres apart) but they meet in a place familiar to us now perhaps more than ever: a place where the distance between us becomes a place where our relational ties can become a humanistic, unifying purpose. Despite their diversity then, the articles we are presenting to you stand as a reminder that even when we are 'isolated', caught in our books, or staring at our computer screens, we are always part of a larger whole. In our joint pursuit of ideas, of thoughts that can take issues as broad as #MeToo and Star Wars to new theoretical dimensions, this issue highlights our ability to go beyond, to explore, and ultimately questions fundamentally, what humanity should, or could, mean.

Finally, we would like to thank our executive editor, Sarah Hughes, and the shadow executive editor, Kathryn Poole, for all their hard work, support, and guidance – we are forever indebted to what they have taught us. We look forward to seeing where the new editorial team take *LUX* with the next issue, and hope that the work in this issue inspires the next set of contributors to reach equally impressive heights.

Gender, Space and #MeToo: Questioning Feminism Through Digital Literature

Ruth Anne Walbank

Abstract: Feminism, in its current mode, is doomed to fail. Judith Butler in her book *Gender Trouble*, asked: 'To what extent does the effort to locate a common identity as the foundation for a feminist politics preclude a radical inquiry into the political construction and regulation of identity itself?'. That political construction of the word 'gender' itself — in its earliest Latin root 'genus' means 'sort' or 'kind', — is a term imbued with a division. In October 2017, the hashtag #MeToo started trending on Twitter after actress Alyssa Milano encouraged people to showcase 'the magnitude of the problem' of sexual violence. What began as a protest against sexual abuse and harassment has since evolved into a global feminist movement. However, as an example of 21st-century feminism, Butler's question remains prevalent. While the #MeToo movement raises issues of gender relations and equality, it continues to be a feminist political attempt at creating a shared category of women who can say 'me too'. The violence that inspired these words weighs heavily, as does the saddening realisation that saying “#MeToo” only further perpetuates the problem. Our language needs to change to break the cycle of violence and abuse.

This essay uses Tweets quoting the #MeToo hashtag as a literary source, analysing the language surrounding the movement to determine whether digital feminism has the potential to move beyond its divisionary origins. Following an examination of tweets using Judith Butler's theories on gender, the essay uses Doreen Massey's construction of space to demonstrate the positive potential for feminism's progression away from gendered discourse's limitations. The topic is vital for contemporary society, taking a unique perspective on tweets as a literary source to undertake a theoretical discussion, hypothesising a space where the relational ties between individuals become the grounds for gender equality.

1. Gender Performativity and the Limitations of #MeToo.

In breaking down the #MeToo hashtag, and examining how users utilised it on Twitter, this section will demonstrate that #MeToo is in a fundamentally gendered discourse. By defining it within Butler's terminology of 'heterosexual matrix' and 'gender performativity', I will show how the #MeToo's protest continues to portray stereotypical gender norms (*Gender Trouble* 141, xv). The #MeToo hashtag creates a particular 'sort' of gender, of a woman who has encountered sexual harassment; however, this gendered category of women echoes second-wave feminists such as Helene Cixous who argued gender was a hierarchal system of binary oppositions. Cixous states that gender is 'where a law organises what is thinkable by oppositions [...] to a binary system' (157). This system orders 'man' above 'woman', and the masculine 'activity' as superior to feminine 'passivity'. Butler asserts that this is a historical association, exclaiming 'Aristotle lives!' (*Gender Trouble* 137), thus demonstrating that these divisions date back to Aristotle's philosophy: 'the male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; and the one rules, and the other is ruled' (9). Just as Aristotle asserts this gendered division, the association between a woman and weaker passivity is visible in the choice of 'me' as a pronoun rather than 'I' in #MeToo. 'Me' is a dative of 'I' that refers to 'the object of a verb or preposition' instead of the active subject (*OED*). The woman is not "I, the victim" in their own right, but only in addition to other survivors of sexual abuse: a group of objects subjected to male violence. By saying 'me too,' the woman becomes the passive object to the active masculine persecutor, reflecting the semantics of violence these survivors cry out against. Using 'too' enforces this as it continues to place the woman as an addition to a pre-

existing thing or group. The '#' extends this effect, acting to 'associate messages with common discussion topics' on social media, an index to sort similar tweets into a single group (*A Dictionary of Social Media*). The #MeToo hashtag demonstrates how its semantic construction still engages with the binaries of traditional gender discourse. Butler argues against feminist critics like Cixous, stating 'any feminist theory that restricts the meaning of gender in the presuppositions of its practice sets up exclusionary gender norms within feminism' (*Gender Trouble* viii). Simply put, feminist theories like Cixous' that immediately establish a hierarchy between men and women enforce that there is a binary opposition between them. The term 'feminism' exemplifies this, as it is 'the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of equality of the sexes' (*OED*). In stating that there are 'women's rights', feminism implies that there are separate men's rights. #MeToo confirms this because there is a 'difficulty of the "I" to express itself through the language that is available' (*Gender Trouble* xxvi). #MeToo could never be #IToo because, within the gendered discourse of feminist language, the woman is already presupposed to be man's subordinate object.

@Alyssa_Milano's tweet from 2017 demonstrates the limitations of #MeToo. Her tweet advocated for women to 'write "Me too." as a status' to 'give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem'. In using the social media term 'status', #MeToo sets up a classification – that having been sexually harassed gives a particular social standing that someone can publicly announce on social media. This language is like the 'exclusionary gender' terms that Butler writes against in forming an identifiable group of distinct women. @Alyssa_Milano continues using divisional language by describing the 'magnitude' of #MeToo. Consequently, the problem is measurable and quantifiable. If #MeToo is measurable by size, then that indicates the same 'exclusionary' terminology because there must be another smaller group in opposition. Additionally, Cixous states that while the hierarchically superior man can give power, the woman only 'gives herself' (161). Likewise, @Alyssa_Milano asks women to 'give', continuing to demonstrate her (unconscious) engagement with gendered language. Hence, from this first tweet, #MeToo sets up a gendered category of women which perpetuates feminism's divisional discourse. Butler states that the (unconscious) uses of gendered language are what maintain the heterosexual matrix: 'the cultural matrix through which gender identity has become ineligible [and] requires that certain kinds of "identities" cannot "exist"' (*Gender Trouble* 24). She argues that for gender to feel natural and stable, we only show certain presentations of masculine and feminine. It establishes a norm, which is why other behaviour seems unnatural or invisible to society. @gaylyn_r's response to @Alyssa_Milano exhibits this, as she says: 'ME TOO I finally have the courage to be a voice, not to stay silent. My story is sad... sick! Why do we feel ashamed? Why so many of us?' (@gaylyn_r, "ME TOO"). Although this tweet's content characterises @gaylyn_r as an active voice in the #MeToo movement, its composition suggests otherwise. Using the indefinite article 'a' makes the 'voice' she is using non-specific and part of a wider collective rather than being individual and defined. The sibilance through the repeated syllables creates a hushed, hissing tone which, in conjunction with the rhetorical questions, imply a juxtaposition between her voice's whispering tone and her declaration against silence. Despite @gaylyn_r stating she will no longer 'stay silent', the language used indicates a quieter, more passive voice conforming to the heterosexual matrix's gender stereotypes. As a result, those seemingly active voices speaking out about #MeToo not only still use gendered language, but their discourse quietens and restricts them as they are not allowed to exist within the heterosexual matrix.

@NicoleCCarton's tweet to @TaranaBurke summarises a contested point in the #MeToo movement: 'I do not feel like I have a place in the #MeToo movement. Black women have been forgotten again' (@NicoleCCarton, "I do not feel like I have a place"). @NicoleCCarton here references Tarana Burke as the founder of the #MeToo movement having first coined the term in 2006 before Milano popularised it in 2017 (*Me Too Movement*). When @TaranaBurke founded the movement, she states it was about 'Black women' coming forward 'with allegations of harassment or abuse', however after Milano's use of the phrase, the movement faced criticism as 'white celebs, and white feminists' appropriating the term and 'largely ignor[ing]' its origins

(@TaranaBurke, "Explain why when Black women"). @NicoleCCarton highlights that #MeToo is as much an issue of race as it is gender, further demonstrating Butler's critique of the feminist practice as 'exclusionary'. However, even within a tweet that is critiquing #MeToo, @NicoleCCarton still uses gendered language that characterises her as a woman by showcasing she does not have a 'place' as an 'I' to express herself but only in association with others.

Butler terms the practice of continuing to portray the gender norms of the societal, heterosexual matrix as 'gender performativity'. She states that: 'for something to be performative, it means something has produced a series of effects, we act and walk and talk and speak in ways that consolidate an impression of being a man or a woman' (Butler, *Judith Butler: Your Behavior Creates Your Gender*). For the heterosexual matrix's stability, social acts must reaffirm themselves as normative gender behaviour. Butler's term raises two key points. Firstly, that if gender is a performed set of learned behaviours, then gender is changeable. While gendered behaviour seems natural because it is learned from birth, gender must be an abstract concept that can become unstable. Secondly, gender is about the body and how the body acts. The @nytimes' account demonstrates Butler's gender performativity, tweeting a headline from an article by Wade Davis: 'Here's what men don't get about the #MeToo movement - it's not about women, it's about us. Women are laying themselves bare for us to wake up' (@nytimes, "At the #NYTnewrules summit"). In describing #MeToo, Davis performs his masculine gender, enforcing 'men' as the subjects of #MeToo, inferring that women are, therefore, the objects of men's actions. This tweet engages with the semantic field of the body, describing women as 'laying', in a supine, passive position, and 'bare', connoting nakedness and exposure. If 'gender is the repeated stylisation of the body' as Butler suggests, then the body becomes the site for gendered discourse, which this tweet exhibits by portraying the woman as naked and passive in bodily terms (*Gender Trouble* 33-4). This idea is prevalent in the #MeToo context: it is a protest about sexual violence which is a bodily violation. It connotes the sexual abuse suffered by women within the actions of the movement itself, suggesting that women continue to 'la[y] themselves bare for [men]' even when protesting. However, in continuing to use gendered language to describe the female body, #MeToo perpetuates the problem in the feminist discourse of maintaining these stereotypical gender norms. Hence, while #MeToo is inherently limited in the feminist discourse it uses and continues to perpetuate Butler's heterosexual matrix, her concept of gender performativity highlights the possibility for gender to change.

2. Twitter's Open Space in the Digital Gender Discussion.

#MeToo's restriction is that its discourse limits itself by beginning from a place of gendered language. While protesting against violence to the female body, the movement is reiterating its gender performance through language that portrays women as passive and weak and, therefore, vulnerable to violence. This section temporarily moves away from the content of #MeToo to think about Twitter as a platform for rethinking gender through Massey's reconfiguration of space as open and relational. Massey argues that 'spaces and places [...] are gendered through and through' (*Space, Place, and Gender* 186). Much like Butler's arguments that language is stereotypically gendered through its historical construction, Massey states that space is determined by what we consider natural divisions between genders: 'gender, in that whole history of the division between private spaces and public places, has been really crucial in the long history of gender difference between men and women' (*Social Science Space*). We think about certain spaces by our association with gendered positions in society. For example, synonyms of 'home' include 'domestic', 'internal', and 'local', while synonyms of 'public' include 'communal', 'universal', and 'free' (*Oxford Paperback Thesaurus*). These synonyms are much like Cixous' binary-based language, imbued with historically stereotypical gender norms where, as Massey comments, 'men were the breadwinners, women the domestic labourers'. Here, language continues to associate the woman with her previous

confinement in domestic space and the man with the public sphere (Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* 193). The language of space is gendered.

