History of Intellectual Culture

International Yearbook of Knowledge and Society

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Volume 1
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Participatory Knowledge

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Charlotte A. Lerg, Johan Östling, and Jana Weiß

Introducing the Yearbook *History of Intellectual Culture*

During the course of the first two decades of the twenty-first century, a number of vibrant historical subdisciplines have shown an increasing interest in knowledge and intellectual activities, including cultural history, history of science, intellectual history, media history, global history, digital history, and history of education. By introducing as well as refining concepts, theories, methods, and perspectives, they have all contributed to enrich the study of intellectual cultures. Many of the analytical approaches they offer have been brought together in the new field of the history of knowledge. This new yearbook sees itself as a part of this fledging field and aims to develop it further.

History of Intellectual Culture (HIC) is an international and interdisciplinary open access yearbook for peer-reviewed papers. It is the succession of the journal of the same name, founded in 1999 by Paul Stortz and E. Lisa Panayotidis at the University of Calgary, Canada. A pioneering part of open access digital publishing among history journals, it was one of the first publications to focus on the cultural dimension in the history of knowledge and ideas. After starting off with a focus on the history of higher education and the professoriate, the concept of the journal soon broadened to the nature and culture of intellectuals and intellectualism in society that went beyond academic boundaries.[1]

Building on this legacy, this yearbook continues to emphasize cultural dimensions of the history of knowledge and underscores that knowledge must be regarded as a fundamental category in society. In doing so, ideas, concepts, ideologies, theories, and cognitive practices are located within their social and material contexts. To understand the theory, production, practices, and circulation of knowledge, we relate intellectual traditions, discourses, experiences, and identities to resources, social conditions, and power structures as well as to organizations, infrastructures, and media systems. In short, we conceptualize knowledge as politically, socially, culturally, and economically formed.

Understanding knowledge as a historical phenomenon, *HIC* focuses on the modern period (from the long nineteenth century onward). In addition, to strike a balance between the geographical parameters of global region(alism)s and the fluid nature of cultural and epistemic construction, the yearbook takes on a de-

1 Paul J. Stortz and E. Lisa Panayotidis, "Editors' Introduction," *History of Intellectual Culture* 1, no. 1 (2001).

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cidedly transatlantic and/or continental view of Europe and the Americas (including Canada, the U.S., and Latin America).

The History of Knowledge: A Vibrant and Growing Research Field

There are several variants of the history of knowledge in contemporary scholarship and we position ourselves in this historiographical landscape. One kind of publication emanates from particular research centers. *Nach Feierabend* (Diaphanes), a yearbook associated with the Zurich Zentrum Geschichte des Wissens, belonged to the pioneers; it released its first issue in 2005 and the last in 2020. Predominantly published in German, it combined historical contributions with philosophical and sociological perspectives.[2] *KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* (University of Chicago Press) published its first issue in 2017 and has the classicist Shadi Bartsch-Zimmer as its lead editor. It is the flagship publication of the Stevanovich Institute on the Formation of Knowledge at the University of Chicago and has an open, interdisciplinary profile. So far, it has not promoted a specific form of knowledge studies.[3]

Other publications are not so strongly connected to a certain institution but tend to privilege a particular understanding of the history of knowledge. In this context, the field is typically discussed and defined in relation to the history of science. For instance, the *Journal for the History of Knowledge* (Ubiquity Press; editors-in-chief: Sven Dupré and Geert Somsen) is affiliated with Gewina, the Belgian-Dutch Society for History of Science and Universities. It is too early to tell what kind of profile the journal will cultivate – the first issue appeared in 2020 – but the fact that many of the key figures have a background in the history of science might mean a certain direction in the future.[4] There are also other journals that at least partly are dealing with the history of knowledge. In the first issue of the journal *History of Humanities* (University of Chicago Press) in 2016, the editor Rens Bod and his colleagues encouraged historians of the humanities to engage with the history of science, and vice versa. "Eventually,"

2 See, for instance, the retrospective contributions in the last issue, including Sandra Bärnreuther, Maria Böhmer, and Sophie Witt, "Editorial: Feierabend? (Rück-)Blicke auf 'Wissen,'" *Nach Feierabend* (Zurich: Diaphanes, 2020).

3 Shadi Bartsch et al., "Editors' Introduction," *KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* 1, no. 1 (2017): 1–9.

4 Sven Dupré and Geert Somsen, "Forum: What is the History of Knowledge?" *Journal for the History of Knowledge* 1, no. 1 (2020).

they wrote, "a case could be made for uniting the history of the humanities and the history of science under the header of 'history of knowledge'."[5] *HIC* follows this idea and, while there is an emphasis on the humanities and social sciences, a strict separation from the history of science does not occur. All the more so, as the cultural history of knowledge pursues a more general notion of knowledge beyond the academy and disciplinary boundaries.

In addition, there are several other journals that recently have devoted special issues or forum sections to various aspects of the history of knowledge. *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* has, for example, highlighted migration and knowledge, whereas *History and Theory* has presented a broad range of topics in an issue from 2020.[6] Furthermore, publishers such as Amsterdam University Press, De Gruyter, Princeton University Press, Routledge, and Rowman & Littlefield International have launched new book series specializing in the history of knowledge.[7] The history of knowledge has also manifested itself in several blogs in recent years and the published posts have contributed in shaping the field.[8]

Last but not least, a few prominent individuals have made vital contributions to establish the field. Peter Burke, with half a dozen monographs, including the two-volume *A Social History of Knowledge* (2000 and 2012) and the introductory book *What is the History of Knowledge?* (2016), is a key point of reference in

5 Rens Bod et al., "A New Field: History of Humanities," *History of Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2016): 6. In a similar fashion, as of 2019 *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Wiley) has a new English subtitle (*History of Science and Humanities*), demonstrating a willingness to include both the natural and human sciences.

6 Simone Lässig and Swen Steinberg, eds., "Special Issue: Knowledge and Migration," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 43, no. 1 (2017); Helge Jordheim and David Gary Shaw, eds., "Special Issue: History of Knowledge," *History and Theory* 59, no. 4 (2020).

7 "Studies in the History of Knowledge" with Amsterdam University Press (edited by Klaas van Berkel, Jeroen van Dongen, and Herman Paul); "Cultures and Practices of Knowledge in History" with De Gruyter (edited by Markus Friedrich, Christine von Oertzen, and Vera Keller); "History of Science & Knowledge" with Princeton University Press (edited by Eric Crahan); "Knowledge Societies in History" with Routledge (edited by Sven Dupré and Wijnand Mijnhardt); "Global Epistemics" with Rowman & Littlefield International (edited by Inanna Hamati-Ataya).

8 See, for instance, *History of Knowledge* (https://historyofknowledge.net), hosted by the German Historical Institute (GHI) Washington D.C.; *Lund Centre for the History of Knowledge* (LUCK) (https://newhistoryofknowledge.com), *Black Perspectives* (https://www.aaihs.org/about-black-perspectives), hosted by the African American Intellectual History Society; *Centre for Global Knowledge Studies (gloknos)* (https://www.gloknos.ac.uk/media/blog), *Wissen entgrenzen* (https://wissen.hypotheses.org/ueber-das-projekt), a project by the Max Weber Foundation; *CIH Blog* (https://intellectualhistory.web.ox.ac.uk/blog#), hosted by the Centre for Intellectual History at the University of Oxford; *USIH Blog* (https://s-usih.org/blog), hosted by the Society for U.S. Intellectual History.

discussions related to the history of knowledge.[9] Acting in both U.S.-American and German academic environments, Simone Lässig and Suzanne Marchand also made important interventions in the late 2010s, as did Lorraine Daston, Sven Dupré, Christian Jacob, Jürgen Renn, and Philipp Sarasin among many others.[10] In addition, crucial publications have explored global, non-white, and inter-sectional perspectives.[11]

HIC strives to connect these historiographical and scholarly traditions, not least German-speaking *Wissensgeschichte* and a more international though mostly anglophone history of knowledge. However, we also have our own distinctive profile. We consciously engage with and aim to dissolve what has long been perceived as a tension between an often elite-focused history of ideas and a more broadly-based cultural and social history. This combination holds great potential to also open this yearbook up towards other related approaches at the intersection of knowledge and society, such as the history of mentalities and milieus, the

9 Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000); Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge: From the Encyclopédie to Wikipedia* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012); Peter Burke, *What is the History of Knowledge?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016).

10 See, for example, Simone Lässig, "The History of Knowledge and the Expansion of the Historical Research Agenda," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 59 (2016); Suzanne Marchand, "How Much Knowledge is Worth Knowing? An American Intellectual Historian's Thoughts on the *Geschichte des Wissens*," *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 42, no. 2–3 (2019); Philipp Sarasin, "Was ist Wissensgeschichte?," *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL)* 36, no. 1 (2011); Lorraine Daston, "The History of Science and the History of Knowledge," *KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* 1, no. 1 (2017). For a historiographical overview of the field, see Johan Östling et al., "The History of Knowledge and the Circulation of Knowledge: An Introduction," in *Circulation of Knowledge: Explorations in the History of Knowledge*, ed. Johan Östling et al. (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2018); Marian Füssel, "Wissensgeschichten der Frühen Neuzeit: Begriffe–Themen–Probleme," in *Wissensgeschichte*, ed. Marian Füssel (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2019); Johan Östling, David Larsson Heidenblad, and Anna Nilsson Hammar, "Developing the History of Knowledge," in *Forms of Knowledge: Developing the History of Knowledge*, ed. Johan Östling, David Larsson Heidenblad, and Anna Nilsson Hammar (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2020).

11 See, for instance, Keisha Blaine, Christopher Cameron, and Ashley D. Farmer, eds., *New Perspectives on the Black Intellectual Tradition* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2018); Mia E. Bay, Farah J. Griffin, Martha S. Jones, and Barbara D. Savage, eds., *Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Kapil Raj, "Beyond Postcolonialism … and Postpositivism: Circulation and the Global History of Science," *Isis* 104, no. 2 (2013); Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, eds., *Global Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); Rens Bod, *World of Patterns: A Global History of Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2022).

history of memory and media, the materiality of knowledge formation, and the genealogies of ideologies.

This general approach has implications for our understanding of what we mean by intellectual culture. Coined by the editors of the original journal, we interpret this inherited concept in light of the ongoing discussions on the circulation of knowledge.[12] Even though circulation itself is a contested and hotly debated framework in contemporary scholarship, we take it as a point of departure to stress that knowledge has always been circulating beyond academia and in these processes it potentially changes, evolves or even disappears and sometimes re-emerges. Against this background, we invite contributors and readers to consider the way knowledge and culture are both at once sedimentary and yet constantly fluid. This is a confluence that is far from coincidental but, in fact, reminds us that knowledge, culture, and intellectual activities are closely and dynamically entwined in modern society and need to be studied in conjunction.

One way of studying knowledge in culture is to use "the intellectual" as a lens. Of course, there is a long, ongoing debate about the term intellectual. As is often the case in conceptual history, any attempt to clearly define the term has to grapple with the cultural variations of its use that stem from transnational differences in social structures, political milieus, and historical traditions.[13] This challenge underscores and animates a key premise of our yearbook: by foregrounding intellectual culture, rather than an (often elite) group of individuals or a somewhat stereotypical persona or milieu, we work with a definition focused on processes and dynamics. This approach aims to free itself from national categorizations of "intellectual," without negating this layer of meaning where necessary. It consciously situates intellectual work within society and underscores the historical and cultural context. While acknowledging that intellectuals engage with the public by producing and circulating knowledge, this approach highlights that they are also part of the public and that they can play different

12 Johan Östling et al., eds., *Circulation of Knowledge: Explorations in the History of Knowledge* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2018).

13 See, for instance, Daniel Morat, "Intellektuelle und Intellektuellengeschichte," *Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte*, November 20, 2011, accessed 31 March, 2022, http://docupedia.de/zg/Intellektuelle_und_Intellektuellengeschichte; Nicole Racine and Michel Trebitsch, eds., *Intellectuelles: Du genre en histoire des intellectuels* (Paris: Complexe, 2004); Denis Sdvizkov and Denis Sdvizkov, eds., *Das Zeitalter der Intelligenz: Zur vergleichenden Geschichte der Gebildeten in Europa bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006); Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, eds., *Global Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); Christophe Charle, *Birth of the Intellectuals: 1880–1900* (Cambridge: John Wiley & Sons, 2015); Martin Jay, *Genesis and Validity: The Theory and Practice of Intellectual History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022).

roles inside and outside the realm of academia. Intellectual culture does not limit intellectuals and intellectual work to a specific socio-cultural function or role; they can be critical or affirmative, depending on the state of society and the historical context there need not necessarily be institutionalized legitimacy. Even if knowledge never moves around entirely freely, once circulated, it turns public. In fact, the conditions and infrastructure of circulation can themselves be understood and analyzed as an element of intellectual culture. The obstacles and catalysts as well as the social, political, and media circumstances determine the modes and manifestations of intellectual work and knowledge.

One way to study intellectual culture is through the lens of "space." Johan Östling, one of the editors of this yearbook, has conceptualized the sites where intellectuals interact with audiences, organizations, or other knowledge actors as "public arenas of knowledge."[14] They include virtual, physical, or hybrid spaces that are less institutionalized and regulated than, for instance, the academic world, and are highly depending on subjective perceptions and power constellations in the public sphere. At the same time, it is important to note that knowledge is seldom limited to one particular arena or *Teilöffentlichkeit*.[15] On the contrary, it can move between social strata and milieus at different moments of time and in changing manifestations. *HIC* invites reflection on how intellectual work relates to the mutability and versatility of knowledge in/as culture.

There are many ways of studying the interaction of knowledge, culture and intellectual activities in modern history. In *HIC* we welcome contributions that engage with the history of knowledge from a cultural perspective that include but are not limited to the following themes:

- institutions, systems, and infrastructures
- circulation (e. g. geographical, biographical, temporal)
- media and materiality
- practices, performances, formations, and formats

14 Johan Östling, "Circulation, Arenas, and the Quest for Public Knowledge: Historiographical Currents and Analytical Frameworks," *History and Theory* 59, no. 4 (2020).

15 There is a rich literature on "the public sphere"; see, for example, Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Neuwied: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1962); Craig J. Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992); Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text* 25/26 (1990); Jane Mansbridge, "The Long Life of Nancy Fraser's 'Rethinking the Public Sphere,'" in *Feminism, Capitalism, and Critique: Essays in Honor of Nancy Fraser*, ed. Banu Bargu and Chiara Bottici (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

- structures, agency, and power relations
- resources and socials conditions
- identity, memory, and community

HIC contributes to an increasingly dynamic international conversation on the history of knowledge, while its distinguishing features will set it apart from existing publications: rooted in the discipline of history (not history of ideas or science), it has a focus on the cultural dimensions of the history of knowledge and stresses that knowledge must be regarded as a fundamental category in society. It takes on a decidedly transatlantic and/or transnational view of Europe and the Americas. Guided by these conceptual and methodological considerations, *HIC* provides a forum for publication of original research and the promotion of rigorous and critical discussion. We particularly invite new voices and early career researchers and distinctly encourage interdisciplinary approaches. Our overarching aim is to stimulate productive exchanges, expanding conventional notions, and enriching public discourse.

* * *

This first volume of *HIC* contains three sections: a general section; a thematic section; and a third section that aims to actively and constructively engage the field with formally less rigid contributions, that may also speak to the thematic topic but not necessarily so. This volume's thematic focus, "Participatory Knowledge," invites us to explore a new perspective on knowledge as rooted in cultural practices and social configurations.

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Johan Östling is Professor of History, Director of the Lund Centre for the History of Knowledge (LUCK), and Wallenberg Academy Fellow. His research is mainly devoted to the history of knowledge, but he has a more general interest in the intellectual, political, and cultural history of modern Europe. His recent publications comprise *Circulation of Knowledge* (2018), *Forms of Knowledge* (2020), *Histories of Knowledge in Postwar Scandinavia* (2020) and *Humanister i offentligheten* (2022).

Jana Weiß is DAAD Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin. With a focus on U.S. and transatlantic history, her research interests include 19th and 20th century immigration, knowledge, and religious history as well as the history of racism. Her most recent publications include "'Where Do We Go from Here'? Past and Future Contributions to the Historiography of African American Studies – A German Perspective" in *Contemporary Church History* (2020) and *The Continuity of Change? New Perspectives on U.S. Reform Movements* (co-edited with Charlotte A. Lerg, 2021).

Section I: **Individual Articles**

Lisa Gitelman

Citation and Mediation: The Evolution of MLA Style

Abstract: The Modern Language Association's rules for citation are traced across nine editions of the *MLA Handbook*, 1977–2021, paying particular attention to the ways that changes have been introduced to readers as reasonable in light of the citational field that those readers by implication share. The citational field implied by each edition is considered primarily in relation to the diverse media and publication formats that it contains. The evolution of the MLA style offers an opportunity to glimpse the discipline defining itself for itself, while successive revisions suggest that literary studies has become both more settled in its service role with regard to undergraduate writers and more catholic in its attention to the text as such as the media landscape has continued to change.

Keywords: citations, literature, style, writing

"Cite any source–no matter how unusual." So reads one of three bullet points used to advertise the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook*, that venerable guide to the preparation and formatting of research papers for students and scholars of literature.[1] The eighth edition of 2016 – like the more recent ninth edition of 2021 – improves upon a long tradition.[2] The first *Handbook* was published back in 1977, intended as a more student-oriented resource than the earlier *MLA Style Sheet* (1951, rev. 2nd 1970). Not surprisingly, much in that original handbook now seems quaint. "In all cases," it warns, "avoid inexpensive dictionaries." That first edition contains a lot of information about doing research at the library – before the Internet – as well as a dizzying litany of arcane rules and recommendations for typing your research paper and its scholarly apparatus on a typewriter. Like all of the subsequent editions, that first *Handbook* also addresses itself to the complicated matter of documenting sources. Although it

1 Advertisements appear on the outside back cover of *PMLA* 131, no. 1 and 131, no. 2 (January and March 2016). I would like to thank Dana Polan, Marita Sturken, and two anonymous referees for their generous suggestions regarding earlier drafts of this chapter.

2 *MLA Handbook*, 8th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2016); *MLA Handbook*, 9th ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2021). Subsequent references to these and other editions will be given parenthetically in the text. Each edition will be cited individually at first mention because publication details (including authorship) vary.

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does many other things too, the *MLA Handbook* was then and remains still a go-to reference work for formatting scholarly apparatus in the domain of literary studies. To that end, the first edition provides "bibliographical specifications for [different] types" of sources, which include a section on "films, radio and television programs [as well as] recordings," because these kinds of sources – a preface warns instructors – "are becoming common."[3]

It would seem that there has been a seismic shift of some kind. Not only have the World Wide Web and word processing arrived to transform the labors of students and scholars, the *MLA Handbook* once framed its own utility in terms of common sources, or sources that were perhaps worrisomely becoming common. In its bid for relevance and universal applicability, however, recent handbooks focus on uncommon sources: "Cite any [of them] no matter how unusual." The most unusual source the eighth edition offers as an illustration is – in my opinion – a chair designed by Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh, which it gives as an example of an untitled source, right before a little advice on citing online comments, tweets, and emails (29). And in addition to the uncommon, the eighth edition also gives advice about citing "unexpected" sources, such as when you are consulting a radio program via a transcript instead of a broadcast (52). Research in the field *circa* 1977 embraced tradition while acceding to current trends. Research by 2016 was full of surprises: the unusual, uncommon, untitled, and unexpected.

What does a contrast like this tell us, beyond that times have changed? It would be difficult to locate an actual typewriter today, while reading we once did at the library can mostly be done online, a change made all the more necessary during the recent pandemic. Modes of writing and doing research have changed dramatically over the last 45 years: no surprise. But what difference has that made? Better, what *kinds* of difference has that made to the work that students and scholars actually produce in the humanities?[4] How has the discipline of literary studies itself changed in keeping with or even as a result of these new methods? My gambit in this essay will be that the *MLA Handbook* can be a useful prompt for elaborating questions like these, even if answers – certainly about correlation versus causality – prove elusive. It's a gambit inspired

3 *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (New York: Modern Language Association, 1977), 7. The two prefaces quoted in this paragraph are unpaginated.
4 Elsewhere I made an attempt to tackle this question differently; see Lisa Gitelman, "Welcome to the Bubble Chamber: Online in the Humanities Today," *Communication Review* 13, no. 1 (2010): 27–36. For an early and insightful reflection on the humanities discipline of Classics, see Karen Ruhleder, "Reconstructing Artifacts, Reconstructing Work: From Textual Edition to On-Line Databank," *Science, Technology, and Human Values* 20 (1995): 39–64.

by Anthony Grafton's observation that the history of a discipline cannot be disconnected from this history of the rhetoric of that discipline.[5]

In his bravura account of the professional historian's footnote Grafton tells us that scholarly apparatus is where history can be seen to have emerged as a modern discipline from its eloquent if uncritical antecedents. My purpose is to glimpse the history of literary studies via its scholarly apparatus, not from its origins but rather zeroing in specifically on the extended era of its – and our – digitization.

Even more than bibliographies themselves, guidelines for formatting bibliographies make for notoriously dry reading. Any excitement that the authors of these handbooks impart is largely accidental, as when the authors of the MLA's first edition elected to itemize the different formats required for referencing different kinds of books, articles, and other sources into three lettered sequences. The first list runs from *b* ("A book with a single author") through *v* ("A book without page numbers but with signatures"), introducing a bit of drama along the way for the attentive reader who may worry whether the alphabet is going to be long enough or not for all of the varieties of books that might need to be referenced (subsequent editions abandon letters in favor of enumerated lists). Tedious to read or not, the modulations and revisions across editions of the *Handbook* are revealing. Among other things they show literary studies to be a discipline that has been wobbling around its axis – an axiomatic subject known as the text – while being drawn repeatedly and irrevocably toward questions about media new and old. In what follows I offer a reading of handbook revisions in order to glimpse that wobble and to detect some of the forces at play.

My primary method has been to examine all of the editions of the handbook and its precursor style sheet. I examined each edition for its scale and scope, paying particular attention to any changes to the citation guidelines introduced and to the ways those changes are explained to readers as reasonable and necessary in light of the citational field that those readers by implication share. In general, I characterize the citational field implied by each edition in terms of the diverse media and publication formats it contains, rather than in terms of the examples given to represent each medium, for instance, that a book with a single author was exemplified by Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* in 1970 but by Angela Y. Davis's *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* in 2021. Because the second, seventh, and eighth editions introduced the greatest changes to the citation guidelines, these have been singled out for more detailed analysis, with the re-

5 Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 232.

sult that 1984, 2009, and 2016–21 stand out, perhaps arbitrarily, as moments in the history of the discipline for which citation practices and the implied citational field offer an opportunity to glimpse the discipline defining itself for itself.

While I cannot offer anything like a thoroughgoing history of the MLA or of literary studies as a discipline, I offer what I hope is an instructive foray into the past. In what follows I illuminate some of the ways that literary studies has constructed itself as a specialized way of knowing, both in terms of its object (the so-called text) and in light of a changing world.[6] Revisions across nine editions of the *Handbook* suggest that literary studies has become both more settled in its service role with regard to undergraduate writers and more catholic in its attention to the text as such. These changes may reflect the declining fortunes of the discipline at the same time that they respond to the contemporary media landscape. To the extent that other specialized ways of knowing inhabit the same media landscape, the case of literary studies points toward questions we might ask about disciplinarity in general and the ways that disciplines and their objects are continuously coproduced. Looking at a "how to" publication like the *Handbook* directs such interrogations specifically toward mentorship and pedagogy, for if disciplines and their objects are continuously coproduced, so of course are disciplinary subjects, the professoriate and the students that it hails, tasks, and labors to engage collaboratively.[7]

First, a bit of background: what is the MLA and how has it come to organize and preoccupy scholars and students of literature who write and cite? The MLA or Modern Language Association of America is a membership organization for aspirant and active professors of English and other languages and literatures, primarily in the United States (approximately four per cent of today's membership is in Canada and 10 per cent in the rest of the world). It was founded in 1883, one year before historians in the U.S. got themselves together to form their disciplinary society, the American Historical Association or AHA. The "mod-

6 Related questions might be asked about film studies, cultural studies, and other similarly hermeneutic areas of humanistic inquiry: fields which also and at least in part take a text as their knowledge object and its interpretation as a goal. For film studies see Lee Grieveson and Haidee Wasson, eds., *Inventing Film Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Andrew Abbott makes the point that literary studies is the "parent discipline" of fields like cultural studies that share "the conception of text" ("The Disciplines and the Future," in *The Future of the City of Intellect: The Changing American University*, ed. Steven Brint (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 218). The field of film studies is especially instructive because it developed simultaneously as a hermeneutic and non-hermeneutic discipline: some scholars "read" films, while others also pursue questions about industry, apparatus, etc.

7 For this turn toward pedagogy see Rachel Sanger Buurma and Laura Heffernan, *The Teaching Archive: A New History for Literary Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021).

ern" in "Modern Language Association" is less to distinguish its membership from history, though, than it is to distinguish them from Classicists with expertise in Classical languages and literatures. The MLA started small, but by the mid-1960s its membership had reached almost 25,000. There were approximately 30,000 dues-paying members by 1991, and annual membership has fluctuated in this 25–30k range ever since, with a gentle decline noticeable since the economic downturn in 2008.[8] Adherents and interested observers of literary studies go far beyond MLA members, of course, and likely far beyond readership for the MLA's publications, which include its flagship journal, the *PMLA* (P stands for publications), an international bibliography of works in the field, as well as the *Handbook* with which I am concerned here (in the interests of full disclosure, my own MLA membership has been intermittent; I once briefly helped to lead its Literature and Media discussion group).

It is worth pausing briefly to consider the context of the MLA's founding. In 1883 the U.S. was in the midst of a prolonged and transformative encounter with a new German model of what a university should be. The German model put a premium on original research by faculty and the training of graduate students to follow in their footsteps, while it divided knowledge into the arts and science disciplines that we still recognize today. It was "never merely a content delivery system," Chad Wellmon explains; it was a system for training up "particular types of people," white and male specialists within the different disciplines.[9] Transported to a larger context in the United States, the German model helped to inspire new institutions – famously Johns Hopkins University (1876) – as well as modifications to other institutions, many of which had been or were being created as colleges to train undergraduates.[10] Unique American conditions helped to create new adaptations. In the U.S. academy the disciplines more obviously became "social structures" of a sort, both within and across institutions: colleges and universities were organized into departments – the departments eventually housing college majors – and a host of national disciplinary societies sprang to life.[11] The American Chemical Society was formed in 1876, for instance, and the MLA and AHA were not far behind.

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8 "Membership," MLA, accessed February 2, 2021, https://www.mla.org/Membership/Our-Members/Membership-Statistics.

9 Chad Wellmon, *Organizing Enlightenment: Information Overload and the Invention of the Modern Research University* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2015), 17, 115.

10 The diversity of the American academy is one subject of Reinhold Martin's recent *Knowledge Worlds: Media, Materiality, and the Making of the Modern University* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021).

11 This is Andrew Abbott, "The Disciplines and the Future," 208; on the college major 209.

The impetus behind the new research university with its disciplinary system as well as behind the disciplines that evolved severally to flourish within it has been broadly characterized as an acute "media surplus," along with the resulting "cultural anxiety about what counted as real knowledge."[12] The West was experiencing an unprecedented explosion in printed materials as new industrial methods of print production and an expanding marketplace for information reinforced one another and as whole new classes of readers clamored to participate in public life.[13] Too much to read and too many different readers: whether self-consciously or not, nineteenth-century elites were experiencing a prolonged crisis of authority. Whatever else they are and have become, the research university and its modern disciplines may be seen as reactive formations that emerged partly to help mitigate this crisis.

Ideally the new university would be an enclave (a tower?) insulated from the marketplace. It would be a bastion of epistemic authority where research specialists could replicate themselves and where scholarly expertise could finally be purified of amateurism, journalism, and even of polymathy. The purification of literary studies in particular meant the elevation of certain kinds of writing and reading over others. Appreciation and other elements of readers' response would give way to analysis and interpretation, while magazine editors and reviewers would have to cede authority to professors.[14] Anyone could read novels and poems – devour a good yarn, identify with a heroine, recite lyrics from memory, e. g., – but soon only credentialed scholars and their initiates would know how to address literary historical works seriously as such, and know – eventually thanks to the MLA – how to format their scholarly apparatus accordingly.[15] Having its own citation architecture would enhance the field's claim to rigor, and learning the rules would be part of everyone's apprenticeship.

Even as the American academy has grown enormously in its size and diversity since the late nineteenth century, the disciplinary system has proved both

12 Wellmon, *Organizing Enlightenment*, 17. Continuing media surplus forward, see John Marx and Mark Garrett Cooper, *Media U: How the Need to Shape Audiences Has Shaped Higher Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

13 See James A. Secord, *Victorian Sensation: The Extraordinary Publication, Reception, and Secret Authorship of Vestiges of the National History of Creation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 523.

14 See Gerald Graff and Michael Warner, "Introduction: The Origins of Literary Studies in America," in *The Origins of Literary Studies in America: A Documentary Anthology*, ed. Gerald Graff and Michael Warner (New York: Routledge, 1989), 1–16.

15 For a history of the discipline in America that emphasizes its conflicts and its coverage model see Gerald Graff, *Professing Literature: An Institutional History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

resilient and resistant to change. Plenty of professionally oriented programs have sprung up around them, but the traditional arts and science disciplines persist, now with a number of more recent non-traditional disciplines adjacent, such as media studies. Another way to say this is that the modern disciplines and "disciplinarity" itself are inertial features in the history of knowledge, even as – somewhat paradoxically – the production of new knowledge remains their focus and appeals for "interdisciplinarity" are as old as the disciplines themselves.[16] This dialectic between old and new is of course a central feature of the history of knowledge, and the question of how (as well as simply if) different disciplines and disciplinary institutions change remains both apposite and compelling.

The conservatism of the American university – rooted in departments, competing for majors – would be difficult to understate, this despite what many recent observers have identified as a new and acute media surplus accompanied by a new crisis in epistemic authority. Even more so than in the nineteenth century there are now too many books, while nonprint sources proliferate exponentially in a dynamic media landscape that has helped radically to transform public debate. The World Wide Web in particular has helped to make knowledge "promiscuous," as Kenneth Cmiel and John Durham Peters, put it, such that "disciplined generalizations about the social and natural world accepted by authority" are giving way in favor of "the massing of facts on particular topics by dispersed groups."[17] Wikipedia grows by leaps while research faculty in traditional humanities disciplines remain ambivalent about technological changes. (Ignore? Embrace?) Meanwhile Google's search algorithm – based in part on the notion that hyperlinks work as citations of other webpages – has led some to wonder whether we really need to bother with scholarly apparatus at all. Isn't all this business of scholarly documentation a little too nit-picky and old fashioned, when any and all of us can just Google what we want to know?[18] I

16 Abbott, "The Disciplines and the Future," 214.

17 Kenneth Cmiel and John Durham Peters, *Promiscuous Knowledge: Information, Image, and Other Truth Games in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 255. Wellmon is also making this point. See also Janice Radway, "Research Universities, Periodical Publication, and the Circulation of Professional Expertise: On the Significance of Middlebrow Authority," *Critical Inquiry* 31, no. 1 (2004): 203–228. For a more specialized account that focuses on a different discipline see Philip Mirowski and Edward Nik-Khah, *The Knowledge We Have Lost in Information: The History of Information in Modern Economics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

18 Tim Parks, "Reference, Please," *New York Review of Books*, September 13, 2014, accessed March 1, 2021, www.nybooks.com. In the face of diminishing epistemic authority, the ability of today's research university to respond and adapt has admittedly been hampered as much

will return to present concerns below, but for now I hope it is clear that the changes I notice above across editions of the *MLA Handbook* are symptomatic of tensions arising partly in relation to media surplus.

By the time the MLA published its first *Style Sheet* (1951) the modern language disciplines were flush with cultural capital and had grown secure in their epistemic authority as the American academy – including the humanities – was enjoying a period of dramatic growth. The style sheet appeared first in the pages of the *PMLA*, offered as instructions for authors preparing manuscripts for submission to learned journals and university presses that published in modern languages and literatures and in allied or adjacent fields within the humanities. The *Style Sheet* establishes standards for knowledge transmission via scholarly publication, from the picayune (how to punctuate quotations, e. g.) to the more expansive (how to document sources, e. g.). Seventy-eight journals and 33 presses were listed as having endorsed all or most of MLA Style, including the AHA's flagship *American Historical Review.*[19]

The first edition of the *Style Sheet* went through 20 printings for a total of more than a million copies, and the second edition of 1970 appears to have done just as well. By then MLA Style had been so widely adopted as a standard (by its own report) that giving a list of journals and institutions adhering to it (and in what measure they so adhered) was dismissed as a project "both difficult and invidious."[20] Runaway success had also helped to inspire a reluctance to modify the standard: authors of the second edition were careful to keep "substantive changes" to a minimum ("The most far-reaching changes are reduction in the use of Roman numerals," 3). Even the first *Handbook* when it appeared in 1977 did little to change MLA Style itself beyond attempting to enlarge its target audience. Unlike the *Style Sheet*, the *Handbook* both establishes a disciplinary standard for knowledge transmission in print and aims at students assigned to write (and type) research papers, thus also at instructors writing and grading assignments.

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by market pressures as by inertia. In brief, a combination of demographic patterns, loss of direct and indirect government funding, already untenable levels of student debt, as well as an intensified cultural premium on what are thought to be the most "practical" areas of study in the minds of students and their parents have left the traditional humanities disciplines in particular jeopardy, engaged in zero-sum competition with one another as well as low and often declining enrollments on the undergraduate side in concert with collapsing job placements for doctorates on the graduate side. See Louis Menand, *The Marketplace of Ideas: Reform and Resistance in the American University* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010).

19 "The MLA Style Sheet," *PMLA* 64, no. 3 (April 1951): 3–31.

20 This is from *The MLA Style Sheet*, 2nd ed., 3rd printing (1973), 3.

Enlarging and diversifying the audience for MLA Style – entering the college textbook market – would make a huge difference in the long run, and it needs to be seen against the growth and diversification of the academy, its students, its institutions, and professoriate. The hypothetical students addressed by successive handbooks may have been English majors or students concentrating in the modern language disciplines, but they appear just as likely to have been undergraduates in general education writing classes. In cautioning students to narrow their research topics, for instance, the first edition imagines one hypothetical student settling on "Nature Imagery in Book I of Wordsworth's *Prelude*" and another on "The SST and the Environment." Seven years later in the second edition (1984), one hypothetical student was still delving into nature imagery in the *Prelude*, while another was interested in "The Future of the Space Shuttle"[21] (by the seventh edition of 2009, one student is imagined to be investigating the effects of cartoon violence on preschool children, and another the architecture of domes[22]). General education courses and their assignments often work at cross-purposes from courses and assignments for literature majors, which creates a kind of unadmitted dissonance in the *Handbook*, an echo of tensions existing more broadly between scholarly pressures to specialize and the broadening ethos of liberal education. Students working on current events need sources quite different from those working on literary history, while all students were likely to benefit if MLA Style were simplified.

The impulse to include new types of sources and the impulse to simplify MLA Style both helped to inspire future revisions. If standards, like disciplines, are inertial, the textbook market is accelerative: the MLA became a brand, the *MLA Handbook* became its franchise, and the MLA Style became its hero. The impulse to include new types of sources would involve the franchise in a decades-long game of whack-a-mole, as the authors of subsequent editions hastened to keep up while forever falling behind the proliferation of newer new media. MLA Style heroically gains the upper hand in each edition, only to be foiled in time for every new installment. Meanwhile the impulse to simplify MLA Style may ironically have helped to erode its appeal for humanities disciplines other than literary studies.

By the time the MLA published the second edition of its *Handbook* in 1984, the modern language disciplines were enormous, and the subspecialized inquiries that they embraced had become enormously diverse. At the MLA's annual

21 Joseph Gibaldi and Walter S. Achtert, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 2nd ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1984).

22 Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009).

convention, some 75 "Divisions" and almost 40 "Discussion Groups" organized panel discussions around different subfields, literary historical periods and critical approaches.[23] Beyond the convention halls controversy abounded, as the humanities disciplines – forever in crisis, perhaps – were for a variety of reasons starting to experience a persistent "rationale problem."[24] The so-called canon wars had begun, and for all of the very welcome (to many) broadening of scholarly and curricular interests entailed, the field of literary studies in particular was rife with what trend watchers would soon call "theory jousting and administrative maneuvering."[25]

Histories of the discipline (from within the discipline) began to appear with certain urgency at this point, while new forms of literary theory were said to vie for attention with "literature itself."[26] At the same time, "the status of the text" as a site of interpretation had become a special bone of contention, with critics arguing over whether or to what extent meanings are determinate or fixed rather than the results of interpretations shaped by shared assumptions on the part of readers.[27] Controversy would remain so characteristic of the field that early efforts at digitization lagged in the mid-1990s. The architects of JSTOR thought literary studies "too turbulent" to have an identifiable core and periphery, while the architects of TEI (the Text Encoding Initiative) found the field riven by "unresolvable differences of opinion concerning fundamental questions."[28] Amid much turmoil, the MLA was a big tent, and the classroom orientation of its *Handbook* a prompt for both inclusivity and moderation.

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23 The program appears as *PMLA* 99, no. 6 (November 1984). Division meetings included, e. g., "Film," "Psychological Approaches to Literature," "Black American Literature and Culture," "Sixteenth-Century French Literature"; and Discussion Groups, e. g., "Computer Studies in Language and Literature," "Scandinavian Languages and Literatures" (1079 – 1081).

24 Menand, *The Marketplace of Ideas*, 61. According to Paul Reitter and Chad Wellmon, the humanities have always been defined by crisis because of forever failing as consolation or compensation for modernity itself; see *Permanent Crisis: The Humanities in a Disenchanted Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021) 16 – 18, 150 – 151.

25 Peter Edidin and Jeffrey Kittay, "Letter to Our Readers," *Lingua Franca* 1, no. 1 (June 1990): 2.

26 See Graff, *Professing Literature*, 254; writing in 1987, Graff addresses "recent controversies over literary theory" (2).

27 See Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 303.

28 "Too turbulent" was the verdict of the Mellon Foundation's nascent JSTOR project in 1994; Roger C. Schonfeld, *JSTOR: A History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 20. "Unresolvable differences" was the experience of the Text Encoding Initiative; see Nancy M. Ide and C. M. Sperberg-McQueen, "The TEI: History, Goals, and Future," in *Text Encoding Initiative: Background and Context*, ed. Nancy Ide and Jean Véronis (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995), 15–18.

The second edition of 1984 continues to divide sources and the rules for referencing them into Books, Articles, and Other sources. As before, the Book and Article sections each start with a general guideline and then proceed to examples, while the Other section consists only of examples, implying that no general principles could or can be adduced that might embrace citing such diverse materials as broadcasts, recordings, performances, letters, interviews, slide shows, manuscripts, works of art, and so on. But the deductive pretext of the Book and Article sections – reasoning from principles – turns out to be pretty flimsy: they each require a blizzard of examples. Meanwhile the section on Other sources affirms the inductive project largely in force: formatting proper citations requires communicating about particularities and not reasoning from principles. The piling up of example citations and types of sources by medium and format creates a kind of puzzle box for students: the design pictured on the box is so intricate (so arbitrary) that it confounds fitting the scholarly apparatus jigsaw together in anything but a painstaking process of piece-by-piece hunting and matching.

This was before the Web, when computing and the Internet were just beginning to receive notice in the humanities. Before it gets down to citing radio and television programs in the "Other" section, the second edition of the *Handbook* starts with instructions for citing software, citing "a computer service" and citing "an information service." None of it makes sense anymore. Software citations are supposed to look like this:

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Kildus, Robert G. Color Scripsit. Computer software. Tandy, 1981. TRS-80, cartridge
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Ideally such references contain familiar publication details like author, title, and date, but they also label the medium – the oddly redundant "computer software" – and label its material format, "cartridge" (*Color Scripsit* was an early word processing application written by Kildus and licensed to Tandy for a line of Radio Shack computers that used a cassette tape drive for program and data storage). Although it might have, the *Handbook* does not explain why anyone would need to cite a word processing program.[29] Meanwhile DIALOG is the "computer service" referenced in examples, and ERIC is the "information service." Both

29 Citing the software that you use to write with was certainly not the point, so I gather that the MLA style mavens were implying instead the study of word processing programs as a gloss on writing as such. For more on early encounters with word processing at this juncture see Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, *Track Changes: A Literary History of Word Processing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), ch. 3.

were research databases that could be accessed online to find publications that had been digitized.

Additions like these make a benighted (whack-a-mole) bid for currency as an epistemic virtue.[30] At the same time, the second edition rolls out a more holistic revision to the MLA Style explicitly in the name of different virtues: simplicity, consistency, and efficiency.[31] This revision – it seemed quite radical at the time – would prove both lasting and consequential. The MLA introduced its "Works Cited" list (a retitled bibliography), and it directed that items listed in "Works Cited" be referred within the pages of research papers via "brief parenthetical citations," thus cancelling the need for any but explanatory or what were called "content" footnotes or endnotes where necessary (I was an English major heading toward graduate school. The earth seemed to shift beneath our feet). MLA Style had always suggested simple parenthetical citations where possible, in the interests of epistemic virtues named readability, clarity, and brevity, especially because note numbers could distract readers by drawing their attention elsewhere.[32] Now readability would rule the day. After we had compiled our lists of Works Cited, all we needed to do in the body of our papers was to drop the correct page number into parentheses if we had mentioned an author in the text – or at most an author's name plus the page number if we had not – and the whole business of footnoting and typing footnotes (which to be honest was an utter nightmare) could be forgotten.[33]

The MLA never takes change lightly. The "new system" outlined in the second edition of the *Handbook* had involved "years of study and deliberation by various MLA committees as well as by the association's Executive Council"[34]

30 The notion of "epistemic virtues" is adopted from Lorrain Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

31 Gibaldi and Achtert, *MLA Handbook* (1984), 1.

32 "Like this. And suppose you had found only 'Ibid.'" (this footnote appears in the first and second editions of the *Style Sheet*).

33 Of course, footnotes became easier once they were word processed instead of typed. My *annus mirabilis* was 1985; I began word processing with *WordStar* on a hand-me-down IBM 50150. The third edition of the *Handbook* (1988) includes a brief and somewhat incredulous section on word processing: "Word processing makes it easy to insert words into, or delete words from, your text and to shift a word or a block of words from one part of the text to another. Moreover, you can then produce a printed version of the revision without having to retype the whole corrected draft, as you would with a typewriter"; Joseph Gibaldi and Walter S. Achtert, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 3rd ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1988), 31–32.

34 Second edition, 1. For the whole process and motivations for this revision see Joel Conarroe, "Editor's Column," *PMLA* 97, no. 3 (1982): 307–308.

(it was developed with an eye toward publishing a more comprehensive *MLA Style Manual*, which appeared in 1985; rev. ed. 1998 and 2008). What the *Handbook* left unsaid about the new system was how much better it works for Books and Articles than for Other sources. The "Works Cited" list plus parenthetical references embraced the logic of print publication – most notably pagination – at the very same time that the *Handbook* was also struggling to cope with ever-increasing varieties of non-print media, like software and the first networked databases.

The MLA's various committees (thinking toward a new style manual) had in fact considered only printed materials in studying the needs of scholars and graduate students. What goaded them particularly – admitting the virtue of readability – was the special vice of books and articles appearing in print with footnotes or endnotes but without bibliographies. Publishers bowing to financial pressures (saving paper &c.) seemed increasingly content to make readers hunt around through thickets of "Ibid." and "op. cit." notes to locate the full reference for a source already cited.[35] The MLA's "Works Cited" system solves this problem rather elegantly by making documentation more economical as well as clear and precise. The economics of publishing was not at all pertinent to undergraduates writing research papers, however, so the *Handbook* remains silent on the whole point.

When it came down to using the *Handbook* of 1984 all of the different puzzle pieces could still be made to fit in "Works Cited," to be sure, but certain priorities were implied. "A book by a single author" is still the first and simplest kind of source described, and the recommended in-text parenthetical page references now tacitly reaffirm its normativity. Research based extensively on unpublished materials – such as manuscript collections in archives – was difficult to square with the new scheme, so to the extent that any of them were still paying attention to MLA Style, historians would take their footnotes and go elsewhere.[36] Nor were scholars whose research was based on unique instances (individual copies) in rare book collections much on the minds of MLA Style mavens. This was the

35 Carolyn G. Heilbrun et al., "Report of the Advisory Committee on Documentation Style," *PMLA* 97, no. 3 (1982): 318–324. This remains a problem today.

36 Of course, MLA Style still allows footnotes and endnotes, but its emphasis has shifted. Starting in 1971 the *American Historical Review* ran a note for contributors announcing, "There is no official style sheet for the *American Historical Review*" and pointing its readers toward the *Chicago Manual of Style*, Vol. 76, no. 1 (February 1971), 2a. The 1970s saw the rise to two competing standards in the humanities – Chicago and MLA – both of which persist today. A longer version of the present essay might treat their convergences and divergences as well as their contrast to APA style.

era of cheap paperbacks. Those inexpensive dictionaries must still have seemed a scourge, but a "seemingly infinite series of classic texts" now supplied – indeed, had helped to create and consecrate – the college market at the same time that library acquisition budgets aimed primarily at hardbacks.[37] Students always need to know how to cite the specific edition they use, but at least by implication it is the literary historical or critical work (an intangible linguistic entity) that matters more than the literal text – a tangible inscription, hopefully paginated and conveniently ordered to the campus bookstore – in which that work is embodied. This is where "the text" as a disciplinary object of inquiry shimmers indistinctly, invoking both the literary work and the particular material instance or mediations through which that work can be closely read.

Here I am hazarding a gentle link between in-text parenthetical references and the literary critical method known as close reading that may feel forced, since MLA Style recommends using in-text references and "Works Cited" for all kinds of sources, not just literary or printed ones. I am persuaded by Jonathan Kramnick's recent description of close reading as less a kind of intensive reading and more "a form of writing."[38] It is that special kind of writing that makes "one's own words and words out there in the world" comingle to produce new knowledge in the field.[39] The "baseline practice" of close reading as a form of original research is direct quotation,[40] which of course begs for parenthetical page references if you follow the MLA rules. Embedded quotations work "to summon a community of readers familiar with the text being cited," serving synecdochally to "imply that the whole of a poem or novel" can be "conjured" in reference to a representative segment.[41] It was something that writers could and should learn to do well, in fact, as the MLA's Advisory Committee on Documentation Style recognized in introducing the "Works Cited" revision to membership: "Skillful writers will discover ways of constructing fluent, even elegant sentences with only minimal parenthetical documentation."[42] Other disciplines are far less oriented toward direct quotation and their citation architectures differ accordingly. Scientists and social scientists learn to cite each other's article-based findings, for instance, while lawyers learn to cite case-based judicial hold-

37 Meredith McGill and Andrew Parker, "The Future of the Literary Past," *PMLA* 125, no. 4 (2010): 963.

38 Jonathan Kramnick, "Criticism and Truth," *Critical Inquiry* 47 (Winter 2021): 218–240.

39 Kramnick, "Criticism and Truth," 222.

40 Kramnick, "Criticism and Truth," 237.

41 Mary Poovey, "The Model System of Contemporary Literary Criticism," *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 3 (2001): 433.

42 Heilbrun et al., "Report of the Advisory Committee," 324.

ings. Apprenticeship in the humanities (and literary studies especially) means learning to use (and cite) another author's exact words.

The *Handbook* revision of 1984 may have felt radical at the time, but in hindsight it is difficult not to see it differently, as a modest retrenchment, perhaps, so much oil on troubled waters, or an uncalculated mustering of students in general education writing classes to the mentality of literary studies. One way to understand the 1984 revision to MLA Style is simply as a confirmation of disciplinary conditions on the eve of digitization. A commitment to the literary historical work coincided with an unselfconscious commitment to the logic of print publication, because the most frequent and most robust (that is, precise) citations pointed to specific page numbers as the sources of direct quotations. When it came to the *Handbook*, the seeming paradox of analyzing the (intangible) work while so painstakingly citing the (material) text according to MLA rules must have been as much an outcome of the sociology of the college classroom and the economics of publishing as it was the result of a long-lived disciplinary orientation toward formalism. "Formalism" in this context does not name a critical movement or doctrine – e.g., Russian formalism, New Criticism – as much as it names a big-tent notion of the literary work as "autonomous," in Mary Poovey's terms. At least since the 1930s and 1940s, that is, literary studies in the Anglo-American academy has in general treated literary works as legible on their own, apart from details about authorial intention, reader response, political economy, or the media history of their textual reproduction.[43]

As Meredith McGill and Andrew Parker observe, the formalist orientation of the discipline and the extended era of cheap paperbacks were to a degree self-reinforcing, as inexpensive reprints of canonical works effectively helped to insulate literary history from media history during the second half of the twentieth century. Not until the digitization projects of the early 2000s – many of them digitizing from microfilm – would literary history regain some of its media history, as Web-based resources finally gave students access to literary texts in (heavily mediated versions of) their original printed forms. Only when the American Periodical Series came online, for instance, was it realistic for students to

43 Poovey describes this kind of formalism as the "prerequisite for literary study's professionalization in universities," which was accomplished only in the 1930s and 1940s ("The Model System," 416) but subject to long-term contestation (see Radway, "Research Universities,"). It is also a long-lived "classroom strategy" in the words of Hugh Kenner, qtd. in John Guillory, "'Flipping' the History of Literary Studies," *Los Angeles Review of Books* (July 29, 2021), accessed February 16, 2022, https://www.lareviewofbooks.org/article/flipping-the-history-of-literary-studies/.

look at *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the pages of the anti-slavery weekly where it had first appeared as a serial.[44] But how to cite it correctly?

The third edition of the *Handbook* (1988) and those that followed stick with "Works Cited" and in-text references, while they of necessity pay more and more attention to doing research online and the expansive, expanding category of Other sources. Claims to "fully cover the problem of documenting nonprint sources" in the third edition (v) become rules "not presented as definitive" in the fourth edition of 1995, because MLA authors then encountering the web are sure that digital communications and disciplinary practices would continue to coevolve.[45] Making a virtue of old and new together, the MLA of the 1990s celebrates its own "tradition of adopting new practices" (xiv). Electronic sources in particular present a trio of problems that successive authors seek to address. First, how much information would readers need in order to locate an electronic source from its citation? Second, what to do about the frightening ease with which electronic sources (and their URLs) could be changed? And finally, how to get students to recognize the perils of plagiarism now that cutting and pasting has made it so easy? This third problem did not directly concern citation formats, but it added moral weight to what was a patent sense of unease within the profession in the face of ever more acute media surplus. One reviewer of the sixth edition of 2003 praised the *Handbook* as possibly "the last bastion of truth and sanity in a digital world." But truth and sanity forever remain in peril: a new seventh edition appeared just six years later in 2009.[46]

The seventh edition of the *Handbook* and the eighth that followed it in 2016 make an interesting contrast with one another while both also announce the introduction of still more dramatic changes to MLA Style. Dispensing with Books, Articles, and Other sources, the seventh edition instructs students in citing four categories: Periodical Print Publications, Nonperiodical Print Publications, Web Publications, and Additional Common Sources. It continues to tout simplicity and readability as epistemic virtues, but in a bid to challenge the particularistic, inductive project of earlier editions, the seventh edition also touts new virtues named flexibility and modularity in its aim explicitly to support improvisation

44 McGill and Parker, "The Future of the Literary Past."

45 Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 4th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1995), xvi.

46 Book review by Kenneth Womack, *Journal of the Midwestern Modern Language Association* 37, no. 2 (2004): 118. Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2003) and [no author] *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009).

and problem solving whenever "unfamiliar sources" require citation (xiii–xiv; 128–9). The promise of flexibility and improvisation is tempered, however, by a simultaneous retreat to the familiar inductive logic. This edition boasts "new guidelines for citing forms that are gaining more scholarly attention" – whacking new moles ("such as graphic narratives and digital files") – and this edition was accompanied by a (proprietary) Web-based component where students could login to find many more examples to puzzle over (xvii).

David G. Nicholls announces what was the biggest change enacted by the seventh edition in his "Preface." As the MLA's director of book publications, it somehow fell to Nicholls to declare in print that the MLA was no longer going to recognize print as "a default medium." Ignoring the extent to which scholarly documentation may or may not be an inherently "print-centric" discourse,[47] Nicholls focuses on evidence that earlier editions of the *Handbook* had always defaulted to print. He notices the way that MLA Style had long required that publication media be specified in citations, but only where the material being cited was not a printed publication (xvii). Remember the "computer software" label and the "cartridge" label from 1984? Now every source in "Works Cited" would have a medium-specific label. A lot of sources would need to be labeled "Print" for the first time, and online sources would generally need to be labeled "Web."

The whole labeling business got confusing pretty quickly. If you consulted a print publication that had been digitized and accessed via a database, it had to be labeled "Web," while you also had to name the database (Google Books or JSTOR, for example) and give the date you accessed it. Something originally published on the Web was to be labeled "Web" too, of course, along with the name of the author, publisher, the publisher's homepage, date of publication and date of access. Dates of access remain key because – as the *Handbook* rightly explains – accessing something on the Web is "akin to commissioning a performance" (181) (including URLs was discouraged in this edition because they are so liable to change and so difficult to transcribe, 182). Something like citing "computer software" and "cartridge" back in 1984, some citations required genre labels (e. g. "Home page," "Map," "Interview") and some required labeling material formats ("CD-ROM," "Laser disc"). The medium of an e-mail was declared to be "E-mail" (even though we typically read e-mail via a Web-based application), and the title of an e-mail was declared to be its subject line starting with "Re:". Mean-

47 The print-centric quality of citation has been lamented by members of the Wikipedia community, e. g., Matthew A. Vetter, "Possible Enlightenments: Wikipedia's Encyclopedic Promise and Epistemological Failure," in *Wikipedia @20: Stories of an Incomplete Revolution*, ed. Joseph Reagle and Jackie Koerner (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2020), 286.

while the medium of a letter might be "TS" (which stands for typescript, an abbreviation going all the way back to the *Style Sheet*) but because it is untitled it needed to be given the genre label: "Letter." E-books and e-readers aren't covered at all – Amazon's Kindle had just been introduced in 2007 – but in cases where file types are unknown, the *Handbook* suggests labeling the medium "Digital file."

A new formalism was struggling to be born amid the confusion. Instead of conjuring the work this new formalism conjures the medium. By implication each medium has a distinct logic, even if in practice the distinction between "Print" and "Web" is discomfiting at best, while inconsistent appeals to format and genre add other discomforts. Ultimately the spirit of ecumenism that had declared "No default medium" works chiefly to reify each medium as such. "Print" – so long and exactingly detailed according to a myriad of variables – is inherently one thing by implication, while "Web" is inherently and contrastively another. And if Print is one thing and Web another, then CD-ROM, e-mail, typescript, and digital file are some of their alternatives. The MLA's homemade taxonomy of media was ad hoc at best and nonsensical at worst.

The eighth edition arrived in 2016 as a turn away from the inductive orientation of earlier editions ("one of our greatest shifts ever," viii), making good on the virtues of modularity and flexibility that the seventh edition had introduced despite its recourse to a "forbidding" level of detail.[48] Instead of a rule for every case, the eighth *Handbook* tries a rule for any case, while it promotes the laissez faire notion (mentioned every once in a while by earlier editions) that "there is often more than one correct way to document a source" (4). Using a new "set of universal guidelines," the hope is that students will be able to use facts ("author, title, and so on") and the epistemic virtue named common sense to document anything, including "work in a new medium" "without new instructions" (4). The path to correct citation lies not in puzzling over hundreds of examples but in understanding the purposes of documentation – being a credible/creditable interlocutor within a specific discipline or profession – while examining each source individually to identify the facts needed to create an appropriate citation (xiii). Anyone left pining for the old skeleton of case-by-case rules can still use the handbook's index to find publication formats and navigate backward into examples (look under "museums, objects in" or "untitled sources" to find the Mackintosh chair).

48 This is from Kathleen Fitzpatrick's "Preface" to the eighth edition, xi; the eighth edition (2016) was retitled simply *MLA Handbook*, ix–xiv.

In its bid for universality, the eighth edition introduces a crucial new concept – the container – with the hope that it will be intuitive to students (it wasn't entirely, we can assume, since the ninth edition of 2021 includes numerous clarifications, illustrations, and elaborations). Containers have titles. They may also have contributors, versions, numbers, publishers, dates, and locations. They contain sources, but they can also contain containers: the research database JSTOR can contain a periodical containing an article; the streaming service Hulu can contain a TV series containing an episode (32–33). A database can contain a previously published book or story (34–35), and a multi-volume edition can contain a novel (36). Inspired no doubt by the templates familiar from software applications that can be used to organize notes and generate bibliographies – like Zotero or Evernote – the *Handbook* lays out a template for building citations. Students fill in the blanks to specify author, title, and then the observable details as needed to identify one or two relevant containers. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is contained in the weekly *National Era*, which is contained in the American Periodical Series online (the earlier microfilm version gets ignored, slipping into a kind of archival unconscious[49]).

Even critics of the new system seemed delighted to dispense with the whole business of labeling media ("Print," "Web," and so on) as the container concept finessed the need to name media and distinguish formats individually. Interestingly, critics and celebrants alike have had little to say specifically about the container concept except to note its centrality. Detractors thought that the eighth edition was less efficient (it returns to recommending the abbreviations "pp." and "vol.," which had been dropped in 1984, for instance) and dumbed down for "ease of use by students of any age and no particular discipline."[50] Others saw the new edition as "visionary" and a welcome opportunity to invite more readers and writers into the scholarly conversation.[51] Complaints about all that

49 Accounts that do consider the microform history of electronic resources include Bonnie Mak, "Archaeology of a Digitization," *Journal of the Association for Information Science & Technology* 65, no. 8 (2014): 1515–1526, and Stephen H. Gregg, *Old Books and Digital Publishing: Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

50 Dallas Liddle, "Why I Hate the New 'MLA Handbook,'" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 14, 2016, accessed February 20, 2020, https://www.chronicle.com/article/why-i-hate-the-new-mla-handbook. For another critical review see Janice R. Walker and Erin E. Kelly, "Trying to Contain Ourselves: A Dialogic Review of the MLA Handbook, Eighth Edition," *Composition Forum* 35 (Spring 2017).

51 Review by David P. Wiseman, *Hispania* 101, no. 1 (March 2018): 162–164; and Dara Rossman Regaignon, "Why I Like the New MLA Handbook," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 27, 2016, accessed February 20, 2020, https://www.chronicle.com/article/why-i-like-the-new-mla-handbook. "Visionary" is Wiseman, 164.

the eighth edition had left out – a section on the mechanics of prose and directions about punctuation, for example – were redressed in the ninth edition, which is more than twice as long than its predecessor.[52]

Whatever else they do and don't accomplish, the eighth and ninth editions have altered the terms of discussion by displacing media forms in favor of formal relations (containment). With a confident admixture of common sense turned towards even the most unusual and unexpected sources, the *Handbook* now finds its readers in the media landscape as it is lived. It is a media landscape in which all cultural productions (even of course the literary ones) now count as "content." With its appeal to alternatives – the different, nested, and even unexpected containers – MLA Style now admits the fertile ubiquity of mediation while inviting further questions about media as well as about the topics that students pursue. Affirming what we know already – that all works are more or less mediated – it asks students and scholars to examine works for the varied conditions of their textual contained-ness.

The ninth edition goes so far as to identify "the three most common types of entries" in a works cited list. Whereas once this might have signaled Books, Articles, and Other, now the most common entries are those that identify works with two containers (e. g., an article in a journal in a database), works with one container (e. g., an article in a journal or a poem in an anthology), and works that are said to be "self-contained." Examples of self-contained works are "a book read in print," "a movie watched in a theater," and "a manuscript read in person" at a library rare book room. Self-containment thus means stand-alone (a page I publish to my own website, e. g.), but it is as much a condition of access by a student writer as it is a political-economic fact of publication. Indeed, access seems newly paramount for today's MLA Style, since neither the eighth or the ninth editions require writers to include the original date of publication when they cite a republished work; that is now considered optional. Reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in a modern paperback? You can cite that edition if you want and forget about Jewett & Company's edition (1852), not to mention the *National Era* installments (1851).[53]

With its premium on access – how student writers have accessed content – and its recourse to a template, the current *Handbook* wagers the virtues of universality and inclusiveness ("Cite any source"), while it welcomes students as

52 The ninth edition also appeals to "balance" as an epistemic virtue, giving guidelines and hundreds of examples organized by publication format for those who prefer working inductively, while also elaborating the template introduced in the eighth edition for those who work more deductively (xxii).

53 I'm scandalized by this. See eighth edition, 50 and ninth edition, 210.

partners in knowledge production and transmission, offering them a small measure of epistemic authority. The measure of authority now on offer has less to do with literary studies as a long-lived disciplinary specialization and more to do with training the eye of a beholder who resides in media surplus as a condition of everyday life. With Google ever at the ready, students presumably fan out to discover resources that require citation, including the unusual, uncommon, untitled, and unexpected.

For each variable in its template (Author, Title of Source, Title of Container, etc.), the current *Handbook* elaborates three things: What It Is, Where to Find It, and How to Style It. The colloquialism "how to style it" is new to the ninth edition and the clearest sign that things have changed. "Style" as a transitive verb appears ascendant. It's a locution that may jangle in professorial ears while ringing familiar to readers who are steeped in the contemporary neoliberal discourse of fashion, especially on social media platforms where advice on how to style your hair and how to style your clothes proliferates. In short, today's *Handbook* hails its users with advice on how to style their citations (how to punctuate, what to capitalize, e. g.) as a species of self-help, related by extension – we might surmise – to such recent titles as *Aim High: How to Style Your Life and Achieve Your Goals* and *Editor in Chic: How to Style and Be Your Most Empowered Self*.[54]

Admitting that the production and transmission of knowledge cannot be separated from either the political economy of pedagogy or of publishing – now including portals and platforms – we can see the *MLA Handbook* as a kind of bellwether. The ninth edition manages to address a wide audience of student writers without telegraphing the anxiety that many literary studies scholars, scholars-in-training, and scholarly institutions (including the MLA) of necessity experience today, as the traditional humanities disciplines in the U.S. have seen significant erosions of capital, cultural and otherwise. Dwindled to just another kind of "content," literature may finally have become less consequential as an object of study – that remains to be seen – even as textual analysis still prospers, now within contexts that beg rather than foreclose questions about the role of media and mediation in the production and transmission of knowledge. Whereas literary historical works were once treated as "autonomous," they are now nominally "contained." The former is a hallmark of formalism that speaks to the critical tradition, the latter a hallmark of mediation that speaks to conditions of access.

54 I found these titles easily on Amazon.com. Sydney Sadick and Fern Mallis, *Aim High: How to Style Your Life and Achieve Your Goals* (New York: Skyhorse, 2020); Mikki Taylor, *Editor in Chic: How to Style and Be Your Most Empowered Self* (New York: Atria Books, 2020).

