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Cover: Hadewijch and Minnemystik, http://people.bu.edu/dklepper/RN413/

This issue of the Journal highlights not only the depth of scholarship among Earlham students but also the variety of approaches to history at Earlham College.

Our first paper, *To Queer or not to Queer: Hadewijch's poetry as a case study for a queer read of history* by Taylor Jeromos, reexamines the courtly poetry of Hadewijch within a queer framework. Jeromos uses Hadewijch's work to illustrate the value of using a queer "lens" to examine history.

Our next paper *Anti-Semitism in German 'Volk' Culture: Propaganda through the Pen and Screen* by Hank Levin, examines the changing attitudes towards Jews in German Volk culture. Levin uses different adaptations of the story of *Jud Suss* to trace the rise of anti-Semitism in Germany.

Our final paper, *Desynchronized Irish Republican Political Strategy: The Dichotomy of the Armalite and the Ballot Box* by Evan Malmgren, examines the tension between militant and political aspects of Irish Republican strategy. Malmgren also shows how this tension has crystalized into a schism between mainstream and dissident Republican groups.

On behalf of the editorial board,

Olivia Hunter & Soren Rasmussen

Anyone interested in submitting articles for the Spring issue should contact Soren Rasmussen (sdrasmu12@earlham.edu) or Sierra Newby-Smith (srnewby13@earlham.edu).

To Queer or not to Queer: Hadewijch's poetry as a case study for a queer read of history
BY TAYOR JEROMOS

Imagine a historian flipping through the pages of a medieval Dutch manuscript which contains the poetry of Hadewijch, a mystic and beguine. The poetry strikes the academic with its intense religiosity and simplistic, yet powerful, language, which describes God as a noble lady whom a knight is courting. Scenes play out in the scholar's head like a period film: The woman wears a lovely dress and looks down from a castle window at her knight, his armor shining in the afternoon sun. Though they suffer through their intense feelings of mutual longing, they fall in love and ascend to a higher, purer plane of existence, for the divine love between humans and God is the most wholesome kind of love attainable.

Many contemporary Western historians might likely agree with this initial interpretation of Hadewijch's poetry. The beguine, whose theological writings were meant to instruct and encourage her female followers, used courtly love rhetoric to describe the human relationship with the divine. She employs vocabulary that seems, on the surface, to be heterosexual in nature. However, when one examines Hadewijch's poetry with a more carefully constructed queer lens, this male/female narrative is destabilized both by her gender-bending language and descriptions of relationships between a female worshipper and a female God. Furthermore, historians must grapple with the mere fact that a poet seems to have written poems in which the speaker is (possibly) a female knight. These are some of the conclusions I have reached when doing what is termed a "queer read" of Hadewijch. This paper will contend that "queer reading" historic sources will help historians cast off their heterosexual frameworks in order to reveal the non-normative messages or ideas that people such as Hadewijch might have been trying to express in their writings.

This paper is an attempt to advocate the process of queering history through the lens of beguines, and one beguine in particular: Hadewijch. Using her poetry and the female-only community in which she lived as an analytical lens, I argue that there is need for an extensive queer

read of historical sources. I have found that the kinds of questions and assumptions—mainly heteronormative lifestyle expectations and gendered categories—with which many historians operate today do not often allow for the non-normative or queer to reveal themselves in historical sources. Queer reads investigate anything out of the ordinary in the writings or actions of historical figures in their historic context. For example, the subversion of patriarchal norms by beguines in female-only religious communities was abnormal in its context, and therefore deserves a queer read. Reading through a queer lens encourages historians to ask: How can this be considered in a non-normative light? These kinds of reads analyze, on a deeper and more inclusive level, written sources like poetry, or historical organizations, like convents. Queer reading historical sources will provide historians with a more complete picture of the nuances in their sources, thus creating a more comprehensive historical narrative.

In this paper I bring together theories of queering history and primary research on Hadewijch and beguine communities. In doing this, I give Hadewijch, and beguines as a whole, a more nuanced read, as well as a stronger presence in queer history. Hadewijch, who lived in thirteenth century Antwerp or Brabant, serves as the focal point of this essay. Little is known about her, as there are no surviving biographical sketches of her. Moammers, one of the first to examine Hadeiwjch's writings, notes that though the figure of Hadewijch is mysterious, her advanced writing indicates she was highly educated. Moammers argues that "the words and themes a writer uses are more likely to be determined by literary than by social background, and one need not be a member of the aristocracy to write courtly poetry. Nonetheless…Hadewijch's mode of expression appears aristocratic."[1] Hadewijch left behind a number of letters, visions, and poetry written primarily in her native Middle Dutch. It is perhaps her anonymity as a historical actor that gives a queer read of her even more appeal. Her writings reveal an abundance of intense emotions couched in descriptive language, yet her person has been hidden by the shadows of

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[1] Paul Mommaers and Elisabeth M. Dutton. *Hadewijch: writer, beguine, love mystic.* (Louvain: Peeters, 2004), 9.

history. Queer reads of her poetry are thus both more and less tenable. They are less reliable because there are fewer opportunities to incorporate her personality and biographical information into the queer read. However, that same anonymity allows for more flexible and speculative analyses of her poetry.

I will first discuss the importance of queering history and the various processes, methods, and discourses that exist within it in the section entitled "Queering History." In "The Beguines: A Historical Context," I will sketch out who the beguines were and why their lifestyle was considered by some to be commendable and by others to be deviant and dangerous. In the section "Gender Fluidity and Courtly Love within Hadewijch's Texts" I will analyze the historiography of Hadewijch's use of courtly love rhetoric and how she employed it in her poetry as a gender-bending tool, the framework of which I will employ to analyze her poetry in the section called "Hadewijch's Poetry." I conclude with "Beguines, Hadewijch, and Queer Readings: The Intersections and Conclusions," which discusses why Hadewijch and the beguines serve as a useful case study for a queer reading.

Queering History

Though it is outside of the scope of this paper, I find that in order to legitimize my definition of "queering," I must acknowledge that adopting the term "queer" weighs my paper down with a loaded historical narrative. "Queer" is a term that has shifted from being a word to describe an oddity to an insult that was (and still is) thrown at those in the LGBT community, particularly gay males. It was reclaimed in the early 1990s by the LGBT community in order to create a more inclusive, overarching sense of identity and to desensitize the word's insulting nature. According to Robin Brontsema,

> the queer…emphasized the inclusiveness that the more traditional gay and lesbian were
> seen to lack, advancing beyond their restrictive limits of gender and sexuality to include
> anything outside of the guarded realm of normalcy, any disruption of the male/female and
> heterosexual/homosexual binaries…Difference was not a challenge, but an invitation.[2]

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[2] Robin Brontsema. "A Queer Revolution: Reconceptualizing the debate over linguistic reclamation." *Colorado Research in Linguistics* 17, no. 1 (2004): 4.

This explanation of "queer" has greatly influenced my reading of Hadewijch. The word itself creates space for recognizing non-normativity in historical sources, as it invites persons/places/ideas/etc. that challenge overarching, non-inclusive societal constructions to consider themselves queer.

There is debate among medievalists about when and how to queer medieval texts, and what "queering" really means for the practice of history. Judith Bennet's canonical article "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisms" seeks to capture the lives of real women and "the possibilities of same-sex love between actual women in the Middle Ages."[3] She critiques some of the preeminent medieval historians who attempt to queer medieval literature based on mystical texts, noting that "although these analyses offer insightful commentaries on how we might better imagine the sexual mentalities of the Middle Ages, even the best of them can give me pause. As literary criticism, these readings reach plausible conclusions, but as guides to social history, they are considerably less convincing."[4] Though Bennet's basic tenets—privileging the nuances in the phrase "lesbian-like" over the anachronistic term "lesbian" and the idea that "lesbian-like" can delineate more than same-sex sexual relations (female companionship, for example)—are useful for historical inquiry, other historians, myself included, disagree with Bennet's assumption that queer readings of mystical texts are merely theories of "literary criticism," and are thus less useful than other forms of "social history." Amy Hollywood also takes issue with Bennet's suggestion that these literary critiques are somehow less able to "give access to 'real women'"[5] [read: lesbian-like women]. Hollywood forthrightly asserts that "no matter how implausible it might seem to us to understand Christ's side wound as a bloody slit that feminizes and eroticizes his corporeality, this is in fact what some medieval women (and men) did."[6] It is not a fantastic notion to consider that these kinds of writings can reflect

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[3] Judith M. Bennett, "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisims," *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol 9. No. ½ (Jan.-Ap., 2000): 9.

[4] Ibid, 8.

[5] Amy Hollywood, "Sexual Desire, Divine Desire; Or, Queering the Beguines," in *Queer Theology: rethinking the Western body*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Pub., 164.

[6] Ibid., 120.

something of the lives and thoughts of mystic poets. Oftentimes these were the only forms of emotional

expression, and cannot be discounted merely as fiction disassociated from their writer's context. Rather,

they might reveal more—or at least different—facets of historical knowledge than other sources. For, if

mystic texts were a somewhat safe space for medieval writers—because they were an acceptable

application of a woman's feelings in a theological context—it might have been that these writers were able

to "let loose" in their writings.

These mystic texts are more than just sources available for literary critique. Tison Pugh argues that

genres (the genre of this paper being mystic poetry) can "communicate cultural meaning by their very

presence" and that historians can do a service to the field by "investiga[ting] the ways in which genres

inform…readers about the ideological position of women."[7] Therefore, a queer reading of medieval texts,

while not as tangible as finding "lesbian-like" actions within medieval women's experiences (the kinds that

Bennet is searching for), will do a great service to social history by allowing historians to call into question

the very inherent existence of people's actions within the larger historical narrative. By queering medieval

texts, historians are inserting another form of critique into the analysis of women's actions: we look back,

queering the space in which "lesbian-like" actions take place.

Queering historical space, for many authors, is a practice that helps to weaken the normalized

(read: heteronormative) conception of history. Pugh argues that

> queering genres, as a matter of practice, involves destabilizing the audience's typical
> expectations with the purpose of subverting subject positions. Within the historical
> trajectory of many genres, heteronormativity privileges certain actors, while others are
> denied the full force of their agency due to their perceived failures to act within the range
> of the sexually normative.[8]

Sheila Jeffreys, in her essay "Does It Matter If They Did It?" gives a narrative example of how

heteronormativity invades the psyche of historians, asserting that "women who have lived in the same

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[7] Tison Pugh, *Queering medieval genres*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 7.
[8] Pugh, *Queering,* 3.

house and slept in the same bed for thirty years have had their lesbianism strongly denied by historians. But men and women who simply take walks together are assumed to be involved in some sort of heterosexual relationship."[9] With this example, we see how the existence of Pugh's "privileging" heteronormative practices pervades historical methods and thought processes. While male/female romantic relationships are assumed to be the norm in historic sources and narratives, queer reads of history bring to the forefront the possibility that the long-standing friendship of the women in Jeffrey's text could be romantic in nature.

Other authors have argued that the use of the word "homosexual" in medieval history is fraught with issues, but that "heterosexual" as a term and concept is used freely and without question. James Schultz contends "that scholars can even write about a Middle Ages in which homosexuality is impossible while heterosexuality is inevitable illustrates the extent to which, even in their minds, heterosexuality remains the unquestioned norm."[10] He asserts that just because our mere existence reveals there was procreation between men and women does not classify their actions or those people as heterosexual. Medieval (Christian) moral codes do not place "heterosexuality" as the normal sexuality with all other "homosexual" desires falling into the deviant category; rather, it classifies many different kinds of sexual acts as either moral or immoral. He thus maintains, controversially, that "the Middle Ages had no notion of sexual orientation,"[11] and that "heterosexuality is a product of history—and a relatively recent one at that."[12] It is clear that serious issues arise when historians, without regard to their own contemporary biases, study source material. Therefore, it is essential to examine historical sources in their medieval

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[9] Sheila Jeffreys. "Does It Matter If They Did It?" in *Not a passing phase: reclaiming lesbians in history 1840-1985*. (London: Women's Press, 1989), 23.

[10] James A Schultz. *Courtly love, the love of courtliness, and the history of sexuality*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 51.

[11] Ibid., 57.

[12] Ibid., 62.

context while employing contemporary theories that appropriately question the biases of the source and the reader.

Some medievalists have argued that queer readings of history are objectionable due to the distance between historians and their subjects. Those who subscribe to this theory maintain that "past phenomena cannot be read in the light of our experience."[13] Some authors have grappled with this idea more deftly than others. E. Ann Matter's "My Sister, My Spouse" barely acknowledges the claim that the term "lesbian" might be a problematic term for medieval authors. While her examination of Hadewijch generates a number of valuable conclusions, her queering of the space is not nearly as complex enough when she categorizes "lesbian" experiences in the Middle Ages.[14] Caroline Walker Bynum's seminal text *Holy Feast and Holy Fast* (1987) maintains that contemporary thinking encourages historians to quickly assume that erotic medieval texts were very much bodily as well as spiritual. She urges historians to distance themselves from reading into medieval texts their own contemporary beliefs of erotic experiences, and argues that they should view them in their medieval context—i.e. as less physical and more spiritual.[15] Many authors—such as Lochrie, Rambauss, and Hollywood—have argued that "Bynum is in danger of denying even the metaphorically sexualized nature of many women's…religious writings."[16] Authors that have refuted Bynum's stance on medieval eroticism label her arguments as dangerously de-sexualizing and non-nuanced. Karma Lochrie offers a cautionary, though beneficially intricate, viewpoint on queering medieval texts. She argues that queer reading "unsettl[es] the heterosexual paradigms of scholarship" and "produc[es] readings of medieval texts that trouble our assumptions about medieval culture and textual

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[13] Anna Kolsowska. *Queer love in the Middle Ages*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 84.

[14] E. Ann Matter. "My Sister, My Spouse: Women-Identified Women in Medieval Christianity." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion,* Vol 2, No. 2 (Fall, 1986).

[15] Caroline Walker Bynum. *Holy feast and Holy Fast: The religious significance of food to medieval women*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

[16] Hollywood, "Sexual Desire," 164.

practices."[17] But she takes her analysis a step further by positing that "'queer' is not simply a reconstructed term for homosexual or homoerotic, but a category marking the sexual as a site of a variety of cultural struggles."[18] In this, queer becomes not just an expression, but a place where historians can examine tensions within medieval culture and the historic sources available to them.

