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Modernism/modernity, Volume 24, Number 2, April 2017, pp. 217-244 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/mod.2017.0019>



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Jessica Berman

When Orlando falls into his transformative trance at the midpoint of Virginia Woolf's romp of a novel, he is an agent of the British Empire in Constantinople, at the moment of receiving his newly conferred Dukedom. The ceremony is a pageant of Empire, which gathers "people of all nationalities" to celebrate Orlando's status, while the text makes frequent reference to the show of British superiority in this event.¹ Yet, awakening as female, Orlando also awakens to life with the Gypsies, abandoning, for a time, not only the ambassadorial dwelling and its trappings of imperial power, but also his/her national identity. Orlando "dressed herself in those Turkish coats and trousers which can be worn indifferently by either sex" and then rode off where s/he had "often . . . longed to be" (103–04). In the following chapter, upon her return to England as female, Orlando discovers the ongoing disjunction between outward gendered appearance and inward sex, and the narrator remarks that "often it is only the clothes that keep the male or female likeness, while underneath the sex is the very opposite of what it is above" (139).

Scholars have often explored these moments of the novel as part of Woolf's critique of imperial masculinity and, more recently, as episodes in her work where Woolf both "extends and works against" modernist racialized aesthetics, "establishing a place for the sexually polymorphous white woman . . . and . . . contesting the ideological parameters of national inclusion."² But only a few scholarly examinations of *Orlando* begin from a transsexual or transgender perspective.³ In fact, the fantastic or modernist elements of the novel have sometimes been read as disrupting any representation of "real" transgender experience.⁴

MODERNISM / *modernity*
VOLUME TWENTY FOUR,
NUMBER TWO,
PP 217–244. © 2017
JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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218 Even fewer scholars have linked the process of sex and gender transformation that Orlando undergoes in the middle chapters of the novel directly to his/her transnational movement and to our ability to read the novel within a transnational frame of reference.⁵

To the contrary, I begin with this episode to highlight the paired critique of national and sexual identification in *Orlando*, and to point out its implications for our efforts to build a global critical perspective on early twentieth-century literature. Woolf's novel, like other twentieth-century narratives, demands to be read as what I call a "trans" text, one that challenges prevailing assumptions about national belonging and scenes of reading, asking to be situated in the context of transnational modernism or twentieth-century "world literature" at the same time as it raises the question of gender and sexual identity as a constitutive dimension of those critical categories.⁶ This kind of a "trans" text challenges the normative dimensions of regimes of nationality and disrupts the systems of embodied identity that undergird them. It pushes us to recognize that any discussion of transnational or world literature must also attend to the assumptions of embodiment and gender identity that are attached to the concept of the nation. By attending to the "trans" dimensions of *Orlando* as well as later work by Ursula K. Le Guin, Joanna Russ, Jan Morris, and Iqbalunnisa Hussain, I will suggest that we reframe the conversation about transnational, world, or planetary literature to better acknowledge the centrality of sexuality, embodiment, and gender to national and transnational categories of belonging—along with any critique of them—as well as to better recognize the importance of transgender theory to our understanding of modernism/modernity and twentieth-century global literature.⁷

Transnational/Transgender

To be sure, by situating Orlando's gender transformation in Constantinople, Woolf drapes it in familiar Orientalist garb—the fluid Turkish trousers seem to offer options of identity not available in England; his encounter with Eastern otherness cloaks Orlando in transformative mystery (Johnson, "Writing the Land," 106). Woolf clearly participates in a British tradition that deploys Turkey as the exotic border between East and West, the site of desire and possibility.⁸ Yet reading *Orlando* as a trans text also asks us to see how far Woolf moves beyond the easy mobilization of Turkey as an Orientalist trope, or the simple codification of transgender identity as a seductive fantasy. Reading the transnational situation as also intrinsically transgender disrupts the determinative power of both the sexed body and its "home" geography, thereby also challenging the Orientalism of the novel's Turkish episodes and the seeming solidity of categories of gender identity once Orlando arrives back on English soil.