Digitization has obviously transformed conditions of access with many and far-reaching effects. In retrospect the evolution of MLA Style suggests both how confusing the process has been, how sprawling its relevant contexts, and how pressing questions of mediation have finally become, at least to the ways that the discipline tries to enlist student writers. Relevant contexts range from sociological dimensions of the academy to trends in publishing, from the role of learned societies to student-centered learning in the age of Google. While changes in some specialized domains have certainly been much more pronounced (think of the profession of journalism, for instance), the traditional academic disciplines have been notoriously slow to change.[55] There the evolution of MLA Style may be as telling as its longevity. The growth and modulation of citational fields across time include the ways that those citational fields become imaginable. The rules for citation imagine a field and then in changing reimagine it.

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55 Louis Menand writes of literary studies, "An academic discipline is a big ship to turn around, especially when it is taking on water" ("What's So Great About Great-Books Courses?," *The New Yorker*, December 13, 2021, accessed February 16, 2022, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/12/20/whats-so-great-about-great-books-courses-roosevelt-montas-rescuing-socrates).

Dillon Savage

The Man in the Mirror: Jacques Lacan's American Reception

Abstract: This article examines the American reception of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), a vociferous critic of the "American way of life" whose late-in-life appearances across the Atlantic were met with both admiration and confusion. Starting in the late 1960s, U.S.-based academics and analysts began to appropriate and criticize Lacan's work in order to advance intellectual projects imbued in various ways with the era's political and cultural radicalism. Lacan's ambiguous teachings on subjects like patriarchal authority, feminine sexuality, and the relationship between the individual and society inspired, I argue, a fundamentally ambivalent form of engagement in American intellectuals interested in Marxism, feminism, or the reform of psychoanalytic institutions and practices seen as outmoded or conservative.

Keywords: feminism, French theory, Jacques Lacan, Marxism, psychoanalysis

Though he only traveled to the United States after achieving a belated fame in his native France, Jacques Lacan seems to have inspired more confusion than admiration during his 1966 and 1975 sojourns across the Atlantic. The earlier visit was occasioned by the famous Johns Hopkins University conference that introduced French structuralism to U.S. academics, "The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man." Speaking in a barely comprehensible mixture of French and English, Lacan delivered a cryptic lecture ("Of Structure as an Inmixing of an Otherness Prerequisite to Any Subject Whatever") that another conference participant – Georges Poulet, a professor of French literature at Hopkins who presented a paper on "Criticism and the Experience of Interiority" – described as a "huge bad joke."[1] The philosopher W. V. Quine met Lacan in 1975, when the latter visited and spoke at a number of American universities.[2] During lunch at the Harvard Club following Lacan's talk at MIT, Quine recalled, the

1 Jacques Lacan, "Of Structure as an Inmixing of an Otherness Prerequisite to Any Subject Whatever," in *The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man: The Structuralist Controversy*, ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), 186–196; Benoît Peeters, *Derrida: A Biography*, trans. Andrew Brown (New York: Wiley, 2013), 555n37.
2 Jacques Lacan, "Conférences et entretiens dans des universités nord-américaines," *Scilicet*, no. 6/7 (1976): 5–63.

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110748819-003

French psychoanalyst asked "bewildering, disconnected questions"; the talk itself touched on a variety of unusual topics including "the really amazing magnitude of elephant droppings."[3] In New York, Lacan demanded a private tour of the Metropolitan Opera, which his guide Pamela Tytell – then a graduate student in French literature at Columbia University – attempted to secure by presenting Lacan to the Met's director as Jean-Paul Sartre.[4]

If this brief account casts Lacan's American travels as a catalogue of follies, we can equally look to these events for evidence of a nascent American Lacan cult. During the discussion that followed Lacan's Hopkins lecture, a graduate student named Anthony Wilden urged bemused auditors to take Lacan's works seriously and, in order to better appreciate them, to "*read Freud*."[5] Wilden's doctoral dissertation was a critical edition of the Rome Discourse, a 1953 lecture in which Lacan condemned institutional psychoanalysis as intellectually sclerotic and set forth the basic principles of his own ostensibly revivifying "return to Freud."[6] Wilden's suggestion that his colleagues read Lacan in order to read Freud through a Lacanian lens betrayed the perhaps inevitable sympathy with the French analyst that resulted from this work. Along similar lines, Lacan's New York handler Tytell, at work on a dissertation titled "The French Psychoanalytic Culture,"[7] would describe her experience encountering Lacan's texts and undergoing a Lacanian analysis as a liberating acculturation. Lacan's teaching, she wrote in a short piece for the French monthly *Magazine Littéraire*, provided a way to move beyond the "behaviorist or positivist" American perspective on the mind and toward a more sophisticated grasp of language's complex, foundational role in a variety of human endeavors, from individual thought to social "communication and exchange."[8]

Though written for a French audience, Tytell's remarks hint at an aspect of Lacan's thought that would be crucial to his American reception: a professed

3 W. V. Quine, *The Time of My Life: An Autobiography* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), 416–417.

4 Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, trans. Barbara Bray (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 374–376.

5 Wilden's emphasis. "Discussion," in Lacan, "Of Structure as an Inmixing," 196.

6 Jacques Lacan and Anthony Wilden, *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968).

7 Pamela Tytell, "The French Psychoanalytic Culture: French Psychoanalysts and Their Relationship to the Literary Text" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1979).

8 Pamela Tytell, "Lacan et l'anglais tel qu'on le parle," *Le Magazine Littéraire* (February 1977): 16.

contempt for the "American way of life"[9] closely connected to his struggles with the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA). Founded by Freud in 1910, the IPA was led throughout much of the 1950s by Heinz Hartmann, an Austrian émigré who became an influential member of the New York Psychoanalytic Society and was one of the leading theorists of ego psychology, a dominant branch of postwar orthodox Freudianism.[10] Ego psychology and the IPA's remit to standardize psychoanalytic training and methods were anathema to Lacan, an inveterate experimentalist skeptical of the notion that analysands should strive to develop strong, autonomous egos and learn to adapt to what Freud had called the reality principle (in his famous paper on the "mirror stage," Lacan described the formation of the ego as an alienating process of misrecognition, whereby a fantasy of corporeal wholeness came to stand in for the infant's basically disorganized, fragmented conception of its bodily experience[11]). One of the technical innovations he advocated in the Rome Discourse – the analyst should, he argued, be free to "punctuate" sessions by ending them well short of the customary 50-minute mark[12] – sparked a controversy that led to his eventual expulsion from the IPA.

Trained as a psychiatrist in the 1920s and 1930s, a period in which he was close to the Parisian artistic and literary avant-gardes, in the 1950s Lacan began to hold a public seminar that would draw ever larger crowds; he founded

9 In the thematic index to Lacan's *Écrits* compiled by Jacques-Alain Miller, "*The ideology of freedom:* theory of the autonomous ego, humanism, human rights, responsibility, anthropomorphism, ideals, instinctual maturation, etc." is paired with "*The ideology of free enterprise:* the American way of life, human relations, human engineering, brain trust, success, happiness, happy ending, basic personality, pattern, etc." under the heading "theory of ideology." Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006 [1966]), 857. Emphasis in the original.

10 On Hartmann and ego psychology, see George Makari, *Revolution in Mind: The Creation of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Harper, 2008), 454, 483. In the text of his first public seminar Lacan can be seen scrutinizing the attempts of Hartmann and his colleagues ("[t]he triumvirate who work in New York": Hartmann, Ernst Kris, and Lacan's own analyst Rudolph Lowenstein) to formulate a theory of the Freudian ego, which Lacan would adopt as his topic for the seminar's second year. Jacques Lacan, *Seminar I: Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953–1954*, trans. John Forrester (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 24–25; Jacques Lacan, *Seminar II: The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis, 1954–1955*, trans. Sylvana Tomaselli (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988).

11 Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in Lacan, *Écrits*, 75–81.

12 Jacques Lacan, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis," in Lacan, *Écrits*, 209.

his own school, the École freudienne de Paris (EFP), in 1964.[13] His rise to intellectual prominence coincided with the brief vogue of structuralism. Drawing inspiration from the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, the structuralists—most notably the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss—approached society, history, and humanity in general as expressions of the resonances and oppositions encoded in closed symbolic systems.[14] For Lacan this meant claiming that the Freudian unconscious was "structured like a language" and treating the Oedipus complex as a linguistic drama marked by the child's confrontation with "the name of the father" and symbolic castration.[15] It also meant treating the patient's speech as a chain of signifiers, each of which pointed not to a referent but to another signifier. Meaning emerged in the cracks and fissures of what was actually said, and was indicative not so much of straightforward motivation or intentionality as an elusive, perpetually dissatisfied desire.[16]

The case of Lacan, whose rise to fame also intersected with the politically and culturally tumultuous 1960s, further complicates an already thorny historiographical issue: the relationship between psychoanalysis and politics. In different ways, two influential works first published in 1979—Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism* and Carl Schorske's *Fin-de-siècle Vienna*—drew connections between the psychologization of American culture and the diminution of radical political energies. For Lasch, conspicuous consumption and New Age spirituality had come to occupy the cultural ground formerly held by leftist radicals.[17] In making this argument he drew heavily on psychoanalytic theory, which as he wrote was being revised by analysts such as Heinz Kohut and Otto Kern-

13 For Lacan's biography see Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*. On his role in the history of the French psychoanalytic movement see Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan & Co: A History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925–1985*, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

14 On the transnational, but particularly American, history of structuralism (and more generally, "antihumanism"), see Mark Greif, *The Age of the Crisis of Man: Thought and Fiction in America, 1933–1973* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), chapter 10.

15 For a historical account of the theme of castration in the work of Lacan and Georges Bataille, see Carolyn J. Dean, *The Self and Its Pleasures: Bataille, Lacan, and the History of the Decentered Subject* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).

16 Useful introductions to Lacan's thought include Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, *Lacan: The Absolute Master* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991); Malcolm Bowie, *Lacan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); David Macey, *Lacan in Contexts* (London & New York: Verso, 1988); John P. Muller and William Richardson, *Lacan and Language: A Reader's Guide to the* Écrits (New York: International Universities Press, 1982).

17 Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: Norton, 1979).

berg to account for what seemed to be a newly dominant clinical profile: the narcissistic personality.[18] For his part, Schorske argued that the introspective turn that enabled Freud's psychoanalytic breakthrough was also a turn away from politics in the face of an increasingly nationalist and antisemitic political culture. Introducing his book, Schorske wrote that his interest in Freud and his milieu stemmed in part from an observation of American intellectuals' political pessimism in the wake of World War II, accompanied in his view by a "turn from Marx to Freud."[19] Both authors connected psychological thinking to diminished political horizons, even as (in Lasch's case) psychoanalytic categories helped clarify this depoliticizing turn.

More recent scholarship has tended to understand psychoanalysis not as "counterpolitical" (Schorske's term) but rather, politically polyvalent. Dagmar Herzog has, for example, demonstrated affinities between sixties counterculture and European and American analysts and intellectuals who, like Lacan, challenged aspects of the field's midcentury orthodoxy.[20] Lacan's own relationship to the era's political radicalism was ambiguous; among Herzog's protagonists are Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, whose *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) was both informed by and critical of his theories. In his history of "French theory" in America, François Cusset similarly highlights this intellectual phenomenon's "countercultural temptations" while also describing it as a "(purely discursive) subversion of the university institution."[21] The histories of psychoanalysis and "French theory" converge in Lacan's American reception, which reflects these histories' tensions and contradictions. At once linked to and at odds with the political and cultural forces that profoundly reshaped American life in and after the 1960s,[22] Lacan's thought was both well suited to the shifting landscape of American intellectual culture at this moment and destined, perhaps, to remain marginal.

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18 On the relationship between the psychoanalytic concept of narcissism and the work of Lasch and other postwar American social critics, see Elizabeth Lunbeck, *The Americanization of Narcissism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

19 Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1980), xxiv.

20 Dagmar Herzog, *Cold War Freud: Psychoanalysis in an Age of Catastrophes* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

21 François Cusset, *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*, trans. Jeff Fort (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 54.

22 Intellectual histories of post-sixties America include James Livingston, *The World Turned Inside Out: American Thought and Culture at the End of the 20th Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010); Daniel Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge, MA; London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012).

In this article I offer a provisional historical sketch of Lacan's American[23] reception by examining the writings and intellectual contexts of several of the U.S.-based academics and analysts who began to study and respond to his work in the late 1960s. The countercultural élan that accompanied the importation of "French theory" into the U.S. favored, I argue, both the appropriation and critique of Lacan's theories by figures like Wilden (one of the first translators of Lacan into English)[24]; the feminist literary critics Naomi Schor and Jane Gallop; and the literary critic and analyst Stuart Schneiderman. These authors were particularly close to the Lacanian project, both through their familiarity with Lacan's notoriously byzantine corpus and, in the cases of Schor and Schneiderman, through working at the EFP. Considering them together helps us understand the internal dynamics of Lacan's American reception and its relationship to broader phenomena like New Left radicalism, feminism, and the politics of psychoanalytic institutions. If Lacan and his followers would tend to regard America with a mixture of fascination and disdain,[25] the American intellectuals discussed here approached Lacan's ideas with a kind of ambivalent enthusiasm. Like Lacan's mirror-gazing infant, both of these groups formed skewed, distorted views of the other that were nevertheless crucial to their own efforts at self-definition.

23 My use of "American" here perhaps calls for qualification. On the one hand, not all of the figures I discuss are American: Wilden was British (though he did his graduate work at Johns Hopkins and spent his career teaching in the U.S. and Canada), as were many of Lacan's anglophone feminist interlocutors, whose work I discuss in the article's second section. On the other hand, I have entirely neglected Lacan's significant Latin American reception, which is beyond the article's scope. For an account of the best-known case, Argentina, see Mariano Ben Plotkin, *Freud in the Pampas: The Emergence and Development of a Psychoanalytic Culture in Argentina* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

24 The first of Lacan's papers to be translated into English was "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious," which appeared in a 1966 special issue of *Yale French Studies* devoted to structuralism. On the history of English translations of Lacan, see Dany Nobus, "The Irredeemable Debt: On the English Translation of Lacan's First Two Public Seminars," *Psychoanalysis and History* 19, no. 2 (2017): 173–214.

25 A recent critical account of Lacanian attitudes toward America (particularly American analysis) is Darian Leader, "Lacan and the Americans," *European Journal of Psychoanalysis*, accessed April 5, 2022, http://www.journal-psychoanalysis.eu/lacan-and-the-americans/.

The Self's Language and the System's Name

A closer look at the work of Anthony Wilden provides an initial glimpse of this ambivalence. Starting with the commentary that accompanied his translation of the Rome Discourse, Wilden brought a great deal of critical scrutiny to Lacan's work in his attempts to explicate and contextualize it. He dismissed claims that he was Lacan's disciple – or along similar lines, that Lacan's ideas could necessarily be incorporated into an emancipatory political agenda. In this way Wilden resembled other politicized readers of Lacan who admired his defiant stance toward institutional authority and suspicion of received wisdom but questioned those of his premises and methods that seemed to smack of patriarchal chauvinism or obscurantist snobbery.

Crucial to this stance was what Wilden saw as the ambiguity of the concept of structure in French structuralism, the peak of whose intellectual fashion coincided with the beginning of Lacan's American reception. Jacques Derrida brought out this ambiguity in his contribution to the 1966 Hopkins conference, a critique of Lévi-Strauss's structural anthropology.[26] In Wilden's summary, Derrida found that Lévi-Straussian *bricolage* – the gathering and arrangement of disparate ideas and methods, which the anthropologist likened to non-Western "savage" thinking – resulted in "a sort of decentered and self-criticizing discourse on myths which is itself a myth." If structuralism challenged dominant epistemic convictions – for example, in the neutrality or purity of scientific observation and judgment or the ability of any particular discipline or method to monopolize truth – it did not do so in order to propose alternatives to the epistemic "centers" it displaced, but merely to posit its own set of *ad hoc* methodological models.[27]

Wilden made a similar point about Lacan. As an intellectual *bricoleur* – employing, in his Hopkins lecture, "the model of the Moebius strip to speak of the subject's relationship to himself" and "using [Gottlob Frege's] theory of integers to discuss the theoretical ramifications of how the child discovers the Other" – Lacan indeed exemplified a certain freedom to play with a diverse set of concepts, using them to construct his own improvised theoretical edifice. But to claim that the unconscious was "structured like a language" (and thus constrained by the imperatives of an ineffable Other) and trace the vicissitudes of

26 Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in Macksey and Donato, *The Languages of Criticism*, 247–265.

27 Anthony Wilden, "Lacan and the Discourse of the Other," in Wilden and Lacan, *The Language of the Self*, 259.

desire resulting from its interrogation was merely to wield theoretical instruments in apparent indifference to the truths they might reveal.[28] Perhaps for this reason, it was far from clear whether the structuralists shared the American New Left's famous goal, Wilden's sympathy with which would become clearer in his subsequent work: identifying, criticizing, and defeating an insidious "system" that combined economic exploitation, racism, and imperialism.[29]

Wilden's impatience with the failure of Lacan, Lévi-Strauss, and other 1960s intellectual luminaries to live up to that era's political ambitions was more immediately evident in his book *System and Structure* (1972). Here Wilden retained the wide conceptual scope of his study of Lacan, apparently driven by the ambition he announced in the earlier work's conclusion: to put Lacan into conversation with analytic philosophy and "communicationally oriented" psychiatry.[30] In Wilden's view, the problem of communication reached far beyond that of psychoanalytic intersubjectivity since communication was always grounded in a social context and societies were complex, dynamic, open systems. Lacan's insight that human experience crossed several distinct existential registers – what he called the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real – was useful in this regard because it hinted at the importance of context and the potential for slippage between the three registers. The same could not be said of the Lacanian effort to elaborate a "logic of the signifier," which for Wilden betrayed a rationalist bias. Like Freud and Lévi-Strauss, Wilden claimed, Lacan tended to flatten multidimensional "analog" differences "of magnitude, frequency, organization, pattern, and the like" into more straightforward "digital" "distinctions and oppositions," thereby relying on faulty, uninterrogated assumptions in his theories of psychic life.[31] "In other words," Wilden wrote, "only in an individualistic and phallocentric culture of primarily digital communication and accumulation

28 Wilden, "Lacan," 260.

29 For Students for a Democratic Society president Paul Potter's famous injunction to "name the system," see Paul Potter, "Speech to the April 17, 1965 March on Washington," in *The Sixties Papers: Documents of a Rebellious Decade*, ed. Judith Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert (New York: Praeger, 1984), 223. Drawing on the work of the historian Jeremy Varon, Greif invokes Potter's speech as evidence that in the sixties, "[t]heorizations of structure acquired new urgency," in Greif, *The Age of the Crisis*, 281.

30 Lacan and Wilden, *The Language of the Self*, 309. The school of psychiatry Wilden had in mind is well represented in Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin Bavelas, and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes* (New York: Norton, 1967).

31 Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure: Essays in Communication and Exchange*, 2nd ed. (London & New York: Tavistock Publications, 1980), 169.

does the Lacanian analysis fully apply. In this context, his analysis is indispensable – provided one knows how to go beyond it."[32]

Adopting a polemical tone in his introduction to the second edition of *System and Structure*, Wilden clarified that to transcend the psychoanalytic account of discontented subjectivity in modern civilization meant incorporating an analysis of the intimate bond between capitalism and scientific discourse into a counter-discursive "guerrilla rhetoric."[33] More precisely, he claimed that by embracing what he saw as the myth of pure, objective knowledge, university-based natural and social scientists misrecognized or deliberately obscured their own work's reliance on a set of socioeconomic relations that, if allowed to persist indefinitely, threatened humanity's survival. Thus their work constituted a kind of symbolic violence, to which Wilden counterposed his own intervention. Of all the philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists, linguists, semioticians, and cyberneticians he discussed in the book, the only one who had developed a "critical and transdisciplinary" and therefore "truly scientific" theoretical model was, Wilden claimed, Karl Marx.[34]

In his avowed Marxism and enthusiasm for the Lacanian categories of imaginary and symbolic experience, Wilden demands comparison with the literary critic Fredric Jameson. In his 1977 essay on Lacan Jameson was, like Wilden, keen to examine the inherent ambiguity and difficulty of theorizing the relationship between individual subjectivity and broader social or historical processes. Although Marxism tended, Jameson argued, to understand subjectivity as inherently social, while from the perspective of psychoanalysis it was "often merely implicitly so," both frameworks grappled with the problem of the "insertion of the subject" into the social fabric.[35] Jameson saw Lacan's distinction between imaginary and symbolic – and the critical strategy of elaborating a potential transit from the first to the second – as a powerful analytical tool with significant political implications.[36] A properly Lacanian critical approach – one faithful to the logic and spirit, if not necessarily the letter, of Lacan's texts – would, Jameson suggested, illustrate the relationship between the imaginary and symbolic di-

32 Wilden, *System and Structure*, 22.

33 Wilden, *System and Structure*, lviii.

34 Wilden, *System and Structure*, xvii.

35 Fredric Jameson, "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan: Marxism, Psychoanalytic Criticism, and the Problem of the Subject," *Yale French Studies*, no. 55/56 (1977): 338.

36 Somewhat contrastingly, Wilden described Lacan's implicit "injunction to transcend the individualistic identities and oppositions of the Imaginary by an entry into the collective differences of the Symbolic" as "paradoxical" and fatally impeded by capitalism's tendency to reduce "Symbolic values" to "Imaginary profits." Wilden, *System and Structure*, 30.

mensions of literary or historical narratives "while preserving [the] radical discontinuity" between them.[37] By rhetorically sublating capitalism's contradictions, this criticism could gesture toward the Marxist desire to realize a post-capitalist utopia. Jameson would build on this idea in his subsequent work, developing a robust method of critical interpretation based on the excavation and redescription of unconsciously "textualized" political and historical material.[38]

As this brief look at the work of Wilden and Jameson shows, Lacan's early U.S. reception occurred in the context of an intellectual left marked by the culture and values of 1960s radicalism.[39] For these authors, Lacan's work could usefully be put into conversation with the largely Marxist interpretive framework that informed their understandings of modern culture and politics. As we will now see, Lacan's feminist readers would find him similarly useful.

Lacan and Feminist Criticism: Thinking with "the Prick"

Like a dream image or a neurotic symptom, the literary critic Naomi Schor's decision to request funding to study at Lacan's École freudienne during the academic year 1976–77 was overdetermined. A junior professor of French at Columbia, Schor hoped, she wrote in her application to the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), to raise her professional stock by undergoing systematic training in psychoanalytic methodology. To do so at Columbia's own psychoanalytic institute would be problematic due to the institute's "rigidly structured" training program and the contingency of Schor's status at Columbia[40] (upon receiving the grant, she wrote to the chair of the French department, Michael Riffaterre and, citing "exceptionally hard times in the profession," requested a one-year extension of her appointment[41]). Besides, her scholarly interest in "the spe-

37 Jameson, "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan," 378.

38 Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981).

39 For a consideration of leftist appropriations of Lacan from the perspective of political theory, see Yannis Stavrakakis, *The Lacanian Left: Psychoanalysis, Theory, Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

40 Application for ACLS Fellowship, November 12, 1975, Naomi Schor papers, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, Ms.2006.02, box 19, folder 4.

41 Naomi Schor to Michael Riffaterre, March 1, 1976, Naomi Schor papers, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, Ms.2006.02, box 19, folder 4.

cifically literary functions of femininity" at work in the psychological novels of Gustave Flaubert and Émile Zola was sure to find abundant stimulus at a school where the psyche's linguistic structure was axiomatic and a lively interest in rethinking female sexuality and psychopathology prevailed.[42] In a report on the experience written several years later, Schor added that "first-hand exposure to psychotic patients and their narratives... was a moving reminder of the human misery that grounds Lacan's most abstract theorizations." Given the "extreme medicalization" of psychoanalysis in the United States, this sort of clinical experience would have, she claimed, been unavailable to her otherwise.[43]

Schor's ACLS Study Fellowship materials hint at a potent controversy at the intersection of feminism, literary studies, and psychoanalysis. "My concern in all the uses I make of French psychoanalysis," she wrote in a retrospective assessment of her year at the EFP, "is to demonstrate that in the French context psychoanalysis and feminism are not incompatible, rather inextricably bound up with each other."[44] In making this judgment, she intervened in two overlapping debates among anglophone feminist scholars. The first, concerning the character and value of "French feminism," came to a head in the early 1980s as the writings on sexuality and femininity of psychoanalytically informed authors such as Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, and Julia Kristeva became increasingly influential.[45] The second, nearly as old as the psychoanalytic movement itself, considered whether Freud's theories of sexual difference offered anything of value to advocates of greater freedom and equality for women. Lacan's own pronouncements on the subject of feminine sexuality bridged these discussions even as his relationship to feminism remained nearly as equivocal as Freud's was.

How could women assert their difference from men without acceding to the inferior status patriarchal society prescribed for them? What sort of difference was this: biological, psychic, social, economic, or all of these – in which case, which form of difference took priority? Was Freud a reactionary "phallocrat" because he misrecognized sexual difference as a biological fact linked inextricably to women's subordination, or were his theories subtly critical of male domi-

42 Application for ACLS Fellowship, November 12, 1975, Naomi Schor papers, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, Ms.2006.02, box 19, folder 4.

43 Report on ACLS Fellowship, Naomi Schor papers, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, Ms.2006.02, box 19, folder 4.

44 Report on ACLS Fellowship, Naomi Schor papers, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, Ms.2006.02, box 19, folder 4.

45 See Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine, eds., *The Future of Difference* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1985); Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, *New French Feminisms: An Anthology* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980).

nance? Did Lacan remedy or merely obfuscate Freud's error when he recast "castration" as a symbolic ordeal instead of an anatomically-based anxiety? These were among the questions that animated feminist discussions of psychoanalysis starting in the 1970s. Although a narrative counterposing French and Anglo-American views on these issues would develop – in Teresa Brennan's skeptical summary, "French feminism is meant to be about the insistence that women are different, and a challenge to phallogocentric thinking and patriarchal structures of language," while its English-speaking "counterpart is characterized by the insistence that women are equal, and its concern with the real world" – this formula fails to withstand close scrutiny.[46] By embracing the "French" position, Schor was not so much encouraging her colleagues to adopt a foreign creed as signaling her eagerness to broaden the field of debate.

A similar attitude seems evident in the work of the British author Juliet Mitchell, much of whose book *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (1974) was dedicated to showing that American feminist critics of psychoanalysis misunderstood Freud. To portray Freud – as, according to Mitchell, did authors like Kate Millett, Betty Friedan, or Shulamith Firestone – as "one of the greatest misogynists of all time" was, she argued, to take his writings on femininity out of context.[47] Its emphasis on the historicity of human subjectivity meant, for Mitchell, that psychoanalysis was not properly seen as bolstering patriarchal society so much as laying the groundwork for a critique of patriarchy. Freud's account of psychic and social development via the Oedipus complex meant he understood that "normal" sexual relations – including women's de facto inferiority – were impossible without any number of compromises and contradictions; thus his thought could be an asset to feminists. The American anthropologist Gayle Rubin developed a similar argument in her essay "The Traffic in Women," which considered whether a synthesis of Freud's thought with (another of Mitchell's crucial sources) Lévi-Strauss's could be applied to a critical analysis of what she called the "sex/gender system." Though Rubin averred that both Lacan and Lévi-Strauss stopped short of renouncing the injustices of modern heterosexual marriage, she suggested that they could serve feminists as Adam Smith and David Ricardo had served Marx: "as reminders of the intractability and magnitude of what we fight" and as critical analysts of "the social machinery we must rearrange."[48]

46 Teresa Brennan, introduction to *Between Feminism and Psychoanalysis*, ed. Teresa Brennan (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), 7.

47 Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), 297, xiv.

48 Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 159, 198.

Both Mitchell and Rubin referred glancingly to Lacan – whose "return to Freud" the former approved of in principle and whose reconfiguration of Freudian "penis envy" into a struggle for the symbolic phallus the latter appropriated – without subjecting his own theories of feminine sexuality to extensive analysis. As a collection of his writings on this subject edited by Mitchell and translator Jacqueline Rose reveals, Lacan continued to develop these theories amid ongoing European and American conversations about the status of psychoanalysis in feminism. "God and the *Jouissance* of the Woman," excerpted from Lacan's 1972–73 seminar, is a pithy – and typically enigmatic – example of the direction his thinking had taken. Lacan had moved past structuralism (without, however, abandoning his contention that the unconscious was linguistically structured) and was now contemplating sexual difference in terms of mathematical logic. If man was all that fell under a certain "phallic function," he told his auditors, then woman was this function's negation: not-all.[49] And if the phallic signifier defined man, woman was, he claimed, best represented by the definite article "the," crossed out in order to indicate that "There is no such thing as *The* woman, where the definite article stands for the universal."[50] Further, woman's non-universality entailed a unique – and uniquely unknowable, quasi-mystical – way of experiencing orgasmic pleasure or *jouissance*, which Lacan compared to the ecstasy of Saint Teresa in "Bernini's statue in Rome."[51]

In a pair of introductory essays elucidating Lacan's theories and situating them within broader psychoanalytic debates, Mitchell and Rose expressed their appreciation for his ability to capture the ambiguities of sexual difference while noting the precarity of his own position. Mitchell argued that by retaining Freud's insistence on the decisive role of the castration complex – that is, the subject's attitude toward the symbolic phallus, a "necessarily missing object of desire" – in the formation of sexual identity, Lacan escaped the biologistic snare that trapped psychoanalytic critics in the 1920s and '30s.[52] The latter included Karl Abraham, Helene Deutsch, and Karen Horney: analysts who sought to endow women with "something of their own" where sexuality and subjectivity were concerned. According to Mitchell, this led them to emphasize biological

49 Jacques Lacan, "God and the *Jouissance* of the Woman. A Love Letter," in *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the École Freudienne*, ed. Juliet Mitchell, trans. Jacqueline Rose (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), 143. This did not mean, he hastened to add, that women could not align themselves with the phallus: "Everyone knows that there are phallic women and that the phallic function does not prevent men from being homosexual."

50 Lacan, "God," 144.

51 Lacan, "God," 147.

52 Juliet Mitchell, "Introduction–I," in Mitchell, *Feminine Sexuality*, 24.

and anatomical factors foreign to Freud's notion of psychosexuality.[53] Insofar as "French feminists" and their anglophone admirers reprised this debate, Rose pointed out, they bore an affinity with Lacan, whose definition of femininity as the place where linguistic meaning could falter paralleled the feminist debate's emphasis on "women's relationship to language."[54]

On the other hand, it is understandable that a correspondent to the editor of the *New York Review of Books* would express bafflement at the prospect of an alliance between Lacan and any "individual women or women's groups."[55] If Lacan's teaching affirmed that sexuality, like so much of psychic life, could be traced to a gap in linguistic structure, his failure to renounce what some continued to see as Freud's sexual essentialism made him an easy target for the sort of textual criticism feminists had begun to embrace. The pioneer of this style of criticism was Jacques Derrida, whose essay on Lacan's "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter'" drew special attention to the easy slippage between the logic of the phallus and anatomical determinism.[56] In his reading of Poe's story as an allegory of the repetition compulsion, Derrida argued, Lacan articulated "phallogocentrism" – a masculinist strand of the "metaphysics of presence" Derrida sought to expose and undermine – via a tortuous series of paradoxes and reversals. Starting from the already suspicious position that "the phallus is not the organ, penis or clitoris, that it symbolizes, but it mostly and primarily symbolizes the penis," Lacan proceeded, Derrida claimed, to conclude that "there is only *one* libido, and therefore no difference, and even less an opposition within libido between the masculine and the feminine, and moreover it is masculine by nature."[57] He was thus, in Derrida's view, far from being the opponent of psycho-

53 Mitchell, "Introduction–I," 20.

54 Jacqueline Rose, "Introduction–II," in Mitchell, *Feminine Sexuality*, 53.

55 Stuart Schneiderman, Fritz Fleischmann, and Richard Wollheim, "Lacan: An Exchange," *The New York Review of Books*, April 5, 1979, accessed June 3, 2021, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1979/04/05/lacan-an-exchange-2/. The correspondent, Fritz Fleischmann, wrote in response to a combative review by the British philosopher Richard Wollheim of the first book-length translations, both by Alan Sheridan, of Lacan into English: *Écrits: A Selection* (1977) and *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (1978). In his review, Wollheim wrote that Lacanianism found "its recruits among groups that have nothing in common except the sense that they lack a theory worthy of their cause or calling: feminists, cinéastes, professors of literature." Richard Wollheim, "The Cabinet of Dr. Lacan," *The New York Review of Books*, January 25, 1979, accessed June 3, 2021, http://www.nybooks.com.libproxy.newschool.edu/articles/1979/01/25/the-cabinet-of-dr-lacan/.

56 On the origins of this text, see Gregory Jones-Katz, *Deconstruction: An American Institution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 136.

57 Jacques Derrida, *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 481–482.

analytic orthodoxy he liked to portray himself as. Rather, his faith that Freud's texts never failed to reveal the "truth" of a single, indivisible, implicitly masculine sex drive meant that Lacan was something more like a psychoanalytic chauvinist or zealot.

The American feminist critics who analyzed and appropriated Lacan's texts starting in the late 1970s were drawn to him equally as a source of inspiration and a target for playfully subversive criticism. As a glance at the private correspondence between two of these figures – Schor and her friend and fellow literary critic Jane Gallop – reveals, Lacan's approach to psychic, sexual, and linguistic problems resonated with them both intellectually and personally. His work served as a bridge between specialized academic knowledge and intimate life, realms Gallop, in particular, was keen to merge. Thus, for example, Gallop wrote to Schor that she had "refound my profound love and admiration for Lacan, the prick." In the same letter she speculated that the gastric disturbance from which she had begun to suffer since embarking on her latest writing project was "a somatic comment on my writing style" and announced that "someday I will be analyzed," preferably in France.[58]

Gallop's letters to Schor express excitement and enthusiasm for a promising intellectual and cultural moment but also occasionally exhibit disappointment and frustration, particularly at the prospect of measuring up to more straitlaced, polished, male colleagues. Gallop complained, for example, that a book she was professionally obligated to read – she was evaluating the author's tenure case – was written in a "sclerotic," "repetitive and defended," excessively "academic" style. She had, she confessed, lost patience for "non-feminist literary criticism."[59] In her writings on Lacan, she similarly emphasized the seductive, rebellious allure of what she saw as his unrepentant stylishness, which led her to characterize him as not phallocentric but "phallo-eccentric."[60] If he was a "prick," he was also a "ladies' man" since, whereas "[p]hallocentrism and the polemic are masculine, upright matters," the "prick, in some crazy way, is feminine." Gallop continued: "The prick does not play by the rules; he (she) is a narcissistic tease who persuades by means of attraction and resistance, not by orderly systematic discourse."[61] Her own attraction and resistance to Lacan's

58 Jane Gallop to Naomi Schor, October 28, 1978, Naomi Schor papers, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, Ms.2006.02, box 6, folder 1.2.

59 Jane Gallop to Naomi Schor, January 28, 1986, Naomi Schor papers, Brown University Library, Providence, RI, Ms.2006.02, box 6, folder 1.7.

60 Jane Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction: Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 36.

61 Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction*, 37.

rhetorical tactics – a desire, seemingly, at once to imitate and refute him – expressed themselves latently in Gallop's distinctive critical style. Yet after the dissolution of the EFP in 1980 and Lacan's death the following year, his eccentric and paradoxical teachings would coalesce into something like a new orthodoxy in the hands of an international group of exegetes and popularizers, including a modest American contingent.

Entering the "Freudian Field"

If Lacan's impact on feminism was one index of his growing significance to American (and more broadly, anglophone) intellectual culture, another was the gradual incursion of his ideas into the field to which he had devoted his labors: psychoanalysis. In his prefatory remarks to *Returning to Freud* (1980), a collection of clinical essays by French analysts that he edited and translated, Stuart Schneiderman – an American literary critic who spent several years among the Parisian Lacanians – argued that "any approach to Lacan that does not see his theory in its relationship to analytic practice is doomed to an irreducible obscurity and confusion."[62] As Lacan's son-in-law and literary executor Jacques-Alain Miller stressed in his commentary on the transcript of an interview between Lacan and a psychotic patient that appeared in Schneiderman's volume, the Lacanian tradition also treated "obscurity and confusion" as indispensable clinical tools. In his case presentation, Miller wrote, Lacan equally eschewed the customary psychiatric attitude of detached objectivity and some analysts' pretensions to uncomplicated sympathy with their patients. According to Miller, Lacan showed that there was "a madness in understanding, a madness in communication." Yet this understanding resided in the patient, whose own paranoid delusions described his mental state more cogently than a psychiatrist or analyst possibly could. Lacan's genius, therefore, lay in his ability to demonstrate that in the clinical setting he himself "understands nothing."[63]

In compiling *Returning to Freud*, Schneiderman drew on the firsthand experience he acquired between 1973 and 1977, when he lived in Paris, went into analysis with Lacan, taught at the newly-established psychoanalysis department at the University of Paris VIII-Vincennes, and became a member of the EFP, an ex-

62 Stuart Schneiderman, "The Other Lacan," in *Returning to Freud: Clinical Psychoanalysis in the School of Lacan*, ed. and trans. Stuart Schneiderman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 9.

63 Jacques-Alain Miller, "Teachings of the Case Presentation," in Schneiderman, *Returning to Freud*, 45.

perience he recounted in *Jacques Lacan: The Death of an Intellectual Hero* (1983). In this book – an idiosyncratic combination of memoir, obituary, and cultural criticism – Schneiderman delivered a boldly bleak account of the Lacanian worldview. As Janet Malcolm pointed out in her review, the book is preoccupied with "the symbolization of death in psychoanalysis."[64] Among other things, Schneiderman stressed the importance of the analyst's capacity, described by Lacan, to elicit the patient's speech by assuming the position of a "dummy" or dead man (*le mort*).[65] For Schneiderman, this principle was operational in Lacan's most controversial technical innovation, the short session, of which Schneiderman wrote approvingly that it induced "something like the horror of death."[66] Although Schneiderman's morbid musings could be chalked up to poetic justice – after all, the book appeared shortly after Lacan's death – he also sent the clear message that psychoanalysis was not medicine that went down easily.

Schneiderman presented a version of Lacanianism whose claim to authenticity lay in its close proximity to the French original and, accordingly, its opposition to mainstream American psychoanalysis. He argued that the alliance, especially strong in America, between psychoanalysis and medicine was misbegotten and should be abandoned. In his view, "the only [question] in which the idea of cure can properly be related to psychoanalysis" was, "Can psychoanalysis be cured of medicine, of the belief that it is part of the healing professions?"[67] In the course of his speculations about the psychoanalytic profession's potential future, Schneiderman occasionally gestured toward the question of whether something like an American Lacanianism could be possible. He wrote that "at the termination of a psychoanalysis an analysand knows that his desire is elsewhere. For me... that elsewhere was the United States."[68] Having completed his apprenticeship, a new desire materialized: propagating the master's teachings in the country that had thus far served as his greatest rivals' base of operations.

The austerity and severity Schneiderman attributed to Lacanianism were also important attributes of the resolutely medical postwar American psycho-

64 Janet Malcolm, "Therapeutic Rudeness," *The New York Times*, April 3, 1983, accessed June 3, 2021, http://www.nytimes.com/1983/04/03/books/therapeutic-rudeness.html.

65 The metaphor of *le mort* is drawn from the game of bridge, to which Lacan sometimes compared analysis. See, for example, "The Direction of the Treatment and the Principles of its Power," in Lacan, *Écrits*, 492.

66 Stuart Schneiderman, *Jacques Lacan: The Death of an Intellectual Hero* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983).

67 Schneiderman, *Jacques Lacan*, 51.

68 Schneiderman, *Jacques Lacan*, 86.

analysis that Lacan made his name inveighing against. That tradition's watchword had been maturity,[69] or the patient's adaptation to reality through a working alliance with the analyst, who nevertheless assiduously avoided gratifying the analysand's emotional demands. Schneiderman's account suggested, in contrast, that psychoanalysis *chez* Lacan dealt with a dimension of human existence that exceeded the bounds of everyday experience and which the analyst could only gesture toward by playing dead. The patient's task was to grapple not with the demands of reality but the grim fact of human finitude; following Martin Heidegger, Lacan suggested that the human subject was a being-towards-death.

Schneiderman's early project of synthesizing and disseminating Lacan's teachings to curious American audiences arguably came to full fruition in the work of another French-trained American Lacanian analyst and author, Bruce Fink.[70] In his first book Fink described, in lucid, breezy prose, Lacan's theories of language, the unconscious, desire, discourse, epistemology, and above all subjectivity. Unlike the Freudian subject, Fink admitted, the Lacanian one lacked a demonstrable reality. Instead of adjusting to the reality principle, the Lacanian subject's task was to assume responsibility for something that was impossible to observe directly: the unconscious. The "point" of analytic treatment, Fink wrote, was "to bring the patient to symbolize his or her real," which for Lacan was precisely the dimension of human experience that escaped symbolization.[71] If, however, analysis was an essentially paradoxical enterprise, this did not stop Fink from weaving technical principles into his discussion of Lacanian theory – and he went on to write a standalone guide to Lacanian clinical technique.[72] Though he and Schneiderman were not alone in attempting to forge an American clinical Lacanianism, they were perhaps unique in their simultaneous maintenance of, on one hand, Lacan's denigration of the authentic self *qua* autonomous ego and, on the other, a beleaguered pragmatism in some ways reminis-

69 On what Eli Zaretsky calls the "maturity ethic" of midcentury American psychoanalysis, see Eli Zaretsky, *Political Freud: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 29 – 32, 153 – 160.

70 For an account of Fink's intellectual biography, see Loren Dent and Bruce Fink, "Lacan in the United States," *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 47, no. 4 (2011): 549 – 557.

71 Fink, *The Lacanian Subject*, 182n7.

72 Bruce Fink, *A Clinical Introduction to Lacanian Psychoanalysis: Theory and Technique* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

cent of the psychoanalytic attitude as it was often understood in the midcentury U.S.[73]

In the years between the appearance of Schneiderman's and Fink's books, a pair of journals – *Lacan Study Notes*, which Schneiderman co-founded, and the *Newsletter of the Freudian Field* – began to focus exclusively on Lacan's work and to document and promote the goings-on of a nascent international Lacanian movement.[74] Although this so-called "Freudian field"[75] ostensibly lacked any central direction, the appearance of Lacan-focused study groups or "cartels" in the United States, South America, Latinate Europe, and the former Yugoslavia owed much to the evangelical efforts of Miller, who continued to edit Lacan's texts and set the tone of the discourse that surrounded them.

The transcript of a lecture Miller delivered at a 1986 psychoanalytic workshop in Chicago reveals a number of his typical precepts. It was, Miller claimed, a mistake to associate Lacan with other French (post-)structuralist thinkers[76]; Lacan was an incomparably innovative theorist and clinician[77]; contemporary psychoanalysts who were not Lacanian basically misunderstood Freud; psychoanalysis was un- or anti-American insofar as it entailed a dark vision of the potential for human happiness, in contrast to "satisfaction guaranteed" consumer culture.[78] Interventions such as this encouraged Miller's American audience to regard Lacan not only as a figure who, like Derrida or Foucault, offered valuable

73 For a contrasting clinical approach to Lacan – exhibiting none of the latter's skepticism toward the potential of psychoanalysis to foster a more authentic subjectivity – see J. E. Gorney, "Resonance and Subjectivity," *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 14 (1978): 246–272. For a clinically oriented comparison of Lacan to another prominent Freudian revisionist, Heinz Kohut (who stressed precisely this problem of authentic subjectivity or selfhood), see Judith Feher Gurewich, ed., *Lacan and the New Wave in American Psychoanalysis: The Subject and the Self* (New York: Other Press, 1996). Lunbeck's *Americanization of Narcissism* compares Kohut with social critics like Lasch and Philip Rieff but does not mention Lacan.

74 An editorial that appeared in the *Newsletter of the Freudian Field*'s third issue reported that four Lacanian journals, each based in a different country (Spain, Italy, Brazil, and Slovenia), had recently formed: Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, "Editorial," *Newsletter of the Freudian Field* 2, no. 1 (1988): 3–5.

75 This phrase originated as the name of an Éditions du Seuil book series, initially directed by Lacan and ultimately taken over by Miller. See "Editorial," *Newsletter of the Freudian Field* 1, no. 1 (1987): 1–2.

76 Jacques-Alain Miller, "How Psychoanalysis Cures According to Lacan," *Newsletter of the Freudian Field* 1, no. 2 (1987): 6. His talk's title was, Miller claimed, "a tribute to Heinz Kohut's last work, *How Psychoanalysis Cures*" (4).

77 Miller, "How Psychoanalysis Cures," 26.

78 Miller, "How Psychoanalysis Cures," 22.

insights into contemporary culture, but as a unique – and uniquely significant – intellectual voice for which Miller served as a privileged conduit.

In an article that appeared in the final issue of *Lacan Study Notes*, the journal's editor, Helena Schulz-Keil, explored the ambiguities of the Lacanian movement while offering a searing indictment of it. An analysand of Miller's and student of psychoanalysis at Vincennes before coming to New York, Schulz-Keil combined speculations about Lacanianism's potential to gain adherents in the anglophone world with firsthand observations of the faltering progress American Lacanians had made so far. In addition to offering the not-uncommon argument that Lacan's ideas and practice were incompatible with American culture, she accused Miller of mobilizing the pernicious logic of corporate branding in his efforts to expand and publicize the "Freudian field."

Interestingly, the theoretical framework she employed to describe this logic was Lacanian. Like Lacan's "letter," she wrote, a "business label... cannot be split."[79] Unlike texts, she went on, labels or brands could not be read or deciphered; they summoned and seduced consumers without engendering knowledge or understanding. She invited her readers to imagine a structural similarity and ideological complicity between the international circulation of Lacan's "brand" and that of financial capital. "The capacity of pure writ," she wrote, "for shifting masses of (unreal) capital around the world has supplanted locally practiced modes of exchange based on the reciprocity of offer and demand. A certain interpretation of Lacanian psychoanalysis hails these developments."[80]

Conclusion

Schulz-Keil's claims about Lacan's devolution into a brand – a signifier winding its way through globalized circuits of (cultural) capital – bring to mind the feminist critic Camille Paglia's characterization of "French theory" as "name-brand consumerism."[81] The vehemence of her tone in this piece, ostensibly a review

79 Helena Schulz-Keil, "Lacan in the English Language," *Lacan Study Notes*, no. 6–9 (1988): 204. Her reference to a "letter" that "cannot be split" seems derived from Lacan's "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter,'" in Lacan, *Écrits*, 6–48.

80 Schulz-Keil, "Lacan in the English Language," 206.

81 Camille Paglia, "Junk Bonds and Corporate Raiders: Academe in the Hour of the Wolf," in *Sex, Art, and American Culture: Essays* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 220. In a more sober tone, Daniel Rodgers has similarly argued that: "In a university system that was moving toward more entrepreneurial and market forms, where administrators competed more and more heavily to be on the cutting edge of market trends, 'theory' was a powerful commodity for the department and

essay of two books about sexuality in ancient Greece, led the literary critic Jean-Michel Rabaté to claim that "Paglia is quite true to the pattern sketched by Lacan's theory of the hysteric, especially in connection with scientific discourse."[82] Summarizing this theory, Rabaté writes that "hysteria gives birth to a discourse and maintains a quest for truth that always aims at pointing out the inadequacies of official, serious, and 'masterful' knowledge."[83] Along these lines, we can perhaps say that for American Marxist or feminist critics or psychoanalysts working between the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1990s, Lacanianism could serve both as "official, serious" knowledge and as a subversive discourse ironically undermining traditional knowledge claims.

Lacanianism's durability as an approach to cultural, social, or political critique seems closely tied to its capacity to sow disillusionment. This may also be true of other critical theories but is less obviously true of psychoanalysis as such, whose many schisms the analyst Martin Bergmann has characterized as "painful" insofar as they seem to have imperiled the psychoanalytic mission of applying a rational scientific method to irrational emotional or social forces. For Bergmann, psychoanalytic disputes are not like natural-scientific ones, "which further experiments eventually resolve, but more closely resembled religious and philosophical disputes, which cannot be resolved by rational means."[84] Lacan's dissidence[85] led him away from the official psychoanalytic community and toward, on one hand, enthusiasts of "theory" and, on the other, psychoanalytic sectarianism.

Unlike the deconstruction proffered by Lacan's sometime rival Jacques Derrida and a number of influential American literary theorists, Lacanianism was not destined to conquer the academy or spread "throughout American life."[86] Nor would it achieve the same level of cultural penetration as the orthodox Freudianism Lacan criticized, which was already falling out of favor when Lacan de-

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the academic entrepreneurs who could lay claim to it." Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*, 159. The "department" in question here is the Yale English department, where Paglia earned a PhD in 1974.

82 Jean-Michel Rabaté, *The Future of Theory* (Oxford, UK & Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002), 14.

83 Rabaté, *The Future of Theory*, 9; quoted in Warren Breckman, "Times of Theory: On Writing the History of French Theory," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 71, no. 3 (2010): 356.

84 Martin S. Bergmann, "Rethinking Dissidence and Change in the History of Psychoanalysis," in *Understanding Dissidence and Controversy in the History of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Martin S. Bergmann (New York: Other Press, 2004), 2.

85 Bergmann's essay situates Lacan in the history of psychoanalytic dissidence; see Bergmann, "Rethinking Dissidence," 49, 63, 73.

86 Jones-Katz, *Deconstruction*, 2.

livered his incomprehensible Johns Hopkins lecture.[87] Yet as I have suggested here, American intellectuals had good reasons to interest themselves in – and critically interrogate – Lacan's thought. His teachings on subjects like patriarchal authority, feminine sexuality, and the relationship between the individual and society were suggestive, if ambiguous. His intellectual authority, gained in part through attacks on psychoanalytic orthodoxy, led to the consolidation of a new orthodoxy with an increasingly global reach. Their simultaneous attraction to and uneasiness with these features of Lacanianism appears in the writings of Lacan's American readers as a constitutive ambivalence.

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87 Eli Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), 312–313. For a journalistic account of the travails of American psychoanalysis in the 1970s, see Janet Malcolm, *Psychoanalysis, the Impossible Profession* (New York: Vintage Books, 1982).

Elin Manker

Object Photography, Illustrated Price Catalogues, and the Circulation of Knowledge

Abstract: Illustrated price catalogues were published and distributed during the second half of the nineteenth century in every country that was affected by industrialization. The illustrations that were used in these catalogues intermingled with several contemporary image-systems; the centuries old practice of engraving, the relatively new practise of using photography, the illustrated publication, displays at world exhibitions and educational displays in public museums. The aim of this article is to investigate the circulation of knowledge that the photographs in the illustrated price catalogues took part in and to interrogate them as object photography. My journey includes three steps: early photography from the 1840s, the illustrated price catalogues of the 1880s, and contemporary antiques journals. This article discusses what knowledge was/is produced, maintained, transformed, and transferred by the use of object photography in these contexts. To this purpose, object photography is identified as a genre of images that generates knowledge that negotiates questions of time and historicity. I note that this is a quality that made object photography pertinent for nineteenth-century manufacturing and marketing and continues to be relevant for the historic revivalism and antiques business today.

Keywords: industrial design history, nineteenth-century media, nineteenth-century photography, retro design movements, second-hand markets

In April 2021, a post appeared in my Facebook feed in a group devoted to sharing information on paraffin oil lamps. A friend had posted some images of an old lamp he had inherited which had been manufactured by the Karlskrona Lamp Manufacturer. An enquiry accompanied the images, whether anyone could provide any additional information about the lamp. Since I happened to have taken photos of some illustrated price catalogues from the Karlskrona Lamp Manufacturer during an earlier research project, I was curious whether the lamp in question was included in any of those catalogues. I did find an image on the very same model of lamp, answered the post, and uploaded my image from the price catalogue. Almost immediately, I received two personal messages from two individuals who wondered whether they could have a copy of the price cata-

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110748819-004

logue. One of them was a conservationist of old metal objects and the other was a collector of paraffin lamps. Just as I had found the price catalogue very informative as evidence of what the manufactories produced and how the design process of paraffin lamps was executed, the group of people in this Facebook community also depends on illustrated price catalogues for much of their knowledge and subsequent social media activity. What seemed to be the most important aspects of these old catalogues (for the group's members) were the images, photographs depicting objects standing on shelfs in a symmetrical order. These old photographs were used to compare with existing lamps for answering questions about the original execution, which manufacturer made which lamp, and when a particular article was produced.

This online interaction prompted me to reconsider a question concerning ornamental prints that I had left unanswered during an earlier research project, namely, what kind of image is it that shows "just" an object against a plain background?[1] Ornamental prints, product photography, design renderings, and object photography of items in a museum's collection all share this property. Together they constitute an extensive set of images that are used in manufacturing, commercial, and museum contexts. However, images of individual objects have not garnered a great deal of research despite the fact that they are so common. In this article, I will address this research area by examining these types of images in terms of the knowledge that they produce. I thus ask: what knowledge is connected to the imagery of a solitary object in its contemporary context, and what properties do such images possess that make them productive images, even after the passing of time? Although I cannot exhaust this topic in the present article, I will identify a number of crucial aspects of the imagery by interrogating three uses of what I call object photography, from the 1840s, the 1880s, and from today.

I begin the article with some theoretical remarks. I firstly situate the article in the field of the history of knowledge. I then define and discuss object photography as genre. I also comment upon recent research on early photography where I conclude that the market for printed illustrated publications constitutes the "public arena" we need to understand object photography as part of. From there, I continue to the study of three uses of object photography where I begin with one of its earliest implementations, in Henry Fox Talbot's *The Pencil*

1 Briefly touched upon in: Elin Manker, *Förlagd form: Designkritik och designpraktik i Sverige 1860–1890* (Möklinta: Gidlunds förlag, 2019), 294.

of Nature (1844 – 1846).[2] I then examine object photography as a site of knowledge circulation, where the image genre proves to have moved itself on into the commercial sphere. My focus here is on illustrated price catalogues from the 1880s. In this part I also elaborate on methods of image analysis in visual studies, useful to the discussion of knowledge circulation. The article concludes with a reflection on how object photography in illustrated price catalogues continues to function as a site of knowledge circulation today by virtue of its use in antiques journals.

Images and Knowledge

Understood in a broad sense, the term image can be used to refer to paintings, sculptures, architecture, designs, and mass-produced images. Images in this sense appear in systems; in structures of production processes, techniques, various media, and (art) discourses.[3] Consequently, images can be interpreted in a large variety of ways. In this article, they will be investigated as producers of knowledge. Knowledge does not in this context exclusively refer to education or scientific knowledge. Instead, knowledge is conceived as a general understanding and practice that develops and changes by virtue of the fact that it is present in a media context that is open and free. Such an approach to the concept of knowledge follows a research field that has emerged across several humanistic disciplines during the last few decades, the history of knowledge.[4]

The objective of the history of knowledge is often argued as being different (although related) to other research fields such as the history of science, the history of ideas, and the history of education.[5] In summary, studies in this field con-

2 Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1844), The Project Gutenberg EBook, accessed July 13, 2021, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/33447/33447-h/33447-h.html.

3 Sunhil Manghani, *Image Studies* (London: Routledge, 2013), 25 – 26, 31 – 34; Lisa Gitelman and G. B. Pingee, eds., *New Media 1740 – 1915* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1999); Kieth Moxey, *Visual Time: The Image in History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013).

4 For an overview, see: Johan Östling et al., "The History of Knowledge and the Circulation of Knowledge: An Introduction," in *Circulation of Knowledge: Explorations in the History of Knowledge*, ed. Johan Östling et al. (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2018).

5 Staffan Bergwik and Linn Holmberg, "Concluding Reflection: Standing on Whose Shoulders?," in *Forms of Knowledge: Developing the History of Knowledge*, ed. Johan Östling, David Larsson Heidenblad, and Anna Nilsson Hammar (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2020); Lorrain Daston, "The History of Science and the History of Knowledge," *Know* 1, no. 1 (2017), accessed June 24, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1086/691678.

ceive knowledge as a central actor in society, where knowledge production outside the rational of the academy is emphasized. Thus, specific interest is shown in the knowledge formed by the circulation and sharing of information in social and public environments outside educational institutions.[6] The research field is held together by an interest in a sort of "subaltern" knowledge which, despite its supposedly lowly or unauthorized origins, informs and transforms rational (or "academic") knowledge.[7] Or at least, as Lorrain Daston concludes, it breaks away from research focusing on "canonical people … and topics."[8] The field of the history of knowledge has, however, not yet become a tightly structured field of study. As Johan Östling recently claimed, it needs cohesive concepts to sustain its relevance. Nevertheless, he also argues that a number of subjects have crystallized into concepts, including "circulation," "public arena," and "infrastructure" as they all relate to knowledge.[9]

The history of knowledge includes studies in a wide range of topics. As Peter Burke declares, from engagement in something that is social (as knowledge is for the history of knowledge) all kinds of possible hubs for knowledge production in every corner of the world can be seen to emerge.[10] However, surprisingly few scholars focus on how knowledge is produced and transferred by visual culture sources, such as book illustrations, commercial images, spaces like architectural settings, or circumstances that reveal tacit knowledge or craft skills.[11] Researchers who work in the academic field of Art History and Visual Studies are not yet much engaged in the field of the history of knowledge. Why this is the case could be further discussed but I leave it with the notion that a more developed interdisciplinary exchange, I think, would be fruitful for both parts. My task in this article is, instead, to undertake such a study of a visual culture source – object photographs within the commercial print sphere – where the "circulation of

6 Johan Östling, "Circulation, Arenas, and the Quest for Public Knowledge: Historiographical currents and analytical frameworks," *History & Theory* 58 (December 2020): 113–114, accessed June 29, 2021, DOI: 10.1111/hith.12184.

7 Philipp Sarasin, "Was ist Wissensgeschichte?," *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur* (July 2011), accessed June 24, 2021, DOI: 10.1515/iasl.2011.010; James A. Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," *Isis* 95, no. 4 (2004), accessed June 24, 2021, DOI: 10.1086/430657.

8 Daston, "The History of Science," 143.

9 Östling, "Circulation, Arenas, and the Quest for Public Knowledge."

10 Peter Burke, *A Social History of Knowledge II* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 3–4.

11 Exceptions concern most notably scientific images as, for instance, in: Lorrain Daston and Elizabeth Lunbeck, eds., *Histories of Scientific Observation* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2011) and several articles by Anne Secord. See Anna Nilsson Hammar, "Theoria, Praxis, and Poesis: Theoretical consideration on the circulation of knowledge in everyday life," in Östling et al., *Circulation of Knowledge*.

knowledge" is employed as a theoretical demarcation.[12] As a starting point for engaging in the history of knowledge, I use Lorrain Daston's straightforward and overarching question: "What counts as knowledge in a given epoch and culture and why?"[13] I do however rephrase this question slightly and ask: what counts as knowledge that is shaped by object photography in a given epoch and culture and why?

Following Helge Jordheim, the object photographs that are examined in this article are considered as "sites of knowledge circulation." Jordheim argues that we should engage in "genre conventions, stylistic and terminological choices, and printing practices" over time and geographical borders, if we are to conduct a study of knowledge production.[14] I also deploy Johan Östling's definition of "public arena" to define what printed media enables for object photography, in terms of being "a platform that, within its given framework, offers the opportunity and sets limits for certain forms of circulation of knowledge."[15] In my discussions, I follow John Frow's description of the basic framework of a genre to elaborate on how object photography can be considered as such, and Sunhil Manghani's methodological conception of an "image community" for how and why images migrate from one media and time to another.[16]

The outline of what object photography signifies, however, remains the author's and is based on the investigation that is reported on here. Needless to say, circulation implies movement. Yet, this article speaks of object photography as a stable, or at least enduring, imagery. As I argue in what follows, I do not assume that object photographs therefore carry over an essential or final content or knowledge. Neither do I consider them as fixed in a particular manifest execution. My interpretation of genre rather speaks of familiarity and slight alternation than of immutable features. Whilst I discuss how different times and practices may employ a certain class of imagery, I also note that the concept of "circulation" implies a recurrent return for initiating new movements.

12 Östling et al., *Circulation of Knowledge*.

13 Daston, "The History of Science," 131.

14 Helge Jordheim, "The Printed Work as a Site of Knowledge Circulation," in Östling et al., *Circulation of Knowledge*, 232–233.

15 Östling, "Circulation, Arenas, and the Quest for Public Knowledge," 122.

16 Johan Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2014); Manghani, *Image Studies*, 34–36.

Object Photography as a Genre

Object photographs depict quotidian things or luxury objects that are released from an apparent context. Typically, it shows an object photographed towards a plain background with few or no contextual surrounding. From today's view, the photograph of a museum object might be the most notable reference, but also the photography of products advertised on most internet shopping sites or the items for sale by auction houses follows this imagery – or genre as it will be phrased in the following.

Fig. 1: Museum photographer Märta Claréus at work, Nordiska museet Stockholm, 1939. Photographer unknown. Photo: Nordiska museet, Stockholm. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

With the term genre I refer to a motif setting, similar to how the academic categories of fine art did function since early-modern time into the nineteenth century (as history painting, still life or portraiture).[17] Thus, a genre is a motif setting that follows a couple of criteria that is used over an extended period of time. Object photography however existed outside the rather limited space of the academic categories and has never really been explicitly defined. The imagery as such could be traced back in time to the ornamental prints, developed since the sixteenth century, i. e., it existed parallel to the academic categories but was in use within other visual cultures; the craft and trade sector, as informative images of items to produce or to buy.[18] At that time, around the 1500 – 1600s, images of a single object could perhaps better be called object depiction since they were, evidently, not photographs. As I will argue later on the event of photography having important implications for the genre, why I stick to object photography as the nineteenth century onwards is my primary interest in this article.[19] Nonetheless, to not mix the art historical categories of motif settings with the use of genre here, I turn to for the definition of genre to literature theorist John Frow.[20]

Frow states that genre is useful as a theoretical concept since it speaks of what information a viewer (reader) needs, to understand a certain object in a certain context: "Most of the knowledge required to read and understand this text is knowledge about the *kind* of writing it is."[21] He thus situates genre as something performed by (or in-between) a writer and a reader, and he connects it specifically to how knowledge is performed. Frow defines genre as containing a set of "structural dimensions" which give the text a certain character and rhetorical function.[22] I will touch upon some of them, and interpret them in relation to images (instead of texts).

17 Moshe Barasch, *Theories of Art: From Plato to Winckelmann* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 342 – 344.

18 Michael Snodin and John Styles, *Design and the Decorative Arts: Britain 1500 – 1900* (London: V&A Publications, 2001), 44 – 60.

19 They might also be called "printed designs" (or "dessin"), in accordance to how that term was used in a Florentine and French context: Karen Edis Barzman, *The Florentine Academy and the Early Modern State: The Discipline of Disegno* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 143 – 151. The terminology of object photography is not, as mentioned, agreed upon, rather this article is one of the first to try this conceptualization.

20 I will also touch upon a different view on genre within visual studies, in the section "1880: Commercial Settings – Image Communities."

