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# The Daughter Industry

Soham Patel

*University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

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THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY

by

Soham Patel

A Dissertation Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in English

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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ABSTRACT

THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY

By

Soham Patel

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2018  
Under the Supervision of Professor Mauricio Kilwein Guevara

*THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* is a long creative work about reproduction. It works to demystify, narrate, and paradoxically to mythologize son-preference as it leads to the practice of sex-selection. The creative project examines transnational values and texts informing the practice and documents some consequences of the practice. This dissertation lifts language and images from medical textbooks, web pages, and various other sources. It also attempts to translate, rewrite, and treat found text. The poetics of *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* manifests in a prismatic approach to its topic. It mixes engagements with collage, documentation, performance, (his)storytelling, prose, poem, prose poem, lyric, lyric address, and the lyric essay.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**A Critical Introduction: “\*contexts for understanding the artistic body of the dissertation, \*\*its relation to ongoing literary trends, and \*\*\*an articulation of literary/artistic influences”**

by Soham Patel

Reading transnational literature between the lines, we encounter the ways in which a storyteller, unauthorized by her polity to tell the whole story, gives an unconventional account of the “the middle ground,” what is skipped over, the small narratives of a public. The call is thus a form of conceptualizing how we might read a lyric address that executes itself in a non-normative mode of recounting a spatially contingent experience of a shared historical moment.

–José Felipe Alvergue “Poetic Seeing/Beyond Telling...”

In their essay “Decentering a Patriarchal Myth: Bhisham Sahni’s *Madhavi*” Pankaj K. Singh and Jaidev discuss the ways in which the central character in Sahni’s play, King Yayati’s daughter (Madhavi), works to “decenter the patriarchal world to let its abused and invisible victim come into the foreground and speak, feel, and protest” (4). The victim in this case is woman. Madhavi is a character that appears in two episodes of the Mahabharatā, a long poem. In Sahni’s play, Madhavi materializes as a messenger essentially with the duty to get the men in the play the glory they feel is entitled to them. It is written in her stars that she will give birth to future kings. She is given value when she becomes a mother to only sons and no daughters in a world where women who give birth to only girls are discarded as useless. Madhavi is a daughter-possession of her father before she is rented out to the heroic sage called Galav in order to produce a son for him so he can receive fame and fortune. Madhavi serves as Galav’s ticket into heaven.

Singh and Jaidev’s essay interrogates the role of the myth in the epic. According to the authors, “men have myths on their side,” while “women have myths against them.” Madhavi, for example, has no agency. She is not allowed to have feelings for her

sons. In the ancient epic, “Madhavi is mute or muted” and has little voice—though when she does—it is in order to explain “her utility to men” (6). Singh and Jaidev’s essay presents three solutions to this reinforcement of oppressive ideology: 1) “recast and renovate myths so that they would not be out of step with their changing [contemporary] realities” 2) construct alternatives, “new myths” 3) “seek to organize life mythlessly.” While Singh and Jaidev note this third solution has a low chance of success since it is difficult to make “[a] total break from the past” they say this third suggestion, though not impossible, could have little appeal (4). What does a mythless life look like? Can a life organized mythlessly position an ethics that performs a solution if it is not fully informed by existing texts?

According to Singh and Jaidev’s analysis, Sahni’s play rewrites the myth and “[t]he play demystifies the brahmin saints and *gurus* [that occupy the epic] by highlighting their greedy, almost petit-bourgeois, traits” (11). The play troubles a myth of the daughter’s role unfortunately still informing norms of current social orders. This daughter myth—often understood as natural or unproblematic—conveniently gets reinforced by the patriarchy—gets marginalized, silenced, or erased.

They say the play is “explicit in its pedagogical intent and is aimed at generating in the audience a concern for the victims of a dominant yet constructed ideology” (15). It seeks to dismantle the power structure that allows gender, a construct, to buttress oppressive behavior. “The play, in other words, is an exercise in justice” (15). Singh and Jaidev conclude that Sahni’s play, as it locates itself alongside the mythological tale of Madhavi from the Mahabharatā, “offers a convincing critique of the ideology underlying

the myth,” and that the two genres together, as they are approaches to storytelling (“small narratives of a public”), work to decenter the hierarchy that rests in the patriarchal world.

The time span—between the Mahabharatā and Singh and Jaidev’s essay, as it contextualizes the ancient myth of Madhavi in Bhisham Sahni’s 1982 recreation of the Mahabharatā episode as it comes in the form of a three-act play—is vast, but this example is useful in understanding the artistic body of my dissertation because here Madhavi becomes able to make decisions and reject the patriarchal ideology that silences her. Through this rejection she eventually is able to acquire “an alternative language of her own” to disappear, to escape the oppressive patriarchal order that views her only as commodity. Patriarchy determines the value of the daughter and this is a large concern, one of the opening questions, for the artistic component of my dissertation entitled *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*. What drove myth of the daughter-value and [how] has it sustained such a long period of time?

A new problem in our current moment situates itself alongside the technology available to exploit reproductive control—a technology just being readily made around the time Bhisham Sahni was producing his play. Language around this sonogram technology, for example, also manifests many times in *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*—but to approach the geopolitical complications of reproductive control is beyond the scope of this critical introduction’s assignment parameters—my hope is the artistic body of the dissertation and its form serves as a foundational approach to understanding the content’s conjecture. Due to its length and aesthetic layering, the artistic body of the



dissertation attempts to offer a reader many entry points. For example, the word ghost appears five times (now six) in this dissertation document—another entry point into the poem’s conjecture notes an encounter with a ghost (girl) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in the year of 2010. A study of *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*’s hauntology here is also beyond the scope of this critical introduction’s assignment parameters—but also is worth not(h)ing. Furthermore, the social construction of gender is rigid and problematic—and so any ideas towards the future need to work to imagine non-normative possibilities for reproduction and family structures. My dissertation pages 49-58, for example, attempt to approach this problem of rigidity, reproduction, sex, and animals as we are. And again it is necessary to pull from and find use of (or, document) existing texts in order to work towards changing realities, constructing alternatives.

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In the March 2, 2016 issue of the Seattle-based alternative weekly newspaper *The Stranger*, Rich Smith reviews Don Mee Choi’s latest book, *Hardly War*. Smith calls Choi’s text “category-defying” due to its collage style. He also acknowledges that the text “requires a lot of active engagement on the part of the reader.” *Hardly War* is Don Mee Choi’s second full-length collection—her first bears the title *The Morning News is Exciting*. Her work is often categorized as documentary poetics. This is the kind of poetics that, as Philip Metres says, draws from “documentary materials to give voice to stories of people and movements that the mass media tend to ignore or misrepresent.” Metres, in his 2007 poem sampler on The Poetry Foundation, makes a case for “the poet as journalist, historian, agitator,” and holds that poems that fall into the category of

documentary “ride the ambiguity between a nothing and a something that can be said.” It is a poetics often engaged by writers taking on difficult topics or stories that are untellable as a whole because of their complicated natures perhaps because it has to make a space for an aesthetic ethical distance. The work bears witness but the source of the work bearing the witness has a vast possibility in terms of source material.

*Hardly War* is a book that collects poetry, prose, photography and artifacts, and it ends in a section titled “Hardly Opera,” a seven-act sequence. The photographs come from Choi’s father’s work as a photojournalist during the war in Korea in the early 1950s. Some of the language manifests from the perspective younger/adolescent version of poem’s speaker and so the voice turns from war analysis to critique to play with language in song-like fashion as a reader turns the page. This bringing together of many source materials allows for Choi to keep the energy of the text vibrating high throughout because the reader is never able to settle into only one register during the course of the book.

The ending section of *Hardly War* is born out of a series of interviews Choi conducted with her father. They focus on his experience in photographing the war. On more than one occasion, The poem’s speaker informs the reader that as a child she “believed that the people and things that [her] father photographed followed him and lived inside his camera” (49). Her desire to be able to follow her father around as well eventually became the writing titled “Hardly Opera”—41 pages of treated visual images (mostly her father’s photography) infused with script. Choi speculates in bold font with the reader before beginning the opera:

Perhaps in many ways the entire book is about the experience of the Photograph not as the Spectator or the Operator, to use Barthes's terms, but as the daughter of the Operator living inside the Camera with Spectrum, with History. Everything and everyone inside the Camera are mad. They also enact their wish, the wish to return to the world. (49)

Choi's use of documentation here makes the encounter with the text more dynamic by way of departure, reflection, return, a recasting of madness. Splicing in memoir-like notes to engage the reader with the writer's modes of composition demonstrates the ways in which the text must consult moments in history in order to make a conceptualizing form. *Hardly War* constructs alternatives to militaristic histories written about the war. The new form is the book itself. *Hardly War* is part rewrite, is part (r)erasure, is an exercise in decentering the myths of military force in history in order to investigate more intricate matters of injustice and identity. Choi's text is somewhat beyond category and difficult to describe, summarize, or paraphrase. This form of an unconventional account perhaps is a condition of the work's transnational content.

Sueyeun Juliette Lee's 2010 *Underground National* is another genre-defying text that employs the visual image, found language, and artifacts in order to recast, renovate, and construct alternatives that could alleviate injustices. *Underground National* is Lee's second full-length collection—the first bears the

title *That Gorgeous Feeling*. A poem opens up *Underground National*. It is 34 pages long and uses a mix of prose blocks, photos from the internet, and other found texts. Lee continuously modifies found material in order to decenter and redefine notions of nationhood.

The opening poem, titled “Korea, What is,” tries to answer itself over and over again each time the reader turns the page. In the poem, images from the internet appear and are written over, reframed, zoomed in on, blurred, sometimes infused with English and Korean script, and sometimes juxtaposed against the language on the pages. Lee’s source materials get erased as part of her project as she alters them through the writing. Page 11, the first page of text, titled “Korea, What is,” for example, appears this way:

An impossibility. And of what potentials—can you enumerate?

Phase one: resource depletion.

Phase two: infrastructural failure.

Phase three:

Phase four:

Phase five: active resistance.

Phase six:

Phase seven: the formation of a new national leadership.

“gnarly chaos” in the “ultimate fog of war.”

We see Lee’s lean to silence in some phases (phases three, four, and six) that gesture towards but do not exactly answer the question implied in the book’s opening poem’s title. The nation is defined as a fragmented myth, or myth is being made through enumeration in order to take into account the formation of the nation (like industry, like myth) which is untraceable exactly anyhow. Lee’s project makes visible the

contemporary realities of the diasporic condition while it also resists offering up any kind of easy answer perhaps, again, because of the difficult nature of its content.

The page preceding the poem “Korea, What is,” is an image, as Lee notes, that is “taken from the website *Globalsecurity.org*,” Lee describes in the book’s notes how the image was captured by “the orbiting Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP) satellite over regions of the world at night” (103). The title of the image Lee lifted is “North Korea is Dark,” and it is according to this image—against a black backdrop the North/South Korea borders are outlined in white and the highest frequencies of light only appear in a few focused places, where Seoul, Gwangju, Daegu, and Busan would be in the South.

Lee also notes that this opening poem incorporates “several excerpts from other texts, many of which [she] altered to some manner through erasure, lineation, or rewrites of short phrases” (103). These excerpts are lifted from sources such as *The World Factbook* and *The New Oxford American Dictionary*. This act of lifting and reincorporating is a technique that allows for the text to embody multiple layers of meaning and possibility. The technique also invites the reader to reread several times as an invitation to aperture. The long poem ends with openness, a signature Lee move where each line begins with a quotation mark but the end punctuation does not appear:

“but also the spread of a political order that inscribes in the social world a new conception of space, new forms of personhood, and a new means of manufacturing the experience of the real (41)

Both books by Don Mee Choi and Sueyuen Juliette Lee have no doubt taken tutelage from Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s epic poem or book length genre-defying work,

*Dictee*. In his 2016 essay “Poetic Seeing/Beyond Telling: The ‘Call’ in Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s *Dictee*,” José Felipe Alvergue describes the book as one that is “composed of poetic sections without narrative omniscience, narrative passages which use poetical syntax and grammatical experimentation, maps and diagrams, and accounts of Western mythologies and origin myths made unrecognizable to Western audiences.” The “Call,” according to Alvergue’s analysis, “refers to a spatial description of relationships engaged in the antagonisms that comprise an epistemology of time and territory” (429). In the context of Cha’s decentered epic rewriting of the myth, these antagonisms are made visible in her techniques of juxtaposition, unsettling of language, and omissions of expected explanations of images included (or as Alvergue calls them “uncaptioned” or “captionless”) in the book, for example. *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*, too takes tutelage from *Dictee*’s form and attempts to, as Alvergue says, “recount...spatially contingent experience[s] of...shared historical moment[s]” by way of moving through many genres as the dissertation abstract’s end introduces: “The poetics of *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* manifests in a prismatic approach to its topic. It mixes engagements with collage, documentation, performance, (his)storytelling, prose, poem, prose poem, lyric, lyric address, and the lyric essay.”

