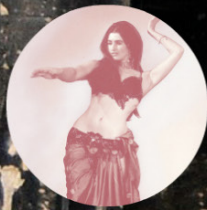


**YOU ARE HERE**  
THE JOURNAL OF CREATIVE GEOGRAPHY  
**2017**

# WAR





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**2017**

# WAR

Volume XIX

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School of Geography & Development  
University of Arizona

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# FROM THE EDITOR

It was early last April when I scribbled some thoughts for the theme of this issue. April 6, to be exact.

That day, the Pentagon announced that “59 Tomahawk cruise missiles had been fired at Al Shayrat airfield in Syria. The missiles were aimed at Syrian fighter jets, hardened aircraft shelters, radar equipment, ammunition bunkers, sites for storing fuel and air defense systems.”<sup>1</sup> Missiles fighting missiles. The headlines were disgusting, unsettling, but the more I ruminated on the destruction of Syria, the more I realized, everywhere is war.

Then on the eve of my 28th birthday, the US military dropped The Mother of All Bombs on Afghanistan. I guess the death count was low enough (and the explosion not fantastic enough), for within a few hours the story disappeared into obscurity. Perhaps I can pause to pose—how is Mother Earth recuperating from a Mother Bomb? Do you know any mother who desires to create so much pain and destruction?

What I know of the maps of Afghanistan and Iraq are based upon war. Nightly news showing a square or circle around Kabul, Erbil, Mosul. The Taliban and al-Qaeda as existential blips on the green screen. We only think about them when we're told, when they tell us that Osama's dead. We seldom heard of the drone strikes throughout the Obama years—unrelenting barrages on Yemen, Pakistan and Somalia. Have these sites made the history books yet? It's hard to remember where we've been when we're all suffering from nausea and whiplash from the current administration's motives and moves. August 21, 2017: “That's why we will also expand authority for American armed forces to

target the terrorist and criminal networks that sow violence and chaos throughout Afghanistan,” he said.<sup>2</sup> Suffering, displacement, anti-diplomacy against innumerable bodies for unchecked amounts of money and time- is what I translated.

As I write these lines, war.<sup>3</sup> War is waged daily on the streets in Chicago and Baltimore. Weekend-long ceasefires fail because another boy's outline is left on the street. War is waged on queer bodies- *another trans person murdered today*. War is waged on female reproduction. A government working overtime to strip us of what strands of control and choice remain. War is waged on children in public schools- *another budget slash*. *We will punish you because you can't afford your lunch*. War is waged on the water systems in Flint and St. Joseph- *do away with the EPA*. War on our watersheds, war on our National Parks.

What plagues my mind when waking up to news briefs each morning; on perennial destruction- in Sanaa, Mindanao, Caracas, Homs, Calais, Ceuta, Rakhine State, Gaza, Juba....checking for updates here more than I do with my loved ones. Maybe everyone is a loved one.

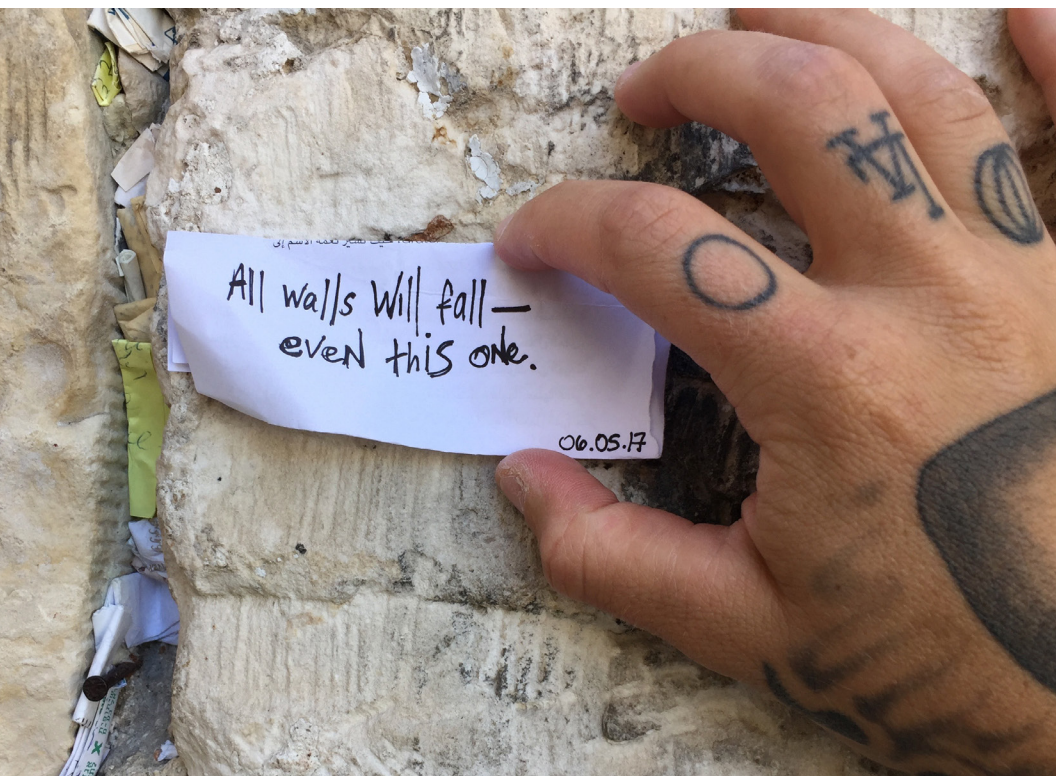
I'm increasingly concerned with the overwhelming apathy I sense amongst my demographic, my peers, who throw their arms up when politics come to the table. *It's all so complicated. Nothing we can do*. Or we pick a cause like throwing darts. Everywhere is war, everything is political. So I wanted this issue of You Are Here to take our temperature, find where we fall into place with the world. Summers are searing in Tucson, no surprise. The Earth is hotter than ever before, again- no shock at this point. But what I really sought to learn was, *how are we situating ourselves amidst all this conflict? How do we find our peace, our place, in a world so damaged and damaging?* The truth is, I feel so damn helpless. Those displaced, those hungry, those in constant danger of endless war. What can we do in the here and now? Can we afford a breath to process? The authors/



artists who heard this call have imperative interpretations.

In these pages, perhaps you'll read despair. We are tired and tuned out to watching the world hurt. Or, perhaps, you'll read this as I do- as an inroad for seeking refuge, solidarity and traction- words, photographs and visual artworks attempting to reconcile guilt, hope, scars, privilege, power...strides to end these wars. It is the tiniest opportunity to humble ourselves, revere the perseverance of others, and tap into a universal humanism that says strongly: NO MORE WAR. Let us never stop working for justice, even in our most fatigued, frazzled moments. Let us always find more space in our hearts and minds, and remain open to the immense potential of peace in place.

**Taylor Kathryn Miller**  
Editor 2017-2018



# ANNA LEAH EISNER

## A MEDITATION ON POWER

A well into which one occasionally peers,  
seeking one's own reflection back, dusty  
and difficult to decipher.

*It is thee to whom heads of wheat bend*  
when strong wind passes over the field.

Who is there to argue? You? Your watery double?  
The mimetic moment moves hard and convincing.

Ruler of a body, owner of a voice, plateaus of  
consciousness – where is your exterior subject?  
(History has shown the desire for an exterior subject.)

*Dissolver of fields, dissolve me* – one hears,  
after sticking one's head into a well, yelling,  
and receiving one's own voice multiplied back in  
unfamiliar ways; the exterior subject appears  
muffled and divine in the echoes.

Thus flagellate your respects, "I dissolve thee."  
And collapse into self congratulation.

# LILY A. HOUSE-PETERS

## THE WAR MACHINE: ENACTING SOLIDARITIES ACROSS SPACE-TIME

*"The sand desert has not only oases, which are like fixed points, but also rhizomatic vegetation that is temporary and shifts location according to local rains, bringing changes in the direction of the crossings. The same terms are used to describe ice deserts as sand deserts: there is no line separating earth and sky; there is no intermediate distance, no perspective or contour; visibility is limited; and yet there is an extraordinarily fine topology that relies not on points or objects but rather on haecceities, on sets of relations (wind, undulations of snow or sand, the song of the sand or the creaking of ice, the tactile qualities of both). It is a tactile space, or rather "haptic", a sonorous much more than a visual space." (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 382)*

Popular resistance movements constitute a war machine. Resistance is rhizomatic. Turbulent. It has the potential to rise up at any point in time, to occupy any open space. To hold space. It is ambulatory. Emergent. Lively. In *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*,<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari provide a conceptual language to grasp what they describe as "the fabric of immanent relations" (358) - the war machine - which takes shape in an ever shifting relation of contra distinction to the State apparatus. The war machine assembles multiplicities, rebel subjects, it "deterritorializes the enemy by shattering his territory from within" (353). The war machine emerges. In a flash, from without. It is the relation of another. "Of another species, of another nature, of another origin" (354). Through the invocation of the war machine, new relations of becoming are imagined, contested, and enacted. Solidarities are nebulae, constellations, permutations. The space-time of the State apparatus

is compromised, othered. “The war machine implies the release of a speed vector” (396); “the arrow does not go from one point to another but is taken up at any point” (377). The war machine, in enacting rhizomatic solidarities and connecting movements across space-time configurations, “invents the abolitionist dream and reality” (385), it contains the very “power of metamorphosis” (352).

In the wake of Catalunya’s historic vote in favor of independence from the Spanish state and the brutal authoritarian suppression that has followed, I summon the conceptual metaphor of the war machine as one method to read images of popular resistance and solidarity encountered in locations throughout Euskadi (the Basque Homeland), in northern Spain in 2017. The Basque region has been embattled in resistance to the Spanish and French governments for decades. At the forefront of the political imagination, the violent conflict between the ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna/ Basque Homeland and Freedom) movement and the government of Spain. Nearly six years after October 2011’s ceasefire, the issue of self-determination remains unresolved. The photos that follow capture scenes of resistance. Resistance to imprisonment. Resistance to occupation. Resistance to eviction. A war machine appearing in flashes, transmutating, seething, tearing at the fabric of the State apparatus. They also capture solidarities. Constellations of tentacles, roots, rhizomes linking disparate autonomous movements, disparate spaces, and disparate times. The scenes of resistance presented here represent non-violent manifestations of the war machine, recognizing that in its multiplicities, violence is contained.

### **Alde Zaharrak Gaztetxea // Old Quarter Gaztetxea Pamplona, Spain (2017)**

The “Alde Zaharrak Gaztetxea” campaign creates spaces in the old quarter of Basque region cities, such as Bilbao and Pamplona, to organize the Youth Movement and the People’s Movement. These self-organized spaces are envisioned as tools of resistance, deterritorialized spaces to manifest political, social, and economic change. To “construct spaces of counterpower in front of what is established.”<sup>5</sup>



independenzia

**eraso  
sexistam  
ez!**

**2**

**jai**

**2017**

**ENTRETIEN • SAÏO • KIMURA**  
**GAITEZPOBIAKE • GONZALEZ**

**LOS LUCIANOS • YEBROSKOLO**  
**VIÑOLA • BALACASTRI • SORRUS**

**2**

**NIPO • SINDON • SORRUS • HERRERA**

**KOP** **WARRI • TRAYTON**  
**PRELUD • LA POULA**

**SUPERACAC • ESTARLOS**  
**DINAMICA • YERBAESTI • DJ**

**SONS OF AGUIRRE**  
**AGUIR • G. GONZALEZ • LOS YEBROSKO**  
**DJ PAAT •**

**ALIXEN • GUBA • SANITA**

**3**

**KOI SUSHI**

Ordaindu zor duzuna  
paga lo que debes

C/Alameda 11, 1º planta, 48100 BILBAO  
944 22 11 11

[illegible]

TU MACHISMO  
 NOS HA QUITADO  
 LA FIESTA  
 FIESTA  
 ZAPUSTEN SIGO





Euskal Udaberria  
**KALERA!**  
BAKEA ETA ASKATASUNA IRABAZTERAI

Euskal Udaberria  
**KALERA!**  
BAKEA ETA ASKATASUNA IRABAZTERAI

Euskal Udaberria  
**KALERA!**  
BAKEA ETA ASKATASUNA IRABAZTERAI

Euskal Udaberria  
**KALERA!**  
BAKEA ETA ASKATASUNA IRABAZTERAI





**Euskal Udaberria // Basque Spring  
KALERA! // TO THE STREET!  
Bakea eta askatasuna irabaztera //  
To gain peace and freedom  
Mundaka, Spain (2017)**

The yellow arrows pointing into the map of the Basque territory represents the movement demanding amnesty and release for Basque political prisoners who remain imprisoned outside of the region in Spain and France. The protest, the mobilization is an ambulatory strategy of resistance. "These are little signs that show us that *'Paths are made by walking'*. And we will continue to walk until we take this struggle forwards as a people and not as small portion of the people."<sup>6</sup>

## **Etxera // Bring them home**

### **Bilbao, Spain (2017)**

Etxera Gunea was a four day long protest in Bilbao's central square demanding the return of eleven gravely ill political prisoners. Basque activists claim that 420 Basque citizens, imprisoned for their involvement in ETA, remain detained in Spanish and French prisons. The Etxera movement supports breaking Spain's policy of dispersion, where prisoners are deliberately sent to prisons far away from their homes, to bring them home to local prisons.



etxera



AMNISTIA ETA  
AUTODETERMINAZIOA

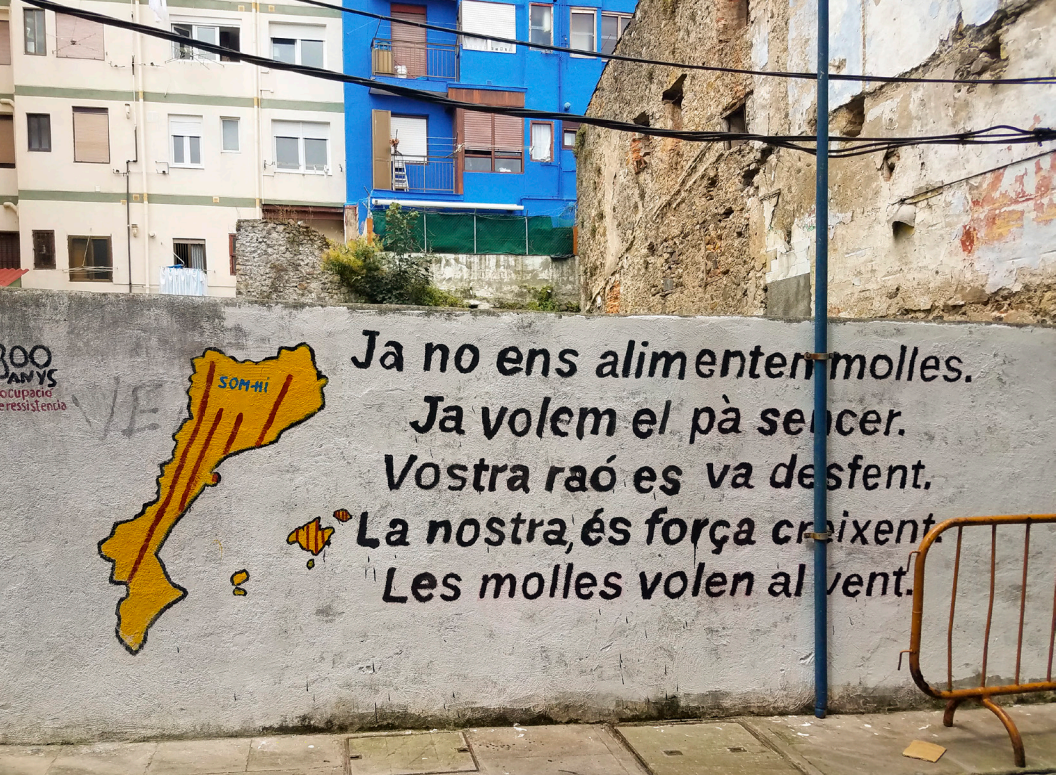


GENAKALA  
MORRES

**Amnistia eta autodeterminazioa //**  
**Amnesty and self-determination**  
**Denak ala inorez //** All or in vain  
**Bilbao, Spain (2017)**

The amnesty and return of the political prisoners produces resonances to the central issues of self-determination, autonomy, and sovereignty.





**Ja no ens alimenten molles. // We no longer feed you  
Ja volem el pa sencer. // We want the whole bread  
Vostra raó es va desfent. // Your reason is undone  
La nostra, es força creixent. // Ours, it is growing steadily  
Les molles volen al vent. // The crumbs are flying  
Mundaka, Spain (2017)**

The Catalan-language prose found on this wall in the coastal Basque region city of Mundaka, is lyrics from the 1974 song *Tot explota pel cap o per la pota* (Everything Explodes by the Head or the Leg) by Ovidi Montllor, a revered singer-songwriter from Valencia, Spain. We read the words and map of the Catalan territory as a demonstration of Basque nationalist solidarity with the Catalan independence movement.





**EZLN//Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional//Zapatista  
Army of National Liberation  
Bilbao, Spain (2017)**

Enacting solidarity across continents, the graffiti artwork depicts the representation of the anonymous, masked resistor commonly associated with the EZLN, an anarchist, anti-capitalist resistance group demanding indigenous self-determination and autonomy from the Mexican state, based in Chiapas, Mexico.





**Etxarri Gaztetxea**  
**Ezerezatik Osotasunera//From nothing to integrity**  
**Bilbao, Spain (2017)**

In November 2016, police using excessive force descended upon a youth organizing center in the Errekalde district of Bilbao. The occupiers of the space were evicted, the building was sealed off, and the property was seized by the Bilbao City Council. Amidst protests, legal tools of resistance have been mobilized as a lawsuit was entered against the City Council in January 2017 for illegal eviction and dispossession of the site.<sup>7</sup>

# KATRINA PHILLIPS

## DECLINE

There are  
words I will never say.  
They would shatter  
my teeth,  
distort my cheekbones,  
collapse the  
bridge of my nose.  
My lips would  
melt  
in the acid pool  
of forbidden  
vowels and consonants.  
They would blacken  
the sky  
if given breath.  
So I must  
choke them back,  
swallow hot coals,  
pin-less grenades.  
Molten lava lullabies  
luring me to the side of the road  
where I can  
burn in peace  
with armies  
on the tip  
of my tongue.

