

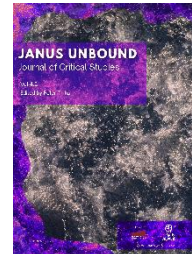


Title: Incanting Ghosts: Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

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Source: *Janus Unbound: Journal of Critical Studies*, vol. IV, no. II
(Summer 2025), pp. 1-16

Published by: *Memorial University of Newfoundland*



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Incanting Ghosts: A Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Peter Trnka

Preamble

A specter is haunting the globe, the specter of Palestine as a single, free state. A multitude of ghosts, Palestinian zombies, press in real time. Another spectral multitude is, at the same time, dissipated out of real time, dropped out of the percolation, no longer viable: the broken project of Israel and Zionist settler colonialism.

The beginning of a new Palestine and the end of Israel.

Touching on—lightly—praying, yet fearful of religious overtones, but not ... apparently ... (all about apparitions, this) the superstitious (the other non-scientific). If incanting ghosts presupposes belief in real ghosts. But if real may open to contestation, and ghost be defined as “a dislocated position of uttering” (Močnik 2008, 110) then there are no issues, no superstitions, only the reality of desiring political lives and the fiery dynamics of histories and fluids.

And so, a focal point of *Janus Unbound* for the first five years and on: spotlighting the Palestinian zombie, incanting or praying for the specter of Palestine, from the river to the sea. In the context of the becoming-impossible of neo-settler-colonialism and Israel. In a power-imbalanced (notably in terms of nuclear-power), globally racist world. For the horizon of global justice.

Insisting all the while that all of such requires thinking, feeling, sensing, imagining, and living differently.

The globe is to be made and remade.

I. Walking through a Process (of Terror)

To start at the tail—the tail end that is, the delays in sending out—properly—the last issue, 4.1, the special issue on Anton Wilhelm Amo, guest edited by Fazil Moradi and Stefanie Bognitz—brings us to the head right away, as we continue here a tendency for hauntological anticolonial ways. It's all in a name, so to speak, or a spell, the problem, issue, fact.

The current pool/eddy (of time)(issues): water, ghosts and specters, voices from the margins, from the on-going genocide in Gaza, from all and for all the living dead. Future plans are for a hauntology of Hiroshima, and a related issue on global racism and nuclear warfare.

The delay: a coupling of automation/machinic issues (centered on the hyphen or the dash) and the spelling of names, troubled names, in the sense of

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names with troubles or turbulences in terms of assumptions (be they correct, necessary?) of the singularity and precision (especially in some/all written forms) of names.

The machinic process in question—hyphenation. The (multiply variously misspelled) names: the previously mentioned titular name of the previous issue, Anton Wilhelm Amo, German Enlightenment philosopher, from Ghana, formed a triad with cover artist and author, Akinbode Akinbiyi, and poet Maryam Qawash.

Writing, especially letter writing like this, is not writing—it is following other processes, engaging in reading, listening, researching, noting, documenting, archiving, sorting, cutting, extending, changing, riffing, and so on, so that little or no separate writing ever happens (index cards to apps). From the editor a note or a letter on the writing and images and sounds—generated by and featuring the writing and images and sounds—as in translation, modifying in trying to stay true.

Automatic self-generating processes, arcs of dead labour over the living, sites for ghosts.

Automatic hyphenation in Word ghosts the process—unwanted hyphens keep appearing.

Communication between multiple editors necessarily original and complicating. Mis-hyphenations, mis-spacings, and mis-spellings spelled the whole process, delaying publication, multiplying publication, and generating unprecedented errata (continuing into the present and future, ineliminable machinic and human errors).

Oh, the point: the process mirrors in micro the macropolitical. Why wouldn't it? I try to track some of it here.

II. Becoming-Palestinian

Gayatri Spivak recently, among others: “Now I am a Palestinian” (2023). I echo the gesture. Notes on epistemicide and scholasticide.

Free the mind/body/person. Freedom, liberation: processes of unbinding and associating newly. All my relations, including new relations.

Archive, curate, to continue by keeping alive in memory the drives and loves and desires of the dead and yet to be. Imagine new generations, new relations, new worlds.

Free, unbridle—the imagination. Realize, bring into actuality, the power, of all; the poor, most of the “all” are the poor. Actualize the power, the *potential*, of the poor, of the multitudes.

Toward a liberation and proliferation of *epistemes* and worlds and life forms. Imagining a life is possible, this kind of life, life form, with these noises.

