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American Networks: Radicals Under the Radar (1840-1968)

In July 2016, the University of Essex organized a small conference, 'American Networks: Radicals Under the Radar,' over two and half days in the grand, high-ceilinged building at 1 Suffolk Street, just off Trafalgar Square, in London. It brought together a network of scholars from the disciplines of History, Art History, and Literature and from across different areas of American Studies: namely researchers of the Caribbean, Latin America and the US.

There were three main points that served as key guidelines, themes and enquiries of the conference. The first was that of the network: how people, ideas, texts and images—all potential nodes to use network terminology—connect to one another socially, politically, artistically and so on. In adopting the lens of the network, it naturally followed as a second point that connections would inevitably traverse national borders, and therefore involve an aspect of cross-cultural encounter. The third key issue, or really the key theme, was to consider the confluence of political radicalism and the arts. In linking these two spheres of activity, we hoped to unravel the interconnections, or rather the larger networks linking writers, artists and political figures in a period of frenetic political activity upheaval which saw the building of the Panama Canal—first in the abortive attempt by French (1881-1894) then by the United States (1904-1914)—the Russian Revolution and the spread of International Communism, the Mexican Revolution, two world wars and rise of anti-colonialism and independence movements globally.

The timeline focused on the one hundred years leading up to 1968, the year in which radical movements and groups lit the blue touch paper. Across the world, dissidence spread like a conflagration in response to the perceived ills of capitalism, hand-in-glove with wars, dictatorships and imperialism. Martin Luther King's and Bobby Kennedy's assassinations that same year hinted at the dark forces lurking within the shadowy worlds of the US state and Central Intelligence Agency—echoing the assassinations of Bobby's brother, J. F. Kennedy, and King's civil rights counterpart, Malcolm X. King's death on 4 April prompted waves of protest across the United States. In that month alone, the Black Panthers, led by Eldridge Cleaver, were embroiled in fatal shootouts with the police in Oakland, California, and students at Columbia University protesting against the institution's allegedly racist policies took three of the University's administrators hostage for twenty-four hours. Black student activism on US university campuses calling for more black teaching staff and a curriculum reflective of African and African diasporic history led to the creation of the first Black Studies departments. Black

student activism saw the campuses shutdown at Howard University in March, and a broad wave of student protest, which included a significant proportion of African-American students, shutdown Columbia University in April 1968. Similar activism at San Francisco State College led to the first Black Studies programme being instituted that year, and the creation of its Black Studies Department the following year. Protest against the Vietnam War—marches, street demonstrations, sit-ins—spread across the United States, West Berlin, London and Japan. The heady foment of black activism and anti-Vietnam demonstrations would lead to the creation of the Weather Underground Organization a year later, who declared war on the US government in 1970 and set about targeting governmental and bank buildings in a series of bombing campaigns.

Further south, the Mexican President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz's hold on power looked increasingly shaky as he maintained a hard-line, authoritarian approach to governance, suppressing trade unions among others from expressing dissent. The Mexican government had spent an eye-watering $150 million in preparation for the 1968 Olympic Games due to take place in Mexico City and undoubtedly this huge piece of expenditure contributed to simmering tensions. In the summer, fracas between rival school gangs in Mexico City led to heavy-handed responses from the government, which in turn united students across Mexico in protest against government repression. Forming student *brigadas* ('brigades'), student *brigadistas* took to the streets, boarded buses to speak to passengers, disseminated leaflets and organized various demonstrations against government repression and corruption. On 2 October 1968, thousands of university and high school students gathered in the Tlatelolco Square, or Plaza de las Tres Culturas, in peaceful protest at the government's actions. Wanting to stem any signs of civil strife prior to the Olympic Games, Díaz Ordaz stepped up security measures and formed an Olympia Battalion, a secret security para-military wing of government, to repress acts of apparent civil disobedience. In essence, Díaz Ordaz had created a pressure cooker intended to halt further protest. At some stage during the Tlatelolco Square demonstration, shots were fired, an assault which led to what eyewitnesses believed to be hundreds left dead or wounded. As sports journalist, Richard Hoffer writes, the massacre 'was public enough to have effectively ended the student movement, yet underreported enough that the Olympics would not be stopped on its account'(Hoffer 2011, 114-115). The combination, then, of state authorized terror and control of the press—what Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser called Repressive State Apparatuses—applied pressure to the radical threat of the protesters, left Mexicans and

people around the globe uncertain of what actually took place, and let the state continue with the Olympic games as planned.

A fortnight later on 16 October, the Texan sprinter, Tommie Smith, and his Harlem-born, second-generation Cuban compatriot, John Carlos, won gold and bronze in 200m at the Mexico City Olympics. During the victory ceremony, as the US national anthem 'The Star-Spangled Banner' rang out, they bowed their heads and raised a black-gloved fist into the air, Smith his right, Carlos his left. Their Black Power salute at the Mexico Olympics in protest at the racial discrimination of black people in the United States would go down in history as one of the most iconic representations of the civil rights struggle. And on the very same day that Tommie Smith and John Carlos held their fists aloft on the Olympic podium, a series of riots broke out in Kingston, after Dr. Walter Rodney, a Guyanese university lecturer in history at the University of West Indies was banned by the Jamaican Government from returning to the island to teach (Yolande Thomas 2013, 95; Keresztesi 2015, 106).

That same month Peru witnessed a Cuban inspired military coup which installed General Juan Velasco Alvarado as the 58th president and the first president of the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces (Gobierno Revolucionario del las Fuerzas Armandas). After more than half a century of increasing political consciousness and popular politics in the region, the revolutionary government of Velasco Alvarado made the most of popular mobilisation and came to power with a robust agenda of left-wing reform to secure justice for the poor (Anna Cant 2012, 2). At the heart of the 'Peruanismo' agenda was a desire to defeat the long-serving oligarchy so characteristic of Latin American social structures of the twentieth century through a commitment to agrarian reform and indigenous communal rights over the land. In this process, Quechua, the main indigenous language of Peru, was made an official national language equal to Spanish.

