

SUMMER 2022

TANGENTS

THE JOURNAL OF THE
MASTER OF LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM
AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

IN THIS ISSUE...

Memoir Pieces by Lisa Wang, Maasni Nigam Dommeti,
Martha McDaniel, Myles Somerville

Poems by John Angell, Patrick Daly, Prabhu
Palani, Sarah Anne Cox

Short story by Andy Grose

Essays by Robert Mason III, Fyza Parviz Jazra,
Aparna Chandra, Sandra Park

PUBLISHING NOTES

This publication features the works of students and alumni of the Master of Liberal Arts Program at Stanford University.

<i>Editors</i>	<i>Original Design</i>
Candy Carter	Suzanne West
Teri Hessel	
Michael Breger	<i>Layout of Current Issue</i>
<i>Faculty Advisor</i>	Maddy Elles-Hill, Marketing, Master of Liberal Arts Program
Dr. Linda Paulson	Stanford

Rights and Permissions

Copyrights for material included in this publication belong to their creators.

Cover Photo: *Snowgeese on Skagit Flats*. Copyright John Farnsworth.

In "We Move Towards Death", the watercolor is courtesy of MLA student Aparna Chandra.

In "Bronze Horse Cast from Driftwood" the photograph *View of foyer of the Cantor Arts Center featuring Viktoria, 1999, by Deborah Butterfield, gift of Burton and Deedee McMurtry* by Maddy Elles-Hill is courtesy of the Cantor Arts Center.

In "To Health, The Greatest Gift" the photograph *Sars Cov2* by Sakhaa 24 is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

In "Twelve Thousand Eyes" the photographs *Butterfly Macro* by Holley And Chris Melton and *American Bullfrog* by the Kaibab National Forest are courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

In "For Rumi" the photograph *Caravan in the desert* By Sergey Pesterev is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

In "The Truth About Impressions - Empiricist Thought in Pride and Prejudice" the illustrations by C E Brock are in the public domain.

In "To Tell a Story Twenty Years Later" the painting *The Dominican Blessed* by Fra Angelico is by courtesy of the National Gallery London.

In "From Helen of Troy of Sparta" the photography of the sculpture *Helen of Troy* by Antonio Canova is courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

In "A Pet Story" the photograph *Arc of the Galaxy from Placitas, NM* by John Fowler is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

In "The Cruel Entrance of Winter, 2003" the photograph by Bernard Gagnon is courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

TANGENTS

THE JOURNAL OF THE
MASTER OF LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM
AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

VOLUME 22

IN THIS ISSUE...

- 2 Letter from the Editors
Candy Carter
Teri Hessel
Michael Breger
- 3 Banning Critical Race Theory: Can American history be banned?
Robert Mason III
- 8 Family Narrative: Extraordinary Act of Kindness and Honor
Lisa Wang
- 11 Poem: Sonnet - We move towards death
John Angell Grant
- 12 Material Biography of Stanford Library's *Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* by Avicenna
Fyva Parviz Jazra
- 18 Poem: Bronze Horse Cast from Driftwood: Do Not Touch
Patrick Daly
- 19 Personal Account: To Health: the Greatest Gift
Maansi Nigam Dommeti
- 23 Memoir: Twelve Thousand Eyes
Martha McDaniel
- 28 Poem: Rumi
Prabhu Palani
- 29 The Truth About Impressions - Empiricist Thought in *Pride and Prejudice*
Aparna Chandra
- 32 To Tell a Story Twenty Years Later: Sister Bartolomea's Institutional Memory of
Corpus Domini
Sandra Park
- 37 Poem: From Helen of Troy of Sparta
Sarah Anne Cox
- 38 Short Story: A Pet Story
Andy Grose
- 42 Memoir: The Cruel Entrance of Winter, 2003
Myles Sommerville

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

We are pleased to present this issue of *Tangents*, the Journal of the Stanford Master of Liberal Arts Program. For this the 21st volume, we have chosen a diverse group of works by students and alumni, including:

four narrative memory pieces about experiences with COVID, baseball, pets, and acts of kindness;

- * four poems (“Sonnet: We move towards death,” “Bronze Horse Cast from Driftwood,” “Rumi,” and “From Helen of Troy of Sparta”);
- * a science fiction short story, “A Pet Story”
- * an essay exploring Critical Race Theory and efforts to ban it;
- * a “material biography” with original research into Stanford Library’s *Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* by Avicenna ;
- * an essay describing the influence of empiricist thought in *Pride and Prejudice*;
- * an essay exploring how Sister Bartolomeo Riccoboni’s 14th Century Corpus Domini established an institutional memory of convent beliefs;
- * original photography
- * original watercolors

Be sure to learn about this issue’s contributors, highlighted on the last pages.

We hope that our choices will provide enjoyable reading and inspire future contributions!

This is our fourth year of service as editors for *Tangents*, and we welcome feedback. We faced ongoing challenges this year with pandemic restrictions. Nevertheless, the continuing generosity of alumni and supporters of the MLA program make our annual publication possible. Thank you!

Candy Carter, editor

Teri Hessel, associate editor

Michael Breger, associate editor, poetry



BANNING CRITICAL RACE THEORY: CAN AMERICAN HISTORY BE BANNED?

by Robert M. Mason III

Introduction

Politics and education don't mix when political partisanship takes precedence over the interests of the students.¹ That adage has been proven again recently in the current efforts to ban the teaching of Critical Race Theory. A concept developed by African American legal scholars who were dissatisfied with this nation's progress towards ending racial discrimination following landmark court and legislative victories, Critical Race Theory hypothesizes that the laws upon which the United States was founded were not intrinsically benevolent. As support, Critical Race Theory focuses on how race has influenced the enactment, interpretation, and application of both race neutral and race specific laws and how those interpretations and applications have harmed the financial wellbeing and psyches of generations of African Americans while benefiting White Americans.

Rather than banning Critical Race Theory, the subject of how race has influenced American laws and social institutions should be made a necessary component in all K-12 public-school American history curricula. That way, students can understand the role that race has played in this nation's development and that how even today, the effects of discrimination against African Americans are still being felt. Even students who do not believe themselves to be racist must learn that the most enlightened students who would never think of uttering racist language or harboring race-based judgments still, on a subconscious level, judge people who belong to a different race.

Thus, whether rightly or wrongly, or expressly or implicitly, negative views that flow from our racial differences are inherent in all Americans, a point succinctly made by the song "Everyone's a Little Bit Racist" from the Broadway Musical *Avenue Q*:

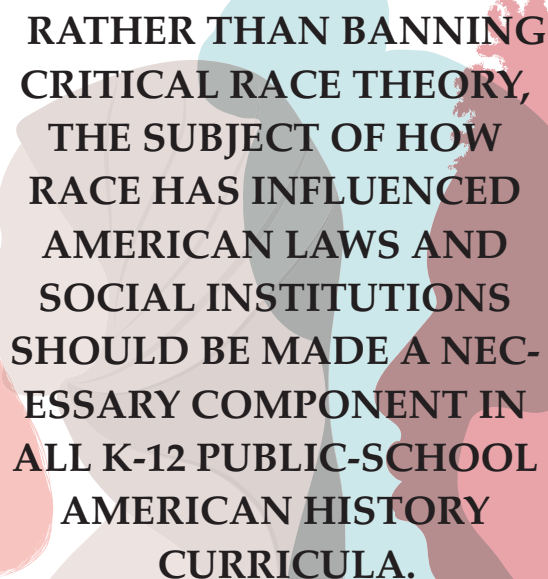
*Look around and you will find
No one's really color blind.
Maybe it's a fact
We all should face
Everyone makes judgments
Based on race.*

As these racial judgements can impact the physical wellbeing of African Americans, they—along with their underlying assumptions—should be scrutinized by an accurate understanding of how history has influenced those perceptions. Critical Race Theory is the best equipped teaching tool that not only is essential to placing negative views towards African Americans in their proper historical context, but is also needed to explain that despite the progress that has been made towards achieving racial equality, the United States has never been, and never will be, a color-blind nation unless and until all Americans confront their predilections about race.

The Origins of Critical Race Theory

Thoughts about the need to teach Critical Race Theory grew out of a time when African Americans were growing frustrated at the slow progress towards eliminating racial discrimination in America. This frustration was exacerbated by the fact that three significant events had occurred over the course of eleven years which gave African

Americans hope that the centuries of discrimination that they had endured was about to come to an end. First, there was the 1954 decision of *Brown v. Board of Education*² where the Supreme Court unanimously overturned the 1896 decision of *Plessy v. Ferguson*,³ which had given the judicial imprimatur on the concept of racial segregation of schools and public facilities. *Plessy* held that



**RATHER THAN BANNING
CRITICAL RACE THEORY,
THE SUBJECT OF HOW
RACE HAS INFLUENCED
AMERICAN LAWS AND
SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS
SHOULD BE MADE A NEC-
CESSARY COMPONENT IN
ALL K-12 PUBLIC-SCHOOL
AMERICAN HISTORY
CURRICULA.**

racial segregation did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution if the segregated school facilities were "separate but equal." In *Brown*, the Court found that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal and in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment because of the psychologically harmful effect that separation has on African American children.⁴ *Brown*, unfortunately, did not provide a timetable for ending school segregation so in 1955 the Supreme Court issued *Brown II* and ordered states to desegregate their public schools "with all deliberate speed."⁵ Second, what the Supreme Court did in *Brown I* and *Brown II* to end segregation in public schools was followed up ten years later with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ended segregation in public places, banned employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion sex, or national origin, and prevented states from applying disparate standards to persons exercising their right to vote.⁶ Third, one year later in 1965, the Federal Government passed the Voting Rights Act, which prohibited any jurisdiction from discriminating against an eligible

voter on the basis of race. In addition, the Voting Rights Act included a pre-clearance requirement for southern states with a history of disenfranchising African American voters and prohibited these jurisdictions from implementing any change affecting voting rights without receiving pre-approval from the U.S. Attorney General or the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

But the "with all deliberate speed" by which the end to racial segregation was to occur proved to be more aspirational and incremental than actual and pervasive. While there was undoubtedly progress towards ending racial segregation and disenfranchisement,⁷ *Brown I*, *Brown II*, and the Civil and Voting Rights Acts were subject to outright resistance and legal challenges that lasted for decades and prevented them from becoming the comprehensive instruments for change that African Americans had hoped for.⁸ One African American legal scholar who was at the forefront of the civil rights litigation movement and fought for the enforcement of *Brown I* and *Brown II* as a lawyer with the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Education Fund was Derrick Albert Bell, Jr., widely regarded as the father of Critical Race Theory.⁹ Bell left the courts for academia and while a professor at Harvard Law School, he wrote two articles that would later be seen as groundbreaking in developing a conceptual analysis that would inspire the Critical Race Theory's development: "Serving Two Masters: Integration Ideals and Client Interests in School Desegregation Litigation,"¹⁰ and "*Brown v. Board of Education* and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma."¹¹ In these articles, Bell acknowledged the conflict created by the "interest convergence" between civil rights litigators looking for a sweeping breakthrough in the pursuit of racial balance in schools and African American parents who just wanted access to better schools for their children. In Professor Bell's view, "racism is an integral, permanent, and indestructible component of this society,"¹² and needs to be studied and understood if there was any hope of addressing and eradicating racism on a comprehensive scale.

To achieve his objective, Professor Bell created a class at Harvard Law School entitled *Race, racism, and American Law*, which explored how racial views influenced and shaped American laws, and

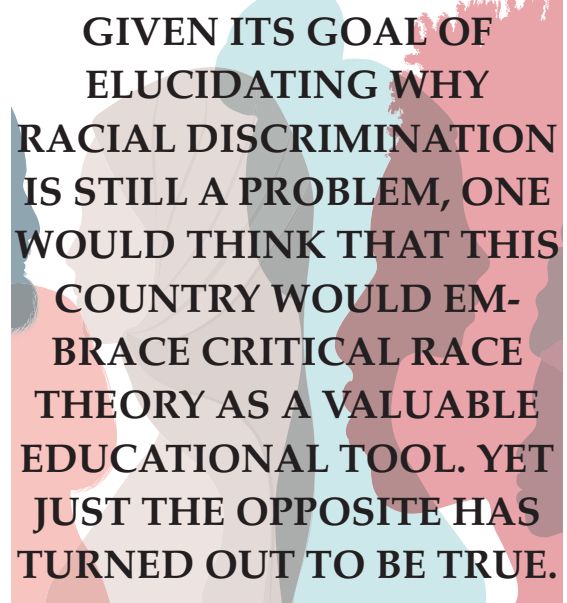
how these racial views continue to shape our laws even after the successes of *Brown I*, *Brown II*, the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, and the legal victories for racial equality won in the courts.¹³ The course materials helped validate Professor Bell's view that racism's permanency can only be overcome when the interests of African Americans and White Americans are aligned.¹⁴ In other words, progress for African Americans in ending discrimination cannot be seen as a zero sum game where African Americans benefit to the detriment of White Americans. Instead, achieving an end to racial discrimination must be obtained in a manner that benefits all Americans.

Ironically, even though he is credited as the creative force behind what was later to be called Critical Race Theory, it was Professor Bell's departure from Harvard Law School that provided the momentum for Critical Race Theory to gain wider recognition. After Professor Bell left to become dean of the University of Oregon Law School, Harvard Law School students invited guest speakers and conducted a version of Professor Bell's class.¹⁵ One of those students was Kimberle Crenshaw who, with her co-editors, published the 1995 anthology *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*.¹⁶ Along with Ms. Crenshaw (now a professor at UCLA and Columbia Law Schools, she is credited with coining the term Critical Race Theory) and other legal scholars published works in legal journals on Critical Race Theory and the discussions began within the halls of legal academia with the hope of coalescing on some settled parameters.¹⁷

What is Critical Race Theory?

Defining Critical Race Theory, and the current efforts to ban it from being taught in public schools, are both difficult objectives as there does not appear to be one settled taxonomy,¹⁸ with Professor Crenshaw underscoring the conundrum when she states that Critical Race Theory is not a noun but a verb because it is "an evolving and malleable practice."¹⁹ Some advocates stress the importance of the use of autobiography/biography to shape legal criticism,²⁰ whereas others see Critical Race Theory as the study of how race, as a construct, influences the creation and interpretation of laws that reinforce and perpetuate racial hierarchies to the detriment of African Americans.²¹ While their approaches

might differ somewhat in terms of terminology and purpose, those scholars advocating for the study of Critical Race Theory agree that it is a concept that provides a framework for studying the intersection between law and race, and how racist beliefs have influenced how American laws have been drafted and interpreted to the detriment of African Americans. It is with that understanding that students can comprehend why —after decades of legal and legislative efforts—the United States is no closer to achieving the total elimination of discrimination against African Americans as to education, employment, housing, and voting rights than when President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.



GIVEN ITS GOAL OF ELUCIDATING WHY RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IS STILL A PROBLEM, ONE WOULD THINK THAT THIS COUNTRY WOULD EMBRACE CRITICAL RACE THEORY AS A VALUABLE EDUCATIONAL TOOL. YET JUST THE OPPOSITE HAS TURNED OUT TO BE TRUE.

Efforts to Ban Critical Race Theory

Given its goal of elucidating why racial discrimination is still a problem, one would think that this country would embrace Critical Race Theory as a valuable educational tool. Yet just the opposite has turned out to be true. Following the high-profile killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, there was an enhanced public interest in the problem of structural racism, how that racism manifests itself in tragic fashion in interactions with African Americans, and how structural racism can be understood and eliminated.²² In response, then-President Trump issued Executive Order 13950, which prohibited the federal government and its contractors from offering diversity training that Trump labeled "divisive" and "un-American."²³

The Trump Administration went further, claiming that the discussion of intersectionality, Critical Race Theory, white privilege, systemic racism, or implicit or unconscious bias in diversity training was “race and sex scapegoating.”

Conservative news pundits have also sought to jump on the bandwagon to ban Critical Race Theory by weaponizing it for their own purposes. Christopher F. Rufo, an analyst with the Manhattan Institute, appeared on the Tucker Carlson show on Fox News and spoke of the “cult indoctrination” of Critical Race Theory.²⁴ In his Twitter page, Mr. Rufo spoke of his desire to seize Critical Race Theory and use it as a cudgel against its proponents: “We have successfully frozen their brand—Critical Race Theory—into the public conversation and are steadily driving up negative perceptions. We will eventually turn it toxic, as we put all of the various cultural insanities under that brand category.”²⁵

BUT WITHOUT A SETTLED DEFINITION OF CRITICAL RACE THEORY, THE PRACTICAL EFFECT OF THESE PIECES OF LEGISLATION IS TO BAN ANY MENTION OF RACE IN TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY.