## JIM FAIRHALL RAIN



He was too new. He died so fast, none of us knew what to feel.

We fumbled for his name. A pale, rawboned, pigeon-chested kid. He would have talked, I guessed, if we had talked to him.

“Unluckiest fuckin’ cherry ever,” Piers said, slip-sliding in the rippled red mud beneath the weight.

Doc, Slow Eddie and I paused, holding tight the other three corners of the kid’s poncho. We clambered up from the

unnamed creek where he'd been shot, one inch below his jutting left collarbone, to the half-overgrown clearing of an old landing zone. We called the streams and rivers blues because of their appearance on our contour maps. They weren't blue, and they had sounds, smells, tastes, shady and sunny patches, and bends not registered on the maps. Now this one had memories attached to it, too, which wouldn't be registered in the coordinates and sparse words of the battalion's after-action report.

The rest of the platoon, stripped down to olive-drab T-shirts in the downpour, was wrestling with a fallen tree and hauling brush so a medevac could land on this mist-wrapped ridge in the foothills of the Annamese cordillera. The scene was black-and-white. It felt old: a movie set from the Great War, maybe in the Argonne Forest during the fall of 1918, flooded from above with ashen light. I'd been in the field almost ten months and had a sense that the war was repeating itself, was repeating earlier wars. A new year had slipped into place—January '71—but the war and I were old. I'd celebrated my 22nd birthday in September in a leaf-smacking rain on the bank of another nameless stream that no doubt also linked up, in one of the jungle's many secret networks, with the Perfume River. We'd played hearts, bent over the cards with the hoods of our ponchos dripping. We kept sprinkling the cards with foot powder so they wouldn't curl. Ivey, a good-natured good old boy from Stone Mountain, presented me with a can of pound cake. "Sorry," he grinned "no candles."

Plotnik, our company clerk, had assured me that a rear job was just a matter of time—maybe weeks. His words reverberated in my memory like an oracle's.

The new LT had jogged up and down from the creek to the LZ three times. Now, as he watched Doc crouch over the body, he looked wasted himself: a furious wind-up officer doll that had run out of commands to issue. He was an Irish Catholic with a choirboy's face, sure until today of his Stateside officer's training, who made us feel nostalgic for Lieutenant Larkin. At 24 he was our adult leadership, but between rain and sweat his



scowl looked ready to melt.

Platoon Sergeant Kekuewa, who was usually happy, as if he carried his Hawaiian homeland's sunshine inside him, frowned at the LT.

"Sir, we could finish faster if the rest of First Squad joined in. There's only this one approach to the LZ. We got a three-man OP covering it already."

The LT, wiping his black-rimmed Army glasses with C-ration toilet paper, looked at him. He probably wasn't pleased that we'd overheard that. He led Kekuewa away from us to talk.

Doc said, "Yo, College, fetch me that tag."

A test. I'd been in country forever, unlike this dead farm boy, but Doc, a soul brother from Memphis—home of the gettin' down blues, y'all better fuckin' believe it—liked to give me digs about my two years at NYU. I glanced from him to the purple-drenched chest. Somewhere in the dark folds of the boy's T-shirt, which sagged down like a sweetheart neckline, there was a wafer of stamped steel. It was a self, the beginning and end of a story line. I fished.

Doc wiped the dog tag on the kid's fatigue trousers. He threaded a black lace through it, like a surgeon suturing an incision, and tucked it against the tongue of the right foot's jungle boot. He re-laced the top, left over right.

"Done," he said. "Where's that motherfuckin' dustoff?"

"No dustoff," Fast Eddie said. His damp, hollow-cheeked face studied a whiz wheel as he knelt beside a green rectangular box, the PRC-25 radio that humped his back like a papoose while we were on the move. "Battalion diverted a logbird. ETA one minute."

The kid's mud-caked canvas-and-leather boots stuck out at right angles, making a V, from the spattering green poncho that we'd wrapped him in.

"DUNBAR, WILLIAM L," Doc said, reciting the name on the dog tag. "Probably a Billy. Goodbye to you."

He got up and walked away, thinking the unsentimental thoughts of a medic who'd survived the ambush in the A Shau

Valley and was getting short.

"Yeah, Billy Dunbar," Piers said. "That's what he wrote inside the cover of his Bible. Used to read that sucker every break we had."

"Didn't do him no good," Slow Eddie said. "Now if'n he toted it in his chest pocket, well, might could've stopped that round."

"That've done it," Piers said. "It was only a carbine that zapped him. Motherfuckin' SKS."

"How you know it was a fuckin' SKS?"

"I *heard* it, man."

"AK, man. I know what those mothers sound like. How long your cherry ass been in country?"

The supply bird beat the bruised gray sky. It whipped the treetops. We turned our faces from the rain-slapping rotor wash as it descended and hovered without landing.

We laid the sagging poncho, wet with rain and blood, on the grease-slick nubbled floor, between a bright-red nylon mail sack and a mound of filthy, olive-drab fatigues. Piers slid the kid's ruck behind his head; the Bible made a hard edge in the mud-splotched green fabric. The chopper angled up, paused tail-high, then straightened out and strummed the air.

Piers asked, "What's this?"

The envelope was damp and stained. Blue strokes on blue tablet paper, blurred and large. As if to make amends—we'd get to know him now—we crouched to block the rain and read:

*Hi Son*

*well how are you today? fine I hope. we are just fine. we got 3 letters from you yesterday. I sure was glad to hear from you. Son we got your money yesterday. I put your Bonds in my safety Deposit box, but I deposit your check in your name in the Bank. we want you to have every penny of it when you come home. well its winter now & we have 3 more inches of snow & its going down to 0 tonite. Theres no school today*

*so Connie is glad. I saw Cobb yesterday he said he had got a letter from you & was going to write you this week. The weatherman just said that the entire state is covered with snow, & in the northwestern part they got 16 inches & the roads was closed. I went to see about a 4 row drill yesterday & they wanted \$250.00 difference between my drill & theirs. & a new Massey Ferguson cultivator sells for \$832.00 so you can see that things are really high. & we are still selling beans for \$2.25 a bushel. The drill was a used John Deere. But maby I can find something worth the money before spring. well I guess Ill go see Bink again. he sure is in bad shape. I sent those film off yesterday. that first roll you sent. Son did you ever get you another air mattress? I hope so. I sure do like that historical Bible Son it has a lot of pictures & things of interest in it. Thanks a lot Son. well Ill close for now Son & will write some more later. christmas day was the longest day I ever spent Im sure it was for you too. Mom cried so hard that morning & I did too. To think you were so far away from home but I know that God will bring us together again. Son keep courage & do the best you can & time will pass & it will be different next christmas. well Ill say bye for now. we all miss you so much Son. & love you very much. I go in your room almost every day. I feel closer to you there than anywhere else. I miss you so much Son. Bye Son.*

*With all my love & prayers  
Dad*

The LT leaned over us. "Gimme that!"

He stalked away and sat down on a black tree trunk. Shielding the letter from the rain with his hunched upper body, he peered like Dorothy at a faraway country.

"Fucker gonna earn his pay for once," Slow Eddie murmured to Piers.

"Fuckin-A. What's he gonna write to them? I let your cherry son get wasted by a trail watcher 'cause I didn't post

flank security. Right.”

The LT came back with Kekuewa, who towered over him—two streaming, hooded figures, a crow beside a heron. He said:

“What’s everybody waiting for? Tell ’em to police up that det cord. Also, who gave permission to throw away rations?”

Kekuewa followed his gaze to an OD can of ham and lima beans that someone had tossed into the red mud.

Fast Eddie walked over with the radio on his back. The LT took the plastic-wrapped handset and called in a sit rep to Alpha’s CP, which in the rain seemed farther than half a klick away. Kekuewa said, with as much energy as his laid-back personality could muster on a very bad day:

“OK. Let’s move! Saddle up!”

We humped a leech-hung trail. Just before dusk, in green gloom, we paused to cook dinner on stoves made from perforated C-ration cans placed above the blue wink of heat tabs. Then we followed the ghostly trail another fifty meters and slipped into our night defensive position. We set out Claymore mines, plotted fields of fire for the M-60s, filled our air mattresses enough to dull the angles of the ground but not enough to squeak when we lay on them. It was too early to sleep. We whispered, intimate, to the guys sitting closest to us under their poncho lean-tos. Rain rustled.

“This is why it’s called rain forest,” Piers said.

“Fuckin’ rain,” Slow Eddie said. “Gonna move to the god-damn desert after I ETS.”

Piers, who came from Santa Cruz, said, “I’m gonna hang out in the sun down by the wharf the whole summer. Only liquid’s gonna be the ocean ‘n beer.”

“Rain makes you think too much,” I said. “That’s the problem.”

Just before the jungle turned inky, the guys on first guard moved to their posts. After pulling second guard I tossed on the uneven ground beneath my air mattress. All night, from leaves, rain ricocheted. Those stray cold impacts woke me up, uneasy.

# RYAN BELCHER

## CARRY

When you left, I watched as you carried the weight of gear and camo cargo on your bones. You were like a passing desert—covered in dry colors of somewhere you would be, some place I didn't know. I watched as you slouched down the hall, towards the chipped wood door, away from me and Eric and mom and the home that you slept in, ate in, lived in. I watched the silhouette of your body step out, and for a moment I reached out to that intangible image, but you were already gone.

When you called long distance, I heard the weight of shells and mortars on the soft tremble of your tongue. I heard our names, marked on the under lining of your helmet, screaming silently at your skull, reminding you of each word you had missed and would continue to miss while you were gone. *How are you, how was school, are you being good to mom*, you would ask, but by then all I heard was the static space between us.

When you returned home, I felt the weight of war in the roughness of your skin, in the deep shadows beneath your eyes, in the arms that embraced me and loved me and held me as if it had been a thousand years. And hadn't it been? Hadn't the sands carried you away? Those same sands that you had carried back with you—sands which had crept into your blood stained boots and into the wrinkled valleys of your hands?

Now, years after your deployments, when your knees are crumbling, and your eyes are drooping low, and your memory fades like a passing desert, I want to ask you if I can carry the weight, Dad. I think I know how.

# JEHAN BSEISO

## HOUNA BAGHDAD

“The heart breaks and breaks and lives by breaking”  
– Stanley Kunitz

Babylon is burning, the hanging gardens are black.  
The 8th world wonder is that we are still alive.  
I am looking at my face in the mirror.  
What is left.

There is a map of every bomb in Baghdad,  
making the rounds on Facebook, between  
baby photos and beach pics.  
Entire cities and families are red circles.  
The caption reads: the streets are full of our blood.  
We don't have water, and we don't have electricity.

Here is a photo of us in black and white in Barcelona.  
The caption reads: In love with the idea of love.  
The truth is, I can understand why a 25-year-old  
would dance his refugee body off the balcony in Beirut.

Dear Daraya, I'm sorry.  
The only aid we could give you is mosquito  
repellent and headlines.

Je suis drone strikes in North Waziristan  
kills a wedding party of 50.  
Je suis all the headlines that don't make it to the  
first page of the New York Times.  
Je suis all the bombs that rip families like ours  
apart from Taiz to Tulkarem  
Je suis there is no difference between unaccompanied minor  
and orphan if mama is dead.  
Je suis don't you dare pinkwash this, Tel Aviv.  
  
I don't have enough life in me, to keep up with all this dying.

# C.S. JONES

## RESEARCH AND THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN TURKEY

*“Threat is from the future. It is what might come next. Its eventual location and ultimate extent are undefined. Its nature is open-ended. It is not just that it is not: it is not in a way that is never over. We can never be done with it. Even if a clear and present danger materializes in the present, it is still not over. There is always the nagging potential of the next after being even worse, and of a still worse next again after that. The uncertainty of the potential next is never consumed in any given event. There is always a remainder of uncertainty, an unsummed surplus of danger.”<sup>8</sup>*

In this essay I offer an auto-ethnography of my own sense of danger and threat while doing research during a state of emergency in Turkey. I use my field notes as a way of reflecting through the themes of threat, alarm, and futurity that Brian Massumi has used to discuss a political ontology of threat.

### A Charged Atmosphere

Reflection 1. At the time of writing I’m living in a world of superlative threat. In 2016 Turkey experienced a series of political shockwaves and correlating bomb explosions in the public sphere. These events amounted to a new world of threat on many levels. At the time of my arrival in Turkey, it wasn’t clear whether threat was subsiding in any of its forms, real or imagined. In my new city, the local city government continued to weigh the potential threats after a series of public terrorism events in the country. A few months earlier they cancelled the New Year’s celebrations in the public square. On New Year’s in Istanbul, 39 people were murdered by a gunman at a night club.



The media imagined that terrorists were hiding anywhere and everywhere, especially in Istanbul and near the Syrian border. I settled in a neighborhood far from the action, only to read later that an ISIS cell had been arrested there just one month before my arrival. "Well, at least they were already arrested," I told myself, quickly burying the events in the past in order to deny a futurity of threat.

Multiple universities were closed down in the city, and thousands of academics were fired for opposing the demolition of Kurdish villages, town and cities. Mass arrests ensued, targeting anyone supporting "peace" - a position the state now interpreted as "terrorism." Thousands of people in Kurdish areas were displaced due to state violence. In Ankara, more than 100 people died protesting state violence when they were targeted by suicide bombers. State violence became justified through a state of emergency in response to an attempted coup the previous July. The villains of the coup were still imagined to be everywhere and anywhere. An American pastor was arrested. "Maybe he was behind the coup too," the state imagined. He's still in prison at the time of writing.

It is hard to write when you're worried...when you're living in a place which is rapidly getting worse week by week. Every day I do what other journalists and academics in this country have done right before being arrested, jailed, and refused access to the justice system: I put words to paper. This simple action carries a deep weight for me as I meditate on the distance between those writers and myself, and the privileges that enable me to be in my position. I am becoming accustomed to living with a new sense of situational anxiety, namely, a sense of enduring, of waiting, and adjusting to the regular shockwaves of bad news resonating throughout the city. It is a charged atmosphere; a place in which one taps into an electric current pulsing with an unsettling energy. What follows is a deeper account of the state of emergency in Turkey, as seen through my perspective as a researcher living amidst a broader space and time of precarity and fear.

## First Days

Reflection 2. Fear has a way of producing unique emotional worlds for the individuals living within a context of war. I'll begin with a story of my own. It is not exceptional. It is simply the first-person narrative that is mine to share.

When I first arrived in Turkey, fear transformed the way in which I perceived my new field site. This was a new experience for me. I had previously spent a cumulative six years studying and working in Turkey, during which I enjoyed a sense of safety beyond what I was accustomed to even in the United States. I quickly realized this transformation was a direct result of Turkey's fast-changing political environment. A state of emergency and an emerging sense of threat was re-shaping my experience of Turkey.

During my first week in the new city I met with several social science programs. From each university came the same reply, "We can't offer you an affiliation because we are too scared of being affiliated with a foreign researcher working on your topic. Things aren't the same as they used to be. We have a new Dean now. He is state appointed. It is best that you give up your research project." This shocked me, but made me more determined. Then came the numerous stories of arrests and firings of academics. I soon realized I needed to work completely independently to avoid being a burden to existing institutions, and to avoid being implicated in current political paranoias. I found a neutral affiliation and decided to work in isolation from Turkish academia until the state of emergency ended.

Weeks passed. I waited with a little hope – a little optimism – for the situation to improve, but the state of emergency continued. The city's foreign humanitarian organizations were targeted for closure by the government, and throughout the country foreign journalists and humanitarian workers were being arrested and deported. A witch hunt for foreign spies in humanitarian and journalism fields commenced, and I slept little at night those first few months.

## Common Anxieties, Different Positions

Reflection 3. A Syrian friend once explained to me, “We can be arrested at any time and deported. Just last week they deported twenty-five Syrian refugees across the border, back to Syria. This can happen to me on the way to work. This is normal life. Our friend has been in jail now for months, and they’ll deport him into Assad’s army soon.”

“They also deported five Western humanitarian aid workers last week,” I replied, “and a European journalist. Another journalist is on hunger strike in prison. He was jailed for taking a photo for National Geographic.” Unlike my Syrian friend, I refused to normalize the situation, but only because I was in a position to do so. “To normalize is to tolerate the state of emergency,” I said. She looked at me and shrugged, and then smiled ironically as if to say, “But there’s nothing else to do. We can do nothing...”. Those who had no way out had nothing to do but shrug and try to ignore what was happening. Those who had a way out could only plan when and how to leave.

We sipped our tea silently and changed the subject.

## Police Knock

Reflection 4. One day a policeman knocked on my door to interview me for a residence permit. He asked how many times I had visited Turkey and details of those trips. I started to name the years and places, hesitating to reveal the geography in the Kurdish east where I had spent eight months of my time a few years back.

He asked me the purpose of each visit. “To travel?” “Yes,” I responded. He did not grasp the concept that Turkish studies at the graduate level involves in-depth language study and generous time abroad. I did not want to explain this, lest it seem suspicious to him.

“...And after Istanbul, where did you visit?” “Adana.” I said, wishing I hadn’t. Fortunately, at that moment my landlord

walked out in nothing but his boxer shorts, distracting the policeman enough to quickly change the subject. "Are you planning to visit other cities?" he asked. "No, I'm avoiding Ankara and Istanbul. Too many events happened in big cities last year." I explained, hoping to end the conversation quickly. "There's nothing to be afraid of," he responded. "You should visit Ankara and Istanbul freely. We have solved all the issues. Don't believe the propaganda of the media. Turkey is a safe place. If you have any problems, come and see me. Here is my number. Please come have tea at our police office. It's in a historical building, I'll show you around. But come after Ramadan, we are fasting now."

I have not visited him.

### Internalizing Threat

Reflection 5. A few weeks earlier I woke up to a phone call from an unknown number. I let it ring and then called back. "Migration and foreigners police office. Yes, I called you to tell you that you need to come to the police station today."

"Is there anything I need to bring? Is anything wrong?"

"I don't have any specific information to give, only that you need to come today."

My foreigner friends and I had been sharing ideas on what to do if we get arrested. These were preemptive measures. First, we would try to erase all content on our phones; all photos, messages, and email accounts. We quickly discovered that Google apps could not be deleted, so we questioned whether we should use our phones for email at all. Second, we would make sure someone knew we were going into custody. Third, we would be prepared to be deported. These discussions were not unfounded. Several foreigners had been recently deported. Some were friends of friends, and some were foreign journalists that we read about in the newspapers. Anything can happen during a state of emergency.