As I write—today is Thursday, August 8—the Israeli security cabinet is being asked (Levy 2025) to pass an “annihilation order” for Gaza, “confirming the killing of thousands of people, demolishing the living conditions of more than two million walking dead and carrying out the final destruction of a busy, crowded strip of land where people once lived, but will no longer.” The living dead, the walking Palestinian dead, the Palestinian zombie, these are not surreal

nightmares or made-up stories but the news on the ground, from the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*.

Combining, juxtaposing the everyday with the impossible, surreal, tragic (see the reports below from scholars in Gaza on conditions on the ground, everyday genocide and forced famine, together with, in some impossible, yet real way, scholarly activity (contingently, precariously, given enough calories, time, electricity, connectedness)). How and why? “Because we must.” “For the sheer love of it.” For the hope that it will continue to matter and allow it to continue to matter for generations to come.

The traumas, the horrors, of the genocide are happening while everyday lives are lived, while this journal issue is being produced. This issue, without a targeted theme, but with friends with sympathies, solidarities, and activist tendencies—commitments, dedicated lives—carries/bears the signs of some of these impossible intersections.

The coming together of work on ontology—the study of the being and becoming of worlds—with work on justice and liberation affords an opportunity to map—yet again, but this time more truly, in perhaps an endless process of decolonizing micro-colonizations of thought—the powers of nature, the forces in the field, the strength of the multitudes of populations, including the resistance and hope and desire to live of the millions of the walking dead (always rubbing against thought’s powerful abstraction and attempting to contain/restrain it).

For the love of the incalculable, immeasurable, continually irrepressible power of the Palestinian poor.

Reality is formed by disciplined exercises of memory. Archival emergencies—archeologically supported memories or not, as is on edge and has been in Palestine since the 1948 Nakba. Loay Abu Alsaud writes of the ghost gatherer Al-Bittar, single female practising archeologist in Gaza today, guardian of endangered heritage, in our second Letter from Palestine: “Heyam Al-Bittar: Guardian of Gaza’s endangered heritage.”

Sounding out new names—for me—helps my chances of repeating them and knowing them, rather than running over them quickly with some substitute blur, in order to avoid knowing them.

Become possessed by foreign names, incant them, pray to them.

Alsaud writes also of an earlier Palestinian archeologist, also a woman, Yusra Al-Haifawiyah, killed in the Nakba. The work of Al-Haifawiyah—recovered in 1997 by Pamela Jane Smith in France in a lost archive—shows the world-historical knowledge at stake in these acts of knowledge-destruction and annihilation. Al-Haifawiyah discovered *Tabun 1*, the putative evolutionary ‘missing link’ Neanderthal skull.

Already in epistemicide, scholasticide, and other specialized and intensified forms of genocide (we began in slavery, this trip).

Curate. Verb, then noun. Action turned social position, specialized division of labour, devoted to keeping alive multitudes, values, and dreams. Resistance through memory, education, intellectual labour, critical, imaginative work.

Decolonizing, deracinating, making more just, truer.

Pausing. On the intellectual atrocity in the midst of the humanitarian atrocity: Prime Minister Netanyahu naming the planned occupation of Gaza city and beyond as a liberation action (August 10, 2025).

He could not even spit it out right in the press conference, saying “liberate Gaza city from Gaza,” then trying to cover over himself by substituting “from Hamas.” Shortly thereafter prominent Palestinian *Al Jazeera* reporter Anas Al-Sharif, four other *Al Jazeera* journalists, and a freelance journalist are targeted and intentionally killed in Gaza by the Israeli Defence Force (which has spoken out publicly against the planned occupation).

What does it mean to be a Palestinian today? A critical intellectual Palestinian? The title of this issue’s artist statement by uminoko, “Continuing the conversation,” was running through my mind during a brief visit to my office, my eye stopping on the shelf holding the volume edited by Homi Bhabha and W. J. T. Mitchell, *Edward Said: Continuing the Conversation*. Perhaps this volume helps answer the question taken on, with trepidation, here. On the news of Said’s death, the editors of *Critical Inquiry*, Bhabha and Mitchell, made a decision: “[w]e decided to do the impossible and ask a range of intellectuals . . . to continue the conversation with Edward where they had left off, to take up the issues that seemed unresolved or in need of fuller elaboration” (Mitchell 2005, 1). A conversation with a ghost, the dead Edward Said, in order to keep his voice alive. To help answer the question what it means to be a critical Palestinian intellectual today.

One answer, or some strands of several answers. Not the answer. There never is such, except in the moment.