Scholar Ulrike Wiethaus queers Hadewijch in light of her association with beguinages and the ways in which beguines enacted a great deal of female agency. She argues that Hadewijch's unique intersectional positions as mystic—which gave her "greater flexibility to express individual creative impulses"—and member of the female-only beguine community—"where she lived surrounded by women"—allowed her to operate in a safer space for writing down feelings or experiences that might have been seen as immoral. Weithaus asserts that "it is likely that at least some women did venture into creating homoerotic aesthetics and practices," or at least write about those feelings, in these kinds of situations.[19] Furthermore, as some medievalists have argued, it is our duty as historians to acknowledge that "the 'silence of the Middle Ages' in the matter of sex between women may also be a testament to these women's success in maintaining necessary secrecy" and that historical reads "attempt to make visible those who had every reason to ensure their survival by making themselves invisible."[20]

However, for many medievalists, it is not the presence of same-sex acts that matters. Rather, it is the acknowledgement of the *possibility* of queer actions/feelings/etc. that is most important for conceptions of historical method and thought. Tison Pugh's distinction between "queer" and "homosexual" provides a framework for how historians, who are looking to queer medieval texts, ought to be practicing:

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[17] Karma Lochrie, "Mystical Acts, Queer Tendencies," in *Constructing medieval sexuality*. ed. Karma Lochrie, Peggy McCracken, and James A. Schultz. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). 180.

[18] Ibid., 181.

[19] Ulrike Wiethaus. "Female Homoerotic Discourse and Religion in Medieval Germanic Culture," Farmer, Sharon A.,and Carol Braun Pasternack. *Gender and difference in the Middle Ages*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 290.

[20] Kolsowska, *Queer Love,* 83.

'To queer' means to disrupt a character's and/or reader's sense of self by undermining his or her sense of heteronormatively inscribed sexuality, whereas 'homosexual' and 'homosexuality' are used to describe sexual relationships between members of the same sex…My hope is that [my book *Queering Medieval Genres*] will contribute to a widened view of the implications of medieval queerness beyond the somewhat limited arena of sexual contact.[21]

Herein lies the key to what I believe is most useful about queering history: it is an attempt to expand what historians should be thinking about medieval history. It is not concerned with imposing contemporary views of homosexuality onto those who lived in the past. Rather, it looks at a source, group, movement, etc., and examines it within a queer framework. "To queer" is a verb which calls for historians to ask deeper questions and promote more nuanced readings of texts that are seemingly heterosexual or normative. It encourages them to ask: "does this source destabilize the overarching, normalized narrative within which the source is supposed to be contextualized?" With these kinds of examinations, the historic narrative will be more complex and complete.

The Beguines: A Historical Context

Carol Neel's assertion that "thirteenth-century description of [beguines] often centers on what they were not, rather than what they were [sic]" grapples with the longstanding comparisons between nuns and beguines.[22] In general, medieval nuns are much more easily defined; they were cloistered, directly under the control of the Church, and almost always affiliated with a convent. Beguines are more difficult to delineate; this stems from the various ways beguinages were organized (a few women in a townhouse to a few hundred in a specifically built beguinage)[23] and the large geographical area over which they were spread. As a general framework, beguines can be seen as a group of "Christian laypeople" who were "striving…to live

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[21] Pugh, *Queering,* 5.

[22] Carol Neel, "The Origins of the Beguines," *Working Together in the Middle Ages: Perspectives on Women's* Communities 14 (1989): 323.

[23] Jennifer Deane, "'Beguines' Reconsidered: Historiographical Problems and New Directions," *Monastic Matrix* (2008).

according to the apostolic model of chastity, poverty, and simplicity."[24] Activities such as work, teaching, and charitable deeds situated these women within urban settings and allowed for the women to interact with townspeople and villagers. This also set them apart from nuns who were often isolated from society.[25]

Many scholars have argued that beguinages formed spontaneously in the late 12th and early 13th centuries throughout the Low Countries (near modern-day Belgium and the Netherlands), an allegation that makes little sense, given the similarities between beguinages across Europe and the relatively similar timeframes of their formation. Carol Neel asserts that beguinages are a result of the upsurge in female piety in two specific groups—the Cistercians and the Premonstratensians—throughout Europe in the High Middle Ages. Neel asserts that there were specific characteristics of each of these institutionalized religious movements—such as the uncloistered lifestyle, mysticism, and the emphasis on charity work—that the beguines adapted to fit their own lifestyle. Cistercians were often uncloistered, and some Cistercian women were mystics. Premonstratensians were encouraged to perform charity work, though the order often insisted that they remain cloistered.[26] Her conclusion is that "the novelty of [the beguines] therefore was in their phenomenal numbers, not in the originality of their roles as….nurses…or their chastity outside the cloister."[27] In this, she argues that beguines did not invent their roles, but rather adapted some of the earlier religious movements' lifestyles to fit their own.

Beguinages were spread throughout Europe, though they were chiefly concentrated in the Low Countries. Simons describes beguinages as "informal communities" because they were not part of an institutionalized religious movement, but rather arose from women who grouped themselves together in order to have more control over their own lives.[28] They consisted of a wide demographic of women—rich

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[24] Ibid.

[25] It should be noted that there was a male counterpart to the beguine movement—these men, called beghards, were fewer in number, but often engaged in the same activities as beguines.

[26] Neel, "Origins," 333.

[27] Ibid., 339.

[28] Simons, *Cities of Ladies,* 36.

and poor, urban and rural—who were called to these groups for various reasons, including, but not limited to, religious fervor, desire for chastity, and/or the independence that beguinages offered to single women. As there was an emphasis on education and charity within these communities, it is likely that many women were attracted to the philanthropic lifestyle. Many beguinages had affiliations with town hospitals, where they cared for the sick.[29] Others were involved in teaching the children who were associated with the beguinages, though the teaching was not limited to moral education; it could include instruction in foreign languages, music, Latin, and, at least in a few cases, Bible study."[30] Theological instruction for children was uncommon because women were discouraged from becoming well-versed in spiritual teachings; it was seen as unnatural for women to be too educated in religious matters. Additionally, because these were not convents, women who joined beguinages were expected either to have funds already or work to support themselves.[31] Mistresses frowned upon their beguine charges if they "spen[t] their time idling,"[32] and so beguines were often employed in the textile industries of their respective towns.[33] Kittell and Suydam argue that, because the beguines were involved in the community and in supporting themselves through manual labor, "economic self-sufficiency defined their movement,"[34] and allowed the women a greater involvement with their town or village.

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[29] Ibid., 76. There is a discrepancy in the historical record about the types of care that beguines gave to the communities. Simons notes that originally, beguines did care for men and women and sometimes (though not often, as it was mostly permitted) they came to the assistance of pregnant women. Geybels, on page 117, states that "beguines were never allowed to take care of men and/or pregnant women."

[30] Simons, *Cities of Ladies,* 82. This religious teaching relates to the translation of the Bible into vernacular languages and the tensions concerning female involvement in theological teaching.

[31] "Nuns renounced their property when they entered the convent and from that moment on the community supported them." Geybels, *Vulgariter beghinae,* 114.

[32] Ibid., 115.

[33] Ibid., 85-87. Geybels notes that the work of beguines, which was un-taxed, was sometimes contested by guilds. McDonnell relates German author Bücher's idea that beguinages sprung up when guilds began to reject women's participation. Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture: with special emphasis on the Belgian scene* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 84. Additionally, Kittell and Suydam mentioned less well-known work of beguines, such as selling real estate outside of the beguinage. Ellen E Kittell and Mary A. Suydam, *The texture of society: medieval women in the southern Low Countries* (New York: Palgrace Macmillan, 2004), xiv.

[34] Kittell and Suydam, *The Texture of Society*, xiv.

However, what beguines are most well-known for is their piety. In these communities, women would don outfits similar to those of nuns and attend daily religious services led by local ecclesiastical leaders. Geybels translates an "acrostichon from a treatise about beguine life in Middle Dutch" which helps emphasize the importance of beguines living simply and devoutly:

> "B = …bride of the Lord
> E = …simplicity
> G = …benevolence
> Y = …intimacy towards God and the saints
> N = …humility"[35]

Both beguines and their supporters wrote on the piety of these women. Hadewijch composed many letters offering religious advice to the beguines who followed her. In one letter, she responds to a person's request for spiritual guidance: "Although you ask me to write to you about this, you yourself know well what one must do for the sake of perfection in God's sight."[36] She recommends that the beguines fill their lives with love in order to strive for spiritual contentment. Her writings often contain personal advice or musings on how faith should be a lifestyle, indicating that theological discussions were common in beguinages.

The life of another beguine, Marie D'Oignies, was chronicled by Jacques de Vitry, who is supposed to have been so devoted to her that he "abandoned his life at the University of Paris to become [her] disciple."[37] In his writings, it is clear that he admires her holiness. Describing one of her reactions to a moment of reflection about Jesus's crucifixion, Vitry utilizes a gentle and admiring tone: "when she considered how great was He…her sorrow was redoubled and her soul renewed with sweet compunction and fresh tears."[38] Vitry's portrayal testifies to the wide-spread religiosity of the movement and the intense spiritual influence that these women had on some of those around them.

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[35] Geybels, *Vulgariter beghinae,* 124.

[36] Hadewijch, "Letter 12" in *Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* ed. Richard Payne (Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980), 70.

[37] Jacques de Vitry, "Book I, Chapter 16," in *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature*, 173.

[38] Ibid*.,* 179.

Religious and secular authorities responded to the female nature of a movement—one which was not directly controlled by a patriarchal religious system—with denunciations and satire. Anke Passenier has categorized the four types of criticisms of beguines, which "inform us about society's reactions and attitudes towards [beguines] and towards women in general."[39] These four stereotypes reveal the duality between what were considered good and bad beguines. The first, "women on the loose," is a categorization in which male writers see two types of beguines—those who are pious, cloistered, and chaste versus idle women with false faith who flirt (or worse) with friars. The acrostichon included earlier demonstrates the ideal beguine—humble, kind, and pious. These "loose" women were essentially free from male control and domination and were therefore dangerous to the medieval female ideal. Second, Passenier sees "the seductible woman" who, falling prey to her fickle female nature, descends "into the hands of heretical preachers."[40] Passenier argues that this stereotype was spurred by a supposed relationship between heretical immorality and female indecisiveness and gullibility.

Passenier's third stereotype is "The Simple Woman." As authorities attempted to prevent the beguine movement from flourishing, they worked to expose the beguines as uneducated and their work with the Bible as heretical; "the simple, humble beguine who obeys clerical guidance, who does not meddle in theological speculation and does not propagate new spiritual and theological insights among the public" is the one that the authorities sought to protect. [41] Fourth, Passenier relates the mysticism of some beguines to the idea of "women's emotional, sensitive, sensual nature" being "in need of the control of…men."[42] This "sensitive woman," Passenier asserts, is why beguines were associated with mysticism (a full-bodied and emotional experience), and why some believed the movement had a need for increased

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[39] Anke Passenier, "'Women on the Loose': Stereotypes of Women in the Story of the Medieval Beguines," in *Female Stereotypes in Religious Traditions*, ed. Ria Kloppenborg & Wouter J. Hanegraaff (The Netherlands: 1995), 64.

[40] Passenier, "Women on the Loose," 72.

[41] Ibid., 79.

[42] Ibid., 88.

control (read: male, rational thought).[43] These two different types of condemnations—heretical and female—were often so intertwined it is difficult to determine causation. Passenier's work reveals that the attacks on beguines were not essentially about the female nature or the heretical nature of the women, but rather the combination of the two that made the beguine movement especially dangerous.

There was support for beguines during their medieval existence, most of it praising the religious nature of the beguinages. Petroff argues that Vitry, mentioned previously, chronicled D'Oignies's life in order to protect the beguines and "make them seem harmless…by making them seem traditional or by assimilating them to a medieval stereotype, the holy nun."[44] This interpretation posits de Vitry as a perpetuator of the ideal image of a pious, cloistered woman. In Simon's analysis of the heated debate centering on beguines, he argues that the mere presence of such discussions originated not from the fear that beguines might become more powerful than they, but because "the ecclesiastical milieu was itself divided on this issue."[45]

Period criticisms of beguines stemmed from an anxiety of both female sexuality and the very real threat of theological ideas originating from women. Gautier de Coincy, "one of the founders of the biting satirical tradition targeting beguines,"[46] was extremely devoted to the Virgin Mary. Historians differ in their interpretations of de Coincy's denunciations, but each argument reveals that de Coincy struggled with an internal apprehension of female sexuality and women interpreting scripture. He reviles nuns in his writings, but his main focus is on the possibility of homosexual relationships between beguines, which he says is a concept that "bewilders Nature."[47] Simons argues that Gautier's dislike for beguines arose from their supposed lack of learnedness, and that they must be mistaken when they try to "join hic and hic

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[43] My summary of her four categories is merely a small glimpse of the arguments and evidence that she presents. Her essay is well worth a read in order to gain a fuller understanding of her thesis and research.

[44] Petroff, *Visionary Literature,* 174.

[45] Simons, *Cities of Ladies,* 126.

[46] Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Satirical Views," 240.

[47] Ibid., 239.

without discrimination," because it is both ungrammatical to join those two words together, and it is thought to be impossible that two women would be intimately involved with one another. In this assumption, Gautier insinuates that the beguines, whose intelligence was deficient due to their sex, should not be allowed to be spiritual teachers or leaders. Blumenfeld-Kosinski's read of Gautier relates de Coincy's satire to his devotion to the cult of St. Mary—she believes that his devotion to the "perfect Virgin" is juxtaposed with what he considered the "overwrought and unacceptable forms of piety" of beguines.[48] However, what is clear in both of these examples is that Gautier had an intense fear of women in power and, in particular, female-only communities where women with religious agency relied primarily on other women.

Other attacks on beguines focus on their supposed lust towards men and the distraction that women caused the male sex. Beguines were rumored to "burn with love under their large robes," and, though they took vows of chastity, knew "how to dress for love."[49] Nicholas of Bibera wrote this of beguines: he first described pious and chaste beguines, and then contrasted them with beguines that would go about "seeking the cloisters of monks / and then again visiting the choir of clerics / and perhaps even their bed."[50] Not only were the women lustful themselves, they were also looked down upon for public preaching because it was likely that "by their very appearance" that they would "constitute a distraction to a male audience."[51] Each of these criticisms originated from medieval standards that demanded female sexuality be confined to the private sphere. Without social control, the carnal feelings inherent in women might provoke men's lustful actions, causing women to surrender their chastity and thus render them unclean and faithless. Additionally, a female preacher would have contradicted the perception that women were unfit—or even intellectually unable—to espouse logical religious thoughts, especially in public. The

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[48] Blumenfeld-Kosinski, "Satirical Views," 239-240.
[49] Ibid., "Satirical Views," 243.
[50] Passenier, "Women on the Loose," 66.
[51] Simons, *Cities of Ladies,* 127.

importance of women fitting within the gendered norms of behavior is evident in the increasingly oppressive rules that beguines were subjected to in the late Middle Ages and into the Early Modern era. For instance, "fourteenth- and fifteenth-century rules regulated more strictly than before the circumstances under which beguines could leave the court, limited contact with men, and prescribed…their…outward behavior."[52] Therefore, female-gendered expectations of chastity, submissiveness, and domesticity were reinforced specifically for beguines, and the sexual deviances of women were at the forefront of male regulation and public attention.