Now that I was actually called to the police station, I didn't know what to expect, so I took time to back up my re-

search notes and erase my phone. I ordered my house (in case a friend would need to pack it up quickly), and informed a few friends about what was happening. After all of these preparations, I took my passport and left for the station. Holding my breath, I entered the station and informed the clerk that I had been called to meet with “table number four.”

“How are you doing? How’s research?” the officer at table four asked jovially. “The weather is very hot,” I replied nervously. “Yes, too hot,” she agreed, “and we have too much work to do here.” I sat tensely, trying to appear comfortable enough to make small talk. “So, I called you because you need to get your house contract notarized. You’ll need to take this and get it stamped, pay \$50, and come back here. I’ll wait for you.” In one moment, I realized this was a false alarm, and became overjoyed to participate in the more inefficient aspects Turkish bureaucracy.

The false alarm had revealed my internalized anxiety from the state of emergency. These accumulated signs included those I had become trained in interpreting from reading newspaper headlines, taking in numerous stories of deportations, and stories of sudden refusals of entrance towards Westerners—especially researchers like myself. In a moment it passed, and I felt my body exhausted.

I quickly obtained the necessary signatures and paid the appropriate fees, but I realized that my sense of danger needed to be quickly discarded. I hadn’t been detained, and my research would continue.

### **Without a State of Emergency**

Reflection 6. A friend suggested I write about what my life as a researcher in Turkey would look like without a state of emergency. To me, the difference is striking. I would have written several op-ed pieces for international newspapers. I would have openly shared my fieldwork research in a blog for friends and family, even publishing short narrative stories about my re-



search subjects. I would have attended conferences in Turkey and developed close relationships with Turkish scholars. I would have pursued closer ties with civil society organizations and leaders. I most likely would have enjoyed a greater depth of experience in this beautiful country and developed a broad and diverse social network. I would have been much more productive. I would be looking forward to future research trips, instead of alternative field sites. I would have written an essay about new political possibilities, instead of a piece about threat and the problems of doing research during a state of emergency.

# RIELLE OASE LEVERAGE (2016)



# LELE SALEHIN

## LIBERATION

This isn't typical when you envision war.

Ready to forfeit?

"Sure."

What keeps me breathing? Simple - under my footing, the marley floor.

Dance is lightning, giving life to this Frankenstein being.

Re-assembled with broken parts.

Each no longer its own, but a mere reminder of what happened at that home.

The unspoken war has occurred behind a closed door.

The conflicts - within a sore soul.

Post traumatic stress disorder has gotten to the wounded  
--not-- warrior.

The shame has become inevitable, let's talk about it at the dinner table.

The things that happen in our homes shouldn't be synonymous with criminal acts of genocide and war.

Neither soldiers nor kin folk should do the 'unspoken of' to the 'unprotect-able'.

Temple with a bullet to it.

There was no questioning, or asking for consent.

This is how self destruction is cultivated.

Rape is not recognized as "war" sufficient.

Life robbed, and then given back to be put in a psychological prison cell.

Wasn't the bad guy in the parking lot, or the stranger hiding in the dark.

But, the good looking well respected family friend.

We need to share their stories to soften societal views towards those who've been bruised.

There's a new kid on the block let's change the rules.

Sexual violence is more common than I knew, but for some reason its talk is still taboo. 1 in every 5 will face it too.

"Hush hush."

Don't make anyone offended.

Let the victims carry their lack of closure, and burdens empty handed.

Allow the savages who did it to walk with a pep in their step.

Continue living life until it happens to you I guess.

Grievously, relatable to popular ideas of war, it can lead to death.

Couldn't wash the filth off my conscious at best.

Water bill went up and couldn't pass my University tests.

Focus.

Everything was overwhelming. No bullies needed, there's plenty of self blaming.

The regretful comments make it worse for them, "look at that outfit." And, "They had it coming."

Victim blaming.

You could ask a stranger, unfortunately to most it's a second nature.

"If you wore something 'slutty' it's you who put yourself in that danger."

So, who wears the pants? Yea?

Reverse the roles, let skirts become power symbols.

Liberate minds, realize that rape is a commonly acted out --in our communities--

war crime.

# REBECCA PATTERSON-MARKOWITZ

## AFTER WAR: FIELD NOTES

Truths erupt from violence and are silenced  
in violence. unknown bones lie together hushed  
Bodies  
cross borders, history in flesh, history in land abandoned  
are burdened with shame for their own penetrability.

*can we trust what our own bodies tell us  
our skin's responsiveness to story  
and our minds futility in the face of complexity?*

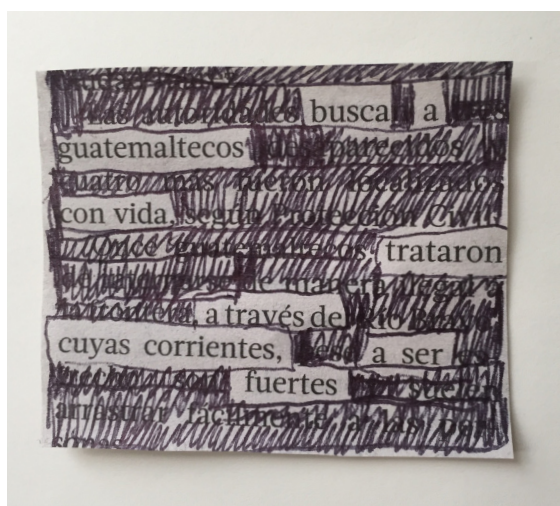
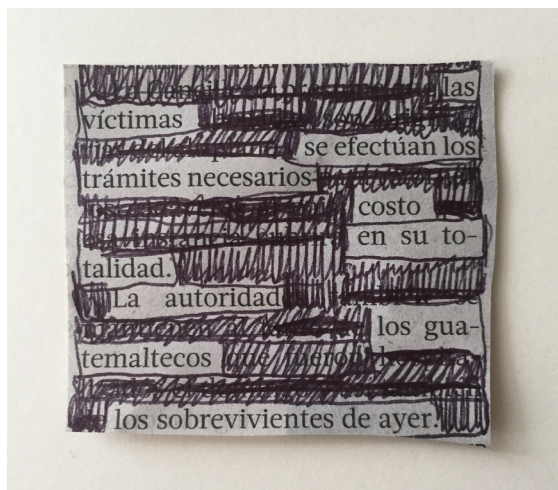
Pain erupts and ruptures in incalculable moments.  
It is in the projects of justice that calculations are made.  
Testimony  
weaponized in the hopes of a nunca más  
negotiates borders foreign to lived experience: victim, victimizer.

*how do we question our own recountings  
as they land on pages and ears  
in complicit and contentious listening?*

Protest erupts from indignation and new freedoms  
In hands cans spray fast words  
*#sihubogenocidio.*

The next day the city's truth wounds scraped and dressed with  
fresh paint  
An attention that posits forgetting as healing.  
The aerosol fumes long since inhaled  
or diffused like so many memories and histories.





Found Poem 1 Prensa Libre 27 de Julio 2017  
Found Poem 2 Prensa Libre 27 de Julio 2017

AARON WALLIS

## ST. PABLO OF MEDELLÍN

Silkscreen, woodcut, and gold leaf BFK, Edition of 20 (2015)



st Pablo of medellin 10/20 2464

## At Pablo of Medellín



**L**os Olivos consisted of blocks of irregular two- and three-story rowhouses with tiny yards and gardens in front, many with squat palm trees that barely reached the roofline. The crowds were held back by police at barricades.

**S**ome residents had climbed out on roofs for a better look. There were those who said it was definitely Don Pablo who had been killed and others who said no, the

police had shot a man but it was not him, that he had escaped again. Many preferred to believe he had gotten away. Medellín was Pablo's home. It was here he had made his billions and where his money had built big office buildings and apartment complexes, discos and restaurants, and it was here he had created housing for the poor, for people who had squatted in shacks of cardboard and plastic and tin and picked at refuse in the city's

**G**arbage heaps with ferchiefs tied across their faces against the stench, looking for anything that could be cleaned up and sold. It was there he had built soccer fields with lights so workers could play at night, and where he had come

**O**ut to ribbon cuttings and sometimes played in the games himself. **A**lready a legend, a chubby man with a mustache and a wide second chin who, everyone agreed, was still pretty fast on his feet. It was here that man believed the police would never catch him, could not catch him, even with their death squads and all their gringo dollars and spy planes and who knew what all else. It was there

**P**ablo had hidden for sixteen months while they searched. He had moved from hideout to hideout among people who, if they had recognized him, would never give him up, because it was a place where there were pictures of him in gilded frames on the walls, where prayers were said for him to have a long life and many children, and where (he also knew) those who did not pray for him feared him.

Mark Borden

Aaron Wallis Sept 2015



# KATRINA PHILLIPS

## DEFY

After this bomb  
I will never die again.  
There is only so  
much heat  
a molecule can  
take  
before it changes  
into something  
completely different  
and solid  
forever.  
Blow me up again  
I will return  
ten fold,  
a hundred million bits  
re-directed...  
stronger than before.  
Atoms, neutrons,  
pieces of my heart  
finding air, water, sugar.  
(The makings  
of a Universe)

I do not fear you  
is what I mean to say.  
And that is  
what you are afraid of.

**DIEGO ARIEL MARTINEZ-LUGO**  
**INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION,**  
**RESISTANCE AND JUSTICE**



You are in Rebel Zapatista Territory  
'Here the Village Commands  
and the Government Obeys'  
(2016)



# A.S. REISFIELD

## THE PERFUME OF TERROIR

On every continent, in every place of worship, in every institution of higher learning, in every legislative chamber, in every war room, in every arena of life, in every aspect of culture, at every turn, it's happening.

"This evening, the scheduled salon has been canned in favor of another just planned, a lineup of tastings not tidings, sipping not dipping, concerning a confirming however disturbing interpretation from the world of wine, vinous testimony apprising that the siege—"

The siege has been laid to Life.

"In no particular order, the first mystery flight issues on the nariz welcome wisps of starfruit and stewed apple—some mid-palate lardy lanolin and papaya-pulp vapors dance around the pharynx—there's a sense of combusting firewood volatiles, the dispersing barbecue smoke produced from spruce, succeeded by a secondary scentful sensation of smoothly skirting guava or goji berries—a boiled nearly rotten beetroot bottom is suspended in the extended fragrant fading finish."

Veteran *vignerons* with small plots of grape vines across countrysides of France and Italy warn of the groundswell, their field of endeavor increasingly carried away by consumer capitalism and flattened out by the blunt sledgehammer of mass opinion, stylized and conventionalized with vinicultural technologies like reverse osmosis and cryoextraction, and microoxygenation, which they liken to botox, and aging in oak *barriques*, which they compare to plastic surgery or worse. Electroconvulsive therapy, for example, has been raised as an analogy on account that the wine is imbued by obscuring vanillin, which narrows ranges of nuance and dulls personality, which masks identifying quirks and distinctions of character in such a way that the *terroir* is snuffed out and the wine, once singularly expressive of Life, loses its vital soul. It is dead (*le vin est mort*).

“The consultants say that they can’t wait to begin growing grapes on the moon.”

That’s a rejoinder by advocates of empire. Mondavi, the beloved conquistador of monolithic thinking, also hopes to witness his heirs producing wines on other planets.

“New wine isn’t put into old bottles. Those vessels used previously are shattered. Old societies collapse upon contact with the new,” Saffron is translating from a French publication on the subject.

It’s a head-on assault against the idea of *terroir*, the ideal of *terroir*, the notion of somewhere, the expression of place, a specific point in space, the interplay of Earth, vine and weather, soil drainage depth and texture, slope of the land, length of the days, and angles of the sun’s rays. The advocates are resistance fighters, partisans up against it, pressured to get with the plan, like small grocers when mammoth supermarkets roll in, pushing back against phantoms of progress, against the steamrolling power of imperial dominion. They are unapologetic defenders of the *terroir*, champions of the *terroir*, fighting for values and livelihoods, making wines in the image of the *terroir*, serving the *terroir*. They explain that first one must discover the *terroir*, then find a way to express the *terroir*, which can take many generations. The region of Burgundy, for instance, where collective memory is long and strong, is one of their strongholds. The modernists call the unyielding old-timers peasants or hicks, or *terroir* terrorists.

“For a maximal impartment of vanilla aroma, the favored wine-racking barrels are constructed of hundred-plus-year-old French new oak trees hand-split into staves, which are then dried for several years, then toasted, the smaller the newer the better to conceal the wine’s undressed nature with molecules of vanillin.”

I think of auto-tuning, to cover up imperfections of pitch when vocalists sing out of tune, or Photoshopping, to manipulate images of fashion models.

“The subject of vanillization, that vanillic evocation, is principally due to the perfume of vanillin.”

Vanillin is a single compound that leaches out from wood lignin of oak barrels, a process not unlike that by which vanilla metabolites from the vanilla fruit are extracted with aqueous alcohol to make the ethanolic tincture.

“All the same, we should point out that industrial vanilla materials, same as wine, are commonly constituted of vanillin from lignin, and nothing but, having nothing to do with vanilla the orchid.”

It is owing to pied-piper Robert Parker and his hundred-point scale that selections placing high on scorecards are so frequently judged to be high-extract big-impression high-concentration big-experience high-and-big-everything with oak-woody intensity and that ubiquitous vanilla overlay, fulfilling the criteria that so many actors and agents in the world of wine have been in recent decades scrapping to emulate, effectively assigning their brands to the bandwagon of Parkerized wines.

“This next is a special drinking vintage by the way it asserts an ample oak-influenced Chablis-like astringent accord—emerges straight away with some summoning of cloves and a tribute to banana peel on a lactic bed of cottage cheese—plus a non-showy shade of cracked-graininess influences the mouth-feel? as though my cheeks are filled with chalky eggshells? the palate perhaps enveloped by flinty minerals?—finally we find a fizzy spritz of lemon rind, finely trailing among the sparkly tailing.”

The appeal of authenticity in wine is the appeal of terroir, which is an appeal to something outside the self, be that a higher authority or a vulnerable ecology, and an appeal to something before the self, to history and heritage, context and continuity, and something after the self, to ongoing stewardship of place—

“Lifting from the glass’s rim to bear early on the nares are inviting tidings of inky-black raspberries and canned

peaches—there's a nice note which connotes a slice of spiced cinnamon toast which then turns to chewy raisin bread—also exhibits coumarinic midsection materializations which recall milfoil or woodruff or cut grass—and a minty element inside a rustic cedar box soaked in cough syrup?—the length is lasting by its lingering with flourishes of tamarind and cantaloupe and mocha.”

...it's an appeal to the production of wine in broad totality by understanding environmental patterns and circumstances, natural settings and conditions, frames of reference and connections, as opposed to compartmentalizing and concentrating on manipulative practices based on specialized and insulated knowledge—

“A supple muscat-like indication shows on the initial nose, a convoluted chord of terpenes evoking watermelons and plummy cherries—transitioning to a warmed fruitcake, then maybe a mellow mango, then pizza dough, then Chinese dumplings—by deep breathing it gives a steely feeling? as if there's a secondary focus? of bell pepper dusted with Mexican chocolate?—then the balm continues on with a balanced sobremesa, a term that denotes a finish, this consisting of backnotes that reflect dried weeds and leather-strap principles.”

...it's an appeal to honor traditional winemakers, their needs and aptitudes and interests, their poetic sympathies and aesthetic affinities, as we acknowledge the wreckful sources of their new fears, those mercenary technical directors who threaten to replace them, along with the ensuing practices of impersonal rubber-stamping based on external demands—

“Opening with an outpouring of youthful dandelion on the proboscis then followed by an olfactory trajectory of celery then seaweed then soon later veering to a rampant gamey redolence of venison and charcoal which surrounds or perhaps intertwines with a poised interior traction of yeasty pancake batter and maillard-toned chestnuts which yields to a presence that reveals on the latter palate as a vegetal facet of burnt eggplant with asparagus then shifting to a persisting bouquet

which presides over the subdued fadeaway with decomposing fruit in a wet scrap bin.”

...it’s a love for time-weathered specificity rather than the seduction of unseasoned generality, for individual inimitable wines of distinct vintage and region rather than disembodied commodities scientifically proven to be the best, of situational idiosyncrasy rather than standardized uniformity, of natural satisfactions rather than products pointedly engineered to produce profits—

“Variation is real and concrete, variousness a fundamental condition of concrete reality, in contrast with the integrative ideas that go by terms such as *average* or *median*, *mode* or *norm*, late-arriving formulations of the human forebrain.”

...these appeals are made with an awareness of limits to knowledge and uncertainty of outcomes, and an ability to spot blind technophilia wherever it rears its biophobic head, as in the case of predictable repeatable insurable oenological results based on viticulture manuals and viniculture databases and consulting-firm wine scores from mathematical algorithms and chemical analyses—

“We should skip this next selection, which is sticky and flat (and we liken to something dragged in by a cat), candy-coated and flabby (like something laid down by a tabby).”

...and made with a desire to illuminate and explore the diverse interplay of vine tending and grape growing and wine making and tasting, rather than chase a score with the aid of chromatography and mass-spectrometry to derive computerized quality indices—

“Whereas the concept of central tendency dwells in the town of abstraction that’s in the state of reduction that’s in the world of calculation, it has no place and is irrelevant in the World of Creation as it has materially existed for billions of years.”

...it’s an appeal to personalized solutions rather than universal fixes, to things that develop slowly through experience rather than immediately by design, to somewhere at some time



rather than anywhere at any time, to the Nature-expressive for better or worse rather than the people-impressive by financial necessity or ideological obligation. It's an appeal to something we can't really own, whose purpose we can't fully apprehend, instead of some property of scaled production under off-site control by anonymous stakeholders—

“The nail that sticks out is beaten down.”

These aggressive modernists don't affiliate with Life, and so they don't get it, don't care to catch on, don't care to listen, never studied living systems or natural history or any such field of inquiry, never paid much attention, and by extension don't consider that novelty and irreversibility are primary defining aspects of Nature, so they don't fret over the loss of unique biocultural expressions, aren't troubled or even concerned, figure general rules of the game won't disappear, elementary particles won't disappear, arithmetic won't disappear, their secure investments won't disappear, electronics won't disappear, God won't disappear, things they're comfortable with, that they align with, against the interests of the vital and vulnerable, irreplaceable cultures and communities of animals, plants and people barely hanging on.