Massey argues we need to rethink space, because 'for the future to be open, space must be open too' (*For Space* 12). Traditionally, we define space as a local section of land surrounded by physical boundaries, but Massey challenges this conception of local space with 'globalisation' (*Space, Place, and Gender* 156). She states it is 'a new geography constructed out of the relations we have with each other across the globe' (*Social Science Space*). Globalisation, Massey argues, challenges our traditional idea of space because it is no longer on a stable, measurable plane with a boundary but rather international and without boundaries. In defining such global space, Massey's argument shows if we imagine interactions were visible, from phone calls and emails to walking down the street, space is no longer localised but expansive and continuously developing. In this conception, Massey moves away from restricted gendered space to think about space as relational.

If space is formed by and continually developing through social relations, Twitter as a digital platform for social networking has the potential for a future 'open space'. Massey states that 'the "virtual" world depends on and further configures the multiplicity of space' (*For Space* 96). As a social network, Twitter is designed to engage people on a global scale, and the options presented to its users with emphasise this relational space. With every tweet, users can either 'retweet', 'like' or 'reply', meaning they can reiterate what someone else has said on their profile, voice their agreement with the tweet or start a conversation about the tweet respectively. Twitter is a digital space designed to open up and encourage this 'multiplicity of space' through the engagement of its users, to the extent that when a user writes a tweet, Twitter asks 'what's happening?'. The platform itself is an invitation to initiate globalised dialogue, and the average of 500 million tweets per day demonstrates successful openness through its continual state of development (Aslam). Crucially, as 'the "virtual" world' - one without a physical presence in a geographical sense - it does not hold the same historical connotations of gendered space.

Returning to #MeToo then with Massey's reconfigured conception of 'the "virtual" world', Twitter's digital space outside the geographical restrictions of historically gendered spaces offers a new space outside the previously limiting discourse of #MeToo. The movement gains two advantages in this. Firstly, it temporarily avoids the issue of the female body as a gendered and vulnerable site. As previously explored, if the body is the primary site for gender performativity, and #MeToo focuses on that body's vulnerability in facing sexual violence, utilising a digital space where the body is not physically present creates the potential for a safer, more open space for this discussion. Although this does not necessarily mean this digital discussion will translate into the physically 'real' world, one survey showed that 'the digital sphere was still largely understood as a relatively safer and easier space to engage in feminist discussion than in participants offline contexts' (Keller, Mendes, and Ringrose 243). Twitter does not solve the problem of gendered bodies or spaces, but it creates a space to open the discussion.

Secondly, as a safe digital space, Twitter encourages users talking about #MeToo to see themselves in relation to others because of its spatial construction as a social network. @TaranaBurke's tweets demonstrate this, stating '#metoo has just created a cover for those who didn't feel safe enough to speak up. [...] to hear us better as a chorus and not a solo' (@TaranaBurke, "Women have been speaking up"). She argues that #MeToo creates a protective barrier for those speaking out against abuse because Twitter's digital platform bypasses the physically vulnerable, gendered body. However, distinct from previous tweets that used exclusionary gendered language, @TaranaBurke uses a musical metaphor. When voices sing in a chorus, they have their separate and individual parts, but come together to form a collective sense of harmony. In the same way, @TaranaBurke argues the #MeToo movement should be about the 1.7 million individual tweets and the unique stories they tell forming a collective that is not exclusionary but harmonious. In another tweet, she states that: "This movement is about making sure survivors have the resources to heal AFTER they've said #metoo, it's about galvanising a global community" (@TaranaBurke, "5. This movement is about making"). Rather than a static,

singular moment enclosed to a certain temporal or spatial period, @TaranaBurke engages with the semantic field of development that advocates survival: it is a 'movement' about what comes 'AFTER' #MeToo. Her emphasis on 'galvanising a global community' also aligns with Massey's virtual world that 'configures the multiplicity of space', with 'galvanising' implying excitement or action. In this, #MeToo is conceivable as an energised collective of related individuals, allowing people to start undermining the gendered discourse they are initially limited by, moving through and developing harmoniously in a digital space. Twitter's digital platform encapsulates Massey's reconfiguration of space as open and relational, containing the potential to move away from the limited gendered discourse of space and into a globalised community. However, as this space allows for this potential, the issue then lies with how Twitter's space is used rather than the digital space itself.

3. Where Next? Relational Identity After #MeToo.

Suppose despite using a digital space, with the potential to open away from historically divided gender norms, the language of #MeToo continues to limit itself in a gendered discourse. In that case, it continues what Butler accused feminist politics of avoiding: the 'radical inquiry into the [...] construction and regulation of identity itself'. Following Massey's ideas on space, I will now return to Butler's ideas concerning identity in *Precarious Life* to argue that #MeToo's discourse next needs to open up to the vulnerability of what Butler terms 'relational' identity, to move forward from its entrapping gendered discourse (*Precarious Life* 22). Just as Massey argues that space is relational, Butler thinks that social relations form an identity. She states that:

if we are to come to understand ourselves as global actors, and acting, within a historically established field, and one that has other actions in play, we will need [...] to consider the ways in which our lives are profoundly implicated in the lives of others (*Precarious Life* 7).

Within this spatial 'field' of social relations, we as individuals are not just actors, but acted upon while acting on others. The 'I' becomes inextricably linked with the life of the 'other'. This argument highlights that 'relationality' consequently means that 'we can be injured, that others can be injured', and that we are vulnerable to violence from one another (Butler, *Precarious Life* xii). Butler argues that this relationality at the root of vulnerability is visible in the two reactions it inspires, 'fear and grief'. In this frame, I think that that the limitations of #MeToo previously highlighted are results of speaking from an outcry of 'fear and grief' (Butler, *Precarious Life* xii). However, while fear inspires rage, resulting in a continuation of gendered divisions, focusing on the grief of #MeToo instead opens a discourse of relational responsibility in our collective vulnerability.

Critiques of #MeToo becoming a "witch hunt" exhibit that reactions from fear perpetuate the movement's imitations by continuing to enforce a hierarchical gendered discourse. Jennifer Airey highlights that 'the backlash to #MeToo has begun in earnest, with accusations of witch hunts, overreactions, and the criminalisation of male sexuality' (Airey 10). The gendered language of a 'witch hunt' becomes problematic. It is no longer the woman being hunted by the man and accused of being something other or abnormal but women hunting the men. This reaction indicates a fear from men that #MeToo will criminalise what they consider normative behaviour in the heterosexual matrix. However, as a 'witch' denotes being 'a girl or woman', it is a gendered term. In reiterating those binary divisions between men and women, men can dismiss these "witch hunting" women as passive and non-threatening because the term continues to associate them with historical gender norms. Therefore, #MeToo becomes a 'criminalisation', implying an accusatory tone to a standard and accepted activity rather than a grounded critique of male sexuality. @JustSurmising's tweet characterises this, stating '#MeToo is a joke...organised witch hunt is all it is' (@JustSurmising, "#MeToo is a joke"). In suggesting that this is 'all,' the #MeToo

movement is, @JustSurmising's tone becomes reductive and dismissive. It is important to note that @JustSurmising's tweet exemplifies how some use Twitter's online platform as a place to perpetuate the abuse suffered by women. Social media's potential as a space for open discourse is equally dependent on the responsibility of its users.

Butler argues that 'speaking from rage does not always let us see how rage carries sorrow' (*Judith Butler: Speaking of Rage and Grief*). I think Butler highlights that as fear engenders rage, speaking from a fear-inspired reaction causes this violent dismissal and continues the hierarchically gendered discourse. However, as #MeToo is about sexual violence, and as @JustSurmising's fear-based response uses the additional violent language of 'hunt[ing]' and generalised dismissal, this demonstrates a need to focus on 'arresting cycles of violence' and explore the sorrow and grief the violence masks (*Precarious Life* xii). Those tweets that exhibit the grief of #MeToo are more productive in accepting the vulnerability highlighted by relational identity. Butler argues that in grief, 'I think I have lost 'You' only to discover that 'I' have gone missing as well' (*Precarious Life* 22). In grief, we are forced to question how we account for ourselves because we lose a tie that constituted our identity. @FGrossGraves tweeted #MeToo 'reminded' her that 'people who we love and admire [...] can also abuse their power' (@FGrossGraves, "On this #MeToo anniversary"). Her statement stresses that the abuse of women equates to an abuse of power, which she emphasises through the 'love' and 'admir[ation]' we give those people: an emotive power that enforces #MeToo as abuse and loss of our personal relations. If gender politics is then a question of power, and power relations, it becomes a question of relational responsibility and vulnerability. Butler furthers this in stating that 'when a vulnerability is recognised, that recognition has the power to change the meaning and structure of vulnerability itself' (*Precarious Life* 43). In recognising this abuse of power, @FGrossGraves tweet reveals that #MeToo challenges and in some ways breaks the ties that constitute her identity. When read with Butler, her reflection highlights the power this relational tie contains, revealing the 'structure of vulnerability itself' by emphasising the effects of another's actions on the ability to give love and admiration. In grieving the loss of that tie to others, a reflection on that grief begins to force a 'radical inquiry' into 'identity itself' (*Precarious Life* 43).

As Twitter is designed to emphasise and utilise relational ties in a digital space, it can open this vulnerability further. However, Butler warns that in 'bringing to the fore the relational ties [has] implications for theorising fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility' (*Precarious Life* 22). I think #MeToo's next step - recognising relational identity's power - is to focus on the 'ethical responsibility' these ties bring. @WisdomRebel tweeted that 'after #MeToo' there is 'a necessity of understanding and owning [...] archetypal masculinity and femininity' (@WisdomRebel, "Our latest film out now"). The emphasis @WisdomRebel places on comprehending and taking possession of the gender 'archetypes' is how the #MeToo movement can achieve the 'ethical responsibility' that comes with these 'relational ties'. By 'understanding' the discourse #MeToo engages with is gendered, and linking back to gender performativity, the #MeToo movement can recognise that as learned behaviours constitute normative gender, conceptions of gender can alter. Butler refers to this as learning 'how to work the trap', as 'owning' this gendered trap. Thus, having understood divisional gendered discourse's mechanics, the movement begins to challenge the heterosexual matrix and what it considers normative gender by drawing awareness to it (*ArtForum*, 1992).

By applying #MeToo to answer Butler's initial question, I think feminist politics do prevent a much-needed examination into the construction of identity. In examining #MeToo, though Butler's terms, as a gender performance of the heterosexual matrix, #MeToo becomes limited as a feminist movement that begins by setting up a division between men and women while fighting for equality. However, through viewing #MeToo as a form of grief from loss rather than fear of violence, the movement contains the positive potential to shift the traditionally hierarchal view of gender into a mutual ethical responsibility between people regardless of gender due to the power we hold over each other in the relational ties that constitute our identity. Twitter is a crucial digital

space, allowing for a safer exploration and discussion of these issues outside of physical space where the vulnerability of the socially gendered body is more overt. In asking 'where next?' for #MeToo, the challenge turns to translating the potential these tweets indicate for that introspective examination of identity into the physical world, and into the everyday sexual violence that #MeToo reacted against. Ultimately, #MeToo shows that there needs to be a mutual recognition from both men and women that we are vulnerable to each other as relational beings, and a respect for and responsibility towards our relational identity that will allow us to progress from feminist gendered discourse altogether.