What was Said always doing? He was always on the phone, say several authors, and always working. He was also and at the same time “always speaking the unwelcome truth to power” (4). And in a polemical, perspectival, unbalanced, sided way:

He was constantly being accused of lacking balance in his political writings and failing to condemn Palestinian terrorism as frequently and honestly as he attacked Israel’s state terrorism as if any polemicist worthy of the name has ever been known for *balance*, as if there were some moral calculus that requires every condemnation of the violence of the strong to be balanced by an equal-time condemnation of the resistance of the weak. (5)

The critical intellectual’s voice is an unbalanced, unbounded resistance of the weak.

Bhabha’s focus follows Said’s theme of slowness in *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*.

Slowness is a deliberative measure of ethical and political reflection that maintains tension rather than resolves it; it is a temporal register that regulates the narrative movement through which (in negotiation, the unresolved tension between the aesthetic and the national) we make “those connections that allow us to see part and whole, that is the main thing: what to connect with, how, and how not?” (Said 2006, 78). (2005, 11)

Conceive the practical question, that is, how to act, as a problem of the vision of the relation of part and whole. Consider a work, a life, that way. Take seriously problems in vision (so familiar to the poor in vision, each a capacity and a limit in the power of poverty). Bhabha continues:

In making visible the complex and conflictual relations of part and whole—over-determination, liminality, translation, displacement, minoritization, domination—slowness articulates the movement that exists between the space of words and the social world, and it strengthens our resolve to make difficult and deliberate choices relating to knowledge and justice—“how and how not?”—in the face of contingency, silence and mortality. (11-2)

The patient, slow, loving gesture is the act of a snail hugging the earth, moving along in its own time (Trnka, 2001). For Bhabha,

The slow narrative of humanist critique creates opportunities for oppositional writing—the resistance of the part of the hegemonic whole—in the process of constructing subaltern or antinomian solidarities: whom to connect with? How do I form my chain of witnesses, my interdependent systems of support, that enable “the practice of identities other than those given by the flag or the national war of the moment” (Said 2006, 80). (12)

Bhabha traces Said’s *locus* on the part/whole relation, and what he terms a “political phenomenology of the exile,” (13) in Theodor Adorno’s work:

bearer of oppositional analyses and maker of antinomian alliances. In the teaching of the new humanistic learning this slow tension of open questions and emerging fields—located between partial realms and holistic cultures—would promote a minoritarian curriculum based on what Said describes in an interview as “massive transversals of one realm into another. ... the study of integrations and interdependence” (Said 2001, 115). (13)

JU stands from the start in the spirit of such integrated, transversal, transdisciplinary practical critical work.

The significant distinction in Said’s work between beginnings and origins is kept awake by Akeel Bilgrami:

In a distinction derived from [Giambattista] Vico—but developed along very distinct lines of his own—between the concept of origins and the concept of beginnings, Edward Said raises a whole range of fundamental issues: about the

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nature of writing and indeed more generally about the nature of human freedom. (27)

This distinction may immediately inform the matter at hand in terms of thinking through the intellectual structure of the Zionist genocidal occupation and the very different intellectual structures of Palestinian resistance:

Vico had spoken [1984, 103] of how the notion of a chosen people, by the privilege it bestowed on them, **protected them from the acts of the imagination** and intellect by which they might probe their own origins. These acts, which since his time came to be described in terms of genealogy but which Vico himself describes as divination, were acts that acknowledged a fundamental fact about those who allowed their indulgence—that they were always in history, stuck in it, outside of the privilege of the sacred domain, and therefore those probings were essentially the Gentile acts of an enforced secularity. The discipline of history and indeed of philosophical anthropology and the very idea of what later came to be called *Geisteswissenschaften* [the human sciences or sciences of the spirit] therefore was by its nature a secular one. (26, emphasis mine)

Amidst many strands of the beginnings/origins distinction, Bilgrami's

focus [is] on the one [Said] himself strikingly expresses by saying (1985, 6): "As consistently as possible I use *beginning* as having the more active meaning, and *origin* the more passive one: "*X is the origin of Y*" while "*The beginning A leads to B*." The essential passivity that he finds in the notion of origin is his way of developing Vico's understanding of the chosen people. (27)

Understanding Said by way of understanding criticism is the route pursued by Paul Bové, who begins his "Continuing the Conversation" by acknowledging that Said "made people around him—me at least—come to love criticism as his great teacher [Richard] Blackmur had taught us: criticism is an act of love, and like writing, it is the response to what has come before, to what is coming into being now" (36). I have for a long time loved the idea, and continue to even after living through damage in my practice of it. What more can be said of criticism in exile?