Across the Atlantic, just over a fortnight after Martin Luther King's assassination, Enoch Powell made his infamous anti-immigration Rivers of Blood speech, in which he claimed that the influx of immigrants—particularly those who were non-white (Sikhs and Negroes are cited)—would lead to violence. His inflammatory speech served to mobilize hostility against immigrants but also sparked demonstrations across Britain. Over the Channel, months of student agitation at the University of Nanterre led to major demonstrations and strikes in Paris throughout May, action which brought the entire French economy to a virtual standstill and the country close to revolution. From a French perspective and, indeed from the range of books

dedicated to the events of May 1968 in Paris, one could easily be led to believe that Paris was *the* epicentre of all radicalism in 1968.[1] 1968 has increasingly been considered as part of a global phenomenon nevertheless, with Paris serving its pride of place alongside other student-led protest movements in Europe (Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, the Netherlands) and the US predominantly. The net effect of this historization has overshadowed student movements in the tropics in places like Jamaica and even France's former colony, Senegal, which barely gets a mention in global studies, despite significant student-led protests and trade union activism between March and June 1968.[2]

At stake in 1968 was the preservation of white male power and the institutions that served to preserve it around the globe. The power of radical politics to make connections between capital and social and economic relations is nowhere more apparent than the Miss America protest in Atlantic City on the 7th September. The personal became political, to evoke the infamous feminist slogan coined by Carol Hamisch, member of the New York Radical Women who organized the protest. The Miss American pageant began in Atlantic City in 1921 as an innovation in the new art of marketing, its sole purpose being to increase newspaper circulation as well as boost Atlantic City's tourist industry. Across the United States newspapers held beauty contests judging photographs of young women with the winners competing in the city. Clearly, female beauty—specifically white women's beauty—was exploited as a marketing tool in the service of the circulation of capital. Miss America, which introduced the infamous talent contests into the competition in 1938, rapidly captured the imagination and became an American cultural institution contributing to the shaping of social ideas about women's role in society. The New York Radical Women, formed in the autumn of 1967, targeted the pageant, termed a 'cattle market,' as a way of catapulting the Women's Liberation Movement into mainstream view, and to undermine the 'image of Miss America, an image that oppresses women in every area in which it purports to represent [them]' ('No More Miss America,' August 22nd). The protest also drew attention to the connections between the pageant, the war in Vietnam and the US racism as the pageant, which had never included a black contestant, sent the winner to entertain the troops. Indeed, in order to address the racism of the competition, the inaugural Miss Black America was established and held in September 1968 just a few

[1] See, for example, Seale and McConville (1968), Bourg (2017) and Singer (2002).

[2] *1968, the World Transformed*, edited by Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker (1998) is representative of 'global 1968' studies in that it makes no reference to events in Jamaica nor the significant student protests at the University of Dakar. Some notable examples which counter this include Carey (2016), Zeilig (2012) and Lewis (1998).

blocks away. Across the Americas, it was increasingly understood that social injustice, racism, and misogyny were symptomatic of capitalism and tackling inequality requires a rigorous analysis and undermining of the economic system itself.

While a range of radical events emerged and faded, with distinct as well as interconnected causes throughout 1968, the notion that Paris—and by extension France—has been at the forefront of radical and cultural, especially artistic, praxes is long-established, discernible in European and world cultural outlets: histories, textbooks, museums, galleries and so on.[3] It is not uncommon to read of 'Paris' as the centre of the Enlightenment, with London often playing second fiddle. Speaking more broadly than Paris, the French historian Fernand Braudel undoubtedly had France's capital in mind as he set out France's cultural hegemony over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries:

> [I]n the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, France, though lagging behind the rest of Europe economically, was the undisputed center of Western painting and literature; the times when Italy or Germany dominated the world of music were not times when Italy or Germany dominated Europe economically; and even today, the formidable economic lead by the United States has not made it the literary and artistic leader of the world (Braudel 1992, 68).

Braudel informs Pascale Casanova's thesis in *La République mondiale des Lettres* ('The World Republic of Letters') in which Paris serves as the 'Greenwich meridian of literature'—the cultural centre through which or in relation to which other writing is measured. In Casanova's formation, Paris operates as a world literary capital from around the late eighteenth century until the 1960s. Borrowing from Bourdieu, she asserts that the literary sphere functions differently from national and political counterparts—to the point that its contestants obscure the relationship of literature to the market and, in essence, cultural hegemony (Casanova 2004, 11, 87). And yet, even as Casanova confines her discussion of the City of Light to the literary, Paris and France have simultaneously been historicized as a centre and nation of radicalism, as Brazil's renowned economist, Celso Furtado, put it: 'the first and greater part of the nineteenth

[3] Peter N. Stearns, writing of European matters in 1815, states 'Elsewhere economic collapse and ideological ferment, in combination, paved the way for revolution. Paris, again, was in the forefront' (1972, 76). While Kevin J. Callahan is careful to avoid pinpointing the precise origins of European mass demonstration, he nevertheless sees the French Revolution as the most likely starting point: 'The precise origin of demonstration or specifically mass demonstration is unclear in European history. It appears as a political tactic no later than the Chartist movement in the 1830s and the 1848 European-wide revolutions. The first episodes of mass politics probably started in the French Revolution' (2010, xxv).

century was marked by a series of revolutions in western Europe, with France as the center of radiation' (Furtado 1965, 39). The nation's historiography is entwined with not just one but multiple revolutions—1789, 1848, the Paris Commune of 1871, and May 1968—purveying an air of regular, cyclic radicalism. We should, of course, add to this list the Haitian Revolution of 1791 onwards.