*Dictee* resists clear genre categories. Is it poetry? A novel? Scholars of this benchmark piece of Asian-American Literature have, of course, taken up these questions about genre and language for almost four decades. What’s recognizable, though, or has become recognizable, is the text’s non-normative approach to telling, not telling, and showing. The book engages but refuses to translate a transnational set of

sources, languages, and myths. Images appear, texts appear, but the author gives no direct instruction on how to read them. This technique, similar to the poetics employed by Choi and Lee, forces the reader to be involved on an elevated level. Is this method a condition of diaspora and the melancholy it is always already producing? Is it a condition of the oppressive ideological orders that are reinforced by nation-building and patriarchal thought? Choi, Lee, and Cha repurpose narrative, construct alternatives, and use archival material in order to organize a third space in which to move forward while also looking back.

While Alvergue categorizes *Dictee* as a transnational text—his essay also establishes that the book defies category in a sense by way of being a non-normative genre. My exercise in trying to place a name on something that is said to be category defying, can of course, be problematized. The texts I have chosen as exemplary to my project’s development have limitations, (as does my analysis of them)—for one thing they are all contemporary texts (all, essentially, under a categorical “poetry” umbrella) and also these formations may not appeal to all readers. Perhaps this inability to be named and to be discursive is a condition of the transnational—perhaps the transnational is always experimental, innovating as it constantly is resituating a rootedness, renovating, and constantly is forced to negotiate the “spatially contingent experience[s] of ... shared historical moment[s],” moments holding multiple times and spaces, and various possible entry points. The moments, like the texts, are difficult to contain—or be put into a singular container of category.

Visual images of the human body in ancient Ayurvedic texts have long been studied in arts practices. Now easily available on the World Wide Web, an image sketched in pen and watercolor by a Nepali artist in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, titled “Ayurvedic Man,” in the (Western [and]) European world, makes an appearance in several ways throughout the artistic component of my dissertation. Blow-ups of the internet image occur in pages throughout and the drawing is reproduced in full on page 43. The so called “Ayurvedic Man” is a centerpiece in London’s Wellcome Collection. According to a caption in an article by Layli Foroudi in *The Financial Times*, titled “How the west co-opted Ayurvedic medicine,” the drawing is “annotated with an Indian holy verse, which is punctuated with errors as it was written by a calligrapher who was not fluent in Sanskrit.” So what’s recountable or recoverable in this case is not fixed.

Other recurring images used in my dissertation come from a contemporary artist based in India and by one now living in Brooklyn. *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* includes Pushpa Kumari’s madhubani painting “Speaking Out Against Sex-Selective Abortion” and screenshots of Prune Nourry’s installation titled “The Terracotta Daughters,” which is a recreation of the terracotta army statues, a collection of 6,000 life size soldiers depicting armies of the Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. As the note on the dissertation’s Notes page indicates: “In 2015 sculptor Prune Nourry’s Terracotta Daughters Army was buried in mainland China. Excavation of this installation, 108 life-sized statues inspired by eight orphan girls in Madaifu, is planned in 2030. (observer.com) The photo on page 61 is from this site.” Both Nourry and Kumari’s intricately transnational approaches and my aesthetic inclusion of them, for me, feel to



be a kind of representation of middle ground for patriarchy's larger narrative—the pieces make lines to read between.

According to the website Mojarto—the largest online platform for Indian paintings, prints, and collectibles—Pushpa Kumari “is one of the finest Madhubani artists in India today.” Her work is rooted in ancient tradition but also incorporates contemporary cultural issues. Women in northern regions of India practice Madhubani painting as part of a livelihood. As Upendra Thakur notes in the book *Madhubani Painting*, Madhubani is a name of a region in India “from the foothills of the Himalayas in the north to the Ganga in the south, it is 100 miles broad...and 250 miles long” (11).

Thakur notes:

There is a delightful rhythm in the sound of the word, *Madhubani* (meaning the forest of honey), a name to conjure with in the history of Indian painting: beyond the trees a fascinating landscape; green pigeons, parrots, cuckoos, quails, melodious red-and-black *bulbuls*, iridescent blue Nīkakanthas speading [sic] their wings in flight, thatched roofs of mud-houses which seem to have sprung out of the earth itself covered with the foliage of enormous squash vines; tall palms, majestic *bodi* and *peepal* trees, rows of *sisam*, sunlight sprinkled on them. It is a land full of the beauty of landscape in sharp contrast to the ugliness of poverty in which its people, most of whom are talented painters, live, who accept their fate, good or bad, and paint for painting's sake, putting at once an end to all illusions about art for art's sake (11-12).

Madhubani art often relies on geometrical patterns and is very labor intensive—done by hand, with twigs, fruit dyes, fingers and sometimes matchsticks. Pushpa Kumari’s “Speaking Out Against Sex-Selective Abortion” appeared as the result of my first internet search for images on sex-selective abortion in 2010 and has been a critical part of each of *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*’s 11 iterations ever since. The painting highlights birthing scenes. It makes a commentary on the violence of sex-selection and the beauty of birthing. The piece is segmented and each part of it is zoomed in to accompany the text written in *THE DAUGHTER INTDUSTRY*. A framed blow-up of each section and a pause on the fragments that combine to tell the story of “Speaking Out...” influences the content of the collection. Nourry’s piece appeared in a similar fashion years later and is treated in a similar fashion to Kumari’s throughout the dissertation.

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Sueyuen Juliette Lee, Don Me Choi, and other authors that do this kind of image lifting and layering have influenced my own practices throughout *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*. Kumari’s piece also obsessively works with repetition. *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* employs a kind of mimicking pattern that has developed through this practice and is in conversation with, and ekphrastically responds to Kumari’s work and Nourry’s work. The lyric lends itself to drama through repetition—it mirrors the rhythm and patterns of the mind that is wounded by a shared historical moment as a way to connect the painting and *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*.

Because the visual image of the sonogram has become so ubiquitously aligned with the question of sex-selection, an image from it is not directly used in the manuscript. But its existence is another context important to understanding it. The

project takes on the subject of misogyny situated within the culture and the practice of son-preference and sex-selection, for example in using figures from the sex-ratio imbalance in the poetry. The work is trying to defy-genre, taking its cue on form from texts like *Dictee*, *Underground National*, and *Hardly War*. It is also a performance piece with a video component and roughly 97 pages of printed matter composed of essay drafts, sonnets, lifted language from medical text books and web pages, and a lipogram of texts under study. A lipogram (leaving out a letter) is a writing constraint in which certain letters are omitted from the page—my lipogram attempts to imagine a “world without girls” and so the letters G, I, R, and L are omitted from certain noted texts under study. Page 90, with its anaphoric “no,” lists words the lipogram could not use and so would be a part of the world it is imagining.

Like *Hardly War*, *Underground National*, and *Dictee*, *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* approaches the call for an unconventional account of the middle ground. It’s an attempt to resonate in a contingent, decentered, and ambiguous space. It tries to perform a genre-resistance, it tries to be unconventional, it attempts a wildness, an experimental approach to narrative.

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In “The Sentimental Avant-Garde” Fred Moten analyzes jazz music and the black radical tradition. Moten talks about “the break” or “the cut” in Duke Ellington’s music and questions what drives his performance. For Moten, what is radical is “both rooted and out there” for black people (26). He says, as situated in improvisation, the avant-garde is often defined by (& by way of its militaristic roots) its expendability. With an

analysis of jazz critic Albert Murray, Moten offers that the avant-garde is “continually submitting itself to a sacrificial experimentalism whose value exists only in what it opens for and echoes of what is essential to the tradition” (33). He is talking about the productive tension between structure and improvisation within music and makes a case for poetry, too, as it has organizational principles holding the essence of experimentation.

A corollary to Moten’s analysis on jazz music and the black radical tradition, of course, resides in performance theory. Guillermo Gómez-Peña’s *Dangerous Border Crossers* has a variation of aesthetic sensibilities. It utilizes multilingual poetry, photographs of his performances, diary entries, essays, script, drawings, experiments, interviews and other modes of composition. Gómez-Peña explores, among other things, identity and immigration, globalization and war. *Dangerous Border Crossers* also serves as a documentary and travelogue of his collaborations with Roberto Sifuentes and his performance-lectures around the world. The book is sectioned into four chapters bearing these titles: “Performance Documents,” “Migrant Provocateurs: Further Chronicles,” “Conversations Across the Border Fence,” and “In Search of a New Topography.”

One of the most immediately striking features of Gómez-Peña body as a performance artist is the way he adorns it. His performances always have him in costumes, with props that both mock and complicate stereotypical images of Mexican and Chicano culture and identity. Gómez-Peña believes “in the power of decorating and aestheticizing the body in order to exaggerate, challenge and problematize mythical

notions of the Mexican Other” in the US imagination (29). This complicated mockery also plays out in the characters Gómez-Peña assigns himself, with different nicknames, slangnames, slurnames, and characteristics and also by way of his engagement with the audience. The gestures towards humor also turn to irony as he interrogates history, points out its absurdity, and works to redefine the possibilities for history and the present’s political imagination.

*Dangerous Border Crossings* is a tender, edgy, and exciting book. Gómez-Peña clarifies the term of performance in it for his readers:

Performance as an artistic “genre” is in a constant state of crisis, and is therefore an ideal medium for articulating a time of permanent crisis such as ours. Performance is a disnarrative and symbolic chronicle of the instant which focuses mainly on the “now” and the “here.” Performance is about presence, not representation; it is not (as classical theories of theater would suggest) a mirror, but the actual moment in which the mirror is shattered. The act of creating and presenting a performance carries a sense of urgency and immediacy that does not exist in other artistic fields. We experience life, therefore we perform—or rather, we perform as we live, love, travel and suffer, everything woven together into a complex, multi-hued tapestry. (8)

What the text as an entirety does in *Dangerous Border Crossers*, is perform its own process. Gómez-Peña also uses the strategy of blurring the audience/artist boundary by including in the book a series of audience and internet confessions in which he asks a

series of questions in a space where readers or the audience are allowed to offer an anonymous answer. This self-aware addition to the tapestry complicates the distinctions between authenticity and artifice in subtle ways.

*THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* as a text and a performance and a text that is performative takes influence, also, from Nato Thompson's *Living As Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*. This book gathers exhibitions from Creative Time in New York City over the course of twenty years. The art discussed and displayed in this book often invites participation and takes on topics of social justice. In her piece that Thompson includes in the collection, called "Microutopias: Public Practice in the Public Sphere," Carol Becker borrows from cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's assertion that we need to think about the world's biggest problems "and come up with the smallest contribution toward their solution" (71). According to Becker, we can do this in "microutopic communities," communities that are small locations of utopian interaction—spaces that form and exist in order to subtly critique what is not good in the world. Becker offers the event of the carefully planned 2011 civil uprising in Tahrir Square, what she calls a "real-life, choreographed showdown" to force Egypt's president to step down, in a place/space built for public gathering as one example of a "dramatic, exhilarating, and even devastating" microutopia (66). Becker's argument is that we need to gather as physical bodies in public spaces in order to hear one another.

But she complicates the, of course, blur between public and private realms available to artists. Two of the other events she offers are art gallery exhibits as example of sites that build microutopias in public spaces that verge into the private sphere. They

are Marina Abramović's *The Artist is Present* (2010), and an untitled exhibit from Janine Antoni in 2011 that appeared both at the Hayward Gallery in London and at the Haus der Kunst in Munich. Abramović would let visitors sit facing her for as long as they wanted. While they were doing this, other visitors of the Museum of Modern Art had the opportunity to watch. The tension between the public and the private here came in the embodiment of the artist who was also the art piece. As Becker states that for the visitors the public interaction was also private because it was "revelatory, contemplative, and emotional" (67).