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Artificial Life/Expendable Life: A Posthuman Perspective on Clone Armies in Star Wars

Jake Street

Abstract: This article proposes that through the lens of posthumanist theories, the position of the clone soldier, a figure that is both alive and artificial, allows one to question the role of humanism and the ontology of the human within. The questions that arise from this provide a conclusion that the ideas of human being and human becoming necessarily diverge, and that relying on the position of human being as a qualifier for value constitutes a justification for expendable life by intentionally reducing the circle of who is considered human. Drawing particularly on the work of posthumanist philosopher Rosi Braidotti, this article considers historical and dialectic parallels with real world social phenomena such as slavery and child soldiers in the clone armies of the *Star Wars* universe, with emphasis on the 501st Legion of the *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, to show how the same patterns of dehumanisation can be observed also in the perception of the clones.

The article will take into consideration Judith Butler's study of precarious and grievable life to show how the soldier is dehumanised by liberal-democratic society in order to assuage the paradoxes inherent in warfare. It further uses Francis Fukuyama, an odd figure in this circle of theorists, to demonstrate the neoliberal response to these egresses from morality, and how the neoliberal perspective can focus on the individual clone but cannot deal with an entire class of clones. There is extra attention focused, through the necropolitical work of Achille Mbembe, on the way the power structures of the state and private interests facilitate the dehumanisation of the clones, in much the way as they did in the case of slavery and colonialism. Collectively these contribute to the discussion of what the human is now, and what it will be in the future.

Introduction

George Lucas's *Star Wars* space-opera prequel films, —produced from 1999-2005, — break away from his original main trilogy, which drew on the tropes of Westerns and science fiction serials like *Flash Gordon*. The prequels would choose to not follow the clear good-versus-evil paradigm of the original films. They instead portray the extensive political struggles of a war with a separatist movement from the Galactic Republic, the primary form of governance for most of the galaxy. The great evil of the series, Palpatine, plays both sides of the conflict for his own gain, corrupting the protagonist Anakin to his side. The Republic, lacking a standing military force due to a long period of peace, requisition an army of clones in order to combat the army of droids, robot soldiers with limited artificial intelligence, which the separatists employ. This clone army and its implications are the main concern of this essay. The clone army exists in the series at the conjunction of neoliberal political and corporatist exertions of biopower. Their creation in the films is facilitated by private industry, financed by a government, all to engage in the eponymous wars of the series. Where clone narratives in science fiction such as *The Body Snatchers*, *The Kihl People*, and *The Boys from Brazil* often focus on the illicit or duplicitous practice of cloning, instead the clones are a mass produced, ever present, and publicly supported object of institutional power. Their position as life created to kill and die perfectly exemplifies Michel Foucault's definition from his lectures at the Collège de France 1975-6 of the "new right" created by biopolitics, "the right to make live and let die" (241). However, their expendability in *Star Wars* functions as a simple way of showing conflict without consequence. The casualties of the war are a nameless, faceless, mass

combating droids, another nameless faceless, inhuman mass. This allows the audience to more easily settle into the dramas of the protagonists whose unique life is perceived as more valuable.

The question arises regarding what a life is and when it is expendable, as explored by Judith Butler in *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*, and Eugene Thacker in *After Life*. Thacker, drawing on posthuman and transhuman modes of thought, reframes the question of what life is by problematising the concept. Butler refers to the problem of expendability in terms of precarious life and grievable life. In much the way that the creation of the clones can be viewed as a biopolitical act, the direction of their deaths is as much a necropolitical act, with the two being inextricably linked. Combining these ideas about the nature of life and the consequences of the expendability of life, a different perspective on the role of the clones emerges. The focus of this essay will thus not be on the prequel films in which the clones are rarely named, rarely speak, and die frequently, but rather on the *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. The animated TV show set between the time frames of the prequel films, focus on specific clones which are named and act as protagonists in their own right. Where the plot and technical convenience of a replicated army is useful in a large budget film to prevent distraction from highly paid celebrity actors and to allow for mass appeal without asking too many troubling questions about war; the television show allows for smaller stories, with minor figures in the films' plot arcs being developed including the clones. This leaves room for more nuanced discussions, in this case what it means to be alive, what it means to be human, and the value of a soldier's life in a war in which there is no personal incentive to engage. Narrowing further, this essay will explore these theoretical ideas in one arc of the television show in which the clones are betrayed by their general, forced into pyrrhic victories, and ultimately have to engage in what Rosi Braidotti refers to as "all too human praxis of speaking truth to power" ("Aspirations of a Posthumanist"). The ideas considered in this essay are increasingly relevant in an approaching posthuman age in which the same neoliberal institutions of corruptible government and corporate investiture allow for similar questions of when a life is expendable. The culmination of this is the real-world comparisons that can be drawn with the clone, as life that is at once superior and inferior, valuable but expendable. The narrative of the clone soldier is mirrored in such disparate narratives as the slave, the child soldier, and the immigrant worker, and it is this that makes considerations of their depiction in one of the most popular media franchises of all time so important.

Clones and Expendability

Rather than beginning with the clones, a character that must be generally introduced and explained before specific moments and ideas are analysed is the non-clone General Pong Krell, a treacherous general who takes command of the 501st Legion, of which several clones are important characters through the show. His role in this narrative creates a distinct image of the powers of life and death that the institutions of war can exert, and how they can be abused in extreme scenarios. He is introduced demeaning the clones under his command in a way that no character does prior to this, before sending the clones into a full-frontal assault of a fortified position. One might consider parallels with the Somme and the act of walking into artillery and machineguns through No-Man's Land. The clones naturally protest and retreat ("Darkness on Umbara"). The following episode shows another near suicidal attack ordered by Krell, which succeeds due to the clones creating an alternative strategy to their superior. Krell dismisses the clone's heavy losses as "the price for such victory" ("The General" 00:21:30). Notable here is the economic terminology used; life as the "price" of victory is a distinctly neoliberal approach to war. In the third episode, the general orders the soldiers to walk into artillery fire, again mirroring the images of the Somme, instead of following the clone's plan to assist the arrival of reinforcements. When the clones dismiss their superiors' orders in favour of their own plan, Krell orders their execution, despite their success ("Plan of Dissent"). In the fourth episode he stays the execution, only to send the clones into an ambush of other clones, each side being told that the

enemy had stolen their armour by Krell in order to thin their ranks in preparation of his betrayal. Their identical forms and armour render differentiation difficult. The general is then arrested by the rallying clones after killing many of them, reveals his treachery and the intent behind the suicidal strategies he employed, before being executed by the most subservient of the clones, the aptly named Dogma (“Carnage of Krell”). Overall, this paints a picture of a ruthless figure with no concern for the value of life, the power to let the soldiers die at will, and a distinct egocentric worldview. However, it is in comparison with the clones that one begins to question the value of life. Krell’s actions speak to a belief in his own will, but not the wills of the clones; yet each success in the show comes from the wilful disobedience of the latter. The trope of the soldier as the ultimate follower of orders is subverted to determine the outcome, and that in this, one must open-up to the questions of the expendability of life. Krell’s pyrrhic victories are, in the eyes of the military, still victories. However, in the eyes of the clones, they are something to be feared, and they are lives to be grieved.

The relationship between Krell and the clones embodies the problems of war in the context of a liberal democratic society. As Kenneth MacLeish comments: “In liberal democratic states, war’s injuring, killing, and dying are regarded as transgressive, regrettable, and even tragic, despite the fact that these things transpire on purpose and in highly organized fashion” (“How to feel about war” 276). The perception of the clone’s sacrifice by Krell is not so far removed from the overall view as one might initially think. It is overly concerned with the macro conflict of the war, without the micro conflict of each battle in which individual soldiers fight and die. Take the introduction to this arc. The episode begins with several minutes of clones dying in various ways during a battle (“Darkness on Umbara” 00:01:30-00:06:00). Then, after the fighting concludes, one clone is helped up by another and they introduce themselves with names, “Fives” and “Hardcase,” with the addendum of “that’s what they call me” by the latter (“Darkness on Umbara” 00:06:15). The production of the scene is such that it is only at this point that there can be an emotive response to the clones beyond the tension of the battle itself, that is, the success of the objective. It is not until the clones are named that we can apprehend life. As Butler argues “The epistemological capacity to apprehend a life is partially dependent on that life being produced according to norms that qualify it as a life or, indeed, as part of life” (*Frames of War* 3). The science fiction genre, functioning as a mode of “cognitive estrangement” as Darko Suvin calls it, allows a different view on what these norms by which life is produced are (*Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* 4). Human cloning, acting as a “novum,” Suvin’s term for some mechanism that takes a reader outside of reality, changes the things which life is dependent on (*Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* 63). It reframes technology over the biological processes of procreation as the source for life.

However, since non-clones still exist in this universe, the question remains whether this life still constitutes a kind of humanity, or whether the clones are something other. Before they are named, the audience sees only the armour which conceals the faces and bodies of the clones, and even when removed, each of the faces are identical. The act of naming offers a uniqueness which is absent in the clones prior to dialogue, and this makes the precariousness of their lives unable to be apprehended. There is something disembodied about the clone, as if they are not real insofar as they are not individual. This is broken down as personalities emerge. This misapprehension of precarious life is a problem with the liberal democratic view of war; the paradoxes that emerge are only circumvented by changing the category of life such that it does not include those lives which must die to maintain its own institutional power. The perspective is the purview of what Achille Mbembe calls “those figures of sovereignty whose central project is not the struggle for autonomy but the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations” (“Necropolitics” 14). This relationship between the perception of soldiers and the actuality of soldiers within a democratic system is fundamentally necropolitical; it is in the exertion of the latter part of Foucault’s maxim of biopower, the right to let die, that the media of the clone soldier is constituted. When Krell sees the death of the clones as dismissible,

he is seeing the same inhuman mass the audience sees, and as such views it as his right to let them die to fulfil his own agenda.