“They know what they're doing.”

# HUSHIDAR MORTEZAIE



Here to Stay  
Mixed media (2017)



**Enrichment**  
Mixed media (2006)

# DAVID LEWIS NEEL

## WHERE NOTHING HAPPENS

Henry Miller never lived in the old wood-siding house at 36°13'14.5"N 121°45'13.5"W that houses The Henry Miller Library. But now The Henry Miller Library doesn't even fully live in the house that houses The Henry Miller Library. You also can't really check out books. Its motto, for years: Where Nothing Happens. Now it is too difficult to get there from the north and also from the south. Now Nothing Happens mostly up in Carmel, in a shopping center called The Barnyard, and Nothing Happens more intensely than before at this building where Henry Miller never lived, tucked into the woods of Big Sur, back up against a rocky hill, just off CA-1, just south of the old hippie hangout Nepenthe which is now primarily a tourist and CA oligarchy scene.

Several months before this writing, the hills east and above one much-filmed strip of CA-1 refused to respect the border of that bit of concrete, and instead hurled themselves across and over CA-1 south of Big Sur. Landslides can be or always are natural occurrences, depending on one's definition of "Nature." A couple months earlier, a mudslide fatally damaged a key CA-1 bridge between Carmel and Big Sur. Landslide/mudslide likelihood increases with larger fluctuations between drought and heavy rain. Massive flow of valued commodities during short durations can be destructive, as can large disparities in concentration. Disruption of native plant life also increases probability of a landslide. This northern slide crashed into and around the bridge columns, but slowed then stopped short of the Pacific Ocean, leaving the water its usual artistically- and touristically-preferred blue.

My friend who lives in the area has suffered nightmares for decades, visions of the sea rising out there at the horizon, the horizon itself rising, and this risen horizon approaching, blotting too much of the sky and failing to respect the border of the land. It was he who first brought me to the Henry Mill-



er Library, sometime in 2001. We could not then enter through the gate in the high faded wooden fence. "Closed for a private function." (Perhaps a wedding? Miller died at 89 before he could marry a sixth time.)

A library dedicated to a now-somewhat-unfashionable literary heritage and at which nothing happens is particularly vulnerable to the erasure, by Nature Rampant, of two sections of primary access road. Thus the new second location in the Carmel shopping center.

The land that became the USA state of California was taken from Mexico during the Mexican-American War, also called *Guerra de Estados Unidos a Mexico*, which concluded in 1848. That year in Europe revolutions against the monarchical and aristocratic exploitation of common folk were both rising up and being violently quelled. The United States failed to respect borders of Mexico and hurled itself across and over and through them until these borders were redrawn under duress.

My wife still dreams of her life Monterey. She first visited in 2009, our first long trip. She began graduate school there in 2012, we began our marriage with a year of geographic separation in 2013, and she moved north again in 2014. In Monterey, she rented a tiny flat looking over a culvert in a ravine and fell deeply in love with four local cats who patrolled the piney slope. 36°35'47.3"N 121°54'11.1"W

A different and much deeper now-unbridged ravine north of the Henry Miller Library as well as thousands of displaced cubic meters of soil south of the library each break CA-1, preventing north-south automotive transport. Warming climate, driven in part by internal combustion engines (fossil fuels) and the eating of cattle (fossil fuels for delivery and refrigeration of dead flesh, but also methane as emissions from still-living creatures before they are killed using industrialized-slaughter techniques) will continue to render formerly livable regions increasingly unlivable. Crop failure. Drought. Wildfires. Rising seas. One hopes the borders will hold, prevent travel as effectively as this landslide. Water wars. Famine. Wars of migration. These

must not interfere with the flow of capital. Borders must halt undesirable flows, but remain permeable to money- the wealthy, the important. You know, those who could, if they pleased, dine frequently at Nepenthe.

Monterey Bay, where the land runs out, where so many drift to a stop at that west edge of the continent, those who live outdoors and are punished for it in small ways and large. Don't sleep on the sidewalk. Don't park overnight. (Imperative decoded: own land, own your own land, damn you, only real estate makes you real. Make sure you can reach down with your finger and trace a line in soil, somewhere, and point to one side and intone, "Mine.") War of rich against poor, haves against haven'ts, there in Monterey, Pacific Grove and Carmel- same as it ever was, everywhere, but maybe a little worse, a little more pitiless, a little more flagrant in the wideness of the divide, a little more impressive in the thickness of the callous.

The skin between worlds is thin there. Porous border. Miller knew this. I suspected it from 2001, but it became real in July 2014. On my way to living the last couple months of Monterey life with my wife, my entire solo drive south from Seattle had been weird: public domain mp3s of Ambrose Bierce, then Arthur Machen's *The Great God Pan* through the twilight near Fremont, then more Bierce from *Can Such Things Be?* including a tale of ghosts and travelers wandering the redwoods of northern California. Bierce himself crossed the border into Mexico in late 1913 to ride with the revolutionary Villa, and vanished like Enoch.

After a couple weeks settling into Monterey life, I felt the call down to Big Sur and the place where Nothing Happens. So, onto the road, southward again, not quite an hour's drive, finally pushing "play" on Machen's *The Hill of Dreams*, through the Carmel Highlands, then out to a series of astonishing vistas, hills rising to my left (often a 30 to 40 degree grade) and falling away down to the Pacific on my right. Lucian, the wandering dreamer of Machen's tale, crosses the border of his neighbor's property to cut through and make his way up to the old Roman



fort, perched atop that hill since England was subjugated to Empire. The boy, the trespasser, once inside that circular ruin experiences... *something*. The details are of hallucinatory intensity, overwhelming the reader, breathless, yet also hazy. Lucian, too, learns how thin the skin between worlds.

This *something* remains inaccessible, something he could never quite properly reckon through the rest of his life, seeking always to somehow recapture this inchoate intensity through his writing and studies. Machen's tale ends in frustration, addiction, and ironic unmourned death. As for me- (not yet that far into the audio version of Machen's weird tale) weaving into thickening forest, past the River Inn, through rockier terrain (like the boy moving toward the top of that mystic hill) and finally down through two sharp curves to the place where Nothing Happens. Self-serve coffee on the porch, then seated facing west and the invisible sea, and writing with a flow not felt in months. No way to tell if it is any good, but the pen, at last, at last, flowing freely across the cheap paper of the composition book. An hour or two in, to stave off a cramp, then, into the library, to browse the books for sale. The centerpiece tucked in the corner, Henry Miller's 100, affordable Penguin paperbacks all black-spined with tiny white script. Taped to the front of those shelves is The List, Henry Miller's sacred/profane texts that conjured within him whatever it is we all chase. There it says: Arthur Machen, *The Hill of Dreams*. A skirmish won for the armies of magic, that day, my rationality fleeing improbability's flashing sword, and the chill grip of Miller's hand on one shoulder and Machen's on the other. The book was out of stock, but surely that's just Miller's joke from wherever he is. Had I been able to acquire it then that is something that would have Happened. I wrote with furious intent as the sun fell into a cloud that loomed just out there beyond the trees.

A few miles north, where I hadn't stopped that day, The River Inn's joke is you can get your drink and sit *in-river* to drink it. Old Adirondack chairs scattered among the rocks of the shallows there, water flowing that would sicken you if you slaked

your thirst. Stick with the pint or cocktail on the wide armrest. The sole toilet in the Library warns that the water is not potable- just flush and wash. Pictures, posters, book covers cover the toilet's walls. The reproduced cover of *Crazy Cock* is memorable, there above the mirror. I have a picture of Lina reflected mid-laugh in the mirror, 2009. *Crazy Cock* is not considered among his best work. The toilet also offers the opportunity to relieve Nature's demands near a large picture window onto the back porch, obscured slightly by an ancient sheer curtain.

In 2012 at Nepenthe after lunch (two broken glasses, one my fault, one the waiter's), we walked out onto the observation deck into sunshine falling onto our bodies from impossible angles and I said to her I wished I had a ring so I could propose, since it seemed a perfect moment and place. She said she wished so too, and so we laughed, agreed, gently blurring the border between engaged and not, and then we went to the library, where Nothing Happens. We played table tennis, repetition of her first ever match three years earlier. It had been not only her first visit to the library but her first time playing ping pong. The game would become a staple stress relief in the student center over her two years of grad school just beginning.

Lina's grad school complete, Machen's words accompanied me as I traced and retraced CA-1's rough sketch of the coastline, all that 2014 summer while Lina taught her first ESL classes as a TESOL master's graduate of the Monterey Institute of International Studies. MIIS also offers a master's degree in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies, which attracts a significantly different student demographic. Monterey is a language and linguistics center, thanks also to the US government's Defense Language Institute. (Even in that name one sees language always at war with itself, always entwined with ideology, or perhaps precisely nothing more than congealed ideology itself.) Something called a *Department of Defense* maintains around 800 (non-disavowed) military bases in over 70 countries. In 2001, a nation that provided some mid-1940s mild aid to the Red Army's project of defeating German fascism nevertheless

without batting an eye created a new federal department called "Homeland Security." Perhaps "Blood-and-Soil Security" was too clumsy and hyphenated in English. My wife's first teaching experience had been in the 1990s, almost exactly 900 miles north of Monterey near Tacoma, teaching Albanian to US soldiers preparing to deploy to Kosova, 42°23'00.5"N 20°25'45.1"E, to prevent further atrocities of the sort that her parents had correctly foreseen coming from Milosevic and his cronies.

The death of the name "Yugoslavia" had resurrected older imaginary lines and privations, and corrupt privatizations led to resurrection, darker still, of old grudges and vendettas—some real but mostly imagined. Lina's parents had foreseen this in fact with enough force and clarity that they arranged in 1995 for their youngest child, still in high school, to go on an exchange to Seattle and then remain seeking asylum, separated from them for over a decade while the blood, mud, piss of war marred their land and then receded. In the fragment some called Serbia her mother's reputation for reckless courage grew. ("Hey old woman, where are you going?" the gun-slung Serb on the tank chides. With a withering stare: "What do you mean where am I going? Where else am I going to go? Home!") As society broke down and the Serbs grew more vicious, she later drove the whole family through turmoil to Albania and safety. In 1940, Henry Miller left a Paris in deepening Teutonic shadow for Greece and then the United States, arriving in Big Sur in 1944, while the "Good War" still raged.

War is the place where everything happens, where all the things that should not happen happen, where whole peoples agree that for now (and for how long after?) nothing is forbidden, where all liberty can be taken, autonomy crushed. When we agree to war, we agree to unleash the darkest urges and acts of human toward human, human toward world, nature, life. We agree to erase borders between what can be and what cannot be, should not be. Lina's mother and her family returned to missing neighbors, a looted house, and partially burned and piss-soaked books in her father's library.

Romantic lens: only war hurled her out of orbit, into mine. Pathology of choosing romantic lens: death of thousands redeemed by focus on one happy couple. Love, supplemented by consumer culture, conquers all. (Factor both terrifying yet mitigating of blame: this choice of lens is made by most western popular art / culture industry.) Moral: refuse the romantic lens.

What else to refuse: The rhetoric of war. The metaphor of war: War on Terror. War on Drugs. War on Christmas. War on Free Speech. War on Religious Freedom. War on Poverty. So many different ideologically loaded uses- and do they not all serve to normalize war, accustom us to war and all its corollaries on a planet that now produces enough food and other resources to provide amply for every human living? But the Living are not a priority for us with the privilege of living where Nothing Happens, no drones overhead, no blockades, no black-outs, no checkpoints, no water shortages. They lie outside the imagined boundary (whichever one we need) that limits our responsibility and our care.

46°24'52.6"N 100°36'55.9"W

31°56'47.3"N 35°18'09.7"E

9°32'17.1"N 31°39'45.4"E

51°30'50.4"N 0°12'57.1"W

35°57'16.7"N 38°59'57.2"E

43°01'34.4"N 83°41'09.4"W

Old Roman fort on a hill in England. A house in California that's a library that doesn't loan books for a dead writer who never lived there at the base of the hill where nothing happens. Two hillsides, one north of the library, one south, each hurls its hill self toward where the sea slowly and endlessly erodes the shore.

*"It is the minority which sponsors war, and this minority always represents the vested interests . . . The vast majority of people in the world to-day not only believe but know the sole reason for war, in this day and age, is economic rivalry. [...] What I protest against, and what I will never admit to be right, is forcing a man against his will and his conscience to sacrifice his life for a cause which he does not believe in."*<sup>9</sup>

— Henry Miller

May we all one day have a place, while we yet live, where nothing happens. May we all choose to act so that we bring this to be.

HUSHIDAR MORTEZAIE

## WE ARE ONE

Mixed media (2009)





# JEHAN BSEISO

## REQUIEM FOR RAQQA

4th of July fireworks descend hot as acid,  
call it chemical, not white phosphorus,  
call it mistake, not massacre.

A doctor in East Ghouta tells me one grave holds  
his entire family.  
(you left me)

A pharmacist sends me a voice note saying there is no more  
Insulin.  
(you left me)

A politician in the US doesn't know what Aleppo is.  
(how could you leave me?)

In occupied Jerusalem, a young man says:  
"Syria is the Nakba of our generation."

(you broke my heart)

Hide in a café in Marseilles, order Turkish coffee with lots of  
sugar.  
Go to the library in Alexandria, order lots of books about politics.  
Stop reading.  
Don't watch Al Jazeera.  
Don't listen to the BBC.  
Make up your own mind, says Beirut graffiti.  
(but, you left me, you really left me)

It's been six years since I slept, Syria.

# SAHAR MUSTAFAH

## THE FIRST PLACE

Long before he lay curled up for two days under musty layers of sheep and goatskin then smuggled out of the country and across a desert, Fadil and his friends would drink a bottle of Johnnie Walker's Red Label Whisky as they argued the pinnacle of Al-Sayyab's free form verse when others had miserably fallen short.

They gathered every Thursday night—before Holy Friday—their banter swelling out of the pub where they drank. The old hajja who lived above it would admonish them from her window, shouting at them to fear the Lord. They cheerfully ignored her, still drinking and laughing and celebrating words and ideas. That was before his friend Basim was shot in the face outside his newspaper office. Before his friend Akram's body was found, his tongue and fingers missing.

Fadil was glad to find whisky in the next place where he could decipher a different Arabic dialect just enough to request a bottle from his host while he waited until many papers were filed, rejected, and filed again, before another boat took him across several seas. His host, a heavily bearded man, would shoo away his hijab-covered wife and their olive-skinned children after their supper, and he and Fadil would sit on the verandah and swat at mosquitoes with their cigarettes between their fingers. They drank without talking, listening to the muezzin's final call to prayer like the lament of a melancholic lover.

Nearly two years later, Fadil could get the whisky himself and carry it without discretion in this still new-place where you always wore a jacket or scarf and the inhabitants were blond and blue-eyed with skin white as the perpetual snow, a phenomenon that did not stop the bustle of life as it would have in the first place where Fadil had come from.

He was sitting in his assigned cubicle at the cultural center—across from him Gunjita, a middle-aged woman dressed

in a long sari, her golden arms shimmering from a layer of musk oil. Behind him sat Tendai, an old man, his skin the color of black figs, who wore a yellow tunic. He liked to imagine Tendai as a young man, once walking on rust-colored dirt roads, stone walls on either side of him. The three of them spoke to one another in perfect English, the only language they shared. On pre-paid cellular phones, they spoke to invisible faces in other languages, familiar only to Fadil in the tone of loss and loneliness that tinged their incomprehensible words.

At his desk, Fadil sketched the face of a lover from his past. For some reason, she had appeared again in his dreams, her scent of citrus and peonies lingering long after he had showered and dressed in his tiny flat in a quiet area of the city. It inspired him to compose a short story—a vignette, really—about a young couple struggling to be faithful to each other. Yesterday, Fadil added a few more touches and emailed it to Birgit, one of the directors at the center. A reading event had been scheduled in a few weeks at which an official from the Ministry of Culture would be in attendance. He and Gunjita and Tendai were the chief presenters.

“It’s quite an interesting style,” were Birgit’s first words as she stood before him at his cubicle this morning. On a corridor wall behind her was an enormous map of the world, what visitors first beheld when they entered the center. His country seemed so small in the company of others. It looked like a tiny puzzle piece he could easily extract, leaving an imperceptible hole in the continent. He wondered if the rest of the world would notice if the beheadings of foreigners had not turned their eyes towards it.

“Yes,” Fadil said. “I suppose I was imitating Mahfouz.”

“Good, good,” Birgit said. Her red-dyed hair was spiky and frost-tipped, her crystalline blue eyes piercing as she gazed down at Fadil where he sat on a swivel chair. “I like it. But, I was wondering about the scene where the lovers ride past the museum on a scooter. The extremists are looting it, yes? And flogging the museum curator in the street?”

She paused until Fadil nodded.

"Could you develop that some more? You seem to gloss over those details." She gave him a brilliant smile. "It's almost there."

Fadil was tempted to ask her where *there* was. The vignette was meant to capture the immutability of love against a backdrop of absurdity. Rather than explain this to Birgit, Fadil nodded his head then swiveled towards his desk and continued sketching. His lover's eyes were deeply set, so much that her eyelids were barely visible. Her lips were thin and pale like the pink dahlias blooming beneath her bedroom window at her father's house. Most days, she had worn her black and wavy hair in a loose bun, wrapping it in a silky scarf when she went to the souk so other men wouldn't bother her.

Fadil traced her neck and shoulders then stopped sketching. He had work to do. His story required a revision—or more technically, a redistribution of value. Less love affair, more flogging.

After some more writing and checking death tolls on social media, Fadil walked from the cultural center down a cobblestone street to a café overlooking a seaport. A row of pubs lined the pier and patrons drank and smoked past midnight. Fadil arrived in the late afternoon when it was relatively quiet. He sat at an outdoor table at a café that served Nescafe, which reminded him of the first place where he'd come from. He ordered a cup and drank it slowly and smoked, watching docked boats bobbing on the water. After a while, he closed his eyes and orange specks of sun danced across his lids.

