promising resource for help theorizing precarity because Levinas's concepts—proximity, alterity, vulnerability, and asymmetry—help us get at what is missing in liberal theories of equality.

According to Butler, politics should be oriented toward the making and preserving of the conditions that allow liveability. Butler's critique of precarity has a lot in common with normative theories that emphasize basic social rights and the need to secure the conditions of human flourishing. Butler's approach shows us how to move beyond an unproductive dichotomy between normative and political or critical approaches to theory. She is unwilling to dismiss ethics and normativity simply because some approaches to these concepts have been normalizing, in the pejorative sense of that term. *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* calls for a new norm of liveability that "is not a form of normality" (p. 33). Is that possible? Yes and no. Norms must be normalizing, but they can be understood as both created and discovered and therefore subject to contestation, revision, and re-imagination.

Butler suggests that shared exposure to precarity could be one foundation for equality and reciprocal obligation (p. 218), but of course precarity is not necessarily shared and the privileged have devoted enormous resources to shielding themselves and their families from such exposure. The growth of elite private schools and residential enclaves are just two concrete manifestations of the move away from solidarity and the rejection of even indirect exposure to the lives of others. These strategies are deeply problematic but, at the same time, it is not surprising that they would be embraced by people who live in a society in which precarity is widespread and growing. Can the solidarity generated through the occupation of public space inspire a political movement that weaves a safety net, integrates schools, and equalizes workplaces? This will not be easy, and Butler is right to remind us that words are not enough. To build a new, more liveable way of life, we must enact the very principles we seek to realize (p. 218).

Border Thinking on the Edges of the West: Crossing over the Hellespont. By Andrew Davison. New York, NY: Routledge, 2014. 289p. $145.00.
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— Juliette Tolay, *Penn State Harrisburg*

Andrew Davison's book is a fascinating read. It is a highly original work, that at times requires some deciphering as to what exactly this project is, but by the end of the book, the reader comes out greatly enlightened on what it means to talk about "borders." Not only does "border thinking" clearly occur, but the author also successfully manages to provide an alternative vision of how to think of a world beyond borders.

Davison is interested, like many other scholars of critical theory (in particular among scholars of globalization, post-colonialism and subaltern studies) in the idea of border and the role it plays in our political conceptions of the world. More specifically, he is interested in "crossing over the border" and the practices that we tend to automatically associate with such a crossing in Western thought. To unpack this, the author turns to ancient classical literature of the Greeks and the Romans, and to texts that are considered landmarks in the development of Western Thought (such as *The History* by Herodotus, *The Peloponnesian War* by Thycydides, *The History of Alexander* by Quintus Curtius Rufus and *Rome and the Mediterranean* by Titus Livy). In using literary and hermeneutical analysis, the author engages in retracing the genealogy of the phrase "border crossing." The book demonstrates quite convincingly that in these narrations, crossing over the border is typically conceptualized as a violent practice, both in the sense that the world on the other side of the border is a place of cruelty and violence, and in the sense that the encounter with this other world will necessary be violent, requiring conquest and subjugation. Most of the focus on this first part of the book is on the critical border of the Hellespont, the thin body of water separating "Europe" from "Asia" what is referred to today as the Dardanelles in modern Turkey. But references to other borders of the "civilized" and/or "Western" world, are also included, such as crossing the Bosphorus, crossing over to Sicilia, crossing over the Alps, and later in the book, crossing over the Taurus mountain range (in Southern modern Turkey). In the large majority of the references to borders, "crossing" implies "crossing with an army" in a form of "expansionist holy war" with most or all of the following elements: army maneuvers, prayer rituals, territorial expansion and an assumption that the other side is inimical (p. 29). A particularly potent part of the analysis concerns the author's claim that this violent conception of border crossing is permanent, and survives—if not constitutes the continuity—between the Greek *polis* (and republican form of government) and the Greek *empire* (unlike the traditional literature that has emphasized the many conceptual shifts begetting the transition from *polis* to *empire*). Actually, Davison goes even further and shows that this early conceptualization of the border as a place of violence and subjugation is one that has travelled through centuries and still fundamentally shapes and permeates the way we think about border crossing today in the West: it is indeed clear that the ethical motivation behind the author decision to investigate this topic was the language surrounding the war in Iraq (and subsequent Western military interventions) in a way that depicted Iraq almost exclusively as a place of violence and subjugation.