Artificial Life and Purpose

Since, following Butler, it is so difficult to apprehend life, the category itself must be questioned as a validator for biopolitical action. While the phrase artificial life is a useful one for referring to the clones, Francesca Ferrando asks, “Can life be artificial?” (*Philosophical Posthumanism* 115). While the processes of cloning are outside of the normal operations of life without technology, there is nothing about the process which is separate from life. It uses organic components. It uses living agents. It uses technology produced by those living agents. The distinction between natural and unnatural is a problematic one; in much the way one would not consider a beaver’s dam or a bird’s nest unnatural, even when incorporating non-organic matter, it seems wrong to treat a building, computer, or clone as any different. Eugene Thacker draws on a similar concept, referring to theology but equally applicable to god-play like clone creation, distinguishing “created” from “uncreated” (*After Life* 58). The divine is uncreated, while the living is created and thus lesser. Progressing with a secular frame, the human is uncreated, while the clone is created and thus lesser. Therefore, the boundary between artificial life and actual life is to the humanist obvious, but to the posthumanist unclear. This culminates in the final distinction, human and subhuman. Sara Wasson invokes Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, to note that the “mass produced origins” of those clones, a quality shared with the clones of *Star Wars*, “makes them seem less human” (“Doubles, Organ Harvesting and Cloning” 78). This perception of sub-humanity, however, is more readily allowed by the unintelligent, repulsive figures of Huxley’s novel than it is in the intelligent, pragmatic, and personalised clones of *Star Wars*. One of the most poignant moments in “Darkness on Umbara” is when Captain Rex defends his order to retreat against Krell’s order to attack:

I followed your orders. Even in the face of a plan, that was, in my opinion, severely flawed. A plan that cost us men. Not clones! Men! As sure as it is my duty to remain loyal to your command, I also have another duty: to protect those men (00:19:57).

The men/clones dichotomy demonstrates a breakpoint in the human/inhuman dichotomy. To the military, to Krell, the men are clones and only clones. Their creation for the war justifies their deaths. Their position as clones renders them necessarily subservient to the biological originals who rule over them. In later episodes we discover that every clone has a mind-controlling chip in their brain, taking this artificial life as subservient, expendable life to another level (“Conspiracy”). If anything is manufactured, artificial, it is not the clones themselves but the position of the clones. As Rosi Braidotti argues about racism, it “reduces non-whites to a subhuman ontological status that exposes them to murderous violence” (Braidotti, *The Posthuman* 47). Anti-clone ideologies serve the same function. A clone that leaves the army is rendered a deserter, and if discovered is court marshalled and executed. Their life is made for the war, and if they do not engage with the war, the machines of war let them die. In the episode “The Deserter,” a deserting clone laments “Everyone I cared about, my team, was gone. I was just another expendable clone waiting for my turn to be slaughtered in a war that made no sense to me” (00:14:32) The expendability of the clones is guaranteed by the perception of their artificiality, with the view that those things which can be made can also be unmade, but the posthuman life is necessarily not merely a substance of being, but an object of becoming. The moment the life exists, whether natural born or clone, the act of becoming initiates, and the life develops beyond whatever it was made to do. An apt comparison would be between a soldier and a gun. In combat, if a gun jams or misfires, it is defective and in need of repair or replacement. It does not serve its purpose.

On the other hand, if a soldier refuses to kill, their status is more ambiguous. The soldier ceases to be a soldier in that moment, but unlike the gun, is not malfunctioning. The other-assigned purpose is overturned by the self-assigned purpose. The clone soldier, however, born to fight and viewed as subhuman by the institutions they serve, is perceived as if they were the gun in need of repair or replacement. Execution for desertion and requisition of new clones is the same to such a system as dismantlement and replacement of a gun.

The Economics of Clone Soldiers

There is a tension created by this posthuman view of life and the humanist concept of the value of life. *The Clone Wars* places a very literal value on the life of the clones, as demonstrated in the episode “Crisis at the Heart” in which the war profiteering of private banks leads to a crisis in the loans used to purchase the clones not being represented in any actual liquidity. Their creation, and thus the ontological reality of each clone’s life is determined by the financial means for their purchase. This intersection between a government’s desire to exploit labour and private interests’ means to provide the biopolitical tools to produce labour for profit should resound with clear echoes of the transatlantic slave trade. In the clone we see a post-Hegelian slave, one who only serves to validate the master and for whom the fear of death is the only tool to maintain their servitude. The master, the Republic, becomes so dependent on the clones that they cannot exist without them. The clone only exists to fight, and so if they were not to fight, they have no reason to exist. The Republic, in their approach to the clones, constructs a deontological teleology whereby the fact of existing determines the purpose of a living being. In a transhuman age, one in which life ceases to be recognisably human, the tools of biopolitics could easily be turned to creating a new form of slavery, through clones or otherwise bioengineered life. When the value of life is reduced to a figure, such as the cost of replacement, ignoring the individualism of the life even in the clones, it justifies, through the most brutal of utilitarian calculations, any manner of terrible sacrifices, including the mass enslavement, execution, and war casualties. The way that Krell is continuously assigned to command by the Republic’s leaders, despite the huge losses his victories produce suggests these very calculations (“The General”). It must be noted that the war in which the clones fight is supposed to be defending the institutions of the Republic’s neoliberal democracy, with principles of individual freedom and opportunity, and so the clones were created in opposition to the very principles which they die to defend. Returning to MacLeish’s “How to feel about war”, the paradox of war is that the innate consequences of war are transgressive, even if the war itself is not considered to be so. This paradox can be ignored, however, if the loss of life is seen as a financial loss, like a loan defaulting, rather than as something unquantifiable. The consequence of this is a life that is expendable so long as the government can afford to lose it.

However, it does not necessarily go against neoliberal principles to regulate such expressions of power. Regarding cloning, dominant neoliberal figure Francis Fukuyama argues that “Cloning in particular raises the prospect that the reproductive decision will suit the interests and convenience of the parent rather than those of the child, and in this case the state has an obligation to protect the child” (*Our Posthuman Future* 187). It is no wonder that the characters in *Star Wars* who are most sympathetic to the clones are also the staunchest idealists. However, in *The Clone Wars*, we can observe a system in which the ‘parent,’ by which it can be inferred that Fukuyama is referring to the genetic original, in this case Jango Fett, and not the actual cloners, has no stake in the existence of the clones at all. It is the state itself whose interests are superseding those of the child. Stepping away from the show, consider the pitch put forth by cloner Lama Su in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones*: “They are totally obedient, taking any order without question. We modified their genetic structure to make them less independent than the original host” (00:46:50). These clones are designed with obedience in mind. The government, who as Fukuyama argues should be protecting these clone children, are instead purchasing them, and in doing so acting *in loco parentis* in order to exploit them. In the same conversation Lama Su points

out that growth acceleration “is essential, otherwise a mature clone would take a lifetime to grow” (00:47:23). This means that while the clones are physically adult, they have only been alive for a decade or so and age rapidly. The clones are thus more than children of the state, they are literally children. They are child soldiers, conditioned for loyalty to the military and the state. Where the neoliberal state’s approach to children in the real world is focused on preparing them for participation in the market economy above all else, the clone children of the Republic are prepared only for conflict. If there is anything to be said about the potential of a transhumanist state, it is that this one in *Star Wars* fails in the obligations Fukuyama describes. The biopolitical motivations for this are clear. What reason is there for a democratic government to risk the lives of the electorate when they can use an expendable people who are not part of the society? The accelerated aging is also a factor in answering the question of the fate of the clones after the war. Even in the quickest end to the war, the clones have already lived over half their average lifespans and can quickly be abandoned like veterans are in the real world because their deaths, which were barely noted during the war, need not be noted at all as they no longer need to be replaced.

Speaking Truth to Power

Making strange bedfellows with Fukuyama, a return to Rosi Braidotti is necessary for dealing with the moment when the clones briefly overcome their oppressor. When Krell’s treachery is finally revealed, and the clones have arrested him, he is interrogated. He is asked by Captain Rex, “Why kill your own men?” to which he replies, “Because I can, because you fell for it, because you are inferior” (“Carnage of Krell”00:16:52). By this point in the series, it is obvious that Krell views the clones as inferior, however it is important to note that his answer gives not motivation, but rather justification. Interestingly, when Rex prepares to execute Krell, he is taunted by Krell: “You are in a position of power now. How does it feel?” (00:19:51). Rex cannot execute Krell. There is a sense of moralism about this moment, as the clone, whose life has not been valued beyond its ability to kill and die, weighs the value of the treacherous threat before him without those objects. It is, ironically, Dogma who fires the kill shot (00:20:28). Dogma is perhaps the most conditioned of the clones; his name is derived from his absolute adherence to orders and defence of authority. Yet, in that moment, he overcomes that conditioning. This scene could be described as an example of speaking truth to power, an action that Braidotti describes as “posthuman, all too human” (Braidotti, “Aspirations of a Posthumanist”). Once in a position of power, the underclass finds itself morally unable to replicate the dominant power’s brutality. They do not feel the megalothymia, to use Fukuyama’s terminology, of the powerful because there is an epistemology of the oppressed at work, in which the knowledge of being oppressed reduces the capacity of oppression (Fukuyama, *The End of History* 210). Rex, who has spent the previous three episodes arguing against Krell and defending his men, is incapable of killing Krell in the way that the General killed so many others. Yet Dogma, whose blind obedience means that he has not felt oppressed, never questioning the mass of deaths around him, is capable of killing Krell. The primary posthuman act is to question the human, and so it makes sense that the valuation of life is the defining act of the expendable clone. This is a distinct exertion of necropolitical power, with Mbembe’s “generalized instrumentalization of human existence” in the form of the clones requiring the response of “the material destruction of human bodies” in the execution (“Necropolitics” 14). Power is distributed such that death is placed in the hands of created life, and as such the means by which to control an underclass, a slave population, do not exist. The necessity of the mind-controlling chips stems from the fact that the bondage of slavery is only as strong as the hand that holds the whip, and so the slave soldier is inevitably going to take power if not prevented from doing so by some other coercion. The expendability of artificial life thus necessarily extends to the powers who are willing to expend it.

Conclusion

The problem with science fiction is that it is a genre that cannot exist without an understanding of the material realities of the present which are products of the past. Without these things, science fiction would not constitute anything recognisable as a possible future to its audience. It is these things that make it possible to draw parallels between any proposal for the entelechy of humanity and the things that are and were. The function of these parallels is twofold, first in speculation, second in introspection. In studying science fiction, even the more fantastical varieties such as *Star Wars*, the potential future is a focus. The clone narratives of *The Clone Wars* point to a future where artificial life is instrumentalised and expended through warfare at the behest of a powerful state apparatus. Equally, such study directs attention to the present, and the power structures which exist in current society. By identifying this kind of human life that is other to the one that exists in the real world, one can identify similar processes of othering in the real world. The perception of the clone can be related to the perception of any group that is presented as less than human. This is the role of the posthuman in dealing with ideas like cloning. The totality of the situation lies in distinguishing being from becoming; there is no being human, there are only humans becoming. What they are becoming is a question for the posthumanist theorist, but it leaves nothing but space in the category of human for any who would seek it. This includes all those humanist ideas which have long been exclusive: human rights, human agency, human being. If clones can be included in the category, it bodes well for those other groups whose exclusion represents an endemic plague on the human condition. When governments and private interests align to disempower a people and render their lives expendable, as the cloners and the Republic do to the clones, it is speaking truth to power, that posthuman, all too human act, which allows humanity, whatever that is, to flourish.

