

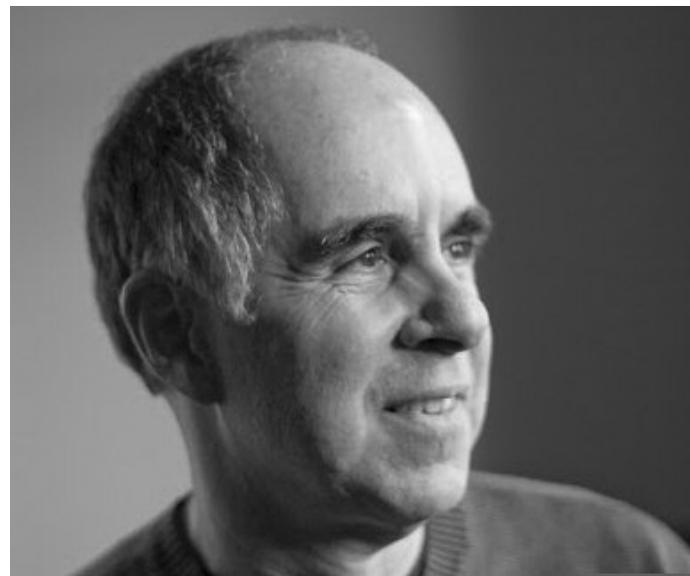
PRRB the Pacific Rim Review of Books

Issue Twenty-Six Vol. 15, No. 1

Publication Mail Agreement Number 41235032

ISSN 1715-3700

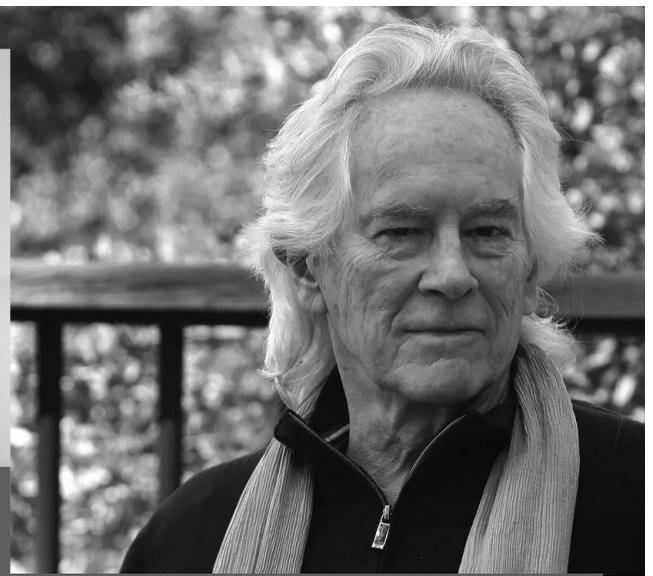
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PRRB

Pacific Rim Review of Books

Issue Twenty-six

Vol. 15 No. 1

Spring 2021

ISSN 1715-3700

Publication Mail Agreement Number 4123503

Published by Pacific Rim Review of Books Ltd.

Publisher/Editor: Richard Olafson

Managing Editor: Carol Ann Sokoloff

Editorial Assistance: Sean Arthur Joyce

Circulation manager: Bernard Gastel

Contributing editors: James Edward Reid (Ontario), Jack Foley (San Francisco), Richard Wirick (Los Angeles), Paul Falardeau (Vancouver), Gregory Dunne (Japan), Antonio D'Alfonso (Montreal), Peter McCambridge (Quebec), Colin James Sanders (Vancouver), Carol Ann Sokoloff (Victoria), Linda Rogers (Victoria), Eric Spalding (Vancouver), Stephen Bett (Victoria).

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The PRRB is published three times a year. Back issues are available at \$6.00. A one-year subscription in Canada is \$15.00 plus GST. Please send a cheque payable to the PRRB.

PRRB mailing address for all inquiries:

Box 8474 Main Postal Outlet

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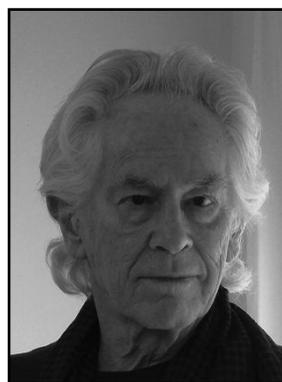
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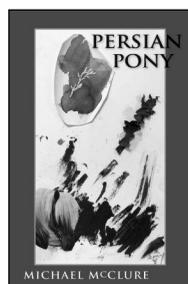
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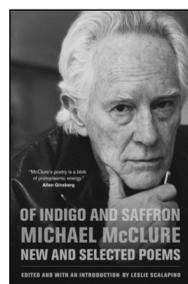
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This issue of the
Pacific Rim Review of Books
is dedicated in part
to the memory of
Michael McClure (1932-2020)
Friend of the PRRB,
a wonderful poet, playwright,
songwriter, and novelist,
he will be missed.



Persian Pony
Ekstasis Editions



Indigo and Saffron:
New and Selected
Poems
University of
California Press

HEART IS THE HORNBOOK IN MEMORY OF MICHAEL MCCLURE

John Olson

My favorite moment in Scorsese's *The Last Waltz* occurs when Michael McClure, dressed to the nines in a blazer, shirt and scarf in color-coordinated dark charcoal grey and looking every bit a romantic poet of the latter half of the 20th century, strides on stage, approaches the mike, and begins reciting the Prologue to Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*: "Whan that April with his showres soote / The drought of March hath perced to the roote..." His recitation is flawless. The words flow smoothly, with no hesitation, all pronounced in their Middle English accentuation. I love this. It's so wonderful that he chose to bring Chaucer and a celebration of spring to a rock concert celebrating the pilgrimage of a band at the end of its journey—in this case, *The Band* – and the end of an era, a decade of protest, consciousness-expansion, quixotic elation and bacchanalian conviviality. McClure wasn't the only poet to read during this concert – there were also readings by Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Diane di Prima – but McClure's presence and choice of Chaucer symbolized more than a tribute to the San Francisco Poetry Renaissance of the 50s and early 60s and the flowering of a newly awakened consciousness that was linked synergistically with the vibrant emergence of psychedelic rock, it was a salutation to the richness of the English language and its enduring vitality. McClure was sharing an essential feature of language and poetry; he was drawing attention to its aliveness, its dynamic combinatory alchemies, chimeric delicacies and appetite for change, for innovation.

Language is a living organism and no one appreciated that more than McClure. He discovered its essential biology in its patterns and structures, its movements and tactility, its intellectual élan and propagative éclat, its paradoxical synergism of organization and disorganization, what McClure liked to refer to as a "systemless system":

To create poetry one must have a system – or an antisystem, or a systemless system. A systemless system is one that alters itself in the waves with a living anarchism – like the evolution through scores of millions of years of the Portuguese man-of-war and other colonial coelenterates, or the migration systems worked out by the bison or the wildebeest. Each individual's actions and patterns are a recapitulation of the old deep patterns in the meat.

Fun fact about the Portuguese man-of-war: it's not a jellyfish. It's a siphonophore, a colony of organisms called polyps or zooids, merged together in a tentacled mass. It looks like a poem. McClure's poems, translucent organisms whose center-justified lines looked like tentacular limbs spreading from a central spine as if eager to take wing in the mind or float – drift – are embodiments, enactments of intellectual inquiry and exploration.

It's pertinent that *Specks* – a collection of McClure's work from 1985 and reprinted in 2012 by Talonbooks – carries a blurb from Nobel Laureate Francis Crick, the British molecular biologist who co-authored the academic paper proposing the double helix structure of the DNA molecule and who – with colleagues James Watson and Maurice Wilkins – was jointly awarded the 1962 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine "for their discoveries concerning the molecular structure of nucleic acids and its significance for information transfer in living material." "What appeals to me most about [McClure's] poems," wrote Crick,

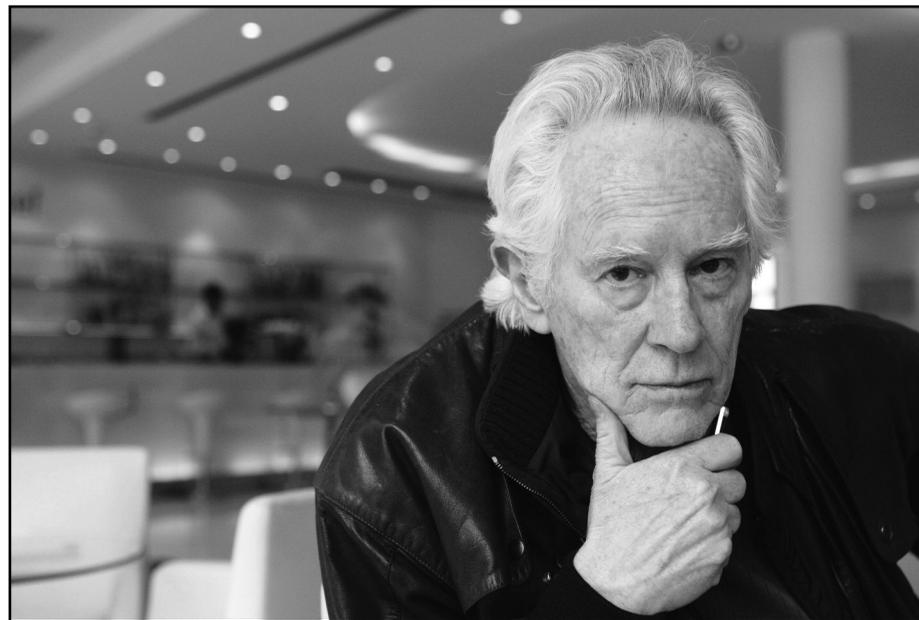
...is the fury and the imagery of them. I love the vividness of his reactions and the very personal turns and swirls of the lines. The worlds in which I myself live, the private world of personal reactions, the biological world (animals and plants and even bacteria chase each other through the poems), the world of the atom and molecule, the stars and the galaxies, are all there; and in between, above and below, stands man, the howling mammal, contrived out of 'meat' by chance and necessity. If I were a poet I would write like Michael McClure – if only I had his talent.

McClure inscribed a copy of *Specks* to me with a poem, carefully written in black ink:

Anarchy is the High.
The systemless system.
A
PELICAN
S
K
U
L
L
Is
SOLID
LIGHT

I don't know whether this poem was written especially for me (what an honor that would be!) or if it's from another collection. But what a great poem! It consolidates all the significant features of McClure's poetry, and ends in a burst of light. "SOLID LIGHT." The poem is a luminous bulb of photonic rhetoric, a delicate skull on the palm of my imagination. The pelican is notable for its pouch, which it uses to scoop up water full of fish and press against its chest to let the water out and let the fish slide down its throat. The pelican skull, along with its absurdly long beak, is a peculiar looking object. Ornithologist Elliott Coues wrote that a bird skull is a poem in bone and its architecture is frozen music. Bird skulls are extremely light and thin but also very strong. Their strength is in their density, a lightweight airframe with pneumatized spaces, materials that have high strength-to-weight ratios. Which is precisely how I see poetry: lightweight airframes maximized for flight.

I can't remember precisely when I first became aware of Michael McClure and his poetry. He'd been one of the readers at the legendary Six Gallery reading in 1955 along with Allen Ginsberg, Philip Lamantia, Philip Whalen and Gary Snyder, but I didn't learn about that until much later. I do remember quite vividly spending an



Michael McClure

entire afternoon and night wandering around the Haight-Asbury district in late July, 1966, an odyssey of psychedelic splendor, a crazy mélange of head shops, greasy spoons and buskers. It was carnivalesque and utopian and outrageously eccentric. The ambiance was one of jubilation. It was easy staying up all night walking, talking, taking in the sights. People offered me food and shelter. Everyone exuded charm and amiability. Early in the morning, I found myself in the Fillmore District. It was a lovely Bay Area morning with caressing breezes from the Pacific, the sfumato of mists softening the buildings and streets and conferring a dreamlike haze on the commerciality of the district, and there in the big red letters on the marquee of the Fillmore



Michael McClure

Auditorium was written *The Beard*, A Play by Michael McClure. And I remember then knowing who McClure was, and that he was one of the guiding lights of this phenomenal energy I'd spent the night wandering around in. He was a firebrand and a shaman, a prince of poetry with a gentle voice that sometimes roared and spoke to lions.

I didn't actually meet Michael until many years later, in 1995. We'd both attended The Recovery of the Public World Conference – a tribute to poet Robin Blaser on his 70th birthday – and we'd seen one another there. Consequently, when I saw him again several days later in Seattle at the Elliott Bay Bookstore, we recognized one another and said hello. He was there with poet Ted Joans who – coincidentally – was staying in a house a few blocks away from our apartment in one of Seattle's prettier neighborhoods. My wife and I would spend a lot of time getting to know Ted and his partner Laura Corsiglia.

It wasn't until my good friend Paul Nelson hosted a reading for Michael in the Columbia City Theater (Columbia City is a neighborhood in south Seattle) that I really got to know the guy. The next night Michael gave a talk to a group of people in the basement of the Columbia City Theater. It was a hugely inspiring talk and covered a lot of ground. He spoke about what he considered his sources (he didn't like the word 'influence'), poets William Blake and Shelley and Keats and Isidore Ducasse, a.k.a. Le Comte de Lautréamont, whose bizarre, incendiary novel of prose poetry – *Les Chants de Maldoror* – was a primary influence on the liberating work of the French Surrealists. He spoke about ending our war with nature, rediscovering our essential mammalian being, and the notion of poetic praxis as an alchemical laboratory, a place where transmutations and a reshaping of the mind can occur. I remember in particular a story he related about Goethe dropping by to visit Friedrich Schiller, who was out, and waited for him in his study. He sat down at Schiller's desk to jot down a few notes and noticed a lingering odor – piquant and sweet – stimulating his olfactory in a strangely engaging way. It seemed to be emanating from a drawer in Schiller's desk. Goethe opened the drawer to find a bunch of rotten apples. The odor was so overpowering it made him light-headed. He asked Charlotte – Schiller's wife – about the apples and she told him Schiller put the apples there and let them rot intentionally. The aroma inspired him. He was unable to work without its aid.

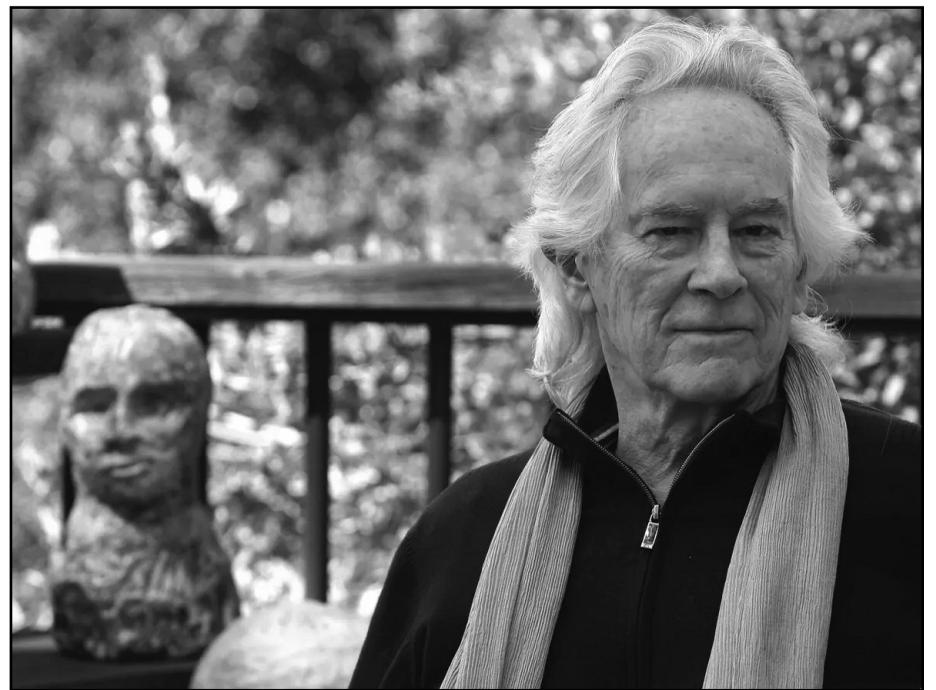
This story is quintessential McClure. Michael enjoyed the work of the surrealists (poet Philip Lamantia was a mutual friend) but rarely dipped his pen in the surrealist bottle. McClure's poetry arose from a deep animal bond with the natural world. His imagery was a bouillabaisse of lipids and deer hooves, a constellation of shoe soles and earthworms, emerald genomes, creaking floorboards and the scent of decayed apples in a desk drawer. His poetry evinces the keen intellect and seditious instincts of Shelley with the exquisite sensuality of Keats. He is a master of subtlety. His poetry is a profusion of those parenthetical moments – those interstices in the daily grind – when the pressures of obligation loosen and another awareness takes over, a deeper cognition of

the myriad phenomena in our sensorium. I feel a permission to enjoy the fullness of being when I read these works. They become incandescent, I feel the heat and pulse of the words, their syllables mingling in protozoan suspension, pyramidal masses impounding the scuffle of feet in a crowded room and bringing us into a fecund silence where the open field of the poem is "vibrant with the delicate wildness in all life."

"The senses are hungers," he wrote in one of his poems. "Liberation is physical. Everything I touch is spread through me and reverberates." Let go of the mind and its sullen ruminations and let the universe rush into you, he seemed to be saying. Become a patriot of the particular. Intrude on your being. Interrupt your busy dialogues and open to the tartness of the olive, that vegetable eyeball and its shameless transmission of Mediterranean butter.

Michael had an extremely generous nature. The longest conversations I've ever had on a telephone I enjoyed a number of times with Michael. We shared a keen interest in French poet Arthur Rimbaud and a fascination with the southwest outlaw Billy the Kid. I'd written a fanciful novel called *Souls of Wind* in which Rimbaud comes to the United States in the 1880s, travels west to New Mexico where he encounters Billy the Kid and they enjoy a friendly rapport. I sent Michael the book, which he liked tremendously, and told me he'd read parts of it to the composer Terry Riley. That's a bit of information I'm very happy to take to the grave with me.

It's hard believing someone is dead when you're reading their words and taking in their thoughts and perceptions. This is especially true when you can remember the sound of their voice, their inflections and rhythms. Michael had a beautiful speaking voice. But he could also roar: there's a video available on YouTube in which Michael reads poetry to a group of lions at the San Francisco zoo, and at the point where he repeats the guttural 'graharrrr' the lions become visibly agitated, not necessarily angry, but excited, "hey, there's a familiar cat-animal-man-being roaring at us. WTF!?!?"



Michael McClure

I can't help but wonder what Michael made of the current pandemic before he passed. I wonder if he had some of the thoughts I've had about Covid-19, that sinister little particulate with its bristle of protein spikes, causing it to closely resemble the sea mines used in WWII. But is it that sinister? It's ridiculous to impute intentionality to an inorganic particulate not much larger than an electron, but you have to wonder if this isn't part of a mechanism the planet uses to clear away an organism that has gone completely insane with its rapacious appetites and destruction and facility for reproduction. I can't really speak for Michael, but I'm pretty sure he would've agreed with me in thinking our capitalist obsession with infinite growth is totally psychotic.

What can one do in the midst of all this madness? "Absorb the beautiful systems. Blueberries in darkness and the light of stars."

I've never eaten food in darkness. I should try it. It might offer a way out. Or a way in.

John Olson is the author of numerous books of prose poetry, including *Weave of the Dream King*, *Dada Budapest*, *Larynx Galaxy* and *Backscatter: New and Selected Poetry*. *Mingled Yarn*, his fifth novel, was published by Ekstasis Editions in 2020.

THE SEARCHING HEART: ADIEU DEREK MAHON

John Wilson Foster

Derek Mahon's death in October reduces to one the trio of contemporary Ulster poets who triple-handedly created for a time the first admired school of Northern Irish poetry. There had been Northern Irish poets before, of course, and have been since, but no cohort had combined precocious merit with a tight age-group identity: only two and a half years separated the births of the three poets.

The convergence was due to the Northern Ireland government's Education Act of 1947. That year was in time for Mahon (b. 1941) and Seamus Heaney (b. 1939), both of modest background, to be given free grammar school and then university education. Without that Act it is highly unlikely that Mahon or Heaney would have become poets. Heaney would probably have become a small farmer, Mahon an apprentice in a Belfast engineering firm, his father and grandfather having worked in Harland & Wolff, the giant shipbuilders that built the equally giant *Titanic*. Both poets were the first generation of "graduates" of the Act, the first discharge of mentored talent that hitherto would have gone unrecognised and unblossoming. Michael Longley (b. 1939) would probably have gone in any case to Royal Belfast Academical Institution, a famous Belfast school newly accessible to bright, exam-passing pupils like Mahon and where the latter first published poems, in the school magazine.

And like Longley, Mahon then went over the border to Trinity College Dublin, an Oxbridge-type remnant of English rule; students from Ulster (all Protestants back then) lost their distinctive dialect at Trinity. Heaney graduated instead (as I did) from the red-brick, i.e. provincial, Queen's University Belfast where, however, he found inspiring lecturers from England and after graduation found the encouragement of the English poet and critic Philip Hobsbaum (as I did in critical theory when Hobsbaum was my thesis supervisor). All three poet-graduates were members of The Group, Hobsbaum's weekly interactive poetry seminars, and although Mahon later downplayed Hobsbaum's contribution, Hobsbaum's candid tutelage surely toughened these budding poets as well as helping to provide an English greenhouse for their blooming. Mahon's *Night-Crossing* (1968), *Lives* (1972), *The Snow Party* (1975) and *The Hunt by Night* (1982) were published by Oxford University Press, just as Heaney was published through his whole career by Faber & Faber (London) and Longley has been by Jonathan Cape (London).

These high-powered launches must have given an edge to the rivalry in a friendship that was really something of a coterie. Through letters and meetings, each knew what the others were writing and how they were faring and developing. And rivalry is a binding as well as divisive state of affairs. I was at a publisher's party in Dublin thrown to celebrate Heaney's Nobel Prize. Late, Mahon announced himself by saying "Well, it seems anyone can win the Nobel Prize these days" - an ice-breaking joke, of course, but Heaney had won the ultimate accolade and the apprentice days of yore must have reproachingly swum into his mind.

The "Ulster Renaissance" as it was called, with some forgivable hyperbole, and spearheaded by the trio of poets, acquired a tauter convergence by the civil disorder in Northern Ireland. Longley has irritably disavowed any inspirational impact of "the Troubles" (i.e. of violence, to which he has a deep moral revulsion), and of course there was historical coincidence at work. Heaney's first real volume, *Death of a Naturalist*, appeared in 1966, Mahon's *Night-Crossing* in 1968, Longley's *No Continuing City* in 1969. The first overtures of real trouble in Northern Ireland were heard in Belfast in 1966, the serious gunfire and bomb explosions made their horrific debut in 1969. This was a conjunction that each of the poets must over decades have pondered: what would my poetry have been like had the Troubles not happened?

Oddly enough, since the poets' work was maturing as conflict erupted, the *fact* of exceptional poetry being written out of philistine Northern Ireland was itself an oblique answer to a question that wasn't actually (in my recollection) being asked at all: Where are the war poets? The exhilaration of the poetry suddenly in our midst was somehow confused with the deplorable exhilaration of the conflict. The question wasn't being asked because the sordid violence wasn't dignifiable as war. Moreover, "Where are the war poets?" was an English question asked by some during the Second World War when the dearth of poetry of the quality of the best Great War poetry became evident. The dignity of the desiderated poetry implied a chivalrous holdover of manly battlefields, though of course Wilfred Owen and Isaac Rosenberg gave the lie to that while nevertheless achieving a dignity of response even with their imagery of



Derek Mahon

blood and brains

As it happens, poetry of *The Years of Disgrace* (as I prefer to call the Troubles) was being written by Padraic Fiacc (b. 1924) and James Simmons (b. 1933), if one thinks that war poetry demands candour, anger, and immediacy. Simmons' second wife was the sister of the Derry poet Michael Foley (b. 1947) whom I remember terming Heaney, Longley and Mahon "the tight-ass trio". If Longley is an admirer of British Great War poets, especially Edward Thomas, and Heaney was an admirer of Wilfred Owen, in both cases it was the poet *qua* poet that was uppermost in their admiration. The fraternity of the trio may well have encouraged a preoccupation with form, since their juxtaposition encouraged a shared apprenticeship to craft and tradition. These were three of the most accomplished versifiers in the islands. Perhaps Foley thought that a formal addiction during civil commotion was a kind of anal-retentiveness, or perhaps that a coterie was itself a tight-ass state of affairs.

Northern Ireland society was in freefall during the 1970s, yet the extraordinary thing about the early verse of Mahon, Longley and Heaney was the equanimity of the speakers. This entailed a certain measured obliviousness to the social formlessness around them. Perhaps this was a function of their third-level education which requires a concentrated self-preoccupation. This equanimity is especially the case with Mahon whose speaker is assured, sceptical and occasionally superfluously eloquent. The obvious poetic forebear is the Ulster poet Louis MacNeice (b. 1907), who is extolled in Mahon's early "In Carrowdore Churchyard". MacNeice inspired Longley, too, and also Paul Muldoon (b. 1951), perhaps bequeathing to the latter among other things a Mahonesque attitudinal escape route from the binary prison of Northern Irish life - mock-pedantry, wit, nonpartisanship.

Heaney's own escape route was not just formal accomplishment and versatility (as well as a Harvard professorship, fame, and the travels that fame invites) but excavation of the origins of the violence going on around him. He dug to get to what he thought might be the truth. Like Mahon, he showed Northern Ireland a pair of heels (they both settled in the Republic) but not, like Mahon, a clean pair of heels: Heaney was wearing his mud-caked Mossbawn and Bellaghy boots when he left. Unlike Mahon and Longley, Heaney was a Catholic, and a Catholic from the country moreover, where that kind of identity was as well-preserved as otherwise perishable objects in bogs. These identities lay beneath education, camaraderie, and literary coterie. Both species of origin came into reluctant play and it became clear that his own precursor was rather the rough-edged Ulster countryman Patrick Kavanagh (b. 1904) than the urbane MacNeice, however much Heaney consciously pursued and analysed the craft of poetry. And before the Catholicism - old enough to be sure - were the pagan belief systems. Northern Ireland's violence, he decided, was re-enacting rituals traceable to the elder faiths of the European North. Interestingly, Ciaran Carson (b.1948), a Belfast poet who like Longley stayed through thick and thin, found Heaney's delving a kind of evasion, a way of letting our terrorists and assassins off too lightly - indeed, a kind

(continued on page 32)

RECKONING UP ROBIN BLASER

Trevor Carolan

Robin Blaser holds a particular place in Pacific coast literary annals. As David Herd's introduction observes, while resident in Berkeley-San Francisco he "participated in an important post WW II literary flowering in the U.S."; and after migrating to Vancouver in 1965 to teach at Simon Fraser University, he emerged as a leading figure for decades in the city's poetry and intellectual life. Miriam Nichols, the foremost scholar of Blaser's work and his former student, notes her book's intention is to "weave together three narrative lines...Blaser's personal story, his social context, and his ventures in poetry." As Herd again comments, it is also a "biography of a poetic practice."

Born in Denver in 1925 and raised in Idaho, through his mother and grandmother Blaser was deeply influenced by Catholicism and its devotional nature would underscore his literary and philosophical journeying. By high school he was writing early poems inflected with sensitivity toward the sacred and a dawning ecological awareness. To this he would bring an appetite for French language and culture. For a time he worked in men's haberdashery where, evidently, homoerotic inklings were also dawning, although as Nichols writes these could not then be openly expressed.

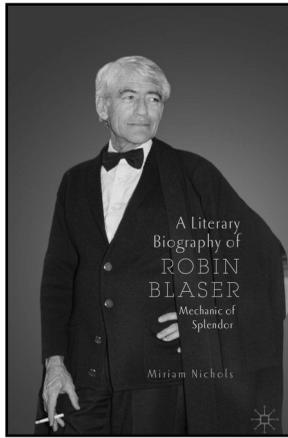
Blaser headed to Berkeley University in 1944. It was an opportunity he wrote in a letter "to find [his] sexual form." It proved revelatory, but after an awkward love interest and recurrent bouts of the clap he determined that he was getting something wrong and gave up on sex "for quite a while." While moving through the bohemian underground however, he met Jim Felts, a student in the hard sciences and they remained a couple from 1945-1964.

Nichols records that at this time Blaser was "deeply rooted in classic American literature—Hawthorne, Poe, and Dickenson." In searching for artistic and cultural knowledge he also became aware of the Bay Area's literary scene with its presiding characters—Kenneth Rexroth, Robinson Jeffers, Henry Miller, and William Everson. Readings in *Horizon* journal exposed him to its publisher Cyril Connolly's remarkable stable of contributors—Auden, Eliot, Virginia Woolf, Dylan Thomas, Paul Bowles, Christopher Isherwood and others. Then he met an oddly attired fellow:

...I open the door, and there is a mysterious man with a moustache, dark glasses, a trench coat, sandals, and his feet painted purple for some incredible reason—it turned out later that it was purple gentian for athlete's foot...it's Jack Spicer.

Spicer gigged as a minor sleuth and felt this was appropriate dress for a detective. He introduced Blaser to poems by Robert Duncan and an exciting milieu of new friendships opened with Blaser's reading conspectus expanding accordingly, roping in Lorca, Pound, Gertrude Stein, and Joyce. His association with Duncan, Spicer and their associates brought forward a "potent mixture of sexual adventure, *mythopoesis*, and critical battle." This, Nichols relates, with the addition of Berkeley lectures by Dante scholar and cultural historian Ernst Kantorowicz offered Blaser a way to rethink religious feeling at a time when his Catholicism was quavering.

Blaser took four years to complete his M.A., by which time a number of his close chums in what we now call the Berkeley Renaissance were already departing for new intellectual climes. Among them, Duncan was already contemplating his "grand collage" poetic response and Spicer, with whom he grew notably close, was working toward his long "serial poem" idea that he regarded in the fashion of a newspaper's ongoing weekly cartoon strip. As the junior poet of the trio, Blaser



A Literary Biography of Robin Blaser
Miriam Nichols
Palgrave MacMillan
2019



Robin Blaser

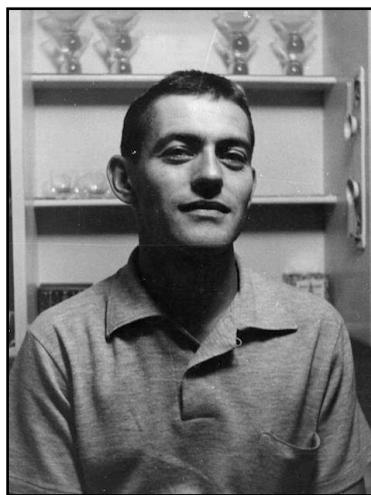
remained in awe of his confrères, yet as Nichols confirms "neither Spicer nor Duncan could have written "Song in Four Parts for Christ the Son" (republished in *The Holy Forest* as part of "Lake of Souls"). If it draws on his Catholic upbringing the poem, she remarks, it is "a first step toward later meditations on one of the big themes of his *oeuvre*: the sacred as a dimension of lived experience."

In 1955, Blaser embarked for a position at Harvard's Widener Library. The next four years in Boston, Nichols asserts, would prove "the most eventful in terms of his development as a poet." He was successful as a research librarian and he was seen as a coming administrative talent. Off-hours he dedicated himself to sharpening up the aesthetic refinements in his quality of living which would later be notable during his long years in Vancouver. Literary hours were spent absorbing the new poetry of Black Mountaineers—Charles Olson, Denise Levertov, Robert Creeley—as well as bright sparks like Michael McClure, Frank O'Hara, and "the Boston boys"—John Weiners and others. Whereas Spicer, who also tried an east coast sojourn, had a knack for alienating others with slovenly personal manners and an abrasive interpersonal style, Blaser showed a talent for cultivating community and immersing himself in the creative juices of the moment. In this manner, through Weiners and others, he acquired knowledge of literary journal production and editorial know-how.

Nichols punctuates her biography with penetrating commentary, demonstrating how Blaser's Boston years were the forge in which he mongered his concerns with desire, the unconscious, language, consciousness, and surrealism. A poet-scholar aesthete of dense capacity, he felt compelled to read and keep up with the latest intellectual currents and the Widener library was ideal for this. Now in his early thirties, Blaser was synthesizing the voice of his education, his extensive depth readings, and the influence of his mentors in emerging as his own theoretician. Comfortable and able to hold his own among presences such as John Ashbery, Allen Ginsberg or LeRoi Jones, increasingly he was able to define what Nichols presciently terms the polarities in his work—"the strange in the familiar, the Other in the same." Unsurprisingly, we learn that he was engaging with Yeatsian poetics, the dancer and the dance. Nichols includes a revealing moment from 1957 when after being tapped by editor Don Allen for inclusion in the historic second edition of the *Evergreen Review* featuring San Francisco area poets, Blaser's "Hunger of Sound" was bumped in favour of Ginsberg's "Howl." It left him in a fury. In a sign of Blaser's capacity to forgive however, (or street-smarts) within a few months Blaser was still able to join Allen in making a visit at Gloucester to the self-appointed boss of the New American Poetry, Charles Olson. It began a significant critical comradeship.

As Nichols has it, "Hunger of Sound", the poem sidelined by *Evergreen Review* is "a launching pad" for Blaser's epic serial poem with which he is synonymous, *The Holy Forest*. In its final section, she says, the poem resolves "'the orchard' of childhood memory, the trees of Dante, and the long years of self-doubt about being a poet," declaiming:

*I said:
My emblem became a tree. Stood*



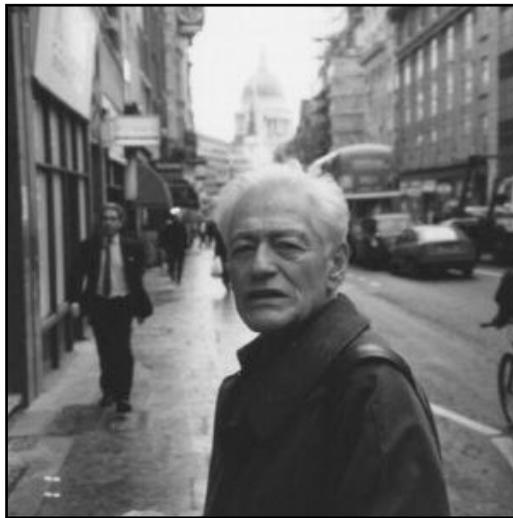
Robin Blaser

*Tall and could both bend and straighten...
This is a gesture. The words stopped
there—part of the forest. (HF, 25)*

Blaser was back in San Francisco by 1959. Its North Beach literary district was agog with Beatmania and non-Beat poets were in a huff. The Spicer-Duncan circle that Nichols diplomatically describes as “practiced in oppositional dynamics” continued apace and included newbies like Ebbe Borregaard and Joanne Kyger. Another affiliate, George Stanley, introduced Stan Persky, a 19-year old navy boy “looking for love and poetry.” Within a few years Blaser wrote Don Allen claiming, “I fear I’ve thrown myself into this Persky thing headlong, as if there were nothing else.” The difference in their ages and emotional barometers did not endear them to a number of Blaser’s old friends, but this same period saw Blaser produce some of his most memorable writing, including the first of the *Image-Nation* poems and *Cups*, a Blaserian hymn to Amor, “human potentiality,” and intellectual radiance—all would become further defining particulars of *The Holy Forest*. His poetry gang pals could be a competitive, ratty mob and carped at his progress, with Duncan commenting in 1967 how, “Blaser as an artist aims at signature or style; I aim at meaning.” Relations between the two would never be the same.



Robin Blaser in London in 1959



Robin Blaser in London in 1996

Parenthetically, Nichols records that in June, 1965, Spicer, Blaser and Persky “took a bus to Vancouver to read, with Blaser babysitting Jack’s brandy habit all the way...” Despite downing a bottle-a-day of the hard stuff, Spicer delivered his still-remembered *Vancouver Lectures* at the home of Ellen and Warren Tallman. Despite his wrecked constitution, Spicer had studied Linguistics and received an invitation to teach at the new Simon Fraser University. “Spicer was quite incapable of holding down a faculty position at this point,” Nichols says. “It unintentionally opened the door to SFU for Blaser later on.”

Within a month Spicer collapsed. “Taken by strangers to the poverty ward of the San Francisco General Hospital,” he died of acute alcoholism. Though not explicitly stated why, Nichols notes that by August “a stressed-out Blaser was undergoing psychiatric examination.” By September he accepted a one-year appointment as Lecturer with the English department at SFU.

Nichols offers an excellent chapter on “Vancouver in the Sixties” placing the cultural impulse of what was then a much smaller town within a reader-friendly context. Personalities, its intertwined literary and artistic scenes, and the intellectual streams of an important countercultural period are established in detailing the *mise en scène* that awaited Blaser and Persky who would shortly follow. Warren Tallman’s innovations at UBC and the coterie of Vancouver writers he gathered and encouraged have been written about before, as well as the non-academic downtown poets and the triangulation lines between all of them and the city’s ancillary cultural scenes. Blaser would make accommodation with these and with the ideas of the late sixties as they evolved into the French psychoanalytically-steeped *mélange* of critical theory universities would devour in the seventies and later as postmodernism. SFU’s early political woes get an airing, as does Blaser’s performance in the classroom: his teaching method “was to present context as explanation,” Nichols describes from her sources, and text “was part of a conversation between the discourses operative in a given historical time and space. The meaning of a work depended on its place in that conversation.”

In the self-consciously dowdy world of academics, Blaser had epicurean style and charisma. He’d arrived with a *story*, and had travelled and jammed with the big boys

in the new American poetry. Committing the academic *faux pas* of becoming popular, his classes were packed. “Like Pound,” Nichols assesses, “he ransacked the past for items of present use in his lifelong effort to construct a response to the events of his times.” If students were charmed, not all colleagues were. Nor were all students. Blaser was openly gay. Citing Maria Hindmarch, Nichols notes “some of the male students around him later reported discomfort with the “pressure” to tolerate gay flirtation.” He incited opinion and few were unmoved.

Blaser willingly took part in “the making” of SFU, and his role in the development of the Centre for Studies in Creative and Performing Arts is addressed. As a result he advanced rapidly through promotional ranks. Simultaneously, he maintained his role as poet and launched *Pacific Nation*, a small literary magazine, publishing Olson, George Stanley, Gerry Gilbert, Karen Tallman, and others, including an excerpt by Richard Brautigan from *Trout Fishing In America* showing that he knew what was happening. Short-lived, its second edition included his essay “The Fire.” Yet as his twin professional lives deepened, “his personal life was falling apart.” He and Persky split.

Considering the generational nature of the times, Nichols observes how during the 1970s, as Canadian arts academics welcomed European theory, they engaged even more forcibly in bringing redress to the traditional secondary role of Canadian literature. Although Blaser acquired Canadian citizenship in 1974 and maintained an active profile in researching and commenting on Canadian writers, once CanLit came in vogue among nationalist-minded writers, critics and teachers, his “San Francisco and Black Mountain connections ... worked against him for the rest of his professional life at SFU.” This confined his reputation; his accomplishments notwithstanding, “it would remain modest throughout his life.” He befriended generational voices such as Louis Dudek, George Bowering, Sharon Thesen, Steve McCaffrey, Erin Moure, Brian Fawcett, and bp Nichol. In Vancouver circles he was a Parnassian figure.

Nichols previously edited Blaser’s master collections *The Holy Forest* and *The Fire*, and the last section of the biography details his continued literary production. In 1977, he met his life-partner David Farwell, and shared purchase of a Kitsilano house with Ellen Tallman, an old friend from Berkeley days. He retired early with a golden handshake from SFU in 1984 and in aging troubadour style spent his remaining years collecting and refining his oeuvre, touring and reading in support of it. He still had things to say, including appreciative long poems in honour of “Great Companions” Robert Duncan and Dante, whose panoramic vision of life saw Blaser through his own big vision projects.

Honours followed—the Order of Canada, the Griffin Prize, a Vancouver conference in his homage, an honorary doctorate from SFU in 2009 shortly before the end. He rests in Fraserview Cemetery, New Westminster. Nichols is a serious scholar, so expect some deep-water paddling through late-twentieth century literary theory in her fastidiously researched and exhaustively documented accounts. Blaser’s life, as Nichols convincingly illustrates, makes the argument that it is indeed possible to work creatively and consolidate a meaningful life in one’s art, and gain renown for this without reporting to kitsch, ass-kissing, or the casting couch. Readers of *New American Poetry/Black Mountain/Beat Lit* will find a rich harvest in this comprehensively executed biography of a poet who with his layers of erudition could still pose challenges even to poets of great stature.



Robin Blaser in West Vancouver in the 1970s



Robin Blaser at home in 1984

Trevor Carolan is the International Editor of PRRB.

REDRESS FOR B.C.'S UNHERALDED ARTISTS

Natalie Lang

Set between fiery sunsets and expansive white moons, among the scent of early spring mornings, and the crispness of a young winter snow, are often other lesser known days and moments that are just as, if not more in many ways, remarkable. Yet, for one reason or another, they fail to launch themselves into a lasting collective memory.

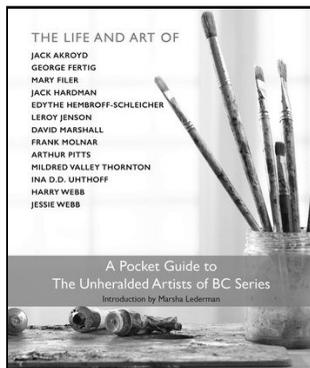
Art is one of those subjective wonders where despite time, study, or talent, some artists fail to imprint on a population and win the respect and observation their merit deserves. What is that elusive element contributing to this phenomenon? Through well-researched biographies, art exhibition lists, and images of their work, *A Pocket Guide to the Unheralded Artists of BC Series*, seeks to provide a snapshot of the lives of thirteen Vancouver-based artists whose work chiefly in visual art (roughly spanning between 1900 and 1980), has been largely overlooked. With this book, editor and compiler Mona Fertig provides an argument for a more fitting, deserved public recognition of these artists based on the many representative works included here that are drawn from collections produced in their time.

This series guide is a brief and direct account of a larger and more comprehensive collection of books individually dedicated to each artist. Along with a poignant introduction from Marsha Lederman, Western Arts Correspondent for the *Globe and Mail*, Fertig has successfully captured the lives of BC artists whose art never quite developed the *aura* required for local or Canadian star status. However, through this text of alternative artistic history, there is now a chance for their artistic redemption and a rediscovery of a group of worthy, talented artists who may yet be recognized for their work.

The artists featured include Jack Akroyd, Mary Filer, Jack Hardman, Edyth Hembroff-Schleicher, Leroy Jensen, David Marshall, Frank Molnar, Arthur Pitts, Mildred Valley Thornton, Ina D.D. Uthoff, Harry Webb, Jessie Webb, and Fertig's own father George, who was the inspiration for Mother Tongue's original series of ten books. As is illuminated in the guide, each produced an astounding amount of high-quality work created through skill, innate talent, art education, close friendships with other well-known artists, the experience of their own exhibitions, through teaching, local and global travel, and life circumstances. Yet, their names and work often went unacknowledged.

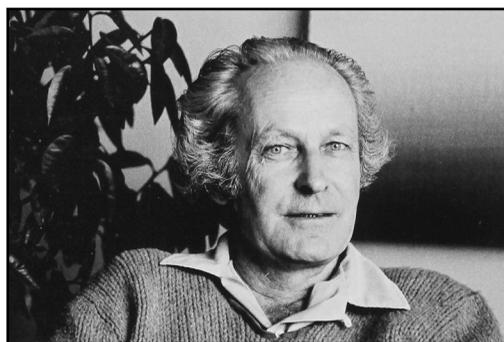
In her introduction Lederman wonders: *what art are we exposed to and why?* The artists featured here have merit, which is clearly not the only component required of a success story. Lederman recognizes that "countless artists toil away in obscurity, making magnificent work nobody will exhibit or buy or give them a grant for. And they keep going. Their passion cannot be quelled by the lack of a paycheque or published review. Long after they give up on the possibility of fortune or fame, they are driven by something more authentic."

As the Guide suggests, there may be many reasons why an artist does not achieve recognition either within their lifetime or thereafter. Some, like David Marshall and Arthur Pitts, were victims of global circumstances, as the public desire for art largely burned out in the Great Depression and putting food on the table became more pertinent. Others fell prey to doubt regarding their rightful place as an artist, as was the case for Jessie Webb and Jack Hardman, where "neglect...killed their confidence." Some simply refused to create what society or the trending visual art scene expected. Later in her life, for example, Edyth Hembroff-Schleicher explained that, "after the war... art changed drastically. First came abstract expressionism, and I opted out. I hadn't spent years of my life learning to draw the figure to simply drip



A Pocket Guide to the Unheralded Artists of BC Series

Mona Fertig, ed.
Introduction by Marsha Lederman
Mother Tongue, 2020.
200 pp. \$24.95



George Fertig

paint on the floor..." Many quality artists like LeRoy Jensen and Mildred Valley Thornton were always in "opposition to the posturing of a small clique of male artists", which arguably hurt their overall recognition. Among these and other circumstantial drawbacks, artists like George Fertig may merely have lacked a certain aggressive quality required for great success, and instead grew "Bitterly disappointed that after working for years as a serious artist [they] still had not had any serious recognition." Perhaps, though, it is not one element at the root of a stalled career, but rather something larger lurking in the balance. The reason these Canadian artists, and countless others, remain unrecognized may solely be due to a lack of that mythic *aura* which seems to emanate from great success stories. The question then becomes, what or who creates that *aura*?

The dialogue around an individual and their work is conceivably just as important as the work itself. When we talk about Vincent Van Gogh, we remember that he cut off his ear and presented it to a prostitute. When we talk about Jackson Pollock, we refer to the layering of splattered paint on large canvases which helped to solidify him as the revolutionary artist, created a new movement. Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is shrouded in myth as curious onlookers wonder who she was. Many globally and locally known artists suffered from self-doubt, poverty, neglect, and a tormented desire to create what meant something to them. The difference, perhaps, between their success and the Vancouver based artists in this guide is the discussion and dialogue surrounding them; a mystic *aura* and networking story connecting us to the art and the artist themselves. That *aura* could perhaps begin here. Those featured in Fertig's Pocket Guide are part of the Vancouver "climate" and, "Though never famous, [they] attracted and [were] part of a group of artists" who were rebels, change makers, and visionaries, working to develop the backbone of what the art scene would become in British Columbia.

These "unheralded" artists, while wildly individual and unique in their own ways, have strong similarities binding them together, commercially neglected, as outsiders. Organized by the stages and years of their lives, this guide is the lighthouse keeper focussed on each artist, searching for the reasons why they never quite reached the harbour. Perhaps, looking at evidence provided in the guide, it is not enough to be statistically great. Life circumstances, the reality of the world globally and locally, and that *aura* illuminating from the artist, could be the trifecta necessary for great success in one's time. Missing one element could mean not becoming the Emily Carr, Lawren Harris, Agnes Martin, Jackson Pollock, Henri Matisse, Vincent Van Gogh, or Leonardo da Vinci, despite the quality of art produced.

Regardless of the reasons the artists featured in the Pocket Guide were not often recognized, a larger question sits between the lines of its narrative and within the larger volumes on each individual artist. What is it about the art scene, art schools, support for the arts, or the public understanding of art, that needs to shift in order for luminous and valuable works to be rightly shared, seen, and acknowledged for the merit they add to the collective consciousness? It is art that reflects society, shedding light on the fissures growing deep within. Perhaps now with this Pocket Guide, recognition of overlooked art and artist-specific collections, past and present, will emerge. Perhaps this is a new direction, revealing steps toward a more collective and less exclusive attitude regarding who should and should not be recognized in the canon.

The doors are not yet closed on Akroyd, Filer, Hardman, Hembroff-Schleicher, Jensen, Marshall, Molnar, Pitts, Valley Thornton, Uthoff, the Webbs, or George Fertig. In rediscovering their lives and the paintings, linocuts, sculptures, and sketches produced, through The Unheralded Artists of BC Series, and in seeing their work for what it is—truly brilliant compositions that are still relevant today—these and other British Columbia-based artists may yet become valuable in marking Canada as a beacon of fine visual art on the world stage.