In the example of Antoni's art piece, the artist placed a note she designed into the galleries' visitors' checked bags. The note was a mass-produced designed letter Antoni made to look like a personal note, "handwritten on a page ripped from a museum program" (67). Some visitors assumed it was a love note, but as Becker offers "the notes were actually sent from an unspecified work of art—an imaginary act that generated a real object" to the end of "extending the experience of the museum beyond" the actual physical space of the building in order to emphasize "the intimate, relational connection between art and spectator" (67). The case here is that the artist wants to transform physical objects into an imagined construction of reality and the space of the microutopia works to allow that transformation to occur.

While my performances of *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* have never yet risked such radical notions on my part (I have read from the work while a video component has played, I have improvised the reading, played with sound and props, but never yet engaged the audience or myself in such bold ways as outlined above), Moten's analysis

and the above examples from performance theory help imagine possibility for performing rituals for the text. Moten, when considering a poetry reading, urges “—one confronts that which requires that we take into account the ways ritual consists of physical action (in time) that may *be*, as well as emit or transmit, the kind of meaningful aural expression that improvises through the distinction between the paralinguistic and the metalinguistic” (48). The subject I am writing about is terribly difficult yet somehow I want to share with my audience a pleasurable experience because perhaps doing so through poetry could offer a small solution for the duration of experiencing the text or the performance or both. *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* could also transform to take the shape of a play or an installation piece some time in the future. My text (both as a read thing and a witnessed thing in the form of a performance) can be a transformative space, so the notion of the microutopia could be utilized to help inform a reader’s encounter with it. Becker’s pressing questions push me to consider how I can make an impact in public spaces that can open engagement with the public or the private sphere or both where the spectator can act in the engagement of the space and the space can engage the spectator wherever *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* might take place.

*One Place After Another: Site Specific Art And Locational Identity* by Miwon Kwon is a critical history of site-specific art. Site-specific art considers the relationship between the art and its site, culture, and industry. This practice works to emerge (re)configurations of sites holding networks of social relations with the artist and with community of place. The practice of site-specific art also works to consider how intimacies based on absence, distance, and ruptures of time and space emerge. This art



works to counter both nostalgic desire for the retrieval of a rooted place, it works to offer possibilities for unbounding of bound identities, it considers the antinostalgic embrace of a nomadic fluidity of subjectively formed identity and spatiality and “can lead to the unearthing of repressed histories” (53).

Kwon notes that this art works to reframe institutional frames and also “(re)produces specific forms of knowledge that are historically located and culturally determined and so: not at all universal or timeless standards” (19). Using examples from corporate art to posters to performances to installations in city parks, Kwon notes that this work of site-specificity is “blurring the division between art and non-art in order to address, in an activist sense, urgent social problems” (24). Site-specific art wants to interrogate “the status of traditional aesthetic values” such as “originality, automaticity, and uniqueness in site specific art which always begins with the particular, the local, unpredictable condition of the site” however it is defined (31).

In Chapter 5 of *One Place After Another:...* – “Integration vs. Intervention”—Kwon outlines historical paradigms of commissioning public art and offers that public art has beginnings in architecture and urban design. In the current moment, site-specific art works to unsettle perceptions that “collapse of the division between art and utility” (69). This all is done in the interest of offering social harmony. In short, as it works with and against both architecture and nature, what site-specific art becomes according to Kwon, is “a radicalizing artistic practice that re-aestheticizes place” (75). Concluding with Kwon here points to the ultimate kind of art I aim for in *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*. I don’t consider this obtainable, I don’t know if the poem or any performance of it has the

power to do anything near the kinds of interventions Kwon outlines—but the stretch towards it is my gesture.

Ideally, readers will engage with the visual images and multiple modes of composition offered in texts like *Dictee*, *Underground National*, *Hardly War*, and *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY*, and they will be startled and curious to work with the work on multiple levels. Sometimes Don Mee Choi sings in her band as she performs pieces of the opera offered in *Hardly War*. Sueyuen Juliette Lee uses elements of photography, film and dance as iterations of her poetry in places. Theresa Hak Kyung Cha was also a producer, director, and visual artist. At certain sites of performance, *THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY* also has, for example, employed elements of dance, original music, and theatre in order to manifest the project's inter-artistic characteristics. It is multi-vocal and inter-artistic because it aims to speak to, through, and from the millions of lives lost due to the deaths and the neglect and abuse caused by son-preference and sex-selection. I am dedicated to producing and reproducing this work in a variety of iterations because doing so is an attempt to hold a light up to and see what imaginaries fuel the misogynist behaviors attached to son-preference, how these values and behaviors originated and prevail, and perhaps even come to understand some solutions, even if only temporary. It attempts to be an exercise in justice, too. My defense of this work is that it hopes to offer an audience not a story or a history of sex-selection and son-preference, but instead some semblance of decentered sensual experience(s), thought provocation rooted in the lessons of history, play, and unpredictable inspiration.

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**THE DAUGHTER INDUSTRY**  
by SOHAM PATEL

I'm not a woman  
I'm not a man  
I am something that you'll never understand  
Prince, *I Would Die 4 U*



I collapse in succulent reach. So we're finished and just beginning, as in: here it's dawn's light and ze's on a bike—scarf waving and wind behind flinted neck.

This is what I've seen through a window in my living room but what is it I am looking for?

For the up/down grades, muscles will push, pull, then turn into them in this moment as an idea through flame.

Their exterior in seven colors I see between my routine of waking, morning, water, fruit, and tea.

She was never here and she's gone and I can still hear her breathe between the scrapes of any chain's rust.

If this scene is imagined impermanence—let the cardinal's pause on the sweet gum branch just outside my window be, too.

The bird chirps sounding like the rusty chain I spoke of.

The bicycle is so she can get away—if she comes back I will ask: what is your good name?



Her body keeps—grows and shrinks and grows and shrinks again.

It is as if each organ has become its own organization with its own leaders, its own devotees.

Her body wakes some feeling from a dream: the one where all the animals on the block shed fur and feathers into the gutters, and the gutters clog up.

The lungs say clean my blood and the cells say yes in blue and red.

Her body keeps channeling this one figure from a movie about a book about a recent ecological disaster and then death and walking through the desert see the mountains.

In the book a voice says see and here look here here I am and here watch me here I go and in the movie there is so much drought and smashed glass and concrete to clean up.

There are a few adjectives for situating and rumor has it another sequel will soon follow.

And her body becomes a sublimite of a fracture so jagged that to think of it on skin, say, would leave no option for stitches: leave it so open that any idea of suture would be like a circus trying to end, pack up the tent, and leave town with no trace by midnight.

She left with her prince or the way it is written. For his fortune with her arrival and white horses carried feathers and a flower tied to the red hemmed yards of silk I sewed by hand foot by foot each year she lived with me or was it in me, or she was never with

What is it I am asking of you? To say an elegy by heart/to zero our dying before birth.  
The history of desire in this house has said son. We know of the daughter aversion. He  
will be a marker/shadow our every move, happily. As for the girlchild—say this over so  
many million times over now: as for the girlchild say this: convexity claims victory with  
that camera that can see our insides.



from Chapter 26  
Sastra Vidhi (usage of blunt and sharp instruments)

...

We shall now expound the chapter of knowledge and usage of sharp instruments; thus said Ātreya and other great sages.

There are six hooks, some of their mouths are shaped like the hood of a serpent, are meant for bringing together (joining); others having the mouth resembling the pin that joins the two reeds of the flute and meant for shaking (loosening the hard objects); and others still that are meant for extraction shall be resembling a fish hook.

...

Blunt accessory instruments (yantras) are: the magnet, rope/thread, cloth, stones, hammer, leather strap, intestine (of animals), tongue, hair, branches of trees, nails, mouth, teeth, time, digestion, hands, feet, fear, and pleasure. Their actions/functions to be made use of, by the intelligent physician, judiciously, based on his assessment.

Nirghatana (pulling out after crushing), ummathana (pulling out after twisting), purana (filling), margasuddhi (clearing the passage), vyuhana (bringing together), aharana (extracting), bandhanda (binding), pidana (rubbing), acusana (sucking), unnamana (lifting up), nimana (pushing down), calana (shaking), bhanga (breaking), vyavartana (overturning), rjukarana (straightening).

---

*boys will / be boys? // lock her / room talk?*

...

Satstras (sharp instruments), twenty-six in number, should be got prepared from skilled metal smiths, in accordance with traditional method (of preparing surgical instruments). They should be capable of splitting the hair, close/shaving, good to look at, with sharp edges, good to hold firmly, not of ugly shape, prepared from well blown (removed of impurities) strong steel like iron, well hammered (to make them sharp), and having the colour of the blue lotus, with the shape in accordance with their name, always ready at hand for use.

Vrdhiptara (scalpel) is shaped like a barber's knife (razor), useful for cutting (excision), splitting (incision), and tearing/separating, it, with a straight edge, for use in elevated (bulging) swellings, the same with its tip bent backwards (resembling now a cow's tooth) long or short edges for use in deep seated swellings.

---

*a pit bull w/lip stick?*

RECIPIES FOR BATHING, anointing, fumigating, topical application of paste and powder for dusting any wounds should be prepared by these drugs only: (conch), (pearls), (coral), (red ochre), (oyster shell).

---

*me too /*

*shut it //*

*down*

*for Purvi Patel*

*Helping the kids up in their coats/But wait the babies haven't been born/ O oh o oh-oh-oh woe*

Oh would be mother of a child in Indiana whose name I'll never know

Because some new  
State Laws

Call your body guilty—  
Say to lock you up for years

20 years for a miscarriage

Shamefaced—all I have  
Are these questions—this want

To be in correspondence:

Did you have  
a name?

*Pavaan      Padmini      Patrick Priya Paul Peeeusssshhh*

When was the last time  
you felt happy?

*How many acres/How much light?*

Or, did you have to laugh  
yourself to tears to sleep at night?

I have not read enough about post-partum depression but remember once when I was ten my cousin was ironing-standing there-soon after her son was born with what luck with what design and she looked so sad I am so sorry Purvi and she told me why

That was not a question, I know  
but what does incarceration  
look like?

20 years prison with what proof and what facility could ever correct the fact you know  
some love is so forbidden?

been locked / up

*We'll collect the moments one by one. I guess that's how  
the future's done?*

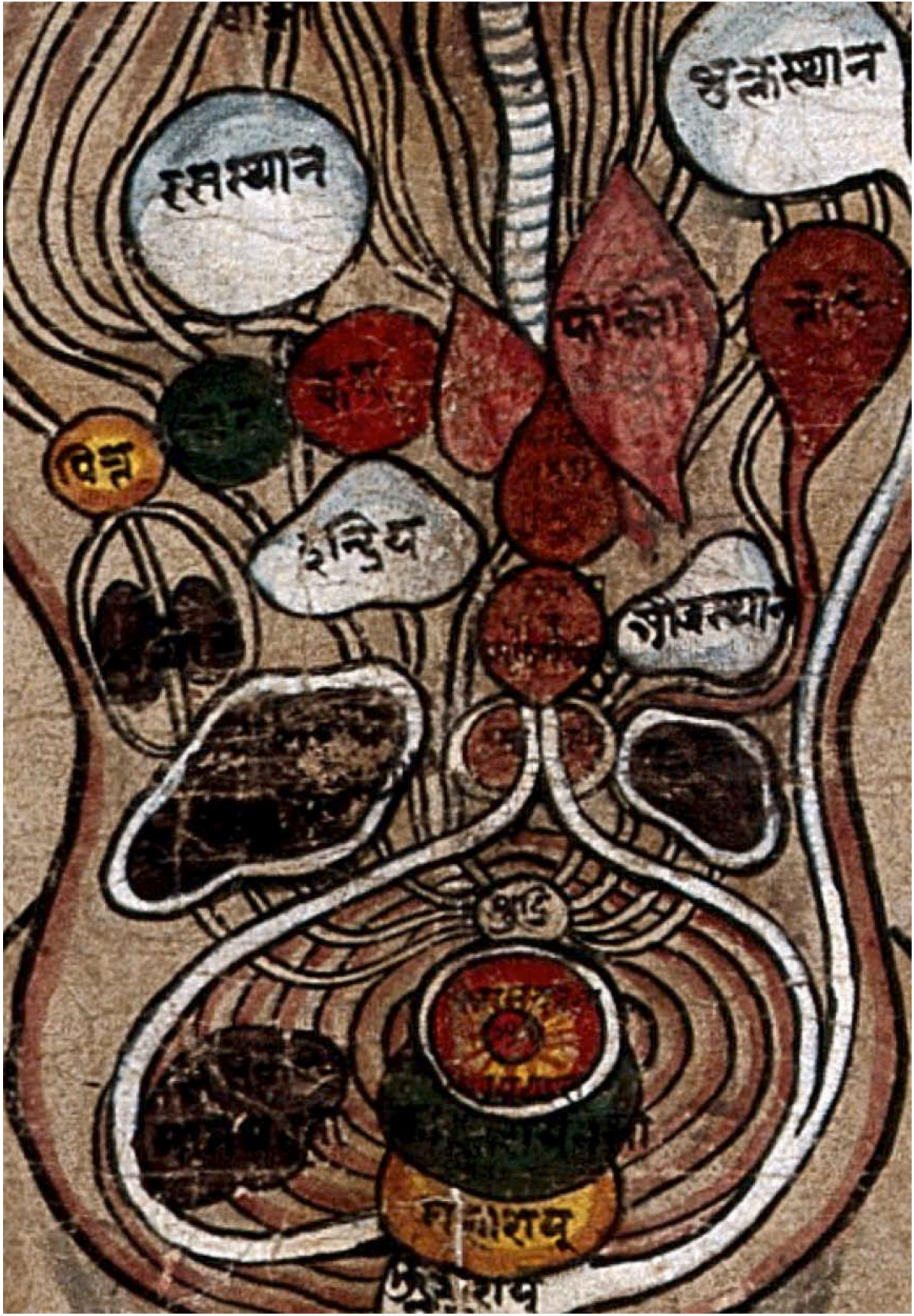
[I boil water for tea in my kitchen at nine pm because I can ]

What trace? *first from the east* What memory, Purvi?