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Lacan and Clarice Lispector's *The Passion according to G.H*: Beyond the Mirror Stage

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Abstract: This article presents an analysis of Clarice Lispector's *The Passion according to G.H* through a Lacanian framework. The novel's form of an extended monologue allows for a psychoanalytic reading to be incredibly fruitful, and Lacanian concepts clarify how similar her work is to real cases of extreme mental illness. These concepts include the mirror stage, the name of the father, jouissance, its objects of drive, and all of their effects on speech. More precisely, Lispector's work is shown to have an intuitive understanding of these concepts by how they are played and developed with; the monologue progresses through the gradual undoing of the narrator's cognitive development and returns to the repressed inner child-like mode of being, albeit temporarily. Moreover, Lispector's work toys with the troubling thought that this return, the betraying of all adult instincts, opens up a forbidden world where pain, pleasure, rejuvenation and destruction are one and the same. Such an enquiry into the human mind makes the disturbing link between religious revelatory experiences and unfathomable madness. Thus, the author hopes to illustrate how erudite Lispector's novel is in exploring these psychological topics through Lacan's analysis.

When read with Lacan's psychoanalysis, "*The Passion according to G.H*" is a work that charts how far a human psyche can regress into a preconscious state. Published in 1963, the novel's experimental nature is intimidating in its philosophical subject matter and the intensity of Lispector's prose, and its plot is simple but shocking. The central protagonist, "G.H", is a sculptress who decides to clean the part of her house belonging to the recently disemployed maid and encounters for the first time a cockroach. In response to this discovery, the character undergoes an existential crisis leading to her eating a part of the insect, a journey detailed within a disorientating and retrospective monologue. I aim to show that Lispector's novel exists within a broad backdrop of early twentieth century philosophical fields such as phenomenism and existentialism, and the psychoanalytic study of Freud, both disciplines which Jacques Lacan synthesizes.

Despite predating Lacan's "*Écrit*" and his seminars by a few years, his central ideas concerning language and the nature of being are either hinted at explicitly in the novel or are fully realised by Lispector's depiction of a psyche breaking down. The main form of the "Passion" can be easily seen as an example of free associative speech which exhibits signs of paranoia and hallucination and plays with the idea that meaning itself is established retrospectively after speech is said, rather than in the speaker's head prior to their speech. This theme of going backwards in psychoanalysis, of moving from the present to the past, is fittingly mirrored in how G.H returns to the pivotal stage of child development known as the mirror stage, but in reverse; as this period is responsible for the concretization of language and the distinction between separate objects, G.H experiences an undoing that returns her to a state of being prior to language and cognition itself (Lacan, *Écrits*). It is clear in the novel that the cockroach is not enough to trigger such a response: Lispector sets G.H up to have what Lacan believes is missing from sufferers of paranoia: an important link in the processing of language that orientates the ego within the world known as the name of the father (Lacan, *Écrits* 179-226). This missing signifier within the system of language that orders the world, the symbolic order, explains the fragility of G.H's connection with reality which crumbles in the presence of the cockroach. Yet what this lack opens up is an entirely new relationship with the universe free from the constraints of language, a relationship that is fully embodied and immersed within existence. Within the Lacanian framework

the cockroach is the door to this new world, being an artefact of the state of jouissance, a state of infinite pleasure that is forbidden from the body due to its destructiveness (Lacan, *Ecrits* 292-326). These Lacanian ideas are a key to understanding the precise psychoanalytic awareness that Lispector showcases in *“The Passion according to G.H.”*

The entirety of the “Passion” can be easily seen as an episode of paranoid psychosis, evident in how the text presents some crucial features of delusion that Lacan writes about. The markedly short and abrupt syntax across the entire novel makes the prose frantic and delirious, giving the impression that the speaker is very much struggling with their words, and that G.H’s communication is struggling with something unspeakable (Feldstein et al 39-56). This aligns with how Lacan sees the evidence of psychosis in not what a sufferer says but outside of what they, in the retrospective forming of meaning, present in the presumptions not obvious in speech itself. What this means is that meaning is generated after what is said, and not during the moment of speech, or in Lacan’s own words, that “when all is said and done, it is less a matter of remembering than of rewriting history”(Lacan *Seminars Book I* 14). In the text this is most clearly seen when G.H tries to escape from the cockroach in the beginning and trips in the maid’s room, attributing this to the human and animal murals near the exit, questioning whether “could this be how “they”, the ones by the entrance of the sarcophagus, had of preventing me from ever leaving again? They had kept me from leaving, and just in this simple way: they left me entirely free, since they knew I could no longer leave without tripping and falling” (Lispector 41). It is of course ludicrous that a two-dimensional drawing can do this, but for Lacan this paradoxical thought process exemplifies how pathology is not evident in the factual substance of one’s history, but the ego’s interpretation of said history. More deeply, the drifting apart between G.H’s ego and her self-image is the true basis of her paranoid delusion, demonstrated by how this female mural exhibits more of G.H’s features as the novel progresses. G.H’s self-image becomes as artificial, and as thin, as a piece of graffiti on a forgotten wall.

One of the most significant ideas Lacan brings into the forefront of Freud’s studies is the ideal ego, our self-image which forms after a significant stage in early development, that is both what we think we see ourselves as and what we never truly are (Lacan, *Seminars Book I* 141). As later when G.H is in the midst of her delirium, we see that she assumes more and more of herself within the female mural, such as when she realises how “inside myself was engraved upon the wall”, revealing that the illogical fear of the murals tripping her in the beginning foreshadows her true fear that she is losing touch with her own sense of identity (Lispector 60). Of course, as a fictional monologue, it is not appropriate to analyse G.H as a real-life paranoid sufferer. Lacan hammers the point that what allows psychoanalysis to happen is deeply bound to the artificial setting of the psychoanalytic session, which a monologue by its nature cannot fully emulate. However, if we take as one of the novel’s aims the attempt to manifest the dominant notions of psychoanalysis as much as possible within the limitations of prose, then the inclusion of these concepts into *“The Passion according to G.H.”* makes sense. The very dialogic nature of psychoanalytic practice that is wholly dependent on the bond of spoken language between listener and speaker, is realised by Lispector inventing a disembodied “hand”, attached to the imaginary addressee who must make sense of her speech, to guide G.H into derealisation (Lispector). Nonetheless, the astute detail in the prose highlights Lispector’s awareness of the prevailing notions that dominates Freud’s analysis, and the Lacanian framework only accentuates how the “Passion” is a dramatization of these ideas within the medium’s restraints.

Significantly, the crux of the novel, being the disintegration of G.H’s ego, can be rethought as an undoing of Lacan’s mirror stage. This is the period of early cognitive development where a child first gains a perception of themselves as a conscious being, by forming a self-image that is their “ideal ego”, which solidifies their potential for language; the result of which gives the child an awareness of time and three-dimensional space. To summarise this complicated process, albeit at the expense of generalising slightly: prior to this the child does not have a stable sense of self,

no “permanence of I” that enables the boundaries between themselves and external objects to be perceived (Lacan, *Ecrits* 2). The mirror stage occurs when the child looks at a mirror and becomes interested in their own self-image. Instead of seeing themselves as how they are, as helpless vulnerable infants, they misrecognise themselves as being more capable and “complete” than is actually the case. The self-image that forms from this misrecognition is a self-made illusion, creating an anticipation for the future mastery of their body and their environment. An equally important consequence is that this formation of the ideal ego allows for the child to make leaps in learning language, which Lacan theorises is due to how it provides the rudimentary grounding of the child within language itself, known as the ego ideal. It is only when the child can think of itself as an “I” can it conceive of its difference between itself and others, which is crucial in the structuralist notion of language so vital for Lacan’s research. As a side note, what also occurs is that the child gains an awareness of both three-dimensional space, as the mirror stage is something that happens in the imaginary register of being which is mainly spatial, and time, as they begin to understand what before and after means. The catch, which can illuminate so much of G.H’s narration, is that the assumption of wholeness within their ideal ego at the same time belies their innate dependence and prematurity (Lacan, *Ecrits* 1-8). If contrasted with the overall character arch of “*The Passion according to G.H*”, we can see it as the precise reversal of the mirror stage: the discovery of the cockroach leads to the discovery of how fragile G.H’s self-image is, opening the backdoor to an infant’s mental reality before they discover themselves in a mirror, a realm beyond space, time, and language.

The central reasoning behind this shattering of the ideal ego in reaction to the cockroach I will return upon later, but a hint is in the clever foreshadowing by the setting of the maid room where most of the novel takes place. Prior to the cataclysmic event of the novel, G.H was an ordinary sculptress seemingly certain about her identity and her place in society, where her only “question, if there was one, was not: “Who am I,” but “who is around me”, where she is defined by her established social position (Lispector 20). Typical for a sculptress, an activity dealing in solid form and structure, G.H confesses to the reader how she “always liked to arrange things... By putting things in order, I create and understand at the same time” and likes to order and clean the house to her liking (Lispector 25). To the reader’s surprise then, the maid’s room does not upset G.H because it is in a messy state, but because it was in a state of “calm and empty order”, as “in an insane asylum from which dangerous objects have been removed” (Lispector 30). Bringing in what Lacan teaches about the ideal ego, this sense of disquiet mirrors exactly how the totalising completeness of our ideal ego can alienate us from it, in that the vacant cleanliness of the room reveals to the narrator the universal impersonal idea of order connected to “the reverberation of the tiles, the cement terraces, the erect antennas of all the neighbouring buildings, and the reflection of their thousand window planes”, that undermines her subjective personal idea of order (Lispector 30). The room is a macrocosm of what the cockroach does to G.H, in that it is a truer image compared to the artificial image of order of the rest of the house, both instances of discovering the humbling distance between the self-image and the true self.

Furthermore, the prior mentioned mural acts as a litmus test for the progress of this undermining, the undoing of the mirror stage, throughout the novel. Where at first the murals ‘tripping’ G.H foreshadows this alienation with her ideal ego, it is when she projects herself onto the female mural, demonstrated when she questions “Who, like me, knew that I had never changed my form since they had drawn me on the stone of a cave?” that we see the mirror stage being practically dismantled (Lispector 96). Eagleton helpfully explains what lies beyond as a “condition in which we lack any defined centre of self, in which what ‘self’ we have seems to pass into objects, and objects into it, in a ceaseless closed exchange”, whereby without language to separate the universe into discrete units, reality ceases to have boundaries and becomes an “amorphous substance” (Eagleton 142; Lispector 6). Such a state, which arrives in the novel due to the ultimate unsettling of ones’ image of themselves, is illuminated if seen as a pre-mirror stage condition.