These criticisms of beguines reveal why it is worthwhile to use them as a case study for queering history. Adrienne Rich's seminal essay "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" asserts that beguines operate on the lesbian continuum simply because they clearly represented a threat to the patriarchal society in which they lived, primarily—I would argue—because of their solidarity and strength as a self-governing, female-only community. Furthermore, Gautier's accusation that beguines engaged in same-sex acts reveals fears of connections between females in ways that might have been seen as threatening to medieval patriarchal control. Though he was likely attempting to discredit the movement as a whole, it is clear that some were distressed that all-female communities might encourage alternative sexual practices. A woman's choice to be a beguine can thus be considered a queer act, and historians today do a disservice to beguines by not acknowledging that their mere presence and agency as self-sufficient theologians and laborers marks a moment in history that reveals something outside of the patriarchal, heterosexual framework.

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[52] Simons, *Cities of Ladies,* 136.

Gender Fluidity and Courtly Love within Hadewijch's Texts

With the advent of gender history, some historians have begun to focus on the gender fluidity of Hadewijch's poetry. It is essential to note that "for most of the [Middle Ages], men and women tended to be perceived as the ends of the same continuum rather than as diametrically opposed to each other as they are today."[53] Hollywood further contends that in the space of medieval texts, "gender becomes so radically fluid that it is not clear *what* kind of sexuality—within the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy most readily available to modern readers—is being metaphorically employed to evoke the relationship between humans and the divine."[54] With these two conceptualizations of medieval gender/desire in mind, those examining Hadewijch's poetry have begun to categorize how she shaped, shifted, and often merged male and female. On occasion, Hadewijch's gender-fusing is so complete that it is difficult to decipher to whom Hadewijch refers in her writing.

Some scholars have argued that this gender-fluid language was utilized by Hadewijch in order to teach her followers about how women could engage with religious texts. Murk-Jansen argues that "this fluidity…underlines the profound otherness of the relationship between the creature and its Creator, a relationship quite unlike any human relationship" and that the use of gender reversal allowed for her female audience to relate to the text. Murk-Janson here refers to the reversal of courtly lovers' genders in Hadewijch's poems: "it is the lady who has all the power [as the pursuer], and the knight who has none [as the person on whom affection is to be showered]."[55] One might see how medieval beguines would be attracted to this kind of rhetoric, for their own theological ambitions would have been legitimized by the female knight pursuing a waiting, willing, and powerful God.

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[53] Saskia Murk-Jansen,"The Use of Gender and Gender-Related Imagery in Hadewijch" in *Gender and text in the later Middle Ages*, ed. Chance, Jane. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 53.

[54] Hollywood, "Sexual Desire," 165.

[55] Murk-Jansen, *The Use of Gender*, 53-54.

The courtly love rhetoric in Hadewijch's poetry often serves as the analytical lens by which historians examine the gender fluidity in her writing. Paul Moammers, one of the historians who first researched Hadewijch's life and mystic texts, identified her use of courtly love terminology. Though Moammers is a canonical text, Barbara Newman's examination of Hadewijch's use of courtly love rhetoric is unparalleled. Her essay "*la mystique courtise*" investigates gender theory, courtly love's intersections with erotic mysticism, and Hadewijch's relationship with the personified Love (capitalized by Hadewijch in order to emphasize that Love was the proper noun representing a personified feeling). For Newman, "*la mystic courtise* was a hybrid of court and cloister, of bridal mysticism and *fin amour* [courtly love]."[56] Newman argues that "adopting the language of *fin amour,* the prevailing ethos in courtly lyric and romance, [beguines] drew on a discourse that assumes a male protagonist and a female object of desire."[57] However, Newman argues that this kind of gender binary was not always upheld by these writers; "[courtly love writing] could encourage women writers to experiment with gender roles," and that Hadewijch, along with several other female mystical writers, "developed [this] art to its highest and subtlest pitch" of the Middle Ages.[58] Various authors have identified some medieval texts in which courtly love rhetoric has influenced homoerotic subtexts. For example, Anna Kolowska insists that *Yde et Olive* and Bietris's *canso* are medieval texts which adopt the language of courtly love; they "are both examples of a conscious reinvention of homoeroticism in courtly love that participates in the fashioning of a lesbian literary voice in the Middle Ages. The *fin amour* script is tailored to represent a same-sex couple."[59] While Hadewijch's poetry is not an explicit example of a tale of two lovers, this theory—that courtly love and homoerotic subtexts might have

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[56] Barbara Newman, *From virile woman to womanChrist: studies in medieval religion and literature*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 143. Her chapter entitled "*La mystique courtoise*: Thirteenth-Century Beguines and the Art of Love" is a treasure trove of useful analysis of beguines' use of courtly love tropes in their writing.

[57] Ibid., 138.

[58] Ibid., 138-139.

[59] Kolowska, *Queer Love,* 115.

been a way in which medieval authors conceptualized life, thus providing a framework for their medieval texts—is central to the argument of this paper.

Two authors—Amy Hollywood and Ulkrie Wiethaus—stand out in their attempts to queer Hadewijch in light of her gender fluid writing. They also acknowledge her use of courtly love rhetoric. Hollywood argues that "the interplay of suffering and desire is crucial" to Hadewijch's work "in ways that ultimately disrupt the heteronormativity between the soul and the divine."[60] She notes that "Hadewijch's work undermines associations of masculinity with the divine and femininity with human, for it includes a series of poems in which the divine is represented as Love (minne, which is feminine), the unattainable female object of desire, and the soul as a knight-errant in quest of his Lady."[61] Hollywood identifies other writings by Hadewijch that can be considered queer; for example, she pinpoints moments in Hadewijch's visions in which Hadewijch and Christ become indistinguishably merged. In one vision, Hadewijch writes that "I wholly melted away in him and nothing any longer remained to me of myself," a moment which Hollywood posits as being "heterosexual in its imagery." However, though it is male/female, "the melting away of the soul into the divine radically undermines any stable distinction between male and female."[62] Without a distinction between male and female, Hadewijch allows for patriarchal societal power norms to shift. These kinds of moments in her writings are decidedly queer.

As noted before, Wiethaus argues that the beguinages and mysticism allowed Hadewijch the possibility of queering her narrative. She also asserts that the concept of a male/female bride/bridegroom relationship between the soul and the divine "allowed Hadewijch to speak of female homoerotic desire and then to disguise it safely under the cloak of her ambiguous and unstable gender identity."[63] However, as Hollywood's argument ends with the intense gender-bending that Hadewijch employs, Wiethaus takes her

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[60] Hollywood, "Sexual Desire," 168.
[61] Ibid., 169.
[62] Ibid., 169.
[63] Wiethaus, "Female Homoerotic Discourse," 302.

analysis a step further and creates a complex argument centered on the idea of Minne (another word for the personified female Love) within Hadewijch's gender-bending framework. According to Newman, "Hadewijch had the most complex and multi-faceted concept of Minne."[64] Within her mystical texts, Minne is Hadewijch's Beloved, a mirror image of herself (as Moammers describes it, "the personified experience of Hadewijch's own love for God")[65] Jesus, a noble woman whom one should worship, or some combination of these categorizations. Wiethaus argues that:

> the imaginary bigendered figure of Minne plays a three-fold role: as a spiritual guide, she models esoteric same-sex student mentor relations[66]; as a symbol of love, she becomes a foil on which to project a specific form of female desire for another woman; as an idealized alter ego, she can speak Hadewijch's own desire.

It is clear that Hadewijch's Minne is a complex figure for historians, and depending on an author's analytical lens, Minne represents a variety of concrete feelings and abstract thoughts. However, what cannot be denied is the way in which Hadewijch uses fluid gender to represent Minne. For this queer reading of Hadewijch, I will insert myself into the conversation primarily with Wiethaus and Hollywood in order to show that though their analysis on gender fluidity is useful for historical inquiry, it does not go far enough in emphasizing how much courtly love rhetoric serves to intensify our ability to queer read Hadewijch's poetry.

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[64] Newman, *virile woman,* 154.

[65] Moammers, *Hadewijch,* 5.

[66] This teacher-mentor relationship between Sara and Hadewijch is not one that will be fully explored in this paper, but does give an interesting dimension to conceptions of female/female erotic feelings in beguine communities. Wiethaus argues that this relationship was a kind of mentorship that may likely have had some sort of erotic bent, as the writings from Hadewijch to Sara display intense affection. However, like all queer reads of medieval writings, there are myriad questions raised with often very few answers. See Wiethaus, *Female Homoerotic Discourse,* 307, for more information.

Hadewijch's Poetry

Hadewijch wrote 45 stanzaic poems,[67] all of which were likely written for her beguine followers.[68] In these, she attempts to impart moral lessons on the proper way to worship Minne or personified Love and how to manage the overwhelming feelings which this celestial body imparts upon the worshipper. Within these poems, the rhetoric of courtly love and Hadewijch's use of gender-bending is so intensely interconnected that to analyze one is to analyze its relation to the other.

Hadewijch's voice calls out of the pages of the past in her poetry, as she beseeches readers to learn from her own struggles and experiences:

> My distress is great and unknown to men.
> They are cruel to me, for they wish to dissuade me
> From all that the forces of Love urge me to.
> They do not understand it, and I cannot explain it to them.
>   I must then live out what I am.[69]

In this poem, the narrator is distanced from the surrounding men, who cannot understand the driving pull toward what might likely be read—in a Western, hetero-patriarchal framework—as a mystic's visionary relationship with God. Her language employs the courtly love rhetoric of intense longing to be with the object of desire (i.e. Love). However, a queer read of this poem might emphasize the distinct acknowledgement of dissociation from men and the lack of understanding that the narrator garners from those men around her. Feelings of exclusion are clearly not a singularly medieval experience. But with a queer read, this sense of exclusion might have been caused by erotic feelings that differed from those around her. The poem's speaker—who feels misunderstood and argues that they "must live out" who they are—may be a reflection of

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[67] She also wrote visions, letters, and poems in couplets.

[68] Columba Hart, *Hadewijch: The complete works*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 20.

[69] Hadewijch, "To Live Out What I Am" 1st stanza, in *Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* ed. Richard Payne (Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980), 186.

Hadewijch's internal feelings. The rhetoric of longing for Love helps to emphasize the emotional attachment that the speaker has with the object whom she is condemned for loving. This could be one instance of Hadewijch "letting loose" in the safe space created by mystic poetry.

As noted earlier, the figure of Minne plays a distinctly queer function in Hadewijch's poetry. Hadewijch uses the male/female role of courtly lovers to narrate stories in which the knight (a religious person) seeks his/her lover (God). However, God is most often described as Minne—or, in the case of many poems, "Love"—who has a distinctly female persona in Hadewijch's writing. Courtly love was an ideal that many medieval persons would have had at least an awareness of. Thus, using this kind of rhetoric to mirror one's personal relationship with God permits Hadewijch to emphasize the importance of religious worship. It also allows for the gender fluidity Hadewijch employs to represent a kind of "nudge nudge, wink wink" about how women might be able to gain and employ power in their own lives.

Minne plays a more substantial role in Hadewijch's poetry than does the male Christ figure; in many medieval mystic visions, Christ is the central, often erotic, focus. Wiethaus notes that "erotic encounters with Minne far outnumber descriptions of fusion with Christ."[70] For example:

> Alas, noble Love! in what season, when,
> Will you restore serene days to me
> And change from my darkness?...
>   You alone know
>   How I mean this:
> Whether I wish anything but your pleasure.
> O powerful, wonderful Love,
> You who can conquer all with wonder!
> Conquer me, so that I may conquer you…
> And I am firm in confidence
>   Through which I know
>   That Love one day
> Will embrace me in oneness.[71]

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[70] Wiethaus, "Female Homoerotic Discourse," 302.

[71] Hadewijch, "The Defense of Love," stanzas 7-10, in *Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* ed. Richard Payne (Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980), 178.

It is clear here that even in the context of this poem, Hadewijch is playing with relationships in a way that ought to be read as queer, as the reader is left wondering about the exact gender position of the narrator. Her approach doesn't undermine notions of gender on the surface, but rather destabilizes it. She asks readers to skew what they know about courtly love and Christian worship while still falling within the acceptable gender roles. By doing this, she uses the safe space of mystic poetry to play with gender without fear of persecution.

As has been noted, Hadewijch's gender-bending does not always distance itself from the male/knight female/love object binary framework. For example:

> He who wishes to serve Love must surrender himself
> Into her power, in accord with her commands…
> He feels himself wholly in Love.
> When she also fills him with the wondrous taste of Love…
> Alas! Soon awakens Desire.[72]

The seeds of this sensual male/female rhetoric can be found in the *Song of Songs*, a book in the Bible which "sets the stage for an intensely erotic and, at least on the surface, heterosexualized understanding of the relationship between the soul and God."[73] Though Hadewijch was likely familiar with the *Songs* and adapted them in her work, the heterosexual categories in the Biblical text are undercut by Hadewijch's insertion of herself into the narrative, in which she gives herself a role in the courtly love romance. In the following poem, Hadewijch distinguishes the narrator as a woman who is taking agency in a narrative of a male/female courtly Love romance:

> He is in woe because of Love;
> For he sorely burns
> In hope and in fear
> Incessantly renewed;
> For all his desire is
> To partake of and to enjoy
> And to have fruition of Love's nature…
> They who live thus in hunger for Love…
> They are robbed of everything:

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[72] Hadewijch, "Reason, Pleasure, and Desire," stanzas 2-4, in *Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* ed. Richard Payne (Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980), 196.

[73] Hollywood, "Sexual Desire," 166.

> And so she stirs up un them such a fear!...
> What must I—poor woman—do?...
> Her touch has been death to me![74]

Here Hadewijch singles out the female narrator whose touch of Love has affected her in the same way that

it affects the male in the poem. The rhetoric of courtly love's intense pain and desire in relation to the

object of desire—in this case the female "Love"—thus gives a structure which destabilized the

male/female dichotomy. By inserting a female-identified person into the story, Hadewijch creates a non-

normative narrative which employs the rhetoric of courtly love to intensify the emotion and create

framework of non-hetero feelings.