The objective of conservative politicians and pundits appears to have succeeded for now as some White parents have expressed concern about teaching Critical Race Theory to their children. They are concerned that their children’s self-esteem will be harmed from learning about how White Americans engaged in a deliberate pattern and practice to advance their own economic interests to the detriment of African Americans, labeling the teaching of Critical Race Theory, equity, and diversity as “Marxist, anti-Christian, divisive, and anti-white.”²⁶ So fearful are White parents about the harmful psychological effects of schools teaching their children about the harmful role of race in

United States history, that they are appearing at school board meetings across the country and arguing passionately against teaching Critical Race Theory.²⁷

The palpable anxiety over the perceived indoctrination of White American children about institutional racism has emboldened conservative state and local officials to introduce measures to ban Critical Race Theory. According to The Brookings Institution, as of November of 2021, nine states have passed legislation to ban teaching of Critical Race Theory although some of the final pieces of legislation do not use the words Critical Race Theory; and some of the laws “mostly ban the discussion, training, and/or orientation that the U.S. is inherently racist as well as any discussions about conscious and unconscious bias, privilege, discrimination, and oppression.”²⁸ Similar legislation is pending in another 20 states,²⁹

But without a settled definition of Critical Race Theory, the practical effect of these pieces of legislation is to ban any mention of race in teaching American history. Such an outcome, however, would not only be internally inconsistent with state school curriculum requiring instruction of slavery, but banning Critical Race Theory would be an impossibility because racial attitudes are intertwined with American history as the following examples demonstrate. How does one teach slavery without mentioning that White Americans owned slaves and treated them as disposable chattel property because they believed that their racial superiority, the law, and religion entitled them to do so? How does one study the Constitution without reading *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, in which the Supreme Court held Africans and their descendants had no rights under the Constitution that White Americans had to respect?³⁰ Finally, how can students be taught about the Declaration of Independence without learning that Thomas Jefferson deleted his anti-slavery language so that the Declaration’s promise of “inalienable rights” and entitlement to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” did not apply to African slaves and their descendants? Without Critical Race Theory, students will lack an appreciation for the inexorable linkage between racial attitudes and significant historical events.

Conclusion

In *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L. ex rel. Levy* (2021) 141 S. Ct. 2038, 2046, the Supreme Court spoke about the importance of an open and vigorous exchange of ideas in the classroom:

The classroom is peculiarly the “marketplace of ideas.” The Nation’s future depends upon leaders trained through wide exposure to that robust exchange of ideas which discovers truth “out of a multitude of tongues, (rather) than through any kind of authoritative selection.

While *Mahanoy* dealt with a school board’s authority to regulate off campus speech, the concern addressed is apropos to the current efforts to ban Critical Race Theory. Partisan political objectives must be separated from public school curricula, so students are exposed to historical events in the proper factual context. No matter how uncomfortable the actions of our predecessors may make us feel today, history, no matter how unsettling it may be, cannot ever be banned. *Mahanoy* is a necessary reminder that the unfettered exchange of ideas is one of the hallmarks of a free and open democratic society that should be jealously guarded against any unreasonable political intrusion.

ENDNOTES

1. P.L. Thomas. “Politics and Education Don’t Mix.” *The Atlantic* (April 26, 2012).
2. 347 U.S. 483.
3. 163 U.S. 537.
4. 347 U.S., 494.
5. 349 U.S. 294, 301.
6. Public Law 88-352 (78 Stat. 241).
7. For examples of voting successes for African Americans, see Daniel P. Tokaji. “The New Vote Denial: Where Election Reform Meets the Voting Rights Act.” *South Carolina Law Review* (2006), 57.
8. Examples of the resistance can be found in Sean F. Reardon and Ann Owens. “60 Years After Brown: Trends and Consequences of School Segregation”. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 40 (August 1, 2014), 199. In addition, 19 years after the Voting Rights Act’s passage, the Supreme Court in *Mississippi Republican Executive Opinion v. Brooks*, (1984) 469 U.S. 1002, affirmed a lower court’s determination that Section 2 of the Act was constitutional.
9. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. *Critical Race Theory: an Introduction*. 1st ed. New York: New York University Press, 2001.
10. Derrick A. Bell, Jr. “Serving Two Masters: Integration Ideals and Client Interests in School Desegregation Litigation.” *The Yale Law Journal* 85, No.4 (March 1976): 470-516.
11. Derrick A. Bell, Jr. “*Brown v. Board of Education* and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma.” *Harvard Law Review* 93, No. 3 (1980): 518-533.
12. Derrick A. Bell, Jr. *Faces at the bottom of the well: the permanence of racism*. Basic Books: New York, 1992.
13. Jelani Cobb. “The Man Behind Critical Race Theory.” *The New Yorker* (September 13, 2021).
14. Brandon Hogan. “Derrick Bell’s Dilemma: The Interest Convergence Principle and Racial Realism.” *Berkeley Journal of African-American Law & Policy* 1 (2019).
15. Cobb.
16. Kimberle Williams Crenshaw; Neil Gotanda; Thomas Gary; Kendall Thomas. eds. *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement*. New York: The New Press, 1995.
17. Cobb, referencing Richard Delgado, Patricia Williams, Mari Matsuda, and Alan Freeman. These works include: Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic. “Critical Race Theory: An Annotated Bibliography.” *Virginia Law Review* 79, No.2 (1993): 461-516; Mari Matsuda. “Looking to the Bottom: Critical Legal Studies and Reparations.” *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review* 22, No. 2 (1987).
18. Jacey Fortin. “Critical Race Theory: A Brief History.” *The New York Times* (November 8, 2021).
19. Janel George. “A Lesson on Critical Race Theory.” *American Bar Association Human Rights Magazine* (January 11, 2021): 46.
20. Richard Schur. “Critical Race Theory and the Limits of Auto/Biography: Reading Patricia Williams’s ‘The Alchemy of Face and Rights’ Through / Against Postcolonial Theory.” *Biography* 25, No. 3 (Summer 2002): 455-476.
21. Paula M. Lantz. “The Tenets of Critical Race Theory Have a Long-Standing and Important Role in Population Health Science.” *The Milbank Quarterly Opinion* (July 14, 2021).
22. Stef W. Kight, [Critical race theory overtakes Black Lives Matter on Google searches - Axios](#) (December 11, 2021).
23. Jessica Guyunn. “Donald Trump executive order banning diversity training blocked by federal judge.” *USA Today* (December 23, 2020).
24. Fortin.
25. Cobb.
26. Patricia J. Williams. “How Not to Talk About Race.” *Nation* (October 18, 2021).
27. Melinda D. Anderson. “The Missing Voices in The Panic Over Critical Race Theory.” *The Huffington Post* (November 30, 2021) [The Missing Voices In The Panic Over Critical Race Theory | HuffPost Communities](#)
28. Ray and Gibbons.
29. *Id.*
30. (1857) 60 U.S. 393.

EXTRAORDINARY ACT OF KINDNESS AND HONOR

by Lisa Wang

I never knew my great-grandparents, yet they came alive for me through my grandmother's stories. My great-grandfather arrived in America to get an education, but when his cousin's farm was going under, he used his school money to keep the farm afloat. My great-grandmother, a "picture bride,"* joined him in America, and together they embarked on the exciting new adventure of building a

WHEN SHE SAW THE POLICE COMING DOWN HER STREET, SHE TOOK A BROOM AND HIT THE BACK WALL, "BANG, BANG, BANG," TO WARN THE CARD SHOP OWNER TO SEND THE GAMBLERS AWAY BEFORE THE POLICE ARRIVED.

life in the "land of opportunity" where people came from all over the world.

Like many Americans, my great-grandparents struggled with poverty during the

Depression. Fortunately, they lived in an area of San Francisco where others were also poor, arrivals from many different countries, with a wide diversity of ethnicity and religions; the neighbors all looked out for each other.

My great-grandparents started a laundry business that shared a wall with a card shop on the other side of the street. The card shop owner held card games to make extra money to feed his family. My great-grandmother, a beloved, nurturing woman, not only looked after her four children, but also took care of people in the neighborhood. Since food was scarce, she would bake jellyrolls whenever she could get sugar, cut the rolls into pieces, and hand them out to all the neighbors. She also looked out for the card shop owner and didn't want him or his gamblers to get into trouble. When she saw the police coming down her street, she took a broom and hit the back wall, "bang, bang, bang," to warn the card shop owner to send the gamblers away before the police arrived. Surprisingly, neither my great-grandmother nor the card shop owner ever met, despite their ongoing "alert" system.

On December 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy bombed the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii during World War II. The following day, the U.S. declared war on Japan. Because my great-grandparents were of Japanese descent, they were subject to Executive





AFTER BEING FORCED ONTO TRAINS AND TEMPORARILY HOUSED IN HORSE STALLS AT TANFORAN RACETRACK, THEY WERE WHISKED AWAY TO A RELOCATION CENTER IN THE UTAH DESERT.

Order 9066 that mandated the “evacuation of all persons deemed a threat to national security from the West Coast to relocation centers further inland.”

They were only allowed to bring one suitcase per person, leaving behind their homes, furniture, cars, jobs, businesses, and all other possessions. After being forced onto trains and temporarily housed in horse stalls at Tanforan Racetrack, they were whisked away to a relocation center in the Utah desert. As the sand-filled winds scratched their skin and stung their eyes and the bitter cold pierced deep into their bones, they ate whatever food they could get, tried to find work, and bore their circumstances in the army

barracks with unrelenting strength and courage.

After a few months, my great-grandparents were told they had a visitor. An African American gentleman sat in his car at the front entrance. His car was filled to the brim with brown bags of clothing and other artifacts. Items that couldn't fit inside the car were placed in boxes and rope-tied to the top and back of the car. The man introduced himself and said, “You don't know me, but my card shop shared a wall with your laundry business. After you left I collected everything of yours from Japan that looked irreplaceable and brought them here so you wouldn't lose them.” My great-grandparents were in tears and beyond gratitude. The man's car was old and broken down, yet he had driven almost 700 miles all the way from San Francisco,



**MY
GREAT-GRANDPARENTS
WERE IN TEARS -
BEYOND GRATEFUL.
THE MAN'S CAR WAS
OLD AND BROKEN
DOWN, AND YET HE
DROVE ALL THE WAY
FROM SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA TO
TOPAZ, UTAH TO HELP
THEM.**

California to Topaz, Utah to help them. This extraordinary act of kindness during a time of unimaginable challenge demonstrated for my great-grandparents, and for me today, an enduring belief in human goodness.

***The term “picture bride” refers to Japanese women who came to the United States to be married to Japanese bachelors already in the United States. Matchmakers used photos of the prospective brides to match with husbands. Over 10,000 Japanese women came to the U.S. mainland under this arrangement; 15,000 Japanese women settled in Hawaii as picture brides.**



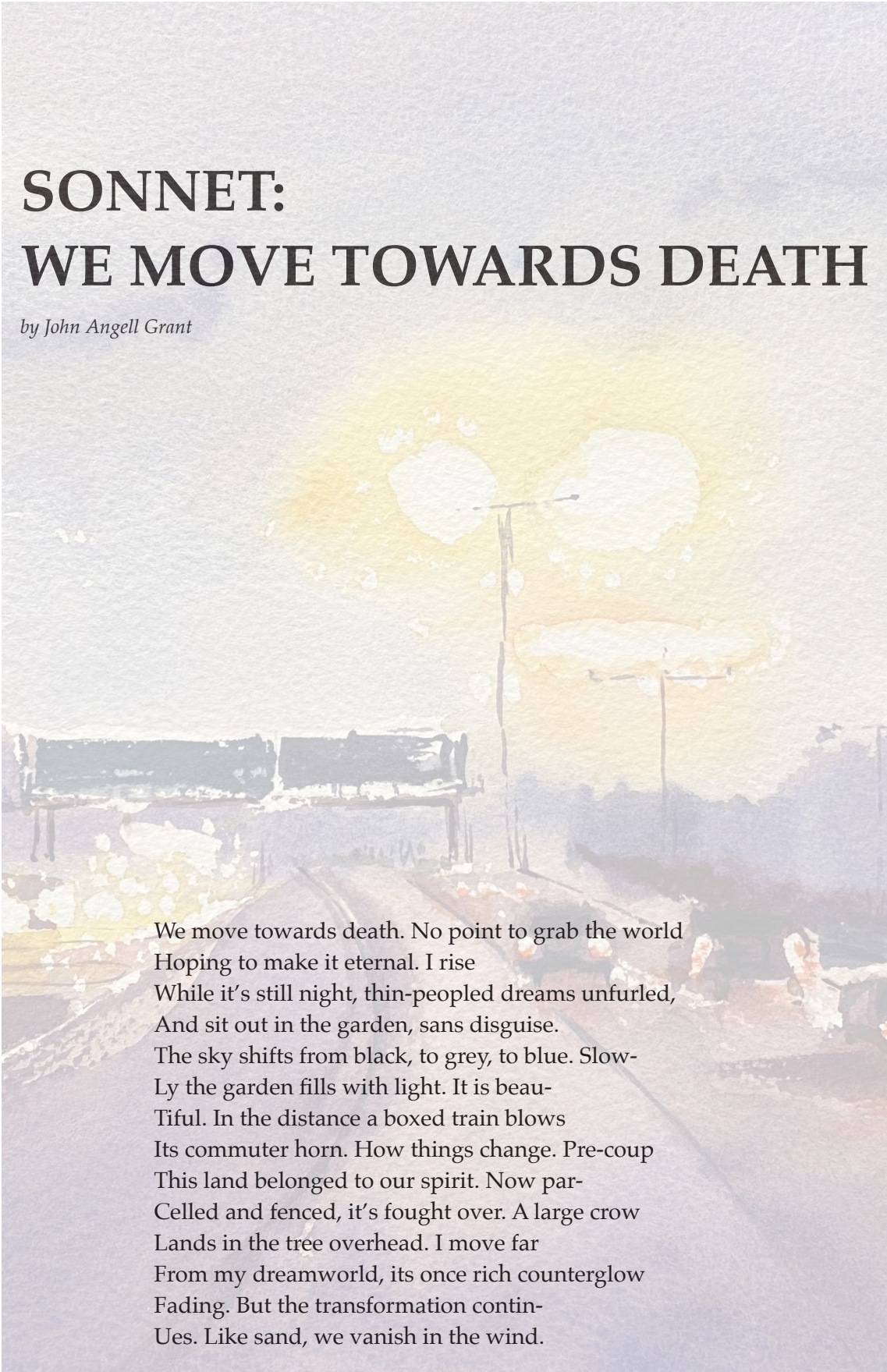
WORKS CITED

Executive Order 9066: Resulting in the Relocation of Japanese (1942) <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=74>

Tunnell, Michael O., *Desert Diary: Japanese American Kids Behind Barbed Wire*, Watertown: Charlesbridge, p. viii, 87, 2020

Remembering Pearl Harbor: A Pearl Harbor Fact Sheet. The National WWII Museum commemorates Pearl Harbor Day. The Museum opened its exhibit, The D-Day Invasions in the Pacific, on December 7, 2001. <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/pearl-harbor-fact-sheet-1.pdf>





SONNET: WE MOVE TOWARDS DEATH

by John Angell Grant

We move towards death. No point to grab the world
Hoping to make it eternal. I rise
While it's still night, thin-peopled dreams unfurled,
And sit out in the garden, sans disguise.
The sky shifts from black, to grey, to blue. Slow-
ly the garden fills with light. It is beau-
tiful. In the distance a boxed train blows
Its commuter horn. How things change. Pre-coup
This land belonged to our spirit. Now par-
celled and fenced, it's fought over. A large crow
Lands in the tree overhead. I move far
From my dreamworld, its once rich counterglow
Fading. But the transformation contin-
ues. Like sand, we vanish in the wind.

MATERIAL BIOGRAPHY OF STANFORD LIBRARY'S *KITAB AL-QANUN FI AL-TIBB* BY AVICENNA

by Fyza Parviz Jazra

The Special Collections at Stanford's Lane Medical Library has a pristine 1593 printed edition of Avicenna's *Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* (Canon of Medicine) by the Roman Medici Oriental Press. The publishing of Arabic scientific works by the press is generally attributed to its director, the Italian orientalist Giovanni Battista Raimondi (1536–1614), who had been a collector of oriental manuscripts. *Qanun*—first completed by Avicenna in 1025—was an essential text to publish as it was an encyclopedia of Greek, Indian, and Persian medicine and observations from Avicenna's medical practice. The Medici edition of *Qanun* is one of the earliest Arabic books to be printed. What is evident from the Medici edition are the textual design and organization methodologies employed by the press. These

**THE MEDICI EDITION OF
QANUN IS ONE OF THE
EARLIEST ARABIC BOOKS
TO BE PRINTED. WHAT
IS EVIDENT FROM THE
MEDICI EDITION ARE
THE TEXTUAL DESIGN
AND ORGANIZATION
METHODOLOGIES
EMPLOYED BY THE PRESS.**

editorial innovations allow scholars to browse, navigate, and read the text with quite an ease. Cultural Anthropologist Igor Kopytoff has argued that biographies of objects make salient what otherwise remains hidden behind the veil; hence, a material history of Medici Press's *Qanun* at Stanford will

reveal some interesting facts about its production, ownership, and use.

Avicenna's *Qanun* was one of the first Arabic scientific texts to be printed. It was published in 1593 by the Medici Oriental Press—one of the first oriental presses in Europe to print Arabic books.