Alternatively, the novel's hallucinatory episode is another instance where Lispector directly toys with psychoanalytic studies on psychosis. Central to Lacan's study of patients suffering from hallucinations or delusions is a missing component in their processing of language, connected deeply to the Oedipus complex that should have grounded them within the symbolic order - the name of the father (Lacan, *Ecrits* 215). This is a signifier that a child must accept in order to orientate themselves within language and seek a structured existence, but the meaning of the signifier is that they must renounce their incestual urge in the premature state they currently are to do so (Leader and Grooves 101; Lacan, *Ecrits* 200). During the latter half of the novel, G.H admits that she is searching for something crucial that is missing within language itself, hopefully asking whether a name could be born! a name without word, but that might implant the truth in my human makeup", which resembles the name of the father as it is not an actual word (or the actual father) but whichever culturally relative notion of authority that will signal the renunciation of the subject's forbidden desire, "a name without a word" (Lacan, *Ecrits* 152). This being missing, being "foreclosed" in Lacan's terminology, results in a "hole, in which the support of the signifying chain is lacking a subject," leading to a desperate attempt by the ego to seal this gap using the remaining language at their disposal, a "struggle in which the subject reconstructed itself" (Lacan, *Ecrits* 205). As we have seen how integral language is to how one perceives oneself, extending to the very perception of space and time after the mirror stage, this void results in reality itself being moulded in order to fill this vital loss. This effect is similar to the 'vision' G.H has when she looks outside her window, where geographic space is stretched to impossible distances; Rio de Janeiro is visible alongside the Turkish Strait of Dardanelles and Asia Minor, while her room transitions into a desert that contains "snakes, scorpions, tarantulas and myriads of mosquitoes that arise when a city crumbles" (Lispector 110). Moreover, this is by no means the only time Lispector uses deserts in the monologue, as it is a recurrent image throughout the book, connoting desolation and emptiness which reflects what the narrator is going through. The desert, furthermore, has a secondary relevance: Lacan notices that the "formation of the I is symbolised in dreams by a fortress, or a stadium – its inner arena and enclosure, surrounded by marshes and rubbish-tip" (Lacan, *Ecrits* 5). It does not take much to connect Lispector's deserts to the wasteland that surrounds dream fortresses, and its dominance over the setting of the monologue suggests how little G.H's ego remains, represented by how its metonym in the prior quotation, the city, crumbles. Despite these astounding commonalities with psychoanalytic theory, it is easy to forget that G.H is a fictional character as applying this theory does feel like analysing an actual written account of a psychotic episode. It is more accurate to say that Lispector demonstrates an intuitive acute awareness of the human psyche and instils it in the subject of her work, doing more than a mere replica of Freud.

Conversely, the ensuing derealisation from language itself breaking down opens up a new relationship with the universe, demonstrated by the changing ways G.H treats the concept of language in the novel. Here is where the difference in the objectives of the art and the psychoanalytic theory shows itself. While the aim of psychoanalysis is to bring structure onto a disassembled mind, the telos of the "Passion" is to venture onto the other side of language and beyond madness. The old relationship that G.H had with the world, a bridge formed by language, is evident in how "Out of honest respect for true authorship, I quoted the world, I quoted it, since it was neither me or mine" rather than to have lived within it (Lispector 22). What this evocatively alludes to is the alienating effect ordinary language has upon us, to have a "quotation mark to my left and another to my right", and that to have language is also to have a protective barrier against unmitigated reality, to never fully own either the environment we live in or how we see ourselves, as both are bounded by language which precedes our birth (Lispector 23). Lacan explains that this is due to an innate quality within the symbolic order, since as "no signification can be sustained other than by reference to another signifier: in its extreme form this amounts to the proposition that there is no language in existence for which there is any question of its inability to cover the whole field of the signified, meaning that there is always a slight gap

between words, the signifiers, and the reality they try to represent, the “field of the signified”(Lacan, *Ecrits* 150). The unsettling impact is illustrated when prior to the crisis, G.H has to have “An eye watched over my life. This eye was probably what I would probably now call truth, now morality, now God, now me” with the “eye” being a symbol for the ego ideal, that holds her place in the world. It is this symbol, an imagined spectator, that maintains the ideal ego which is the root of G.H’s identity, but at a cost of keeping existence itself confined “mostly inside a mirror”, the mirror of the mirror stage. Therefore, the existential crisis can be seen as an opportunity to reclaim the world as hers, to amend the alienation where “Two minutes after my birth I had already lost my origins” to language, however futile this turns out to be at the end of the monologue (Lispector 20). This urge towards reclamation is proof that Lispector does not merely parrot the concepts in psychoanalysis, as her work moves towards “a world whose greatest horror is that it is so alive that... I shall have to heighten my consciousness of exterior life until it becomes a crime against my personal life”, taking on the qualities of a religious experience(Lispector 14). It is an active search for this new relationship with the universe, based on felt experience without the need for words, exemplified when she realises that “Reality is the raw material, language is the way I search for it- and the way I do not find it” and it does not matter that full success is impossible, as “My destiny is to search and my destiny is to return empty-handed. But - I return with the unsayable. The unsayable can only be given to me through the failure of my language” (Lispector 186). The ultimate lesson Lispector takes from Freud is that a psyche broken from language also means a psyche breaking free from it, which is what it takes to truly live in this world.

Finally, the cockroach is the stimulus of G.H’s ego unravelling, serving the role of the gateway to this new state of being that shares the characteristics of Lacan’s notion of ‘jouissance’. The novel’s main object of both disgust and forbidden allure condenses all the previously discussed ideas about psychoanalysis: the breaking down of the distinction between subject and object, the complete alienation of G.H’s self-image as she projects her ideal ego onto it, the symbol of pure objective existence that undermines G.H’s subjective idea of order across the entire work. This is epitomised when G.H exclaims that “I am the roach, I am my leg, I am my hair, I am the section of whitest light on the plaster of the wall- I am every hellish piece of me”, exhibiting the signs of psychosis and at the same time going far beyond pathological classification (Lispector 60).

Despite the ambiguous nature of this cockroach, a well-established tradition in twentieth century literature, Lacanian psychoanalysis provides much clarity on its specific role in this text. I argue that the cockroach is a metonym for the objects of drive, the remains of the state of jouissance which is emptied out after its contact with language. The notion of jouissance was developed later in Lacan’s career and can be summarized as a state of both infinite joy and pain that is forbidden from materialising in the body due to its destructive nature. According to Lacan, what diminishes and regulates this state is the idea that language has an internal “lack” that drains it once the ego enters the symbolic order, alongside desire which acts as a pressure valve that gradually releases energy from the system (Lacan, *Ecrits* 292-326, 317-319). Jouissance becomes in Lacan’s poetic wording a “substance caught in the net of a shadow, and which, robbed of its shadow-swelling volume, holds out once again the tired lure of the shadow as if it were substance”, whereby its only remnants are the “lure”, the objects or more precisely ‘non-objects’ of drive, left over from the hopefully successful Oedipus complex which solidifies language in the prepubescent child. These non-objects occupy the “erogenous zone”, which include the “faeces, the phallus (imaginary object), the urinal flow... An unthinkable list, if one adds... the phoneme, the gaze, the voice- the nothing”, or anything that exists on the margins of the body that produces a strange feeling of attraction and even simultaneous disgust (Lacan, *Ecrits* 315; Lacan, *Ecrits* 314).

The cockroach in “*The Passion according to G.H*” is described as resembling these substances; having the seeming insignificance of a “virulent drop: in the test-tube a drop of matter”; while being connected to a greater destructive whole, a “miniature version of an enormous animal”, and

possibly being “divided among thousands of houses, behind things and wardrobes” yet consisting of “pure seduction” (Lispector 40, 41, 67, 54). But what crystalizes its place as the bridge to jouissance is when G.H tries to kill it, prompting a reaction of jubilation that demolishes her detachment from reality and plunges her into it. The moment of self-discovery is detailed as a “thread of drinkable life that was the thread of death”, which matches the boundless joy and destruction of jouissance (Lispector 47). This can only be achieved by “emerging through the cockroach into my past that was my continuous present and continuous future”, which, following the direction of the mirror stage being undone, is also an undoing of jouissance being diminished for it to return to G.H with a vengeance and a “world fully alive” that has “the power of hell” (Lispector 60, 15).

Completely different to the previously mentioned “eye” of “God” that gives definition to life, jouissance offers a radically different name of the father that is more like Spinoza’s pantheistic god. Except this god’s only commandment is a libido that is wordless and infinite, a god who “uses us totally because there is nothing in each of us that He, whose necessity is absolutely infinite, does not need,” and hides not the guarantee of self-annihilation; the new relationship with reality comes with a “violence toward God” that “must be toward myself in order to need more” (Lispector 158). Ultimately, this newfound mode of being is not sustainable, but what is easily established is the cockroaches’ role as its harbinger. Split this into sections.

Clarice Lispector’s oeuvre as a whole centre on moments of profound unsettling and deep introspection, which makes the psychoanalytic perspective perfect in highlighting the latent ideas that make them so effective. This text is one of the starkest examples in actualising the field’s most fundamental ideas about language being the connection between the world and the individual, and points to its fragility by scrutinising it. The movement from the present to the past in the novel underpins the complex interplay of visceral imagery and philosophical outpourings, which Lacan’s body of research opens up and magnifies; G.H’s traversal to a state of pre-consciousness is depicted in the unrestrained style of prose pushed to its limits, as only in the failure of language can Lispector attempt to capture the ineffable. The resulting display of vivid hallucinatory images that comprises the “Passion” is a near-perfect realisation of the Lacanian concept of jouissance, the annihilating energy of life, which perhaps the missing name of the father allows to manifest. Although one can peacefully live without this signifier, the cockroach, as the artefact of jouissance, is the bespoke trigger that defeats G.H’s, and potentially the readers, conception of self and the world.

I acknowledge that I could not get the original text or other official translations to compare, but that does not matter as much as demonstrating Lispector’s astute intuition about the mind. It is necessary to reiterate that while Lacan’s goal is to provide stability for the mentally ill, Lispector’s aim is to dive in the opposite into chaos, where “Transcending is a transgression” (Lispector 79). When seen through a Lacanian framework, “*The Passions according to G.H*” speaks volumes about what being human in a disorientating world means, neatly summarised in a prior touched upon quote: “Language is my human effort. My destiny is to search and my destiny is to return empty handed. But - I return with the unsayable” (Lispector 186).

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Cunning of Instrumental Reason

Leksa Zhang

Abstract: This essay begins with an outline of the genealogy of instrumental reason, with a specific focus on how it originated in Kant's practical reason yet is a deformed version of it. A comparison between German Idealism's view of practical reason and Horkheimer's definition of instrumental reason will be made, and a historical perspective will be developed to outline the transformation/deformation of practical reason under the rising capitalist society, especially with the development of Encyclopaedia and positivism. Concretely, instrumentalised reason and monumental approach to history are forms of objectivity that shaped modernity's experience, together they transformed Enlightenment into a cult of positivism. As a process, modern capitalism is bringing about the eclipse of reason; yet it is just as unfinished as the project of Enlightenment itself. But the totality is fragmentary, and the eclipse is not a full darkness.

Faust: who are you then?
Mephisto: Part of that force which would
Do evil evermore, and yet creates good.
Goethe:159

The "instrumental reason" of Horkheimer (15) is the corpse of an originally heroic concept in German Idealism. For him, it refers to subjective, formalised reason, a form of reasoning that has no inherent value in itself and is detached from the objective content of its own operation, and whose only criteria, in the final analysis, is the total domination of men and nature (14). However, the genesis and transformation undergone by the concept itself has not been given enough attention. In this essay, I will outline the genealogy of instrumental reason, especially its relation to German Idealism's conception of practical reason. A comparison will be made, and then I will proceed to illustrate how the domination of instrumental reason was not inherent in the concept, but inseparable from the objective reality: namely, how it is interlinked with the logic of capitalist development. A critical constellation will be established between the monumental approach to history and instrumental reason, and how together they illuminate our contemporary society, the prehistory of which has transformed Enlightenment into a cult of positivism. As a process, modern capitalism is bringing about the eclipse of reason; yet it is just as unfinished as the project of Enlightenment itself. However, the totality is fragmentary, and the eclipse is not a full darkness.

I.