What reflection?

When you look now in the mirror  
is the mirror rusty will spit wipe shine





At the end of the 1970s Audre Lorde was writing her essay “Poetry Is Not a Luxury” and I was rice-sized inside my mother.

Lorde articulates that poetry is illumination and offers to us that “it is through poetry that we give name to those ideas which are—until the poem—nameless and formless, about to be birthed but already felt.”

Lorde knows there are no new ideas, but poetry has the potential to muscle us into doing by imagining.

Some of what you are currently reading comes from earlier drafts of an incomplete crown. It is incomplete because the lines participate in the rules of a crown while also becoming a subversion of the form.

The lines do not always follow the demands of an unbroken sonnet’s metric and rhyme patterns or always follow within the language the sonnet form was conceived in’s limitations.

In “Poetry Is Not a Luxury” Lorde challenges the way we are compulsorily made to “liv[e] in the european mode” as being a “problem to be solved.”

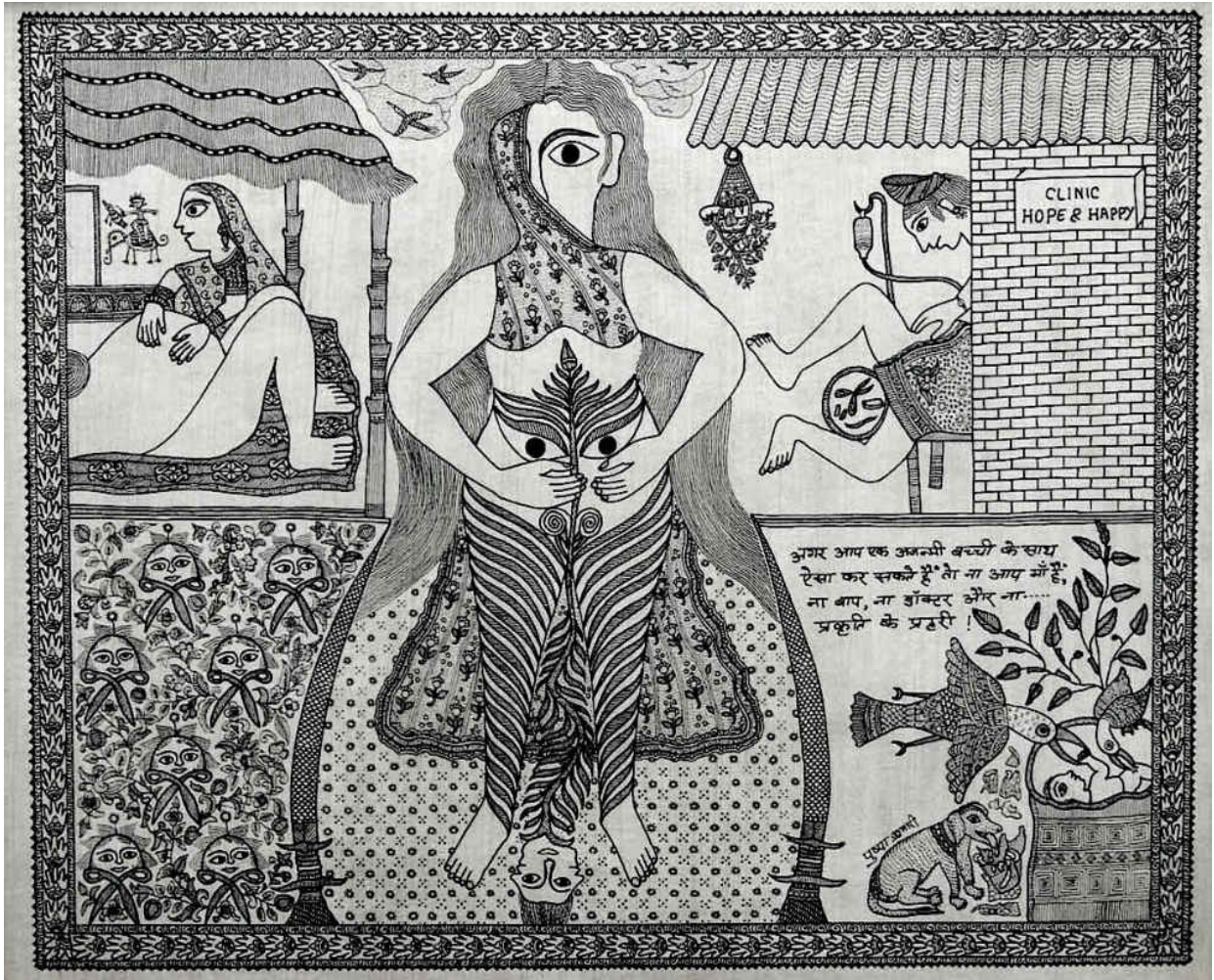
She offers another option that says, “as we come more into touch with our own ancient, noneuropean consciousness of living we learn to respect hidden sources of our power.”

Or as she says, “the Black mother within each of us—the poet—whispers in our dreams: I feel, therefore I can be free.”

All the pronouns and “I’s” in this poem are voiced as and by me and many others: a mother, the unborns, born, a father, a son, translated medical textbooks, erasures, versions, lifted language of texts under study. Daughters are dead and the unborn are unborn because of son-preference, sex-selection—and this results in a sex ratio imbalance, a whole population of people who were never.

For Lorde imagination and insight towards knowledge run parallel—and poetry can be a way “we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought.”

My experience is not that of a mother, or a would be mother, a ghost-daughter, or a son(neteer) even so this “I” & you and this form have had to keep breaking in the process of making itself. And the breaking isn’t just for the sake of making something new. It is also not trying to perform a failed subaltern attempt to speak through a disrupted form of the colonizer’s sonnet. The “I’s” subjectivity forms and forgets and is allowed to birth what is felt—and again to borrow from Lorde’s eloquence in “Poetry Is Not a Luxury” the poem attempts to examine experience both real and imagined in order to “give us the strength and courage to see, to feel, to speak, and to dare.”



Pusha Kumari, "Speaking against Sex-Selective Abortion," Ink on Paper, 2011

Between the living and the dead I hush up.  
Ladies: who would be my daughter sprouts  
lush out from river sand and siphoned singing?

Decades ago some passage of acts manifested  
brazenly, detected deformities, my girl's rice-  
sized for a moment, for each obliteration.

GENDERSEXGENDERSEXGENDER could collide with life.  
Transience subdued into bloom—I thought—  
*how many hands held me since my birth?* I am

iteration in place with pacifiers, pageantry. I am  
the brooding pink of cap and blanket covering  
yellowish, covered and covering and covering

my crucial naming, my holding, my distinction  
had come to surface at nubile and knighthood.

For the falling through ice and light  
I am silent ladies. Sometime before  
now my acts occurred without shame:  
the discovery of deformities in rice,  
each opiate I ate at bedtime. Put the size  
of my descendants in your hand for a while.

Check for any destruction that might conflict  
with the kind of life I said was transitory  
for the subject of flowers. I thought  
about the many hands I have held. I am  
a recurrence in a place for peacekeeping  
forces, no luxury. The silk pink blanket,  
meditative in yellow light. I have my  
difference/emerged through the melting.

- 
- 
- 
- Sajani: Beloved. Loving. Well Loved/ Supriya: Well-loved.
- Samali: Bouquet
- Samiya: Incomparable
- Sanjita: Triumphant
- Sansita: Praise
- Sara: Precious
- Sarojini: In the lotus
- Sasmita: Always laughing
- Satvari: Night/Sharvari: Twilight/Shirina: Night
- Satvi: Existence/Satya: Truth
- Saura: Celestial
- Savriti: Mother
- Shaili: Tradition
- Shaivi: Prosperity
- Shalulu: Perfume/Shefali: Fragrant
- Shalini: Modest
- Shanti: Peace
- Shari: Arrow
- Shasha: Moon/Sheetal: Cool
- Sheela: Character
- 
- Shiuli: Flower
- Shreesth/Shresthi: Best of all
- Shrika: Fortune/Shrimayi: Fortunate
- Shriya: Prosperity
- Shushma: Fragrant
- Siddhangana: Divine. Pure
- Sinjini: Sound of anklet
- 
- Somila: Tranquil
- Sonal/Sonali: Golden
- Suchhaya: Shining
- Suchita: Auspicious
- Suhaila: Moonshine
- Sunmedha: Intelligent
- Sumita/Sumitra: Friendly
- Sushila: Good character woman
- Suvali: Full of grace

In a world without girls there is no i

world without girls—

these the odes  
to take us out  
when we take  
count what we found  
nest down by the maps  
ask the dead end when  
these odes can take you and  
you and you and you choose  
somebody hates these odes  
passes as touch then moves west



world without girls—

and by no shame

she comes face up

my dawn smock on

avenue on top of my body

the want on my head to

a woman's body comes to feed

she eyes shut

a mod ocean

a skyed bay dashes

she asks: "what's open?"

my mad notebook

world without girls—

they shadow types

to keep the way

know them and know

the advocated unknown

they not a man they not a woman

they came up and cupped

my hands to my chest

they they know about you

world without girls—

of my name

say sweat

of my name

say ban say upon

and at about two a.m.

say of my name

a body bent

*say my name say*

*my name say*

namesake say

out put out put food out

the books state names

face them

they symptom

they say an abyss

that's what they'd bet

world without girls—

we nose the cement

beneath steep

boa necked pushes

the pavement washes

off a penny on a toy

and she moves out of town

mast aback she pouts

dances off

mud bottoms my shoes

world without girls—

a bamboo on a one

a hopscotch

and spots

stacked woman want

to keep the way

of my name

on the stone

on my body

the want on my head to

shampoo tub wet but no

move on odes out

move on out of town

world without girls—

mast aback she pouts  
at what names the state  
she catches a sway on a peak  
apt to feuds  
not houses not towns not feet  
the estate has went has moved  
a few tones stay as epochs  
fastened to the dead  
once doubt packed best-shots  
as quotas decayed each season  
hens had waned to stoned hope  
to become the baby's face

world without girls—

the day that ends  
at the past moment  
when movement escapes a husband  
she jumps the body on  
that makes a type  
she heaves to the sound  
not so sea beasts move away  
at the \_\_\_\_\_ of a woman  
when face up on the stone  
each of the opaque names say me  
each of the opaque names stay me

*clamoring to be heard*  
ghost girl scratch:  
she'll say stop mourning  
me to live on as these marks  
stretch she says look so I watch  
her turn nowhere  
into at least dead-end streets  
—to finish each edge  
demarks any solutions  
enough to say hey see ways  
breath takes into account  
so take a breath like my name  
spills out for the next one in





According to the [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk): The preference for male children is part of the general inequality of women in some cultures. This is largely economic and due to reasons like these:

- family continuity depends on sons
- 
- girls cannot hold property in some societies so a male child is essential for a family to retain its wealth
- 
- girls are transitory members of a family - they marry and leave home
- 
- even while girls remain in the family they generally earn less than boys
- 
- the family may have to produce a dowry when a girlchild marries (this could be regarded as a back door way of a woman getting to inherit some of the family wealth)
- 
- boys bring in a dowry when they marry, adding to the family wealth
- 
- a wife's status (and thus her economic security) is not consolidated until she produces a son
- 
- the trend to small families means that parents don't want to have several girl children before having a son
-

we see her maybe/she raises  
a hand as if in supplication  
frozen? disfigured? near dying?

by the box we've locked thought  
in as in locked her as in locked in her

if you could pick another time and place to live in would it be this one i am thinking we have other ways into conceiving this critical force holds new meaning in the sound of a heart beating into its own stumble or stop



doorshut red chest business  
when opened the wince for

busted faces force fed unhulled  
rice to puncture windpipes

stripped thrift fed fertilizer sinks  
girl birth burdens a blueshift kill

hinges linger on suffocated lungskin  
thrill and the throttle the ring the roar

fire on dried milk with saffron sings the air

पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ।

Chapter--5

*VIKṚTI VIJNĀNIYA ( knowledge of bad prognostics )*

अथातो विकृतिविज्ञानीयं शारीरं व्याख्यास्यामः ।

इति ह स्मार्हुरात्रेयादयो महर्षयः ।

We shall now, expound the chapter Vikṛti vijnāniya-  
knowledge of abnormalities *vis a vis* bad prognostics; thus  
said ( revealed ) Ātreya and other great sages. 1.