21 Frow, *Genre*, 7, emphasis in original.

22 Frow, *Genre*, 8 – 10.

What is at stake in object photography is the intention to transparently picture an object, i.e., to show the object clearly in detail, fully exposed, and with a minimum of personal expression on behalf of the photographer. If taking object photography that museums generally practise as an example, the transparent ambition is clearly connected to the fact that the photograph is supposed to enable objective research, and/or function as a record of the museum's inventory. Thus, the object photograph must be a reliable representation with as few bearings on context or personal objectives as possible. Turning to Frow, that corresponds with what he calls a "thematical structure," which he refers to as a *topos* to speak from.[23] The *topos* of object photography is to present as informative an image as possible of an existing object. Another of Frow's structural dimensions is the "formal feature." That is, for Frow, the "visual structure" and "organisation" of content.[24] In object photography this corresponds to focus on sharpness and details. For instance, in the museum context, a blurred image or unsharp focus would reject the photograph as suitable for a museum's archive. Details must be possible to investigate.[25] The formal feature in an object photograph is also employed by the imagery where a single object is depicted against a plain background. This is very typical of object photography but hardly exists in any other kind of photography. This way of making an image directs the gaze towards the object; the empty surroundings do not evoke the viewer's attention. A focus can be maintained.

It is important to note that in marketing photography, which I also included in this genre, much more meaning-bearing techniques are likely to be implemented, including narration, visual references, political statements, and so on. Notwithstanding that, in the nineteenth century, the object in object photography stood pretty much for itself, even in the context of commercial imagery. As will be shown later in this article, this also goes for more contemporary images in today's life-style magazines.

To follow Frow a bit further in his negotiation on genre, another signifier is what he calls a "metageneric reference." This is a feature in one artefact that is transferred to another but also between different genres. Frow's example is taken from literature and exemplified by words referencing to each other.[26] In the case of images, metageneric references can instead be identified as transferred visual

23 Frow, *Genre*, 9.

24 Frow, *Genre*, 9.

25 Early photographs might not yet have been very sharp, in the eyes of a present-day viewer, but sharpness was discussed by the inventors of photography. See further section "Early Photography and the Public Arena."

26 Frow, *Genre*, 8.

elements.[27] For object photography one such reference is the plain backdrop which connects object photography, as it is performed, with similar images in other techniques, as ornamental prints and also, if pushed a bit further, with portraiture. The metageneric reference have different functions in these two examples. The use of a plain background in the ornamental print was a practicality based on technique. To just depict the object saved time and material. In many cases, the ornamental print was also suggestion of a design, i. e., it showed not yet realised objects but detailed sketches to be used in the workshop.[28] The white printing paper of the ornamental print however lived on as a formal feature in the plain backdrop of object photography, even though it no longer had practical implications. The plain background is also common in many portraits (however far from all) in terms of an obscured background. The focus on the portraited person, details in dress, accessories, and so forth intensifies by the exclusion of context. A plain background could be interpreted as an empty space, but once seen as an element in an image composition, it takes on the additional function of reinforcing other elements in the picture – in this case, the object. A plain background is thus an important formal feature in object photography and can be characterized as a metageneric reference. In this last sense it reveals image circulation, in terms of technique, function, and between resembling genres.

As we will see, Talbot's object photography expands the ornamental print imagery from depicting a single object to an image (a photograph) of multiple objects. Nonetheless, the rest of the features of the genre remain. As I note below, the potential depiction of multiple objects was one of the advantages Talbot associated with photography in contrast to engraving. As Frow argues, a genre is not set once and for all, but remains open-ended and accumulates as history and discourses change.[29]

Early Photography and the Public Arena

In *The Pencil of Nature*, printed 1844 – 1846, the inventor and photographer Henry Fox Talbot presents his thoughts on photography in words and pictures. By using 24 commented photographs, Talbot exemplifies his newly-developed

27 See Geoffrey Batchen, *Apparitions: Photography and Dissemination* (Sydney and Prague: AMU Press, 2018), 74 – 128.

28 Barzman, *The Florentine Academy*, 143 – 151.

29 Frow, *Genre*, 3.

photographic technique, the calotype (in his words, "Photogenic Drawing") and its benefits.[30] The 24 plates show a great variety of scenes. Thirteen of the plates display open-air scenes (ten of them depicting buildings), three are examples of how the photographic technique could be used to transfer other media into a photograph (facsimiles of books, sketches, and lithographs), two are photograms (direct exposure on the photosensitive paper in 1-to-1 scale), five are versions of object photography in the sense defined above (two are images of sculpture busts, one depiction of books, and two depictions of articles made of ceramics and glass). The last group of images include the images that constitute the starting point for the present discussion: Plate III ("Articles of china") and Plate IV ("Articles of glass").[31]

Fig. 2: W H Fox Talbot: Plate III, Articles of China, *The Pencil of Nature,* 1844. Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

30 Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*.

31 All photographs can be retrieved at: Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, accessed July 13, 2021, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/33447/33447-h/33447-h.html.

The china and glass articles are placed on a shelf in each of the images. They are placed symmetrically, with a little space around the objects. The images are composed in such a way so that the ends of each image coincide with the side-parts of the shelf. Consequently, the calotype itself visually re-presents the shelf. The articles are distributed evenly across the surface of each of the images. The camera was positioned so as to reproduce the perspective where the viewer's eyes would likely have been if the viewer were standing in front of the objects in real life. The lowest shelf in each image is thus viewed from a slight bird's-eye-view, and the top shelves are viewed *en face*. The images provide a straightforward presentation of the items, giving the viewer an unobstructed view of them. The background is plain and dark, thus allowing the items to stand out from the background. Consequently, the contours of each item can be easily followed, and certain details of how each item was made can be examined.

Talbot's claims regarding these photographs in the accompanying text is his investigation into an alternative way of depicting collections. In this context, he declares the many advantages that photography has over other reproduction techniques: it is faster than the combined work of drawing and engraving every single object since a photo shot captures all objects at once. Photography is also a much faster and more exact procedure than writing an inventory. In this vein, Talbot observes that "the more strange and fantastic the forms of his [a collector's] old teapots, the more advantage in having their pictures given instead of their descriptions."[32] Furthermore, the camera is, to Talbot, never distracted by other impressions than what is actually in front of it, while an engraver would inevitably implement an interpretation in translating (the image of) the object over to a printing plate. This last statement can perhaps best be understood in the light of Talbot's ideas concerning what characterizes photography in the first place – it reproduces something that indisputably exists since the actual object left its mark on the plate by the light's inscription, no artist or engraver has had any hand in it.[33] Talbot also suggests a very practical reason for photographing objects like this: photographs might stand in as "evidence of a novel kind," an indisputable witness of ownership if your home (or collection) was burgled.[34]

The Pencil of Nature is a well-known and a much-commented-on work on the history of the photographic image. Talbot's invention of calotypes is also acknowledged as an important step in the advancement of photographic techniques. Talbot's calotypes were the first photographic technique to use a light-sen-

32 Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, text for Plate III.
33 Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, "Introductory Remarks."
34 Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, text for Plate III.

sitive paper negative in the photographic process. This process allowed for a series of copies of the same image to be made, also on paper. Talbot was not, however, alone in experimenting with photographic techniques. His main competitor, Louis Daguerre, had developed the daguerreotype slightly earlier, which provided sharper detail but produced a somewhat fragile imprint on a silverplate that could not be duplicated over again – and to make several copies were important to Talbot. *The Pencil of Nature* was originally published as a series of booklets containing three to seven calotype plates each. The initial intent was to compile a collection of 50 plates, but problems in the printing process forced Talbot to stop publishing his booklets after three years and six issues. However, he continued to make improvements in his technique and produced several other books containing photographic images.[35]

Much literature on early photography has turned its interest towards the relationship between photography and art or has been focused on pioneering inventions (like those made by Talbot).[36] Scholarly interest in Victorian culture has also brought about much literature on scientific photography and on the relation between photography, novels, and narration.[37] Recent years have also seen a growing interest in positioning photography in terms of the development of other media.[38] In the case of Talbot, his interaction in photography is by some

35 Larry J. Schaaf, "Third Census of H. Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature*," *History of Photography* 36, no. 1 (2012), accessed June 26, 2021, DOI: 10.1080/03087298.2012.632561; Steffen Siegel, "Uniqueness Multiplied: The Daguerrotype and the Visual Economy of the Graphic Arts," in *Photography & Other Media in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Nicoletta Leonardi and Simone Natale (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2018), 118–129; Batchen, *Apparitions*, 26.

36 The reference list on this topic is quite extensive. For an historiographical overview, see for instance, Cecilia Strandroth, "The 'New' History? Notes on the Historiography of Photography," *Journal of Art History* 78, no. 3 (2009), accessed May 11, 2021, DOI: 10.1080/00233600903326136; Geoffrey Batchen, *Burning with Desire. The Conception of Photography* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press Paperback Edition, 1997), 4–53.

37 Jennifer Tucker, *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 1–15; Nancy Armstrong, "Fiction in the Age of Photography," *Narrative* 7, no. 1 (1999), accessed March 16, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20107168.

38 Concerning the nineteenth century, see Erkki Huhtamo, "*Elephans Photographicus:* Media Archaeology and the History of Photography," in *Photography & Other Media in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Leonardi and Natale; Stephen Bann, "Against Photographic Exceptionalism," in *Photography and its Origins*, ed. Tanya Sheenan and Andrés Mario Zervignón (New York: Routledge, 2015); Cara A. Finnegan, *Making Photography Matter: A viewer's history from the Civil War to the Great Depression* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015); Stephen Bann, *Parallel Lines. Printmakers, Painters and Photographers in Nineteenth Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Pelle Snickars, *Kulturarvets mediehistoria: Dokumentation och representation 1750–1950* (Lund: Mediehistoriskt arkiv, 2020), 243–341.

researchers argued to best be understood as part of the development of graphical printing. For instance, Geoffrey Belknap has convincingly posited the idea that the wish to develop a new printing technique was one reason why Talbot engaged with photography in the first place.[39] Geoffrey Batchen and Steffen Siegel have (separately and with Talbot as one example) discussed photography as yet another technique for publishing images in the growing business of public printing and publishing, where also variations of gravure technique developed parallel to photography for the printing market (such as xylography, lithography, zinc engravings, etc.).[40]

The research on the relation between photography and the printing market has significance for the arguments in this article, not the least since printing businesses in general enabled an increasing circulation of images (this was not specific for Talbot's work). The context of the nineteenth century market for printed illustrated publications thus demarcates a public arena where Talbot's images took part.[41] This public arena was accessible, commercial, full of new inventions, and constantly growing. It was heterogeneous in the respect that illustrations came in many versions, as mentioned above, and it typically reached not only the academia or upper classes but also the so-called "greater public."[42] It was however limited by the medium of the printed book, booklet, journal, etc.; i. e., publications distributed by publishing houses.

To demarcate the printed illustrated publication as a public arena does not immediately respond to questions on what knowledge was transferred by the imagery in the object photography. In the section "1880: Commercial settings – image communities" I will argue that Talbot's object photography moved on from his experimentation of printing techniques into more prosperous commercial prints, functioning as sites of knowledge circulation in the public arena of the market for printed illustrated publications. To go there I however need to elaborate on what knowledge was at stake in object photography in an earlier stage. Geoffrey Batchen and Vered Maimon have separately claimed that early

39 Geoffrey Belknap, "The Print after Photography: Talbot and the Invention of the 'Photographic' Print," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 42, no. 2 (2020), accessed June 26, 2021, DOI: 10.1080/08905495.2020.1733326; see Schaaf, "Third Census of H. Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature*."

40 Siegel, "Uniqueness Multiplied"; Batchen, *Burning with Desire*, 24 – 102; Batchen, *Apparitions*, 74 – 128; Anthony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550 – 1820* (London: The British Museum Press, 2016), 489 – 496.

41 See Östling, "Circulation, Arenas, and the Quest for Public Knowledge," 122.

42 Anne Hultzsch, "'To the Great Public.' The Architectural Image in the Early *Illustrated London News*," *Architectural Histories* 5, no. 1 (2017), accessed March 15, 2022, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/ah.268; Manker, *Förlagd form*, 135 – 141, 200 – 203.

photography, with Talbot as example, was part of a philosophical discussion on epistemology and of one's understanding of the world that took place during the shift between the enlightenment and the advent of positivism.[43] Batchen and Maimon thus transcend the development of photography far beyond the mere description of it as a shift between different artistic or mechanical techniques. They place it in a more specific knowledge context. Batchen's and Maimon's claim is the starting-point for my first exploration of a use of object photography.

1840: Photography as Document

Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* was published at a time and place when photography was new and much discussed concerning what it "was" and for what purposes it could be used.[44] For instance, the question of whether a description was better performed by words or by images was a central question – and a question we could see Talbot responded to in his comments in *The Pencil of Nature*. In her research on the scientific image, Anne Secord has shown how natural scientists who propagated for the use of images in education – especially education that was provided outside the academy – had to fight for their position on this subject.[45] One of the arguments that was presented on why images would not be of use was based on the claim that images were thought to hinder the free reflection of the mind. Images were considered to be too direct, too decisive. Correspondingly, Dan Karlholm has observed how engravings of paintings in art history publications during this period often were presented as contour drawings,

43 I want to stress that more scholars could be mentioned making this claim, for instance Nancy Armstrong, Jennifer Tucker, Lorrain Daston, and Peter Galison. The limited space of this article however makes me stick to just Maimon and Batchen since they position the claim in relation to Talbot specifically. Vered Maimon, *Singular Images, Failed Copies: William Henry Fox Talbot and the Early Photograph* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), ix–xvi, 175–198; Batchen, *Burning with Desire*, 4–21, 56–57. See Tucker, *Nature Exposed*; Lorrain Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007); Armstrong, "Fiction in the Age of Photography."

44 See Leonardi and Natale, eds., *Photography & Other Media in the Nineteenth Century*; Daston and Gailson, *Objectivity*; Kathleen Davidson, *Photography, Natural History and the Nineteenth-century Museum: Exchanging Views of Empire* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017), 27–47; Batchen, *Burning with Desire*; Michel Frizot, "The Parole of the Primitives," *History of Photography* 16, no. 4 (1992), accessed May 11, 2021, DOI: 10.1080/03087298.1992.10442570359.

45 Anne Secord, "Botany on a Plate: Pleasure and the Power of Pictures in Promoting Early Nineteenth-Century Scientific Knowledge," *Isis* 93, no. 1 (2002), accessed June 17, 2021, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/343245.

lacking any intricate shading or other techniques that would make for a more accurate representation of the complexity of the original picture. Karlholm argues that, based on the nineteenth century German idea of *Bildung*, it was argued that an image's function was to put the mind in movement. Complete insight into the content of the image was only seen as possible if the interpreter had the opportunity to reflect upon and further develop an interpretation of what was seen. Images were seen as only a facilitator to this process and thus should not be too detailed in terms of the information contained therein.[46]

Talbot's position in this evidently was on the side of the spokespersons for using images.[47] Moreover, he conceived photography as a "drawing by Nature" itself (his use of the initial capital). It represented a form of direct contact with nature. Viewing a photograph was almost the same as examining the object itself. It is perhaps easy to think that "drawing by Nature" here was used as a metaphor, but Talbot (and others) seems to have conceived of the imprint that light made on the light-sensitive surface as equal to the act of drawing that the human can perform.[48] This does not mean, however, that the notion of "realism" was at stake. Geoffrey Batchen has pointed out the importance of keeping distinct the ideas of what is "real" from "realism." Realism in the context of an image hardly existed at the time (the 1830s and 1840s), at least not as a well-defined concept. Realism, as a nineteenth century phenomenon within art, was a certain approach in painting striving for communicating an ideal kind of life, developed in France and in relation to the art market. To paint realistic would at the time rather be phrased as "naturalism."[49] To say that Talbot strove for "realism" thus is to use the terminology improper.[50] However, Talbot and his companions did think of their photographs as mirroring what was in front of the camera, i. e., as a kind of naturalism, fixing a specific scenery and point in time. Talbot, specifically, spoke of his calotypes as "shadows," and his calotype technique can also be visually conceived as such since it functioned by creating a negative imprint that was then used to create a positive image in the form of a photograph.[51]

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46 Dan Karlholm, *Art of Illusion: The Representation of Art History in Nineteenth-Century Germany and Beyond* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), 119 – 120.

47 See Davidson, *Photography,* 27 – 28; Snickars, *Kulturarvets mediehistoria,* 278 – 285.

48 Batchen, *Burning with Desire,* 62 – 69, 90 – 100.

49 Linda Nochlin, *Realism* (London: Penguin, 1990).

50 Daniel A. Novak, "Photographic Fictions: Nineteenth-Century Photography and the Novel Form," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 43, no. 1 (2010), accessed March 14, 2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27764365.

51 Batchen, *Burning with Desire,* 138 – 143; Hagi Keenan, "Photography and its Shadows," *Critical Inquiry* 41, no. 3 (2015): 549, accessed June 26, 2021, DOI: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/680085.

Using Batchen's analysis, together with Talbot's own comments in *The Pencil of Nature*, we might conclude at least three things of the discussion on photography at this point in time: firstly, these early photographers did not necessarily consider themselves artists. They did not, automatically, express an artistic intention. Instead, they looked upon themselves as mediators. They enabled their equipment to interact with the sun (or nature) to duplicate what was visually present on a two-dimensional surface. Secondly, their intention was to freeze a moment, to arrest a specific time and place, to represent whatever was being photographed for later examination. The question of why they did this is intertwined with contemporaneous scientific aspirations to decode and understand nature. Nevertheless, their work should not be interpreted as an act of positivism; instead, it could be seen as an act of taking inventory or as practising connoisseurship in a collector's manner. Thirdly, photography was not an act of "realism." The challenge was, at this time, to realize a method of reliable representation of something that did *de facto* exist, something that was real at the moment when the photograph was taken, and to document it in detail.[52]

My use of the word "document" in this context is borrowed from Vered Maimon's insightful comments on Talbot and *The Pencil of Nature*. She elaborates on how historic knowledge was conceived at the time, and what knowledge was conceived from a photograph.[53] Maimon bases her argument on the critical observation that Talbot was also a literary antiquarian who wrote several philological books on classical texts. In this role, he wrote in the tradition of Walter Scott and Thomas Babington Macauley, who Maimon calls "romantic historians."[54] In the context of this article, it is also important to note that Macauley and Scott were writers of popular work and the interaction on the commercial market via publishers constituted a vital role in bringing their books to a wide audience.[55] Even though Macauley and Scott were both empiricists, these authors refuted the Enlightenment ideas of reason and rationality. Instead, their work, according to Maimon, can be described as being informed by the idea

52 Batchen, *Burning with Desire*; Batchen, *Apparition*. See also: Michel Frizot, "The *Parole* of the Primitives"; Leonardi and Natale, eds., *Photography & Other Media in the Nineteenth Century*.

53 The idea of Talbot's photograph as "document" is also used by Carol Armstrong, but my discussion here relies on Maimon: Maimon, *Singular Images*, 187–188. See also: Michel Frizot, *The New History of Photography* (Köln: Könemann, 1998), 10.

54 Maimon, *Singular Images,* 179–181; see Ian Hesketh, *The Science of History in Victorian Britain: Making the Past Speak* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 1–11.

55 Leslie Howsam, *Past into Print: The Publishing of History in Britain, 1850–1950* (London: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 2009).

of being "empathic to the past"; their vocation was to open up and narrate stories that were hidden in old documents to their readership. They based their narration on old text fragments, ruins and other architectural remains, archaeological findings, and folk tales.[56] Narration, to Maimon, thus operates similarly to Karlholm's discussion on the German idea of *Bildung* where the reflective mind, in the context of knowledge gained from images, is set in motion by fragments of a full picture.[57]

Maimon suggests with her claim that Talbot worked in the style of the romantic historians, that Talbot's photographs are a continuation of his philological attitude, which was merely transferred into the production of photographic images. The photographs are thus both intended to be empirically stable artefacts – imprints of what was actually there – but also not to be taken as providing a completely accurate picture of reality or a historic event. The empathic imagination (of the viewer) has to perform a certain amount of work to complete the picture. Maimon specifically mentions Plate III and Plate VI (as well as Plate XVI and Plate XIX, depicting Lacock Abbey) and describes what can be interpreted as a three-part historicism evoked by Talbot: the photographic plates recorded objects that were part of history (antiquities or a medieval building) but, evidently, were also of his own time. At the moment a photograph is taken, the image however becomes a before; i. e., the instance when the camera caught something. The particular history that is represented in the photograph, nevertheless, is for the viewer to interpret. The photographer can only record as transparently as possible whatever is at hand.[58] With Maimon, Talbot's view of photography (and his Plate III and Plate IV in *The Pencil of Nature*) can thus be interpreted as constituting an act of writing history; negotiating past, present, and future. From this perspective, his object photographs had the function of a document that the (future) viewer will bring back to life.

1880: Commercial Settings

In the context of museums, the object photograph as document is easily understood. In many ways research upon collections even today is a quest for making the "past speak," as Ian Hesketh has phrased the ambition of the nineteenth century historians.[59] During the 1880s, however, very similar images as those de-

56 Maimon, *Singular Images*, 179 – 186, 189 – 190.
57 On narration and nineteenth century photography, see also: Novak, "Photographic Fictions."
58 Maimon, *Singular Images*, 186 – 197.
59 Hesketh, *The Science of History*.

picted by Plate III and Plate IV in *The Pencil of Nature* were produced in quite different contexts. The most striking similarity is visible in illustrated price catalogues from manufacturers who wished to advertise their goods. The reader is

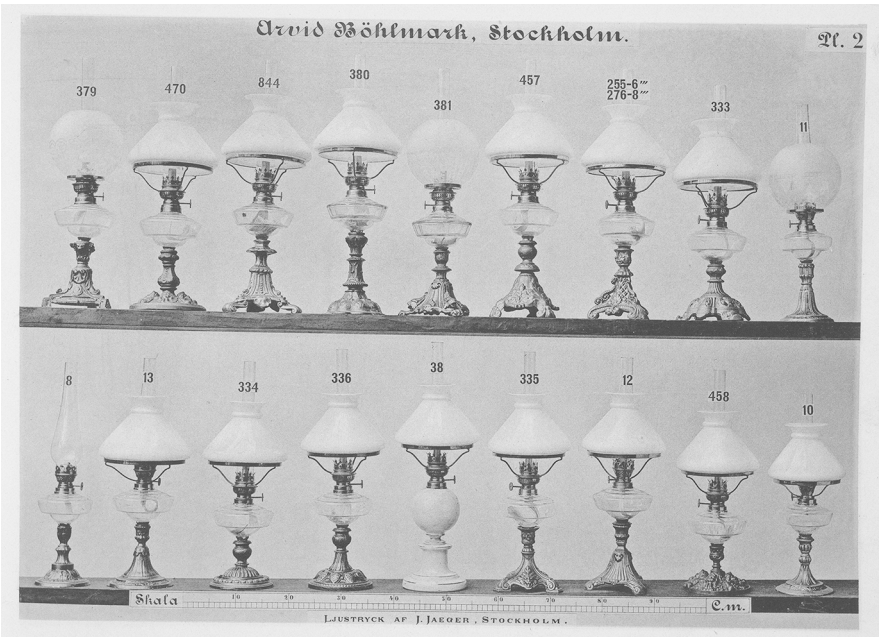

Fig. 3: Plate II, *Arvid Böhlmark Lamp Manufacturer Price Catalogue,* 1887–1888. Photo: The National Library, Stockholm. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

presented with images on symmetrically ordered items on shelves, that have a plain backdrop, are shot from a slight bird's-eye view and where each image is presented as if the frame of the photograph were the frame of the shelf, just as in Talbot's images. They differ only in having article numbers added and a ruler is found at the bottom of each picture to indicate the dimensions of the article. Object photography has moved on into a new setting, still on the market for illustrated printed publications but more explicitly connected to trade than to the writing of history. In this section I want to elaborate on the situation were object photography expanded in many directions, but I will focus on the commercial sphere and what implication of knowledge it brought about.

The price catalogues that I examine here come from Böhlmark and Karlskrona lamp manufacturers which operated in the then sparsely industrialised country of Sweden. Their relative geographical locations indicate how the genre of object photography took part in an international medialisation during that time.

The manner in which the articles are displayed in the price catalogues in general was also employed in advertising materials and window displays. Similar dis-

Fig. 4: Advertisement for Arvid Böhlmark Lamp Manufacturer, *Ny Illustrerad Tidning*, 1893. Photo: Elin Manker. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Courtesy to The National Library, Stockholm.

plays can also be seen in other visual cultures. I will shortly comment upon some of them to indicate the vast implementation of objects towards a plain background, alone or in series, in the late nineteenth century.

Objects in museum cabinets, for instance, were ordered in symmetrical settings like the Talbot images. These displays were based on typological systems of classification inspired by the archaeological science and thus interacted with the context of history writing – the distance between the museum exhibition, the world exhibitions, and accordingly the commercial display was not far; as Tony Bennett has argued they were all part of the "exhibitionary complex" of its time.[60] This manner of displaying valuable objects was also customary within

60 Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, theory, politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 51–88. See John A. Walker, *Design History and the History of Design* (London: Pluto Press, 1989), 48, 110–118; Fredrik Svanberg, "Samlingarnas historia, som den samlats," in *Ett museum måste irritera*, ed. Johan Hegardt et al. (Stockholm: The Swedish History Museum, Stud-

the interior design of the homes of wealthy individuals since the collection of valuable objects was seen as an appropriate occupation. The aspirational middle-classes followed these practices from the eighteenth century onwards, which, in turn, informed a growing consumer demographic.[61] The display of collections in interior design would often use the walls for hanging things. This corresponds to the visual presentation practices used in another type of price catalogue, illustrated by engravings instead of photographs. In such price catalogues, each object could be positioned anywhere on the page. Intriguingly, the photographed catalogues, in return, sometimes activated a similar layout by hanging lamps in fine threads in positions other than on a shelf. The photographs in these catalogues could also be cut out and pasted back in during the printing process to create an effect similar to the engraved images (see Fig. 4–7). An ongoing interaction back and forth between techniques, display positions, and media are thus evident, with the metageneric reference of the plain background/plain paper constantly approached in the display methods.[62]

This interplay of methods of displaying objects, both in two-dimensional and three-dimensional versions, can be seen in the light of what Sunil Manghani calls "image-systems" and "image communities." An image-system is termed by Manghani as "all the contextual factors which allow images to exist at all."[63] It is, thus, a very inclusive concept but focuses rather on processes of social structures and institutional praxis than on images' inherent qualities. Manghani notes that this constitutes a risk that the image (as such) disappears from the researcher's focus and evaporates into its relations.[64] For looking at images more specifically, and their meanings in a context, Manghani therefore suggests a narrowing down of the image-system to an image community. The image community

ies 24), 127–131; Davidson, *Photography*, 45–56, 112–120; Jonah Siegel, "Art, Aesthetics, and Archaeological Poetics," in *The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature*, ed. Norman Vance and Jennifer Wallace (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

61 This development took place when the arrangement of collections was informed by then-current principles of interior design, not when they acted as Wunderkammer. This development also followed industrialization and took place at different points in time in different countries, see Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford Scholarship Online: October 2011), accessed July 26, 2021, DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199215287.001.0001; Anca Lasc, *Interior Decorating in Nineteenth-Century France: The Visual Culture of a New Profession* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), accessed July 26, 2021, 15–57.

62 See section "Object Photography as Genre."

63 Manghani, *Image Studies*, 32.

64 James Elkins, "First Introduction: Starting Points," in *Farewell to Visual Studies*, ed. James Elkins, Sunil Manghani, and Gustav Frank (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015).

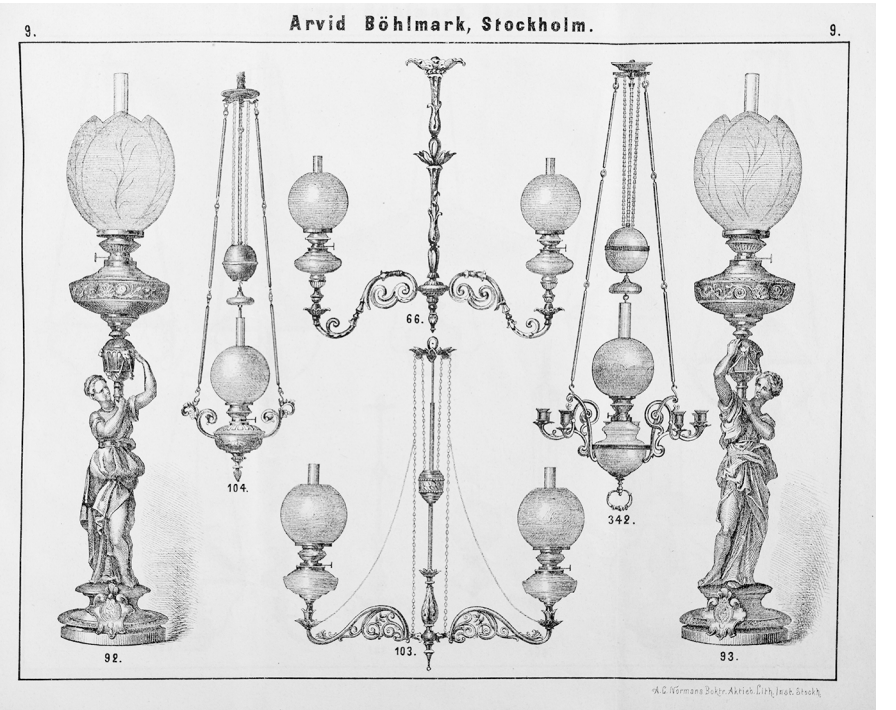

Fig. 5: Plate IX, *Arvid Böhlmark Lamp Manufacturer Price Catalogue*, 1876. Photo: Elin Manker. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Courtesy to Svante Helmbaek Tirén.

constitutes the nearby network that the image "works with or against," and this network could be "a genre and/or modality of images."[65] Manghani further suggests that an image community is best analyzed (or deconstructed) via the processes of dissemination that the image community performs. This dissemination is recognized as including actions of "distribution, abundance, energy, adaption, and succession" (and I will elaborate briefly on this below).[66] In her research on photography, Anna Dahlgren clarifies that analysis of an image community must be combined with a close reading of images, with a focus on the image as an actor, or at least as an important mediator of actions.[67]

65 Manghani, *Image Studies*, 34–36.

66 Manghani, *Images Studies*, 34.

67 Anna Dahlgren, *Travelling Images: Looking Across the Borderlands of Art, Media and Visual Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 5, 13–14.

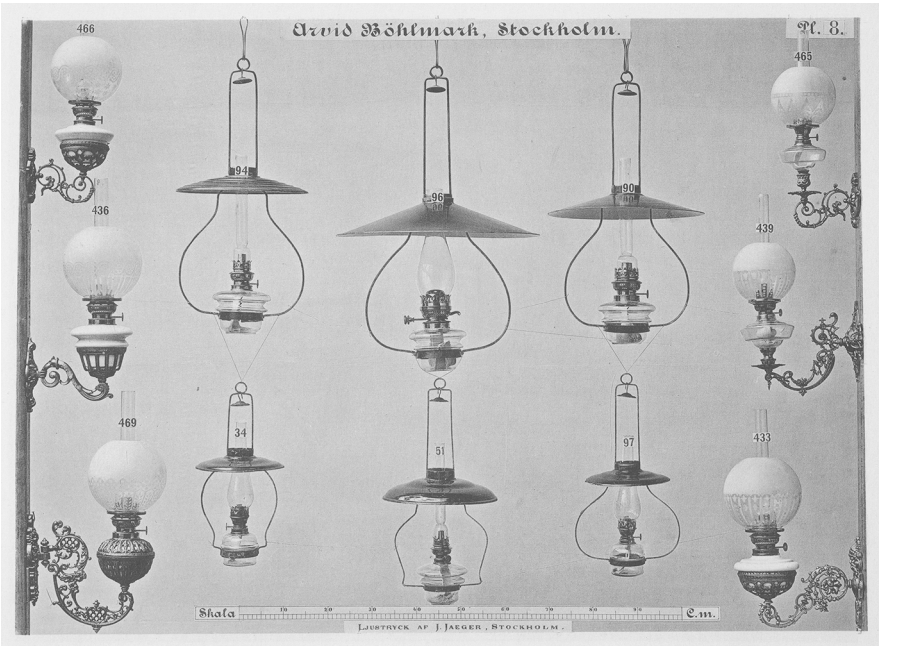

Fig. 6: Plate XIII, *Arvid Böhlmark Lamp Manufacturer Price Catalogue*, 1887–1888. Photo: The National Library, Stockholm. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

Manghani thus proposes the notion of genre as an image community. Such definition comes close to the one I elaborated on based on Frow, where references and metageneric structures shape a familiarity in-between images that supports knowledge production. Dahlgren views the situation somewhat differently. In her estimation, genre is "based on set, formal features or contents that are supposed to reside inherently in the image," while an image community "emphasises the decisive significance of the environment or social milieu of the image."[68] For Dahlgren the genre specificities thus hinder negotiation between images. A reason for that argumentation might be that genre in an art historical context habitually refers to the academic criteria of motif settings.[69] Dahlgren's objective is to investigate the different contexts that an image travels through and to identify what transitions across boundaries (or "borderlands" in her terminology) may imply. She specifically discusses this in relation to hierarchies within the art historical context, as her aim is to problematize the claim that different images are

68 Dahlgren, *Travelling Images*, 9.

69 As discussed in the section "Object Photography as Genre."

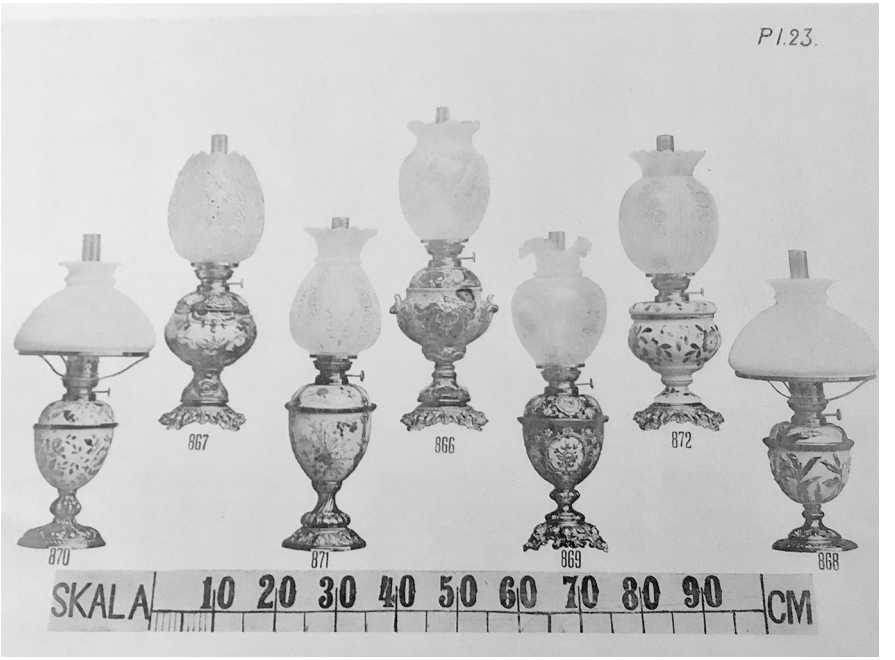

Fig. 7: Plate XXIII, *Karlskrona Lamp Manufacturer Price Catalogue*, 1890. Photo: Elin Manker. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Courtesy to Karlskrona Lamp Manufacturer.

hierarchically ordered.[70] She subsequently uses Manghani's concept of adaption and succession in her analysis. For the present study, what is intriguing is not that and how images move to new communities (and are consequently adapted or accepted by new communities), but why they last despite their transition to a new community. For that purpose, Manghani's concept of a certain "energy" in images is particularly relevant since it most clearly focuses on the agency of each image (or imagery). With his use of energy, Manghani explains that images "do not simply appear out of nowhere, they have a "*gestation*" that makes them "come into *common currency*" (my emphasis).[71] The energy that he refers to, then, closely relates to genre in Frow's sense, where different features make the text (or here, image) understandable and familiar in its context, and therefore makes them useful and moveable.

70 As proposed by Arthur Danto and George Dickie; see Dahlgren, *Travelling Images*, 7, 17.
71 Manghani, *Image Studies*, 36.

The price catalogues during the nineteenth century were used in three ways in trade: as promotion for the manufacturer towards resellers, as reference when a reseller ordered items from the manufacturer, and as source of inspiration when a competing manufacturer made new products. That the price catalogues were used by competing manufacturers was of course not intentional from the first manufacturers' point of view, but since design during this period was not yet regulated by copyright or intellectual property laws no one could hinder it from happening.[72] The use as inspiration is intriguing when discussing knowledge circulation, which is why I continue by addressing that aspect.

To build upon earlier designs were the general process of creation in design business prior to the more modernistic idea of originality (as something completely new and unique).[73] To conquer knowledge in early-modern craft and design (and art), copying was seen as an inevitable step on the way.[74] This view on creativeness did live on far into the nineteenth century praxis of manufacturing; Adrian Forty has shown that the nineteenth-century market for manufactured goods was driven by a differentiation of models, not unique pieces, to meet a variety of customers.[75] I have argued elsewhere that manufacturing in the nineteenth century consisted of an accumulation of forms with direct connections to earlier guild practice.[76] In a discussion with manufacturers of lamps today, I have been able to show that the numerous variations on each model in the price catalogues in the 1880s, and the fact that different manufacturers made similar objects, must be interpreted as a result of inspiration in the early-modern craft sense (as opposed to copying as a lack of inspiration which would be the modernistic view, if put coarsely).[77] Moreover, the craftsmen I talked with stated that the process of producing a copy (casting) was much more time-consuming than merely elaborating on existing models. Each lamp model prototype was created in the workshop by hand with one eye on the inspiration model (which

72 Stina Teilmann-Lock, *The Object of Copyright: A Conceptual History of Originals and Copies in Literature, Art and Design* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017).

73 Teilmann-Lock, *The Object of Copyright*, 86 – 122.

74 Leora Auslander, *Taste and Power. Furnishing Modern France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 110, 118 – 121, 150; Stuart Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* (London: University of London Press, 1970).

75 Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society 1750 – 1980* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), 62 – 93.

76 Manker, *Förlagd form*, 279 – 297.

77 Manker, *Förlagd form*, 280 – 284. The manufacturer I involved in this discussion was Karlskrona Lamp Manufacturer, founded 1884 in Sweden and still working in a workshop characterized by non-automated machines and design process similar to the nineteenth century. Today, however, they look in their own old price catalogues for inspiration, not others!

could be an image in a price catalogue) but with the other focused on their own creation. In regards to the price catalogue's function as inspiration in manufacturing, object photography within trade thus performed a similar use as ornamental prints had been employing for centuries: as models to build new variation on of already accepted designs. The price catalogues maintained a rhetoric known from the imagery in the ornamental prints, communicating trustworthiness and accuracy in design.

Helge Jordheim has proposed that we consider the circulation of knowledge as being facilitated by specific "sites" that are shared and understood widely and thus enable the circulation of knowledge. Jordheim convincingly shows how the genre of the literary dialogue, by virtue of its specific rhetoric, also functioned as an intelligible genre for scientific writings throughout the seventeenth century despite the claim that a more rational language would have suited the subject under discussion better (in his example, astronomy). By comparing how different translations circulated at the market and by noting that the translations that maintained a dialogue form were more successful, Jordheim argues that the familiarity of the genre functions as a "site" for the broader transfer of knowledge.[78]

Similarly, I argue that the genre of object photography is interpretable as a site for circulation of knowledge. By the end of the nineteenth century, the familiarity of the image setting of a sole object had allowed the imagery to migrate into a larger set of uses. The imagery was employed in different media and with different techniques. In the example above, a rhetoric in the imagery prior to the photographed technique was revealed as maintained. However, the photographical technique per se hold a rhetoric that also transformed how the images were used. Object photography, as seen in the Talbot example, conveyed a sign of a product actually being there. The photograph was "evidence of a novel kind," as he put it. An object had stood in front of the camera and thus existed.[79] In the context of being images on a market for selling goods, this is interpretable as a promise that the object was produced. The inscription of light documented a factual existence, thereby confirming that the object was manufactured and was not just a rendering (as every ornamental print is, after all). In this context, the three-part historicity that is reported on in the Talbot implementation of object photography has been transformed into a question of a two-part historicity, the present and the future (but not the past). It prognosticates – "energises," to elaborate on the Manghanis concept – a home interior

78 Jordheim, "The Printed Work."

79 See section "Early Photography and the Public Arena."

for the viewer. It has stepped into the dream world of desirable goods that distinguishes commercial society.

2020: Second-hand Markets

At the beginning of this article, I commented upon the use of old price catalogues in the social media exchange of knowledge. Catalogues from the late nineteenth century were reactivated in a concurrent movement that showed interest in historic interiors. Although it is a giant leap ahead in time to discuss the present, in this last section I would nevertheless like to reflect on how the genre of object photography operates in contemporary illustrated price catalogues and, specifically, outline how it intersects with the writings of history today. Notwithstanding this leap across time, I remain in the same geographical context as the 1880s catalogues, namely Sweden.

Sophisticated re-use of price catalogue images can be found in one of the most popular and successful journals of later years, *Scandinavian Retro* (onwards referred to as *Retro*, founded 2011). This is a journal devoted to reporting on industrially produced goods during the twentieth century. The journal's readers are presented with a mix of information on "modern classics" from the mid-twentieth century and lifestyle content that celebrates the aesthetics of "older but still modern periods."[80] *Retro* builds much of its editorial work on information that can be found in price catalogues. The most characteristic kind of article in *Retro* presents a product series from a Swedish manufactory or designer, as in a 2014 issue where the front cover announces that it gives "All about *Blue Fire!*" (Allt om *Blå Eld!*), one of the earliest tableware series that became an icon of modernism in Swedish design history.[81] The article layout consists of a short introduction of one page presenting the designer and some facts around the manufacturing. This is followed by a comprehensive overview of the series, including images of all of the ceramic items that constitute the series, covering several pages of the journal. Comments on the dimensions, existing colours, and year of design follow every image and the estimated price today on the second-hand market is shown by a series of codes. The text is in Swedish, but all of the articles provide endnotes of an English summary at the end of the journal, thus indicating the journal's ambition to reach international readers.

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80 Elizabeth. E Guffey, *Retro. The Culture of Revival* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 12.

81 See Grace Lees-Maffei, "Introduction: Interrogating Iconic Design," in *Icons. 50 Stories about 50 Things*, ed. Grace Lees-Maffei (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), accessed August 4, 2021, DOI: 10.5040/9781474293921.0003.

Fig. 8: Page 22 – 23, *Scandinavian Retro*, 2014:1. Photo: Elin Manker. Courtesy to *Scandinavian Retro*. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

The images that are used in the journal are clearly of the genre of object photography, with individual articles presented against a plain background. However, the image setting is somewhat different when compared to the price catalogue settings. Instead of the articles being presented on shelves in orderly rows, they are scattered over the page as cut-outs, a technique facilitated by modern desk-top publishing tools. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy how this arrangement resembles some of the images used in the catalogues of the 1880s, which employed a surface-covering method (see Figures 5 – 7). In *Retro*, the layout is less symmetrical. Some images are even cut-off and continue out to the bleed area of the page. The imagery of desk-top publishing is thus not a completely new image approach for the digital age but instead speaks of the abundance, adaption, and succession of images in printed media (as discussed by Manghani and Dahlgren).[82] However, there is another change in the way the items are presented, which is noteworthy. The line-up of items represents a historical recap of the series of items that were once produced by the manufactory. *Retro* thus pro-

82 See Dahlgren, *Travelling Images*, 7, and *passim*; Manghani, *Image Studies*, 34 – 35.

vides a historical overview of the entire series. This has at least two effects for what knowledge it mediates:

Firstly, when examined in detail, the imagery expresses other intentions than those associated with the commercial line-up from the 1880s. The imagery more closely resembles how Talbot's photograph instantiated a collection, but the display of the entire historical development intricately reshuffles his three-part historicism. The photographs are shot at different occasions; reference is made to one photographer and two auction houses.[83] The object photographs consequently form a collage, beyond a set time and place of the photographic moment. The objects are also, in being presented as a named series, removed from belonging to a specific time and place. Instead, the objects are situated in an infinite belonging to a category of modern designs. This infinitization is reinforced by how the photographs are edited. The plain backdrop that initially was part of these photographs has been removed in the digital file. In its desktop version, the only part of the object photograph that exists (or remains after editing) is the pixels that catches the object. Yet, as an element in the composition the plain backdrop is, by virtue of its absence, I would suggest, now even more loaded with meaning than earlier versions of the object photograph. The backdrop does not merely make the object stand out from the background. The now non-existing backdrop allows the objects to change context, expressing whatever the publisher wishes.

The interpreter's contextualization is thus enforced. Or, to recall the discussion on Talbot, the viewer is the one to bring the document to life. In the case of *Retro*, the obvious narrator of this context is the second-hand market for modern design. As Staffan Appelgren and Anna Bohlin have argued, shopping for second-hand items and furnishings has grown into a lifestyle performance instead of being based on practical or economic necessity. Such a performance includes a narration through objects that have a prior history, which transports the objects away from the domain of mundane commercial commodification into a culture of remembering.[84] In this specific context, a narration of "the modern" also takes place. The objects are part of an "iconization," as noted by Grace Lees–Maffei, where specific designs enter the canon of "good design," thereby marking off a specific history as desirable.[85] Museums and auction houses are key public arenas in this process of iconization, but so is the extensive production of books on

83 Photo credit is made to: Patrik Enquist, Bukowski Market, and Auktionshuset.

84 Staffan Appelgren and Anna Bohlin, "Growing in Motion: The Circulation of Used Things on Second-hand Markets," *Culture Unbound* 7, no. 1 (2015): 149 – 156, accessed July 1, 2021, DOI: 10.3384/cu.2000.1525.1571143.

85 Lees-Maffei, "Introduction. Interrogating Iconic Design," 9 – 21.

iconic design (that, notably, use object photography as their primary image genre). Historians also take part in this iconization, by virtue of a tendency to give prominence to a number of iconic (or representative) designs.[86] Additionally, overviews of a particular design would usually show only a single item from a whole production series (in books as well as museum displays). From a design-historical viewpoint, I claim that this approach does not fully explain what industrial design is about. A product series is instantiated by a whole set of items, not just a single coffee cup or its decoration. Moreover, the work of industrial designers includes considering design as part of mass-production and everyday use, not as singular pieces and exclusive consumption.

This iconization however gives rise to the second effect of the recap-layout in *Retro*, namely the fact that *Retro* goes beyond providing an iconic stance and presents an alternative history of industrial design. Price catalogues are not always easy to find. One might expect them to be archived in the National Library of Sweden (which should have a copy of every Swedish printed publication on hand). However, with respect to the category of "vardagstryck" ("everyday prints" which includes for instance commercial prints), much is missing.[87] The work done by *Retro*, transforming rare price catalogues into an accessible source of information, thereby reactivates precise knowledge about historical production series and all the items that made up the series. In this last respect, *Retro* includes information that otherwise may be neglected by design history. By providing reports on these production series, *Retro* has almost created an encyclopaedia of price catalogues. This information is of use not only for retro-lifestylers, but also for researchers. Notably, the presentation of a new series in each issue of the journal will also result in more "non-iconic" designs being reported on, sooner or later.

In the context of a history of knowledge *Retro* and the editor's use of object photography instantiates an alternative kind of representation of knowledge than that which can be found in most history books. The journal's motivation might lie in a market-driven agenda (to lead its readers to know more about the prices of goods, to introduce them to rare items and to what is especially desirable for collectors or retro-lifestylers) but the knowledge that the journal (re-)

86 Kjetil Fallan, "Academic and Design Writing, De-Tooling Design History: To What Purpose and for Whom Do We Write?", *Design and Culture* 5, no. 1 (2013); Grace Lees-Maffei, "The Production–Consumption–Mediation Paradigm," *Journal of Design History* 22, no. 4 (2009), accessed Aug 10, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1093/jdh/epp031; see Judy Attfield, *Wild Things. The Material Culture of Everyday Life* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000).

87 "Vardagstryck," last modified March 25, 2021, accessed June 29, 2021, https://www.kb.se/hitta-och-bestall/om-samlingar-och-material/vardagstryck.html.

produces, nevertheless, enables us to form more truthful understanding of the manifoldness of industrial design, beside the iconised version or its history. *Retro* is thus yet another example of how knowledge is medialised, not least by the popular press, and, importantly, by the images in it. *Retro* reveals a knowledge – in this example, of industrial design practises – that has acted in the circulation of knowledge uncommented by the rational of the academic. At the core in this circulation is a set of images that depict individual objects against a plain background. Even though this set of images remains somewhat unrecognized in the literature, they are frequently employed in media-systems, in the history of printing, in design history, and in the history of knowledge. By recognizing them as instantiating a particular genre, namely, "object photography," they prove to be a site of knowledge circulation that transfers ideas of past, present, and future, as well as time-specific interactions in commercial and printed media spheres.

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Section II: **Participatory Knowledge**

Charlotte A. Lerg, Johan Östling, and Jana Weiß

Participatory Knowledge: Conceptual Thoughts

Knowledge, Culture, and Participation

Thinking about modes of participation is closely connected to conceptualizing the complex workings and interpretations of democracy as well as ideas of equality and the public sphere. Accordingly, participatory models and structures have predominantly been discussed, demanded, or decried with regard to political discourse and/or cultural creation.[1] Knowledge is an integral part of both and yet in the history of knowledge participation so far has received relatively little attention as an analytical framework.[2] The notion of knowledge as "participatory" invites us to explore the ways knowledge is rooted in cultural practices and social configurations.

1 Aaron Delwiche and Jennifer Jacobs Henderson, eds., *The Participatory Cultures Handbook* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2012); Martin Butler, Albrecht Hausmann, and Anton Kirchhofer, *Precarious Alliances: Cultures of Participation in Print and Other Media* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2016); Hubert Heinelt, ed., *Handbook on Participatory Governance* (Cheltenham/Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2018).

2 Most studies on participation and knowledge production are concerned with present issues in the sociology of learning or with science governance; see e. g. Andrea Cornwall and John Gaventa, "Knowledge and Power," in *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practic*, ed. Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (London: SAGE, 2012); Matthijs Hisschemöller, "Participation as Knowledge Production and the Limits of Democracy," in *Democratization of Expertise? Sociology of the Sciences Yearbook* 24, ed. Sabine Maasen and Peter Weingart (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2005), 189–208; Thomas Saretzki, "Participatory Governance of Science," in Heinelt, *Handbook*, 157–184. A related strand of research making use of concepts of participation in knowledge production is linked to the history of activism and community engagement; see e. g. John Trimbur, *Grassroots Literacy and the Written Record: A Textual History of Asbestos Activism in South Africa* (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2020); Nicolas D. Brunet, Gordon M. Hickey, and Murray M. Humphries, "The Evolution of Local Participation and the Mode of Knowledge Production in Arctic Research," *Ecology and Society* 19, no. 2 (2014). Based on this research, more recently works have emerged in museum studies; see e. g. Lozej Š. Ledinek, "Collaborative Inventory/A Participatory Approach to Cultural Heritage Collections," in *Participatory Research and Planning in Practice*, ed. Janez Nared and David Bole (Cham: Springer, 2020), 121–131; Per Hetland, Palmyre Pierroux, and Line Esborg, eds., *A History of Participation in Museums and Archives Traversing Citizen Science and Citizen Humanities* (London: Routledge, 2020).

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The title of this thematic section, "Participatory Knowledge," borrows from ideas about processes of cultural production. In the tradition of the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies, media scholar Henry Jenkins coined the term "participatory culture" in his 1992 study of (pop) cultural markets of the late twentieth century.[3] Some of his early work may have been overly optimistic regarding the democratising effect of "participatory culture" but his central diagnosis that consuming culture always constitutes an act of shaping culture at large holds great potential for the study of the creation and circulation of knowledge through the lens of participation. Moreover, this approach underscores the close connections of knowledge and culture, both in practice and in theory. Hence, we can or even must conceptualize knowledge and culture together.

Linking knowledge to culture and the concept of participation for the thematic focus of the first volume highlights key aims *HIC* prioritizes in the approach to the field of the history of knowledge. We see knowledge as rooted in social and political structures, determined by modes of transfer and produced in collaborative processes. Our aim in this section is to draw attention to the potential of looking at these elements through the lens of participation and to open a dialogue about how and what this perspective can contribute to the history of knowledge.

Key Questions

Power structures and agency are written into the very fabric of participatory systems.[4] Modes of participation can enter into the examination of knowledge on various levels. We may ask who gets to participate in defining what counts as knowledge and in deciding whose knowledge and what kind of knowledge counts? As modes of participation in knowledge are predicated on social, cultural, and political power structures, not surprisingly, they reflect such hierarchies.

3 Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992). For comparable work with regard to the medieval period see e. g. Heather Blatt, *Participatory Reading in Late-Medieval England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017); Jenkins' more recent work focuses on the participatory patterns of cultural production predicated on digital communication, e. g. Henry Jenkins, Mizuko Ito, and danah boyd, *Participatory Culture in a Networked Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016).

4 Actors of knowledge are part of and themselves create and reinforce power relations. In discussing knowledge and power, scholars frequently point to Michel Foucault who has emphasized its controlling and punishing functions; see e. g. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1977); *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York: Harvester, 1980).

Issues of classification tied to value judgement often determine what is considered "important" or "relevant" knowledge, or even what is considered knowledge at all. Colonial contexts for example illustrate this challenge, particularly in the encounter with indigenous knowledge systems.[5] As hybridized cultures emerge, they fuel the continuous process of negotiation and re-negotiation with regard to determining knowledge and understanding.[6] Closely tied to these questions are issues of agency. Who gets to participate in producing knowledge and in what way? Which mechanisms govern patterns of inclusion or exclusion and what kind of hierarchies do they create? Moreover, as cultural and social practices also depend on infrastructures and modes of communication, a final set of questions relates to who gets to participate in the circulation of knowledge and who has access.

Considering broad participation in knowledge creation also requires reflection on the role of the "expert."[7] Arguably, for the political realm this question has been pondered over and over since Plato's *Republic*. However, when it comes to epistemology, experts seem to have a different station than in the theory of democracy, which also shows ramifications when applying notions of participation from the realm of political theory to the history of knowledge. The position of Plato's philosopher kings is defined by the knowledge they have (or claim to have) while the process of how they acquired this understanding is mostly neglected or assumed to be intrinsic. This does not hold for experts within systems of knowledge, whose position is generally defined by their genesis, e. g. training or qualification, which in turn is determined by social structures and cultural parameters. Plato's republic leaves little room for more participation without changing the very nature of the political construct he proposes. In systems of knowledge, however, participation can be expanded without questioning the role, function, and necessity of experts as such, by focusing on the structural preconditions of their formation. This of course does not come without its own challenges and political implications as the Lippman-Dewey debate over the

5 For an overview of studying indigenous knowledge systems see e. g. Margaret Bruchac, "Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge," in *Encyclopedia of Global Archaeology*, ed. Claire Smith (New York: Springer, 2014), 3814–3824. For a take on some of the methodological challenges see Anne Martin, "Indigenous Histories and Place Ethics," in *Big and Little Histories: Sizing Up Ethics in Historiography*, ed. Marnie Hughes-Warrington and Anne Martin (London: Routledge, 2021), 174–183.

6 Peter Burke, *Cultural Hybridety* (Cambridge: Politiy Press, 2009).

7 For a recent reflection on the role of the expert see e. g. Marian Füssel, Frank Rexroth, and Inga Schürmann, eds., *Praktiken und Räume des Wissens: Expertenkulturen in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019).

role of education, media, and expertise in democracies illustrates. Their contest also links to the question at hand. Both emphasize the role of communication, education, and modes of circulation in the generation and dissemination of (political) understanding and thus as a basis for democratic participation.[8] Participatory knowledge therefore can also be read in relation to political participation.

Participation in the modern world – whether in political processes, social interaction, or culture production – needs a system of mediated communication. Accordingly, media history adds a meaningful perspective.[9] Historical examples of direct ("unmediated") democracy in the western world, like Aristotle's Athens or Thomas Jefferson's rural town halls, are primarily idealized political spaces imagined for the sake of political theory. The emergence of Web 2.0 technology around 2005 that has brought on the recent boom in discussions about participatory structures is only the latest incarnation of a debate that has been replayed in one way or another with almost every major technological innovation from the printing press to television.[10] The similarities are particularly striking when we compare radio history with the debates about social media. In both cases an early phase of self-taught tinkerers evolved into a hobbyist culture that envisioned a future of a connected more democratic world. This laymen culture then, however, gave way to a professionalized high-stakes commercial space that was also prone to be co-opted for political and propaganda goals.[11] Indeed, media systems hardly ever exist for the purpose of participation alone but tend to follow economic and market-related parameters and interests.[12] Thus, we also need to consider who is involved in shaping infrastructures and institutions. Content is inseparably determined by modes of dissemination and transmission

8 John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: McMillan, 1916); Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, 1922).

9 See e. g. the collection of essays in Anders Ekström et al., eds., *History of Participatory Media: Politics and Publics, 1700 – 2000* (London: Routledge, 2011).

10 Gabriele Balbi et al., eds., *Digital Roots: Historicizing Media and Communication Concepts of the Digital Age* (Boston/Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021).

11 Bertolt Brecht contemplated the ambivalence of the "new medium" radio in various texts towards the end of the 1920s, collectively called his "radio theory." See e. g. Bertolt Brecht, "Der Rundfunk als Kommunikationsapparat (1932)," in *Bertolt Brecht Gesammelte Werke* 18 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1975), 552–557. For examples of the underlying narrative of participation in twentieth century radio history, see e. g. Susan Merrill Squier, ed., *Communities of the Air: Radio Century, Radio Culture* (Durham: Duke UP, 2003); Jesse Walker, *Rebels on the Air: An Alternative History of Radio in America* (New York: New York UP, 2001).

12 Arguably, the digital age has brought new urgency and complexity as media tools are no longer exclusively controlled by humans. Machine learning, thus, adds yet another layer to grappling with the issues of knowledge production. On artificial intelligence and some of the cultural implications see e. g. Margaret A. Boden, *AI: Its Nature and Future* (New York: Oxford UP, 2016).

and looking at knowledge through the lens of participation in this context once again highlights these blurred lines between production and circulation.

It is worth acknowledging that participatory forms of circulation and corroboration can also play a key role in spreading "uncertain knowledge" that historically has often been the only way for subaltern groups to exchange information and even organise.[13] This has been shown for example by research on the importance of rumours in slave rebellions in the Atlantic world, or by examining the way gossip and hear-say became a political driving force in pre-revolutionary France.[14] Both examples highlight how participatory knowledge can have an empowering effect while at the same destabilizing established structures and power relations. What may prove democratizing and even liberating in one context might be quite problematic in another. Arguably, as the flipside to highly participatory networks of unofficial, uncertain knowledge systems we may point to the spread of conspiracy theories, not just in recent years, which also illustrates that knowledge and truth cannot be conflated.[15]

Besides critically analyzing structural elements that determine who participates in defining, shaping, and circulating knowledge with regard to access, ability, and authority, the nature of participation, i.e. how participation occurs, also needs to be considered. This may relate to the formation of methods or the collection of material as well as to the way the output is shared. It can also mean being included in the process of knowledge creation rather than being conceived of as a mere object of study or a passive receptor.

Academic disciplines that depend on community involvement for their research like certain areas within the social sciences or anthropology provide instructive examples of studying modes of participation – and also the limits

13 Gary Alan Fine and Nicholas Difonzo, "Uncertain Knowledge," *Contexts* 10, no. 3 (2011): 16–21; Sebastian Jobs, "Uncertain Knowledge," *Rethinking History* 18, no. 1 (2014): 2–9.

14 On slave rebellions see e.g. Wim Klooster, "Slave Revolts, Royal Justice, and a Ubiquitous Rumor in the Age of Revolutions," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (2014): 401–424; Sebastian Jobs, "The Other 'Faithful Servant': Uncertainty and Trust during Gabriel's Conspiracy in Virginia, 1800," *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 66, no. 2 (2021): 355–376; on early modern France see e.g. Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard UP, 1982); Elizabeth Andrews Bond, *The Writing Public: Participatory Knowledge Production in Enlightenment and Revolutionary France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021).

15 E.g. Michael Barkun, *A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Michael Butter and Peter Knight, "Conspiracy Theory in Historical, Cultural and Literary Studies," in *The Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, ed. Michael Butter and Peter Knight (London: Routledge, 2020), 28–42.

thereof.[16] A particularly promising concept to build on for the history of knowledge are "communities of practice." As a model that originated at the intersection of cognitive science and the sociology of learning, where the term was originally coined by Jean Lave and Étienne Wenger, communities of practice are concerned with the circulation of information within groups that are not necessarily homogenous.[17] This framework also widens our perspective to integrate contributions by different practitioners as more directly part of knowledge production and shifts the focus to what could be called "doing knowledge" or the social practice of knowledge.[18] This may refer to volunteers but also to those "for whom making knowledge was part of making a living."[19] Shedding light on the practical or even pragmatic processes behind the production of knowledge can also reveal implicit hierarchies and mechanisms of exclusion. Nevertheless, "communities of practice" highlight the act of knowledge generation, including collection, circulation, and documentation. Thus, compared to an approach that focuses primarily or exclusively on content and results, a broader community can be conceived of as participating.

Theories of "citizen science" have grappled with this issue for some time striving to identify key elements of such collaborative settings.[20] An established field in the natural sciences where an interested public has been encouraged to participate in collection drives and quantitative research designs as early as in the nineteenth century, citizen sciences, the approach in the humanities and social sciences, began flourishing in the late twentieth century. There were, however, precursors, for instance in the history workshops or linguistic field work. A more general theoretical grounding for citizen science practices that brings together experiences from different fields is even more recent, as digital and public

16 Guy Bessette, *Involving the Community: A Guide to Participatory Development Communication* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2004); Shauna MacKinnon, ed., *Practising Community-Based Participatory Research: Stories of Engagement, Empowerment, and Mobilization* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2018).

17 Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).

18 Andreas Reckwitz, *Kreativität und Soziale Praxis: Studien zur Sozial- und Gesellschaftstheorie* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2016).

19 Patrick Anthony, "Introduction to 'Working at the Margins: Labor and the Politics of Participation in Natural History, 1700 – 1830,'" *History of Science and Humanities* 44, no. 2 (2021): 109.

20 Loreta Tauginienė et al., "Citizen Science in the Social Sciences and Humanities: The Power of Interdisciplinarity," *Palgrave Communications* 6 (2020), accessed November 27, 2021; Gowan Dawson, Chris Lintott, and Sally Shuttleworth, "Constructing Scientific Communities: Citizen Science in the Nineteenth and Twenty-First Centuries," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 20, no. 2 (2015): 246–254.

humanities have offered fresh input.[21] While academic training and a methodological as well as a theoretical frame of reference endow experts with more interpretive authority, they do not exclusively determine the collection processes. Members of the participating public contribute their own framing, for example by choosing how to interpret and fulfil certain tasks or how to implement relevant directions. Consequently, citizen science has evolved into an established subfield in the history of science.

Approaches to Participatory Knowledge

With concepts of participation discussed in multiple disciplines from media studies to anthropology, from political sciences to sociology, a rich interdisciplinary exchange informs our understanding of "Participatory Knowledge". It reminds us that in order to analyze the complexity of knowledge formation and circulation, we need more than one disciplinary perspective. *HIC* is keen to promote this fruitful dialogue and to engage scholars from a broad range of fields. The contributions to the thematic sections attest to and highlight the great variety of approaches, contexts, and interpretation of "Participatory Knowledge."

