

and I wonder if rather than anti or counter-sovereign, it is not better to think of Antigone's claim as gesturing towards a political alternative beyond the sovereign frame, à la Arendt?

My questions are provoked by the richness of H.'s fertile rehabilitation of a new and fresh political reading of the play; one that opens up the text again. H. herself engages in such exploration when she revisits the people's previously articulated desire for natality and dance, the 'forgotten alternative of reconstituting the community through festive forgetting' (p. 45). This is the kind of life-oriented pleasure that characterised the larger festival of Dionysus in which *Antigone* was featured, and which H. celebrates in Douglas Crimp's combination of mourning with militancy as the road not taken (Chapter 2). This is also what H. reads into Bruce Bernard's photograph of Lucian Freud's painting of Nicola Bateman, which serves as the cover of the book, the re-signification of political theory as an open-ended agonistic practice, enacted in H.'s own rivalry and conspiracy with receptions of the classical text to facilitate new roads not yet taken. The book uses the rope in Bernard's photograph to hang the martyr and the lamenter (to interrupt this reception) but also to aid both women to get out of their black holes by making conspiracy into a democratic alternative to idealised models of publicness. Readers will definitely find in H.'s beautifully written text a rope with which to hang their own lamentation of politics, get out of their own black holes and pursue their own wilful readings of the classical text in revitalised political ways.

University of Massachusetts Amherst ANDRÉS FABIÁN HENAO CASTRO
ahenaoca@polsci.umass.edu

POSTMODERN *ANTIGONES*

WILMER (S.E.), ŽUKAUSKAITĖ (A.) (edd.) *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism*. Pp. xiv + 429, ills. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Cased, £92, US\$150. ISBN: 978-0-19-955921-3.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X14000778

This volume has its origins in the 'Interrogating Antigone' conference at Trinity College Dublin in October 2006, from which the book borrows its title. It is divided into four parts: philosophy and politics; psychoanalysis and the law; gender and kinship; and translations, adaptations and performance. An introduction and 21 articles, distributed across these four parts, make up the book. The articles themselves are richer than the divisions used to group them and it is impossible to do justice to them in a short review. Thus, I will explore some transversal themes in the book rather than providing a detailed treatment of only a few essays. Given the emphasis of the text on philosophy and criticism I shall start with the critic who receives the most theoretical attention in the book, Jacques Lacan. Most essays dealing with Lacan read his *Antigone* as trapped in Creon's frame, T. Chanter most significantly. Seeking to reverse readings of Antigone as monstrous – Hegel, Heidegger and Lacan, primarily, all of whom place her outside the symbolic order that Creon metonymises – Chanter emphasises Antigone's political trajectories in translation. Such trajectories refer to Antigone's ability to produce meaning and sustain a political alternative of female revolt in her different post-colonial, post-racist, anti-repressive and anti-imperialist futures, all of which are denied when her monstrosity is accentuated. J. Fletcher does something similar in her essay when she emphasises the richness of *Antigone's* political language – rumour, gossip, citation and speech-acts – as a metonym of the democratic voice, even if her essay

does not directly engage the symbolic crisis that her resolute ‘no!’ provokes in Lacan’s interpretation. T. Eagleton takes a different path and questions Lacan’s *Antigone* as marginalising the productive politicisation of everyday life by emphasising a quasi-religious commitment to the ‘Real’ in the sublimated act of transgression Antigone is made to represent. Lacan is equally challenged, from a psychoanalytical viewpoint, for his patriarchal neglect of a different tradition of the psychic life within the trans-subjective space defined by the *matrixial*, in a theoretically dense essay by B.L. Ettinger. L. Irigaray distances herself even further from Lacan by embracing not a death-driven Antigone, but one that cultivates life by guarding sexuate differentiation within the larger economy of the cosmos. In opposition to this reading Lacan is also reinterpreted as offering a more empowering narrative for women in the works of A. Kahane, C. Neill and M. Griffith. Griffith, for example, takes Lacan’s emphasis on desire to retrace Antigone’s political commitments to heroic aristocracy in the erotic language with which she refers to the singularity of her dead brother. In Griffith’s essay desire does not result in the ethical exclusion of the symbolic but in its fertile political pluralisation, leading Griffith even to problematise queer theory’s investments in Antigone given her potential deliverance to heterosexuality in death through Haemon’s bloody embrace. This rich debate around the work of Lacan makes *Antigone* oscillate between politics and ethics, and contributes to the expansion of the productive trajectory of the classical text in psychoanalysis and political philosophy.