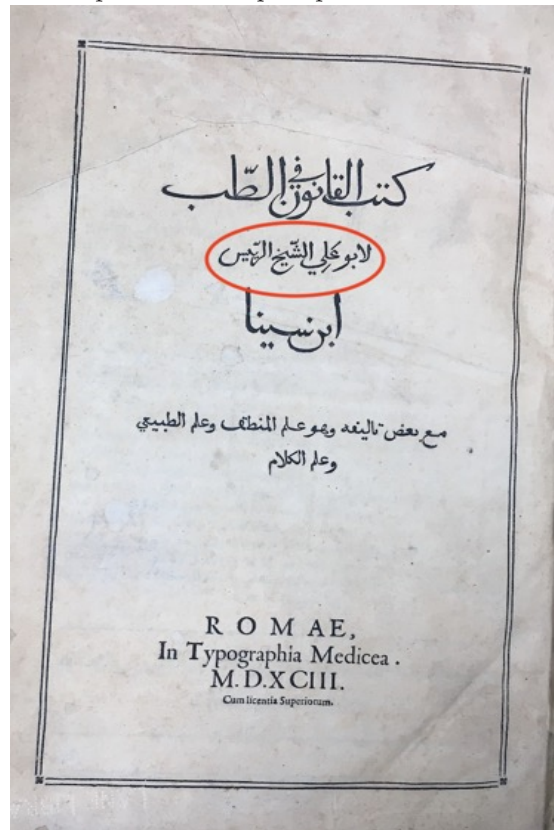


Figure 1: Avicenna's epithet listed in the Frontispiece of *Kitab Qanun fi al-Tibb*

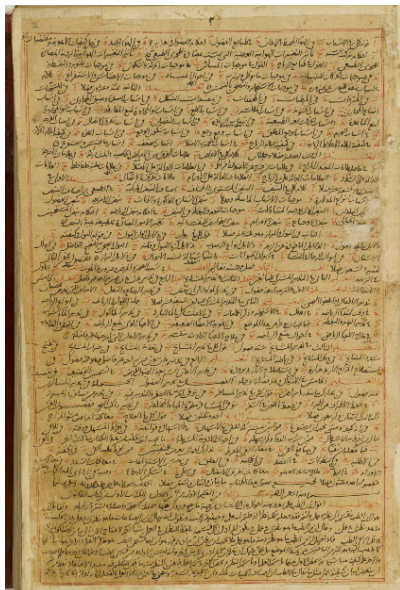
Medici Oriental Press or the *Tipografia Medicea Orientale*, was set up to publish Arabic books in Rome in 1584. Between 1590 and 1595, the press published seven Arabic texts. Two of these were Christian works issued in Arabic and bilingual Arabic-Latin

editions; the other five were Arabic scientific texts, including Avicenna's *Qanun*.

Qanun was most probably selected by the press primarily because of the stature of Avicenna (980-1037). According to Nancy Siraisi, "the *Canon* was the largest project undertaken by the press and the most important scientific work of Arabic origin to be printed there."¹ As indicated in *Figure 1*—the title page of Medici's *Qanun*—he was often referred to as al-Shaykh al-Ra'is (the preeminent scholar). Avicenna was a prolific author and wrote on topics as varied as metaphysics, theology, medicine, psychology, earth sciences, physics, astronomy, astrology, and chemistry. His fame in Europe rested principally on *Qanun* that held a position of superiority in the medical literature of the age, displacing the works of Galen, Al-Razi and, Al-Majusi,

THE FIRST STRIKING FEATURE OF MEDICI'S QANUN IS THE ELEGANT TYPE OF THE ARABIC SCRIPT.

tive techniques are evident in the *Qanun* as the typeset he created consists of round and curvy letters that resemble the Naskh font often used in Arabic manuscripts, especially in the Quran. *Qanun* consists of two font sizes: a larger one for the headings and a smaller one for the main text. Instead of a period at the end of a sentence, there is a plant motif, providing extra space between sentences. The text is enclosed in a two-line border, leaving



المصنوب الاول في الامور الكلية من علم الطب يشتمل على اربعة فصول

ا في حد الطب ومبداه من الامور ج في حفظ الصحة ط
ب في ذكر الامراض والاسباب والاعراض د في بيان وجه العلاجات بحسب الكلية ط
المصنوب الثاني في الامور الجزئية

الفصل الاول يشتمل على ستة فصول

ا في مبدا الطب ومبداه ج د في الاحلاط ه
ب في الازكان ح ط في الانفسا
ج في المزاجات د ه في الازواج والاعمال والقوى ط

التعميم الاول وهو فصلان

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم الثاني وهو فصل واحد

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم الثالث وهو فصلان

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم الرابع وهو فصلان

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم الخامس وهو فصل واحد ويشتمل على

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم السادس وهو فصلان

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم السابع وهو فصل واحد ويشتمل على

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم الثامن وهو فصلان

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم التاسع وهو فصل واحد ويشتمل على

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

التعميم العاشر وهو فصلان

ا في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ج
ب في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ج في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
د في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح
ه في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ط
ط في شرح ما هو الطب من الازواج ح

Figure 2: The right image is of the Table of Contents from the 13th century British Library: Oriental Manuscripts, Or 4946.

and becoming the textbook for medical education in the schools of Europe, such as Montpellier, in France, Salerno, in Italy, Louvain, in Belgium, and many other universities in Germany, until the 17th century and even until the 18th century in some institutions of higher medical education in Europe.²

The first striking feature of Medici's *Qanun* is the elegant type of the Arabic script. The French typographer Robert Granjon (1513–90), who was known as an excellent cutter of types, was responsible for creating these fonts.³ Arabic script is quite technically challenging as the language consists of varying letterforms. Granjon's innova-

considerable space for annotations. These techniques make the *Qanun* aesthetically pleasing and raise the standards of Arabic printing. The novelty of Granjon's typeset was much esteemed as "the punches are preserved in the Imprimerie Nationale in Paris under the name 'Arabic of Avicenna.'" ⁴ The superb technical skill of Granjon's movable metal type raised the bar for Arabic printing in Europe and continues to impress today. The cursive Arabic fonts of Granjon were used in all the printed editions of the Medici Oriental Press. They bettered all previous attempts in Europe and remained unsurpassed long after the press had closed.

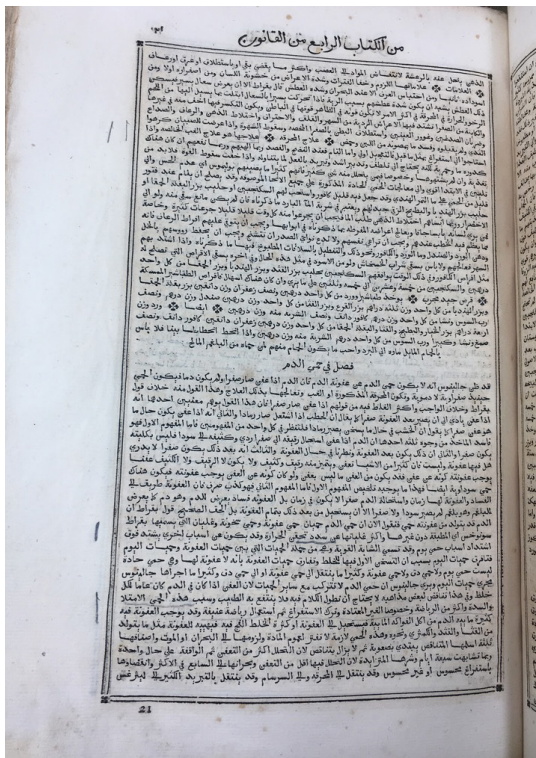


Figure 3: Line Markings

An interesting design choice employed by Granjon for Qanun is that there are no diacritics on the letters. Accents are essential for non-native speakers of Arabic as they help with pronunciation and are used to differentiate words with multiple meanings. Yet Arabic diacritics can also take up a considerable amount of line space. Also, it is easy to make mistakes with accents. For example, on an alphabet, a fathah—a small diagonal line above a letter—instead of a kasrah—a short diagonal line below a letter—can completely change the meaning of the word. The design choice to remove the accents allowed the press to create words of equal length with equal line spacings and also to minimize the possibility of errors.

Another innovation of Medici Press's edition of the Qanun lies in redesigning a comprehensive table of contents at the beginning of the book. For example, Figure 2 illustrates the table of contents of Book One of Qanun compared with one found in a 13th century Arabic edition in the British Library BL Or 4946. Medici's table of contents clearly shows the division of each book into multiple sections and subsections. The horizontal lines guide the reader in the division of the text, and the vertical listing of the contents with the appropriate page numbers on the same line assists in quickly locating a section

of the book. In contrast, the table of contents in the manuscript in the British Library's collection is not sectionalized. The written text flows linearly in one direction with the headings and the page numbers in red ink—a common practice in Arabic manuscripts.

The question to consider is whether Raimondi's redesign of the table of contents was the first of its kind for an Arabic edition of the Qanun or whether previous attempts were made to make this prodigious text accessible? A thorough search of all extant Arabic copies of the Qanun needs to be conducted to answer this question. Only a few complete manuscripts of the Qanun in Arabic have survived through the ages: National Library of Medicine MS A 53 (15th century), Florence no. 211 (15th century), Wellcome History Medical Library, London MS. Or. 155, (1632), and the previously mentioned BL Or. 4946 (13th century).⁵ Florence no. 211 is not digitized, and MS A 53 does not contain a table of contents. MS Or. 155 includes a comprehensive fihrist—list of contents for all the five books of the Qanun in Arabic and the design is similar to BL Or. 4946. According to the catalogue of Arabic manuscripts on medicine and science in the Wellcome Historical Medical Library, this manuscript was transcribed in 1632 in Isfahan, Iran.⁶ Therefore, this is a later

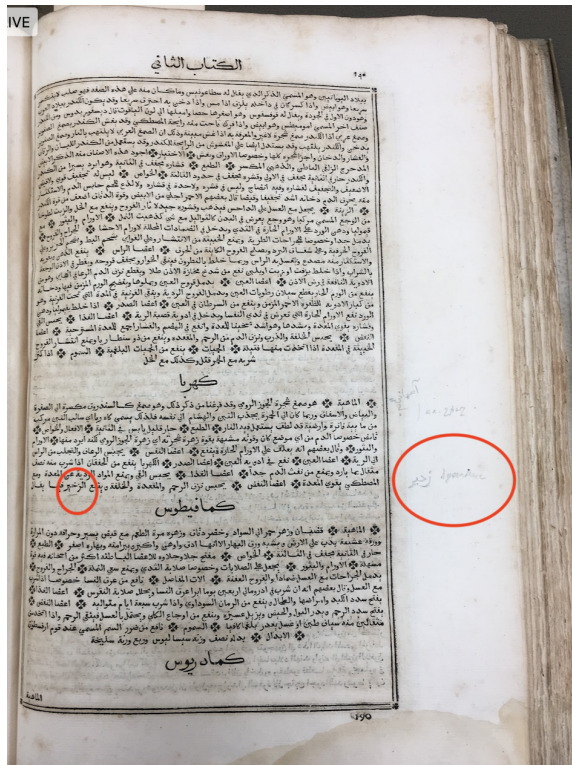


Figure 4: Annotations indicating Corrections

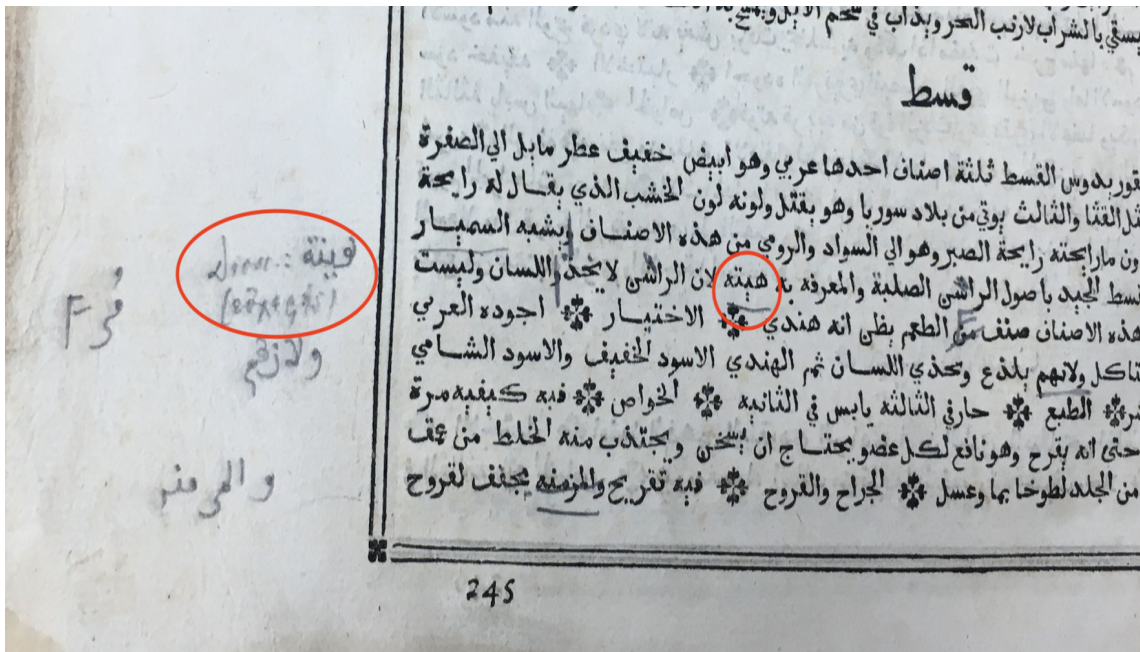


Figure 5: Greek and English, to German word next to Arabic word Hayanth in the margins.

manuscript than the Medici edition, yet it did not incorporate the enhancements made to the table of contents of the *Qanun* by the press. More research needs to be done to understand the early modern Arabic manuscript scribal community's reaction to the Medici Press's Arabic editions.

MORE RESEARCH NEEDS TO BE DONE TO UNDERSTAND THE EARLY MODERN ARABIC MANUSCRIPT SCRIBAL COMMUNITY'S REACTION TO THE MEDICI PRESS'S ARABIC EDITIONS.

Another Arabic scientific text published a year later by the Medici press does not contain a table of contents. The later work is *Kitab Tahrir al-Uṣul li-Uqlidis* (Exposition of Euclid's *Elements*), an Arabic redaction of Euclid's *Elements* attributed to Nasir al-Din Tusi (1201-1274) published in 1594 and was the first Arabic mathematical work to be printed in Europe in the original Arabic language. It can be speculated that the feature of a comprehensive table of contents was designed by Raimondi specifically for the *Qanun*

One hypothesis as to why a table of contents was added to *Qanun* and not to *Tahrir* could be because the *Qanun* is prodigious. It consists of five books. The first book deals with the general principles of theoretical and practical medicine. The second book presents simple remedies and describes over 800 drugs. The third book discusses

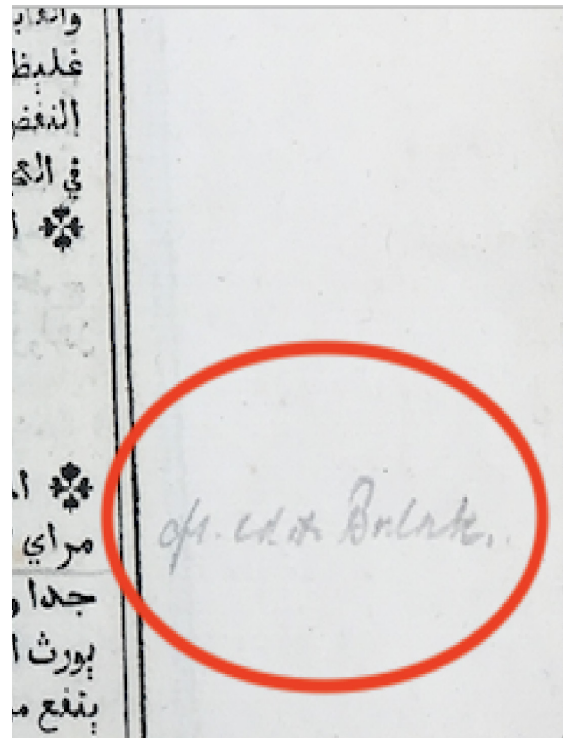


Figure 6: Note indicating another edition

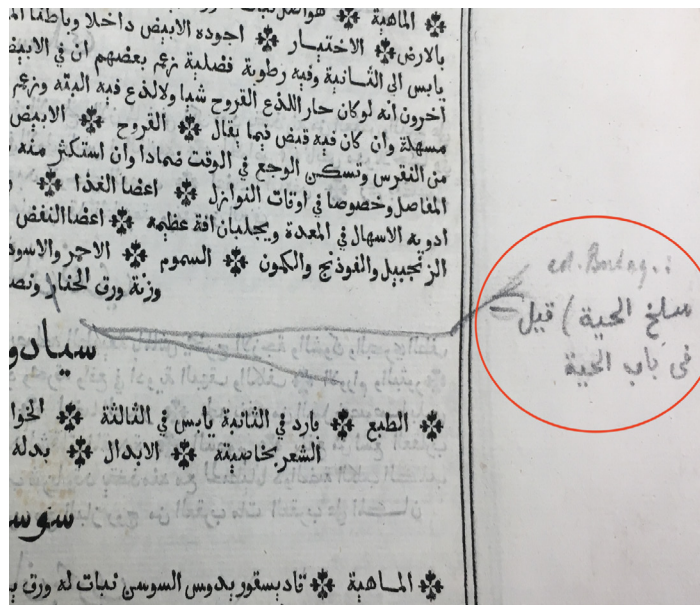


Figure 7: Indicating that the other edition includes a phrase omitted in the Medici edition

illnesses from the head to the toe. The fourth book is dedicated to general pathology. Added to this is a treatise on personal hygiene. In the fifth book of the *Qanun* the make-up and administration of medicines is discussed, together with the presentation of about 650 recipes for their composition. The table of contents systemizes an expansive array of information and orients the reader. It gives a roadmap by breaking the text into manageable parts, making it easier to study the work. Also, the systemization adds a level of authority and professionalism. It allows the scholar to preview the book before reading it, to see which sections address their main concerns and interests, and easily find the page number of that section. Because of these textual and organizational innovations, the Medici's printed edition of the *Qanun* was a valuable resource for centuries for scholars.