They used to walk along the river, holding hands like a betrothed couple. She smoked and pointed her cigarette at the mountains, the sun dropping behind them.

A waiter pulled him from his reverie. "*Unnskyld, et glass vann?*"

Fadil nodded.

At the end of her morning classes at the university, Fadil picked her up on his scooter and they rode through the bustling

market. They arrived at a posh area of the city and at a newly constructed flat, which the wealthy parents of a friend of his owned. He'd given Fadil a key and clearance for the doorman.

Afterwards, she adjusted her brassiere and slipped back into a pair of mismatching panties. She lay on her back on top of the tangled sheets, an arm above her head and a glass ashtray poised on her flat stomach. She smoked a cigarette and touched his bare leg with her toes as he stretched beside her. Fadil was overcome by such love for her he was afraid she would see it in his eyes. She never brought up marriage and he had finally realized that he might lose her if he did propose. She didn't desire that. She wanted to be free to study and work—the burdens of domesticity had turned two of her sisters into submissive wives and mothers.

"I want to preserve my freedom," she had told Fadil. A year before the kidnappings and executions, she refused to see him anymore. Their walks and afternoons in the flat ceased. One day, she called Fadil and told him she had fallen in love with another man. She married him and they left the country before catastrophe hit. Fadil was ultimately gripped by a tragic reality: she had never felt real love for him. For, in love, one unthinkingly surrenders everything, including freedom. Fadil had not stirred her to the point of relinquishing her autonomy and abandoning her cynicism.

The waiter brought him a glass of water and he drank it. He pulled out a small lined notebook from his shirt pocket and a retractable pen. An idea for another short story had suddenly come to him.

His cellular phone buzzed as he jotted down a few phrases. It was a message from Birgit:

*See attached flyer for the reading next week—it will be brilliant!  
How's the story coming along?*

Instead of replying, Fadil ordered a whisky. The sun had started to dip, casting a lovely glow over the red and blue-tiled

houses lining the pier opposite of him. He lit another cigarette and returned to his notebook.

He'd give them their stories and perhaps one day when he could return to the place where he'd come from, he'd piece together his own.



## KELSEY SHEA IN LEBANON, DISDAIN

Disdain. Indolent, yet pervasive, like the sticky mid- afternoon heat, the faint smell of simmering garbage in the alleyways. It permeated spaces unseen and unspoken, cloying and crawling and languorously damning us all.

At the hospital, disdain lived in the spreadsheet column dedicated to patient nationality, in the obsession with payment for services, with questioning the UN reimbursements, with photocopying identification cards. We did not create the disdain, but we justified it, we slipped easily into the bureaucratic racism and the order it provided. The disdain crawled onto our hands as we folded money into envelopes and stamped patient documents. It landed on our tongues when the news spoke of fires in the camps and extrajudicial killings but we spoke instead of restaurants and weekends at the beach.

The lack of surprise when a young Syrian patient arrived comatose after falling 8 meters at a construction site. *Polytraumatisé* read the doctor's notes, with multiple injuries endangering our patient's vital functions. But his many traumas had begun long before his fall, and would not end despite his miraculous recovery. We rejoiced, of course, when he regained full consciousness, and smiled with him as he walked out of the emergency room shirtless and unfazed. But it was a tempered and uneasy joy because, at just nineteen, our patient's body was resilient but had become disposable.

The resentful, relentless chasm between us and the tiniest of our patients, the five year old boy from Aleppo with a broken arm and darkened eyes. Perched awkwardly on the emergency room bed, his face gave no hint of his distress but his uninjured hand betrayed him. One thumb twisted frantically through a belt

loop and tugged desperately at the fabric, the only hint of his fear. He glanced wide-eyed at his mother for the briefest moment, then studiously looked back down at his feet. Five years old and he didn't want to burden her with his worries.

*Habibi albi*, your pain is not a burden. Syria, your pain is not a burden, your children are not a burden. We speak of lack of infrastructure and unclear loyalties and terrorism threats but what we mean to say is that our hearts have grown small and distrustful. Our resentment may condemn us but the weight of it is breaking your backs and bowing your heads. And yet you are steadfast, persistent in the face of injury and fear. You don't deserve our disdain and you don't need our awe.

Your pain is not a burden. A human being is not a burden.

# JEHAN BSEISO

## AFTER ALEPPO

I learned to read early.

But the truth is, sometimes I wish the letters remained funny  
drawings for longer, before the uninvited tyranny of words, and  
before other tongues found home in my big mouth.

I don't mean it literally.

One day, we will go back to Aleppo you said.  
You don't mean it literally.

Habeebi four years ago we shouted for change, and now we  
are citizens of border towns.  
We go from Turkey, to Lebanon, to Egypt, but we don't find  
Aleppo.

We have food vouchers, and, assistance criteria,  
and, intermittent empathy.  
I don't write any more poetry.

The boat is sinking,  
literally,  
but I don't want to leave this room.  
It smells like jasmine and you taste like freedom.

# ADNAN SAMMAN



We Live for the Country  
Mixed media, collage (2016)



Tonight  
Mixed media, collage (2016)





## CARLY ROSENTHAL

### HEBRON (21 APRIL, 2017)

Hebron is the peak of the occupation in my eyes. If you want to see apartheid, go to Hebron. Unlike in other areas where the occupation continues almost unnoticed, in Hebron, it is impossible to miss. Two systems of law for two different peoples. Jewish Israeli citizens living under civilian law and Palestinians living under military occupation law. This dual legal system has dire consequences for Palestinians including unjust court systems, arrests, night raids, lack of freedom of movement and discrimination. The Jewish residents are typically religious nationalists, insisting that all of this land belongs to the Jews. Their fervent ideological stance promotes even more tension and suffering. The young, armed, Israeli soldiers on every corner are ultimately there to protect this Jewish population of around 850. In this photo, we were on a tour of Hebron with “Breaking the Silence,” an Israeli organisation of ex-IDF soldiers who oppose the occupation and collect testimonies of soldiers who served in the occupied territories. We see a soldier escorting a group of Jewish settlers down the street. The main message I took from the tour was that the soldiers are not necessarily cruel and evil human beings but rather the system of occupation is, and that is what has to end.

# ELISSA RABIN

## WAR ZONES IN CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

My first trip to the West Bank was a visit to Hebron in the waning days of 2013. We pulled up to the plaza just outside of the Cave of the Patriarchs in an armored bus. I was on a trip called “HaMerkaz” (the center), during which I spent ten days learning about Judaism in the mornings at a women’s seminary in Jerusalem, and toured around the country in the afternoons. I went on the trip mostly because I wanted to get back to Israel to visit the host family I had lived with in the south of the country a year and a half prior.

As we climbed out of our armored bus, I thought of my mother sitting half a world away, who would be more than a little anxious if she knew that I was in the West Bank—that scary, mysterious place where the news tells us terrorists attack unwitting Jews. I recall taking a picture of a young man and a boy, tending a donkey and carrying a cart—the elusive Palestinians I had read about in news reports. I tried to ask questions of my trip leaders about the Palestinians—*was it true, what I was reading, that Israel was upholding a military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza? Was the Israeli military really to blame for human rights violations of Palestinians?* I was told swiftly that these were ridiculous, blasphemous questions—questions that had absolutely no grounding in truth.

It is incredible to me the way in which a person can vacation, tour, and even live for short periods of time in Israel without witnessing, or feeling as though they are in a war zone. I visited Israel/Palestine four separate times, spending a collective ten and a half weeks in the country without ever having such a feeling.

On a warm spring day some three and a half years after my first trip to the West Bank, however, I again found myself in Hebron. This time, I arrived in a small, unarmored *sheirut* tour bus, guided by former Israeli soldiers who had once served in





בית  
ביצור  
שטח



the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in the Occupied Territories.

Hebron is the largest Palestinian city in the West Bank, with a population of roughly 250,000 Palestinians. The city is divided into two areas, H1 and H2. H2 makes up roughly 20% of the city, and is under control of the Israeli military. It is also where roughly 850 settlers live, and thus, where roughly 600 Israeli soldiers are deployed to protect them. This also means that the Palestinians who live in H2 live under military law, not civil law. This is not the case, however, for the Jews living in H2, who have special police enacting Israeli civil law for them.

Walking in the old downtown of Hebron, I feel as though I have entered the stereotypical warzone of my imaginings. The



streets are entirely abandoned, the buildings crumbling, cement blocks obstructing what used to be the entrance to the main market. Every several hundred feet there are military checkpoints, manned by Israeli soldiers clad in olive green uniforms, flanked by machine guns.

They call H2 Hebron a “ghost town”; 42% of the downtown is entirely abandoned. On some streets, Palestinians are not allowed to drive cars. On some streets, Palestinians are not even allowed to walk. The army calls this policy “sterilization.” Palestinians who have homes with front doors on these sterilized streets cannot walk out of their front doors to access *anything*—not to go to school, work, or the market to buy food. Their homes are easily identifiable by the graffiti sprayed on the front in Hebrew, *biduk b’yitziah*; “check upon exit” reminding soldiers to “check” the citizens of these homes before they are allowed to leave.

I spent the bus ride back to Jerusalem that one day mostly feeling numb. Up until that point, I spent two months living in Jerusalem, passing each day learning about the conflict, and feeling increasingly pessimistic. Throughout my formative years, I was sold on Israel as a kind of “Disneyland” for Jews; a place where, after thousands of years of oppression, our people can finally be free, independent, and prosperous. I was raised believing that being a part of “the chosen people” meant that “my people” were different than others—inherently moral and good, taking the hard path and asking and debating the toughest questions. Learning that this isn’t true, confronting the humanity of the Jewish people—in all of its flawed glory—has been one of the greatest internal wars I deal with in my life.

I don’t remember the specific details. I just know that a few days after my Israeli friend texted me in November of 2012 to tell me that the IDF had just started a military operation in Gaza, I found myself sobbing on the floor of my dorm room, hot angry tears streaming down my face. I had spent the last few days e-mailing the family I had lived with the previous summer in Israel, and Googling everything I could about what was hap-



pening in the country. My roommate at the time, also Jewish, had encouraged me to expand the scope of what I was reading about the latest round of violence. That war, Operation Pillar of Defense, changed the trajectory of the development of my identity as a diaspora Jew.

Since that time, I have- in what I believe is the truest form of what my religion encourages- asked many questions.

I am asking questions about politics: what kinds of policies is the Israeli government putting in place? Is the situation there a military occupation? What does it mean to have security concerns - and which are justified - and which are being co-opted for the purposes of control? What would/should/could a peaceful and just solution look like in this land and in this conflict?

I am asking questions about Judaism and the Jewish people: does the Torah tell us that all of the Land of Israel is for the Jews? Does this mean it is only for the Jews, at the expense of all other peoples? How literally should we interpret the Torah in 2017? Do thousands of years of historical oppression and displacement justify the oppression and displacement of another people? Does my religion *endorse* this oppression, or is my Judaism merely being used as a tool in geopolitics?

I am asking questions about myself: what is my role in all of this? Do I have the right to express my opinions on Israel/Palestine? How much can I say, given my identity as a diaspora Jew, my limited experience living in Israel/Palestine, and my choice not to make *Aliyah*? Does my criticism and concern come from a place of anger and bitterness, or a place of genuine love and concern for the future of the Jewish people?

I have been called a self-hating Jew. I have been told that criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic. I have gotten into arguments with loved ones over my belief that the current political situation in Israel/Palestine is untenable. I've been made to feel as though I must choose a side in this conflict—as if the world can be decided in absolutes, as if the world respects the lines and borders it has created.

Warzones are violent, electrically charged, lonely places. They are, as I have experienced them, terrifyingly sad, and, perhaps, a place of truth. These spaces show us the ugliest truth of humanity; the starkest expressions of insecurity, of hunger for stability and acceptance. In Hebron, the Jewish state longs for the acceptance of its historical tie to the Cave of the Patriarchs; it hungers for control and stability expressed in the most tragic of ways. I ask questions in the hopes that I will find acceptance from my own community, in the hopes that the Jewish people can do and be better, and to find stability in my identity as a diaspora Jew working for justice.





# CARLY ROSENTHAL

## SUMUD FREEDOM CAMP

(19 MAY, 2017)

Sumud Freedom Camp was an historical action, organised by an unprecedented coalition of Palestinians, Israelis and over one hundred international Jews. The action took place in the South Hebron Hills of the West Bank. The organisations involved were the Center for Jewish Non-Violence, All That's Left, The Holy Land Trust, Combatants for Peace and the South Hebron Hills Popular Resistance Committee, as well as the displaced families of Sarura. The action was expected to last a few hours and instead successfully ran for over a month. The camp was set up to support the return of a Palestinian family who was displaced from their homes in 1997. This photo was taken on the first day, when around 300 people joined together to support the return of the family. Pictured in the foreground in grey shirts are the local Palestinians and in the purple and pink shirts are international Jews cleaning up one of the old caves where the families of Sarura used to live. This would become the main sitting and sleeping area of the camp. It was very hot but we were strong in numbers, working quickly while learning names and sharing a lot of laughter.



# EMILY SCHNEIDER

## EMPATHY, SHAME AND PLACE: PATHS TO IDEOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION AND ANTI-WAR ACTIVISM

A few days before my high school graduation, all of the students in my class were asked to pick a country's flag to hold during our graduation ceremony. We were told to choose a flag that represented our identity, to pick a country that meant something to us, our family, or our heritage. I chose the Israeli flag. Although I had never been to Israel before, it was an easy decision. The Star of David bordered by two thick, matching blue lines was an image that had long been woven into my sense of self. Looking out onto the colorful array of flags, there was only one I could see myself in, the Israeli flag was the obvious representation of me.

As a preschooler, I colored in the lines of that flag, learning early on how to draw a "Jewish Star." I didn't want to draw regular stars. I was Jewish, and I was proud to have a special star that was different from my classmates'. In elementary school, I learned about the mystical Dead Sea, where people floated on water. I turned the pages of children's books about the colorful markets of Be'er Sheva and the holiness of Jerusalem. I was told that Israel was my people's redemption after the greatest moral catastrophe in human history. My grandparents and great-grandparents had emerged from the ashes of pure evil and hate. Despite insurmountable challenges, they defied all things racist and violent, and had created a small place where my people would finally be safe and free.

On my first day of college, I proudly placed a 4x6 inch Israeli flag in my dorm room. Each post of my bed had a small hole that was intended to connect bunk beds. I lived in a single,

and so I used the hole in the bottom left post to raise my flag. I liked that it communicated my unique identity, and I liked that, to me, it stood for the principles I believed in – principles of equality, liberation, and freedom.

There were two events that I can trace to my decision to take the flag down. The first was a play called “My Name is Rachel Corrie.” Rachel Corrie was a 23-year old American activist who was killed by an Israeli bulldozer while she was protesting the demolition of Palestinians’ homes. A poster hanging in the student center with the words “Israel,” “human rights,” and “activist” had caught my eye, and so, a friend and I decided to go to the play without much context of who she was and what had happened to her. Within minutes of the curtains opening, I realized that this Rachel, a blonde, recent college graduate from Washington, had looked like me, she had talked like me, and she had thought like me. By the end of the play, I had also realized that the country I loved, the place that symbolized my uniqueness in the US, and that represented my deepest values and convictions had killed her. They killed someone who as a fifth grader chose her class project to be on ending world hunger. I was once a fifth grader who wanted to end world hunger. Israel murdered someone like me.

The second event was a lecture at UC Boulder by a representative of the Palestinian Authority. From what I remember, the speaker, a low-level member of the PA, didn’t say anything particularly inflammatory or controversial. He did say something though about Israel’s racist policies, and that got me going. I stood up in tears, and made some nonsensical argument about my mother, a white Jewish convert, being allowed to immigrate to Israel, and how this openness to all Jews was proof of Israel’s lack of racism. At the time, I couldn’t understand how my focus on Israel’s law of return, a law that exclusively grants Jews immigration privileges over all others, perfectly exemplified his argument. I also wasn’t aware that Reform converts are largely unaccepted as Jews in Israeli society, an issue that is currently escalating but beside the point.<sup>10</sup>



What happened next was one of the most tense and disorienting events of my life. The entire audience began glaring and then booing me. The man behind me even threw something towards my head. We were trapped in the first row between the speaker and a swarm of 50 liberal Boulderites whose looks of disgust sent me into a panic. The Q&A ended shortly after, and the people around us continued to hurl insults at me throughout the evening as I floated between defensiveness and tears. One woman walked up to me and calmly reassured me that with time I would see the truth.

Fast forward three years later and I am living in Israel with my Israeli-soldier boyfriend. I have a budding criticism of what I once thought about this place, but I am still skeptical and cautious of conflicting information.

I decide to take a tour with a Palestinian company that will lead me through areas of the occupied West Bank. I spend four hours getting from our apartment in Tel Aviv to East Jerusalem. First, I take the Northbound train instead of the Southbound train. I get off in a town called Kfar Saba, not realizing that Jerusalem is Southeast of Tel Aviv. Luckily there is a train that leaves soon and takes me to West Jerusalem. Once I arrive, I manage to reach Damascus Gate, the Old City's iconic landmark of crossover from West to East. I stumble through the winding, unnamed streets of East Jerusalem and arrive at the tour's meeting point.

I sit nervously in the designated hotel café, not sure if I am in the right place. Finally, the guide arrives, he looks around and sees me sitting alone in the empty restaurant with a cup of mint tea. He's annoyed and reluctantly asks if I'm here for the tour. I smile, and eagerly walk towards him, clumsily grabbing my backpack and raincoat. He begins to tell me that the tour is probably going to be cancelled since no one else has shown up. I quickly jump into a passionate recounting of my long, arduous journey to Jerusalem. I beg him to take me around, even if it's just for a little bit. He agrees and off we go.

For a moment, my racist upbringing towards Palestinians

causes me to wonder about the guide's intentions. Am I safe? Is he going to kill me? What am I doing here alone? Even though these fears quickly subsided, I remain embarrassed that the thoughts crossed my mind.

Our first stop is a gas station. It's clear we're not following a normal tour route, but I am excited for the adventure. I sit in a plastic chair next to three Palestinian men smoking Shisha, while my guide goes in to buy two Cokes and a bag of potato chips. I notice that all the buildings around me are a gray-white color. There's trash everywhere. Piles of construction materials and cement blocks with thick twisted bolts eerily surround us. The economic inequality between here and Tel Aviv is stark, undeniable.