The second part of the book turns to providing an alternative to our tendency to think of the border as a place of violence. The style of the text changes here radically, in a way that is both unsettling and inspiring. The goal of the author in these pages is to immerse the

reader in a different type of literature, one that happens right at the border, a "fatal border" according to the classics, in the Taurus mountains. In these texts, the narration focus on "life" as seen from within as opposed to the "violence" observed and imposed from outside. The texts chosen here are the three volumes of *Ince Memed* by Yaşar Kemal (written in Turkish in the 1960s), a trilogy depicting the life and acts of a young heroic mountain bandit (*eşkiya*) in the Taurus mountain in the 1920s, fighting for justice, beauty and life against the wrongdoings done to the local population by the local landlords (*ağa*).

In this second part, the analytical voice of the author disappears, and gives way to a purely narrative voice, where the author proposes his own summary and translation of the three volumes of *Ince Memed*. This change of style is unsettling for the typical social scientific reader, as the narration is no longer interrupted by the author guiding the reader on how to make sense of the stories and images depicted. It does not read as traditional political science analysis, it does not read even as typical literary analysis, it is simply an original rewriting of a major piece of literature, summarizing the original thousands of pages into 172 pages (p. 93–265). The experience is even more perplexing due to the unusual use of a mix of original language and English translation, not neatly separated, but rather merged through the text. While it makes for a very interesting iterative and almost cyclical reading experience for someone fluent in both Turkish and English, I wonder what the effect is on the much more common English language reader who does not speak any Turkish, and might be puzzled by full sentences in Turkish in the middle of the text, and wonder which parts are being translated, and which are not.

But the advantages of this immersive approach become more apparent by the end of the volume. This lengthy and detailed wandering in the world of Yaşar Kemal and *Ince Memed* provide the reader with a clear alternative to a conceptualization of the border as a place of violence devoid of worthy life. Rather, it provides a clear vision of a complex form of life, from the life of the inhabitants, animals, nature, the landscape, etc. It is not a place devoid of violence, but a place where there is *more than* violence: there is good, bad, hope, injustice, resistance, resilience, ethical agony, heroism, and much more. And, as outlined in the concluding chapter, not only is this life happening where others see a border, but this very life is erasing the idea of border. There is no crossing anymore, because there is just experiencing life.

In that sense, Davison is not really criticizing the West by providing a voice to the non-West, as many post-Orientalist works have attempted to do. While it may seem that the author is pinning two sets of texts, one from the West (the Classics), another from the East (Yasar Kemal), and affirming the ethical superiority of the later, the most important contribution of this book is to provide a different type of analysis. If Davison had engaged in such an appreciation of the Western literature vs. a non-Western literature, his analysis would have been unfair because both sets of texts are not treated the same way: the attention to language, original meaning, poesy, and totality of the literary work given to *Ince Memed* is not given to the works of the Classics. In addition, the two sets of texts are not equivalent, covering a similar geography (very broadly speaking), but a different time period and having very different audiences in mind. But Davison is not assessing the Western literature vs. the non-Western literature: he has simply identified two sets of literature that provide alternative visions on what "border" mean. One set happens to associate border with violence and subjugation, and to be a dominant set of text in the West, while the other associate that border with life and tends to be a form of narration that does not permeates the Western discourse. But that does not mean that other iteration of *Ince Memed* could not be found in Western literature, or that narration of borders as place of violence and conquest could not be found in non-Western literature. While the author hints at this argument, I feel it could have been a little more explicit in the text. Davison concludes his book on how he has been transformed personally by discovering how he had been socialized (like most of us) in a violent conception of borders and how the journey to become aware of this particular socialization and its alternative has been a fulfilling and satisfying experience. Similarly, this book is contributing to the development of fulfilling and satisfying transformation of a political analysis of literature that no longer thinks through borders between different bodies of literature. This book does not teach how to "cross" meaningfully and ethically a border, but rather how to erase the artificial borders that separate complex and overlapping places.

Hegel and the Metaphysical Frontiers of Political Theory. By Eric Lee Goodfield. New York: Routledge, 2014. 251p. $145.00.
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— Robyn Marasco, *Hunter College*

"Metaphysics is the form of philosophy which takes concepts as its objects," Theodor Adorno says in his 1965 lectures, published under the title *Metaphysics: Concept and Problems*. Adorno meant metaphysics "in a strong sense, in which [concepts] are always given precedence over, and are assigned to a higher order of being than, existing things or the facts subsumed under them." I believe it is in this strong sense that Eric Lee Goodfield defends metaphysics and the metaphysical foundations of political thought. In his daring and intelligent book, *Hegel and the Metaphysical Frontiers of Philosophy*, Goodfield presents Hegel's dialectic as the great synthesis of metaphysics and political philosophy.