Natalie Lang is a teacher, writer, and currently a Master's student in Graduate Liberal Studies at SFU. She writes from Abbotsford, B.C. where she lives in a renovated barn in the heart of Sumas Mountain. Her work has also appeared in *The Ormsby Review*.



Mona Fertig

CRISIS? WHAT CRISIS?

Eric Spalding

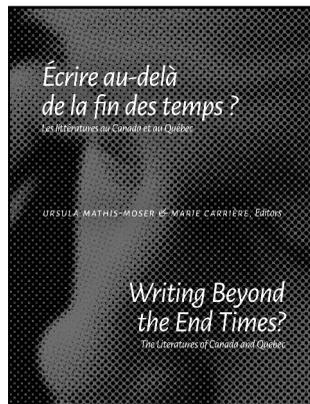
Writing *Beyond the End Times?* compiles fifteen articles of literary criticism, some examining a single author, others examining two or three. What they have in common is an emphasis on crises as represented in English- and French-Canadian novels, poems and plays. (One article, exceptionally, examines three Québécois movies.) As the co-editors write, “Readers will find identifiable thematic and even stylistic characteristics that mark these texts of crisis, sometimes in crisis, and indeed beyond crisis.” The focus is broad, and the reader ends up with a diverse array of essays organized into five sections: “Apocalypse and Dystopia,” “New Ethical Frameworks,” “Facing/Over-coming Crisis,” “Memory, Truth, and History” and “Cultural Conflicts.”

I do not anticipate that many people will read the entire book, as it is in two languages: five of the articles are in English and ten are in French. In addition, three and a third focus on English-language works while eleven and two thirds focus on French-language works. There is an introduction in both languages, as well as French abstracts for the English articles and English abstracts for the French ones. As can be expected from such a collection, readers will find some of the pieces more interesting and informative than others. In my view, a couple of them are enhanced summaries. Others are abstruse, although this abstruseness might have something to do with my not having read the works under review. I also find some of the articles too brief—they end just as I am getting to know an author’s work.

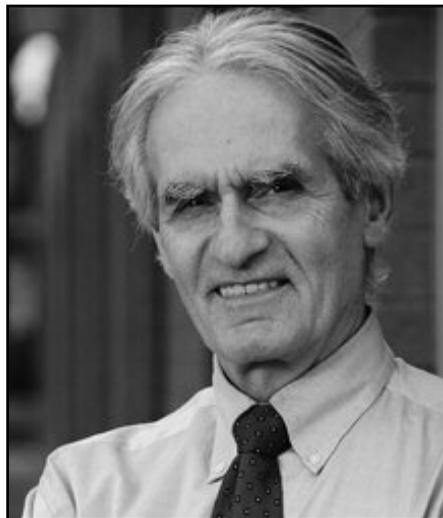
Even so, these “peer-reviewed” articles all meet a basic standard of quality. Significantly, they go beyond assessments of whether a work is good or bad. Indeed, the essayists all start from the assumption that the books they analyze are worthy of attention. The only critical evaluation comes from Srilata Ravi’s article on the novel *Uashat* by Gérard Bouchard. She writes: “In this essay, I have tried to show that Bouchard’s wish to relate the force of the unspoken silence of the marginalized Innus gets embedded and lost in the Eurocentric language of the novel, only to reinforce the very power relations that his humanist intervention seeks to abolish.”

Otherwise, I think of John Updike’s comments on *U & I*, a quirky reflection on his work by Nicholson Baker. Updike said that this book had enhanced his reputation. In a similar manner, some of the articles in *Writing Beyond the End Times?* pique my curiosity about certain authors. For instance, there are two articles that explore Nelly Arcand’s oeuvre. I have long been aware of this author’s troubled life. I knew of her early successes with such novels as *Whore* and *Hysteric*, and of her suicide at age 36, but I had never read her books, presumptuously assuming that, because of their autobiographical nature, they were not literary. Now, thanks to the two articles about her in the compilation, I plan to give at least one of her books a try.

I felt a similar experience with Nicole



Writing Beyond the End Times? The Literatures of Canada and Quebec
Ursula Mathis-Moser and Marie Carrière, eds
University of Alberta Press, 2019



Gérard Bouchard



Nicole Brossard

Brossard, whom I had also been aware of for a long time without ever having read her. The serious examination of her poetry in two articles makes me curious to learn more about her. In fact, I looked up an interview with her on YouTube. Her articulateness impressed me—she sounded like she was speaking in perfect paragraphs. In my view, a literary essay is successful if it makes you want to read the original work. In this regard, devotees of literary fiction might usefully turn to *Writing Beyond the End Times?* for suggestions on what to read next.

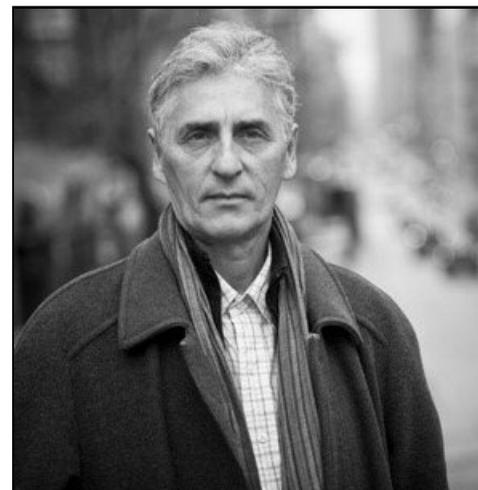
Two essays are particularly engaging—“Ethnographic Practices, Good Intentions, and Writing the Indigenous Other in Gérard Bouchard’s *Uashat*” by the aforementioned Srilata Ravi and “Écrire la crise du multiculturalisme—fictions et positionnements dans la littérature québécoise contemporaine (Monique LaRue, Abla Farhoud, Larry Tremblay)” [trans. “Writing the Crisis in Multiculturalism—Fictions and Positionings in Contemporary Québécois Literature...”] by Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink.

I liked what Ravi writes about Indigenous people as she reviews a novel by anthropologist Bouchard. The latter decided to write a work of fiction because he thought that an ethnographic document would not convey as effectively the lived experience and emotions of the Innu to whom he had spoken. In her essay, Ravi examines whether the novel, *Uashat*, adequately represents its author’s good intentions. In the end, she writes, “Even while giving the appearance of *not* speaking for the other, the novel ends up doing just that.”

As for Lüsebrink, he suggests in precise French that there is a crisis in multiculturalism caused by the rise of nationalism, increased demands from ethnocultural minorities, and a surge in religious radicalism. For each of these three causes, the author presents a work that illustrates his points. In this manner, Lüsebrink starts from a social issue rather than from a work of fiction. His approach made my unfamiliarity with the works under review less of a handicap than it was for some of the other essays in the book.

Challenging as it can be on occasion, *Writing Beyond the End Times?* offers enthusiasts of Canadian literature a means of rediscovering familiar authors and discovering new ones.

For a year, Eric Spalding studied French at Université de Montréal before switching his major to Communication Studies. He contributes regularly to PRRB.



Larry Tremblay



Monique LaRue



Abla Farhoud

AL PURDY AFTER A CENTURY

Linda Rogers

First thing first, an echo is a transformation. Al Purdy shouts from his podium, a big hill in his Purdy-centred world, and the rock faces respond, bending his voice, as scholars take note. All of it is vicarious. That's how we live in the world of "he said." He said what? Listen to the echo. Is it real?

In our all-mutable world of false information and projection of moral failure, there are many angles from which we examine poetry, prayer, and politics, the ultimate spoken word. Bradley gives opportunity to many voices in the choir as abstract expressionism morphs into formalism and finally to the Al in algorithym, the self creation of runaway myth in the age of social media undermining civilisation as he knew it.

And Al, the conscious self-creator most of the essayists notice, struggled to find that voice, the one that would lead him to the celebrity he encountered in an Atwood, his formidable and stubborn frenemy, finding her apotheosis in the dystopian present. At the unveiling of Al's statue in Queens Park, I found myself laughing with her as little children troubled the stone carved in his image and I apologized for dead Al and live myself for describing her as cold. "The world needs Romantics," she said, her point taken.

Was Purdy a romantic at all? In the Aristotelian ways, yes, but in the broader sense of enthusiasm for all of nature, including the rights of women and children, then no. This is the angel Shane Nelson wrestles in his essay, "Purdy's Mock Love Poetry, Misogyny, Nation and Progress," where he questions the intent in the so-called love poems which make the disaster film "The War of the Roses" look like innocent foreplay.

Nelson also finds offence in the awarding of the singular Voice of the Land award which, in the end was actually a private subsidy to allow Eurithe to afford the double wide graves that would give them equal space, perhaps a joke by one of our greatest ironists and at least one major donor. In the end, the frugal depression survivors decided to share a plot and justice will see Eurithe on top at last, because Purdy's offences were all bids for freedom. It bears mentioning that, in poetry and in life, from the toddler moment he hid on his frantic mother to his rejection of family and the concept of love, he sought freedom.

No one knew that Atwood was constructive in assisting her old sparring partner's end days, and instrumental in his selection as The Voice of the Land. His was not the only one, but it was a legitimate poetic voice of his generation, an uneasy moment between recognition and attempted reconciliation of our colonial past. In China, there is a tone for the reign of every emperor. Al prevailed because he crafted a sound that fit his time.

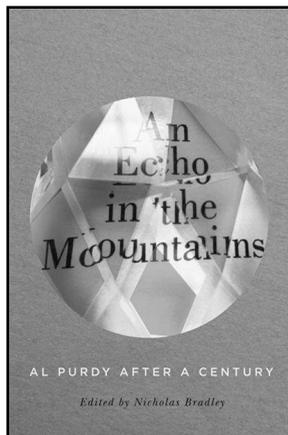
Poets know the importance of order in organizing a collection of poetry. The editor of *An Echo in the Mountains*, arranged the various arguments so they move as poetry does, from the particular to the universal, starting with essays by friends familiar with the rhythms of this very unique individual, his life and his work.

Doug Beardsley examines the reach in "The Man Who Lived beyond Himself, the Transcendental Al" as the poet uncovered mysteries buried in layers of language.

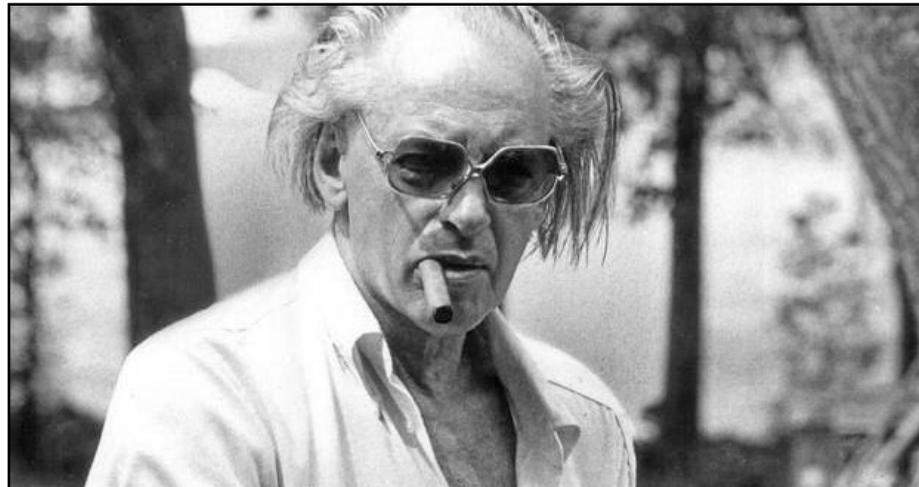
He comes to the only possible conclusion: the deep syntax and tone of Al Purdy was prayer, a bridge to the unknown. That it came from a plainspoken man of exquisite vulgarity, a rude man who never swore around women, was his ticket to rapture.

Jamie Dopp, in "Six ways of Looking at 'Elegy for a Grandfather'," confirms this mythic quest for perfect utterance, the songline that connects past to present, which is at the heart of this book whose moving parts are more about poetry than one poet standing in for the transformative language that defines all of us. Then may not describe now, but it stood its' place in time. It is not a question of great poetry, but poetry that connects the "we" to the "me" and Al, he argues, found the language for that 'in a series of attempts, using different strategies, to bring back the near mythic figure that Purdy's inner child will never let go of.' Understanding, articulating the past is the first task in human existence. Know thyself.

Once we had Ten Commandments, and they were indisputable. Now nothing is sacred, not even fame. Now poets representing variety in the Canadian mosaic



An Echo in the Mountains: Al Purdy after a century
Nicholas Bradley editor
McGill-Queen's
University Press, 310 p.



Al Purdy

inscribe the new holy words.

Purdy became famous as the everyman poet of his generation in Canada, and now his wake is examined in the context of new political realities, diversity and revealed authenticity. In this book, his oeuvre and his reputation are parsed by poets and scholars of a generation informed by post, post-modernist consciousness.

Bradley has selected points of view that tell us as much about poetry as they do about the subject poet, a big man whose hubris may have been reach exceeding grasp, or a declaration of the ongoing potential to experience heaven reflected in a still Ontario Lake or asparagus growing in a ditch. The difference is in point of view.

This inclusive poet's dozen, one short, debates the aspects of a complex/simple man, whose long shadow may or may not reverberate in the concrete towers replacing mountains in the urban landscape of Canadian consciousness. "Say the Names" he shouted in possibly his last great poem, but, they are overwhelmingly masculine and white, their energy concentrated in nouns that transform even as they are spoken into a vernacular incomprehensible to a mid-century man.

Al may be laughing at the confusion his poems have caused in the minds of academics who require the last word for context. Several essayists in this volume lament the impossibility of nailing down the intention of poems that saw many variations, the sheer volume of revisions.

Purdy was a hunter-gatherer trapped in a settler reality, and he threw nothing away. Every critic should be required to visit his virtual basement filled with papers, books, photographs and not the least, recordings. He abhorred cant and dogma, stasis, adored the legato of Verdi, Lawrence, Bjorling, boy voices without end, infinite variation until he landed on the final jarring note, self-termination.

Al was not interested in the Sutherlands and Stills, or even the Atwoods and Lawrences although several scholars comment that he was fascinated by their access to fame. He was reaching for something primal, the male voice he heard in the womb, reverberations from the Halifax explosion, maybe cymbals, the tragic ending. If he ever got a handle on his slurry consonants he would have been a happy operatic baritone. This never varied, his preoccupation with maleness, his narcissism.

It is easy to forget that in this time of instant revision, poets of his generation typed laborious revisions on typewriters. Discarded words that now live in the sky are the paper trails of the past. Al had several typewriters, one in every location where he might meet up with his muse for furtive sex. We have one and it won't stop talking in that slurry growl that once translated the music of time into poetry.

It would be easy to imagine him a curious child on the floor taking a typewriter apart and putting it back together *his own way*. He was stubborn, would have tried as he succeeded in finding his own poetic persona after many failures, especially his infamous attempts to emulate my kinsman Bliss Carman, "Make me over Mother April, when the sap begins to stir. "Make me over," he did and critics who wonder at the final construct, a giant baby stepping over mountain and prairie, riding the train, while proclaiming discovery and conquest, get their answer in his confessional letters with Margaret Atwood whose celebrity persona he envied.

In her comical essay, "One of us, Purdy Elite Culture and the Visual Arts" Ernestine Lahey laments the creation of a one dimensional Purdy by his "friends," myself included. "All these activities have the hallmarks of a branding exercise, one in

which Purdy is packaged, marketed, and sold (with the help of celebrity endorsements) with the help of souvenirs and fan ‘experiences.’ I think Al would be forgiven for saying this kind of “scholarship” with its own agenda doesn’t know its ass from a hole in the ground. Now that is plain speech but real poets have the prerogative to comment on unfamiliar making soup out of their bones.

Purdy intimates might have preferred a little more civility, not in his work, but in his behaviour. His best work transcends human behaviour and that is why he is an emblem of his generation, something Bradley recognizes, even though he generously gives space to dissenting opinions.

Lahey’s other contention that Purdy experienced interior and exterior landscape visually is also a projection. He was in fact an autodidact who informed his poems with references to visual art, treasure he discovered in books, an aspect of craft, sets for his operatic productions in plainsong. She mentions Van Gogh and the prints hung in their bedroom by Eurithe, who scooped crockery and pictures while her husband foraged for books at yard sales and other nuisance grounds.

It is hard to think of a poet who knew or cared less about art than Al Purdy. Eurithe was the eye. He was the voice. That was the partnership.

Al created Al the common man quite intentionally, selecting from his various aspects as he confessed in letters to Atwood, the persona that fit his time and place. That was his genius. For anyone to suggest that his fellows had anything to do with it is quite comical in the context of the man who made impressions on his wife’s wrist: “I act, she reacts.” His friends reacted by ignoring the unkind Al and focusing on his somewhat naïve enthusiasms. That was the enjoyable Al, not the one who edited out both his children and watched his wife suffer.

Although his letters with women writers offer some insight into the character of the man and his poetics, the many letters I received that were written on hotel notepaper felt like his grip on Eurithe’s wrist. I answered only once, when he was dying. “Now *this* is a poem,” he shouted, waving an unsigned poem he’d received in a card. “*This* was written by a man.” “Sorry Al, it’s mine,” I said.

Purdy’s misogyny, his casual intolerance of a woman who put it all aside and still does for him, a woman who might have had her own identity, who secretly aspired to be a doctor or photographer or even a better mother, her repressed ambitions, is front and centre in poems that never speak of love. He could not say the word, because that is the nature of narcissism. He felt enthusiasm. Al admired, and usually what he admired was masculine models of aspiration.

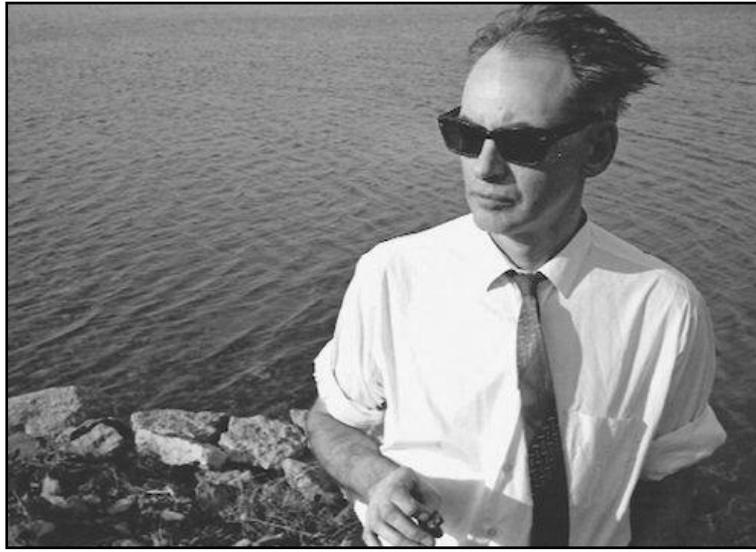
The other deficit mentioned more than once is racism with regard to Indigenous people. Al Purdy was not a racist, but he was thick as mud when it came to understanding the effect of colonialism on First Nations. An admirer of male intelligence, he simply didn’t understand that it was the imbalance created by The Indian Act, the devastation of genocide and destruction of Native habitat and balanced hegemony that destroyed community.

The hunter-gatherer couldn’t fathom the importance of women as knowledge keepers, within and without his settler culture. When women spoke up, they had to be challenged, an almost sexual sport that often ended at an attempt at seduction, not from love but conquest, to silence the subject female.

Bradley is proximate in his exegesis of Purdy the ethnographer, his song catching parallel to the quests of Marius Barbeau and others who respected the cultures that came before settlement. Then as now the land speaks through many, and, if Purdy is now “out of date” in the scramble for literary recognition, that does not negate his significance in his own time and place.

In the days before appropriation was strictly applied to literature, Purdy assumed he could reconstruct traditional stories.

“Yehl the Raven” shows that, at the outset of his career as a mature writer, Purdy was determined to render his poetry a means of exploring Canadian history and geography, in which he included Indigenous cultures, even if so doing took him away from personal experience and his home in southern Ontario.



Al Purdy

whose noise he would cut off with an ill tempered “Cut the crap.” His laughter resounds in limbo or wherever he is waiting for Eurithe to make his last meal. Although impressed by the interest, he would probably threaten to take the pages and pages of footnotes in this volume to the outhouse.

It is interesting how the age of information and disinformation has affected the protocols of critical writing. The poet might ask, does the footnote affirm the accuracy of this remark or is it just another opinion. Poets are about truth. Is truth in the end a footnote or a gathering of words in psalm or song?

What are the received conventions in an era when social media control the collective soul, 1984 realised in the demise of civilisation? Bradley et al are scrupulous. They are fact checkers. We take comfort from that, but not in the way that Al might have.

In her essay, “Purdy, Margaret Atwood and the Malahat Review,” Natalie Boldt examines a rare friendship where Purdy barely restrains his urge to dominate. She is too big for that as were the flowers she sent to his hospital room when he underwent surgery for the cancer that almost killed him. The flowers kept on breathing as Eurithe controlled his oxygen for months.



Al Purdy

Purdy, who had been considered a colonial enigma when he read at Oxford in the Seventies, noticed Atwood “travelled well,” her fame fitting the geist of a new generation. He kept his eye her vibrant bouquet, wondering aloud which would wilt first, the patient or the flowers.

Carl Watts gets the last word while considering the precocious Carmine Starnino’s disparagement of the loose in/formalism of an apparent school of free verse influenced by Purdy. “Purdy is far from formally experimental but he is consistent; his form as unspectacular as it may be when read in isolation from his subject matter, never the less exists in symbiosis with the persona that emerged from the confluence of content, context and stylistic regularity.” It is what it is, not a school, not a contrivance, but a man enchanted by an echo in the mountains, the sound of himself magnified, free. In that moment, it was perfect. Home to his grave, with a tombstone designed by my husband, who agrees he was an uncommon common man.

Al Purdy

1918-2000

“This is where I came to
when my body left its body
and my spirit stayed
in its spirit home’

Linda Rogers, Canadian People’s Poet and former Poet Laureate of Victoria was recently awarded the Gwendolyn MacEwen Award for the second time and the Carter Vanderbilt Cooper short fiction award. Her recent books include *Repairing the Hive* and *Yo!Wiksas?* with Chief Rande Cook. *Mother, the Verb*, an anthology of women’s art and writing, is forthcoming.

CHINA'S "BANISHED IMMORTAL"

Trevor Carolan

Li Bai (Li Po) has held an influential chair in modern poetry ever since Ezra Pound translated the Tang dynasty master's "The River Merchant's Wife: a Letter", glossing it with remarkable skill and having it become his own most widely anthologized work. Published in Pound's 1915 collection *Cathay*, comprised chiefly of translations of Li Bai's work whom Pound introduced by his Japanese name of Rihaku, the book became one of the 20th century's foundational poetic texts. Through Pound, Li Bai's work from 1200 years earlier helped pave the way for Imagism and our whole idea of "modern" poetry. As Ha Jin's own translations confirm, Li Bai's grace, economy and elegance were an ideal counterpoint to late Victorian and Edwardian British poetry that had seen its creative well run dry. Li's notable willingness to utilize themes of feminine tenderness with such related expressions as the sorrowful noise of monkeys, paired butterflies, and mosses brought a new way of seeing to English language sensibilities.

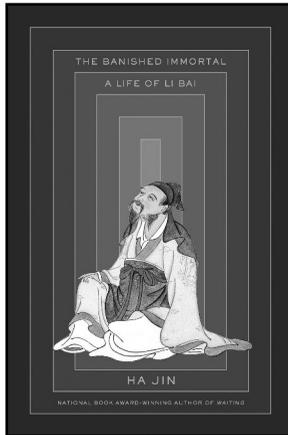
In the post-WW II period Li's bittersweet aesthetics were further revived as a significant informing element in the development of Beat Lit in the U.S., and the importance of Li, Tu Fu, Wang Wei, Bai Juyi and other classical Chinese and Japanese poets to modern North American poetry, especially from the Pacific Coast, cannot be underestimated. What we have known about Li Bai the man and poet in English, however, has been spotty. A hagiography has grown up around the Tang poetry masters not always based on facts, therefore Ha Jin's biography brings needed correction to misunderstandings about this giant of world literature.

To put things in cross-cultural perspective, after nearly 1300 years Li Bai still enjoys popular renown in China equivalent to Shakespeare, Robbie Burns, or John Lennon. Taxi drivers and politburo leaders know him, and his short poems and folk songs are still routinely cited at drinking get-togethers and farewell parties. Throughout East Asia common folks still brighten at mention of his name: few can name more than one or two of China's 500 emperors, but almost everyone remembers the hard-drinking Li Bai. We might recognize him as an early Johnny Cash or Bob Dylan figure, travelling endlessly on the road keeping his name alive, star-crossed with the lovably inebriated Dean Martin. Add Jim Morrison's sneer and you've more or less got him.

Forget the romanticized death story—the ridiculous bit about tipsy Li Bai drowning while contemplating the moon like a hapless Brian Jones after getting the boot from The Stones. But as Ha Jin's masterful appreciation of Li Bai's life has it, that wouldn't be too far off either.

Ha Jin establishes this cheerfully readable narrative on a chronology derived from a series of historic Chinese accounts of Li's life and from a close reading of his poetry that comes to us packed with names, towns, incidents which can be checked and indexed. Born in 701 AD information about his early life remains scanty but it's virtually certain he came from mixed parentage out on China's frontier grasslands in western Sichuan, with his mother likely of Turkic tribal origin—his native fluency with non-Han Chinese languages would later serve him well. Such families were not uncommon in inner Asia's vasts where trading and old warring routes among Persians, Mongols, Uighurs, Tibetans and others intersected. Despite the fairly tolerant intercultural policies of the Tang dynasty this *hu*, or partial barbarian background would act as an obstacle in his gaining official favour throughout his life.

Li's father was a successful merchant trading in grains, fabric, utensils, paper and wines with a series of trading stations along the Yangtze River. In China's rigidly stratified society merchants were a bottom-drawer caste: what really counted was aristocratic privilege with its guarantee of protection from sudden harm that was gained by bureaucratic or military service to the imperial system. Entrance into the civil system was controlled by a rigorous public examination based on rote knowledge of the classics, but Li Bai's inferior social class disqualified him from applying. Alternative backdoor opportunities existed, however, and hoping to place at least one of his sons into this golden path to family security, Li's father had his youngest son instructed in the classics and bankrolled him on a series of journeys lasting several years during which



**The Banished Immortal:
A Life of Li Bai**
Ha Jin
Pantheon, 2019



Ha Jin

the young man was expected to cultivate friendships and useful connections. His family's trade contacts ensured a safe beginning and the 17-year old was expected to transmute his investments in dinners and gifts to well-connected officials into a respectable government position.

Writing polished letters of self-introduction, thanks, and fawning admiration of one's betters was essential to this commission and by his teenage years Li Bai had begun writing with capability. Hard as it may seem today, skill in composing poetry was a fundamental skill needed by every educated person and a *de rigeur* syllabus of sophisticated metres, structures, and rhythms had evolved. Ha Jin informs that early on, Li Bai was drawn by folk poems and songs, and notably by the "celestial space" in the poems of Qu Yuan (340-278 BC) that were preserved from almost a thousand years earlier. Ha Jin, himself a respected poet, novelist and professor residing in the U.S. since 1985, doesn't present his biography as an academic study; fortunately, however, he takes care to explain some of the historical and cultural relevance of moments and situations in Li's life, without which our understanding would not be satisfactory. What is key to notice is that Li Bai was not so much drawn to cosmologies, mythologies or inspiring forces in his early poetry as he was to the vast eternal Tao within which all moved under heaven. He's the poet, Ha Jin says clearly, who devoted himself and his words and images to the *moon*—indeed, the power of his eventual poetry would become a central iconic element of Chinese poetry ever after. In his essay "What Poetry Did in China" (1995), Gary Snyder discusses the relevance of a set of traditions that seemed to be reflected in East Asian literatures—these were the concerns that Li Bai was steadily inching toward in his work: "Chinese poetry, at its finest, seems to have found a center within the tripod of humanity, spirit, and nature. With strategies of apparent simplicity and understatement, it moves from awe before history to—a deep breath before nature."

Contrary to popular misconception in the West, Li Bai was not Buddhist but Taoist in belief and training. It's the love of Taoist nature-wisdom that permeates his writing. The stasis of Confucian ritual practices wearied him, and although he periodically took residence and studied at Buddhist mountain temples, he remained staunchly Taoist nature-oriented throughout his life and was formally inducted into a Taoist school in northern Shantung province. He trained himself in Taoist swordsmanship and became an expert practitioner, something that periodically and less agreeably he affected with some swagger. Near six feet tall and with an imposing physique, the studied young martial artist and poet was already shaping up along the Yangtze country as a formidable individual.

Ha Jin traces Li Bai's training residencies with Taoist mountain adepts and at further Buddhist temples during which he deepened his study of statecraft, since the young seeker was determined to perfect his suitability for a serious government post. As he travelled further from his western origins and nearer the centre of Tang administrative power, Li also sharpened his ability in creating disciplined poetry spontaneously—think of a young Jack Kerouac with his "spontaneous bop prosody." He also simplified his structural delivery and some of his road poems have a distinct fragment-

ed narrative, pre-empting the discontinuous perceptions of T.S. Eliot, Pound, Philip Whalen, Allen Ginsberg and others by well over a millennia. Alas, time after time in presenting his credentials to ranking officials Li met with calculated disapproval. Half-barbarian and merchant class, he lacked the royal jelly local potentates demanded.

Ironically, while mayors and governors stalled and obfuscated in finding Li work they invariably delighted in hosting his company to their friends. Any party was a guaranteed success with his recitations, declamations, songs and demonstrations of his sword prowess. Ha Jin makes it clear that he was a great fellow to have around, to wow the ladies, and shining up one's association with him could be profitable, but he was still viewed as a dangerous potential rival. It's an old story familiar to poets and visiting writers in need of work at universities and colleges to this day—welcomed for a visit by dull timeservers, even provided with a short stipend, but then shown the door diplomatically with a thin smile. Li Bai's returning home unsuccessfully became a long, recurrent pattern.

We have more than 1,000 poems allegedly Li's. Ha Jin says plainly that "throughout his life, Li Bai dedicated flattering poems to petty officials right and left"—the dross of his decades-long job searching travels. He was not alone. This role of the wandering scholar-bard known as *yunyou*—"wandering like a cloud"—was followed similarly by other Tang poets, notably Tu Fu. They traversed mountains, rivers, the edge of deserts, often in each other's company, visiting every sort of village, town or county seat between. They encountered every sort of official, hoping for one respectable sinecure to make it all worthwhile. Wherever Li Bai roamed he drank; wherever he drank he declaimed his poetry, and when circumstance allowed he wrote it on the walls of popular historic landmarks. Eventually all the begging poems hit their mark too and steadily found circulation. His very best poems found their way into the wineshops where the singsong girls loved his work.

"Suzanne Takes You Down", "Four Strong Winds", "The Times They Are A-Changing", "Both Sides Now"—"The River Merchant's Wife", "Song of Jingzhou", "Song of the Emei Moon", "Saying Goodbye to Jingmen"—great folk tunes and poems have a way of catching on. The worthiest become anthemic, sung in household kitchens, by the hopeful young, and in tavern honky-tonks. That's how showbiz works. Increasingly, Li Bai's fame grew with his popular works, assured by their constant singing up and down the mighty Yangtze, then north and south, and from the eastern sea to the deserts. Everybody knew his story—he was a celebrity wanderer and the road was his true home. His poetry kept getting better with themes of loneliness, heartbreak, tender-hearted tavern girls, oceans of clouds drifting thousands of miles long. They knew he drank his blues away, calling out to the goddess of the moon.

What Snyder and the Beats in particular were able to comprehend of Tang poetry with its ability to compress large ideas into compact language and space, is how it can marry the edges of both the conscious and unconscious mind, can be shamanic, "a mode of speaking for our dreams and for the deep archetypes." This is what Ha Jin shows us of Li's original creative yearnings—a craving for solitude, for wild company, an homage to classical literary voices, and a foundational need to employ his services toward the benefit of his state and society. In contemporary parlance, Li's poetry walks the line between reclusive, Taoist-rooted nature worship and a compassionate, activist poetics. As Ha Jin's insightful commentary explains, Li Bai's lifelong struggle—his *fuga*, or "artist's way"—was to try and reconcile these two fundamentally divergent paths.

An arranged marriage would follow, then another, a chance to settle down and trade celebrity for domestic comfort. Despite such advantages, Ha Jin states Li made a poor husband: unable to settle, he continued roaming, dreaming of sagely serving the emperor. Unluckily, with middle age came deepening resentment at his failures and his letters to officials grew more arrogant and gave offence. After fathering two children he became known especially for his "Leaving" poems, still ready to depart at a shift in the breeze. When his great call from the emperor finally did arrive at age 43, it was almost anti-climactic.

Life in the palace at Chang'an was frustrating for Li Bai. After a festive welcome he was quickly delegated to a time-serving role as an under-utilized academician.



Li Bai

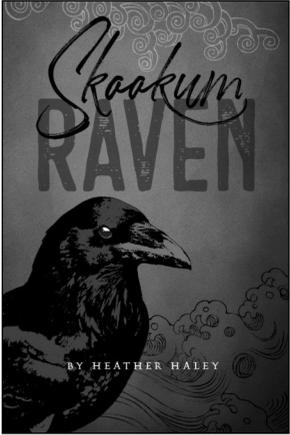
What had happened to his long-dreamed of appointment as a ministerial advisor to the Son of Heaven? Mystified, he retreated as usual into drink. He was a big-shot now and there was plenty of it. When the emperor eventually needed Li's service the messengers found him piss-tank drunk. His imperial career was brief, less than two years, and he succeeded only in making deadly ministerial enemies for himself. Resigning, he fled far for his safety taking refuge in Taoist holy orders.

Tu Fu, the younger Confucian poet with whom Li Bai is so firmly associated, entered Li's life for a period of only about six months in the Luoyang area subsequent to his imperial service. With a third friend the poet Gao Shi, the trio of poetry highwaymen wandered on horseback and hunted together through modern Henan Province. The rice-wine flowed abundantly and they relished each other's poetry. Tu Fu wrote 15 poems about Li Bai whom he esteemed like a true immortal, although Li's verses in return "are not as deeply felt," Ha Jin observes. Of the two, where Li wrote freely and easily, Tu Fu laboured in his compositions as Li noted poetically in his "Teasing Tu Fu." Although their paths would cross only three times during their lives, the two would forge one of history's greatest poetic comradeships.

Would we have known all this if not for Ha Jin's work? The mythic version of Li Bai's life is of "a banished immortal" as the book's title reminds us. The more accurate version it appears is of a brilliantly inventive writer, full of homage for his friends and the ancients, who terminally frustrated with a social system that disqualified him, took out his anger in vindictive whacks at officials who declined to help him. Yet his late poems demonstrate an awakening plight for China's wretched poor and this has not been forgotten either. For all Li's aspiration to serve as a statesman, Ha Jin makes clear he proved mainly a bumbler: his actual banishment late in life came as a result of catastrophically bad political judgment, backing a pretender to the throne against all expressed public sentiment but his own. He was lucky to save his head, directly attributable to his having saved someone else's years before who could now help him—a rare win. Yet the tide of liquor around Li continued to give his story a friendly glow through the centuries and has weary echoes of Scott Fitzgerald, Charles Bukowski, or Jackson Pollock.

This is a genuine eye-opening biography from a now Chinese-American scholar who knows his materials. If we've heard of Li Bai's troubles before, seldom have we heard of his propensity to shoot himself in the foot so frequently. Regarding his oft-declared yearning for reclusion in nature he couldn't stick with it and returned time and again to his *yen* for public esteem. With a peerless gift for compassionate lyric poetry and a body of popularly-loved work, too often he was doomed by pressing need to write puffery. By 762 AD he was broken and old. A year later, local officials were agog at an imperial summons from the latest new emperor commanding the great poet to the palace—redemption at last! Alas, true to form Li Bai was already buried in a shabby grave near the house of his son, a minor salt station clerk. History and the Chinese people would write the final verdict. * *Outstanding recommendation.*

Trevor Carolan's new book is *Road Trips: Journeys in the Unspoiled World (Mother Tongue)*.



New from Ekstasis Editions

SKOOKUM RAVEN

Heather Haley

There are some rough and wild birds around Howe Sound — the sharp-shinned hawk, the northern harrier, and the whiskey-jack. Heather Haley, an accomplished mapper of human migration, pair-bonding and predation, takes these feathered frenemies as her starting point in this assured third collection, *Skookum Raven*. Haley writes sophisticated free lyrics of a witchy feminist kind, but adds some proletarian ferocity with her bus-station grandpas and sketches of iffy guys like Ed the Fence. These are astute, austere poems which sometimes take flight into optimistic beauty.

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Rose Morrison

Author Alan Twigg, Order of Canada, is well-known to British Columbian writers and book enthusiasts. He received the Governor-General's Award for Literary Excellence in 2016 and is acclaimed, among many other things, for his eighteen books and many services to the literary community. When asked why he chose to write *Moon Madness*, he reputedly said, "Because I wanted to write about a good person."

Moon Madness is a biography of Dr. Louise Aall, who spent most of her career as a physician healing, helping, and carrying out research in East Africa while supporting a medical clinic in Mahenge, Tanzania. Readers may be attracted by the book's title; they will find its content equally engaging.

In early 1963, Dr. Aall, a resident psychiatrist at the Swiss institute for Epilepsy in Zurich, is thinking about her future when one of her contemporaries, Dr. Wolfgang Jilek, stops by her office to invite her to visit a restored thirteenth-century castle with him. Aall accepts: he seems like a good person; and this is what normal people do, isn't it? She does not recognize that, despite the many experiences and adventures she has already packed into her life, this is the start of a new kind of adventure and a major turning point in the thirty-two-year-old's life.

Moon Madness begins in 1931, with Aall's birth to parents Lily and Anathon who are esteemed academics living comfortably in Oslo. Anathon co-founded the philosophy department at the University there; he is also a distinguished psychologist. Lily is a celebrated ethnologist. The Aall family name has been significant in Norway's history for a few generations.

Twigg relates that the Aall children had a privileged but sheltered upbringing with little opportunity to socialize in their early years. Several factors influenced Louise's personality as she grew up. The children were home-schooled until their mid teens. Independence was encouraged and their education was selective. Their father liked to teach them through stories and fables; and both parents encouraged reading, although when Aall was of university age, she could not gain admittance to the University of Oslo because of her low mathematics score. She was the serious child who wanted, and tried continually, to impress her parents; often without the desired effect. She and her brother Cato became skilled outdoor enthusiasts who, when the family moved to their safer country home during WW II, would ski eight hours to get to Oslo. As teenagers, the pair also went on a two-month cycling trip to the Arctic to visit their grandfather's birthplace. A salient event occurs with the death of her father. Aall was close to him, and at twelve years old she was the only one who could calm and comfort him during his last illness. Possibly her mother's dire warnings that romantic and sexual relationships could destroy a young woman's hopes and ambitions had the most enduring influence on Aall; she resolved to make herself look unattractive to men. The picture of young Aall that Twigg presents is that of a healthy outdoors girl; a loner, smart but not wise, independent yet socially gauche, well-read yet naïve; and adverse to any man outside her family circle. Later, Aall offers that she was also very proud.

Moon Madness is full of interesting events and adventures. The adult Aall experienced and accomplished so much that this reviewer, having read the book twice, still finds the chronology that Twigg includes helpful. Aall knows in her teens that she wants to become a medical doctor; and she studies medicine at the University of Tübingen in Germany from 1951 – 1954. This is a happy time. Her uncle helps with expenses, and her brother invites her into his social circle. "I was like a flower," she says, "blossoming because I was able to talk to everybody." To add to her self esteem, her mother is proud of her medical student daughter. Aall comes across books on Tanganyika (present-day Tanzania), then reads about paster David Livingstone and his friend Stanley; her imagination is fired with thoughts of Africa. Her interest intensifies when she attends Dr. Albert Schweitzer's 1953 Nobel Peace Prize lecture about his hospital work in what is now Gabon. His reverence for life philosophy reminds her of her father.

As the story advances, so does its momentum. This is partly because it is event-



Moon Madness:
Dr. Louise Aall,
Sixty Years of Healing
in Africa
Alan Twigg
Ronsdale Press

ful, and partly because of Twigg's skilled writing. What began with the account of an unusual girl's upbringing in Norway, develops into the story of a riskily brave doctor who dedicates her career to helping and healing in places where many would not want to go. Aall, a life-long learner, goes on to study at Saarland University, where she learns the importance of treating the whole patient, body and mind, from French physicians. Following that, she completes a higher medical degree in Zurich. She develops a close, but not physically-intimate friendship with an unassuming young man who is like her soul mate; when he passes away she is affected greatly. Seeing him die, she knows that she will never be afraid of sitting with dying people. Having mourned, she completes a tropical medicine certificate in Zurich, and meets Rudolf Geigy of the Geigy pharmaceutical company. She agrees to work at the small hospital he has established in Ifikara, Tanganyika, and while there, to conduct some research for Hoffman La Roche.

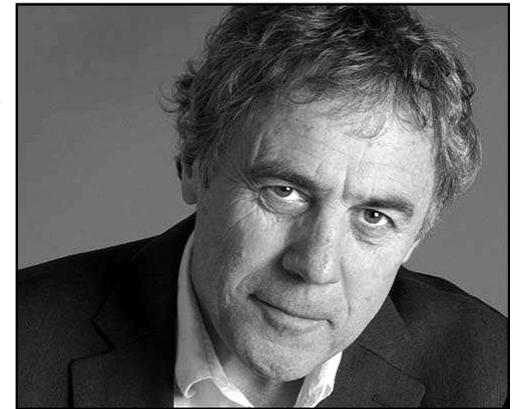
This trip to Africa in 1959-1960 is the first of many for Aall: *Moon Madness* describes them all—the culture, living and working conditions, and the high incidence of epilepsy in Tanganyika. Aall makes it her mission to care for epileptics, who are usually cast out of their communities; and to research epilepsy in this region of Africa. In 1960-1961 the Red Cross summons her to co-manage a larger hospital in the Congo, during the civil war. After receiving a Red Cross medal for her work, she flies to Gabon and works as pediatric assistant to Dr. Schweitzer. Impressed by Schweitzer's culturally-sensitive, unconventional methods, she decides to specialize in psychiatry. This goal is reinforced when, in 1962, she requests the World Health Organization's involvement with epilepsy in Africa, and is summarily dismissed as a mere medical doctor by a sexist World Health Organization official. A later attempt will also get ignored. At times, *Moon Madness*, reads like Verghese's novel *Cutting for Stone*, which includes reporting of political unrest, terrible working conditions, poor people with serious maladies, danger, earnest doctors and nurses, and romance.

This review opened with thirty-two-year-old Aall sitting in her office at the Swiss Institute for Epilepsy, mulling her next steps. A pharmaceutical company has made her an offer: will she return to Tanganyika, all expenses paid, to collect more of the tree bark that medicine men use in treating symptoms of epilepsy? She has serious doubts; should she go to Africa alone again? There are safety concerns; and she's often been lonely. Will she regret not having any family life? A few days after their visit to the castle she confides in her new friend Dr. Jilek. He asks if she'd like him to go with her to Africa. Surprisingly, she accepts without even knowing his first name. The couple marry later that year.

Now there are two to share the adventures. The newly-weds immigrate to Canada, study cultural psychiatry at McGill University, and write their Canadian medical accreditation exams. Aall publishes the first paper that identifies head-nodding syndrome in children who later become epileptic. Twigg relates how "her treatise is largely ignored ... fifty years later the phenomenon will be verified and studied, with no recognition of her pioneering work." Settling in B.C.'s Fraser Valley this unstoppable couple's service and accomplishments continue. From 1966 to 1977, writes Twigg, they are the only psychiatrists in the upper Fraser Valley. Both Jilek and Jilek-Aall write books; and both are Professors *emeriti* at the University of B.C. In 1979 the couple adopts their daughter Martica.

Despite setbacks and disappointments, the work at Mahenge, Tanzania, which Aall and Jilek continuously support, goes on, helped from Canada by individuals and organizations such as Ken and Nancy Morrison's Provision Charitable Foundation, and by committed medical personnel in Tanzania. In 2019 Dr. Dan Bhwana, now clinic director at Mahenge Epilepsy Clinic, visits Jilek-Aall at her Delta, B.C. to consult with her and receive her valuable medical records regarding epilepsy. *Moon Madness* recounts all of this and is a wonderful, inspiring, and sometimes heart-breaking read.

Rose Morrison is a frequent contributor to PRRB.



Alan Twigg

A MORAL VOICE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

James Deahl

A new poetry collection from A.F. Moritz is a gift to receive with gratitude and joy. *As Far As You Know* follows his wondrous selected poems, *The Sparrow*, by a mere two years, and shows a poet forging ahead, developing and deepening his themes and concerns. Moritz, like most serious people, seeks the moral bedrock in an era when nothing seems absolute, when everything is questioned.

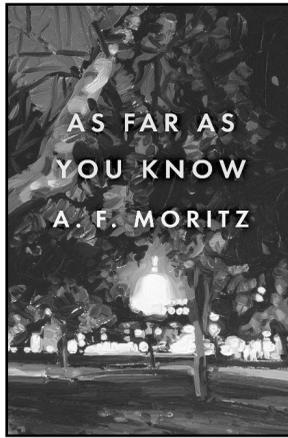
The poems in this collection are arranged by date of composition. *As Far As You Know* starts with "Terrorism" which serves as an introduction. "Terrorism" is dated October 2012 and at nine pages is the longest piece in the book. The collection closes with "An Image of Our Life" dated July 29-30, 2016. This is also a longish poem at four and a half pages. Between these two "bookends" Moritz's poems flow like chapters in a book as themes develop and expand. While this volume could be read as separate poems, it is even more rewarding when read as a single extended poem or poem sequence.

I find it useful to think of this book as a musical composition — a symphony, perhaps. It is a work in several movements, each with its own tempo. And within each movement are brief passages, which repeat certain motifs that become central to the overall musical concept. In this book, poems strike fire from each other, their placement within the work being so precise, and while each piece or segment might be strong and attractive on its own, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

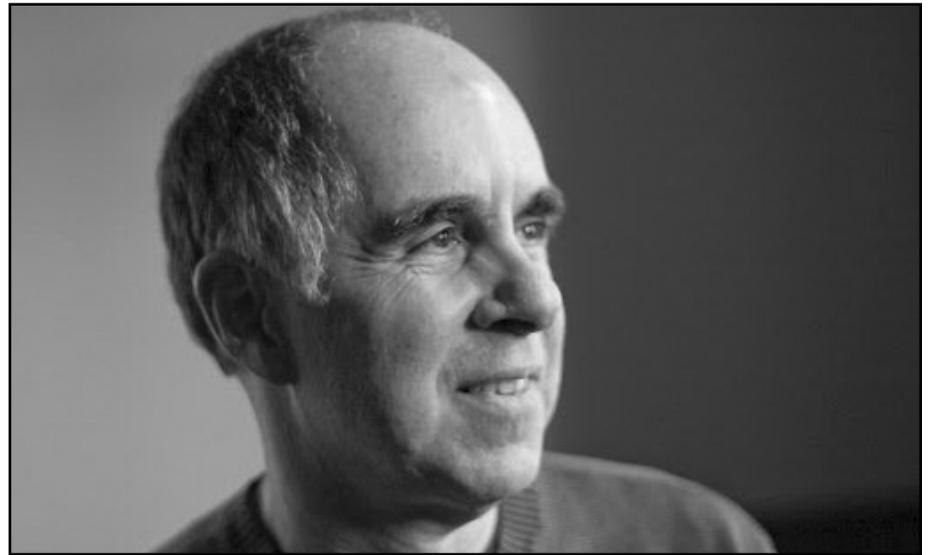
Readers who have followed Moritz's poetry over the decades will find many of his expected topics within these pages. In a sense, *As Far As You Know* follows closely on his Griffin Prizewinning *The Sentinel* (Anansi, 2008), but there is a tighter focus here. I like to view this book as an argument against simplicity. Terrorists, for example, subscribe to a world-view reduced to black-and-white solutions. While their acts of violence and self-sacrifice may call for courage, they do not require much thought. This is binary thinking: Yes/No; Good/Bad. Moritz understands that much more is necessary if we are to live authentic and moral lives. Over a hundred and fifty years ago, Henry David Thoreau thought our human lives should not be a duty or a burden, nor should life be merely a means to an end. Rather, our life should be a self-justifying esthetic joy. That is why we were created. Even at his most somber, Moritz seeks joy. Indeed, the poem "Terrorism" ends with the poet's happiness and "An Image of Our Life" closes with an affirmation of life. The poet closes his book with "But you will live." Between "happiness" and "life" come the fifty-six poems that form the core of *As Far As You Know*. None of these poems are easy; several are difficult. But modern life with all its ambiguities is difficult terrain, too. And we, like A.F. Moritz, are compelled to cross it.