In other poems, the female-identified narrator explicitly states her choice to follow a female God

to court:

> I bid farewell to Love now and forever.
> He who will may follow her to court; as for me, I have had too much woe.
> Since I first chose her, I expected to be a lady of her court;
> I did everything with praise: I cannot hold out.
> > Now her rewards
> > Seem to me like the scorpion
> > That shows a beautiful appearance,
> > And afterwards strikes so cruelly. [75]

Hadewijch's use of courtly love tropes intensifies the narrator's affection toward female Love. In

this narrative, Love is a dichotomous figure who gives great rewards along with great pain, much

like a noble lady who might tease and then subsequently spurn the knight venerating her. In this

stanza, Hadewijch highlights the agency of the female speaker in tandem with the men who are

pursuing love. Furthermore, this narrator is female. It is clear that the female speaker is making an

intentional choice to follow female Love to her royal/divine court so that the narrator may

worship the same way as men. Here Hadewijch makes an explicit attempt to spotlight a female

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[74] Hadewijch, "'Sure Reward," stanzas 6-7, in *Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* ed. Richard Payne (Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980), 166.

[75] Hadewijch, "The Noble Valiant Heart" 6th stanza, in *Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* ed. Richard Payne (Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980), 184-186.

who chooses to pursue another female entity. A queer read of this poem should highlight the ways in which that kind of relationship might undermine the hetero-patriarchal framework of the medieval church and society as a whole.

Not only is Hadewijch pushing gender boundaries in this poem, there is veiled sexual imagery in the way that the female narrator relates to female Love. In the Middle Ages, scorpions had sexual connotations. It had an association with both penetrative sexual organs and women's sexuality in general. Ecclesiasticus 26:10 says this: "he that hath hold of her [wicked woman] is as he that taketh hold of a scorpion."[76] The scorpion in this context evokes the danger of female sexuality. In Hadewijch's poem, the female narrator is penetrated by Love's sting and emotionally suffers because of it. A queer read of that stanza might note that a scorpion, representing women's sexuality, was penetrating—though whether physically or spiritually we cannot determine—the female narrator. This act of penetration causes great emotional anguish, which is concurrent with courtly love rituals of emotional distress from longing. This poem allows for readers to ask deeper and broader questions about Hadewijch's message, conceptions of gender, and ideas about female sexuality.

Beguines, Hadewijch, and Queer Readings: The Intersections and Conclusions

This paper brings together gender, mysticism, queer theory, and medieval history in the hopes that historians might begin to think differently about sources they study. I argue that in order to complete a full historical analysis of beguines, historians should more closely examine the alternative lifestyles and thought processes of these women. Simply by being an all-female community without any male cleric in control of them, beguines were a queer entity in the medieval Low Countries. When looking at Hadewijch's poetry, historians must acknowledge that there is more beneath the surface of the male/female courtly love

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[76] George B Pace. "The Scorpion of Chaucer's Merchant's Tale," *Modern Language Quarterly*, 26(3) (1965), 371.

romance with God. My queer read has added significant depth to Hadewijch's intersection of gender bending and courtly love rhetoric, though her visions, letters, and poems in couplets are likely rich sources for further queer reads.

There is additional research and study to be done on queering historic sources, and it is safe to say that source material will likely never run out. For, as I hope I have revealed, sources can and ought to be re-examined in a queer framework. It is time to take up Shakespeare and read between the lines by queering the actions, thoughts, and speeches of the characters. Does Ophelia's relationship with Hamlet end because he is cruel, or does she decide that perhaps celibacy is a better option for her life? Might Rosencrantz and Guildenstern represent homosexual foils to Hamlet and Ophelia, their death revealing Shakespeare's idea on male homoerotic friendships? These are all queering questions, and the answers to them do not have to be "yes" for the questions to be considered legitimate or useful. A queer read is essential to every historic source, for without it, a source's significance may well be incomplete.

Thus, Hadewijch's gender-bending poems ought to make historians pause. Because these poems reveal something that is outside of the expected (read: heterosexual), their presence in the historical narrative can be queered. They are male/female, but they are also not. They employ rhetoric of courtly love relationships, but they are primarily focused on religious feelings. For historians, acknowledging the possibility of queerness thus gives credence to the theory that there is something to be discovered underneath the heterosexual and male/female gender binary surface read. By falling into heterosexual paradigms, queerness is ignored by historians and thus delegitimized as a lifestyle. Additionally, historians who encounter instances like these within historical evidence do a disservice to their sources by not giving them a complete examination. The sources are not stretched and bent to their fullest extent if heterosexuality is the only framework of analysis. This is not, as Judith Bennet might advocate, an attempt to search for "lesbian-like" feelings, but a call for acknowledging and accepting that sources might be queer (in any of the numerous ways that a source might be considered "queer"). Furthermore, a historian

who pushes to the side the lens of "queerness" does a disservice to historical methodology and narratives as a whole. Just as Marx advocated class as a lens through which to analyze the world, so does queer reading call forth new paradigms of historical investigation.

It is time for us to queer read the internal movie created by Hadewijch's poetry. We must take this imagined film and ask: is there something here that is non-normative? Is there only one ending? Perhaps the knight pulls off their helmet to reveal that they are actually a woman. It could be that the film ends not with the male/female relationship triumphing but with the noble lady's decision to live a chaste lifestyle in the local beguinages. These queered alternative endings do not have to all come to fruition, but they all must be available for the audience. Without them, the story is incomplete.

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Anti-Semitism in German 'Volk' Culture: Propaganda through the Pen and Screen

BY HANK LEVIN

The Germanic term 'Volk' carries a significantly more dynamic meaning than its English translation to 'folk' or 'people'. The term 'Volk" originates from the word "Volkskunde" which in the late 18th and early 19th century referred to the academic study of collective German history. Originating in the era of Romanticism, Volk became the German collective mindset in the 19th and 20th centuries. In order to overcome political disunity regarding modernity, Germans strove towards creating a singular, mystical identity. Modernity paradoxically became a rejection of modernity. The popular focus of academic study known as the 'Volkskunde' originally had a complete absence of bigotry. However, it would gradually involve into a catalyst of nationalistic propaganda which masked a blatant and sinister political agenda. As the 19th century progressed, Germans interpreted the Volk as a rallying point, which enabled them to see themselves as a superior native race and set themselves apart from other peoples. Consequently, given that the other major population group at this time in Germany was the Jews, they became associated with the antithesis of 'Volkish' values.

These propagandistic aspects of Volk ideologies allowed Germans to see the Jews as the biological and social 'other'. The 'otherness' of the Jews is constantly presented through both physical and psychological stereotypes, and they were seen as personally embodying the concepts which Volk culture had formed in opposition to. The intimate association of anti-Semitism with 'Volkish' ideals started in the era of Romanticism in the early 19th century and lasted through the Third Reich and World War II. It was consistently present in not only the public establishments, such as government and educational institutions, but also was a constant thematic element in works of art of all genres, including literature, musical compositions, theatre-opera, and film.

Once Volk ideologies had gained respectability in mainstream German culture it became easy for them to cross over into the political sphere. This essay will trace the origins of the Volk, how the Volk

ideologies achieved respectability among the German masses, as well as reveal through art, the dichotomies that encompassed anti-Semitic tendencies of the populace. The perfect example of how the dynamics of the Volk ideologies had spread is evident in one of the most popular German Volk stories of all time, Jud Süß. The true story of how a 17th century lower class Jewish merchant rose to the highest echelons of the German government only to eventually be executed for the high crime of treason was retold in Wilhelm Hauff's 1827 novel as well as Veit Harlan's 1941 film. Both works are totemic of the Volk ideologies of the particular time in which they were released. I will attempt to trace the developments of Volk ideologies during this time period; and show how a desire to search for national unity and commonality turned into bigotry and the megalomania of national superiority. The German attitudes towards Judaism developed from ambivalence, to dissociation, and finally to blatant hatred. For Germans anti-Semitism would become the means for individual salvation as well as collective national redemption. The development of Volk ideology is revealed through analysis of these two iconic texts. A major cause in the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust was the social concept of the Volk being developed and accepted on a mainstream scale, with the delivery of this propaganda being successful through several generations of German art.

The Historiography of the Holocaust Studies and the Development of the Volkskunde

The historiography of the European Holocaust has been a fiercely contested area of study for decades. However, the consensus is that one should begin at Saul Friedlander's *Nazi Germany and the Jews Volume I*. This work, which received upon its 1998 publication widespread critical acclaim, was referred to by the Los Angeles Times as the "definitive work" on this area of study. Friedlander makes the goal of his study clear from the beginning, which is to reveal "an account in which Nazi policies are indeed the central element, but in which the surrounding world and the victims' attitudes, reactions, and fate are no less an integral part of this unfolding history."[1] However, prior to Friedlander's publication, though there were a

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[1] Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews Volume I.* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 1-2

few notable works focused on the historiography that had achieved success within the academic community, others included arguments that were often polarized or lopsided.

George L. Mosse's *The Crisis of German Ideology* exemplifies one of these pioneering texts. Mosse focuses on two ideologies, Marxism and National Socialism. He intentionally sets these apart from the beginning. However, the bulk of his argument traces how the ideas of National Socialism were deeply embedded within Germans several generations before Hitler's rise to power. These ideas included Germanic Christianity, nature mysticism, theosophy, sun worship, and racial hegemony. Mosse's underlying thesis is that these anti-democratic and anti-liberal ideologies gave Germans the hope that they could achieve sociopolitical and historical salvation. Early on, he mentions that this set of ideas has been termed "Volkish", which "signified the union of a group of people with a transcendental 'essence'", and was born from German romanticism in the late eighteenth century.[2] This increasingly resulted in the German perception of the Jews to be in contrast with themselves, who "living in dark, mist-shrouded forests, are deep, mysterious profound," and constantly "strive toward the sun."[3] He also emphasizes that the perversion of Volkish ideals began with a very small group of German idealists and infiltrated secular education systems to become accepted by the mainstream.[4]

Another installment of acclaimed non-fiction Holocaust academic literature was Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. This book deals with ordinary Germans who were in Order Police, one of the units primarily responsible for the mass murder of Jews in Poland and Eastern Europe. Browning's main argument is that conditioning and group loyalty were more important than ideological conviction. Even though Browning's thesis was in direct contrast to Mosse's, it nevertheless received critical acclaim from Mosse himself, who described *Ordinary Men* as "a truly pioneer study of how it was possible for ordinary middle-aged men to become mass murderers,

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[2] George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich*. (New York: H. Fertig, 1998), 4.

[3] Mosse, 5.

[4] Mosse, 110.

personally shooting thousands of men, women, and children. Convincing, fluently written, and difficult to put down, it should be read by all interested in our common future." This book would also gain the respect of Friedlander, who described it as "remarkable" and "an important contribution to the understanding of one of the most incomprehensible aspects of the 'Final Solution': the psychological adaptation of the perpetrators."

Prior to this publication, scholarly works on the Holocaust tended to have arguments that could best be described as superficial and lopsided. In the 1980's, for example, the two most prominent publications on the subject were Lucy Dawidowicz's *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* and Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Hilberg focused exclusively on the Nazi political system, while Dawidowicz concentrated entirely on the history of the victims. Browning paved the way for a new approach to Holocaust studies. But more importantly arguments would be made which blended together the assertions of Hilberg and Dawidowicz. This allowed the issue to be acknowledged as being a multi-dimensional one with incredibly deep complexities that could never be addressed with one-sided arguments.

This did not mean the controversy that inevitably came with the subject went away. The response to Browning came from Daniel Jonah Goldhagen in 1997 with *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. In this study, Golden completely disregards the psychological argument regarding the conditioning of the Germans. Instead, Goldhagen asserts that ordinary Germans were primed from the beginning to be experimentalist anti-Semites and that the Nazis simply unshackled their murderous will. He asserts that the perpetrators of the Holocaust were merely innately driven by anti-Semitism and their own convictions. Therefore having judged the mass annihilation of the Jews to be a moral obligation, clearly "did not want to say 'no'."[5] Another controversial aspect of this publication was Goldhagen's unsupported assertions that the perpetrators "along the way overwhelmingly cited sheer physical revulsion

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[5] Daniel Goldhagen. *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust.* (New York: Vintage, 1997), 16.

against what they were doing as the prime motive but did not express any ethical or political principles behind this revulsion."[6] Goldhagen encountered fierce criticism from historians, who interpreted his arguments as not only being shock value with little substance and backing, but also unoriginal.

Friedlander timed the release of his now-renowned publication perfectly. In *Nazi Germany and the Jews Volume* I, Friedlander directly criticizes Goldhagen for the reasons mentioned above. In addition to providing thorough evidence, which includes individual first person accounts from the victims as well as the perpetrators, Friedlander does not make sweeping shock-value conclusions. Friedlander consistently argues that Goldhagen's approach to study is dangerous, reductive, and simply weak. Goldhagen's thesis, which claims the cause of the Holocaust is "eliminationist anti-Semitism" directly opposes Friedlander's argument that the roots of genocide lay in "redemptive anti-Semitism". Like Mosse, Friedlander doesn't just superficially describe what Hitler's anti-Semitism did and what the intentions behind it were. He states that "earlier reductive interpretations" had focused solely "on the role (and responsibility) of the supreme leader."[7] Friedlander describes this redemptive anti-Semitism argument as the opposite of Goldhagen's broad "ordinary racial anti-Semitism" argument. In redemptive anti-Semitism "the struggle against the Jews is the dominant aspect of a worldview in which the other racist themes are but secondary appendages."[8] This book provides a balanced argument about the incredibly complex subject it discusses and thus became the standard text about German anti-Semitism.

The term Volk was originally coined from the term "Volkskunde" ("folk studies" or "folklore"), which developed as a result of the German's newly discovered desire to understand people who didn't have a public voice in the past. In the late 18th century, Germany was fragmented into several different states. People held a natural curiosity about the culture of other states and began to travel and record their

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[6] Goldhagen, 74.
[7] Friedlander, 14.
[8] Friedlander, 87.

findings in travelogues.[9] The earliest of these travelogues comes from Josef Moller, a Prague scholar who in 1788 wrote a "…list of several aids for a pragmatic study of the state, folk, and country of Bohemia."[10] A German theologian by the name of Wölfling released another notable piece of early Volkskunde literature in 1796, in which he gave a detailed account that had "…virtually nothing that was not described by him, which he would not have described"[11]. Wölfling, who wrote anonymously in *Letters of a traveling Frenchman about the Germans*, searched for a "national physiognomy", a "national sensitivity" and an explanation to the "general character of the German nation" by examining the societal background. This included how the "characteristic traits of individual provinces are presented together with considerations about the influence of the governments on the customs of the citizenry"[12]. These works focus on explaining the differences between the different regions of Germany. The only aim is to find a collective national commonality. Sentiments of racist, anti-Semitic, or nationalistic propaganda are not evident during the initial developments of the Volk ideologies.