Emily Steinhauer focusses on the ideological currents and methodological practices of knowledge production and participation. Her essay interrogates the sociological projects of the Frankfurt School with regard to the tension that arises between the particular brand of democratic ideals of mid-twentieth-century empirical social research versus the firmly hierarchical set-up of the relevant field work and the general environment of the studies. Moreover, Steinhauer distinguishes between knowledge-collection as a bottom-up and knowledge-production as a top-down approach. In fact, there is a distinct difference between participation in the creation and collection of data and (raw) material on the one hand, and sharing in processes of organization and interpretation on the other. As Steinhauer shows, the highly standardized nature of the questionnaire-based methodology used by the Frankfurt-School studies ultimately seems to have impeded the kind of participation in knowledge production that could be considered participatory, i. e. meaningful to the subjects.

Måns Ahlstedt Åberg shifts the focus to the motivations of participants and presents a compelling example of broad public mobilization for collective

21 Barbara Heinisch, "A Path through the Conceptual Jungle of the Public Humanities," in *Public Humanities*, ed. Liza Kolodzie et al., posted June 26, 2021, accessed March 31, 2022, https://publicdh.hypotheses.org/148.

knowledge production. He examines how in the 1930s the Swedish population responded to calls by the Uppsala-based Institute for Race Biology to submit material in order to establish genealogical lines and a racially coded imaginary of desirable Swedish ancestry. Lacking an explicit description of what kind of documentation would constitute such a lineage, many citizens sent birth certificates or family trees while others opted for photographs. Their choices influenced the nature and the makeup of the collection that would later also go on display in a national exhibition. Genealogical research may simply seek a sense of identity or belonging, but it is often coupled with the desire to access a kind of hereditary social capital, for example by discovering famous relatives. With a focus on the lineage of the so called Great-Mother in Dalecarlia, this was a central driving force. Moreover, in line with the racist knowledge regimes that at the time also manifested themselves in eugenicist efforts in other countries, this particular genealogical research had a distinctly racialized impetus. Overall, Åberg investigates what led everyday people to contribute to the project, showing that participation in knowledge production not necessarily happens as a goal in and of itself and how at times it is steeped in ideology.

The close ties between participatory practices of knowledge production and national ideology also lie at the heart of the contribution by **Ana Carolina Arias.** In the 1920s, Argentinian teachers were called upon to participate in the National Folklore Survey to help with identifying and collecting material of national cultural relevance. Almost simultaneously to the survey in Argentina, John and Alan Lomax travelled the United States collecting and recording U.S.-American folk songs as part of the New Deal programmes.[22] However while the U.S. example has experts actively seeking out contributions form participants, what is intriguing about the Argentinian case is that by using the school system as an organizational framework, a network of "collection nodes" emerged creating a more decentralized participatory infrastructure while also bridging the sometimes considerable spatial distance, not by travel but by communication. The teachers and school officials became highly influential in interpreting and implementing the guidelines from the Argentine Education Council that had initiated the survey. Moreover, in the process some of these actors grew into specific kinds of experts themselves. Arias' contribution, thus, also reminds us that participatory knowledge can create its own structures

22 Todd Harvey, Andrew Peart, and Nathan Salsburg, "Alan Lomax and the 'Grass Roots' Idea," *Chicago Review* 60/61, no. 4/1 (2017): 37–45; Robert Baron, "'All Power to the Periphery': The Public Folklore Thought of Alan Lomax," *Journal of Folklore Research* 49, no. 3 (2012): 275–317.

and hierarchies that tend to be a lot more complex than an expert/amateur binary.

Sakina Gröppmaier shows how power structures and content can be closely intertwined in academic knowledge regimes, arguing that modes of participation play a role on both levels. She highlights how a very recent participatory strategy, namely hashtag activism, has created new, often transnational dialogues about power structures within mostly national academic systems while at the same time re-negotiating canons and traditional narratives in highly institutionalized (Western) knowledge settings. A raised degree of participation suggests a more equal and consequently more democratic process. Broader participation can mean the inclusion of more diverse voices, interests, and perspectives into the discourse. Elite and elitist structures and norms are rightfully challenged. Accordingly, Gröppmaier discusses the way these developments have caused "rapture," especially in this media-driven "academic public sphere" that cannot fully be separated from a highly politicized and often polarized more general (digital) public sphere. The proverbial ivory tower of old, itself part of an imaginary shaped by exclusionary structures,[23] was never really closed off entirely. We can identify a (mass)media driven expansion of the discourse on and in academic spaces beginning decades before the digital age, though it gained considerable momentum with the advent of the digital public sphere.

More recent occasions to spotlight the challenges and opportunities of participatory practices of knowledge have come in the form of rapid response archives that emerged for example in the wake of major events like 9/11 or collective activism like the Black Lives Matter Movement or the fight against climate change.[24] Building on these forerunners, the Corona pandemic gave rise to similar compilation efforts in different countries. In an open conversation, published in Section III of this volume, we invited representatives of three **Covid-19-archive-projects** to reflect on how their work ties in with the notion of participatory knowledge. These newer – often digital – formats draw fresh attention to the various questions of participatory knowledge. They are rooted in citizen sciences practices and depend on a low threshold with regard to (media) access and initial expertise. Nevertheless, balancing open and participatory collection with curation and the development of durable structures re-

23 Steven Shapin, "The Ivory Tower. The History of a Figure of Speech and its Cultural Uses," *British Journal for the History of Science* 45, no. 1 (2012): 1–27.

24 For a broader evaluation of participatory models in archiving see Edward Benoit III and Alexandra Eveleigh, eds., *Participatory Archives* (London: Facet Publishing, 2019).

mains an ongoing challenge. Motivations and the diversity of representation among participants varies over time and space, while methodological questions abound. Hence, these examples highlight how closely knowledge is connected to the ever-changing processes of social interaction and cultural practices. Modes of participation offer a most stimulating perspective to analyze these interdependencies in the history of knowledge.

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Emily Steinhauer

Empirical Research as a Form of Participatory Knowledge? The Sociological Projects of the Frankfurt School as Democratic Practice

Abstract: This article analyses the role played by "participatory knowledge production" in three empirical social research projects undertaken by the Frankfurt School and its associates: a study on workers and white-collar employees from 1929/30, the study on the "authoritarian personality" undertaken in exile, and the "Group Experiment" conducted in the early 1950s in West Germany. These innovative studies allowed for more intricate engagement with individual participants, especially through the use of psychoanalytic approaches, which gave researchers insights into seemingly hidden personality-traits. The article shows how the Frankfurt School considered the use of this newly produced knowledge for political and social engineering approaches and as part of the post-war re-education mission. It subsequently reveals the persisting pitfalls of these research-projects and analyses how participation did not necessarily mean agency or empowerment for individual participants.

Keywords: Frankfurt School, knowledge production, participatory knowledge, re-education, social engineering

"Thus anyone who is serious in the desire to fill our entire country with democratic spirit, must, despite all reservations, approve that one finds out more concrete and above all more objective information on the state of public opinion than would be possible through random and accidental observation."[1]

This plea for the integration of systematic opinion poll research in the reconstruction of the West German state after the Second World War comes from the pen of none other than Theodor W. Adorno, one of the country's most famous post-war academics and public intellectuals. Writing in 1952, Adorno outlined not only the technical (dis)advantages of different polling techniques but also professed to their democratic function as a tool "representing" the people beyond periodic elections. Regular polling and interviewing counteracted a certain

1 Theodor W. Adorno, "Öffentliche Meinung und Meinungsforschung" (1952), *Gesammelte Schriften* 20, no. 1 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2003), 300 [my translation].

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110748819-006

political apathy among those who felt they were not heard by politicians, whilst also creating a knowledge-pool monitoring developments in the still young democratic state.[2] Yet whilst many are familiar with his prominent role in the discourse on German "Vergangenheitsbewältigung" – working through the past – and his indictment of a world stunned into standstill by the horrors of an escalating rationality, Adorno's engagement in opinion surveys and the political impetus behind this are lesser known. Since the interwar period, sociologists, psychoanalysts and philosophers in the orbit of the Institute for Social Research (IfS), founded in 1923 in Frankfurt, conducted empirical research projects, developing a distinct methodology of investigating human consciousness and latent attitudes. Part of the "intellectual migration" from Europe during the Nazi period, the encounter of and collaboration with U.S.-social sciences further impacted their research, as did the impetus to engage with democratic cultures on both sides of the Atlantic.

This article focuses on three major research projects undertaken under the aegis of the IfS, spanning a time-period of over 20 years, from the interwar years to the mid-1950s. Rather than honing in on one of the three projects, it provides a survey of how the Frankfurt School's work changed in the years before, during and after the Nazi period, in response to exile, as part of the rebuilding of Germany, and in tandem with the overall developments in the institutionalisation of social research. Beginning in 1930s Germany, I will show how Erich Fromm's *Arbeiter und Angestellte am Vorabend des Dritten Reiches* (1929 – 30) laid the basis not just for the diagnosis in U.S.-exile of the so-called "authoritarian" personality-type that was developed further in the *Studies in Prejudice* (1950), but also for an empirically-grounded social research that shied away neither from systematic and large-scale sampling nor from innovative, psychoanalytic techniques of interpretation.[3] Because Fromm's study remains largely ignored in scholarship, space will be given to a detailed analysis of this foundational work in social-psychological research.[4] Upon Adorno's and Horkheimer's return to West Germany, these methods found further application in the diagnosis of the emerging culture of repression among the German population eager to forget the Nazi past. The so-called Group Experiment, undertaken in 1950 – 1, forms the

2 Adorno, "Öffentliche Meinung," 300.

3 The "authoritarian personality" described a personality type particularly prone to fascist or authoritarian attitudes and behaviours.

4 This is partly due to its late official publication date: Fromm only worked through the material in the 1980s. Some of the material was used in the IfS' *Studien über Autorität und Familie*.

pinnacle of this development.[5] Yet like Fromm's study, the Group Experiment has received little attention and has only been translated into English recently. I will argue that these empirical studies form important moments in critical theory's exploration of the democratic possibilities of participatory knowledge production. The following will show how the innovation in social research studies allowed not only for a wide circle of participants, but also developed new and more intricate measures to engage with individual participants. In turn, the process of collecting material, as well as the final results, offered new possibilities for democratic learning and engagement – both for those conducting the studies and those taking part. We can see here, I contend, the direct relationship between knowledge production and social engineering. Contrary to common perception, then, the Frankfurt School's flight from Nazi Germany, their establishment in U.S. exile and the subsequent remigration to West Germany was not one of intellectual contraction and withdrawal into political apathy. On the contrary, the experience, on a personal as well as scientific level, marks the possibility for application of their political ideas in new fields.

As Wolfgang Bonß has argued, critical theory under the aegis of Max Horkheimer as IfS-director changed drastically in the interwar and exile period: both the loss of confidence in the working class as revolutionary subject in the wake of 1933 and the subsequent encounter of U.S.-social research during their emigration-period led to a sharpening of the IfS' parameters of empirical research.[6] Although disappointed in the revolutionary potential of the proletariat and increasingly frustrated with their own methodology, the Frankfurt School did not, however, withdraw into apathy and apoliticism, but revised their empiricism in collaboration with U.S. researchers.[7] Understanding the innovative aspects of these Frankfurt School projects requires a critical perspective on the production of knowledge within these studies. This article therefore not only looks at the methods used to gain new insights, it is also interested in the power-relationships engendered by the research and their impact on results. It advances the argument that the Frankfurt School and its associate Institute for Social Research

5 Erich Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte am Vorabend des Dritten Reiches* (Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag, 2019); American Jewish Committee, *Studies in Prejudice*, accessed June 9, 2021, http://www.ajcarchives.org/main.php?GroupingId=1380; Friedrich Pollock et al., *Group Experiment and Other Writings*, transl./intr. Andrew J. Perrin and Jeffrey K. Olick (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2011).

6 Wolfgang Bonß, *Die Einübung des Tatsachenblicks: Zur Struktur und Veränderung empirischer Sozialforschung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1982), 186–187.

7 Accusations of political apathy are common in the literature, see more recently e. g. Stuart Jeffries, *Grand Hotel Abyss: The Lives of the Frankfurt School* (London: Verso, 2016).

(IfS) developed in the period from the early 1930s to the mid-1950s a system of research that increased participation, rather than limiting it, by testing out new strategies combining empirical methods pioneered in the U.S. and qualitative considerations prevalent in German social research. Ultimately, these methods were designed to produce better, more accurate knowledge about different populations and social groups, and to enable the usage of this knowledge for political and governmental purposes. Participation was central to this: both from different groups within the population, as well as from larger research teams. Project leaders like Adorno relied heavily on close associates aiding the development and interpretation of questionnaires and interview-scenarios, a pool of staff that could conduct interviews and group discussions, but also on a wider network of contacts that would facilitate the distribution of questionnaires. Yet, I will also argue, despite this participatory impetus, the individual projects often still missed the democratic mark. Structurally, the reliance on Freudian psychoanalytic methods allowed individual participants greater input, but also often enforced a division between expert and participant. This, finally, raises questions about the relationship between participation and agency in social research and the subsequent opportunities and dangers posed by them for a democratic society.

Two aspects are central in shaping the methodology and direction of these research projects. Firstly, they are outstanding examples of what Peter Burke has termed "hybridization," the integration of different cultures of knowledge, often achieved through the transplanting and translating of knowledge by exile- and diaspora-communities and the parallel mediation between this body of knowledge and that of the host country.[8] Whilst empirical social research did have a longer history in Germany, Erich Fromm himself acknowledged the import of state-of-the-art U.S. research methods when he undertook his study on workers and white-collar employees.[9] Once the IfS and its looser associates had emigrated to the U.S., encounters with research-institutions allowed them to draw even further on local expertise, and to finetune their own skills through collaborations.[10] After their return to West Germany, the Institute could then establish it-

8 Peter Burke, *Exiles and Expatriates in the History of Knowledge* (Waltham: Brandeis UP, 2017), 2, 19, 28. Also see Susanne Korbel and Philipp Strobl, eds., *Cultural Translation and Knowledge Transfer on Alternative Routes of Escape from Nazi Terror: Mediations through Migrations* (New York: Routledge, 2021), especially the programmatic introduction by Korbel and Strobl.

9 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 26–27.

10 On the emigration to the USA, see Thomas Wheatland, *The Frankfurt School in Exile* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009); Peter U. Hohendahl, "The Displaced Intellectual? Adorno's American Years Revisited," *New German Critique* 56 (1992): 76–100; Judith Friedlander,

self as a research facility bridging the two cultures, testifying to the possibility of multi-directional knowledge-transfer.[11] The story of the Frankfurt School's empirical social research is thus part of the "intellectual migration" that signalled a shift in the scientific culture's centre of gravity away from Central Europe now threatened by fascism towards England and especially the U.S. As scholars like Udi Greenberg have shown, this had long-lasting and global impacts.[12]

The second, crucial factor influencing the research-agenda of the Frankfurt School was the power-knowledge nexus that evolved especially once the IfS became part of the wide-reaching network of the U.S. war effort.[13] Whilst their work had never been apolitical, the premises of interwar critical theory had been to remove oneself and one's research from official power and break through the parameters of the status quo to reveal the conditions and relations of power and manipulation lying beneath it.[14] Through its endowment, the IfS hoped to maintain independence from funding-bodies and continued to hold the university, with which it cooperated, at arm's length. Yet financial pressures (and mismanagement) in exile and the transformation of the academic landscape, as well as a personal, moral imperative to contribute to the defeat of Nazism and the re-education of Germans meant that the Frankfurt School and associated thinkers had to drastically alter their attitude towards collaboration and funding.

As historians like Lutz Raphael have argued, the nineteenth century had seen the beginning of a process of "scientification" (Verwissenschaftlichung) of the social that led to an increasing use of information produced by the humanities and social sciences in government and administration, economic or-

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A Light in Dark Times: The New School for Social Research and Its University in Exile (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019); Martin Jay, "Adorno in America," *New German Critique* 31 (1984): 157–182.

11 On the intellectual return migration of experts, especially on democratic thought, to West Germany, see Margit Seckelmann and Johannes Platz, eds., *Remigration und Demokratie in der Bundesrepublik nach 1945: Ordnungsvorstellungen zu Staat und Verwaltung im transatlantischen Transfer* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2017), esp. Seckelmann and Platz, "Ansätze zu einer erneuerten Ideengeschichte der Remigration," 13–20; also see Kirsten Heinsohn and Rainer Nicolaysen, eds., *Belastete Beziehungen: Studien zur Wirkung von Exil und remigration auf die Wissenschaften nach 1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2021).

12 Donald Fleming and Bernard Baily, eds., *The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America, 1930–1960* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1969); Udi Greenberg, *The Weimar Century: German Émigrés and the Ideological Foundations of the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2014).

13 E. g. Raffaele Laudani, *Secret Reports from Nazi Germany: The Frankfurt School Contribution to the War Effort* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2013).

14 Max Horkheimer, "Traditionelle und kritische Theorie," in *Traditionelle und kritische Theorie. Fünf Aufsätze* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 2011), 205–269.

ganisation and social welfare.[15] Whilst motivations and uses behind this new form of knowledge-production vary, scholars continue to highlight its close entwinement with nation- or state-building, its function in disciplining and punishing, controlling and coercing, colonizing and ruling populations and individuals.[16] Far from merely reproducing the truth, knowledge thus works as an active shaper of reality, creating and enforcing power-relations. The establishment of a "psychological society" in the transitional period from the nineteenth into the twentieth century, which saw Gustave Le Bon, Sigmund Freud and John B. Watson develop their theories of mass-psychology, psychoanalysis and behaviourism, played a crucial part in this development. Leading both to a therapeutic impetus and a greater acknowledgement of and preoccupation with the "self," as well as the emergence of "psychopolitics," psychological knowledge must not only be understood in an academic or therapeutic context, but as part of an evolving political realm that began to extend into new areas of life.[17] This transformation of knowledge in modern societies inevitably also altered the position of those producing it, accelerating across the second half of the twentieth century the rise of the "expert" who left behind the sheltered realms of academia to be in the service of governments, NGOs or business. In turn, the knowledge produced fed into public discourse, as the Frankfurt School's research demonstrates: foundational for their thought on re-education, it influenced their usage of mass communication media such as the radio.[18] Providing new employment- and funding-opportunities, and often an increase in status and celebrity, this brave new world also fundamentally shaped research-agendas and imperilled the neutrality of scholars, not just in the authoritarian regimes of the twentieth-century age of extremes. Particularly in the wake of the Second World War, the reestablishment of democratic societies relied on polling institutes and think tanks, which also became valuable assets for political parties designing election

15 Lutz Raphael, "Die Verwissenschaftlichung des Sozialen als methodische und konzeptionelle Herausforderung für eine Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 22 (1996): 165–193.

16 See e. g. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1977).

17 Maik Tändler and Uffa Jensen, "Psychowissen, Politik und das Selbst: Eine neue Forschungsperspektive auf die Geschichte des Politischen im 20. Jahrhundert," in *Das Selbst zwischen Anpassung und Befreiung*, ed. Maik Tändler and Uffa Jensen (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2012), 12–24; Jeroen Jansz and Peter van Drunen, *A Social History of Psychology* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 35–38.

18 Clemens Albrecht, "Die Massenmedien und die Frankfurter Schule," in *Die intellektuelle Gründung der Bundesrepublik: Eine Wirkungsgeschichte der Frankfurter Schule*, ed. Albrecht et al. (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1999), 203–246.

campaigns and party programmes.[19] Yet, as this paper will show, the development of new social research methods – particularly in psychology and psychoanalysis – and its wide use from commerce to policing gave new powers to the expert few able to employ these techniques. Psychoanalysis in particular, as integral to the Frankfurt School's take on opinion polling, creates a complex relationship between the participant and the interpreter in which the latter through their expertise and training gains a certain prerogative of interpretation over the former's inner life inaccessible to themselves.

How can we square this development then with the, albeit tumultuous, rise of liberal democracy across the "long twentieth century"? It seems that the collection of knowledge about populations – be it to increase their welfare, cohesion or prosperity – easily reverses into their control, either in a paternalistic welfare state or under a more sinister authoritarian regime. It appears that knowledge production, born out of the same Enlightenment impulse that cemented liberal values and rights, has parted ways with these original parameters. Yet at the same time, surveys and polls have also always been considered a possible tool in the service of democracy, giving those a voice that often feel disenfranchised and removed from the centre of power.[20] This struggle is also evident in the research projects of the Frankfurt School.

Trial and Error: First Experiments in Psychoanalytical Surveying

Mass democracy and increased opinion polling are thus indelibly intertwined. The more the word – and especially the vote – of ordinary men and women counted, the more parties, politicians and observers of the political climate were interested in ascertaining their allegiances, desires and attitudes. This is particularly true of a place like Weimar Germany with its relatively young democracy and high degrees of political polarization. Erich Fromm's study, conducted in 1929–1930, but only completely analysed and published 50 years later, puts its finger on exactly this question of political attitudes and the possibilities for po-

19 E. g. Anja Kruke, *Demoskopie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Meinungsforschung, Parteien und Medien 1949 – 1990* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2007).

20 See e. g. Kerstin Brückweh, *Menschen zählen: Wissensproduktion durch britische Volkszählungen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis ins digitale Zeitalter* (Berlin: Oldenbourg, 2015), 8–9.

litical mass-mobilisation.[21] As the title already suggests, it hones in on two of the major groups that were shaking up the interwar period in Germany. The workers, firstly, were the mainstay of the socialist movement, and the Social Democrats as well as the Communists relied on them for support at the ballot box and on the street, as public displays of political allegiance became more prominent.[22] Yet ever since the failure of the revolutions following on the First World War, Fromm and his colleagues had become wary of the revolutionary potential of the proletariat and its ability to gain consciousness and overthrow the capitalist system. At the same time, the dominance of the working class was impinged upon by the white-collar employees: increasingly important since the late nineteenth century, this social group was outstripping the numerical growth of the workers by the interwar period. Although white-collar employees increasingly drifted into dire financial circumstances, the hoped-for solidarization with the proletariat did not take place. Instead, they continued to insist on a fundamental social and cultural difference, seeing themselves outside of the proletariat-bourgeoisie class-binary and instead forming a kind of "estate," echoing older political systems. To distinguish themselves further, they emulated a middle-class lifestyle and used dress, cultural interests and living standards to express their difference from the proletariat.[23] This did not preclude political opinions, however, and historians are still debating their role in facilitating the Nazi rise to power.[24] Observers thus had to navigate a growing discrepancy between what economic conditions, cultural preferences and even personal taste and interests suggested, and eventual political outcomes.

Fromm, who had studied sociology under Alfred Weber before undergoing psychoanalytical training, was largely responsible for the reconciliation of Marx and Freud at the IfS, and also introduced empirical research to the theoretical study of materialism.[25] His combination of social psychology and politics quickly alerted him to issues within modern society, which by the early 1940s

21 Some of its insights are included in Max Horkheimer et al., *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (1936) (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1936).

22 Eric Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2009), 111–112.

23 Jürgen Kocka, "Marxist Social Analysis and the Problem of White-Collar Employees," *State, Culture, and Society* 1 (1985): 137–151.

24 Pascale Cancik, "Zuviel Staat? – Die Institutionalisierung der 'Bürokratie'-Kritik im 20. Jahrhundert," *Der Staat* 56, no. 1 (2017): 1–38.

25 Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute for Social Research, 1923–1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 88–91; Wolfgang Bonß, "Critical Theory and Empirical Social Research: Some Observations," in *The Working Class in Weimar Germany* by Erich Fromm, ed. and with an introduction by Wolfgang Bonß (Leamington Spa: Berg Publishers, 1984), 1–38.

had led him to a concept of alienation – the tension between modern man as self-reliant but also isolated, independent but afraid, a condition that could easily push individuals into the arms of authoritarian movements.[26] These concerns can already be spotted in the *Arbeiter- und Angestelltenstudie*. Although the study is nowadays usually attributed to Fromm, it must be considered a much more collaborative work. The conception of the project builds on a longer genealogy of questionnaire-inquiries dating back to Karl Marx, in the context of left-wing agitation, and Max Weber, together with the "Verein für Sozialpolitik." Marie Bernays and Hilde Weiss, who worked with Weber and Fromm respectively, are important links disseminating and updating the concept of the "Enquete"[27] for twentieth-century usage.[28] Like the "Studies in Prejudice," and specifically the "Authoritarian Personality," the list of close collaborators includes a prominent number of women – Weiss, Else Frenkel-Brunswick, Marie Jahoda – and other prominent social researchers of the time, such as Paul Lazarsfeld, but both projects have become associated almost exclusively with their research-leads, Fromm and Adorno. Whilst group work thus became more and more necessary, the cult of genius, often specifically associated with continental research, persisted as part of the project's reception history.[29]

Fromm's study was not the only social research into workers and white-collar employees at the time – Emil Lederer and Hans Speier had conducted their own surveys, and Siegfried Kracauer produced his well-known journalistic reportage, *Die Angestellten*, in 1930.[30] Yet Fromm's project stands out for its novel combination of psychoanalytical detail with empirical breadth. This methodological innovation – a psychoanalytical survey of a social group using an open, interpretative questionnaire – is what constitutes the study's pioneering

26 Annette Thomson, *Erich Fromm: Explorer of the Human Condition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 14–15; Erich Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom* (1941) (London: Routledge, 2021).

27 They drew in particular on Marx's adaptation of the common surveys undertaken for philanthropic or social legislative reasons to the milieu of the workers whose conditions he wanted to study.

28 Marion Keller, *Pionierinnen der empirischen Sozialforschung im Wilhelminischen Kaiserreich* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2018), ch. 3; David Smith, "The Ambivalent Worker: Max Weber, Critical Theory and the Antinomies of Authority," *Social Thought & Research* 21 (1998): 35–83; Hilda Weiss, "Die 'Enquêtes Ouvrières' von Karl Marx," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 5 (1936): 76–98.

29 Also see later Theodor W. Adorno, "Teamwork in der Sozialforschung" (1957), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 8 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2003), 494–498.

30 Hans Speier, *German White-Collar Workers and the Rise of Hitler* (1933/39) (New Haven: Yale UP, 1986); Siegfried Kracauer, *Die Angestellten* (1930), in *Werke Band 1* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2006).

achievement.[31] As Heinrich August Winkler noted in a review upon the study's publication in Germany, it not only provides a singular insight into the daily life ("Alltagswelt") of interwar German workers and employees, it is also an important document in the history of science ("Wissenschaftsgeschichte"), pioneering both the connection of Marxist and psychoanalytical methods by the Frankfurt School in particular and opinion-survey techniques in general.[32] This innovative character created major problems for the organisers of the survey. To fulfil the criteria of representativeness, the pool of participants had to be widened beyond a small circle of individuals known to the researchers. Yet financial constraints meant that a large psychoanalytical interview-programme was impossible and had to be replaced with an intricate questionnaire.[33] Ultimately, only 584 out of 3,000 questionnaires could be analysed by Fromm, the rest were either never returned or lost as the IfS went into exile.[34]

Broadly speaking, the study wanted to reveal "typical traits and attitudes in different status-groups" through an analysis of individual opinions, ideas and dreams. Answers were thus not seen merely as expressions of individual emotional dispositions, but reflections of the group-ideology he or she had come to accept.[35] Central to the inquiry was the fear that surface political allegiances were no longer congruent with an individual's full personality – a suspicion that was eventually confirmed by the German workers' parties' lack of resistance against National Socialism.[36] Emotional attachment hence became a crucial category to test: only if party-programme and emotional needs were congruent would individuals stand firm behind their chosen political movement. If this bond was weak, the individual could be counted as a "fair-weather-supporter"

31 Rainer Funk, "Zur Entstehung und Bedeutung der sozialpsychologischen Untersuchung," in *Arbeiter und Angestellte am Vorabend des Dritten Reiches* by Erich Fromm, ed. Rainer Funk (Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag, 2019), 8. The full questionnaire is reproduced in Horkheimer et al., *Studien über Autorität und Familie* (1936) (Lüneburg: Dietrich zu Klampen Verlag, 1987), 240–249. It can also be found here, accessed February 28 2022, https://archive.org/details/HorkheimerEtAlAutoritatUndFamilie/page/n125/mode/2up; as well as in Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 307–318.

32 Heinrich August Winkler, "Review: Arbeiter und Angestellte am Vorabend des Dritten Reiches. Eine sozialpsychologische Untersuchung by Erich Fromm and Wolfgang Bonss," *Historische Zeitschrift* 233, no. 3 (1981): 740–742.

33 Rolf Wiggershaus, *Die Frankfurter Schule: Geschichte, Theoretische Entwicklung, Politische Bedeutung* (München: dtv, 2008), 135.

34 Winkler, "Review," 741.

35 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 26–27, 240; Funk, "Zur Entstehung," 14.

36 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 28.

who could be strung along in good times but would become unreliable in critical moments.[37]

In order to reveal people's "true personality" and the extent of their political conviction, the questionnaire worked with three categories of questions, giving insight into (1) the participant's assessment of general social-political problems, (2) their attitude towards authority and (3) their stance towards their fellow human beings.[38] Initially, participants were asked about their objective living-standards, their socio-economic status, occupation and family, as well as their party- and union-membership, their degree of their political activity and their voting behaviour.[39] Ascertaining the true political attitude and worldview of participants was more difficult, however, especially as Fromm's team did not want to emulate a multiple-choice personality test, whose limited, pre-formulated answers already suggested "correct" or "possible" statements and left no space for spontaneous responses.[40] Instead, more experimental questions were devised requiring participants to answer more substantially.[41] For example, the questionnaire wanted to know participants' ideas about their "ideal" form of government, which historical personalities they admired, the way they decorated their flats and what books they read, even what they thought of women's fashion and make-up. The aim of the survey was to get as close as possible to latent wishes and dreams by asking questions that would elicit extractable hints of these, demanding a sustained engagement of participants and a willingness to answer even intrusive and personal questions, as well as those with no immediately clear purpose. Although not all of the experimental questions proved successful, at the end stood a new kind of knowledge mapping the mental world of participants, incorporating both rational, knowable facts and less palpable, irrational elements of their psyche.[42]

Responses from the different sections were then categorized according to three main groups: "radical" (R), "authoritarian" (A) and "compromise-orientated/reformist" (K). "Indifferent" (I) responses were also classified.[43] Then, each questionnaire was assigned a "syndrome" based on these three categorisations.

37 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 54.
38 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 241–245.
39 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 32–33.
40 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 37.
41 Funk, "Zur Entstehung," 11.
42 It should be noted that there is no clear information when the individual questionnaires were filled in or whether they were answered over a longer period of time. This is relevant also because some respondents took months to return their forms.
43 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 246.

The most clear-cut syndromes were "RRR" or "AAA" and "RR-" and "AA-": all three categories or categories (1) and (2) were the same. This meant that a participant's "rational" and public political allegiance was in agreement with their emotional commitments and inner life. They were either consistently radical, and thus reliable members of the left-wing movement, or the polar opposite – authoritarian through and through. These clear-cut personality-types were not in the majority, however. Only 15 percent, Fromm noted, could be expected to show the conviction necessary to lead a left-wing movement.[44] Most participants instead fell into the "R- -" bracket, meaning that their political ideas were conforming with general left-wing doctrine, but their emotional drives were not directed the same way. Neither truly reliable nor completely idle in political conflict, Fromm noted that "[...] they always needed an equally clear and rousing leadership so as not to reverse into passivity again."[45]

Most importantly for the future work of the Frankfurt School, however, was the detection of another character-type, "RA-," an individual with a radical political attitude but a "mismatching" authoritarian emotional and personal life. This character-type distinguishes itself by a clear dissonance between outward opinion and internal desires. Thus, whilst many of them were familiar with the basic tenets and slogans of the socialist project, confidently reciting them if directly prompted, they also longed to submit themselves under a strong leadership figure. As will become evident, this discord between surface opinion and private desires – often seemingly undiscovered by the individual themselves and lying dormant to be tapped into by a particularly skilled orator – becomes a mainstay of the Frankfurt School's analysis of the function of propaganda as well as the limits of traditional polling techniques. It also elevates the psychoanalytical expert to a new position of power, able to access information not (yet) available to the analysand.

Who, then, participated? To capture a sufficiently large and diverse segment of the population, Fromm's team drew on a cohort of volunteers – doctors, union functionaries, newspaper editors, adult education teachers – who came in regular contact with workers and white-collar employees to distribute the questionnaires.[46] As the survey did not aim to study a cross-section of society as a whole but concentrated on workers and white-collar employees, specific regional, social-political and gender distributions were to be expected.[47]

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44 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 270.

45 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 264 [my translation].

46 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 38. Questionnaires came with an explanatory note and a franked envelope to ensure return.

47 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 66–70.

Besides this regional imbalance, the rural, agricultural East not represented, gender was the major stumbling stone on the road to participatory equality and representability. Fromm acknowledged this in his analysis, stating that they only managed to collect 47 questionnaires from women, compared to 537 from men. A gender-specific analysis was hence near-impossible.[48] No clear data is available on the low female participation, yet without doubt, this low number misrepresents the role played by women in the interwar economy – by 1919, women were accounting for 36 percent of the workforce, and their prominent new role as typists has been remarked upon by contemporary observers and scholars alike.[49] The lack of female participants also constitutes a fundamental blindspot in the analysis of authoritarianism: historical debate is still undecided on the role women played lifting the Nazis into the saddle.[50] At the same time, however, the study did show interest in gender, specifically the perception of women by the participants: from make-up and fashion to whether women should join the workforce, femininity and the "new women" were at least implicitly being tested. The survey thus does give some insight into the gender-relations of the period, but like Fromm and his team, historians must be aware of the gendered dimension of the knowledge produced in this context.[51]

Participation in the study was thus curtailed by region and gender, as well as by profession – the percentages show that workers (64 percent) were much keener respondents than white-collar employees (29 percent); whether this is due to the network of contacts distributing the questionnaires or the personal attitudes of potential respondents remains unclear. Yet one further way in which participation was restricted was by limiting and modifying an individual's agency in expressing themselves through their answers. Firstly, Fromm and his team were interested in unravelling the connection between an individual's attitude and their wider context. Answers were seen as a result of these circumstances, whilst individual conditions disappeared behind this determinism. Secondly, answers were not always taken at face value but had to undergo a psychoanalytical analysis: as Fromm states, the survey could only work if it was undertaken by experts in the field of psychoanalysis.[52] Even silences, seem-

48 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 52.

49 Angelika Führich, "Woman and Typewriter: Gender, Technology, and Work in Late Weimar Film," *Women in German Yearbook* 16 (2000): 151–166.

50 Matthew Stibbe, *Women in the Third Reich* (London: Arnold Publishers, 2003).

51 Gendered perspectives on knowledge production is a growing field. Most recently, see Jennifer Forestal and Menaka Philips, *The Wives of Western Philosophy: Gender Politics in Intellectual Labour* (New York: Routledge, 2021).

52 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 48–49.

ingly a powerful tool of participants to reject a question, display their distrust or distaste, were turned from an expression of power of the participants into a moment of power-appropriation of the researchers who imposed their own interpretation. Knowledge-collection and knowledge-production thus divert here, running in opposite directions: the former relies heavily on a bottom-up approach, gathering the voices of as many participants as possible to create a wide pool of raw information. Knowledge-production, however, becomes an opaque bottom-down process where data is funnelled through the expert-prism of the psychoanalyst, shape-shifting along the way. For example, a participant's statement on their rejection of authoritarianism was not necessarily taken at face value, but had to be read against further responses on attitudes towards women or childhood education, and could thus eventually be verified or falsified by the researchers.[53] This modification relied on the acceptance of the irrational and the suppressed as a source of knowledge useable in real-life social and political context, empirically measurable and comparable. Fromm's experiment opened the doors to methodological innovation in social research, centring on the individual participant and their idiosyncrasies, but it achieved this at the cost of establishing a psychoanalytical, expert-driven hegemony.

American Intermezzo: Solidifying the Experts' Hegemony in the U.S.

Unlike Fromm's study and the post-war "Group Experiment" discussed in more detail below, the "Studies in Prejudice" conducted by the IfS together with independent researchers and the American Jewish Committee received a comparatively generous scholarly reception.[54] Particularly the "Authoritarian Personality," the empirical study part of the larger project, quickly gained attention among the scientific community in the U.S., starting a veritable trend for investigation into this particular character-type.

As Thomas Wheatland argues in his study of the Frankfurt School's U.S. years, whilst the "Studies in Prejudice" finally seemed to provide the scholarly appreciation Horkheimer and his circle had been pining for, it did so at the cost of "a clear accommodation with Anglo-American research methods [...as it...] sought to combine these empirical techniques with the speculative tradition

53 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 187–208.

54 Wheatland, *Frankfurt School*, 254–257.

of Continental sociology."[55] The project, which took numerous funding applications to reach its final outline, is generally seen by Frankfurt School experts as a more or less severe deviation from the original tenets of critical theory.[56] Especially its focus on psychology over a more Marxist analysis of socio-economic conditions gives the project the air of a turning point: the Frankfurt School had now truly arrived in the USA, but this could also be reversed – U.S.-research methodology had become an integral tool in the repertoire of the Institute. However, whilst the "Studies in Prejudice" certainly present a high point in the fusion of critical theory's "Continental" parameters with U.S.-social science methods, Fromm's own assessment of the U.S.-influence on interwar research and the methodological innovation taking place in Weimar Germany itself suggests a longer genealogy.[57]

Upon publication, Adorno himself emphasized the innovative character of the study, making a new kind of knowledge detectable:

> On the one hand, it would free psychoanalysis from the – as we feel – unjustified onus of premature generalisation [...]; on the other hand, indisputable quantitative methods would be applied to problems which are neither trivialities nor something between true psychological insight and popular notions, but rather categories that are usually considered to be beyond verification in terms of productive scientific reliability.[58]

The combination of empirical research and psychoanalytical approaches allowed the extension of truth's realms of possibility, by recognising different levels of openness and repression among individuals: the study was still able to record attitudes expressed freely in public or among more intimate acquaintances through direct questioning, but it also revealed the "secret thoughts" that were either inaccessible to the individual, or underdeveloped and therefore impossible to be expressed openly.[59] Not merely identifying and analysing but accessing these deeper personality-layers was crucial in Adorno's eyes, "for precisely here may lie the individual's potential for democratic or antidemocratic thought and action."[60] Similar to the Fromm study, it thus ascertained a character-type not through direct questioning but by analysing the affect-laden, irrational urges of anti-minority sentiment.

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55 Wheatland, *Frankfurt School*, 243.

56 Wheatland, *Frankfurt School*, 240–41.

57 Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte*, 26–27.

58 Theodor W. Adorno, "Remarks on the Authoritarian Personality," in *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950) by Adorno et al. (London: Verso, 2019), xlvii.

59 Adorno, "Remarks," xlv.

60 Adorno, "Remarks," xlv.

Like Fromm's study, the project's dimensions necessitated teamwork, especially as Adorno and Horkheimer, working together on the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in California, lacked the relevant training in social psychology. Unlike the *Arbeiter- und Angestelltenstudie*, however, the Institute had now been able to secure sufficient funding to not only employ experts to advise them, but to conduct a multi-step questionnaire- and interview-study with a large pool of participants.[61] Similar to the earlier study, the reach of the "Authoritarian Personality" remained limited to a particular social group – educated, middle class individuals: the organisers themselves admitted that different social and economic strata required different approaches. This, of course, elicited early criticisms from commentators – and especially the further reduction of the participants-pool at the interview-stage suggests a certain preference for extreme cases: the researchers had developed a way of measuring the degree that people were either susceptible or resilient to authoritarianism, and only conducted further research with the highest scorers on either end of the scale, inevitably paying less attention to the large middling pool and their distinct character-profiles.[62]

Regardless of specific faults and limitations of the "Authoritarian Personality," it fundamentally altered the relationship of the Frankfurt School to political work and opinion polling. As part of the IfS' effort to secure funding and establish itself in U.S.-exile, Horkheimer and his colleagues had to assimilate to the language and purpose of U.S.-social science, and in turn became integrated into a system of research and funding powered by political agendas and direct social issues relevant to those in power – be they in government or non-governmental funding organisations. This shift towards commercial sociology was continued in the post-war period, especially as the IfS became part of a re-education mission in West Germany.[63] Crucially, their methodology, albeit developed in the particular context of a U.S.-case-study, became a transferable asset that they could take back to Germany with them.

With this methodology also came a political imperative for democratisation. As scholars like Shannon Mariotti and David Jenemann now argue, for Adorno especially, the years in the U.S. were a period of astute political thought forma-

61 Unlike Fromm's study, there were thus resources to analyse the material and prepare the *Studies in Prejudice* for timely publication, another possible reason for why Fromm's study was eclipsed.

62 Wheatland, *Frankfurt School*, 256.

63 Uta Gerhardt, *Denken der Demokratie: Die Soziologie im atlantischen Transfer des Besatzungsregimes* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007), esp. section III.

tion, in which he began to understand "democracy as practice."[64] Understanding the "dialectics of lived experience" and developing a programme to foster critical thinking that could work like a "vaccine" to detect and protect from social pathologies, Mariotti emphasises the always ongoing, practical work of strengthening democratic subjects, which the Frankfurt School also recognized: rather than simply and abstractly identifying problems, individuals had to be motivated and equipped to constantly challenge the status quo.[65] Ultimately, and despite the criticism voiced by Adorno and Horkheimer in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, they remain committed to an enlightened, democratic educational programme, as well as the centrality of the public sphere for achieving this.[66] This pedagogical aspect also becomes evident in the structure of the Group Experiment devised upon the return to West Germany.

Group Experiment: Democratic Reset?

Throughout the early 1940s a defeat of Nazi Germany became increasingly likely, raising questions both among official U.S.-government and -military agencies, as well as the European exile community, about the reconstruction and re-education of Germany and the Germans. First in the U.S., and then through the remigration of the IfS to Frankfurt in 1951, the Frankfurt School became involved in this process, motivated by a complex matrix of reasons, from a desire to curry favour with the U.S. and potential funding bodies to a moral imperative to contribute to German democratisation and an emotional longing for their former homeland, but also the drive to re-establish sociology and psychology as academic fields with the IfS at their helm.[67] The Group Experiment epitomised this coming together of different concerns and motivations. It clearly participated in an U.S.-led effort to monitor and shape the transition towards a democratic regime, relying on the (financial) endorsement of the High Commissioner of Ger-

64 Shannon L. Mariotti, *Adorno and Democracy: The American Years* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016), 32; David Jenemann, *Adorno in America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

65 Mariotti, *Adorno and Democracy*, 96–102.

66 Fabian Freyenhagen, *Adorno's Practical Philosophy: Living Less Wrongly* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2013), 176–182.

67 Adorno and Horkheimer returned to Germany, as well as their close collaborator Friedrich Pollock. Other Institute-members, as well as Erich Fromm, remained in the U.S.

many (HICOG).[68] Methodologically, the experiment built further on the previous studies undertaken by the Institute and its associates, drawing especially on the combination of empirical methods and psychoanalytical impetus that had proven well during the "Studies in Prejudice." This, however, also set the Group Experiment apart from other U.S.-opinion research undertaken at the time. Politically, the study also stands for a transition of the Frankfurt School towards a more engaged, and more prosaically democratic, outlook. Although often accused both of deviating too far from the critical, detached programme of interwar critical theory, and for an apolitical, apathetic attitude, the empirical studies and the concomitant writings on (political) uses of research show a different, under-researched side.[69]

In preparation for the occupation, the U.S.-war effort had relied on the expertise of exiles functioning as "transatlantic mediators" able to translate their knowledge about German government and population into usable reports for the US government and military agencies.[70] Once in German territories, however, the U.S. Office of Military Government (OMGUS) was able to draw directly on individual Germans to paint a bottom-up picture of the Germans' mindset. Regular opinion-surveying allowed the occupation to test the democratisation- and denazification-process among the population.[71] In the eyes of Adorno and Horkheimer, however, the results of these surveys were naively positive. Not only did these surveys propose an abrupt break with the past and a quick adoption of democratic attitudes among the German population, they also worked with a simplistic conception of the way individual and public opinions constituted themselves.[72] Public opinion, as the leaders of the Group Experiment declared, was usually conceived of in far too simplistic terms, considering the participants stated beliefs as final – when in fact most surveys only collected subjective attitudes and deduced a "generality" from them.[73] At the same time, most surveys held

68 See documentation in the Horkheimer-Nachlass (Goethe Universität Frankfurt), folder Na1.751.

69 The classical criticism comes from and a classic criticism: Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London: Verso, 1976).

70 Arnd Bauernkämper, Konrad Jarausch, and Marcus Payk, "Transatlantische Mittler und die kulturelle Demokratisierung Westdeutschlands 1945–1970," in *Demokratiewunder*, ed. Arnd Bauernkämper et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2005), 11–37.

71 Famously, by Anna J. Merritt and Richard L. Merritt, eds., *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany: The OMGUS Surveys, 1945–1949* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970) and *Public Opinion in Semisovereign Germany* (London: University of Illinois Press, 1980).

72 Andrew J. Perrin and Jeffrey K. Olick, "Translators' Introduction: Before the Public Sphere," in *Group Experiment*, ed. Pollock et al., xxiii; Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 23.

73 Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 22.

participants' beliefs to be stable, disregarding the dynamism not just of individuals in their social contexts themselves, but also that of their opinions:

> [Opinion research] needs to recognize that, in a totally socialised society (*vergesellschaftete Gesellschaft*), the objective conditions of a society play a decisive part in the formation and content of individuals' opinions without eliminating the subjective process of responding to objective social facts.[74]

Yet, as Andrew J. Perrin and Jeffrey K. Olick, editors and translators of the first English edition of the Group Experiment, point out, social context did not only determine what participants said openly, it must also be recognized as a stifling and potentially silencing atmosphere:

> In immediate postwar Germany the charged context was an intolerable threat to the validity of the HICOG surveys. How could the citizens of a recently vanquished nation, its erstwhile national ideology a worldwide disgrace, honestly explore and articulate their views on Jews, the war, guilt, and democracy to a stranger conducting an interview?[75]

Franz Böhm, Christian-Democratic politician and associate of Adorno and Horkheimer, who wrote the preface to the Group Experiment, recognized the ability of opinion research to not only ascertain these individual inhibitions but to systematise them across society into what he called the "non-public opinion" that existed parallelly to a sanitized, morally acceptable discourse in the media or political forums.[76] Böhm had been prosecuted under the Nazi regime and lost his teaching licence in 1938; after the war he was involved with the restitution-effort – explaining the allegiance with the Frankfurt School across the political spectrum.[77] The Group Experiment was an attempt to develop a methodology that could cope with these issues: it recognized both the global capitalist phenomenon of a society dominated more and more by its social and economic parameters and the particular issues that had developed in Germany in the recent past, whilst bringing to the fore the lurking, hidden feelings and thoughts of individual Germans who had emerged from 12 years of Nazi rule and were now adjusting to a new system. At the same time, the Group Experiment also offered a more direct democratic prospect: in line with the belief developed in the USA, and supported by the U.S.-re-education mission, that empirical social research

74 Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 23.

75 Perrin and Olick, "Before the Public Sphere," xxvii.

76 Franz Böhm, "Preface," in *Group Experiment*, ed. Pollock et al., 3.

77 Günter Buchstab et al., eds., *Christliche Demokraten gegen Hitler: Aus Verfolgung und Widerstand zur Union* (Freiburg: Herder, 2004), 108–114.

could control and influence public opinion, but also help dissolve social tensions, the project offered a forum for self-reflective education for participants and academics alike. Although the (worrying) results were only presented to an expert-circle, the study thus offered participatory potential on other levels.[78]

Like the two previous research projects, the Group Experiment necessitated a larger corpus of collaborators who would lead the 136 focus groups across the country. A number of study reports were produced by different collaborators, but Adorno's own quantitative analysis, *Schuld und Abwehr*, remains the most prominent.[79] Building theoretically and methodologically on the Studies in Prejudice, the West German study nonetheless widened its scope and tried to reach people from all strata of society – although it was later acknowledged that the group sessions worked best when people from similar backgrounds came together. These were to help in understanding

> [...] important aspects of German public opinion – what is in the air in the realm of political ideology – by studying the "trans-subjective" factors, and especially to understand the ways and the extent to which these take hold in the individual.[80]

Group settings were supposed to mimic a social environment in which pronounceable attitudes could be generated – stimulated by a letter, written from the perspective of an Allied soldier remarking on the Germans' relationship with their Nazi past and current societal issues. Designed to touch on "sore spots" in the German mind, and thus to reveal the machinations at work in the psyche of individuals repressing and rationalising feelings of guilt about the recent German past, the letter was expected to trigger psychological repression, rejection, rationalisation, overcompensation, and even aggression, making

78 Michael Becker, Dirk Braunstein, and Fabian Link, "Postnazistisches Sprechen. Einführung in Peter von Haselbergs Beitrag zum Gruppenexperiment," in *Schuldgefühle: Postnazistische Mentalitäten in der frühen Bundesrepublik* by Peter von Haselberg, ed. Michael Becker et al. (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2020), 13–22; Dirk Braunstein, "Demokratisches Denken durch die Praxis der Soziologie: Die Reeducation-Konzepte des Instituts für Sozialforschung in den 1950er Jahren," in *Erinnern, Umschreiben, Vergessen: Die Stiftung des disziplinären Gedächtnisses als soziale Praxis*, ed. Karin Amos, Markus Rieger-Ladich, and Anne Rohstock (Weilerswist: Verlbrück Wissenschaft, 2019), 187–210.

79 Theodor W. Adorno, *Schuld und Abwehr: Eine qualitative Analyse zum Gruppenexperiment* (1955), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 9, no. 1 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2003). For an overview of other texts relating to the Group Experiment, see the introduction in Friedrich Pollock, ed., *Gruppenexperiment: Ein Studienbericht* (1955) (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1955).

80 Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 32–33.

experts trained in recognising and interpreting these signs vital for the project's success.[81]

The eventual goal was to close the gap between what people might openly say when quizzed in a U.S.-opinion poll and their inner life. The Group Experiment thus continued the assumption formed by the Frankfurt School in the interwar period that participants in surveys were more complex than often assumed, and that the traditional multiple-choice form or direct interview method was inadequate at capturing the individual's true attitudes and hence also the wider social mood. In fact, these techniques could even falsify the results: the direct questions and the pressure from the interviewer to supply a response, whether the participant had a clearly formed opinion or not, often led to the employment of unconscious psychological defence mechanisms; subsequently "participants often give incorrect or retouched answers, without being clear about them."[82] The Group Experiment, on the other hand, was supposed to afford participants the space to unfold emotionally and psychologically, using associations and free-flowing discussion to give observers a real-time insight into opinion-formation. This was particularly important in post-war West Germany, where individuals were torn between the attitudes that had become ingrained through years of propaganda by and/or active participation in the Nazi programme, post-war reactions, especially rejection and rationalisation of these attitudes, and the development of new ideas in the wake of occupation and confrontation with and reflection on the crimes of the Nazi period. Pollsters thus had to abandon the idea of clear-cut facts they could extract from individuals, and instead embrace complexity of opinion:

> Depth psychology has proven that the strongest psychological ambivalence surrounds the strongest affective charge. [...] Contradictory tendencies in an individual's opinion do not mean that he lacks an opinion, but that these opinions are multi-layered or antagonistic in themselves.[83]

The structure of the Group Experiment leaves historians with a dilemma: whilst, if we follow the Frankfurt School's logic, standard opinion polls and interviews usually produce incorrect or insufficient results, and therefore only paint a distorted picture of individual life in social context, psychoanalytical methods appear to strip the individual participants of their agency, leaving them as objects of analysis in the hands of experts. Consider this quotation from the Group Ex-

81 Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 33–35, 43.
82 Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 29.
83 Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 28–29.

periment report, and its ethical dimensions: "In the same way that wine reveals but does not invent, the irresponsible drivel in the discussion can be very informative for those attitudes which are rarely visible and are hidden in an interview based on multiple-choice questions."[84] In fact, the Group Experiment relied on individuals losing composure and revealing what was hidden: but this, to an extent, necessitated a violation of the individual. Unlike in a therapeutic setting, consent was more difficult to ascertain, and the purpose and method of the project could not be fully disclosed to participants (for example, the stimulus-letter was not written by a real soldier but devised for maximum psychological results). This initial "deception" was necessary, however, to achieve the study's purpose: not just a profound insight into the personalities of participants, but also the opportunity for (self-)reflection. The Group Experiment was thus not just a – albeit more profound – surveying method, but also a tool in "soft" or "democratic" approaches to social engineering. It thus resembled the group dynamic laboratories developed by Kurt Lewin from the 1930s onwards, and the group discussions that also appeared in West Germany in the 1960s[85]: whilst these were designed to develop and strengthen democratic behaviour in participants, contributing to a therapeutic self-understanding, the Frankfurt School's group method did not foreground a therapeutic or healing component in the first instance. Instead, its methodology relied on bringing individual pathologies to the surface in order to record them. Altering these, especially under democratic premises, became pivotal only in a second, distinct step, as will become clear below. As the projects required increasingly deep and long participation – hours to fill in a questionnaire, repeat interviews or discussions – agency of individuals involved continued to wane.

Political Applications of Social Research

The social-psychological research projects of the Frankfurt School were part of a larger development towards the inclusion of social science into the governing of populations. In a democratic society, polling, focus groups and other forms of questioning the population appeared to foster democratic exchange and create a more open, discursive atmosphere. Thus, scholars like Jeffrey Olick, one of

84 Pollock et al., *Group Experiment*, 35.

85 Maik Tändler, "Therapeutische Vergemeinschaftung. Demokratisierung, Emanzipation und Emotionalisierung in der Gruppe, 1963 – 1976," in *Das Selbst zwischen Anpassung und Befreiung: Psychowissen und Politik im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Maik Tändler and Uffa Jensen (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2012), 141–167.

the few researchers who has published on the Group Experiment, emphasise how the methodology devised in the Institute-studies of the 1950s prefigures important theoretical developments in democratic theory: "The point is that one can in this way easily draw a direct intellectual lineage from the *Gruppenexperiment*, through Habermas' ideas about a bourgeois "public sphere", to contemporary concepts such as "deliberative democracy" and the like."[86] Olick's focus on the establishment of democratic practices through conversation and the establishment of a functioning public sphere are not entirely misplaced, as Böhm's distinction of public and non-public opinion evinces, although the relationship between the Group Experiment and a democratic public sphere must be further qualified. As Böhm had outlined in his preface, the sharp contrast between public and non-public opinion shocked study-organisers and raised the question how a liberal democracy should deal with the hidden existence of the kind of attitudes and values that were circulating among the West German population. Böhm argues that in a free society, these opinions can neither remain hidden, nor should they be suppressed. Instead, they had to be brought "before the forum of public discourse, before the forum of reason and morality,"[87] seemingly assuming a uniform society unmarred by class- or other conflicts. Here, like a quality control for political values, only those attitudes acceptable in democratic discourse – in the media, in political parties or in public debate – would transition into the actual public sphere.[88] Yet we must be wary of understanding the Group Experiment as an expression of a direct democratic impetus. Instead, a closer look at the way the IfS, and specifically Adorno, understood the role of the participants in the group setting reveals a more cautious approach. His theoretical reflection on sociological research, "Öffentliche Meinung und Meinungsforschung" (1952), is a key text in understanding the limitations of democratic structures in the Institute's research at the time.

Accepted knowledge on the state of public opinion often, Adorno highlights, orientates itself towards the most popular and prominent voices, creating a superficial, and at times even outdated, picture. Instead, the seismographic capabilities of social research, especially the Group Experiment, can circumvent this hierarchical notion and come closer to what Adorno terms the "objective spirit," the amalgamation of individual opinions, forged in the individual's communicative, multi-directional relationship with society.[89] Accurate knowledge of public

86 Jeffrey K. Olick, "Collective Memory and Nonpublic Opinion: A Historical Note on Methodological Controversy About a Political Problem," *Symbolic Interaction* 30, no. 1 (2007): 41–55.
87 Böhm, "Preface," 4–5.
88 Böhm, "Preface," 5.
89 Adorno, "Öffentliche Meinung," 295–296.

opinion thus depends on recognising individual opinions – though not simply as a sum of these: the knowledge gain of, for example elections, is constricted and limited. Thus, basic percentages can be accorded to individual parties or contestants, but no information about voting-motivations, inclinations or dislikes is provided.[90] To this Adorno presents opinion research and especially the IfS' group discussion method as a remedy to ascertain the sociological structure of society and its true opinions especially on affect-laden topics.

New research methodologies from the social sciences thus offered a relevant addition to the relatively spaced-out elections, supplying more real-time information about changing attitudes and continuing, deep-set opinions. Projects like the Group Experiment can thus be seen as a kind of knowledge-mining that understands public opinion as layers of sediment. Yet what would the political use of these group discussions be? Whilst it is tempting to read a proto-people's sovereignty into these methods, similar to a system of regular referenda, Adorno actually contrasts this basis-democratic, participatory system with the contemporary functioning of liberal democracy: governments must not always and exclusively bend to the vote of public opinion, as this would undermine the democratic principle of the separation of powers and establish the ideal of a direct people's democracy following the "volonté de tous," an impossibility in modern society which was, Adorno insisted, highly fragmented and marked by the division of labour. Instead, he conceded, in the current system a protection of the minority from the majority was still a necessity.

One practical application that the IfS toyed with might however be detected in the use of empirical research for political parties. Already in 1949, the West German Allensbach Institute, undertaking demoscopic research, had struck a deal with the governing Christian Democratic Party to undertake polling for them.[91] When the IfS faced financial difficulties in the 1950s, it was suggested that the Institute could approach the Social Democratic Party in turn and offer their services.[92] Nothing, however, came of this in the end.

Conclusion

Over the course of the twentieth century, mass democracy also came to mean mass survey projects. Yet as Adorno points out in his 1952 essay on the contem-

90 Adorno, "Öffentliche Meinung," 295–296.
91 Kruke, *Demoskopie*, 169–176.
92 "Friedrich Pollock to Theodor W. Adorno (28/01/1954)," Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Adorno Archiv, TWAA Br1151.

porary situation of empirical social research, the knowledge produced in these studies is often produced for the sake of rule, not education.[93] This article has shown both the democratic potential of empirical social research and its possible pitfalls. Surveying three moments in the Frankfurt School's intellectual journey towards a distinct methodology, I have outlined the importance participation – both of those being surveyed and those leading the projects – played. It has become evident how the experience of the rise of authoritarian regimes in Europe and subsequent exile in the USA have shaped research-agendas and methodologies. Yet this was not only a story of intellectual emigration, but also of remigration, as the undertaking of the Group Experiment in West Germany in the 1950s has demonstrated. Beyond its participatory and educational elements, its role in informing expert-discourse and the re-education-mission, especially among Institute-members, has hinted at the intertwinement of public sphere discourse and social research. Knowledge production and medialisation here become, to an extent, intertwined. Empirical social research is hence part of a larger story of democratisation and Westernisation, fuelled by a cross-Atlantic knowledge-transfer. It is therefore, too, one of exile and knowledge-exchange driven by migration between university- and knowledge-systems. In this case, specifically, the process of enforced emigration and subsequent remigration mirrors larger political movements of the century that manifested in intellectual and political culture. The Frankfurt School's pioneering combination of empirical methods and psychoanalytical deep-dives has proven particularly relevant in the twentieth-century history of (German) democratisation. The ability to unearth latent attitudes and analyse personality-structures not immediately discernible to the untrained eye meant that it could test the population's democratisation beyond its formalised, institutional frameworks. Yet the three studies have also shown the stringent hierarchisation and financial needs that come with knowledge production, especially when large survey-projects are involved: gender and expertise determine not just who is questioned, they also influence who appears as "main author" and who does the legwork. Funding these projects meant greater dependence on governmental and other funding bodies, in turn influencing the direction of research.

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93 Theodor W. Adorno, "Zur gegenwärtigen Stellung der empirischen Sozialforschung" (1952), in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 8 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2003), 491. Adorno distinguishes "Herrschaftswissen" and "Bildungswissen," following Max Scheler.

twentieth century, knowledge transfer among exiles, and women's intellectual history. In her PhD, she traced the intellectual remigration of the Frankfurt School from the U.S. to West Germany.

Måns Ahlstedt Åberg

Amateur Eugenics: The "Great-Mother in Dalecarlia" Genealogy Project and the Collaboration Between the Swedish Institute for Race Biology and the General Public, 1930–1935

Abstract: This is a paper about the knowledge-circulation that took place between the Swedish Institute for Race Biology in Uppsala and the general public in Sweden between 1930 and 1935. It focuses on a genealogical survey of the descendants of "Great-Mother in Dalecarlia," a seventeenth-century woman who was the progenitrix of many prominent families in Swedish history. It argues that a promising line of inquiry within the field of the history of knowledge is a more systematic approach to studying how traditional academically trained elites, like eugenicists, have cooperated with members of the public. The main conclusion is that the "Great-Mother" project was not a question of a simple diffusion of knowledge from institute to society but rather was a reciprocal process of knowledge circulation between centre and periphery.

Keywords: circulation of knowledge, eugenics, Great-Mother in Dalecarlia, the Institute for Race Biology.

Introduction

Since around the 1980s, numerous studies on the eugenics movement during the first half of the twentieth century have been published. Many of these have focused on the place of eugenics in society, and on how it was presented to the public in many countries. However, few studies have attempted to analyse the ways in which members of the public participated in eugenics research projects; how they directly contributed to producing and furthering knowledge of eugenics.

The present article approaches this question through a specific example: the Swedish Institute for Race Biology, a eugenics research facility, and its collaboration with private citizens during the first half of the 1930s. During these years, the institute attempted to make a large genealogical survey – the so-called "Great-Mother in Dalecarlia" project – and encouraged members of the public

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to assist in the research. The Great-Mother project was launched in 1930 and the last traces of it can be dated to 1935; as a result, these years have been chosen as the time frame for this study.

This paper places itself at the intersection between several different fields of research. First, it is a study of an aspect of the history of the Swedish Institute for Race Biology; second, as such, it is also a case study of the history of eugenics vis-à-vis the public in modern societies, in a broader sense; finally, it raises theoretical questions regarding the relationship between academically trained experts and non-academic amateurs, and thus between knowledge and power in society.

In this paper, the term race biology – in Swedish *rasbiologi*, and originally derived from the German word *Rassenbiologie* – is used interchangeably with the English word eugenics. However, please note that, strictly speaking, race biology was no equivalent of eugenics. The latter term implies a practical application of race biology, i.e., systematic knowledge of heredity among humans. As such, it has more in common with the German term *Rassenhygiene* and its Swedish equivalent, *rashygien* (literally, "race hygiene"). Still, in Sweden during the 1920s and 1930s, the distinction between the two words was most of the time rather blurry, even among experts. Moreover, the use of the word "race" in this paper mirrors that of the time and the place in question; hence, it will not be put within quotation marks.[1]

Prior Research

The studies of the history of eugenics in Sweden are legion. From the mid-1970s onwards, the subject has been analysed from almost every conceivable perspective.[2] One of these is the way in which the Swedish general public have collaborated with the Institute for Race Biology, such as sending information or specimens and borrowing books.[3] Aside from this, there is also research dealing with an earlier exhibit by Lundborg, the itinerant exhibition of the "types of the peo-

1 Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all translations are my own.

2 For an almost exhaustive survey of the Swedish historiography, see: Martin Ericsson, *Historisk forskning om rasism och främlingsfientlighet i Sverige – en analyserande kunskapsöversikt* (Stockholm: Forum för levande historia, 2016).