Now, to the poems. It is not my goal to completely outline the "plot" of *As Far As You Know*, although it does have one. (In 1984 and 1987 Robert Duncan published *Ground Work: Before the War* and *Ground Work II: In the Dark*. They have a plot, and Moritz has constructed his new book along similar lines.) My intent, rather, is to encourage you to read his book. I can say without reservation that Moritz has given us the most important volume of poetry since his *The Sparrow* appeared two years ago. No other poet is writing at this level, and that makes this book essential. But I will talk about a few of the pieces.

"Terrorism" starts with grackles and starlings enjoying a fountain in a park on a lovely day. Moritz's observation of these birds is exact and vivid. The poet is so deeply into the moment he notes in fine detail the drops and streams of water — that is, the action of the fountain. He then sees the trees near the fountain, and again is specific: an Austrian pine, a red oak, a green ash, a northern catalpa. He soon moves on to a jetliner he spots flying high above the park in the beautiful autumn sky. This leads him to thoughts of Pearl Harbor and death from the sky. This attack, which drew the United States into World War II, happened a half dozen years prior to the poet's birth, but it comes to him in a park in the 21st Century. The poem then cuts from December 7, 1941 to September 11, 2001 and the attacks on the World Trade Center. Once again, death from the sky, sudden and without warning. Never losing sight of the birds, the poet travels back to April 6 and 7, 1862 and the slaughter at Shiloh. And we return to



As Far As You Know
A.F. Moritz
House of Anansi
2020, 129 pp., \$19.95



A.F. Moritz

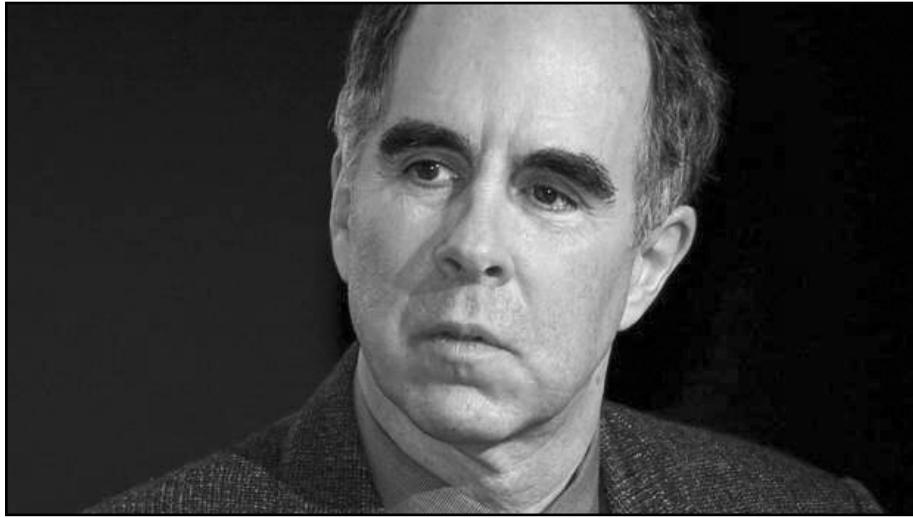
the catalpa, the birds, the water, and the poet's happiness. There is a balance between thoughts of violence, war, and death and a sunny day in an urban park watching birds at play in a fountain.

From this opening, which establishes the tone for the entire collection, we move immediately into the story of Abraham, his son Isaac, and the ram. During the 1950s when I was young and attending Sunday School, children were given this Biblical story as an example of Abraham's righteousness. We were all to admire this Godliness and grow up to become like Abraham. But what father would agree to slay his own son as a sacrifice? While most poets who take up this story and its theological meaning focus on Abraham and his struggles with God's request, "The Ram" deals directly with the ram, who far from being a bystander to this drama, is the actual sacrifice, and therefore the real point of the tale. Having read only these initial two poems, the reader now understands that this is an exceedingly serious book.

Moritz questions the role, and efficacy, of poetry. Can poetry assist the writer when it comes to dealing with real life? Can poetry do the same for its reader? What is the value of a poem or a book? And, perhaps the most crucial question: What is the relationship between silence and song? If these questions cannot be answered, writing a book becomes mere self-indulgence. In the section called "Poetry" Moritz is forced to justify the act of poetry, which he does beautifully. Behind all of the many different movements of this book stands divinity, elusive but real.

In an appendix to *As Far As You Know* called "Author's Note on 'Art of Surgery'" Moritz reveals his debt to poet William Blake and French moral philosopher/theologian Jacques Ellul. Ellul influenced the thought of political philosopher George Grant who, in turn, influenced Milton Acorn and other Canadian poets (including the present author). Thus, some of Ellul's ideas entered Canadian literature indirectly through Grant. But, of course, Moritz went directly to the source. The principle issue here is the essential need we all have for human relations to remain human, and the threat technology offers in this modern world of digital magic. But other concerns are also at play in this book; many of these concerns highlighted by Moritz are those both Grant and Ellul wrestled with. And like them, he meets with some failure as well as a measure of success.

Perhaps the most challenging poem in the book, and clearly one of the most important, is "Love Poem" because love is central to the overall scope of *As Far As You Know*. "Love Poem" is found in a section called "Childhood Friends", which also offers a brilliant poem sparked by the murder of Freddie Gray in the back of a police van in Baltimore five years ago. As one example of the complex manner Moritz employs to address and penetrate complex issues, both "Love Poem" and the Freddie Gray poem are in the same section, while most readers would expect "Love Poem" to be included in the following section: "Our Own Dark Hands, in the Recess of Our Love". This placement permits the investigation of the relationship between love and anger, between the police killing of a Black man and the natural beauty of a gold and blue Baltimore oriole singing from a silver maple with flowering crab-apples and forsythia present and correct. Both "Love Poem" and "Baltimore May 2015" focus on major themes, not just for Moritz, but for all of us.



A.F. Moritz

“Love Poem” deals with the relationship of two lovers. It concerns their emotional and sexual connections and disconnections. It also deals with desire, rejection, anger, and emptiness. This is to say that “Love Poem” is much more than the erotic/romantic side of life, although that is covered, too. Much like the celebrated spiritual poems of Robert Lowell, Moritz ends his poem in mystery, which is no less real and concrete by being mysterious: “where anger is mildness,/ the blank openness of all the possible,/ the beneficence of making, letting/ me go, go and find, such anger is love.” Because “Baltimore May 2015” comes before “Love Poem”, the implied connection is clearly sensed.

Readers familiar with Moritz’s prior books will recognize the last-man and ruined-future images to be found in the fourth section, “Our Own Dark Hands, in the Recess of Our Love”. Here we are told of the “misery of the world” which poetry and love can hold at bay. Poetry and love are no more than a temporary refuge, unfortunately, for the misery lives on. In the poem “Escape to the Sea”, the high point of this section, there is really no escape except death. Part two of “Escape to the Sea” is a homage to Cormac McCarthy’s Pulitzer Prizewinning dystopian novel, *The Road*. In the Moritz poem, the father dies having reached the edge of the sea, now “disease filled” and ruined. But at least he is released by death from his struggles and his suffering. His young son, however, will survive to face everlasting “terror and pain” because he will live. This is a picture perhaps even bleaker than the McCarthy novel.

Having identified death as, perhaps, the final solution to life’s pain, the fifth section, “Art of Surgery”, deals directly with dying, death, and what might follow the termination of the physical body. These poems were sparked by Moritz being hospital-

ized in 2014 for open-heart surgery. Given the poet’s serious cardiac condition, these thoughts might be expected. But “Art of Surgery” also investigates life because one cannot consider the meaning of death without also thinking of life. Moritz discovers that death, like sleep, can both annihilate and restore. Death, in fact, is both beginning and end. (In this, the poet was anticipated by St. Augustine, who also discovered the unity of beginning and end.) The question becomes: After the death of the body what is conserved?

As with the dystopian realm explored in “Our Own Dark Hands, in the Recess of Our Love”, here, too, it is the human-to-human personal relationships that grant reprieve. In part four, it is the relationship of the father who will die and the son who will live. This is the moral core of life, of human life, and that becomes clearer in “Art of Surgery” when the poet, lying seriously ill, investigates the full meaning of his personal relationships. In Christian life, God and God’s rules form the basis of morality. But for many of us, these are not Christian times. What is the moral bedrock of our post-Christian world?

If we can take “Escape to the Sea” as the climax/crisis point in Moritz’s story, with the young son left standing by his dead father and facing the brutal chaos of a world in collapse, then the final section, “The One Who Answers the Call”, proffers a measure of redemption. We may live in a “world of grief” but it is a grief that can be “tinged with happiness”. This brings the reader back to the opening poem, “Terrorism”, when, having considered the horror of the September eleventh attacks, Pearl Harbor, and Shiloh, the poet, watching birds in a fountain, finds happiness. Moritz affirms that human connections, be they friendship or love or the relationship between medical staff and their patients, and despite our glaring failures and flaws, can shield us from the thoughtless brutality of the world. This, then, is the source of a morality, a *human* morality, that can support us as we move forward day by day. As the poet says with resolve and clarity, “*But you will live.*”

Had Moritz written nothing more after his stunning *tour de force* of *The Sparrow*, he would have established himself in the first rank of English-language poets. Remarkably, he has exceeded that achievement with *As Far As You Know*. In this work, he has developed his long-standing concerns into a brighter, tighter focus. Throughout *As Far As You Know* I kept thinking of the late W.S. Merwin’s poetry. A broad scope, keen intelligence, human kindness and compassion, and an outstanding facility with language are common hallmarks of both Merwin and Moritz. By celebrating joy and affirming life, even in our time of increased rancour, fear, violence, and despair, of unclear moral values and spiritual confusion, and of political and social upheaval, Moritz’s new book helps keep us grounded as we traverse the seasons of our lives.

James Deahl is the author or editor of forty books, including *Tamaracks: Canadian poetry for the 21st century*, the first major anthology of Canadian poetry published in the U.S. in three decades.

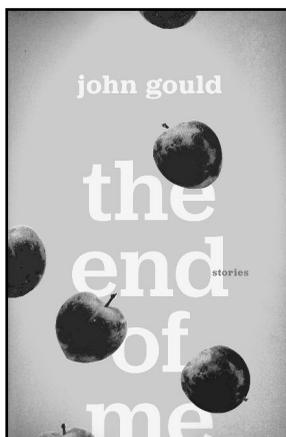
THE END OF ME

Arleen Paré

John Gould’s bemused and amusing, shyly profound and kindly voice is thoroughly engaging in *The End of Me*, his third collection of short short fiction. In *The End of Me* Gould has mastered the genre, perfected its best stylistic features. Well-suited for this age of bytes, quick texts and twitter, this collection of over sixty bite-sized shorts is, yes, sometimes biting. Fittingly, it is often sardonic or ironic as well, making it a match for this twenty-first century of idiosyncratic, inexplicable global occurrences. The stories are also tender, happily, and thoughtful, exploring, as they do, a wide range of mortal possibilities.

Reading this collection, I was reminded of Swedish poet and Noble Prize winner, Tomas Tranströmer. Although different in genre and in subject matter, the literary tones and the extreme writerly concentration, the approach to the understanding of life of both writers is similar. Both poet and short story writer, Tranströmer and Gould, use fresh, unusual, somewhat surreal concepts to good effect.

Short short fiction engages spare settings, spare, straightforward narrative and



The End of Me
John Gould
Broadview Press, 2020

plot. Character, as expected, given the logistical limitations of the condensed, shorter text, is generally considered to be less developed than in longer fiction. But, remarkably, Gould’s characters come alive. They present as real, often ordinary, as if we’d just met them, each one, in the aisles of the local grocery store. This is one of his shining strengths: he knows how to breathe life into the individuals who people, walk on and off his pages. He offers the reader a peak-a-boo into the human psyche as each character maneuvers the awkward, distressing, sometimes humorous circumstances, whether personal or remote, surrounding mortality. The characters, exposed to various aspects of death, come to understand something more about life. All the stories in *The End of Me* are concerned with death, and if we are interested in life, we must also consider death.

These are sixty cool, intimate, vernacular stories: something for everyone in the very readable pages of *The End of Me*. If we are interested in rich literary brevity, in mortality, in people, we are interested in John Gould.

Arleen Paré has published three collections of poetry and two novels to date. Originally from Montreal, Paré worked in social services in Vancouver for much of her professional career.



John Gould

HAIKU IN CANADA

Joel Robertson-Taylor

Haiku is poetry in form but attempts more with less. Perhaps it makes itself to be a category of its own, being like a Zen reflection as much as an art, Haiku's focus on simplicity and the "now" within a particular place is the quintessential quality that sets it apart. Terry Ann Carter explains this and gives her own reflection on the form in *Haiku in Canada: History, Poetry, Memoir* which is a focused attempt to introduce Canadian haiku to a broader readership.

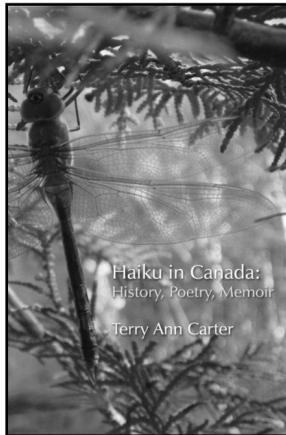
Carter's book is primarily a history and reflection on haiku. There is a reverence for the form in her careful chronicling of haiku history, and an intimate reflection on having been there though much of its growth. Canadian haiku is still young, though according to Carter, is world-class. And despite this and the numerous fine examples of haiku in her book, the form, broadly, is under appreciated in Canada outside of the small yet devout community of haiku writers across the country.

Perhaps this is because haiku is misunderstood. Note that haiku is not *always* a three lined poem with lines of five, seven, and five syllables respectively, as is taught in grade school. According to Carter, three lines defines the *essence* of haiku without placing rigid boundaries on the structure:

*the moon
not quite full
but full enough*

-Diana E. Cox

To be exact, haiku is traditionally thought of as a three-lined, 17 syllable poem. And while there are "ideal" elements of traditional haiku (these are: referring to a specific event, capturing the present moment; objective tone in observation; avoiding poetic devices) Carter writes that the form like any other is subject to experimentation and contemplation. More to the fact that not all haikus pattern the same is that the form is



***Haiku in Canada:
History, Poetry,
Memoir***
Terry Ann Carter
Ekstasis, 2020



Terry Ann Carter

native to another language, and thus, like it, its set of rules are translations. If the very best specimens of Japanese haiku are translated into English, they'll not likely fit the 17 syllable confinement. As well, syllables are counted differently in Japanese than in English. A 17 syllable poem in Japanese would have half as many in English. In exposition on the *way* of haiku, Carter writes: "...a 17 syllable English haiku will seem inordinately long to the Japanese reader. As a result, many English haikuists try to write with as few syllables as possible to capture more accurately the spirit of the shorter Japanese version."

Haiku in Canada situates much of Canadian haiku history among a handful of central figures who helped to shape its growth. With a focus on history, for what the piece lacks in narrative it makes up for in impressive detail and recall. Carter highlights the important, if unfortunate, genesis of Canadian haiku. These might have

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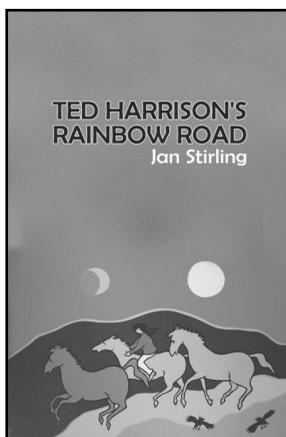
THE PAINTER AND THE PIANIST

Carol Ann Sokoloff

When renowned British-Canadian painter Ted Harrison meets the dazzling jazz pianist, Jan Stirling, at a Victoria, BC Rotary meeting, an unusual friendship develops. Both had suffered recent losses – Stirling, the end of her second marriage and Harrison, then in his eighties, the loss of independence through a move to a senior's residence. Despite a considerable age difference these two artistic souls find comfort in each other's company, and even a kind of romance.

"We sat in my Honda... sipping from small bottles of champagne and gazing at the crashing waves in front of us... we were cozy and comfortable, not feeling a need to talk. The occasional squeeze of our clasped hands expressed our delight. "There's nowhere else I'd rather be," I thought with surprise," Jan Stirling recalls. (p. 10)

Delighting in Harrison's occasional spontaneous musings on diverse subjects, Stirling begins to record in shorthand the artist's sensitive commentaries. Now some years after Harrison's death, she has published *Ted Harrison's Rainbow Road*, her memoir of their unusual relationship interspersed with what they came to call



***Ted Harrison's
Rainbow Road***
Jan Stirling
Austin Macauley
Publishers Lt.

Harrison's 'poems.'

It makes for a compelling narrative, a book to enjoy and re-read regularly for the effervescent engagement of two creatives reflecting on life and love and art. Stirling offers a window into Harrison's vivid imagination. The bright tones of his paintings are easily conjured in the colourful language of his meditations. But we also see the deep music of friendship, the dance of intimacy on a level beyond the physical and the journey of a woman negotiating the heart's challenging path. Their relationship allows each to be honest and open with each other and Stirling is able to reflect both of their vulnerabilities as they help each other sustain joy.

"Where love is, anger is not... where love is joy prevails. ...There are no fences around love. All is an open gate...So freedom remains a quality of love – the freedom to choose, the freedom to think the finest thoughts and noblest actions. Everyone is an aristocrat where love is concerned..." Harrison affirms after a fine Valentine's dinner. (p.126)



Jan Stirling

(continued on page 41)

CELEBRATING CANADA'S TRAMP LAUREATE

Ryan Pastorchik

Jim Christy represents a waning class of drifters. In *Jim Christy: A Vagabond Life*, Ian Cutler captures the wanderer's spirit, honouring a unique and resonant voice from a fading time. Part of Feral House's "Tramp Lit" series, Cutler considers the traits of vagabondage and the allure it has for those drawn to the horizon. Cutler presents a vision of freedom through the biography of Canada's tramp-laureate, Jim Christy.

Offering a history through "some semblance of chronological order", Cutler takes the shifting tapestry of Christy's story and identifies key moments that are quilted together using Cutler's reflective prose and excerpts from the author's numerous works. The gaps are filled with the narratives Cutler has collected through interviews with Christy's friends and companions. *A Vagabond Life* provides the opportunity to experience the wandering writer's extensive resume and travel log without the threat of spending time in castle dungeons ourselves. The biography ends with a collection of photographs that help make the strange tales familiar.

Cutler—whose own interest in the art of rambling is long-lived—reveals the core tenets of tramping through this exploration of Christy's life. The sundry stories provide lively windows into the refusal to be constrained by authority, the thirst for secrets of the world, a deep sense of honour and respect for the good and downtrodden, and embrace the "seductions of the 'natural' world." From creating a protection racket as a child to the quiet study of art in later years, Christy's story offers a vicarious introduction to the fortune and fees of a vagabond life.

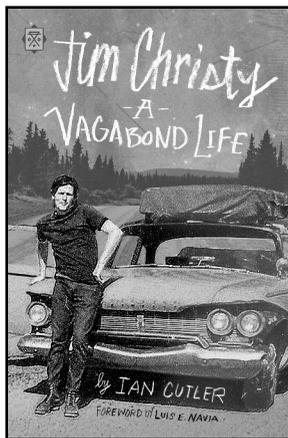
For Christy and many who have lived on the road, judgments of others cannot be made until their characters are clear. When injustice appears, action is taken. This is seen in a gratifying story involving a car, a racist redneck, and a promise kept. Christy, who has an appreciation for the automobile, saw a green, white, and gold '58 Cadillac for sale. He describes it as "love at first sight." Christy and the owner worked out a deal for the sale of the car, but the owner had a catch—Christy had to promise to never sell the car to a black person. Christy made the promise and drove away with the prize. Four years later, Christy found himself moving to Vancouver and recognized the old Cadillac would have to stay behind. For three years Christy had passed on offers from a friend to buy the car. Aware of the move, this friend, who was black, asked again to buy the car, but Jim explained he had made a promise and couldn't sell it to him:

"He gave me the flat look."
 "I didn't think you were like the rest of them."
 "I'm not. But I'm a man of my word."
 "Shit."
 "So I'm not going to sell it to you, Chris. I'm going to give it to you."

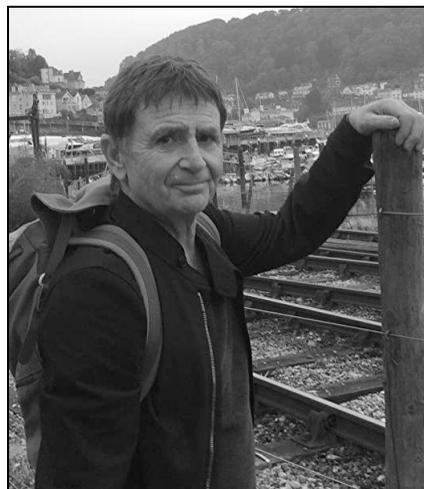
This story and many others reveal the honour, honesty, and humanity found in a life spent wandering.

Cutler's account of Christy and his writing is full of reverence for the world. Cutler draws attention to one moment in particular that "was the defining moment for Christy in feeling and becoming Canadian."

"My mind put aside all thoughts and flowed with what was before me. Somehow the insane crashing of the boxcar dimmed and faded. The clear smell of earth and nature filled my nostrils and I just watched. Everything



Jim Christy: A Vagabond Life
 Ian Cutler
 Feral House, 2019
 336 pp. \$27



Ian Cutler



Jim Christy

was hushed and silent, the woods were like a great still cathedral."

As Christy crossed the Rockies in his boxcar, the landscape welcomed him. The invitation was received; Christy landed in Revelstoke and "clearly felt that he was, at last, a Canadian." Cutler writes that, "Wanderlust represents an addiction to continually seek out the remotest corners of the world and to get as far away from the human herd and their manufactured paraphernalia as is possible." For Christy, these remote corners are people as often as they are places—he is drawn to that which others often fail to notice and finds wealth in communion.

At a time when our energy is increasingly focused inward, Christy's story reminds readers that there is a world of experience, beauty, and freedom available to those who are willing to wander. Canadian poet Len Gasparini describes Christy as "the only person I know who embodies the true spirit of the troubadour", and Cutler shares this spirit with readers at a time it is deeply needed. *Jim Christy: A Vagabond Life* celebrates a remarkable Canadian figure while sharing a much-needed vision of self-confidence and freedom.

A teacher and school administrator in the Fraser Valley, Ryan Pastorchik is a frequent contributor to PRRB.

HAIKU IN CANADA (continued from page 17)

been the first haikus—those written by prisoners of Japanese internment camps in British Columbia. Carter also notes the first known collection of haiku published in Canada (1965) and mentions Leonard Cohen's Haiku-like poetry in his *The Spice Box of Earth* (1961) which was likely the first haiku-esque poem published by a mainstream Canadian poet. Not long after all of this, the first known collection of haiku in Canada was published in 1965. The formation of the Haiku Society of Canada and a handful of haiku-focused publications then followed suit, and helped bridge the writer to reader.

Largely structured like a history book in its exposition, example, exposition, and figure format, Carter adds charm through memoir. This history Carter provides is one of research interwoven with her own thoughts before she closes with a simple reflection on her developments and achievements as a writer.

It becomes clear in *Haiku in Canada* that Carter (and her contemporaries) think of haiku as something more than a form. Quoting Eric Amann, one of the influential members of the early haiku community: "A problem for the Western reader, therefore, is not to find the hidden meaning, the 'symbolic significance' of a haiku, for there is none, but to re-convert the images of a haiku into his own institutions. And the answer to that lies in the art of reading haiku."

And it may not be possible to appreciate this until one reads through hundreds of syllables. Fortunately Carter includes a great deal of haiku from many respected Canadian haiku writers. Some are which are simply delightful such as this one of the

(continued on page 19)

BUDDHISMS IN ASIA

Maryse Cardin

Approaching the study of Buddhism like this textbook does, from a multidisciplinary approach, would be like studying a garden by breaking it down into its components and expressions. For the garden, we'd look at its flowers, bushes, and trees, its location, influences, design, water features, and history. Foremost, we would look at the garden as is a living organism forever in flux, growth and renewal.

This is what the editors and the authors of *Buddhisms in Asia* have done. The book weaves together a multitude of different approaches to create a tapestry of Buddhism. It demonstrates how alive Buddhism is, and how it continues to evolve in all its manifestations and forms such as philosophy, canonical texts, practices, movies, art and literature.

This is how the editors position the textbook, as “a sustained study of ‘Buddhism’ that reveals how the term does not refer to a simple monolithic phenomenon; instead, Buddhism is complex and manifold. Indeed, due to the rich variety of cultural productions (texts, practices, sociological structures, artistic expressions) and ideologies that fall within the category, it is better to conceive of Buddhism pluralistically. That is, Buddhism is better understood as Buddhisms. Moreover, while Buddhism is historic, it has never been static, nor is it now a vestige of a bygone era. Buddhism is and always has been a dynamic array of traditions.”

The work is a unique and inspired collaboration of scholars who met at a five-week summer institute on Buddhist Asia hosted at the East West Center in Honolulu. Each writer brings their own expertise to this study of Buddhism. Their goal is to broaden “understandings of how Buddhism has shaped and been shaped by cultures and societies over the course of its spread across Asia.”

This is a text for undergraduate students and teachers, whether the class be in a world religion or Asian studies department, or part of the curriculum in a humanities course. It may also be of interest to practitioners of Buddhism who would like to deepen their practice with theory. The textbook's geographical and conceptual range is large reflecting the expertise and fields of interest of the collaborators. It takes us to India, Thailand, Tibet, and Vietnam, among many countries. It looks at Buddhist philosophy and the study of its canonical and ancient apocryphal texts. It examines medieval Japanese literature, and also how Buddhism shows up as a social engagement today.

One chapter delves into how Buddhism was interpreted by artists. It looks at Buddhist imagery and art and its transformation over time and space, such as how serpentine spirits in Indian imagery became dragons in China. Another chapter covers how to get students interested in Buddhist concepts by utilizing Hollywood films like *Fight Club*, and contemporary translations of ancient texts by Vietnamese monk and scholar Thich Nhat Hanh.

I wanted a better understanding of the textbook and the impetus behind it, and reached out to its editors, Nicholas S. Brasovan and Micheline M. Soong. The following is our exchange.

Q: Why did you decide to create this book?

A: We created this book to advance an interdisciplinary approach to the study and teaching of Buddhism in an academic setting.

Q: In one sentence, what is the textbook all about?

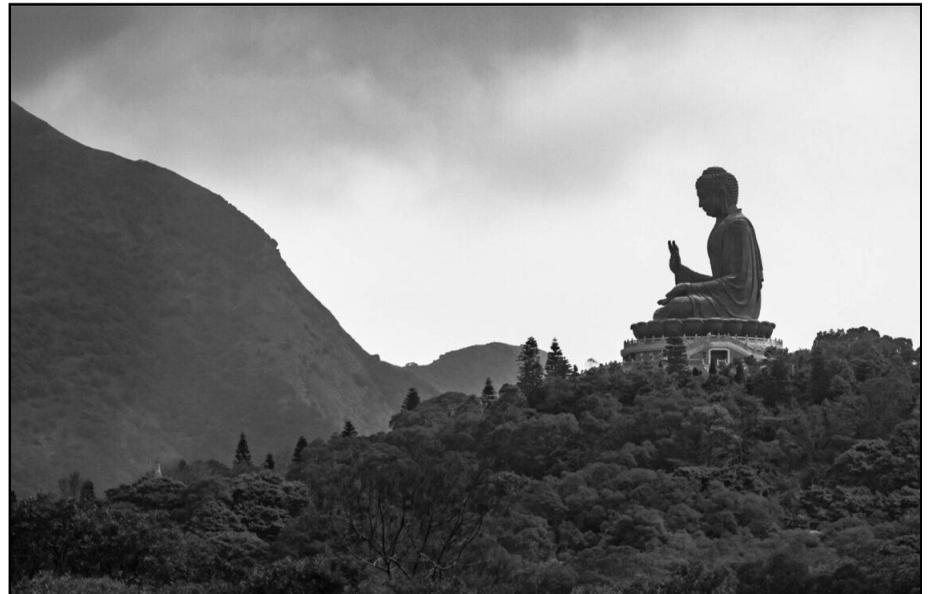
A: This book demonstrates that Buddhisms are multimedia, multicultural, polylingual phenomena which are best understood from a multidisciplinary approach using different academic disciplinary theories and methods.

Q: What are some challenges in teaching Buddhism in the classroom, and how does this textbook alienate these challenges?

A: Buddhism presents challenges due to its depth and breadth in philosophy, religious



Buddhisms in Asia, Traditions, Transmissions, and Transformations
Nicholas S. Brasovan
and Micheline M. Soong, eds.
SUNY Press, 210 pp
\$32.95



Tian Tan Buddha, Hong Kong

ideology, praxes, aesthetics and histories. This volume provides educators and students with fresh looks at Buddhism as a diverse array of expressions.

Q: What aspect has you most excited?

A: We are most excited about the different perspectives, cultures and ideas that are represented here. Again, we are happy to have had a hand in elevating a concept of pluralism as a paradigm for studying and teaching Buddhism.

Q: I understand you are practicing Buddhists. How has your practice informed the creation of this textbook?

A: Our practice of Buddhism is only enriched and informed by the book, but we would not say that our practice has informed the book.

Q: What do you find most catches the interest of students in a Buddhism class? What speaks to them most intimately?

A: We find that students are attracted by the novelty and frankness of the religion, and they are often attracted to its rich tapestry of multimedia representations—for example, its narratives, philosophical arguments, iconography, and ritual praxis.

A Zen Buddhist practitioner and former editor of *Japan EcoTimes*, Maryse Cardin writes on Buddhist culture for PRRB.

HAIKU IN CANADA (continued from page 18)

two poems that Jacqueline Pearce won the first League of Canadian Poets haiku contest with:

after the rain
my daughter jumps into
each piece of sky

- Jacqueline Pearce

Carter's open adoration for the growth of haiku in Canada should be met with an equal appreciation or a curiosity about the unique form. There is a special relevance it has today. Haiku's precise, terse style makes it a peaceful combatant to the chatter of infinite scroll content — not something all together opposite to poetry, but adamant in intent. And that's what makes it a particularly powerful form for this era. Carter's recent work adds to this growing body of Canadian work, detailing its importance to her and the whole of Canadian poetry.

Joel Robertson-Taylor was the recipient of the 2018 Canadian University Newspaper Editor award of the year. His previous review in PRRB was *Two Roads Home*.

MARVELLOUS MUSHROOMS

Jesse Boyes

This collaborative publication is an eye opener even for experienced mushroom hobbyists, proof that the fungal kingdom is an endless source of awe. Who knew that a polypore mushroom was once found in Alaska with a diameter of over ten feet? Who knew the largest organism on planet Earth may be a fungus, with its underground mycelium network covering 2,200 acres? *Medicinal Mushrooms of Western North America* delivers such stumpers on almost every page, and is an informative showcase of the medicinal power of fungi.

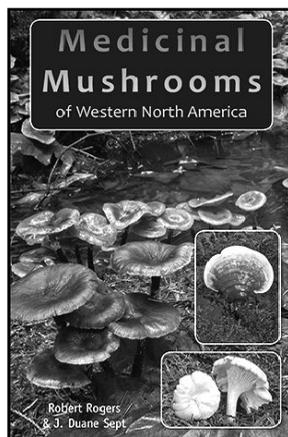
Robert Rogers is an herbalist of over 45 years, experienced mycologist, professional member of the American Herbalist Guild, and assistant clinical professor in family medicine at the University of Alberta. One of over 50 of his publications is called *The Fungal Pharmacy: The Complete Guide to Medicinal Mushrooms and Lichens of North America*, and is a comprehensive guide to over 300 species, weighing in at over 600 pages. For those who are inspired to further expand their mycology shelves, Rogers has written on a plethora of fungal matters. Regarding medicinal mushrooms in particular, he's an essential source, having also authored a book citing over 500 human clinical trials on 50 medicinal species, *Medicinal Mushrooms: The Human Clinical Trials*.

J. Duane Sept is a biologist who has a wide range of popular publications. Many of them are also published by Calypso Publishing, and are written in the same style as *Medicinal Mushrooms of Western North America*, on cousin subjects: birds, butterflies, trees, medicinal plants, wild berries, wildflowers, marine life, and so on. Last year, a revised edition of his 2006 book *Common Mushrooms of the Northwest* was released. Most of Sept's work is focused in Alaska, Western Canada, and the Northwestern United States. Sept is also an award winning photographer whose work is published internationally by such assemblies as BBC Wildlife, Parks Canada, Nature Canada, National Wildlife Federation and World Wildlife Fund. Most of the photographs included are taken by him, although credit is given to a dozen other photographers for particular photos, including some from Robert Rogers. Our guides on this journey have written on subjects that they have studied up close, smelled, tasted, photographed.

It's a small book of ninety-six high-quality pages, colour coded into four main categories. Easy on the biceps, yet rich in content. There are introductory guides to 40 species of medicinal fungi: gilled mushrooms, polypore fungi, jelly fungi, and an "other" division for a huge bolete, a club fungus that eats insects, and a few other bewildering characters. This book does not claim to be a *field* guide, or guide to picking, eating, or treating with fungi. The purpose it serves is to introduce the reader to a selection of noteworthy species with medicinal value that can be found in Western North America, and inform of possible ways they may be used as medicine. Further research is encouraged, but this acts as an excellent starter trail into an immense terrain.

Each species in this book has either one or two full pages devoted to it, including the photographs which are printed large and in full colour. The basic description is not always sufficient for confident mushroom identification, but the book gives sufficient warning from the start. Mushrooms can be tricky, or deadly poisonous. How's that for a dinner party? Picking them to use as food or medicine is not for the incautious. When Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist, first thought up the taxonomic system for categorizing and naming organisms that we still use today, he looked at the elusive, staggeringly diverse fungal kingdom and, overwhelmed, threw all fungi into one category: *Chaos Fungorum*. With well over a million species of fungi, there's still room for much discovery. It's easy to get overly confident, and think we recognize something while overlooking important distinctions.

Each species is introduced with a common name next to its Latin binomial, with a list of "other names" since fungi often have several. The description, in the section on gilled fungi for example, begins with a briefing on the cap (which might say "convex, moist and sticky when new" as with enoki mushrooms, or "convex or dome shaped when young, flattens with age" as with the meadow mushroom. What follows is description of gills, the colour of spore prints, the stalk, veil if any, and the size. The

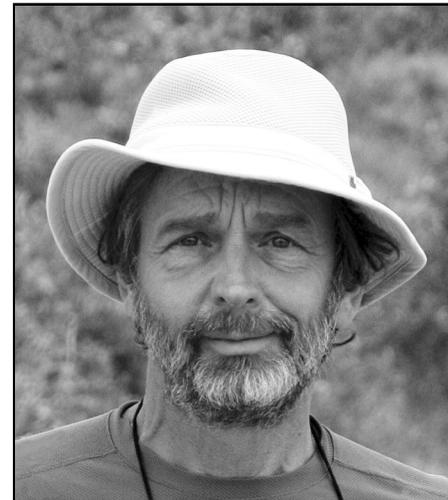


Medicinal Mushrooms of Western North America

Robert Rogers & J. Duane Sept
Calypso Publishing,
2020. 96 p.



Robert Rogers



J. Duane Sept

basic anatomic outline precedes information on the mushroom's habitat and its geographic range. What follows are the really juicy sections: traditional uses, and medicinal uses. Each species is then concluded with a small section of notes that are usually too interesting to leave out, and then a list of similar species if any are relevant.

Medicinal mushrooms are attracting more and more attention in modern times, and so the market for them is growing. Sept and Rogers have here opened many gates for serious mushroom foragers, but they also diffuse some important controversies for those who simply want to buy a product from a health food store. The most famous and widely marketed species (such as lion's mane, or chaga) are included in this book, with much wider ranging information than you'll find on product packaging or in a field guide. The clinical trials referred to are especially assuring and enlightening. Turkey Tail fungi, for example, have yielded surprisingly encouraging results in studies on their effect on patients undergoing treatment for colon cancer and breast cancer, and may also prevent neurodegeneration in the brain.

This book testifies to the vastness of traditional mushroom use. It frequently refers to Traditional Chinese Medicine, international cuisine, and the ethnomycology of various indigenous peoples. It is explained that a relative of the "thin walled maze polypore" called *Daedaleopsis tricolor* was found in fragments, more than seven thousand years old, in the ruins of ancient Rome. Several conk species have been used by tribal peoples to carry fire. Vikings may have eaten *Amanita* mushrooms to muzzle their fear of death before going into battle. These examples have not even come close to spoiling the highlights.

The sections on medicinal uses are really the vital force in this book. The clinical trials referred to are explained concisely but adequately. The authors often clarify which studies were on humans and which on animals. Some mushrooms have shown to exhibit cytotoxicity against certain kinds of cancer cell lines, some protect bone marrow from side-effects of chemotherapy drugs, and some protect against other adverse effects of chemotherapy. Many of these mushrooms modulate the immune system. The Amadou mushroom, among others, has been shown to have anti-viral properties. Chaga fungus extracts inhibit influenza. There is plenty of reason to be hopeful about fungal medicine.

Because the authors dodge the "field guide" status, they're also liberated to touch on a historically contentious topic: hallucinogenic mushrooms. The two pages dedicated to *Psilocybesemilanceata*, the Liberty Cap, are courageously honest. Promotion of emotional empathy, relief from treatment-resistant depression, from PTSD, and relief from cluster headaches are some examples of the proven healing potential of this mushroom. While discretion is again advised, it's encouraging to see the real research on display.

This book is up to date, making note of wide-ranging research including that which is recent and little known. Overall, it is an impressive memo from the Earth, respectfully conveyed by these two elders in the field. Candidly, my own medicine cabinet will never be the same.

Jesse Boyes is a wood artist and amateur ethnobiologist who writes from B.C.'s Fraser Valley.

A VOLUNTARY CRUCIFIXION

Patrick Keeney

“I am an uneasy man, severe with myself, like all solitaires.” ~ Blaise Cendrars

“The great book of the world ... traveling, seeing courts and armies, mingling with men of diverse tempers and conditions, gathering a variety of experiences, proving oneself in the fortunes of life.” ~ Descartes, *Discourse on the Method*

“In a country like Canada, executions are a back-room affair.” ~ David J. MacKinnon

David J. MacKinnon’s *A Voluntary Crucifixion* is a book about memory and the elusive task of trying to capture in prose the elements – the people, places and events – that have gone into making one’s life. It brings to mind Nabokov’s, *Speak Memory*.

MacKinnon is a Sorbonne graduate in history *cum laude* and the author of two critically-acclaimed novels, *Lepor Tango* and *The Eel*. For those who are new to his writing, he can be laugh-aloud funny, his biting wit the perfect tool for poking at the absurdities of modern life. For example, *A Voluntary Crucifixion* opens with David, *en famille*, waiting frustratingly at the airport in Reykjavik. He asks his son: “How do I look?” His son responds, “You look gaunt and ghoulish.” David, the proud father, comments, “Ah, salve for my wounds. My offspring knows the words gaunt and ghoulish. Hope still there – two cerebral souls in a Gomorra of cretins.”

But as the title suggests, the author’s honesty creates a tome which can also be excruciatingly painful in its honesty, as he proceeds to uncover the genealogy of his psyche, and indeed the psyche of his generation. One of the book’s leitmotifs occurs in the first pages: “A bottomless spiritual hunger has seized the world. The more you feed it, the more it grows.”

MacKinnon has led an extraordinary life, which has taken him from the suburbs of Vancouver, to Montreal, onward to Hong Kong and Paris, then to London and Rome, with many stops in-between. He is currently resident in Amsterdam.

In keeping with the author’s candid, confessional tone, I had better lay my cards on the table at the start. David and I are long-standing friends going back to our high-school days. We share a Catholic background. He attended St. Peter’s parish in New Westminster, while my family went to the nearby, slightly down-market parish of St. Michael’s in Burnaby. As boys, we were both taught by nuns, he by Sister Mary Lucille, who, in his words, “vowed to squeeze the pleasure out of any child she ever laid hands on,” and me by Sister Theodoric, renowned as a “lover of God but hater of little children.”

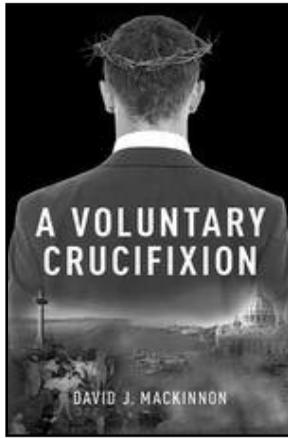
We both attended St. Thomas More High School in Burnaby, where the Christian Brothers of Ireland taught us, and where we were team-mates on the junior varsity football team.

As teen-agers, we raided his father’s liquor cabinet. I had a crush on his sister, the fair Maureen (alas, never requited). His mother amazed me by her unflinching kindnesses to whoever David dragged home. I stood in awe of his father, Judge Gordon MacKinnon of the BC Supreme Court, who despite his natural conviviality, put the fear of the Lord into all of us. As good Catholic boys, guilt was our second-nature. And yes, as a matter of fact, we *were* all guilty – at least by the canons of our Catholic faith.

After high school, I shared a house with David’s brother Graeme, a venue that became famous for its parties with the trainee nurses from the Royal Columbia Hospital. David frequently slept in the bathtub.

David’s successful campaign for the student senate at UBC consisted of him plastering the campus with posters of him in the MacKinnon tartans and kilt, his campaign motto taken from Ogden Nash:

A camel has a single hump
A Dromedary Two.
Or else the other way around
I’m never sure, are you?



A Voluntary Crucifixion
David J. MacKinnon
Guernica Editions,
2019, 394 pp.

His victory was assured when he secured the engineer’s vote by successfully winning their foot race. The challenge was to chug a beer every hundred yards.

The book refers to much familiar geography – Agnes Street, St. Mary’s Hospital, Moody Park, the PNE, the infamous Hollywood Hospital – as well as mutual friends, including one of the dedicatees of the book, “Red Fred” Naylor, the New Westminster Fire Chief whose premature death was caused by inhaling the deadly fumes in New York after the 9/11 attacks.

I remember the shocking news of the murder of his uncle Hugh, a Catholic priest in Mexico City, an event that he reflects on at some length in this book. At the time, we were, of course, all horrified. But it wasn’t until I read his account here that I learned of the impact it had on my friend.

All of this shared background is not to claim any unique insight, but only to say that it has taken some intellectual effort to disentangle David, the man, from the author of *A Voluntary Crucifixion*. It’s not always easy delivering an honest appraisal of a friend’s book, particularly when so many of its incidents and themes intersect with your own life.

A Voluntary Crucifixion defies easy categorization. In one sense, it is a straightforward autobiography, a candid recounting of the author’s life. Yet the book is somewhat cannily subtitled, “Prose by David J. MacKinnon.” I suspect it is easier for a publisher to market “prose” rather than autobiography, but in fairness, autobiography doesn’t quite fit either. I think the book might best be categorized as Canadian history as experienced by the MacKinnon clan, of whom David is destined to play the role of the learned scribe.

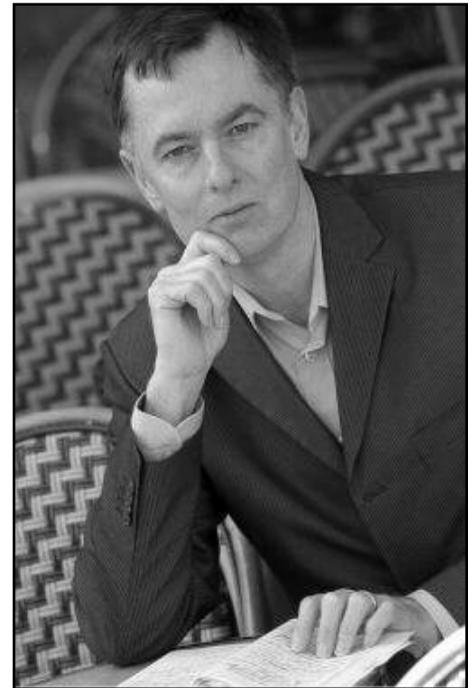
The book is filled with fascinating incidents from Canadian history, and the author is masterful at re-telling them. For example, during the 1920s, the KKK tried to establish itself in Saskatchewan but soon abandoned it as a lost cause. As MacKinnon notes, anyone familiar with the Prairies’ styles would know that rural folk in Canada with a strong tradition of cooperative action weren’t likely to support the Klan’s divisive message.

Yet there is an ironic contemporary coda to the KKK’s attempt to convert prairie farmers to their cause. He writes, “The Klan, and its very ephemeral membership, were targeting two groups – Jews and Europeans – who, ironically, have re-emerged as pantomime villains in the small “I” liberal-left *commedia dell’arte* performed by snowflakes and millennials worldwide that all Europeans are responsible for all oppression since the beginning of recorded history.”

The ancient clan of the MacKinnons, it turns out, is fiercely dedicated to a number of intergenerational passions, including Catholicism, alcohol, the law, patriotism, scholarship, and the commonweal of Canada. He writes, “My family is governed by a thirst for knowledge, a thirst for drink, and a thirst for justice, dictating the course of our lives far more than we dare admit.” Edmund Burke’s observation that society is a contract among the living, the dead, and the yet to be born seems apposite for the MacKinnons.

MacKinnon is proud of Canada, but he has no delusions. His patriotism is tempered by a gimlet-eyed appraisal of Canadian power centers’ *realpolitik* and the corruption endemic in much of the Canadian establishment. Working as a lawyer in Montreal, he saw the corruption first-hand, upfront and personal. He writes, “Aye, it is a great and glorious thing to be a MacKinnon, just as long as you don’t ... discredit the powers that be with any Papal delusions about bringing moral purpose to the enterprise of governing this great land.”

In this context, one of the more poignant moments in the book is a brief conver-



David J. MacKinnon

(continued on page 22)

THE EYELID

Allan Graubard

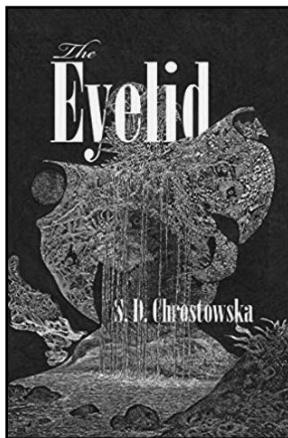
What is a life altering discovery? How do we know it has occurred? In what fashion do we judge its content and implications, whether for good or ill? Does it appear just like that, the sudden fruit of an intuition previously unknown or barely sensed? And how, or how well, does disbelief enter, or its cousin, irony, keeping distant just enough what would otherwise sweep away ambiguous assumptions or shifting conceits?

These are some of the questions that seem to have animated S.D. Chrostowska in her charming dystopian novel, *The Eyelid*. From its first introductory line, a cautionary, if buoyant excerpt from Victor Hugo, the novel takes shape. Indeed, “there is nothing like the dream to create the future,” or, in this case, a fiction that the author unveils in forty-two brief chapters

It begins on a park bench as many things do perhaps a year after the protagonist, known only as “I,” has lost his job. Negligence of duties, contagious yawning, passive buy in, quiet napping were enough to do him in. Given over now to idle games and wandering, his imagination sensitized by his relative freedom from work, the false security bought by a salary and all its shared values, he finds himself on that bench as the autumn sky darkens and snow begins to fall. Before him two swans, one white, one black float slowly on a still lake. He senses someone has sat down beside him: “A small unimposing man gazing out at the water,” casually though perfectly dressed. Minutes pass. If only to break the silence, which has “congealed” uncomfortably within him, he asks him the time. It is, as the fellow puts it, already “too late.”