In this special issue we aim to move beyond the paradigm of Paris as the centre of radical art and politics, a factor which can often accent Americanist cultural history to the point that artists in particular—Gertrude Stein, Man Ray, Rubén Darío, Octavio Paz, Diego Rivera, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Langston Hughes, Carl Van Vechten, Richard Wright—either perceived themselves or are perceived by others as having received the imprimatur of artistic maturity or proficiency after residence in, contact with, or success via Paris. As such, the essays in this issue point to other geographic orientations and confluences. The networks included here are trans-American (Peter Hulme, Julia Roth, and Nicole Willson) and transatlantic (Winston James and Adrian Mack). Taking a broad trans-American approach, Julia Roth examines the often-occluded input of Caribbean and Latin American women in trans-American and international feminist organizations and conferences. In Peter Hulme's essay, Mexican-US relations, or more specifically, Mexican connections to New York City, are central, as the US metropolis served as a hub for revolutionaries of all stamps—or just critics of Porfirio Díaz—in the years around the Mexican Revolution. Informed by Paul Gilroy's dynamic geographical concept of the Black Atlantic, Nicole Willson emphasizes the *routes*, as opposed to the *roots* of Haitian identity formation, and discusses the travel, translation and representation of Haitian folk culture and, in particular, the *ti nèg* ('the small man'—literally the small black man), in both Langston Hughes's and Jacques Roumain's work. Winston James examines Claude McKay's brief, but significant stay in London from 1919 until 1921 and delineates how the associations he made with leftist organizations, trade unionists, Communists, mariners, Irish nationalists and others helped facilitate what could be seen as a major radical turn in his life. Adrian Mack's essay on the poet Sarah Webster Fabio traces her peripatetic life and networks in the United States (Nashville Atlanta, northern California), Germany and Senegal, and her association with various black arts programs. Using transatlantic, Black Atlantic and trans-American frameworks, these essays orient their networks and cultural discourse towards US, Caribbean and Latin American concerns. Issues of race, revolution, anarchism, Communism and state surveillance serve as key topoi.

While the editors and authors here signal a step away from the glare of Paris, it is worth sketching an important etymological and conceptual connection to the city which defined a linkage of radical art and politics. A near synonym of radical, the term 'avant-garde', a Gallicism which can be dated back in English to the 1485 text, *Le Morte d'Arthur*, believed to be authored by Thomas Mallory: 'Lyonses and Pharyaunce had the aduant garde and they two knyghtes mette with kyng Idres' ('avant-garde'; Malory and Southey 1817, 23). Its earliest meaning was clearly military, denoting those soldiers in the frontline of an army who scoped out the battlefield, engaged in the initial fray or encounter—political then in the most overt sense. In 1825 that Olinde Rodrigues, a follower of Saint-Simon, used 'avant garde' in a way that moves towards a modern definition, denoting those at the forefront of artist innovation. In his essay 'L'artiste, le savant et l'industriel' ('The artist, the scientist and the industrialist'), Rodrigues outlined, 'It is we, artists, that will serve as your avant-garde,' contending that 'the power of the arts is indeed the most immediate and fastest way' to social and political reform.[4] The term was not taken up immediately to apply to the artistic field, however just three years before the 1848 Revolution, Gabriel-Désiré Laverdant, a disciple of Charles Fourier, wrote of the 'avant-garde' in a strikingly similar way to Rodrigues, affirming associations between art and politics:

> Art, the expression of society, manifests, in its highest soaring, the most advanced social tendencies: it is the forerunner and the revealer. Therefore, to know whether art worthily fulfills its proper mission as initiator, whether the artist is truly of the avant-garde, one must know where Humanity is going, know what the destiny of the human race is. (Laverdant 1845; quoted in Poggioli 1981, 9).

Laverdant identified art of the 'highest soaring' as connected to a revolutionary and radical avant-gardism, thereby associating good art with a generalized social and political avant-garde. As Renato Poggioli has argued, this mid-nineteenth-century conception of the term, pre-dated the modern view of avant-garde art in which the term is generally used to apply to formal experimentation free from any political affiliation per se. Baudelaire in his 1862-4 notebook, for example, applied the phrase 'les littérateurs d'avant-garde' to radical, left-leaning writers, not to writers whose literature was radically experimental. This sense of two avant-gardes

[4] 'C'est nous, artistes, qui vous servirons d'avant-garde: la puissance des arts est en effet la plus immediate et la plus rapide' (Rodrigues 1825, 341; quoted in Calinescu 1987, 103).

appeared to fall away by the twentieth century, leaving only a faint imprint of its original political and militaristic meaning, while its application in the artistic sphere began to dominate.

This special issue, then, in turning its focus towards the Americas and the transatlantic includes essays which stitch together what could be conceived of as two avant-gardes. The term radical has been adopted in part because it is freer of the baggage of 'avant-garde,' though, like its sister phrase, it operates with at least a double meaning. First used in connection with 'roots' and the vital moisture or humidity found in all living things, the etymology of the word radical is very much bound up with an earthy point of view. To be radical is to be grounded, to go to the origin, to the essential (*radicalis / radicis*) and we can see this through the notion of a grass-roots movement, a reminder that radicals' linguistic origins can be traced back to the soil, water and heat—to conditions which are absolutely necessary for life. The radical then has, from medieval times onwards, been requisite and would emerge as a different conceptual being of heat in the eighteenth century, when the word began to be associated with notions of reform—as change from the root—, and signify, more or less, the social and political dimensions that it bears today.