For any exile, criticism involves love for all the world, but it represents the clearest description, analysis, and judgment of power's realities, especially its unjust imbalances. The critic loves freedom enough and depends so much upon its possibility as a condition for its own existence that he must speak truthfully, even harshly, to protect it. (36-7)

Who questions the need for harshness against Israel today?

The attempts (still to this day) by Israel, figured in Netanyahu's impossible utterances, to present Arab resistance as racist, genocidal, irrational and out of control—deserving to be wiped out—are more and more transparent—even to those strongly willing not to see the truth—as mirror projections, as the re-

turn of the repressed, the confessions of Israel as cruel killing machine in its death throes.

Zionism is foundationally, eliminatively, racist. What is the scale and scope of that intentional elimination of the Palestinians? Noam Chomsky, in his contribution to *Continuing the Conversation*, is clear in his answer when responding to Bhabha on the matter of Israel's attitude to the right to return of refugees:

here I strongly disagree with my Palestinian friends, close friends, I have felt for years and I've been trying to tell them for years something very unpopular: you cannot hold out false hope in front of the refugees. The people who are suffering miserably in refugee camps in Lebanon, it's just not honest and not moral to tell them you have hope of returning to your homes because they don't. First ... there is no international support for it. And under the unimaginable circumstances that there would be international support, **Israel would use the ultimate weapon** to prevent it, even if that required using lethal weapons to blow up their region. What they used to call the **Samson complex** back from the 1950's. If they were to accept the bringing of the Palestinians back, they would prevent it by **any means possible**. (59-60, emphasis mine)

The racist genocidal power, in possession of ready nuclear missiles, still attempts to justify itself, by poor rhetoric joined with active expansive settler-colonialism, in its full, intensified Western-upheld genocidal forms. Including epistemicide and scholasticide: the destruction of all universities in Gaza, as well as teaching hospitals, libraries, and museums, the intentional assassination of journalists and scholars, and all other means available.

The inquiry into the meaning of criticism continues in the conversation between Said and Harry Harootunian, who starts his communication by quoting/repeating Said (1985, 25) quoting/repeating Antonio Gramsci:

In the *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci says: 'The starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is "knowing thyself" as a product of the historical process, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory.'

How are the curates tending the inventories? Which are still alive, versed in which languages and methods?

Harootunian joins the conversation on the tense, unbalanced character of political criticism:

Said's death puts an end to an energetic activity motivated by the necessity of always keeping alive the tense but asymmetrical relationship between culture and politics and the almost impossible task of resisting the temptation, at least for American academics, of slipping into the former as if it were a more than adequate substitute for the latter. (68)

There are other issues involved in the Gramscian in(can)vocation, as Jacqueline Rose brings to the surface in her conversation with Said's ghost, "The Question of Zionism: Continuing the Dialogue":

For me Gramsci's injunction always contained a psychoanalytic demand: the consciousness of what one really is ... is knowing thyself, although such knowledge is barely easy, as every psychoanalyst will attest. ... I see this as your injunction to Zionism and Palestinian nationalism alike. By the time we get to "Bases for Coexistence" in 1997 (Said 2000) to this classic Freudian dictum you have added another no less painful and difficult dimension: "We cannot coexist as two communities of detached and uncommunicating separate suffering. And then, against the grain of your own and your people's sympathies, 'There is suffering and injustice enough for everyone.'" ... Not just self-reflection, nor just internally unsettling, but perhaps precisely because it is both of these, such knowledge has the possibility to shift the boundaries between peoples. There can be no program in the Middle East, I hear you saying, without a shared recognition of pain. (151-2)

For Rose, this order/imperative from the grave, Gramsci's, then Said's, gives criticism another harsh demand, harsh for its balancing of harshness/rage with empathy and love. All critics of Israel, Rose writes, are "to hold together in our hearts and minds the polar opposite emotions of empathy and rage" (82).

The challenge to the critic with this harsh demand to empathize with the occupier, the killer, the genocidal agent, is figured as a challenge to sight and understanding, an epistemic challenge:

Freud ... spoke of the "blindness of the seeing eye" (or in the words of Jean-Luc Godard, "shut your eyes and see"). Zionism ... has done itself a major disservice. So fervently has it nourished the discrimination between Jew and non-Jew, the rationale of its dispossession of the Palestinians, that, while it may have seized the earth, it has also snatched the grounds for understanding from beneath its own feet. (153)

The end of Israel is signaled in the now growing global reaction to the ongoing genocide, forced famine, and occupation of Gaza city and the remains, it seems, of Gaza. The international will that Chomsky did not see in the early 2000s is now a ghost becoming actual. And the reason is the intense and extreme fidelity by Israel to the racist colonial-settler genocidal plans of Zionism, from the beginning to now.