The edition of *Qanun* at Stanford Medical Library is part of the Seidel collection named after Dr. Ernst Seidel, a German physician and collector of antiquarian texts in various languages such as Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. In 1921, his library was purchased for Stanford University by Dr. Adolph Barkan, an ophthalmologist and one of the four founders of the Lane Medical Library's historical collections. A significant feature of the Medici edition owned by the Stanford Library is the marginalia. It provides another layer of information about the book's history and the people who have contributed to it. If the annotations in the text are

by Dr. Seidel himself, then it is fascinating that he purchased a 300-year-old text not merely for preservation or investment purposes but also to study the book meticulously. His marginalia give a glimpse into how the audience utilized the Medici press's published works, thereby showcasing the sustained importance of the Medici's edition of *Qanun* that was deemed beneficial to the scholarly community for centuries.

Marginalia also highlights Kopytoff's point about the intimate relationship between people and things. The annotations in Stanford's *Qanun* are in multiple languages: Arabic, with some Greek, English, or possibly German. There are also line-markings, shown in Figure 3, underlining certain sections, sentences, and words. The annotations in Arabic mostly call attention to the print errors. As illustrated in Figure 4, the reader, Dr. Seidel, has underlined the erroneous word *Zakheer* and in the margin has written the correction *Zahar*, and has also written the English translation of the word *dysentery* in the margin. In another example, the reader has corrected the heading *Labab* that should have been *Lablab* meaning *Ivy*. Another interesting instance is seen in a section called *Qist* that discusses the herb *costus*'s help in easing dysentery. As shown in Figure 5, the reader has underlined the word *Haytha* and not only has written the correction *Hayntha*, meaning *ease*, but has also written next to it a Greek and possibly hard to read English or German word.

In other instances, the annotator has copied an Arabic word in the margin and written a Greek word, perhaps its translation, underneath. There are also a few references to another edition of *Qanun* being consulted, shown in *Figures 6* and *7*. It is hard to read the scholar's writing, but the name of the other version seems to be *Barlak* or *Barlaqai*. Further research needs to be done for correct identification. This illustrates multiple points about a scholar reading the Medici edition of the *Qanun*. First, the reader was diligently consulting various editions of *Qanun* at the same time, possibly even in multiple languages. Second, the reader was fastidious, marking as many printing errors in the text. And third, the reader was also interested in translating the Arabic terms to other languages. Translations from Arabic to Greek were essential to the scholar as they helped uncover the Greek roots in Avicenna's work.

Analyzing Annotations not only makes an inanimate object like a book come alive, it also reveals the otherwise hidden history of its users.

Kopytoff is correct; objects do have biographies. The life of every manuscript is unique and has numerous stories to reveal. The *Qanun* at Stanford has survived through centuries, interacting with owners and ages. It tells the story of innovations by a Roman press to create a typeset for Arabic. It also calls attention to the systemization effort to make a comprehensive encyclopedia of all ancient and medieval medicine more accessible. The marginalia, by possibly a late 19th-century scholar, indicates the enduring influence of Medici's *Qanun*. These accounts give Stanford's *Qanun* an identity and character and raise many more questions for future research.

ENDNOTES

1. Siraisi, Nancy G, *Avicenna in Renaissance Italy: The Canon and Medical Teaching in Italian Universities after 1500*. Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 147.
2. Hamarneh, Sami K, "Medical education and practice in medieval Islam," In: *The history medical education*, University of California Press, 1977, p. 39-71.
3. Vervliet, H. D. L. *The Palaeotypography of the French Renaissance : Selected Papers on Sixteenth-century Typefaces*. Brill, 2008.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 455.
5. See the complete manuscripts of *Qanun*: National Library of Medicine: <https://collections.nlm.nih.gov/bookviewer?PID.nlm:nlmuid-9403778-bk>, "Islamic Medical Manuscripts : Catalogue - Encyclopedias 8." U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, 13 Dec. 2013, <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/arabic/E8.html>.
- The Wellcome Collection: <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/mssuvf7d>, The Qatar Library has digitized a 13th century manuscript of the *Qanun* in the holdings of the British Library: al-Qānūn fī al-ṭibb نوناقلا بطالاي ف نوناقلا انيس نبا British Library: Oriental Manuscripts, Or 4946, in *Qatar Digital Library*: https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc_100041536079.0x000001 The Library of Congress also has a couple of digitized manuscripts ranging from 14th to 19th century (<https://www.wdl.org/en/item/15433/>).
6. Iskandar, A.Z, "A catalogue of Arabic manuscripts on medicine and science in the Wellcome Historical Medical Library," Wellcome Collection, 1967, p. 178. <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/mnx6epy3/items?canvas=178>

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hamarneh, Sami K. "Medical education and practice in medieval Islam." In: *The History of Medical Education*, University of California Press, p. 39-72, 1977.
- Kopytoff, I. "The cultural biography of things: Commoditization as process." In A. Appadurai (Ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, p. 64-92, 1986.
- Siraisi, Nancy G. *Avicenna in Renaissance Italy: The Canon and Medical Teaching in Italian Universities after 1500*. Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Vervliet, H. D. L. *The Palaeotypography of the French Renaissance : Selected Papers on Sixteenth-century Typefaces*. Brill, 2008.

BRONZE HORSE CAST FROM DRIFTWOOD – DO NOT TOUCH

by Patrick Daly

*Deborah Butterfield's sculpture stands in the lobby of the Cantor Arts Center, Stanford.
(The title is from the plaque as it originally read.)*

These are the trees the wind blew down.

This is the wood that rivers washed away
and waves brought back.

These are the limbs scattered and collected.

This is the mind and these are the hands.

This is the clay casing. This is the wood burned away
and this the metal sputtering into the mold.

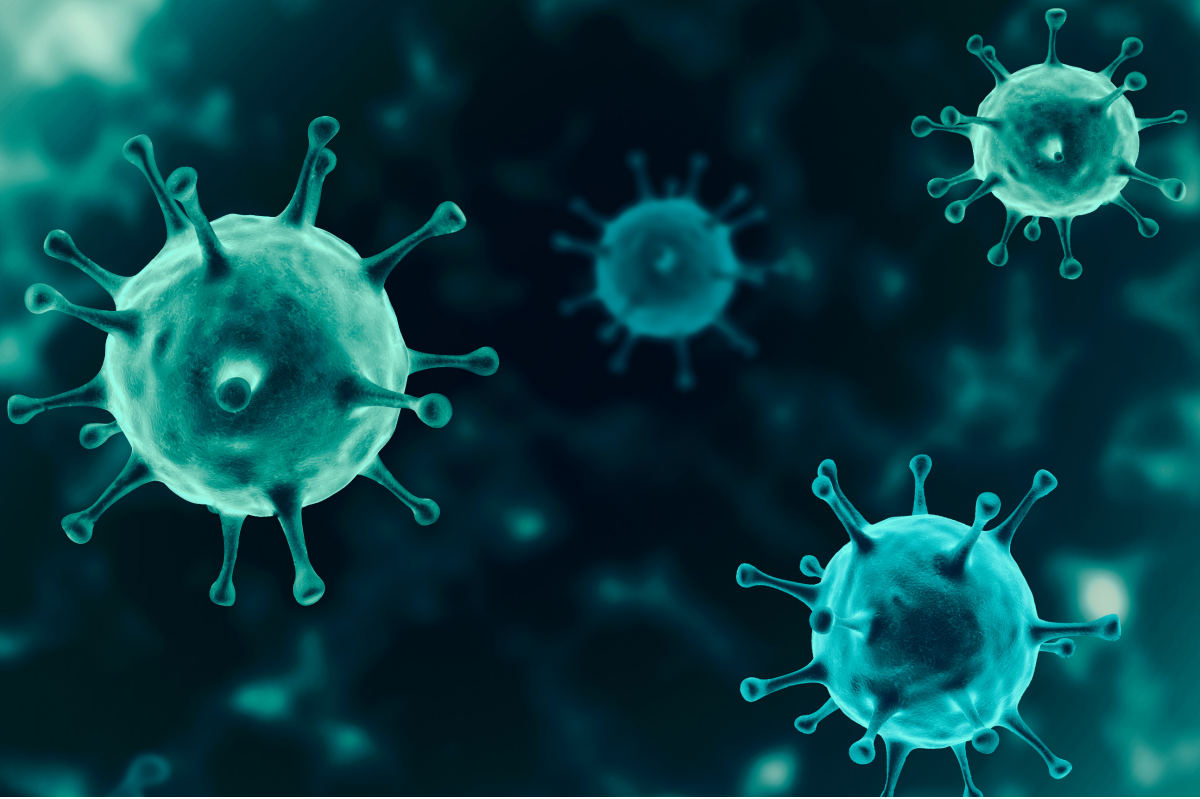
These are the ashes brushed away
and the metal has turned to branches.

These are trees recollected in metal, purged to their effigies, shaken free of themselves,
swept up
into horse.

This is the horse recollected
in branches lashing in the mane, the tail, the belly.

This is the horse of the hands, of water, wind and metal,
this is the horse standing, lifelike
(in the mind the dead stand like this)
turning to look.

This is the horse turning to look, to bite at a fly, so lifelike
a notch for an eye, so lifelike,
how can you bear not to touch?



TO HEALTH, THE GREATEST GIFT

by Maansi Dommeti

The man in front of her opened his eyes; they were a bright, neon purple. Had they always been this shade of purple? No. They had most certainly not been purple this morning. And that's when it occurred to her. He was the monster. He was the monster that could steal people's eyes. This realization hit just as his eyes opened up to reveal two mechanical claws that came straight at her, surely to take away her own eyes. With a start, she gasped awake tossing and turning, tangled in her sheets, drenched in sweat.

A nightmare. It was a nightmare, and she was still gasping for breath. Breath that was actually quite difficult to catch. She was sick, very sick, though not as sick as she may have been had she fallen ill this same time last year. After nearly two years of dodging Covid-19, taking every precaution, enduring long bouts of isolation, sacrificing so much life, she had

finally gotten hit. She didn't even know how it happened. There was no party—no single point of contact, no friend calling to let her know she had tested positive. She had been so careful, always masked up and yet, somehow, perhaps in that last Uber to brunch, perhaps at brunch itself, maybe at the airport, somewhere on her commute home from the mountains, she had caught the bug. Or rather, the bug had finally caught her.

Health was a funny thing. You didn't quite know what you had until you didn't have it. Breathing was so easy. She couldn't remember a time when she couldn't breathe. Well, there was that one time, off the coast of Maui when she'd partaken in something called SNUBA for the first time. The instructor had said, "No matter what happens, don't take your SNUBA mask off. Push the water out of the mask by pressing on the eject button; do NOT take

your mask off. But she had panicked when the water got in her mask and what had she done? She'd taken it off. Fifteen feet underwater. Yes, she supposed that was a moment in which she couldn't breathe. She'd kicked her legs with whatever strength she could muster to swim towards the golden light coming from the surface of the water. Fifteen feet had felt like fifteen miles in those few seconds. But she had made it to the top and that first breath of fresh air was one she would never forget.

But aside from that, she couldn't remember a time when she couldn't breathe. It was just something one did, something one was born doing. And yet, all of a sudden over the past week, she'd suddenly found herself slowing down. Having to really focus on the breathing. Breathe in, breathe out. She was congested. Her head was foggy. She felt slightly delirious. She signaled to her husband to bring her the Apple Watch so she could quickly check her oxygen. It was still 98 percent. Good, good. The doctor said there was no need to come in unless this number dropped. She was fine. Breathing was feeling like work to her, but clearly her body was doing what it needed to do.

Her body. She had only just realized just how much faith she had in her body. She just assumed it would get up day after day, didn't she? Occasionally, she would get sick, sure, but it would heal, and she would get up again. But with two little lines on a plastic test strip, she had begun to question everything. Sure, she was vaccinated, but was her body okay

knew that. That was a high-risk category. Her weighing scale had been rudely reminding her in the new year that her BMI was borderline obese. In June, the doctor told her she was pre-diabetic, but had assured her that many people had become more sedentary through the pandemic, and it was nothing to worry about. Would COVID-19 take offense to that? Would it attack?

She felt like absolute death. She had been told this variant was mild. Everyone seemed to have it and most young people her age were recovering quite quickly. No symptoms! No problems! Then why did she feel like absolute death? She of course didn't know what death felt like, but she was lying there, tangled in her sheets, drenched in sweat, unable to move, barely able to breathe. She slowly turned her head to the side, her vision blurring. Her head felt so heavy, she could hardly remember the dream she had just been having. Everything was hazy, her mouth was parched. She managed to swing her arm to her nightstand and grab the bottle that sat there. She took a swig and flinched as the cold water dribbled down her chin and onto the pillow. She hadn't quite had the strength to lift her head, but she drank it anyway, trying to quench a thirst that wouldn't die.

How did she get here? How had it come to this?

There was a flight delay in coming home from the mountains. There were staff shortages everywhere, the whole industry was in shambles, everyone was sick. But people had

BREATHING WAS SO EASY. SHE COULDN'T REMEMBER A TIME WHEN SHE COULDN'T BREATHE.

enough? How was she to know if there wasn't some issue internally, festering, waiting to be discovered by this virus that had the ability to attack most viciously at a moment's notice? What if she was a bomb waiting to explode? She had no way of really knowing...For the past two years, everyone had been talking about the immunocompromised. Was she? She didn't actually know. She was overweight, she

to get home. The last flight out of Denver was delayed by three hours. She had just been sitting at the airport since 9 p.m. that evening hoping that she'd somehow make it home in time to give the cats their last meal. It would be almost eight hours later that she would actually walk through her doors. It had been a long time to be in a public place. Perhaps at one point she had lifted up her mask to scarf

down some left-over ramen from dinner. It had gone cold, but the waiting had made her famished. She replaced the mask as soon as she could but perhaps not soon enough.

The next day was wonderful. She had Monday off. What a blessing. To have an extra day off from work and ease into the new year. And Tuesday had been fine, too. She felt energized, almost giddy to get back to work. After two weeks off, she was feeling almost grateful for the routine her day job brought back to her life. And then, on Wednesday morning, she had awoken with a sharp pain in her throat.

Dread.

got worse, and she felt her voice cracking. By 2:30 p.m., she was speaking up only when addressed, with a soft whisper, trying not to anger her vocal chords. At 3 p.m., she told her team she was signing off. She was done for the day. She closed her eyes, fell back on her pillow, and passed out. Chills, body aches, sweats, chills, body aches sweats, the next few days were delirium. She awoke when she was cold, or when she was feeling too hot, but she was always unconscious during the fevers. And she had feverish dreams, full of good things suddenly turning sour, evil monsters, confusion, and discomfort.

AND SHE HAD FEVERISH DREAMS, FULL OF GOOD THINGS SUDDENLY TURNING SOUR, EVIL MONSTERS, CONFUSION, AND DISCOMFORT.

She knew what it meant. Even before she whipped out her at-home rapid test, she knew. She hadn't stepped outside since she'd come home from the airport; she hadn't been in contact with any sick people; she knew what it meant that her throat was aching. She hurriedly skimmed through the instructions, they reminded her of the science experiments she used to do decades ago. Swab, soak, swirl, squeeze, seal, shake well, and siphon onto the testing stick. Wait 15 minutes and, she read this part multiple times, two lines mean you have a positive test.

It didn't take the full fifteen minutes. It took maybe three minutes. Two lines. She was positive. She was positive that she was positive. As she knew she would be. She had felt it. And as the day wore on, it only got worse. Her throat had been on fire since the morning. She thought, rather hoped, that would be the last of it. How silly she'd been.

Her face revealed it first. Her eyes were dark, sunken into her face, pinched around her nose. She saw herself on Zoom and decided she would go video-off today. Her mind was the next to go. The clouds rolled into her head as dense as the San Francisco fog. By noon, she was taking her Zoom calls horizontally, counting down the minutes until she could be done with meetings. Her throat

Perhaps worse than the cycle of fever was the loneliness. Her husband had not tested positive. He didn't have any symptoms. So she had gone into quarantine, quickly turning their already contaminated room into her refuge for the next week. Her husband would come in, only to deliver food, liquids, and occasionally check in on her. And so she dealt with the fever alone. She dealt with the delirium alone. She lay there. What if there's something wrong with me? She couldn't help but wonder. What if there is something in me that this virus can attack? They had said it was mild. This didn't feel mild. What if something had gone wrong? Millions had died. She lay there lost in her frenzied thoughts. Alone.