The notion of roots and ground conditions evoke the network and, indeed, the rhizome which, like the radical, traces its origins back to roots, or more precisely to a 'mass of roots,' a biological rhizome becoming a philosophical one that has no clear entry point, no discernible beginning or ending, but is instead, in Deleuze and Guattari's terms, a non-hierarchical form of knowledge that works on connections across spatial and temporal spaces (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 3-28). In this way, the networks that are constantly being established disrupt the very concept of roots, of origins, making the radical even more radical than before and creating space for revolution. Our attention to cultural flows across and between the Americas and the (Black) Atlantic reminds us that the roots of these routes and cultures – radical or otherwise – are located in the sea. The cultural history of the region is, as Ian Baucom theorised, synaptic, with the Atlantic being the 'nervous system of empire' (1997). For Baucom, the submarine is 'neither European nor Caribbean, neither metropolitan nor colonial.' Rather, it is the location of the 'system of exchanges which at once acknowledges the distinct character of such 'unities' and makes such distinctions meaningless' (1997). The synapse is reminiscent of the rhizome, of course, but with a clear distinction, one that is pertinent for our thinking of radical networks. As Baucom asserts, 'the rhizome has neither a history nor an environment. The synapse has both' and 'bear the traces of both a collective and an individual history' (1997). 'The consequences of this difference are immense,' he tells us, because if we 'conceive of culture

as a rhizomatic assemblage, then we must construct a philosophy of culture which has no use for memory' (1997).

Historical memory is essential for there to be radical or revolutionary thought or action. Radicals, like reactionaries, are products of their worlds and concomitant histories. Taking exception to the status quo, they seek to alter the present in bold colours, paving the way for a future state in which new conditions, ethics, or aesthetic tastes are no longer taboo or illegal. To borrow from Marx, the aim of the radical is typically to push beyond the theorizing of 'philosophers [who] have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it' (Marx 1994, 101).

It seems no accident, for example, that Malcolm X's mother and father, Louise and Earl Little were staunch Garveyites, serving as organizers for the Universal Negro Improvement Association, nor that his parental home was burnt down and his father murdered most likely at the hands of white supremacists. The very conditions of his formative years, which portray life in a 'US apartheid', created Malcolm X, a black radical leader promoting armed self-defence alongside his NAACP confrere, Robert F. Williams (Gilroy 2001, 5). In response to criticism from Martin Luther King, Malcolm X would tell Alex Haley, 'Yes, I'm an extremist. The black race here in North America is in extremely bad condition. You show me a black man who isn't an extremist and I'll show you one who needs psychiatric attention!' (X and Haley 2001, 21). His words almost parallel the more cautious voice of New Negro editor and promoter, Alain Locke, who described the New Negro as a 'forced radical'—acknowledging as Malcolm X later would that conditions forged radicals in different ways. The extremity of racism bred extreme counter-measures reaching a high-point one might argue in US and Caribbean spheres with the Black Power movement.

X's trajectory then was to some extent half-plotted out in 1910s and 1920s Harlem by predecessors like Garvey and the sphere of Afro-Caribbean and Afro-American radicals drawn to Garvey's UNIA, Hubert Harrison's Liberty League and Cyril Briggs's African Blood Brotherhood. All three leaders called for armed self-defence in the wake of the 1917 East St. Louis riots—in the same year that the Russian Revolution rocked the world—going far beyond the more moderate responses of civil rights leaders among NAACP ranks. Their position extended from a generation or more of post-emancipatory action and discourse, informed by global movements of anti-slavery and anti-colonialism, but also by the resurgent racist

ideologies which emerged as a backlash to emancipation during the Reconstruction era in the US and the imperial discourses of European powers.

While 1968 can be read as an acme of radical activity, this issue looks back then to precursors to that moment, starting with 1840 in Julia Roth's essay '"Manifiesto de solidaridad continental". Alliances and Inequalities: Inter-American Feminist Networks 1840-1948'. Her chronology begins two years after slavery was effectively abolished in the British Caribbean, as apprenticeships which had continued after the Slavery Abolition Act 1833 drew to a close on 1 August 1838. In 1840, the first World Anti-Slavery Convention was held in London, attracting, as Roth outlines, US feminists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, who went on to found the Women's Movement at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. Abolitionism and the fight for women's rights intersected in this period, as it had in early periods, with the participation of enslaved women in abolitionist circles typically under the radar of official accounts and histories. Roth draws attention to the exclusions of feminist historiography, which have typically omitted Caribbean and Latin American actors. Her discussion crystallizes around an organizational history of inter-American and international conferences and in which US, Caribbean and Latin American feminists congregated. She examines a range of meetings, including the Pan-American Women's Conference and International Conferences of American States, and organizations such as the Inter-American Commission of Women/Comisión Inter-Americana de Mujeres (IACW/CIM). In charting this history, Roth highlights how US feminists played a hegemonic role within organizations like IACW, with its first chairwoman, Nebraskan-born Doris Stevens, petitioning for the Equals Rights Treaty yet deaf to the demands of separatist women's rights groups in the Americas. The historical irony, however, is that at times Caribbean and Latin American delegates appeared to be leading the charge. Such was the case at the seventh International Conference of American States in 1933 in Montevideo where the only four countries to sign the first international treaty to offer political rights to women were Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay. Roth further charts the history of IACW/CIM into the post-World-War-II era and the Latin American and Caribbean Feminist *Encuentros* began in the 1980s, concluding with the 2017 Women's March on Washington and reflections on future orientation of feminism as practiced in the Americas.