After our Cokes and some friendly banter with the men on the plastic chairs, we drive to the infamous separation wall. I've been told up until now that this wall keeps me safe, it keeps the terrorists out. The piles of trash are even taller here, and the sea of gray-white cement is refreshingly disrupted by colorful graffiti. I have lots of questions for my guide. "Isn't this wall necessary for security?" "What about the 90% drop in suicide bombings?" "Wait a second," he says. He lights a cigarette and leans back into his seat. "See that opening in the wall over there? Within the time we're sitting here, I bet you 20 shekels that someone is going to come and cross right through the wall." I sit in fidgety anticipation, not sure whether to hope he is right or wrong.

Sure enough within about five minutes, a young man with a small red backpack cautiously approaches the wall. He looks left and right, and then slides his body through the narrow opening, carefully stepping over a pile of rubble. Within a few seconds he has taken off running into the Western, Israeli-controlled side of Jerusalem. My guide was right.

I went home that night waiting to hear on the news about a terror attack in Jerusalem, or at least about a Palestinian infiltrator being caught on the other side of the wall. It didn't take long after that tour for me to understand that people like

the man with the red backpack weren't sneaking into Israel to kill Jews, as I had been led to believe. Soon after the tour, I began reading books and articles that led me, relatively quickly, to the realization that the wall wasn't really about security. It was easy now for me to hear the arguments that I had previously resisted, that the wall was there to confiscate land and to control the Palestinian people. More reading, debate, and travel all painted a clear picture of a civilian population that is systematically denied their most basic rights by the state of Israel. I realized I had been wrong. My political views continued to shift dramatically throughout the coming months.

Why and how did I go through such a dramatic transformation? It seems rare for people to change their minds about their core political beliefs, especially when those issues are connected to a person's identity. And yet, young American Jews are shifting in droves to more critical views of Israel compared to the views they were raised on. According to the 2013 PEW study on Jewish Americans,<sup>11</sup> the majority of respondents over 65 reported that caring about Israel is an essential part of their Jewish identity, while only one-third of respondents under 30 made the same claim. In addition, while 45 percent of respondents over 65 felt that the Israeli government was making a sincere effort to reach a peace agreement, only 26 percent of respondents under 30 agreed. Just last month, a study by the Brand Israel Group revealed that support for Israel among Jewish college students in the US has dropped 27% since 2010.<sup>12</sup> The last six years have also seen the rise of large, well-organized anti-occupation Jewish groups such as All That's Left, Open Hillel, and IfNotNow, all of which are explicitly oriented towards young, predominately American Jews.

If I take my own case as an example, one can identify three critical turning points in my trajectory – the Rachel Corrie play, the CU Boulder lecture, and the tour of the West Bank. What happened in each of these events that shook me so profoundly?

In this first event, I became aware of a wrong that no longer fit within my racist configurations of innocence and culpa-

bility. With Rachel Corrie, I was not able to rely on demographic markers of guilt to forgivingly interpret Israeli acts of violence. I had been taught that Palestinians were not to be trusted, that they were violent, and that the Israeli army would perform as the moral superior in moments of confrontation. When the victim shared my own positionality however, the logics of collective discrediting no longer held up.

At the lecture, I was publically shamed for my beliefs and felt ostracized from an ideological community I identified with. For the first time, I was considered outside the anti-war and pro-human rights community. At the moment, I reacted like most people do when they are attacked, I felt defensive and alienated. However, with time, the ways in which my beliefs on Israel/Palestine put me outside the margins of an accepted human rights advocate became clearer. The pushback I received at the lecture was an abrupt, but perhaps necessary, moment in my realizing that my beliefs were inconsistent with collective understandings of what it meant to oppose war and militarization.

The tour felt like the final straw. If now, I had genuinely empathized with a victim of Israeli violence, and then I had been made aware of the ways that my views put me outside the confines of my desired ideological location, I was perhaps primed and ready to accept new, contradictory knowledge.

Taken together, my own experiences suggest three necessary conditions that may facilitate political transformation. First, one must experience a deep and genuine connection with someone from the “other side” of the issue. As long as victims of Israeli violence remain dehumanized to its supporters, no logical, political, or moral argument is likely to shake them. Unfortunately, our ability to empathize with others is often deeply bound to our own social locations and subsequent prejudices. We live in a society that systemically dehumanizes people of color both here in the United States and abroad. Our society's economic system and military objectives depend on a devaluing of black and brown lives, which transfers into the ways that

Palestinians are perceived. For me, it took a white woman being crushed by an Israeli bulldozer to seriously consider the immorality of Israel's actions.

This is not to say that change can only occur when violence reaches a victim who shares a bystander's positionality. While this is one type of impetus for personal change, this also means that change can occur, perhaps more effectively, through stronger connections and shared channels of resistance among oppressed populations. While power may still lie in the hands of a wealthy, white elite, the road towards solidarity and empathy seems much more likely among those who share social contexts of violent exclusion and disenfranchisement.

The second incident suggests that despite the unpleasantness of such encounters, feelings of shame, ostracization, and confusion may be productive in sparking major attitude change. It's hard to imagine any situation where a person shifts from one end of the political spectrum to another without any period of self-doubt, frustration, and reflection. Publically marking political inconsistencies and boundaries of value-based inclusion is an essential component of social movement formation. Attitudinal lines are drawn in order to delineate the focus of the collective thinking that drives collective action. When a person finds him or herself outside those ideological boundaries, but still committed to a cause, an attitudinal shift seems likely.

While I suspect that these two events were fundamental in shaping my political consciousness, the event that I have always referenced when thinking about or explaining my so-called turning point on Israel/Palestine, was the tour I took to the West Bank.

Tourism is perhaps one of the most explicit mediums by which physical space is interpreted and created for specific meaning-making outcomes. Since the founding of the state, Israel has used tourism to establish and maintain Jewish allegiance to Zionism. Today, Palestinian and Jewish/Israeli activists are re-appropriating tourism in order to influence Jewish sup-

port for the state of Israel. By hearing directly from Palestinians living in the West Bank and by witnessing physical markers of the occupation first-hand, activists hope that these tours will challenge travelers' misconceptions and inspire them to work for change within their own communities.<sup>13</sup>

Tourism is of course a flawed strategy, it is environmentally destructive and it relies on unequal, and often exploitative power dynamics.<sup>14</sup> Without cultural and economic hierarchies in place, wealthy, predominately white travelers would not be able to engage in tourism as it currently functions. Under global capitalism, tourism is premised on populations in certain geographic locations having enough disposable income for pleasure-based travel. At the same time, populations in tourism destinations are locked in place by financial strain and then incentivized to commodify their cultures for foreign audiences. As tourism grows, local infrastructural developments begin to prioritize foreign tourists, which further robs citizens of basic social services. This creates a dependent relationship that both requires and exacerbates economic inequality, as countries in the global periphery are held to international arrangements that depend upon their economic and cultural subjugation.

Nonetheless, the visceral power of physical presence and of visual witnessing is undeniable. While my previous experiences may have put me in a position to more openly receive the information on my tour, I am convinced that it was this experience of geographic exploration, of tourism, that solidified the transformation of my political views. Over the past three years, I have collected hundreds of testimonies from Jewish-Americans that attest to the transformative power of tourism to Israel/Palestine. Over and over, my interviewees tell me how "nothing compares to seeing something with your own eyes." The Jewish activists and educators I talk to consistently refer to tours like mine as key turning points in their identities, activism, and political views.

The relationship between place and political mobilization, especially in regards to war and violent conflicts such



as in Israel/Palestine, is one that cannot be ignored. Physical place, and the rights of indigenous and oppressed populations to narrate the stories of their homes is essential to educational activism. How then can we think about facilitating opposition to war and violence through methods of change that call for international movement and witnessing? Looking back on my own political journey, I find myself torn between the desire to recreate my experience of travel and witnessing for others, and my concerns with using tourism as a vehicle for social change. Activist-scholars are in a unique position to empirically address these questions, while tending to the need to build movements and support ideological transformations that resist war, oppression, and military occupation. There are many roads to political engagement, and the road of travel is one wrought with contradictions, but capable of fantastic results. It is for both of these reasons that it deserves our attention.

# BROOKE LARSON

## SIREN SONG

Summer is the time to go on holiday, Jerusalemites tell me, because summer is when blood gets hot and war breaks out. The UN has not yet recognized a positive correlation between degrees and missiles, but I feel it on the ground. Jerusalem, on a normal breezy day, is easily ten planets in one. Turn up the sun, and she manifests full-on multiple-cosmos disorder.

For her I sing the needle-skipping song of world hopping. Both feet on summer fire on shifty stones.

My mind flashes to this month last summer. I was camped out with a small group of people in the Arizona desert. It was sometime in the night, hardly a moon, a handful of stars, I crawled out of my blanket to go take a leak. The ground was a checkerboard of indigo juniper shadows. While I didn't wander off very far, I found that when I turned back to camp, I was in a different landscape. No. On a different plane. Everything had shifted, rotated. Translated. I saw our fire, but it was not our fire. Where my group had been sleeping on the ground was now a ring of rocks. What was uphill was downhill, what was desert, wooded. There was a cowboy hat on a fence silhouetted against the sky, which was a different sky. For a second, wildfire panic swept through my body. And then it snuffed out, totally. And there in the fear's place, from far inside, came the shrug of all shrugs — a metaphysical one, deep in my mental musculature — that said: Huh, so I guess here is where I cross over into another dimension. Ok.

It was the opposite of a psychotic break. It was a psychic homecoming. My twilight mind revealing to me just how deeply I believe in the fundamentally unbelievable nature of this world.

Maybe this is the quality that drew me, an utter outsider -- Scandinavian-American agnostic from polygamist Mormon stock, anyone? -- to Jerusalem in the first place, and what keeps me here, shockingly at home in the otherness. Jerusalem

is my style of reality. Kaleidescopic, a kind of kinetic montage, divergent worlds and scenes and sounds blurring and colliding and cutting and jumping – where the daily spontaneous catechism is how in the world did I get here? – said with doubt and hope and delight and wonder.

And, lest I fool myself – fear.

Worlds killing each other, worlds flattening other worlds, worlds insecurely securing only their world as the world, unchecked worlds of check points, worlds going around, coming around, dark moon worlds you pray under to bring back the light, because it's a world where there's a story that says the sun and the moon used to be equal, that the world is made not of atoms but stories, and stories are shadow phases of the world with power to faze out the Other or give her a face, oh our Father, bless us now with foreign tongues and forgive us our familiar stories.

Stay out of the Muslim, Armenian, and Christian quarters, said the security email. So of course I would meet on my night walk an Armenian Palestinian who lives in the Christian quarter. And follow him home. As with most every meeting in Jerusalem, this was not our first. By some cosmic sitcom force, in Jerusalem we are all cameo visitations in one another's lives. You see the same people again and again. And without going into names or places or phone numbers, you fall into conversations like you'd always known each other.

So it was that when he and I bumped heads on Ben Yehuda Street, we were suddenly talking about the modern exile of spiritual masculinity, peace farms in Kentucky, and his neighbor who got the crap beat out of him this week. He doesn't look Palestinian. And he let that fact unfold slowly. Our greeting turned into a walking, turned into journeying, and he told me about hiding his identity as a hormonal teen, trying to get with Israeli girls because what options did he have in his own culture? and how that lie messed him up inside and how later, when asked "what" he was at a check point, he said all pointedly "Palestinian" and how that word messed up his face with bruise-

es. I've heard these stories before. What was different was the Buddha grin he told them with. "Thank you for asking," "Thank you for listening," he kept smiling. His family fleeing genocide in Armenia, then from Turkey, then Syria, then arriving in Palestine, just in time for The Catastrophe. And he was telling me this with kind eye crinkles and no residue of bitterness. "I made it a study," he said, "if you can love your enemies. I wanted to know if it was real. And it is, a scientific fact. I'm not interested in Palestinians or Israelis. I care about humans."

He led me through the Old City gate, into the labyrinth of the Christian quarter, incense-infused and vaguely rotting. I thought it was a bad idea for a whole half second. He unlocked the gate to his home. A vast, moon-soaked courtyard surrounded by stony rooms. A basket sat under the gibbous moon full of ragged soccer balls – "Bombing our courtyard long before the 6 day war." He showed me inside. Spice tea and cushions and Turkish delight, Lebanese music – we were dancing, twirling, clapping, him teaching me traditional steps and me spastically transgressing them – we arm wrestled, we leg wrestled, and from my place as the loser sprawled out on the ground, I lay and listened to him play the Oud and sing Arab poetry. An extra note here and there of gun shots. As I left we told each other our names.

If my whimsical ass had been just a few kilometers to the east, I would've heard a different world: fire bombs, noise bombs, tear gas, rock throwing, rioting and chanting, shooting, police, ambulances, not even one love poem.

Jerusalem has meaning beyond its means, bursting at the seams with its own symbolism.

There's the feeling that I'm always crossing thresholds. Climbing branches that just keep branching. Now a stranger is barbecuing me lamb, now I'm helping in the kitchen of some church, now I am praying at the Wall, now dancing at a disco, klezmer and protest, absinthe and Zohar. Reading in a park a woman asks if I want to walk her dog with her. A friend and I serendipitously converge on a footpath at midnight under the

moon, and the wondrous feeling that nothing could be more natural. This is one day.

What is this rapid-fire metabolizing of reality? I feel like it has something to do with the warmth – and the heat – that is radiated here – by the people, by the stones, by the friction of devotion. You feel it under your skin – the thigh bruises of angels, flowing oil of lovers, rugburn of siblings wrestling from the womb.

Before it was confirmed last summer that the Arab boy who died was in fact a revenge killing by Jews in Jerusalem, I was at shabbat dinner with friends. We said a blessing for the families of the kidnapped and murdered Jewish boys. Then one of the guests said, “I think we should say a blessing for the Arabs.” He talked about how he’d never been ashamed as an Israeli until the past week. Everyone started talking, mostly talk about why would we want to talk about this? Too heavy for shabbos. And then my friend, and our host, gave over a lovely bit of kabbalah about how we need to engage the dark and muddy to elevate those things to a higher level of consciousness.

With all that talk, we didn’t say the blessing for the Arab families.

I found myself very upset later with all the abstractions. Why couldn’t we do something concrete and give that blessing? And then I was bolt upright upset at my thought. Since when has prayer been concrete? I’ve been in Jerusalem too long.

Before we knew there were missiles headed to Jerusalem, I was at a forum with a speaker from ACRI, The Association for Civil Rights in Israel. ACRI denounces the Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip that target residential buildings. The Israeli woman speaking worked in East Jerusalem. She told us about the violence and violations she’d seen over the past week between Police and Arab-Israelis. She showed us pictures and stories. She was surprisingly soft-spoken, has family living in Zionist settlements, and shared powerfully disturbing facts. “I love my family, and they love me. We just don’t talk about my work.”

Separated worlds without end.

I left on fire with the Palestinian plight. I met a Zionist friend for dinner, we sat outside and argued.

When the first siren went off. Jesus – what a sound. A ghostly alarm straight from the black and white cinematic abyss of World Wars. It flooded the whole city. What is that? My friend and I looked at each other. People were running, rushing, confused. We followed a panicked crowd inside.

You mean to tell me a missile can reach right where I'm sitting?

Well this was a different story. I wasn't thinking about safe water and electric access for Palestinians anymore. A deeper bias, both perverse and natural, had been born in my intestines at the first howl of that siren.

I get it, that I don't know anything. What living with chronic fear can do to a person and whole peoples.

After the sirens we watched the futbol game outside, like always. Small streets of big screens, beers, throngs. In response to the sirens, everyone ordered another round. What else to do? said the girl who insisted we two l'chaim, and l'chaim again. We heard the boom, and another boom.

Nine boys had the same idea to go out and watch the game, in Gaza. The bar blew up, their body parts scattered in the sands.

In Jerusalem, sound, too, is a layering of worlds.

Against my writing is a background of traffic. I half-hear the constant stream of car horns, high and low, faint, harsh, when one sound peels off from the noise, rising, hovering over the honking void. My ears perk up and I realize, with a chill, it's a ram's horn. Re-calling that ram in the thicket.

Abraham, don't you touch that boy.

A techno song plays in a bar in West Jerusalem. At once I see everyone flinch, look around. Was that a siren? Everyone laughs nervously. It's in the music. There are sirens in the song. Jerusalem, psych of song of songs. Can someone please play something else?

On Saturday morning I do not visit the Mormon church,



which is on lockdown. But I can't stay away from Jerusalem's flaring innards. I find myself walking around the wall of the Old City. Around inside, and around again outside. My head is covered and my face is veiled, a walking outside-inside. The evening before, before prayers in the synagogue with a curtain between the women and the men, I was outside reading in the grass – my own sacred ritual. A man came to lie there, close by, and I thought, Ok it's a free world, when the man started pushing his hips into the grass digging his eyes into me. And before this, the black-hatted Ultra-Orthodox man who out of the blue kissed my face and ran like hell.

Because in Jerusalem people are such lovers they kiss stones and books and walls and ruins and every alley of the Old City glistens with lip grease, a sliding slipping love, a city loved up unto death, you have to shroud yourself against so much love, and the veils create more desire and the mounting desire creates more veils and all things hurt and destroy in all that holy mounting.

Don't look at me. I don't want your violence. I'll be violent back. Cover myself until I cut you out of sight. That's how I add my violence today, walking Jerusalem above the graves, body and face wrapped up with a scarf and a book, reading inside a gauzy blue womb. And from inside I can read out loud, pronounce a poem over the city.

*Why is Jerusalem always two, of above and of below  
and I want to live in Jerusalem of in between  
without hitting my head above without stubbing my toe below  
and why is Jerusalem a pair like hands and legs,  
I want to live in one Jerusalem  
Because I am only one I and not many 'I's*

But the want of one Jerusalem means one must be many at once. And you can read 'want' both ways. Any way I read this place, I have too many I's to fit in my head. I got no blessing for you Jerusalem but my equivocations. A sacrifice of my first-

born stories. A covenant to rethink them, and a commitment to no conclusion.