It didn't take her long to realize the difference between COVID-19 and the flu. By the end of Day 3, the fever had broken and she felt like she was getting much better. Perhaps, if she had had the flu, she would have actually been well by Day 4. Usually, the end of the fever meant the end of the illness was in sight; it meant a light at the end of the tunnel. But she did not have the flu. She had severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, nicknamed SARS-CoV-2 by the scientific community, and lovingly referred to as Coronavirus, Covid-19, and The Rona by the very public it threatened.

Covid-19 did not merely go away in three

days. No. On day 4 she went into a deep spiral of depression, the isolation finally getting to her. She irrationally fought with her husband about why he wasn't coming into the room to properly take care of her - why was he putting his own safety first? Was there no humanity left? She caught her frenzied thoughts toying with the idea of ending this life to start over. What was the point of living? her mind screamed. She was appalled. What was this virus doing to her?

geous. That night, she noticed a swollen film over the whites of her eyes. Six days after her symptoms first appeared, she had developed conjunctivitis, yet another symptom of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2.

On day 7, she was tired. Her eyes hurt. Sharp pains jabbed at her arms and legs periodically. But the mental fog was clearing. She felt herself slowly starting to refocus. She softly contributed to some meetings at work. She read books. She did some crafts. By

**ALL PLANS HAD BEEN CANCELLED.
SHE KNEW NOW THAT THE GREATEST GIFT
WAS HEALTH. THERE WOULD BE NO FAMILY, NO
FRIENDS, NO GRAND PARTY, NO EXORBITANT
VACATION WITH HER GIRLFRIENDS.
TO FEEL 100 PERCENT AND MAKE IT, TO SEE THE
DAWN OF ANOTHER BIRTHDAY, THAT WAS ALL
SHE WANTED.**

On Day 5 she felt herself coming back to her senses, but as her rationale returned, so too did the weakness. She was suddenly very lethargic. She spent most of the day sleeping, and when she did get up, she felt herself stumbling, uneasy on the legs that had carried her through her entire life. At least the mental fog was gone, she thought, trying to remain ever optimistic.

On day 6, she dragged up her laptop and joined her first meeting. She couldn't possibly keep taking days off. Two meetings into the workday she realized that the mental fog was most certainly not gone. She could not focus on anything. Despite feeling the sickness in her bones, she rationalized that she was not congested and she did not have a fever; why not take another at-home test? Surely she had overcome the virus by now? The test was positive. Of course, it was. She most certainly not better. She was still very much unwell. And yet, by this point, most employers across the country could have demanded her to return to work in person if they so pleased. Outra-

nighttime, she emerged, her quarantine period having technically ended and felt a little more like herself.

When people asked how she was doing, she no longer had an answer. She did not know when she would have a proper answer. She had felt fine since Day 3, and yet she was clearly not. New symptoms emerged every day. She did not know how she was doing, she only knew she was fighting. Her body was fighting for her, but unlike with the flu, there was no clear end in sight. Her birthday was just around the corner. She had made plans to go to Paris. To get out and do something special to celebrate a new year, a new age. Cancelled. All plans had been cancelled. She knew now that the greatest gift was health. There would be no family, no friends, no grand party, no exorbitant vacation with her girlfriends. To feel 100 percent and make it, to see the dawn of another birthday, that was all she wanted. What a gift, the greatest gift - this body, this life.

TWELVE THOUSAND EYES

by Martha McDaniel



I was unprepared for what came next. I had been staring at the butterfly up close, only six or seven inches away, to see if I could safely unstick one of its legs from its chrysalis. I didn't want to tear or cut the leg off. How do butterflies feel pain anyway? Would it be as excruciating as tearing off my own leg? I didn't want to accidentally crush its body either, which seemed likely if I held it between my thumb and finger in order to perform an operation. Using tweezers or scissors might puncture its abdomen or thorax or rip a hole in one of its delicate wings. The risk of mutilation was too high. Besides, my six-year-old daughter stood right up against me, chin resting on the table surface where the butterfly lay. Helena watched me intently as I assessed the problem. A small furrow creased her brow as she asked, "what can we do? I don't want it to die." My gaze lifted, just millimeters up from the stuck part, and that's when I found myself looking directly into one of its eyes, or rather into the 12,000 hexagonal ommatidia or optical units that make up each of its compound eyes, and it was looking back.

The instant our eyes met every cell in my body also felt like a wide-opened eye. All of my nearly thirty-seven trillion cells seemed to open in unison and were suddenly alert to the infinitude of possibilities in the universe. This feeling lasted only a fleeting few seconds but felt like an eternity during which I knew not only the butterfly, but all other life across time and light continuums. A vast spectrum of colors appeared as saturated, sharp-edged, three-dimensional entities. Red, green, orange, for example, weren't merely descriptions of how things looked, but they were things, three-dimensional shapes, themselves. Exhilarating contrasts between light and dark shimmered fluidly, moving through the landscape, being absorbed and reflected by the color shapes. I became acutely aware that my eyes were linked to my tongue, linked to the inside of my nose, and to my inner ear, and to my skin, and to my heartbeat. All senses were alive in perceptive accord. Past and future became irrelevant, subsumed by a harmonious present-ness, now-ness.

**I GULPED,
CAUGHT OFF GUARD AT
THE INTENSITY OF THE
CONNECTION, AT THIS
NEW WAY OF KNOWING,
AT THIS SURPRISING
ADDENDUM TO MY LIFE
TRAIL AND THE MANY
PATHS IT HAS TAKEN.**

I gulped, caught off guard at the intensity of the connection, at this new way of knowing, at this surprising addendum to my life trail and the many paths it has taken. Then I looked at Helena, her lovely hazel eyes were taking it all in, she seemed to sense my amazement.

Three weeks earlier, the butterfly kit had arrived, complete with emergent life. Five tiny caterpillars clung to the inside of a pint-sized clear plastic jar. They were genus *Vanessa Cardui*, commonly called painted ladies, a member of the phylum arthropoda. A bucket-sized pop-up mesh habitat came with the kit. Fortunately, it was not blazing hot the late-September afternoon when the mailman left the boxed kit on our front porch, which being south facing, protected by an alcove, and paved with red brick, becomes a veritable oven on even mildly warm days. Nevertheless, all life contained therein survived the journey through the U.S. postal service, now it had to survive my and Helena's care for the next three weeks.

CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER CREATURES CAN HAPPEN INSTANTANEOUSLY OR TAKE WEEKS OR MONTHS OF INTERACTION TO DEVELOP.

Our first priority was to choose a spot that wouldn't kill them. It had been a typical Fall in Northern California, unpredictably cold then hot then cold again, so my preferred choice of a patio placement did not seem viable, even though as insects in nature they would most likely have endured. Helena and I settled on the carved buffet table that stood against a large sliding glass door in the dining room. It was a good spot. Sunlight filtered onto the table for most of the morning. Helena thought it afforded the creatures a semblance of being outdoors with views of their future butterfly home – a hodgepodge of trees from oak, maple, redwood, and pine, to apricot, apple, persimmon, and fig. She hoped the flowering orange marigolds and purple coneflowers on the patio would keep them within our sight once they were released. Watching the transformation of caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly was the whole point of these short-term pets so having them in a spot that we walked by several times a day, en route to the kitchen, was ideal, thus on day one, we popped up the habitat on the buffet and set the caterpillar jar inside.

The word "pet" might be a bit of a stretch for a butterfly, much less a caterpillar or chrysalis, but isn't a pet just a kept animal that we take care of? My friend Anne has kept giant cockroaches in an aquarium for years; she enjoys observing their social interactions. Not something I would endeavor; butterflies are about as insect friendly as I get. But I never expected to connect with them, not with a species so different that it's not even in the same taxonomic phylum, and I certainly did not expect to connect so deeply. As many of us have experienced, the close bonds that are possible with our fellow mammal friends, dogs, cats, horses, can be touching, healing, even profound. Connections with other creatures can happen instantaneously or take weeks or months of interaction to develop.

Cooperative interspecies communication is the pseudo-scientific term for connectivity between different species. It is cooperative because the connection benefits all of the participating beings. Interspecies simply means that there are different species involved. And the communication in this relationship can be a personal rapport or some sort of information exchange. The question though is how much we really are communicating and how much of that experience is anthropomorphic. To one degree or another, we end up assigning our own feelings and thoughts to the other animal, even to other humans that we interact with, though I do believe most mammal pets, and humans, participate in the communication interchange, at least on some level. Through communication we learn about both ourselves and the other being. I'm not here to argue the validity of who communicates with whom and to what purpose, but to relay my encounters. I count the butterfly gaze amongst the most unexpected interactions I've had with other beings in the animal kingdom.



Helena and I had another interspecies interaction with a small green amphibian. It had been a couple of years since the butterfly kit when Helena received a miniature aquatic frog, phylum chordata, as a gift from her aunt. We named him Tiny for his rather small size – a mere inch long full-grown. He was another kit-based pet, this one from one of those catalogue-slash-mall-based brick and mortars that offers the latest in gadgetry and convenience for folks who already have everything and then some. Tiny lived a long two-years in his little milk-carton sized Plexiglas aquarium that sat on top of Helena’s dresser.

He became one of our routines. At feeding time one of us would drop a few smelly fishmeal micro-pellets into the little holes in the top of his tank. The motion of picking up the small jar of pellets excited him. Opening the jar, releasing the fishy aroma heightened his excitement, prompting him to dart around the tank. In an amusing display of amphibious acrobatics he’d shoot up to the surface to gobble up the little morsels as they were dropped in, then dive down to catch the ones that sank. In addition to feeding time, we were in and out of Helena’s room frequently, picking up clothes and toys (me), making the bed (me), sleeping, dressing, and playing (all Helena). We were known and of interest to Tiny and he showed this by swimming up to the side of the tank that was nearest our position in the room. He’d hover there calmly, seeming to want us to touch the plexiglass side he was up against, or maybe he was hoping we would pick up the pellet jar. For us, the relationship was subdued but satisfying, one of routine dependence and provision.

When Tiny died, we all—my husband, Helena, and I—cried. We buried him in a nice spot under a redwood tree in the backyard and placed a rock with his name written in Sharpie on top of the small mound. After we all said a few solemn words, I think mine were “Tiny was a good frog,” we went on about our lives.

About a week into our butterfly caretaking project change was evident. The black fuzzy caterpillars had grown longer and plumper and molted their skins several times. They made their way to the top of the jar to make little silk pads on the underside of the lid to which they could affix themselves. Thus started their metamorphosis to butterfly-dom, from leaf-eaters to nectar-drinkers.

The larval creatures molted one last time to form their chrysalides; the new development piqued Helena’s anticipation.

Our primary butterfly task shifted from casually observing the wriggling caterpillars in passing, to twice or thrice daily purposeful close inspections of the little hanging chambers of concealed change. Every day over the next twelve or so days, we looked for some slight wiggle or shake that would indicate their pending emergence. Helena and I watched this biological miracle together, talking about what was happening inside the chrysalides, what happened to their old caterpillar selves, whether or not they would have the same brains once they changed. Her eagerness was infectious.

FOR US, THE RELATIONSHIP WAS SUBDUED BUT SATISFYING, ONE OF ROUTINE DEPENDENCE AND PROVISION.

Sharing her excitement was natural for me. Helena was and always will be part of my being. I loved her the moment I knew she was growing inside of me. I had no idea how deep that love would be, at how connected we would become. Co-tending other beings became an important part of our connection; we were caretakers together. Connections follow routes, roots, and routines. They form along the winding trail that our life follows; they can have some deep, common basis of connection; and they usually thrive with the regular touch points that come with caretaking. Perhaps when we allow ourselves these connections, despite what species, or even phylum we belong to, we open other ways of knowing not only each other, but ourselves too.

Several years after the butterfly experience, Helena and I co-tended a second dresser-top pet, this one rescued from a local Chinese market’s live seafood section. She had gone to the market with a friend, taken by the friend’s mother to buy a few hard to otherwise find Asian cooking ingredients, and to walk through the aisles to see what other people in the world liked to eat. Upon coming to the seafood section, they found tank upon tank

of live sea creatures: fish, lobster, shrimp, crab, and crayfish.

The girls were horrified at the thought of the creatures' likely destination to stewpots up and down the Peninsula. The other girl's mom relented and rescued two of the crayfish to bring home, one for each girl. Total bill: thirty-eight cents. The mom already had a couple of aquariums from her stash of grade-school-teacher supplies and donated one to us. How could she do otherwise after springing the new parenthood task upon us?

Originally named Squirmy, the crayfish's name soon became Stinky because of how quickly his aquarium went from clean to odiferous. His new home consisted of fresh water, aquarium gravel, and a couple of small huts made of heavy-duty aluminum foil; he liked to lie under these. Like the butterfly, crayfish belong to phylum arthropoda, and they have two compound eyes (though the crayfish eye orbs can move independently of each other).



Despite this similarity to the butterfly, Stinky exhibited many of the same kept-animal behaviors as Tiny, who belonged to a completely different phylum. He communed with us whenever we were in the room by following our movements from one side of the tank to another, he waved his claws at us when we approached, and became much more excited at feeding time. We were surprised at how clever and industrious he was. Helena complained that she could hear him scratching in the gravel during the night. Morning light revealed the ramp of gravel he had pushed up one side of the aquarium, on which he stood reaching for the top edge, presumably in an attempt to escape.

Even though our routines with him were relatively minor, he earned a soft spot in our hearts and we were saddened by his eventual death. Stinky, like Tiny, lived about two years. He was given a

simple memorial and buried in the backyard near Tiny. We placed a little grave-rock, with his name written in Sharpie, on his small mound.

We were almost three weeks into the butterfly project when the long-awaited phase of hatching began. The chrysalis membranes had gone from solid green to gray to nearly translucent, finally revealing the furled beauty of the new creatures' wing patterns. Helena's eyes were large with anticipation as we scrutinized the wiggling pods. Then came the day that the butterflies broke open their thin enclosures. We placed a sugar water solution and some fresh orange slices in the hut in preparation for their new life phase.

By the next day, all but one of the butterflies had fully emerged and had begun to feast on the sweets. But one was stuck, its leg caught in its chrysalis. Unable to fly, let alone crawl or move about the hut, it was captive, not only by us, but by its own metamorphic mishap. We were hopeful it would work its way out, so we placed an orange slice right next to where it sat and left it to free itself overnight, hopeful that things would continue to happen as they should. But things don't always happen like we think they should.

Did things happen as they should the night I had a death dream about my cat, before I even knew he was dead? Max was my first, really uncanny, out-of-the ordinary experience with another being, long before Helena, Tiny, Stinky, and the butterfly. He was a rebound cat. Saddened by the untimely death of my prior cat, I jumped at the opportunity to adopt this feral four-month-old grey tabby.

Raised in and around a remote barn in the Santa Cruz Mountains by his also feral mother, Max had very little experience with humans. Thus, he came to our house, wild, timid, and hungry. He seemed to like the twice-daily food and water service, so he stuck around. I let him keep his distance, offering what I could, making a point to speak to him kindly with those singsong inflections that make cats and babies relax.

Then one day we connected. It was the same day of his fatal ending, July 1, the day of the year in most years that the apricots are ripe enough to harvest before the squirrels get to them. I had been up in the tree picking fruit, buckets hanging on old brittle limbs, cardboard boxes wedged here and there, when I noticed I had company. Max was

perched on a branch above my head. As I reached near him to snag a plump cot, he reached down and gently tapped my hand with his paw. I was ecstatic! After months of letting him be, he came to me. Neither of us was ready for him to sleep inside; it would have meant entrapment to him, and a flea bomb in my future.

That night I dreamt that Max had soft grey wings and was flying. He circled overhead a few times then glided away. It was a fitful dream, and I woke eager, almost anxious to interact with him again. Per my usual morning routine, I cracked open the back door, set his breakfast on the deck, but no Max. I called him, but still no Max. I walked around the exterior of the house, checking his usual hiding places, finally coming to the bush he favored for daytime naps. There he lay under the bush, on his side, legs outstretched, eyes open, stiff.

Would our connection have seemed so profound if he had not died? Would I have grieved so much if I had not known him in my dreams? Retrospection gives events their should-have-been status.

A week after the butterflies hatched, we still had four fully emerged and one with its leg stuck. After weighing the options, we decided not to pursue surgery. Four were released; one was left to live out its remaining days on the bottom of the hut, next to a fresh slice of orange. We were sad for his shortened life, but now I wonder if at least some balance was established in the universe through our experience with the creature. Our co-tending brought Helena and I closer together, and I'll never forget the psychedelic experience of looking into that butterfly's compound eye.