Adrian Mack's essay traces the networked relationships between post war Black Nationalism and the Black Arts Movement (BAM) and the Central Intelligence Agency funded transnational Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) in order to show the ways in which both

the BAM and CCF addressed notions of sovereignty at a time of stark ideological opposition. Mack begins by charting the influence that Black Nationalism had on the birth of the Black Arts Movement and ultimately the creation of the Poetry Center at San Francisco State in 1953 which would become the intellectual home a decade later of the poet, Sarah Webster Fabio, the main subject of his essay. He charts the influence of Black Nationalism on Fabio's work and her essential role in the creation of Black Studies programmes in the US during the 1960s, spaces that engendered radical networks of black scholars and students and forwarded the development of Black consciousness. Fabio's networks extended outside of California, across the United States and into Europe (specifically Germany) and Africa (Senegal), bringing her work into contact with the shadowy cultural arm of the Cold War. The essay details the ways that these different groups with starkly different interests were connected and shaped public political discourse through the arts. For Mack, what is at stake is conflicting models of sovereignty, with peoples of color fighting for political and artistic independence and freedom.

Peter Hulme's essay, 'Joel's Revolutionary Table: New York and Mexico City in Turbulent Times', draws on trans-American connections between Mexico City and New York City around the first decades of the twentieth century. Informed by the backdrop of the Mexican Revolution, Hulme homes in on a circle of Mexican émigrés living in New York City who were radical in the broad sense and opposed to Porfirio Díaz's authoritarian regime. The caricaturist Carlo de Fornaro is the key figure in his network, with Benjamin De Casseres, a journalist, and the de Zayas family (three brothers, Rafael, Marius and Jorge de Zayas, and their father, Rafael de Zayas Enríquez) all interconnected supporting figures. Joel's Bohemian Refreshery, a celebrated watering hole on 41st street, downtown New York, functions as something like the node through which a number of revolutionary figures sat—as represented in Carlo de Fornaro 1911 drawing 'Joel's Literary Corner'. Hulme unravels how Fornaro's book *Diaz, Czar of Mexico*, an indictment of Mexico's President and his regime, led to Fornaro being sentenced to hard labour in the US due to cronyism between President William Taft's circle and Díaz's. Fornaro's network, which was transnational, bohemian and broadly non-partisan, gained the support of anarchists, Emma Goldman and Leonard Abbott, both of whom drew attention publicly to Fornaro's unfair treatment in Goldman's journal, *Mother Earth*. Hulme highlights how such radical networks reveal a shadow network of powerful state players, in this case connected to Taft's brothers, Henry and Charles, both of whom had interests in Panama, Mexico, and the Philippines—with the former acting as an advisory lawyer

for the person officially bringing the lawsuit, Reyes Spíndola (Díaz, the shadowy figure behind him).

Hulme's discussion draws out a broader point about radical networks: that each is all too often connected to a shadow network of state agents, and repressive and ideological state apparatuses.[5] This dynamic emerges in Winston James's essay, 'In the Nest of Extreme Radicalism: Radical Networks and the Bolshevization of Claude McKay in London'. In his analysis of Claude McKay's London years (1919-1921), James reveals how the writer laid low from the International Socialist Club (ISC) in London's East End, when the Criminal Investigation Department apparently began to take a sustained interest in its members' affairs. He also outlines how McKay narrowly avoided arrest when the offices of Sylvia Pankhurst's *Workers' Dreadnought* were raided by detectives. While Pankhurst served time for sedition, she refused to name McKay as the probable author of two out of four articles ('Discontent on the Lower Deck' and 'The Yellow Peril and the Dockers') that the government used in its case against the *Workers' Dreadnought*. Radical networks therefore can also shelter individuals and help keep them beneath the radar when necessary.

James illustrates how three groups were instrumental to McKay's radical trajectory. First, the Workers' Socialist Federation, of which Pankhurst was founder and leader, and the *Workers' Dreadnought* its organ; second was the Hoxton-based ISC; third was a club on London's Drury Lane established for non-white colonial and African American soldiers. McKay's connections in this period also extended to literary figures such as George Bernard Shaw, Charles Ogden, editor of the *Cambridge Magazine*, and Grant Richards. However, James argues that it was McKay's radical associations which galvanized him, and gave him special access to a range of leftist and working-class spheres, including the trade union and shop stewards movements. 1919, the year of his arrival in London was a seismic moment in terms of world politics. Two years after the Russian Revolution and amid the backdrop of the Russian Civil War, the Communist International (Comintern) or Third International was founded in Moscow in in March 1919. Within less than three months, the WSF was renamed the 'Communist Party (British Section of the Third International)'—a move which went against Lenin's desire for a united British far-left party and earned Pankhurst and her colleagues the label of 'Left-wing communists'. McKay's London sojourn also coincided with the Irish War of Independence

[5] William J. Maxwell makes a similar point in his history of the Bureau and later Federal Bureau of Investigation with regards to African-American literature judged as subversive. See *F.B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature* (2015).

(1919-1921) and it was while in London's Trafalgar Square that he heard Irish nationalists demanding independence from Britain. Such anti-colonial sentiment, combined with his first-hand experience of racism in London, James contends, pushed McKay towards socialist, anti-imperialist and black nationalist struggle. Hence, McKay, evidently operating in several different networks and spheres of influence, could comfortably write in 1920 of being an 'international Socialist' and support the Jamaican black nationalist, Marcus Garvey, whose organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association, claimed around four million members in August of that year (Drewry and Drewry 1971, 345). In the discourse of social network analysis, McKay then proves something of a major broker between the far-left leaning Socialists in Britain (often white) and black radicals in New York, which included Garvey's UNIA.