Volkskunde developed into an accepted political science throughout early decades of the 19th century.[13] Two of the most well-known figures of this movement were called the Brothers Grimm.[14] These German brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, developed the study of language which is known today as linguistics. They were driven by the growing movement of national unification and desire to understand the fellow individual. A letter written by Jacob Grimm reveals how he wanted to accomplish a "fraternization of Germans in various states who would then work on one and the same great work" …and a "vita populi."[15] The methodologies Grimm used and the subjects he studied were typical of the

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[9] Wolfgang Jacobeit. "Concerning the Traditional Understanding of "Folk Culture" in the German Democratic Republic. A Scholarly-Historical Retrospective." *Asian Folklore Studies* 50, no. 1 (1991): 70.

[10] Josef Mader, cited in Jacobeit, 70

[11] Jacobeit, 70.

[12] Jacobeit, 70.

[13] Jacobeit, 72-76.

[14] Jacobeit, 74 –75 Jacobeit refers to these brothers as men as "often" being called the "fathers" of Volkskunde in academia, of which doing so, Jacobeit asserts, is unfair

[15] Jacobeit, 74-75.

early years of the Volkskunde, as he wrote, "Special attention should be devoted to the way and method in which the folk carries water and loads throughout the various provinces; is this on the head, the back, or the arm? How do they behave while talking and sitting, while eating and drinking-e.g., how do they position their arms and legs."[16] The study of the Volk originated out of the German collective desire to deeply understand the intricate nuances of their fellow countrymen. It however resulted in something much more sinister.

Previous German authors such as Goethe and Herder wrote in the early years of Volkskunde about a general dissatisfaction with modernity, specifically with urbanization, industrialization, and capitalism. Herder wrote that the general concern of society was the usefulness of the individual under the growing economic trends of capitalism and trade.[17] As a result of the rapid growth of urbanization and industrialization, the conversion of manual labor to mechanized labor seemed unstoppable. Goethe wrote in *Poetry and Truth* of his experience visiting a textile manufacturer whose factory had become mechanized, saying "When one walks between the numerous spindles and weavers' stools in a large factory, one feels with all this whirring and rattling, with all this mechanism so confusing to the eye and the senses, with an incomprehensible view of a place that is so busy in so many ways to do all that is necessary to make a piece of clothing …one's own jacket…that one is wearing…suffers."[18] Though on one hand the development of the terms Volk and Volkskunde began to unite the different provinces of Germany into a singular, national identity, many negative aspects were revealed.

These studies then caused scholars to examine their history in order to find out the causes of their collective discontents. Jacobeit writes of this change in the Volkskunde/Volk, which was originally "…supposed to contribute to a harmonization of these vast social contracts and it is supposed to point out the illusionary values from the various strata of the past" and had been gradually infected by the

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[16] Jacobeit, 75.
[17] Jacobeit, 72.
[18] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, cited in Jacobeit, 72.

"…indoctrination (under the cloak of so-called spiritual Volk culture) with nationalistic embellishment, and directed consciously towards societal contrasts, are those uniquely created 'village histories' of Germanophilia, Frankophobia, and anti-Semitism that were produced in large numbers."[19] George Mosse wrote prominently of the Volk driven nationalist movement in the early to mid-19th century, referring to the movement as Germans creating "an indivisible whole."[20] Hitler, who eventually translated the dynamic elements of the "Volkish" movements into his political power, simply had to draw upon the deep-seated beliefs of the masses which had been boiling internally for the last 150 years. For the German citizenry, embracing this belief was the only path to collective salvation. Mosse referred the Third Reich as "…not a culmination of history", though "not an accident of history."[21] The propaganda of Hitler contained elements of redemptive anti-Semitism that would be found in many works of art including several adaptations of *Jud Suss.*

One of the earliest Volk scholars who became associated with the nationalistic aspects of the movement was Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, who in his works consistently presents the idea of the German land and language being fundamentally linked.[22] His methods of collecting information, such as walking the countryside, keeping a travelogue, talking to many residents of different socio-economic strata were identical to those used during the early years of Volkskunde.[23] What differentiated him from the previous generation of scholars were his views on how urbanization and capitalism connected with the Jews. Statements such as, "the organic nature of the Volk can only be attained if fused with the native landscape", "urban centers are the cause of unrest", "for many Volkish thinkers, only nature was genuine", "working class were the most respectable Volk", and most notably "Berlin is the domain of the Jews"

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[19] Jacobeit, 79.
[20] Mosse, 35.
[21] Mosse, 14.
[22] Mosse, 19.
[23] Mosse, 20.

guaranteed him attention.[24] He was still popular in his time, with Jacobeit having referred to him and his

school of thought as an "aid in what stirred the 1848 revolution."[25] Riehl's reactionary style would become

common in the works of journalism of the era, but would also be emulated by a diverse set of voices

crossing all economic and social barriers.

Art is and has often been used as a tool to express social commentary. Goethe set a precedent for

the German population to study themselves by showing an interest in the "folk" of all social strata, not

just those in power. Goethe, wrote in 1796 that the "Volk is of enormous interest" to him. He also

summarized the growing desire for the creation of an art that would define the next 100 years of German

popular culture in his 1833 work *Maxims and reflections on art*, in which he stated that "[w]e know of no

world except in relationship to man; we want no art that is not a reflection of this relationship."[26] Hauff's

novel, one of the first popular forms of art containing themes of the redemptive Volk ideologies had been

published 6 years prior to Goethe's statement.

Wilhelm Hauff's *Jud Süß*

At the age of 25, Wilhelm Hauff published the novel *Jud Süß*. The story, which focuses on the life

of the Jewish banker Josef Suss-Oppenheimer, who served in the 1730's as the financial advisor to the

Duke Karl Alexander of Wurttemberg, is considered a "watershed work in German history" by Jefferson

Chase, because it "prefigured both the world-be philo-Semitic and anti-Semitic treatments of the Suss-

Oppenheimer story and, as such, rehearses the entangled logic of emancipation and chauvinism so

prominent in the German nineteenth century."[27] The story of Suss and his rise from poverty to become

the second-most powerful man in the state of Wurttemberg only to be executed shortly after the death of

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[24] Mosse, 21.

[25] Jacobeit, 79.

[26] Goethe, cited in Jacobeit, 71.

[27] Jefferson S. Chase, "The Wandering Court Jew and the Hand of God: Wilhelm Hauff's "Jud Süss" as Historical Fiction." *The Modern Language Review* 93, no. 3 (1998): 724.

Karl Alexander in 1737 would become the topic of many social debates in the following centuries, as well as one of the first pieces of evidence of the increasing anti-Semitism in Volk art.

The watershed element that Chase refers to, between the philo-Semitic and anti-Semitic treatments of the story, is linked to two of the most well-known adaptations created a century after the publication of Hauff's novel. The philo-Semitic treatment being German-Jewish author Lion Feuchtwanger's 1925 novel *Jud Süß*, and the blatantly anti-Semitic treatment being Veit Harlan's film of the same title released 15 years later. Hauff essentially blends both of these attitudes into his narrative through what Chase refers to as a "disjuncture" between the "discours" and the "histoire". In other words, Hauff's passionate rhetoric of tolerance is juxtaposed against a plot in which the removal of the corrupt financial minister, and in turn, the removal of the Jews as a people from the native land, is an absolute necessity to ensure the survival of the Volk, no matter how unpleasant the process might be.[28] In Hauff's narrative, the underlying values of Romantic nationalism combined with an innate, though ultimately dangerous, desire to tolerate the Jewish "other" serve as a social commentary on the essence of the Volk ideologies. Even though Jewish characters are not always presented as obvious enemies, ultimately the act of realizing the otherness of the Jew is redemptive, foreshadowing a future national conflict of real consequence.

The first scene of Hauff's novel takes place after Suss has already gained power. The audience never finds out how Suss actually gained power, only that the Duke "…has been driven by an agenda of military matters, allowing Jews to seize the reins of power."[29] The narrator lets the reader know in the first paragraph that there is an "…endemic of misery and poverty" that has infected Württemberg as the "…direct result of systematic and calculated interventions of an all-powerful minister."[30] The first scene takes place at a masquerade ball thrown by Suss to honor himself on the occasion of his birthday. At this

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[28] Chase, 725.

[29] Wilhelm Hauff, *Jud Suss*. (London: P. Reclam, 1917), 1.

[30] Hauff, 1.

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event he holds card games for the apparent purpose of "fund raising."[31] It is in this first scene of the masquerade ball where three anti-Semitic stereotypes that would become constants in Volk narratives are evident. First, the scene reveals the stereotype that Jews were fueled by sexual lust, whereas the pure Aryan German race acted only on pure love, as revealed in a dialogue between three unnamed guests who discuss the rumors that Suss "…has many mistresses of many daughters of fathers."[32]

Second, the "masking" stereotype of the Court Jew carrying on constant deception is alluded to in the first physical descriptions of Suss. In the following scene, Gustav "the Mighty", the son of the leader of the legislative council, Lanbek, observes Suss playing at the card table, "[Gustav] admitted that the fact of [Suss] is formed by natural beauty, and he even has got something imposing, but hostile, repulsive wrinkles lay there between his eyebrows where the forehead wanted to join his well-shaped nose, and the mustache on his upper lip could not hide one resentful expression around the mouth, and the man had a truly horrible hoarse, forced laugh, which the Jewish minister accompanied."[33] The stereotypical Court Jew, according to Chase, has the "positive attributes" necessary to "penetrate the highest echelons of Gentile society" while simultaneously presenting an external image of someone who is "ambitious and resentful."[34] This image of Suss is vastly different from the Suss that would be created in Harlan's film over 100 years later. Unlike Harlan's film, which would not give Suss a single redeeming quality, Hauff's narrative presents Suss character in an envious light. Even though this Jewish character is driven by ambition, lust, and revenge, he also has an overpowering aura of respectability, an essential characteristic for political advancement. This is an acknowledgement of competence from Hauff, as even though the hero of his text is ultimately able to see the inherent danger of the Jewish "other", the bulk of the story revolves around Gustav's emotionally taxing struggle to recognize these dangers.

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[31] Hauff, 2.
[32] Hauff, 3.
[33] Hauff, 7.
[34] Chase, 729.

The third anti-semitic stereotype is revealed through a conversation that Suss has during a card game after a farmer approached him with the sarcastic question, "A lot of money you have there, sir! Honest earnings?" Suss doesn't reply to the question directly, instead he "…looked around, and tried to mask a smile. Perhaps he did this to give himself a desirable and popular reputation." When Suss tries to call the farmer "my friend", the farmer replies, "God protect me if I was your friend, Mr. Suss…If I were your friend, I was probably not be in this old hat. You make your friends rich indeed." The stereotype of a capitalistic thirst which fuels the Jew is first revealed in Suss's reply, "Now, all of Württemberg must be my friend, because I make it rich."[35] Seeing personal wealth as equivalent to worth would consistently be a theme of "Jewishness" in works of Volk art. An example of this came a few decades later from arguably the most famous international artist of the late 19th century, the German playwright/composer Richard Wagner, who in his magnum opus entitled *The Ring of Nibelrung,* created an antagonist who is totally driven by a desire to gain and regain a ring which gives limitless power to whoever holds it.[36]

The debate between Suss and the farmer further reveals how capitalism was viewed in Volk literature, as well as how the Volk thought the Jews viewed capitalism. The farmer then replies to Suss:

> "'How beautiful is this gold! How much sweat poor people go to earn such a piece of gold?'
> 'You are a capital fellow,' cried Suss, very quietly playing…
> 'Who is your lord?' said the farmer.
> 'A slave driver, but a noble. Do you think he flays vulgar cattle, horses, dogs and the like? No, he is a martinet, but he is also a card manufacturer.'
> 'A card manufacturer?' Exclaimed the farmer.
> 'Yes, because all the cards in the country, you have to buy from *him*, he stamped it, but he is also a tanner.'
> 'How so?'
> 'Well, all tanners in the country, the hides buy from him, but he is also an embossed floor.'
> 'What! An embossed floor?'
> 'Yes, he makes all the money that is in the land.'
> 'That's a lie,' said the farmer, 'do you mean, he does everything for money, which is in the country, but that he is not a stamping floor. There is only *one* stamping stock in
> Württemberg; the country has put his signature.'

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[35] Hauff, 7-8.

[36] Richard Wagner, and Andrew Porter. *The Ring of the Nibelung: German Text.* (New York: Norton, 1977).

The crowd had only murmured their approval, but at the last reference to the coin they burst out laughing, and the forehead of the mighty darkened slightly, but he still continued to play quietly. 'But why did you let the beard grow out pointed?' The farmer went on, 'this looks very Jewish' 'It's just the way fashion," [another farmer named] Hans replied, "since the Jews are masters of the country, and soon I will be very Jewish"[37]

The sentiments of the farmer regarding the subjective nature of capitalism would survive all the way until the era of the Third Reich. In arguably Hitler's most popular piece of propaganda, entitled *Mein Kampf*, he famously stated that the Jew "…begins to operate in the economy, not as a producer but as an intermediary" and that the Jew "…himself has never cultivated the soil."[38] The choice that Hauff made in representing the German Volk with a farmer cannot be a mere coincidence. Farming alludes to the common thematic element in these Volkish works of art of the frustrations that reflect the culture's sentiments towards capitalism, in which the rich could themselves not produce anything while still gaining a more substantial profit than those who are actually doing the manual labor. Farmers are hence placed in a sympathetic position to the audience.

Chase points to this scene as establishing two important symbolic dichotomies; the first being the Court Jew as "externally impressive but internally corrupt", and the other being the opposition between the foreign Court Jew and a native figure directly associated with the soil. The setting of the masquerade ball "not only serves the important practical function of allowing politically oppressed people to speak their minds openly," but also "has the symbolic connotation of people's true feelings and identities being concealed under social masks."[39] The first dichotomy goes back to Chase's description of the stereotype of the Court Jew as someone who has "…mastered Gentile language, appearance and customs" and "insinuates himself into power and secretly runs the government."[40] The use of these stereotypes are

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[37] Hauff, 8-9.