3 Gunnar Broberg, *Statlig rasforskning: En historik över Rasbiologiska institutet* (Lund: Ugglan, 2002), 29–30, 34–35, 48–49, 57–58.

ple" of 1919.[4] Another adjoining field of research, in which similar conclusions are drawn, is that which treats similar kinds of public exhibitions or institutions, that were centred around different sorts of eugenics-related topics.[5] Yet, while giving many empirical examples of the interaction between the public and the institute, none of these earlier works has attempted to study it in more detail, as one coherent phenomenon.[6]

The studies of eugenics in relation to the general public have usually been of two kinds: on the one hand, studies on how eugenics has been received in different societies – specifically how its messages have been popularised and spread publicly;[7] on the other, how members of the public have become victims of different sorts of abuse, often eugenically motivated sterilisation campaigns, carried out by the authorities.[7] However, in this research, it is almost invariably a question of a one-way dissemination or diffusion of knowledge – of how ready-made results of eugenic research were spread from academic experts, to the general public. Conversely, there are few studies on how knowledge of eugenics was created in joint efforts by both professional eugenicists and members of the public.

This would seem to be a promising line of inquiry, since the history of the role of eugenics in modern society then could be further developed. That eugenics was a well-regarded and even popular progressive force in twentieth-century industrialised societies, especially during the 1920s and 1930s, is already well-

4 Gunnar Broberg, "Statens institut för rasbiologi – tillkomståren," in *Kunskapens trädgårdar: Om institutioner och institutionaliseringar i vetenskapen och livet*, eds. Gunnar Broberg, Gunnar Eriksson, and Karin Johannisson (Stockholm: Atlantis, 1988), 195; Britas Benjamin Eriksson, "Delaktighet som pedagogik – Föreställd ras och publikpositioner i den svenska folktypsutställningen" (Master's thesis, Uppsala University, 2013), 15–17; Maja Hagerman, *Käraste Herman: Rasbiologen Herman Lundborgs gåta* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2015), 149, 152–153; Ericsson, *Rasism och främlingsfientlighet*, 202.

5 See, for instance, Maria Björkman and Sven Widmalm, "Selling Eugenics: The Case of Sweden," *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* 64 (2010): 379–400; Maria Björkman, *Den anfrätta stammen, Nils von Hofsten, eugeniken och steriliseringarna 1909–1963* (Lund: Arkiv, 2011), chapter 4; Eriksson, "Delaktighet som pedagogik."

6 The only study that has done this is the author's own master's thesis, parts of which this paper is based on: Måns Ahlstedt Åberg, "Den cirkulerande raskunskapen: Interaktionen mellan rasbiologiska institutet och allmänheten 1922–1935, sedd ur ett kunskapshistoriskt perspektiv" (Master's thesis, Lund University, 2019).

7 See for instance: Gunnar Broberg and Nils Roll-Hansen, eds., *Eugenics and the Welfare State: Sterilization Policy in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996); Mattias Tydén, "The Scandinavian States: Reformed Eugenics Applied," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, eds. Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 363–376.

known.[8] However, the extent to which members of the general public in these societies were actively involved in the creation of knowledge of eugenics is much less studied. The phenomenon in question becomes all the more interesting in the light of the theories in the field known as the history of knowledge. This is a vibrant field that has evolved over the last 20 years, and that highlights the study of knowledge as a historical phenomenon, and hence would be highly suited as an approach to my case study. The field and its theories will be discussed in greater detail below.

Historical Background

Eugenics in Sweden and the Institute for Race Biology[9]

The term eugenics and its theory were originally formulated by the British polymath Francis Galton in the 1880s.[10] During the years around 1900, the theory of applying the knowledge of heredity among humans spread to Sweden, where it came to influence the young physician Herman Lundborg. His interest in the subject had originally sprung from attending lectures held by the natural scientist Gustaf Retzius. The latter proposed systematic anthropologic study of the population of Sweden, chiefly through anthropometrics, that is, the measuring of physical characteristics. In Lundborg's mind, these anthropological ideas cross-fertilised with the theories of eugenics, starting his lifelong zeal to introduce and spread eugenics in Sweden.

After propagating for nearly two decades for the founding of a national eugenics research-institution, the Swedish parliament finally, in May 1921, decided to create and fund such an institute. The State's Institute for Race Biology, as it was called, started operating in January the following year. Lundborg was appointed its first director and remained in this position between 1922 and 1935. Not incidentally, this period in the institute's history was influenced by his interests in physical anthropology, and the phenomenon of mongrelisation among humans and its (as he argued, adverse) side-effects. He also worked tirelessly to popularise and publicly display the institute's work, such as by contributing with a section about eugenics at the Stockholm exhibition of 1930 (see below).

8 Marius Turda, *Modernism and Eugenics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 13–91.
9 The text under this subheading is based on: Broberg, *Statlig rasforskning*, 60–76, 85.
10 Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 3–19.

Aside from this, the institute also published a long list of popularised books, as well as articles in newspapers and journals.

After Lundborg's retirement, the institute had two other directors, but neither of them shared his interest in physical anthropology or had his talent for publicising research results. Even though this part of its history is less well-studied,[11] it seems that the research it carried out was more directed towards medically scientific questions of heredity, such as how blood types are inherited between generations. In 1958, the institute and its research were incorporated into the Department of Medical Genetics at Uppsala University, and thus ceased to exist as an independent organisation.

The "Great-Mother in Dalecarlia" Project

On May 16, 1930, a great exhibition was inaugurated on Gärdet outside of Stockholm. This was the third Stockholm Exhibition – an exhibition in the tradition of the world fairs such as in London (1851) and Paris (1889).[12] Its primary focus was to display the new architecture style known as functionalism – in practice, modern, efficient and hygienic housing of the future – but this was far from the only aim.[13] It was also an exhibition of the people who were supposed to inhabit those houses and apartments – that is, of the Swedish population in its entirety.

The place where this ambition manifested itself the most was in a three-story pavilion by the name of *Svea Rike* ("kingdom of Sweden"). This was meant to be a panorama of the nation's past, from the melting of the glaciers during the latest Ice Age to the rapid industrialisation of the present.[14] The leitmotif of the exhibition was a question that clearly linked the country's past to its future: "What have we done, what can we do?" Around 30 authors and artists had been employed to design the pavilion and to popularise this message for the public.[15] Indeed, one of the explicit aims of *Svea Rike* had been to "put less emphasis on

11 However, an important contribution has been made lately by Swedish historian Martin Ericsson. See: Martin Ericsson, "What Happened to 'Race' in Race Biology? The Swedish State Institute for Race Biology, 1936–1960," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 46, no. 1 (2021): 125–148.
12 John Chrispinsson, *Stockholmsutställningar* (Lund: Historiska Media, 2007), 7–9, 81.
13 Eva Rudberg, *Stockholmsutställningen 1930: Modernismens genombrott i svensk arkitektur* (Stockholm: Stockholmia Förlag, 1999), 75–102.
14 Gregor Paulsson, *Redogörelse för Stockholmsutställningen 1930* (Stockholm, 1937), 165–175; Rudberg, *Stockholmsutställningen*, 137–140; Chrispinsson, *Stockholmsutställningar*, 87–89.
15 Paulsson, *Stockholmsutställningen*, 165–175; Rudberg, *Stockholmsutställningen*, 137–140; Chrispinsson, *Stockholmsutställningar*, 87–89.

naked numbers, which one quickly forgets, than on images and popular productions, that leaves their mark in memory."[16] Accordingly, one scholar has called *Svea Rike* the "ideological core" of the entire Stockholm Exhibition.[17]

Nowhere in *Svea Rike* was this ideology more evident than in the section managed by Lundborg, the already mentioned director of the Institute for Race Biology. Above the entrance to this section were a number of quotes from poetry and literature, for example the following romantic lines written by the celebrated author Viktor Rydberg: "I was ordained by a friendly *norna* to be Swede, to be of Aryan blood, purest and oldest of all."[18] Much in line with this, the aim of the race biological section was primarily to show the Swedish population what it was and to make the visitors feel proud of themselves and their ancestry. It consisted mainly of comparative photographic galleries, showing different contemporary representatives of the Swedish people. The main didactic point of these galleries was to contrast different "racial types" against one another: the Nordic (or Germanic) majority type against ethnic minorities such as the Fins, the Sami, the Jews etc.[19]

However, the race biological section also looked to the past. This was especially the case in the exhibition of the family tree of the so-called "Great-Mother in Dalecarlia" ("*Stor-Mor i Dalom*"),[20] which was the popular name of Margareta Hansdotter Burea Zebrozynthia (1594–1657), a woman who had been the wife of two clergymen in the region of Dalecarlia (Dalarna). Her children became the ancestors of many prominent Swedish families during subsequent centuries – families which could still trace their lineage back to her in the 1930s. This phenomenon – the importance of "good genes" for the historical progress of families and for society as a whole – was of great interest to the institute, which spared no

16 Paulsson, *Stockholmsutställningen*, 165.

17 Chrispinsson, *Stockholmsutställningar*, 87.

18 Diarienummer (D.nr.) 286/30 (October 2, 1930), Statens institut för rasbiologi (Rasbiologiska institutets arkiv) / The State's Institute for Race Biology (Archive of the Race Biological Institute) (SIFR) E2:9, Uppsala universitets arkiv / Uppsala University Archive (UUA). A *norna* was, in old Norse mythology, a goddess of destiny, who spun and weaved the fate of men.

19 The photographic galleries are collected in the album: *Rasbiologiska institutets utställning å "Svea Rike" 1930 – 31*, Rasbiologiska institutets fotografiska arkiv, A7, Uppsala universitetsbibliotek/Uppsala University Library (UUB).

20 *Stor-Mor* has, in this article, been translated literally to "great-mother", mainly to emphasize the archaic sound that it must have had to people at the time. *Stormor* is actually an old Swedish word that has the same meaning as the English *grandmother* or the German *Großmutter*. By the 1930s, it had not been in use for a long time in the Swedish language. Supposedly, it was used as a sort of wordplay, denoting at the same time her role as a grandmother of many, and as a historical progenitrix of the Swedish nation as a whole.

efforts in an attempt to chart the genealogy of Great-Mother. She was used as a symbol of the "pure and healthy Swedish stock," symbolising the foundation of the nation's power and well-being.[21]

Eugenics and the History of Knowledge: Theoretical Considerations

During the past 20 years, the history of knowledge has been established as an important field of research in several countries.[22] A cornerstone in this field is the notion that knowledge – its forms, production, transmission etc. – should be studied as a historical phenomenon, and thus be historicised within its proper context. Also peculiar to the field, which sets it apart from the history of science, is the fact that the concept of knowledge is much broader than the relatively narrow science. It denotes all types of knowing that has been regarded as real and valuable by people in the past, for example practical skills or religious beliefs. Whereas science is usually defined as an empirical method through which one can reach certain verifiable results, knowledge can encompass anything that people in the past considered to be knowledge; even things that can be refuted by scientific inquiry, such as magic. What has been regarded as knowledge and what has not; what types of knowledge has been regarded as more valuable than others; and how this knowledge has been expressed, renegotiated and maybe even abandoned – these are all questions of interest to the history of knowledge.[23] In this context, eugenics appears as a suitable topic on which to apply this set of theories. From having had the status of a "hard science" during the early twentieth century, to today being widely considered as pseudoscientific nonsense, it shows better than most subjects that the status of knowledge in society depends greatly on historical contexts.

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21 Broberg, *Statlig rasforskning*, 49–50.

22 Philipp Sarasin, "Was ist Wissensgeschichte?", *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur* 36, no. 1 (2011): 159–172; Simone Lässig, "The History of Knowledge and the Expansion of the Historical Research Agenda," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 59 (2016): 29–58; Johan Östling, Niklas Olsen, and David Larsson Heidenblad, eds., *Histories of Knowledge in Postwar Scandinavia: Actors, Arenas, and Aspirations* (London: Routledge, 2020).

23 For the debate on the differences between the history of science and the history of knowledge, see: Jürgen Renn, "From the History of Science to the History of Knowledge – and Back," *Centaurus* 57 (2015): 37–53; Lorraine Daston, "The History of Science and the History of Knowledge," *KNOW* 1, no. 1 (2017): 131–154; Christian Joas, Fabian Krämer and Kärin Nickelsen, "Introduction: History of Science or History of Knowledge?", *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 42 (2019): 117–125.

An important concept within the history of knowledge is that of circulation.[24] Central to this approach is the notion that knowledge is not simply created by experts in the centre and thereafter distributed, in a static, ready-made form, to non-experts in the periphery. Quite the opposite, knowledge constantly moves between different spheres of society, and changes and develops as a result of this very movement.[25] The collaboration between the Institute for Race Biology and the Swedish public would be a very clear example on which to test this theoretical concept.

Closely related, another methodological maxim that has been stressed is the importance of studying actors as opposed to structures. German historian Simone Lässig makes a similar claim: "Because the processes involved in the production, negotiation and translation of knowledge vary according to time and place, studying knowledge as a historical phenomenon requires an actor- and practice-focused approach."[26] One such actor- and practice-focused approach is studying the roles that knowledge actors of non-professional status have played for professional academics.[27] This is yet another characteristic that sets the history of knowledge apart from other related disciplines, such as history of science: the emphasis that it places on ordinary people; on the kinds of relatively anonymous individuals, who throughout history have created, maintained and transferred different kinds of (non-academic) knowledge, but have seldom been recognised for this by historians. U.S.-American historian Mary Terrall has analysed this kind of collaboration between elite knowledge actors in the centre and non-elite knowledge actors in the periphery: entomologists in eighteenth-century Paris and their less well-known agents in the French countryside.[28] She stresses the reciprocity of this collaboration process: there was always, she argues, "a two-way traffic of insects, instruments, ideas, sentiments, observations and books. All these were the elements of new knowledge about

24 James Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," *Isis* 95, no. 4 (2004): 654–672; Johan Östling et al., "The History of Knowledge and the Circulation of Knowledge: An Introduction," in *Circulation of Knowledge: Explorations in the History of Knowledge*, eds. Johan Östling et al. (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2018), 9–33; Johan Östling, "Circulation, Arenas, and the Quest for Public Knowledge: Historiographical Currents and Analytical Frameworks," *History and Theory* 59, no. 4 (2020): 111–126.

25 Sarasin, "Was ist Wissensgeschichte?", 166; Lässig, "The History of Knowledge," 43.

26 Lässig, "The History of Knowledge," 43.

27 See, for example: Tobias Scheidegger, "Der Lauf der Dinge: Materiale Zirkulation zwischen amateurhafter und professioneller Naturgeschichte in der Schweiz um 1900," *Nach Feierabend: Zürcher Jahrbuch für Wissensgeschichte* 7 (2011): 53–73.

28 Mary Terrall, "Following Insects Around: Tools and Techniques of Eighteenth-Century Natural History," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 43, no. 4 (2010): 573–588.

the natural world, though an analogous pattern of circulation could easily be mapped for knowledge about antiquities."[29] Accordingly, this paper argues that the same pattern could also be applied to knowledge about genealogy and race biology.

Closely related, Swedish historian of ideas and science Johan Kärnfelt has coined the useful and apposite term "the infantry of knowledge formation."[30] It denotes exactly the kinds of unknown, ordinary people, who throughout history have been vital for the creation and furthering of knowledge, but only rarely have received recognition for their actions in histories. The two main reasons for this have been a traditional focus on elite individuals – scholars, inventors and scientists – as well as a lack of sources regarding the people who assisted them, such as proof-readers or lab assistants. Similarly, in the same anthology, Thomas Kaiserfeld, historian of science and technology, convincingly argues that, without the countless small contributions made by numerous comparatively anonymous individuals, the activities of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences would almost certainly have come to a complete halt.[31] However, even though scholars like Kärnfelt and Kaiserfeld are addressing the phenomena, they do not make any theoretical claims as to how to develop a methodological approach to the concepts of knowledge actors and circulation of knowledge. This is unfortunate, since one question, that would seem to be a promising line of inquiry, is the following: how does one study the history of knowledge from a circulatory perspective that highlights the influence of non-elite, non-professional actors? To put it differently, how can such a methodological approach contribute to a deeper understanding of the inner workings of historical processes of knowledge circulation, and, more specifically, of the role played by "ordinary people" in these processes?

Swedish race biology and the way in which the Institute for Race Biology collaborated with members of the general public offer various examples of such processes. Precisely this kind of collaboration between academically trained experts and amateurs is here amply in evidence.[32] The empirical groundwork has thus already been made, and more energy can be put into testing and developing the theory. This is where this study situates itself, and where its significance lies.

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29 Terrall, "Following Insects Around," 576.

30 Johan Kärnfelt, "Cirkulation och mediering," in *Kunskap i rörelse: Kungl. Vetenskapsakademien och skapandet av det moderna samhället*, eds. Johan Kärnfelt, Karl Grandin, and Solveig Jülich (Göteborg and Stockholm: Makadam förlag, 2018), 381.

31 Kärnfelt, "Cirkulation och mediering," 381; Thomas Kaiserfeld, "Vetenskapsakademiens fotfolk," in *Kunskap* eds. Johan Kärnfelt, Karl Grandin, and Solveig Jülich, 385.

32 See *Prior research* above.

The Great-Mother in Dalecarlia Project: Race Biology in Circulation

The Stockholm Exhibition of 1930

On March 12, 1930, an order was sent from the Institute for Race Biology to the Swedish Telegram Bureau concerning clippings from all Swedish (and Swedish-language Finnish) newspapers that had participated in a nationwide appeal.[33] Around mid-March, the appeal was published in newspapers of all sorts, both large ones, with a national reach, and smaller, local papers.[34] It consisted of a short description of Great-Mother and her historical and race biological significance, as well as a presentation of the planned genealogical investigation. Finally, there was also a request for assistance from the general public, mainly concerning tasks such as collecting pedigrees and images.[35]

However, this was not the only preparatory measure taken by the institute. It had also sent out personalised appeals and questionnaires to individuals whom it assumed to be descendants of Great-Mother. On May 5, for instance, a letter of thanks went out to a director Erik Åkerlund, who had answered by sending a photograph of himself to Uppsala.[36] The letter informed him that "the research executed has given some support to the supposition, that Director Åkerlund would be a descendant of 'Great-Mother in Dalecarlia'" – a statement that he was asked to either confirm or reject, to the best of his knowledge.[37] There was no answer from Åkerlund, or at least none that has been preserved. Another thing that is missing in the archive of the institute are the traces of his photograph, or other pieces of the material that was sent in during the spring of 1930.[38] One possible explanation for this could be that the material that was meant for the exhibition was collected separately from the regular correspondence. That there indeed were things being sent can be ascertained from the

33 D.nr. 152/30 (March 12, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA).

34 For a selection of the newspapers that participated in the appeal, see: (March 11, 1930) *Upsala*, *Gevle Dagblad*; (March 12, 1930) *Stockholmstidningen*, *Svenska Dagbladet*; (March 13, 1930) *Nya Wermlands Tidningen*, *Östgöta Korrespondenten* [see the album *Stor-Mor i Dalom, Utställningen, Svea Rike*, SIFR F1:2 (UUA)].

35 See for instance: "Stor-Mor i Dalom och hennes ättlingar ett viktigt bidrag till vår kulturhistoria," *Falu Läns Tidning*, March 11, 1930, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

36 D.nr. 266/30 (May 5, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA).

37 D.nr. 266/30 (May 5, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA).

38 See the table of contents in SIFR E2:9 (UUA), *passim*.

fact that the photograph collection of the institute during the spring of 1930 grew from around 6,000 to 9,000 items.[39] Moreover, in an interview by a local newspaper in April, Herman Lundborg claimed that "a good deal of material has been received."[40]

The Stockholm Exhibition opened on May 16, 1930 and quickly became very popular. *Svea Rike* alone received around 300,000 visitors during the four and a half months that it was open to the public.[41] This also applied to the race biological section in *Svea Rike*, and in particular to its displayed Great-Mother project. Not only did it attract many visitors, but was also widely covered in newspapers during the spring and summer of 1930 – something which contributed greatly to public knowledge of, and interest in, her and her descendants.[42] Even after the exhibition had closed, the public interest persisted for years to come. Between November 1930 and May 1935, there were several private citizens who contacted the institute with different sorts of questions pertaining to Great-Mother and their own possible personal relation to her genealogy. They did not necessarily receive the reply they may have hoped for; on many occasions, the questions could not be answered.[43] For instance, on October 30, 1934 a man by the name of Vilhelm Masreliez got the reply from the institute that no connection between his family and Great-Mother could be established.[44]

The Collaboration with Author Aivva Uppström (1930–1932)

The institute did not only attempt to reach a broader public though the press or personalised questionnaires; another venue that proved to be most efficient was literature. Indeed, during the spring of 1930, the institute collaborated with the author Astrid Wilhelmina ("Aivva") Uppström. She had already been mentioned by Lundborg in the nationwide newspaper appeal around mid-March as having

39 Hagerman, *Käraste Herman*, 311.

40 "Stor-Mors i Dalom ätteträd," *Upsala*, April 22, 1930, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

41 Paulsson, *Stockholmsutställningen*, 174.

42 "'Stor-Mor i Dalom' har ättlingar på Tummelsta gård," *Sörmlandsposten*, March 6, 1930; "Stockholmsutställningen," *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, May 15, 1930; "Vernissage på Stockholmsutställningen i dag," *Upsala*, May 15, 1930. These and many other newspaper clippings are to be found in SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

43 For a selection of such correspondence, see: D.nr. 550/30 (November 28, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA); D.nr. 92/31 (February 21, 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA); D.nr. 49/32 (January 27, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA); D.nr. 187/34 (September 27, 1934), SIFR E2:13 (UUA).

44 D.nr. 187/34 (27/9 1934), SIFR E2:13 (UUA); D.nr. 380/34 (30/10 1934), SIFR B2:10 (UUA); D.nr. 208/34 (2/11 1934), SIFR E2:13 (UUA).

made a "very lovable depiction of Great-Mother."[45] This was a historical novel with the title *Stor-Mor i Dalom: En kvinnlig livsbild från sextonhundratalet* (*Great-Mother in Dalecarlia: Depiction of a seventeenth-century woman's life*), a dramatized version of Great-Mother's life. First published in 1919, it had been so popular as to having already gone through two earlier editions by 1930.[46]

By then, Uppström was close to her fifties. The daughter of a circuit judge, she had been a teacher at a private girls' school between 1903 and 1921, but thereafter made a living as a journalist and novelist.[47] She lived at the fashionable Stockholm address of Narvavägen 22, and seemed to be moving in the higher social stratum of society – in other words, she belonged to the educated, national-conservative upper-class, where Lundborg tended to find many of his most loyal supporters.[48]

"Loyal" may indeed be an apt term to describe Uppström's relationship with the Institute for Race Biology in general, and with its director in particular – the two corresponded privately, long after the end of the Stockholm Exhibition.[49] The first letter in this correspondence is from March 1, 1930 and is about the coming edition of the book. Here, it becomes clear that he was taking great interest in it. She writes:

> A reverential thanks for Your kind remembrance of my book "Great-Mother in Dalecarlia" and for Your suggestions concerning the cover of the book! I have written to the publishing house about it. When the book had been published, several persons wrote to or telephoned me and mentioned that they were descendants of Great-Mother. Would it be of any use if I were to draw up a list of these persons for You? In that case I will gladly do so.[50]

The collaboration that followed between Uppström and the institute manifested itself most clearly in an epilogue, written by Lundborg, that appeared in the third edition of the book. This epilogue was dated May 22, 1930 and is in many ways an echo of the appeal that had been published in the papers around mid-March (in fact, certain parts of the text are identical to those of the appeal). It contains a

45 See for instance: *Falu Läns Tidning*, March 11, 1930, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

46 Aivva Uppström, *Stor-Mor i Dalom: En kvinnlig livsbild från sextonhundratalet*, third edition (Uppsala: J.A. Lindblads Förlag, 1930).

47 Paul Harnesk, ed., *Vem är Vem? Stockholmsdelen, årgång I* (Stockholm: Vem är Vem Bokförlag, 1945), 905; *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon*, search term: Anna Maria Roos, accessed February 7, 2022, https://www.skbl.se/en/article/AnnaMariaRoos.

48 D.nr. 154/31 (16/3 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA); Aivva Uppström to Herman Lundborg, December 22, 1931, Herman Lundborgs brevsamling / The Herman Lundborg correspondence (HLB) 14, (UUB).

49 See Uppström, *passim*, HLB 14 (UUB).

50 Aivva Uppström to Herman Lundborg, March 1, 1930, HLB 14 (UUB).

short discussion of Great-Mother and her many children, who had become the ancestors of many successful and illustrious families and individuals throughout history. "From her and both of her husbands," he writes, "has the good biological heritage emanated, that distinguishes the family tree well into latter days."[51] Directly after this text, an appendix is attached containing 15 portraits of Great-Mother's second husband, son-in-law, and some of her most remarkable descendants in addition to a pedigree of her children.[52]

The epilogue concludes with an argument for the desirability of an exhaustive genealogical investigation of the family tree of Great-Mother. It develops into an appeal directed towards the reader, and thus, the general public:

> An exhaustive genealogical and demographic investigation of this kind [...] demands several years of persistent work in order to be brought to a happy ending. [...] For this purpose [...] considerable assistance from descendants of Great-Mother in different parts of the country is required, which can be done through the sending, either as loan or gift, to yours truly, of portraits, genealogical inquiries, or other pieces of information, that presumably could be of interest to the investigation in question. Within the family tree of Great-Mother there seems to be an inherent viability, that among other things shows itself in great fertility, a trait which apparently is based on a feeling of obligation towards the ancestors and a wish to manage the good heritage well and to pass it on. One can take for granted, that this dogged viability shall be united with a distinctive love of family and a desire to have the history of the family tree cleared up, as far as possible. It is in the firm conviction hereof, that I have dared to initiate such a comprehensive investigation as the one outlined above.[53]

The third edition of *Great-Mother in Dalecarlia* appears to have been published sometime in June 1930, just a couple of weeks after Lundborg had written the epilogue.[54] Starting then, and continuously during the remainder of the year, it was reviewed in several newspapers and journals – the reviews being mainly positive.[55] The majority mentioned that Great-Mother had many well-known descendants, something which had surely been gathered from the epilogue and appendix. The existence of these was often acknowledged in the reviews, even though they were seldom commented upon. One exception to this was a review stating that the epilogue, the portraits and the pedigree had "to great extent in-

51 Herman Lundborg, epilogue to *Stor-Mor i Dalom: En kvinnlig livsbild från sextonhundratalet*, third edition, by Aivva Uppström (Uppsala: J.A. Lindblads Förlag, 1930), 180.
52 Lundborg, epilogue, 179–180.
53 Lundborg, epilogue, 180.
54 Based on when the earliest reviews of the book were published (see below).
55 Many related clippings are included in SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

creased the value of the interesting depiction of [Great-Mother's] life."[56] "It is surely," another reviewer wrote,

> for a race-biologist, a wonderful field for research, this eminent woman's numerous descendants ,especially [*sic*] since so many of them has [sic] been prominent personality. [*sic*] For the descendants themselves [...] I imagine, however, that the consciousness of their possible descendance from the stately woman does not matter that much for their choice of actions.[57]

Long after it was published, the book continued to spark an interest among its readers in Great-Mother's genealogy. In September 1932, for instance, a letter was sent to Uppsala by a headmaster in Bollnäs by the name of Fredrik Bröms. "Yours truly," he wrote, "whom, in the epilogue in A. Uppström's book 'Great-Mother in Dalecarlia', sees that the Race Biological Institute is working on family tree investigations and – belonging to the Leksand-branch of said family – is very interested in this, permits myself to ask" if, and in that case where, the investigation could be purchased; if the institute needed any more material to complete it with; and whether or not copies of the portraits of Great-Mother and her first husband could be acquired.[58] A little more than a month later, Bröms wrote another letter, in which he gave thanks for a portrait of Great-Mother that he had received. He also conveyed his hopes of soon being able to dispatch the genealogical material that he had promised to send to Uppsala.[59]

Contributions by the Public to the Great-Mother Project (1930–1932)

Bröms was not alone in sending genealogical material. Quite to the contrary, during the two years that followed the displaying of the family tree of Great-Mother at the Stockholm Exhibition, numerous individuals contacted the institute, offering to submit material that they thought could be of value to the ongoing investigation.

The first trace of these kinds of activities is a letter that was sent to a certain Anna Polheimer in Arvika, on June 4, 1930, in which she is being thanked for

56 "Stor-Mor i Dalom. En märkeskvinna från 1600-talet," *Aftonbladet*, September 7, 1930, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).
57 "Moder Margareta," *Tidevarvet*, June 21, 1930, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).
58 D.nr. 313/32 (September 14, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA).
59 D.nr. 341/32 (October 24, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA).

having contributed with a "pedigree aside from other pieces of genealogical information."[60] A similar letter of thanks was sent by the end of September to a woman named Gunhild Larsson-Pyk, the owner of a country house called Tummelsta: "Hereby the genealogical acts, that were received on loan, are restored. Professor Lundborg asks me to convey to You the institute's thanks for the kind complaisance, to having put said acts at our disposal."[61] It was probably (though not exclusively) with her in mind that the newspaper, by which she had been contacted earlier the same year, made the following remark: "[...] it has to be pointed out, that the descendants of Great-Mother have been most willing to put material at [the institute's] disposal."[62]

The very same day that the letter was sent off to Larsson-Pyk, three others were dispatched to individuals who had loaned different sorts of genealogical material to the institute. There was a K. U. Erlandsson, teller at the National Bank, who had a pedigree returned to him; a Sigrid Setterwall, who similarly had eight pedigrees handed back to her; and, finally, a captain by the name of F. Kihlstedt, who was asked for a prolonged loan of the "valuable contribution" that he had put at the institute's disposal – something which was granted, though not by himself but by his widow, since he had himself died in the meantime.[63]

In December 1930 and January 1931, a couple of newspapers reported that, due to its popularity, the pavilion *Svea Rike* was to be reopened during the coming summer, independent of the finished Stockholm Exhibition.[64] Furthermore, it had been decided that the race biological section was to be enlarged – according to one of the papers twice as big as the year before.[65] Another one of the papers made the claim that Lundborg still had "plenty of material that possesses great value from a demonstrative point of view."[66]

Despite this supposed abundance, the institute continued to willingly accept material submitted by the public during 1931. On February 14, for instance, a man named Daniel Erlandsson, veterinary in Trosa, offered a loan of genealogies that went back to Great-Mother's paternal grandfather and uncle; it was accepted

60 D.nr. 296/30 (June 4, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA).
61 D.nr. 419/30 (September 29, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA).
62 *Sörmlandsposten*, March 6, 1930, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).
63 D.nr. 415/30 (September 29, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA); D.nr. 416/30 (September 29, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA); D.nr. 417/30 (September 29, 1930), SIFR B2:6 (UUA); D.nr. 292/30 (October 8, 1930), SIFR E2:9 (UUA).
64 "Svea Rike får mera rasbiologi," *Stockholmstidningen*, December 19, 1930, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).
65 "'Svea Rike' återuppstår i sommar," *Upsala Nya Tidning*, January 24, 1931, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).
66 "Mycket nytt i det nya Svea rike," *Stockholmstidningen*, January 24, 1931, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

with gratitude.[67] A couple of weeks later, a certain Ellen Terserus in Stockholm was asked whether her branch of the Terserus family was in any way related to Great-Mother. Should this be the case, she was asked to put her pedigree (if any) at the institute's disposal, so that it could possibly "introduce the same on the pedigree in *Svea Rike*."[68]

On March 9, another letter, that deals with a reciprocal exchange of genealogical information, was dispatched to an Umeå-based woman named Annie Nordin-Forsberg. She was thanked for her contribution to the project (though it remains unclear what it actually was), and was, in return, informed about her lineage back to Great-Mother.[69] A different sort of errand appears on March 17, when Erik Hägg, a director-general living in Stockholm, was asked to complement some pieces of genealogical information that he had given.[70] Strikingly, the search for material did also traverse national borders, as when Gerd Bausch, resident in Neu Kaliß in northern Germany and another descendant of Great-Mother, received some questions about her family: what her husband's year of birth was, and whether or not they had any children together.[71]

Towards the end of the year, someone who naturally had a great personal interest in the Great-Mother project, Aivva Uppström, reappears in the Lundborg correspondence with the following message:

> Thanks for the letter and kind Christmas greetings! I hesitate to inform Mr Blackwood Wright about the Great-Mother-portrait that is offered for sale, since it would be a shame if this were to be brought out of the country. Perhaps the wife of the new archbishop, whom is also one of the descendants, would be inclined to acquire the painting? Yesterday I met the Wife of Government-councilman Willand Aschau, who mentioned, that they can both trace their lineages back to Great-Mother! He through Troilius; she, whom is a daughter of an alderman Pettersson, through Terserus.[72]

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67 D.nr. 77/31 (February 14, 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA); D.nr. 99/31 (February 24, 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA).

68 D.nr. 110/31 (March 2, 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA).

69 D.nr. 127/31 (March 9, 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA).

70 D.nr. 157/31 (March 17, 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA).

71 D.nr. 214/31 (April 29, 1931), SIFR B2:7 (UUA). Please note that, in Sweden, *Gerd* is a woman's name, as opposed to in Germany.

72 Aivva Uppström to Herman Lundborg, December 22, 1931, HLB 14 (UUB). I have not been able to identify either Blackwood Wright, Pettersson, Willand Aschau, or the latter's wife. However, government-councilman (*regeringsråd*) was until 2011 the title of a member of the Supreme Court of Sweden. Moreover, Elisabeth Eidem (*née* Eklund) was the wife of Erling Eidem (1880–1972), archbishop of Sweden between 1931 and 1950. Why she would have a particular interest in acquiring the painting in question, I cannot say.

Also, during 1932, a few Great-Mother-related errands appeared in the archive of the institute. On February 10, a letter of thanks was sent to a major by the name of Carl Heijkenskjöld, who had given a set of genealogical material.[73] Another person who received thanks, as well as a photocopy of a portrait of Great-Mother, was Elisabeth Krusell in Hjortsberga, who, aside from some genealogical information, sent photographs of herself and her immediate family to Uppsala.[74] A couple of months later, however, she asked them to have the photograph of herself returned (and received it), as she needed it for a book project of hers.[75] Finally, on November 10, 1932, Uppström wrote yet another letter, which started with the following line: "By chance I have heard of still a couple of descendants of Great-Mother, and thus thought of informing You about it, even though they may not be unknown to You."[76] This time, the matter at hand was five siblings by the name of Hagberg, who supposedly descended from Great-Mother on their mother's side, and from her first husband on their father's. "There should be genealogical indexes", she added conclusively, "in the home of one or the other of these descendants."[77]

The Genealogical Research of Anders Westgärds (1931–1932)

On February 26, 1931, a local newspaper in the region of Dalecarlia published an article written by Anders Westgärds.[78] He was a farmer in the parish of Leksand – the place where Great-Mother was from – and in addition to this an enthusiastic hobby genealogist, who had busied himself with her family tree, which of course was of local-historical interest. In the article, he gave an overview of some of the more thoroughly investigated genealogical lines that went back to her. Aside from this, he also mentioned the role of the Institute for Race Biology in making the family tree "one of the country's more known and interesting phenomena."[79] "Thanks to the attention," he wrote, "that race biological science has given to

73 D.nr. 96/32 (February 10, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).
74 D.nr. 141/32 (April 5, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA); D.nr. 252/32 (April 23, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).
75 D.nr. 322/32 (September 30, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA); D.nr. 607/32 (October 4, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA); D.nr. 367/32 (November 27, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA); D.nr. 710/32 (November 30, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).
76 D.nr. 350/32 (November 10, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA).
77 D.nr. 350/32 (November 10, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA).
78 "Stormors dalagren utforskas," *Borlänge Tidning*, February 26, 1931, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).
79 Ibid.

the same, it has been manifested how not only the high nativity, but also the original great fortitude and strength of the progenitrix, has, in many cases, gone down into later generations with undiminished strength, and in more refined and cultivated forms."[80] Two days later, the news of his ongoing investigations were published in a Stockholm-based newspaper; a small news item illuminated the fact that "'Great-Mother in Dalecarlia', known not the least from Svea Rike at the [Stockholm] exhibition" really had descendants in the home parish and that "local honour" thereby had been saved.[81]

Almost exactly one year after Westgärds had published his article, on February 25, 1932, two other local newspapers published articles announcing that he had succeeded in finding a formerly unknown branch of the Great-Mother family tree; a branch which included thousands of individuals and that led up to the present-day population of the parish. They also reported that four days earlier, Herman Lundborg himself had arrived in Leksand, to visit Westgärds and to discuss his genealogical findings with him.[82] The background to this visit can be traced back to February 13, 1932, when Westgärds had written to the director.[83] After his arrival Lundborg had been, as one of the newspapers writes, "pleasantly surprised to find so much work already cleared away," and had also expressed "his exceptional delight over the fact that a person, only out of interest for the matter, had accomplished such a feat of research."[84] What was being discussed during their meeting is not known aside from the fact that Lundborg offered Westgärds to continue his investigations at the institute's expense and asked him to transfer his research findings to "a system of cards, created specifically to this end."[85] Accordingly, just two days later, a consignment consisting of 100 so-called "family-registry cards" was sent off to Westgärds.[86]

The collaboration lasted several months, from late February to early May 1932. On March 8, for instance, the institute sent Westgärds some genealogical information about the Terserus family, from a reference work that he himself

80 "Stormors dalagren utforskas," *Borlänge Tidning*, February 26, 1931, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

81 "Stormors Dalagren utforskas", *Dagens Nyheter*, February 28, 1931, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

82 *Falu Kuriren*, February 25, 1932, SIFR F1:2 (UUA); "'Stormor i Dalom'", *Falu Läns Tidning*, February 25, 1932, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

83 D.nr. 70/32 (February 13, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA).

84 *Falu Läns Tidning*, February 25, 1932, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

85 *Falu Läns Tidning*, February 25, 1932, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

86 D.nr. 142/32 (February 27, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA). Even though none of these family-registry cards has been preserved in the archive of the institute, I have gathered that they were a sort of printed form on which genealogical data could be filled into blank spaces: for example, who were the mother and father of a person, and so on. Together, the cards would enable the user to register a large family tree.

did not have access to.[87] After some initial uncertainty about how to correctly fill out the cards,[88] he soon ran out of his original 100 cards, and had to request for consignments with new ones twice.[89] By March 31, a local newspaper reported that at least 164 family-registry cards had already been filled out by Westgärds, and that he had discovered a formerly unknown branch of the Great-Mother family tree.[90]

Finally, on May 9, Westgärds sent off the finished investigation to the institute, which by then consisted of 496 cards.[91] Nine days later, remuneration of 50 *kronor* was dispatched to him.[92] Around this time, the average weekly wages earned by craftsmen and industry-workers were between 29 and 43 *kronor*.[93] Soon thereafter, Westgärds acknowledged that he had received the money and also mentioned that he was planning to continue the investigation of the Great-Mother-descendants privately, promising that, in case he was to fill out any more family-registry cards in the process, he would send these to Uppsala.[94]

The results of his investigations, however, were not only sent to the institute, but were also published as a chapter in the 1932 yearbook of The Association of Antiquities and Home Soil of Dalecarlia (*Dalarnas Fornminnes och Hembygdsförbund*).[95] The chapter was to be greatly emphasised in a review of the book that

87 D.nr. 164/32 (March 8, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).

88 D.nr. 192/32 (March 21, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).

89 D.nr. 108/32 (March 27, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA); D.nr. 200/32 (March 30, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA); D.nr. 118/32 (April 6, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA); D.nr. 258/32 (April 27, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).

90 "'Stormors i Dalom' Leksandssläkt," *Ludvika Tidning*, March 31, 1932, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

91 D.nr. 155/32 (May 9, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA); D.nr. 292/32 (May 14, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).

92 D.nr. 300/32 (May 18, 1932), SIFR B2:8 (UUA).

93 *Lönestatistisk årsbok för Sverige 1932*, published by K. Socialstyrelsen (Stockholm: Isaac Marcus boktryckeri-aktiebolag, 1933), 75.

94 D.nr. 179/32 (May 23, 1932), SIFR E2:11 (UUA).

95 Anders Vestgärds, "Stormor i Daloms Leksandssläkt," in *Dalarnas Hembygdsbok: Dalarnas fornminnes- och hembygdsförbunds årsskrift 1931–1932* (Falun: Dalarnas fornminnes- och hembygdsförbund, 1932), 37–55. Between 1922 and 1935, the institute sometimes collaborated with this and other similar organizations. The first director of the institute, Lundborg, was a conservative steeped in the rhetoric of national romanticism, and as such he firmly believed that the healthiest, most eugenically sound parts of the population were to be found on the countryside. Thus, both the institute and the regional associations had a common interest in finding ways to make people out in the country produce genealogical and anthropological records, which partly could be used to describe regional culture and history, and partly would further research into eugenics.

was published in two Stockholm newspapers on February 6, 1933.[96] During the 1930s and 1940s, this organisation took a keen interest in race biological subjects, mainly with regards to genealogy and anthropology. For instance, during these decades, it occasionally employed amateur race biologist Bertil Lundman to carry out anthropological measurements on the inhabitants of certain villages and regions. One of Lundman's reports on his work was published in the same yearbook as Westgärds's paper.[97]

Concluding Discussion

From the empirical examples studied above it becomes clear that the Great-Mother in Dalecarlia-project essentially was a result of cooperation between professional and non-professional knowledge actors. Far from being a simple diffusion of race biological knowledge from the Institute for Race Biology to the public, this paper shows that the process was oftentimes highly reciprocal. Not only was the public in Sweden very interested in race biology, but also a most active participant in some of the institute's projects. Indeed, the examples show the great influence that non-professional knowledge actors could have over the process of knowledge formation – even when academically trained, professional knowledge actors working in a state-funded research facility were officially orchestrating it. The initiative may have come from the institute, but from beginning to end the existence of the project depended upon the material that was sent in voluntarily from private citizens. Without their support there would not have been any Great-Mother project at all.

All in all, these people can be said to have been a prime example of the concept of the "infantry of knowledge formation," as formulated by Kärnfelt.[98] It can also be argued that their activities truly constituted a circulatory movement of knowledge. The knowledge originated among members of the public, was transferred via the institute, and finally returned to the public, in the shape of the race biological section at the Stockholm Exhibition – by which time it had developed into something quite different, indeed. After the wheel had come full circle, the knowledge that had been set in motion had changed. This resonates well with

96 "'Stormors' nya ättlingar," *Stockholmstidningen*, February 6, 1933, SIFR F1:2 (UUA); "'Stormors' nya ättlingar," *Stockholms Dagblad*, February 6, 1933, SIFR F1:2 (UUA).

97 Bertil Lundman, "Folktypsundersökningar i övre Dalarna," in *Dalarnas Hembygdsbok: Dalarnas fornminnes- och hembygdsförbunds årsskrift 1931–1932* (Falun: Dalarnas fornminnes- och hembygdsförbund, 1932), 76–103.

98 Kärnfelt, "Cirkulation och mediering," 381.

what has been argued by scholars such as Lässig: knowledge does not merely circulate between different spheres in society, but changes and develops as a result of this very circulation.[99]

The empirical examples cited in this paper clearly show that the process of circulation contributes to altering knowledge. What had started as genealogical information and images (mainly photographs) became something different when it was processed by the institute and finally displayed at *Svea Rike*. It was moulded into race biological science and fitted into the constraints of the message about the importance of the procreation of good genes, for the progress and well-being of Swedish society. As such, the Great-Mother project was intimately connected with the underlying racial ideology that was central to the institute's research between 1922 and 1935. The Great-Mother project reinforced the message that a multitude of prominent individuals in the country's history (up to the present day) had been of "sound Nordic stock"; not only healthy, vigorous, ambitious and intelligent, but also essentially Swedish.

As far as I am aware, the Great-Mother project never went beyond mere documentation. Its goal appears simply to have been to prove the eugenic hypothesis that individual qualities such as health, diligence and vigour are hereditary, and that they can be passed on to later generations, providing that the "sound" individuals procreate. Their conclusions were never instrumentalised, in the sense that they were used as a direct argument for promoting marriages and raising the nativity of the country. This is truly astounding, since the so-called "population question" was one of the most fiercely debated political issues in Swedish society during the 1930s. One possible reason for this could be the fact that the answers to this question increasingly seemed to come from the left, from social-democratic thinkers.[100] Lundborg's national-conservative stance in this question was thus possibly dismissed. After retiring from the institute in 1935, he would become more and more politically radical and, not incidentally, increasingly isolated. During his final years, he even sympathised with Nazism – a movement which was never very influential in Sweden.[101] This mirrors the worldwide shift in the mid-1930s from so-called traditional (or mainline) eugenics to reform eugenics.[102] Lundborg was a representative of eugenics in its tradi-

99 Sarasin, "Was ist Wissensgeschichte?", 166; Lässig, "The History of Knowledge," 43.

100 See, for instance: Alva and Gunnar Myrdal, *Kris i befolkningsfrågan* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1934).

101 Hagerman, *Käraste Herman*.

102 Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 172–175. The main difference between the two forms of eugenics lies in an older, anthropological emphasis on physical characteristics as opposed to a newer focus on medical genetics. Traditional eugenics also had a preoccupation with racial dif-

tional form, whereas the social-democratic nativity program took its inspiration from reform eugenics. In other words, the Great-Mother project was the last effort of a eugenics movement, the ideas of which were, by the 1930s, rapidly becoming antiquated.

It is important to remember that the Great-Mother project continued to play a role well beyond the Stockholm Exhibition. Arguably, its significance lies in the life that it lived outside of its public display – not to mention the confines of the Institute for Race Biology – in Swedish society at the time. "Life" might actually be an apt term to describe the trajectory of the circulatory process that has been outlined above, for there was something almost organic in the way it grew and adapted to its surroundings. Most importantly, the intense publicising activities by the institute during the spring of 1930 – with the nation-wide newspaper appeal, the epilogue in Uppström's historical novel and the exhibition at *Svea Rike* – did result in the desired outcome: great public interest in the subject matter. Great-Mother in Dalecarlia was a project that the general public was very aware of during the first half of the 1930s; and this awareness – it is important to stress – affected the behaviour of some private citizens in ways that contributed to changing this project. When formally asked, genealogically interested members of the public showed themselves very willing to share the research-results of their own family-history – information which was processed, and then exhibited on the Stockholm Exhibition and beyond. The media coverage that the genealogical survey received led to a great upsurge in the interest in Great-Mother. This, in turn, encouraged more and more citizens to investigate their own ancestry and contact the institute about it. Moreover, this did not only include those who knew themselves to be descendants of Great-Mother, but also numerous individuals whose main motivation for contacting seems to have been mere interest in the subject.

The reasons behind the great public interest can be explained in several ways. First of all, many hobby genealogists found that their (usually rather esoteric) work was suddenly a question of national importance, and they were probably only too happy to share the results of their research. Another important reason was most likely a desire among persons to show that they were of particularly good or illustrious ancestry, combined with the seductive notion of being intimately interwoven into the history of one's own country – that is, that one came of good descent, carried these qualities in oneself and one day could pass them on to the next generation. The feeling of the importance of

ferences among humans, whereas reform eugenics had no use whatsoever of "race" as an explanatory model, and openly opposed it after ca. 1945–1950.

the biological heritage not only for one's own offspring but for the future of the nation was likely the attractive message behind the Great-Mother project, which raised much interest.

While it is not always possible to ascertain a person's socioeconomic status in the correspondence – even in the strictly formal Swedish society of the 1930s, where almost everybody was addressed with title – it appears relatively clear that the Great-Mother project was a concern for individuals of middle- or upper-class background. Almost everybody had professions like headmaster, company director and major, or, like Larsson-Pyk, were the owners of country-houses. The author Aivva Uppström is another good example. She was the daughter of a circuit judge, was educated, had worked as a teacher at a girl's school, lived at a fashionable Stockholm address and associated with people in the highest social stratum of contemporary society. In other words, the Great-Mother project was a genealogical survey of elite individuals in the past, for elite individuals in the present.

Moreover, the public responses were not in any way uniform; on the contrary, this knowledge spurred different reactions in different people. At least three distinct types of circulation can be noted among the empirical examples studied above. It was not only a question of a simple circulatory movement from institute to public and back again: i.e., the former asks the latter for information and receives it – such as with the case of Åkerlund. There were also examples of how it happened the other way around (such as with Erlandsson and Bröms): a private citizen who reaches out with an offer of information; and sometimes there were even reciprocal exchanges of genealogical information (Nordin-Forsberg). Indeed, Terrall's argument for the existence of a "two-way traffic" in the circulatory process of knowledge production applies well to all of these examples.[103]

A third type of circulation spurred by a private citizen were the investigations of the amateur genealogist Anders Westgärds. These make up one of the most clear examples of two important theoretical points, which have been stressed in this paper: on the one hand, of how a non-professional knowledge actor can prove decisive in a process of knowledge production[104]; on the other, of how knowledge is transformed when it circulates in society.[105] His private investigations started as a result of the media coverage that the institute's Great-Mother project had gotten but soon developed into something that attracted public attention in its own right. This attention led to Lundborg contacting Westgärds,

103 Terrall, "Following insects around," 576.

104 Kärnfelt, "Cirkulation och mediering."

105 Sarasin, "Was ist Wissensgeschichte?", 166; Lässig, "The History of Knowledge," 43.

whose project came to influence that of the institute. Finally, the investigations resulted in a book chapter that was reviewed in newspapers.

Thus, it becomes clear that these three kinds of knowledge circulation, once set in motion, tend to be driven by a sort of domino effect. In the long run this turns into a sort of perpetuum mobile, propelled by the forces of public participation: a self-sustaining, self-strengthening process, almost independent of (but not necessarily without relations to) the "prime mover"; in this particular case, the Institute for Race Biology.

All of these findings have important implications for the theory being applied. In effect, they show that putting emphasis on the interaction between professional and non-professional actors in the study of knowledge production has great potential. In focusing on the role non-professional actors have played, the inner dynamics of the processes of circulation become visible. At the same time, focusing on circulatory processes gives individuals outside of the academic elites the kind of theoretical recognition that they have so far mostly lacked in the history of knowledge. What is more, it becomes clear that these processes have a tendency of reinforcing and sustaining themselves – that circulation engenders further circulation – which is another aspect of the theory that has not been stressed enough in previous research. In conclusion, these results open up for new ways of studying public participation within the history of knowledge.

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Ana Carolina Arias

Folklore, Teachers, and Collective Knowledge in Argentina in the Early Twentieth Century

Abstract: This article explores teachers' and schools' information gathering practices and devices in Argentina in the 1920s. For that purpose, it focuses on the instructions and records from the 1921 National Folklore Survey and the answers sent by schools. The National Folklore Survey was organized by the Argentine Education Council to collect folk traditions, appealing to the collaboration of teachers and other school officials. For this task, instructions were distributed with guidelines on information selection, organization, and classification. The initiative involved teachers, principals, and school inspectors from all over the country, totaling 3,250 compilers. The article analyzes the instructions and results of the National Folklore Survey to unveil the different interpretations made by teachers of what they were supposed to collect and how they were supposed to do it. In this regard, I propose to examine the involvement of teachers and other agents in the creation of a nationwide inventory of folklore, taking into account the distinctions drawn between popular or traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge.

Keywords: amateur, Argentina, folklore, teachers

Introduction

In 1921, the Argentine Education Council organized a compilation of "markedly ancient folk traditions" by calling teachers and other school officials to collaborate.[1] This initiative made it possible to form a body of knowledge on "Argentine

Note: Historical Archive of the Museum of La Plata, Natural Sciences and Museum School, National University of La Plata, Argentina. This work was carried out as part of a PHD research financed by the National Commission for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET) and of the project Rise number 101007579, SciCoMove.

1 Juan Pablo Ramos, "Recopilación de la literatura popular (Folklore Argentino)," *El Monitor de la Educación Común* 39 (1921): 14–17.

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folklore" through a collective activity effort, where teachers played a central role in the inventory of the ancient traditions and customs of each location. The Argentine Education Council distributed instructions with guidelines for the selection, organization, and classification of the information to be collected. This set a precedent for similar surveys carried out in later years, such as the 1940 Argentine Folklore Anthology.[2]

This paper explores the practices and devices for information collection by teachers and schools in Argentina in the 1920s. For this purpose, it focuses on the instructions and records from the 1921 National Folklore Survey and the answers sent by schools. As it is intended to show, the instructions mobilized different agents and gave rise to different interpretations of what needed to be collected and how to do it. In this regard, the paper highlights the active role played by teachers and other school officials in the compilation and production of a national folkloric inventory that included a wide range of knowledge and territories. To that effect, the survey focuses on the knowledge classified there as "popular knowledge of science."[3] This paper thereby seeks to deepen the understanding of the links between bureaucratic forms of knowledge (drawing on the history of knowledge)[4] and the role that instructions have played in shaping collective inventories of the past or a territory's nature. In doing so, the article intends to start a dialogue with discussions related to amateur practices in the historiography of sciences,[5] participatory knowledge, and the joint production of knowledge.[6]

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2 Diego Bentivegna, "Tradición y conflicto: puesta en libro y elaboraciones de lo nacional en manuales y antologías folklóricas argentinas (1939 – 1940)," *Traslaciones: Revista latinoamericana de Lectura y Escritura* 1, no. 2 (2014): 9–30.

3 Juan Pablo Ramos and Pablo Córdoba, "Instrucciones a los maestros," *El Monitor de la Educación Común* 39, no. 78 (1921): 3–23.

4 Irina Podgorny, "Las instrucciones y las cosas," *Revista Hispánica Moderna* 71, no. 1 (2018): 23–38.

5 Florian Charvolin, André Micoud, and Lynn Nyhart, *Des sciences citoyennes? La question de l'amateur dans les sciences naturalistes* (Aube: Éditions de l'Aube, 2007); Hervé Guillemain and Nathalie Richard, "Introduction. Towards a Contemporary Historiography of Amateurs in Science (18th–20th Century)," *Gesnerus* 73, no. 2 (2016): 201–237.

6 Martin Lengwiler, "Participatory Approaches in Science and Technology: Historical Origins and Current Practices in Critical Perspective," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 33, no. 2 (2008): 186–200; Mark Toogood, "Engaging Publics: Biodiversity Data Collection and the Geographies of Citizen Science," *Geography Compass* 7, no. 9 (2013): 611–621; Jenny Pearce, "Avanzamos porque estamos perdidos. Reflexiones críticas sobre la co-producción de conocimiento," in *Prácticas otras de conocimiento (s): Entre crisis, entre guerras*, ed. Xochitl Leyva Solano et al. (México: Cooperativa Editorial RETOS, Taller Editorial La Casa del Mago, 2018): 356–381.

Studies focused on vocational practices in science and the role of amateurs in shaping scientific knowledge have increased in recent years and are dedicated to the analysis of both the past and the present.[7] In this vein, this paper attempts to contribute to the understanding of certain mechanisms that have allowed a collective production of knowledge through the participation of teachers and school officials. As historians of science Guillemain and Richard point out, the recent "coronation of the amateur"[8] is, in fact, part of a pattern long established in the evolution of sciences in Western societies. This recent elevation thus reveals a disqualification of amateur practices in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, combined with the assimilation of certain aspects of popular knowledge into the academic and scientific canon. The image of modern science has been largely built on the degradation of amateurism, but we also observe forms of collective mobilization that resisted or opposed the academic world that defended the knowledge produced by amateurs, long before the surge of more recent "citizen science." In this sense, to call all the teachers in the National Folklore Survey "amateurs" misses important nuances. The survey consisted of a collective mobilization around a common interest and although it proposed a distinction between "popular" and "scientific" knowledge, the results showed that these distinctions were not so clear.

Concerning the history of knowledge, the study of the survey allows us to approach the role of knowledge in the shaping of lifeworlds and molding everyday actions.[9] It enables an approach to the teachers' knowledge, coming from their experiences, practices, and training as educators. Through them and their compilation work, it is possible to learn about the role of knowledge in people's lives. The teachers' answers reveal how knowledge was used and practiced in the lives of ordinary people, through the compilation of different "voices" coming from informants in each locality: elders, indigenous people, amateur naturalists, and even the teachers themselves, who on many occasions compiled their personal experiences.

As for studies on folklore, collections and publications of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have expanded and received widespread attention from

7 Robert A. Stebbins, "Serious leisure," *Society* 38, no. 4 (2001): 53; Charvolin, Micoud, and Nyhart, *Sciences*, 254.

8 Guillemain and Richard, "Introduction," 204.

9 Johan Östling and David Larsson Heidenblad, "Fulfilling the Promise of the History of Knowledge: Key Approaches for the 2020s," *Journal for the History of Knowledge* 1, no. 1 (2020): 3, accessed January 15, 2022, DOI: 10.5334/jhk.24.

scholars from various disciplinary perspectives during the past few decades.[10] Folklore often constituted one of the key elements of national identities, a distinguishing feature of a group of people that could be identified as a nation through their cultural practices, stories, traditions, dwellings, songs, music, costume, dialect, cuisine, etc. This fell easily in line with nationalist agendas and Ricardo Rojas, who played a key role in the studied survey at hand, also has to be read in this context. Cultural nationalism may have been particularly effective, as couched in a language of scholarly objective it also mobilized a variety of different types of amateur, gentleman, and professional scholars of a romantic bent interested in identifying, classifying, and presenting folklore in all its variety for its own sake or in combination with other types of analysis of human society.[11] At the same time, as was also the case in Argentina, the normative nature of defining "folklore" reinforced mechanisms of exclusion and overemphasized a certain homogeneity. While references to a romanticized "indio" past may have been part of these notions of "Argentinian," the more complex realities of indigenous cultures and pasts remained outside the scope and the cultures and lives of Afro-Argentine people were rendered all but invisible.

Surveys and questionnaires, and their link to the social and natural sciences, have also been extensively studied. The use of questionnaires in the humanities and social sciences is part of a long tradition that can be traced back to at least the eighteenth century.[12] The use and genesis of the questionnaires respond to different processes and were often designed to collect material given writing a comprehensive civil and natural history of local territories.[13] The long tradition of questionnaires has been supported by certain ways of building, ordering, and categorizing knowledge. These practices often succeeded in imposing ways of systematizing and classifying that characterize the dominant systems of knowledge. Different institutions, such as the school or the church, have been used as a system for disseminating instructions and collecting data. In ad-

10 Timothy Baycroft, introduction to *Folklore and Nationalism in Europe during the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2014), 1–10.

11 Baycroft, "Introduction," 1.

12 Pascal Riviale, "Des études en quête d'auteurs : instructions et questionnaires sur l'habitat traditionnel en France, fin XIXe-milieu XXe siècle," *In Situ* 30 (2016): 1–2, accessed November 3, 2020, doi: 10.4000/insitu.13569.

13 Simona Boscani Leoni, "Between the Americas and Europe: Mapping Territories through Questionnaires, 16th–18th Centuries," in *Connecting Territories*, ed. Simona Boscani Leoni, Sarah Baumgartner, and Meike Knittel (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2021), 23–53.

dition to collecting, the instructions educated the participant subjects' ways of seeing.[14]

In Argentina, several works have been devoted to the historical analysis of the materials gathered with the folklore surveys from different approaches and themes. Some of them examine the relations between the development of the folkloric movement in Argentina and the economic and political interests of the provincial oligarchies,[15] in a moment where certain visions of democracy and nation promoted popular knowledge.[16] The "cultural battle" of Argentinian nationalism at the beginning of the Twentieth Century enthralled many intellectuals across the political spectrum, such as the writer Ricardo Rojas.[17]

Other studies focus on the importance of the survey for the institutionalization of folklore at Argentinian university, linked with the growth of philological and traditional literature research.[18] Finally, some works explore the voices and interpretations condensed by the compilation, especially in certain provinces.[19] These works explore in-depth the linguistic and folkloric studies of each province.[20] In this line, some authors point out the value of these folkloric archives,

14 Irina Podgorny, "La mirada que pasa: museos, educación pública y visualización de la evidencia científica," *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* 12 (2005): 231–264.

15 Oscar Chamosa, *Breve historia del folclore argentino* (Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2012).

16 Gabriela Pellegrino Soares, "Monteiro Lobato, Juan P. Ramos e o papel dos inquéritos folclóricos na formação cultural e política da nação," *Varia Historia* 31 (2015): 423–448; Vitor Hugo Silva Néia, "A Encuesta Nacional del Folklore de 1921: cultura popular e nacionalismo argentino" (Diss., Universidade de São Paulo).

17 On the complexities of different political leanings within cultural nationalism in Argentina, see for example Jean H. Delaney, "Imagining 'El Ser Argentino': Cultural Nationalism and Romantic Concepts of Nationhood in Early Twentieth-Century Argentina," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34, no. 3 (2002): 625–658, accessed March 22, 2022, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3875463. See also Fabio Espósito and Ely V. Di Croce, "Un archivo del folklore nacional: la Encuesta de Magisterio de 1921," *VI Jornadas Internacionales de Filología y Lingüística*, August 7 to 9, 2013, La Plata, Argentina, 1–7.

18 Marta Blache, "Folklore y nacionalismo en la Argentina: su vinculación de origen y su desvinculación actual," *Runa* XX (1991–92): 69–89; Marta Blache and Ana M. Dupey, "Itinerarios de los estudios folklóricos en la Argentina," *Relaciones de la Sociedad Argentina de Antropología* 32 (2007): 299–397; Gloria B. Chicote, "Romancero tradicional argentino," *Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar* (University of London, 2002), 16.; María I. Palleiro, "Notas sobre los estudios de folklore en el Instituto de Filología," *Filología* XLV (2013): 115–142.

19 Ana María Dupey, "Territorialización de alteridades rionegrinas. Abordaje desde las perspectivas del Folklore," in *Cosechando Todas las Voces: Folklore, Identidades y Territorios*, ed. Ana María Dupey (Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires), 1–21.

20 Judith Farberman, *Magia, brujería y cultura popular: De la colonia al siglo XX* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2010); Celina Vacca, "Aportes para la construcción de un archivo indígena local:

as a middle ground between the written document and the ethnographic testimony.[21]

The material aspects and practices linked to this type of collection as well as the responses and effects of the instructions on the interest and mobilization of school officials, teachers, and students to continue collecting that associated with ancient popular traditions have been scarcely considered.

In this paper, I will work with the folders gathered by the National Folklore Survey. These records were assigned to the School of Philosophy and Letters of Buenos Aires. Such material was the basis for the creation of the Institute of Argentine Literature in 1924.[22] This institute, directed by Ricardo Rojas, was in charge of supervising the organization of the material, once the survey was completed, and the publication of a Catalog of the Folklore Collection (17 volumes published between 1925 and 1938) which classified files by province and teachers. This Catalog is also a key source of this work.

Transatlantic Travels, Surveys, Emulation, and Exchange

The project of the National Folklore Survey was not isolated from similar surveys and collections carried out in other countries. The survey carried out in Argentina was inspired by the efforts made by other countries several years earlier. For example, in Spain, since the "Golden Age,"[23] traditional tales and poems had been collected: storytellers, paremiologists, playwrights, and novelists devoted themselves to collecting family tales. The folklore publications made in the late nineteenth century by Sevillian Antonio Machado y Álvarez (1846–1893) are worth mentioning, as well as the instructions for collecting "material folk-

la Encuesta Nacional de Folklore en la provincia de San Luis, Argentina, 1921," *Memoria Americana. Cuadernos de Etnohistoria* 26, no. 1 (2018): 77–93.

