

Editorial Foreword

BLACK FACE/WHITE FACE In today's world of race relations, is there anything more politically incorrect than a minstrel show? Especially in its archetypal American guise, with white artists in blackface makeup, this art form is easily characterized, and experienced at a gut level, as racist. Yet one can hardly conjure up a more convincing proof of the dogma, now regnant in the humanities and social sciences, that race is a social construction. And what of the non-white performer who acts out whiteness? When is this performance read as comedy, as social criticism, or as a commitment to upward mobility? There is something sacred, and taboo, about racial boundaries. People who cross them are often special; they are stigmatized and valorized, and the tools they use to transgress racial boundaries (or to move across them with minimal censure) are always of special construction.

Magnus Course and **Kristina Wirtz** explore racial crossings at opposite ends of the color spectrum. In Chile, where Mapuche clowns act out exaggerated forms of whiteness, Course argues that clowning is a trade taken up today by low-status men, whose work as rule breakers and enforcers in communal rituals is a commentary on the inability of rural Mapuche to resist a national culture that is rapidly turning city-dwelling Mapuche into white people. In Cuba, Wirtz tracks the development of *Bozal*, a form of Spanish associated with African-born slaves. Used by black and non-black speakers who portray Africans—in the theatre, in spirit possession rituals, in literature—*Bozal* persists as a standardized representation of historical speech, although it is highly unlikely, Wirtz contends, that *Bozal* was ever spoken by African-born slaves. The blackness it encodes, like the whiteness of Mapuche clowns, is an act of the imagination, but one that holds troubling political and cultural realities in place.

INSIDE THE ARAB SPRING The European and American observers who saw in the Arab Spring a re-enactment of the French Revolution, or the fall of the Soviet Union, have been greatly disappointed by subsequent events. The revolutionary moment, yet again, comes to us festooned in liberatory fantasies and bad political analysis. Even leading Middle East specialists have mis-recognized key actors and their intentions. An intense desire to see young, freedom-loving, progressive, middle-class, technologically savvy demonstrators at the heart of change in the Arab world is the positive counterforce to a sturdy array of old Orientalist motifs that fix the Arab/Muslim world in a state of perpetual despotism and populist violence. This clash of interpretive

stereotypes is far removed from events on the ground, and it works well to prevent more subtle intellectual engagements with the Arab Spring.

Walter Armbrust and **Salwa Ismail** step beyond popular media accounts to explore the complexities of revolution and counter-revolution. Analyzing the career of Taufiq `Ukasha, an Egyptian media personality and opponent of the January 25th Revolution, Armbrust considers how the space-time of revolution is fertile ground for liminal tricksters like `Ukasha, who weave an alternative political universe out of inherited and newly invented claims about power. `Ukasha's appeal, though strongest among the lower and uneducated classes, is situated in a larger array of counter-revolutionary, pro-military interests that, as Armbrust argues, have not been swept away by the collapse of the Mubarak regime. Adding the Syrian revolution to the Egyptian case, Ismail describes the central role urban subaltern populations have played in the uprisings. In Egypt, residents of Cairo's popular quarters battled the police, whom they saw as a hostile force intent on marginalizing and humiliating them. In Syria, urban subalterns fight for and against the Asad regime, and Ismail shows us how decades of government policy have turned the Damascus landscape into a checkerboard of staunch support and avid resistance. In both cities, revolutionary struggles correspond to certain logics, but they are unpredictable, and Ismail and Armbrust demonstrate clearly that subaltern and populist actors (like those of elite and middle-class backgrounds) are not motivated solely by a principled yearning for democratic reform or regime stability.

DIVIDED RULE One of the great ploys of political domination is “divide and rule.” The master is one, the subjects are many, and weakness is rooted in conflicts of interest that are typically portrayed as petty or shortsighted. But what if the masters are two, and each master is subject to the other? Imagine a city and a state—but not a “city-state”—in which local notables govern alongside a class of external military leaders who administer the city's laws, secure its trade, carry out its foreign affairs, and are periodically banished or killed off if they do not perform their roles competently. These two sovereign authorities cannot exist separately; neither can they replace, fully control, or blend into one another. A city of this type will collapse if it has only one of these two kinds of leadership. Each sovereign faction seeks out a contract with the other in order to constitute and sustain urban life.

Lyuba Grinberg argues that an urban society based on “dual administration” of precisely this kind evolved independently in Central Asia and was dominant there from 800–1100 CE. The great oasis cities of Transoxiana and the more modest, Viking-ruled cities of the Russian forest-steppe were alike in their reliance on external military rulers who brokered unstable accords with urban elites who were intensely local in orientation. Grinberg suggests that this pattern was a “horizontal continuity” produced by Silk Road economies that favored commerce over agriculture. Whatever its causes, the preference

for joint sovereignty between “men of the sword” and “men of the pen” prevailed for centuries in Inner Asia, and it encourages us to think again about the terms on which military and civilian interests merge, or come apart, in city/states that have developed what appear to be more monolithic forms of rule.