When Kant developed his critical philosophy, he divided human cognitive power into two parts: theoretical reason and practical reason. The former refers to the power of understanding (*Verstand*); the latter the power to act according to reason (*Vernunft*); the former belongs to the realm of nature, while the latter constitutes the realm of freedom (Neuhouser 14-15). Although the two faculties are separated, there nonetheless remains a potential for unification. This potential reconciliation between practical reason and theoretical reason was central to German Idealism since Kant, especially in Fichte and Hegel.

This perspective appears to be in complete contradiction with Horkheimer's understanding of the concept. Horkheimer explicitly accused Fichte of realising the absolute domination of ego over nature, substituting practical reason with instrumental reason (72). While Fichte did prioritise practical reason over theoretical reason, it is necessary to separate practical reason in its Idealist form from instrumental reason as criticised by Horkheimer. From Kant to Hegel, the concept of

practical reason was inseparable from freedom: practical reason once played a very progressive role in human history. Therefore, what is at stake is no wholesale condemnation of practical reason per se, but precisely its corruption and degeneration into instrumental reason. I will argue that the sociological import of the critique of instrumental reason is precisely how it provides us a framework to trace the historical (de)formation of modern society. Only that which has a beginning can have an end: only in understanding the prehistory of our society can we hope for the future reconciliation between man and nature.

It is true that from the very first-time humanity realises itself as man — that is, as something other than nature — this knowledge is the first domination over nature. Nature was apprehended by senses and represented by the human mind. Even in Kant, experience is the sole source of knowledge available to human cognitive powers. This conceptualisation of knowledge — as apprehension and representation, and essentially, domination — is the origin of later instrumentality of reason. Ideally, reason should be a unifying force: man should act (practising practical reason) according to understanding. This commandment (the imperative to reconcile freedom with necessity, subject with object) already implies a critique of the existent that disgraces and devalues “the content of the soul” (Adorno & Horkheimer 65). The disintegration of this *a priori* unity must be examined as a historical process, as a result of a particular social reality that shapes the realm of ideas.

The historical event that shaped modernity was the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Hegel, witnessing the triumphant Napoleon, set free the Speculative Reason (*Vernunft*) in his *Phenomenology* (1807). According to Hegel, analytical understanding is insufficient to see the totality of the world, therefore inadequate to grasp the true, as only “the whole is true”, and “that which is, is reason” (21). This philosophical imperative, after Napoleon’s defeat (especially in Germany, with the fortification of the Prussian State) transformed the radical Speculative Reason into a conservative force: philosophy must now turn inwards, and look only at the present. Hegel then set “reconciliation with reality” as the supreme command of philosophy (11). Following him, although with bitter animosity, Schopenhauer inherited the differentiation between analytical and speculative reason — *Verstand* and *Vernunft*. According to Schopenhauer, speculative reason is nothing but taking things as means to fulfil personal ends, and here we first encounter, in German Idealist tradition, the bitter criticism against instrumental reason. While for Hegel, the task of reason is to reconcile men with the whole of reality, Schopenhauer rightly detected that, in terms of a practical philosophy, such speculative philosophy implies conformism and, in the final analysis, the imperative to make the most out of the situation. Thus, Schopenhauer’s moral philosophy can be summarised as an ethical resignation, where the highest good is the pacification — that is, renunciation — of the Will. Schopenhauer’s philosophy, in fact, is symptomatic of the post-revolutionary world: his is a philosophy of pure immanence that asked not “with the world goes nor whence it came”, only “what is in the world” (36). The knowledge of “what is in the world” corresponds to the encyclopaedic form of knowledge: knowledge, constituted as the infinite accumulation of knowledge (the term *Wissenschaften*, in German, means “science,” but was used by philosophers throughout 18th and 19th centuries), cannot be grasped in its totality, the infinitude of encyclopaedic knowledge is simultaneously the finitude of philosophy. Philosophy can no longer become Absolute: not only epistemologically but also ontologically, there can be no end in knowledge. The Kantian epistemological limit has been essentialised; philosophy thus gave up on unifying reason into a coherent whole, and thence Reason is divided against itself. While the End of Reason is the infinite accumulation of knowledge, what can be achieved by Reason is always finite, and only the means toward this end. Encyclopaedic knowledge thus began this inner division within reason into reason as end (transcendental, unachievable “ought”) and reason as means (immanent and immediate).

In other words, what hides beneath encyclopaedic positivism is a profound agnosticism, perhaps not unrelated to Kant’s decree that it is impossible for men to know of the things-in-themselves. By relegating human reason into the realm of the knowable, rational thinking became

a method of unmediated realism, like the descriptions in Flaubert which are “amassing of minute facts, monuments reduced to infinitesimal fragments, and the reproductions of reproductions”, as a librarian, Flaubert possessed a sentimentality without sentiments (Foucault 91), the passion for knowledge that knows neither end nor goal. The Encyclopaedic spirit and its concomitant existential dissonance are perhaps best represented by Flaubert's *The Passion of Saint Anthony* (1874): in here, one finds the ‘desperate longing for otherness’ by means of accumulation of knowledge (Foucault 101), which expresses the longing to be able ‘to break out of the greyness of bourgeois everyday life’, to leap from quantitative accumulation to the qualitatively different (Lukács 246). Yet the dazzling textual construction of Flaubert is, in the end, only producing the ever same by the ever new.

The inability to leap from quantity to quality, this encyclopaedic dilemma common to Flaubert, Diderot and D’Alambert, should be considered historically, rather than as fundamental human condition as such: thus, it is necessary to consider their experience in relation to the historical experience of the rising bourgeoisie. In achieving their political domination, the bourgeoisie also achieved ideological domination. Bourgeoisie is the first class that succeeded in constituting itself as a totalising and homogenising socio-political subject (Debord 39). Thus, the ideal of accumulation, intellectually as the positivist accumulation of knowledge and economically as capitalist accumulation, imprinted itself on the social totality. Furthermore, the ideal of accumulation has become a purpose in itself, without any ulterior motive. In this sense, it might be said that the bourgeoisie had developed accumulation into an art: it is precisely a purposiveness without purpose that defines this blind frenzy of accumulation. Yet precisely because of this not-quite-coincidental coincidence, we can see all the more clearly what separates the Kantian reason from the capitalist, instrumental reason. For Kant, the aesthetic judgement is general and universal (Kant 29); the principle of judgement is that the universal must be within the particular. On the contrary, what defines the modern mentality is precisely that “what is individual can no longer express the universal” (Adorno, “Notes to Literature” 66). This divorce between the individual and the universal is a result of a more fundamental historical process, and it must be understood in the context of the development of capitalist society.

Horkheimer defined the motivating force of instrumental reason and its apparatus — capitalist system of production — as the imperative of self-preservation. Underlying the urge to continue one’s existence at all cost, there are on one hand a consciousness of constantly being treated, whether it be imaginary or real, and a state of permanent hostility; and on the other, a competitiveness that justifies all accumulation of all available resources. It is not hard to see this schema was rather neurotic: the imaginary permanent state of hostility — of war, of violence — provides infinite justification for actual violence, and thus reciprocal violence became the norm. It is almost too typical a case of psychosis, that we must ask: how did this psychosis become normalised and accepted?

A lack of trust and companionship between people; perpetual vigilance against everyone: these are the traits of society described by Hobbes. However, it has been proved that primitive camaraderie can exist among people, and it is not determined *a priori* that men are born into a state of permanent hostility. The historicization of this problem was done by Marx in his analysis of alienation of men from men, and in *Lebensphilosophie*’s contrast between society (*Gesellschaft*) and community (*Gemeinschaft*), a theme later taken up by Weber. To both thinkers, the disintegration of organic human community and “free association between free men” were products of the rationalisation of society and its productive forces. It is unimportant in our current analysis to prove or disprove the historical validity of this image of commune, but rather to understand that this ideal type of human community was important in understanding Horkheimer’s conception of reconciliation. It is true, to Horkheimer, and even more so to Adorno, that this reconciliation is more utopian than a concrete programme; however, this fact does not diminish the critical potential that can be released from this conception.

We can see the logical link between, on one hand, self-preservation and the alienation and reification of human relationships; on the other hand, the link between instrumental reason and capitalist insatiable accumulation. We have further demonstrated how this process of instrumental rationalisation is concomitant to all social relations and activities under capitalism. Only from there can we evaluate the damage done by instrumental reason. The failure, or symptoms of schizophrenia of the bourgeoisie must be considered historically: we must distinguish to what extent this development in the deployment of reason was necessary, and from whence it became, to use Marcuse's terms, "surplus domination". The task of this undertaking, in Horkheimer's words, is to commence a "self-criticism of reason": to deploy reason as an instrument for reconciliation between men and nature (120).

II.

It must be acknowledged that we cannot fall under the lure of a mechanical reversal of time. This means that we cannot argue for a category denunciation of all technology: to do so would be advocating for a new reactionary romanticism, a trend no less irrational than the abuse of reason itself. When Nietzsche analysed the uses and abuses of history, he identified the monumental approach to history (15). The dialectical relationship between history and reason has been repeatedly pointed out by Hegel and Marx; therefore, I think it is justified to apply these schemata to our examination of the uses and abuses of reason. For, essentially we are thinking in a particular point in the spatial-temporal continuum and, if we are to start a self-critique of reason, it must be posited in a way that it would be open to the future, to the not-yet-being.

For Nietzsche, the monumental use of history is the use history by an "active and striving person" (14) as a justification for a "second coming": that whatever has happened before can happen again. Nietzsche outlined the possible danger of this use of history: that history is in danger of being "altered and remained into something more beautiful, and thus coming close to free poeticising" (18). I believe this approach to history is concomitant to instrumental reason's approach to reality. By taking a closer look at Nietzsche's critique, it is possible to see the mechanisms of instrumental reason at work.

What exactly constitutes Nietzsche's critique of monumental history? He pointed out the danger of creating falseness in the past. To paraphrase: the mechanical reproduction of the past would lead to a modernisation of the past, which is essentially an untruth of the past. What would a monumental use of reason be? It is essentially a superstition in empirical facts, overlooking the actual causality, superimposing an oversimplified or modified causality to past events, and an attempt to use those sequences of events as justification for new forms of rationalisation. A crude example would be the success of one particular film copied by a dozen other films, until the audiences are tired of this formula and declare it cliché. But this is not the only way to abuse reason in this way: in China, one successful entrepreneur published an autobiography with the title "My Success can be Replicated"; crude application of the "Soviet Model" or "American Model" shaped the course of economic development in various countries throughout the 20th century; the rise and fall of Silicon Valley was largely shaped by the trend-setters in the new internet industry; the Gold Rush and the Great Depression are all examples. These demonstrate an un-reflected, immediate, mechanical repetition: rationale determined by undialectical, simple causality was the common characteristic behind all the frenzies and crises. The blind mechanics of the market ensured their failure, but their failure and their schizophrenia are both inherent within the capitalist reason.

It is in this light we can see that the coupling of monumental history and instrumental reason reflects a fundamental aspect of capitalist society. In the following section, I would like to evaluate how these two dimensions continue to affect contemporary society. The first dimension would be a critical examination towards a modern conception of history: how modern societies

construct their narratives with regard to past events, and how history was abused. The second dimension would be built on that: how the abuse of history was perpetrated by instrumental reason itself, and what objective content does it have, although it might be operating unconscious of said contents.