Said's humanist criticism is the topic of the hauntological conversation with Saree Makdisi, who puts Said in line with the humanist naturalism of Baruch Spinoza. Makdisi speculates, in "Said, Palestine, and the Humanism of Liberation," (though given Said's interest in Gilles Deleuze and others influenced by and writing on Spinoza the speculation is secure) that:

Spinozan in quality, if not in name, the ultimate horizon of the heterogenous and infinitely open-ended striving that Said called humanism is the production of new forms of life, life understood in the Spinozan ... sense as indeterminate, expansive, and existing precisely in the connections and affects that tie human beings together. (90)

The critical humanism of Palestinian liberation is not, as the limited racist imaginary supposes, namely, a copy of itself from a different, competing standpoint:

The idea of Palestine ... reflects to Zionism not the distorted mirror image of its own antagonism and violence, but, instead, a humanism of liberation, a humanism that would free Jews as well as Arabs. “Maybe time is running out,” an interviewer once suggested to Said, who replied, “We fight on. And we keep saying ‘We’re going to live together with you.’” He added, “No matter what they do, we’re a shadow.” What Said is articulating here is the idea of Palestine as a kind of shadow to the violent alterity of Zionism. The idea of Palestine here expresses the logic of a fully anticolonial humanism of liberation, a will that the traumatic encounter of colonizer and colonized, occupier and occupied, self and other, which has historically been essential to Zionism, could be overcome by an affirmation of unity rather than denial. (98)

Perhaps Spivak’s closing paragraph in her “Thinking about Edward Said: Pages for a Memoir” is a good place to end this revisitation, this re-incantation, of the critical Palestinian intellectual, Edward Said:

Otherwise I chant that wild hymn, from the time when Hinduism was nearly indistinguishable from animism: as the ripe fruit bursts its skin, so immortality bursts out of death. In the love of family and friends, the intellectual journey of students. But also, harshly, literally, pushing up the daisies. In the face of that harsh immortality, the heart must break. (162)

III. The Issue is Heavy

Our heavy contents, heaviest ever. Longest issue, over five years now. More and more trauma, and focus on such, in the context of criticism, action, and resistance.

Also, a messy issue, by design and in design, and messy through design. Will we get there? What happens in the meantime? Will the situation on the ground be the same, similar, or substantially different than asserted here in the work being worked on here?

Trying to work out of the box is taking more time, fighting access and programming obstacles. More repetitive errors, bad ghosts, poor work, automatically valued and recycled in machinic circuits.

Desiring water, the ubiquity of the immersion, the full dimensionality of the experience and medium, its omnidirectionality. Spilling, flowing and overflowing. To be contained at peril—beyond containment. Messy, tragic at times—bloody, sweaty, teary—living.

Our cover and lead article concern the duality and identity of water and consciousness.

The cover image, blurred and blocked and coloured, is an untitled colour photograph by uminoko—reproduced in full, without editorial addition, again at the close of their artist’s statement, “Continuing the Conversation, between a Philosopher and an Artist.” Consciousness is a stream, in the phenomenological tradition, but one that when stilled shows itself distortedly.

The intellectual inquiry into the relation—potential whole/partial identity, commonality, material proportionality—between water and consciousness forms a focal point for our lead article, by Dominique Ciavatonne: “Thinking and Feeling with Ocean(s): An Emergent, Co-Creative Approach to Putting Rights of Nature and Water Ontologies into Conversation;” a focal point both theoretically, in terms of the (theme-)streams of the explicit discussion, and practically, in terms of method and presentation of that method, and accompanying theory, in the design of the presentation of the article.

The cover, design, and layout of “Thinking and Feeling with Ocean(s)” are intended to flow, as much as selected design programs at early stages of familiarity, among other variables, allow such flow. Experiences of water are stimulated by features of the design, especially in the provision of soundscapes at places in the article which may be activated by the reader at their discretion.

Good writing is said to flow. But how? How quickly, for example? Depends. And sometimes it flows by halting the flow, by screeching to a stop.

Pause.

How does one flow and maintain tension instead of dissipating it?

Our second article, “*Multitudo* vs. *Gespenst*: A Comparison of the Marxist Conceptions of Popular Power by Negri and Derrida” by Ilgin Aksoy, provides Marx-derived hauntology with a critical comparison of its ontological (Antonio Negri) and hauntological (Jacques Derrida) streams, as well as a historical genealogy of the powers of multitudes in relation to states and empires.