Only now can I try to put that experience into words, but will words themselves convey the depth and complexity of what I felt and learned? In *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger wrote,

“It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled”

I often wonder how it's possible that I looked into that eye, the one with 12,000 optical units crammed into one tiny organ and know things that I didn't know I already knew—things that I didn't know I had the capacity to know. How did I see a beloved pet's death in a dream, before I knew he had died? How could we become companions and feel so much empathy for a frog and a crayfish. How can the depths of love for your children ever be known until you experience it?

At the time of our butterfly project, Helena and I had not yet been tested by the inevitable teen-age angst that precedes separation. Yet as I write this, our connection remains, sometimes tangled or partially obscured by the moods, the uncertainty about the world's future, and the search for purpose that 16-year-olds experience. It is my privilege to participate in this bumpy ride and share in the rich complexity of life's journey.

IT IS MY PRIVILEGE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS BUMPY RIDE AND SHARE IN THE RICH COMPLEXITY OF LIFE'S JOURNEY.

There are as many ways of seeing and knowing as there are different eyes, different brains, different contraptions — all of them valid ways of knowing both self and other, and our respective place in the world, but not all accessible or even understandable. What does that say about our untapped capacity? This is what I want to instill in my daughter. It's the idea that one can keep looking, seeking, and learning, and be open to where each of those activities might take us. It's when we let our guard down, when we least expect it, when we stop searching after the long search, when we follow our routines with grace and openness, when we no longer try to force a connection; that's when the life trail tail wags for us, even for but a moment.



FOR RUMI

by Prabhu Palani

Poetry is a rough translation
For the soul that never was
One's grandest being
In its simplest form.
Clever words that disguise
A heady Coban of substance and
Drizzle.

Poetry is thoughts that penetrate the depths
Of the mind
Like the color that dyes my lover's veil
Its lines written on sand
On whom the caravans pass.

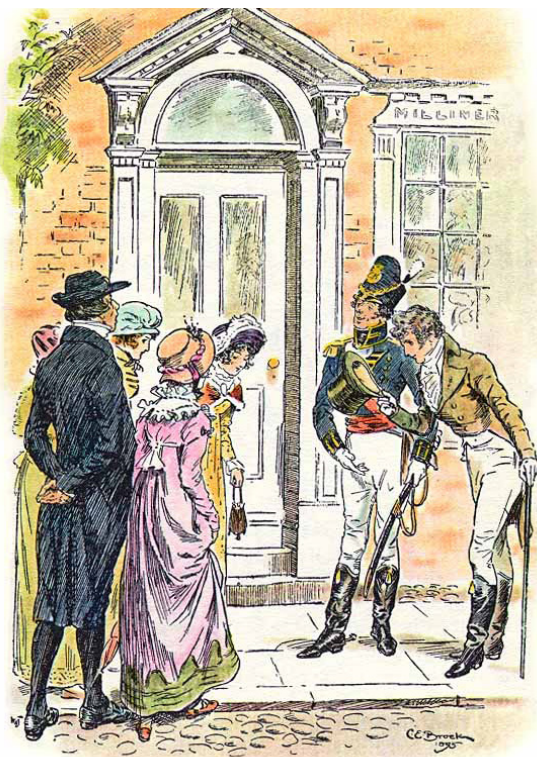
Poetry is unresolved yearning
Captured on paper
Its grammar puzzles
Yet somewhere resonates
Like the emptiness and fullness
of life.

THE TRUTH ABOUT IMPRESSIONS – EMPIRICIST THOUGHT IN *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

by Aparna Chandra

Jane Austen wrote *Pride and Prejudice* at a time when the philosophers of the day were preoccupied with the question: how does one know what the truth is? While Austen's title teaches us to seek out the titular traits throughout the book, there is another key idea hidden in the opening sentence – truth – the pivot around which pride and prejudice dance. Pride and prejudice drive the narrative but are themselves driven by the estimation of truth by each character, and this truth invariably proves at times to be wrong. This suggests the influence of empiricist thought on Austen's writing. Empiricists argue that there is no way to know the truth with any certainty because the only way we acquire knowledge of the world is through sensory experiences,

**IF ONE LOOKS CLOSELY,
AN UNDERCURRENT OF
EMPIRICISM CAN BE
FOUND RUNNING
THROUGH
*PRIDE AND PREJUDICE***



and our conscious mental reflection on those experiences – the problem being that both are fallible. Misperception limits the authenticity of what we can know through our senses, and misinterpretation tampers with what we can assess through reflection.

When we examine what Austen's characters believe, we find that their experiences align with the empiricist claim. They often

fail to know the truth because their knowledge is either based on their faulty sensory experience, or a biased mental processing of this sensory input. Thus, if one looks closely, an undercurrent of empiricism can be found running through *Pride and Prejudice*. The evolution of Elizabeth's opinion of Wickham from admiration to abhorrence, as she draws conclusions based on her observations as well as through reflecting on them, is one such illuminating example.

The first time Elizabeth's senses are presented with the excessively handsome Wickham, she evaluates him with passion. Her thoughts betray that she is letting his comportment stand for his truth of character: "his very countenance may vouch for being amiable" (79), and "there was truth in his looks" (80).

Further, she answers her older sister Jane's advice to be circumspect about Wickham with smug self-confidence: "one [Elizabeth] knows exactly what to think" (85). Clearly, Elizabeth is oblivious to how Wickham's charisma has prejudiced her towards him and robbed her of the ability to be a fair judge of truth.

Now that Elizabeth is convinced of Wickham's excellence, cautioning against him proves futile: she gets dismissive, or enraged.

Much worse, she blatantly neglects the obvious facts even when she sees them first-hand, in order to stubbornly uphold her opinion of him. She angrily rejects Miss Caroline Bingley's friendly warning as class snobbery and labels her "insolent" (93). She ignores the fact that Miss Bingley is a disinterested party, so there would be no reason for her to lie.

Similarly, she promptly writes off Jane's unflattering appraisal of Wickham, since Jane has heard it from Bingley who, in turn, got it from Darcy: "Mr. Bingley learned it from his friend [Darcy], so I'll venture to think the same [of Wickham] as before" (94). Elizabeth's extreme surety of her evaluation also prevents her from noticing that the self-imposed absence of Wickham from the Netherfield Ball to avoid Darcy (113) was contrary to his previous hauteur, "If he [Darcy] wishes to avoid seeing me, he must go" (77). Instead of comprehending this discrepancy, she "approves his forbearance" (114). Elizabeth's unquestioning faith in Wickham's goodness, and her own emotional entrapment with his handsomeness hinders her ability to surmount that opinion. A preference for her own version of truth gets in the way of exercising wisdom. She clings to her faulty opinion as the immutable truth even in the face of contrary facts being reported to

her senses.

As additional evidence of Wickham's ignominy comes to light, Elizabeth's pride takes charge of decision-making. Wickham's transference of affections from herself to Miss King does not outrage her. Even though she disengages romantically from him, she irrationally continues to hold him as "her model of the amiable and pleasing" (150). When her aunt derisively calls Wickham mercenary



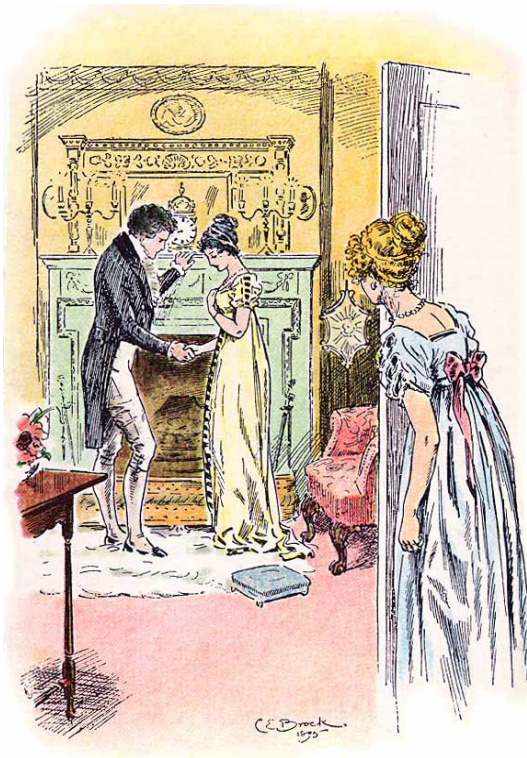
for preying upon the newly rich Miss King, Elizabeth reminds her of her previous warning to not get entangled with Wickham as he had no money. She immediately defends his behavior – if it was okay for her to not get attached to Wickham for pecuniary reasons, it is fine for him to be a mercenary (151). Finally, even when Darcy's letter reveals Wickham's dishonorable deeds to her, she discredits it entirely: "This must be false! This cannot be! This must be grossest falsehood!" (198-199).

Elizabeth prides herself in her ability to figure people out. To accept that she is wrong would shatter her dignity. However, while she adamantly insists that she is right, and defiantly ignores proof of Wickham's character, she still distances herself from him on account of her aunt's warning and his preferential attachment to Miss King. This indicates that now she is beginning to doubt his goodness.

A PREFERENCE FOR ELIZABETH'S OWN VERSION OF TRUTH GETS IN THE WAY OF EXERCISING WISDOM.

Eventually, when Elizabeth begins to reflect on and connect Wickham's observed behavior to Darcy's report of him, understanding provides a new appraisal – not only of Wickham, but also of herself. Elizabeth first vehemently rebels against the accusations leveled against Wickham in Darcy's letter, but then collects herself, and commands herself "to examine the meaning of every sentence" (199). For the first time, she demonstrates a reflective stance with respect to Wickham. Soon enough, she interprets all the previous observations in a completely different way. She recalls that "His countenance, voice, and manner, had established him at once in the possession of every virtue. She tried to recollect some instance of goodness . . . But no such recollection befriended her" (200). She realizes how her senses had been duped. His absence from the Netherfield Ball strikes her as an instance of "inconsistency of his professions with his conduct" (200). Now, she also

**EMPIRICISM ANSWERS:
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO
KNOW THE TRUTH WITH
ABSOLUTE SURETY,
BECAUSE ALL
KNOWLEDGE IS
ACQUIRED THROUGH
OUR SENSES WHICH ARE
SUBJECT TO DECEPTION.**



sees "His attentions to Miss King" as "hatefully mercenary" (201). As her prejudice towards Wickham is destroyed by a new evaluation of facts, her own pride is also shattered by these new truths to which she has awakened. She is ashamed and laments, "I, who have prided myself on my discernment! – I, who have valued myself on my abilities! . . . How humiliating is this discovery! . . . I have courted prepossession and ignorance, and driven reason away, . . . Till this moment, I never knew myself" (202).

Darcy's letter presents evidence to Elizabeth's mind and compels her to sieve the facts through her mental process. This sorts out truth from wishful thinking and apprises Elizabeth of Wickham's unscrupulousness.

Wickham's elegant deportment, and manipulative conversation laced with misinformation, as well as Elizabeth's own emotions about Wickham befog her, and doggedly defeat her attempts to know his real character. How can she ever know the truth, when she must navigate a tangle of confounding information presented to her senses? Empiricism answers: it is impossible to know the truth with absolute surety, because all knowledge is acquired through our senses which are subject to deception. This string of events leads us to suspect that Austen was well versed in empiricism to have woven it seamlessly through the lives of her characters, nevertheless, in the true empiricist spirit it has to be acknowledged that it is an impression gleaned from the book; whether it is the truth, we shall never know for sure.

WORK CONSULTED Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Penguin Books, 2014.



Detail from "The Dominican Blessed" (1423-24) by Fra Angelico courtesy of the National Gallery, London

TO TELL A STORY TWENTY YEARS LATER: SISTER BARTOLOMEA'S INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY OF CORPUS DOMINI

by Sandra Park

Declaring in preface "to recount the full truth of what I have seen and heard,"¹ Sister Bartolomea Riccoboni's chronicle reads as literary present, telegraphing scenes of the past as an unfolding drama. To recount is to retell a story. And yet, everything in the sister's chronicle constitutes a beginning, that is, a foundational origin story. "... I have decided to write with this goal in mind: in order that those sisters who follow after us may be properly edified ...and follow through on this good beginning." The conservative strain in this narrative is to showcase the virtues of life at the convent, what is practiced and should continue in perpetuity. *Life and Death in a Venetian Convent* is written in historical past tense but seems fixed in an eternal present, as in "Christ is risen." Historian Kate Lowe says "Convent chronicles in the vernacular ignore classical rules governing the composition of history and forge a collective past for their community on their own terms."² Sister Bartolomea's recounting of what she has "seen and heard" claims an eyewitness view of Corpus Domini in Venice of 1395-1436. And yet,

none of the events are contemporaneous, having taken place "some twenty years ago." As such, she employs vivid detail and scene to establish an institutional memory that will conserve convent beliefs and practices in an eternal present.

**...SHE EMPLOYS VIVID
DETAIL AND SCENE
TO ESTABLISH AN
INSTITUTIONAL MEM-
ORY THAT WILL CON-
SERVE CONVENT BELIEFS
AND PRACTICES IN AN
ETERNAL PRESENT.**

Among a full roster of over seventy sisters at Corpus Domini, Sister Bartolomea's authorial stance is that of the royal "we." With alert eyes and

ears, she is a nun in Dominican habit, literally and figuratively taking on the mantle of the Catholic church. Just as Venetian patricians wear the long black robes of State authority, she is properly dressed for the role of a bride and servant to God. Sister Bartolomea positions herself as a writer and reader, probably of genteel birth or of the merchant bourgeoisie, given her literacy to produce a manuscript book on behalf of the convent. She ascribes her authorial impulse to the Holy Spirit, herself as an instrument of the divine who records thoughts and deeds for posterity. Her own biographical details are missing, although her necrology of others fastidiously records their circumstances of entry to Corpus Domini: as young women, widows, transfers from other convents, or lay sisters. Without putting herself in the picture, the writer takes an omniscient, discerning view that serves the reputation of Corpus Domini. Virtue and devotion are highlighted; misdeeds and corruption are omitted.³

The larger frame to this document is the landscape and setting of Corpus Domini, on a tip of a narrow spit of land northwest of central Venice, bounded on two sides by the Adriatic Sea and what is now called the Cannaregio Canal.⁴ The tip of land was called Capo de Zirada, “a shoal where boats were beached,” a site that “pleased” Sister Lucia Tiepolo, the founder and a key figure in Sister Bartolomea’s chronicle. “The land belonged to certain widowed noblewomen who offered to help her erect the building and come reside with her.” In one fell swoop, not by the sword but by her faith, Sister Lucia acquired prime land and a small nucleus of entering sisters. Although much is made of her “vision,” there were also efficacious negotiations for land, building, expansion, and daily operations. Of the prominent Tiepolo family, she declined to fill the position of abbess in Ammiano, a backwater post.⁵ Instead, she looked for another opportunity in mid-career and middle age. Sister Tiepolo persisted beyond her “vision” for six years and finally secured permission from the Great Council of Venice, the nod from patriarchal privilege. The convergence of an isolated, picturesque site and a founding story of women who were fluent in title transactions and property management gestures toward pragmatic resourcefulness under the arc of Providence, a miniature of the origin story of Venice, the know-how of lagoon people and mariners coupled with the stolen-transferred relics of St.

Mark. Venice, looking east on the high seas to establish a *stato da mar* under the banner of the winged Lion and the Church, likewise staked its claim to land and property: multiplication of monasteries and convents amounting to a religious sector of society with *terra ferma* wealth and influence.

The Catholic obsession with relics is a reach for continuity, material evidence of origins. In Sister Lucia’s vision, the “wounded and bloody” “Lord Jesus” said “Go to Venice and build me a convent in my name...The Body of Christ.” In terms of story and symbol, the relic is embedded in the name Corpus Domini (a common name for convents elsewhere in Italy). Corporeality, the opposite of spirituality, occupies a lot of space in Sister Bartolomea’s text: Christ embodied plays an essential role in the convent imaginary. Two episodes stand out as corporeal in nature: when the wind knocked down the eucharist and the nuns cried out, beating their breasts as if witnessing the Passion all over again, and when Father Domini was “utterly dumbfounded” at the load of “chains and whips” collected from the sisters after too many had shown signs of severe illness from self-flagellation. Both episodes starkly depict the life of the body in sisterhood. Far from abstractions of spirituality, these corporeal events pushed this chronicle of memory into a present tense of scene and drama. As a twenty-year retrospective, what is put in and what is left out may be a trick of memory. Or, this may indicate the unresolved, obsessive return to the Passion, the sisters’ bodily reenactment of Christological suffering, on the verge of erotica with moans and tears.

TO REMEMBER IS RECURSIVE: WE MUST RETRACE TIME PAST AND RECONSTRUCT WHAT HAPPENED.

Christ embodied in the eucharist, a gust of wind, and a religious procession somehow appear as a mashup in chapter VIII, involving a quashed attempt⁶ of the convent’s confraternity to join a highly regulated Corpus Christi procession without State permission. Sister Bartolomea’s version of this nonevent is entitled “HOW THE WIND KNOCKED

THE CHAPBOOK-LENGTH MANUSCRIPT IS A WORK OF MEMORY, INTENSELY RENDERED MOMENTS WITH MORE LAPSES THAN WHAT CAN BE RETRIEVED AS A MATTER OF RECORD.