21 Judith Farberman, "Presentación. Debate Historia, antropología y folclore," *Corpus, Archivos virtuales de la alteridad americana* 4, no. 1 (2014): 1–4.

22 Pablo Buchbinder, *Historia de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1997). The collection is currently archived at the Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Pensamiento Latinoamericano, in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

23 The Spanish Golden Age is a historical period in which Castilian art and literature flourished, and which coincided with the political and military rise of the Spanish Empire of the House of Trastámara and the House of Austria. To read more about folklore in the Golden Age, see, among others: Máxime Chevalier, "De los cuentos asturianos del siglo XX al folklore del Siglo de Oro," *Anuario de Letras. Lingüística y Filología* 15 (1977): 299–319.

lore" by Telésforo de Aranzadi, a Basque ethnographer and naturalist.[24] In London, the Folklore Society, created in 1878, published the well-known *Handbook of Folklore*, a manual with wide circulation used as a reference for several instructions later drafted.[25]

In France, Paul Sébillot performed several studies on folklore. His work was one of the first classifications on the subject.[26] Sébillot, a Breton legal scholar and high-ranking official in the French government, published his first questionnaire in 1880, called *Essai de questionnaire pour servir à recueillir les traditions, les coutumes et les légendes*, in *Revue de linguistique et de philologie comparée*. It was considered quite innovative in Europe and was later translated into Spanish and English. In the early twentieth century, Sébillot published *Instructions et questionnaires* (1887), where he gathered a set of articles, some of them initially written for primary education "to guide the research of teachers who might be interested in folkloric studies."[27] In 1903, Sébillot prepared a Spanish version, called *Cuestionario de Tradiciones Populares*, for *Mission Scientifique Francaise dans L'Amerique du Sud*, published by Créqui Monfort and Sénéchal de la Grange, with the support of the *Ministere de l'Instruction Publique*. According to Fernández Latour de Botas, this questionnaire inspired Ramos to prepare the 1921 Folkloric Survey in Argentina.[28]

The Argentine survey was also influenced by the ideas of writer Ricardo Rojas. In 1907, a few years before the Folklore Survey was conducted, the Argentine Ministry of Justice and Public Education requested Rojas to draft a report on how history was taught in European countries, as a matter linked to national interests.[29] For this purpose, Rojas was commissioned to go to Europe and study the educational system there, visiting England, Italy, France, and Spain. Upon his return, he submitted a report with an account of his trip: *La Restauración Nacionalista*, which was published in 1909 and republished in 1922. The report was

24 Telésforo de Aranzadi, "Plan de un museo de etnografía y folklore en Cataluña," *Estudis i materials* 2 (1917): 29–60.

25 Raquel Arana, "Cien años de la ciencia del folklore," *Revista del Instituto de Investigación Musicológica "Carlos Vega"* 2, no. 2 (1978): 5.

26 Nicole Belmont, "Croyances populaires et légendes. A propos d'un dossier inédit d'Arnold Van Gennep sur les êtres fantastiques dans le folklore français," *Le Monde alpin et rhodanien. Revue régionale d'ethnologie* 10, no. 1 (1982): 211–219.

27 Paul Sébillot, "Instructions et questionnaires," *Annuaire des traditions populaires* 2 (1887): 11.

28 Olga Fernández Latour de Botas, "En el centenario de Juan Alfonso Carrizo," *Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos* 545 (1995): 127–138.

29 Susana V. García and Irina Podgorny, "Pedagogía y nacionalismo en la Argentina: lo internacional y lo local en la institucionalización de la enseñanza de la arqueología," *Trabajos de prehistoria* 58, no. 2 (2001): 9–26.

officially printed and distributed among teachers across the country. In it, Rojas pointed out that the teaching material should be expanded. In addition to textbooks, he recommended books of historical readings used especially in France[30] and Germany,[31] which contained extracts of memoirs or contemporary chronicles of different events. One of the sources he mentions to prepare these compendia were oral traditions: "Some forms of oral and figurative tradition that survived through time, in the memory of the people. Proverbs, songs, dances, legends, superstitions, myths, empirical medicine, rural customs, some customary institutions."[32] These elements are the ones that, according to Rojas, constitute *folclor.* In his "nationalist restoration" program, he conceived public schools as the quintessential tool to educate the population on national traditions. His nationalism had a strongly historicist trait, which led him to think of the "spiritual crisis" triggered by immigration and modernization as the moment of a movement that would give rise to a new historical synthesis that would include the newcomers.[33]

30 In the early twentieth century, references to Rural France, regionalism, and folklore figured prominently in efforts to rearticulate French national identity. Folklore in this country was linked to the development of ethnology. In both disciplines, instructions were widely used as tools to organize the collection of data and the dissemination of knowledge. For further information, see, among others: Mona Ozouf, "L'invention de l'ethnographie française: le questionnaire de l'Académie celtique," *Annales. Histoire, sciences sociales* 36, no. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 1981); Shanny Peer, *France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris World's Fair* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998).

31 In Germany, the Volkskunde initially contained some of the research interests of the Völkerkunde or anthropology, but institutionally the field remained separate, or, if anything, aligned with the study of cultural history or philology and literature, while the Völkerkunde sought proximity to the natural sciences. In the decades around the First World War, folklore as a discipline was in process. While the scholarly nature of the enterprise was emphasized, educated amateur scholars such as teachers, pastors, and lawyers often aided "real" scholars in their collection efforts. Born of the same enthusiasm as the romantic-bourgeois appropriation of certain folkloric materials, clubs for the preservation of song and dance, costume, or, in general, regional, or national folk culture, played a very important role in what has been called "the nationalization of the masses." For more information, see, among others: Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 95–118.

32 Ricardo Rojas, *La restauración nacionalista: Crítica de la educación argentina y bases para una reforma en el estudio de las humanidades modernas* (Buenos Aires: La facultad, 1922), 82.

33 Carlos Altamirano and Beatriz Sarlo, *Ensayos argentinos: de Sarmiento a la vanguardia* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores, 2019), 189.

The Interest in National Identity and the Folklore Survey Project of 1921

In the last years of the nineteenth century, Argentina received a massive number of European immigrants. Immigration was part of the policy put into practice by the local ruling classes, which sought to populate the supposed "desert."[34] Unlike in other Latin American countries, in Argentina, feelings of national identity were reinforced around a "*criollo*" citizenship, which subordinated ethnic or racial identities. Both indigenous and Afro-Argentine peoples went through at times forceful processes intended to render ethnic and racial divisions invisible through citizenship during the nineteenth century.[35]

The Argentine state consolidated its space of domination in these years – in a process parallel to that followed by other Latin American states such as Brazil, Chile, etc. – by the material appropriation of new territories – Chaco, Pampa, and Patagonia –, mainly through military conquest. Also, by the subjugation and displacement of the native populations, the installation of state authorities, the foundation of urban centers, the laying of roads and the realization of some infrastructure works, and the promotion of economic activities articulated with the national system centered on the agricultural production of the Humid Pampas.[36]

This context was supported by the idea of a "vanishing Indian" and the need to "populate" the so-called desert, a task to be carried out by European immigrants. However, the monopoly of land in the hands of large landowners inhibited immigrants from reaching the countryside and they concentrated in the cities, especially in Buenos Aires and the Littoral. This situation was accompanied by accelerated urbanization, the modification of the productive structure, and the emergence of new classes and social categories that replaced the previous

34 Pedro Navarro Floria, "El conocimiento de los Territorios Nacionales generado por los agentes del Estado: memorias, informes y mapas," in *Viajes: Espacios y cuerpos en la Argentina del siglo XIX y comienzos del XX* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Teseo, 2009), 89. Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Vida y muerte de la República verdadera (1910–1930)* (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 2007), 31–70.

35 Lea Geler and Mariela Eva Rodríguez, "Argentina," *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism* (2015): 1–4. Axel Lazzari, "Aboriginal Recognition, Freedom, and Phantoms: The Vanishing of the Ranquel and the Return of the Rankülche in La Pampa," *Journal of Latin American Anthropology* 8, no. 3 (2003): 59–83.

36 Navarro Floria, "El conocimiento," 89.

pre-capitalist stratification.[37] Immigrants, rather than populating the desert, began to be perceived as a foreign population, undermining national values.

In the first years of the new century, the results and consequences of these movements became visible. In 1910, while the country was celebrating the first centenary of the May Revolution, the power of the alliance of landowning families receded. The decline of the oligarchy was accompanied by a strong political and ideological debate in which the future of the country was discussed. While radicalism fought for institutional reforms,[38] socialists for labor reforms, and anarchists for revolution, the elites of the interior trembled at the prospect that the change of regime would shelve the protectionist model that had sheltered them.[39] In the intellectual and cultural sphere, the most significant of the reactions were to the issue of "national identity."[40] In this context, the "criollo" and "tradition" took on new meanings: "The gaucho, the desert, the wagon are no longer the representatives of a "barbaric" reality that must be left behind in the march towards "civilization", but the symbols with which a national tradition is woven that "progress" threatens to dissolve."[41] This cultural nationalism was not homogeneous, nor did it belong to a single system of ideas.[42] Nor is the situation isolated to Argentina. Bancroft identifies several common features between nationalism and folklore in different countries during the late nineteenth century, as both contain elements of the search for the "people" and their authentic voice.[43]

Alongside these cultural nationalisms, early twentieth-century Argentina promoted regional historical museums, together with legislation for historical heritage preservation and protection.[44] Traditional textile and loom workshops

37 Altamirano and Sarlo, *Ensayos*, 167.

38 As the historian Tulio Halperin Donghi points out, the political system at that time was essentially oligarchic. Those who dominated the powers of the state were confident that this system would be strengthened by the establishment of an "authentic democracy" with universal suffrage. This led to the pursuit of electoral reform, where the vote would be secret and the list of voters would be taken from the military enlistment register. Halperín Donghi, "*Vida y muerte*," 45–46.

39 Chamosa, *Breve historia*, 21.

40 Altamirano and Sarlo, *Ensayos*, 162.

41 Altamirano and Sarlo, *Ensayos*, 184 (my own translation); Chamosa, *Breve historia*, 13.

42 Altamirano and Sarlo, *Ensayos*, 189.

43 Timothy Bancroft, "Introduction," in *National Cultivation of Culture*, ed. Joep Leerssen (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 1–10.

44 María Élida Blasco, "La fundación del Museo Colonial e Histórico de la Provincia de Buenos Aires: Cultura y política en Luján, 1918," *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Dr. Emilio Ravignani"* 25 (2002): 89–119.

were encouraged at ordinary schools, as well as the use of indigenous designs to decorate handcrafts in different regions of the country, fostering artistic production with pre-Hispanic roots.[45] This was also promoted by sectors linked to the Argentine Patriotic League created in 1919,[46] whose objectives included the protection and promotion of "the virtues of the Argentine people."[47] Thus, in those years, scholarly interest in objects of the past, topics referring to indigenous societies, and different political movements trying to recover a certain past to guide the "search for a national ideology" came together.[48]

In this context, the 1921 Survey was promoted. Oral manifestations of national literature were highly valued, framed within nationalist cultural projects amidst the Nation's Centenary[49] and the ideas of Ricardo Rojas in his book *La Restauración Nacionalista* (1909) about the "essence" of Argentine nationality, based on Hispanic and indigenous roots.[50] Rojas and Manuel Gálvez – also a writer – founded what Darío Pulfer called "cultural nationalism."[51] Rojas' pro-

45 Andrea Pegoraro, "El uso de motivos indígenas de colecciones del Museo Etnográfico de la UBA en los inicios del Siglo XX: actores, actividades y objetos," *Revista del Museo de Antropología* 10, no. 1 (2017): 27–36.

46 The Patriotic League was created as a reaction of the dominant class to the growing unionization in post-war Argentina. Supported by the employers' organization congregated in the National Labor Association (ANT), the police, and the Army, the League amplified its networks in order to deepen its anti-left campaign and crushed a large number of strikes throughout the country and dismantled several unions. However, the League made its actions through the formation of free labor brigades, an essential nucleus of its organizational structure and operations. These brigades would provide, supported by businessmen members of the organization, union services that the *Liguistas* considered legitimate, for example, mutual aid, education, gradual improvement of economic and working conditions. For more information, see Sandra McGee Deutsch, *Contrarrevolución en la Argentina, 1900–1932: La Liga Patriótica Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes Editorial, 2003).

47 McGee Deutsch, *Contrarrevolución*. The League functioned with a Central Board and brigades of workers, students, teachers, women, and others. The brigades worked to neutralize possible revolutionary influences in different social spheres. The League gained important support among priests, intellectuals, industrialists, military, businessmen, and politicians, attracted by its nationalist proposal in the face of the advance of "revolutionary" ideas in popular sectors. Mirta Moscatelli, "La Liga Patriótica Argentina: Una propuesta nacionalista frente a la conflictividad social de la década de 1920," *La Trama de la Comunicación* 7 (2002): 197–203.

48 Pegoraro, "Uso de motivos," 34.

49 Patricia Funes, *Salvar la nación: Intelectuales, cultura y política en los años veinte latinoamericanos* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2006), 259–397.

50 Blache, "Folklore y nacionalismo," 77.

51 Darío Pulfer, "Presentación. Rojas: educación y cuestión nacional en el Centenario," in *La restauración nacionalista: informe sobre educación* by Ricardo Rojas, commented by Darío Pulfer (Buenos Aires: UNIPE Editorial, 2011), 13–41.

posals went in the direction of reformism within the oligarchic state, seeking to broaden its support base through education and the creation of a national body with common principles and values based on the invention of a "national spiritual tradition." In his work, Rojas sought to vindicate and rethink the Hispanic-Creole heritage, combined with references to native peoples as symbols of a vanished past.[52] According to Rojas himself, since 1910, he had been "proclaiming" in books and the press the message that a survey like this must be conducted.[53]

Taking these ideas as inspiration, in March 1921, the lawyer and writer Juan Pedro Ramos, a member of the Argentine Education Council, presented the project entitled "*Compilación de Literatura Popular (Folklore Argentino)*." The instructions written by Ramos were in tune with the cultural nationalism of the Centennial and related to the concerns and advances of anthropological studies of those years, looking to Samuel Lafone Quevedo, Robert Lehmann-Nitsche, and Juan B. Ambrosetti for "models to tutor the teachers in their ethnographic work."[54]

The project was intended to collect, through the schools created under the Láinez Law (as explained below), scattered material on folklore, poetry, and music "which is about to disappear from our country due to the advance of cosmopolitanism."[55] The project highlighted that the Survey should be concerned with national patriotism. Each teacher was supposed to make their school and province stand out from the rest. With this purpose in mind, a collective work, through individual contributions, would be achieved. In addition, the top five submissions would earn a gold medal and the employee file of each teacher who had participated in the survey would mention their involvement.[56] The project was quickly approved by educational authorities and disseminated through the pages of *El Monitor de la Educación Común*, the official publication of the Argentine Education Council. That same year, the first steps toward project implementation were taken at the schools reporting to the Council.[57]

The Argentine Education Council had been created in 1881 and, under Law No. 1,420, enacted in 1884, it established an institutionalized, public, and centralized education system. In the late nineteenth century, the Council had direct

52 Pulfer, "Presentación," 22.

53 Ricardo Rojas, "Advertencia," in *Catálogo de la Colección de Folklore*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de la Universidad, 1925), v–ix.

54 Farberman, *Magia*.

55 Ramos, "Recopilación," 15.

56 Ramos, "Recopilación," 16.

57 Espósito and di Croce, "Un archivo," 1; Gloria Beatriz Chicote, "La Colección de Folklore de 1921: los múltiples autores de la lírica popular," *Boletín de Literatura Oral* 2 (2019): 265–274.

jurisdiction over the federal capital and the national territories, as the National Constitution established that primary education was under the charge of the provinces.[58] The institution had considerable economic and administrative autonomy, and its influence extended to the rest of the country, especially from 1887 onwards, when all the provinces accepted the national subsidy law for the promotion of public education and, with it, the regulations and supervision of the Council's inspectors.[59] The inspectors were assigned not only control duties but also the duty to train teachers to professionalize the teaching practice. In 1905, the report performed by the national administration was that the number of schools in the provinces was insufficient, especially in rural areas.[60] For this purpose, Law No. 4,874, known as the Láinez Law, was enacted and allowed the country to establish national schools in the provinces that so requested. With this law, which reinforced the system's most centralist aspects, the Argentine education system was legally organized.[61]

By 1920, the Council was in charge of schools in the Federal Capital, the National Territories, and the so-called "Láinez schools," which were primary education institutions located in provincial territories that reported to the national government. This agency covered nearly half of the structure of public primary education in Argentina, while the rest reported to provincial administrations.[62]

In Argentina, since the late nineteenth century, when the national public education system was structured, resorting to that system to gather information concerning different areas of knowledge and across a vast national territory

58 Susana V. García, "Museos escolares, colecciones y la enseñanza elemental de las ciencias naturales en la Argentina de fines del siglo XIX," *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos* 14, no. 1 (2007): 173–196, accessed February 18, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-59702007000100009. Flavia Fiorucci, "Maestros para el sistema de educación pública: La fundación de escuelas normales en Argentina (1890–1930)," *Revista de Historia de la Educación Mexicana* 2, no. 3 (2014): 25–45.

59 García, "Museos escolares," 176.

60 Fiorucci, "Maestros para el sistema," 28.

61 Adriana Puiggrós, *El lugar del saber: conflictos y alternativas entre educación, conocimiento y política* (Buenos Aires: Galerna, 2003).

62 Alejandro Cattaruzza, *Los usos del pasado: La historia y la política argentina en discusión 1910–1945* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2012). In 1921, the National Board of Education had 9,648 elementary schools distributed throughout Argentina, with 39,352 teachers and 1,195,382 students registered. Of this group, there were 2,921 schools in operation under the Láinez Law, attended by 5,556 teachers. *Memorias del Ministerio de Justicia e Instrucción Pública 1921–1922*, vol. II, Buenos Aires, 1922.

was a common practice.[63] This would continue being promoted in the first decades of the twentieth century, interacting with museums and other scientific institutions.[64] The establishment and operation of schools dependent on a national bureaucratic structure gave way to the creation of institutional and personal networks for data and sample circulation among provinces. Furthermore, the schools became a collection node for information and interesting facts shared by neighbors and people from surrounding towns.

The 1921 survey was not the only initiative related to the collection of materials through schools. Around 1920, and in parallel to the Folklore Survey, the Council also promoted the formation of a national herbarium through the collection of plants by teachers and students. The instructions for its preservation were drafted by the National Museum of Natural History.[65] Several attempts to do the same were made in some provinces, using the provincial school structure. For example, between 1922 and 1925, the Regional Museum of Corrientes called the schools of the province to form a regional herbarium, where over 30 schools participated. The samples collected were classified by specialists of scientific institutions from Buenos Aires and La Plata.[66] Likewise, in the 1920s and 1930s, the new provincial museums resorted to the school system to collect zoological and botanical specimens, geological samples, and archaeological and historical pieces. These practices were neither new nor unique in Argentina and, as usual, circulars and instructions were distributed across schools, leaflets were printed, and taxidermy and specimen preparation courses were offered to teachers.[67] This encouraged the creation of museums within schools and, at the same time, sought to consolidate an audience for provincial museums.

The National Folklore Survey of 1921

The Survey called Láinez schools' teachers for them to collect, classify and send to the Argentine Council popular traditions that met three requirements: 1) being

63 Susana V. García and Gabriela Mayoni, "Los museos y gabinetes de ciencias en los colegios nacionales de la Argentina (1870 – 1880)," *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana Dr. Emilio Ravignani* 50 (2019): 135–172.

64 Susana V. García, "Museos provinciales y redes de intercambio en la Argentina," in *Colecionismos, práticas de campo e representações*, ed. Maria Margaret Lopes and Alda Heizer (Rio de Janeiro: EDUEPB, 2011), 77–94.

65 García, "Museos provinciales," 83–84.

66 García, "Museos provinciales," 83–84.

67 García, "Museos provinciales," 84; García and Mayoni, "Museos y gabinetes," 139.

old; 2) being local, national, or circumscribed to a given radius; and 3) conforming to the meaning of the word tradition in the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy: "News of an ancient thing passed on from parents to children and successively communicated from one to another," a term complementary described as "any of the legends, romances, or historical facts transmitted from hand to hand, passed on from age to age."[68]

The project and the first guidelines for the implementation of the National Folklore Survey were published in the magazine *El Monitor de la Educación Común* (which was sent to schools) on March 16, 1921 and established on August 1, 1921 as the deadline for submissions. The survey required certain specifications from the teachers, gathered in a set of "Instructions," drafted by Ramos himself and by Pablo A. Córdoba, the Council's Assistant Secretary, and distributed in the next month, on April 30, 1921.

The teachers had to send their work to the relevant Sectional Inspector. Then, works were sent to the General Inspectorate of Provinces, to the National Board of Education, and, finally, to the jury. The jury was composed of Councilmember Juan P. Ramos, Council pro-secretary Pablo Córdoba, the directors of the National Teachers' Library and the Sarmiento School Museum, Leopoldo Lugones and Luis M. Jordán, and the administrator of *El Monitor*, Enrique Banchs. They were all linked to the literary and cultural spheres and to the growing cultural nationalism. Banchs and Jordán were poets and participated in cultural magazines such as *Ideas* and *Nosotros*.[69] Lugones had different ideological positions throughout his life. In 1920, a shift toward the nationalist cultural ideas of the time began to become apparent in him.[70]

The works sent from schools located in the Federal Capital and Territories, or by people outside the Council, were sent directly to the reception desk, at the Council of Education in the capital.[71] Each song, legend, and description had to be sent on a single sheet of paper, separated from one another. In addition, each sheet would have a header with the following data: location, school, name of the principal or teacher who had sent it, name of the person who narrated it, age of that person, whether the teacher knew that other people knew

68 Ramos and Córdoba, "Instrucciones," 4.

69 See among others the Thesis of Verónica Delgado: *El nacimiento de la literatura argentina en las revistas literarias: 1896–1913* (Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 2010).

70 Natalia Bustelo, "La figura política de Leopoldo Lugones en los años veinte," *Papeles de trabajo: La revista electrónica del IDAES* 3 no. 5 (2009): 11.

71 In accordance with article 6 of the decree of March 16, 1921, all those persons who, even if they were outside the schools, wished to cooperate in the work were authorized to participate in the compilation, pursuant to the established terms.

that content. Inquiries were to be made to the Sectional Inspector or directly to the chair Juan P. Ramos, by post. The instructions also clarified that inspectors could request that graphophones be sent to certain areas to record music.

The instructions had 26 pages detailing: the definition of the term folklore, the classification adopted for the survey (see image), and examples of the different categories into which folklore was divided, spread across 20 pages. The instructions set guidelines for the selection, organization, and classification of the information to be gathered. The classification adopted was organized into the following general categories:

1. Beliefs and customs
2. Narrations and sayings
3. Art (poetry, songs, dances)
4. Popular knowledge (in the various branches of science: medicine, botany, zoology, astronomy, geography, etc.)

In this classification, both the knowledge of "town people" (also referred to as "uneducated classes of civilized peoples" and "*gauchos*") and of "indigenous people and what is said about them" was included.[72] This classification shows the permanence of certain ideas from previous decades, especially the civilization/barbarism dichotomy established by Domingo F. Sarmiento. Rojas tried to overcome this dichotomy by opposing "Indianism" to "exoticism." Rather than a struggle between "civilization" and "barbarism," to Rojas it was a struggle between "what was imported and what was rooted."[73] He defined Indianism as a constant spiritual identification with the land. This understanding of mestizaje assumes, as already mentioned, a homogenizing synthesis that absorbs the differences, subsuming the dominated cultures to the point of dilution.[74]

To facilitate the task, the instructions provided examples of how to record information and a table to classify it before submission to the Council.[75] The examples, according to the same instructions, were to be taken from "renowned authors in this field" whenever possible and teachers were advised to resort to "re-

72 In this classification, the gaucho, linked to Hispanic roots, is considered the archetype of the nation. The indigenous, in contrast, are "primitive" expressions of the past, destined to disappear and whose ways of being and doing have not permeated the criollo archetype. Vacca, "Aportes," 81.

73 As explained by Glauert (1963), 3.

74 Alejandra Mailhe, "Dossier: Discursos e independencia en América Latina: Reflexiones críticas. Prólogo," *Revista de filosofía y teoría política* 41 (2010): 157–175.

75 Ramos and Córdoba, "Instrucciones," 4.

FOLKLORE ARGENTINO

CLASIFICACION

1.º *Creencias y costumbres.* — 2.º *Narraciones y refranes.* — 3.º *Arte.* — 4.º *Conocimientos populares.*

1.º *Creencias y Costumbres*	A. *Creencias y prácticas supersticiosas.*	a.	Supersticiones relativas a fenómenos naturales o naturaleza inanimada.
		b.	Supersticiones relativas a plantas y árboles.
		c.	,, ,, ,, animales.
		d.	,, ,, ,, faenas rurales.
		e.	,, ,, ,, juego.
		f.	,, ,, ,, la muerte, juicio final, etc.
		g.	Fantasmas, espíritus, duendes.
		h.	Brujería.
		i.	Curanderismo.
		j.	Mitos.
		k.	Cosmogonía.
	B. *Costumbres tradicionales*	a.	Ceremonias con que se solemnizan algunos acontecimientos, tales como nacimientos, matrimonios, muertes.
		b.	Juegos.
2.º *Narraciones y refranes*		a.	Tradiciones populares.
		b.	Leyendas.
		c.	Fábulas, anécdotas.
		d.	Cuentos.
		e.	Refranes, adivinanzas.
3.º *Arte*	A. *Poesías y canciones*	a.	Romances, poesías de los aborígenes, poesías populares de género militar o épico que canten escenas, episodios, luchas, costumbres, etc., de las invasiones inglesas, guerra de la independencia y guerras civiles posteriores.
		b.	Canciones populares.
		c.	Canciones infantiles.
	B. *Danzas.*		Danzas populares con o sin acompañamiento de canto.
4.º *Conocimientos populares* (1).	*Conocimientos populares en las diversas ramas de la ciencia (medicina, botánica, zoología, astronomía, geografía, etc.).*	a.	Procedimientos y recetas populares para la curación de enfermedades.
		b.	Nombre con que vulgarmente se designa a los cuadrúpedos, pájaros, peces, reptiles, insectos, árboles, plantas, pastos, etc. de la región y lo que se sabe de ellos.
		c.	Nombre con que vulgarmente se designa a los planetas, estrellas, constelaciones, tanto entre la gente de pueblo como entre los indígenas; y lo que se dice de ellos.
		d.	Nombres de sitios, pueblos, lugares, montañas, sierras ,cerros, llanuras, desiertos, travesías, etc., de la región y lo que se sabe de ellos.
		e.	Nombres de minas, salinas, caleras ,etc., de la región y lo que se sabe de ellas.
		f.	Nombres de ríos, riachuelos, arroyos, torrentes, manantiales, fuentes, pozos, lagos, lagunas, etc. de la región y lo que se sabe de ellos.
		g.	Nombres de caminos antiguos, veredas, atajos, puentes, sendas, pasos, vados, etc., y lo que se sabe de ellos.
		h.	Tribus indígenas de la región, religión, usos, costumbres, etc.
		i.	Lenguas indígenas, apuntes de gramática, vocabularios, frases sueltas.
		j.	Locuciones, giros, trabalenguas, frases hechas, semejanzas, chistes, motes, apodos, modismos, provincialismos, voces infantiles, etc.
		k.	Otros conocimientos.

Figure 1: Classification of Argentine Folklore, source: Ramos and Cordoba (1921, 11).

search carried out by prestigious men who stand out in the study of our history, despite not having dedicated their work exclusively to folklore."[76] Among others, the introduction provided examples from *Supersticiones y leyendas* (1917) by Juan Bautista Ambrosetti (1865–1917), which teachers would also cite in their answers. Anthropologists such as Robert Lehmann-Nitsche (1872–1938), archaeologists such as Adán Quiroga (1863 – 1904) and Samuel Lafone Quevedo (1835–1920), or naturalist travelers such as Tomas Falkner (1702–1784) and Charles Musters (1841–1879) are also cited in the examples. The selection of authors in these examples does not seem to derive from a political decision, but rather from a desire to set the foundations of a "state of the art" in a discipline – folklore – that was still in the making. The purpose of mentioning those authors was to clarify and reinforce the objectives of the survey. However, many teachers were directly influenced by them, so much so that they quoted the authors recommended in the examples instead of including first-hand testimonies.

All these authors, among others, have been considered the initiators of folklore studies as, in the late nineteenth century, they started highlighting the folkloric sense of some of the works. By 1897, the context of production, circulation, and consumption of elements related to folklore was strongly promoted by different social sectors.[77] Samuel Lafone Quevedo published a series of letters in the national newspaper *La Nación* between 1883 and 1885, addressing customs, tales, and traditional anecdotes from the province of Catamarca. Furthermore, Adán Quiroga in his book *Folklore Calchaquí* (1897) described festivals, cults, and beliefs in the northwestern Andes, and Eric Boman (1867–1924), inspired by the French folklorist Paul Sébillot (1843–1918), described a set of customs from Jujuy in the second volume of *Antiquités de la Région Andine* (1908). Moreover, Juan Bautista Ambrosetti personally gathered stories from different provinces and published them in the book *Supersticiones y Leyendas* (1917) following the steps of English folklorist Andrew Lang.[78] Likewise, the German author Robert Lehmann-Nitsche devoted himself, among other interests, to the publication of a series of monographic studies between 1911 and 1928 called *Folklore Argentino*. He also published *Adivinanzas rioplatenses* (1911), which included the study, in urban environments, of issues related to traditionalist centers, *tango*, and brothels.

76 Ramos and Córdoba, "Instrucciones," 5.

77 Diego Ballestero, "Recolección y estudio de música popular e indígena en la Argentina de comienzos de siglo XX," *Indiana* 33, no. 2 (2016): 93–118, accessed January 8, 2020, https://doi.org/10.18441/ind.v33i2.93-118.

78 Blache, "Folklore y nacionalismo," 76.

Those works were auspicious for writers, historians, lawyers, doctors, and military men who were descendants of aristocratic provincial families to turn their eyes to the countryside in search of local customs not "contaminated" by cosmopolitanism.[79] As mentioned above, the investigation of folkloric expressions was associated with the need to preserve traditions in the face of a growing immigrant population in the early twentieth century. It was rather contradictory: the same country that wanted to "whiten" its people and populate the so-called "desert" with European immigrants a few years later wanted to erase those immigrant footprints and reinforce national identity with the vindication of the "*criollo*" and indigenous roots. These processes of construction of the Argentine nationality date back to the late nineteenth century and were marked by the presence of a far-reaching patriotic movement. However, in the Centenary, the different conceptions of nationhood that had coexisted until then weakened in the face of the culturalist conception, which gradually pushed out other views. Thus, this essentialist conception of nationality, based on its own historical and unequivocal cultural traits, came to the forefront in the first decades of the twentieth century, related to the work of some personalities such as Ricardo Rojas, Manuel Gálvez, José María Ramos Mejía, among others.[80] These authors shared the spirit of the times around "nationalism." They shared a common "fear" against immigration, a fear that came from people living in the countryside and from secondary fractions of the dominant elites in the context of a dependent agro-export model with an oligarchic base. This spirit of the times was also expressed in the "patriotic education" pursued by José María Ramos Mejía's administration at the National Education Council[81] through a series of measures that insisted on the patriotic cult.[82]

79 Blache, "Folklore y nacionalismo," 77.

80 Bertoni, "Patriotas," 307–316.

81 Ramos Mejía was president of the Council between 1908 and 1913. His patriotic program was linked to all areas of knowledge: from school events, reading, and writing; to natural sciences and arithmetic and, of course, geography, history, and morals. María Beatriz Schiffino, "Diversidad y homogeneidad en el proyecto educativo del nacionalismo cultural del Centenario," *PolHis. Revista Bibliográfica del Programa Interuniversitario de Historia Política* 15 (2020): 66–94.

82 Pulfer, "Presentación," 19–20.

Popular Knowledge of Science, a Category that was Adjusted in the Process

The folders collected by the teachers formed the Folklore Collection, which was organized by certain common criteria and general classification. The responses were organized and classified by the Institute of Argentine Literature of the School of Philosophy and Letters of Buenos Aires. The classification of the folklore collection was descriptive: by provinces and names of teachers. In this way, the Survey is proof of a large-scale initiative for collective data collection, using networks connecting distant people, institutions, and territories. The teachers who participated in the survey worked together to classify, organize, and collectively construct a set of information about national folklore. Despite this, the responses did not always result in a homogeneous set of information. In addition, the responses led to adjustments in the instructions, which were made during the survey.

In 1921, when the survey was being conducted, the Council's Committee initially in charge of collecting the material received a large number of queries regarding the instructions and deadlines. In addition, in the first submissions received, two topics were partially absent: popular knowledge of science and music. The category "popular knowledge in the various branches of science" included popular procedures and recipes for curing illnesses; the local common names given to animals, plants, constellations, and geographical features; indigenous tribes of the region, their religion, and customs; indigenous languages, grammar, vocabulary notes. This category also included utterances, set phrases, tongue twisters, jokes, and idioms, among others. Thus, Manuel de Ugarriza Aráoz, who was in charge of the survey's jury drafted a circular to reinforce these areas:

> It could be observed that the compilers gave preference to literary subjects for which examples were provided in the booklet, neglecting, on the other hand, those relating to popular knowledge and dispensing altogether with music, which had been omitted from the classification table. To overcome these deficiencies the Secretary's Office of the jury, which was in my charge, drafted a circular addressed to Sectional Inspectors informing them of a deadline extension for submission of the material, giving them new instructions to forward to teachers.[83]

83 Manuel Ugarriza Aráoz, "Antecedentes relativos al origen de esta colección," in *Catálogo de la Colección de Folklore*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de la Universidad, 1925), xvi. My own translation.

The circular emphasized topics that had been considered deficient up to that point and offered new examples aimed at encouraging the work being done by teachers. In the Catalog of the Folklore Collection, some of the responses recorded include two or more submissions. Many of those responses including more than one submission, and answers on popular knowledge of science were incorporated or expanded upon. One of the circulars emphasized that issue, noting:

> In general, the Jury of the competition observes that what relates to popular knowledge in the various branches of science and industry has been somewhat neglected to give preference to what might be termed purely literary. However, it should be kept in mind that a mummy, some primitive utensils, an unearthed potsherd, a carved stone, or a piece of fabric found in an Indian cemetery, might be enough to give us greater elements of judgment about lost American civilizations.[84]

The circular seemed to encourage observation of popular knowledge. Some submissions made references to bones, mortar hands, ruins, excavations, potsherds, or mummies, among others. Diversity of indigenous languages was also collected, both in single words and in the naming of plants and animals, or song lyrics. Also, many indigenous customs were described, in some cases under the title of "superstitions" or "*curandería*."

On the use of notions such as "superstitions" and "*curandería*," several authors study how the narratives collected by the teachers refer to repertoires of imagery almost identical to those of colonial processes and the trials of sorceresses carried out in the eighteenth century.[85] Likewise, popular medicine was the object of persecution and attacks by the medical corporation and the state from the mid-19th century in Argentina,[86] although there were also people who built their political and scientific careers on popular knowledge and charlatanism.[87] These imaginaries of *curandería* remain to this day.[88] Considering these aspects, the conceptions of curative and medicinal knowledge and popular

84 Quoted in Ugarriza de Aráoz, "Antecedentes," xvii. My own translation.

85 Farberman, *Magia*.

86 Astrid Dahhur, "Los maestros entre la condena y la aceptación de la medicina tradicional en la provincia de Buenos Aires: La cultura popular y la cultura docta en la Encuesta Nacional de Folclore de 1921," *Sociedad y Discurso* 28 (2015): 94–114.

87 Irina Podgorny, *Charlatanes: Crónicas de remedios incurables* (Buenos Aires: Eterna Cadencia Editora, 2012).

88 See among others Lucas G. D. Ledesma, "Experiencias, magia y colonialidad. Reflexiones sobre estudiantes y brujas en Santiago del Estero, Argentina," *Chasqui. Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación* 131 (2016): 221–236.

superstitions should be read in terms of colonial legacies that are updated in different contexts. These conceptions have a long tradition of categorizing, classifying, and even marginalizing certain types of knowledge, especially "other" knowledge.

As can be seen, the instructions sent from the Council were modified or expanded according to the first results of the survey. This shows how the forms of knowledge collected were being adjusted "in process."

Layers of Knowledge in the Folklore Collection

The folders sent by the teachers in response to the instructions formed a heterogeneous set of information. While complying with the general requirements intended by the organizers, many responses lacked any kind of systematic categorization. As Kury[89] points out, instructions imply a conception of academic knowledge production that includes the participation of people lacking specialized training. In this case, teachers contributed in a variety of ways and completed the survey by drawing on the knowledge they had at hand. This knowledge included their own experience, literature, and their teaching training, among others. Thus, they adapted their answers to their possibilities, prior knowledge, and interpretations of the topics included in the instructions. As a result, when Ricardo Rojas was faced with the task of cataloging the material at the Argentine Literature Institute, he considered that the collection had common dimensions, but its diversity was such that it lacked categorization:

> Perhaps no public department was in a better position to carry out this undertaking, given the number and nature of its officials. But the haste with which the work was carried out and the not always faithful interpretation given by teachers to the instructions received, as well as the diverse wealth of local collections and the diverse capacities of those jointly responsible, contributed to the fact that the material collected, although extremely valuable for its quantity, nevertheless lacks a systematic harmony between the various parts that form it.[90]

Because of this "lack of harmony," the decision was made to organize the survey's catalog by provinces and teachers, realizing that it had a merely descriptive nature, with no systematic uniformity, due to the "fidelity with which we have

89 Lorelai Kury, "Les instructions de voyage dans les expéditions scientifiques françaises (1750 – 1830)," *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences* 51 (1998): 65–91.

90 Rojas, "Advertencia," vi. My own translation.

tried to describe the files; and these, as we have already pointed out, vary based on the capacity of the contributor, the interpretation of the instructions and the abundance of the material collected." The catalogs were arranged in a way that made it possible to quickly process the enormous volume of material since the Council had committed to awarding prizes to the top five compilations.[91] The collection is made up of 88,009 handwritten pages organized in 92 boxes. Each box contains folders labeled with the name of each of the 3,250 compilers,[92] indicating their school and location.

Therefore, at a second stage, the institute proposed to catalog the set of responses thematically "by subject and in sheets of paper with the pieces contained in the various files, to facilitate research on certain topics." To this end, Rojas proposed to start by dividing the material into two large groups: popular science and popular literature. This work was never carried out, perhaps because the "merely" descriptive cataloging took 13 years of work (from 1925 to 1938).

Although the instructions recommended gathering stories or resorting to one's own experiences,[93] there were many submissions from teachers who resorted to other sources: newspaper articles, books, and magazines used in schools, such as *Billiken*, a magazine for children, or the education magazine *Atlántida*. In addition, occasionally the answers mentioned findings and observations from before the survey. For example, Manuela María Valdivieso, from School No. 66 in Saénz Peña, province of Buenos Aires, reported that in 1904 she had had the opportunity to observe the remains of a mummy in the town of Las Flores, province of Buenos Aires, which had been found a year earlier in the puna of Jujuy and taken to the province of Buenos Aires by Dalmacio Castrillo, school inspector, who eventually "sold it to one of the great European museums."[94] The teacher mentioned the notes and photo engravings of the mummy published in the national newspaper *La Prensa* and the popular, illustrated magazine *Caras y Caretas*. She also gave an opinion about its age based on the authority of naturalist Florentino Ameghino: "The death is likely to have occurred

91 The awards were presented in 1945.

92 Considering that 5,556 teachers worked in the Láinez schools in 1921, the number of teachers who responded to the survey constitutes 58.5% of the total.

93 In the general instructions, it was requested to head the answers with the following data: locality, school, name of the principal or teacher who referred it, name of the person who narrated it, age of this person, if the teacher knows that other people know him/her (to the narration). Ramos and Córdoba, "Instrucciones," 25.

94 Manuela María Valdivieso, folios 5 and 6, folder 202, Buenos Aires Province, National Folklore Survey, INAPL.

at least four centuries ago, according to Ameghino and other experts who saw it."

References to Ameghino and his research were present in several teacher responses. Ameghino himself had begun his career in the school environment, as an assistant in a school in the city of Mercedes, province of Buenos Aires. There, in 1871, as explained by Podgorny,[95] he began to collect fossils of mammals and indigenous antiquities, a behavior not at all unusual in campaign towns in the second half of the nineteenth century. His work was published in education magazines and his prominent figure was described in several biographies like that of a teacher who, in a self-taught and marginal way, became a "national sage."[96] However, Podgorny points to the central role he played in science in Argentina from 1880 until his death, a role built through and thanks to the media.[97]

Likewise, Juan Manuel Cotta, the principal of School No. 92 in Dolores, province of Buenos Aires, explained that 37 years before, his father had begun to dig a well to get water and, at a depth of four meters, workers had found some "*pampas* bones": "[L]ike those of an ox, but bigger," which, out of superstition, had been reburied and another place was chosen to build the well. Cotta guessed that "they were perhaps the remains of some fossil mastodon or another creature of those that the earth holds to horror the ignorant and weave magnificent fantasies around men of science."[98] Also while digging a well, a mortar hand was found by the principal of the Normal School of Dolores, Manuel Cutrín. Cotta explained that the piece had been kept in the museum of the school and that the news was brought to the attention of Carlos Ameghino, "a man dedicated to paleontology and American archaeology." In both cases, we found a reference to the Ameghino brothers, who were related to the search, classification, and trade of fossils and indigenous material relics.[99] This shows how layers of knowledge overlap, where teachers take the reference of "experts" in these subjects. At the same time, they take over scientific findings and research and redefine them

95 Irina Podgorny, "De la santidad laica del científico: Florentino Ameghino y el espectáculo de la ciencia en la Argentina moderna," *Entrepasados* 13 (1997): 37–61; Irina Podgorny, *Florentino Ameghino y Hnos: Empresa argentina de paleontología ilimitada* (Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2021).
96 Podgorny, "Florentino Ameghino y Hnos," 293.
97 Irina Podgorny, "The Daily Press Fashions a Heroic Intellectual: The Making of Florentino Ameghino in Late Nineteenth-Century Argentina," *Centaurus* 58, no. 3 (2016): 166–184; Podgorny, "Florentino Ameghino y Hnos," 293–312.
98 Cotta Juan Manuel, folios 136 and 137, folder 60, Buenos Aires Province, National Folklore Survey, INAPL.
99 For more information, see among others: Irina Podgorny and Margaret Lopes, *El desierto en una vitrina, Museos e historia natural en la Argentina, 1810–1890* (Rosario: Prohistoria, 2008); Podgorny, "Florentino Ameghino y Hnos."

by considering these practices as part of the folkloric and popular heritage of the region. This example also shows how teachers positioned themselves as spokespersons for science, even as scientists. Precisely, their practice, attitude, and answers during the survey demonstrate the porosity between the definitions of teacher (or amateur) and scientist.[100]

The pages sent by Juan Manuel Cotta also include references to the legends compiled by Ambrosetti[101] and notes on local historical sites published in the national newspaper *La Nación*. Another teacher, Elena Magnasco from National School No. 91 in San Martín, province of Buenos Aires, gathered a collection of legends, traditions, and popular knowledge, citing several publications as her sources, such as the books of Juan Bautista Ambrosetti, the *Billiken* magazine or the book *La Argentina*, by H. Damián. While she includes accounts of some indigenous customs, narrated by a local man, she also transcribes part of an account by Luis J. Fontana about scientific explorations in eastern Patagonia, taken from *Boletín Geográfico Argentino*.

These examples show reappropriations of some scientific and literary knowledge considered part of folkloric or popular knowledge that, in turn, is gathered and organized as a collection for future research. This shows the role played by teachers and instructions in the practice of collectively inventorying the past and the knowledge of "the people" of a territory.[102]

Conclusion

This article analyzed the instructions prepared for the 1921 National Folklore Survey, as well as the answers given by the teachers to form the Folklore Collection. The collection produced by the National Folklore Survey consisted of a heterogeneous set of materials, with a broad territorial and thematic scope, but alien to

100 Irina Podgorny, "La momia y el herbolario: Un ensayo sobre la historia de la arqueología del siglo XX," *Anales de arqueología y etnología* 75, no. 1 (2020): 23–51.

101 Juan Bautista Ambrosetti (1865–1917), recognized as a naturalist, archaeologist, traveler, and collector. In 1904, he was in charge of the recently created Ethnographic Museum of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of Buenos Aires, which he directed until his death.

102 Kury, "Instructions de voyage," 65–92; Steven J. Harris, "Long Distance Corporations, Big Sciences, and the Geography of Knowledge," *Configurations* 6, no. 2 (1998): 269–304; Pascal Riviale, "Las primeras instrucciones científicas francesas para el estudio del Perú prehispánico (siglos XVIII y XIX)," *Bulletin del Institut Français d'Études Andines* 29, no. 1 (2000): 29–61; Marcelo Figueroa, "Manuel Basavilbaso y el oso hormiguero: sobre la formación de las colecciones de historia natural," *Revista Electrónica de Fuentes y Archivos del Centro de Estudios Históricos "Prof. Carlos S. A. Segreti"* 4 (2013): 47–58.

the systematic categorization intended to be obtained. On many occasions, the teachers shared information that was classified in the catalog of the collection as "archaeological" and "ethnographic": findings and sites with archaeological pieces, customs, and linguistic compilations of different indigenous groups, among others. The answers varied in length and detail. Some teachers answered only a few items in the survey and others answered the instructions from beginning to end. Some teachers sent more than one response, in which they elaborated on the information previously collected. These materials were gathered from oral testimonies of various people, often local elders, but also indigenous people. The questions gave priority to Criollo and Gaucho traditions and did not consider the customs brought by immigrants or Afro-Argentine culture. In addition, some of the responses included other materials, such as magazine and newspaper clippings, historical documents, illustrations, and photographs.

On the one hand, the Argentine Education Council was shaped as an institutional space that enabled the development of certain practices and social forums in which amateurs could insert themselves and acquire, share, and produce knowledge. On the other hand, when studying the results of the National Folklore Survey, it is possible to observe how the instructions "educated" teachers (and, through them, their social environments, schools, locations) on a certain way of conceiving the past and traditions, contributing to generate new ways of understanding, interpreting, and cataloging folklore and what was considered popular. The work of teachers in this collection allows us to think of a social history of the relations between scientific practices and formal teaching institutions, which adopts a "from-below" perspective,[103] paying attention to the representations and agencies of compilers themselves. This view contributes to the discussion over preconceptions about categories traditionally conceived as antagonistic, such as amateur/professional or popular/academic.

In addition to being "acculturated" by the instructions, teachers incorporated their knowledge into the answers. Just as Florentino Ameghino had drawn on the commercial and administrative practices acquired in his training as an ordinary teacher to manage his scientific venture, these teachers drew on their knowledge from their teaching training to make and organize a folkloric collection.

Thus, what was gathered as "markedly ancient folk traditions" was made up of different layers coming from literature, teacher training programs, the press, and the history of expert knowledge, among others. Therefore, the analysis of the Survey enables not only the study of the compilation and conformation of

103 Guillemain and Richard, "Introduction," 210.

the later Folklore Collection but also that of the "popular knowledge" conceptions related to the so-called scientific knowledge. It also drives the analysis of the education system as a space for the implementation of large-scale information-gathering projects, from where it was feasible to mobilize a significant number of collaborators residing in remote locations.

Teachers had a high degree of participation in the production of knowledge of the country's folklore and popular traditions. The compilation work did not reach the expected uniformity, but it constitutes a very valuable archive today for Historical, Anthropological, and Cultural Studies, among others. Because of its heterogeneity, the Folklore Collection that resulted from the Survey allows an approximation to the knowledge of the daily life of many people. The large number of topics included in the instructions allowed a gathering of knowledge from different localities, from different voices, and all over the country.

To conclude, the survey set a precedent for other similar undertakings in the following years. In 1939, the Argentine Education Council promoted another national survey and the publication of an Argentine Folkloric Anthology (1940), with a selection of answers from the 1921 Survey. Curiously, the 1939 instructions clarify that the material had to be collected "directly from the people that have inherited it by oral tradition. Do not copy anything from printed material."[104] In turn, these experiences were taken up by later projects, such as the 1945 National Survey on Regional Speech, organized by the Commission on Folklore and Nativism of the Argentine Education Council, and the 1951 General Folklore Survey of the Ministry of Education of the Province of Buenos Aires. As in 1921, these surveys leveraged existing school networks to gather popular knowledge. And even though 18 and 30 years had gone by, these subsequent surveys insisted on the value of nationalism and cultural policies based on the reinforcement of an Argentine nationality.[105]

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104 "Curso de folklore argentino. Síntesis de la labor realizada por el Consejo Nacional de Educación a partir de 1921 hasta 1960," *El Monitor de la Educación Común* 71, no. 936 (1961).
105 Blache, "Folklore y nacionalismo," 79.

(2021) and “Wanda Hanke y la recopilación de información y colecciones antropológicas (1934 – 1944)” (2017).

Sakina Shakil Gröppmaier

Critical Tendencies and the Production of Knowledge: Contention, Coalition, and Antagonism in the Digital Public Sphere

Abstract: As the digital dimension of academia continues growing, so does participation in and dissemination of debates over the production of knowledge. This paper examines the phenomena of critical-ness in the academic public sphere, arguing that critical tendencies have become the forerunning condition of debates over knowledge production and that these tendencies are reinforced and advanced due to the porous, accessible nature of the digital public sphere. Using empirical evidence, this paper points to the development of activist-like behavior and polemical discourse in intellectual debate, which is strengthened by the nature of this sphere's technical infrastructure; an infrastructure that produces impetus for the formation of coalitions and furthers antagonistic divisions in the public sphere – in academic zones and beyond.

Keywords: academia, critical, digital public sphere, knowledge production, participatory discourse

Introduction

The public sphere[1] is bustling, its digital dimension enabling access and participation on unprecedented levels. This is visible in debates over intellectual culture and academia – debates that have stirred contention, formed coalitions, and created deepening antagonisms. Disparate perspectives on intellectual approaches, on challenging underlying power structures, and on methodological disruptions demonstrate a rupture in attitudes towards what is and what is not of academic value and how the University should change. This is particularly evident in debates over knowledge production in the West, and particularly in

1 I use the singular "public sphere" to refer to a broad, porous space where discussions and deliberations take place. I also acknowledge that the public sphere is not a static, universal space; it is constituted of multiple spheres where entrenched hierarchies exist. My use of the term in the singular is to delineate a broad space that can be seen through different lenses and can sustain intersecting dimensions, for which I qualify the term contextually (e. g. the digital public sphere, the academic public sphere, etc.).

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transatlantic spaces where cross-border academic exchange is prevalent. Such debate has taken on a polemical tone, addressing specific issues that have clear overlaps and a common theme: how should processes of knowledge production function in academia?

In the University, the focus on scholarship and career can leave debates over the production of knowledge unrecognized, both in broader academic publics[2] as well as in terms of their direct relevance to scholarship and career. But as the digital dimension of academia continues growing, so does participation in and dissemination of such debates, creating topical zones in which the scholarly can evolve into a democratic, participatory phenomenon. As the last years have demonstrated, there is intense activity in the academic public sphere that is dedicated to larger, interconnected ideas that transcend national, ideological, and political borders – this is made possible by the porous and accessible nature of many digital spaces, and consequently, the digital public sphere.[3] Understood as a differentiated, multifarious, and contested space, the digital public sphere is a dimension "provided or supported by online or social media, from websites to social network sites, weblogs, and micro-blogs ..."[4] It is a dimension that can be conceptualized through various lenses: from what communicative patterns its infrastructure produces to the participatory potential it presents, as well as the threats it poses to democratic engagement. In the University, the digital sphere is becoming increasingly important – the shift towards online academia in the years of the COVID-19 pandemic has made this clear, as research, teaching, and professional interpersonal interaction during this time could only be sustained by digital infrastructures. The nature of these infrastructures has increas-

2 In this paper, I use "publics" to refer to specific groups undertaking discursive involvement that are constituted of specific demographics by interest, identity and/or discursive space and dimension; these overlap to constitute the public sphere. "Broader academic publics," for example, refers to a generalized public consisting of interest (those who are interested in academia) and identity (those who are involved in academia). I adopt this term from its use by scholars such as Michael Warner and Nancy Fraser, who have written about the constitutive roles various specific groups take on in forming the broader public sphere. See Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), and Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text* 25/26 (1996): 56–60.

3 While this is a differentiated concept, throughout this paper I rely on an adoption of Christian Fuchs' concept, which describes the digital public sphere as "not a separate sphere of society, but a dimension and aspect of the public sphere in societies where digital information and digital communication are prevalent." See Christian Fuchs, "The Digital Commons and the Digital Public Sphere: How to Advance Digital Democracy Today," *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture* 16, no. 1 (2021): 13.

4 Mike S. Schäfer, "Digital Public Sphere," in *The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*, ed. Gianpietro Mazzoleni (New York, John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 322.

ingly interwoven the digital public sphere and academic experience, from both a bystander and a participatory perspective. And herein, critical-ness[5] has taken center stage. Critical approaches have been incorporated in theory, methodology, and scholarship since the early twentieth century and underwent a popularization with the postmodern turn of the 1960s. Today, however, critical-ness has become an underlying tendency in both discussion and deliberative thought in the academic public sphere. The word itself is topical and as embraced as it is rejected. It has garnered attention and controversy far beyond the academic public sphere, becoming a hot item in politics and policy.

This paper takes an observational approach to the phenomena of criticalness in the academic public sphere, seeking to tease out underlying patterns in current debates connected to the production of knowledge and unearth what they may indicate about the state of academia today. Using empirical evidence, I will argue that critical tendencies have become the forerunning condition of debates over knowledge production, and these tendencies are reinforced and advanced due to the porous, accessible nature of the digital public sphere. This reinforcement and advancement have, in turn, created echoes of activist behavior by producing impetus for the formation of coalitions within the academe and furthering antagonistic divisions in the public sphere – in academic zones and beyond. Such academic debates employ polemical modes, using digital infrastructures to ensure that their claims and stances are visible to relevant interest groups as well as to larger publics, interweaving various dimensions of the public sphere: the academic, the political, and most importantly, the participatory. To lay out the framework on which this argument stands, I will begin with a contextual sketch of academia and the digital public sphere followed by an overview of critical tendencies in contemporary intellectual culture. These two sections serve to foreground the cases used to substantiate my argument, which I divide into two categories: cases of coalitions and networks that have been formed by digital publics and cases that are grounded in literary production which produces antagonistic cycles of critique.[6] These cases are rooted

5 I use the term "critical-ness" to refer to critical tendencies that are interconnected but distinct from theoretical concepts of the critical, which are primarily used for scholarship that incorporates assessments of structural and social orders into their methods. "Critical-ness," thus, refers to the incorporation of these assessments into broader thought that is not considered scholarship in the academic sense, but is relevant to structural and social orders in academia and beyond.

6 This is not a universal study, nor does it claim to be. This paper positions itself within research relevant to Western academic culture that exists primarily in transatlantic spaces, with a focus on the United States and Germany. The reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, transatlantic rela-

in challenging or affirming norms that have long informed structural processes of academic work and are demonstrative of the critical tendencies that permeate debates over change and resistance; debates that can be viewed as participatory deliberations made possible by the interconnected digital media networks comprising our contemporary public sphere.

Academia and the Digital Public Sphere: Media, Borders, and Possibilities

The public sphere today has evolved far beyond the Habermasian concept. The salons of the nineteenth and twentieth century exist in vastly different forms made possible by an immensely accessible, interconnected digitized media landscape. Historical barriers to accessing information, discussion, and debate such as place, citizenship and class are diminishing as primary determiners of who can access information in this digital public sphere; though to be sure, they certainly influence what information can be accessed. This is manifested in the use of firewalls, paywalls, algorithmic patterns, and other techniques used to manage and control digital information networks, and that are resisted against with the use of technical hacks and community-rooted methods—such as VPNs and shared accounts—to overcome such management and control techniques. While our contemporary public sphere remains non-egalitarian, it presents unprecedent opportunities for participatory deliberation.

To speak of the public sphere today is to speak of a transnational space which follows two major presuppositions: that decentered, borderless communicative processes can coalesce to form public opinion, and that English as a *lingua franca* can subordinate national languages.[7] In the academic public sphere,

tions between the United States and Germany have a long history, both intellectually and politically, and continue playing a prominent role today in both academic practice and intellectual exchange. Secondly, due to my own position as a scholar working in American Studies at a German University, I have greater interest and exposure to the academic culture that binds these two national entities. These reasons present a regional bias, which I see as a subjectivity and a strength. My hope is that this paper invites critique and further research into the critical and the participatory elements of contemporary intellectual cultures in and beyond the West – in relation to knowledge production as well as to the impact of digital infrastructures.

7 Nancy Fraser, "Transnationalizing the Public Sphere: On the Legitimacy and Efficacy of Public Opinion in a Post-Westphalian World," in *Transnationalizing the Public Sphere*, ed. Kate Nash (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 23–25. *This condition must also be critiqued. While English is considered the *lingua franca* from a Western perspective, it is also considered "the lingua fran-

English functions as the de facto *lingua franca*, but in a digitized environment it does not have to be a standalone language. Translation tools, such as the open-access Google Translate, can act as intermediaries, and the capability to display websites in multiple languages has established a new norm in online presence for academia: that digital textual material should be available in English as well as the national language. Often, despite the presence of a different national language, such textual materials are only available in English, which implies assumptions that English is a universally accessible language or a preference and prioritization towards speakers of English exists. The academic public sphere in its digital spaces is thus multilingual but English dominant, and this play an important role in the development of debate and the formation of coalitions.

With the term "academic public sphere" I refer to a specific topical zone that has to do with academia and intellectual culture. Such a zone is filled with opinions, discussions, and arguments that may not directly comment on intellectual practice, but has important, subversive connections. #BlackInTheIvory is an example of such phenomena: when a tweet on exclusion in academia by a scholar sets off a chain reaction of further tweets, then blogs, then mainstream opinion editorials, and then cultivates the formation of a concrete academic network that then further develops its web presence with more tweets, and thus more blogs and articles, it creates a cycle of information that operates in this topical zone.[8] The hashtag itself may not be about the production of knowledge, but the establishment of a network that fights against certain forms of exclusion in academia certainly indicates attitudes towards it. This is particularly evident in transatlantic spaces between the United States and Germany, which is the parameter this paper works with. These transatlantic spaces of the academic public sphere are porous and permeate the digital media landscape in ways that often remain invisible. They are filled with zones of exchange, mergers, and flows that develop opinions and ideas which cannot be placed within specific national borders. Despite the state or city-bound nature of academic institutions or major

ca of neoliberal capitalism" and must precipitate "thinking past, around, and *about* it." See Aamir R. Mufti, *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

8 Such phenomena are described as "hashtag-mediated discursive assemblages" that can be comprised of various actants, such as corporate or collectivist. I adopt this concept to refer specifically to academic collectives that are formed as part of these cyclical information processes that can only be established in the digital public sphere, as this is the dimension for which the hashtag was created. See Nathan Rambukkana, "#Introduction: Hashtags as Technosocial Events," in *Hashtag Publics: The Power and Politics of Discursive Networks*, ed. Nathan Rambukkana (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2015).

media outlets, the nature of information flow online is stateless, enabling a constant cross-border flow of research, knowledge, ideas, and people in the academic world.

It is often impossible to determine the origins of an idea in the academic public sphere, but ideas gain traction and credibility through U.S. based institutions or initiatives that have a strong web presence.[9] This can range from internationally-consumed magazines like the New Yorker to blogs of academic networks like the Society of U.S. Intellectual History that publish opinion pieces on academic issues and controversies.[10] The U.S. junction is also a reason why English has become the *lingua franca* of the transatlantic academic public sphere – it is the major global academic hub, with U.S. universities and institutions often dominating rankings and U.S.-based scholars gaining increasing social and cultural capital worldwide. This is not to say it is the center of the academic world, but rather to highlight that its role as an intermediary force is powerful.

Perhaps this is why today, it is often events based in the United States that trigger reactions in the transatlantic academic public sphere. New topical foci often enter mainstream academic discourse when such events occur. One of the notable examples of this in recent years are the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests of June 2020, which created massive public interest in discussions on racial inequality and consequently increased attention towards the power structures and inequalities permeating various factions of life and thought today, which is reflected in the tone of activity in the academic public sphere. This what I refer to as critical tendencies and are evident in discussions connected to the production of knowledge in the years surrounding 2020. These critical tendencies

9 A commentary by Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant critiques this influence as "universalizing particularisms" of U.S. society and universities. Interestingly, the piece points to a precedent for this in the nineteenth century, where conflicts specific to German universities informed the larger philosophical questions debated throughout Europe. See Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant, "New Liberal Speak: Notes on the New Planetary Vulgate," *Radical Philosophy* 105 (January/February 2001), accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/commentary/newliberalspeak.

10 While there are several examples that could not be included in the empirical portion of this paper, two important ones discussed in the fourth and fifth section are: Kristal Brent Zook, "How Black Lives Matter Came to the Academy," *The New Yorker*, January 30, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-political-scene/how-black-lives-matter-came-to-the-academy and Tim Lacy, "The Mean(s) of History: #TheoryRevolt, Evidence, and Purported Anti-Intellectualism," *Society for U.S. Intellectual History*, June 3, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, https://s-usih.org/2018/06/the-means-of-history-theoryrevolt-evidence-and-purported-anti-intellectualism/.

are dedicated to assessing and challenging power structures; in academia specifically, they have become a polemicized mode in debate over what power structures inform both the scholarship that is produced as well the scholars who produce it.

The big "C": Critical Tendencies in Contemporary Intellectual Culture

The term "critical" has become a staple in the Arts and Humanities, and the digital public sphere, both inside and outside of its academic zones, thrives on it. The widespread use of the term has led to the labelling of various scholarly approaches as well as a shift in attitudes, but how did this develop? There is a connection here between theory, practice, and tendency. Attitude is the focus of this paper and represents a contemporary turn in trajectories of critical-ness. Practice is the bridge between theory and attitude, in terms of the production of the knowledge as well as the factors that shape it. Theory, however, is a genealogical milestone in understanding how such attitudes have developed. While there are multiple definitions and application of critical theory, there is a common thread in its various uses – it can be seen as "less of a method and more of an approach to the social and political world," as an approach to examining and analyzing "social phenomena that upsets us, like racism, sexism, inequality, marginalization, oppression and domination," and one that takes an underlying or overt interest "in who has the social and political power to legitimize certain stories about society rather than others."[11] Critical theory, thus, can be seen as an intellectual approach that has to do with reassessing norms and practices and seeking understandings of how they came to be.

From a historical perspective, critical theory is widely considered to have its roots in the Frankfurt School and European Marxist tradition, with German scholars such as Max Horkheimer often credited as originators of this intellectual approach.[12] Horkheimer's writings distinguish critical thinking as non-individualistic, but as subject to "a definite individual in his real relation to other individuals and groups, in his conflict with a particular class, and finally, in the re-

11 Eva Erman, "What Is 'Critical' about Critical Theory?" *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 43, no. 3 (March 2017): 300 – 301, accessed March 15, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1177/0191453716671272.