The romantic cliché and deadpan response establish the mood for the events to come; a kind of blues or threnody in minor chords with subtle, frenzied overtones. “Chevauchet,” this man who quickly becomes mentor to the narrator, is an Ambassador of the Free Republic of Onirica. Without official status of any sort, yet seeking acolytes, his is a subversive position.

The reality principle has triumphed. In order to feed arch cycles of consumption and production, sleep and nocturnal dreaming have been outlawed. Wakefulness, supported by drugs, and the spectacle, a catalytic social media Goliath, control the population. For the great majority, the eccentric, nonproductive, deeply personal world of sleep has vanished. And yet here and there in a fluid underground known or curated by Chevauchet, free spaces to sleep and dream in survive, accepting whomev-



The Eyelid
S.D. Chrostowska
Coach House Books
140pp, paper, \$21.95

er finds them. Inevitably, as the police track one down and end its operations, arresting all participants, another opens up: a kind of rueful hide and seek that will not end kindly. The discovery of this clandestine world, the preservative role it offers, how it infects perception even when awake, and the fatality that unravels for the narrator within it compel the read.

In order for this kind of novel to exceed the narrative tropes that define it, and breach or float free of contemporary genres, a keen poetic intelligence is necessary. Our author knows this, and uses that knowledge to some effect; investing the narrative with linguistic resonance rooted in associations derived from root definitions. For a scholar of humanities and social and political thought, which our author also is, this is not rare. But in the refinements that she brings to her writing, less concerned with character than the atmosphere that characters and events inspire — a palette led by shimmering layers of chiaroscuro and the reveries attached to them — her literary skills draw the reader in.

The novel, of course, is a warning of what is to come or what in large part has already come for us. Where do the opacities of sleep and the images and tales that our dreams are full of find reference in the world we inhabit? Darkness itself, the night sky of our mega cities, so scored by illumination, has lost the wonder it once held for us. 24/7 media cycles play with our passions as they absorb and recreate them. Self-identity, ever problematic, has entered a homologous, socially sanctioned, global commercial space that militates against psychological, cultural and linguistic difference while using them, whenever feasible, for profit. Even as nations struggle to sustain their politics and cultures, their economic interdependence commonly calls the shots.

In these circumstances, is it possible any longer to affirm that a life altering discovery is at all attainable, despite the marketing hype that infects the phrase, making it just one more diminished hyperbole among others? That, I hope, is up to you to decide, whenever and wherever you find yourself only and excessively *you*. This novel is an incitement to do just that.

Allan Graubard's poems, fiction, literary criticism and theater works are published and performed in the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Chile, U.K., and the E.U., with translation into numerous languages.



S.D. Chrostowska

CRUCIFIXION (continued from page 21)

sation between the author and his young son. David is telling his boy of the MacKinnon's clan great respect for the law. The son says, “You always tell us Canada is about the rule of law.” In the age of Trudeau the Younger, the dad sadly replies, “Not any more.”

Among the pleasures encountered in this book are the author's incidental observations. He is a Russophile who as a boy read Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Gogol, and Gorky while his peers watched hockey. Later, he studied Russian literature at both UBC and the Sorbonne. He remarks, “Russia was then, as it is today, a mystery, still locked in its eternal mind-split as to whether it is European or Slavonic. As if Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, rather than liberating them, paralyzed the entire nation in a gyre of division as to its identity.”

There is much else to recommend this wild romp of a book. Some compare MacKinnon to Charles Bukowski, while others have compared him to the French vagabond poet Blaise Cendrars, whose radio interviews he has translated. However, if we must insist on comparisons, I would compare him to Hunter S. Thompson — albeit a Hunter Thompson educated at the Sorbonne and who had the discipline to be a member of two law societies.

MacKinnon's prose is astoundingly erudite, sometimes challengingly so. And he is unapologetically male, writing eloquent, testosterone-infused sentences. And he is disdainful of the Toronto-centric, Canned Canadian Culture shtick.

As to the authenticity of what is reported, some of which strikes one as quite fan-

tastic, I cannot say. As MacKinnon himself observes:

“I suppose a lot of things can fog the memory lines. Particularly war.”
“And don't forget drink.”

Indeed. Don't forget drink. And don't forget the passage of time.

Memory gets fogged. Whether the accounts set down in *A Voluntary Crucifixion* are real, exaggerated, or entirely fabricated hardly matters. As Nabokov says, “Some might think that the creativity, imagination, and flights of fancy that give my life meaning are insanity.” Some might say something similar about Mr. MacKinnon.

Yet the author has provided a glimpse into an extraordinarily eventful Canadian life. There is a thread of anguished refinement threading throughout, a kind of inchoate sorrowful yearning, but paved over by a veneer of angry defiance, doubtless born of his Scottish ancestors. He has a gift for narrative style, and his prose is rich and full, laced with allusions, both classical and modern. The book is witty, laugh aloud funny, and, in the end, wise.

A Voluntary Crucifixion deserves a place on the shelf as a modern Canadian classic. MacKinnon is unquestionably brilliant. As wild and untamed as his Celtic ancestors perhaps, but brilliant.

Patrick Keeney is associate editor of C2C Journal.

THE ARTIST AND INEFFABLE DESIRE

Lucia Guidorizzi

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Amedeo Modigliani, an artist who left an indelible mark on 20th-century art for his ability to express sensual beauty with strength and intensity and ancient essence.

Carmelo Militano is a Canadian poet of Italian origin who I was lucky enough to meet in Cesena in 2018 at the Festival of the Sisters Arts and is the author of several books of poetry and prose. He is also someone who has never forgotten his roots and love for his Italian homeland and now has written an extraordinary poetic biography on the short intense life of Modigliani, a book that attempts to capture the great creative genius of Modigliani. Militano's *Catching Desire* (Ekstasis Editions, 2020) is a new and original image of the flawed great artist.

Carmelo Militano is a poet and as such he has been able to enter emphatically into the deepest dimensions of Modigliani's life, expressing his preoccupations and longings, sensations, and emotions. This book could be defined as a kind of psycho-biography that equally focuses on the cultural and social milieu Modigliani came from as well as his artistic environment, and some hidden aspects of his family genealogy: the artist, for example, belonged to a rich multilingual Jewish family that suffered a financial crack; his parents (in particular Modigliani's mother Eugenia) were cosmopolitan atheists and lovers of culture. Or we learn that in the early 20th century Modigliani moved to Venice to study at the Academy, but soon abandoned his studies, allowing himself to be absorbed into the city's decadent sensual underbelly and the unparalleled light of Venice reflected on its the water.

Militano is a poet who writes about Modigliani lyrically and is able to investigate his creative essence and seeks to understand its most intimate sources. Carmelo Militano is not limited to a simple biographical reconstruction, but also investigates the stars that influence his birth theme. Modigliani was born under the sign of the Virgin, dominated by Mercury, for the Greeks, Hermes, the psychopomp. In the Kabbala, the sign is connected with the sephiroth Hod, which presides over the sphere of mental faculties and which promotes imagination, intelligence and artistic abilities.

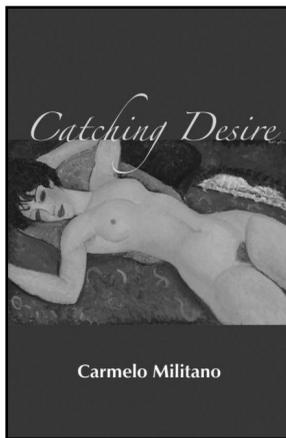
It turns out that Amedeo Modigliani was not only a painter and strong believer in astrology but also loved the word- philosophy- and in particular poetry: he used to proclaim drunk in the cafes and saloons of Paris the verses of Villon, Baudelaire and Lautremont.

In order to understand Modigliani in depth, Carmelo Militano sets out to retrace or find traces of Modigliani by visiting Modi's hometown Livorno. Militano offers us intense and vivid images of Livorno, and sometimes lonely images similar to the American artist Hopper of getting lost in the maze of streets, but still finding epiphanic moments.

In addition to the deep and sensual bond Modi establishes with each city in which he lives (Livorno Capri, Rome, Venice, and Paris), there is also his tormented and often ambivalent relationship with the feminine: his loves were never trivial or banal, but often permeated by a tragic and sometimes fatal violent tempers, such as the one with the poet Beatrice Hastings or gentle and kind with the Russian poet Anna Akhmatova, or his fatal relationship with the young artist Jeanne Hébuterne who committed suicide two days after his death almost nine months pregnant.

In the artistic field as in love, Modigliani appears to be a two-faced being, much like the ancient Roman god Janus: on the one hand he seeks success and recognition, on the other he is dominated by self-destructive tendencies.

Yet, this book also manages to go beyond the romantic clichés associated with artistic genius such as wild unruly behavior and the stereotype of the *maudit*, (damned) artist because it not only manages to grasp the dark side of artistic creation, but Militano also finds the brighter, and let us say, more positive side of the artist. Modigliani's kindness and refined mind, his creative sensibility and work ethic, his total disinterest in the economic aspect of his work, all make him adamant and allow him to reject the contradictions in his life and the expectations of society. Modigliani was thus able to express in his works a maximum sensuality, rejecting the anxiety and anxieties of a Europe slowly entered into the upheavals (WW1) at the



Catching Desire
Carmelo Militano
Ekstasis Editions, 2020
\$23,95



Carmelo Militano

beginning of the 20th century.

The writing of Carmelo Militano is compelling and alternates between prose and poetry. This variety of extraordinary interpenetration of styles and narrative allows him to effectively register the development of the pictorial and existential poetics of Modigliani. These pages are also pervaded by subtle ironic considerations such as the quote by the English writer Martin Amis in *The Information*: "Poets don't drive. Never trust a poet at the wheel. If he can drive, distrust the poetry."

I do not know if Carmelo Militano can drive, but he certainly was able to conduct this book poetically and masterfully, offering a vivid and multifaceted image of Amedeo Modigliani's life and artistic expression.

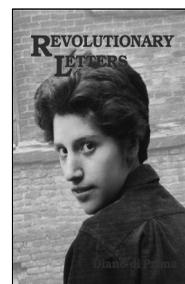
Lucia Guidorizzi is the author of ten books of Italian poetry and is a professor at a Liceo Classico, City of Venice, Italy.

This review was originally published online in Italian on September 28, 2020 at cartesensibili.wordpress.com.



This issue of the
Pacific Rim Review of Books
is dedicated in part
to the memory of
Diane di Prima (1934-2020)

A wonderful poet, artist and teacher
she was a friend of the PRRB
and will be missed.



The Revolutionary Letters
Last Gasp
(Expanded Edition
available soon
from City Lights)



Loba
Penguin Poets

SUMMER SNOW

Mary Ann Moore

You won't see a lot of white space on a page of a Robert Hass poem but you will find the delightful and the unexpected, like "Patches of Snow in July" and "Smoking in Heaven."

Blank pages between poems offer pause, whether by design or the poet's intention. A hand-drawn ellipsis denotes each of the five sections in *Silent Snow*.

It's been ten years since the publication of *The Apple Trees at Olema: New and Selected Poems* (HarperCollins, 2010) which includes poems from *Time and Materials* for which Hass received the Pulitzer Prize in 2007 and the National Book Award in 2008.

Hass worked with his friend, the late Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz, to translate a dozen volumes of Milosz's poetry and Hass's translations of the Japanese haiku masters have been collected in *The Essential Haiku: Versions of Basho, Buson, and Issa. A little Book on Form: An Exploration into the Formal Imagination of Poetry* (HarperCollins) was published in 2017. From 1995 to 1997, Hass served as poet laureate of the United States.

The book jacket refers to Hass's "wide-ranging eye" and could include his ear and all the senses as he taps into memory and everyday observations. Letters, notebook renderings, and dreams are among his customary forms of approach, in a colloquial style that creates an intimate bond between poet and reader.

"First Poem" describes dreams by a sensual and practical narrator with a pleasing rhythm of repetition. As has become familiar in a Hass poem, there are birds ("a hawk with blood on its beak") and an abundance of colour:

*In the dream he was a turquoise bird fashioned from blue stone by a
people who dug it from the earth and believed it was the shattered sky
of a foreworld.
In the dream he was the turquoise bird.*

"Patches of Snow in July" reads like the poet's personal journal with his observations of "wildflowers [that] had the raw look of early spring, as if they were astonished at themselves for having forced the dead earth." The prose (and this is where the reader may ask if there really is any difference between poetry and prose) moves into poems, under the same main title, about "Death in Infancy," "Death in Childhood," "Death in Adolescence."

Robert Hass was born in 1941 and as we age we can't help but think of death and the ones who have gone before us. Many of the poems in the book are about death and Hass names poets who have passed on.

"Planh or Dirge for the Ones Who Die in Their Thirties" follows "Those Who Die in Their Twenties." The planh (a funeral lament) includes Sylvia Plath and Arthur Rimbaud while "Harvest: Those Who Die Early in the Middle Years" refers to "Jane Kenyon, cancer at forty-seven" and "Ray Carver / who had met Tess and beat alcohol which / was going to kill him, cancer at fifty."

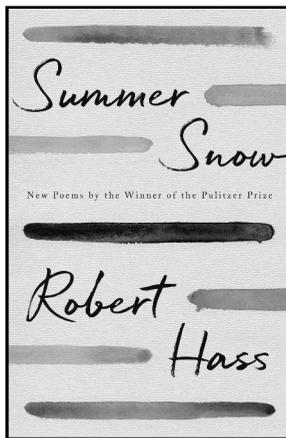
Two lines that startle and cause the reader to halt in the middle of the first page of "Harvest" is:

*All of them suddenly become the work
they managed to get done.*

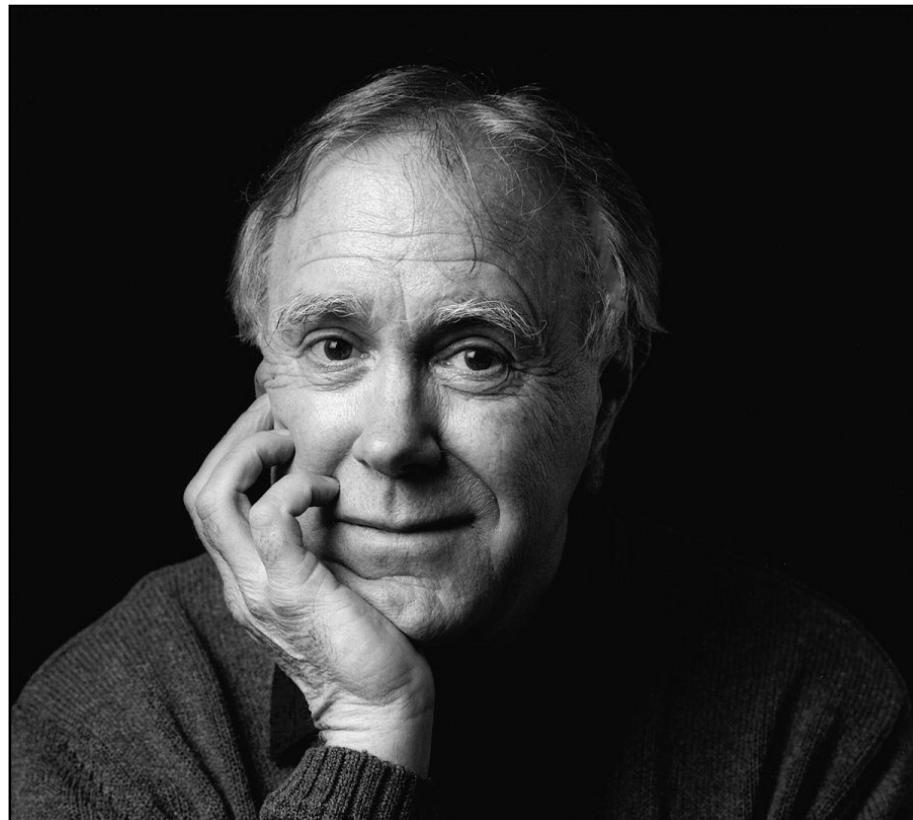
Hass makes note, in "Second Person," of an "acceleration in the occasions for mourning." This is another poem that looks as a piece of creative non-fiction might look on the page.

... You could have said, "That summer

*After my friend had shot herself" or "that summer after his friend
had shot herself," but it was you who walked the streets those
mornings, ...*



Summer Snow: New Poems
Robert Hass
ecco/HarperCollins:
178 pages



Robert Hass

Pablo Neruda makes an appearance in "Second Person" and in "Pablo Neruda: Only Death," Hass writes:

*We die as if a ship were going down inside us,
Like a drowning in the heart,
Like falling endlessly from the skin to the soul.*

"An Argument About Poetics Imagined at Squaw Valley After a Night Walk Under the Mountain" is an argument in the poet's head as Hass mentions in his "Notes" at the end of the book. Or as Hass says "I suppose I should say the poem's narrator's head."

All of these references to death are not gruesome. They are memorials, often with humour, to loved ones including many fine poets. The narrator of "Smoking in Heaven" wonders "if there would be a smoking terrace / in heaven."

"The Creech Notebook" reads like an email letter or daily journal entries in Hass's "Creech Notebook." The Creech Air Force Base in Nevada is an aerial training site for military drones which Hass notes in his poem "cost twelve million dollars / to build, \$30,000 an hour to fly . . ."

The poem's narrator and a couple of friends along with Brenda (Hass's wife is poet Brenda Hillman) protest with signs and the reading of poetry

*11 a.m. Witness can be a little boring.
I have mostly been holding up my sign
For the cacti and the Joshua trees to read.*

Another tribute to poets, in the last section of the book, is "What the Modernists Wrote About: An Informal Survey." In it, stanzas are written about Thomas Stearns Eliot "poor Tom, as his friends said," Robinson Jeffers, Marianne Moore, Gertrude Stein and others.

If I were to add a stanza to the poem about Robert Hass I may say:

He kept "an eye out for that scrap of immaculate azure,"
("Stanzas for a Sierra Morning"),
learned there is no "the" in Polish,
his "own stumbling a desire for lightness, and also necessity like a metallic
taste in the mouth, and the civility of shape" ("Notes on the Notion of a
Boundless Poetics").

Mary Ann Moore is a Nanaimo, B.C. poet, writer and writing mentor. Her book of poetry is *Fishing for Mermaids* (Leaf Press, 2014).

REPELLED BUT SELDOM BORED?

Gary Geddes

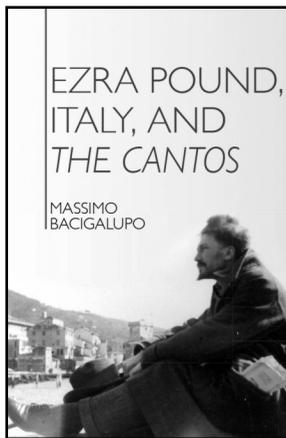
I'm sailing with Massimo Bacigalupo in the Mediterranean off Rapallo, the city where American poet Ezra Pound spent more than half his life in voluntary exile. Massimo's father Giuseppe Bacigalupo was Pound's doctor, so the skipper of the sloop *Vagabonda III* is full of stories of Pound and his circle of literary acquaintances. I use that word instead of 'friends,' as Pound seems to have been too remote or self-centered to fully engage with others in anything as intimate and caring as a friendship. One of his closest literary allies in Italy, Carlo Izzo, confessed: "I cannot say that I ever had with Pound a real human relationship, since he was so remote from reality, and conversed in fragments, occasionally somewhat childishly."

Massimo, smiling all the while, is at the tiller, his Italian-Spanish granddaughter Allegra chattering, hanging onto the guardrail, and waiting for the wind to utter its last gasp so we can all go swimming off the boat. In the rare intervals. Massimo tells me more stories about Pound, many of them expanded in his new book *Ezra Pound, Italy and The Cantos*, which is the most intimate and comprehensive look at Pound's creative process and the degree to which it is linked to his favoured places, art and history in Italy.

Bacigalupo admits that Pound territory is not easily mapped. In fact, it's full of obstacles, submerged reefs and deliberately confusing signs. Pound was conscious of the expectations of readers like me, including his mother Isabel, who want to see at least a few recognizable poetic signposts or "traditional noises" along the way, indications that "you are now reading poetry." Although such expectations are often ignored by Pound, Bacigalupo, speaking specifically of The Pisan Cantos, written while Pound was locked down in military custody awaiting extradition back to the U.S. for trial as a traitor, tells us, "the greatness of the sequence is precisely in the masterful alternations of the prosaic and the lyric". And that Pound's passages of free association "are surely the majority in the sequence, but always lead somewhere and nevertheless function as a musical background." It's a wonderfully woolly rationalization, which says, basically, even if you don't know where you are going, or where this poem-sequence is taking you, you can always relax and enjoy the musical ride.

For those readers who find this uncertainty and willing suspension of disbelief too difficult, Bacigalupo offers no apology: "The discontinuity of language may appear an obstacle until we remember that the reader of *The Cantos* is expected to be equipped with Pound's own knowledge, no more and no less, and so should have enough Italian to attack these pages. In fact, *The Cantos* are primarily written for one reader—Ezra Pound." This statement is a serious challenge for me, and I assume for many others, poets included, as I have always had an aversion to poems that are full of quotations in foreign languages and require footnotes, especially copious footnotes, a sign, to me, that the author is showing off. So, when choosing poems by Eliot and Pound for inclusion in my Oxford anthology *20th-Century Poetry and Poetics*, I deliberately excluded Eliot's "The Waste Land" and Pound's more rarefied and esoteric texts. So much for William Empson and his celebration of *Seven Types of Ambiguity*: Pound's ambiguities are seven times seven, and counting.

All this said, *Ezra Pound, Italy and The Cantos* is an enjoyable and exhilarating reading experience. Bacigalupo is not uncomfortable with Pound's distortions, failures of memory and inaccuracies, which make the reader feel as if he or she were being swept away in a maelstrom of incomprehension: "Pound is precisely that dispersal, the vortex, the incorrect text: the text as process, that only an 'affable putana' [whore]



Ezra Pound, Italy and the Cantos
Massimo Bacigalupo
Clemson UP
346 pages, 2020



Gary Geddes sailing with Massimo Bacigalupo

would think of correcting." Like Whitman, Pound had no difficulty or embarrassment about contradicting himself. While Pound objected to the scholarly, the text-centered and the pedantic, Bacigalupo detects much irony in the fact that "*The Cantos* are based precisely on a sort of worship of texts, regardless of their 'verbal formulation'—for Pound is always quoting his authorities which are supposed to carry conviction just by being named. Furthermore," he adds, "*The Cantos*, often portentous in tone, are addressed to readers who are ready to take them as a kind of sacred text, and not to look too closely at their inconsistencies and half truths. What matters (so far as the poet is concerned) is that they are song (canto), word, text, ideograph."

While dealing openly and critically with Pound's anti-Semitism and Fascist sympathies, Bacigalupo delights in sharing personal anecdotes about the poet, his wife Dorothy Shakespear, and lover-companion Olga Rudge, Pound's fiercest defender. When Olga became bitter, after Pound's death, she would launch into attacks on his enemies, among whom she briefly included Bacigalupo, following the publication of his 1980 study of Pound, *The Forméd Trace*. As a very angry Olga took a strip or two out of him, constantly interjecting the word *capito*—meaning "do you understand?"—Bacigalupo argued that "Pound's poetry and life could be better defended if accepted in all their aspects, light and dark . . . [his] greatness was closely linked to his unwieldiness, to his being out of bounds in all fields. To castrate him to make him look respectable was not doing his memory a service. The Pound Vortex had to be acknowledged in all its bewildering violence and historical dimensions."

Although he stood mostly alone and out of place in the Italian literary landscape, like a gigantic erratic, Pound's presence there was acknowledged and not always unappreciated. His contact with Eugenio Montale, for example, which began in 1925 and lasted for a decade, involved correspondence, the exchange of books and ideas, and several meetings. Reflecting on their contacts in 1955, Montale said: "This is the Pound I knew . . . the impulsive and generous man who began translating Pea's *Moscardino* when I brought it to his attention, but who in countless ways was remote from our literature, which he believed had gone astray since the Trecento. After 1940 we didn't see each other anymore, perhaps because Pound, very likely from an excess of vitality, showed a singular incomprehension for those Italians who were unable to see in Mussolini's anti-usurious Italy an Eden of delights."

Generously attributing Pound's racism to excessive vitality is rather typical of the Italian writer, whose wife was Jewish, and who would elsewhere describe Pound "as a force that had not been focussed in one direction, and finally was expended all on the surface." Yet despite his hesitations and perplexity, Montale found in *The Cantos* "a flood of haikus, that, should most of the poem be destroyed, would be the marvel of posterity." Carlo Izzo, struggling with Pound's support of Italy's racist legislation, chose to offer on the subject the conciliatory remarks of his Jewish friend Camerino: "years and decades and centuries hence, the young, without rancor or preconceptions, when discovering a book by Pound, will love him, just as we loved him so many years ago, And rightly, they will not expect measure, forbearing, bourgeois caution from a man who was born as a great wind, a great force of nature: with its evil, with its ever-consoling good. Of this, today, though embittered, Ezra Pound can be confident and

(continued on page 39)

DIGITAL DICTATORSHIP AND BIOCAPITALISM

Richard Olafson

The welfare of humanity is always the alibi of tyrants.
~ Albert Camus

Someone must have falsely denounced Josef K., for without having done anything wrong, he was arrested one morning.
~ Franz Kafka, *The Trial*

When Klaus Schwab announced from his “throne” at the World Economic Forum in Davos that Covid-19 offered an opportunity to redesign society for the Fourth Industrial Revolution and transform humanity, to take the human being into a new evolutionary phase by merging the digital, physical and biological, and by doing so transform reality (Really!), I immediately recognized the context in which he had framed Covid-19. Klaus Schwab, the founder of the World Economic Forum, is often described as a “Bond” villain, but he seems more like a comic-book villain, a mixture of Lex Luthor, Magneto and Doctor Octopus (from Spiderman): an archetypal figure of the imagination that only Jack Kirby could draw. I grew up reading comic books—first DC, and then Marvel (Stan Lee was a progressive) until about nine or ten. At that time I weaned myself off comic books and became obsessed with science fiction and technology. At about nine I gave away all my comic books (selling my large collection for ten bucks) and began seriously reading science fiction. I encountered villains and aggressive aliens, but most of all science fiction taught me how to recognize dystopia when I see one. I encountered themes of a robotized society, robot cops, mind reading police, Transhumanism and a grim future of totalitarian control. Theodore Sturgeon’s 1953 novel, *More Than Human*, introduced me to Transhumanism. Philip K. Dick introduced me to the corporate dominance of reality, through AI technology, and studied the nature of reality in a digitized world. Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451* revealed how easily thoughts and perceptions can be controlled through the manipulation of knowledge and history. Jeff Bezos’ personal plan to escape the world by building a revolving space station where the last remnants of humanity would huddle in an artificial environment and how closely his vision reminded me of Larry Niven’s *Ringworld*. It is almost as though the oligarchs had read the same books and saw in these books of dystopia blueprints for the ideal society. Dystopia for us, but Utopia for the oligarchs? After a reading of Ballard’s “The Drowned Giant” I was nudged towards Franz Kafka, and his vision of bureaucratic control, which reflects this moment all too perfectly. With an early exposure to Kafka, it was easy to recognize a pre-planned dystopia when I see one. When Klaus Schwab published his book *Covid 19: The Great Reset*, essentially a summary of the pandemic in advance, a new super villain appeared, straight out of the comic books. Dystopia arrives by stealth. I knew the world that I had read about in science fiction would come to pass, but I did not realize it would come about so quickly. (The flip-phones in *Star Trek* should have been a clue!) If science fiction dystopia appears more real today it is because we are living it. Our human response will determine what kind of lives we will live.

In response to Covid 19, the World Economic Forum introduced “The Great Reset,” a plan long in the making for the management and financialization of everything in the world. The WEF scheme allows for the endless growth of capitalism, while purporting to address the amelioration of climate change. It is a Kafkaesque project, not even Kafka could have imagined, necessitating a complete re-engineering of our civilization and what it means to be human, a kind of Corporate Totalitarianism based on global surveillance and digital control over every aspect of our lives.

In his 2014 book, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Klaus Schwab explains how the original human race will end in order to make room for the next stage in human evolution: we will all become cyborgs. Our bodies will be greatly altered using technology, as man and machine become one and our consciousness is uploaded to the cloud. In his follow-up volume, *COVID 19: The Great Reset*, rushed to print in June 2020, the current pandemic, he suggests, necessitates doing so sooner than later. Okay. Franz Kafka meets Philip K. Dick.

New technologies and approaches are merging the physical, digital and biological worlds in ways that will fundamentally transform humankind.

~ Klaus Schwab



“Many of us are pondering when things will return to normal. The short response is: never.”
Klaus Schwab, architect of the Great Reset

Doctor Evil’s Unveiling A Plan for Global Domination

Considering how perfectly the response to the pandemic has aligned with the goals of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is important to consider Covid 19 in that context. The new industrial model is a product of Klaus Schwab, chair of the World Economic Forum (WEF), who announced in June of 2020 the Fourth Industrial Revolution and stated that the global pandemic provided “an opportunity” for ‘The Great Reset’. A striking figure on the Davos pedestal at the World Economic Forum—looking perhaps a little too much like Dr. Evil from the Austin Powers films or alternatively, a sinister Bond villainhe unveiled a new kind of capitalism, “stakeholder capitalism,” driving the “novel” enterprise. Klaus Schwab is the most recognizable representative of global power right now and has written a little book of great impact, *Covid 19: The Great Reset*, (Forum Publishing, July 13 2020) apparently in response to Covid 19. Of course, he was able to slap together a 179-page book and publish it in 2 months! In this book he reaffirms the program that has already been available on the WEF website for several years an economic and technocratic strategy that will determine what is a human being, for several thousands of generations to follow. Given this potential impact on the future of humanity, we should be paying close attention to the details of his plan. In Schwab’s book, *COVID-19: The Great Reset*, he challenges industry leaders and decision makers to “make good use of the pandemic by not letting the crisis go to waste.”

Klaus Schwab has some very big plans for the world—very big plans—that govern the intent of this book. Its suggested actions are formed from an underlying philosophy that biology is limited and humankind cannot evolve beyond what it is now without merging with technology. This book provides an abstract blueprint to restructure the world to fit a desired shape, to recreate humanity as a digital, technocratic configuration: a cyborg, through which immortality will be achieved. Along with this, however, is an evident disgust with the diseased biological creatures that we are. Covid 19 has provided the catalyst to fit the roundish world into a squarish ideology. Klaus Schwab is chair of the World Economic Forum and his colleagues are some of the most powerful individuals ever to walk the earth, the elite billionaire class at the very top of a mind-crushing pyramid of influence.

Schwab’s vision of the future is a world run with precision and uniformity, a technocratic universe where food scarcity is addressed by laboratory-grown meat and chemically saturated vegetables. Health and over-population is addressed by vaccines and digital bio-surveillance. Education is imagined as children encased in digital bubbles that can be tracked, measured and monetized. It and other public initiatives will be paid for not by taxes but by the valuable data that can be mined effortlessly as citizens surrender more and more of the sovereignty of their bodies to an anonymous corporate control. Nation states will mostly be used to control populations, a sort of global Robocop police force. This is the “New Normal,” Schwab and allies project, the privatization of virtually everything in the world, including the privatization of our

bodies. Schwab's stakeholder capitalism clearly serves a transnational oligarchic caste that will take over the governance of Western "democracies." The endgame, or the golden calf, of Schwab and his gang of stakeholders—made up of hedge fund managers, Silicon Valley technocrats and global NGOs—besides the dismantling of democracy, is the privatization of life itself.

Klaus Schwab begins his argument by explaining that Covid 19 is not a serious pandemic and that "... the coronavirus is (so far) one of the least deadly pandemics the world has experienced over the last 2000 years..." He goes on to say that, "The corona pandemic is different. It does not constitute an existential threat."¹ He continues, however, to make a case that the "least deadly" pandemic in recorded history warrants a complete overhaul of our planetary system and our biological integrity. He compiles a list of familiar abstract ideas. Schwab says the form of the reset cannot be predicted, but says it will include "massive wealth redistribution" and "the abandonment of neoliberal policies..."² He avoids any discussion of the problems inherent in such a change, or how such a change might materialize. There has been no public discussion or democratic discourse on the implications of such an enormous change to biological life on this planet, yet most world leaders seem to have signed onto this project without ever taking it to their electorate. Schwab is prepared to use a sledgehammer to serve the wishes of a global elite keen to destroy the world as we know it and then remake it according to the author's subjective design and the desires of the "stakeholders."

This little book by Klaus Schwab should be paid attention to, not for its literary or philosophical merit, but for the nightmare for humanity it presents. 'The Great Reset' will change the lives of all who inhabit 'Spaceship Earth' (*a la* Bucky Fuller) for many generations to come.

¹ "Now is the time for a 'great reset'", World Economic Forum: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/now-is-the-time-for-a-great-reset/>

² Ibid.

The Totalitarian Dream of Klaus Schwab

Before mass leaders seize the power to fit reality to their lies, their propaganda is marked by its extreme contempt for facts as such, for in their opinion fact depends entirely on the power of man who can fabricate it.

~ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Klaus Schwab was born in Germany in 1938, at the height of Nazi power and he is truly a child of the Nazi era. His writing on social order displays a longing and desire for the kind of order he knew in his youth. While at Harvard, as a young man, he fell under the influence and mentorship of Henry Kissinger, who remains a dominant figure at Davos and whose book *World Order* was published at the same time as Schwab's previous book, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Kissinger, a veteran of many political adventures, shares Schwab's longing for a global 'World Order.' They envision a perfection that can only come from manipulation of information and control of the population, his "Realpolitik." As a student of Kissinger at Harvard, Schwab was schooled in world domination.

There is no question that 'The Great Reset' was planned prior to Covid 19. Detailed documents about it have been posted on the WEF website since 2017. The 'Covid 19' title was hastily added in the past year. The website also shows that the responses to Covid 19 were planned well in advance of the 2020 lockdown of the world's economy due to Covid 19. In reality, this virus provided the catalyst and the "opportunity," but the Great Reset was a Mack truck already barreling towards civilization before we even realized how quickly it would overtake us. In a hurry to complete this project, Covid 19 provided these actors the opportunity to spring the plan into action.

The plan was first coined as "The New World Order." That didn't catch on so well with the masses. Neither did The Great Reset ... until Covid, when Schwab added Covid to the book title, and added Covid to 'The Great Reset' documents on the WEF website (many of them going back decades). The inherent deception of 'The Great Reset' is that we somehow need this kind of control matrix, or as Kissinger said in 2014, at a Davos meeting, "Never before has a New World Order had to be assembled from so many different perceptions, or on so global a scale." Since the global population could not stomach such a huge plan, a resetting and reconfiguring of every aspect of human life, a major global crisis was needed to implement this plan. 'The Great Reset' is the proposed mechanism for setting in motion a new global order, a Technocratic World Government, that represents



The Fourth Industrial Revolution
Klaus Schwab
Currency
2017, 192 pages

the aims and desires of a billionaire elite. As Klaus Schwab expresses it, "The pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine, and reset our world to create a healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous future."¹

In the past year Heads of State around the world, have employed deception, misinformation and distraction to control their populations following the directives of the social engineers at Davos, to become compliant and subservient to the New World Order. A massive social engineering experiment is underway, unlike any other since civilisation began, to realign the human personality, and to enslave all of humanity in a digital bubble, while a Global Elite asserts ownership over all the world's resources (including human beings). This book reminds me of 21st century *Mein Kampf*, prophesizing an age of Global Totalitarianism, with the most seductive of meaningless words and ideas.

¹ The Great Reset, World Economic Forum: <https://www.weforum.org/focus/the-great-reset>

Pandemic Profits

A psychotic world we live in. The madmen are in power. How long have we known this? Faced this? And—how many of us do know it?

~ Philip K. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*

Let's start by examining who exactly is profiting from the current Pandemic.

In November of 2020 Pfizer released a press release declaring enormous success in their vaccine tests, claiming the Pfizer vaccine was 90% effective and 100% safe. Within a few days, copying the success of Pfizer's press release, (not vaccine) Moderna released a similar press release that their vaccine was 95% effective in treating Covid19. The same day as the Pfizer announcement was made, Pfizer's CEO, Albert Bourla, sold 5.6 million dollars' worth of company stock as part of a preset plan. He had timed the stock sale to coincide with the announcement of the efficacy of his vaccine and its safety. Although the Pfizer and Moderna announcements were not issued or verified by any regulatory body but only the companies themselves, the media took notice, increasing shareholder value in both companies. Billions of dollars (perhaps trillions) were at stake in the rush to create the vaccine.

A modicum of critical thinking suggests it is 'patent-ly' absurd (pun intended) to suggest that Pfizer or Moderna have done the necessary due diligence to determine either safety or efficacy. Their vaccines have already sold in the millions, to governments around the world (Canada has pre-purchased 30 million shots) and the FDA, under pressure, has fast-tracked emergency authorization of the vaccines with no research on long-term effects or the considerable short cuts taken by both companies. In addition, governments have granted vaccine manufacturers immunity from prosecution if they injure or kill someone. If you die after receiving the vaccination, good luck to your estate in collecting any compensation. The manufacturers have no liability for vaccine-derived injury and cannot be taken to court. This legislation stands from 1986 in the US when Reagan signed it into law and Quebec followed suit. They have demanded the same kind of indemnity for these new vaccines around the world. No other industry is given this kind of freedom from responsibility, so for Bill Gates, a majority shareholder in both firms, it is the perfect business model.

There is no logical way that either company can make such a claim. Neither Pfizer nor Moderna nor the FDA can answer serious questions such as: Will the vaccine prevent death? Will it be effective on serious cases? Will it cause long term injury that cannot be detected in the first two month of testing? And moreover, what were the conditions of the test? Was a proper control group used? How many Covid patients was the vaccine tested on? And many more questions, none of which they have provided details on in their press release. In fact there are no details given on how these percentages were arrived at, but the tone of the discussion in the press is, "Trust us because we are a vaccine company and this is science, which is why you should demand your governments provide us with billions and put your arm out for the job." The fallacy of this position is already revealed by a steady reports of deaths and adverse events from the start of its phase three human trials, now occurring on in the world's population.

Should We Trust Pharma Companies?

Caution in handling generally accepted opinions that claim to explain whole trends of history is especially important for the historian of modern times, because the last century has produced an abundance of ideologies that pretend to be keys to history but are actually nothing but desperate efforts to escape responsibility.

~ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

In 2010 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) launched an emergency inquiry regarding the influence of pharmaceutical companies on the global Swine Flu campaign. Dr. Wolfgang Wodarg, head of health at the Council of Europe, accused the makers of flu drugs and vaccines of influencing the World Health Organization's 2009 decision to declare a pandemic. Nations all over the world, particularly Europe, had wasted scarce health funds on a contrived "pandemic." Signed by 14 members from 10 countries sitting on the EU's Health Committee, the motion "Request for Debate Under Urgent Procedure on 'Faked Pandemics A Threat for Health'" was listed on the EU's draft agenda. This gives some insight into the corruption of the WHO, the drug industry and academic scientists that at that time damaged the lives of millions of people, and even caused death, with a dangerous vaccine. By May 29, 2010, sixty deaths were reported 11,029 adverse events following the administration of the H1N1 vaccine. One of the more serious side effects was narcolepsy, which changed the lives of thousands who were affected by it, including one nurse who committed suicide because she could not have a fulfilling life or be able to work, as she, like so many who had taken the vaccine, fell asleep more than forty times a day. The 1976 flu vaccine, also rushed into production for a pandemic, caused large-scale paralysis and was pulled from circulation after only 25 deaths in the US.¹

The *British Medical Journal* reports, "In October 2009, the US National Institutes of Health infectious diseases chief, Anthony Fauci, appeared on YouTube to reassure Americans about the safety of the "swine flu" vaccine. "The track record for serious adverse events is very good. It's very, very, very rare that you ever see anything that's associated with the vaccine that's a serious event," he said."² Four months earlier, the World Health Organization had declared H1N1 influenza a pandemic, and by October 2009 the new vaccines were being rolled out across the world. A similar story was playing out in the UK, with prominent organizations, including the Department of Health, British Medical Association, and Royal Colleges of General Practitioners, working hard to convince a reluctant NHS workforce to get vaccinated. "We fully support the swine flu vaccination programme. The vaccine has been thoroughly tested," they declared in a joint statement.³

Except, the vaccine had not been thoroughly tested (echoing the current Covid situation). Anticipating a severe influenza pandemic, governments around the world had made various logistical and legal arrangements to shorten the time between recognition of a viral pandemic and the production of a vaccine and administration of that vaccine in the population. In Europe, one element of those plans was an agreement to grant licences to pandemic vaccines based on data from pre-pandemic "mock-up" vaccines produced using a different virus (H5N1 influenza). Another approach, adopted by countries such as Canada, the US, UK, France, and Germany, was to provide vaccine manufacturers indemnity for liability for wrongdoing, thereby reducing the risk of a lawsuit stemming from vaccine related injury.⁴

On the appearance of the first case of "swine flu" the WHO changed their criteria of what constitutes a pandemic. Originally defined as a disease that causes widespread death, "against which the human population has no immunity, resulting in epidemics worldwide with enormous numbers of deaths and illness" the new wording suggests "Pandemics can be either mild or severe in the illness and death they cause, and the severity of a pandemic can change over the course of that pandemic." This new definition allowed the WHO to declare a pandemic (on the advice of their advisory arm, which primarily consists of vaccine lobbyists) and nations were forced by the UN Agreement on Pandemic Preparedness to implement plans to purchase large quantities of flu vaccines, fast-tracked and untested, giving drug companies billions of dollars in profit. Dr. Wodarg believes that profit is the real reason for the Swine Flu "pandemic." The Gates Foundation and its many tentacles among vaccine companies are in the primary business of patent protection—not health. Drug companies make untold profit on their patents. In the end, although George Bush pushed universal vaccination by suggesting over 2 million would die of the pandemic, not a single death resulted from the Swine flu panic in Canada or the US. Not one. Zero. Yet, in Manitoba alone (to use one Canadian example) the vaccines had to be stopped as they caused at least one death (a woman had contracted the flu from the vaccine and died) and many other injuries.⁵

CBS reporter Sheryl Atkinson, reported that only a fraction of reported H1N1 cases were actually H1N1. Using a Freedom of Information Act request from the CDC, and by contacting each state individually when the CDC refused to respond, she discovered that the vast majority of cases being reported as H1N1 were not flu at all instead, they were some kind of respiratory infection! Although there were not many deaths from the

Swine Flu, they caused thousands of vaccine-derived illnesses, including a debilitating narcolepsy, Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS), convulsions, syncope (fainting), blood and lymphatic system disorders, and immune disorders such as anaphylaxis, just to name a few, all events that can be life-threatening enough to end in death. One young nurse in England killed herself because she could not live with the life-altering effects of the vaccine-derived narcolepsy, that destroyed the quality of her life!⁶

In an interview with *Pharma Times*, Dr. Wodarg called the H1N1 pandemic "one of the greatest medicine scandals of the century."⁷ That was true, until Covid 19 came along. The fast-tracked pandemic 2009-2010 H1N1 swine flu vaccine used in Europe turned out to be particularly reactive, causing many cases of narcolepsy across Europe. Now, parents whose children developed narcolepsy following their swine flu vaccination, reported their children falling behind at school.

In 2010 *Der Spiegel* reported that a greedy and money-hungry conspiracy of government agencies and Big Pharma had faked a pandemic for profit. Billions of dollars' worth of vaccines were purchased that had to be destroyed as unusable, because the vaccine caused more injuries than the swine flu itself. The Health Committee of the EU Parliament concluded that the pandemic was "faked" for monetary gain, and their final motion on the matter reads: "In order to promote their patented drugs and vaccines against flu, pharmaceutical companies have influenced scientists and official agencies responsible for public health standards to alarm governments worldwide." It goes on to say, "They have made governments squander tight health care resources for inefficient vaccine strategies and needlessly exposed millions of healthy people to the risk of unknown side-effects of insufficiently tested vaccines."⁸

According to the *British Medical Journal*, "the Swine-Flu"-campaign, combined with the 2005/06 "Bird-flu"-campaign seem to have caused a great deal of damage not only to some vaccinated patients and to public health budgets, but also to the credibility and accountability of important international health agencies."⁹

Fear, however, has made some people in the pharmaceutical industry very, very wealthy. Mandated compulsory vaccines violate a fundamental human right, the right of informed consent and may compromise public health to a greater extent than a virus that may come and go. I have gone on at length concerning this past history as the current pandemic seems to contain striking parallels with the 2009 "fake" pandemic, including the observation that many of the same players as in the past are again involved.

¹ "Highly Cited Doctor Comes to Stunning Conclusion," Global Research: <https://www.globalresearch.ca/highly-cited-covid-doctor-comes-stunning-conclusion-government-scrubbing-unprecedented-numbers-injection-related-deaths/5744316>

² *BMJ*, Peter Doshi, Sept. 20, 2018.

³ *British Medical Journal*, September 2018.

⁴ *BMJ*, September 20, 2018.

⁵ CTV News, May 19, 2012.

⁶ *The Guardian*, August 11, 2016

⁷ *Pharma Times*, January 4, 2010

⁸ <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/reconstruction-of-a-mass-hysteria-the-swine-flu-panic-of-2009-a-682613.html> and also the *British Medical Journal*, 2010.

⁹ Rainer Woratschka, Schweinegrippe mit der Grippe, *Der Tagesspiegel*, 16 December, 2009, accessed in <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/international/Schweinegrippe-Europarat;art123,2976433>

An Opportunity to Reset the Economy

When one pursues material means, a savage awakens within us and forces us to oppose the laws of humanity.

~ Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*

Control of information has always been an imperious tool, even of the most democratic of governments. The most alarming aspect of the hysteria around Covid 19 is the suppression of contradictory and accurate science, in favour of unscientific solutions that contradict their own science. Scientists who have contrary evidence are silenced, sidelined, smeared, threatened with job and funding loss, and even, in one case, jailed. That is a good motivation for health bureaucrats to continue with the deception. As Dr. Jay Bhattacharya of the Stanford University School of Medicine, has said, "It's quite clear to see for anybody who is doing deep research into the Covid pandemic that there is a big split within the scientific/medical community as to whether or not the measures being taken by governments around the world, like lockdowns, masking and social distancing are appropriate, effective and necessary... Facts, not fear, will stop the pandemic." He goes on to write, "It's quite a concern to many that doctors and scientists who oppose the views and perception... given... by mainstream media about the pandemic are largely ignored and censored." He continues to say that the recovery rate from the virus has dropped sharply since March 2020, and that it's now 99.95 percent for people under the age of 70 and 95 percent for people over the age of 70 (99.997percent for those under 20). He concludes by saying that, "The media have

paid scant attention to the enormous medical and psychological harms from the lockdowns in use to slow the pandemic. Despite the enormous collateral damage lockdowns have caused, England, France, Germany, Spain and other European countries are all intensifying their lockdowns once again.”¹

He joins a chorus of scientists and medical professionals that disagree strongly with the current narrative, including Prof. John Ioannidis, Luc Montegier (Nobel Prize winning epidemiologist), Dr. Wolfgang Wodarg, and perhaps a couple thousand others.

Justin Trudeau, addressing the UN in September, 2020 described Covid19 as an “opportunity to reset the economy.” One question that comes immediately to mind is, opportunity for whom? Certainly it is an opportunity for those who have vast stock portfolios, those insiders who are already billionaires or multi-millionaires, such as Bezos, Gates, Buffet. Is it an opportunity for the 300,000 inhabitants of earth that may perish per day because of Covid 19 measures? Is it an opportunity for the millions upon millions who have been thrown out of work because of “pandemic measures” or the children and students who have had their lives and futures taken away, denied access to a proper education? Is it an opportunity to the suicided, the desperate, those living without hope, those who are now beaten down by “benign” measures, such as lockdown, of the pandemic? An opportunity to victims of domestic violence, those who live on subsistence incomes, those struggling with addiction, those who cannot receive proper health care because all resources are devoted to Covid19? The millions consigned to crushing poverty, who have lost their future?