[38] Adolf Hitler's, *Mein Kampf*, cited in Linda Schulte-Sasse. "The Jew as Other under National Socialism: Veit Harlan's Jud Süß." *The German Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (1988): 22-49.

[39] Chase, 730.

[40] Chase, 729.

evident at this point in the story, as Suss has already mysteriously gained his power without the reader ever

knowing how, and he has already abused this power.

Another important aspect of Volk culture is breaking away from the political oppressions of the

former absolutist rule, which the Jews came to embody. Suss represents absolutism since at this point in

the story he has been granted full immunity from criminal prosecution for any acts done in the name of

the crown. He has also imposed devastating taxes on the populace which he has used in part to increase

his own personal wealth.[41] The military-minded Duke is indifferent to the actions of the financial advisor

as long as he keeps Württemberg financially successful on paper and provides him with an army. The other

aspect of this dichotomy is the separation between the foreigner and the native, which would become the

defining feature of mainstream Volk ideology and one of the driving forces of anti-Semitism in Germany

for the next century. In 1827 the Volk appeal had not quite reached the nationwide mainstream in

Germany, with the term generally being associated with the working class and the petit bourgeois.[42]

However anti-Semitic stereotypes are clearly embedded and the Jews in general are clearly the "other" to

the German natives presented in Hauff's novel. The character of Suss is the embodiment of the "fighting

modernity with modernity" dynamic. He represents the disgruntlements of the German Volk towards

modernity during this era of capitalism and absolutism. He could only be defeated by unity stemming from

national commonality in which redemption-salvation can be achieved. Intrusions made upon the farmer

symbolize the pervasion of foreign absolutism.

The plot continues with Head-Councilor Lanbek organizing a coup-d'état to oust the financial

advisor. His son Gustav, however, develops a romantic relationship with Suss's sister, Lea. The

relationship is at first a secret one. Suss finds out, and tries to blackmail Gustav into marrying Lea in order

to align himself with one of the most powerful families in Wurttemberg. The rest of the story focuses on

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[41] Hauff, 5.
[42] Jacobeit, 68.

the struggles Gustav encounters as a result of this relationship with Lea. As the attraction becomes publicly known, Gustav has to wrestle with either losing his family as a result of the scandal that will inevitably come because Lea is a Jew, with the desire to act on his natural impulses and feelings of romantic attraction towards her. According to chase, the prevalence of this romantic element in the plot was done for two reasons. The first is that forbidden love was a popular theme in literature at the time.[43] The second is the author's choice in selecting Gustav as the primary protagonist. Not only does Chase view this as an important example of Hauff fictionalizing the historical record, but it also shows that while the negative aspects of Karl Alexander's regime were displaced onto Suss as a scapegoat, the voice of healthy native Volk society is placed on Gustav.[44]

The character of Lea represents, according to Chase, "Hauff's ambiguous attitudes towards Jewishness."[45] When the first physical descriptions of Lea are given, Hauff writes of a beauty that is similar to how Suss is first described by Gustav. Lea is described as having "glowing eyes" and her face is the "perfection of Oriental features with this symmetry in her finely cut features with wonderful dark eyes, shaded by long silken lashes", with her attire having the "charm" and "demure" "of a Turkish lady."[46] The theme of dichotomy between exterior beauty and interior corruption is used once again as Gustav then alludes to this attraction as a "deception", thinking he had seen "one of those wonderful phenomena as [the poet] Tasso describes how she gripped the imaginations of the travelers on their return."[47]

This initial attraction foreshadows the negative influence she will ultimately have on Gustav. Even though he is clearly moved by her physical beauty, that same beauty still clearly indicates her foreign nature. It is an unhealthy peculiarity that Gustav himself recognizes. Comparing it to the poem of Tasso, the use of the words "travelers" and "return" are the key elements in this use of symbolism. If a person

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[43] Chase, 728.
[44] Chase, 730.
[45] Chase, 731.
[46] Hauff, 11.
[47] Hauff, 11.

returns from traveling, that usually means they are returning to a concept of home, or in German, heimat.[48]

Heimat is the "…Volkish ideal as the place where one has roots and tradition with the myth of Jewish rootlessness, of itinerancy stemming from the desire for world hegemony."[49] Gustav compares himself to a character in a poem of a traveler returning home. The "gripping of the imagination," that occurs is recognized at this moment, likely unconsciously, as an attraction that will lead to disaster, as Lea's beauty is more of a strange enchantment, like that of a magic spell, as Hauff writes, "Love, or even the influence of that wonderful magic that is supposed to have been received from Rachel's days among the daughters of Israel – it drew him an irresistible something back to the side where since the dawn of the first day of March night, became darker."[50] Even though he is heavily under this spell of "magic" and having his "imagination gripped" he knows from the very beginning, that he is a traveler who will eventually have to return home to the Volk.

Once their relationship runs its course, they both realize that the external societal factors are too powerful for them to be together. In one particular scene, once the relationship has already been discovered by the public, and Suss has blackmailed Gustav, Lea and Gustav are discussing what the future holds for their relationship. Leah asks him, "I do not even know how to understand you…especially now that we can talk about hindrance, you're so scared, almost dumb, instead of coming into the house with us, you order me to meet secretly in the garden, I do not know, in front of whom you fear so much, even if you stand in such a relationship?" Gustav, who at this point is only called his last name by Hauff, 'Lanbek', replies by asking what exactly the relationship is. Leah then replies, "Well how do you ask yet so strange! My brother said to you, in case I wanted that the Duke would abolish this obstacle based on religion

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[48] Schulte-Sasse, 41.
[49] Schulte-Sasse, 41.
[50] Hauff, 37.

between us. I'm just glad you're not Catholic, as it would not be possible but you have not a Protestant ecclesiastical leader who are really as good as we Jewish heretics."[51]

Chase calls this scene the moment where the "…mask slips from the Beautiful Jewess's face."[52] Lea, at this moment, reveals a similarity between her and Suss, which is that they both see the native society and religion as a form of hindrance.[53] For Suss this hindrance serves as a blockade from the total domination of him and his Jewish race, while for Lea the hindrance is on her happiness of being with Gustav. Even as a Jew without the blatantly evil intentions of Suss, Hauff reveals from the sarcasm of the last lines that her character ultimately does not care about the native German customs. Therefore it is essentially an act of recognition and justification of the total difference between her Jewish race and the native Germans.

As the protagonist, Gustav is the character through which Hauff can essentially give the perspective and voice of the Volk. In the next scene, he returns home to his father and two sisters, who voice Gustav's personal pressures which further reveal the Volk dichotomy between the foreigner and the native. His father does not call Gustav by his name the entire scene, and has been made physically ill by this entire affair. In a moment when his "anger overcame his physical weakness", he says "That's the boy…that has brought the house and your father, our good name, and you, innocent children, with misery, shame, and disgrace…The Judas, the patricide…because today he has hit the nail in my coffin."[54] His sister, Hedwig, immediately voices the Volkish stereotypes of the superior Aryan race as being "calm" and "sensible". She tells Gustav that it is his "duty as an honest man" to not engage in the relationship anymore. Both of the sisters argue of his "duty", or obligation to his own family and country, and therefore include a warning to the consequences of trusting the Jew in the proposed alliance. The Volk

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[51] Hauff, 38.
[52] Chase, 732.
[53] Chase, 732.
[54] Hauff, 40.

dichotomies influence in this scene is evident in Gustav's struggle with the foreign 'Other'. Should Gustav cave in to his sexual urges, personifying the perceived lust of the Jew? Or should he return home out of duty to his native family? Will he venture on the path of private desires or public duty?

At this point Gustav's father promises to forgive him as long as he ends the affair. After he reluctantly promises to end it, he feels a "long and infinite sadness" when he thinks about Lea, whom he now views through the Volk-Jew dichotomy as "the unfortunate creature". The dichotomy of the Jew versus the native German is evident when Gustav further reflects, as Hauff writes, "Because he shared all of the strict religious beliefs of his time, he shuddered at a curse that followed a homeless man's tribe to a thousand generations, and they seemed to pull everyone in their ruin, who also approached the noblest of them in the most natural way…he gained some consolation by subordinating his own destiny a higher dispensation."[55] According to Chase, Hauff uses the stereotype of the wandering Jew "…specifically to tip the balance between Gustav's conflicting desires and loyalties, his fear of shaming his family and his humane impulses, so that the protagonist can arrive at what is, from the perspective from the native community, the proper action against a serious threat"…and to show that the "…collective homelessness of the Jews provides a potential explanation for the crooked financial advisor's unethical and destructive behavior."[56] Like the image of the Court Jew, the Wandering Jew would also become a prominent symbol in German art.

The scene of Gustav's reflection and subsequent justification is an example in which Hauff presents both the philo and anti-Semitic ideas of the Volk culture. Even though there is an obvious underlying desire for tolerance and assimilation, the loyalty to the native German's is presented as the chief moral duty. The dichotomy makes Gustav's decision inevitable, as Chase puts it, "Gustav's action is the only one that will leave his conscience at rest, that will expiate the sin of his attraction to the foreign object

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[55] Hauff, 43.

[56] Chase, 734.

of desire. 'Everyone' who comes into contact with the Jews is dragged down, subjected to their own tragic destiny. If Gustav's people and Lea's are incompatible on such an absolute, essential, cosmic level, separation cannot be avoided."[56]

Lea's character is a quintessential tragic figure. Once the Duke suddenly dies from a stroke, both Suss and Lea are left defenseless against an angry mob. Suss is executed by "the hand of God" further indicating the "higher order" inevitability of duty, and Lea commits suicide.[57] The execution scene also foreshadows the nationalistic political agenda of later Volk narratives. The essence of this was that brutal violence could be justified as long as it was done in the name of the German crown. Chase refers to this concept as a "*sine qua non*".[58] This dangerous propaganda would permeate the German masses throughout the century to Third Reich, when this same violence, driven by Volk ideologies, was presented as a duty. Hauff presents this duty as an unpleasant yet necessary ugliness amongst the German people.

Veit Harlan's *Jud Süß*

The main difference between Hauff's novel and Harlan's film adaptation is in the issue of genre; essentially, the novel is a tragedy and the film is a horror. A tragedy often involves a villain, or any force working against the objectives of the protagonist, who often has no genuine intentions of directly harming the protagonist. The villain in a tragedy often has the ability to change or improve. Hauff's novel is a tragedy because of Lea's role in the development of Gustav's character, and the centrality of their relationship to the plot. Horror, on the other hand, involves a villain that is essentially not a social being. The entire purpose of the horror villain's existence in a plot is to harm those working against him. The villain is an alien force in the style of a typical slasher-genre antagonist. For this archetype, there is not a shred of hope for redemption and the protagonists realize that one of their objectives in the plot are to

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[56] Chase, 733.

[57] Hauff, 47.

[58] "What is necessary" Chase, 737.

stop the villain. The manner in which Suss's character operates in Harlan's film makes him even more frightening than a Freddy Krueger, Jason Voorhees, or Michael Myers. For one, those "slashers" are created for popcorn entertainment purposes where the filmmakers' goal is to create the most visually creative way for the killer to attack the victim. In these types of films all of the other characters realize the killer is evil and must be stopped. In Harlan's film, the horror lies in the antagonist's ability to brainwash the most powerful character in this story, the Duke. The audience sees before their eyes this Jew who rises out of nowhere, disrupting the status quo and stealthily decaying the moral and social codes of the nation. Whereas the novel focused on Gustav, the film's plot revolves almost entirely around the actions of Suss.

By the time Hauff's novel was adapted to the screen 113 years later, the mainstream Volk ideology in Germany was exclusively anti-Semitic, especially in the context of 1940. As previously mentioned, the Volk was a common symbol of propaganda used by the Nazi's, and the "…recycling of nationalistic myths that were a seminal part of conservative movements in Germany from the late nineteenth century was a significant component of Nazi film policy."[59] As Hitler famously stated in *Mein Kampf*, "every Court has its Court Jews, like the monsters are called, who torment the dear Volk to desperation."[60] The film was commissioned by one of the highest members in the Nazi political hierarchy, Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels.[61] Even though the Volkish idea of a perceived duty to eliminate the Jewish 'other' from the native land was over a hundred years old, this Romanticist nationalism remained a common social ideal. This film was commissioned and thought up by people who likely knew that the extermination of the European Jewry was coming. Anti-Semitism had rarely been directly preached in films up to this point. Instead, it was alluded to through subtle hints.[62] Likely because of the writers' and artists' concerns that they would be viewed as pursuing a political agenda, direct or outspoken anti-Semitism in Volk art had for

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[59] Schulte-Sasse p. 23

[60] Schulte-Sasse, 36.

[61] Schulte-Sasse, 22.

[62] David Welch. *Nazi Propaganda: The Power and the Limitations*. London: Croom Helm, 1983 p.40

the most part been a nonfactor, though it was seen through subtleties in Hauff's novel in 1827 and Wagner's opera in 1871. At this point, however, anti-Semitism had been fully integrated into Volk ideology.

The nationalistic and anti-Semitic elements in the film are blatant. Every point in the plot of Wilhelm Hauff's novel that could be interpreted as having a sympathetic narrative toward the Jews is omitted in the film adaptation. The characters of Lea and Gustav are nonexistent. Instead, the head of the legislative council is named Sturm and has a daughter named Dorothea. The man who Dorothea marries, Faber, a young man of the council, embodies a stereotypical Aryan of the Volk. Even though the actions and dialogue of Harlan's Suss are more or less the same as Hauff's Suss, the plot of the film revolves around Suss. Whereas in Hauff's novel, the political dynamics of Suss's rule essentially takes a backseat, it is the primary focus of Harlan's film. Even in scenes in which he is not physically present; his actions are indirectly involved or alluded to in the course of the screenplay. Every anti-Semitic stereotype that had been conjured up to a mainstream artistic scale through Volk ideology is present in Veit Harlan's *Jud Suss*. These stereotypes include the Court Jew, the Wandering Jew, ambitious, materialistic, lustful, chauvinistic, clever, driven by revenge, scheming, commonly uses flattery or gallantry, etc. The function of Harlan's Suss is to initiate the complete destruction of the political and economic structures of the German Volk, as well as the social-family dynamics symbolized by Dorothea.