12 James Bohman, "Critical Theory," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2021 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed March 15, 2022, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-theory/.

sultant web of relationships with the social totality and with nature."[13] Today, critical thinking is a standard in approaches to race, class, and gender, and such intersections are considered necessary inclusions in scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. But critical thinking has also been criticized as unnecessarily politicizing research. Such criticism is both within and beyond the academic zones of the public sphere – a prominent example of this is state-level legislature effectively banning the use of critical race theory (CRT) in public schools in the United States, using claims that the approach increases divisions and fuels racism against white people as justification.[14] Horkheimer predicted such resistance, writing that "the hostility to theory as such which prevails in contemporary public life is really directed against the transformative activity associated with critical thinking. ... Those who profit from the status quo entertain a general suspicion of any intellectual tradition."[15] Like what is happening with CRT in the United States, as various forms of critical-ness are driven forward by proponents, they are accompanied by such hostility and suspicion predicted by Horkheimer.

CRT is a case where scholarly approaches enter the broader public sphere and blend the academic and the social in political deliberation, making it necessary to distinguish it from the critical theory that is widely associated with Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School.[16] CRT has its roots in the United States, where scholarship began diverging from traditional, universalist approaches by addressing specific groups and identities in the second half of the twentieth century. Gender studies, for example, emerged alongside women's studies in the 1970s; the two were often placed in opposition to each other, one of the fears being that with "gender studies has emerged as an alternative to women's studies, undermining the primacy of women as the field's proper object of study..."[17] Ethnic studies also emerged in the 1970s as the civil rights movements had

13 Max Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," in *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell and others (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1975), 211.
14 Stephen Sawchuk, "What is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack," *Education Week*, May 18, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.edweek.org/leadership/what-is-critical-race-theory-and-why-is-it-under-attack/2021/05.
15 Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," 232.
16 In fact, Frankfurt School scholar Theodore Adorno (and Horkheimer's contemporary) rejected the concept of identity in his work, criticizing it as a deterministic and causal agent. It is likely that the Frankfurt School may have rejected CRT, presenting a complexity in attempted genealogies of critical theory that are rife for exploration. See Theodore Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (Suhrkamp, 1973).
17 Robin Wiegman, "Academic Feminism Against Itself," *NWSA Journal* 14, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 19.

brought national attention to repressed minorities, establishing sub-disciplines such as African American studies or Indigenous studies in several universities.[18] Amongst this division of disciplines was a subversive focus on race and advocacy of intersectionality in scholarship. Legal scholar Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw is widely associated with the emergence of such intersectional scholarship, with her 1989 paper "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" emphasizing that "theoretical and political developments [that] miss the mark with respect to Black women because of their failure to consider intersectionality."[19] This paper is considered a pioneer for intersectional approaches to scholarship, and such approaches would succeed in interweaving disciplines such as Gender studies or African American studies with established disciplines like History and Literature, producing work that can now be categorized as interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary.

The emergence of such sub-disciplines also introduced new ideological approaches and schools of thought, CRT being among them and which Crenshaw continues to be associated with.[20] CRT began as an academic movement in legal studies in the 1970s, developing alongside civil rights studies in the humanities but in a fundamentally different way, as "unlike traditional civil rights, which embraces incrementalism and step-by-step progress, critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order."[21] CRT quickly moved beyond law, and was absorbed into the social sciences, the humanities, and education and pedagogical methods. Defining CRT, as with defining critical theory, is impossible with a static definition but there are some basic, common features, such as the idea that "racism is ordinary, not aberrational," and that because of this ordinariness "racism is difficult to cure or address."[22] CRT also "holds that race and races are products of social thought and relations" and that

18 Roger Chapman, "Multiculturalism and Ethnic Studies," in *Culture Wars in America: An Encyclopedia of Issues, Viewpoints, and Voices*, ed. Roger Chapman and James Ciment (New York: Routledge, 2014), 440.

19 Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1: 140.

20 Rita Omokha, "'I See My Work as Talking Back': How Critical Race Theory Mastermind Kimberlé Crenshaw Is Weathering the Culture Wars," *Vanity Fair*, July 29, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2021/07/how-critical-race-theory-mastermind-kimberle-crenshaw-is-weathering-the-culture-wars.

21 Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 3.

22 Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory*, 7.

"races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient."[23] Similar to Horkheimer's description of critical thinking as subject to the individual in their relation to other individuals or groups, CRT focuses on how structural issues can determine the positions of individuals and groups, with a definitive emphasis on how race can circumvent universalist principles or ideals as set on paper.

This extrapolation on CRT is important, as the school of thought has informed mass calls for disruption in traditional, essentialist approaches in scholarship. Although its origins lie in legal studies, today CRT is associated with numerous, non-traditional approaches in traditional disciplines, and a prominent one is History. CRT advocates for a reexamination of "America's historical record" by "replacing comforting majoritarian interpretations of events with ones that square more accurately with minorities experiences."[24] This is encouraged in pedagogical approaches to U.S. history by established scholars. In a 2018 report on teaching history, historian David Blight wrote that there "is the deep, abiding American need to conceive of and understand our history as 'progress,'"[25] which encourages the teaching of master narratives and hinders the teaching of multi-faceted histories. Blight argues that the "point is to tell American history as a story of real human beings, of power, of vast economic and geographical expansion, of great achievements as well as great dispossession, of human brutality and human reform."[26]

One such project was established to do just this – the New York Times' 1619 Project, an initiative that "aims to reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center"[27] of the dominant, U.S. national narrative. The project is a series of essays, literary works, and visual histories that began as the brainchild of writer Nikole Hannah-Jones: the first essay, titled "The Idea of America" by Hannah-Jones, kicked off the project in August 2019 and won the Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 2020.[28] As the project attracted increasing attention, it also generated

23 Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory*, 7.

24 Ibid., 20.

25 David Blight, "Introduction," in *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery*, ed. Kate Schuster (Montgomery, Al: Southern Poverty Law Center, 2018), 8, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/tt_hard_history_american_slavery.pdf.

26 Blight, "Introduction," 8.

27 Jake Silverstein, "Why We Published The 1619 Project," *The New York Times*, December 20, 2019, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/20/magazine/1619-intro.html.

28 "Nikole Hannah-Jones of The New York Times," *The Pulitzer Prizes*, accessed September 6, 2021, https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/nikole-hannah-jones-new-york-times.

increasing criticism. Together, five historians at leading U.S. universities sent a letter to the New York Times Magazine, which was published with a rebuttal from the publication's editor-in-chief Jake Silverstein.[29] The letter criticized the project as suggesting a "displacement of historical understanding by ideology" and of "selective transparency" when it came to source selection and process, and the lengthy rebuttal responded to these criticisms by defending Hannah-Jones and the 1619 project, emphasizing both their positions as journalists rather than historians as well as pointing out that "within the world of academic history, differing views exist, if not over what precisely happened, then about why it happened, who made it happen, how to interpret the motivations of historical actors and what it all means."[30] This exchange grew to involve actors beyond the platform maintained by the New York Times. In the digital public sphere, historian Leslie M. Harris wrote a critique of Hannah-Jones' claims[31] and a larger group of Civil War historians published a second letter accusing the project of "a historically-limited view of slavery."[32]

The criticism the 1619 Project continues to receive is similar in scope to the resistance against CRT more generally, in the public sphere and beyond. Such critique and resistance illustrate that CRT has become a powerful school of thought that has entered the mainstream, moving beyond its scholarly origins into broader publics. The existence of the 1619 Project as well the response it generated are demonstrative of critical tendencies in the mainstream, but they exist within academic frameworks as well. Critical tendencies in academia can be in-

29 The letter was signed "Sincerely, Victoria Bynum, distinguished emerita professor of history, Texas State University; James M. McPherson, George Henry Davis 1886 emeritus professor of American history, Princeton University; James Oakes, distinguished professor, the Graduate Center, the City University of New York; Sean Wilentz, George Henry Davis 1886 professor of American history, Princeton University; Gordon S. Wood, Alva O. Wade University emeritus professor and emeritus professor of history, Brown University." See "We Respond to the Historians Who Critiqued The 1619 Project," *The New York Times Magazine,* December 20, 2019, updated January 19, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/20/magazine/we-respond-to-the-historians-who-critiqued-the-1619-project.html.

30 "We Respond."

31 Leslie M. Harris, "I Helped Fact-Check the 1619 Project. The Times Ignored Me," *Politico*, June 6, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/06/1619-project-new-york-times-mistake-122248.

32 This criticism argues that the 1619 Project presents slavery as an exclusive U.S. undertaking and compresses 400 years of history into a single interpretation, limiting the history of slavery by region and to a singular interpretation; these are, in fact, the very issues the 1619 Project criticizes in traditions of U.S. history. See "Twelve Scholars Critique the 1619 Project and the New York Times Magazine Editor Responds," *History News Network*, January 26, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/174140.

corporated beyond scholarship and into the constituency of the academe, by which I mean scholars and the coalitions they form.

Identity, Experience, Perspective – Coalition Formation in the Academe

As critical tendencies move into methods, pedagogy, and source acquisition and analysis in scholarship, they also manifest in stances explicating the personal experience of scholars. Here, the digital public sphere acts as an agent in propagating these stances, which are espoused by individuals and quickly disseminated on online platforms by people who agree, have similar experiences or sympathize and, perhaps even more efficiently, by those who disagree or critique.[33] The use of the hashtag, in particular, has become a popular strategy to develop such discussions into movements – the hashtag "brings statements together and forms collectives" but it can also gloss "over differences and thus obscures subtleties,"[34] creating a for-or-against tendency within the digital public sphere. The profuse dissemination of such stances via hashtags can result in the rapid drawing of alliances, the most productive of which can establish coalitions and socially efficacious networks of scholars. Again, June 2020 serves as an important trigger point for recent cases.

The widespread BLM protests were accompanied by a plethora of statements, images, and videos shared through the use of hashtags in the digital public sphere, and amidst this BLM discourse #BlackInTheIvory emerged. Started by Shardé M. Davis and Joy Melody Woods[35] on Twitter,[36] the hashtag was used to

33 There is much research done on filter bubbles and echo chambers and the restrictions they place on nuanced debate; these phenomena group participants by opinion or interest, leaving little room for counter opinions or opposing views. See Axel Bruns, *Are Filter Bubbles Real* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019) and Cristian Vaccari and Augusto Valeriani, *Outside the Bubble: Social Media and Political Participation in Western Democracies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

34 Andreas Bernard, *Theory of the Hashtag*, trans. Valentine A. Pakis (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019), 6.

35 Despite having been credited as a co-founder of the hashtag in media coverage during the viral phase of the hashtag, Woods is not present on the #BlackInTheIvory website nor is credited as a cofounder along with Davis. According to her own personal website, Woods is now involved with #ownvoices, a Twitter-based movement dating back to 2015 that campaigns for the connection between author identity and experience through storytelling to be actively championed in the publishing world. #ownvoices is an interesting movement in its own right, bringing structural issues of the publishing industry into the public sphere, but also acting as a bridge between

share the experiences of Black scholars with higher education, which were wrought with racism, discrimination, and marginalization. Davis, an assistant professor at the University of Connecticut at the time, and Woods, a doctoral student at the University of Texas, got the idea through conversations about their personal experiences as Black women in academia. Inspired by the surge in BLM discourse, they decided to share some thoughts publicly on twitter with the hashtag; #BlackInTheIvory went viral overnight.[37] Black scholars in various places – the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and elsewhere – nurtured the conversation by publicly sharing stories of individual racism, structural racism and the excessive emotional and professional burdens they felt as Black academics. The hashtag was also used by non-Black academics to express solidarity and sympathy, as well as to criticize or demean. But by and large, #BlackIntheIvory became the impetus to create a borderless community for Black academics for personal and professional support in dealing with the issues the hashtag had brought to the fore. The hashtag continues to be used on social media but it has gone beyond the discursive. It has spurred conferences and conversations that openly address invisible structures of academia and it has also become a growing community beyond the public sphere.[38] Davis trademarked the hashtag, creating the Blackademic Social Network, how-to guides for allies and interested parties in academia, and an upcoming published volume which takes the hashtag into the realm of print.[39]

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academic and mainstream publishing by addressing the "who" in both research claims and authorship. See: Joy Melody Woods, "About Me," *Joy Melody Woods*, accessed September 5, 2021, https://www.joymelodywoods.com/aboutme and Moneeka Thakur, "The #OwnVoices Movement: Whose Voices Are Being Heard?" *Cherwell*, May 11, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://cherwell.org/2021/05/11/the-ownvoices-movement-whose-voices-are-being-heard/.

36 *Black in the Ivory*, 2021, https://blackintheivory.net/.

37 Nyasha Junior, "#BlackInTheIvory Documents Anti-Blackness in the Academy," *Women in Higher Education*, September 1, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.wihe.com/article-details/158/-blackintheivory-documents-anti-blackness-in-the-academy/.

38 Examples of these are "#Blackintheivory conference is centerpiece of Black History Month at UON," *University of Northampton*, October 1, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.northampton.ac.uk/news/blackintheivory-conference-is-centrepiece-of-black-history-month-at-uon/, and Josh Busby, "The Networks and Hidden Procedures that Keep Discrimination Alive in Academia," *The Duck of Minerva*, July 12, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.duckofminerva.com/2020/07/the-networks-and-hidden-procedures-that-keep-discrimination-alive-in-academia.html.

39 All these can be found on the official #BlackInTheIvory Website. See "The Blackademic Social Network," 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://blackintheivory.net/blackademic-social-network, and Shardé M. Davis, *Being Black in the Ivory: Tips for Amplifying the Voices of Blacka-*

Such negative experiences in academia extend beyond identity, in cases where shared experience is the basis for network formation without the categories of ethnic, racial, gendered, or class-based identities. This can be seen in the Academic Parity movement, a network addressing bullying in academia that uses human rights as a lens to address abusive behaviors in mainly laboratory-orientated university environments.[40] Established in 2019, and inspired by research conducted by founder Morteza Mahmoudi, the movement developed anonymous complaint procedures and produces research and publications on bullying in academia to quantifiably and qualitatively demonstrate that such problems in academia are widespread and require tackling on an institutional level. While founded by scholars in the United States, it is also borderless, with an international board and no citizenship requirements for its growing network. But despite an active Twitter account and popular YouTube videos, it has received little to no coverage in mainstream media. Compared to #BlackintheIvory, which generated praise and criticism beyond the academe and received coverage from mainstream publications like the New Yorker and the Guardian, the Academic Parity Movement has garnered significantly less public attention. Thus, while shared experience serves as foundation for network formation, perhaps this points to identity as the magnet of interest for non-academic publics and as a catalyst for efficacious development when it comes to the public presence and reputation of coalitions.

Borderless-ness as a feature of contemporary, critical networks can thrive on the transnational nature of the digital public sphere, but in transatlantic spaces it is also dependent on the accessibility of language – the Academic Parity Movement and #BlackInTheIvory operate in English because of their origins in the United States, but this is also the reason for their international appeal. For #BlackInTheIvory, identity and the hashtag are important factors in its exponential growth and garnered attention. The shift from hashtag to movement has proven to be effective, and the transition can be seen in Germany as well; an example of this is the #IchbinHanna hashtag turned initiative. The hashtag appeared on Twitter in June 2021 as a response to a video[41] posted by the *WissZeitVG* "the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research" explaining the *Wissen-*

demic TRUTHtellers in the Academy. Black in the Ivory, February 1, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://blackintheivory.net/blackademic-truthtellers.

40 "The Problem," *The Academic Parity Movement*, accessed September 5, 2021, https://paritymovement.org/the-problem/.

41 While the video is no longer available on official *WissZeitVG* platforms, it can still be viewed on YouTube. See "Ich bin Hanna," Jörg Thomsen, YouTube video, 2.23, June 17, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIq5GlY4h4E.

schaftszeitvertragsgesetz "Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act" – the act exempts universities from standard labor rights using innovation in scholarship as justification for the widespread practice of issuing limited term contracts. Hanna is a reference to the video, which featured a fictional PhD student named Hanna as a success story of fixed term contracts; the video posits her success as a result of the experience she gains at different universities. Hanna is thus an attempt to personify the alleged benefits of the *Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz*. The #IchbinHanna hashtag was first deployed by Amrei Bahr, Kristin Eichhorn, and Sebastian Kubon, who are established critics of the *WissZeitVG*. Previously, in October 2020, the trio had published their *95 Theses against the WissZeitVG*, a lampooning of the Ministry in both German and English.[42] While less viral than #IchbinHanna, the theses also began on Twitter with the hashtag #95vsWissZeitVG, which then led to a blog and a printable *plakat*.[43] #IchbinHanna was more productive. It was used by scholars to share of thousands of personal experiences with fixed-term contracts in German academia on Twitter, and these experiences were negative and tainted with insecurity and precarity – as a result, the *WissZeitVG* deleted the video.[44] Like the Academic Parity Movement, the #IchbinHanna initiative is founded on shared experience, but its use of the hashtag has generated more discussion. It has also become a grassroots initiative in Germany aimed at sustaining this discussion by both German and non-German speaking scholars. #IchbinHanna tweets appeared in German and English and the initiative published their statement in both languages, demonstrating that members of the academe within national borders are unmistakably pluralistic. Pluralism in the German academic community was affirmed in the critical response the hashtag itself received; a new hashtag, #ichbinreyhan, highlighted the increased obstacles that scholars of color faced in German academia.[45]

42 Amrei Bahr, Kristin Eichhorn, and Sebastian Kubon, "95 Theses against the WissZeitVG," accessed September 5, 2021, https://95vswisszeitvg.wordpress.com/95-theses-against-the-wisszeitvg/.

43 Amrei Bahr, Kristin Eichhorn, and Sebastian Kubon, "95 Thesen gegen das WissZeitVG," accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.perspektivbrocken.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/95vsWZVG_Online_Plakat.pdf.

44 Ilka Brasch and Jens Temmen, "Englisch Version: IchbinHanna (translates to #IamHanna)," accessed September 5, 2021, *#IchBinHanna*, https://ichbinhanna.wordpress.com/english-version/.

45 See Dr.in Reyhan Şahin (@LadyBitchRay1), Twitter Post, June 11, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://twitter.com/ladybitchray1/status/1403238905051332609?lang=en, and Susan Djahangard, "Ich Werde Ständig Unterschätzt," *Zeit Campus*, June 19, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.zeit.de/campus/2021-06/ichbinhanna-hashtag-twitter-arbeitsbedingungen-diversitaet-diskriminierung.

Shared perspective is another basis for coalition formation and growth in the online media landscape. The Germany-based *Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit* "Network for Academic Freedom" is, according to the first sentence of their English-language manifesto, "an association of academics with the common concern to defend the freedom of research and teaching against ideologically motivated restrictions and to contribute to strengthening a liberal academic climate."[46] The network, comprised primarily of university professors at German universities, did not start with a hashtag or on social media, but has been widely discussed in mainstream German media such as Sueddeutsche or Die Welt as well as by its critics on Twitter. Its website has a .de URL,[47] clearly displaying that its origins and presence are rooted in Germany. Yet, the availability of the content of the website in both German and English language versions affirms the *lingua franca* status of English within the German academe and indicates that an international dimension exists at the network or that there is some desire for international appeal. Founded in February 2021, the first English-language press release states that ideological or political agendas connected to "Cancel Culture" and "Political Correctness" are what inspired its establishment – countering such ideological or political agendas in academic research is what the scholars "joined forces" to do.[48] The German-language version of their web page for press releases is more demonstrative of what unites the network's members: a claim to no single perspective. For example, a German-language press release, *Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit fordert: Kein Zwang zum Gendern* "Network for Academic Freedom demands: No Compulsion to Gender" is a call on academic institutions to restrain from issuing binding regulations on the use of gender-sensitive language.[49] The network has also received significant media coverage in Germany, in the academic sphere and beyond, and a long list of this appears in the list of links posted *Das Netzwerk in den Medien* "The Network in the Media" page.[50] That the network is presenting these links indicates that such

46 "Manifesto," *Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit*, February 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.netzwerk-wissenschaftsfreiheit.de/en/about-us/manifesto/.

47 The website for #IchbinHanna, in contrast, has a .com URL; see https://ichbinhanna.wordpress.com/.

48 Sandra Kostner et al., "Press releases," *Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit*, accessed September 5, 2021, https://www.netzwerk-wissenschaftsfreiheit.de/en/press/press-releases/.

49 Sandra Kostner et al., "Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit fordert: Kein Zwang zum Gendern," *Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit*, June 25, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.netzwerk-wissenschaftsfreiheit.de/presse/pressemitteilungen/.

50 "Das Netzwerk in den Medien," *Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit*, accessed September 15, 2021, https://www.netzwerk-wissenschaftsfreiheit.de/presse/das-netzwerk-in-den-medien/.

coverage is, in part, awarded because it is comprised of academics with contacts and influence amongst the German media establishment.

Netzwerk Wissenchaftsfreiheit is an interesting case of critical tendencies as it has been formed in response to what its members perceive as injustice. The network presents itself as taking a minoritarian position, yet it is one that does not have collective historical struggles comparable to coalitions like #BlackInTheIvory nor did it come together due to the experiences of job insecurity like the supporters of #IchbinHanna. Perhaps then, the network presents a case of simulated critical tendencies; because of this, it has generated backlash at the heights of its own activity in the digital public sphere. The network's claims have been billed as a "Kampf um die Wissenschaftsfreiheit" "battle over academic freedom,"[51] critiqued as restricting legitimate criticism and democratic expression by the inter-university student organization the *freier zusammenschluss von student*innenschaften* (fzs),[52] and accused of perpetuating a *Schreckgespenst* "bogeyman."[53] It has also led to the formation of a counter-initiative called *Wissenschaftsfreiheit* "Academic Freedom." *Wissenschaftsfreiheit* describes itself as a coalition rather than a network, with the stated understanding of academic freedom "as a process to extend participation in science" and as a "basis for processes of negotiation."[54] The coalition, an initiative of the *Forum Antirassismus Medienwissenschaft* "Forum of Antiracism Media Science," has a vast signatory list including professors, lecturers and independent researchers, and more, a contrast to the professors comprising *Netzwerk Wissenchaftsfreiheit*. Its URL ends in .org, which is typically used for non-profit organizations, a contrast to the .de URL address used by *Netzwerk Wissenchaftsfreiheit* which implies a nation-bound quality. Apart from this, the URLs are identical, and one can easily land on either page without intention if they have mistakenly typed .org or .de, or done a Google Search without a close look at the results – arguably, this is the intention. Both have German and English versions of web text, but the text available on the *Wissenschaftsfreiheit* website is concise and direct –

51 Arnd Diringer, "Kampf um die Wissenschaftsfreiheit," *Welt*, July 23, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/article232656823/Recht-behalten-Kampf-um-die-Wissenschaftsfreiheit.html/.

52 Iris Kimizoglu, "fzs kritisiert das 'Netzwerk für Wissenschaftsfreiheit,'" *freier zusammenschluss von student*innenschaften,* March 8, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.fzs.de/2021/03/08/fzs-kritisiert-das-netzwerk-fuer-wissenschaftsfreiheit/.

53 Martin Lüthe, "Netzwerk Wissenschaftsfreiheit: Eine kurze Replik," *DeGruyter Conversations*, February 5, 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://blog.degruyter.com/netzwerk-wissenschaftsfreiheit-eine-kurze-replik/.

54 "Wissenschaftsfreiheit," *Wissenschaftsfreiheit,* accessed September 6 2021, https://netzwerk-wissenschaftsfreiheit.org/.

it is simply a statement of purpose in both German and English on the same page with a list of signatories below, and a separate page in German for contact information for interested signatories and press inquiries.[55] *Wissenschaftsfreiheit*, then, can be seen as a critical reaction to *Netzwerk Wissenchaftsfreiheit*, which in itself is a reaction to the growth of critical approaches. Without any explicit description, the two networks can be placed in opposition to one another when examining their web content, their member and signatory lists, and most notably, the discussion surrounding them in the digital sphere – if *Wissenschaftsfreiheit* has been formed as a result of the accumulated criticism of *Netzwerk Wissenchaftsfreiheit,* then this is testament to the power of critical publics in developing from interest groups into concrete coalitions.

Critical Antagonisms: Theory, Methodology, Pedagogy

Critical tendencies in academic discourse have set in motion a reassessment of long-established norms in scholarship; norms that have traditionally positioned dominant narratives as sole histories and created imbalanced planes of experience for members of the academe. This critical-ness has its opponents, creating antagonisms between drivers of these reassessments and opponents who argue that the reassessment itself should be under review. Herein, the production of literature stemming from this critique and the reaction it garners is indicative of the deepening antagonisms connected to perspectives on how theory, methodology, and pedagogy should be in practice. In this regard, a critical look at critical theory is also underway.

Cynical Theories: How Activist Scholarship Made Everything About Gender, Race, and Identity and Why This Harms Everything by Helen Pluckrose and James Lindsay was published in 2020. The book's basis is that another culture war has been taking place since the beginning of the twenty-first-century,[56] which is driven by a postmodernist culture of "social justice activism" in scholarship that is detrimental to intellectual practice and academic communities. For the authors, this culture war has resulted in the detrimental creation of the hy-

55 "Kontakt," *Wissenschaftsfreiheit,* accessed September 6, 2021, https://netzwerk-wissenschaftsfreiheit.org/kontakt/.

56 Helen Pluckrose and James A. Lindsay, *Cynical Theories: How Activist Scholarship Made Everything about Race, Gender, and Identity – and Why This Harms Everybody* (Durham, NC: Pitchstone Publishing, 2020, EPUB), 22.

brid "scholar-activist."[57] Pluckrose and Lindsay are self-described advocates of liberalism and for them, "[p]ostmodern theory and liberalism do not merely exist in tension: they are almost directly at odds with one another."[58] The book's argument rests on the claim that "there is nothing that postmodern theory can do that liberalism cannot do better, and it's high time we regained the confidence to argue for this."[59] The publication of *Cynical Theories* was met with commercial success, attracting attention beyond the academe and becoming a bestseller.[60] The topic and angle struck a chord with opponents of critical theory and critics of "social justice discourse," and it was one that the authors had a history with.

Pluckrose and Lindsay had already established a reputation for mocking what they and others refer to as "activist scholarship." In 2018, along with colleague Peter Boghossian, the trio wrote some 20 papers using language associated with postmodern scholarship in a jargonistic fashion and submitted them to journals associated with critical scholarship in fields such as gender studies, queer studies, and race studies, or what the trio has cumulatively termed grievance studies. Nicknamed the Grievance Studies Affair or Sokal Squared after the Sokal Hoax,[61] they achieved quite some success with this plan: seven of their papers were published in peer-reviewed journals.[62] To reveal their hoax, Pluckrose, Lindsay, and Boghossian published a tell-all essay describing what their issues with critical academia are with a run-down of the papers they had written, the feedback they had received, and the acceptance or rejection statements from various journals. In their essay, the trio emphasized that they "undertook this proj-

57 Pluckrose and Lindsay, *Cynical Theories*, 19.

58 Pluckrose and Lindsay, *Cynical Theories*, 389.

59 Pluckrose and Lindsay, *Cynical Theories*, 413.

60 The Associated Press, "US-Best-Sellers-Books-USA Today," *The Washington Post*, September 3, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/books/us-best-sellers-books-usatoday/2020/09/03/9f6d462e-ee03-11ea-bd08-1b10132b458f_story.html.

61 The Sokal Hoax refers to a prank played by NYU physicist Alan Sokal in May 1996, wherein a parody article he had written and submitted was published in the academic journal *Social Text*. Sokal later published an opinion piece which was released by the New York Times, stating that he had written the article with absurd claims using jargon to show that poststructuralism was having detrimental effects on research and argument in the humanities. See Lingua Franca, *The Sokal Hoax: The Sham That Shook the Academy* (Lincoln, NB: Nebraska University Press, 2000) and Zack Beauchamp, "The Controversy Around Hoax Studies in Critical Theory, Explained," *Vox*, October 15, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.vox.com/2018/10/15/17951492/grievance-studies-sokal-squared-hoax.

62 Yascha Mounk, "What an Audacious Hoax Reveals About Academia," *The Atlantic*, October 5, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/10/new-sokal-hoax/572212/.

ect to study, understand, and expose the reality of grievance studies, which is corrupting academic research"[63] and incorporated a pronounced call to action by recommending "all major universities to begin a thorough review of these areas of study ..."[64] The call to action was embraced by some and scoffed at by others, and whether or not any institutions have acted upon it remains to be seen. But the essay reveals that the hoax was a well-planned affair with an antagonistic ideological crux: it produced a critical reaction to critical-ness. After all, Pluckrose, Lindsay, and Boghossian were assessing what new norms are in the process of being produced.

Such antagonisms exist within disciplines as well, such as the lesser-known but hotly debated #TheoryRevolt. Known by the hashtag, #TheoryRevolt is a manifesto written for scholars associated with history. The manifesto, entitled *Theses on Theory and History*, was written by historians Ethan Kleinberg, Joan Wallach Scott, and Gary Wilder in May 2018 and promotes a rebellion against traditional, empiricist historiography by calling for the incorporation of theory, and for establishing a theoretical approach to historiography as part of the discipline itself.[65] The manifesto ends with a coda that imagines "the historian as akin to the interpreter of dreams," stating that "we see that those who look to make literal sense of the dream by presenting it in a chronological, realist, and self-evident manner, are recognized and rewarded." The coda concludes with its appeal for theory in history, placing interpretation at the center and theory as its tool: "The historian equipped with a background in theory is attuned to the navel of the dream, to the places where history does and does not "make sense," and this is the opening to interpretative and political innovation."[66] With the manifesto, the authors placed themselves in opposition to what they viewed as normative history and normative historians, and the reaction in the academic public sphere was swift. A response by independent scholar Tim Lacy published on the Society for U.S. Intellectual History's blog critiqued the manifesto as redundant, arguing their presentation of history was distorted: "I don't see a profession enchained by common-sense realism, mere description, or stale evidentiary standards. ... I see practitioners working toward a mean be-

63 James A. Lindsay, Peter Boghossian, and Helen Pluckrose, "Academic Grievance Studies and the Corruption of Scholarship," *Areo*, October 2, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, https://areomagazine.com/2018/10/02/academic-grievance-studies-and-the-corruption-of-scholarship/.

64 Linday, Boghossian, and Pluckrose, "Academic Grievance Studies."

65 Ethan Kleinberg, Joan Wallach Scott, and Gary Wilder, *Theses on Theory and History* (Wild On Collective, May 2018), 8.

66 Kleinberg, Scott, and Wilder, *Theses on Theory and History*, 11.

tween evidence and interpretation."[67] A post written by PhD Student Jonathon Caitlin for the Journal for the History of Ideas blog historicized the use of theory in history, citing courses taught at Princeton University that incorporated theoretical reading with specific historical cases as early as 1965 to demonstrate that theory in history has a longer tradition than the manifesto alleged.[68] On a personal blog, historian Matt Fitzpatrick detailed a section-by-section critique of the manifesto, arguing that it created "a false dichotomy between empiricism and theory" but, at the same time, praising its "renewed call to embrace" theoretically driven history.[69] Blogs of historians and history societies were critical, but excited by #TheoryRevolt, and the volume of feedback induced a response in July 2018 by Kleinberg, Scott, and Wilder. On the Critical Inquiry blog, they wrote that their digital "open access platform has led to a global reception that has exceeded our initial target but also reveals that these "Theses" have hit a nerve and provoked a response. ... The point here is that whether one agrees or disagrees with the 'Theses,' they have started a debate about the norms of the historical discipline."[70] The writers credited the digital public sphere for their publicity – they had published the manifesto online and free for download, and the hashtag had easily developed and categorized the discussion about it. This technical environment, combined with the topical appeal of the Theses, created an antagonistic dynamic within the discipline that scholars were keen to explore. #TheoryRevolt is an example of methodological antagonisms that excite the academic public sphere, but perhaps are too niche to move beyond it.

Other critical antagonisms, however, can move into a broader public sphere if they are seen to have a direct connection to major sociopolitical issues in the mainstream. This is the case with #DisruptTexts, an initiative seeking to disrupt pedagogical norms by changing the Western literary canon. The initiative was founded in 2018 by Tricia Ebarvia, Lorena Germán, Kim Parker, and Julia Torres, four educators, English teachers and women of color, and describes itself as "a

67 Tim Lacy, "The Mean(s) of History: #TheoryRevolt, Evidence, and Purported Anti-Intellectualism," *Society for U.S. Intellectual History*, June 3, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, https://s-usih.org/2018/06/the-means-of-history-theoryrevolt-evidence-and-purported-anti-intellectualism/.

68 Jonathon Caitlin, "Theory Revolt and Historical Commitment," Journal of the History of Ideas Blog, October 8, 2018, accessed August 7, 2022, https://jhiblog.org/2018/10/08/theory-revolt-and-historical-commitment/#.

69 Matt Fitzpatrick, "A Few Preliminary Thoughts on #TheoryRevolt," *The Kaiser and The Colonies: Monarchy, Democracy, and Empire in Germany*, June 3, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, http://monarchydemocracyempire.blogspot.com/2018/06/a-few-preliminary-thoughts-on.html.

70 Ethan Kleinberg, Joan Wallach Scott, and Gary Wilder, "From the Authors of the 'Theses on Theory and History,'" *Critical Inquiry*, July 10, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, https://critinq.wordpress.com/2018/07/10/from-the-authors-of-the-theses-on-theory-and-history/.

crowdsourced, grassroots effort *by* teachers *for* teachers".[71] As in the case of #TheoryRevolt, it was conceived as a hashtag that would generate literature to further their goals. #DisruptTexts challenges traditional modes of pedagogy in literary education by diversifying the canon and incorporating anti-racist and anti-bias teaching methods. A column published by the founders in the English Journal described the principles of the coalition as critical: "The antithesis to critical literacy is universalism. Too often, students may read a text though a dominant narrative, a single interpretative lens. Instead, students can ask questions of texts such as *Who is centered? Who is marginalized? Who is missing? And what does this mean and why does this matter?*"[72] Thus, for the coalition, critical literacy can be developed through changing the canon as well as changing the way we view the canon, from elementary school to post-secondary education. The coalition has teaching guides available for download on their website as well as on the website of publishing conglomerate Penguin,[73] increasing their visibility and credibility given Penguin's established history and reputation as a publisher of literary classics. Again, like #TheoryRevolt, the founders use of the hashtag as a name demonstrates their aims of developing a conversation, as can be seen on their website as well as on social media platforms such as Twitter. The homepage is filled with posts about how teaching literature can be effectively disrupted by teachers; from re-contextualizing or re-teaching To Kill a Mockingbird to reducing the focus on Shakespeare,[74] the conversation the coalition has fostered is detailed and can be easily shared with the hashtag in digital publics.

#DisruptText's intended audience is educators, but its belief that diversity and anti-racism should be incorporated into pedagogical methods connects it with other critical tendencies that have moved beyond academic publics into the mainstream public sphere. A major controversy surrounding group was sparked by a tweet by Germán on November 30, 2020: "Did y'all know that many of the 'classics' were written before the 50s? Think of US society before

71 Tricia Ebarvia et al., "What is #DisruptTexts?," *#DisruptTexts*, accessed September 6, 2021, https://disrupttexts.org/lets-get-to-work/.

72 Tricia Ebarvia et al., "#DisruptTexts," *English Journal* 110, no. 1 (September 2020): 101.

73 Disrupt Texts, "Disrupt Texts in Your Classroom Educator Guide," *Penguin School and Library Teacher and Librarian Resources*, accessed September 6, 2021, https://penguinclassroom.com/books/disrupt-texts-in-your-classroom-educator-guide/.

74 See Lorena Germán, "Chat: Disrupting 'To Kill A Mockingbird,'" *#DisruptTexts*, May 13, 2018, accessed March 15, 2022, https://disrupttexts.org/2018/05/13/disrupting-to-kill-a-mockingbird/, and Lorena Germán, "Chat: Disrupting Shakespeare," May 25, 2018, accessed September 6, 2021, https://disrupttexts.org/2018/10/25/5-disrupting-shakespeare/.

then and the values that shaped this nation afterwards. THAT is what is in those books. That is why we gotta switch it up. It ain't just about 'being old.' #DisruptTexts."[75] Again, the hashtag generated several written responses in the digital public sphere, some agreeable and others mocking. An Op-Ed in the Wall Street journal titled "Even Homer Gets Mobbed" raged that a "sustained effort is under way to deny children access to literature" and that #DisruptTexts was constituted of "critical-theory ideologues, schoolteachers and Twitter agitators [who] are purging and propagandizing against classic texts."[76] A longer piece on Harpers aligned the coalition with author Viet Than Nguyen's call for "literary insurgency," arguing that #DirsuptTexts and its advocates "borrows the tech world's callow fetish for "disruption" to advocate the diversification of reading lists."[77] A piece on Quillette discussed the "punishment the activist teachers meted out" on Jessica Cluess, an author who had criticized the coalition on Twitter.[78] Each piece cited Germán's tweet. The coalition predated the tweet by two years, but Germán's words triggered publics in a way that #DisruptTexts objectives had previously not. While the tweet itself sparked a viral response, #DisruptTexts continued generating discussion in the public sphere as this virality died down, which considering the use of a hashtag is, in essence, a goal achieved.

Conclusion

The digital public sphere provides new possibilities for discussion to gain momentum and, potentially, to spark change. Interconnected, intellectual discussion is thriving due to an unprecedented accessibility of information as well as the widespread technical and discursive capabilities to disseminate agendas. And the intellectual agendas of today are underscored by critical tendencies, intentionally and inadvertently, that create polemical modes of debate – debates that incorporate definitive argumentative stances that can unite different per-

75 Lorena Germán (@nenagerman), Twitter Post, November 30, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://twitter.com/nenagerman/status/1333449963401924609.

76 Megan Cox Gurdon, "Even Homer Gets Mobbed," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 27, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://www.wsj.com/articles/even-homer-gets-mobbed-11609095872?mod=article_inline.

77 Thomas Chatterton Williams, "Campaign Literature," *Harper's Magazine*, April 2021, accessed March 15, 2022, https://harpers.org/archive/2021/04/campaign-literature/.

78 Lona Manning, "What is #DisruptTexts?," *Quillette*, December 9, 2020, accessed March 15, 2022, https://quillette.com/2020/12/09/what-is-disrupttexts/.

spectives under an umbrella, but deepen divides between those who critique or vehemently disagree.

While such debates are evident in different facets of intellectual culture, they are linked to what factors do and should inform processes of knowledge production, and can be openly observed in the digital public sphere. This sphere exists as a porous space, allowing for cross-border forms of communication that develop discursive assemblies that are topical, but with underlying connections. The transatlantic academic zone of this sphere is dependent on a common language to render this as accessible, which enables an exchange and development of opinion, support, and antagonism across national, ideological and political boundaries. Coalitions and networks formed amidst this exchange attract members based on identity, experience, or shared perspective rather than citizenship or nationality, and literature promoting methodological disruptions are intended for disciplinary change beyond national borders.

From theory to methodology to members of the academe, a critical reassessment of academic norms has a powerful impetus for change. Yet, there are also defenders of norms and resistors of change, leading to tensions that create a thriving discussion in the academic public sphere. In fact, it is the swaying scales between consensus and rupture that prove most effectively that participatory engagement in the public sphere is roaring, and that academics are participating members of an active discursive environment that is contributing to the formation of horizontal communities. This paper has highlighted the immense potential for participatory academia that digital infrastructures enable, and this is a key difference between academia today and academia in the twentieth and early twenty-first century. There is much more research on this to be done. What are the genealogies of current modes of debate, and how do we pinpoint what is new in the making? How did debates over knowledge production unfold without this digital infrastructure? What were the capacities for coalition-building and methodological disruption in a time when information borders were harder and when communication was more restrictive? Did comparable types of critical tendencies exist in dominant intellectual discourse? Did the same type of public interest exist without the accessibility the internet provides?

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Section III: **Engaging the Field**

Maria Bach

Positive Discourse Analysis: A Method for the History of Knowledge?

Abstract: If historians of knowledge want to seriously succeed in exposing marginalised figures, they must identify approaches to systematically do that. Researching marginalised figures requires an understanding of how knowledge is produced by actors considered and treated as inferior and a systematic contextualisation of their socio-economic, political and intellectual environment, which includes the dominant, or non-marginalised, narratives. I propose, in this article, one theory and method: Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism operationalised through Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA). Dialogism enables a study of marginalised figures to theorise how discourses simultaneously constrain and facilitate meaning-making. PDA operationalises the dialogic approach into a more concrete step by step process of defining one's protagonists' multidiscursive and multispatial contexts, and how these contexts affected the particular discursive practices and knowledge created in specific utterances. To show how the theory and method can be effective, I use my previous research on the first generation of modern Indian economists in the late 19th century as a case study. These Indian economists, relative to imperial officials and both British and European thinkers, were marginalised, and rarely seen, as economists.

Keywords: method, history, discourse, dialogism

Introduction

In the relatively new subfield of history of knowledge, there is an ever-present goal to look where few have looked before and to make different assumptions about how knowledge is produced and who can produce it. One of the main stated objectives for history of knowledge is to give agency to overlooked actors by "broadening the range and types of knowledge actors."[1] If, however, historians of knowledge want to seriously succeed in exposing what I call marginalized figures, they must identify approaches to systematically do that. Researching marginalized figures requires, in my view, an understanding of how knowledge

1 Johan Östling, David Larsson Heidenblad, and Anna Nilsson Hammar, eds., *Forms of Knowledge* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2020), 16.

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110748819-010

is produced by actors considered and treated as inferior and a systematic contextualization of their socio-economic, political, and intellectual environment, which includes the dominant, or non-marginalized, narratives.

I will propose, in this article, one theory and method: Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogism operationalised through Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA). Dialogism enables a study of marginalized figures to theorize how discourses simultaneously constrain and facilitate meaning-making.[2] PDA operationalises the dialogic approach into a more concrete step by step process of defining one's protagonists' multidiscursive and multispatial contexts, and how these contexts affected the particular discursive practices and knowledge created in specific utterances. PDA is a strand of the better-known method, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA, as well as PDA, is a critical reading of the place and force of language, discourse, and text and how it changes social, economic, and cultural conditions.[3] PDA, unlike CDA, is specifically designed to focus on discourses from the margins, taking a bottom up approach, as opposed to CDA's top down approach.[4] To show how the theory and method can be effective, I use my previous research on the first generation of modern Indian economists in the late nineteenth century as a case study.[5] These Indian economists, relative

2 Mikhail Mikhaĭlovich Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Ceryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986); Mikhail Mikhaĭlovich Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Ceryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

3 Allan Luke, "Beyond Science and Ideology Critique: Developments in Critical Discourse Analysis," *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 22 (2002): 97; Allan Luke, "The Material Effects of the Word: Apologies, 'Stolen Children' and Public Discourse," *Discourse Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 18, no. 3 (1997): 343 – 368; Teun A. Van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis," *Discourse and Society* 4, no. 2 (1993): 249 – 283; Ruth Breeze, "Critical Discourse Analysis and Its Critics," *Pragmatics. Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)* 21, no. 4 (2011): 493 – 525; Rebecca Rogers et al., "Critical Discourse Analysis in Education: A Review of the Literature," *Review of Educational Research* 75, no. 3 (2005): 365 – 416.

4 Tom Bartlett, *Hybrid Voices and Collaborative Change: Contextualising Positive Discourse Analysis*, *Hybrid Voices and Collaborative Change: Contextualising Positive Discourse Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

5 Maria Bach, "What Laws Determine Progress? An Indian Contribution to the Idea of Progress Based on Mahadev Govind Ranade's Works, 1870 – 1901," *The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought* 25, no. 2 (March 4, 2018): 327 – 356; Maria Bach, "Phd Thesis Summary: Redefining Universal Development from and at the Margins: Indian Economies' Contribution to Development Discourse, 1870 – 1905," *Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics* 13, no. 1 (March 1, 2020): 139 – 147; Maria Bach, "A Win-Win Model of Development: How Indian Economics Redefined Universal Development from and at the Margins," *Journal of the History of Economic Thought* 43, no. 4 (2021): 483 – 505.

to imperial officials and both British and European thinkers, were marginalized, and rarely seen, as economists.

Case Study: Late Nineteenth Century Indian Economics

"Indian Economics" needed to be understood for India to prosper, declared Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842–1901), an Indian High Court judge, during a lecture at the Deccan College, Poona, in 1892.[6] The lecture hall was filled with Indian students and probably some officials, as the College's location was the summer capital of the imperial administration. Deccan College was part of the imperial university system where Indian elites had been able to get a higher education as of the mid-1800s. The College was a prominent place for Indian intellectuals and is one of the oldest modern educational institutions in India. It is significant then that the first generation of graduates from the imperial universities, including Ranade, started to criticize the imperial system within a space where they learnt the skills to understand the system. Ranade's lecture inaugurated Indian Economics, as he uttered the term "Indian Economics" for the first time. The other founding text of Indian Economics was authored by Ganapathy Dikshitar Subramania Iyer (1855–1916), a leading Indian journalist at the time.[7]

Ranade's and Iyer's initial idea of an Indian Economics proved popular with other contemporary Indian intellectuals, enabling Indian Economics to emerge. There were about seven other economists in the first generation of modern Indian economists – Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848–1909), Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917), Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi (1851–1911), Prithwis Chandra Ray (1870–1928), Surendranath Banerjea (1848–1925), Kashinath Trimbak Telang (1850–1893), and Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866–1915) – mainly scattered across the three locations of the imperial universities in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. Some of the economists, like Ranade, Iyer, and Telang, openly self-identified as Indian economists. Others, like Naoroji and Dutt, have been labelled Indian economists by later thinkers and secondary literature because their research ac-

6 Mahadev Govind Ranade, *Essays on Indian Economics: A Collection of Essays and Speeches* (Madras: G. A. Natesan and Company, 1906), 1.

7 Swaminath Aduthurai Govindarajan, *G. Subramania Iyer* (New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1969), 1, see also: G Subrahmaniya Iyer, *Some Economic Aspects of British Rule in India* (Madras: Swadesamitran Press, 1903), pt. Appendix, 1.

tively sought to find theories, concepts, ideas, and solutions for India's, often distinct, problems. Ranade's inauguration of an Indian Economics placed the increasing number of studies by this group of Indians under its intellectual umbrella.[8]

Indian Economics emerged as a backlash against the existing school of political economy taught at the imperial universities and cited by the imperial officials as reasons for various policies. The Indian economists were all later labelled as early Nationalists because they were the first generation of Indian elites fighting for independence. For the most part, they agreed that "orthodox economic science, as expounded in English text-books, has to be modified when applied to the conditions of this country."[9] The troubling socio-economic conditions in India and elsewhere seemed to disprove the relevance of universal economic principles such as free trade and comparative advantage.[10]

Indian Economics' ideas of progress and development were not however unified, despite the consensus over its goal to better understand and identify more appropriate solutions to bring about progress. Ranade, for instance, was a member in the Bombay strand, along with Joshi and Naoroji, which concentrated on imperial finance, banking, and in general exchange. The Bengal strand, including scholars such as Dutt, rose to prominence at the turn of the century focusing on land-revenue, rural relations, and peasant indebtedness and particularly emphasized indigenous institutions and practices.[11] Indian Economics was united without always sharing the same research focus, approaches, ideology or discursive practices.

By the early twentieth century, the early Nationalists' political agitation against existing political economy education and orthodox imperial policies impelled the imperial administration to better understand the Indian social and economic conditions. Consequently, courses on Indian Economics were offered at the imperial universities in India as of the beginning of the century, along

8 Bach, "What Laws Determine Progress?"; Bach, "A Win-Win Model"; Bach, "Phd Thesis Summary."

9 Govindarajan, *G. Subramania Iyer*, 1. Similarly, the orthodox economics tradition, according to Ranade, does not take into consideration the "relative differences in Civilization, or the possession of natural advantages, or disadvantages, in matters of situation, climate, soil, National aptitudes" (Ranade, *Essays*, 2).

10 Ranade, *Essays*, paras. 5, 11, 21, 24; Iyer, *Some Economic Aspects*, pt. Appendix, 3.

11 Manu Goswami, *Producing India: From Colonial Economy to National Space* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 236.

with the first textbook on Indian Economics.[12] The first complete history of Indian Economics came in 1966 by Bipan Chandra, which provides an overall picture of this first generation of modern Indian economists and their attempt at producing a body of works that theorized and modelled "economic nationalism."[13]

Some scholars, including Chandra, maintain that although Indian Economics identified British rule as a barrier to economic development, the economic thinking did not find solutions to generating economic growth nor did Indian Economics create alternative economic tools to analyze economic development.[14] The historical studies seem to focus on the discursive and material constraints imposed upon imperial subjects. For instance, the research often concludes that there was little space for Indians to think outside of Western knowledge norms, as they were taught a Western curriculum.[15] They were subsequently critiqued for only regurgitating existing thought. Moreover, India's extreme poverty is said to have made Indian intellectuals preoccupied with urgent political and economic needs, rather than knowledge creation.

Research in the last 30 years has started to analyze the Indian economists and their texts in a new light. However, they have predominantly been studied as activists and thinkers in the nationalist movement, not as economists.[16] My

12 Sharmin Khodaiji, "A Nationalistic Framework for Political Economy: Textbooks on Indian Economics during the Early-Twentieth Century," *Oeconomia: History, Methodology, Philosophy* 9, no. 3 (September 1, 2019): 459–480.

13 Bipan Chandra, *The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1966), 1.

14 E.g. Panikkanparambil Kesavan Gopalakrishnan, *Development of Economic Ideas in India, 1880–1914* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1954); Chandra, *The Rise and Growth*; Bipan Chandra, "Reinterpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History," *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 5, no. 1 (1968): 35–75.

15 Sanjay Seth, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Imperial India* (Durham, N. C: Duke University Press, 2007).

16 Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, vol. 11 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Goswami, *Producing India*; Birendranath Ganguli, *Indian Economic Thought: Nineteenth Century Perspectives* (New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publications Company, 1977); Benjamin Zachariah, *Developing India: An Intellectual and Social History c. 1930–50* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Christopher Alan Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

analysis follows this research by assigning agency to these figures as economists.[17]

Theorising Meaning Making in an Imperial Context

Imperialism, essentially by its own definition, caused global historical narratives on Western superiority to omit the fact that India also created discourses to understand political and socio-economic changes throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[18] Bakhtin's theory of dialogism helps my study give voice to all interlocutors to better understand how language both makes and changes reality. Interlocutor means a person who takes part in a dialogue or conversation. I use interlocutor, rather than protagonist or thinker here, because dialogism theorizes that all meaning is produced through dialogue. While intellectual historical studies may all contextualize, few include a social theory that lays out how meaning is produced in society. And those who have a social theory rarely make explicit or explain their theory in any detail. I argue that this is missing in historical research and my article offers a suggestion.

Dominant shared meanings like development may appear more frequently in everyday utterances reinforcing its dominance, however, marginalized interlocutors also have agency to interact with and change dominant discursive practices.[19] Dialogism involves a functional approach to language, seeing language as a tool rather than a structure, which enables me to analyze discursive practices within Indian Economics without imposing constraints *ex ante*. The interaction between different discursive and spatial contexts offers insight into what and how understandings of development were produced in late nineteenth century Indian Economics.[20]

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17 *Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought; Goswami, Producing India; Zachariah, Developing India; Christopher Alan Bayly, Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Ganguli, Indian Economic Thought.*

18 Christopher Alan Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World: 1780 – 1914* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 79.

19 Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*; Bakhtin, *Speech Genres*; Valentin Nikolaevich Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (New York: Seminar Press, 1973); Valentin Nikolaevich Voloshinov, *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique*, ed. and trans. I. R. Titunik (London: Verso, 1976).

20 *Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevskys Poetics, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984); Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination; Bakhtin, Speech Genres.*

Indian Economics was marginalized, leading to two main consequences. First, the space to disseminate was relatively limited. Its texts – lectures, published books, letters, and articles – existed almost exclusively in India, and when not in India were predominantly consumed by Indian and anti-imperialist audiences in Britain. For instance, a large amount of the articles was published in the journal that Ranade founded in 1870, *Quarterly Journal of Poona Sarvajanik Sabha*,[21] to create a space for Indian intellectuals to publish their research. The Indian economists were not getting published in British economic journals or even treated as economists.

Second, their texts were considered only as a regurgitation of existing thought. For example, *The Times* and *The Times of India* reviews of Dutt's volume on Indian history wrote: "the work before us is not a history, it is merely a collection of historical arguments for the use of a political sect."[22] Dutt's two volumes of Indian history were an attempt to rewrite Indian history from an Indian perspective. Dutt questioned the dominant imperial narrative of a poor and weak Indian sub-continent in need of a strong imperial ruler – e. g. the Mughals from the Middle East had reigned before the British took over. Dutt's analysis, especially in understanding the large rural areas of India, was based on rural data collection and testimonies from rural peasants, areas rarely visited by Europeans who had previously published histories of India, such as James Mill's well-read *The History of British India*.[23] Dutt, among others, attempted to rewrite Indian history to include, for example, the previous thriving textile industry. Undoubtedly, Dutt and his peers had a political agenda, hence the use of "political sect" in the quote above, to rally support for Indian independence. If India had been capable of ruling itself, such as the Maratha regime[24] in power in Western India before the British came, it would be capable and should be ruling itself again soon. The European readers of the Indian economists read their texts as only propaganda, rather than economic ideas or theories, when in fact they were both!

Dialogism offers several useful concepts that help characterize more precisely how context determines utterances and how different utterances produce

21 Sarvajanik Sabha is Marathi for public society.

22 Reprinted in Jnanendra Nath Gupta, *Life And Work Of Romesh Chunder Dutt* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1911), 294.

23 Maria Bach, "Poverty Theory in Action: How Romesh Chunder Dutt's European Travels Affected His Poverty Theory, 1868 – 1893," *History of Political Economy*, forthcoming, n.d.; James Mill, *The History of British India* (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1817).

24 Ranade wrote a book on the rise and success of the Maratha regime: Mahadev Govind Ranade, *Rise of the Maratha Power* (Girgaum, Bombay: Punalekar and Company, 1900).

shared meaning in society. Context can determine utterances through assimilation, orientation, heteroglossia, addressability, answerability, and both authoritative and internally persuasive discourses. Interlocutors utter words formed through the assimilation of other utterances.[25] As a result, new perspectives are incorporated into language when interlocutors selectively assimilate others' perspectives. Interlocutors situate themselves in relations to other utterances, which occurs as a process of self-actualization.[26] Utterances and discourses are, in other words, multidiscursive.

While there are varying degrees of others' perspectives, there are also "varying degrees of our-own-ness" in each utterance.[27] Each interlocutor has her own orientation, viewpoints. Heteroglossia builds on the concept of assimilation and orientation to explain how each utterance is a combination of several discourses (others' speech, others' words, appropriated expressions) that are necessarily polyphonic (many views, styles, references, and assumptions not the speaker's own).[28] Heteroglossia suggests that context determines the meaning of utterances. Bakhtin proposes that language is not a closed system, and that there is no infinitely stable unified language – as opposed to Ferdinand de Saussure's theory.[29] Context determines meanings, not the words themselves.[30] Nevertheless, Bakhtin observes that language can become monologic when a particular discourse, meaning or world-view becomes momentarily stable, but this state cannot continue forever. Eventually a dominant discourse is defeated by another discourse.[31]

The next two concepts necessary to understand dialogism are answerability and addressivity. An utterance is addressed to someone and can generate a response.[32] Addressivity dictates that utterances will take into account who is being addressed.[33] In my case, the Indian economists were conscious of their audiences and they will have chosen similar words to those used by British officials so as to be understood by them. Additionally, interlocutors will try to anticipate

25 Bakhtin, *Problems*, 433.
26 Bakhtin, 340.
27 Bakhtin, *Speech Genres*, 89.
28 Bakhtin, 170; Bakhtin, *Problems*, 7, 291, 294, 301, 354, 428.
29 Ferdinand de Saussure et al., *Course in General Linguistics* (London: Duckworth, 1916).
30 *Michael Holquist, Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World (London: Routledge, 2002); de Saussure et al., Course in General Linguistics.*
31 Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 61, 68, 270 – 272, 346, 370.
32 Bakhtin, *Speech Genres*, 68, 95.
33 Voloshinov, *Marxism*, 85.

the following utterance – what Bakhtin labels answerability. The Indian economists will have anticipated the responses of the British.

Dialogism is more appropriate for the imperial context than other theories that also emphasize the contextual determinants of meaning-making – such as Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Derrida, Pierre Bourdieu, Quentin Skinner, and the post-colonial theorists.[34] Habermas is inapplicable because his theory seems to assume the possibility of a rational, scientific understanding of the natural world. Assuming rationality means that my study would claim to be finding a "true" or "right" meaning of Indian Economics. On the contrary, it is impossible, in my view, for there to be one "true" interpretation of a text, let alone that it can be found. Rather, the dialogic approach helps explain that specific past and present contexts are what give meaning in certain moments and spaces. Derrida's theory of deconstruction concentrates too much on deconstructing dominant discourses and exposing contradictions within texts. I aim to expose discursive innovation within marginal discourse, resembling more construction than deconstruction.

Bourdieu's social field theory examines how individuals construct social fields and how they are affected by those fields.[35] In many ways, Bourdieu offers similar tools to Bakhtin. They both have a relational approach where the middle of the dialogue rather than the extremes (the individuals) must be analyzed. Interaction is what produces knowledge and action. They both also theorize how different interlocutors hold different amounts of power and have varying motivations. However, Bourdieu seems to focus on the materialistic actions, influenced by Marxist theory that assumes that all actions are motivated by gaining economic command over resources,[36] whereas Bakhtin focuses on meaning-making. I study the latter, making Bakhtin more appropriate.

Skinner's theory in intellectual history focuses almost entirely on intentions and motives present within texts and lacks some of the more rigorous understanding which dialogism offers in explaining meaning-making through dia-

34 Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory* 8, no. 1 (1969): 3 – 53; Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1 (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1981); Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena: And Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, trans. Newton Garver (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

35 Pierre Bourdieu and Randal Johnson, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Columbia University Press, 1993).

36 *Didier Bigo, "Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power," International Political Sociology 5, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 227; Bourdieu and Johnson, The Field.*

logue and context.[37] For instance, how can we identify the true intentions of an interlocutor? We only have the text or dialogue to go by. Dialogism places less emphasis on the intentions and more on the interlocutors' past exchanges, training, and habitual discursive practices. Furthermore, Skinner and his peers in the Cambridge School of history of political thought have been critiqued for adopting orientalist perspectives by ignoring non-Western contributions to intellectual history.[38]

A question that follows then is why I do not adopt post-colonial theory. Post-colonial theorists emerged in the 1950s, making colonialism "a social object in its own right and a force or structure that impacted social relations in definite ways."[39] I use their studies extensively to understand my protagonists' context, such as Ranajit Guha's theory that the colonial state was based on dominance without hegemony and Homi Bhabha's idea of colonialism as a "negating experience."[40] Nonetheless, post-colonial theory does not, like dialogism, offer a more holistic social theory of how meaning is produced in society, such as the useful concepts explained above. Moreover, post-colonial theorists often use dialogism to theorize the colonial situation, such as Bhabha.[41] The difference in my approach is that I use a concrete method alongside dialogism. In fact, Bhabha's theory of hybridity that implies certain social conditions of existence is criticized for not theorizing those conditions explicitly.[42]

Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA)

While all historical studies contextualize, my argument is that it requires a more transparent and concrete method than describing and analyzing the context. PDA is a method used to study the impact of texts in the world by bringing to-

37 Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding."

38 See e. g. Christopher S. Goto-Jones, ed., *Re-Politicising the Kyoto School as Philosophy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

39 Julian Go, "Decolonizing Bourdieu: Colonial and Postcolonial Theory in Pierre Bourdieu's Early Work," *Sociological Theory* 31, no. 1 (March 29, 2013): 52, "The Rise, Fall, and Rise of Colonial Studies, 1951–2001," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 20, no. 2 (2002): 47–76.

40 Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Homi K. Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 2013), xi.

41 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 142–144, 188–192.

42 Gregor McLennan, "Sociology, Eurocentrism and Postcolonial Theory," *European Journal of Social Theory* 6, no. 1 (July 24, 2003): 69–86.

gether social theory and textual analysis.[43] Understanding what texts do in the world cannot be explained solely through text analysis.[44]

The method is not a formalized corpus of analytical and methodological techniques. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), of which PDA is a strand, grew out of critical linguistics in the 1970s.[45] Norman Fairclough first coined CDA in 1989, however, the central concepts of CDA such as power, ideology, and discourse came before from thinkers such as Bakhtin, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Michel Foucault, and Julia Kristeva.[46] The method has now acquired its own acronym and a "degree of stability, canonicity, and, indeed, conventionality."[47] If there is a generalisable approach in CDA, then it is the analytic movement between text and context. CDA, including PDA, explores the dynamic relationship between discourse and society, exploring how language and discourse interacts with and imposes itself on social, economic, and cultural conditions due to ideological forces and power relations.[48]

The aim of CDA has generally been to transform and empower the oppressed by deconstructing often hidden oppressive dominant discourse.[49] While I, in contrast, want to expose the dominant discourse to uncover my protagonists' discursive innovation, PDA is more appropriate. PDA documents and analytically explains "affirmative, emancipating and redressive texts and discourse practices" which can successfully lead to a redistribution of wealth and power.[50] PDA can identify marginal discourse, despite the tendency for marginal discourses to be dwarfed by dominant discourses, because it explores the instances in

43 Vijay Bhatia, John Flowerdew, and Rodney Jones, *Advances in Discourse Studies* (London: Routledge, 2008), 195; Rogers et al., "Critical Discourse Analysis," 1193.

44 Luke, "Beyond Science," 102; Alastair Pennycook, *Critical Applied Linguistics: A Critical Introduction* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2001).

45 Two books were particularly influential in the development of the method: Roger Fowler et al., *Language and Social Control* (London: Routledge, 1979); Gunther Kress and Robert Hodge, *Language and Ideology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979).

46 Rogers et al., "Critical Discourse Analysis," 1193.

47 Luke, "Beyond Science," 99. See also Breeze, "Critical Discourse Analysis," 493; Rogers et al., "Critical Discourse Analysis."

48 Luke, "Beyond Science," 100.

49 See Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard and Malcolm Coulthard, eds., *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), ix.

50 Allan Luke, "Notes on the Future of Critical Discourse Studies," *Critical Discourse Studies* 1, no. 1 (April 2004): xi; Luke, "Beyond Science and Ideology Critique: Developments in Critical Discourse Analysis," 98. See also Rogers et al., "Critical Discourse Analysis," 383.

which discourses are "blurred and mixed to create hybrid texts."[51] New discursive practices often appear as re/dis-articulations of dominant discourse and occur at the margins of dominant discourse.[52] In short, CDA generally deconstructs dominant discourse, while PDA aims to reconstruct marginal discourse.

What then does PDA entail? Firstly, as PDA brings together social theory with textual analysis, I explain how dialogism, my chosen social theory, is compatible with PDA. Secondly, as PDA requires a contextual analysis because it sees meaning-making as constructed within its context, I outline which contexts to analyze. Finally, I discuss the textual analysis, including the selection and handling of texts, the narrative structure, rhetorical devices, and how I identify and analyze what is left out of the text.