The reset is ‘The Great Reset’, in line with the UN’s Sustainability (what an oxymoron that one is!) Goals as expressed by the World Economic Forum. This opportunity is a smorgasbord of new financial markets and other financial instruments for hedge fund managers and other trans-national grifters, new financial instruments such as Human Capital Markets (mmmmm? Isn’t that like selling humans for capital) and Social Impact Investing (mmmm? Isn’t that like creating wealth from other people’s misery). In ten years, if their plans unfold, we will be an entirely different species, and will not recognize the “humans” we will have become. (As it says on the WEF website, “By 2030, you will have nothing, you will own nothing and you will be very very happy.”) Even the small piece of land you inhabit, all your assets, including your “self”, along with your biometric data, will be managed by the billionaires and hedge fund managers who will not be subject to the same regulatory rules as ordinary people.

The suppression of science and information has always been a product of social control throughout history. Giordano Bruno was a poet, Dominican friar, mathematician and cosmological theorist who was burnt at the stake in the 16th century for affirming the Copernican universe, with the sun at the centre, and for challenging the Church’s Aristotelean/Ptolomaic conception of the spheres, which asserts the feudal hierarchy which justifies the order of the universe and which was the current accepted dogma of science of the time. Bruno questioned the science of his time in the 14th century and was tortured for having challenged the pseudo-science of his time, which also challenged the feudal order. In a similar fashion scientists are now being censored, unless they are actors of the state. YouTube, Twitter, and other corporate engines, censor real science while promoting the official fear narrative. (In Bruno’s time fear was also used as a means of maintaining the old feudal order of the Divine Right of Kings and the supremacy of the Church.) Actual science is suppressed and called misinformation. (One psychiatrist in France was put into a mental institute for questioning the psychological impact of lockdowns and masking on the population.) It becomes almost impossible to make a clear-eyed judgement of what is true and what is false because media and social media platforms have muddied the water, under the guise of protecting us from misinformation. Any who question the narrative or who dare to ask significant or scientific questions are now Giordano Brunos, “burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames.”²

“Science is being suppressed for political and financial gain. Covid19 has unleashed state corruption on a grand scale, and it is harmful to public health,” writes Kamran Abbasi, executive editor of the *British Medical Journal* in a November 13th, 2020 editorial. “Politicians and industry are responsible for this opportunistic embezzlement. So too are scientists and health experts. The pandemic has revealed how the medical-political complex can be manipulated in an emergency—a time when it is even more important to safeguard science.” He goes on to say, “Politicization of science was enthusiastically deployed by some of history’s worst autocrats and dictators, and it is now regrettably commonplace in democracies. The medical-political complex tends towards sup-

pression of science to aggrandize and enrich those in power. And, as the powerful become more successful, richer, and further intoxicated with power, the inconvenient truths of science are suppressed. When good science is suppressed, people die.”³

The contemporary pharmaceutical industry was born out of the Nazi death camps, where science drove the field of eugenics and the experimentation on human beings. Now, the Coronavirus has hastened the restructuring of civilization and culture, sweeping away old assumptions and expectations. Lockdown is a new idea for a pandemic but an early phase of a larger campaign of cellular colonization, an advance guard assault on our biological autonomy. DNA is the code of life and that is the prize of this new hedge fund paradigm. Eric Schmidt, CEO of Google, said, “Data is the new oil!” and to have access to this informational code will yield unbelievable riches for the billionaires. Life flows through us, like water, on the the spiral strands of DNA, but a predatory class wish to own the river of life, extract it, and then sell it back to us for a profit.

¹ The Hill, March 12, 2020

² Antonin Artaud, *Théâtre et son double*

³ *BMJ*, November 13, 2020

PCR Testing and the Governance of Fear

Before mass leaders seize the power to fit reality to their lies, their propaganda is marked by its extreme contempt for facts as such, for in their opinion fact depends entirely on the power of man who can fabricate it.

~ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Collective fear stimulates herd instinct, and tends to produce ferocity toward those who are not regarded as members of the herd.

~ Bertrand Russell, *Unpopular Essays*

According to StatsCan as well as the world wide data available from even the WHO, there are no excess deaths in 2020. Deaths around the world remain fairly stable, however, death by the flu and pneumonia have gone down considerably. The PCR testing is what is driving public health policy. It is a story of the misuse of science and terror tactics on a global scale for pure financial gain that will be remembered in future generations for many years to come, or if they succeed, they will bury the information through algorithmic adjustments. Stanford Professor John Ioannidis suggested (and the WHO agrees with him!) early in the pandemic, that according to a mathematical model, the infection rate of Covid19 is no more than 0.14, about the same as a seasonal flu.¹ The court in Portugal ruled that the PCR tests are only 3% reliable and display 97% false positives. In a November 15th, 2020 broadcast anchor, Sandie Rinaldo of CTV News, claimed—based on the government’s own figures—that there were to date 10,947 deaths from Covid19 in Canada, with 10,781 of those death elderly patients and staff of long care seniors facilities. This section of the newscast was scrubbed from their site, but not before a video screen capture could be obtained. That is, 166 deaths were not in long care homes, or in the privatized health care system. That was enough to lock down the economy, putting large numbers out of work, and to have everyone masked. In Canada, according to StatsCan, the average age of death from Covid was 86, when the life expectancy in Canada is 82. Of those who died, 96% of them had underlying conditions (heart disease, pneumonia, diabetes, etc.) A series of leaked emails by senior staff of Matt Hancock, the UK Health Minister, as Boris Johnson threatens more tests and more lockdown, confirm what has been the suspicion of many, because of the extreme fallibility of the alternative rapid-tests. The senior staff claim that testing protocols are only accurate to between 2% and 10% if they are optimistic. A recent study of US cases and deaths, “COVID-19 Data Collection, Comorbidity & Federal Law: A Historical Retrospective” by Dr. Henry Early, reveal that the CDC’s figures are deliberately inaccurate, and wildly overestimated. “With the inclusion of probable fatalities and significant changes made to how certificates of death are recorded exclusively for COVID-19, scientific objectivity demands that we acknowledge the data presented is inaccurate,” the study concludes, continuing, “It is concerning that the CDC may have willfully failed to collect, analyze, and publish accurate data used by elected officials to develop public health policy for a nation in crisis.”²

It is unclear how many of them may have died from loneliness and stress, as many died alone, their families unable to say goodbye. In a recent study from John Hopkins University by Genevieve Briand, researchers discovered that death rates had not gone up significantly, yet deaths from all other causes (flu, heart disease, cancer, etc.) went down by about the same amount as recorded deaths from Covid 19. “All of this points to no evidence that COVID-19 created any excess deaths. Total death numbers are not above normal death numbers. We found no evidence to the contrary,” Briand (author of the report) concluded. In an interview, she addressed the question of whether COVID-19 deaths can be called misleading (referring to US numbers) since the infec-

(continued on page 45)

CODE NAME MADELEINE

A SUFI SPY IN OCCUPIED PARIS

Carol Ann Sokoloff

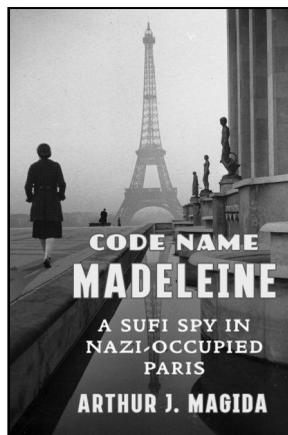
World War II heroine Noor Inayat Khan (1914-1944, Croix de Guerre, George Cross) has recently been the focus of much-deserved attention. The gifted daughter of Indian musician and Sufi mystic Inayat Khan (1882-1927), Noor is revered for her courage as wireless operator 'Madeleine' for Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE), aiding the resistance in occupied Paris in the summer of 1943. Arrested that October she was sent to a German jail and executed at Dachau, Sept. 1944. Noor's second biographer Shrabani Basu (*Spy Princess*, Omega Publications, 2007), campaigned to have a statue placed in 2012 in London's Gordon Square, where Noor briefly resided with her mother, the American Ora Ray Baker. Other recent recognitions of her heroism include a new 'blue' historic plaque in London, one of few honouring a woman or person of ethnic origin. An interactive display at the RAF Memorial in Runnymede, England opened in Spring 2020. Noor currently appears as a character in the new feature film *A Call to Spy*, available on streaming services. She has already graced a British stamp and a proposal to issue a coin in her memory is gaining momentum.

Amidst all this attention, W.W. Norton released last June a third full biography of her life, *Code Name Madeleine, A Sufi Spy in Occupied Paris* by American author and journalist Arthur J. Magida. Magida's previous books include *The Rabbi and the Hit Man*, described as "a fascinating true crime narrative" and *The Nazi Seance*, "the true tale of a Jewish mentalist" in Nazi Berlin. These books appear to be popular, fiction-like works based on stories taken from interesting twentieth century lives. In *Code Name Madeleine* Magida largely re-tells the narrative found in previous biographies. His re-writing is entertaining but unreliable. He further popularizes the mythologizing begun in *Spy Princess*, a biography claiming Noor as a Muslim woman of colour. Magida clarifies that she was more of a Sufi, but both recent biographies are filled with half-truths and assumptions masquerading as fact.

Noor's first biographer Jean Overton Fuller (*Madeleine*, Victor Gollancz, 1952) did the research on which the newer biographies are based. Magida adds some information but it is not reliable as he is prone to gossipy hearsay or personal conjecture—fictions based, not on evidence, but imagination. Rather than meticulous research Magida interviews a limited number of people, brings some new reminiscences to light but never balances these with others' statements or views them in a larger context. His publishers promoted this title as an 'authoritative' biography but disturbing inaccuracies, failure to cite evidence and sources as well as too many assertions based on mere assumption, makes it anything but.

In Jewish tradition, a *maggid* is one who teaches by telling holy tales. This Magida is a good storyteller who weaves an interesting tale but one that ultimately serves neither his subject nor his reader. With fictional statements presented as fact, the reader has no way of distinguishing between truth and conjecture. Magida is a storyteller and not a historian. He never lets truth get in the way of a good story. The disservice to his subject stems from this as well as his avoidance of serious questions regarding SOE's responsibility in sending and keeping Noor in dangerous conditions. This avoidance results in a perplexing tendency to disparage and blame his supposedly saintly subject. I'll explain this further in the course of this review.

Magida promotes for posterity a 'mythology' rather than a flesh and blood woman, whose own reported statements he dismisses without a thought. He tells the main events of her life in a readable though hardly remarkable fashion, but never probes deeply or extensively. Arcane details of SOE training manuals substitute for extensive research. And there is an unfortunate error on page three when he claims SOE stands for Strategic Operations Executive rather than Special Operations. Throughout the book he persists in calling it 'the SOE', when all other literature simply uses the initials SOE. It suggests this author has not read very much of the fascinating literature of SOE's heroes and heroines. Magida has no qualms about laying blame on his subject rather than confront some disquieting questions. Convinced of



**Code Name Madeleine:
A Sufi Spy in Occupied
Paris**
Arthur J. Magida
W.W. Norton &
Company



Noor Inayat Khan

his interpretation, he is satisfied to let truth to take a back seat.

As an example, when describing Noor's first meeting with Émile Garry, the resistance cell organizer for whom she was to transmit messages to and from England, Magida writes (not especially well): "Garry's cell hadn't had a radio operator since he'd recently formed it. But after taking one look at Noor, he wasn't sure about Noor. Why, as the German's were picking apart Prosper—the SOE's most effective network in Europe—was he stuck with this slip of a girl? Was this a joke? Or was SOE so desperate it was sending him anyone who volunteered. Garry didn't know and he didn't have time to find out." (p.127/8) The author offers no source for this information and since Garry was soon captured (due to Noor's arrest) and left no statements, it appears a conjecture Magida finds useful in spinning his tale. It also hints of the disparagement of the subject previously suggested. The narrative non-fiction genre demands that quotes be from actual sources and contemplations be qualified as to reflect what, based on evidence, the author imagines might have taken place. Magida quotes few sources and never qualifies that many 'facts' relayed have sprung largely from his own imagination.

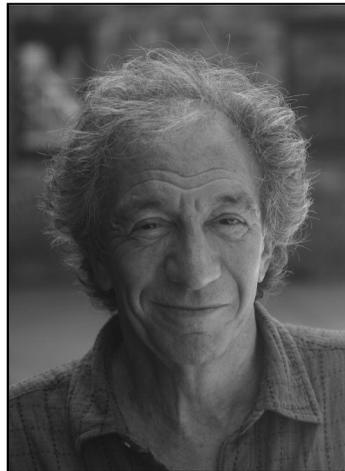
On his website Magida claims, "Writing is an exploration of self, of time, of place—various times and various places, but always one self—I can't get away from me... Why settle for the easy and the pat when you can wrangle with the difficult and the complex..." These statements perfectly encapsulate my discomfort with this biography. As someone who has been writing about Noor since 1986 (*A Light Unbroken*, long poem, Ekstasis Editions) I find Magida focuses on details which illustrate his viewpoint, rather than, for even a moment, taking Noor's actual statements to heart. Considering that first biographer Jean Overton Fuller raised disturbing allegations that Noor may have been betrayed by the very people who sent her into occupied Paris, Magida's avoidance of this matter hardly exemplifies the "wrangling with the difficult and complex" he claims to champion. If one refuses to entertain this controversy, there remains an uncomfortable fact (glossed over by Magida and also previous biographer Shrabani Basu) that, like Émile Garry, seven agents in total met their death due to Noor's alleged 'mistakes'. So if official narrative is believed Noor is a saintly, heroic and bumbling agent, determined to be a martyr for a noble cause, but inadvertently killing her comrades and even, as some suggest, a lover. On the other hand if the biographer even for a moment considered 'believing the woman,' taking Noor's reported statements at face value, another picture emerges, one that is embarrassing to the British government.

The eldest child of the four children of Inayat Khan and Ora Ray Baker, Noor may now be the best-known member of an illustrious family that includes not only her inspired father, but great-grandfather Ustad Maula Bakhsh, 'the Beethoven of India', royal ancestor Tipu Sultan, the Tiger of Mysore, and two younger brothers who went on to lead sufi spiritual organizations, Vilayat Inayat Khan, known as Pir Vilayat, and composer and author Hidayat Inayat Khan (*Sufi Teachings: Lectures from Lake O'Hara*, Ekstasis Editions). Born in Moscow January 1, 1914 in a period of unrest prior to the Russian revolution, Noor's early years, were spent in wartime London (WWI). The family moved to France in the 1920's, settling in the village of Suresnes, across the Seine from Paris. A Dutch disciple purchased a regal house for the family which Inayat named House of Blessing (*Fazal Manzil*). There Sufi summer schools took place until his return journey to India in the Fall of 1926. He died suddenly of flu in Delhi, Feb. 1927.

After her father's mysterious and unexpected death, Noor became a little mother to her siblings as her own mother retreated to seclusion, overcome with grief. The family, which had orbited around the inspiring presence of the magnetic musician were now adrift without a compass. In the tradition of Indian culture, Noor's more rigid and orthodox uncles believed themselves in charge of the family's destiny, an uneasy situation. Strangely it seems to continue, as the offspring of one of these uncles is the informant on whom Magida relies for his understanding of Noor's upbringing and Inayat's sufi teachings. Actively revising Inayat Khan's universal teachings to suit his more orthodox approach, this informant may not be entirely reliable.

Magida gives no real thought to the depths of the family trauma. On the contrary he adds to it by passing along hurtful gossip regarding Noor's mother. Noor and her siblings were first generation children raised between ancient and modern cultures and experienced a challenging adolescence, compounded by financial restraints. As adolescents they struggled to pursue their musical interests and a secular education, particularly Noor who was expected to remain sheltered and uneducated and marry an Indian family member. The four children were proficient musicians on different instruments. Noor's was harp. She studied at L'école Normale de Paris under the famed Nadia Boulanger (as did her brother composer Hidayat Inayat Khan) and also later child psychology at the Sorbonne. Noor wrote poetry and stories for children and her book *Jataka Tales*, based on animal incarnations of the Buddha, has remained in print since its first publication in 1939.

The Nazi occupation of Paris interrupted Noor's writing and publishing career. The family held English passports and would be considered enemy aliens by the invading Germans. The siblings were also determined to fight fascism, the very antithesis of Inayat Khan's Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty. With the exception of brother Hidayat, they joined the exodus out of Paris in June 1940 as the Nazi's invaded, barely catching one of the last boats sailing to England. In England Noor volunteered for the Women's Air Auxiliary (WAAF) and due to her French language fluency, was eventually recruited to the secret Special Operations Executive. SOE's mandate was, in Churchill's words, to 'set Europe ablaze' by sabotaging the Nazi war effort, as well as to train and arm a local resistance to help defeat the occupiers after an Allied invasion. SOE believed women could be less conspicuous in occupied territories and began sending them on very dangerous missions.



Arthur J. Magida

Following a shortened training period Noor was flown into France in June 1943 to be a wireless operator for the Cinema circuit in Le Mans and relay messages between it and SOE. It is claimed she is the first female sent in that role, although there may have been at least one other (not British) before her. The messages transmitted were usually about secret cash or arms drops to support local resistance movements. Her circuit was a spin-off of the large Prosper network centred in Paris. Within days of her arrival, the Prosper network, was decimated, its leader Francis Suttill arrested along with dozens of others caught in a Gestapo web. Subversive activity came to a standstill, but the few uncaptured agents needed more than ever to communicate with London. It is often claimed, including by the author of this biography, that Noor's radio was the sole link between occupied Paris and London. Here again SOE documents suggest a few operators remained in the vicinity but Noor did relay messages for key individuals—including the French Section's second in command, Major Bodington, as well as the slippery air traffic agent, Henri Dericourt, the double agent who met the Lysander airplane which brought Noor back to France in 1943.

Magida repeats and expounds further on the unfounded claim that Noor single-handedly tried to rebuild the Prosper network: "When Noor could finally send a message to England that the Prosper network didn't exist anymore, Maurice Buckmaster [SOE French section head] ordered her home. Paris was, the "most dangerous place" in all of France, "swarming with Germans and security police of every description." A Lysander would bring Noor home. She refused...She told Buckmaster she would stay in Paris for at least a month, rebuilding Prosper, maybe not to its former glory, but strong enough that it could hurt the Nazis. When Frank Suttill had flown into France in 1942, his job was similar to what Noor was proposing for herself...Now it was Noor's turn to start a network from scratch." (p. 133). While Col. Buckmaster has made the claim that he tried to get Noor to return to England, no actual evidence supports it. SOE ran on military protocol, so Noor would not have had the option of refusing as Magida suggests.

Furthermore, the suggestion that Noor proposed to single-handedly rebuild a shattered network is naive. A wireless operator's training and role was for the single task of coding and uncoding and transmission and reception of messages between agents and London's Baker Street 'outfit,' and vice-versa. Noor herself needed the care of network members and was not in any position to rebuild a network. She may have expressed willingness to stay, believing (perhaps falsely) that she was the only remaining link. Documents show there were others she may not have known about (and was not told about.)

Noor did last longer under dangerous conditions than anyone expected. SOE considered the active average 'life-span' of a radio operator 'in the field' to be a mere 6 weeks, due to advanced German detection techniques. Yet her superiors left her in the centre of a vipers nest for a full four months, until her eventual Oct. 1943 arrest.

Magida skirts the questions as to why she was not commanded to return by claiming the dashing Col. Antelme, a pivotal agent whose repatriation was arranged through Noor's radio, also begged her to join him as he returned to safety and she refused. The records in the National Archives show, on the contrary, that he found her a new place to stay. Magida offers no source for this fictional assertion of romance novel proportions. He also claims that Bodington, Buckmaster's mysterious second in command of SOE's French section, also pleaded with Noor to return, a statement of pure invention without basis in research. Bodington, Noor's superior, used Noor's radio to arrange his return to London, after his unusual visit to assess the damage to the Prosper cell. He got on that plane alone knowing Noor was likely soon to be captured by the Gestapo. Noor received no orders to return and no flight was ever arranged for her—at least there are no documents to support any other conclusion.

Magida also constantly chides Noor for incompetence or breaking SOE training guidelines, as in, "...SOE had told Noor to be independent and self-sufficient. She wasn't. Everyday someone was complaining that she was sloppy or careless..." (p. 131)—another unsupported generalization with no source offered. He decries her 'foolish' activities such travelling by bicycle rather than the metro, ignoring her need to transport a heavy radio receiver to new locations every few days to avoid detection. Operators in other regions had colleagues keeping their radios in safe locations to which the agent would be brought. Noor had little support due to the widespread arrests of the network.

Magida also suggests she broke SOE instructions by visiting people she had known from her earlier life: "Noor didn't like the SOE's orders not to contact anyone she had known before the war" (p. 137). The people who wrote these instructions rarely experienced life 'in the field' which necessitated other actions and if this author had read more accounts by SOE agents he would know these guidelines were consistently abandoned as impossible. To suggest "Noor didn't like" her instructions is again an unfair and disparaging assumption. With no help from London, who mistakenly sent her to meet two Germans impersonating Canadian SOE agents, she evaded capture and continued transmitting. Noor remained in these conditions longer than expected but was eventually caught by the Gestapo and later imprisoned in Germany and executed, Sept. 1944, at Dachau.

Jean Overton Fuller's *Madeleine*, 1952 was the first biography of this courageous woman, written by a friend of hers and of her brother Vilayat. In 2007, Omega Press, associated with Vilayat's Sufi Order, published British-Indian author Shrabani Basu's *Spy Princess*, portraying Noor as an Indian Muslim spy princess. Noor's father's was raised Muslim but later practised the hybrid or universal path of western Sufism (as shared in his *Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty*, vols. 1-13). Noor did not identify as Islamic, rather she wrote Buddhist stories, wished to study Sanskrit, became engaged to a Jewish pianist and listed Church of England as her religion on military forms. She and siblings were contemporary western or Universal Sufis. As for 'princess', her great grandmother was the daughter of the last Sultan to fight the British occupation of India, so there was royal blood and the family were courtly in demeanor, but no other sibling choose to give themselves these titles and I doubt whether Noor would have either, had she lived.

One hoped a third biography might bristle with new information from the ongoing de-classification of records (many still under wraps as 'top secret'.) But these biographies offer only readable re-tellings of the original, with the occasional new piece of information, which may or may not be true. *Code Name Madeleine* is high on drama and short on history. Although quoting and footnoting Overton Fuller's *Madeleine* extensively, Magida avoids mentioning this biography, referring to Overton Fuller as 'Noor's friend Jean,' neglecting to add that it is her research that largely infuses his text.

If Magida has a strength it is in his description of wartime Paris under Nazi occupation.

"This wasn't the city she had left three years ago..German soldiers were everywhere... Posters appealed to Frenchmen to join Hitler's battle against Communism... food rations were slashed to the lowest in Europe...Most taxis and cars had disappeared—only Nazis...could afford gasoline. Everyone else got about on bikes...The unrelenting surveillance made everyone claustrophobic. (p. 125/6) and: "Psychologically, 1943 was the most exhausting year of the occupation. Paris, on the cusp of hope, remained wrapped in dread and fear. After four years the German control of the city seemed to be slipping, and everyone knew D Day was coming. Yet the Nazis were still executing 'terrorists' and sending thousands of Jews to 'the east' and cramming into three warehouses in Paris the furniture, paintings, stoves and ashtrays.. they'd looted from forty thousand apartments around the city. (p. 170)

He is less successful in claiming to understand the Sufi context of Noor's life based on her father's teachings. He is able to convey that Noor was acting on the ideals of service to humanity instilled by her father, but his knowledge of Inayat Khan's teachings is limited. From an extensive literature of remarkable writings, Magida selects the most trivial of quotes.

One wonders why a biographer would sabotage the individual he has chosen to write about. For example, Magida strangely delays giving the reader important information about his subject until he can use it for his own purpose. By the time of her service to Special Operations, Noor was achieving success as an author, having published *the Jataka Tales*, a book first published in 1939 that has never gone out of print, as well as contributing stories to the Children's Hour, a Paris radio broadcast, and working to create a magazine for children. In the chapters dedicated to Noor's youth and young adulthood, this fact is not mentioned. It is only later, when sharing SOE codemaster, Leo Marks', story (from his book *Between Silk and Cyanide*), of helping Noor perfect her coding by approaching it in terms of one of her *Jataka Tales*, that Magida mentions this essential detail about his subject. To include this information only as a footnote to another's tale is again disturbingly dismissive and belittling.

Noor's previous biographer, Shrabani Basu *Spy Princess, 2007* labelled Noor as a Muslim Princess spy, a half truth supposed to bolster the status of British muslims after 9/11. It may be a positive goal, but is it fair to the book's subject who did not identify in this way? It seems any group can claim Noor and use her story to put forth their own agenda or just make some bucks—just as SOE may have used, in a less than forthright manner, her desire to serve.

For *Code Name Madeleine* Arthur Magida interviews three family members, some of whom wish to revise Inayat Khan's teachings towards traditional Islam. He cites a few books and limited archival material, while repeating without investigation fictions from shallow film and TV treatments. His website mentions the book has already been optioned, and now I realize it was likely written for Hollywood.

Taking the safe course, he delicately sidesteps the dire repercussions following Noor's arrest—deaths for which she has, rightly or wrongly, been blamed. A notebook containing coded and uncoded messages was found alongside Noor's radio. This allowed her captors to break the code and impersonate her in a 'radio game' with London, leading to the death of several fellow agents. In this age of 'believe the woman' it is upsetting that this biographer never considers that Noor is quoted as saying she was instructed to keep these messages. You'd think a biographer might, for a moment, stop to consider what his subject has been reported to have said.

Noor's first biographer, who has done the lion's share of the original research on which both subsequent biographies are based, embarrassed the British government in the 1950's by suggesting Noor, and other agents, may have been betrayed by SOE. Since then, there has been a concerted effort to promulgate an official narrative. "Official narratives" always make me wish to delve further, but Magida never strays in anything but the safest territory. The journalists I am most inspired by are those who keep asking questions; who do not say, "I have interviewed one person and that is enough," but seek a divergence of voices to grapple with the larger picture. There is always a larger picture. If the story were so very simple it would not be particularly interesting.

To the person who has never heard of Noor Inayat Khan and knows nothing of her life and family or of her war service, this may be a readable, if not entirely reliable, introduction. Those who have read the previous biographies will find some interesting new material on Noor's birth in Russia or on the Jewish concert pianist to whom she was engaged against family wishes. Magida does not fully penetrate the deeper currents of the relationship, but he offers more information than has yet been published. He has also expanded on the family's flight from Paris in 1940.

Magida may believe he has put himself in Noor's shoes and seen from her eyes, but he never fully, as he confesses, "gets away from me." He writes about his own way of seeing Noor—not entirely complimentary—a saintly character in over her head who made mistakes which are best forgotten. He never casts a spotlight on those who sent her and left her to be caught and whether her and others' capture took place through either incompetence by the amateur spies of SOE's French section or, as has been suggested, by design, as part of a deceit to fool the enemy.

I am happy Noor Inayat Khan is getting more recognition. Her story is important. But let's pay her the respect of telling it with accuracy and understanding. Let's not continue to use her to wave another's flag or to get a movie contract. *Code Name Madeleine* will no doubt introduce Noor Inayat Khan and possibly her father's *Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty* to many and some may wish to look deeper into both subjects. The earliest biography by Jean Overton Fuller is still the authoritative. Available from Omega Press, it can also be found in many libraries. Other researchers are probing further and will release work in the future. Magida's is not the final word on the inspiring 'Madeleine.'

Carol Ann Sokoloff is a writer, editor and songwriter and performer. She is the author of *Eternal Lake O'Hara*, and has released a jazz album titled *Let Go! An expanded version of her limited edition chapbook, A Light Unbroken* (Ekstasis Editions), a long poem on the life of Noor Inayat Khan will soon be re-published with an extensive introduction and archival photos.

MAHON (continued from page 5)

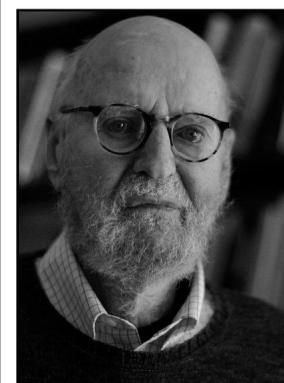
of aestheticism. Again, cultivated form over the imperatives of experience.

In any case, the individual talent trumped tradition and Northern Irish poetry was a School only when you included Carson, Muldoon and Medbh McGuckian (b. 1950). The pioneering trio went their separate ways. Longley has become a lyric poet of exquisite locution and a nature poet of delicate observation. He didn't flinch during the years of disgrace from the atrocities that scarred Northern Irish life, but always he settled painfully a kind of membrane or caul of spirituality and hope for redemption over his existential despondency. No tribal obligations complicate his dual British and Irish affiliation. Despite Carson's reservations, Heaney however did not escape the bonds of identity. He may have resisted the tribal importunities—"When, for fuck's sake, are you going to write/Something for us?" ("The Flight Path", *The Spirit Level*, 1996). He did so, however, with much Hamletish self-interrogation, and his poetry is troubled by emigrés, absconders, deserters. But on a famous occasion he also reminded the English that British he was not. Indeed, he has become something of a tribal bard, especially since his death in 2013, perhaps a counterweight to the Anglo-Irishman Yeats who stoked Heaney's creative fires.

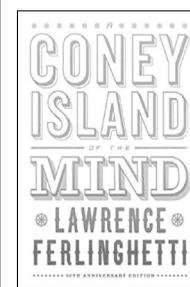
Mahon by contrast decisively rejected his tribe from the start. He preferred to re-fashion himself and sever his roots (suburban Belfast in British Ulster) - more decisively than MacNeice, almost as decisively as Samuel Beckett (b. 1906), both also self-deracinating Protestants. There was Paris (the Sorbonne, 1965-66) and Canada and the United States (travels in 1966-68), then Dublin for a good few years, and eventually Kinsale in Co. Cork for the last decades, as far south of suburban Belfast as possible. He may have voted with his feet to be Irish, as did Heaney, but Irishness entails identity politics and Mahon's poetry presumes and asserts total freedom from any such thing. The fate of *Titanic* for him had nothing to do with his people who built it ("After *Titanic*"), but rather with the unmoored J. Bruce Ismay's anomalous exile in County Galway. Mahon eschewed the dependable affiliations, preferring the sea in winter to the familiar ports and harbours. Life itself was unmooring, a matter of incarnations, metamorphoses and flux, as "Lives" (an oblique hymn to cultural appropriation) and other poems attest. The only continuity is inevitable desuetude and abandonment, as his most famous poem, "A Disused Shed in Co. Wicklow" exemplified. The only truth to belonging is found in the oceanic reach and earthwide compass of his work. What some readers have decided is his envoi, "Everything is Going to be All Right", reads on the face of it like a sentimental retraction.

Note: Mossbawn was the Heaney family farm near Bellaghy village, Co. Derry. J. Bruce Ismay, to save deck space, was responsible for the *Titanic's* having fatally few lifeboats aboard.

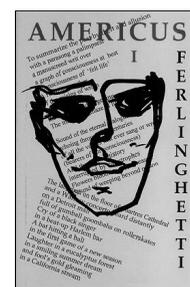
John Wilson Foster is the author of *The Achievement of Seamus Heaney (1995)*. His latest book is *The Space-Blue Chalcedony: Earth's Crises and the Tyler Bounty (2020)*.



This issue of the *Pacific Rim Review of Books* is dedicated in part to the memory of **Lawrence Ferlinghetti (1919-2021)** Poet, publisher, visual artist, social activist, founder of City Lights Books, he will be missed.



A Coney Island of the Mind
50th Anniversary Edition
New Directions



Americus, Book 1
New Directions

THE SHIMMER'S END

Richard Wirick

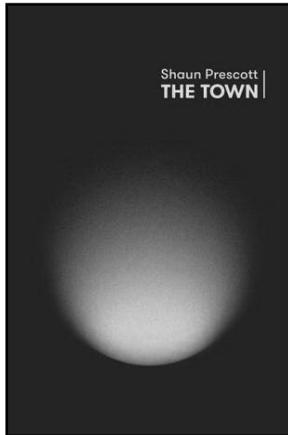
This astonishing debut novel operates on both a literal and an absurdist/allegorical level, sometimes simultaneously. The realist musings center on a writer entering an unnamed town, renting a room, finding a pub with an echoing radio DJ named Ciara, and settling down to write something, non-fiction, about “[T]he disappearing towns of the Central West of New South Wales.” Not much disappears on this level, except the horizon, one or two characters, weather patterns that confuse and amuse the reader, and endless skies that lay above the last, lost continent. It seems that the town is certainly vanishing literally. No one moves in. No one leaves. No one traverses the canvas of the painting, and its edges and borders never expand. Still there is the character and voice of the writer. The literal plane lies very much under the influence of Australia’s great stylist Patrick White. But the style is not as ornate. There are no multiple voices, no single voice speaking in several registers.

This literal level also resembles the work of Peter Carey and Tim Winton. It contains meticulous physical descriptions of the entropy the writer is attempting to capture. The plot slides forward nicely on Prescott’s spot-on, imagistic scene building. The town seems to have had a purpose at one time, a monochromatic stretch of mini-malls and shopping plazas, fast food chains, parks where people seem neither to come and go so much as stay stationary, their shadows, cone-like, stretching and receding, and seeming to be as alive as the shapes that cast them. The writer gets to know numerous people around town, and they take on the character of the landscape, both here and not here, both stationary and moving.

Tom is a musician with sufficient chops to have been in several bands. But it all seems to have led to his present lassitude, where he simply drives the town transit bus. But of course there is no one who is working, no one who seems to want to go anywhere, no one to get onto the bus or off of it. One looks down the row of seats and does not even see clown masks, deformed riders, not even transparency. There is a pesky number named Jenny, who actually owns the pub the narrator drinks in, but only occasionally materializes in order to wipe the counter or serve the double-dose of boilermakers that is called by some odd, Central Australian name. One particularly bellicose character—almost a stereotype of the Australian philistine—is named Steve Sanders. He carries a chip on his shoulder and for unknown reasons seems to be wanting it knocked off by the narrator. There is Rick, whose aspirations elevate only to bagging groceries at a supermarket. Vaping and rapping teens run in and out of the picture, attempting, along with the reader, to make sense of why they appear and disappear.

The one character who ripens into a character’s ripeness is Ciara. But the station she broadcasts has no listeners, seemingly no physical plant or towers, and has nothing but dreams of a richer existence, perhaps offering her music as a bridge to somewhere more substantial and interesting. The writer strikes up a friendship with her, but it is undefined. Could it be romance or a companionship with benefits? She does not seem to know and neither does the narrator. It seems that only the narrator cares or wishes to care.

Still on the realist level, houses appear abandoned or vanish altogether. They are like the subdivisions of Albuquerque that dissolve and reappear on ‘Breaking Bad.’ An ‘aggressive sadness’ overtakes those who get stoned or ‘juiced’ enough to rise to that level of consciousness. At one point the polis, slight as it is, seems to resemble “a depressed country [music] festival in a 2 a.m. lull.” When is someone going to start something? When will the people show enough intrinsic character interest to begin interacting with one another. The métier here seems surrealist as well as absurdist. People attempt to leave, and it is here that the absurdist line of the drama kicks into full steam. There is a train station like the scores we have seen in Peter Weir movies or imagine from our plane windows as we fly over the Outback. But of course there are no tickets, no conductor, no locomotive. The roads that might lead out of the place turn back on themselves. Everyone seems too stuck with ‘misfortune humping his leg’ that they neither board nor disembark. People seem unable to muster the energy to escape or to even talk about improvements or criticism.



The Town
Shaun Prescott
Farrar, Straus & Giroux
190 pages

The absurdist-allegorical element of the novel spans time as well as space. The town may once have been a place people would come to, but no one seems to remember why, or when that was. They continue to be numbed by the dry, blasted landscape that causes character to remember and misremember, speak circularly about themselves, building scenes and characters that sometimes remind this reader of the meta-landscapes of the writer’s fellow Australian Gerald Murnane. The narrator himself seems to forget where he came from. He muses, looking out into the shimmer: “I tried to trace the highways east and west of the town in my mind, but my memory faltered at the shimmer.” The stillness and frozen inaction seem to stretch as far back as anyone’s memory, and to encompass any eternity that the narrator and his ‘friends’ might be able to imagine stretching out into the future.

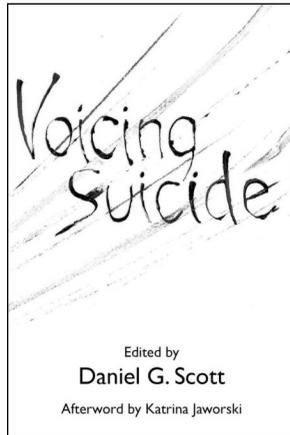
The metaphor and the trope of vacuity ramps up when holes begin appearing on the landscape. Everyone seems to be sitting back and enjoying the possibility of solidity, infused with some kind of narcotic drip, when emptiness comes with its unassailable and invisible power. Holes begin to appear. Some of the holes are craterlike, some very tiny. The narrator’s reality seems to break into fragments whenever one of them appears. People remark that it is not “your typical hole” and that it could “well be an environmental disaster.” But of course no one is able to gauge what kind, what its nature or duration might be. Municipal workers put up poles, barricades and tape, but everything continues to dissolve as the workers’ deadpan comments attempt to latch on to something.

But the emptiness brings out the best in speculative, ephemeral fiction, especially that coming from Down Under. The novel is one of possibility rendered by device and the minds of characters determined to stay where they are long enough to figure out the dissolution solution. It sometimes seems thin on character, but why would it not be if vanishing is the principal trope? Both the reader and her narrator are impressed by how increment—only small steps, in both mind and action—appears to be holding the world together. Whether it ultimately succeeds is less important than watching the poetic, mirage-making dissolution process.

Richard Wirick practices law in Los Angeles. A collection of his essays and reviews, *Hat of Candles*, is forthcoming from Ekstasis Editions.



Shaun Prescott



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A SLIGHT SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE

gillian harding-russell

Joanne Morency's *Miettes de Moi*, awarded the 2010 prize for a first book by the Foundation L.A. Finances, is at once idiosyncratic and lyrical, concrete and metaphysical. In Jill Varley's translation, *A Thousand Pieces*, the bilingual reader may appreciate the poems in two different languages since the French and the English versions face each other on adjacent pages. In general, Varley's translation is faithful to the original though she tends to give a more idiomatic than literal translation and, perhaps, in all but poetry this plan is the best one. As a metaphoric art, poetry transcends to meaning from the literal, and so with a more idiomatic version a way of seeing or understanding the world may be dulled in the translation. That said, I found Varley's translation almost seamless and careful to adapt the French line to the musicality of the English line.

As the most obvious example of the discrepancy between French and English versions, however, one need to go no farther than the title: whereas the original title *Miettes de Moi* (or "pieces of myself"), implies a fragmentation of experience through the divergent senses, the translated title, *A Thousand Pieces*, suggests a bringing together of the broken parts into a fragmented whole. The essence and experience of the poems reflect a whimsical introspection as the speaker examines physical parts of herself in her interactions with the world as a way to understand her spiritual self, and so the author's chosen title is the most direct. Nevertheless, the translated title, *A Thousand Pieces*, coming a decade later, gives rise to the idea that those parts come together in a visionary whole. And so, the two versions, in French and English, may be said to work as counterpart perspectives.

If I were to single out another poet for comparison, Gwendolyn MacEwen's poetry with its symbolic spirituality and underlying gnostic mysticism springs to mind. As in MacEwen's poems, there is a wonder at the world's mysteries and a playfulness to the writing, and in both poet's and translator's work there is an uncovering of paradox with childlike point and a poignant lyricism. Whereas MacEwen's speaker awaits inspiration in the projected image of the "red bird you wait for," the speaker in "Fragments" is more preoccupied with the physicality of the immediate world as a mean for inadvertent transcendence when she remarks, "Look at that, a right hand!"

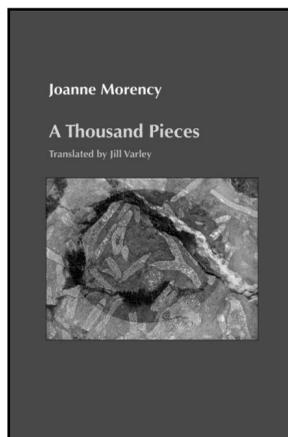
It is a rare day when my whole body is with me. Most of the time, my pieces are widely scattered. A hand that writes, absent knees, an invisible back. (13)

In going about her day, the speaker describes herself as losing parts of herself, and so, while extending the metaphor to consciousness, her body "slip[s] out" by night to be brought back into her skin by morning. Again, it is interesting to compare the original French "remet alor debout sur mes batons" with the more colloquial English translation, "get back on my pins" where the translation, even if idiomatic, carries slightly differing associations of agitation (as in wearing formal, heeled shoes or 'on pins and needles').

Poets are often introverts, and Morency's speaker is most certainly inward-looking in her looking out at the world. In "The Noise of the World," there is a sense of being overwhelmed by the multitudinous nature of the world where even "the ants" in their miniscule universe are "running everywhere, stirring all day long" (17). With so much surrounding stimulation and being unable to view herself, the speaker projects a certain mysticism as inherent in the act of partaking in the world while the subjectivity of perception prevents one from seeing oneself:

I forget my point of view in the sky. I do not know how to be entirely here, without losing myself along the way. (17)

As the lines "it gets hot beneath the cat's coat," and "I long to stretch out under/my own shadow" suggest, the house cat—as simultaneously a physical cat in her



A Thousand Pieces
Joanne Morency
translated by Jill Varley
Ekstasis Editions
2019, \$23.00

household and transcending to a symbol, later given the suggestive name "Vestibule"—becomes a part of the speaker, something like her sensual, animal self (17). In association with hallways and entrances, therefore, the cat may be seen to open areas of physical awareness inside herself. Similarly, a dog "follows her from one room to the next" and "knocks/ his flank against her thigh" (97) in a later occurring poem, and these two household figures blend in the speaker's psyche, one aloof but occasionally demanding attention, and the other "forget[ing] he is big for an hour or two" as he "stretches at [her] feet and shrinks" (97).

The poem "Oasis" that dramatizes the speaker's moment of discovery through an extending metaphor of a desert is particularly evocative of MacEwen, who was also drawn to deserts and landscapes. Here the speaker suggests that insight may be accompanied by serendipity when the speaker notices "a detail" about her own face that she doesn't recognize, as if she "had crossed a desert to [her]self in the /midst of a sandstorm" (87):

Each object is complete, larger than its shadow, and amazed to never be alone in the mirror. (87)

While Morency uses short, cumulative sentences and fragments, Varley here improvises a longer line punctuated with commas. Whereas the original verses suggest mounting realisation, Varley's long meditative lines seem more confident at the process of discovery (as if the speaker had known it all along).

Most curious, but also akin to MacEwen's world, is the presence of a male muse in Morency's poems. Whereas MacEwen's muse in "Finally Left in the Landscape" writes himself inside a landscape in a kind of dance where the speaker in figuratively immersing herself through awareness joins him, Morency's muse is also ephemeral but appears in a more flesh-and-blood-seeming guise: "The man standing close to me is not there. Not yet." And yet in the next stanza we witness him follow her. He "pets the cat, and even me, sometimes" (93). That he has "wings, a heart and hands" suggests a bizarre and marvellous combining of the angelic and the spiritual with the human.

As in MacEwen's "Letter to a Future Generation," the speaker in *A Thousand Pieces* is troubled by evil in the world. Whereas MacEwen writes her "letter" to warn us almost biblically, and thus to enable us to avert tragedy, Morency finds herself immersed in a world that cannot necessarily be changed. Just as the speaker doesn't know "how to pluck the corpses from her soup" in "The Noise of the World," so a feeling of being overwhelmed by personal and public tragedy reaches a climax in "Spring Cleaning." In long lithe lines (also in the translation) and using homely images, Morency articulates a pain not easy to alleviate that may be too familiar to many of us.

My neighbour across the way has tossed his heart in a bin.
The girl next door sealed her stepfather's hands in a green garbage bag.
My mother, her straitjacket of anger. My old father, everything he didn't get enough time to do. (63)

In the final movement of the poem, Morency dramatizes the tying down of that



Joanne Morency

(continued on page 40)

JAZZ FROM DETROIT & RABBIT'S BLUES

Joseph Blake

This is an important, well-written book drawn from veteran journalist Mark Stryker's decades covering jazz and other art forms in the Motor City. After a brief chapter outlining jazz music's first half-century in Detroit, the author paints a vivid picture of the city's 1940-1960 golden age, using more than a dozen, insightful, passionate portraits of Detroit-bred jazz warriors. As a fan of America's great art form for 50 years, I was stunned to learn how many of my favourite musicians were the product of Detroit's fecund music scene. Great musicians who I'd always associated with the Village Vanguard, Blue Note Records, and other seminal New York jazz institutions turn out to have deep roots in Detroit and the Motor City's seminal secondary school music programs, active jazz club scene, and the city's tight-knit, blue collar Black community.

The outgrowth of the post-WWII economy spawned by the auto industry, Detroit's jazz scene thrived, turning out a dazzling collection of jazz stars. Joe Henderson, Milt Jackson, Ron Carter, Kenny Burrell, Donald Byrd, Gerald Wilson, Yusef Lateef, Sheila Jordan, Tommy Flanagan, Barry Harris, Roland Hanna, Curtis Fuller, Louis Hayes, Charles McPherson, and the Jones brothers-Hank, Thad and Elvin are profiled by Stryker. The author's descriptions of the music these jazz giants produced are masterful as their playing. One wag once joked that writing about music is like tap dancing about architecture. He should read Stryker's descriptions of the improvisational art's textures, harmony and rhythmic complexity.

In the chapter titled Gentle Giant, the author describes Yusef Lateef's tenor sax-led quartet swinging "robustly before dabs of orchestral color splash across the canvas and Barry Harris improvises Messiaen-like fragments in the balcony of the piano-the closest this lifelong bebopper came to free jazz."

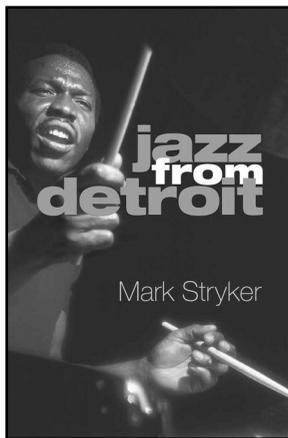
Manna for lifelong jazz fans like me, there are almost 400 pages of such laser-like, singularly astute descriptions of the music. Stryker is equally crafty and passionate in his descriptions of the musicians' lives and personalities. For example, his profile of Ron Carter, the most prolifically recorded bass player in jazz history with over 2,000 recordings credits, captures Carter's unique greatness.

Stryker describes "the paradox that has made Carter such a vital force. He is a peerless accompanist because he is the ultimate team player. But he deliberately introduces enough tension to push players out of their comfort zones, lifting the bandstand to a higher plane of improvisation. Carter relishes controlling the flow of the music, but his musicianship is so profound that the conflict between selflessness and ego disappears the way sugar disappears in coffee. It's like the way Michael Jordan elevated the play of his teammates while always making sure the Chicago Bulls' offence ran through him."

In subsequent chapters on the 1960's and 1970's, the author depicts a city ravished by neighborhood-destroying urban renewal, racist police brutality, the explosive rebellion that almost burned Detroit to the ground, and White flight that cut the city's population by 30% from 1960-1980.

The gritty city responded with a radically collectivist approach to bands, venues, and record labels. Detroit Artists Workshop, Detroit Creative Musicians Association, Focus Novii, Contemporary Jazz Quintet, Strata Corporation, and Tribe all represent the city's musical community's collectivist efforts over these tough decades.

The chapter featuring Marcus Belgrave underlines the jazz scene's educational and mentorship approach to the bandstand in the decades wrapping up Detroit's 20th Century jazz development. Stryker calls trumpet star Belgrave "The Nurturer", and



Jazz From Detroit
Mark Stryker
University of Michigan Press
342 pages



Mark Stryker

it's an apt title. Lauded and showcased by Wynton Marsalis and other Young Jazz Lions, Belgrave focused his efforts on his home town's budding musicians, helping to produce jazz stars like Geri Allen, Kenny Garrett, Regina Carter, Gerald Cleaver, Robert Hurst, Rodney Whitaker, James Carter, and Karriem Riggins. Their profiles are truly inspiring and some of Stryker's most astute writing, framing the musicians artistic and commercial triumphs in the shadows of the city's slow, painful rebirth.