One of Jerusalem's most far-out world-hoppers uses my friend's apartment as his threshold. That's where I met him one evening. My friend got a call, said someone he knew was stopping by. Ok, cool. Then in walks a Haredi man with black beard to his mid-chest, long flowy forelocks, black hat and long black coat. He knew who I was. (World-hopper radar.) But I had yet to meet his other self.

He had us get to work, and play dress-up. Trying different hats on him (black sombrero, lady's sun hat, teardrop fedora), different t-shirts, stylish jackets. He tied his spiraled locks in a knot on top of his head, tucked under a newsboy cap (the winner). And then he was off and running to paint the town not black and white.

I run into him all over the underworld. He appears, rocks out, vanishes again. "There's day and there's night," he said to me, "but you don't say they're separate. They go together. Life is hard, so I figured out a way to live. I don't see a contradiction." Last week, walking back from the kotel alone at night, I saw in the yellow glow of an Old City alley a small group of men in traditional silk striped robes, more beard than face, and on their heads those huge furry barrel hats, and one of them was grinning at me. Odd. "Shabbat shalom," he said, as I passed. I did a double-take. My friend, in his full Haredi glory! We had danced together like space aliens in a Russian bar the last time I'd seen him. Though we couldn't let on, I smiled the whole way home. Night and day aside, I still want to ask him, How?

Shabbat afternoon I run into an acquaintance leaning against King David's tower.

"Where you going hamuda," he says. To the Armenian Church. He gets a shocked look. "I didn't know you worship idols."

"I worship The One, babe," and I pinch his cheek.

"You don't want to go there, come with me to the park for Shabbos lunch. They're your kind of people." But I'm going

to the Armenian Church. He doesn't smile, says, "Say Hi to those idols for me."

This is a hello? In Jerusalem it is. Hey what do Jerusalem and Halloween have in common? Every greeting starts with Hey what are you.

"Then Judaism can go to hell," says my teacher at the Conservative Yeshiva, where they kindly let me play spiritual anthropologist. "I don't worship Judaism. I worship God. And God is what is worthy of service and worship." He is something like a pro-Palestine Zionist, which labels are stupid and ill-fitting on such a vast, textured consciousness as this guy. He believes in Human Rights. And he proves with the Torah that Human Rights Covenants trump Torah, every time. The Messiah comes in robes of species-wide legal norms to protect human beings everywhere. The thing is, he doesn't go looking in Torah to justify his liberal values. He assumes they are already there, because he assumes God has the highest humane values he can conceive of. He doesn't justify God. He assumes God. And that approach to text is enough to rock one's assumptions about having assumptions and grant a nebula-load of permission.

I met Shaiya four months ago, when by twists and turns I ended up in a seat in his Kabbalah class. He welcomed me and warned it was going to be a weird one. I remember him chanting the Aramaic, my skin prickling, as I followed these funky visualizations of God's skull and nose and beard. In His eyes, the sages say, there are three colors: white on white on white. Oh the holy sense of humor. I remember how at the end he said, "Sorry if none of that made any sense for you." And how the tears were already down my neck. In this world where so many facts fill my head and leave me empty, thank god for substantive nonsense. A breeze between lines.

A story from the Kabbalah: In the beginning God made the Kings of Edom. They hung around for a few generations, but ended in total failure. So God stretched himself out on a canvas and remade herself. Now God was ready to make Adam in His/ Her image.

Why, ask the rabbis, were the Kings of Edom a flop? Because, they say, the names of their generations did not include the names of their wives. Something wrong there.

No face-to-face tension = cosmos dead in the water.

Recipe for a universe that survives: It is in conflict with itself; it searches after itself; it cannot satisfy or fulfill itself. When you read the news, if it lacks the names of the other side, you know the world is dying. That would be the ultimate robust universe, right? ...The one with the names of every relational becoming, the wives and husbands and women and men and girls and boys – of every State and non-State – and when all their flesh and blood and relatives and relativities and unknissed interstices are witnessed, then also the names of the animals, of the trees...

My Austrian roommate in West Jerusalem was teaching in East Jerusalem for a time. No matter she's an intelligent, compassionate person, and has the permission of an Outsider to boot. A day came when working in two worlds was too hard. Emotional, spiritual whiplash, and narrative trauma to the head. I hear this story so much it's a Jerusalem genre. Expansive people commute between worlds. And then one day they go home, shellshocked from incongruent cosmos, and don't come back.

There's a tune that hums me low every weekend. Maybe you know it. I call it the Shabbat Blues. It plagued me in America, too, but that was just a shadow of the Shabbat Blues to come. I adore and I dread Shabbat in Jerusalem. It refuses integration. It WILL be set apart. And if you are not a part of the apart, then you're on your own even among the hosts. Inside / outside. I feel the yearning energy, the high, the depths, the words and rhythms and braided bread and blessed wine get down in my body, and I rise up and make to be one...

When I feel my face violently smooch against the glass, outside looking in. Hell I don't speak this language. I'm not Jewish. I don't know what I am. Human, I'd say, but it sounds a bit thin. In those profound words of true blue rock – I'm a creep, I don't belong here.

For me Shabbat is not so much a break from the world as a break with it. Another turn to another world, one I'm shut out of and anyways refuse to enter on anyone else's terms. In Jerusalem the Sabbath exists for or against you, and both in turns. It is the formal institution of absence as presence.

Ever heard of the Cohen blues? Now that's a tune that will play you! Of course it happened: I fell hard for an Orthodox Jew. We met (unavoidably it seemed) my first week in Jerusalem. Our third date he told me that he can only marry an "originally Jewish girl." And I thought, That works, because I can only marry a not racist person. Of course we kept seeing each other. "Out of everyone, why the Cohen? It's uncanny. Like is there something deeply masochistic in me that is attracted to whatever keeps me outside? When all I want is home?" Telling my friend this, he laughs. "How Jewish of you. Welcome to the family."

I feel myself becoming at home in my outsidersness. But never at rest.

Home like a nucleus of waywardness with positive and negative charges.

Separate worlds without end. Or maybe I'm thinking of this wrong, and sad. Maybe I should think not so much parallel lines as origami. Manyfold worlds.

Manyfoldness as a holy gift. The Lord is my shepherd of folds. I lack nothing, including lack and nothing. He makes me to lie down in green fields, quantum fields, gathering into the fold, wormholes, brain folds, paper folded along a loving spine, the love of the folded God in the folds of spacetime for the manifold of becoming, mindful of those not of this known fold, His unfolding must bring them in also.

Just down the street from me, this wildman bedouin character, Isaiah, used to hang around and trip out on visions of a new world order. That was nearly 3 millennia ago. The neighborhood is still trying to catch up.

And it shall come to pass in the last days... many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of

the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

...And after there is peace among humans, this wild visionary brings in the animals, the trees...

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.... They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

I fold the corner of the page. It's not enough. Fold it like origami, my hands curled up in it.



# JUDITH TERZI FLOWER

*After a photo of Haftom Zarhum, a 29-year-old Eritrean  
migrant mistaken for a terrorist  
and killed in Beersheba, Israel*

You lay in an agony of Red Sea,  
trousers torn, shoved down

toward your ankles. Petal of a red  
star of David half-hidden

under your head. Dreams of asylum  
no Jacob's dream, stairway

collapsed, dreams spurted over bus  
station tile. We never saw

your smile, Haftom. Eight shots, kicks,  
curses, spit—identity eclipsed

between melanin & war. You, the African,  
You, the tens of thousands

of migrants. Their fates. Their faiths.  
You, Jesús of the Negev, José,

Yousef. And *Be'er Shiva*--*Bi'ir as-Sab*--  
city of seven wells, tenuous

oaths. You are *haftom*: in your language--  
*wealthy from happiness*. You are

the backbone of hotels, coffee shops.  
You are farmhand, gardener,

your hands nourish biblical soil. You cut  
roses, narcissus for sacred rituals,

arrange lilies for *Shabbat*, gardenia  
corsages for lovers. We never saw

your smile, Haftom. We search online  
for your story. Your Eritrean

*fiyori*, your flower, your queen, kneels  
by the water's edge, southern swell  
of Red Sea. She waits for your body.  
Bouquets of white roses floating ashore.

# JEHAN BSEISO

## NO SEARCH, NO RESCUE

To the families and lovers at the bottom of the sea,  
trying to reach Europe.

I.

How do we overcome war and poverty  
only to drown in your sea?

II.

Misrata, Libya  
Habeebi just take the boat.  
In front of you : Bahr.  
Behind you : Harb.  
And the border, closed.  
Your Sea, Mare, Bahr. Our war, our Harb.

III.

Augusta, Italy  
Where is the interpreter?  
This is my family.  
Baba, mama, baby all washed up on the shore.  
This is 28 shoeless survivors and thousands of bodies.  
Bodies Syrian, Bodies Somali, Bodies Afghan,  
Bodies Ethiopian, Bodies Eritrean.  
Bodies Palestinian.  
Your Sea, Mare, Bahr. Our war, our Harb.

IV.

Alexandria, Egypt  
Habeebi, just take the boat.  
Behind you Aleppo and Asmara, barrel bombs and Kalashnikovs.  
In front of you a little bit of hope.  
Your Sea, Mare, Bahr. Our war, our Harb.

V.

Maps on our backs.  
Long way from home.

# ANNE PAQ

## DEMONSTRATION AGAINST NEO-NAZI MARCH











# JANE BLANCHARD

## MANIFESTO

Fifty and a hundred years  
should have dried all Southern tears.  
Raze the plaques and monuments  
honoring long-gone events.  
Tip the statues of the men  
uniformed in gray back then.  
Put away the battle flag;  
let it neither fly nor swag.  
Desecrate the graves of those  
whose beliefs most now oppose.  
Never read or sing a verse  
that could cause a scene or worse.  
Rid from any memory  
Relics of Confederacy.

# BERTO REYES

## HUMANIZING SUPREMACISTS

*"I must not fear.  
Fear is the mind-killer.  
Fear is the little death that brings total obliteration.  
I will face my fear.  
I will permit it to pass over and through me.  
And when it has gone past, I will turn the inner eye to see its  
path.  
Where the fear has gone there will be nothing.  
Only I will remain."  
~ Frank Herbert*

I'm 19 and there's a swastika carved into my door. My dorm's Hall Advisor tells me it was a joke; he's heard rumors of some kid who would go around the hall doing this sort of thing. Doesn't matter; prankster or not, somebody decided to come into my space and remind me of my monsters.

And I mean monsters. I'm brown, I'm queer, I'm gender-fluid; I'm three justifications they'll use for why I'm, at best, a blood stain on a steel-toed boot. At worst, I'm a bigger stain and a body dropped off somewhere secluded. I'm a valid target for violence by virtue of existing, and here's someone - according to the rumors - who thinks that this is a joke.

I'm 24. As with any phobia, I'm trying to learn more about the object of my fears. I need to know their thinking. Every gear in their thought train, bend in the rails, I'm mapping every stop they make. Whether it's white supremacy, cisgender heteronormative supremacy, masculine supremacy, ableist, and more - I throw myself into studying supremacists. It's an obsession, I'm sure, but it doesn't matter.

I have to know. I found a swastika on the entry to where I sleep. It came without my knowledge or control. I have to keep my home. But I can't. Every sign is the idea that I can't have one,

that I don't belong in any space I occupy. And not for anything I've done; it's who I am. If these ideas present in sign, then I have to catalogue these signs.

RAHOWA - Racial Holy War. 88 - H being the 8th letter, HH meaning Heil Hitler. 14 - the 14 words of David Lane, "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." I collect all the signs. They say black and brown actions are a Jewish conspiracy. Every action is part of a Jewish conspiracy. I'm watching their signs and ideas proliferate as often as their groups divide. Personality conflicts. Ideological differences. They call each other ignorant. Obsolete. Ugly public images.

I'm 32 and I've finally humanized them.

They aren't my monsters. Monsters live in the shadows; they are only limited by imagination, and are always the ones giving chase. Monsters can strike at any time. A monster is power and fear incarnate. When we turn these people into monsters, we're giving them that power. We're acknowledging their limitless potential and that they're the ones who are active. We aren't the ones who can chase, but are reacting to their presence.

But a human can be stopped.

Unfortunately, a difficulty in stopping those who were once my monsters arises by misunderstanding what it means to humanize. There's a connotation behind humanizing; specifically, that to do so is an inherently sympathetic act. That to humanize is to build a connection to another by virtue of understanding their position - to bring them from inhuman to human by means of an empathic bond. But those who act on their belief of supremacy are making a choice to dehumanize. They pass laws on the basis of the inferiority of others. They assault under the belief that others should be erased.

I'll admit that I have some difficulty in being sympathetic towards one who thrives off the idea that my existence is rationale for my elimination.

Gaining sympathy for their position would also acknowledge that there's validity to their belief that I'm subhuman. That I need to understand where they're coming from in order to gain a full appreciation for their position, and ultimately, a shared humanity. It is supposedly through this rational debate that we can come together, with them gaining knowledge through the work of me proving my humanity, and me opening my ears - my mind, my heart - to their belief that I am less than in the hopes that they will recant.

I have to question what happens to this rational debate - and the sympathetic approach - when power is gained by keeping me subhuman. With political legitimacy granted to supremacists (for instance, those now calling themselves the alt-right), there is a vested interest in ignoring this hypothetical debate. Humanizing as a sympathetic act is fruitless. There is no conversation; instead, "talking to" becomes "talking at."

That I would have to prove my humanity also assumes that I start from a subhuman position. I must earn the right to be called human, in this case. As opposed to assuming that I am human first and was pushed into a minoritized position, my "inferiority" is assumed and I have to take on the labor of speaking truth to those to whom we grant power.

And for every minute spent on this "debate," I have the opportunity to become the blood stain. The ideology of supremacy isn't changing, as those who spread it maintain social, material and political capital from not listening. I have to risk my life to further a conversation that is going and will go nowhere. Those who live by the conviction that my existence validates annihilation have the chance to turn me into another body dropped off in a secluded area. Perhaps, if I'm lucky, I can become a candlelight vigil meant to send a message that's never been read.

But, apparently, I am not as important as this wasted breath.

In this, the supremacist doesn't have to be human. Humans are accountable for their actions. Humans have to respond. Supremacists can continue to ignore any conversa-



tion. Instead, they retain the ability to surround me, to chase, to terrorize. They can remain monsters. Attempting to humanize through sympathy - through some rational debate and shared understanding, or through compassion for the ideology which gains power through elimination - takes the onus of responsibility away from the supremacists.

I don't aim to sympathize; I aim to humanize. To create limits to what was once limited only by my imagination. To show that this isn't fear incarnate, that this isn't all-encompassing and ever-present power. These are humans who made the choice to dehumanize another, and who must be held accountable for that choice.

When I speak of humanizing, I speak of dismantling the institutional power granted to supremacists that allows them to become monsters to minoritized individuals, and removing the fear of supremacy by recognizing that its perpetrators are human - limited and fallible as we are. In my youth, a supremacist could be a monster not only because of their ability to strike at any time (and as close to me as my dormroom door), but also because the symbols carrying their ideologies could be thoughtlessly deployed in spite of their potential impact.

That a critical symbol in white supremacy became a joke to someone, according to the rumors, speaks loudly to the pervasiveness of that ideology. This symbol calling for my death becomes a harmless prank only because I, and those who would be most harmed by it, are inconsequential to the one who carved it on my door. Even if not explicitly calling for my death, the moment someone began carving was the moment they declared my lack of humanity, as the repercussions for crafting this sign did not matter to them.

And, if the rumors were false, then the implication that someone purposely targeted me and could hide under the guise of a prank is horrifying.

But it never mattered whether the symbol was left as a joke; the impact is obviously greater than the intention. What matters is the normalization of the supremacist ideology. The

institutional power granted cover to this particular act of dehumanization by claiming that it was a joke. The individuals who harmed me, who once were my monsters, were able to hide in the shadows of institutions protecting white supremacy as the impacts on me were discountable given my presupposed lack of humanity.

In professing and acting upon ideologies of supremacy, supremacists have declared war on minoritized peoples. However, the proposed solution for peace, humanizing through sympathy, merely gives them a platform from which they can speak, while attempting to converse with them when they aren't listening and are actively profiting from their violent acts. Instead of focusing on what gives them the right or ability to assault minoritized people, the humanization as sympathy model allows the attacks to continue under the hope that supremacists will one day change their minds.

Thus the need to humanize, not by sympathizing, but by dismantling the institutional power that grants them the ability to become monsters. By making substantive change to the structures that allow them to take on the image of monsters. To leave no shadows for them to hide, for them to strike from, for them to appear limitless. And by reminding ourselves that it is these power structures that make supremacists appear to be monsters. But it isn't true.

These are humans.

We must not fear.

# ASHLEY ARCEL

## NOTES FROM THE WESTERN FRONT: WHITE SUPREMACY IN THE FLATHEAD VALLEY

If you asked me what makes Whitefish, MT notable, I wouldn't tell you "Its recent rash of white supremacy and Nazi ideology," although there's a good chance it would cross my mind.

Whitefish is my home town. I was born here and have lived my life going and coming back. It's a docile place that feels like Mayberry.

There's a local hardware store, its narrow aisles stuffed with toilet repair kits, garden equipment, spray paint, and novelty gifts. There are a few Western art galleries, an ice cream shop with a line that stretches out the door and around the corner, a lake, a golf course, and lots of friendly, active people. Central Avenue, the street that runs the four blocks of "downtown," funnels your view past the rail yard and up to the looming ski mountain, where the runs resemble branching veins under pale skin.

Whitefish is thirty minutes from Glacier National Park and the Canadian border. It's the end of the road, geographically, and things tend to be quiet around here.

Recently, however, this town has been making national news for something dark and subversive: a surge in White Nationalist ideology.

Ask people where it started and most folks would say, "Richard Spencer." Spencer is the 30-year-old leader of the National Policy Institute - a White Nationalist think tank. He's also an infamous internet troll, one of the most prominent icons of modern white supremacy, and a part-time resident of Whitefish.

If you've heard of Spencer, you might know that some people confuse his views with traditional Christian conserva-

tism. But make no mistake - there's no similarity. In fact, Spencer places virtually no worth on conservative Christian values. He's open to gay marriage and believes abortion should be legal and accessible – if only to reduce the number of black and Hispanic children being born.

Recently, he posted a comment on AltRight.com's YouTube channel: "Smart people are not using abortion as birth control ... It is the unintelligent and blacks and Hispanics who use abortion as birth control... This can be something that can be a great boon for our people, our race." By "our people," Spencer, of course, means white Europeans.