GOVERN BY NUMBER The nation-state, in contrast to Grinberg’s Inner Asian city, is a configuration of power in which entire populations are shaped by a pervasive, unifying discipline. Modern governance, the best political theorists tell us, can no longer be secured by sovereigns who dominate and placate the nobility while making occasional displays of brute force to keep the rest of us in line. To be governed well, the nation must be governed comprehensively. Its citizens must be counted, their capacities measured, their needs catered to, controlled, and reformed, their culture extolled, publicly displayed, and (when it is inadequate) concealed from outside observers. What is interesting about this process is its tendency to produce minorities. Human subjects who cannot be treated as political equals, who attract disproportionate amounts of discipline and care, are fated to become test populations against which the sovereignty and moral sophistication of contemporary states can be judged.

Tim Rowse and **Tiffany Shellam** describe the growing importance of statistics in the management of indigenous populations in Australia and New Zealand in the mid-nineteenth century, a form of government by enumeration that directly addressed the question of whether “savage races” could survive, as minorities, in modern imperial societies. **Anna M. Mirkova**, working at the point of historical transition between Ottoman imperial society and the new Balkan nations, examines related issues of incorporation and fair treatment of minority populations in political entities defined by the demographic dominance of particular ethno-religious groups. In both settings, civilizational standards were employed to defend and displace minoritized populations, who were likened to children, the sick, and the impoverished. According to Rowse and Shellam, missionaries and colonial officials suggested, on the basis of statistical studies of health conditions, that aboriginal populations could survive modernization even if (only if) their cultures were destroyed. Likewise, Mirkova shows how, in the short-lived autonomous region of Eastern Rumelia, Bulgarian officials protected the rights of the Muslim minority while enacting discriminatory policies that prompted Muslims to leave the province. In both settings, minority status was produced by a population politics that demanded equality, and systematically denied it, at every turn.

SEX RE-EDUCATION Biopolitics is about power, yes, but it is equally implicated in social theory’s other enduring fixation: sex. An explicit engagement with sex and its academic twin, “sexuality,” will quickly expose the dichotomy

that informs (and, some would argue, distorts) any approach to community formation that rests on population models: namely, the nature/culture divide. To put it grossly, this binary forces us to ask if we are better off treating human reproduction, social and sexual, as a range of behaviors subject to Darwinian selection and phylogenetic constraints, or as an array of historically contingent social constructions? If you can no longer feign interest in such questions (which have parallel versions when applied to race, gender, class, kinship, and almost any other form of human identification); if the questions seem ill conceived and pat; if you would like to ask other questions instead ... you are not alone.

Kyle Harper tries to shake loose some of the foundational assumptions that make the nature/culture binary such an indispensable aspect of social theory. Noting the fateful convergence of Foucault's writings on sexuality with the sociobiology wars of the 1970s, Harper claims that this hotly polemical and intellectually transformative period gave rise to analytical trends that were unnecessarily doctrinaire. Returning to classical antiquity, where Foucault located much of his work on sexuality, Harper shows how productive that work has been. He insists that new developments in anthropological and evolutionary theory, especially models of dual inheritance, group selection, and the mutual constitution of cultural and natural worlds, provide the intellectual equipment scholars need to create new histories of human sexuality—say, histories of the spread of monogamy in the Roman Empire—that define biological and cultural variables in more open, critical, and creative ways.

IN MEMORIAM We are sad to note the death of Daphne Grew on 14 July 2013, at the age of eighty-two. Daphne was one of the first managing editors of *CSSH*. In fact, she invented the position as we know it today. According to Ray Grew, Daphne's husband, she began working at the journal in 1965, when it was still run out of founding-editor Sylvia Thrupp's office in the History Department at the University of Michigan: "Daphne's role steadily expanded as did *CSSH*'s quarters, from a desk in Sylvia's office to the office next door where Daphne handled editing and correspondence. Soon another part-time person (usually a graduate student) served as secretary. Daphne in effect set house style and the tradition of gracious rejection letters and befriended worried authors. In the 1970s she used her lunch hour to train and/or work with her successors, principally Juliet S. Pierson. Daphne remained a devoted reader of *CSSH* even after she had retired." Along with the hundreds of scholars she ushered into print during her years at the journal, we take this opportunity to remember and appreciate Daphne Grew's lasting influence on *CSSH*, and we extend our heartfelt condolences to her family and friends.