( आयुष्मति क्रियाः सर्वाः सफलाः सम्प्रयोजिताः ।  
भवन्ति मिषजां भृत्यै कृतज्ञ इव भूभुजि ॥ १ ॥  
क्षीणायुषि कृतं कर्म व्यर्थं कृतमिषाधमे ।  
अयशो देहसन्देहं स्वार्थहानि च यच्छति ॥ २ ॥  
तर्हीदानीं गतासूनां लक्षणं सम्प्रचक्षते ।  
चिकित्तिः प्रकृतेः प्राज्ञैः प्रदिष्टा रिष्टसंज्ञया ॥ ३ ॥ )

All the treatments properly administered by the physician to the person who has long life become successful just like the grateful person (becomes faithful) to the king. Treatments administered to the person whose life is waning ( short ), become a waste, just as the help done to a mean person. By that, the physician gets bad reputation, doubt of life and loss of own desires. Hence, herein are described, the signs of the person who is losing his life. Abnormal changes of the prakṛti ( normal features of the body and mind ) are called, by the learned, as *Riṣṭa* ( fatal signs ). 1-3.

28 A

their skin so translucent and less so when air exposure their waiting in numbers been  
dropped off in front of government buildings in a bundle here comes love here comes  
marriage there once was a girl named \_\_\_\_\_ they are the so many  
losing to the stars their possible kissing in the orphanage because there the beds line up  
and there is a whole generation of empty beds there is a generation now crossing over  
to the sky instead

*Riṣṭa nirukti ( definition of fatal signs ) :--*

पुष्पं फलस्य धूमोऽग्नेर्वर्षस्य जलदोषयः ।  
यथा भविष्यतो लिङ्गं रिष्टं मृत्योस्तथा भ्रवम् ॥ १ ॥

Just as the flower, smoke and appearance (and collection) of clouds are the signs of future occurrence of the fruit, fire and rain respectively. *Riṣṭa* are the definite signs of on coming death ( fatal signs ). 1.

To step  
inside this  
shadow  
    stop.

Harvest  
moons up  
with bliss.  
We couldn't  
    stop it.

Harvest  
is a promise  
so fragrant  
the lung-  
sac becomes  
a memory where  
    fermatas end.



Blaze power and darkness—  
Blissful sleep on my sleeve.

What's left of the dancer's dress?  
What world could have you happy?

Here, a lake and shipwrecks  
applause to no one listening.

I gave a lecture on your poem as poplars  
grew and velvet on the deer's antler.

According to my almanac  
the day gets longer

and years become larger.  
There were many men—

they hinged ennui  
with flashing matches,

pipe tobacco, and chirpy  
virtues that stirred frequent

and shrugged wrong doing  
into good—

like when we touch  
marble on hot afternoons

or bite an apple  
while gazing at the moon—

morning always offers other fruit

(something new)



a marriage  
offers protection

but anyway  
i've got my work

ecstatic [she says]  
to hear yes

this event could erase

previous identities

so we agree to destruction

see the film about industry work

it's on the syllabus:

[ that subversive epic]:

*Modern Times*

remember the factory

sequence

a body rolls through a cog

it's Charlie Chaplin's spine!

disc by disc one at a time

[not to] demand [not too] protest

all love the letters left in our Union's

Lost and Found



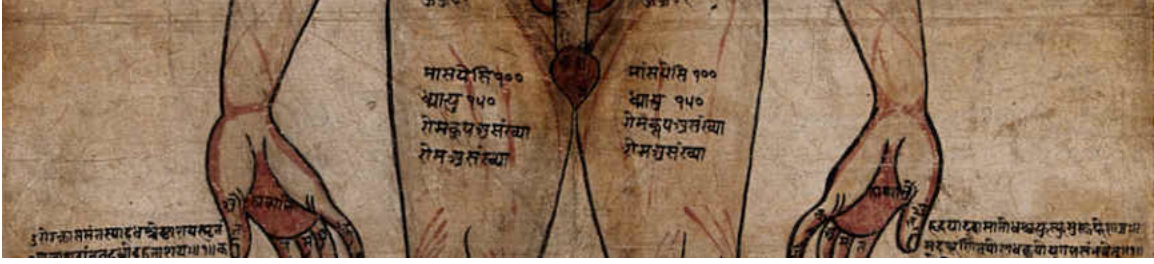
Brilliant crop. Brilliant toil.  
The meat is certainly used for soup  
for sureness's selection's so natural.  
The disaster within/lying to each  
morning the sun wakes me up.  
    To say someone needs protection.

Someone churns stocks of milk, butter,  
  
rice. I'm trying to remember what I wanted—  
  
passage meant goodnight but still I shiver and we all  
  
write a survival story down somewhere.

*she is not here but i am here you do  
not forget you do not forget her when  
we sing and i stretch song on skin  
call back her and call back her i have  
just this language now will you do coo with me  
when i can not breathe my legs are dancing  
i am loser and i am winner here  
she is not here but i am her when*

*how many months when your mum sings the same  
songs you dream i fever and fall off the changing table*

*and who will catch me and how will i eat and  
i do have a sister she is there with you  
she has blue eyes hum animal eyes slow  
and she falls to sleep there by your feet*



VĀGBHATA'S ASTĀṅGA HRDAYAM  
 from Chapter 40  
 (Virilification therapy)

...  
 Man who is seeking pleasure should resort to virilification therapy constantly. It bestows contentment, nourishment, children of good qualities, continuity of progeny and great happiness immediately.

...  
 A man without children, is like a tree which has no shade, bearing no flowers of foul smell, and not bearing fruits, not having branches, and standing alone.

...  
 He who consumes white tila soaked in milk boiled with the testes of the goat, copulates with hundred women as never before.

...  
 Powder of vidari soaked many times in its own fresh juice and consumed, mixed with honey and ghee, makes the person enjoy hundred women.

...  
 He who consumes paste of kulirasrangi dissolved in milk and partakes food along with sugar, ghee, and milk behaves like a bull with women.

...  
 All the (five) sensory pleasures should be enjoyed to the maximum, they are the sprouts of the kalpa vrksa and the five arrows of the cupid.

...  
 After the end of the ceremony (ritual of begetting a male offspring) the man who has partaken food consisting of ghee, milk, and boiled rice, should climb on the bed, keeping his right foot first, and at the auspicious moment; the woman should climb next, keeping her left foot first, from the right side (of her husband), after partaking food consisting chiefly of oil (sesame) and black gram.

...  
 The woman, who has completed sixteen years of age, mating with a man who has completed twenty years, the uterus, the channels, of blood (menstrual), semen, and the mind (in this context) all being pure (unvitiated), gives birth to a valient son.

...

Each of the objects of the sense organs yields happiness and love, what to say when all of them are present together in the body of a woman.

*There is something compelling about being both male and female, about having an entry into both worlds. Contrary to some psychiatric tenets, half and halves are not suffering from a confusion of sexual identity, or even from a confusion of gender. What we are suffering from is an absolute despot duality that says we are able to be only one or the other. It claims that human nature is limited and cannot evolve into something better. But I, like other queer people, am two in one body, both male and female. I am the embodiment of the hieros gamos: the coming together of opposite qualities within.*  
—Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*

not breeders still come out—

in a poem for the animals we fuck like bunnies like all the time or like lions in dens my

my mmamoriri yr name sounds like fox, too in mothertongue howl like dogs would do

the shrimp are born girls to become men to mate

sometimes people are like *who wears the pants in the relationship?!* and we're like both

and we both dress in dresses sometimes or we say she's the cat and I'm the dog

when the cat's away the mice will play on play on like the dormouse the California

dormouse mates monogamously for life but they don't live that long anyway

or some weeks I dress like a white bearded dad one day then shave for a dress the one

to wear after pulling gently up a tight pair of fishnets fast and relative to the moon

macaques and whiptail

lizards and bluegill sunfish

hyenas and us

“Why aren’t we all bisexual, with one gonad acting as a testes and one as an ovary (only one of each is necessary for either reproductive role anyway)?”

–Fred Hapgood, *Why Males Exist – An Inquiry into the Evolution of Sex* (1980)

---

For survival. Not either has to be one or the other or only just you are my other. As in, despot duality^as in the daughter industry breeds fantasy weddings with fireworks and horses and drums to stop the traffic. But I still love to have to buy new lipstick and apply and re-apply.

with their hemipenes and blanketwarm pheromones   nests of red garden  
snakes gather to a ball to slither and entwine all together  
they might reproduce by doing so but they also might not



Studs on the street corner light up my cigarettes. Burned filters wedge between sidewalk panels but my daughter oh my daughter oh my daughter's been gone so long now I can't remember what her voice sang like when she'd sing me my lullabies.

maybe this wouldn't be acceptable to most persons where you are but here i am  
awake for hours before bathing some days we talk over phones and echo  
remember dancing to the *i am a disco dancer* song in your mum&dad's room while  
they were sleeping i read your algebra notebooks some afternoons tried to trace  
the way you make loops in the number two

A world with out girls :: Abnormal patriarchal hierarchies (Feminized men!)