The dynamic, flowing, unstable nature of multitudes and multiplicities is Anna Sauvagnargues’ topic in the third article (as translated by Conor O’Dea): “The Organizing Dynamism and Its Egg: Ruyer and his molar theory of multiplicities.” Deleuze appropriated, from mathematics and other fields, and deformed, to his own form, notions of multiplicity. Sauvagnargues here traces Deleuze’s debt to Raymond Ruyer. Work, the activity of living labour, that is, is not static but dynamic: “work activity is not punctual and ideal, but rather domanial and organizational” (107).

Our first of two Letters from Palestine, “The Palestinian Authority’s demonization of Palestinian armed resistance groups,” by Bilal Hamamra and Ekrema Shehab, shows that against Israel’s Zionist-racist genocide, ethnic cleansing, and forced starvation of Palestinians in Gaza, the resistance is more than justified, more than needed, and should not be smeared-dismissed.

In the creative intervention, “I Can’t See What I’m Looking At, But the Heart Feels the Pulse of Community,” the title says all: seeing is not simple, easy, a given, but, as with all human acts, it is a part of a whole that desires, consciously and unconsciously, transparently and spectrally, *locatedly* and *dislocatedly*.

Male acts, kinds of men—and kind men, in particular—are a focal point in the creative piece, as they are in the poem “Maybe next I’ll try talking to men” by Amber Moore. Two heart and mind wrenching poems from the accomplished and awarded (and repeat presence here at *JU*) Maryam Qawash, as translated again by our board member, letter writer, and assiduous worker Bilal Hamamra: “Thy hands!” and “Shall we meet?”.

The first poem, from Justin A. Hill, “Eschatology,” came by way of conversation concerning the book review he was writing (published below: “A Review of Antony Loewenstein’s *The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports The Technology Of Occupation Around the World*”). Not surprisingly, perhaps, depending on one’s privilege, location, but also capacity and willingness to see, there is trauma and suffering almost everywhere, ghosts lingering almost everywhere: tragedy is not the rarity and exception but a defining feature of living. After I had shredded his review of Loewenstein into approximately half the length of his submitted copy, Hill wrote to me extensively and confluent to the theme of the flow of the collective work of the poor, the workers, in the meantime, that is, all the time (all the time between the fixed dead-time is the living time of labour). The power of this living labour time of the poor is evinced in every social encounter that is open to seeing the collective labour process at work. Hill (2025) began:

I appreciate your patience sifting through so much extra writing to help me identify what could be cut. Seeing the difference between the two reviews has given me a first-person look at a fallback process that I can complete myself moving forward for, one way or another, coming to clear and concise writing. I have normally relied on a clean first draft, but this first-run clarity became more difficult as I started moving more quickly and as my ideas grew more complex, detailed, and nuanced. I try to be diligent and prompt with my turn-arounds, out of respect and gratitude. I did not always understand the labors of others when I was younger; teaching has shown me a lot more of what is required behind the scenes as well as the graciousness and hard work of my collaborators.

The appreciation of the collective work process lead to personal affinity and the sharing of suffering:

I cannot express how grateful I am to have the dedication [to Margaret Kay-Alana Calhoun Turner] remain in the review. Anti-hierarchism and the working-class struggle were important to Kay before it ever became personal to her; my tone in referencing the events are candid because, so often in private, they have been world-breaking and rending in their grief. I speak on her behalf in thanking y'all for this collaboration, both editing and the opportunity in the first place. In a way, the dedication is both a call of return and a decrual of grief-making noise for a *differend* of justice that may never arrive, and clearly far beyond her specifics. Her local community in southeast Texas really rallied around her case the past two years, up until her funeral last November. I'm not satisfied with the conclusions, but that's probably just ... [the] denial of death ... (the title of a great poem by Louise Gluck).

So what is the significance of the dedication and who is Justin Andrew Hill? Hill teaches philosophy at Tarleton State University in Texas, has an M.A. in Philosophy from SUNY at Stonybrook, and worked at Bedford Stuyvesant (familiar to me from a good friend, Chris Frey, who came from there to attend Langley High School, in McLean, Virginia, where we met). The dedication is this:

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Hill would like to dedicate this book review to his ex-partner, Margaret Kay-Alana Calhoun Turner, who disappeared during an unnecessarily aggressive then negligent interaction with the Harris County Sheriff's Office, in Tomball, Texas, just north of Houston, in spring 2023, a week after Hill began teaching fourth grade in an integrated co-teacher (ICT) classroom in Brooklyn, New York. From the river to the sea, Kay.