These are views Spencer has been popularizing for years. In 2016, he dominated headlines when he delivered a speech to more than 200 alt-right attendees in Washington D.C., during which he proclaimed, "Hail Trump, hail our people, hail victory!" The audience went wild, cheering and offering Nazi salutes.

While the speech seemed about as removed from Montana as possible, it had a swift and direct effect on Whitefish. Enraged by Spencer's message and its Neo-Nazi implications, activists dug into Spencer and discovered that his nonprofit corporation was registered at an address in Whitefish. The building associated with the address is a multi-use property in the Railway District. Sherry Spencer, Richard Spencer's mother and the heir to a southern cotton farm fortune, owns the building.

Using social media as a springboard, activists began calling for a boycott of Sherry Spencer's property, which offers commercial leases on the bottom level, and luxury condos for rent on the upper level. Whitefish felt the shift. Calls went up for tourists to boycott the town – a troubling thing for a place that lives and dies by the tourism industry. Many of the tourists who did visit sought out the once-quiet historic corner of downtown, where the building is located, and snapped photos of its bright red exterior.

Distressed by the growing attention and the pressure on

her livelihood, Sherry Spencer began considering her options. Despite the fact that her son's nonprofit was registered at her Whitefish address, Sherry Spencer has stated multiple times that she does not agree with her son's political or social views and plays no part in perpetuating them.

Reportedly, Sherry Spencer reached out to Tanya Gersh, a local realtor, to ask her opinion about how to handle the growing, negative media attention and its effects on her business.

In several pieces published by Gersh since 2016, Gersh states that she advised Sherry Spencer to sell the building. Gersh also recommended that Spencer make a public statement and a charitable donation to disassociate herself from her son's radical views.

According to Gersh, Spencer agreed to sell the building and donate some of the proceeds.

In December of 2016, however, Spencer released a viral Medium article. The article stated that she had never intended to sell the building until she "started receiving terrible threats" from Tanya Gersh, Love Lives Here – a local human rights organization, and the Montana Human Rights Network.

The problem may have resolved like most minor legal matters do, except for the fact that Tanya Gersh is Jewish, and that Spencer's supporters began to take note of that. Andrew Anglin, the founder of The Daily Stormer, a Neo-Nazi website that calls African Americans "nig-nogs," seeks to "Educate people about "the Jewish problem," and calls itself "The World's Most Genocidal Republican Website," was one of the first.

To retaliate against Gersh, Anglin obtained Tanya's address and phone number, her husband's contact information, and the links to her then-12-year old son's social media profiles, and pushed them to his hundreds of monthly readers – encouraging them to initiate a "Troll storm" against the family. Anglin's publication also went as far as to create an image of Tanya and her son, superimposed over the gates at Auschwitz.

Eager to attack anyone charged with challenging The Leader, Anglin's readers set in like pit bulls. In the weeks follow-



ing, Gersh received many hundreds of threatening calls, emails, and letters, including more than 700 harassing messages and Holocaust memes. She was called a “filthy Jew” and a “rank bitch.” In an exceptionally creative twist, Anglin’s Neo-Nazi following sent her threats disguised as holiday letters and cards. They also left her voicemails disguised as property inquiries. One said, “Oh, I’m sorry. I have the wrong number. I was looking for the crematorium.” The exuberant trolls also called her husband’s law practice so frequently that the paralegals were unable to do their work, and the office closed temporarily.

Far from stopping there, Anglin and his followers worked to arrange an armed Neo-Nazi march down the streets of Whitefish. They rallied White Nationalists from around the country to participate. Despite the fact that Anglin managed to spearhead an effective troll storm, he couldn’t manage to fill out the required applications correctly or entirely. Because of this, local officials never issued a permit for the march, and the demonstration never took place. Whitefish eventually fell out of the headlines, and the frantic response to Spencer’s presence subsided.

The fact that the national media is no longer consumed by this issue, however, does not mean it has disappeared. In fact, it has become clear that the racist and xenophobic ideology centered in Whitefish extends beyond Spencer and his cronies. While Richard Spencer’s presence and Gersh’s ordeal are some of the largest indications that this town harbors pockets of hate, they aren’t the only signs.

Recently, I saw a flyer on the window of our local bookstore. “If you see these,” it said, with an arrow pointing up, to a small square of paper proclaiming the need to “preserve our Aryan youth” and listing a website to visit for more information, “please alert your book seller. These are unwelcomed and unsolicited.” Apparently, someone had been stuffing the small squares into books, and customers were discovering them, horrified, when they got home.

There’s also the flyer I picked up on the street one recent

Sunday morning. I noticed it because, although it was folded, one corner was turned down, revealing a Star of David. Unfolding it, I saw it featured various other religious symbols, all superimposed over unflattering images of each religion's devotees.

Odinism, the religion claiming this brochure with a distribution stamp printed on the bottom edge, is harmless enough in its original form. A modern interpretation of ancient Nordic religions, which were polytheistic and worshipped gods like Thor, Odinism draws followers who refer to themselves as "heathens" and believe deeply in protecting natural resources. As a general rule, they're more concerned with saving trees than they are inciting race wars. Like virtually all religions, however, Odinism has its extremists.

In a 1998 report on Odinism, the Southern Poverty Law Center states the following: "Odinism, which is closely related to Asatrú, was much favored in Nazi Germany. Its Nordic/Teutonic mythology was a bedrock belief for key Third Reich leaders, and it was an integral part of the initiation rites and cosmology of the elite Schutzstaffel (SS), which supervised Adolf Hitler's network of death camps."

Since then, Odinism has been called "The new religion of choice for white supremacists." The link between Odinism and White Supremacy isn't theoretical – Frazier Glenn Cross, who, in 2014, shot and killed two people at a Jewish Community Center outside of Kansas City and murdered a third at a nearby Jewish retirement community, had attachments to the religion.

At one point, Cross posted an online manifesto which proclaimed "Odinism! This was the religion for a strong heroic people, the Germanic people, from whose loins we all descended, be we German, English, Scott, Irish, or Scandinavian ... Odin! Odin! Was the battle cry of our ancestors; their light eyes ablaze with the glare of the predator, as they swept over and conquered the decadent multi-racial Roman Empire. And Valhalla does not accept Negroes. There's a sign over the pearly gates there which reads, 'Whites only.'"

While Cross wasn't the person who dropped the flyer

on the street, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the flyer represents at least a portion of the dialogue circulating under the surface of Whitefish right now. That dialogue is subtle, most times, like a rip tide or strong underwater current – only the people who know how to look for it or are stuck within it know it's there – but it exists.

Recently, I've been wondering if I need to see Whitefish in a different light. Is it not still the beautiful, small town of my upbringing? The place where, as a child, the friendly grocery clerk used to give me orange slices while my mom shopped, or where I learned to swim in one of the country's cleanest, largest lakes? Is it not still the community I've known to rally around families and individuals affected by tragedy- arranging meal trains, donations, and reprieve? Has it changed, somehow? Am I just slow to adjust?

When something this ugly and horrible rears its head in your midst, it makes a hole equivalent to a gash in delicate fabric. It's impossible to repair, and even harder to understand.

People have varying opinions on "the Nazi issue" here. Some people believe it gets too much press and that Whitefish has "never seen racism" before this. Those same individuals insist that the only way for the problem to disappear is for everyone to stop talking about it. Others have responded by taking action – reaching out to surround Gersh and her family, creating a local drop station for bottles of wine, food, and other comforts to help them through the terrifying ordeal. To this day, there are paper menorahs in most windows in town, a not-so-silent display of solidarity. Still others have reacted by withdrawing, seemingly paralyzed by shock and mortification.

The unfortunate truth, however, is that none of these approaches answer my earlier question: Is the place shifting? Is the ground moving under our feet? Or has this always been here, dormant like a virus?

My opinion is that it's always existed, in part, as it does in many rural areas of the country, where damaging and misguided ideas go largely unchallenged by the forces of diversity

and external influence. I also believe, however, that this isn't where the buck stops.

Today, I see Spencer a handful of times every few months - at the gym, the farmer's market (if you'd like a surreal experience, I recommend selecting a bunch of carrots next to the leader of the modern White Nationalist movement), the theater, and the restaurants downtown.

We've never spoken, but I watch him out of the corner of my eye. He seldom smiles, and he tends to disappear, like Voldemort. In the gaps of time I don't see him in person, I see him on the news, being hauled away by police in Charlottesville, being denied speaking engagements at the University of Florida and Penn State, or supporting what he calls "free speech" on the web. When he's around, I've taken to looking over my shoulder nervously because it seems like he could be standing right behind me. There's something about him that triggers a deep, evolutionary response. Your body screams at you to run away, not to turn your back on him, to keep him in your line of sight. "This," it says, "is a man that could do anything."

Seeing him is supremely surreal. It also engenders rage. I've watched people approach and engage him, although it's well-known that he sees any platform as an opportunity to spew his rhetoric. I've watched people yell at and about him. I've seen people poke and prod him, like he's a caged bear, hoping for a reaction. In these situations, the only path I've discovered is to focus, instead, on the many community members who have chosen to oppose Spencer and his twisted ideology by speaking out against him, or putting their heads down and getting to work creating policies and programs that fly in the face of his exclusivity and hate.

While we can't deny that Spencer, the embodiment of bigotry borne from certain financial and social comfort and elitism lives here, or that he spews his poison with a sly joy, we also can't place a period after the fact.

At the end of the day, this Whitefish is the Whitefish I grew up in, but it's struggling, as so much of our country is right

now, and our task is to sit with it and see it through.

Thanks to the explosion of hate, xenophobia, racism, and sexism spilling out around the country, this ugly subdermal layer has found a voice and bubbled to fruition. That much is clear – the only question is what to do about it, in our individual communities. In our individual places.

The horrendous thing about people, like Spencer, who are immune to the sharp sting of indecency is that they leave the task of feeling it to the rest of us. Here in Whitefish, that duty falls to myself and the rest of the citizens who share this pristine little community, with its lazy green river and cool, high-altitude summer mornings.

With a troll in our midst and a quiet war on our fringes, we're left with a decision: assume that hate is as durable and authentic as Spencer and his cronies like to believe, or conduct our every movement in an effort to battle it back, to reclaim our ground, to allow the flag of inclusivity and safety to fly high once more.

While I still fear the former, I've invested my heart in the latter.

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## ARTIST/AUTHOR BIOS

Aaron Wallis is a printmaker specializing in silkscreen, lithography, intaglio, letterpress and woodcut. His print series “The Street Bible” draws upon two disparate influences from his adolescence: being raised by Evangelical Christians, which gave him an appreciation for iconography in the illuminated manuscript, and Rap Music, which gave him an escape from Evangelical Christianity. The Street Bible can be viewed as an attempt to reconcile the two. Aaron currently lives in San Diego, CA.

Adnan Samman is a 24 year old Jordan-based visual artist from Syria. His work has been mainly revolving around collage, where he recreates images to present alternative scenes of the Middle East. Adnan’s work has been featured on many online platforms and had its real-life gallery debut at the prestigious Central Saint Martins in London.

Anna Leah Eisner likes to dance, a lot. Sometimes this comes in the form of writing.

Anne Paq is a French freelance photographer, videographer and member of the photo collective Activestills. She has lived for many years in Palestine. Her latest work, an award-winning multimedia project called “Obliterated Families” is a three-year collective project which tells the stories of the families in Gaza who were shattered by the 2014 Israeli military offensive. It can be seen at [www.obliteratedfamilies.com](http://www.obliteratedfamilies.com).

A.S. Reisfield has spent stretches of time collecting plants throughout montane Mexico, as an instructor in natural aromatics, and as a Visiting Scholar in Botany at The University of Texas. Most recently he has published the trilogy of books, *The Perfume of Life*. Today, A.S. Reisfield makes art and music and perfume in the altiplano of Central Mexico.

Ashley Arcel is a copywriter and editor from Whitefish, Montana. A graduate of Montana State University, she is the founder of Proline Creative, a content marketing firm serving small businesses and startups.

Berto Reyes is a digital and critical rhetorician, a scholar of hate, and (sometimes) a pretty snappy dresser. With a background in union and community organizing, they understand dismantling hate as a necessarily intersectional and ongoing process to address the power structures created by hate in all its forms.

Brooke Larson holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Columbia University, and is currently a PhD student in Poetry at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her poems and essays have recently appeared in *The Offbeat*, *Gravel*, *The Swamp*, and *Dialogue Journal* and she was this year's runner-up for the Tennessee Williams Poetry Prize. Often she runs away to teach primitive survival skills as a wilderness guide in Arizona's Sonoran Desert.

Carly Rosenthal is studying for a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Linguistics and Arabic at the University of Melbourne. She recently participated in a 5-month volunteering program in Jerusalem called Solidarity of Nations – Achvat Amim. These photographs were taken during the program.

C.S. Jones is a PhD student at the University of Arizona.

David Lewis Neel inhabits Seattle with a family made up of multiple felines and a human wife. He is interested in intersections/combinations of literary work, mathematics, philosophy, and the bringing about of conditions from which a more sustainable and radically egalitarian world could emerge. In these grim times, he strives to refuse the privilege of despair.

Diego Ariel Martinez-Lugo is a first-generation Xicano activist and graduate student at the University of Arizona researching and practicing social and environmental justice. Working towards dismantling legacies of colonialism, patriarchy and capitalism to ending systematic racism, Diego employs an intersectional framework in la revolución.

Originally from the Chicago-area, Elissa Rabin is currently a student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She loves to eat chocolate, sing on long car rides, and discuss Israel/Palestine.

Emily Schneider is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology at Colorado College and a Doctoral Candidate at the University of California – Santa Barbara. Her main areas of interest are the sociology of tourism, social change and identity with a regional emphasis on Israel/Palestine. She is currently working on a project funded by the National Science Foundation that examines how political tours to the Occupied Palestinian Territories impact American Jews' relationship to Israel. She was previously the Director of Development and International Relations at Windows- Channels for Communication, a joint Israeli-Palestinian NGO.

Hushidar Mortezaie was born in Tehran and immigrated to California in 1975. He moved to NYC in 1994 for 10 years and now resides in California, living between Los Angeles and the Bay Area, while bridging both the fashion and the art worlds. Mortezaie uses a mixture of collage, painting, illustration, installation and fashion design. His emphasis on Iranian culture is prompted by the rise of a contemporary Iranian political and pop culture aesthetic for the diaspora's modern generation. His focus on challenging convention and the Western lens through the use of stereotype as armor, branding, ornamentation and packaging are mainstays in his decorative and political pop art.

Jane Blanchard lives and writes in Georgia. Her poetry has appeared in venues such as *About Place Journal*, *The Dark Horse*, *The Evansville Review*, *The French Literary Review*, *The Seventh Quarry*, and *U.S.1 Worksheets*. Her first collection, *Unloosed*, and her second, *Tides & Currents*, are both available from Kelsay Books.

Jehan Bseiso is a Palestinian poet, researcher and aid worker. Her poetry has been published in Warscapes, The Funambulist, The Electronic Intifada, and Mada Masr among others. Her book *I Remember My Name* (2016) is the creative category winner of the Palestine Book Awards. Bseiso is co-editing *Making Mirrors* - a new anthology by, for and about refugees. She is also working on a collection of poems - *Conversations Continued* - a compilation of real, misheard, and misremembered conversations. Jehan has been working with Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders since 2008, she currently heads a regional communications team based in Cairo and Beirut.

Jim Fairhall teaches modern literature and environmental studies at DePaul University in Chicago. His publications include award-winning works of literary criticism, fiction, creative nonfiction and poetry. He has won the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival Award for Fiction. His most recent article, combining literary analysis and cultural geography, deals with Irish bogs and the writings of James Joyce.

Judith Terzi's poems have recently appeared in *BorderSenses*, *Caesura*, *Columbia Journal*, *Raintown Review*, *Spillway*, *Unsplendid*, and *Wide Awake: The Poets of Los Angeles and Beyond*. Her poetry has been nominated for Best of the Web and Net, and included in Keynotes, a study guide for the artist-in-residence program for State Theater New Jersey. *Casbah* and *If You Spot Your Brother Floating By* are recent chapbooks from Kattywom-pus Press.

Katrina Phillips is a graduate from DePaul University, an actress (“But I’m a Cheerleader”, “Stranger Inside”, “Payback”), a writer and an activist. She currently lives in Northern California.

Kelsey Shea is a second-year medical student at the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson. She received her BA from the University of Virginia, where she studied foreign affairs with a concentration in the Middle East. In her spare time Kelsey plays violin for the local Tucson band Kyklo.

Lele Salehin is a full time student, human rights activist, poet, and part of a local rap group, “No Discretion.” She is a City High School alumni who has had the honor of performing at: the Pennington St. block party, whole school meetings, Paulo Freire Freedom School events, and high school graduation. She is a recent member of the Esperanza Dance Company and a regular mover at BreakOut Studios in Tucson, Arizona.

Lily House-Peters is assistant professor of geography at California State University, Long Beach. Central to her research, writing, and political activism are issues of access, natural resource conflicts, environmental justice, political economy, technology, autonomy, and territory.

Rebecca Patterson-Markowitz is a native Tucsonan working on a MA in Geography at the University of Arizona studying psycho-social accompaniment and other practices of care in post-conflict Guatemala. The works here were composed during 7 weeks of fieldwork in in the summer of 2017. One of her favorite ways to explore life is through movement. When she is not traveling or studying you can find her teaching or grooving on a dance floor.

Rielle Oase is a Taiwanese-American mixed-media photographer based in Phoenix, Arizona. She received her BFA from the University of Arizona in 2016 and has exhibited widely in the USA. Despite this, she is still poor. The work she creates explores culture and social structures characterised by oddball narratives.

Ryan Belcher is a military brat, a Korean-American, and a recent graduate from the University of North Texas. This is his first non-fiction publication.

Sahar Mustafah is the author of *Code of the West* (Willow Books, 2017), a prize-winning collection of short stories. Her work has recently appeared in *Two Countries: US Daughters & Sons of Immigrants* (Red Hen Press, 2017), *Minola Review*, *Mid-western Gothic*, and *Room*. She is co-founder of Bird's Thumb, an online literary journal devoted to new and emerging voices.



## A note about the font

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