The piggy back frog mates to the death :: He straddles on to grow and stays :: Emaciates

A world with girls :: Darkness between predatory fireflies :: Land on her and she eats you

Some scavengers have a “pseudo-penis” :: They can be cocksure killers

Nest building fish exponentialize each of the genders :: Three males sometimes as three

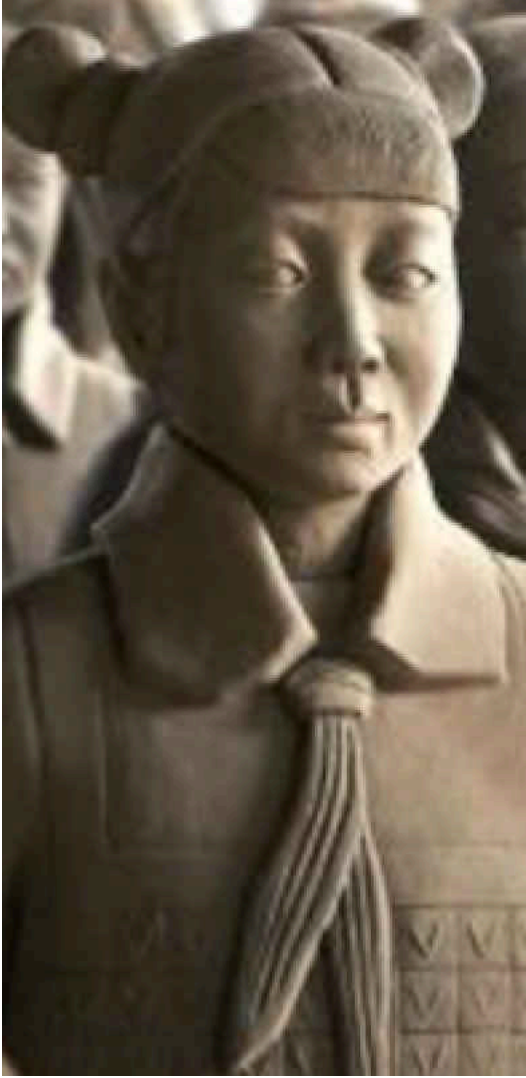
Toxicity reports can come up low :: This folk singer :: Mason :: His eponymous album

:: I bought&loved it so much I listened to it over and again until the disc melted ::

New Mexico’s state symbol nips lady ears :: Her jerky gait swaggers a sway

Old World monkeys to queer our futures :: To queer our futures and the rest

So fast at long last what can be caught? Here is a play that takes place on a surgical stage. In a theatre where a boy is born: sweets for the whole town! As for the arrival of the girlchild, they'll also ask if you knew it was so in gravidity. But keep if you can a butter knife near the cinnamon. Leave lights on. Top the tension with a cigarette, whiskey. Disguise her life—likened to a cat, a groundling, or with two hands held together—see how the shadow becomes a doggie?



sentry prophecies upon us

tortured desert made this place

a young age when sisters went missing

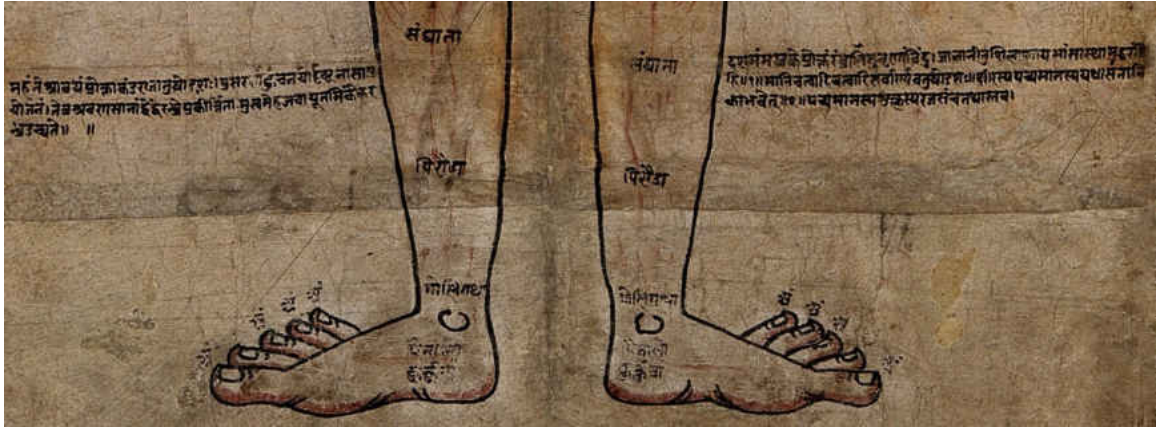
transpire      expire      consider

a bear or otter    a wolf or danger

when gala vicars sing soothing laments

*we have the body of a woman*

painter sold the work for a song to echo towards evening



from Section 2 – Chapter 1  
Sarira Sthana  
(section on Anatomy and Physiology/embryology)

...

Notes: The beam of the sun's rays passing through a lens converging on a piece of paper is not visible, yet we notice the paper catching fire, similarly the entry of the soul into the embryo though invisible can be inferred by the commencement of life activity in it.

...

By the same doctrine (of the effect being similar to the cause), a male (child) will be produced when semen is more, a female child when menstrual blood is more and child neither definitely male nor female when both are equal.

...

Wise men say, that in order to beget a (good) offspring, the couple should indulge in copulation in solitude (in a secluded place, free from embarrassment by others). A bad offspring, though of reputed pedigree, is like fire to the family.

...

The woman, herself, should instill drops of juice of roots of brhati made with milk into her right nostril if she desires a son and into the left nostril, if she desires a daughter.

*You are no singular existence here. The year: 1982. We watch E.T. in a movie theater and even though the theater is full of people you are the only one in the room with me. We fall asleep. In a memory of this moment I hear children snore over playhouse loudspeakers. We smell less the smell of butter flavor and our shiny candies and more the lingering smell of smoking is allowed from a decade ago. After several years—this seems possible: you. Sitting in darkness, our sticky floor pushes up against layers of rubber and canvas on our shoes and then on my jeaned knees and then on the palms of your hands that you will later lick for the salt taste.*

*In the movie there is a boy on a bicycle. A space alien sits wrapped in a blanket in a basket on the handlebars. Some magic happens and then they fly in front of the moon. When I ask you what you remember you say we were eating the same candy that was in the film. You picked some up off the floor and put the pieces in your mouth. The alien in the movie needs protection, to go home, to be lifted into the sky, to disappear. [Superman did something similar with General Zod and his criminal Kryptonian crew in Superman II. Remember: Ursa in her black suit, saying “see how these humans need machines to fly!” And remember her lipstick and how she blows the helicopter a kiss, then the helicopter loses control and crashes into a barn?] You, too blur into space.*

*Amniocentesis was introduced around 1974 so now in the science of the body: regarding birthing, blood flow in the umbilical cord and placenta can be observed with real-time sonography. And now we know: how a camera can sound a heartbeat, show a pulsing. We see a shimmer against hospital white and that glassed monitor. in cystic spaces: a pattern pulsatile, whirling, and accelerating flow visible even to suggest a fetus’s sex, see the death. I ask you if it is conceivable: to graph a function of a space in which intuition could take the place of the screen, you say yes.*

*There is a frequency that keeps the body alive. You keep that metal whistle you won at the fair round your neck. I have never heard you blow into it but sometimes the wind is enough to make it make a sound. Because to know you would be to know how to answer a question I do not know how to ask: what I’m wishing for is an open sky for you—and there is one with stars that are forming a brilliant and almost blinding blue light.*





This is a story about a girl who was never.

There are parties, machines—made to say enough now:  
Oh, you are pregnant! Congratulations! Are you having a boy  
Or an abortion?

A machine to look inside:

a sonogram  
also called ultra-  
sound—uses  
waves bouncing  
in the interior  
not radiation  
so it is safe

Shatter sound pumps heart stutter haha heart stutter.

Womb as a landing and wound.

Labor works when

To announce the auspicious event.

Baby is born→

doctor looks for a penis

she can't find one

←Baby is dead



---

*Men are good men are bad and the war is never over.*

can many things be smaller

drawn clouds hold

hawks like backward fish

what is this what carries

what bliss what hope

what happy what hands

hands on a stomach and stay

hands over two eyes on a face

where closeness bursts white

like swirl and swim to

and a stalactitelike vine drapes

down to a head by my feet

do you think this is sexy

She was never with me—I only imagined.  
Her memory's a fragmented gamete in fontanel  
closing to form recognition or rattles.  
Her eyes may have been green. Or light  
reflecting off the dam's concrete  
offers some glint for the aching—tumult.  
Relentlessness of no sleep now or later on.

We exist in land drained from the missing.  
Fiercely for one another come and go sex  
sweeping floodplains we continue out.

world without girls—

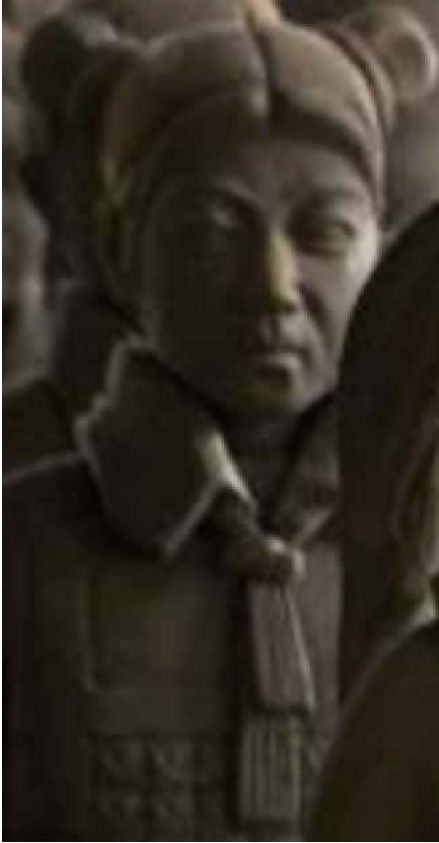
no song no singing no silences no music...no milk no territory no engine...no self no discipline no saying...no no terrible child no water...no vestige no scholars no pipe...no poetry no blood...no illusions no wind no vista...no marvel no power no bright...no no no no truffles no oil no...onion no fruit no bread no simmer...no savor no spit no swallow...no breathing no bedding no mattress...no blanket no fall to the floor and sweat...no pillow no sharp objects no shirts...no problem no pleasure no instance...no time no questions so sorrow daughter no dear so disappear...no horizon no labor no rest no art...no brush no wickedness no split no pier...no mezzanines no yearling no driving without a license no cowherd's son no retreat no honor no kill no

to be her(e)  
brothersongs  
will light the pyre  
sweep grave-  
stones I am  
burning beautiful  
incense for living  
& dead to be  
in between as in  
not ok as in trouble  
on the borders  
in which space  
shall I live



Another missing girl dreams to me at dawn.  
My daughter would be an heir or her own error.  
My wild and unmarried braid undone again  
'Til my estrus breaths—coconut oil smooths to fray.

She would have danced even to my uneven lazy beats.  
But I cannot say disappeared/she was never here.



---

*A world where girls are married off before they can even name their own desire.*

eyelid kisses

the glass larynx opens for breath

a drink of water

skin sheds

blessings for every hair

wings bloodied (on backward hawks)

sounds of a light's beam

i am in the sky

you are there singing in between

pulsings of a wingspan's flap

sounds of guts falling to the floor or in a dog's mouth

hums in the garden

or the act ends as origins as horses resemble us, my love

ephemera

in time the pillow you left smells

less like our heads and then mine

remains here

hotel ashtrays and your grandmother's  
story about stealing them year after

years ago

in time your blanket creases my cheekskin

oils itself into threads

where your hair's been

braided

in limbo you left in time

the bed

there by my feet

rocking we fall

asleep to each

other's heartbeat

“Insects were long on this Earth long before us, they will still be here long after us, and when we are able to explore distant planets, we shall find their like rather than our own. Which I think, will be a source of consolation to us.”

–Amin Maalouf, *The First Century After Beatrice*

---

bight and bite  
a wound heals

a mother wakes  
before daybreak

to make soup of boiled down bones  
to make soup to swallow of boiled down bones  
and potatoes

to smoke before daybreak  
before children

wake to whir(ring)  
machines light fires

a kitchen and riches she can demand  
from the men

surplus

paper dolls  
kimono dragons  
motherland  
no man's land  
whys and wherefores

monarch wings rose

to power

power points  
crack me up

(in Actualities)  
a horse is a horse  
declares go home no  
no corporate authority

makes the crown and crowd want  
to take note

this production is brought to you by the global daughter industry! “Exclusive confidences of a Bombay nurse: “We see nothing but willies now!” (Maalouf 33)

“

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*what congeals the give-and-take from accretion?  
what is a family for?  
what makes a house hold run?  
is there a circuit staged at the center,  
a room in which to re-enter,  
any wagers on the gender?  
what forms do I take?  
is there any language  
we can make?*

*Who shoed the fame now?*

*We snatched one fusty scab.*

*Whey aunt sent decays*

*when we stand ousted.*

*We take out abode and can*

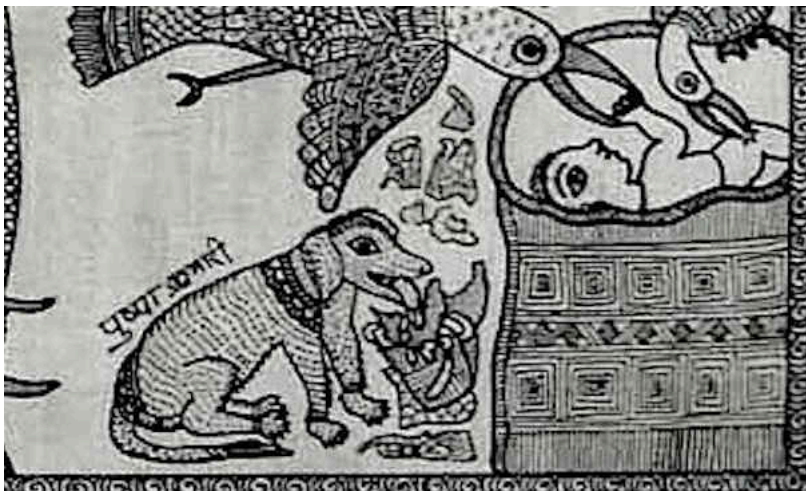
*fade a focused dynasty.*

*Oh be tuned back to the pack*

*and at some new phase set*

*stout foams on a pot to eat!*





the doctors announce times of death and sister sleeps      spend days holed up in  
the library and learn the word *amniocentesis*      kiss cousins in blue film rooms

where the women wore no gloves and smelled of blood and marigolds

## **Sex Selection Frequently Asked Questions**

### *Have many babies been born using the sperm isolation method?*

A: Yes. Thousands of healthy babies have been born in the United States and other parts of the world.