PDA, theoretically founded on Bakhtin's work, is compatible with the theory of dialogism because it treats discursive practices and what they do in society in the same way. To both dialogism and PDA, texts are language in use reflecting the production of meaning and social relations; discourses are a recurring chain of utterances, statements, and wordings across texts that are inherently ideological; all texts are made up of various worldviews; interlocutors have their own discursive resources due to their context; the meaning of a text is ultimately produced in its particular context; and each utterance is based on whom it is addressing and the anticipated response.

Furthermore, texts do not have equal effects on the world. The hierarchical structure of discourse includes authoritative and internally persuasive discourses. Authoritative and dominant discourses will intentionally, and often successfully, exert power in society by fixing its worldview as truth and universal[53] – e. g. India was seen as backward, regressive and therefore needed a foreign ruler in the late nineteenth century. These discourses uttered by powerful interlocutors like rulers are treated as common sensical, almost always accepted without much critique and widely disseminated. For instance, the idea of development

51 Allan Luke, "Text and Discourse in Education: An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis," *Review of Research in Education* 21, no. 1 (1995): 16. See also Luke, 39; Luke, "The Material Effects of the Word: Apologies, 'Stolen Children' and Public Discourse," 343 – 344, 348.

52 See e. g. Valbona Muzaka, "A Dialogic Approach to Understanding Regime Conflicts: The Case of the Development Agenda," *Third World Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2017): 61 – 83; Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984). Bhabha describes this process as a mutation of dominant discourses and genres (Homi Bhabha, "Unpacking My Library Again," *Midwest Modern Language Association* 28, no. 1 (1995): 5 – 18).

53 Luke, "Beyond Science," 101; Ruth Wodak, *Disorders of Discourse* (London: Longman, 1996), 17; James Martin, "Positive Discourse Analysis: Solidarity and Change," *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* 49, no. 1 (2004): 179 – 202.

or modernity in the late nineteenth century was widely accepted to have first appeared and been first conceptualized in Europe. Modernity was then said to have spread to other European countries, then to European settlements in America, eventually reaching Russia and Japan by the end of the nineteenth century.

Internally persuasive discourses are the opposite: they are uttered by marginalized figures such as by Indian protagonists and continually questioned and rarely disseminated. Bakhtin theorizes power also through the centrifugal tendencies of language, the same as PDA's concept of dominant discourse. Bakhtin found two opposing tendencies of language: a centralising tendency to construct one unitary language and a centrifugal tendency that diversifies language.[54] The former means that a dominant discourse can appear standard and fixed, but the latter supports that dominant discourse can still be overthrown by other discourses.

Moreover, PDA systematically helps the researcher to define the relevant contexts. I employ a categorization of contexts found in a recent survey of studies that use CDA.[55] First, the survey categorized context as space, time, practice, change, and process. The following paragraphs and Table 1 explain the most relevant contexts to my interlocutors.

These contexts (see Table 1) are relevant for several reasons. Firstly, they include the immediate spatial contexts in which the texts (intertextual) and my protagonists found themselves (situational, institutional, and national). The context is thus multi-spatial. The spatial contexts will affect meaning and discursive practices in diverse ways. For example, Dutt talked more openly about self-rule in India than in Britain. During a speech at the Madras Mahajana Sabha, an Indian national association based in the Madras Presidency, Dutt asserted that "the path which they thus point out to us is not the path of progress, but the path of death! The remedy of these physicians is that the patient, in order to be cured, should commit suicide!"[56] Dutt is referring to the British imperial administration who were bringing regress, rather than progress, to India.[57] "Self-government" was the only remedy for India's poverty.[58] In contrast, in a short

54 Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 67, 82, 270 – 274, 368, 376, 382, 425. See also Muzaka, "A Dialogic Approach," 65.

55 Shirley Leitch and Ian Palmer, "Analysing Texts in Context: Current Practices and New Protocols for Critical Discourse Analysis in Organization Studies," *Journal of Management Studies* 47, no. 6 (2010): 1194 – 1212.

56 Romesh Chunder Dutt, *Speeches and Papers on Indian Questions, 1897 to 1900* (Calcutta: Elm Press, 1902), 161 – 162.

57 Dutt, *Speeches and Papers*, 160.

58 Dutt, *Speeches and Papers*, 160.

Table 1: Contexts to be analysed.

Context as:	Subcategory	Explanation and Examples
Space	**Intra-textual**	Discursive practices need to be placed within their textual context – e. g. Dutt and Naoroji's quotation of a poem's verse were under different chapter headings in reference to different time periods, which changed the intention and, to some extent, the meaning of the quotation.
	Situational	The meaning of discourse will vary in different genres – e. g. the meaning of the text might vary depending on whether the primary source is a letter, lecture, speech, journal article, newspaper article or book.
	Institutional	The meaning of discourse will differ depending on where a study's protagonists are – e. g. this study's protagonists will address the British officials at Indian National Congress (INC), while they address primarily Indian audiences at the Social Conferences and learned societies.
	National	Meaning and discursive practices will differ in the two different national contexts relevant to my case study, India and Britain.
	Multi-spatial	The international, multi-institutional, and contextually diverse nature of the case study ultimately means that several contexts are important – e. g. the academic and policy contexts.
Time	**Intertextual**	Reference to past texts such as Smith's *Wealth of Nations* or List's *National Political Economy* and potential future discourses will impact the meaning of the text.
	Past events	Discursive practices will be determined by reference to past events – e. g. the late nineteenth century famines in India.
Practice	**Socio-cultural-economic-political**	The broader socio-cultural-economic-political contexts need to be laid out, e. g. India had competing political structures such as the Princely states versus the imperial British administration because it produced different discursive practices to explain the Indian experience.
	Ideological	The broader ideological context of how development ideology is defined and dealt with will affect the meaning of Indian Economics' texts – e. g. intellectual debates on development outside of India.
Change	**Contest**	The discursive context within which this study's protagonists found themselves was inherently competitive and resistant – Indian Economics argued for a different idea of development than the British imperialists.

publication published in London and sold to mostly British audiences, Dutt's used a more subtle approach, explaining how

> Englishmen have not done worse, but have done better, than any other national could have done in India under any form of absolute rule. The British administrators of India are not incompetent men, they are competent and able administrators, but they have failed because a system of absolute rule *must fail* to secure the interests of the people.[59]

"We do not," he continued, "propose any new departure; we do not approve of bold experiments; we suggest only improvements."[60] He proposed, in other words, "modest reforms," quite different from the speech in Madras, in which he called for Indians to rally together to take their country's fate into their own hands.[61] This is also an example of how power and inferiority can change the diffused knowledge.

Secondly, Indian Economics' texts need to be placed in their intertextual context. The intertextual context is citations and similar wordings and statements found in other existing texts both before and after the texts' dates of creation. The latter – after the text's date of creation – is relevant because utterances are determined by past and potential future utterances. The Indian economists would have deliberately chosen discursive practices familiar to the British (e. g. Ricardo's theory of trade). Yet, Indian Economics was able to preempt twentieth century dependency theory and the balanced growth policy framework. Both are examples of intertextual contexts.

The Indian economists were taught discursive practices (i. e. concepts, frameworks, and tools of analysis) from their imperial university education and existing literature that were primarily based on another regional context – as articulated by the Indian economists themselves.[62] The British educational reforms particularly helped Western liberalism to take root in India by establishing schools, universities, newspapers, and imperial law courts to disseminate its theories, concepts, and discursive practices.[63] For instance, Horace William Clift's *Elements of Political Economy* and J.S. Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* were the prescribed textbooks for history, law, politics, and economics degrees

59 Romesh Chunder Dutt, *Indian Famines, Their Causes and Prevention* (London: PS King, 1901), 15.

60 Dutt, *Indian Famines*, 15.

61 Dutt, *Indian Famines*, 16.

62 E. g. Govindarajan, *G. Subramania Iyer*; Ranade, *Essays*, 2.

63 See e. g. Bayly, *Recovering Liberties*; Seth, *Subject Lessons*; Andrew Sartori, *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

at least until the end of the nineteenth century.[64] India's first three universities of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras were established between 1856 and 1857, soon followed by additional universities in other parts of India.[65] The first matriculation examinations passed 219 graduates in 1857–1859, rising to 2,778 in 1881–1882.[66] For instance, Ranade, amongst the first batch of graduates from Bombay University in 1859, studied at the Elphinstone Institution.[67] The Indian economists employed discursive practices from existing Western schools of thought and contemporary debates in order to be understood and listened to by the imperial rulers.[68] The context is thus necessarily multidiscursive.

Thirdly, Indian Economics' texts refer to past events, which determine the meaning of the text. The relevant events are those referred to in the primary material. For instance, in Dutt's history of British India, he mentions several events to analyze, for example, the extent of poverty in India. He documented in particular the several famines that, according to him, proved the increasing poverty, because they were claiming ever more lives – e. g. Dutt listed and described famines beginning with the famine in Madras in 1783 and ending with the famine of Punjab, Rajputana Central Province, and Bombay in 1900.[69] Naoroji quoted the Queen's proclamation of 1858, making India an official territory of the British

64 Cited in Sharmin Khodaiji, "Formalising a Discipline: History of Economics and Economic Thought in Early-Twentieth Century India," in *21st Annual European Society for the History of Economic Thought Conference* (Antwerp, 2017).

65 See Syed Nurullah and Pangal Jayendra Naik, *History of Education in India during the British Period* (Bombay: Macmillan and Company, 1943), 218–236.

66 In 1857, the universities of Calcutta and Madras passed 162 and 36 graduates in the final year examinations respectively, while Bombay University passed 21 in 1859. The number of applicants who sat the exams rose to 7,429 in 1881–1882 (Nurullah and Naik, *History of Education*, 227).

67 Rustom Pestonji Masani, *Dadabhai Naoroji: The Grand Old Man of India* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1939), chap. 2; "London School of Economics Library Archives on Britain and South Asia (16-Non-ILP Print: Miscellaneous). Independent Labour Party Papers: ILP/16/1901. 'Mahadev Govind Ranade: His Life and Career' (Madras: G. A. Natesan and Company, Esplanade) (Pamphlet)," 1901; "London School of Economics Library Archives on Britain and South Asia. Independent Labour Party Papers: ILP/8/1908/7–19. 'Dadabhai Naoroji: A Sketch of His Life and Life-Work' (Madras: G. A. Natesan and Company) (Pamphlet)," 1908.

68 Daniel Argov, *Moderates and Extremists in the Indian National Movement, 1883–1920: With Special Reference to Surendranath Banerjea and Lajpat Rai* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1967); Goswami, *Producing India*, 210; Jon Wilson, *India Conquered: Britain's Raj and the Chaos of Empire* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2016), 294–298.

69 Romesh Chunder Dutt, *Open Letters to Lord Curzon on Famines and Land Assessments in India* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Company Ltd., 1900), 2–15.

Crown.[70] Fourthly, the socio-cultural-economic-political and ideological contexts are important to interpret the texts. These contexts include, for example, the culturally, linguistically, religiously, socially, and politically diverse Indian national context and the development ideology first conceptualised in the early nineteenth century.

Finally, global developments produced a competitive and resistant nature of Indian Economics' discursive context. Britain's dominance was increasingly challenged, and inequalities were increasing in India due to, for instance, Britain's industrialization and India's subsequent marginal industrial growth and the Long Depression in Europe from 1873 to 1896.[71] Indian Economics were actively resisting and contesting British (and to a lesser extent European and North American) worldviews of development. The discursive practices reflect this struggle – sometimes through declared resistances in the texts and sometimes through rhetorical devices.

The final component of my method is the textual analysis. The textual analysis needs to compare the discursive practices or ideas in the primary texts.[72] I also need to identify the narrative structure and rhetorical devices, as well as identifying and analyzing what is omitted in the texts. The narrative structure of any given text has two components: plot and story.[73] The plot refers to how the story is told and when key conflicts are set up and resolved, attempting to identify the phases of the story.[74] The story includes several components – i. e. the key conflicts, main characters or protagonists, and events.[75] The stages of the story (plot) and its components (story) construct the elements, actors, and structure of the texts to gain a better understanding of the meaning being produced. For example, in Ranade's lecture on Indian Economics, the protagonist is creating more applicable economic thinking for India. However, when and how did he declare the need to create new economic theory in the lecture? Using plot and story, my analysis can systematically identify that while Ranade declared this need a few times (mainly at the beginning and end), most of the

70 Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Company, 1901), 1.

71 Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (New York: Verso, 2002); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014); Goswami, *Producing India*, 11.

72 Also argued by Michael Stubbs, "Whorf's Children: Critical Comments on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)," *British Studies in Applied Linguistics* 12 (1997): 100 – 116.

73 For an example, see Luke, "The Material Effects," 359 – 362.

74 Luke, "The Material Effects," 362.

75 Luke, "The Material Effects," 362; Luke, "Text and Discourse," 22.

lecture is filled with a history of different (European and North American) schools of political economy. There is no mention of an Indian tradition of political economy. In sum, the texts are analyzed in their entirety by exploring what is included in the narrative and how the narrative is told.

Moreover, my text analysis identifies rhetorical devices to explore what meanings and social relations these might reflect. Rhetorical devices are used by the interlocutor to convey a particular meaning to the audience with the aim to persuade them to consider a different perspective. The Indian economists in this period contested the imperial system which was, according to them, impoverishing India. They were therefore particularly prone to using the rhetorical device antanagoge, which places a criticism and complement together to lessen the impact. For instance, Naoroji submitted a text to the Welby Commission on January 31, 1897 – a group set up by the British government to investigate the wasteful spending in India. At the beginning of the text, he wrote the following: "Nobody can more appreciate the benefits of the British connexion than I do—Education in particular, appreciation of, and desire for, British political institutions, law and order, freedom of speech and public meeting, and several important social reforms. All these are the glory of England and gratitude of India."[76]

At the end of the speech, his tone had changed: "They call us fellow-citizens, and they must make their word a reality, instead of what it is at present, an untruth and a romance—simply a relationship of slave-holder and slave."[77] The presence of gratitude for the imperial administration and a critique of the same administration in the primary material shows how the context affects the knowledge diffused and produced.

Other rhetorical devices such as metaphors, analogies, and similes are important to analyze as they shift the meaning of words. In particular, natural science metaphors were used to explain societal change – e. g. social progress was likened to human growth. The use of such metaphors was not unique to these scholars, but rather shows that they were taking part in a global conversation on how to understand and explain societal phenomena through natural science processes.

Finally, the unsaid and unwritten also has a meaning and can have powerful concrete effects.[78] The Indian economists would certainly have left out certain opinions and theories from their writings and speeches to persuade the British

76 Dadabhai Naoroji, *Essays, Speeches, Addresses and Writings (on Indian Politics) of Hon-Ble Dababhai Naoroji*, ed. Chunilal Lallubhai Parekh (Bombay: Caxton Printing Works, 1887), 375.
77 Naoroji, *Essays*, 395.
78 For further explanation and examples, see Luke, "Text and Discourse," 31; Luke, "Beyond Science," 104.

to listen, and hopefully act. For instance, in some texts the wish for self-rule was never expressed. For example, Naoroji submitted a document to the Welby Commission on March 21, 1896, in which he concluded: "I must not be misunderstood. When I use the words "Native States," I do not for a moment mean that these new States are to revert to the old system of government of Native rule. Not at all."[79] Yet, we know from letters between Naoroji and Dutt that Naoroji urged Dutt to stop arguing for a decrease in the land tax, because it distracted from the real issue.[80] "Till the bleeding ceases and India is moving towards self government and self enjoying her own resources, there is no hope of better days," wrote Naoroji to Dutt in 1903.[81] More forcefully, two days later, Naoroji wrote: "The Fundamental *cause*, the cause of the whole mischief is the "Foreign domination" and as long as that continues, there is no hope."[82] During this earlier period of the nationalist movement in the late nineteenth century, the Indian economists were under the impression that moderate change through the imperial administration was their best strategy for harnessing progress in India.[83] Yet, self-rule was still the plan in the long-run. This, however, was not mentioned extensively at the early meetings of the Indian National Congress.

There are naturally limitations of the PDA method. Firstly, the method may avoid structural constraints when the focus is identifying and analyzing marginalized voices.[84] Nevertheless, based on my method of contextualization above, my study does not risk ignoring the structural constraints. The constraints are rather made explicit to understand why certain utterances are made in certain ways and what they may mean considering those constraints. Secondly, analyses using PDA can suffer from being solely confined to the analyst's criteria of agency[85] – something Bakhtin in fact theorises in dialogism, insisting that we must acknowledge that the researcher will influence the findings of any study.[86] Historical studies without method, however, suffer from this researcher bias, too. In fact, I would argue that the bias is often amplified when the researcher lacks a

79 Naoroji, *Essays*, 371.

80 Dadabhai Naoroji, *Dadabhai Naoroji: Selected Private Papers*, ed. S. R. Mehrotra and Dinyar Patel (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 155–174.

81 Naoroji, *Selected Private Papers*, 165.

82 Naoroji, *Selected Private Papers*, 167.

83 For instance, Banerjea uttered at the Indian National Congress in 1885 that "our motto is reform not revolution," quoted in Argov, *Moderates and Extremists*, 47.

84 Bartlett, *Hybrid Voices*.

85 Rebecca Rogers and Melissa Mosley Wetzel, "Studying Agency in Literacy Teacher Education: A Layered Approach to Positive Discourse Analysis," *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* 10, no. 1 (2013): 62–92; Bartlett, *Hybrid Voices*.

86 *Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination*.

road map of which contexts to analyze and how to analyze them. The historian without method is more likely to lose him- or herself in their own predispositions.

Nevertheless, does PDA risk making studies too inflexible or does outlining a method like this wrongfully undermine the richer historical studies that contextualize brilliantly without an explicit method? Moreover, does the historical method (if there exists one overarching approach) have its own advantages for the study of history, while linguistics and sociology, where discourse analysis emerged, have their proper research objects that require a method like PDA? Doing history started for me in graduate school, having done my first degrees in economics, so perhaps my arguments for outlining a more concrete process of contextualizing my primary texts come from that earlier training in a discipline, in my opinion, excessively grounded in positivist epistemology and empirical methods. My arguments for this approach are, to some extent, rooted in these two facts: my economics background and my distrust of dogmatic positivism and empiricism. I have found in this approach an in-between that suits my research object well. I shall let the reader decide whether they find dialogism and PDA a valuable approach for their future research.

Conclusion

I have shown that dialogism helps my analysis to understand meaning production as a fundamentally dialogic process whereby meanings are produced in interaction with other meanings. Through dialogism's various concepts, I can explain how discourse provides interlocutors with words to assert a particular viewpoint but those same discourses constrain interlocutors with a limited set of words. Utterances are thus made up of divergent meanings, views of the world, and ideologies.

I then showed how PDA enables me to systematically analyze those different types of discourse characterized in dialogism. PDA is particularly appropriate for my research question because it aims to identify marginal discourses, like Indian Economics, which are often dwarfed by and situated at the margins of dominant discourses. The steps of PDA are to first identify the dominant discourse in the marginal discourse (Indian Economics' texts) and then to identify the discursive innovation and hybridization caused by the joining of these different discourses. I argued that the combination of dialogism and PDA enabled me to contribute new insights on the idea of development in Indian Economics.

Finally, the approach is applicable to other actors beyond colonial natives. For example, uncovering female economists, long underappreciated, is a benefit

of this research design. Dialogism lays out a foundation of understanding how meaning making happens in society, applicable to all actors. PDA's framework of identifying and analyzing the various contexts can be applied to other marginalized actors' contexts. It requires the researcher to identify and understand the specific relevant contexts applicable to their marginalized actor(s).

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HIC Conversation with Thorsten Logge, Stefan Krebs, Mark Tebeau, and Tizian Zumthurm edited by Charlotte A. Lerg

Documenting COVID-19 for Future Historians?

Abstract: This conversation-style exchange explores the processes and practices of archiving different kinds of sources generated during the COVID-19 pandemic. The teams behind three digital collection projects from three different national contexts reflect on their work and the challenges they faced and still face. The text contemplates theoretical and methodological questions, as well as issues of infrastructure, resources and technology.

Keywords: COVID-19; digital history; citizen science; archives

Historians study the past; but like everyone else, they live in the present and look to the future – including the future of writing a history of that very present. In line with this particular set-up, a number of collection projects[1] sprung up around the world when the COVID-19 pandemic began to unfold in the spring of 2020.[2] Using the opportunities of digital technology and building on previous examples that involved the public in source collection processes, all the projects engage with issues of participation, organisation and conservation. As such they not only speak to the current political and historical moment(s), but also tie into different methodological and theoretical questions that are very much part of a larger discussion within the field, such as issues of crowdsourcing and citizen science in the humanities, the challenges of rapid-response archives, and long-term use of born-digital material. All of these are key aspects to consider in discussing participatory structures and mechanisms in the generation, dissemination, and conservation of knowledge.

While documentation was (and is) the principal goal of these digital collection projects when they started, more than two years into the process, their work

1 Laura Spinney: What are COVID archivists keeping for tomorrow's historians? *Nature*, vol. 588 (December 24/31 2020): 578 – 580.

2 The International Federation for Public History has created a map that provides a good overview of the various collection efforts worldwide, accessed March 22, 2022, https://ifph.hypotheses.org/3225; see also Tizian Zumthurm, "Crowdsourced COVID-19 Collections: A Brief Overview," *International Public History* 4, no. 1 (2021): 77–83, accessed March 22, 2022: https://doi.org/10.1515/iph-2021-2021.

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110748819-011

(sometimes indirectly) also sheds light on the dynamics of academic research and public engagement. Moreover, as the pandemic is still ongoing, the way we strive to document it is ever evolving. Besides juggling funds, personal resources and public communication, technological as well as legal issues also need to be addressed. But beside practical issues, we are increasingly seeing theoretical questions come into focus.

Having contacted the teams behind a number of projects in various parts of the world, we at HIC were delighted that three of them (from Luxembourg, Germany, and the United States) have agreed to contribute to what initially we conceived of as a "written conversation." It has developed into a group reflection, which unfolded over two rounds of questions and commentaries between the summer of 2021 and the spring of 2022. It invites readers to engage with the ideas, challenges and methodologies that are being proposed, probed, and practised.[3] Aiming to capture the liminal nature of the current situation and the work-in-progress character of these projects, we have opted for an open format that leaves room for descriptions of the experiences and of challenges still to be met, prompting reflection on possible avenues to explore and lessons learned.

Genesis and Infrastructure

A Journal of the Plague Year: An Archive of COVID-19 **(JOTPY)**, USA emerged on Friday, March 13, 2020, two days after the World Health Organization declared the pandemic (and one day after US President Trump did the same). As schools, including Arizona State University, closed and events were cancelled, Professor Catherine O'Donnell wrote to colleagues (Professors Richard Amesbury and Mark Tebeau) about working with students to create a "repository of this strange time." She wrote, "students would be acting less as historians, admittedly, than as chroniclers, recorders, memoirists, image collectors … but collecting materials … that they think a future historian would want is thinking like a historian." Tebeau immediately connected the dots to the tradition of rapid-response archiving that followed from the *September 11 Digital Archive*[4] to the *Hurricane*

3 As this text was coming together, it became evident that the various uses of verbs with regard to how the sources and the collections came to "be" pointed towards yet another theoretical debate. After all, it seemed to be something over and above "collecting" but should we talk about "producing" or "manufacturing" sources? What about a more fundamental (or organic) term like "creating"? It is worth drawing attention to this issue, even if it was impossible, in this text, to follow up on such deliberations.

4 https://911digitalarchive.org, accessed June 27, 2022.

Katrina Digital Memory Bank[5] through the *Our Marathon* project. Within an hour, the team had launched the project, initially titled *A Journal of a Plague Semester*, ironically drawing on Daniel Dafoe's novel. Within weeks, as the scope of the pandemic became clear, we renamed it *A Journal of the Plague Year*.

We created our project using the Omeka content-management system largely because it both developed out of previous rapid-response collecting efforts and because it has been proven as a viable option for rapid-response collecting. We also began the project using a hosted version of Omeka, allowing the project to grow organically. Later, we transitioned to Omeka-S to integrate the many partners that became part of the collective. Omeka-S is distinguished by the ability to have many different views and approaches to the archive, while sharing a common data-set.

JOTPY grew organically from scholarly and community interests across the world, with partners in Australia, the Philippines, Canada, and across approximately 30 states in the United States, becoming a meaningful collaborative endeavor with a dozen scholars and archivists leading the effort collectively. Largely, our curators have been scholars including especially historians, but also sociologists, political scientists, cultural as well as language scholars, for example, from American studies; team members also draw from library, archive, and museum communities. JOTPY received funding from a variety of sources at ASU, including the public history endowment, the College of Arts & Sciences Humanities Dean, and the Institute for Humanities Research. The American Council for Learned Societies funded a post-doctoral fellow for the project, and the Arizona Humanities Council funded collecting of materials in Arizona. The archive has grown to more than 16,000 digital objects; it has had more than 10,000 individual contributors. Hundreds of students in both high school and university settings have also contributed.

* * *

covidmemory.lu (Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History): After the first lockdown measures were introduced in Luxembourg in mid-March 2020, Professor Sean Takats launched the idea for covidmemory.lu, an online platform "to map and historicise the impact of COVID-19 in Luxembourg."[6] It was also inspired by rapid-response collecting projects in which he had been previously involved (the *9/11 Digital Archive* and *Hurricane Katrina Digital Mem-*

5 http://hurricanearchive.org, accessed June 27, 2022.

6 Description of the C^{2}DH Slack channel that Sean Takats created for the coordination of the project on March 23, 2020.

ory Bank). Like those digital memory banks, covidmemory.lu runs on Omeka-S, a software application specifically tailored for online collections and exhibitions that has been developed along with the projects.

However, unlike the collection projects for Hurricane Katrina and the 9/11 terrorist attacks, covidmemory.lu was not about an event that is finished; its focus was something that was still unfolding during the collection process. Within a few days, a team of designers, programmers and historians from the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C^2DH) joined the project and Assistant Professor Stefan Krebs agreed to act as project lead. With all the project participants working remotely from home (using emails, instant messaging, and video conferences), covidmemory.lu was also a response to a novel work situation; it not only provided an opportunity for people to share their experiences but also helped to keep the team motivated. The main goal of the platform, however, has always been to preserve experiences of the pandemic for future generations.

The historians discussed the narrative framework of the platform and prepared the review and curation processes, and the designers and programmers developed a smoother and more inviting user interface than that offered by most Omeka-S websites. The team worked hard to create a collecting platform with four working languages, an essential requirement for a multilingual country such as Luxembourg.

Stefan Krebs (PI) and Sean Takats acquired a COVID-19 fast-track grant from the Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) for the technical development of the platform, which allows us to host additional collections and to curate and showcase small online exhibitions in the future. With additional funding from the C^2DH, postdoctoral researcher Tizian Zumthurm is currently maintaining the platform on a day-to-day basis. Besides acquiring new contributions, we need to ensure accessibility, compatibility, and long-term archiving. The C^2DH is first and foremost an institution for historical research rather than an historical archive.

The covidmemory.lu website was launched on April 3, 2020 and received regular radio, television and newspaper coverage throughout the year. So far, we have received some 350 submissions, about a dozen of which have not been published. Photographs make up roughly half of all the items, but there are also videos, diaries, poems, cartoons, and other types of content. While we had hoped for more resonance among the general public, it is worth noting that similar platforms in Germany and Switzerland, for example, have published about seven to eight times fewer contributions per 100,000 inhabitants.

* * *

The **coronarchiv (Germany)** is a digital born crowdsourcing project. Its goal is to enable the decentral collecting of individual everyday experiences, thoughts, media, and memories during the "corona crisis." The archive was set up at the end of March 2020 by historians Prof. Dr. Christian Bunnenberg (Bochum), Prof. Dr. Thorsten Logge (Hamburg), Benjamin Roers (Gießen), and Nils Steffen (Hamburg). The coronarchiv is based on the free and open-source rapid-response collecting and publishing platform Omeka-S. The project is funded by the University of Hamburg, University of Gießen, Landeszentrale für poltische Bildung Hamburg and Stiftung Mitarbeit. At the peak the team consisted of 15 people from different disciplines e. g., Public History, History, Turkology, Latin American Studies, and Performance Studies. To generalize the experiences gained from the crowdsourcing activities and to make them available to future crowdsourcing projects in a crowdsourcing manual, a temporary CrowdsourcingLab was established in early 2021 with funding secured until October 2021.

As of mid-September 2021, the *coronarchiv* has a total number of 6,230 items, of which around 4,433 are publicly available on the website. The non-published items can be used for research upon request. Most of the objects are images, but as the pandemic progressed, the number of texts increased. Videos, audio files, and objects that consist of several medias are also available in smaller numbers.

Within the first 16 months, the *coronarchiv* has become one of the world's largest digital collections on the pandemic. It is available in five languages: German, English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Turkish. You can also find the project on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Data about Data: The Role of Metadata

JOTPY

Viewed over 20 years, one sees the evolution of rapid-response crisis archive. Metadata strategies in these archives have grown more elaborate, as is evident in the evolution of such projects, from the *September 11 Digital Archive* through to the *Hurricane Katrina Digital Memory Bank* to *Our Marathon*—in which the metadata is more elaborate with each new project, comprehensive and systemically implemented. Even so, building rich metadata has not always been a prime feature of rapid-response archives, which have often emphasized collecting stories over fully curating materials in their archives. Without effective metadata, it can be difficult to discover materials in the archive. As a result, we prioritized a curatorial process through which we described digital objects in great detail, al-

most from the archive's inception and providing robust metadata became a fundamental ethic. It both facilitates discoverability and builds context for researchers and publics. We expanded that program of thick description to include asking contributors to assign tags to archival submissions, enhancing the depth and breadth of the metadata. As a result, JOTPY metadata is unparalleled in rapid-response archiving and should set a new standard for what we are doing in this field. Indeed, without metadata, archives risk becoming attics, their contents perhaps preserved but largely unseen and unused. With metadata, current and future researchers and browsers will be able to aggregate and sort materials across the innumerable dimensions of pandemic experience, making possible far richer historical analysis and policy prescriptions—as well as fostering deeper empathy for past experiences. Moreover, expansive metadata allows for users to identify materials and stories, including lengthy oral histories, that interest them and to discover similar materials. This also has the benefit of making the archive legible to new cohorts of interns and project curators, who can see the process of making meaning at work in the archival metadata.

covidmemory.lu

Our primary concern when establishing the platform was to keep the bar for contributing as low as possible. The submission form thus contains only basic metadata fields: contributors can indicate when and where the "memory" occurred. They can also provide their name, email address, and place of residence; this information is not made public. Omeka-S automatically saves some additional data, e. g. the date of the upload, an indication that at the moment does not appear on the website. If the curators decide not to publish an item, they note the reason for this in the backend. Future researchers will thus need access to the backend to obtain additional information.

We are currently reworking the web interface and the next version will publish more of the collected metadata that is currently only available in the backend. We are also adding curator tags to help retrieve meaningful entries when browsing the archive. At the same time, tagging already channels attention and might affect future research questions. In our case, we also have to think about which language we are using. Submissions are in Luxembourgish, German, French, and English. Prioritising one of these languages through tagging could influence the perceptions of other participants.

Finally, we observed that it is also possible to find additional metadata that have been unintentionally recorded in the properties of files that are frequently

attached to the contributions. This might include information that is not supposed to be public, such as the name of the creator.

coronarchiv

We are trying to balance the needs of curators, archivists, and historiographers for data quality, a maximum quantity of metadata and the usability of a platform that needs to establish as few barriers as possible to motivate contributions to the collection. The needs of historiographical practitioners and curators do not necessarily match the media practices and habits of the public. We always aimed at collecting as many objects as possible and set the barriers to contribute as low as possible. This then also leads to the fact that we collect by far not as much information on the individual objects as desired and expected by some professional stakeholders.

Methodological Thoughts

Rapid-Response Collecting?

coronarchiv

Contributions published on the *coronarchiv* website are medial speech acts that may contribute to the contemporary understanding of the pandemic experience. They can be used by the public to compare individual experiences with others and thereby help to classify and cope with one's own experience. Thereby the *coronarchiv* is part of "doing" the event: by documenting, describing, and mapping COVID-19 experiences, the rapid-response collecting and crowdsourcing activities and the *coronarchiv* are serving as a communication device taking part in the emergence of the pandemic as an event. This affects the nature and scope of the documentation process. The *coronarchiv* as a technical tool, its team, its communication activity and the media coverage during the pandemic need to be included into every source critique that deals with objects and items from the *coronarchiv*. The archive is not a post-event structure, but a communicative structure within the pandemic and therefore part of the discursive practices that make the event in terms of giving meaning to individual and collective experiences.

coronarchiv.lu

Right from the start of the project, historians in the team discussed the dilemma that we are concomitantly shaping the experiences of the pandemic that we would like to collect. The visual and textual framing of the website, our communications (e. g. posters and Facebook banners) and published contributions all inform visitors and contributions. The decision as to whether a submitted item is meaningful to the collection already influences the collection process, and the tagging of entries has an even greater impact. The fact that we have so many more contributions from the first wave is an illustration of this point. We find it difficult to assess to what degree we shape the event itself or the memory of it. Several factors should be considered: how representative can such a platform be? For example, are we reaching out to specific social groups that are close to our own socio-economic and political positions in society? What is the relationship between how the event is featured in (social) media and how it is framed on digital memory banks?

Moreover, what is already published on the platform influences what will be uploaded later. We have to bear in mind that with digital memory banks we are not simply archiving memories. People have specific reasons to contribute and they do so in specific ways. School assignments, which can be found on many of our platforms, are only the most obvious type of submission that has been created with a particular audience in mind. More centrally, human behaviour and self-presentation on any sort of digital platform generally follows certain conventions.[7] Reflecting on how digital archives change modes of access and storage, media theorist Wolfgang Ernst underlines that "the so-called cyberspace is not primarily about memory as cultural record but rather about a performative form of memory as communication."[8] This shift forces us to rethink how historical knowledge in memory banks is epistemically constituted and how scholars can reflect and write about it.

JOTPY

Documenting the pandemic required that the team collect digital artifacts and build metadata on the fly. In many ways, this makes archives of the pandemic

7 Anna Poletti and Julie Rak, *Identity Technologies: Constructing the Self Online* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014).

8 Wolfgang Ernst, *Digital Memory and the Archive* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 99.

fundamentally different in scope and scale from their peer crisis archives. The current COVID-19 crisis disdains temporal boundaries as it does the geographic; as it rolls on, talk of "spikes" and "waves" only heightens our unease about its formlessness and threatened endlessness. It's true that all crises have long-term repercussions: the *Hurricane Katrina Digital Memory Bank*, for example, brilliantly documented ongoing economic dislocation as well as the rebuilding of communities and lives. But the COVID-19 pandemic happens and happens and happens some more, with no division between event and aftermath yet possible. The pandemic also unmoors us in a second way, obliterating the activities that drew us together and oriented us in time: morning rush hours, work schedules, classroom bells, sports seasons. This temporal disorientation can turn our faces toward each other: "When will it end?" we ask. And: "Do you know what day it is?" But it also threatens to heighten the mistrust incipient in all contagion, as we argue over what stage of the pandemic we have entered and how—even whether—to respond. In short, like the pandemic's geographic expansiveness, its messy, temporal sprawl threatens division and thus requires collectivity.

Toward addressing these concerns we developed an approach that team members (Professors Marissa Rhodes and Katy Kole de Peralta coined it) call "rolling-response archiving." Recognizing that the pandemic was not merely a moment but an ongoing societal crisis transformed our collecting efforts toward building specific "calls to action," in which we solicited materials on certain themes. Also, this generated our iterative approach to team building that crossed traditional institutional boundaries. You see this rolling-response aspect in our approach to metadata collecting and curating, emphasizing both a depth and breadth of descriptive terms. At the same time, we also drew upon the rapid-response literature, in terms of thinking about process and practices; in terms of ethics we drew upon *Documenting the Now.*[9]

Crowdsourcing: Digital History "From Below"?

coronarchiv

Crowdsourcing in the humanities is a means to enhance evidential material for curated and narrated historiographies in the present and in the future. It adds to the official records and the mass-media documentation of discourses and happenings. In this regard, crowdsourcing in the humanities connects to the de-

9 https://www.docnow.io, accessed June 27, 2022.

mands of everyday history and the need to cope with the experiences of "ordinary" people.

Crowdsourcing engages the broader public and can raise the number of voices heard. By offering participation in the collecting process, it starts at the very beginning of the historiographical process: the production of the source material. Therefore, crowdsourcing can serve as a practical gateway for theoretical reflections on the very nature of historiography itself: the sources. If participation is enhanced to curatorial and narrative practices, the selection, curation, ordering, and narration of the traces as sources can serve as an entry to theoretical reflections on the nature of history production in diverse forms and formats.

Crowdsourcing can help to transfer traces and sources from the private to the public realm. If used to preserve subcultural, marginalized, or less recognized individuals, groups and processes, it can serve as a hub for raising of valuable and necessary resources for historiography and/or new histories beyond master narratives. However, we experienced that the providing of a technological solution to contribute memories or digital artifacts does not automatically lead to more contributions from all parts of the society. It also needs self-esteem and a conviction of one's own importance to deem self-documentation important and necessary. To reach all sections of society without authoritative access seems unattainable and should not be the goal of such a project. To encourage people to see their own lives as worthy of being handed down and documented is a challenge that needs reflections on communication strategies and engagement in general.

covidmemory.lu

Digital memory banks are instruments that enable the production of sources "from below." Finding such voices is deeply rooted in the academic tradition of public history and related initiatives like the *Geschichtswerkstätten* (history workshop) movement.[10] What is comparatively new is that crowdsourcing occurs digitally, which opens up new spatial scopes and allows material to be collected with unprecedented speed. For the discipline of contemporary history, crowdsourcing is rather unusual, especially crowdsourcing in and about the present. Historians normally rely on other collecting institutions like (state) archives

10 For the theoretical grounding e. g. Sven Lindqvist, *Gräv där du star* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1978); Alf Lüdtke, ed., *Alltagsgeschichte: Zur Rekonstruktion historischer Erfahrungen und Lebensweisen* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 1989). See also: *The History Workshop Journal* (Oxford University Press) http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk, accessed March 22, 2022.

and (university) libraries, and they prefer to allow a greater temporal distance to assess the relevance of the material at their disposal.

For us crowdsourcing is a method used to build an archive for future histories of the pandemic but this also raises questions about how these future histories can be told and how historiographies based on born-digital material can be written. A possible route of enquiry is to analyze how crowdsourced evidence as a core element of future historiographies is produced in the digital space. Another angle is to examine the material collected and its use in narrative and curatorial practices. We can study the potential impact of crowdsourced archives on historiography by analysing what sorts of narratives can be created through such projects and what gaps exist.

In addition, crowdsourcing is also a means for contributors to come to terms with what is happening (or what has happened). In this way it can also have a therapeutic effect. The collecting platform gives individuals an audience and offers them insights into the experiences of others, reassuring them that they are not alone in struggling with frustrations and fears.

JOTPY

Crowdsourcing continues to evolve in the humanities, from its earliest days when it meant simply taking materials from communities toward richer formats in the present when it also means that communities take a more active role in the co-creation of knowledge. In the case of JOTPY, the community is assigning metadata to the objects they collect, making them part of the process of metadata assignment. They are not merely providing a service—doing an activity or sharing a photograph—they are helping to interpret it.

More broadly, crowdsourcing has always been part of the humanities, as citizens shared their own materials with archives or wrote local histories. What has changed is that a broader range of citizens is now engaged in the process of archival creation. For example, JOTPY seeks stories from those whose stories and voices are traditionally silenced by archival collecting. This includes those on the margins of society whether based on social class, race, ethnicity, gender, or age. In the case of JOTPY, we have significant collections from the borders of the United States where too many people are invisible, and the majority of contributions come from women.

Also, in the field, we see the scale and scope of crowdsourcing continuing to grow. The future challenge will be to channel social media storytelling and archiving toward more formal archives that have staying power (and are not stored

or searched in commercial spaces, not merely stored by for-profit corporations but where the historical record itself is being monetised).

A Citizen Science Approach?

coronarchiv

When the *coronarchiv* started, it was a spontaneous endeavor that aimed at enabling a documentation of the open process of the pandemic. We wanted to provide a digital container that suits the everyday practices of the public without the economic interest and the discursive setting (followers, audiences, self-presentation) of social media platforms. The idea was to gain insights into temporary reflections and documentations of an open-ended process and without knowing the outcomes of the situation. At that stage, the project can mainly be seen as a citizen science project in the style of the numerous projects that engage the public as contributors of data (numbers of insects, animals, plants, temperature, or air quality measurements etc.). The unexpected great success, media coverage and inflow of contributions then overloaded the resources of the project team quickly and for a longer time.

In the winter 2020/2021 we established a more theoretical reflection by raising funds for the installation of a CrowdsourcingLab that worked on the creation of a crowdsourcing manual for the humanities. We also developed and submitted a transnational grant proposal with the Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C^2DH) in Luxembourg to research rapid response collecting, crowdsourcing and participative historiography as citizen science that is still under review.

Thus, the project grew from a spontaneous public history intervention to a project that explores crowdsourcing as citizen science, participatory historiography and theoretical reflections on traces and sources as foundational elements of historiographical practices.

covidmemory.lu

One problem with this notion is that definitions of "citizen science" are many and varied. In the sense outlined above by the coronarchiv team, covidmemory.lu (and other digital memory banks) are all citizen science projects, of course. In our conception, however, historical citizen science includes some degree of historical interpretation or analysis of data. We would thus characterize covidmemory.lu as crowdsourcing rather than citizen science. Contributors currently

have no possibility of interacting with contributions by themselves or others. Unlike other platforms, we do not offer comments or public tagging. So, the question here is: what exactly is the difference between crowdsourcing and citizen science when speaking about rapid-response collections? In order to understand differences between citizen science and crowdsourcing in public history and historical knowledge production we need to refine and clarify such questions. The envisioned joint project with coronarchiv aims to do so by investigating how historical traces and sources are produced in this context and what kind of narratives emerge from them.

JOTPY

We have embraced the idea that community curation represents a citizen science approach to knowledge production. However, there are limitations to our approach. Individual contributors often lack the knowledge to be sophisticated curators of their own materials. We would likely have to do more systemic and expert trainings for contributors but this may dissuade contributions. Regardless, the metadata we are getting from contributors is surprisingly insightful and incisive, if imperfect. But, then again, all metadata is imperfect.

Contributors (and communities broadly) have the ability to assign metadata to the materials through a plug-in that we are using in Omeka Plus. Unfortunately, most people are unaware that they can do this, as it is not obvious this feature is available, nor have we promoted this aspect of JOTPY very much. As a result, very few people actually add tags to the items.

Finally, our approach has been to build common cause with communities as a way to engage those communities traditionally silenced by archives but also as a more affirmative way of collecting. This is, by definition, a citizen science approach to building a crowdsourced archive because it transforms partners into co-creators of the project.

Structural Challenges

Silences in the Archives

covidmemory.lu

The main challenge is to fill the gaps in our archive. If the aim of the collection is to document a future everyday history of the pandemic, we have to acknowledge the obvious limits concerning the social groups we seem to reach, i. e. those who wish to share their experiences.

There are a number of archival silences that need to be overcome. The platform needs more contributions from underrepresented social groups, for example people who were particularly or even existentially affected by the pandemic. It also needs more contributions related to the "new normal" since summer 2020. We are encouraging people to contribute despite their apparent "pandemic fatigue" [as discussed further below].

coronarchiv

Long term digital preservation is an honorable goal but is complicated by the fact that all team members are employed on a temporary basis. Thus, the sustainability of the project is not only a question of technical means and resources but is also endangered by current employment policies. Hence, the project team cannot actively seek material due to manpower and resources. The project, therefore, primarily reaches members of social strata with the time and the technical means to participate in digital collecting, who consider self-documentation in what is perceived as an historically significant situation and actively strive to do so. To expand diversity in our archive has been a challenge from the beginning, though we tried to reach new communities by cooperation e. g., with the German Red Cross, local and regional archives, the activities of the CrowdsourcingLab and via our social media channels.

covidmemory.lu

We have opted for open calls for contributions aimed at everyone living or working in Luxembourg, instead of actively collecting memories among certain communities. The former reduces our impact as historians on the style and topics of

submissions, but the latter would allow us to directly target certain groups which we have not yet reached. Since we do not want to change our approach, the challenge is to reach out to these absent voices, for example with newspaper coverage and radio interviews.

Moreover, we plan to host other collections that are likely to expand our view of the pandemic in Luxembourg. Some of them have a similar approach with an open call to the public, for example the initiative launched by the Lëtzebuerg City Museum[11] to look for material objects that have been produced or have received new meaning during the pandemic. Other projects have produced knowledge in different ways, such as the impressive "Yes we care" oral history collection[12] initiated by our colleague Professor Benoît Majerus. Together with other C²DH historians, he has conducted more than 350 short interviews every two weeks with 21 people working in the Luxembourg care sector (e. g. nurses, doctors, directors of health institutions, a funeral home employee and a physiotherapist). These interviews are going on at a reduced pace and provide insights into dimensions of the pandemic (such as health effects and implications, suffering and death) that are largely absent from our *covidmemory* collection.

JOTPY

We have tried to confront the silences of the traditional archive. Archives, as we know, remain silent at a variety of boundaries—often based on present-day power relations. JOTPY has sought those voices that are often muted and distorted by contemporary injustice and inequality: people living in poverty, African-Americans, Native Americans, LatinX communities, and the elderly have been among those who have been infected, hospitalized, and died at higher rates than other groups. Communities with less social and economic capital also have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and its economic impacts. Not surprisingly, these groups also have relatively fewer resources, less access to digital platforms, and less leisure time to document their experiences or participate in the (usually) university-based efforts at documentation.

To address these needs, project partners reached out directly to marginalized communities, providing them with training or direct support for uploading images. We also recognized that using digital archives is not self-evident, so we de-

11 The Lëtzebuerg City Museum: Collecting in the Age of Coronavirus: https://citymuseum.lu/en/news/collecting-in-the-age-of-coronavirus, accessed June 27, 2022.

12 C2DH: "Thinkering": https://www.c2dh.uni.lu/thinkering/traces-et-memoires-dune-pandemie-en-cours-yes-we-care, accessed June 27, 2022.

veloped forms and trainings that would make it easier for contributors to share their stories. Importantly, training people to collect is not just about technical matters; quite often it is about teaching ordinary people—especially those with less social and political capital—that they matter. Public engagement teaches both contributors and researchers how to add to the collections, helping to drive collecting forward. It also has forced us to think more critically about how the materials might be used for research in the future, shaping design (and redesign work). We built our programming out of topics and trends that we saw emerging in the archive, often leading to specific "calls to action" that invited contributions.

Misinformation and Hate Speech

JOTPY

We also encountered problems in terms of collecting and describing misinformation and/or hoaxes. Indeed, the pandemic also emerged in a variety of ways within the broader cultural and political sphere. It grew into a potent and central campaign issue in the United State presidential election. At the same time, the multi-year disinformation campaign that became a signal feature of Donald Trump's presidency—with more than 20,000 documented false or misleading statements according to *The Washington Post*[13]—have complicated the team's efforts to document the crisis. Broader discussions of truth, hoax, and misinformation—including the question of whether the pandemic even existed—have shaped the archive, though they remain somewhat unresolved.

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We do not see the project as a normative gate keeper, but at the same time we did not experience misinformation or hate speech as a major problem. There were only a few items of fake news or individual contributions that showed proximity to conspiracy ideologies, but, after all, these are part of the pandemic experience and need to be traced and documented, too.

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13 Glenn Kessler, Salvador Rizzo, and Meg Kelly "President Trump has made more than 20,000 false or misleading claims" *The Washington Post* (July 13, 2020). https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/07/13/president-trump-has-made-more-than-20000-false-or-misleading-claims/, accessed June 27, 2022.

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We review all contributions before publication to ensure that they are legally compliant, e. g. concerning copyright or hate speech. We take these legal obligations seriously but try to approach them in such a way that they are not too onerous and frustrating for contributors. In general, however, the contributions that remain unpublished are those without any obvious link to the pandemic. As mentioned in our introduction above, about a dozen out of the 350 contributions do not appear on the platform.

Misinformation and hate speech are socially important aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic and should also be included in our archives if uploaded by the public. However, these voices are absent from covidmemory.lu. Thus, future historians might obtain a distorted picture from our platforms. We can only assume that they will also look into other sources where critics of pandemic measures, conspiracy theorists, deniers, etc. are represented.

Privacy

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On a conceptual level, one of the greatest challenges is to find a balance between user friendliness, data privacy, and digital preservation need. While we strive to make the uploading process as easy as possible for our users, data privacy rules and regulations force the implementation of restrictions that might discourage people to upload their corona experiences. At the same time, lower contribution barriers also impact the collecting of metadata. This affects the data quality for future research as well as digital preservation.

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When setting up the memory bank and creating the submission form we followed the principle of data economy, asking for only those personal data needed for the collection and curation process. Contributors may stay anonymous or submit some personal information that will not be published on the webpage. Overall, the submission process is more complicated than contributing to most social media platforms as participants have to fill out a relatively detailed form and accept the legal and technical terms every time they submit a post. This process might work as a filter that prevents people from uploading imme-

diate and emotional responses. Moreover, people who have grown used to being able to comment and post content easily, may feel discouraged from uploading something on our platform.

JOTPY

As we started collecting, we realized the potential danger of revealing private medical information shared by our users. We worried that laws and rules that govern medical providers might also be relevant to JOTPY. And, although we later learned that contributors sharing their own or others medical information did not put us in jeopardy, we nonetheless redacted certain private information shared by contributors about health issues pertaining to individuals other than themselves, especially in the oral history collections. Likewise, as contributors began sharing images of social protest, we also recognized that photographs of protesters could be used by law enforcement or other agencies to identify individual protesters other than those who contributed those images. As a result, we set in place a policy where our curators could redact or blur the public view of individuals (who were not the contributor) in photographs; we retained the original images in our database. Protecting privacy emerged as a central point of conversation.

Pandemic Fatigue

JOTPY

Pandemic fatigue can be understood in terms of growing weary of the pandemic, but also adjusting to what one might call the "new normal." And, indeed, over time pandemic fatigue appeared in the archive, especially toward the end of the first year of the crisis. During the first several months through the summer of 2020, contributions to the archive poured in, including with renewed vigor in Fall 2020. By October, JOTPY had crossed the threshold of 10,000 contributions (in the first eight months). Following the presidential election in the United States, the rate of contribution slowed. By the new year the rate of contributions decreased further, with many of them being about the vaccination program in the United States, which began in earnest in January and February. As hope about the ending of the pandemic increased, our contributions slowed further, including as life seemed to be on the verge of returning to normal in June, prior to the emergence of the Delta variant.

The slowing of contributions forced us to think critically about the sorts of "calls to contribute" that our curatorial team, including especially interns, could seek. In particular, we have worried that as the novelty of the pandemic wore off, the relative slowing of the pandemic might give misimpressions to researchers about the trajectory of the pandemic. For example, the pandemic has surely disrupted supply chains across the globe (or led to impulse and bulk buying), leading to an early influx of photographs about absences of products—toilet paper or condoms, for examples—on store shelves. Contributors shared these early disruptions, often attributing them to irrationality, in large numbers. By contrast, as pandemic fatigue slowly set in, and life changed during the pandemic, other limitations of the supply chain, as well as changing social conditions, made their way into the consumer landscape. Plywood, for instance, drove up construction costs for homes. This happened as demand for houses increased and supply diminished (because people started spending more time at home)—all of which also served to drive up prices. The pandemic, as well as other externalities, also caused shortages of microchips, high chlorine prices (for sanitation), and of both new and used cars. Unfortunately, some of these subtler elements of how the pandemic shaped the consumer landscape are less well documented in JOTPY because pandemic fatigue set in and created a new normal in which such inconveniences and/or shortages seemed ordinary.

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Numbers of contributions seem to go down when infection rates decline, however, we have not had a chance to analyse our data in depth so it is impossible to say, at this point, if this observed correlation really holds true.

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When the platform was launched in April 2020, researchers and contributors alike were very much in the moment. The former were keen to provide possibilities for documentation which the latter actively embraced. With the transition from the first to the second wave of COVID-19 infections, the number of contributions decreased and the platform's focus changed to providing a resource for future generations. As of January 2022, only 71 of the published contributions date from August 2020 or later. Moreover, a considerable number of them are still about the first wave; the second and third waves are somewhat absent, despite the fact that infection rates have been much higher than during the first wave.

The platform speaks to two audiences: researchers and the "public." The latter needs to know that covidmemory.lu is still active and that we are still seeking new contributions. Every upload matters; nothing is too trivial.

Curating the Collections

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We would like to stress that for us the curation process already starts with the framing of the platform and outreach activities. On the introduction and submission pages, we list possible media types and themes that we find interesting. Such lists cannot be exhaustive and remain rather static, even though we have also addressed current topics through specific calls on our social media channels and pointed out gaps in our collection in interviews with journalists.

JOTPY

We developed programs that sought to teach people to use the archive (not just to contribute), allowing them to explore other contributions. This broader work of public engagement—during the pandemic and after—remains a central concern for the JOTPY team. For example, we continue to build and host workshops and lesson materials for teachers about using (and contributing to) the archive as a way to foster inquiry. From those conversations and from focus groups with teachers, we have learned that the search and use of archives is not intuitive, even in this world of digital savvy. As a result, we continue to experiment with design ideas, as we ask how to build an interface for the archive that spurs action, fosters questions, and allows for intuitive searching and discovery. After all, what good is an archive that does not get used?

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With the launch of the new *coronarchiv* website by the end of March 2021, we enhanced digital options to present the collected material. Next to making the website cleaner and user friendlier, one of the main reasons for the relaunch was to make more active use of our own material. We are now able to curate and host digital exhibitions and we established a project blog on the site.

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We plan to host small exhibitions on the new website (currently under construction), complementing the collected content from the platform with external contextualizing material. This is more like traditional curation and is intended not only to demonstrate the platform's relevance but also to encourage interaction. Finally, we are tagging the existing contributions. This will facilitate future research in the archive and also make it easier to use in the present by identifying specific themes.

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Online exhibitions are curated by different members of our team and contain between seven to 15 objects. The exhibition and blog module are open to diverse curators and authors: team members, from professors to students, all bring in their own take on the content. In 2022 we started a call for exhibitions to include citizen curators and their perspectives on the collected material. As we are still in an ongoing pandemic situation, the exhibitions aim to contribute to a bigger understanding of everyday life since we conceive of them as cross medial speech acts. At best, our own curated contents will widen a global perspective and contextualize the pandemic endeavor as a phenomenon that cannot be treated as national experience at all.

JOTPY

Almost from the outset, we actively curated materials as they have been ingested into the archive, using a process that has evolved through an iterative approach. Initially, only members of the JOTPY team assigned metadata, but we soon expanded that to ask contributors to assign metadata—and even studied the differences between contributor and curator tags. As we built workflows, we also recognized that it was important to assign metadata quickly as this satisfied our contributors' interest in seeing their materials/stories in the archive. We have balanced quick turnaround with a thorough vetting process—in which lead curators review the metadata assigned by interns and curators for consistency in the application of nomenclature and project guidelines.

Equally important, by providing wide-ranging metadata in a variety of fields, we create a context that fosters interpretation and dialog about the pandemic (and about our curators' metadata choices). The work of building context

through assignment metadata has been critical to our development of programs and exhibits. We have developed public programs around specific items or collections, creating linkages, connections, and contexts for discussion in public programs, classrooms and professional meetings. These contexts of meaning have generated ideas for exhibits, and provided exhibit curators with easy access to a wide array of objects, leading to student-, intern- and curator-created exhibits in digital format (within JOTPY) as well as physical exhibits on display in classrooms and cultural organizations.

Public Engagement and (Historical) Knowledge

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First, we should emphasize that submissions to covidmemory.lu currently represent knowledge of the present. It remains to be seen if they will also become knowledge of the past; that is for future historians to decide. In our opinion, we lack the necessary temporal distance to evaluate the historical value of the collected material from a more nuanced historical perspective and to analyze its usefulness for memory work.

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Instead of retrospective classifications and interpretations, the *coronarchiv* focuses on documenting experiences in the ongoing process. The contributors document what they perceive as relevant at the very moment of experience, without knowing the end or the results of the open process of the pandemic. And they can upload reflections and thoughts in hindsight.

Overall, the *coronarchiv* serves as a container for a broader public to leave and preserve traces of everyday experiences that they deem important enough to preserve. While neither the project team nor the contributors can predict the use of the preserved material by future historians or the use of single objects for historical narratives within or beyond academic historiography, the traces left behind may increase the diversity of perspectives on the pandemic, provide empirical evidence for local experiences, or supplement state and media records. It is important to understand that producing and collecting traces is not to be mistaken as producing sources. The decision about which traces become sources is up to future historiography. The *coronarchiv* thus provides a collection of traces that need to be contextualized, curated, and narrated later.

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We see the contributions as local or vernacular knowledge. This knowledge reveals how people experienced the pandemic and its multiple impacts on everyday life, and how they are making sense of living in a time of crisis. Through the material they upload, this knowledge is made explicit. This process cannot happen without some degree of self-reflection. In this sense, we provide an opportunity for both knowledge production and knowledge conservation. We propose to distinguish between snapshots and more thoughtful contributions, both of which have the potential to provide unique insights into local life.[14]

It will be the task of future historians to make sense of this knowledge. An element of historical source criticism will be to identify, for example, how much time elapsed between each submission and the actual event or memory. Scholars can then begin to analyze whether the contributions offer a window into everyday history and to what extent individual memories were shaped by media discourses or even other submissions to our platform.

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As founders and operators of the *coronarchiv*, the project team is part of the ongoing public processing of the pandemic and thus needs to be contextualized, explored and discussed by others. From the beginning we have been and still are an active part of the ongoing communication about the pandemic and cannot be separated or restrain ourselves from that.

covidmemory.lu

In our media contributions and research papers we have been transparent about the main weakness of covidmemory.lu: to a large extent, it represents the broader socio-economic milieu of the researchers, as seen in many of the contributions. Furthermore, it may seem trivial but it is important to highlight that digital memory banks always represent their creators' understanding of history. Of course, there is no way out of this: historians always practise in their present.

14 Examples of a snapshot, all accessed June 25, 2021, https://covidmemory.lu/memory/906; a stream of consciousness, https://covidmemory.lu/memory/643; and reflective writing, https://covidmemory.lu/memory/1088.

The idea that everyone's testimony is important for future histories might be considered not only democratic and emancipatory, but also individualistic and egocentric.

When we decide to not publish a submission, we keep a record of that decision in the metadata of the item. Sometimes, there have been discussions among the curators as to whether or not a contribution should be published. So far, these discussions can only be retrieved in our internal communication channels. We have not yet discussed how to bring these different records together, how to archive them or how to connect them to the public platform.

JOTPY

Throughout the project, the JOTPY team has worked to make its practices and processes transparent, including evidence of our deliberations and curatorial choices in the archive. For example, the curatorial guides that we developed to process materials (and train new curators) are available publicly through Google Documents, as well as in the JOTPY archive. When teachers or community partners issue a "call to action," curating with their students or communities, those calls are included in the archive and linked (using the linked data feature) to materials submitted by (or collected on behalf of) community members. Finally, we used the team collaboration software SLACK to organize our disparate community and to share authority. We sought to create dynamic curatorial process for incoming materials, as well as a way to organize and iteratively expand our process. Conversations on SLACK transformed into the written guidelines for curators as team members produced two 40-page plus guides (Google Documents) outlining curatorial practices, including one specifically devoted to oral histories. This document became both a guide to our practices for team members and a tool for onboarding new curators, as well as curators from across the globe. To date, the SLACK channels have amassed more than 20,000 messages from our partners—revealing to us both our changing practices but also the dynamic process of shared authority that has driven our collaborative curatorial processes. Eventually, this SLACK conversation will be added to the archive to help researchers understand the transformation of our team's practices, as well as to position our work for researchers.

Thinking Beyond

JOTPY

The pandemic both coincided with and drove broader political, economic, and social change. Protest emerged as a central characteristic of the current crisis, first with demonstrations against mask ordinances and lockdowns. At the same time, in May, 2020, a broader array of national and international protests developed, led by the Black Lives Matter movement in response to the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers (one has been convicted and others are awaiting trial), was recorded and broadcast on social media. These protests developed from the widespread and deep inequalities that structure life in the United States, which themselves have been manifest in the impact of COVID-19 on Americans. In particular, working-class, poor, and non-white populations have faced death and hospitalization at greater rates than other Americans. For this reason, JOTPY curators recognized that in many ways racism intersected with the pandemic and that protests challenging entrenched political regimens tied to race, class, and state-sanctioned violence should be documented as part of the broader pandemic.

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The various collecting platforms on COVID-19 from all over the world offer a compelling basis for comparisons, as we discussed during an international workshop[15] in November 2020. We remain interested in national and international cooperation and the creation of synergies. For this purpose, we also organized two round table discussions[16] with other stakeholders in Luxembourg involved in collecting personal memories of and official documents on the COVID-19 pandemic. This collaboration might lead to a shared platform containing more sources related to how people in the country have lived through the pandemic, thereby enlarging the perspective of the covidmemory.lu core collection.

15 Tizian Zumthurm and Marco Gabellini. "Collaborative COVID-19 Memory Banks: History and Challenges", *C2DH Thinkering* (January 19, 2021): https://www.c2dh.uni.lu/thinkering/collaborative-covid-19-memory-banks-history-and-challenges, accessed June 27, 2022.

16 Tizian Zumthurm. "The Gap and the Future: COVID-19 and (Digital) Collecting", *C2DH Thinkering* (September 30, 2020): https://www.c2dh.uni.lu/thinkering/gap-and-future-covid-19-and-digital-collecting, accessed June 27, 2022.

The central question of which social groups and memories will be represented in COVID-19 online archives hinges on whether digital memory banks will be able to collect more of the unknown and unexpected rather than merely perpetuating the (upper) middle-class discourses that can be found in the media. We see the danger that digital memory banks are mainly expanding the middle-class bubble of communication rather than transcending it in terms of content or perspectives.

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We may think about possibilities and options, challenges, and means – but it may be way too early to measure (fundamental) transformation and changes. It gets easier to collect and store material from the everyday due to the technical development, but only for certain spaces and societal strata. We should not overestimate the western hemisphere experiences at all. But it seems likely that citizen engagement in the West becomes way easier due to technological changes, accessibility, and distribution of mobile devices as hubs for media production and distribution, the expansion of networks for mobile data transmission, the rise of digital literacy in certain societies, and the dissemination and impact power of social media platforms. This may rise the sheer number of voices that can be heard and documented—but it remains open whether and how this affects and changes the way we think about memory.

It seems that looking into hitherto unvisited or unseen social spaces and their communicative practices and contents unsettles the long-established middle-class bearers of public memory culture in Western societies. We need to understand that seemingly new emerging voices often have existed before, but that they become more visible and thereby accessible beyond the narrow, socially confined communication bubbles in which the middle class has established and partially isolated itself in the past. New ways of understanding are needed that go beyond the current wondering and downgrading of the unknown and unexpected. And by opening and rearranging participation in communication circles, the communicative production of knowledge and memories will eventually change without a doubt.

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