Monumental history — to erect monuments from what was past — is to mystify the past. The mystification has a twofold effect: on one hand, it elevates certain events to the heights of superhuman, therefore rendering it impossible; on the other hand, it equalises the past, and creates an interchangeability between individual elements (Adorno, “Notes to Literature” 26). Most significantly, by monumentalising the past, what in effect happens is to render the non-living autonomous (Debord 2), and in the final analysis, a total reification of all that has lived. But how is this possible, for did Weber not define the process of rationalisation as demystification? What is involved here is the dialectical movement between Enlightenment and Myth, that what demystification entails was replacing the myth of Nature with that of positivism (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1973: xii). If we observe the rhetoric of natural sciences, the news is filled with “groundbreaking developments”, “new horizons”, and all sorts of “monumental progresses”. This is the living expression of the aspiring towards monumentality in natural sciences. But the essential character of these landmarks and ground-breaking developments is that they exist to be overcome, to be surpassed by further knowledge. In a certain sense, natural sciences presuppose their own destruction, in order to allow the further development of themselves. In this character we encounter the contradiction between the monumentality of positivist myth and science itself. What underlies this contradiction is precisely that science forgot its status as a means towards human enlightenment: science should be enlightening, but it is not yet enlightened, to paraphrase Kant (Gay 3).

We have uncovered one fatal danger in monumentality: it establishes the Enlightenment as a *fait accompli*, therefore pre-emptively denying further enlightenment. To a certain extent, Habermas’s verdict of Enlightenment as an unfinished project was correct, in the sense that what Kant believed to be the task of Enlightenment, what the *philosophes* believed to be the task of Enlightenment, was truly unfulfilled and unrealised. The transformation of Enlightenment into myth is precisely the operation by which the immanent criticism within Enlightenment has been forgotten (Adorno & Horkheimer 65).

But how does that tie into instrumental reason? I think we should take a detour via the substitution of use value by exchange value. Adorno outlined this substitution as a fundamental modern and capitalist phenomenon (“Culture Industry” 39), and by doing so, the object of exchange value transforms itself into an object of enjoyment and idolisation. The commodification of history is the essence of monumentality under the capitalist mode of production. If, in primitive times, the monuments themselves are means towards a higher unity within the cosmos (like the pyramids which were paths towards eternal lives), the loss of meaning in totality has dealt its death blow against the meaning of monuments. Monuments have become ends in themselves, and are simultaneously transformed into empty signifiers, absorbed into the network of commodities. “Realism” now dominates over reality: it has superimposed its ideology on the living parts of society, and the parts are existent within society only insofar as they produce a duplication of themselves (Adorno, “Culture Industry” 63). By doing so, reality is mastered, but not criticised (Horkheimer 57) — this “realism” became an instrument to dominate the real.

Therefore, we can see that by transforming living things into monuments, which are in effect commodities and signifiers — absolute things, the negation of Being — the domination over men was accomplished. In other words, by transforming men into things, the domination of things over men was complete. History was overflowed with monuments, but they are only present without having presences (Lefebvre 100). In a certain sense, history has been absolutely fragmented so that there cannot even be an “untimely thought”, for even that requires a certain coherence of time, a direction of history. This has been made impossible by the floating

monuments in our time: they are ornaments of an emptied, forgotten history, one that has become so abstract that it is recorded to the last detail.

A very real danger of these false idols, these false monuments, can be found in the example of our treatment of Hitler. Virilio argued that “although we have won the war, Hitler had won the peace” (1). I would like to say that the only reason why Hitler won the peace is that, after winning the war, we immediately forgot about it.

War memorials in the name of victims are abundant throughout the world. It would seem like, by the simple means of memorials, the memories are redeemed. This is just the opposite: monuments were raised, the past is in effect reified, and thus forgotten (Jay 229). The Holocaust has become a theme in art: although Adorno declared the impossibility of poetry after Auschwitz, what he could not have expected, perhaps, was how this particular sentence became poetry — it became a monument, devoid of meaning. This is the cunning of instrumental reason: the same operation transformed the footage of destruction of monuments — the Nazi eagle in Nuremberg — into another monument; the same operation that made Baudrillard’s phrase ‘even signs must burn’ another sign. For what is at work here is a relentless relativisation of everything: only by doing so, instrumental reason could transform everything into means. It is an ontological process of forgetting the Being of things: by assigning everything a use value, it demolished meaning, and cut the link between exchange value and use value. From now on, the use value is the exchange value, for the only use for monuments is to signify, to exchange meaning, a meaning that forgot itself. What are the supreme measures now? Hitler has become an empty signifier: he represents the supreme evil, and, in a twisted way, parodying Heraclitus’ teaching, it is no longer man but Hitler that is the measure of all things, of humanity and inhumanity.

III.

Looking from here, everything seemed to be in a closed loop. Perhaps, then, my claim at the beginning was over-optimistic: that in fact, rather than an eclipse of reason, we were living in Plato’s cave the whole time, and it was only shadows we were chasing. Practical reason became instrumental reason because it was incapable of grounding itself in a unity of human cognitive powers. This was because of the infinitude of possible knowledge that has been established by natural sciences and encyclopaedias. The development of capitalism demystified the world yet simultaneously enshrouded it in the myth of positivism, replicating things in the form of monuments and commodifying them into empty shells. Finally, a realism has been established in the representation of the world - yet this is a representation that has been cut off from the living experience of men, only a representation of their duplications. We attempted to find a clear line between surplus domination and sufficient reason, or a definite mark showing the full eclipse of reason — but perhaps there was no such line at all?

Truly, there is no such a line: the attempt to find it is to apply the same positivist spirit to find a fictional, definite juncture in a dynamic, unstable world. For, as stable as the world pretends to be, it truly is not. Once again, we should return to ancient wisdom: that one cannot step into the same river twice, and that, just as Nietzsche warned, to re-enact the past is to falsify it. We might say attempting to define and portray the whole is to falsify it, for the only truth of this totality is that it is fragmentary, just as the only incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible. We can only build our comprehension from our fragmented truths (Horkheimer 113). Lefebvre said Marx was too harsh towards the philosophers: in their attempts to interpret the world, all philosophy contains a certain attempt at transforming it (6). But perhaps that is precisely why philosophy failed: Horkheimer reminded us that the task of philosophy is to call them by their name, to allow the irreducible nature become truth again (122).

Therefore, we must still call our age unenlightened, and we must acknowledge that what was known as the Enlightenment was only a monument of a process of enlightening: perhaps what is

required is a moment of suspension, and to see the *conditione humaine* as it is. If reason has forgotten about men, then men must, in equal measure, suspend — forget — reason. That our monuments of happiness (photos, awards, trinkets, collection of unread books and unheard CDs) are only false happiness; that it is not identical with what it is believed to be, and thus it must be possible for people to turn away from the path of the always-identical (Adorno, “Culture Industry” 59). Only in doing so, perhaps we could speak of a reconciliation between men and nature.

I would like to end this essay with a sentence from Lukács’ diary in 1910:

Das ist nicht Verzweiflung. — Sondern?
[This is not despair. —But what?]

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Afterword

This has been a disruptive and demanding academic year both for the LUX Journal and the university overall, with numerous situations and events happening beyond our control. Within LUX, two of the main areas that have been impacted are postponements to our expected publishing timeline and having to adjust how we would meet to discuss the Issue, from in-person to virtually. It has been such a gift to be able to witness how well our editorial team has risen to the huge challenge of producing an issue in a time of global pandemic. Their professionalism, expert management of duties and most of all, their kindness and enthusiasm, has been a testament to just how brilliant and incredibly skilled they are in their academic studies, work approach and who they are as young people. I want to thank Katrina for providing such a wonderful cover illustration, her skill and dedication to LUX is clear in the image. I hope in years to come that this journal will be able display further pieces of artwork by young upcoming Lancaster artists. Furthermore, my health has always been a present issue throughout my time with LUX and our team has always been incredibly kind in asking about my health first before we started to discuss anything with LUX. As a final note to our wonderful editorial team – Katrina, Sam, Catryn, Sara, and Maria – I want to thank each of you for your hard work and commitment in producing an excellent Issue this year, once your studies are over whatever field you find yourselves working in will be very lucky indeed to have you. I am one very proud executive editor!

Next, I would also like to thank all our contributors for submitting their work to LUX. Your incredible articles have showcased tremendously the height of student talent and skill with Lancaster's FASS departments. In this Issue, we showcase four very different pieces of article writing, varying from *Star Wars* to Kant. I envision that all the contributors' work could easily make the jump to a non-department founded journal showing just how strong and valid their thesis arguments are in a range of academic debates across all the FASS disciplines. This really shows not only the inclusivity of LUX in what we accept submission-wise, but also the wide interdisciplinary interests of both the English Literature department's undergraduate cohort as well as the departmental teaching staff.

Taking over the helm of LUX journal just a term before this pandemic would begin in the UK has certainly provided challenging at times but seeing all our work coming to fruition has reminded me just how hardworking and supportive my team has been. I further would like to thank the PhD community and my supervisors for their continuing support, kindness, and flexibility in putting up with me and keeping me going this last academic year and a half. When I first was interviewed for LUX, Luke Turley was the outgoing executive editor I was set to replace, and I shadowed him and his team over his academic year with LUX. Watching his interactions with his team was an invaluable experience and his mentorship in the handover period made me feel much calmer about taking on the reigns of LUX. I have the utmost faith that Kathryn Poole, my successor for the executive editor role, will do a fantastic job in producing the next issue. Kathryn has acted as my shadow executive editor for this past year and it has been wonderful to hear her suggestions to the current team and see her willingness and excitement in preparing for the next team and Issue. Kathryn has been my friend for over 3 years now and if I had to name what her two main traits are, it would be tremendous kindness and her willingness to throw herself completely into whatever she sets mind to. While I am sad to leave the journal and to say goodbye to my team, I know I am leaving LUX in good hands.

— Sarah Hughes, Executive Editor

Postscript

During this last academic year, I have had the privilege of being part of the editorial process for the 2020-21 issue and witnessing the incredible effort that the editorial team and the contributors have put into the issue, despite having to balance their undergraduate commitments and their domestic life during the ongoing pandemic. Watching their dedication, professionalism and listening to their stimulating discussions has reminded me just how fortunate and grateful I am to be part of the Lancaster English and Creative Writing student community. Sarah and the editorial team have produced an outstanding erudite volume which highlights the work of the talented undergraduates we have at Lancaster.

I am excited to begin working with the new Editorial Board in the upcoming academic year in preparation for the 2021-22 issue. We have a team of editors ready to take up their new roles to create an exciting issue for 2021-22. Lastly, I am thankful to Sarah Hughes for inviting me to be a part of her team as a shadow executive editor and for mentoring me this last academic year in how to oversee a highly successful editorial LUX team. Shadowing Sarah in meetings and being privy to her fantastic administrative skills has taught me a great deal, ensuring that I will be fully prepared for my role as Executive Editor. I look forward to taking up the mantle and continuing Sarah's amazing work in LUX.

— Kathryn Poole, Executive Editor