### *How long will it take to conceive using this method?*

A: The average woman conceives in about three cycles. Some conceive sooner than others. Human reproduction is not a very efficient process as evidenced by the fact that only about 20% of couples trying to conceive naturally do so in any given month.

### *Will irregular menstrual cycles prevent me from undergoing sex pre-selection?*

A: Women who have irregular cycles are accepted for this procedure, but usually take longer to conceive, because they ovulate less frequently and unpredictably. This makes it more difficult to choose a proper day for insemination. Hormone tests are of some help in this matter. We recommend that the female be evaluated by a fertility specialist prior to initiation of procedure.

### *Who will be told of my conception in this manner?*

A: The process is totally confidential. Our staff will release no information about you unless it was authorized.

### *Am I more likely to have a problem with a pregnancy resulting from sex pre-selection?*

A: Experience indicates that the course of a pregnancy resulting from sperm isolation is no different from one conceived naturally.

### *Are miscarriages more common?*

A: The likelihood is no greater or less than that of a natural conception, which is presently estimated at one out of four pregnancies.

### *Is the chance of a birth defect developing, higher after sperm isolation?*

A: No. All artificial insemination studies, whether performed with fresh, frozen, washed or isolated sperm, show no greater occurrence of birth defects when compared to natural conception.

### *Am I guaranteed the child of desired sex by pre-selection procedures?*

A: The outcome of the pregnancies can never be guaranteed. The statistics for each procedure will be discussed with you before proceeding.

### *Once washed, how long can a specimen be kept prior to intrauterine insemination?*

A: We suggest that the insemination take place within one hour of completing the separation procedure. A washed specimen can be safely kept for a couple of hours prior to insemination. In addition, the Fertility Center of California, Sperm Bank Inc. can maintain the washed specimen in a special medium for 6 hours should the insemination be delayed.

## **Request a Consultation with FCC »**

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**Purity of the sense organs, their objects, intellect, soul and mind and normalcy of the tissues of the body are the features of (the person) cured of insanity.**

Insanity has six kinds. By body type (three) and destiny, sins and by poison. Indulge in meat and wine (and women). Become exaggerated. Oblations of victuals that are greasy and sweet. Uncooked meat. You drink the water by the cattle shed where the rivers make union. The mind becomes disordered due to loss. Thing(s) most liked become normal—cures are the opposite of greed. Let them migrate into the body like assurances and consoling words. We will put you in a well without water. Endure hunger on purpose. Your acquaintances assure you this new loss of your beloveds (money, drink, etc.) is an amazing thing of the body. They smear you with mustard oil, heated metal, make you itch. The common girl beats you with lashes & throws you into a ravine. The king's attendants bind you in a dark room empty of weapons and stones, bandits or thieves. A toothless snake bites you. The time is right, so illness can be alarmed right out of you. In the room will be a decaying dead dog. A plump dog. Inhale—deeply. You can eat his meat. It will make you bleed but only in a place devoid of breeze. Urine, bile, excreta, hairs, hooves, and the skin of a jackal, porcupine, owl, and a kind of sparrow, bull and goat. Anoint your own skin. Breathe in. We macerate the herbs in elephant's urine (made into pills) and dry it in the shade. You drop drops of this mixed with elucidated butter into your eye. Evil spirits and epilepsies—just like nectar—bestow astuteness and growths of the body in children. When you have no semen, no brood, no intelligence, want good memory, can't digest—drop herb paste (appropriate kind) up your nose and your barren woman will bestow sons that produce good speech and voice, (intelligence). When you are corpulent, oleation. When you are combustion, purgative therapy. When your visage is blue and your eyes are red—you will be rejected. Loss of money, your woman, etc. which is unbearable, persists for a long time leads to insanity. You become pale, timid. You black out often. You weep for reasons other than death. You desire a woman (sex) and solitude. Secretions gush. Out of the nose and the mouth makes a copious saliva. Startling activities. Hatredness to cleanliness and sleep after taking rations. Attack others with a clenched hand. Desire a cool shade and cold water. Remain naked. You see fire. Blaze. Stars. A lamp that is not actually present.

could've been doctor mother

lover's once lover kin or me

अगर आप एक अजन्मी बच्ची के साथ  
ऐसा कर सकते हैं तो ना आप माँ हैं,  
ना बाप, ना डॉक्टर और ना.....  
प्रकृति के प्रहरी !

“if u kill unborn female then u r not father mother doctor or natural”

i have given every love a mole:

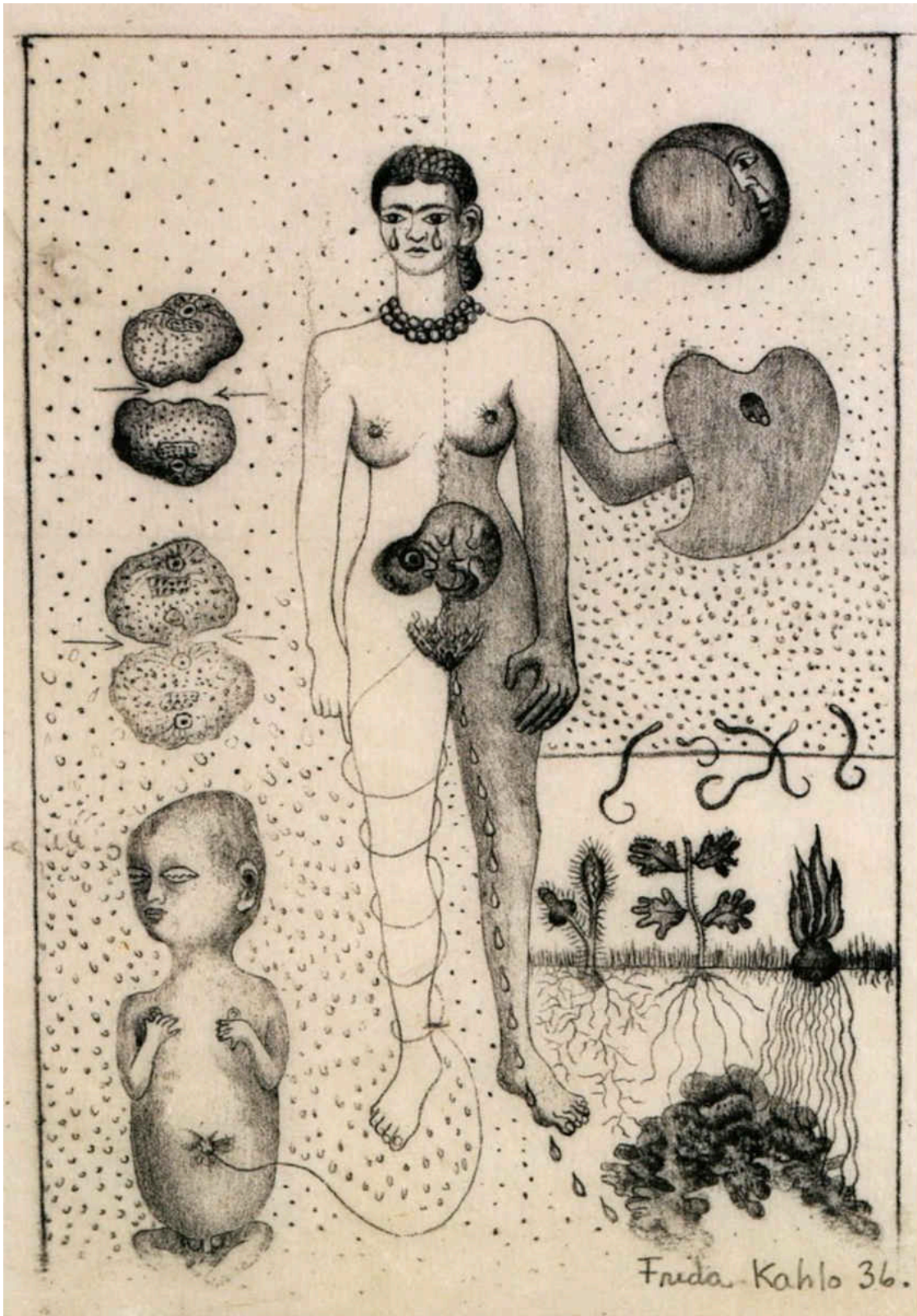
the belly has one for *n* one for *m*  
on my left thigh—i left it for *b*  
the one on my cheek belongs to *t*  
i can see the one on my arm—it's *r's*  
*c*, this one by my eye is yours, but / you and  
*s s s*, each one here is actually just for you

from the missing i feel more alive

the names mean many things or are a system of letters nestled together along  
with mine—not carved into trunks of trees i have not seen so i cannot say







---

*Raising a daughter is like watering your neighbor's plant. Hai! Let it be another boy!*

Two packs of whisky

Marry off daughters

Field acres for  
mango/marijuana/grazing  
barely/tobacco/banana

For camels and gold

A ring of gold enough to bury

brush sound and pace when she turns to breathe into my clavicle my ankle—an  
obtrusion of crack and swell and so we sit rhythming hums with sleep/sleep when she  
turns into a breath

Waken and for the time being. For the moment collapse of speech and speaking. Milk powder and water? Machines to heat food fast for our ground exegeses render the workday formidable but sometimes I just want to know what it would feel like to fall overnight through melting ice.

brother play:  
that song again  
the one about the garden  
and eaves on the stand  
the one where we event  
invention one throw at a time

brother, play  
that song again  
the one where desert ghosts  
stone fatherlandscapes to death  
the one with the whistle  
and hum where we to whisper to whir

this play takes place on a surgical stage  
oh brother—could've been doctor  
by now, brother recreates that song too

Years later, we heard once upon a time once again, mother told us:  
the rain it did not stop for the whole month of June and when the wind

Switched—drought and the mewling calls from peafowls: Indian, Green,  
and White. We were not afraid. We could taste river water in the air still

After the rain had stopped. We were not afraid because some bridges  
we could swim under/there were nights our beds were almost flying.

...and you must survive because we love you, and for the sake of your children and your children's children. —James Baldwin *My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of Emancipation*



the body is warm and the night turns cold.  
the body is not fit for no cleanliness, sleep.  
the body of both man both woman both.  
loss of money, wife, etc. which is unbearable.  
after a body becomes purified by these  
therapies, the mind becomes tranquil (calm).

living situations and associations

call for a lease          a signature

there is no way the body

can't become labor

the work trust affiliation      familial

pictures the desert

as place to frame factory garments

books state names

there on the table with candle **no. 3** burning

*"Give Love"* Aromatherapy      lilies and citrus  
ylang-ylang and orange

that gift      received

from the landlord

before she had to leave

child's born and mother  
cries in hospital for days

names her daughter a son's  
name opens her eyes

so blue the white  
nurse says oh this is god's baby

or the devil's

in the gulf a shrimp's  
mother was exposed to oil three

years ago and it is the grandchild  
that grows now with no eyes

## Notes:

Some text here has been lifted from Vāgbhata's *Astāñga Hrdayam*, translated by K.R. Srikantha Murthy, Government College of Indian Medicine, Bangalore, Krishnadas Academy, Chowkhamba Press, Varanasi, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (2000 A.D.).

Some images are from internet searches for sex selection and ayurvedic medicine—the image on page 31 is from Kungliga Svenska vetenskapsakademiens handlinginger (1818) as noted in Maja Larsson's paper: "From Frightening Beast to Primitive Stage: On the Normalization of the Monstrous Body in Swedish Medicine" in *Body/Claims*: Bromseth, Janne, Käll, Lisa Folkmarson & Mattsson, Katarina (eds.) (2009).