THE HOLY SACRAMENT DOWN FROM THE PLACE WHERE IT IS KEPT BECAUSE THE DOOR WAS LEFT OPEN." (This sounds like the wishful thinking of a contrada bad boy who says a rock jumped out of the bushes and tripped him, how he landed on top of a comely maiden on her way to a festival procession.) The chapter title reveals naiveté on the part of the narrator: she may be revisiting this incident as a puzzlement, the unfinished business of trusted confraternal officers "setting out" and then interrupted by a gust of wind knocking down a chalice holding the host. Unusual in both scripture and liturgy, "because" is not a providential term; paratactic conjunctions such as "and" are used to narrate events and parables. The title indicates that, although the "wind" knocked down the eucharist, it was the sisters' neglect of "a door ... left open" that caused the knockdown. Conveyed on Sister Bartolomea's own terms, it seems that neglect by the sisters disrupted the confraternal mission. "The octave of the feast arrived ... marking three years to the day since the convent was enclosed." The translator's footnote says in 1397 the octave of Corpus Christi was the *day before* the feasts of Saints Peter and Paul, sounding like a bell in the nick of time. But in the next sentence, "the tabernacle containing the host that had been borne in the procession remained steady" may be referring to the Corpus Christi procession, in which case, the chalice knockdown incident was an after-the-fact admonition to the convent. Note the narrator's reference to the foundation date of enclosure: that this particular incident occurred in the early years of Corpus Domini and that enclosure is a point of reference for its story of many chapters. As institutional memory, certain unresolved events bookmarked in the sister's recollections are

retold by ironing out wrinkles of doubt or dispelling aspersion. Her Corpus Domini chronicle raises questions both by what she chooses to leave out as well as what she leaves in, the conceal/reveal phenomenon of any written text.

As an object of knowledge that outlives its historical moment, the written word is another obsession of clerics, keepers of articles of faith. Church historian Roberto Rusconi describes a lively pre-print culture among convent sisters in late medieval Italy.⁷ He lightly mentions the obvious: scripture and liturgy. Rather, he pays closer attention to letters, vernacular translations, and prevalent "bulky compilations of ascetic writings" that circulate among the sisters. Ascetic writings may have included poetry and confession by nuns, lay sisters, and anchoresses. Asceticism seems to involve the solitary voice in the nun's cell or an anchorite's enclosure. The sermon, typically preached by the abbess within the convent, was sometimes recorded as notes taken by attending nuns. Rusconi refers to *legendae* of "revered founders of female monastic institutions" as "treated with special respect." He indicates that most of these documents were written by male clerics, sometimes recorded as confessor to a sister's account. Language historian Brian Richardson, discussing nuns as scribes, thinks of text as a social and spiritual network, a Republic of Letters for devout women. Disciplined handwriting, whether in old-fashioned gothic or a humanistic cursive (later than Sister Bartolomea's generation), "could be seen to be beneficial as a spiritual exercise."⁸ The act of writing as spiritual exercise is a compelling idea: the disciplined hand leaving a material trace of testimony and truth. Sister Bartolomea compressed four decades into eighteen brief episodes and a necrology of forty-nine hagiographic, "thumbprint" profiles. The chapbook-length manuscript is a work of memory, intensely rendered moments with more lapses than what can be retrieved as a matter of record.⁹

Anything said or recorded, whether twenty minutes or twenty years after the fact, is invention by definition: why eyewitnesses to a car accident give differing accounts to a police officer who arrives on the scene minutes later. To remember is recursive: we must retrace time past and reconstruct what happened. Twenty years allow more possibilities for variance. In the necrology of Corpus Do-

<i>Notation</i>	<i>Number of mentions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Virgin	19	Since poverty, chastity, obedience constituted a nun's vows, it is curious that virginity is mentioned (or not mentioned).
Widow	15	
Enclosure on first day	10	Before enclosure on the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul, 27 were enclosed that first day, including Sister Bartolomea; of those, 5 were consecrated by Father Dominici, having "worn their habit under their clothing for some time."
Transfer from another convent	9	Of the 9 mentions, twice Sister Bartolomea implies that transfer to Corpus Domini was for its reputation of adhering to rules, probably a measure of rectitude.
Age at time of death	43	Of 49 obituaries, age is not mentioned 6 times; 12 died in adolescence through the 20s; oldest survivors were 91 (Sister Lucia Tiepolo) and 100.

Table of necrology, *Life and Death in a Venetian Convent: the chronicle and necrology of Corpus Domini, 1395-1436*.

mini, certain patterns suggest what Sister Bartolomea finds significant: virginity or widowhood, first day of enclosure, transfer nuns, age at the time of death. The table below ticks off these four notable distinctions, based on what is persistently repeated in the necrology. Typical entries were "She was a pure virgin and one of those who were enclosed the first day;" "she was twenty-one and was one of the women from San Girolamo."

AS A DOCUMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY, THIS IS A SINGULAR ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND CULTURE OF CORPUS DOMINI.

Sister Bartolomea's necrology, as well as her chronicle, are not completist in any sense: much convent history is missing or elided and not all obituaries appear to be included. As a document of institutional memory, this is a singular account of the life and culture of Corpus Domini. Her chronicle

shines a light on a foundational story, how Sister Lucia Tiepolo and certain widowed noblewomen formed a nucleus of sisterhood. Perhaps the five consecrated by Father Dominici, who had worn habits under their clothing, were the widowed noblewomen, possibly including relatives, who had provided the convent site and joined her endeavor. By avoiding evidence of internal conflict or infractions of vows, Sister Bartolomea wrote a chronicle and necrology on her own terms, perpetuating a largely unsullied, inspirational account of Corpus Domini. Between 1400-1500, three-quarters of sisters in Venetian convents who were beatified were from Corpus Domini.¹⁰

Like any elite institution, Corpus Domini has a reputation to uphold: its isolated site and origin story lends distinction to its place in Venetian history and mythmaking. As institutional memory, Sister Bartolomea's chronicle conserves and perpetuates the ideals of convent life on its own terms. This is a shining example of the social and spiritual power of the written word, shaping the communal life and thought of Corpus Domini in an eternal present.



ENDNOTES

1. Daniel Bornstein translated Sister Bartolomea's retrospective account, a chapbook-length document that left out more than it put in, a work of memory with notable "compression and lapses." Riccoboni, Bartolomea and Daniel E. Bornstein. *Life and Death in a Venetian Convent: The Chronicle and Necrology of Corpus Domini, 1395-1436*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

2. Kate Lowe's reconsideration of nun chronicles avoids unfavorable comparisons with Renaissance histories or humanist philosophy; instead, her critical reading recognizes these chronicles as a distinct genre. Lowe, K.J. P. *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

3. Historian Mary Laven includes many examples of errant behavior and institutional corruption, a range of convent culture, from highly observant cloisters to commodious havens for unmarried gentility, based on unofficial records as an alternative to the genre of convent chronicles. Laven, Mary. *Virgins of Venice: Enclosed Lives and Broken Vows in the Renaissance Convent*. London: Penguin/Viking, 2002.

4. This map view shows the prime location of the convent, its sense of place on the sea and canal artery leading to a busy port. Detail of a map of Venice from 1500 by Jacopo de' Barberi that shows a view of Corpus Domini buildings and walls at <http://www.churchesofvenice.co.uk/demolished.htm>.

5. Paula Findlen in seminar, 3 February 2021. This class session provided contextual understanding of convent culture, such as the instrumental role of nuns from nobility who could bring money and social capital to the convent.

6. Paula Findlen in seminar, 3 February 2021. That Corpus Domini's confraternal procession group organized by its own officers was an overreach since the feast of Corpus Christi was a high-profile, regulated civic event; hence, the nonevent.

7. In "'Scriptoria': Nun's Writings," Rusconi describes a lesser known body of works (letters, vernacular translations, ascetic writings, chronicles, copied texts) in the Republic of Letters in late medieval Italy. Bornstein, Daniel E, and Roberto Rusconi. *Women and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

8. On the social function of texts and books with an intriguing reference to "monachization poems." Richardson, Brian. *Women and the Circulation of Texts in Renaissance Italy*. 2020.

9. Besides the daily "perfect silence" "from the time compline was said until mass the next day" "no one could utter a single word," there are silences in her chronicle as well as the erasure of Corpus Domini itself: the convent was dissolved in 1810 and subsequently demolished. Website on Corpus Domini built by students at University of Groningen in the Netherlands at <http://bluenetworks2014.weebly.com/corpus-domini-an-enclosed-convent-in-the-middle-of-society.html>.

10. In seminar, 3 February 2021, quoted by Findlen from a student paper. According to Mary Laven's *Virgins of Venice*, there were 49 convents with founding dates until 1500, the extant field of consideration—that three-fourths of those beatified were from Corpus Domini is a remarkable record of recognition by the Church.

SOURCES CONSULTED:

Crouzet-Pavan, Elisabeth. *Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of a Myth*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002. Print. Crouzet-Pavan, discussing the challenge of inventing a city on a lagoon, mentions entrepreneur religious institutions "embarked on land-reclamation projects on the scale of an entire quarter." In other words, the Church staked claims early and invested in land and property.

Muir, Edward. *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981. Print. The Candelmas route of the Festival of Twelve Marys illustrates Muir's theory of religious rites and civic ritual as engendering, at the least, a veneer of political stability and social cohesion. This water procession traversed the Grand Canal, waterfront, and faced the open sea, a spectacle of Marian worship.

A close-up, profile view of a marble bust of Helen of Troy. The sculpture is light-colored, possibly Carrara marble, and shows her face with a serene expression, looking slightly downwards and to the right. Her hair is intricately carved with thick, wavy curls that cascade down her forehead and back. The background is a solid, muted teal color.

FROM: HELEN OF TROY OF SPARTA

by Sarah Anne Cox


or Helen of Argos - Argive Helen
all names of allegiance or ownership
except this last
an attribute, radiant
and shining
like so many reckless icons, Phaedra, Cybele
small moon of the planet

From even the beginning
these nagging discrepancies
a stumble on the dusty path
at ninety three°
to be at Sparta is to be among the olives
to be at Troy is to be on the flat scrub plain
under a tree, reading aloud
the distance to the sea always measured

How to forget Hesiod
the way we are related
gifts that a suitor is expected to offer
to the father of the woman
whom he proposes to win as his bride
to convolute a long-term hook up
with requirements of livestock
of so many prepositions and connections
the greasy wool in trade

A PET STORY

by Andy Grosse

A photograph of a desert landscape with unique rock formations under a starry night sky. The rock formations are light-colored with some reddish-brown staining, and they have a jagged, eroded appearance. The sky is dark with many stars and a prominent band of light, likely the Milky Way, stretching across the upper portion of the image.

Genn had grown tired of all the sampling and testing, tired of carefully crossing off one more tiny square on his mud-stained chart. Tired of the endless drudgery of prospecting. He was headed back to port early, disheartened, when he glimpsed a speck of glitter in the darkness of the vast Off-grid.

As he approached, the tiny glimmer blossomed into a lacework of illumination, long strands of light with jewel like clusters. Closer still, the light strands became a vast array of moving dots, and the glowing gems revealed geometric patterns, regular lines like his Zack-Board, and spires of lighted cubes. The sunlit half, as he circled, was a scatter work of white swirls against a beautiful blue background.

He named it Azure.

Likely already discovered, he thought. Already claimed and picked clean. Yet he could see no warning beacons. So he moved closer. No signs of mining. If he were the FirstFinder, he could claim it—along with everything

on it—as his own. Genn loved a longshot, the abiding thrill of trying to beat the odds. The chance of vast return from little effort.

He docked where he could make a quick escape. The mining corporations with their network of connections and resources had left slim pickings for the solo privateers like him. He had crossed paths with other prospectors earlier and things could get rough. The rule was who filed the claim, not who found it. Claim jumping was common, and an “accident” way out here would leave no witnesses. Discoveries were often left unmarked and booby-trapped to protect them until a claim could be filed.

After a sweltering search, Genn’s instruments had detected no sign of Purium, the exotic mineral being crafted into the multicolored jewelry in feverish demand. The ComJewel ads always ended with their trademark line, “Be the envy of all!” The fad drove both customers and miners.



THE MINING CORPORATIONS WITH THEIR NETWORK OF CONNECTIONS AND RESOURCES HAD LEFT SLIM PICKINGS FOR THE SOLO PRIVATEERS LIKE HIM.

Abandoning the fantasy of easy riches, Genn scooped up a few of the ragged little creatures watching him—they were clambering over each other in the heat, squealing wildly—put them into his specimen box, and loaded up for home. He might get a small fee for them from one of the zoos, the only profit his explorations has so far yielded.

From habit Genn noted the coordinates of Azure with his Tri-locator. Then, safely back on auto-cruise, he crawled into his waiting bunk rack. Some time passed before he awoke, hungry. And, when he noticed that his new specimen box was empty, chagrined. He was sure he'd remembered to catch some of the little devils. They had been twisty, and hard to hold. Specimens had escaped before. If the Rent-A-Craft agent found another one loose, he would lose his deposit.

He saw that the DigiLock on his new specimen box—the latest thing, guaranteed escape-proof and priced accordingly—was still open. Likely, he thought, the heat had distracted him.

When he gave the new lock the required thumb print, it snapped shut with a reverberating clunk, and one of the creatures showed its head for just a moment from under his red survival suit, right next to the radio-beacon.

Genn activated the sensor array and scattered the only bait he could find—a stale QueBar broken into tiny crumbs—near several likely hiding places, leaving most in the open center of the floor. Then he opened the last QueBar for himself, and settled down to watch from the concealment of the galley.

With the microphones on max, he could hear their chatter, which was unlike anything familiar, and rather musical. He was relieved when he finally saw one on the viewer, inspecting the QueBar fragments. Cute in a way,

moving so cautiously. Soon he counted seven, enough for a finder's fee. The zoos only paid for six or more, and then only for a new species.

When Genn turned the lights up, they scampered back into hiding. With the biosensor on, he had no trouble tracking them to where they gathered in a sort of nest. The little one was curled up on top of two large ones. Well-fed and sleepy, he hoped. Finally, the last one stopped wasting time circling the nest and joined them.

The net, primitive but effective, fell over them just as he had planned and he put them back into the specimen box one by one, careful not to be bitten. To his surprise, a second small one leaped out of the nest and ran to the specimen box. He helped it in with a wry smile and set his thumb gently on the lock pad. Snap. Two extras.

Genn swiftly organized for the check in, sweeping and stowing. He was amazed to find four tiny—what, symbols?—near their nest. They had been made with toothpicks he must have dropped on the floor. They looked like pieces of a broken ladder. He snapped a quick picture to study later.

Finally satisfied with his hurried cleanup, he put his own belongings together for fast unloading: one duffle bag holding the net and tools, his battered survival suit, the Purium detector, the new specimen box. Not much gear for the long distances he covered, but it was all his. And fully paid for. No debts. No partner to split with.

Despite his off-grid detour, Genn was still ahead of schedule back at Rent-A-Craft. They returned his cleaning deposit. And, fearing they might still find an escaped specimen, he talked them into a cash refund for the unused time, not the usual credit for a future rental.

THE AZUREPET FAD COLLAPSED HARD, VICTIM OF ITS OWN SUCCESS.

With money in his pocket, he felt less discouraged as he looked for a dockside zoo agent. However, the only one still open doubted that the creatures were unique. To be sure, he went to the library to check the latest electronic Catalogue of Species. He found no exact match. Wrong size, wrong ears, not quite enough fur for two legs.

Maybe they were an undiscovered species after all.

Hopeful, he checked the Consolidated Mining Claims file. Nothing was listed for Azure's coordinates. He time stamped his FirstFinder claim form—paid for with his Rent-A-Craft refund—and submitted it to the Records Librarian, who scanned it into the ClaimQuik. The former system's delay had created time for conflict and confusion. But the response came back almost instantly: "Approved."

Whatever they were, the creatures were his to deal with. All of them.

Genn celebrated with a fresh salad and tangy moonberry pie in the café next door, his first healthy meal in ages. Then, feeling unusually optimistic, he took another longshot and asked the librarian to join him for a drink after work.

Her name was Tychia, and she gave him an idea. His little Azures, as she called them, might make good pets. They had cute faces and they didn't smell that bad.

They tested her hunch at the portside market. The Azures sold easily—especially the little ones with big eyes. No one even haggled over the price, which he kept doubling after each sale.

Two hundred more—captured by hand with an improved snare—were offered for sale on-line, and snapped up within minutes at astronomical prices. His flashy ads played on

their exotic nature.

AzurePets became an instant must have item, more popular than Purium jewelry itself. Genn had hit paydirt. And he owned the motherload. Soon his fleet of tight-packed transports hauled Azures by the thousands to every known TradeZone of the far-flung Federation. By the time his exclusive rights under the Commercial Compact expired, he had picked the place clean of them.

But the real bonanza proved to be his AzureDomes, available with the new escape proof DigiLocks and a wide selection of options, each for a small extra fee. Even puzzle kits the Azures themselves could assemble. Genn found it ironic that the after-market products proved more profitable than the pets themselves.