The final chapter carries the story forward into the 21st Century and future Detroit-bred jazz stars like Ralph Armstrong, Marion Hayden, Michael Malis, and Marcus Eliot. The book's coda describes a 2018 concert at downtown Detroit's Carr Centre featuring some of these musicians. Inspired by Geri Allen, playing arrangements by Thad Jones, the Gathering Orchestra features 15 young musicians directed by Rodney Whitaker. Whitaker gets the book's last word.

"That's what we do in Detroit. We make cars, and we make jazz musicians."

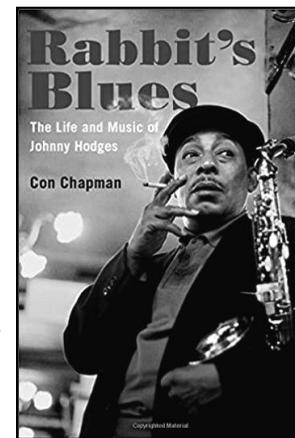
Johnny Hodges was the heart and soul of the Duke Ellington Orchestra for four decades. The quiet, diminutive saxophone star was a Boston-bred teenage prodigy before he joined the band in 1928. Gifted with an unschooled but New Orleans-inspired tone, Hodges had a singular sound ripe with innovative glissando and understated grace that echoes down the ages on Ellington's greatest music.

The New Orleans sounds of Sidney Bechet, Barney Bigard, Louis Armstrong, even Jelly Roll Morton influenced young Hodges before he joined Chick Webb's New York band in 1926 and two years later Ellington's group. But that tone was all Rabbit, a nickname that described his shy, skittish, melancholy, expressionless, rabbit-like face, character and stature. He was also called Jeep, a Popeye cartoon moniker that inspired such Hodges classics as *Jeep's Blues* and *Jeep Is Jumpin'*, but it is Rabbit that stuck, and veteran British journalist Con Chapman's well researched biography with its music-focused descriptions of Hodges' life and art paints a nuanced, respectful portrait of a very private genius. Chapman makes a strong case for Rabbit's place at the jazz head table. He was small, but he was mighty.

The alto saxophonist's tone seductively threads through the orchestra's most popular music, some of the greatest sounds of the 20th century. Rabbit's solo are like a singer's voice, and his sax is volcanic at the centre of every big band brass chorus. Steeped in shadow and understatement, Hodges' tone dominated jazz saxophone for two decades, an eternity in jazz time. Charlie Parker's blazing bebop technique shocked jazz into '50's modernity, but Hodges soldiered on, never straying far from the quiet storm at the heart of his sound, the smoldering, sexy soul music the Rabbit always conjured up. He was under-recorded as a solo artist, and his record dates as a leader are overlooked, little gems, but Hodges' alto was well documented during his forty years with Ellington. Hodges' original compositions are noted Ellington Orchestra classics too.

Duke Ellington's music is eternal. Con Chapman's biography suggests that much of its majesty came from the heart and horn of Johnny Hodges. *Rabbit Blues* is a must-read for jazz fans. Highly recommended.

Joseph Blake is Music Editor for PRRB.



Rabbit's Blues: The Life and Music of Johnny Hodges
Con Chapman
Oxford, 227 pages



Johnny Hodges

THE UNSURPASSED, SUPREME MANTRA

Maryse Cardin

My father passed away on the very last day of 2016. I had kept vigil all night at his bedside when he died on a freezing New Year's Eve dawn. Seeing how grief stricken I was, my Zen meditation teacher Hoben urged me to chant the Heart Sutra every day for 49 days.

According to Buddhists, 49 days is the amount of time it takes a soul to travel from one world to another. Chanting the Heart Sutra provides a benefit to the person in transit. A boost—if you will—to help assure my father's safe passage to this new world.

The chanting of the Heart Sutra became a sacred act. Each day, I knelt in front of my home altar. I lit a candle, and while the smoke of incense rose around me, I chanted the Heart Sutra. It provided a daily comfort, and a moment of calm. It was something I could do for my father and for me, the last act of a devoted daughter.

I had until then chanted the Heart Sutra once a week during meditation practice at the Zendo in both Japanese and English, but frankly, I was puzzled by the whole thing. Hoben advised me to stop trying to figure it out and simply chant. Still I'd catch myself constantly thinking, what could this possibly mean? I am a university communication teacher. Being clear is ingrained. I teach students to write and communicate with clarity above all things. I kept trying to get my head around the sutra. My experience with the Heart Sutra was highly personal. I knew next to nothing about it except for what it was like to chant it, and how it made me feel.

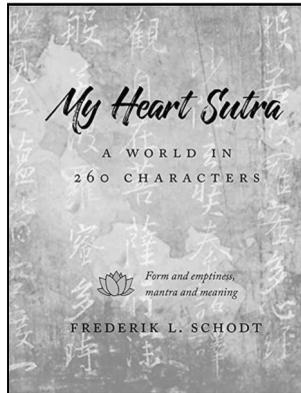
After reading *My Heart Sutra, A World in 260 Characters*, a fascinating new book by Frederik L Schodt, I can see that I am in esteemed company. Devotees, religious figures, and scholars of the mantra have been trying to figure it out for many centuries. Legions of books have been written about the sutra, its meaning, and its history. It sparks academic controversies to this day. In case you are not familiar with the Heart Sutra, it is a relatively short sutra that encompasses some of Buddhism's key teachings such as the concepts of emptiness and the transitory quality of life. It is said to have been pronounced by the Buddha himself 2500 years ago.

Schodt writes, "Many people assert that it takes years of study or meditation to understand the Heart Sutra, in particular its emptiness theory. There is no lack of books that purport to explain emptiness and the core phrase in the Heart Sutra, stating that "form is no different from emptiness; emptiness is not different from form; form is indeed emptiness, emptiness is indeed form." Entire forests may have been felled to do so. Not surprisingly, many of these books can appall serious academics and religious figures who have often spent long years seriously studying and contemplating the sutra."

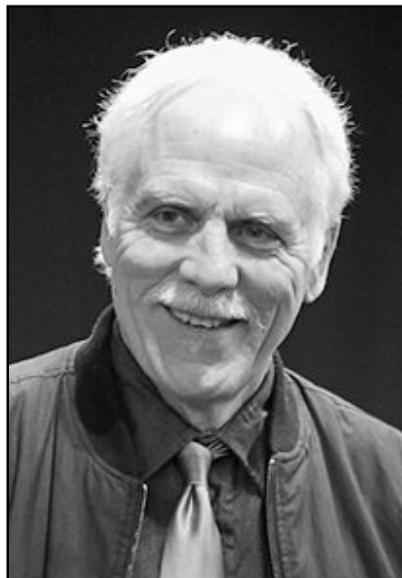
The sutra's meaning is so shrouded in mystery that Schodt declares outright that he won't attempt to explain it. The book instead is a love letter to the Heart Sutra, as well as a trip through time, and to the far corners of the Buddhist world where its popularity goes unabated.

A friend of Schodt, an ordained Buddhist priest, says that "it's best not to even try to understand the Heart Sutra intellectually in the beginning, but just to learn to chant it and absorb it, letting the vibrations see through one's body, almost like learning a song."

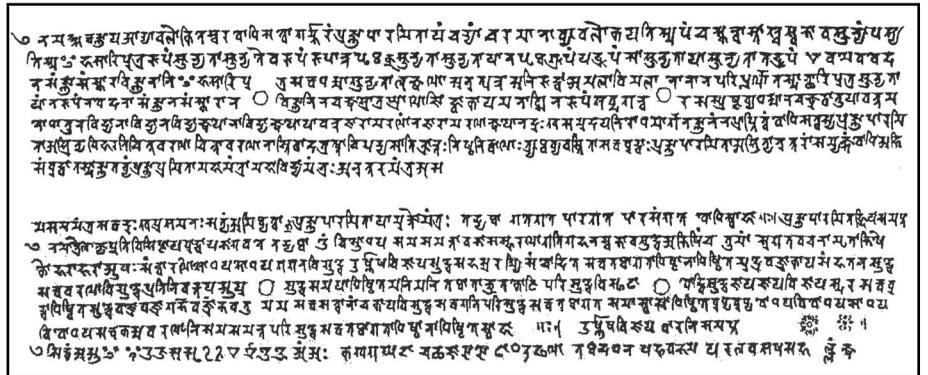
Schodt was familiar with the Heart Sutra after attending a recital by beat poet Allen Ginsberg in 1974 in LA. (he kept the ticket stub in his journal), but it was only recently that he took an avid interest in it. His book was born of a vow he made dur-



My Heart Sutra, A World in 260 Characters
Frederik Schodt
Stone Bridge Press
2020, 248 pp.



Frederik Schodt



A reproduction of the palm-leaf manuscript in Siddham script, now located in the Tokyo National Museum at the Gallery of Hōryū—ji Treasure. The original copy may be the earliest extant Sanskrit manuscript dated to the 7th–8th century CE.

ing a flight he took that experienced enough mechanical difficulties to have him seriously worried. The fear ignited his passion for the sutra, and he vowed to memorize and to study it deeply. His research took him across Asia to some of its most revered sites including a temple in Japan where part of the relics of Xuanzang are allegedly kept.

The story of Xuanzang is one of the most fascinating sections of the book. Xuanzang was a Chinese monk who travelled for 17 years from China to India and back 1400 years ago so that he could learn Sanskrit. All the original Buddhist texts were written in Sanskrit and Pali, and Xuanzang was dissatisfied with the existing Chinese translations. His trip took years and was fraught with danger from crossing deserts on foot to being robbed by brigands. He also had to outmaneuver the Chinese imperial army chasing after him. Xuanzang's translation of the Heart Sutra from the year 649 is still intact today. It is considered the "gold standard" of versions, as Schodt writes.

The Heart Sutra is popular and ubiquitous all in parts of the Buddhist world from Taiwan to Cambodia, but it is in Japan that it seems to be most alive. The sutra is featured in manga, in popular music, TV and movies. A Zen priest named Kissaquo performs it with an orchestra in sold out concerts. There's even a Heart Sutra chanting robot. In temples you can buy supplies to copy the sutra. Some have halls that hold up to 200 people copying simultaneously.

It is interesting to note as well that the Heart Sutra has long been considered a magical invocation or spell. The ancients recited it to ward off famine and pestilence, among many usages. "Intellectual comprehension aside, the Heart Sutra has often had a practical, talismanic component for those who have memorized it," writes Schodt.

The author himself recites the Heart Sutra after he is thrown off his motorcycle. As he's being carried by an ambulance to the hospital and starts fearing for his life, it is the Heart Sutra that he recites. Writes Schodt: "Have I become enlightened? Far from it. As a typically weak human, I am sometimes the victim of neurotic thoughts and existential terror, unsolvable mental dilemmas, and occasionally even what might be called clinical depression in what often seems a broken world, a world full of wars and terror and cruelty and climate change and global pandemics. Yet reciting the sutra gives me focus, and despite what might be perceived as a string of negations in the "emptiness" portion of its text, at times it almost seems to cleanse my brain, my consciousness. The more turmoil my world seems to be engulfed in, the more peace it gives me."

Although I am no closer now to understanding the Heart Sutra than I was at the beginning of reading Schodt's book, I now know that it's a tremendous gift of devotion that's been passed down for millennia. The words have been so lovingly and painstakingly recited by the ancients, and by countless devotees today that the text itself is imbued with it. As I drove my daughter to the hospital recently after a bad fall she had taken on the basketball court, I remembered the Heart Sutra and found myself reciting it. The deep essence of the sutra was suddenly off the page and embodied in me as I responded with clarity and stillness to this moment of crisis. It was the sutra of my heart.

Maryse Cardin is a frequent contributor to PRRB. She writes from West Vancouver.

OTHER / WISE

Terry Ann Carter

It is fitting that Gregory Dunne's *Other / Wise* (Isobar Press, 2019) begins with this quotation from *The Gates of Night, Six Songs from the NOH* (David Jenkins and Yashuhiko Moriguchi):

In Noh drama the action dictates a journey, even a lengthy journey, by standing in one spot and turning himself in a full circle. Thus we see in the simplest of gestures, that points of departure and of arrival are one and the same.

for Dunne's book is a finely crafted collection of departures and arrivals, beginning with his early life in the United States, his move to Japan (where he has lived for many years) and concluding with a series of clear-sighted and tender poems of family life in his adopted homeland.

Dunne, a professor (PhD in English/American Literature and Creative Writing) in the Faculty of Comparative Culture at Miyazaki International College, in Kiyotake, Miyazaki, Japan, is also skilled in Japanese, English as a Second Language (ESL) Intercultural Communication, Translation, and Lecturing; he is an associate poetry editor at *Kyoto Journal*. Previous publications include *Fistful of Lotus* (Elizabeth Forrest, 2000) and *Home Test* (Adastra Press, 2009). His critical memoir, *Quiet Accomplishment, Remembering Cid Corman* was published in 2014 by Ekstasis Press.

Cid Corman plays a behind the scenes presence in *Other / Wise*. There is a quote from Corman that serves as a kind of frontispiece and from which the title springs, although Dunne has given the word a makeover, with emphasis on a double entendre.

Poetry becomes
that conversation we
could not otherwise have

The book is dedicated to Cid and his wife Shizumi (and also David Jenkins) in memory. And in the first section, the poem "Vocation" is devoted to him: "...Look/ for patterns in the weather/ and make yourself familiar/ with local geography —/ become the salmon/that knows the river/ by smell alone..."

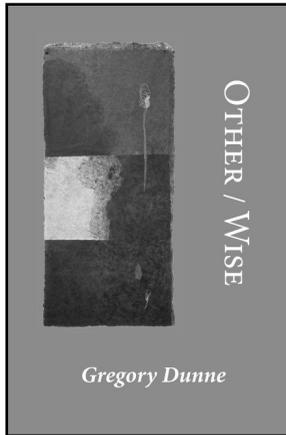
Dunne is a master of homage. There are several like minded poems dedicated to his friends Tod Marshall and David Jenkins, and to his father Jeremiah A. Dunne. His poem "Seed Trees", a tribute to William Stafford, is one of my favourites, for not only do I feel the admiration of the writer, but I learn a thing or two about Stafford in the process:

His wife spoke of his readiness
to drop anything
at a moment's notice—his readiness
to run and help a neighbour
who might have given him a call.

His response was always the same:
Be right there! Imagine
the presence of mind —
so prepared as that—
to say whatever I am doing now

can wait until I see you first.
Maybe he *was* a genius
as Jonathan Holden said
a man who made his poems
with pleasure and ease,

but her quavering voice tells me,
he was also someone who understood
how many a poem remains —



Other / Wise
Gregory Dunne
Isobar Press, 2019
79 pages

because it was left
along the way — unwritten

to do its work in time
the way a logger might
plant the finest trees
by leaving one behind —
the tallest strongest one —

to seed the forest back again alive.

Each of the three sections of *Other / Wise* begins with a haiku by Santoka, and Dunne's own haiku appear intermittently. There are references to Basho, Zen Buddhist teacher Shunryu Suzuki, ikebana, The Great Fukushima Earthquake (March 11, 2011), Robert Aiken, the Kamo River, Hyakusaji Temple in Shiga Prefecture: clearly, "Japan has risen over my life like a moon."

Poems in the first section focus on Dunne's early life. In "Ferris Wheel" he writes "... the carnival was nothing but a few/ lights flickering on and off/ like the last embers of a fire/ we might have called childhood", and from "Leaving a Forest" "... Those are my parents/ walking through the forest / ahead of me and down/ along the river, the forest/ they taught me to enjoy/ and find my way through."

It is in the second section that we find poems about Japanese experiences and aesthetics. This fine haiku "the old men play/ *shogi* and blow/ petals off the board" is titled "Along the Kamo". Haiku are not usually titled, or if they are, the first line of the poem appears as the title, but this is a small niggle. It is a moment of beauty that has been transplanted into language. Dunne has a wonderful sense of deprecating humour, that is exposed (forgive the pun) in his poem "In Praise of the Hot Japanese Summer":

I love it when the women take off their clothes
in the hot, hot *mushi-atsui* heat of summer—shed them
and begin to show the more sumptuous
flesh the sun has gotten to early. Look
at her by the elevator there
wearing a cotton dress
and *zori* with yellow flowers.
...that, and her smile—enough
heat in these alone
to fire the cockle's of an ageing man's heart,
say nothing of the city outside already ablaze.

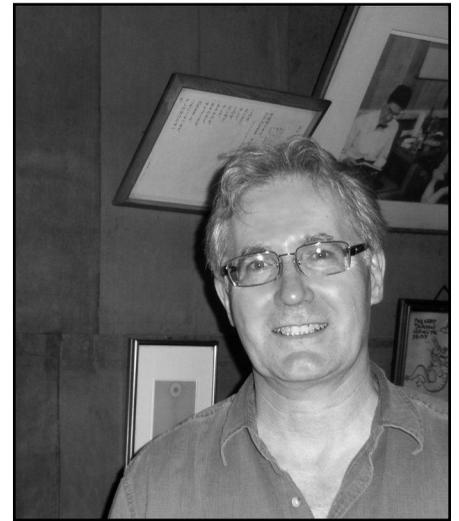
It is in the final section that poems appear about his children:

Because she's turning four years old today
and wears a summer dress
with a giant strawberry
floating in a bowl of cream
right there on her chest...

Because she hears the hungry fish
all the way under
the shadows of the pond
and kneels to coax them up —
the orange and red koi
to rise and feed
a pinch of food for every gaping mouth...

There is a poem for Jyoji, "my son, one year old", a love poem, a poem that tackles the thorny issue of different faiths, a home test surrendering a pregnancy, and the

(continued on page 43)



Gregory Dunne

A LITERARY MOSAIC IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO SERVED

Eric Spalding

Head *Amid the Guns* is a nonfiction book about World War I destined for a lay audience. It is beautiful-looking, with vintage photographs from the war on almost every two-page spread. It is also accessibly written. There is a chronology of the Great War at the beginning of the book so that readers can get their bearings. Beyond this chronology, Jacqueline Larson Carmichael's focus is not so much to describe and explain the war as it is to commemorate average individuals, many of whom were Canadian, who served in the war. The author's interest in her topic is evident, and she clearly has a deep knowledge of this traumatic period in history.

Her motivation for writing the book comes in part from the fact that both of her grandfathers fought in this war. In her inviting preface, she draws on their correspondence to describe what they did. She also talks about their lives after their return to Canada. The maternal grandfather fares well. The paternal one, however, has developed a penchant for alcohol during the war, and he continues to drink after the war. His alcoholism in combination with his post-traumatic stress disorder make him hard to bear.

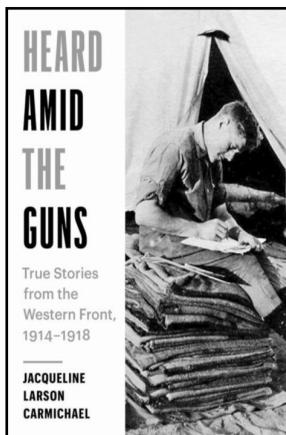
Most of the chapters of the book are organized thematically. For instance, one chapter focuses on women, another on the trenches, yet another on animals, and so on. The chapters are composed of vignettes, normally two or three paragraphs long, commemorating different people who took part in the war. In these sketches, the author typically mentions where an individual comes from, what he did during the war, and how he died. The following passage entitled "Air Raid Claims" illustrates this approach:

Near the end of the war, Nursing Sister Gladys Mary Maud Wake was stationed near the front lines, where the wounded were—and where the battle raged nigh. Wake, thirty-four, was far away from the Class of 1912 at Royal Jubilee nursing school and her native Esquimalt, BC. She died May 21, 1918 of wounds received in an air raid near the 1st Canadian General Hospital in Étapes, Pas-de-Calais, France (112).

In this manner, Carmichael creates a mosaic from numerous participants' experiences. In doing so, she takes pains to highlight the involvement of women and minorities in the war. She shows how African Canadians, Indigenous people and others contributed immeasurably to the war effort. A few of the vignettes, especially some of the longer ones, are absorbing. For instance, there is one about Walter Thomas Robus.



The author's grandfather Charles Chapman, back row, middle, with fellow soldiers from the 10th Canadian Mounted Rifles.



Heard Amid the Guns: True Stories from the Western Front, 1914-1918

Jacqueline Larson Carmichael
Heritage House Publishing, 2020



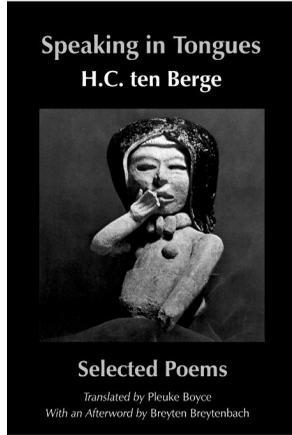
Jacqueline Larson Carmichael

Over and over, this Ontarian suffered grievous harm on the battlefield, spent weeks recuperating in hospital, and yet demanded to return to the front. He died in 1926, at only 33, his health ruined by his numerous injuries. The author does not gloss over the miseries of the Great War. The terror and monotony of trench warfare, the insalubrious conditions and the constant shelling are all described.

However, I found that the vignette approach left little room for character development or narrative. Moreover, the vignettes are sequenced in a manner that occasionally seemed arbitrary to me, especially in the first half of the book. In *Human Smoke: The Beginnings of World War II, the End of Civilization*, Nicholson Baker also builds his narrative out of vignettes, but his are in chronological order, so the reader has a sense of how the war develops and unfolds. The second half of Carmichael's book, with its focus on the end and aftermath of the war, achieves some of that order. Here, she addresses such topics as the Spanish flu, war brides and reintegration into home life. To me, these closing chapters seemed less fragmented than the preceding ones.

I do not think that this book necessarily needs to be read in order. It can be picked up when the mood strikes and a vignette or two can be read from it. The topic however is vitally important: we must not forget the failures in leadership that led to this unnecessary war or the tremendous sacrifices of the men and women of diverse backgrounds who fought in it. *Heard Amid the Guns* helps us to remember them.

Eric Spalding lives in Surrey, BC.



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H.C. ten Berge

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Translated by Pleuke Boyce
With an Afterword by Breyten Breytenbach

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LIVING THE BROKEN DREAM

Paul Falardeau

Borderline is Marie-Sissi Labrèche's first novel, but has long been lacking an English translation. Now, anglophones will have the opportunity to read this fascinating, moving and often jarring debut from the Quebecois author. Now, they too will be able to take the too-close-for-comfort journey, alongside its broken and struggling heroine, into the reality of life with borderline personality disorder.

Labrèche published *Borderline* in its original French edition in 2000. After receiving critical acclaim, it was made into a film, its screenplay developed as a combination of the *Borderline* and the author's second book, *La Brèche*. The film won a Genie award for best adapted screenplay. The short novel also has seen many translations over the years into German, Russian, Dutch and Greek. However, it has taken until 2020, two decades after its initial release, for an English translation to appear. Anvil Press and translator Melissa Bull have done a job that is worth the wait. Bull's translation feels authentic to the vision and vitriol of Labrèche's original, frenetic language. In this new edition, the reader is given a set of notes that explain the parts of Montreal in the late 1990s that may be foreign to modern anglophones without detracting from Labrèche's unmistakable, whirlwind style.

Easily the most memorable aspect of *Borderline*, Labrèche's style of writing will also initially require readers to adjust themselves to the writer's mind. This means experiencing her Borderline Personality Disorder from her perspective. The Mayo Clinic describes the mental illness, saying, "Borderline personality disorder impacts the way you think and feel about yourself and others, causing problems functioning in everyday life. It includes self-image issues, difficulty managing emotions and behavior, and a pattern of unstable relationships." This means that individuals experiencing BPD have, "an intense fear of abandonment or instability, and...difficulty tolerating being alone. Yet inappropriate anger, impulsiveness and frequent mood swings may push others away." As Labrèche puts it, "I don't differentiate between the outside and the inside. It's because of my skin, which is inside out. It's because of my nerves on edge. Anyone can see inside of me, I feel like. I am transparent...so transparent that I have to cry out to be seen."

Labrèche's language is crass and colloquial and often intentionally filled with the naivety of a child. Labrèche does well to use these trappings to center this story in the experience of the young woman, Sissi. Readers feel almost helpless as the mind-process unfolds, leading Sissi to tear apart normal situations by following her unhealthy mind to conclusions most folks would never consider. Then, Labrèche considers Sissi sitting in the aftermath of her self-destruction with a kind of tenderness that first-hand experience brings. We, as readers who have now experienced Sissi's inner workings, sit right there beside her in the blood and bafflement.

Borderline is fiction that is heavily informed by the author's own life. The protagonist is even named Sissi. It's hard to tell where the truth lies of Labrèche's actual experience, but the goal of the novel is more towards understanding the truth of living with BPD. As a young girl, Sissi grows up in Montreal's Hochelaga-Maisonneuve neighbourhood with her "two mothers," that is, her Grandmother and her biological mother. Her father is absent and her mother is suffering from schizophrenia, constantly in and out of the hospital. This leaves Sissi to be raised by her Grandmother, who spouts a litany of harsh truths and paranoid warnings, which have a troubling veracity for the young girl. As isolating as having an absent father and a mentally unstable mother are, the way her grandmother reacts too often exacerbates the pain and confusion. "Sissi, don't forget your Ventolin, otherwise you might have an asthma attack, and that will worry your mother, and when your mother worries, she goes crazy, and then we have to lock her up. You don't want to make your mother crazy, eh?" So, the young Sissi is not only drowning in obscurity and loneliness, but begins to develop the notion that all of it—all of her family's problems—are her fault. The intermittent moments of happiness amongst the great instability of young Sissi's life then cause her as much damage as the traumatic experiences do.

Sissi craves love, acceptance and attention more than anything, but has little to



Borderline
Marie-Sissi Labrèche
Trans. Melissa Bull
Anvil Press, 2020.
152 pp.



Marie-Sissi Labrèche

no idea of how to find it in a healthy way. So, as the novel shifts between childhood and Sissi's experiences as a young woman, we often find her trying to fill the emotional gaps with physical attention. Obsessed with appearance and with a clinging Cinderella dream, the adult Sissi numbs herself with sex. Much of the external narrative of Sissi's adulthood is spent jumping from boyfriend to boyfriend (to girlfriend) in a search to find the family that she could never count on at home. However, most of these partners, at least from Sissi's perspective, only want her for sex, a beautiful blonde barbie doll. Yet, she feels that she cannot turn them away because it is the only way she knows to get the attention she craves. The dissonance between what she wants and needs and what she seeks and receives grows greater and greater. Here is a lesson she has learned young, "when I'm bad, the whole world stirs out of its lethargy and rushes to take care of me"; yet as an adult, her circle of support dwindles and the few people who might show care have been methodically pushed away.

As hard as all this is to read, the pages of *Borderline* keep turning. It is a story that we want to find a conclusion to. Like Sissi, we want a happy, fairytale ending. This is a sign of the power of Labrèche's prose, that we are able to identify so profoundly with her heroine. Labrèche also makes good use of humorous asides and flares of hope that there will be a peaceful resolution to all the madness. For example, she describes the wild, young attention seeking girl as "Arnold Schwarzenegger in a skirt" or her adult self's lover coming into her room as, "excited as a flea on a poodle," a metaphor that shows that Sissi is being used up, but elicits a much needed laugh nonetheless. These small blips of humour, and the excellent, empathetic prose make for a captivating read, even though the subject is often almost unbearably sad. Labrèche does well to relate Sissi's experiences in a way that reflects the upbringing of most children, so we see the character as our own reflection, in a mirror darkly. The life that is set before her is not one of her own making and, but for chance, it may have been ours as well.

Paul Falardeau is a poet and journalist living in Vancouver, BC. A high school English teacher, he has been published in *SubTerrain*, *Cascadia Review*, *The Ormsby Review*, *BC Bookworld* and is a regular contributor to *PRRB*.

EZRA POUND (continued from page 25)

happy."

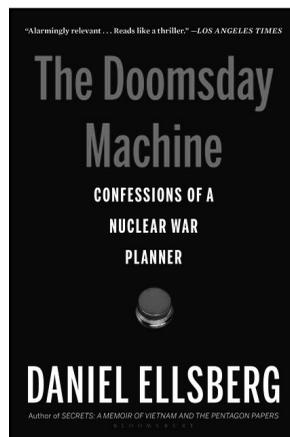
I suppose, alas, I am just that 'affable whore' (or teacher) who wishes, at times, to correct and control. And yet, I feel, on reading this book, like Keats after discovering Chapman's translations of Homer, "when a new planet swims into his ken." If not a new planet, at least a sophisticated new instrument for exploring that planet. Whatever the poet's many failings, Bacigalupo reminds us, Pound loved Italian landscapes, art, history and people. And, to quote from Canto 81, "What thou lovest well remains." Pound loved, above all, the music of poetry; and Bacigalupo, translator par excellence, finds that a gift impossible to resist.

The wind has died and we are all in the water, Allegra still chattering, with no access to or need for a compass, as Rapallo is visible in the distance. Immersed in water, as in life, which Conrad called "the destructive element," I am reminded of what it takes to make a great critic, someone who privileges knowledge over judgement. Massimo Bacigalupo is one such critic, so to him must go the last word: "There is in *The Cantos* a whole world, and we can pull out now one thread and now another, and we will often be intrigued, fascinated, moved, sometimes repelled, at the result. Again, with some exceptions, we will not be bored."

Gary Geddes is a poet, anthologist and translator, and the author of *The Resumption of Play* and *What Does a House Want?*

THE DOOMSDAY MACHINE

James Edward Reid



The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner
Daniel Ellsberg
Bloomsbury Publishing
2017, 420 pp, \$40.00

Never one to forego the historical resonances in the name of the eleventh century *Domesday Book*, which was “the record of the great survey of the lands of England made by order of William the Conqueror in 1086”, (*The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, p. 281), Daniel Ellsberg has chosen *The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner* as the title that introduces his informed survey of a possible contemporary doomsday. *The Doomsday Machine* stands as his exhaustive reckoning of the worldwide numbers of human deaths, global devastation, and centuries of recovery necessitated by long radiation half lives, if just one nuclear warhead is detonated on Earth, leading to “nuclear winter and nuclear famine”. He also ascertains that the detonation of one nuclear warhead would cause “near-universal starvation within a year or two” (page 17). Ellsberg does not provide false hope.

Once a plane carrying a nuclear warhead was launched, “*There was no Stop or Return code . . . Once an authenticated Execute order to launch a warhead has been received, there was—by design, it turned out—no way to authenticate an order to reverse course, from the president or anyone else. And no such unauthenticated*

order was to be obeyed.” (p. 64). *The Unstoppable Doomsday Machine Indeed*.

Ellsberg’s contemporary Domesday Book is, in part, also an inventory of the countries that are known to possess nuclear warheads, and he occasionally lists the numbers of these warheads, and any other details he has about these terrible inventions of mass murder. And it is mass murder he describes—Racist nuclear genocide, such as the unconscionable deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent Japanese men, women, and children at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It must never occur again. Another Doomsday would be the last.

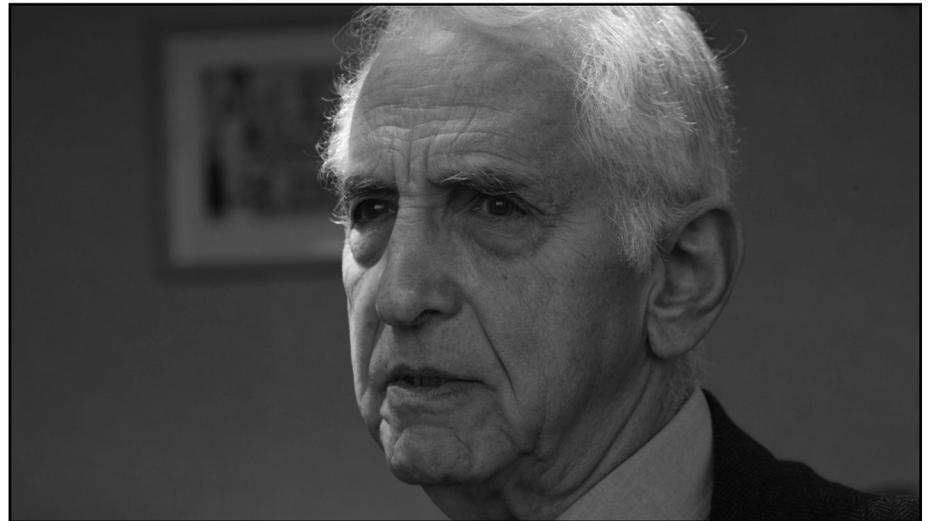
Ellsberg’s damning and accurate descriptions of the numbers of warheads, and of the possible extent of worldwide devastation of our planet Earth, by the detonation of just one of the hundreds of thousands of currently far more powerful contemporary nuclear warheads in the hands of government leaders who are sometimes capable, somewhat stable, and (not pointing any fingers here) occasionally unstable, ignorant, misinformed, or obviously delusional.

Early in *The Doomsday Machine* I recalled a childhood crisis when I was 6 or 7 years old—it was most likely at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis. My family lived in southern Ontario then, on a mid-line drawn between Washington D. C. and Ottawa, the capital city of Canada. Both cities would likely have been bombed if a nuclear war began. I asked my father if I could seal the basement windows in the foundation supporting the structure of our new house. He gave me permission. I found enough plywood, and 2x4s to close every basement window, except a smaller one, which was wide open and faced south. I was not able to find or buy plywood to seal the last open window, and spent my spare time in the basement, reading the daily news about the crisis, or listening to it on the radio, and looking up at that last open basement window. I couldn’t talk to anyone about my fear.

In the unlikely event that warheads are launched in our time, there will be no turning back. In the also unlikely event that the targeted country had built nuclear war shelters, citizens of a targeted country would not have enough time to find shelter. And most shelters built decades ago may not even provide minimal protection.

Of course, that early and fearful Missile Crisis is now generally regarded as small potatoes, and might be forgotten. Forgotten since contemporary nuclear warheads have increased significantly both in range and numbers, and in their increased capacity for physical devastation, and in the possibility of the horrific deaths of hundreds of millions of men, women, and children.

When the first nuclear bomb was detonated at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945 J. Robert Oppenheimer was one of the observers. He was left horrified and momentarily speechless by the destructive capacity of this small nuclear bomb. Then these terrible words of foreboding from the Bhagavad Gita, occurred to him: “*Now, I am become as Shiva, the Destroyer of Worlds.*” Yes, this is who we have all become. Oppenheimer passed away in 1967. At times, Ellsberg’s own career inside the



Daniel Ellsberg

American Nuclear War Planning Machine returns to haunt him, “Who were these people I was working for? Were they all insane?” (p. 200)

In *The Doomsday Machine*, Daniel Ellsberg has returned from his reckoning of the number and the danger of the nuclear warheads now on earth, and he has also clearly described his committed attempts to reduce the number of these warheads. His reckoning is one that arises from very deep and informed concerns. Unfortunately, in his commitment to accuracy, he is only occasionally encouraging about our future, encircled as we all are by nuclear warheads, all in the hands of fallible men and women.

And as for the people he was working for? Yes. Unfortunately, they are still working, in a sort of life, in a hell with no escape. Ellsberg, fortunately, seems to have found a kind of hope.

For more background about Ellsberg, I recommend his book that helped to end the war in Vietnam, after he leaked 7,000 pages of top secret documents to *The New York Times: Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers* (2002). If he had not released the Pentagon Papers, untold thousands of Vietnamese children, women, men and peacekeepers may have died in the bombs and napalm in Vietnam.

I also recommend the Academy Award Nominee Film, *The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and The Pentagon Papers* (2009). Narrated by Daniel Ellsberg.

James Edward Reid is a Canadian writer who lives in Ontario. He has been writing for 12 years for *The Sarmatian Review*, a triannual publication of the Polish Institute of Houston, at Rice University in Houston. The *Sarmatian* deals with Polish, Central, and Eastern European affairs. His *Sarmatian Review* publications are archived at the Central and Eastern European Online Library at www.cceol.com.

MORENCY (continued from page 34)

garbage bag, a kind of Pandora’s box in reversal. The staggered, broken lines from the original French are replicated in the English version: “This is how//we will heal//in the earthquakes” (63). That the bin has a lid that is “airtight” doesn’t prove terribly reassuring. Anaerobic containers can explode!

In a world where we find ourselves inundated with personal, civic, national and world tragedy, Morency’s *Miettes de Moi* and the slightly more optimistic and longer lens suggested by the translation, *A Thousand Pieces*, offer a clear-eyed view of the world but not without a glimmer of stability as the speaker looks to her physical being with a kind of equanimity like prayer.

gillian harding-russell is a poet, editor, and reviewer. Her most recent poetry collection *In Another Air* (Radiant 2018) was shortlisted for a City of Regina, Saskatchewan Book Award. A new collection *Uninterrupted* was released by Ekstasis Editions in 2020.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR

Jason Blake

Carolyn Marie Souaid's latest collection, *The Eleventh Hour*, is her eighth volume of poetry. It is also the finest of the four Souaid collections I have read.

Souaid meditates on ancestry, times gone by, death, and hard times North of the 60th, but never succumbs to doom and gloom. She also reflects on the writing life, without falling into solipsism. This is fortunate because reading a writer writing about writing is usually dull. For Souaid, poetry is a job among other jobs and she slyly works this everydayness into "Survivor": "She commutes to work and files her taxes. / Her children are fed. // Between dishes and bed, she types a word." Modesty, a work ethic and a sense of proportion can also fuel verse—"She drinks, in moderation, / far too little to enlarge her spleen." Verse is not born only of booze, melancholy or suicidal thoughts, and the title "Survivor" is a nod to real survivors but also to those who have been bitten by the muse.

The Eleventh Hour contains 49 free-verse poems, plus five interspersed centos or collage poems made up of lines from other poets. These "Auguries" help set moods, casting a meaningful shadow over the poems to come. Souaid's poems are personal, but they do not alienate the reader; they are not mere diaries in verse.

The opening of "Sisters" springs us back decades: "Little tagalong brat, you were. / Little, tagalong, thumb-sucking brat." Now, the two sisters are "cantankerous farts who knit scarves / and dine at five after Scrabble and Scotch," still playing together, still bickering after all these years. "Steven Anthony Joseph Souaid (1961-)," aimed at another sibling, starts, "My brother insists I write him into a book"—somewhere between making Steven immortal and giving in to a little brother's wheedling or whining. "But don't expect a miracle" writes the self-deprecating Souaid. "Don't assume my quotidian pen / will make you a symbol, a martyr, a venerated saint."

The comic-yet-melancholic "Questions for HRH," one of my favourites, is aimed at Souaid's son:

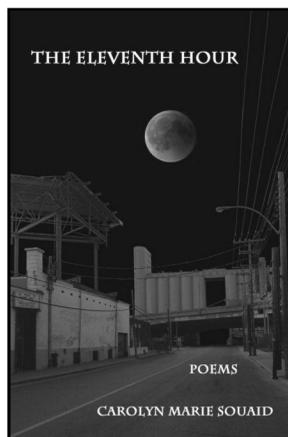
Why does your own mother, caregiver,
constant reservoir of love and support,
need to call ahead to book time with you?

The motherly cross-examining continues: "When did your hair recede, / your doctor start prescribing cholesterol pills?" Though this is the voice of a worrying mother, the son might hear this series of questions as badgering. (Note to my own mother: I know I'm balding. You don't have to remind me.) It is also the voice of sadness at times gone by. The final lines read: "is it feasible to call in sick, / play hooky with me?" The management-buzzword "feasible" gives way to the schoolyard word "hooky" as Souaid pleads for Son to take a day off work to hang with Mommy. The poem has travelled miles from the sarcastic *His Royal Highness* of the title.

Souaid's poems travel fantastic distances, moving from time past to time present in the blink of a stanza. Sometimes this is achieved through references. "Shipwreck," for example, is inspired by a sunken 19th-century schooner now visible at Higgins Beach in Maine. The *Howard W. Middleton* "could have been the Titanic of its day" but instead it "mutated overnight / into a green dungeon dripping with algae." Four stanzas later, Souaid mentions a "pirate adventure starring Johnny Depp, / star-crossed lovers on an ill-fated course," and that layered reference whisks us away from the beautiful description of the first stanza, while reminding us that we see the past (including Shakespeare's lovers) through Hollywood-coloured eyes and celluloid stories.

Souaid handles and blends voices masterfully. In "Timeline," she sketches her father, just as he once sketched her mother:

In his youth our father sketched: portraits of Mom
before the cancer infiltrated.
A good sport, he managed the fort
until new and improved she returned from the hospice—
illness downgraded to a green alert,
a blip on the radar, a problem solved.



The Eleventh Hour
Carolyn Marie Souaid
Ekstasis Editions
2020, 73 pages



Carolyn Marie Souaid

In one short stanza Souaid delivers the euphemistic hospital-speech of "cancer infiltrated" and the sprightly and chipper internal rhyme *sport/fort*. The dehumanizing "new and improved," and "blip on the radar" evoke the speech of a previous generation, perhaps of a man pushing away pain and death through manly phrases.

"Amplitude" begins with a "a dozen flies swarming / around death" as they orbit a bird corpse. This image would be cliché were it not for the terrible beauty of the "crushed velvet, / blue and iridescent" Souaid spies in the bird's head. In the second stanza, the blue is echoed in the "the mottled bruise" that appears on her father's leg after a fall. The link between the dead bird and the fading father is all the more subtle for the non-repetition of "blue." Souaid suggests the link but doesn't force it, showing confidence in the reader.

The Eleventh Hour is deliciously paced and gorgeous. It makes the reader want to slow down and speed up at the same time—to revel in the words and rhythms but also to give in to the narrative thrust of each poem's twists and turns and surprises. There is darkness here, but *The Eleventh Hour* put me in a good mood.

Jason Blake was born in Canada and is now based in Slovenia, where he also works as a translator. He is also the author of *Canadian Hockey Literature*.

STIRLING (continued from page 17)

Stirling's writing is simple, candid and moving as she describes the emerging relationship with authenticity and flair. Stirred by Harrison's optimism and appreciation for beauty despite the deprivations of age, she shares, not only his reflections and perspectives, but also their context – the walk, the visit, the food eaten, the drinks consumed, the words exchanged and the music heard. It is clear that Stirling's affection for the elderly artist created an atmosphere which enabled Harrison to freely and easily express his playful observations, echoing a mature wisdom.

Perhaps that is the reason Ted Harrison is named in the title but not as a co-author even though a large segment of the book consists of his words. While graced with attractive Harrison artwork on the cover, the book design might have more easily distinguished between the two voices through typography. Or maybe, like the Sufi poet Rumi and his teacher Shams Tabriz, these two spirits melded to the degree that separate thoughts and words ceased to exist. (Rumi called his writing the poems of Shams Tabriz). Despite the occasional confusion, the pairing of these fascinating personalities results in a unique volume of universal appeal and of particular interest to those involved in creative pursuits. It is to these that Stirling dedicates the book, to those, "who embrace their hardships, including them as their inspiration for creative works." Though Ted Harrison is now gone, his art remains as vital as ever and Stirling's book brings his personality alive to those who never knew him. She is an adept weaver of tales and I hope to read more from this emerging author as her own creative adventure in music, healing and the art of living continues.

Carol Ann Sokoloff is a writer, editor and songwriter and performer. She is the author of *Eternal Lake O'Hara*, and has released a jazz album *Let Go!*

THE HALF LIFE

Karen Shenfeld

If you pick up Rogers Greenwald's latest collection of poetry and peruse its opening pages, you'll come across the term, "half-life," nine times. *The Half-Life* is the title of the book and forms part of the title of its introductory poem. It appears inside that first poem, too, and in the book's long, meditative penultimate piece. Derived from the field of physics, "half-life" is defined by the Collins English Dictionary as "the time taken for half of the atoms in a radioactive material to undergo decay." Greenwald references the term to speak to us about the nature of sorrow. "The Half-Life of Sorrow," he says—with the poem's title doubling as its opening line—"is about five years." A few lines further on, he concludes:

The half-life isn't hard
to understand.
It means the sorrow
will be half gone in five years,
what's left will then take five again
to diminish by half.
So it will never stop flashing
in your life, though your life
will stop it eventually.

Sorrow indeed underlies many of the poems in *The Half-Life*, as do feelings of loss, longing, and alienation.

T.S. Eliot begins his famous love song with that flamboyant evocation of "a patient etherized upon a table"; in "Sliding Doors," which opens book's first section, Greenwald leads us through a hospital's automatic doors.

Her body rolls into your dream that opens for it
like the hospital's automatic doors
where you were getting some air—but an alarm went
off they're all running could you
move please, go sit in that room.
"Nice that they run."

Here, and in other pieces, Greenwald eschews the signposts of language. He leaves out commas, periods, question marks, capital letters, and quotation marks. He consciously crafts a poetry of the unconscious that mimics the workings of memories and dreams—in which objects may be symbolic and events happen out of rational order, collide, reoccur, contradict, appear connected or disconnected to our lived lives.

To steal lines from several of his works, Greenwald's poetry arises from "a space / where allegory and psyche embrace."; where the poet "drift[s] back // to song singing sung of resting in the half- // light or dark..."; where he sits "half hearing / music" that he "can't really catch the feelings or intentions of"; or crosses a plateau, each foot of which dwarfs his age "with a half-life whose mirrored image in the black lake / is an endless mating of clouds..."; Reading *The Half-Life* half locked down in my house, distanced from family and friends, my nights coloured by pandemic mares, the book had, for me, an additional, unintended resonance.

What is the wellspring of the poet's sorrow, a sorrow that, like a sword, runs through his "halved life / that won't heal"? Greenwald is direct: It's love — the bidden or unbidden recollections of a lost love, a love that was thwarted before it ever came to fruition. "My children don't believe in me", Greenwald declares in "Open Water," "because I lost their mother / before she could be their mother". In dreaming and remembering this love (or possibly several loves) the poet is, by turns, mournful, wistful, matter-of-fact, and, at times, sardonic and angry. He ends his poem, "Giving," with:

She gave me a life
and took it back.
I gave her a life;



The Half-Life
Roger Greenwald
Tiger Bark Press, 2020

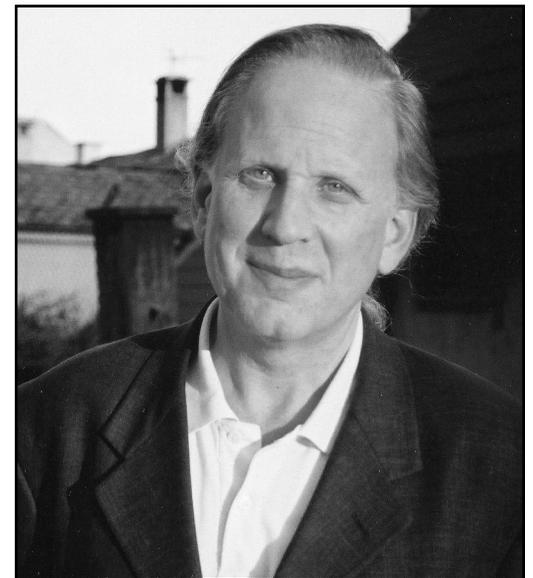
she took it with her.
Thanks, she said.

Not all of the poems of *The Half-Life* are, however, melancholic. "Body Dreams," for example, is culminated by an ecstatic verse with erotically charged imagery inspired by the lyrics of rhythm and blues:

We hold our bodies; mine shakes.
It shakes and shakes till my seed
is making dry music like a gourd's.
Seed and language, mine and hers,
deepest flesh I have. No end to
shake and sing while the blood goes.

A few pages later on, the lines in the poem, "1 A-M One Me," hurry across the page, mirroring the whispered words of a lover approaching climax: "your body that is through and through your words, body of words / that is body, body of body that is words that are breathing you." Music also offers the poet consolation, and he references traditional folk songs, Neil Young, an Indian raga, Mozart, and Bach.

The Half-Life is divided into three sections: the first dream-filled "Body Dreams"; "Home on the Range," containing poems rooted in Toronto; and "Open Water," which gathers together travel-related poems, mainly set in Scandinavia. The section divisions offer clues to the poet's biography: American-born Roger Greenwald moved to Toronto in the late 1960s, where he obtained a Ph.D from, then taught at the University of Toronto, I first encountered him, there, in the late 1970s, leading a poetry workshop for students and non-students alike at Innis College. A young, not-yet-famous Anne Michaels was also inspiringly in attendance.