Willson's article begins with a journey taken by Harlem Renaissance thinker, writer, and activist Langston Hughes and Zell Ingram, a young African American student, to Haiti via Cuba in 1931 when Haiti was still under the occupation of the US. Whilst in Haiti Hughes met with the Haitian writer, activist, and founder of the Haitian Communist Party, Jacques Roumain. Hughes and Roumain built a lasting artistic friendship through a shared commitment to exploring the radical aesthetic and scholarly potential of the figure of *Ti Nég* – the small man in Haitian folk culture. For Hughes and Roumain, the 'people without shoes' were the true legatees of the country's revolutionary history and with their commitment to the land, labour and community, are the centre of its narratives.

The article focuses on the interwar period through a reading of Roumain's *Masters of the Dew*, translated by Hughes in 1947 after the author's premature death, which explores the deep rooted relationship between the Haitian peasantry, the land, and the ancestral memory of rural populations. The shared radical aesthetic vision of Hughes and Roumain allows a light to be shone on the dynamics of power infused with a long history of class and racial conflict that have framed the revolutionary narrative and Willson's interrogation explores the ways in which alternative revolutionary narratives that rise from below become representative of collective peasant practices countering the *gwo négs* – big men – who have dominated the island's revolutionary narrative. It is the multiple narrative pathways that compel a reconsideration of the singular narrative of the roots of the Haitian Revolution with it being better understood as circular and routed; a revolution that has been ongoing since the eighteenth century until the present moment. These are the routes of resistance that frame Willson's argument, identities routed in black agrarian landowning cultural practices which

have a long history of resisting capitalist modernity. Willson departs from previous scholarship by anchoring black radical aesthetics in peasant culture and she shows how the production of a black peasant aesthetic had significant cultural and political ramifications for black artists across the Americas.

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In the field of art criticism, and in particular, aesthetic theory, a whole range of seminal theorists and schools, including the Russian Formalists, the New Critics, and Marxist theorists like Georg Lukács and Theodor Adorno, maintained that art operates autonomously and therefore is best comprehended through its own internal processes, what Rene Wellek called 'intrinsic' criticism. Lukács thought art should reflect social realities, while Adorno argued art was always trying to free itself of any real-world associations; yet both clung to the notion of art's autonomy. In *The Theory of the Novel*, Lukács claimed that 'the elements of the novel are . . . entirely abstract.' The medium, in his view, brought to light 'the distance separating the [novel's] systematisation from concrete life' (1971, 70). Similarly, in *Aesthetic Theory* Adorno argued that 'aesthetic relations of production . . . are sedimentations or imprintings of social relations of production' (2013, 7); both read art then in terms of a distant 'reflection' of the social world. Adorno accepted art's partial autonomy ('Art is autonomous and it is not') and raised concerns about the relationship of art to the market, hinting at the potential to read art as sociologically constituted and connected (2013, 8). However, ultimately, as Peter Bürger has outlined, neither Lukács nor Adorno showed a deep interest in the production of art as a field or institution; or rather, they did not sufficiently outline how concepts and functions of art were socially constituted or institutionalized (1984, lii).

While sociologists have long been interested in the sociological components of culture, it was through the pioneering work of scholars broadly interested in the sociology of literature and art that shifted the discussion from the interiority of artworks' meaning to their sociological constitution. Robert Escarpit and a disciple of Lukács, Lucien Goldmann, were pioneers of this field in the 1950s, both introducing new conceptual frameworks oriented towards a reading of literature in sociological terms. Where Escarpit wrote of 'cultured' and 'popular' circuits in *Sociology of Literature*, Goldmann delineated a method of 'genetic structuralism'—structuralism with a historical and humanist turn—and the concept of transindividual 'cultural creation' in the 1960s (Goldmann 1965; Escarpit 1971, 57-75; Goldmann 1975, 10). For

Goldmann, the ‘collective character of literary creation’ was more significant than any attempt to comprehend works in terms of the individual. To dissect literary works, he argued, it was necessary to understand the collective ‘consciousness’, ‘mental structures’ or unities of groups which comprised, in short, ‘complex networks of inter-individual relations’ (Goldmann 1975, 158-160). In the early 1970s, Raymond Williams sought to refine Goldmann’s ideas by knitting them to Antonio Gramsci’s, the latter serving as a corrective. Williams viewed culture as a ‘productive process’ and introduced the notion of dominant, residual and emergent practices and forms as key concepts of hegemony (Williams 1980, 243). Like Goldmann, Williams saw the role of literature as one of ‘mediation’ as well as ‘reflection’. Overlapping with Williams in the 1970s and 1980s, Pierre Bourdieu would become perhaps one of the most influential scholars in both sociological and cultural criticism, shaping the sociology of culture and literary criticism. In works like *The Field of Cultural Production* and *The Rules of Art*, Bourdieu set out detailed analyses and methodological tools for interpreting the way culture is produced, replicated, embedded within societal groups and their preferences. He conceived of cultural production as both a set of positions (social, economic, familial, symbolic and so on) and dispositions—or ‘habitus’ the word he coined to define the system of ‘durable, transposable dispositions’ (Bourdieu 1977, 72). Like Williams, he believed that culture was shaped by competing agents, forces, institutions and groups. Williams is often defined as a ‘founding father’ of cultural studies, alongside Richard Hogart, and he would play an influential role in the work of another ‘founding father’ Edward Said, contributing indirectly to the foundations of postcolonial studies. Bourdieu’s influence has been broad, impacting postcolonial studies and world literature among other fields.[6] Indeed, Pascale Casanova’s ground-breaking work, *The World Republic of Letters* would be unthinkable without Bourdieu (not to mention Edward Said who is both a reference point as well as the book’s General Editor). What unites all these scholars is there turn towards the sociological and material reading of culture, and of their reading of culture production as essentially communal and structural.