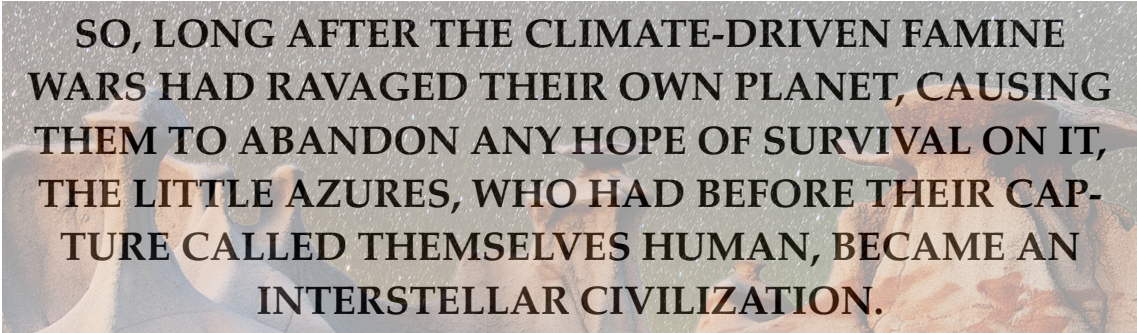
His takeover of DigiLock Corporation—all cash—shocked the markets, as he wielded his growing wealth to assemble an unprecedented conglomerate. Seen smiling from magazine covers, often with Tychia, he was living proof that the New Treaty Rules were fair, the talk of cronyism and back room deals just myths.

In what seemed like no time, Genn, an old-fashioned solo prospector, had become richer than anyone within ten light-years. A most improbable business colossus. A self-made Titan.

Then, even faster, Genn was ousted by an aggressive new Cartel, one organized for just that purpose, one with impeccably appropriate connections. They claimed to have found fatal flaws in various paperwork. Omissions of obscure but necessary details. It was perfectly legal, the Courts ruled. And brilliantly efficient. Especially the use of Government "incentive loans" for financing.

To Genn it was pure claim jumping.

Yet, after only a little self-pity, the tantalizing spark of new possibilities began to reignite



SO, LONG AFTER THE CLIMATE-DRIVEN FAMINE WARS HAD RAVAGED THEIR OWN PLANET, CAUSING THEM TO ABANDON ANY HOPE OF SURVIVAL ON IT, THE LITTLE AZURES, WHO HAD BEFORE THEIR CAPTURE CALLED THEMSELVES HUMAN, BECAME AN INTERSTELLAR CIVILIZATION.

his imagination. What he called “prospector’s itch.” And why not? He had already survived what he thought could only be his once-in-a-lifetime bushwhacking.

He sold his bachelor’s apartment, all he had to show for his lost empire, and paid cash for a small mining craft. A long-hall, live-aboard model made, he noted with curious pride, by one of his old companies.

When Genn rummaged through his duffle bag packing to leave, he found two QueBar wrappers and a few loose toothpicks. He recreated the patterns he could remember the first Azures making, little L’s and H’s, musing that they might be clues to the musical language some children claimed to understand. He couldn’t find the photo with the E and P.

Tychia, who had stuck by him through it all, reluctantly abandoned her hope to be invited, then her agonizing plan to stow-away. His resolve was adamant. No partners. No looking back.

He asked her to name his vessel. She thought it best to decline.

That might have been the end of the story.

The AzurePet fad collapsed hard, victim of its own success. Once no longer rare, most were disposed of in the quick and simple euthanasia bags that came with every AzureDome. Others died of accidents, mistreatment, or old-fashioned neglect.

The Cartel soon followed. Its diverse assets were liquidated when the New Cabinet demanded repayment of the prior government’s “incentive loans.” Very few parts of the former

Conglomerate were ever able to be reorganized as on-going businesses.

Genn spent his remaining years prospecting alone, his only companion the tattered picture of a rueful Tychia, trying to smile as she waved good-bye. But there would be no lucky longshot. No new bonanza. No Purium, none of the newer minerals. Just gleanings enough to fuel his intoxicating pursuit of El Dorado.

However, perhaps inevitably given their vast number, some Azures survived. Most by escaping when—against the clear advice in the owner’s guide—they were let out to play. Others spilled during transportation. A handful had been released deliberately. Tychia freed hers in a park the afternoon the newborn learned to say her name.

Eventually, after precarious feral survival, a lucky few reached the scattered niches of the many TradeZones where the climate fit their nature. Environments where they would thrive in myriad colonies. Communities that grew ever more complex and organized.

So, long after the climate-driven Famine Wars had ravaged their own planet, causing them to abandon any hope of survival on it, the little Azures, who had before their capture called themselves human, became an interstellar civilization. A vast network of diverse cultures, each with a symphony of languages, each bejeweled with illumination, and all boundless markets for their own exotic pets.

Azure, a lifeless greenhouse planet once-upon-a-time called Earth, would spin on.

One hemisphere a brilliant opalescent blue, the other now eternally pitch black.



THE CRUEL ENTRANCE OF WINTER, 2003

by Myles Sommerville

Explainer for anyone unfamiliar with Red Sox baseball: In October of 2003, it had been nearly 85 years since the Boston Red Sox and their tortured fan base had won a World Series. They were sniffing a long-awaited World Series that Fall as they faced their century-old rival, the New York Yankees in Game 7 of the American League Championship. Then, Aaron Boone hit a walk-off home-run to stomp on Boston's soul and keep their curse alive. The following year, the Red Sox beat the Yankees on their way to winning the World Series, in what most people call the greatest come-back in sports history.

In 2003, in New England, a fighting Fall eventually stepped aside to a relentless Winter. But it is every year here, in New England, that Fall turns to Winter. No one is surprised by it. No one is happy about it, either. Not even the damned skiers can fudge up enough enthusiasm to smile while dragging up their ice torn skis from the basement stairs. It just happens.

THE THOUGHT OF A GAME 7, LET ALONE A GAME 7 & VS. THE EVIL EMPIRE HAD ME SKIPPING, ACTUALLY

Around here, Summer into Fall is an easy two-step dance. You got pumpkin stuff. So much pumpkin stuff. You have lingering

summer nights. Good waves. The striped bass hang around like stubborn bar drunks at last call. You got Tom Brady's cheekbones in your living room on Sundays. Winter....you get jack shit. Darkness and brown sludge and knee aches. And there's no graceful transition. It always hits you right in the crotch like a stepped on rake you are about to hang up in the shed for the year.

But in 2003, it stunk the worst.

The autumn was still flaunting a magic about it. May have been the Indian summer we were having. May have been the leaves that year. May have been because it was my Junior year of high school and my voice was finally dropping and I finally had a girlfriend to take notice. But, really, that Fall was special mostly because the Sox were playing meaningful late October baseball....for really the first time in 25 years, since Billy freaking Buckn---- eh, you get it.

I walked the three blocks to Ian's house to watch game 7. The thought of a game 7, let alone a game 7 vs the evil empire had me skipping, actually. Murph had had a good day down at Dutch Harbor and was making stuffies from his haul. Murph is Phil and Phil is Ian's dad. There is nothing that resembles "Murphy" in any of the names on his drivers license, so I never knew why the neighborhood called him Murph, but it seemed better to never ask. Murph answered the door with a half empty quahog shell in his hand and chorizo stuck between his teeth. He gave me a meaty hug and rushed me to the couch. "C'mon. Damon is up."

We watched the game on Murph's 13-inch television, with our butts mostly just hovering over the edge of the cushions. Like most of the worst times of your life, you hardly remember the details leading up to the heartbreak. I know we took joy in making fun of all the doughy things that kept dribbling out of Joe Buck's mouth. I know my nerves were sizzling enough to nullify any desired buzz from the Rolling Rocks Ian and I kept sneakily chugging out of Murph's ice chest in the garage. I remember declaring undying allegiance to the holy Kevin Millar, Red Sox first-baseman and Boston legend. I remember Ian throwing a paper cup at the tiny screen yelling, "get him out, Grady!" I remember Pedro—arguably one of the best pitchers ever—staying in and watching a three run lead in the eighth leak out of all of our cupped hands. And I kind of remember lying on the floor after Aaron Boone—the guy who was hitting .254 all year—sent a ball into the Hudson in the bottom of the 11th.

**LIKE MOST OF THE
WORST TIMES OF YOUR
LIFE, YOU HARDLY
REMEMBER THE DETAILS
LEADING UP TO THE
HEARTBREAK**

I am almost positive that Ian and Murph and myself all picked ourselves off the floor at the next commercial break and walked away without saying a word to each other. Ian to his bed. Murph to his ice chest. And me to my walk home. No meaty hugs.

**AND ALL YOU NEED TO
KNOW ABOUT IT WAS
THAT IT WAS A COLD
AND A DARK THAT I HAD
NEVER QUITE
EXPERIENCED BEFORE
IN NEW ENGLAND. YOU
COULD SEE NO STARS,
ONLY BREATH.**

But I remember the walk home with vomit-inducing detail. And all you need to know about it was that it was a cold and a dark that I had never quite experienced before in New England. You could see no stars, only breath. The leaves on the sidewalk trees had seemed to have Irish goodbye'd during the seventh inning stretch, disappearing without a word. It was as though they knew things were going to get awkward. There was this lumbering silence coming from all the houses that reminded me of what it must sound like in caves the night bears decide, "screw it, let's shut her down."

And even with all this time that has passed.....and even with the beautiful hindsight of knowing that the very next October, Manny and Ortiz would be spraying champagne all over the field that I had just saw Aaron Boone sky that ball over.....and even though the imagery of bloody socks and crying A-rods and the best come-back in sports history should be more memorable.....I remember that walk the most.

Winter has never been announced with more dread and as little hope as it was in 2003.

To this day, I got to say it: Go to hell, Aaron Boone.

CONTRIBUTORS

APARNA CHANDRA (watercolors and The Truth about Impressions...) is a second-year MLA student. Her previous training is as a physician. Her love of liberal arts was fanned by continuing education classes she took in Chicago, New York, and Bay Area institutions. The last series of lectures she attended took her on a journey of history of art and inspired her to take up watercolors. She lives in Palo Alto, and when she is not thinking about her MLA essays, she is scouting the neighborhood and the regional preserves for painting ideas; in fact, she sometimes does both at the same time. She is a self-taught artist and loves collecting all kinds of pigments and inks.

SARAH ANNE COX (Helen of Troy) is a San Francisco poet and the author of *Arrival*, *Krupsaya 2002* and *Parcel*, O Books 2006, and *Super Undone Blue*, Dusie 2016. Her work has appeared in the American anthologies *Bay Poetics*, *Technologies of Measure*, and *Kindergarde*, which won the Johns Hopkins University Press Lion & Unicorn Award. Another anthology, *The Beautiful*, Gualala Arts Center, is forthcoming in 2022. In 2014, her poems were translated into Swedish by Kristian Carlsson. She teaches writing at SFSU, studies Classics at the University of Edinburgh, and snowboards with her family. She completed her MLA degree in 2012.

PATRICK DALY (Bronze Horse) has been working for a software start-ups for the past decade, writing poetry on his lunch hours. His poem *Words* was a 2015 poem of the year in the *New Statesman* (London). He has published poetry in many other magazines and e-zines, most recently in *Portside*, *Ekphrasis*, and *The Sand Hill Review*, and poems of his have appeared recently in anthologies including *Extreme Sonnets*, *A Bird Black as the Sun*, and *America, We Call Your Name*. His poem *Tiananmen Square* received honorable mention in the *Pushcart Prizes*, and his chapbook *Playing with Fire* won the *Abby Niebauer Memorial Prize*. His first full-length collection is *Grief and Horses*, just published by *Broadstone Press*.

MAANSI NIGAM DOMMETI (To Health...) is a 2nd year MLA student at Stanford. Originally from Atlanta, GA, she moved to San Francisco in 2017 chasing a career in product marketing in the tech industry. Aside from marketing and liberal arts, she has also formally studied Kathak, a form of Indian classical dance, and considers herself an amateur painter. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, traveling, and eating to her heart's content. She lives in the City with her husband and two cats and does her best to live a creatively inspired life.

JOHN SEIBERT FARNSWORTH (Snowgeese photo), MLA 2007, is Senior Lecturer in Environmental Studies and Sciences, Emeritus, at Santa Clara University. After receiving his MLA, he went on to earn a PhD at the University of Stirling in Scotland. His recent books, published by Cornell University Press, are *Coves of Departure: Field Notes from the Sea of Cortes* (2018), and *Nature Beyond Solitude: Notes from the Field* (2020). He is currently working on a book about Pacific Northwest ecologies.

JOHN ANGELL GRANT (Sonnet, We move towards death) is the author of 12 fully-produced stage plays. He was playwright-in-residence at Berkeley's Bare Stage, and a member of the OATCO Playwrights Unit in San Francisco. John's play *Language as Communication* was produced in New York by the Manhattan Class Company (MCC), as well as in Los Angeles at the Gardner Stage and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Locally, his play *A Package for Max* was produced at the Pear Theater in Mountain View as well as in Chicago by New Branch Theater. John has also worked in video production and written for *American Theater* magazine and many other publications. He's authored 2,000 theater reviews, and 200 poems. His MLA thesis on T.S. Eliot's drawing room comedies was published by *Academica Press*. John has a B.A. in Comp Literature from Columbia, and an MLA from Stanford.

ANDY GROSE (A Pet Story) (MLA 2001) is a retired Emergency Physician. He is the author of the short story collection, *Ten Tales: The Youthful Adventures of Pete and Toad*, and of *The Circus Tent of Deja Vu and Other Stories*, both are available from Amazon/Kindle. His thesis was a study of the 19th century *Deseret Alphabet*.

FYZA PARVIZ JAZRA (Material Biography of Stanford Library's *Kitab al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* by Avicenna) is a recent graduate of the MLA program. Her thesis was on the classification of the 17th Century Oxford Astronomer and Mathematician John Greaves as an "Applied Historical Astronomer," due to his use of Greek, Arabic, and Persian Star Catalogs to solve practical problems in astronomy. She is the co-director of Stanford's Poetic Media Lab, where she works on multiple digital humanities projects such as *The Mapping Republic of Letters* and *EpiCConnect*. She previously worked as a Software Engineer at Apple and Motorola. She is an aspiring fiction writer and has read her work at various festivals and venues around the Bay Area.

ROBERT MASON (Banning Critical Race Theory...) graduated from the Stanford Master of Liberal Arts Program in 2013. He currently works as an Administrative Law Judge at the California Public Utilities Commission where he has held that position since 2012. He has been the assigned judge to the Commission's rule-making regarding transportation network companies such as Uber Technologies, Inc. and Lyft. Robert has drafted several decisions covering such diverse topics as pilot programs for permitting autonomous vehicles, renewable energy programs, and distributed resource programs for improving access to the electrical distribution grid for consumers. Prior to becoming an Administrative Law Judge, Robert worked at the Commission as a legal advisor to one of the commissioners, and as an attorney in the telecommunications enforcement division. Before joining the Commission in 2007, Robert worked as attorney in private practice, specializing in insurance recovery and civil appeals.

MARTHA McDANIEL (Twelve Thousand Eyes) is a writer and artist. After earning an MFA in pictorial arts from San Jose State University, her career pivoted to business consulting for 25 years before returning to the liberal arts. She graduated from the MLA program in 2020. In addition to her creative pursuits she consults part-time, serves on nonprofit boards, and volunteers within the community. Martha lives in San Carlos, CA with her husband and teenage daughter. See her visual works at: marthamcdaniel.com.

PRABHU PALANI (Rumi) is the Chief Investment Officer of the San Jose Retirement System. In addition to poetry and music, his interests include the history, politics, and people of Colonial India.

SANDRA PARK (Sister Bartolomea's Institutional Memory of Corpus Domini) has written poetry and fiction that has appeared in *St. Petersburg Review*, *The Iowa Review*, *New American Writing*, and other journals and anthologies. Her fiction narrative, *If You Live in a Small House* (2010), takes place in 1950s Hawai'i. She enjoys reading about early modern women (1200-1500) and their book habits. A gift of the MLA program is a long queue of good books to read.

MYLES SOMERVILLE (The Cruel Entrance of Winter) was born and raised on Aquidneck Island off the coast of Rhode Island, a lovely rock that is enthusiastic about good drinks, great fishing, delightfully odd people, and fanatical in its often painful allegiance to Boston sports. As a first year MLA student at Stanford who is also raising three kids in the Bay Area, he tries to hold on tight to life back home. He wants to continue to keep it as a significant part of his kids' upbringing as well as his foundational learning out here. He is the assistant dean of residential life at Woodside Priory School and the head lacrosse coach there.

LISA WANG (Kindness) is a second-year student of the MLA program. Prior to retirement, her previous career was in product management. Her love of liberal arts was expressed through continuing studies courses in literature, political science, law, history, economics, and science at UCLA, Santa Clara University, and Stanford University. Her curiosity for presidential history, speeches, and decision-making lead to research on John F. Kennedy and Abraham Lincoln. She is an aspiring writer, and enjoys novels, movies, dance, and travel.



MASTER OF LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM
Littlefield Center
365 Lasuen Street
Stanford, CA 94305