Roger Greenwald
Photo by Alf Magne Heskja

Since that time, he has published two previous books of poetry and has twice won the CBC Literary Award (once for poetry and once for travel writing) and the Gwendolyn MacEwen Poetry Award. He has also won numerous international awards for his many translations of Swedish and Norwegian poetry and fiction. Several poems in *The Half-Life* allude to Greenwald's work as a translator. In "Actions and Answers," the poet, trying to remember the details of a dream, struggles to know what language he is reading, even though he has understood the meaning of the words.

I appreciated *The Half-Life* for its authenticity of voice and depth of emotion. Quoting a friend named Sarita in "Relief," the first poem in the book's final section, Greenwald writes,

Later she says, Stop I can't
stand it. I can't
stand that any doubted
whether to be with you.

Reading those lines, I wanted to call the poet up to wish him well, to tell him that he'll surely find love again to mitigate the sorrow.

Karen Shenfeld's most recent book of poetry is *To Measure the World*. She is currently writing a screenplay that has been optioned by the director, Bruce McDonald.

THE TWO-HEADED MAN: ONE VOICE, MULTIPLE WAYS OF BEING

Ana Lúcia Alvim Silva

Le texte est à la fois produit de la société et producteur de la société.

~ Mikhail Bakhtin

For thirty years Antonio D'Alfonso has been present in the Canadian/Quebec scene as a poet, novelist, essayist, translator and film director, enriching the art panorama with his particularly original voice.

As if to celebrate the passage of that long and prolific period, *The Two-Headed Man* (Guernica Editions) was recently published, a book of collected poems from 1970 to 2020.

Calling himself either an apatriote or an exiled man, a stranger, in short, D'Alfonso has been exploring those figures in quite an emblematic way, mastering the subject with a knowledge that was first found in real life-experienced situations. To be an outsider: this condition was explored in all its different shades, from poetry to prose. As an unflagging observer of life events, the writer captured with an inquisitive eye and eventually with a tortured soul, what it means to be a descendent of a different culture in Canadian society. Still life must go on, and one learns how to create survival strategies: "He multiples himself. He is in everything."

Fifty years is a considerable portion of time and yet it is possible to note the same consistency throughout that period, if the different stages in the life of the writer are compared, according to his age: the voice of youth, the one of adulthood and now the one of mature years.

If some poems tell of the indignation of the poet, revolting energetically against the *status quo*, other texts reveal this same vigor in a much more subtle and quiet manner. Some of these poems relate to day-to-day life, events or scenes that eventually grow up to epiphanies. One good example is the poem *Montreal*, where situations are caught as if they were pictures taken here and there in the city, showing its particular way of living, the behaviour of its people, its luminous and dark scenes. A text inspired in an intimate circle is *Humewood Drive*, which marks his leaving of Montreal and the adoption of Toronto as a city to live in for a period. But no big changes will take place, and the text goes: "Isn't this joyous suffering: to appreciate what has not been found?"

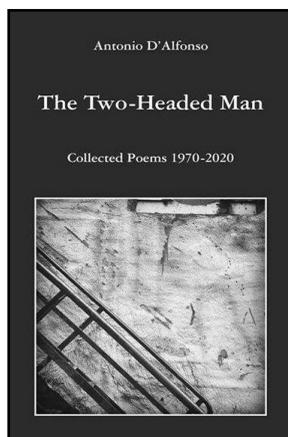
Another engaging text is the one the poet addresses himself to his parents, *Dear Parents*. This one was originally published as the introduction of the book *Un ami, un nuage* (2013). Here, the poet frankly opens up his heart to his Italian parents as if making a balance of his life as a writer. The poem entitled *09.11.03* that we suppose to be a date, was also published in the above-mentioned book of 2013. The atmosphere here is heavy, no solution possible, no relief attained: "No gin to slacken his muscles. No fire to swallow, for he can't get drunk."

Queror, first published in 1979 and an emblematic piece of work, is also present in this collection with its always contemporary issues and interrogations. And yet a text full of hope: "No victory for liars (...) Learn then, read love's fine wit, learn to hear with bright eyes." If some of the images employed in *Queror* approach to allegory, they are not so, for they are much more open to suggestions than to explicit figures. The poet's voice is conscient of the horrors created by human society, an ancient or a contemporary one. *Queror* is one of those poems written during his twenties, already advancing the paths of combat and indignation that would be present onwards.

A character that was permanent and widely explored either in D'Alfonso's literature or cinema was that of *Antigone*, mythic figure, a model of resistance to power, the one that has been always there "to defy the State laws, to feed disorder where decrees order, to act apart from others [...]"

Backdoor was the first poem I read from Antonio D'Alfonso, during a Master's level class given by Simon Harel at Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul—Porto Alegre, south of Brazil in 2003. The text exerted such an impact on me that I subsequently pursued a doctorate on D'Alfonso's writings.

In his new book, not only poems will be found, but also some prose — poetic prose, which characterises D'Alfonso's lyrical poetics. A book of collected texts says



The Two-Headed Man
Antonio D'Alfonso
Guernica Editions
2020



Antonio D'Alfonso

much solely by its own content, for a considerable part of a whole shall be set aside. The fragments the reader will have before his eyes definitely mean something. To this collection of already existing poems, new ones were added and others were modified, composing the vision of a mature writer on the world he lives in. You are all invited to open this great book.

Ana Lúcia Alvim Silva has a doctorate in French and francophone literatures. In 2015, she translated Antonio D'Alfonso's *In Italics: in Defence of Ethnicity* from French to Portuguese.

OTHER / WISE (continued from page 37)

first day of school:

...All I can do
is smile from the back of the room, this room
I am beginning to take the measurement of—
call it *fatherhood* from here on out. But already
I have her tears in my eyes, too,
it works like that and she sees this and chokes
into a sobbing that that seems to rush between us

like a river we can neither get across
nor meet in the middle of—at least not until
she turns to face the teacher, and I,
on my side, turn to face this dearest song
I think I've ever heard, lifting into my heart
light and airy as the blossoms streaming
from the trees in the yard and pouring
into the afternoon heat their small sweetness.

Whether he is composing a poem called "Skylight" or "In Reply to the English Professor Who Warned His Teaching Assistants Never to Date a Student", Gregory Dunne brings a craft, a wisdom, a shining, to his poems that celebrate arrivals. Departures.

Terry Ann Carter is the author of six collections of lyric poetry, and five chapbooks of haiku. She has edited four haiku anthologies and is the past president of Haiku Canada. *Haiku in Canada: History, Poetry, Memoir* was published by Ekstasis Press, 2020.

OF LIGHT: JUDE NEALE'S *IMPROMPTU*

Cynthia Sharp

Jude Neale encouraged me to write with her through National Poetry Month and I caught the fever, her own original prompts the ones that flowed most easily. Like the collage of hearts and stars on the cover, *Impromptu* is an explosion of everyday love and being. Neale is sunlight from the inside out, the rhythms of daily life in the direction of devotion.

Love imbued in her biorhythms, Neale breaks open another ethereal collection filled with imagery, strength and surprise. An intriguing Baldwin quote opens the book, setting readers in a blissful Zen state from which creativity emerges. As poems build on each other, Neale endows us with the wisdom that we may choose how to live this one ephemeral life. Diction like “confabulation” and “gloaming” permeates the narration, making the visceral accessible and concrete. She names light, giving it form, presence and permission:

“The shadows lengthen
until I can hold
the whole world softly
in my out stretched arms.”

Neale confounds beyond wonder until all who choose are within her radiant reach. She ends poems with profound questions that give beyond the border and scope of the piece to alight into the great beyond, love of the universe. Like a Paulo Coelho vision, “The Promise” resonates with such eloquent metaphor and strong surrealism that the audience believes in her reverie:

“If she is the wind
can he be the hollow flute

echoing back her urgent song?”

In pieces like “Shelter,” the poet not only possesses keen insight into human nature, but plays with the elevation of collective consciousness, the turns in her poems an elixir for transcendence, her stargazing elevating culture into healing veneration of the young, existentialism for the spirit.

“Your ice blue eyes
watch without judgement...

Sleep my child -

nothing matters more
than this peace you carry.”

Neale validates our collective veneration of the children we’re privileged to care for, those who will live on after us, perhaps with the tiny rhythms of our adulation to pass on to future generations beyond themselves, capturing how a grandchild is more magical than anyone gone before. Her last stanzas play with the meaning of so many types of rest, of permanence and impermanence. With honesty and openness, Neale embraces the finite nature of individual human life, manifesting meaning beyond mere acceptance in her deeply kind, immeasurable presence:

“I am here to hold your tears
so you can rest,

and I can uncertainly follow.”

As Neale expands the ordinary into the eternal, one is reminded of Rilke’s lines



Impromptu
Jude Neale
Ekstasis Editions
80 pages



Jude Neale

in the *Duino Elegies*, where he says:

“Once for each thing. Just once; no more. And we too,
just once. And never again. But to have been
this once, completely, even if only once:
to have been at one with the earth, seems beyond undoing.”

Like Rilke providing a fulfilling experience of completion from which we can let go, Neale is not afraid to directly acknowledge truth, then bend it into new light. “Changes” is my favourite poem in the book, the way it gets inside the reader and uplifts in exquisite imagery, appealing to all the senses at once:

“If the dying earth was carpeted with
A bright pallet of wild flowers
And the waters sang with whales
It would be enough for me to dress in white to marry the world again,”

then journeys from a land of wildflowers and clean, calm air to delicate purity:

“If I could I would change it all
I would leave luminosity and light where my feet had trodden.”

Neale is herself a wildflower. Through her evocative words we breathe in how we always wanted to live and give ourselves permission to be who we always were:

“If I lost my voice I would learn to give with my hands
I would fashion bracelets of gold
To show you my shimmering tune”

Alliteration flows with the cadence of oceans in lines like “show you my shimmering tune” and “flourish in the bowered bed,” an image reminiscent of Titania, pure of heart. “Waters sang with whales,” Neale writes, the rise and fall of lines a thrilling ride on a turbulent sea, a reminder of all there still is to dream and create, all that lies within our imagination, her subtle use of poetic devices a beautiful lilt in her multi-layered flower imagery.

In “Gratitude,” Neale embraces the wisdom of having lived, still open to the new:

“I will sing

Puccini’s Madame Butterfly
to the green and patient lake.”

We ascend in each of her generous visions, floating above reality to possibilities in reach. She’s dreamed them to us so we may taste their visceral deliciousness “again and again,” every line alight with symbolism from the inside out.

“The Gift” is another remedy of life experience teaching one how to see:

“the Love you have scattered
Like birdseed.”

Neale replenishes us to wholeness with concrete images of the eternal in our finite lives.

The collection is not without playfulness. “A Okay” reveals the poet’s sense of humour, while “The True Story of Otherworldly Matters” brings home the uplifting theme of transmutation.

“I had been visited by his grace
And I believed for the first time

In the unknowable practise
of the human spirit.”

My other favourite in the collection is written from Neale’s own inviting prompt,

“Add a day to any month.” I can taste the nasturtiums, floating through wild flowers and magic realism with the narrator.

In poems like “The Chrysalis,” Neale finds personal meaning in tiny places and brings them to the womb of the whole.

She excels in a variety of genres, from free verse to form poetry. Crafted with juxtaposition, her haiku suggests subaqueous depth in only seventeen syllables, speaking to the power of chemistry:

“Faint-hearted lover
Don’t stop yearning for thunder
It waits like a pearl”

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“But I’m patient as Methuselah.

“Don’t mind waiting
for the ripe perfection of you.”

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“I thought love was something shiny

And not this burnished light
That joins us like steel”

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“It smells like tangerines...

I am grateful
as a field to rain”

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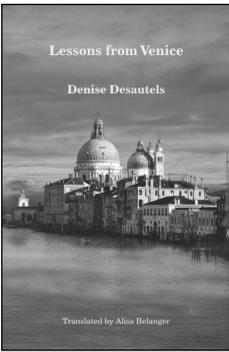
“From the leafy canopy
Where there’s hardly a sound,”

our yearning to dwell in the sky.

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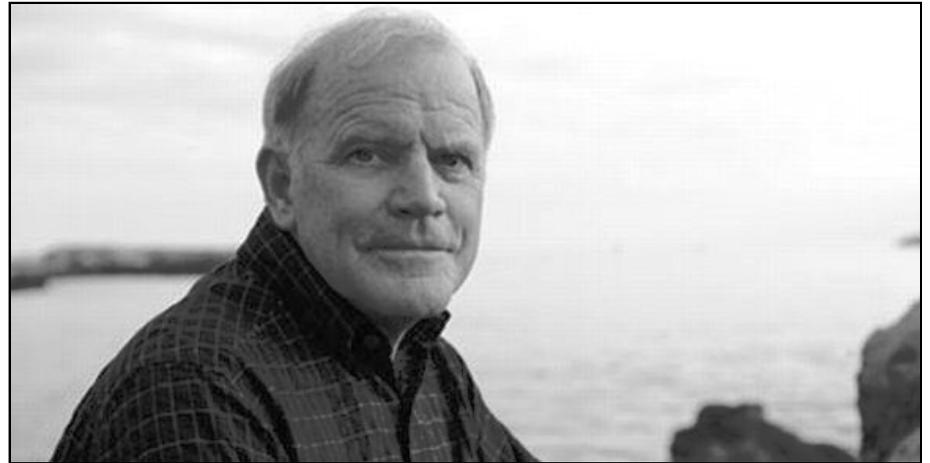
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BIOCAPITALISM (continued from page 29)

tion might have exacerbated and even led to deaths by other underlying diseases. “If the COVID-19 death toll was not misleading at all, what we should have observed is an increased number of heart attacks and increased COVID-19 numbers. But a decreased number of heart attacks and all the other death causes doesn’t give us a choice but to point to some misclassification,” Briand replied. ³

In order to understand the nature of the pandemic, it is necessary to understand the use of PCR testing in order to generate fear and control over the population. Since the overall death rate, during the pandemic, has remained about the same, this indicates that many of those dead did not die from Covid but from other causes, but were recorded as Covid deaths because they tested positive for Covid at the time of death. In the RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction process) an RNA sample has to be changed to DNA by a process of reverse transcription. Then it exponentially increases copies of the DNA in a kind of “molecular xeroxing” in a chain reaction. The biological sample is amplified until a viral fragment becomes visible. It



Kary Mullis, RIP 1944-2019; Recipient of the 1993 Nobel Prize for the discovery of the PCR test.

is generally understood that an amplification or cycle threshold (CT) of 17-20 is fundamentally accurate. After 20 CT diagnostic accuracy declines, and after thirty becomes wildly inaccurate. In Canada the Health Ministries test at CT of 35-45, which can create a 90% false positive rate. The conclusion is that these PCR tests are meaningless as a diagnostic tool to determine an alleged infection by a supposedly new virus called SARS-CoV-2. (Many argue the virus has never been isolated, so they don’t know what it is or what they are looking for, but what they are looking for is something else that may be attached to the virus, not the virus itself.) Up to a Cycle Threshold of 17, the PCR test is fairly accurate (with about 40% accuracy!) Even Dr. Fauci has admitted that anything over 30-35 CT is wildly inaccurate and will result in a false positive. The FDA and the CDC and the WHO all recommend 40-45 CT which could result, according to several pieces of scientific data, in as much as 100% false positive but at least 80-90% false positives. This explains why “cases” are going up while deaths have levelled out and declined. Kary Mullis, who won the Nobel Prize for the PCR test in 1994, claimed it should never be used as a diagnostic tool as test results are imprecise and lack specificity. The test is unable to distinguish between one virus and all the others, especially at an amplification above 25. The PCR test also cannot distinguish between a live virus and a dead one, between other coronaviruses (such as the common cold) or even whether there is the presence of a virus or whether there is an infection. The PCR test is more like a superstition than a medical procedure. The PCR test does not measure active infection. It is ramped up to detect residual pieces of dead virus. ¹ PCR is extremely sensitive, which means it can detect even the smallest pieces of DNA or RNA—but it cannot determine where these particles came from. ⁴

Some commentators insist the cost for lockdowns in Canada, in terms of Quality Adjusted Life Years and Wellbeing Years, is at least 10 times greater than the benefit. That is the conclusion of Dr. Ari Joffe, a specialist in pediatric infectious diseases at the Stollery Children’s Hospital in Edmonton and a Clinical Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at University of Alberta, in a paper titled “COVID-19: Rethinking the Lockdown Groupthink.” ⁵ He writes, “Since lockdowns are a public health intervention, aiming to improve the population wellbeing, we must consider both benefits of lockdowns, and costs of lockdowns on the population wellbeing. Once I became more informed, I realized that lockdowns cause far more harm than they prevent ...

Anyone can test positive for practically anything with a PCR test, if you run it long enough... with PCR if you do it well, you can find almost anything... it doesn’t tell you that you’re sick.

~Kary Mullis

Emerging data has shown a staggering amount of so-called ‘collateral damage’ due to the lockdowns.” He goes on to say, “In the cost-benefit analysis I consider the benefits of lockdowns in preventing deaths from Covid-19, and the costs of lockdowns in terms of the effects of the recession, loneliness, and unemployment on population wellbeing and mortality.”

In an interview with the *Toronto Sun*, January 9, 2021, Joffe asserts, “[The] initial modelling and forecasting were inaccurate. This led to a contagion of fear and policies across the world. Popular media focused on absolute numbers of Covid-19 cases and deaths independent of context. There has been a sheer one-sided focus on preventing infection numbers. The economist Paul Frijters wrote that it was ‘all about seeming to reduce risks of infection and deaths from this one particular disease, to the exclusion of all other health risks or other life concerns.’ Fear and anxiety spread, and we elevated COVID-19 above everything else that could possibly matter.

“Our cognitive biases prevented us from making optimal policy: we ignored hidden ‘statistical deaths’ reported at the population level, we preferred immediate benefits to even larger benefits in the future, we disregarded evidence that disproved our favorite theory, and escalated our commitment in the set course of action ...

“Each day in non-pandemic years over 21,000 people die from tobacco use, 3,600 from pneumonia and diarrhea in children under 5-years-old, and 4,110 from tuberculosis. We need to consider the tragic Covid-19 numbers in context... I believe that we need to take an ‘effortful pause’ and reconsider the information available to us. We need to calibrate our response to the true risk, make rational cost-benefit analyses of the trade-offs, and end the lockdown groupthink.”



Christian Drosten

“I did not consider all of the other so-called ‘collateral damage’ of lockdowns mentioned above. It turned out that the costs of lockdowns [in Canada] are at least 10 times higher than the benefits. That is, lockdowns cause far more harm to population wellbeing than COVID-19 can.”⁷

A study called “COVID-19 Data Collection, Comorbidity & Federal Law: A Historical Retrospective”⁸ claims the CDC has inflated the number of deaths and “cases” 1670%. Yes, that is 1670%! If the Covid-19 “Panicdemic” has done anything it has exposed the corruption of the pharmaceutical industry and the sinister influence

they have on public health. The public health measures implemented caused far more harms than the virus, even before the number of deaths falsely attributed to Covid-19 are factored in. A recent study in the *BMJ* of the cumulative death in the UK from 1900 to 2020 suggests that, allowing for a larger and aging population, that the overall number of deaths is actually the lowest it has been since 1918.⁹

The clearest illustration of bureaucratic malfeasance is contained in Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, when she writes that evil is institutional, ordinary and “banal”. These are the primary lessons of the Nazi era. The CDC has released new guidelines regarding the use of the PCR tests, that for the “vaccinated” the CT should be turned down to less than 28, to illustrate that the vaccines are working, an obvious trick to encourage more vaccination. In a recent trial in Manitoba, for instance, which has not concluded, Dr. Jay Buttachanya from Stanford testified that the PCR tests are unreliable and Jared Bullard agreed that only 56% of the tests are inaccurate, which is in dispute, some claiming only 3% are accurate, according to a court ruling in Portugal. However, with this kind of fallible accuracy, the PCR tests have been used to lock up and harass perfectly healthy people, and label them as disease carrying sacks of pathogens, that can kill anyone they come in contact with. Medical nonsense!

The PCR-RT test is an ideal tool to perpetrate massive deceptions. It is overly sensitive and will pick up microbes in anything if the CT threshold is ramped up high. The FDA recommendation is to set the CT at 35-45 resulting in a meaningless reading. At that rate the test can register a positive reading with anything—pineapples, old car tires, a kitchen fork, anything at all. It will register 97% positive against anything. Swedish Public Health has acknowledged that the PCR results are meaningless, and that all PCR tests (the “cases”) may be false positives.¹⁰ Christian Drosten, who refined the PCR test for the purposes of deceiving the public, knows this. Fauci knows this. Bill Gates knows this. It appears from the outside that the “PCR test” was intentionally chosen for its potential non-specificity. It can be a very useful technique for those wishing to control, mislead, impoverish and eliminate us as it is so easy to manipulate its protocol to suit different purposes. The fraudulent use of PCR / RT-PCR testing has served the purpose of cultivating an irrational fear of microbes that serves the ends of Agenda 2030, the World Economic Forum’s stated plan to transform society, for the manipulation, harm and—ultimately, the destruction of humanity.

¹ <https://dryburgh.com/covid-ifr/>

² COVID-19 Data Collection, Comorbidity & Federal Law: A Historical Retrospective”, Henry Ealy, Michael McEvoy ‡\$, Daniel Chong, John Nowicki, Monica Sava, Sandeep Gupta; Science, Public Health Policy, and The Law, October 12, 2020: https://jdfor2020.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/adf864_165a103206974fdbb14ada6b8af1541.pdf

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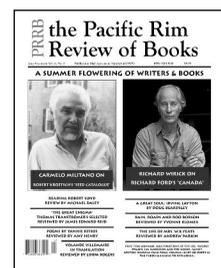
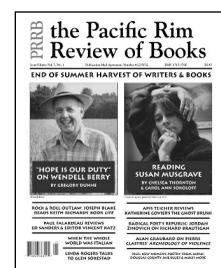
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³ It has been removed from their website but it can be found in PDF form here:
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⁴ An informative link regarding the PCR tests from Professor Carl Henghan and his teams at the Oxford University Centre for Evidence Based Medicine is here: <https://www.cebm.net/covid-19/pcr-positives-what-do-they-mean/>

⁵ <https://uncoverdc.com/2020/12/03/ten-fatal-errors-scientists-attack-paper-that-established-global-pcr-driven-lockdown/>

⁶ Joffe AR. COVID-19: Rethinking the lockdown groupthink. *Frontiers in Public Health* 2021;9:625778

⁷ *Toronto Sun*, January 9, 2021

⁸ *Science, Public Health Policy and The Law*: Volume 2:4-22 October 12, 2020

⁹ UK deaths in 2020: how do they compare with previous years?”, *BMJ* 13 April 2021:
<https://www.bmj.com/content/373/bmj.n896>

¹⁰ Public Health Agency of Sweden, <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/communicable-disease-control/covid-19/covid-19-testing/>

Asymptomatic Transmission: Quarantining the Healthy

Never do human beings speculate more, or have more opinions, than about things which they do not understand.

~ Carl Jung

Another threat which necessitates the stringent biosecurity policies is that of asymptomatic transmission. Masking, social distancing, isolation and broken social relationships are measures justified exclusively by the myth of asymptomatic transmission. Masks are neither an effective nor sensible public health policy. On June 7, 2020, Maria van Kerkhove, an infectious disease epidemiologist and the COVID-19 technical lead for the WHO, stated that available data from published research of member countries had shown asymptomatic cases were not a significant driver for the spread of the virus and that asymptomatic spread of the disease was “very rare.” She was, of course, reprimanded for this revealing statement. However, there are peer-reviewed studies that confirm Kerkhove’s conclusion.

A recent study of 10 million residents of Wuhan China revealed that asymptomatic people do not spread the virus to others, nor do masks stop the spread from infected carriers. The Wuhan study stated, “The study found no ‘viable’ virus in the asymptomatic cases and the close contacts of these positive asymptomatic cases did not test positive.”¹ The study can be found at *Nature Communications*.² Called *Post-lockdown SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid screening* in nearly ten million residents of Wuhan, China, it concludes, “All asymptomatic positive cases and their close contacts were isolated for at least 2 weeks until the results of nucleic acid testing were negative. None of detected positive cases or their close contacts became symptomatic or newly confirmed with COVID-19 during the isolation period.”³

There is no other scientific, peer-reviewed study of this or any scale, so are we to conclude that asymptomatic people do not spread the disease? There is no science to contradict this, so public health measures are both misguided and a failure. Asymptomatic spread was the answer given to why we should lock down, why we should wear masks and why we should socially distance. Lockdown has destroyed lives and dreams and social distancing has destroyed relationships (my son will not visit his senior parents, my wife and I, out of fear of spreading the virus).

Why should someone who is not sick be locked down? Why are the healthy quarantined? And what possibly could it mean, in any case, to be sick without symptoms? Why are half the PCR-positive tests assigned to people who otherwise seem to be perfectly fine? Why is it that so many people who receive a positive test and are counted as a case never get sick and will never get sick? Because children are assumed to be “superspreaders” schools are closed, and for the rest of us we are assumed to be spreading the disease so rights of commerce were vanquished, wartime-style shelter-in-place orders were imposed, travel nearly stopped, all large events were cancelled, and so on. Health policy seems to be working against the social system, to destroy all that makes life worthwhile, exacerbating isolation, distraction, depression, fear and other everyday challenges we all face.

In *COVID-19: The Great Reset* Schwab challenges industry leaders and decision makers to “make good use of the pandemic by not letting the crisis go to waste.” The Great Reset, responding to Covid, is about multinational corporate “stakeholders” at the World Economic Forum controlling as many elements of planetary life as they possibly can—from the digital data humans produce to each morsel of food we eat. And to advance a global transformation, using the threat of death and disease to consolidate their control over every aspect of life and increase their wealth at the expense of all life on this planet.

This is not to say that Covid19 is not present in the community, like many other diseases. If you are immuno-compromised you have to be careful, and take precautions, which is a sensible way to conduct health policy. It is like a bad flu season, however, unlike a normal bad flu season, deaths have not gone up. But is this response about public policy or something more sinister? If it is about public health policy they have not looked at their own data, as their data contradicts everything the health

departments around the world are claiming. There are many tragedies around the world, caused not by Covid 19 but the stringent health protocols, including postponement and cancellation of elective medical procedures, mental health, disruption in food production and transport, heart disease, people with cancer having delayed treatment, disrupted cancer prevention, general healthcare disruption, violence (both domestic and homicide), suicides, starvation and famine around the world. It has been shrugged off by health professionals that the rates of suicide and opioid deaths exceed the number of Covid deaths. (There was one case of a woman, in Canada, who chose to be euthanised rather than live in loneliness, denied visitors to her long-term care home.) The World Food Program estimates that Covid 19 measures will push over 300 million into starvation.

Covid 19 appears to be the controlled demolition of civilization to prepare the world for a technocratic neo-feudalism, imposing the privatization of the commons, the removal of wealth and livelihood from large segments of the population, death and destruction from health measures killing millions more than the actual disease, and the enforcement of rules that separate us and remove our humanity. We are being pushed into a world similar to medieval feudalism, but with robots and complete biometric surveillance and global totalitarianism.

In order to restructure the world, the WEF needed a crisis to take a sledgehammer to the old economy, hence the lockdowns. In order to ensure compliance and cooperation they needed fear and confusion in the population, hence the flawed PCR tests and the masks. Behavior modification, through Blockchain technology, is embedded in the scope of the engineered pandemic, hence social distancing. This is leading us towards the introduction of a cryptocurrency system, which is neither cash nor currency but a system of population control.

Is this a proper health care policy whose consequences are far worse than the disease it seeks to contain? As Stanford’s John Ioannidis says, “I feel extremely sad that my predictions were verified.” As one of the world’s leading epidemiologists, he said, “Major consequences on the economy, society and mental health have already occurred.... Globally, the lockdown measures have increased the number of people at risk of starvation to 1.1 billion...”⁴ The UN has since revised John Ioannidis’ number to 1.6 billion on the verge of famine. As James Corbett has said, “If you are advocating for lockdowns, you are complicit in tearing families apart. You are complicit in inflicting untold suffering on millions of people around the world. You are complicit in casting the poorest and most vulnerable in our societies into even further grinding poverty. You are complicit in murder.”

There has never been a disease in history that was considered an asymptomatic carrier of disease, and there have been several studies examining this false assumption, which can be viewed in the footnotes.⁵ The myth of Asymptomatic transmission, promoted by Christian Drosten, has enabled harsh and draconian protocols and has allowed otherwise healthy people to be labeled as dangerous carriers of disease, to be shunned by society. Again, medical nonsense!

¹ *Science Daily*, <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/11/201130131511.htm>

² <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-020-19802-w>

³ *Nature Communication*, November 20, 2020

⁴ *Greek Reporter*, July 20, 2020

⁵ <https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4436/tr-10>

False Positives and Medical Fraud: the Christian Drosten Case

The only means to fight the plague is honesty.

~ Albert Camus, *The Plague*, 1947

One of the greatest advantages of the totalitarian elites of the twenties and thirties was to turn any statement of fact into a question of motive.

~ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

German-American Lawyer Dr. Reiner Fuellmich has initiated a court case against Christian Drosten, the WHO’s Tedros Adhanom and Anthony Fauci of the CDC, for crimes against humanity, in what promises to be the most significant legal case of the century. Drosten is at the heart of all the Covid measures that have caused suffering and isolation around the world. He was also at the heart of the false and misleading Swine flu pandemic, that proved to be not a pandemic at all. The PCR-RT test was introduced very early on as a means of detecting cases of infection, when Wuhan only had 6 cases and it became the ‘gold standard’ of detection and became used by public health officials around the world.

Like the vaccines introduced now, it was introduced with ill-considered and indecent haste. Drosten published an article, titled “Detection of 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) by real-time RT-PCR”¹ on January 23rd, 2020 in the scientific journal *Eurosurveillance*, of the EU Center for Disease Prevention and Control. Drosten,

along with several colleagues from the Berlin Virology Institute at Charite Hospital, along with the head of a small Berlin biotech company, TIB Molbiol Syntheselabor GmbH, published a study claiming to have developed the first effective test for detecting whether someone is infected with the novel coronavirus identified first only days before in Wuhan. Before the study was even published, it was sent to and was officially recommended by the WHO as the worldwide test to determine the presence of the novel coronavirus before the paper was even published. The corrupt Director General of WHO, Tedros Adhanom,² the first non-medical doctor to head WHO, enthusiastically endorsed it as did—later—Anthony Fauci of the CDC.

By March, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said, “Most of you will become infected.” A recent email thread leaked from Merkel’s office, dating from the time of that statement, shows that the German Ministry of the Interior worked with several scientists on a strategy to increase fear of the coronavirus among the public, to foster understanding for drastic public health measures. Germany was among the first to implement lockdown. Minister of the Interior Horst Seehofer was concerned about easing too quickly and instructed State Secretary Markus Kerber to draft a plan to create public support for more stringent measures. Kerber sent emails to several scientists, universities and research institutes around the world asking to help plan “measures of a preventive and repressive nature.” The scientists responded with proposals to put “fear and obedience in the population” on the agenda, including campaigns using images of



Lawyer Dr. Reiner Fuellmich

people dying of breathlessness because no ICU beds were available. In the emails, scientists argued among themselves what the death toll should be, and an employee at an influential economic research institute, argued for the death rate of 1.2 percent. He wrote that they should consider “the purpose of the model”, to emphasize “a lot of pressure to act” and therefore present the numbers “better worse than too good”. Working from “faulty” PCR tests, the German government would instill fear in the populous to gain a “mental and systemic” grip on the situation. Drosten’s PCR tests would become an instrument of propaganda around the world for the emerging situation.

On November 27th, a highly respected group of virologists and microbiologists published a call for *Eurosurveillance* to retract the Drosten article, in a genuine “peer reviewed” article, accusing Drosten and others of “fatal” scientific incompetence.³ For one thing, they assert that the paper that established the Drosten PCR test for the Wuhan strain of coronavirus that has subsequently been adopted by the Merkel government along with WHO for worldwide use—resulting in severe lockdowns globally and an economic and social catastrophe—was never peer-reviewed before its publication by *Eurosurveillance*. In their criticism they point out that, “the Corman-Drosten paper was submitted to *Eurosurveillance* on January 21st 2020 and accepted for publication on January 22nd 2020. On January 23rd 2020 the paper was online.” They point out that a subject so complex and important to world health and security, a serious 24-hour “peer review” from at least two experts in the field is not possible. “Our conclusion is supported by the fact that a tremendous number of very serious design flaws were found by us, which make the PCR test completely unsuitable as a diagnostic tool to identify the SARS-CoV-2 virus.”

Drosten and his co-author Dr. Chantal Reusken, did not disclose a glaring conflict of interest. Both were also members of the editorial board of *Eurosurveillance*. Further, as reported by BBC and Google Statistics, on January 21 there were a world total of 6 deaths being attributed to the Wuhan virus. In their rebuttal of Drosten’s paper, “Why did the authors assume a challenge for public health laboratories while there was no substantial evidence at that time to indicate that the outbreak was more widespread than initially thought?”

Another co-author of the Drosten paper that gave a cover of apparent scientific credibility to the Drosten PCR procedure was head of the company who developed the test being marketed today, with the blessing of WHO, in the hundreds of millions—Olfert Landt, of Tib-Molbiol in Berlin. Landt did not disclose this pertinent fact in the

Drosten paper either.

In the November 27th peer reviewed paper, Pieter Borger and his fellow scientific collaborators point out, “confirmed cases” is a nonsense number. They conclude that the PCR test does not actually identify the virus and Covid “false positives” were used to justify lockdowns and demolition of national economies. The report identifies “ten fatal problems”. They write, “This high number of variants not only is unusual, but it also is highly confusing for laboratories. These six unspecified positions could easily result in the design of several different alternative primer sequences which do not relate to SARS-CoV-2... the confusing unspecific description in the Corman-Drosten paper is not suitable as a Standard Operational Protocol. These unspecified positions should have been designed unequivocally.” They also add that “RT-PCR is not recommended for primary diagnostics of infection. This is why the RT-PCR Test used in clinical routine for detection of COVID-19 is not indicated for COVID-19 diagnosis on a regulatory basis.”

The key to the fraud perpetrated by Drosten and the Merkel government is the manipulation of the amplification methods, based on the Cycle Thresholds (anything over 30 is meaningless). The Borger report notes, “These types of virological diagnostic tests must be based on a SOP (Standard Operational Protocol), including a validated and fixed number of PCR cycles (Ct value) after which a sample is deemed positive or negative. The maximum reasonably reliable Ct value is 30 cycles. Above a Ct of 35 cycles, rapidly increasing numbers of false positives must be expected... scientific studies show that only non-infectious (dead) viruses are detected with Ct values of 35.”

The report suggests that a serious error of the Drosten paper is that it does not mention the Cycle Threshold value for which a sample can unambiguously be considered a positive or negative test result. “The fact that these PCR products have not been validated at molecular level is another striking error of the protocol, making any test based upon it useless as a specific diagnostic tool to identify the SARS-CoV-2 virus.” In other words the PCR test of Drosten and the WHO is a monumental fraud involving the entire edifice of the Gates Foundation, the WHO, Fauci’s CDC and the WEF, making the case for forced, untested and experimental vaccines meaningless.

In addition to this critique of the Drosten paper by twenty-three of the world’s leading microbiologists, Drosten and the officials at Goethe University in Frankfurt, where Drosten claims to have received his doctorate in 2003, are accused of degree fraud. Drosten’s doctoral thesis, which by law must be deposited on a certain date with academic authorities at his university, who then sign a legal form, *Revisionsschein*, verified with signature, stamp of the university and date, with thesis title and author, to be sent to the university archive. With it, three original copies of the thesis are filed. Dr. Markus Kühbacher, a specialist investigating scientific fraud, charges that the Goethe University is guilty of cover-up by claiming, falsely, Drosten’s *Revisionsschein*, was on file. The University spokesman later was forced to admit it was not filed, or at least not locatable by them. Moreover, of the three mandatory file copies of his doctoral thesis, highly relevant given the global importance of Drosten’s coronavirus role, two copies have “disappeared,” and the remaining single copy is water-damaged and unreadable.

Kühbacher says Drosten will now likely face court charges for holding a fraudulent doctoral title, according to German-American attorney, Dr. Reiner Fuellmich, in his charges against the defendants, the WHO, Tedros Adhanom, Christian Drosten, Anthony Fauci and others for Crimes Against Humanity. Fuellmich cites in full the charges against the Drosten test for coronavirus of Dr. Pieter Borger *et al* noted above. This is in effect forcing the defendants to refute the Borger paper. It is a major step on the way to refute the entire WHO COVID-19 PCR testing fraud. Already an appeals court in Lisbon, Portugal ruled on 11 November that the PCR test of Drosten and WHO was not valid to detect coronavirus infection and that it was no basis on which to order nationwide or partial lockdowns. Christian Drosten also advised the WHO on the 2009 “fake” pandemic that was cited above.

On January 13th, 2021 the WHO recommended that the cycle threshold of the PCR tests be turned down after the vaccines were “authorized” and immediately afterwards there was a decline in the number of “cases”. The WHO published a memo regarding the problem of asymptomatic cases being discovered by PCR tests, and suggesting any asymptomatic positive tests be repeated. This followed up their previous memo, instructing labs around the world to use lower cycle thresholds (CT values) for PCR tests, as values over 35 could produce false positives. Essentially, in two memos the WHO ensured future testing would be less likely to produce false positives and made it much harder to be labelled an “asymptomatic case”.⁴ Antony Fauci makes a point of saying the PCR COVID test is useless and misleading when the test is run at “35 cycles or higher.” A positive result, indicating infection, cannot be accepted or believed, he stated during an interview with TWiV: This week in Virology.⁵ Here is an excerpt from Fauci’s key quote (starting at about the 4-minute mark): “...If you get [perform the test at] a cycle threshold of 35 or more...the chances of it being replication-compel of the PCR, tent [aka accurate] are miniscule...you almost never can cul-

ture virus [detect a true positive result] from a 37 threshold cycle...even 36...”⁶ With the decline in the CT of the PCR it certainly appears that the vaccination program is very effective, but since we know the PCR at a CT above 30 or even 25 is wildly inaccurate, perhaps this is a little too convenient. With the PCR test the CDC were able to elevate a flu-like disease with an infection survival rate of 99.997 per cent to pandemic status. The PCR tests, using the playbook of the Iraq War, are Weapons of Mass Deception.

The controversy around the PCR tests proves that there is science and then there is “science.” The draconian and unnecessary measures in response to Covid 19 were defined and imposed with the authority of a group of experts, including Merkel’s Health Minister, Jens Spahn, a former banker who has no medical degree, only a stint as a lobbyist for Big Pharma; Christian Drosten who faked his doctoral degree, with the aid of the Goethe Institute; WHO chief Tedros Adhanom is no medical doctor whose WHO is financed massively by a college dropout billionaire computer manager Gates, who also advises the Merkel government on COVID-19 measures; and in the US, Anthony Fauci, who as an administrator has not practiced medicine in over 40 years with a history of incompetence and falsification (see the AIDS crisis and the 2009 pandemic, created to sell vaccines). From this mixture of fraud and incompetence, lockdowns, masking and social distancing have destroyed lives, killed the innocent and created a human rights crisis and possibly genocide of unimaginable scale.

¹ *Eurosurveillance* 25(8) 2020

² “Who is WHO’s Tedros Adhanom?” by F. William Engdahl, 18 February 2020 <http://www.williamengdahl.com/englishNEO18Feb2020.php>

³ External peer review of the RTPCR test to detect SARS-CoV-2 reveals 10 major scientific flaws at the molecular and methodological level: consequences for false positive results. <https://cormandrostrenreview.com/report/>

⁴ <https://www.who.int/news/item/20-01-2021-who-information-notice-for-ivd-users-2020-05> July 16, 2020, podcast, “This Week in Virology”

⁵ <https://www.microbe.tv/twiv/>

⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_Vy6fgaBPE&t=260s

Children Are the Target

Before mass leaders seize the power to fit reality to their lies, their propaganda is marked by its extreme contempt for facts as such, for in their opinion fact depends entirely on the power of the man who can fabricate it.

~ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

An email leak, reported in the German paper *Die Welt*, reveals the exchange between the Germany’s Ministry of the Interior and several scientists around the world soliciting advice on how to instill fear and obedience in the population to ensure compliance with the Covid measures.^{1 2} Prior to that, however, the so-called ‘Panic Papers’ were also leaked, where the same issue was identified. In the Panic Papers, however, children were singled out as a specific target. The ‘Panic Papers’ were written by the German Ministry, and according to a legal case filed by Reinier Fuellmich, “The accompanying irresponsible statements of the Head of the RKI—Germany’s CDC—Mr. Wieler, who repeatedly and excitedly announced that the corona measures must be followed unconditionally by the population without them asking any questions, shows that that he followed the script verbatim. In his public statements, he kept announcing that the situation was very grave and threatening, although the figures compiled by his own institute proved the exact opposite. Among other things, the ‘Panic Paper’ calls for children to be made to feel responsible—and I quote—‘for the painful tortured death of their parents and grandparents if they do not follow the corona rules’—that is, if they do not wash their hands constantly and don’t stay away from their grandparents.”³ The advance strategy of the German planning reveals that children are a primary target.

The panic around the pandemic has pushed education towards complete digitization with all learning done online. It may never go back, in some places, because the investment community craves this data. It also would allow educational institutions, from universities to grade schools, to be repurposed for the 5G smart city grids that are already being rolled out around the world. Covid 19 has offered the predatory class an opportunity to redesign education and along with it the minds, bodies and souls of future generations of children.

Why would anyone give their children this new experimental vaccine? We have no information on the long-term effects or what it might do when you switch on RNA at the cellular level, or when RNA is converted to DNA through a metabolic process. Children are not susceptible to this disease, they have little or no risk, according to statistics, and are not carriers of the disease or “superspreaders” as some falsely fear. Scientific evidence suggests the contrary. This injection is a highly experimental treatment that has never been fully tested on either animals or humans. Every individual who takes the injection will be a test subject, a guinea pig, and the vaccine makers and the politicians who enabled them will just sit back and watch. Children are a key com-

ponent: they can be trained at birth to accept this new reality, as they can be encased in their digital data bubble, excreting data like sweat that can be financialized on the market. “Smaller number of perfect people on a perfect planet.”⁴

Children are a key target of the New World Order, because the education of children is an element of what are known as Human Capital Markets. *Forbes Magazine* writes that by 2024 Human Capital Markets will be worth \$24B and are likely to increase and grow from there. Bill Gates has long been a proponent of the Charter School System, investing billions into the restructuring of education, which is the privatization of the education market. For the Great Reset to take place, based on the financialization of Human Capital and lifelong data collection, it is necessary to train children from birth to accept the New Normal. For most of us the New Normal is a little bit strange but for children this will become a way of life. Hence, the media propaganda surrounding children as superspreaders (even though this is contradicted by science) and the fear-mongering suggesting children may kill grandma if they see her.

We are seeing the controlled demolition of social and family relationships: it is a great danger to hug another, to be close, to be intimate. Many grandparents have died alone in this period, unable to be surrounded by their loved ones, and especially the grandchildren they have not been allowed, in many cases, to see. Regulations demand no hugs and no contact unless you are in the same household—masking, social distance, lockdown. Children are a valuable resource, for the love they have to give, but in the mechanistic new world, all that matters is the data they can provide. The technocrats on Wall Street need that data, which is why education is moving online. Digital platforms like Zoom feed information back to a centralized source for tracking, which again feeds into Capital Market investing.

Investors need to track the success and growth of their investments. It is why all the arts, all the business, may be conducted exclusively on digital platforms in the future, because the tracked data can be monetized, and the new markets created for the Great Reset are dependent on this data overreach. It is also why biometric sensors are needed to receive data at the cellular level. Those who do not excrete “value added” data will have limited value.

The children of the future will lack the opportunities that we have had. The choices we made will not be available to them. In fact they may have no choice at all. They may be slotted into a path or stream from birth to death, and hedge fund or asset managers such as Black Rock will control their education and the direction it will take. All learning will occur at home and online, where it can be tracked, monitored and monetized for investment bankers and asset managers with the absence of socialization or in-person learning that may have no value in terms of data collection. Students may be packaged up into bonds and traded in the markets. Some believe, as expressed by Cory Morningstar and Alison McDowell, the billionaire class will cannibalize all future generations of children for profit. From masks to social distancing to fear and coercion to take a gene-editing injection that has never been approved, an entire generation, trauma that may last a lifetime, surrendered to global predators.

¹ Germany’s Ministry of the Interior Hired Scientists to Justify “Tough Corona Measures” by Anette Dowideit and Alexander Nabert, Global Research, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/germanys-ministry-of-the-interior-hired-scientists-to-justify-tough-corona-measures/5736941> February 10, 2021

² *Die Welt* 7 February 2021

³ *The Panic Papers*, from <https://www.aeginagreece.com/aegina-island/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Transcript-testimony-Reiner-Fuellmich-.pdf>.

⁴ WEF Global Risks Report, World Economic Forum: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2019.pdf

Crimes Against Humanity: Nuremberg 2.0

Totalitarianism in power invariably replaces all first-rate talents, regardless of their sympathies, with those crackpots and fools whose lack of intelligence and creativity is still the best guarantee of their loyalty.

~Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

If you want a vision of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face, forever.

~ George Orwell”

These companies, not the lunatic Nazi fanatics, are the main war criminals. If the guilt of these criminals is not brought to daylight and if they are not punished, they will pose a much greater threat to the future peace of the world than Hitler if he were still alive.

~ Telford Taylor, US-Chief Prosecutor, 1947 Nuremberg War Trial

One of the principles of Western Democracy, which the Nuremberg Trials articulated, was the principle of “informed consent.” The mass vaccination program assaulting the public violates this ideal dramatically. Recipients of the vaccine are told that

the vaccine is “safe and effective” according to Health Canada, but they are not told that the vaccine has not been approved, and only authorised for “emergency use only” and that they are in Phase III of a medical experiment that will not end until 2023. They are not told that the vaccine does not necessarily prevent transmission or from catching Covid (there have already been several cases of Covid in people who have received their second dose of the vaccine). Nor are they told of the many side effects, including death, or the number of people who have received the vaccine and either died or had life changing adverse effects. For a disease with a survival rate of 99.997 for anyone under 50, and a 94.95% for anyone over 80, social norms have completely overturned and a new governance model is imposed along with coerced injections of a highly experimental gene-editing therapy.

A broad social experiment has been underway for more than a year now, a new totalitarian governance—biosecurity—for which we are asked to accept limitations of mobility and cruelty towards those who disobey the regulations that we would never accept otherwise. Something like a mass psychosis has become pervasive in our society, aided by the dominance of social media in all our lives. We are told to accept without question confusing and contradictory information from the leadership and the medical professionals (First Fauci says: “Masks don’t work.” Then, next month, it’s yes—masks! Then: three masks!) which has increased the fear and apprehension, as we are told this is the “New Normal.” Critical thinking is forbidden, as we are told to follow rules unquestionably, even when thousands of scientists around the world question the narrative.¹ Capitalism has always had an uneasy relationship to democracy. Democratic politics have always been a threat to the primacy of the market. With a sudden abrupt halt on March 11, 2020, we were asked to give up some fundamental principles that have guided Western civilisation for a millenium, that are symbolised by Hippocrates (we are the agents of our health) and Socrates (free discourse in the marketplace of ideas). The allegations of the Corona Investigation Committee headed by Dr. Reiner Fuellmich are that Covid 19 measures, the control of the populace, and the fear, is driven by the greed of the Pharmaceutical industry.

The Second Nuremberg tribunal is in preparation, with thousands of lawyers around the world participating with Dr. Fuellmich in a class action suit to prosecute those responsible for the Covid 19 swindle manipulated by the Great Reset and the World Economic Forum. “The hearings of around 100 internationally renowned scientists, doctors, economists and lawyers, which have been conducted by the Berlin Commission of Inquiry into the Covid-19 affair since 10.07.2020, have in the meantime shown with a probability close to certainty that the Covid-19 scandal was at no time a health issue. Rather, it was about solidifying the illegitimate power (illegitimate because it was obtained by criminal methods) of the (in Fuellmich’s words) “corrupt Davos clique”² by transferring the wealth of the people to its members, destroying, among other things, small and medium-sized enterprises in particular. Platforms such as Amazon, Google, Uber, etc. could thus appropriate their market share and wealth.”