Hill was expansive in his email response:

No need to respond line by line to all of this. I like to overshare as a way of showing others who I am and breaking down distances. I looked up Chris Frey, and it seems that, aside from leading the Environmental Protection Agency under [President Joseph] Biden (the clean energy work, while still neoliberal, was making good progress and necessary of course—better than what we've come to now), he also works at North Carolina State University.

The real and virtual connections are plenipotent if one dares to open-up and see.

Hill then drew a picture of Kay Turner, first by sharing some of her last words:

You are also welcome to include this excerpt from a text she sent me three days before her disappearance: "Just keep your head down and stay focused, careful, and strategic. You get to speak to the next generation, now." Kay was an aspiring and inspiring singer-songwriter. Much of my poetic ambition came from a desire to impress her, which was difficult to do. ... She also sent me the lyrics to a song she was working on, titled "Minimum Wage," ten days before her disappearance. ... The song is about a rural experience of earning the federal minimum wage in Texas while being dependent on a partner for housing (her partner after me), even though she might want space but cannot afford to separate, and while being unable to afford visiting the doctor. Here's one salient line: "How can anyone ever / write let alone sing a revolution / when they're paid / the federal minimum wage, / so is it too much to ask / if I can get a little UBI, / and a \$25 minimum wage / especially for healthcare workers. / Especially." Kay and I lived through the pandemic in Brooklyn together in 2020. She worked on Times Square at a hotel and saw the influx of military doctors who were staffing hospitals in Manhattan and New York City broadly, which influenced that lyric.

I cite at length as the relevance of this discussion to the work that was being done in the meantime is, I hope, obvious: epistemicide and violence to the poor, micro and macro, everywhere you look. I had mentioned I was writing on epistemicide:

As for epistemicide in Kay's case, the investigation into her disappearance was obfuscated until only dental remains could be identified, thirteen months later. The location where she was found was not where police stated they searched for her, until their body-cam footage was released a year later and contradicted

their narrative. The footage also showed that an officer smashed her driver-side window with a 2x4, possibly hitting her and leading to a fatal injury. I have not been able to watch the footage. A sergeant, when told that the search dog had a lead but was tired and needed to be swapped out, responded that their arrest warrant out for her was enough (the negligence mentioned in the dedication). This has always felt like a cover-up to me, which would also be epistemicide; animals destroyed her remains. It has been infuriating, and it's worse when I imagine the final moments of her life, in fear and terror. ... As for epistemicide in the review, Loewenstein mentions (44) that the true purpose of Sharon's invasion of Lebanon was to control (and destroy) the historical artifacts of Palestinians at the Palestine Liberation Organization Research Center. The archives were returned in November 1983, about a year later, as part of a prisoner exchange. Politicide, in my understanding, is a form of epistemicide. ... Capitalism itself depends on this destruction of and regulation of knowledge (both *techne* and narratorial-historical), since they threaten its false scarcities, artificial closures, and oppressive preclusions.

The way capitalism depends on controlling the epistemic and the ontological, and the way in which poverty is power, are two foci of the work of Margherita Pascucci (featured in previous issues of *JU*, now an editorial board member) in her critical review, "The Butlerian Revolution: A Review of Adriana Zaharijevic's *On Judith Butler and Politics*." Zaharijevic's approach, argues Pascucci, is "making visible the infrastructure of the insurrection at the level of ontology central to Butler's thought" (129). In part of her discussion Pascucci features a recent talk at Bologna by Butler, "Fascist passions", where Butler phrases lucidly the challenge to the critical intellectual: "fight the phantasms with a powerful and regenerative counter-imaginary." Spinozan love of the proliferation and multiplication of the multitude, Said and beyond.

IV. Membership, Movement, Act and Resistance: Intellectual Responsibilities

Our nature is shown in history and direction. What's coming? Two calls for papers: first, a special issue on Arab Women's theater, edited by Sarmad Majeed Mohammed and Eman Fares Salman (5.1 Winter 2025); second, on the theme of Global Racism and Nuclear Warfare (5.2, Summer 2026), linked to work being done in October this year between myself, Fazil Moradi, and collaborators at Hiroshima University (for another upcoming special issue, on Hiroshima). I will help host a global webinar in October on the same theme, Global Racism and Nuclear Warfare, with the scholarly network, Act-for-Pal. Act-for-Pal (2025), as defined by its mission statement:

is to build a grassroots academic movement grounded in steadfast principles of anti-colonialism and anti-racism. We work alongside Palestinian academics to promote their rights, amplify their voices and steadfastly defend their autonomy in shaping their narratives. We aim to create innovative educational solutions, particularly as a priority for Gaza, that leverage local resources and technologies. We support higher education institutes to over-come systemic barriers and

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foster a global network that works alongside Palestinian scholars to revolutionise higher education and place Palestinian voices at the centre of the movement.