Some text here has been lifted from websites by resarchgate, the population reference bureau, the public library of science, the bbc, the economist, the Womb With A View® 3D 4D HD and Gender Ultrasounds website, and from the Sperm Bank, Inc. dba Fertility Center of California, California Sperm Bank Clinic, EST 1980 website.

In 2015 sculptor Prune Nourry's Terracotta Daughters Army was buried in mainland China. Excavation of this installation, 108 life-sized statues inspired by eight orphan girls in Madaifu, is planned in 2030. (observer.com) The photo on page 84 is from this site.

Image on page 108 is an uncaptioned computer picture found on Pinterest.

Italicized lyrics in the poem for Purvi Patel come from Leslie Feist's song, *Mushaboom*.

Italicized line on page 51 is from a talk about our ancestor ghosts by Carlos Fuentes.

Italicized line on page 81 comes from Valarie Martínez's poem, *It Is Not*.

Italicized lines on pages 87 come from MIA's song, *Survivor*.

Italicized line on page 93 comes from Fatimah Ashgar's essay *Finding The Hammaam: Towards an Inclusive Muslim Femme Poetics*.

The line on page 109 comes from Shauna Singh Baldwin's novel, *Selector of Souls*.

A large part of the "world without girls—" series is a lipogram that omits the letters g, i, r, & l from pages typed out from the following text's under study on my table at the time of composition: my own seminar paper, titled "Firearms, Breaking Syntax, And Unicorns: MIA, 'Explosion of tires has no meaning,' (the title of a poem by Tsering Wangmo Dhompa) *Schizophrenie* And Performing Race From The Margins" for a Critical Race Theory class at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, Zia Jaffrey's *The Invisibles: A tale of the Eunuchs of India*, Carmen Giménez Smith's *Goodbye, Flicker*, Bhanu Kapil's *Schizophrenie*, Dawn Lundy Martin's *Discipline*, and Kumkum Sangari's *Solid : Liquid, a (Trans)national Reproductive Formation*.

**Curriculum Vitae**  
**SOHAM PATEL**

**EDUCATION:**

*University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI*  
PhD, Creative Writing, 2013-2018

*University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA*  
MFA, Poetry, 2012

*Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA*  
MA, English Language and Literature, 2004

*University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND*  
BA, English and British Literature, 2001

**EDITORIAL POSITIONS:**

Assistant Editor, *The Georgia Review*, 2018-present  
Poetry Assistant Editor, *Fence*, 2017-present  
Poetry Editor, *cream city review*, 2014-2017  
Chapbooks Assistant Editor, *Horse Less Press*, 2016-2017  
Poetry Editor, *Hot Metal Bridge*, 2010-2012  
Managing Editor, *almagre literary arts journal*, 2007-2009  
Reader, *Bellingham Review*, 2003-2004

**TEACHING:**

*University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI*  
Graduate Teaching Assistant, Courses taught: Introduction to Creative Writing,  
Introduction to College Writing, College Writing and Research: Writing About Poetry,  
2013-2017

*University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA*  
Adjunct Instructor of "ESL" Seminar in Composition, 2012-2013  
Writing Tutor, The Writing Center, 2011  
Graduate Instructor of Introduction to Poetry, 2011-2012  
Graduate Instructor of Introduction to Creative Writing, 2010-2011  
Graduate Instructor of Seminar in Composition, 2009-2011

*Gateway to the Arts Charter School, Pittsburgh, PA*  
Teaching Artist, 2012-2013  
*Community College of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, PA*  
Instructor of Creative Nonfiction: Memoirs, Memories, and Stories, 2012

*University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, CO, 2007-2009*

Adjunct Instructor, Courses taught: Fundamentals of Creative Writing, Introduction to Poetry, Environmental Rhetoric, Introduction to Rhetoric, Developmental English

*Pikes Peak Community College*, Colorado Springs, CO, 2005-2007

Adjunct Instructor, Courses taught: English Composition and Literature, U.S. Literature, World Literature, Introduction to Literature, Composition.

*Anand Arts College*, Gujarat, India, 2004-2005

Visiting Lecturer, Courses taught: Functional English, British Drama, Indian Literature. Classes were taught to students who were using English as a third or fourth language.

*Western Washington University*, Bellingham, WA, 2002-2004

Graduate Instructor of First-Year Composition

*Grand Forks Central High School*, Grand Forks, ND, 2001-2002

Paraeducator for Vocational Resource Education

#### **BOOKS AND CHAPBOOKS:**

*to afar from afar*, (The Accomplices, 2018)

*ever really hear it*, (Subito, 2018)

*world without girls—&otherwritings (museum of expensive things, 2018)*

*In airplane and other poems*, (oxeye press, 2018)

*New Weather Drafts*, (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs, 2016)

*and nevermind the storm*, (Portable Press at Yo-Yo Labs, 2013)

*Riva: a chapter*, (kitchen-shy press, 2013)

#### **PERFORMANCES AND PRESENTATIONS (SELECTED):**

Panel Discussion. Feminist Poetics, Emergent Pedagogies: Panelist: Troubling the Human Animal "I." Los Angeles, CA, 2018.

Poetry and Panel Paper, with Film. Thinking Its Presence, The Ephemeral Archive: Panelist: The Raced Pronoun, and How Do We Sound?. The University of Arizona Poetry Center, Tucson, AZ, 2017.

Poetry with Film and Dance. #NOTENSTION2017. Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance Showcase of Queer South-Asian Diasporic Creatives. Bronx, NY, 2017.

Poetry and Healing Ritual. New Orleans Poetry Festival: Panelist: Animals And The Afterlife. New Orleans, LA, 2017.

Poetry and Live Writing with Film. &NOW Blast Radius-Poetry And The Other Arts: Panelist: And Those That Don't Survive. California Institute for the Arts. Valencia, CA, 2015.

Fiction Reading. Southeast Wisconsin Book Festival, Panelist: Other Sides of the Story: Writers Addressing LGBTQ Issues. University of Wisconsin. Waukesha, WI, 2015.

Poetry and Song with Film. Thinking Its Presence, The Racial Imaginary: Panelist: On The Poetics of Anguish, Gender, and Variant Constructions. University of Montana. Missoula, MT, 2015.

Poetry with Film. From Trauma to Catharsis, Performing the Asian Avant-Garde Panelist: A poetics of both or neither. California Institute for Integral Studies. San Francisco, CA, 2015.

Recitation. Split This Rock Poetry Festival Reader: Intersecting Lineages: A Showcase of African American and Asian American Poets. Washington D.C., 2012.

Panel Paper. Associated Writing Programs Panelist: A Different Kind of Hybrid: Race, Lyric, and Innovation. Washington D.C., 2011.

Panel Moderator. Associated Writing Programs Panelist: Eco-poetics on Colorado's Front Range: Intersections and Ecotones, and Shift the Ground Under Your Feet: Studying Writing Abroad. Denver, CO, 2010.

Panel Paper. Belladonna Advancing Feminist Poetics and Activism: A Gathering. Panelist: Disrupting the Page: Hybridity and Asian American Poetics. City University of New York. New York, NY, 2009.

Panel Paper. Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment Panelist: "The Rivers Running Through Arundhati Roy's Writing." University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 2005.

#### **PUBLICATIONS (SELECTED):**

Poetry: Literary Journals, Anthologies, and Magazines

*Resist Much/Obey Little Anthology*, 2017: "Poem Beginning with a line by Duncan"

*Dusie*, 2016: "from Letter To A Carbineer"

*eleven eleven journal*, 2015: "from Letter To A Carbineer"

*Banango Street*, 2015: "song"

*Twelfth House*, 2014: "(from) from The Missing"

*CURA Magazine*, 2014: "(from) from The Missing"

*Verse Wisconsin*, 2014: "Poem for the Animals" Nomination for Pushcart Prize and Best New Poets

*The Volta*, 2014: "song" Pushcart Prize Nomination

*The Destroyer Magazine*, 2012: "smith"

*No Tell Motel*, 2011: 6 Poems

*Anti-*, 2011: 3 Poems

*XCP (Cross Cultural Poetics)*, 2010: 3 Poems



*Copper Nickel*, 2010: "Dear Ghost" (finalist for the Copper Nickel prize)  
*Super Arrow*, 2010: "Rioted with The Wildest Scribbles" (Collaborative Poem)  
*Lantern Review*, 2010: "Sunken Garden Exit Ghazal" (Collaborative Poem)  
*Foursquare*, 2010: "Study the Scope of Wind Gust Retreat"  
*Main Street Rag*, 2010: "Wednesday 6:15 a.m."  
*Marginalia*, 2009: "The Laws of Rain"  
*The Cortland Review*, 2009 Issue 43: "shade train"  
*Shaking Like A Mountain*, 2008: 2 Poems  
*Shampoo*, 2007: "Postcard Poem"  
*Copper Nickel*, 2006: "Our Skin Collapse"  
*Stirring*, 2005: "Pop Off The Climbing" Nomination for Best of the Net  
*Cranky Literary Journal*, 2004: "Tea Time"

Book Reviews:

*Singapore Unbound*, 2017: "On Sonia Bahl's *The Spectacular Miss*"  
*Denver Quarterly*, 2011: "On Cynthia Arriue-King's *People Are Tiny in Paintings of China*"  
*Arch Literary Journal*, 2009: "On Myung Mi Kim's *Penury*"  
*Boxcar Poetry Review*, 2008: "On Clare Kageyama-Ramikrishnan's *Shadow Mountain*"  
*Boxcar Poetry Review*, 2007: "On Purvi Shah's *Terrain Tracks*"

Essay and Other:

*The Georgia Review*, 2018: "In the time of PrEP: An Interview with Jacques Rancourt"  
Panthalassa Pamphlet Series for *Tea and Tattered Pages*, 2017: "sites"  
*cream city review*, 2015: "On *The Best American Poetry* and *100 Chinese Silences*: An Interview with Timothy Yu"  
Broadside for *Fact-Simile Editions*, 2012: "ocean and shore"  
*About A Word*, 2011: "Poems as Rendition: Or, Some Ways I'm Stealing"  
Contributing Writer, 2009: Pikes Peak Poet Laureate's *Poetry While You Wait*

**FELLOWSHIPS:**

University of Wisconsin Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship: 2017-2018  
University of Wisconsin Chancellors Fellowship: 2013-2014  
Soapstone, Fellowship: July 2010  
Kundiman, Fellowship: June 2009, 2008, 2006  
Soul Mountain, Fellowship: July 2008

**AWARDS, HONORS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMITTEES (SELECTED):**

Woodland Pattern Book Center Community Volunteer, Milwaukee WI, 2014-2017  
Kundiman Staff Member, Bronx, NY, 2010-present  
Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission, 2016-2018  
Finalist for Cleveland State University Poetry Center First Book Award, 2017  
Finalist for Milkweed Editions Lindquist & Venum Prize, 2017  
Finalist for Omnidawn First/Second Book Contest, 2015  
Finalist for Nighthoat Books Poetry Prize, 2015

Finalist for 1913 First Book Contest, 2015  
Finalist for Nightboat Books Poetry Prize, 2014  
Finalist for Alice James Books' Kundiman Poetry Prize, 2012  
Finalist for Omnidawn's First/Second Book Contest, 2011  
Finalist for Alice James Books' Kundiman Poetry Prize, 2011  
Workshop Leader. speaq Program for Queer Youth, Pittsburgh, PA, 2011  
Poetry West Workshop Leader, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO, 2008  
Adjunct Instructor of the Year, Pikes Peak Community College, Colorado Springs, CO,  
2007

#### **REFERENCES:**

Brenda Cárdenas  
Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee  
Curtin Hall 589 3243 N Downer Avenue  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 5321  
(414) 229-6993  
[cardenab@uwm.edu](mailto:cardenab@uwm.edu)

Mauricio Kilwein Guevara  
Professor, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee  
Curtin Hall 512, 3243 N Downer Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53201  
414-229-4520  
[maurice@uwm.edu](mailto:maurice@uwm.edu)

Dawn Lundy Martin  
Professor, University of Pittsburgh  
628 Cathedral of Learning, 4200 5th Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260  
(917) 749-4068  
[d1m57@pitt.edu](mailto:d1m57@pitt.edu)