Vera Sharav

“To fully understand what is at stake with this new Nuremberg tribunal to judge the biggest tort case of all time, it is by pulling the thread of Drosten’s lie for falsifying the PCR testing protocol on behalf of the Davos clique, that everything will come to pass: the sponsors of the financial oligarchy, Klaus Schwab, the great architect of this gigantic hostage-taking, the politicians at the head of the EU, the armed arm of the execution of Drosten’s and WHO directives that led all Western governments yesterday to take the devastating decisions of containment, curfews, compulsory mask-wearing and social distancing, and today of lethal vaccines for the oldest among us. It is these truths that will bring down the masks of those responsible for the crimes committed. To the politicians who have had faith in these corrupt figures,” says Dr. Fuellmich, “the facts presented here are the lifeline that will help them to set the record straight and begin the much-needed scientific debate to avoid going down with these criminal charlatans.”

Very strong words from Reiner Fuellmich, but among his interview subjects for the pre-Discovery trial, is Vera Sharav, a Holocaust survivor who lost both her parents in the camps and who managed to survive due to the kindness of strangers. As a survivor, she knows from firsthand experience that the Nazi eugenics program was enabled by public health officials. She says, “It’s a very, very dangerous thing to do: to follow. That’s what happened in Germany essentially. All Germans were not evil, but most of them, the vast majority, simply went along. And yes, of course, it was wartime, and we’re always being told about war, and now it’s a war on a virus. That kind of thing should not eliminate basic human rights and basic respect for individuals.... It starts—and medicine especially which is so intertwined as it was then—when medicine veers away from the Hippocratic Oath, which is an oath that promises to respect the individual rights, to do no harm to the individual... If you don’t harm the individual, you’re not going to harm the community, but if you wipe out the individual’s right,



Nuremberg trial

their human right, then you’re going to harm the community as well because the community is a bunch of individuals. It’s not some other entity.” Ilana Rachel David has made a similar claim, as an Orthodox Jew, likening the vaccine rollout in Israel to the Holocaust and the Green Pass, which gives Israelis access to a ‘normal’ life, to the Yellow Star. She qualifies that by reiterating that as a Jew, the Holocaust holds a “sacred place” in history and she would not make such a comparison, except there is no other appropriate comparison. In a secret contract with Pfizer, the Israeli government has agreed to test a highly experimental gene-editing therapy on its own citizens and send results to Pfizer. According to Ilana Rachel Daniel this has happened before: during the Holocaust.^{3 4}

The Nuremberg trial was a trial of the doctors who collaborated with the Nazis, experimenting on concentration camp inmates with experimental medical procedures. The International Medical Tribunal in Nuremberg, Germany, delivered its verdict in the trial of 23 doctors and bureaucrats accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity for their roles in cruel and often lethal concentration camp medical experiments, and out of that arose the Nuremberg Code, a set of guidelines and principles to govern medical research. As the vaccines have all been rushed to market in Operation Warp Speed, proper consent or information for this experiment could not be given because safety studies are not completed. This violates, at least, three of the 10-point set of rules, if not all of them. “The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential,” is significant, as well as the third decree, “The experiment should be so designed and based on the results of animal experimentation and a knowledge of the natural history of the disease or other problem under study that the anticipated results will justify the performance of the experiment.”

There are a lot of misconceptions around the history of the Nazis and the development of its eugenics program. Another interview subject, Rabbi Chananya Weisman, makes the point that the eugenics program of the Nazis was a long time in coming, beginning with the cleaning of all surfaces in workplaces with disinfectant, and then the indoctrination of the healthcare regime. “Regarding the parallels between now and the Holocaust and what we should have learned. Look—people today don’t get good history lessons. And, unfortunately, when people learn about the Holocaust they only learn about what happened after the final solution. Right? When the people are being burned in ovens and gas in the chambers. They learn about the horrors of the Holocaust. But that’s not the education that they really need to focus on. They need to focus on what happened *before* the final solution,” Rabbi Weisman says.⁵ “When Hitler took power in the early 1930s it took him several years to consolidate his power and to condition enough of the people to make the final solution possible. That’s the time in which we’re living today. We have to nip this in the bud. We have to cut it off at the very roots. Because once they implement the final solution we’re basically powerless to stop it.”

“So that’s the education that people should have been getting, and for the most part have not been getting. And we also have to recognize that even those who did

learn their lessons from history, the bad guys also learned their lessons from the Holocaust. They learned what worked well, what didn't work so well, and during these 70 years of, you know, peace that we've basically enjoyed for the most part, they've been fine-tuning their methods and they've been planning their next battle.... The Holocaust never really ended. There was just a cease-fire, the bad guys were still out there and they are perpetuating their evils as well. And they've been doing this constantly. They haven't taken any time off."

Rabbi Weisman makes some significant point about the world that we are now living in: the most important to note is that the Global Elite began planning this immediately after WWII. "The bad guys didn't go away," he says, "they just continued to plan for their next opportunity." Many do not realise, as Weos,amm points out in his interview with Fuellmich, that the Nazis implemented the Final Solution incrementally, leading inevitably to the Nazi eugenics program, as many nationalities were deemed germ carriers. Many governments around the world (including the Canadian government) have already floated the idea of quarantine camps (some of which are operational for travellers) for the unvaccinated.^{6,7} It has been suggested that Canada is already in conversation with IBM over Vaccine Passports.⁸ IBM, as Edwin Black detailed in his book *IBM and the Holocaust: the Strategic Alliance between Nazi Germany and America's Most Powerful Corporation*,⁹ points out that the Final Solution would not have been possible without their coordination, as they developed a coding system for the Nazis for identifying and tracking Jews, Roma, homosexuals and other undesirables and disease-carriers. Rockefeller's Standard Oil supplied the fuel, and his pharmaceutical companies benefited from Nazi research on human subjects. How convenient that they would receive the contract for Vaccine Passports, as they already have experience!

In 1996, Pfizer rushed to Nigeria to apparently assist this West African country, and began administering an experimental drug Trovan, treating close to 100 children.¹⁰ Pfizer left shortly after but behind them several dead children remained. Many of the other children who were treated became permanently disabled. Pfizer had forged and falsified their research data and was clearly in violation of international law governing the wrongful experimentation, without informed consent, on a vulnerable population. They have continued this malfeasance, racking up billions in fines, considered by their shareholders the "cost of doing business." The pharmaceutical industry has a history of this going back to its founding by the Rockefellers. As Telford Taylor, US-Chief Prosecutor, 1947 Nuremberg War Trial against the managers of IG Farben, has said, "These companies, not the lunatic Nazi fanatics, are the main war criminals. If the guilt of these criminals is not brought to daylight and if they are not punished, they will pose a much greater threat to the future peace of the world than Hitler if he were still alive." It was the pharmaceutical cartel of IG Farben and Rockefeller that made the eugenics program possible. IG Farben tested gasses on Auschwitz prisoners. Various IG Farben pharmaceuticals were also tested. Most died from the experiments themselves—others were eliminated due to concerns of a proprietary nature. One of the SS doctors at Auschwitz, Dr. Helmut Vetter, a longtime Bayer employee, was involved in the testing of Bayer experimental vaccines and medicines on inmates and later executed for giving inmates fatal injections.

The German government is in the process of centralising power in order to be able to rule by decree and dictate "national emergency measure, discontinuing the German constitution as well as human rights and democracy.

This crisis is purely political with a health pretext. Why are public health officials and politicians lying to us? Why are they lying about overcrowded hospitals? Some are crowded, as they normally are, but some are significantly less busy this year. Why are they lying about the effectiveness of masks? Why are they lying about case numbers? Why are they lying about the necessity of lockdowns? Why are they lying about the severity of Covid 19? Certainly, they wish to put pressure on us all to take the vaccine. Vaccine passports? This has been an objective for a long time, as governments have been planning for them in secret. The Great Reset? There seems to be a larger intention at play here.

A global economic control system that will dominate most of the humans on the earth as well as its natural resources and which is bathed in classism and eugenics seems to be imminent, crafted by the financial and technological oligarchs, with the assistance of heavily funded academics and institutions, and with the eager cooperation of NGOs, funded by the oligarchs through foundation wealth. As the lawyer Fuellmich and others on his team insist that we are living through the biggest worldwide organised crime since WW2, and most are still asleep. Dr. Mike Yeadon, former Vice President of Pfizer, has said of this agenda: "If you wanted to depopulate a significant portion of the world, and to do it in a way that wouldn't require destruction of the environment with nuclear weapons, or poisoning everyone with anthrax or something, and you wanted plausible deniability, whilst you had a multi-year infectious disease crisis; I don't think you could come up with a better plan of work than what seems to be in front of me. I can't say that's what they're going to do, but I cannot think of a benign explanation for why they are doing it."¹¹ We do know that the

Rockefeller family and the Gates family have been involved in the eugenics movement for quite some time, with Rockefeller's involvement going back to the turn of the 20th century. Rockefeller supported the Nazi war effort, and was named by Hitler as an inspiration. We do not know where the mass vaccination campaign, to vaccinate everyone on earth, will lead but any one with an ounce of common sense can see that it is not good. According to Rabbi Chananya Weismann, the Fourth Industrial Revolution is the Fourth Reich.

¹ See World Science Alliance, and the Corona Investigation Committee

² Dr. Reiner Fuellmich - corona fraud scandal - biggest tort case ever.

<https://www.bitchute.com/video/jwldUcWf21Yn/>

³ "Vaccines For Data: Israel's Pfizer Deal Drives Quick Rollout — And Privacy Worries" *NPR*, January 31, 2021 <https://www.npr.org/2021/01/31/960819083/vaccines-for-data-israels-pfizer-deal-drives-quick-rollout-and-privacy-worries>

⁴ "According to Ilana Rachel Daniel Israel's 'Green Passport' Vaccination Program Has Created a 'Medical Apartheid,' Distraught Citizens Say" *Free Speech and Alternative Media News*, March 10, 2021 <https://vk.com/@uncensoredmedia-rss-1510611868-2114509366>

⁵ Reiner Fuellmich, interview with Rabbi Weismann, <https://www.bitchute.com/video/QA1zqxB4njLq/>

⁶ "Would Germany send Unvaccinated People to Concentration Camps?" Jorg Luyken, *Telegraph*, January 17, 2021 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/01/17/germans-keep-refusing-quarantine-could-put-detention-centres/>

⁷ "Would Germany send unvaccinated people to concentration camps?" Natalia Lebed, January 2021, 112.international/society, <https://112.international/society/would-germany-send-unvaccinated-people-to-concentration-camps-58279.html>

⁸ *Macleans*, March 18, 2021: <https://www.macleans.ca/opinion/vaccine-passports-are-inevitable-and-canada-should-prepare/>

⁹ *IBM and the Holocaust: the Strategic Alliance between Nazi Germany and America's Most Powerful Corporation*, Dialog Press, 2012

⁷ <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1417&context=jil>

¹¹ "Interview with Dr Mike Yeadon", The Delingpole Podcast; Minute 44: 25:

<https://delingpole.podbean.com/e/dr-mike-yeaddon-1617215402/>

Vandana Shiva and Seeds of Hope

What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or in the holy name of liberty or democracy?

~ Mahatma Gandhi

The Great Reset is about maintaining and empowering a corporate extraction machine and the private ownership of life.

~ Vandana Shiva

India's Vandana Shiva is an ecofeminist, author, lecturer, anti-globalist, and a scientist with a PhD in Quantum Physics. In her lectures and books she presents a framework for an alternative path, a natural world of unlimited possibility contained within simple growth, a world that is at once in perfect tune with the resonance of the natural world of the songs of the birds and the vibration of trees and the grass beneath our feet.

Her book *Oneness Versus the 1%*, was written before Covid, but it is especially applicable to the pandemic and the politics behind it. She has written an 'Afterword' specifically for the Covid 19. I first became aware of the implications of the Great Reset when Shiva released a hastily made video called "Digital Dictatorship" at the beginning of the pandemic, and brought our attention to Patent 060606 (aka Patent 666) by Bill Gates, that was approved on March 26, 2020, for a data mining process, using the human body as a conduit for a cryptocurrency system. She quotes this description of the patent:

"Human body activity associated with a task provided to a user may be used in a mining process of a cryptocurrency system. A server may provide a task to a device of a user which is communicatively coupled to a server. A sensor communicatively coupled to or comprised in the device of the user may sense body activity of the user. Body activity data may be generated based on the sensed body activity off the user. The cryptocurrency system communicatively coupled to the device of the user may verify if the body activity data satisfies one or more conditions set by the cryptocurrency system, and award cryptocurrency to the user whose body activity data is verified."¹

According to Shiva, in July 2019, months before the COVID pandemic, Gates bought 3.7M shares of Serco, a military contractor with U.S. and UK government contracts which tracks and traces pandemic infections and vaccine compliance. To facilitate our transition to his surveillance society,² we are told Gates invested \$1 billion in EarthNow, which promises to blanket the globe in 5G video surveillance satellites. EarthNow will launch 500 satellites allowing governments and large enterprises to live-stream monitor almost every "corner" of the Earth, providing instantaneous video feedback with one-second delay. Gates' company, Microsoft, has patented a sinister technology that uses implanted chips with sensors that will monitor body and brain activity. It promises to reward compliant humans with cryptocurrency payments when they per-

form assigned activities. Gates has also commissioned (in partnership with the late Jeffrey Epstein) the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to build an injectable quantum dot dye system to tattoo stored medical info beneath the skin. The tattoo is designed to be readable by an iPhone app. Gates has also said publicly in 2015 during a Ted talk (later edited out of his TedTalk but Internet Archives has preserved a record), “So eventually there will be this Digital Immunity Proof that will help facilitate the global reopening up.” This is very concerning as Gates has integrated his monopoly ownership of body activity in order to financialize it, Patenting this data-mining system indicates his intention to profit from it. “The patent is an intellectual property claim over our bodies and minds,” warns Vandana Shiva. “But that’s not the totality of Gates’ vision. In fact, it is even more sinister—to colonise the minds, bodies, and spirits of our children before they even have the opportunity to understand what freedom and sovereignty look and feel like, beginning with the most vulnerable.”³ She calls this Digital Dictatorship.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is constructed on our separation from one another, the destruction of our communities, and disjunction of parents from children, neighbour from neighbour, friend from friend, and lovers from lovers. Vandana Shiva warns in *Oneness Versus the 1%*: “New forms of totalitarian control are being created through new methods of extracting superprofits from society, new convergences of technologies and new concentrations of power. The guiding principle of corporate globalisation is centralised, industrialised, and mechanised modes of production. Gandhi turned this principle on its head and envisioned a decentralised, home-grown, hand-crafted mode of production. In his words, ‘Not mass production, but production by the masses.’”⁴

Eric Schmidt CEO of Google says, “Data is the new oil!” Social media provides methods of extracting data and with new methods of extracting data from human beings, new financial markets are created, where the private data of human beings can be sold and traded for political management, for advertising, for commercial purposes. People’s knowledge, their friendships all become commodities that can be repackaged and sold. Vandana Shiva reserves her harshest criticism for Bill Gates, because of the linkages of his various holdings: from Monsanto, which sells toxic poison and GMOs, to agribusiness, which is destroying biodiversity through emphasis on monoculture, manufactured food, chemicals under the guise of health expediency, the geo-engineered seeding of the atmosphere with toxic nanoparticles such as aluminum in an effort to solve climate change by blotting out the sun and the vaccine trade to cure the autoimmune diseases created by the toxic chemicals. If reality was a spiderweb, Bill Gates would be the spider at the centre of that reality web.

Data-mining brings all other corporate activity of the Gates Foundation together, as health passports are meant to hold more than just health data. Eventually all that other information will be layered in, catalyzing commodities futures, Human Capital Markets and Social Impact Investing, trading in life outcomes. Human beings will be put on the Blockchain and tracked from birth to death. The world’s largest asset holders and hedge fund managers, are anxious and impatient to run their capital through our bodies. The stakeholder capitalists at Davos desperately require the adoption of vaccine mandates. They need real time data, and they need for it to be interoperable. The health passports make it possible to provide real time data in order to run the financialized global totalitarian world planned for us, and the Davos crowd would be very upset with any politician who might stand in their way.

Vandana Shiva saves seed as an act of defiance against the control of agribusiness, in the same way that Gandhi preserved the salt for his people. Under the colonialist hegemony of British rule, the processing of salt was the domain of the British, who denied the natives access to their own resources. India, like Africa, is rich in resources (the investor class requires rare minerals for the 5G grid) yet their own citizens do not benefit from their own resources. As Shiva has pointed out, the introduction of GMO seeds on farmers created insurmountable debt and a rash of suicide among the small landholders. Debt is created in the same way the IMF creates financial resources: out of thin air. Though an artificial construct, this debt creates enslavement for impoverished countries. Prior to the introduction of GMO crops, small farmers would save their seeds from year to year, in preparation for next year’s harvest. Then the Gates Foundation used property rights to claim ownership over the seeds of the earth that had been traditionally free for thousands of years. Suddenly, because the seeds are terminal—the sterile GMO terminator seeds—farmers must pay for new seed from year to year, and incur debt in order to do so, while the Gates Foundation claims the patent



Vandana Shiva

over the fruits of the earth.⁵ Shiva has said, “Bill Gates is a rent collector,” as he “takes what the earth give us for free, imposes ownership over the earth and then collects rent.” In the same way, the British East India Company in 1600 claimed ownership over India and suddenly Indian citizens who had lived on the land for thousands of generations, had to pay rent to the world’s first corporation.

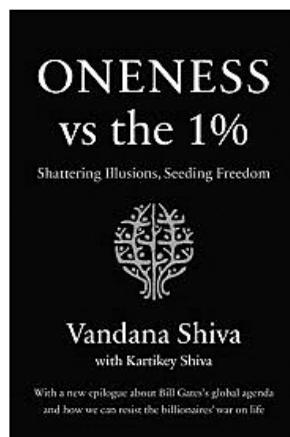
As Shiva says, “We’re beginning the decade of transition, the decade of possibilities. The decade of moving out of the fossil-fuel/poison dominated age, the age of hate and division and mechanistic reductionist thought, the age of separation, to an age of diversity and unity—an age where we are awakened to the fact that we are inter-beings and we co-create with the Earth. Our health is in the soil, our health is in the food, our health is in the diversity. It’s in this world of diversity, it’s in the world of inter-beings, it’s in the world of cooperation, that we create sustainability of living at peace with the Earth, and we create peace of communities of diversity living in peaceful societies.”⁶

What drives the management-obsessed mechanistic model of life is the need to control and record and register every living thing on the Blockchain. The global elite and the Technocrats intend to control access to life itself and for us to rent life from them: a debt-based system of currency, using debt to control behaviour. What drives the “New Normal” is an anti-life, anti human paradigm. In order to exercise control the Elites require monoculture in agriculture and a singular, trackable life lived only through the virtual world where every aspect of life can be recorded, financialized and then rented from the billionaires. This is the new, resource-based currency proposed by the financial sector and the technocrats. But for life to have any value it requires nuance, heterogeneity, contrast—in the same way a monocultural soil is a dead soil. A geo-engineered world will kill life as we know it and replace it with an artificial construct. “For soil to flourish and give us healthy and rich food, we need a diversity of elements in the soil, a mixture of dead and living that is the food of life. They are consumed by the idea that life is not of value, that it can be improved through mechanistic methods, and that an artificial life can replace real life.”⁷

Vandana Shiva offers the world an alternative, based on the richness and diversity of life. As the Davos crowd embraces an anti-life message, she answers this with a call to our basic humanity, based on community, building a connection with each other and with the earth as an answer to eradicating all future pandemics, and to alleviate the suffering of the earth. During the pandemic governments under the instructions of the WHO and the World Economic Forum have disrupted human relationships, disrupted our relation to the world and placed us in isolated bubbles, away from each other, masked and alone. The world, and humanity, are under attack from mechanistic forces that seek to destroy life itself. If we want a human civilization we are going to have to invent it through community and love for each other and the world.

According to Shiva, the Gates Foundation in the past has caused a great deal of damage in Africa and in India, using highly experimental vaccines on the local population, which have caused sterility, paralysis and death.⁸ A new order of governance by Davos, and their stakeholders, a world of total control through biosurveillance, enabled by the end of currency—a complete control system through cryptocurrency in partnership with Mastercard and GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, another arm of the Gates Foundation.

With Bill Gates’ billions of dollars he has come to control governments, media and health organizations around the world. He has stated he wants to inject over 7 billion people with a vaccine for Covid 19, that risks changing human DNA forever, and securing billions in profit. He has said publicly that he wants to reduce mankind by 15% using vaccines. In the past he has destroyed the lives of many using his vaccines (infertility in Kenya and India,⁹ the Gardasil vaccine causing death,¹⁰ the paralysis of 496,000 from vaccine-derived polio^{11 12 13}) and 600,000 people have signed a petition to prosecute him for crimes against humanity. This is considered a conspiracy theory but the facts are out there and his crimes have been documented. He is using the



Oneness vs. the 1%
Vandana Shiva
Chelsea Green
Publishing
2020, 208 pages

media to weaponize our ignorance against ourselves. There is barely a mainstream media outlet that is not financially supported by the Gates Foundation.

“The resurgence of real wealth must be based on the recovery of the commons, and on the creation of new commons that are beyond the reach of global corporations and the centralising, privatising corporate states. Twenty years of corporate globalisation, based on the WTO rules written by the ToxicCartel and the Agribusiness Cartel, combined with five decades of a Toxic Cartel-driven non-Green Revolution, have pushed Indian farmers to the brink. Instead of revisiting the unfair rules of globalisation and trade liberalisation, the corporations that created the distress are trying to turn the crisis into an opportunity to expand their profits and control. They want long distance trade and contract farming to lock every farmer into slavery, instead of the natural process of regeneration, creating new seeds they must pay a yearly rent on their seeds. They seek to intensify industrial farming and its monocultures. They are proposing ‘one agriculture, one market’, a slogan embodying monocultures and monopolies that governments are picking up as the new ‘development.’”¹⁴

The Gates Patent 060606 is perhaps the most egregious example of a colonialist invasion of the Commons, as Shiva writes, “The patent is an intellectual property claim over our bodies and minds.” She goes on to say, “But that’s not the totality of Gates’ vision. In fact, it is even more sinister—to colonise the minds, bodies, and spirits of our children before they even have the opportunity to understand what freedom and sovereignty look and feel like, beginning with the most vulnerable.”¹⁵

Covid 19 has enabled the billionaires to establish a digital panopticon to encase and enslave all of humanity, where our data is always accessible and can be mined and financialized for profit. It is a prison whose bars are our fear of disease and suspicion of others. “The Great Reset is about multinational corporate stakeholders at the World Economic Forum controlling as many elements of planetary life as they possibly can. From the digital data humans produce to each morsel of food we eat.”¹⁶ In order to advance a global transformation, using the threat of death and disease to consolidate control and increase their wealth, the Elite at Davos has created an artificial crisis from “the least deadly pandemics the world has experienced over the last 2000 years.”¹⁷ Their endgame is to feast on life itself, cannibal economics from the darker forces of the patriarchy and capitalism. The disease of the climate crisis is offered as the cure: more control, more management of wealth by the very few, and the management of the population.

Covid 19 has been an exploitive tool that has enabled the 1% to coerce us, out of fear and concern for others, to surrender and participate in our own demise. Evading responsibility the billionaire who have caused the climate crisis and brought us to the brink are now in charge of solutions, solutions which benefit them, to the exclusion of the rest of humanity. The Great Reset is advantageous to the billionaires and their profits. They create the devastation and then swoop in and refinance everything, manufacturing debt which they can profit from. Vandana Shiva says: “Killing is not a prescription for saving lives.”¹⁸

¹ <https://patentscope.wipo.int/search/en/detail.jsf?docId=WO2020060606>

² “Bill Gates Calls For National Tracking System For Coronavirus During Reddit AMA” Matt Perez, March 18, 2020 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/mattperez/2020/03/18/bill-gates-calls-for-national-tracking-system-for-coronavirus-during-reddit-ama/?sh=53da6486a72f>

³ *Oneness Versus the 1%*, Vandana Shiva: Page 179

⁴ *Oneness Versus the 1%*, Vandana Shiva: Page 162

⁵ *Bill Gates and Neo-Feudalism: A Closer Look*, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.: <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/bill-gates-neo-feudalism-farmer-bill/>

⁶ *Navdanya - People's Assembly Press Conference*: <https://m.facebook.com/vandanashiva.navdanya/videos/1016060088506434/>

⁷ *Food for Health*, Vandana Shiva: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-X_LoUixBGo

⁸ “Flawed immunisation policies in India led to polio paralysis” G Mudur, *British Medical Journal*, 1998 Apr 25 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/9599049/>

⁹ *Why is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Under Fire in India?*, *India Times*, Aug 31, 2014: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/controversial-vaccine-studies-why-is-bill-melinda-gates-foundation-under-fire-from-critics-in-india/articleshows/41280050.cms>

¹⁰ “*Indian Parliament Comes Down Hard on Cervical Cancer Trial*”, Pallava Bagla, *Science Mag News*, Sep. 9, 2013: <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2013/09/indian-parliament-comes-down-hard-cervical-cancer-trial>.

¹¹ “Correlation between Non-Polio Acute Flaccid Paralysis Rates with Pulse Polio Frequency in India”, Rachana Dhiman 1, Sandeep C. Prakash 1, V. Sreenivas 2 and Jacob Puliyl, *International Journal of Environment and Public Health*: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6121585/pdf/ijerph-15-01755.pdf>

¹² “Oral polio vaccine causing paralysis in kids: Study,” *The New India Express*, October 23 2019. <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2019/oct/23/oral-polio-vaccine-causing-paralysis-in-kids-study-2051670.html>

¹³ “The moral dilemma of the polio eradication programme”, T Jacob John 1, Dhanya Dharmapalan 2, *National Library of Medicine*: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31791935/>

¹⁴ *Oneness Versus the 1%*, Vandana Shiva: Page 160

¹⁵ *Oneness Versus the 1%*, Vandana Shiva: Page 160

¹⁶ “World Economic Forum’s ‘Great Reset’ Plan for Big Food Benefits Industry, Not People,” Jeffrey Lofredo: *The Defender*: <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/world-economic-forums-great-reset->

plan-for-big-food-benefits-industry-not-people/?fbclid=IwARouSQHFkHcNdRmWG4WT8ovccQrfUyPq31bewt5I8KyHoProofhCNTzpTQQ

¹⁷ *Covid 19: The Great Reset*, Klaus Schwab and Thierry Malleret, Forum Publishing, July 13 2020

¹⁸ “Bill Gates’ Global Agenda and How We Can Resist His War on Life”, *Independent Science news*, September 21, 21, 2020: <https://www.independentsciencenews.org/biotechnology/bill-gates-global-agenda-and-how-we-can-resist-his-war-on-life/>

A Prison of Fear: Human Microbes

The program of the ruling elite in Orwell's 1984 was: “A foot stamping on a human face forever!” This is naive and optimistic. No species could survive for even a generation under such program. This is not a program of eternal, or even long-range dominance. It is clearly an extermination program.

~ William S. Burroughs, *The Western Lands*

As humanity enters a new evolutionary phase where artificial and augmented reality replaces the lives we have, where 3D printed food becomes our food source, and nutritious food becomes rare, where Zoom replaces any human connection, where humans become sources of data traded on the markets, the human spirit, the spiritual fire that rises up from the depths of our being, will become even rarer, like the rare minerals, mined through slavery in Africa, that drive the surveillance grid. The New Normal means the digitization of all aspects of life: “digital agriculture, farming without farmers, trucks without drivers, food without food and then, ultimately, life without life” (Vandana Shiva). The Billionaires have created a, “coersive economy which depends on them and their rent collection,” says Dr. Shiva. The billionaire wealth has grown by over a trillion dollars during the pandemic, and this signals a move towards a more extreme capitalism. “Stakeholder Capitalism” indicates a pivot towards a feudal/fascist model on which human liberty—our value and right to life will be determined by our ability to consume, where all the world’s assets, organic and inorganic will be inventoried and held by the global elite. The Gates business model is the assertion of property rights over life itself. Human beings will be of value only according to the amount of data they shed, like a virus, which can be packaged up into Human Capital Markets or Social Impact Markets that will trade in human misery while biometric sensors track our every move. The World Economic Forum hopes to save capitalism, by extracting super profits, turning society into a feudal-renter society, with a small ownership class. New convergences of technologies and new concentrations of power will allow the Silicon-based global elite to invade and control our bodies, minds and souls.

It sounds bleak, certainly, but I cannot feel the bleakness when I see Vandana Shiva’s radiant smile, which offers some hope in the resilience of the human spirit. It has all happened very quickly and we have been caught off guard with the surprise attack of an engineered pandemic. The farmer’s strike in India, against Modi’s Neoliberal pro-corporate deregulation laws, is one simple example of the pushback that can occur.

Humanity is at a crossroads, We could devolve into the kind of Techno-feudal, semi-fascist society the WEF has planned for us or the human spirit will rise and throw off our feudal chains. But at the heart of the reengineering of life is the meaning of life. We do not really know what life is and it is still a mystery in us waiting to be discovered. When everything in the world is a commodity, a thing which can be bought and then consumed, life is another consumable. It suddenly appears and then is gone, like a flower that blooms once and then wilts. DNA is the code of life and to have ownership over DNA is a great temptation to own and control all humanity. But life is regenerative, a mixture of information and energy, but something else, some mystery that binds it, the seeds of hope scattered through the universe, an organic consciousness that artificial intelligence cannot duplicate. It is the binding power of hope and love that we give to each other that social distancing cannot sever.

A final word from Vandana Shiva, on why Gates and the WEF wish to move education online, so that all information about the children will be tracked and commodified with zoom and education on video. “That is why the indicators he promotes are attendance, college enrollment, and scores on a math and reading test, because these can be easily quantified and mined. In reimagining education, children will be monitored through surveillance systems to check if they are attentive while they are forced to take classes remotely, alone at home. The dystopia is one where children never return to schools, do not have a chance to play, do not have friends. It is a world without society, without relationships, without love and friendship.” A world without love is an abuse of all future generations of children. Vandana Shiva shows us the path to love is in the bonds we share with each other and the earth.

BioCapitalism

“The real solution must involve a structural change. The feudal hierarchy which structurally imposes extortion schemes of money and violence on people by domesticating their humanity, to be harvested over and over within

the capitalist framework, is inhumane and destructive to our species. Such an idea must not be brushed aside as untenable idealism if we are to live harmoniously with one another and with our environment.”

~ Hiroyuki Hamada, Global Research

“We have gone beyond the Internet of Things into the Internet of Bodies,” says Xian Liu, Fellow at the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, World Economic Forum. ¹ Covid 19 is the catalyst that brings us into the Internet of Bodies, where our biometric data is monitored and mined for value. In order to have wide public acceptance of such a strange “evolutionary” direction for the human race it was necessary for some driving overriding fear to make the public compliant and to accept the convergence of the digital and the biological: when the biological, physical and digital world’s merge, some (but not all) will become more than human,² as a natural course for evolution. Two classes of society will emerge, the transhuman overlords and the worker drones (a third class will emerge, according to Yuval Harari. “the useless class” without value).³ ⁴ Masks and social distancing are used in order for the population to accept the robotization of humanity, the merger of human and machines, with the global elite harvesting our data like livestock. (It is incomprehensible how many have accepted the elderly dying of isolation and loneliness and stress, denied family visits, the affection of their grandchildren, their family gathered around them as they make their final journey. This is a disruption of natural human processes, and I cannot help but be reminded of the Nazi slogan, “Für Ihre Sicherheit” (“It is for your safety.”)

One thing is clear from Klaus Swab’s book, *Covid 19: The Great Reset*, this has nothing to do with the coronavirus. The tech world and the financial sector are collaborating with governments and transnational organizations to advance an anti-democratic agenda of increasing centralized power. The financial system had reached its end and the movement of capital in a classical debt-based system had reached a deadend, as liabilities have mounted, and there is no way to go but down, having been supported, until now, by quantitative easing, that maintained the system in some sort of unsteady balance.⁵ Biosecurity is becoming intrinsically linked to the financial system and offers a new way of asserting control over the monetary system, through biological data (hence Mastercard, leaders of the cryptocurrency revolution, announcing their partnership with GAVI, the Gates funded Vaccine Alliance). At the beginning of Covid 19, all the countries came together simultaneously, with a plan to change the monetary paradigm, to control resources through a central bank digital currency. The leaders of the Central Banks are colluding on a secret plan to transform the global economic system over the next few years. The Coronavirus epidemic has provided the perfect opportunity for accomplishing something that was impossible otherwise and the lockdown buys time to effect the monumental adjustments necessary to bring this new economy into fruition. The population, using a combination of blockchain technology and biosecurity, will be branded like cattle to control the herd.

This is a blueprint for redesigning our culture and what it means to be human in a grand technocratic state, a one world government propelled by a global surveillance grid, that will keep us all in an open air prison, a data-farm, where information and data can be extracted, and where a smaller population of useful and controlled people as drones serving the needs and the greed of the global elite. Klaus Schwab’s blueprint was all ready conceived long before this global pandemic. If we do not push back against this vision of life on this planet, rapidly advancing, in five years we may wish we were dead, we may wish our children and grandchildren not to be born. We will have to decide whether we wish to surrender to an anti-humanist, sinister plan redesigning not just society but evolution, or whether we wish to assert the human spirit and take back our humanity. This may be the most important decision we make since the first living cell split in half to become two. A broad social experiment, a new totalitarian governance—biosecurity—has been introduced into the human experience for which we are told not to question it, not to think critically because of an invisible microbe.

The implementation of the Great Reset proposes a new governing system that conforms to the UN’s 17 sustainable development goals. Fourteen of the goals refer to finance. They are clearly meant to *sustain* capitalism. It works in conjunction with the advent of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), in a way that allows for management and financialization of all people and things. New markets are created for the stock market, such as Human Capital Markets, the value of human beings on the global market, and Social Impact Investing, the financialization of poverty. Digital tools are being introduced incrementally, which include blockchain, AI, camera surveillance, body sensors, edge sensors called Internet of things, and wearables and injectables called Internet of Bodies, are supposed to help computers keep track of all resources and information. In reality, what is being installed is a new economy where humans will be bio-metrically measured as human capital for the future digital workforce, starting with re-skilling and retraining of our children. AI will analyze our behaviour and nudge us into paths that it finds most suited, and behaviour will be modified and controlled through the Blockchain Matrix. Humans will move into virtual worlds, from

home, to earn a living, while robots and automated machines will replace most of our jobs. In a cashless society, where your value is measured in social behaviour, through badges and certificates, our digital portfolio and reputation will be closely monitored. As Klaus Schwab wrote in, *Shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution*, “the integration of materials with blockchain technologies could aid in the implementation of a global database for trusted materials sourcing and recycling provenance records.” ⁶

An individual will not expect to live a fulfilling, independent life, but one whose value is measured by their thoughts and actions, closely watched—a life dependent on Blockchain, a system of rewards and punishment. This will determine your place and position in society. This is a “short simple” explanation of the Great Reset. It is occurring right now as we sit at home in our cocoon watching Netflix and they are not hiding their plans for us fully described by the “stakeholders” of the World Economic Forum in public writings and their websites. This is an open conspiracy, as everything is written out, whether in Schwab’s books or on the extensive links on the World Economic Forum’s website. The future is being planned and designed for us, without our participation, and soon we will have to decide which future we want for future generations. We have surrendered all autonomy to the very entities that have caused the climate catastrophe we are living in. The propaganda has been very effective, as Vandana Shiva says, “Deflecting responsibility for the mass extinction ecocide and genocide away from the Poison Cartel to individual responsibility, from recycling to social distancing.” During the Covid 19 period this Agenda has not been discussed by politicians or the media and it is operating in the open, with great *hubris*, under cover of a pandemic. This is a final battle for our humanity, and although we have not won and seem to be losing, because of the extensive levers of mind control, we should not give up hope. The human spirit may be beaten down but it will survive. In the midst of chaos, in our time, reality has become provisional and the pandemic has awakened a collective desire for order, even to the point of the dissolution of all social bonds. Covid 19 has been an exploitive tool that has enabled the 1% to coerce us out of fear and concern to participate in and surrender to our own demise.

¹ “The Internet of Bodies is here. This is how it will work”, Xian Liu, WEF, June 2020: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/internet-of-bodies-covid19-recovery-governance-health-data/>

² *More Than Human*, Theodore Sturgeon, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1953

³ *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, Yuval Harari, Harper; (2015)

⁴ AI will create ‘useless class’ of human, predicts bestselling historian, Ian Sample, *The Guardian*, Fri 20 May 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/may/20/silicon-assassins-condemn-humans-life-useless-artificial-intelligence>

⁵ A massive “quantitative easing” dump on Wall Street was announced by the Federal Reserve on March 11th, 2020, at the same time as the first “lockdowns” were proposed.

⁶ Klaus Schwab and Nicholas Davis, *Shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution*, WEF, 2018,

Conclusion: A Terrible Transformation

I don't think you'll ever have a perfect world because we humans are prone to error, and so we're always in search of an upgrade.

~ Henry Rollins

From many sides the hypothesis is now being formulated that in reality we are experiencing the end of a world, that of bourgeois democracies, founded on rights, parliaments and the division of powers, which is giving way to a new despotism; which, in regard to pervasiveness of control and the cessation of all political activity, will be worse than the totalitarianisms that we have known so far. American political scientists call it the Security State, which is a state in which “for security reasons” (in this case of “public health”), any limit can be imposed to individual freedoms. And the control that is exercised through video cameras and now, as has been proposed, through mobile phones, far exceeds any form of control exercised under totalitarian regimes such as fascism or Nazism.

~ Giorgio Agamben, *New Reflections* (April 2020)

Under the all-embracing shade of Covid 19, a rapid and terrifying transformation is taking place, of our culture, of our civilization, of our humanity. After this transformation will human beings even exist? It is unknown. But it is important to note that it is taking place without any discussion, without democratic oversight of any kind, the people who are most affected by it have not been consulted, yet their lives will be enchained by it. The media keep churning out the rising case numbers, the rising fear, the rising threat of this invisible microbe, and yet there is no mention of this move to imprison the world in a trans-humanist digital bubble. The propaganda has been so extreme around Covid that most do not even know of this open agenda although the planning documents have been available for years. Covid 19 has the same lethality as a strong flu, whose fatality rate is about 99.97 (even less for those under sixty) and the majority of deaths have occurred in poorly managed, privatized care homes. It is,

however, the perfect opportunity to roll out a new technology and a new vaccine.

Although they have been experimenting with RNA vaccines for years, the FDA has never approved them for humans prior to this, and they are being introduced at this time on an emergency basis. SARS Cov 1 (from 2003) and this present SARS COV-2 are 79% similar to each other, and although the experimental trials are not complete for Covid 19, the 2003 iteration of the Sars COV virus did have some experiments with animals. All the tested animals died after receiving this experimental vaccine. This time they are testing directly on humans, forgoing animal tests altogether. Pfizer and Moderna have both been given the green light to ship their products around the world, at “warp speed.” According to the FDA and Pfizer, the vaccine is only in Phase 3 of its trial which will not be completed until 2023. This means that every one who takes this vaccine now is an experimental test subject, a position for which they have not volunteered, believing the vaccine to be perfectly safe. Moderna calls their vaccine “the software of life” and that is what it is, an injectable software that messages DNA, to mix with our body’s cellular structure. Dr. David Martin has said, “This is about getting you sick and having your own cells be the thing that get you sick... This is not a vaccine... This is mRNA packaged in a fat envelope that is delivered to a cell. It is a medical device designed to stimulate the human cell into becoming a pathogen creator. It is not a vaccine. The Covid ‘vaccine’ will cause your cells to make pathogens. This is a bioweapon, not a vaccine.”¹

Covid 19 has been the perfect opportunity to erase democracy, plateau our society and to deny citizens the right to gather, to socialize, to earn a living, to be at one with nature and each other, to reaffirm our commitment to community. The longer the imposed restrictions of masking, lockdown and social distancing, the longer the global elite have to transform our society. The banks are already introducing their centralized cryptocurrency, almost ready, but not quite yet. The lockdowns extend the period before they can eliminate all cash transaction and move towards the control grid of digital dollars. The transformation is occurring incrementally, but each step will be sudden and mystifying as they introduce a new way of being, new ways of consciousness: the internet of things becoming soon (after the vaccine) the internet of bodies, 5G, a web of digital interconnection so that even our heart will send out a digital signal and all life on earth can be monitored through cryptocurrency and smart cities. Digital financial transactions, contracted through either a digital chip or more pertinently through DNA, will become the only option of controlling the reservoir of small payments. Control of all bodies will be enabled through the governess of fear of others as disease vectors. Data-mining through DNA transcription will be a new financial market, through vital signal implanted in DNA strands with the introduction of new vaccines, enabling the monitoring of every single individual on earth.

The intersecting grid of pulsing energy will be the bars of our prison. The primary focus of the political and media campaign has been to target young people and to indoctrinate children, separate them from their family, inculcate them while young to a virtual education lived on line, without social interaction, where all information can be tracked and harvested. The youth will not have any memory of what democracy was.

Covid 19 is a social engineering experiment where the interests of the four pillars align—agricultural, financial, government and the pharmaceutical industry. Between them they control every meaningful aspect of life: control of food, control of money, control of behaviour and control of health. To understand this control grid, which will be operated by 5G technology, it is important to understand that we are being offered an alternative to life, not life itself. As control, through the lockdown measures, sweeps into fewer and fewer hands “the meaning of life” or living a purposeful life will be collateral damage. In the end, life will have no meaning, unless you are among the global elite.

Currently, the world’s financial system is in abeyance, continuing with fiat currency, to give them time to prepare the financial markets for the switch to cryptocurrency. Cryptocurrency is not currency, least of all cash. It is instead a resource-based economic system, never before tried in human history. All the world’s resources will be held by the global elite and the rest of us will pay rent, in order to live, perhaps in order to breathe. Since it is about control, a behaviour modification component is built in through Blockchain technology and controlled by the Central Bank. After the chaos subsides, and all Western nations are in a debtor condition, a One World Government will be proposed and the world will be divided into seven regions. Democracy will no longer exist and the world government will be controlled by a global elite of technocrats. Localized governments, such as Canada, will be used only for enforcement and behaviour control. Control of health will come in the form of vaccines and the health passport, which will contain more than just your biometric data. Health, and the fear of dying, is the perfect segue into the control grid which gathers data like wheat from a field.

Poets, writers, readers, thinkers, I exhort you now, you must consider this: What will poetry be like at the end of the biological phase? When biology ceases what will the new human write about? What kind of poetry? What kind of music? Certainly we have all seen intimations of it online and through digital platforms, but what will cul-



Vandala Shiva

ture look like when the final transformation has occurred, the final merger of our biological selves with technological logical singular self, as one self will become part of the larger amorphous self, chained together, encircling the globe, the Internet of Bodies, a world wide web, absorbed into one global self, becoming one planetary system expressing the self that is one? Will the universe end when all is digitized? Who will write our poetry in that coming age of one self encased in a singular planetary system, excreting data and energy, like urine or Co2, as its only purpose in life, while financial systems run by AI, without human interaction, reap our excretions of data, on a digital treadmill of behaviour modification followed by rewards? Hedge fund managers do not call it “Making a killing!” for nothing. If we are to become “more than human” should we not look towards the transcendent dimensions of human kind rather than the mechanistic and simplistic approach that is suggested by Silicon Valley? Civilization is a vast web of interconnection that encompasses past, present and future through mutuality, compassion, communion and association, the interrelatedness that defines humanity through the calibration of body, mind and spirit that makes up this thing called a human being.

To the technocrats that are now making a play for ownership of the world and life itself we are just a collection of inert blocks that can be manipulated and traded on the stock market. The WEF website says that by 2030, “you will own nothing, you will have nothing and you will be very happy,” suggesting that this new world will be ordered similarly to the software industry, renting software rather than purchasing it. To a billionaire that sounds like utopia but for the rest of us it may be a bit of a dystopia.

Covid 19 has been an exploitive tool that has enabled the 1% to coerce us, out of fear and concern for ourselves and for others, to surrender to and participate in our own demise. Schwab re-envisioned our world as a utopian world of perfection chosen by governing bodies. He has identified a primary deficit in our world, “If no one power can enforce order, our world will suffer from a ‘global order deficit’.” Coronavirus is the pretext to push through an agenda for managing nature and the population. The end goal is global totalitarianism where all aspects of living, organic and inorganic, will be surveilled and inventoried. In this new World Order the distinction between organic and inorganic will blur, as biology blends with machine. “A smaller number of perfect people living in a perfect world.”² At the beginning of the pandemic, February 11, 2020, the government of Canada posted in “Policy Horizons” a policy document called “Exploring Biodigital Convergence.”³ Is the future of our bodies to merge with our computers? Through this Manichean struggle we may discover what it means to be human, a struggle that art and poetry and music has always delineated but never solved. We are all at war and at peace with our bodies, but it is through human touch and human contact that we find our spiritual selves.

The Great Reset is a plan but like many plans it may not come to fruition. In the assertion of our humanity against the Great Reset, we may find our humanity, learn to hug each other, to be more intimate and aware of others, to find love and community and sharing. This is a moment in time when, in Auden’s words, penned on the eve of another disruptive world event, “We must love one another or die.”⁴ Yet he ends with the lines “Negation and despair,/ Show an affirming flame”. We must rejoice in our humanity, rise up and dance and sing and create art. To counter the forces that will take us down this dark path, we must cherish each other and love the love we have to give.

¹ Covert Geopolitics: <https://geopolitics.co/2021/01/20/the-mrna-covid-vaccine-is-not-a-vaccine/>

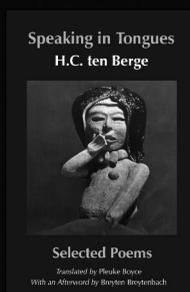
² *The Linacre Quarterly*, National Library of Medicine, “Transhumanist Medicine: Can We Direct Its Power to the Service of Human Dignity?”: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6537347/>

³ Government of Canada: Policy Horizons | Horizons de politiques Exploring Biodigital Horizons <https://horizons.gc.ca/en/2020/02/11/exploring-biodigital-convergence/>

⁴ “September 1, 1939”, *Another Time* by W. H. Auden, Random House

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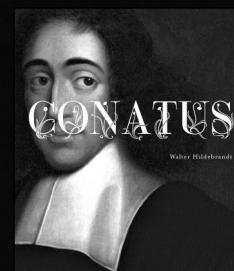
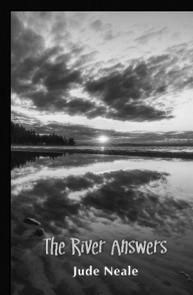
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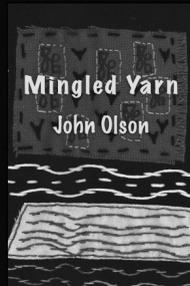
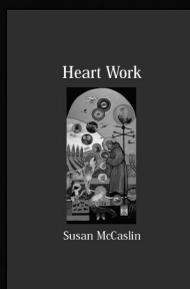
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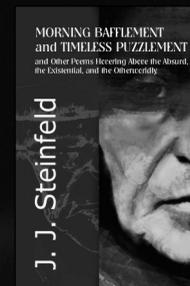
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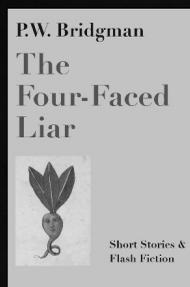
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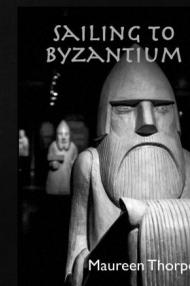
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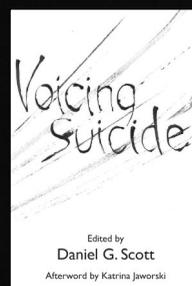
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