All of Suss's values and characteristics were associated with the aristocracy by Volk culture, which directly correlate to the perceived "Jewish" values. Conversely, Volkish ideals were opposite of those held by the aristocracy. Their values stressed qualities such as love, fidelity, honesty, humanity, virtue, women being domestic, straightforward language, forgiveness, trusting, genuineness, and dedication to the native home, community, and country.[63] Another link seen in Suss's character which reveals his 'otherness' is his repeated use of French dialect throughout the film. In addition to this fulfilling the Jewish-aristocratic

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[63] Schulte-Sasse p.24

stereotypes of gallant mannerisms and a courtly appearance, the dichotomy between the native and the

foreign 'other' is evident as, "[f]rom the eighteenth century on, the use of French especially on the part of

the aristocratic literary figures was a sign that the figure was internationally rather than nationally oriented,

i.e., lacked a 'heart' for Germany."[64]

During the eighteenth century, France was also the symbol of the political absolutism of the

Enlightenment Era.[65] About an hour and three minutes into the film, there is a scene that takes place

within the Duke's castle while an angry mob of citizens gather outside chanting the word "Sturm". This

chant is referring to the false imprisonment of Sturm based on trickery used by Suss's Jewish assistant. In

the trick, the assistant uses deductive logic to essentially put words in Sturm's mouth, further

implementing the Volkish stereotype of Jews as "clever and sly but not wise." As Suss and the Duke watch

from inside the castle, Suss suggests that the Duke completely abolish the council, making him the

sovereign leader, similar to what Suss said was done by "the Sun King" of Versailles. Absolutism and

centralism were consistently rejected in German Volk stories. Another element of the anti-Volk revealed

through Suss's actions is through his rationalism, as "[t]he construction of a political 'machine' is also

typical of rationalist philosophy, where the metaphor of the machine is one of the most frequent in

describing the function of politics."[66] As a result, Suss's plan is essentially to protect his own personal rule,

"…and in no way pays homage to national allegiance or patriotism, and thus… clashes drastically with the

Volkish ideal of nation or homeland."[67]

Harlan's film contains an element of symbolism in every scene. The locations and the characters

involved in each scene are all strategically placed in a particular order. The first scene shows a portrait of

the Duke Karl Alexander's father. A majestic radiance of light continually illuminates both the father's

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[64] Schulte-Sasse p.25
[65] Schulte-Sasse p.25
[66] Schulte-Sasse p.26
[67] Schulte-Sasse p.26

portrait and the face of the son as he is being sworn in as Duke. In this scene the Duke is presented as a patriarchal figure, referring to the citizens as "subjects." Yet, it is in the tone of protective nature rather than oppressive, as the subjects are referred to in plural possession. As he is sworn in, the Volk ideologies of the land, people, and government stand out, as he says "…the vale of this blessed land has passed into my hands. At this time, I wish to commit my people by oath. As a sign of my view, I place my hand upon the constitution of land." He then swears to protect "…our subjects' well-being with the utmost demotion", and to "…uphold the constitution and be true to the constitution, together with the council". The last two promises he makes are Volkish in nature, referring to the lack of absolutist rule that is running the government without the influence of the foreigner. The word Volk is then directly used, likely as a form of Nazi propaganda, as in the year the story was supposed to take place, the term Volk didn't exist. The Duke's last oath is his promise to "…ensure that our rule shall in all manner and true form, adhere for honesty and faith of our Volk". This would allow the exclusively German audience viewing the film at the time to fully embrace the Duke's character.

The order in which scenes are selected follows a consistent mathematical pattern. After every scene in which the public or, political realm is shown, the next scene almost always one takes place in the domestic, private sphere, usually involving Dorothea. After the Duke is sworn in, the screen flashes to a scene at the home of Dorothea, singing a song with her husband. The lyrics emphasize the Volk value of fidelity: "All of my thoughts, they are with you, you, my one, and only, never leave me, for you, you, you to be thinking , that would be my greatest wish, I wish to never leave you." The very next scene shows the Duke being carried through the streets for his parade. He goes up to the balcony of his palace, and exclaims to the crowd, "Württemberg, the most blessed land among the Germans!" The vibe can only be described as pleasant, peaceful, and unharmed by any outside influence.

The screen does a slow fade out. The film is pitch-black for a split second (to symbolize the closeness of the danger awaiting them) before showing the next setting of the Jewish neighborhood in

Frankfurt. The music score becomes suspenseful. This same technique is used at the scene when the Jews are granted access into Stuttgart after Suss gains power. The people in this ghetto aren't necessarily living in poverty yet they are somehow crammed together. An unkempt appearance is a common feature.

The Duke's representative who desires to buy jewels knocks on the door of Suss's store. When Suss's Jewish assistant answers the door, the camera adopts the technique of Chiaroscuro; the assistant's body is shown in shadows, with fragments of his face catching the light, reminiscent of Brando in the cave scene of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. This could symbolize madness, evil, or maybe the mystery of the 'other'. It could also represent a perception of a natural underlying hostility amongst the Jews which further reveals these Volkish ideologies. Even though the assistant acknowledges that Suss is expecting the guest, the forced wideness of the assistant's eyes creates either the expression of having just seen a ghost, or rather a sinister countenance which would immediately alert the audience of his malicious character. When the assistant invites him in, the strangeness of the "other" is evident— instead of turning around, and holding the door open, he slowly backpedals into the pitch black interior, with the only distinguishable feature of this shot being his eyes brightly glowing in the dark. The scene then turns to a young Jewish woman and her father looking out of their window discussing with another local on the street what the people were doing looking for Suss. The image of the young Jewish woman, 'Rebecca' stands out. She is nearly identical to the description of Lea given by Gustav at the end of Wilhelm's novel, a beauty that stands out but who still has a clear aura of danger.

A meeting then occurs between the representative and Suss. The first lines that are spoken by Suss are "I think Württemberg is rich", to which the representative replies, "Württemberg is rich, but not its Duke", following with the line foreshadowing Suss's plans for utter destruction, "Well, I'll see." Here the audience sees Suss's capitalist implications. Harlan's goal in the first 15 minutes alone is to paint Suss as an entirely unsympathetic character. As soon as the Duke's assistant leaves Suss's house, Suss's true intentions are further revealed when he says to his assistant, "I shall open the door for all [Jews]! You'll wear velvet

and silks, tomorrow or the day after. The day will surely come" The impeccable timing of the delivery of these lines— the very moment Suss's assistant walks the Duke's representative out the front door—uses the Jewish "masking" stereotype while simultaneously implying materialistic traits. Suss meanwhile carries on the public façade that he is a man in service to the state of Germany by bringing the Duke his desired jewels, though in actuality he is looking out for his own "other" people regardless of what happens to the native Volk. The audience immediately knows that this man can only be interpreted as a poison to the state. His actions are blatantly not in the Duke's and his subjects' best interests.

The next shot is of Suss riding by horse on his way to meet with the Duke in Stuttgart. This scene includes the first interaction between Suss and Dorothea. With the music score adopting a frantic tone, Suss's carriage rapidly glides past Dorothea's carriage. Meanwhile, the horses in Dorothea's carriage are traveling at a slow and steady speed. Because Suss is trying to travel at such a high speed, his carriage runs off the road and tips over during the attempt to pass Dorothea's carriage. This is Harlan's attempt to show the fundamental difference between the lifestyles of the Jewish "other" compared to the native German bourgeois. The speed of Suss's carriage is symbolic of the Jew's intense ambition of capital venture in the service of the rapidly advancing aristocratic capitalism, compared to the slow, relaxed, peaceful speed of Dorothea's bourgeois carriage. When Dorothea sees that Suss's carriage goes off the road, her expression becomes frightened. She pulls over to see if anyone is hurt, just as any caring woman of Germany would do. Suss, with his polite charm, asks her to give him a ride. The infection of the "pure" domestic by the Jew has now begun.

The very second after Suss asks Dorothea to take him "part of the way", the screen flashes to a scene of the Duke's legislative meeting. As mentioned, the previous scene that involved members of the German government was when the Duke said "My people! My land! Württemberg, the most blessed land among the Germans." As he lectures from his palace balcony, his wife and his legislative stands directly behind him, symbolically "backing" him in support, while the crowd he is governing stand below in the

streets cheering for him. In this next scene the Duke is absent from the legislative meeting, showing that Suss is initiating his Jewish permeation into the pure social and political order of German society, and effectively compromising the Duke.

The next scene is of the council complaining that the Duke is requesting that his own personal ballet and opera house be provided to him using state funds, as well as personal bodyguards even though he spends all of his time locked up in a safe fortress. The theme and imagery of the blithe German society which had been previously seen through Dorothea's carriage is conjured up by Harlan again when Sturm delivers these next lines, "Gentlemen I agree with you that our Duke's demands from our State Council are exorbitant." Sturm then dramatically ratchets up the passion in his voice and expression, and Harlan gives Sturm's character a close-up shot to symbolize the importance of the line: "I am also of the opinion that we are used to simple living, and that our constituents would not understand us if we consent to our Duke's demands." It is this same exorbitance that is seen as a defining characteristic of Suss in both Hauff's novel and Harlan's film.

In this narrative, the second the Jew crosses over into German society by meeting Dorothea, the corruption of German society begins at even the highest levels. This theme continues throughout the film, as the Duke who was initially presented as a pure, fatherly leader who would uphold the traditions of German culture like the great leaders of the past evolves slowly into an absent, incoherent, power-driven drunk. Most importantly, however, this transformation happens in direct relation to the closer Suss gets to the Duke, and how much power he is given. Harlan's statement is the same statement of propaganda that the Nazi's used when they would use the word "Volk". This Volk ideological statement stemmed from Hauff, but had now evolved to dramatic new heights. Over a hundred years prior to this film being released, the Volk statement in Hauff's novel functions as a warning by revealing the German's attitudes of uneasiness towards the Jewish "other". For Hauff, his personal narrative argues that peaceful tolerance and coexistence with the Jews might be something that many Germans secretly desire. This could even include

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having intimate relationships of love and caring with the "other". However, he warns that because of the Volkish-Romantic value of public duty to the German motherland, coexistence with the Jewish "other" is unlikely because it would threaten the strong German identity.

Harlan's statement is that not only has the Jewish "other" threatened German identity, it has already permeated and poisoned all levels of society. The failures Germany had seen during the early 20th century allowed people to make this scapegoating connection. How Dorothea's character is used is also important when determining the significance of how the Volk ideologies had changed since 1827. In Hauff's novel, Gustav's (the Volk's) suicidal love interest is Lea (the other), which allows her to function as a tragic figure and evokes sympathy from readers. Harlan replaces this tragic element with the character of Dorothea.

As Suss's cunning allows him to become the Duke's right hand man and decision maker, he infects society in every phase. The socio-political structures are ruined by Suss, who was portrayed as destroying the native traditions such as the Jews not being allowed to live in the city or adopting a system of absolute monarchy, etc. Economically, Suss makes life difficult for the common Volk by putting high taxes on goods, and even committing highway robbery, as in the scene when Suss's assistant collects a toll from a common citizen simply trying to enter the city. Another example of this is the subplot of the blacksmith, whose house gets torn down for protruding a few inches into an area where one of Suss's construction projects to repair the streets is occurring. When the blacksmith reacts by taking a sledgehammer to Suss's carriage while defending his home and family, Suss has the blacksmith executed. But where Dorothea's character comes in is arguably the most important Volkish statement Harlan is trying to make: that the Jews corrupt the moral purity of the German bourgeois lifestyle.

One of the scenes that Harlan adapts closely from Hauff's book is the masquerade ball, particularly with the almost verbatim dialogue during the earlier poker scene. By having all the fathers bring their daughters and wives to an event like this, the already-corrupted Duke himself remarks that "Primitive

natures would think this is fun, but for me it's too conservative." As the young women are lined up and separated from the older women, Suss's assistant can be seen giddily jumping in the background while he is obviously scouting the prey as he orders the massive doors to be shut, separating the young women into a private room with the only men present being Suss and the Duke. Suss then makes sexual advances on an obviously uncomfortable Dorothea. The literal "separation" of the young daughters from their parents into a room where they could not be seen is Harlan's sinister intent to portray the Jew as infecting future generations by closing them off from their tradition.

Suss obsessively pursues Dorothea throughout the film. The "scheming" stereotype of the Court Jew is used in this regard as well, as he goes far enough to even attempt a political deal with her father, Sturm, in order to gain permission to marry her. Without hesitation, Sturm rejects the offer, an action which causes him to be falsely imprisoned by Suss and his assistant's scheming and trickery. When Dorothea's husband, Faber, is sent to try to get outside military help to overthrow the Duke, he is captured. When Dorothea pleads to Suss to release her husband, Suss's actions reveal all three stereotypes. Several established stereotypes are evinced here such as scheming, lustful, and revenge-driven as Suss demands that Dorothea have sex with him in order for Faber to be released. Now the Jew is presented as a genuine sadist. The slasher-villain level of sinister is revealed as he orders his men to torture Faber, who is in a building across the street, as he waves a handkerchief outside his window. Suss had already planned this entire operation, he knew Dorothea was going to come up to his room. He planned it so that she would hear Faber's screams of pain as he was being tortured. The stereotype of the Jew being driven by revenge is shown when Dorothea prays to the higher Christian power, to which Suss replies "…pray to your God. Go ahead and pray. But not only Christians have a god. We Jews have one, too. An avenging God An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." Dorothea then submits as Harlan gives all of the imagery of rape. Suss himself did not even care that a man who was planning a coup d'état to overthrow him was captured. Or at least if he did, he viewed having sex with the man's wife as being more important.

By having Dorothea commit suicide by drowning herself because of the shame, she is allowed to replace Lea as the tragic figure. Ultimately, because Harlan's work is a horror film, the extermination of the villain is the only possible way for the protagonists to survive. When Suss is hung at the end, he claims that he was only doing what was asked of him. The character arc of Harlan's Suss is also a direct parallel to how the meanings of the Volkish ideologies dramatically changed during the previous couple centuries. Suss initially presents himself as a man in service of Germany and his Duke. Volk studies were initially created to study a history of the collective German identity. Suss then reveals another aspect of this masquerade by revealing his ambition for power and wealth. The Volk then evolved into a concept that was almost synonymous with German nationalism. Suss reveals himself as a sadistic cancer to society. The Volk concepts are eventually used for the purpose of propaganda to call for the extermination of the Jews. By comparing the two characters of Suss from Hauff to Harlan, it reveals how redemptive anti-Semitism had evolved beyond the 18th century, culminating in the Nazi era.