Tahrir Hamdi, cofounding member, Act-for-Pal, and associate editor at *JU*, addressing the “Narrative raising awareness” groupuscule at the first Act-for-Pal meeting (virtual, April 23, 2025), spoke fiercely of how “the intellectual can make it possible for the people to envision victory ... To envision Palestine, to imagine Palestine, to envision the defeat of this brutal violent Zionist entity ... is to hold on to hope, to nurture hope.” She spoke of the destruction of all 12 universities in Gaza, the forced starvation of the population in the ongoing genocide, and the focus on scholasticide and epistemicide by Israel with the targeting of universities, libraries, museums, and scholars and journalists. Hamdi opened the first public Act-for-Pal webinar, on Student Activism (June 12, 2025) by noting that “the contemporary colonial order fully supports Israel in genocide, epistemicide, scholasticide.” There was a total blackout in Gaza so no Gazan students could participate. Numerous Palestinian activist students reported from around the world, gave testimonials, and theorized networking.

The second webinar, on Scholars in Gaza (August 6, 2025), started with Wesam Amer speaking on the scholasticide in Gaza: “Scholasticide has a method: the targeted destruction of institutions of learning.” No access to higher education in Gaza for 24 months, and seven decades of scholasticide, “deliberate, systematic, genocidal.” Amer called for “truth-telling in the face of erasure” and argued that “education is on the front line for the fight for justice.” We heard from many scholars in Gaza. Dr. Ibrahim Alsemeiri, for one, spoke on the experience of work during multiple displacements, lack of food, living in a tent, not a home, and dangerous trips to places with internet connections. Alsemeiri affirmed that he “continue[s] to believe in the power of knowledge” at the same time as he developed, to communicate his experience in Gaza, in relation to the term *genocide*—similarly to the concepts of scholasticide and epistemicide—the concepts of *mind-cide* (“deliberate killing of intellectual life”) and *future-cide* (“killing of our ability to recover and to dream of the future”). Dr. Ahmad Junina said he would not repeat all Dr. Alsemeiri had said but that we should know it mirrors the experiences of all scholars in Gaza amidst this “systematic destruction of education.” Dr. Ayat El-Haj warned us that: “My children now dream only of food.” Nadia Naser Najjat, a poet—who questioned “Am I a poet? Only at the beginning of this journey”—spoke of her love for her teacher, Refaat Al-Areer, and described the “process of writing during genocide: difficult/tough understatements; unbearable ... absurd ... genocide should be written in the harshest, most brutal language.”

The next webinar will feature Susan Abulhawa and the idea of a Free Palestine (September 12, 2025), followed by a webinar on Global Racism and Nuclear Warfare in October.

Congratulations to Gayatri Spivak for the Holberg prize! Congratulations Ozayr Saloojee for his poem “Little Things” (*JU* 3.1) being listed as one of the best Canadian poems of 2024 by Bibliopress.

Thank you all, especially Fazil Moradi and Stefanie Bognitz (new editorial board members), Justin Andrew Hill, Michael Broz, Hasan Habib, and Dylan Delikta. Thank you core collective and boards and referees.

We act to resist the wiping out of the traces of the oppressed.

Biography

Peter Trnka (PhD University of Toronto 1995), Associate Professor of Philosophy at Memorial University, has taught at Karlova University, the University of Toronto, York University, and the University of Prince Edward Island. He has published scholarly philosophical and transdisciplinary articles in various international journals (on figures including Canguilhem, Deleuze, Derrida, Foucault, Gramsci, and Marx, and on topics including indigenous rights, communism, criticism, revolution, justice, and time). A recent publication: "Disjoint and Multiply: Deleuze and Negri on time" (in *Deleuze and Time*, ed. D. Smith & R. Luzecky, 2023). He also has creative works, poetry, and a cookbook. Since 2020: Editor-in-Chief for *JU*. He considers his employment as a teaching assistant at a National Institutes of Mental Health institute for youth in Virginia as well as his work as a grievance officer, financial officer, president, and chief negotiator (twice during two strikes) at the Canadian Union for Educational Workers, Local 2 in Toronto as formative of his intellectual habits. He has three children, Alexandra, Nicolas, and Lily; lives in Holyrood, Newfoundland; and manages a bar in St. John's called Spirit.

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