Despite the priority given to philosophical frameworks produced in Europe and the United States – notably those of Jacques Lacan, Judith Butler, Giorgio Agamben and Slavoj Žižek, which are the most often discussed across the essays (individual attention is given to Hannah Arendt in C. Sjöholm’s essay and Jacques Derrida in E. O’Brien’s) – it is important to highlight the effort of the editors in addressing *Antigone*’s afterlife in post-colonial contexts. Such efforts include a contribution from M.F. Nelli on Griselda Gambaro’s *Antígona Furiosa* (Argentina), A. Van Weyenberg’s reflection on Fémi Osófisan’s *Tegònni* (Nigeria) and W.’s interpretation of Seamus Heaney’s *The Burial at Thebes* (Ireland). All these essays challenge women’s subordination within their political contexts through their meta-theatrical aesthetic innovations. As Chanter says, ‘there is no returning to a Greek text somehow outside the political genealogy of its multiple translators. There is no pre-political text named *Antigone*’ (p. 46). Such political genealogy has travelled towards new epistemologies in the south that are trying to decentre criticism from its most Eurocentric tradition, and the collective book makes a moderate effort in this direction, most notably when it looks for Europe’s own peripheral *Antigones*, as in the scene from Andrzej Wajda’s *Katyn* (2007) that serves as the cover of the book. The scene is marginally referenced in Z.’s otherwise very interesting conceptualisation of Antigone as a literary candidate for Agamben’s notion of the *homo sacer*.

The choice of a singular image from Wajda’s film as the cover of such a diverse book, however, illustrates the volume’s most important contribution to the vast literature devoted to the Greek heroine, that of looking for Antigone outside *Antigone*. This means examining the ways in which the character is reinvented as a refugee in Sophocles’ *Oedipus at Colonus* (C. Sjöholm); gets re-politicised through its aesthetic novelties in different German adaptations (E. Fischer-Lichte); gets paired with Karen from Lars Von Trier’s film *The Idiots* (1998) in order to cast new light on Lacan’s psychoanalytical contributions to ethics (C. Neill); and gets restored into the patriarchal construction of femininity in the prevalent pictorial tradition since its depiction on fourth-century B.C. amphoras and vases to posters and paintings in the twentieth century (M. Meyer). D. Roberts’ fascinating explanation of the ways in which *Antigone* is already framed for us through inter-textual and para-textual choices also belongs to this critical effort. According to Roberts, at the inter-textual level, for example, Shakespeare emerges in translations of *Antigone* as dictating the words, which radically inverts the play’s

temporality and confuses its authorship. At the para-textual level, Roberts highlights how *Antigone* already gets framed even before we start reading it, as when Antigone appears as part of a Theban trilogy that was never conceived as such by Sophocles. S.D. Kirkland's productive interrogation of time in his confrontation of Cocteau's and Sophocles' versions also belongs to this interrogation of Antigone beyond *Antigone*. Paying close attention to its tempo, Kirkland argues that modernity's emphasis on speed, on the priority of the new that gets celebrated in the futurist manifesto of Marinetti, ends up becoming its own tragic temporality, renewing the critical potential of the play.

De-framing and re-framing Antigone beyond *Antigone*, from theatre to film, from philosophy to psychoanalysis, the volume chooses correctly when it makes Wajda's film-image the index for these diverse contributions. Not only because the Antigone of the theatre erupts into the Antigone of the film, when Agnieszka sells her beautiful hair to an actress and survivor of Auschwitz who is playing Antigone and needs the hair to cover up her mutilated head, but also because the transgressive act is carried through the object that results from that exchange. Agnieszka undoes the temporal displacement of the massacre, which had perpetuated the lie covering up the Soviet crime, through the engraving of the real date on the gravestone that she buys with the money that she gets from the actress. Like Wajda's film, W. and Z.'s book offers a rich economy of semiotic exchanges in the multiple efforts of critics to produce new meanings through their alternative engagements with the classical text and its inexhaustible resources. Readers will find in the book a rich variety of *Antigones* with which to enter into some kind of meaningful exchange.

University of Massachusetts Amherst ANDRÉS FABIÁN HENAO CASTRO
ahenaoca@polsci.umass.edu

PLATO VS THE REST

SCHMITT (A.) *Modernity and Plato. Two Paradigms of Rationality*. Translated by Vishwa Adluri with the assistance of Christine Melchart and Joydeep Bagchee. Pp. xlii + 592. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012 (originally published as *Die Moderne und Platon. Zwei Grundformen europäischer Rationalität*, second edition 2008). Cased, £65, US\$99. ISBN: 978-1-57113-497-4.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X14000067

This volume positions itself in the venerable German tradition of Kulturwissenschaften pioneered by Winckelmann in the eighteenth century. S. uses a pair of opposing conceptions of 'rationality' – a term which he does not define, but which appears to mean something like 'the nature of thought' – to explain the relationship between Graeco-Roman antiquity and the later European intellectual tradition.

The volume is the culmination of a multi-disciplinary research group which S. led on 'The Self-Conception of Modernity and Interpretation of Antiquity'. Its aim was to understand how thinkers since late medieval scholasticism and the Renaissance constructed their conception of the 'modern' and contrasted themselves with previous historical periods, in particular classical antiquity. It is disappointing that S. does not present the findings of the participants' research, on which he heavily draws, or the overall structure of his 'Modernity' project more thoroughly at the outset of his book. Instead, he relies heavily