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Desynchronized Irish Republican Political Strategy: The Dichotomy of the Armalite and the Ballot Box

BY EVAN MALGREM

The Irish Republican movement has been historically riddled with discontinuity, ideological infighting, and a myriad of fragmenting splinter groups. These tensions are visible in the union of the Provisional Irish Republican Army and Sinn Féin, which adopted the "armalite and ballot box" strategy of pursuing their goals simultaneously through subversive militancy and constitutional politics during the 1980s. This strategy is often seen as having reflected a surge in the popularity of radical politics in Northern Ireland, or else the radicalization of mainstream nationalist contingencies. Along with this, the PIRA and Sinn Féin are generally understood to have existed as inseparable organizational bodies with coordinated goals and interests. In many ways, though, these strategies were less harmoniously aligned than many had believed, and helped lead to the moderation of Republican politics and ultimately the demilitarization of the Republican movement. Thus, hindsight demonstrates that the Republicanisms of Sinn Féin and the PIRA were ultimately irreconcilable; the armalite and the ballot box were not complimentary sources of power or legitimacy, and the strength of one came at the expense of the other.[1] The armalite and the ballot box, or the PIRA and Sinn Féin, are probably better understood as icons of competing ideologies rather than constituting a united front.

If "the armalite" and "the ballot box" are understood to be a dichotomy rather than constituents of a holistic approach, then the coherency of republicanism itself falls into question. Sinn Féin was predominantly a mouthpiece for the PIRA after a split in 1970, and did not drum up much political support until after rectifying its strategy after the 1975 ceasefire.[2] Once their electoral politics proved

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[1] Frampton discusses the difficulties that Sinn Féin faced in reconciling their non-abstentionist politics with their image as a legitimately Republican organization. Martyn Frampton, *The Long March: The Political Strategy of Sinn Féin, 1981-2007* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

[2] The organization also undertook its first significant action during this process, in manning the 'incident centres' that oversaw the ceasefire. Paul Bew and Gordon Gillespie, *Northern Ireland: A Chronology of the Troubles 1968-1993* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1993), 98.

viable, they became increasingly willing to shy away from the armalite in order to maintain constitutional authority. Thus, in some ways, the PIRA became a subservient organization to Sinn Fáin whereas previously the opposite was true. It is worth considering whom the armalite and ballot box strategy belonged to, as it was carried out across distinct republican bodies with increasingly divergent interests. If groups such as the CIRA and the RIRA are taken into consideration, then the armalite and ballot box strategy continues even to this day, except that "the armalite" is now even further removed from "the ballot box" as dissidents accuse Sinn Fáin of orchestrating British rule in Northern Ireland. The beginning of the strategy, then, may be understood as the sewing of a long-lasting schism in republican politics.

It should be noted that the armalite and the ballot box were not always powerful forces in Irish republicanism. Indeed, in the wake of the 1956-62 border campaign, the old IRA held a relatively weak presence in Northern Ireland, was not particularly well armed, and had largely reformed as a revolutionary socialist rather than nationalist party.[3] Thus, republicanism was in a slump during the 60s, and a nationalist civil rights movement rose to replace it in the north. This movement mostly sought Catholic equality rather than independence from Britain, and was largely inspired by civil rights movements taking place abroad. However, as it became increasingly targeted by the aggression of loyalist paramilitaries, violence escalated towards the end of the decade. This violence eventually culminated in the riots of August 12-17 in 1969, during which the old IRA was seen as having been completely ineffective in protecting Catholic communities in Belfast.[4] After a number of Catholic deaths, republicans increasingly sought armed protection. The police were vehemently pro-unionist, the old IRA was seen as impotent, and as a consequence, "the Provisionals emerged as necessary defenders of the Catholic community."[5]

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[3] Richard English argues, however, that the practices and infrastructure of the old IRA were indeed quite influential upon the development of the Provisionals. Richard English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA* (London: Pan Macmillan Ltd, 2003), 132-133.

[4] This is, of course, a necessary oversimplification of these events. For a concise yet more satisfactory history leading up to the creation of the Provisional IRA, see: Tim Pat Coogan, *The I.R.A.* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993), 341-353.

[5] English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 81.

By 1970, the armalite had risen as the dominant impetus of republicanism, and violence escalated between republican and loyalist paramilitary groups. Amongst republicans, support for militarism spiked once again in 1972 in the wake of Bloody Sunday.[6] At this point in time, the ballot box was hardly a feature of republican strategy; indeed, Sinn Féin lacked a coherent political platform throughout most of the 70s. Rather, the organization primarily existed for publicity, and as an outlet for women and the elderly who could not contribute militarily. This began to change during the ultimately unsuccessful ceasefire of 1975, and it was around this time that a shift began to take place in republican strategy. Many prisoners, as well as people in leadership positions, began to discuss a protracted 20-year struggle rather than a quick 5-year victory, and Sinn Féin's political mission was thus reshaped.[7] Gerry Adams lead much of this push, ascending to the position of joint vice-president of Sinn Féin in 1978 and becoming a leading figure in moving the organization away from the abstentionist and southern-based leadership of Ruairí Ó Brádaigh and joint vice-president Dáithí Ó Conaill. Although still subservient to the militant PIRA and not quite contesting elections in the late 70s, Sinn Féin was re-conceptualized as a political force.

As the nature of the struggle came to be perceived as a long-term ordeal, the role and identity of the IRA's political prisoners became an increasingly important facet of republicanism. Fighting for the rights of republican prisoners also came to be seen as a way to legitimize republican involvement in assembly politics.[8] Sinn Féin assumed a position of campaigning on behalf of the prisoners, and enjoyed a massive swell in popularity around their activities during the early 80s. As internment was phased out, the Northern Ireland Office's policy of criminalization lead to a series of prison protests: first the 'blanket' protests, and then the powerful hunger strikes of 1980 and 1981.[9] The nature of Sinn Féin's alliance with

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[6] Richard English focuses on the enraged sense of empowerment that the IRA built up in the wake of Bloody Sunday, also including their official press response. Ibid, 155.

[7] Jeremy Smith, *Making the Peace in Ireland* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), 146-147.

[8] Richard English mentions the legitimization of Sinn Féin's participation in elections surrounding the rights of political prisoners. English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 224-225.

[9] For an incredibly detailed account of the H-block hunger strikes, see: David Beresford, *Ten Men Dead* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1987).

the Provisionals changed dramatically as a result of these escalating protests, and particularly with the brutal hunger strikes of 1981. Jeremy Smith argues that it was this particular event that caused Sinn Fán to grow from an IRA mouthpiece into "a powerful, community-based, media-sensitive and tactically astute Republican movement."[10] As they continued to contest elections, the ballot box became just as significant as the armalite in commanding republican authority.

Thus "the armalite and the ballot box" was born as a reaction to an upsurge in political support revolving around the hunger strikes, and particularly the political victory and subsequent death of Bobby Sands in 1981. Danny Morrison first articulated the strategy at Sinn Féin's annual conference, Ard Fheis, that very same year: "Who here really believes we can win the war through the ballot box? But will anyone here object if, with a ballot paper in this hand and an Armalite in the other, we take power in Ireland?[11]

Early successes at the ballot box fueled optimism for this two-pronged strategy, as Sinn Féin enjoyed international legitimacy and secured 9-13% of the vote between 1981 and 1986 despite remaining an abstentionist party. This was a time in which Sinn Féin needed to be particularly careful with their politics, insisting that the armed struggle was still paramount to their cause.[12] However, as the public's fervor surrounding the hunger strikes began to subside, the party failed to overtake the SDLP as the dominant nationalist party in Northern Ireland. This lead to infighting, and in 1986 republicanism split for the first significant time since 1970. The larger group, which retained the leadership of Gerry Adams, abandoned abstentionism to focus more on building Sinn Féin as a political party, while the newly formed Republican Sinn Féin and Continuity IRA split from Sinn Féin and the PIRA, respectively.[13]

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[10] Jeremy Smith, *Making the Peace in Ireland*, 115.

[11] English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the* IR, 224-225.

[12] For a brief exposition of the balance between political contestations and armed escalation during Sinn Féin's first bout of elections, see: M. L. R. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement* (London: Routledge, 1995), 169-172.

[13] Smith discusses this split as reconsolidating the center of the Republican movement in the North, as well as acknowledging "a need […] to go 'slightly constitutional.'" Smith, *Making the Peace in Ireland*, 136-137.

Although the PIRA remained active at this point, participation in the Northern Ireland Assembly demonstrated a significant change of heart on the part of Sinn Féin. Recognizing the British government infrastructure in hopes of reaching a greater electorate, Gerry Adams took his party in a much more moderate direction. Despite this, the armalite and the ballot box continued to dominate the spirit of republicanism throughout much of the 80s, until a number of setbacks caused Sinn Féin to rethink its political strategy once again. Notably, the party's loss of 16 council seats in 1989, as well as Gerry Adams' loss of the Belfast West constituency in 1992, demonstrated the long-term strain that the PIRA was putting on Sinn Féin's electoral viability.[14] By the late 80s, the organization began to deny links to the IRA. Although these links still existed, it is clear that the armalite and ballot box strategy had undermined the ideological coherency of republicanism. On the one hand, hardline dissidents in the CIRA and RSF condemned mainstream republicanism, and on the other, Sinn Féin was forced to publicly abandon support for militarism.

As the dismal likelihood of a PIRA military victory became increasingly obvious and the perceived efficacy of constitutional republicanism grew, the PIRA became a political liability to Sinn Féin. They grew ever more willing to bargain it off by the late 80s, and Gerry Adams moved towards lowering the price for an IRA ceasefire. The power of the armalite had faded substantially. In 1986, he suggested that the Provisionals would settle for something less than an imminent British withdrawal, and began to engage in talks with John Hume of the SDLP. Although these broke down, they resumed once more in 1993 when Adams indicated the potential for an IRA ceasefire in return for British support for eventual Irish unification.[15] Eventually, Adams and Hume reached a point upon which an IRA ceasefire might be

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[14] Ian McAllister, "'The Armalite and the Ballot Box': Sinn Fein's Electoral Strategy in Northern Ireland," *Electoral Studies* 23, no. 1 (March 2004): 123–142.

[15] Ed Moloney reveals that the decision to strategically make this concession had been made behind tightly closed doors as early as 1988. Ed Moloney, *A Secret History of the IRA* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 392-395.

mutually accepted by both unionists and republicans: the right to self-determination.[16] The peace process

began to move forward, and in essence, Sinn Féin had embraced the ballot box wholesale, only using the

threat of the armalite as a final bargaining chip.

Sinn Féin's signing of the Belfast Agreement was not only a final abandonment of the armalite, but

also of traditional republicanism. In settling for the right to self-determination, Gerry Adams entirely

strayed from his old line that he would accept no less than the end of partition in exchange for ceasefire.

Indeed, as late as 1989, the public stance of Sinn Féin remained "totally opposed to a power-sharing

Stormont assembly."[17] Nonetheless, Sinn Féin claimed the agreement as a political victory, pointing

especially to the advents of power sharing, self-determination, and cross-border cooperation. In fact it

could be argued that the agreement constituted a victory for Sinn Féin on some level, as their voter

representation continued to rise and eventually overtake the SDLP as the dominant nationalist party.[18]

However, it still represented a firm moderation of republican politics. Sinn Féin's cooperation on the

Belfast Agreement was a direct descendant of their armalite and ballot box strategy, as well as evidence

that the magnetism of the latter eventually managed to outweigh the momentum of the former. Although

the PIRA took a further 12 years to fully disarm, the association of the armalite and the ballot box had

ended in 1998 after a period of decided deradicalization.

Although the supposed union of the armalite and the ballot box ended with Good Friday, it is

debatable that the dichotomy still exists to this day. Indeed, the Belfast Agreement encouraged another

split, as many republicans did not support the move towards ceasefire. As Bernadette Sands McKevitt,

sister of Bobby Sands stated, "Bobby did not die for cross-border bodies with executive powers. He did

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[16] The arrangement of the eventual peace talks were largely midwifed by the persistent efforts of Hume. Martin Mansergh, "The Background to the Irish Peace Process," in *A Farewell to Arms? Beyond the Good Friday Agreement* (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 2006), 24–40.

[17] Kevin Bean, *The New Politics of Sinn Féin* (Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 231.

[18] Mainstream political success also came to necessitate an even further moderated policy in securing a continuing political growth. By the 21st century, Sinn Féin was entirely divorced from the support of political violence. Frampton, *The Long March: The Political Strategy of Sinn Féin, 1981-2007*, 143-150.

not die for nationalists to be equal British citizens within the Northern Ireland state."[19] This sentiment was

certainly felt by others, and she later went on to form the 32 County Sovereignty Movement, a community

pressure group that exists as the abstentionist political body of the newly formed Real IRA.[20] These

organizations remain committed to traditional republicanism, and reject the ballot box in clear favor of the

armalite. Moreover, they decry Sinn Féin as merely orchestrating British rule and imposing partition

government.[21] Although the armalite still exists as a force of republicanism to some extent, its power has

been thoroughly sapped by the impetus of the ballot box. Today, the active political and militant wings of

republicanism are entirely disassociated and oppositional.

The armalite and the ballot box were less a coherent strategy of republicanism and more a schism

that was created vis-à-vis the fundamental philosophy behind the anti-partition movement. The two

power bases were not complimentary, but rather mutually detractive.[22] As has been demonstrated, the

initial republicanism of the Troubles relied entirely upon the armalite, from roughly the August riots of

1969 until the hunger strikes of 1981. In 1981, the ballot box became a force of republicanism out of

circumstance as support for militancy swelled around the prisoners' protest. This began an uneasy

cooperation between the armalite, or the PIRA, and the newly empowered ballot box, or the restructured

Sinn Féin, until roughly 1989. At this point a series of political setbacks necessitated a preference towards

one or the other, and the ballot box started to win out. From then until the Good Friday agreement of

1998, the power of the armalite shrank at a rapid rate, until it was fully forfeited by Sinn Féin in favor of

pursuing republican goals constitutionally. The dichotomy of the armalite and the ballot box still exists

today between dissident and mainstream republican organizations. Unlike in the 80s, these groups do not

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[19] English, *Armed Struggle: The History of the IRA*, 316-317.

[20] Although this relationship is contested by the 32CSM, the connection is generally held to be true.

[21] The party position on Sinn Féin is outlined in the 'background' section of their website. "The 32CSM - Background and Objectives," February 27, 2014, http://www.derry32csm.com/p/32csm-background.html.

[22] Smith points out that Gerry Adams himself acknowledged this to some extent during the early stages of the armalite and ballot box strategy. Smith, *Fighting for Ireland? The Military Strategy of the Irish Republican Movement*, 172.

present themselves as congruent power bases, but the reality of their antagonism remains relatively

unchanged from that time.

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