In *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, Williams outlined the tendency within literary studies in the wake of I. A. Richards and, later, the school of New Criticism to read ‘the work of art as *object*, as *text*, as an isolated artefact’ (1980, 46). In his desire to wrest power from such positions, Williams sought to emphasize works’ ‘essential community as well as their irreducible individuality’ and attend to ‘the reality . . . and the conditions of their practice as it was then executed’ (1980, 48). The move from autonomous object, then, to communal practice

[6] See, for example, Dalleo (2016).

mirrors Bourdieu, who argued in *The Field of Cultural Production* against the notion that individuals ('this or that "influential" person') or even specific organizations ('this or that institution') really made reputations in the cultural sphere. For Bourdieu, the true source that endowed art with value was 'the field of production, understood as a system of objective relations between these agents or institutions' (1993, 78). Goldmann, Williams, Bourdieu and others working in the sociology of culture have been credited as paving the way for objective approaches to cultural analysis, including network analysis which is beginning to make inroads into cultural criticism (So and Long 2013). One has only to glance at the words invoked in their work to see that what is now the lingua franca of network analysis vocabulary dispersed throughout their works: circuits, circles, movements, groups, connections, actors, networks, ties, associations, homology, social capital. Bourdieu in particular has served as an influential figure in social network and network analysis. While critics have highlighted his subordination of 'empirical ties' to 'objective relations', his work has been proved fertile ground for network analysis (Crossley 2015, 135). Notions of homophily ('Taste is what brings things and people that go together') which are seminal to theories on networks had been elaborated by Bourdieu in the mid-eighties and serve as foundational concepts which inform current research on networks (Bourdieu 1984, 241).

In recent years, network analysis has impacted subjects now gathered under the umbrella of humanities in a number of ways. The first concerns work which invokes the network in the broadest sense as a paradigm or lens of analysis. A number of projects ranging across different fields and historical periods, from Medieval to Modernism studies, function accordingly. In *Women's Networks in Medieval France: Gender and Community in Montpellier 1300-1350*, Kathryn Reyerson, for example, acknowledges her indebtedness to 'social network analysis' but adopts terms like 'linkages' and 'network' in 'nontechnical ways' (2016, xxiii). The research generated by Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker's Modernist Magazine's Project (2006-2010), has similarly invoked the network in discursive terms, conceptualizing of 'little magazines' as small 'networks of international contributors' and as transnational—even peregrinating—bases of operation (Thacker 2017, 70).[7]

The second, an extension of the first, relates to the increasing push within what could be defined as a subset of the humanities—the digital humanities—towards computational and data-driven

[7] Thacker discusses the magazine *Broom* as an example of a publication which moved its base of location across national boundaries.

analysis. In this latter camp, cultural researchers like Richard Jean So and Hoyt Long, founders of the Chicago Text Lab, have actively adopted methods from relational sociology and tools from social network analysis to define Modernism and literary praxis in the early twentieth century in the US, China and Japan. While So and Long acknowledge a degree of reductionism in the 'dimensionality of the literary field' (2013, 180), their work does illustrate some interesting broad findings: that in the US in the 1910s and 1920s, there were a great deal of high-profile and middle-ranking literary brokers (from Amy Lowell and Countee Cullen, to Louis Ginsberg and Barbette Deutsch)—those who fill or bridge structural holes—as opposed to China, where few brokers appear, and rather periodicals cluster around a small enclaves of key figures like Liu Bannong. Where in their network maps the US model looks like an entangled web of threads, Chinese journals radiate like near-discrete suns.

In many respects, So and Long's research fulfils a call expressed by Franco Moretti, one of the most prominent scholars in the Digital Humanities, to perform 'distant reading': a concept which has received considerable criticism over the years (Moretti 2000, 56-58).[8] In books like *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2005), and through the Stanford Literary Lab, co-founded with Matthew Jockers, Moretti has shifted humanities discourse towards the computational, quantitative and abstract. His 1990s work and *Atlas of the European Novel 1800–1900* demonstrated his affinity for materialist and empirical informed research, as he adopted a form of literary geography that interpreted maps as productive resources for reading fiction. To some extent, one could argue that Moretti's trajectory has led him from materialist interpretation which included thick cultural description (linking typical literary discourse, such as aspects of close reading, to cartography) to more semiotic, quantitative and abstract models (in which for example, the frequency of genres in a certain place is mapped over time, see 2005, 81, 85). Moretti's network analysis post-millennium has generally mapped the interior spaces of fiction and, while potentially bridging gaps between literature and mathematics, it tends to make the connection between society and culture abstract, or reduce the association to plot points on a graph or dots in a network map. While Moretti borrows from quantitative subjects like mathematics, his work occludes expansive explanations concerning the decision-making which informs such data modelling.[9] What results then is a visual representation with scientific appearance, but lacking

[8] Gayatri Spivak has been broadly critical of what she sees as Moretti's scopic vision and false claim of objectivity (2005, 101, 108). See also John Frow (2008).
[9] So while Moretti includes a brief 'Note on the Taxonomy of the Forms' around half a page long in *Graphs, Maps, Trees* and lists the sources for his graph, he does not elaborate on how exactly texts have been classified as belonging to particular genres (2005, 91).

a thoroughgoing outline of empirical method. As a result, the conclusions mask the value judgements of the graph maker. Arguably the biggest flaw in Moretti's approach is contained in the assumption, as John Frow has outlined, that 'morphological categories' like genres are 'pre-given' rather than 'constituted in an interpretative encounter by means of an interpretative decision' (Frow 2008, 142). In short, Moretti treats literary history as a something like a pure or tangible object, not a field to be impinged upon by the impure, non-empirical forces of subjective hermeneutics. While some early adopters of computational analysis may have dreamed that such paradigms would bring about revolutionary change, the impact on literary and cultural so far has been modest and incremental, but not insignificant.

In sociology of science spheres, actor-network theory (ANT), devised primarily between Michel Callon, Bruno Latour and John Law, poses a radical challenge to sociologists and cultural theorists alike. In *Reassembling the Social*, Bruno Latour questions assumptions about society and outlines that we can only arrive at some social definition through analysis of particular 'associations'. In his schema, society does not exist, or rather its existence is not a given; rather it only comes into being through actors and networks—or to be precise actor-networks (2007, 5). It is only through actors' connections that we arrive at a collective, whether we designate that a group, society, a movement or so on. ANT also extends beyond the human and the organic, so that actors may be non-human or non-living: texts, machines, rocks and microbes (2007, 10).

While ANT offers some tantalizing propositions for scholars across all disciplines, challenging received wisdom on a range of issues, the difficulty of its application for those in the arts and humanities remains. Technically complex with recondite terminology, it is a difficult 'theory' to pin down, in part as it has an evolving methodology and multiple, divergent approaches. Law defines ANT as 'a disparate family of material-semiotic tools, sensibilities and methods of analysis that treat everything in the social and natural worlds as a continuously generated effect of the webs of relations within which they are located' (2009, 141). Alternatively, Latour states that ANT is 'simply another way to be of being faithful to the insights of ethnomethodology' (1999, 19). Latour has also claimed to have considered the 'sociology of translation', 'actant-rhyzome ontology', 'sociology of innovation' as other possible labels, suggesting an unease—beyond naming alone—with its categorization, or with its framing as a 'theory' (2007, 9). More of a method than an explanatory tool or theory, it does not provide reasons for a network's emergence or its particular formulation; rather it defines associations between actors, or actants in ANT terminology (people, organisms and things) in detail.

Generally applied to the sociology of science—to case studies of cars and scallops for example—it has not, as yet, made significant in-roads into arts and cultural analysis (though prominent practitioners such as Latour have been keen to incorporate artwork to illustrate its working). One of the major criticisms of ANT which is hard to dismiss is that in making relations between humans and non-humans symmetrical, this methodology does not really address the asymmetry of power and runs the risk of ahistorical and apolitical analysis (see, for example, Fine 2005).

The mileage between the sociology of literature approaches that shaped Williams and Bourdieu to the data-driven literary-networks of Moretti and actor-networks of ANT practitioners may be considerable. Systems, structural analysis, and the interconnection between actors clearly inform all of these modes of inquiry. Yet where Goldmann, Williams and Bourdieu were keen to read culture as a mediation of the social (in anthropocentric terms), Moretti's recent work suggests that cultural mediation of the social is best apprehended quantitatively or at a distance, while ANT, in ranging beyond the human, may operate outside the social (and therefore the historical and political as we typically understand them) altogether.

While the approaches adopted in this special issue do not use social network analysis, computational methods or ANT specifically, they nevertheless engage with the concept of the network or the rhizome as a significant mode of historical enquiry, with a rhizomatic model of culture and history that identifies an array of connections, attractions, and influences. Non-uniform as a whole, the contributions invoke the rhizome and network in discursive terms and are close in spirit to Williams's and Bourdieu's sociologically-informed cultural analysis. Intriguingly, the essays collectively suggest the applicability of the 'small-world phenomenon'—the principle popularized through Stanley Milgram's 1960s experiments that people's links to one another are small when traced through intermediaries, generally associated with the idea that there are 'six degrees of separation'. This is probably because several of the networks overlap chronologically, with events being dense around 1910-1940, and geographically, with a good deal of key figures who either passed through or resided in New York City and Mexico City. Hence, Doris Stevens, an important feminist leader who features in Roth's discussion, met Emmeline and her daughter, Sylvia Pankhurst, at Oberlin College, both of whom seemed to turn her towards feminism. She also became a leading member of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage (Pan American Women: U.S. Internationalists and Revolutionary Mexico, 149) alongside Crystal Eastman. Both Eastman and Sylvia Pankhurst were key figures in Claude McKay's circle, the latter featuring

significantly in James's discussion. McKay and Langston Hughes, a key figure in Willson's essay, and a peripheral one in Mack's, corresponded regularly though they do not appear to have met. Langston Hughes, perhaps one of greatest networkers of his age, was good friends with the Mexican caricaturist, Miguel Covarrubias, who in turn was friends with Alfred Steiglitz, a friend of his compatriot Marius de Zayas, who features in Hulme's essay. The conclusions one might draw from this, as with all small-world theory could be shaped into a somewhat blithe worldview of global interconnection, in which every human being is never more than a few connections away from any other human. However, taken seriously, we might arrive at another conclusion, that given a limited set of parameters (such as shared timeframes, geographies and concerns) small-world phenomena can thicken considerably and the maximum number of connections required—often thought to be six—might well decrease. It is notably that the most links required to move from one paper to another in the shortest chain here are three—from Willson's key figure, Langston Hughes, to Hulme's actor, Marius de Zayas. At present, such results look unlikely to dramatically alter the way cultural history is practised. However, network discourse may well assist with a push evident in Moretti's quantitative work: to thicken cultural history with more information. While one route may run through the avenue of big data, another could still exist in discursive fields, in which accounts of middle-ranking men and women and smaller players that contributed to movements, cultural outpourings and so on, are actively traced and described. So, in discussing the group, we may well uncover bit-players key to particular histories, or parts of the narrative, where as individuals, examined in isolation, their actions might not so easily be comprehended or drawn to the surface.

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