I also want to use this episode to explore a broader yet underexplored theoretical question, which has deep ramifications for the ways we conceive of both transnational modernism and contemporary world literature: Is the "trans" in "transnational" the "trans" in "transgender?" My question deliberately echoes Anthony Appiah's famous essay, "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial?," which discusses the post- in postmodernism as an attempt to "challeng[e] earlier legitimizing narratives"

of Enlightenment modernity—an attempt shared by postcolonialism.⁹ According to Appiah, just as postmodernism challenges the legitimizing narratives of modernism and modernity, postcolonialism (which he also problematically terms “post-realist” and “post-nativist”) challenges the narratives of national consciousness and liberation that characterized the first wave of anticolonial writing in Africa. Especially in the period after the mid-1960s, Appiah claims, writers exhibit their postcolonialism by mocking the realist narratives of African nationalism (“Is the Post-,” 349). In Appiah’s view, these later post-realist, postcolonial novels looked towards pan-Africanism as the new source for cultural legitimacy, challenging optimistic nationalism (353). In other words, their postcolonialism was not only postcolonial, it was also what I would call “transnational.” They deploy a set of attitudes or a constellation of relationships to the nation that challenge the primacy of the “national” as the dominant horizon of expectation and position texts as moving beyond and critiquing the dichotomy of “nation” and “world.”

Other more recent postcolonial theory has fleshed out—and contested—the link between the postmodern and the postcolonial, and has complicated both the linear historical trajectory of anticolonialism that Appiah traces and the assumption of a progress from nativist to transnational resistance movements. For example, as Jennifer Wenzel demonstrates in relation to South Africa, the matter of transnational affiliation is more complex. Affiliations flow “across national, temporal, and genealogical boundaries” and do not sort easily into linear narratives of “pre” and “post.”¹⁰ This complex transnationalism is also visible in the diasporic practices of many writers of African descent, as Brent Hayes Edwards describes, and in the long history of cosmopolitanism among black writers across the Americas, as illuminated by Ifeoma Nwankwo.¹¹ Others have pointed out the variety of modes within colonial and anticolonial textuality that cannot be subsumed within the catch-all term “nationalist realism.”¹² Modernism, understood as a dynamic set of aesthetic responses to and engagements with the problematic of modernity, arises globally in many different guises and a variety of time frames. It is not limited to those texts that display aesthetic styles common to Euro-American modernism, such as narrative fragmentation or stream of consciousness narration.¹³ Under this more capacious rubric, we can see a range of modernisms emerge in tandem with anticolonial movements in both pre- and post-colonial moments. But we have seen neither the kind of monolithic shift to post-realism that Appiah represents as a corollary of later postcolonialism, nor the decline of nativist sensibilities that he predicts.

These weaknesses in Appiah’s analysis show the danger of drawing an all-inclusive or too-simple critical analogy. Rather, when I ask “Is the ‘trans’ in ‘transnational’ the ‘trans’ in ‘transgender’?,” I pose an open question that seeks to recognize the common valences of these terms without creating a teleological universal story or drawing an equivalence that conflates fields or elides differences. It is a gesture that hopes to muster the critical energy that scholars such as Natalie Melas attribute to new models of scholarly comparison within a global domain, which allow us to compare without presuming equivalence, commensurability, or sameness between the fields in question. As Melas has argued, once the positivist model of historical progress, with its categories of timeliness and belatedness, has been rejected, and the imperial system of global

220 organization, with its focus on center and periphery, has been refused, “comparison” can begin to “involve . . . a particular form of incommensurability: . . . a ground of comparison, but no given basis of equivalence.”¹⁴ Comparison based in incommensurability rather than equivalence offers critical vantage points across fields and discourses that can illuminate shared patterns, adjacencies, interconnections, and divergences without erasing the singularity of events, texts, histories, or identities.

Despite its weaknesses, Appiah’s essay helps us see how the prefix “trans”—like his “post”—might operate as a comparative, “space-clearing gesture” in more than one critical domain (“Is the Post-,” 348). It points the way towards a method that loosens the prefix from its application only in connection to a series of other specific terms understood as separate entities and helps us understand the potential grounds of comparison between them. As Susan Stryker, Paisley Currah, and Lisa Jean Moore put it, considering the “relationality of [the prefix] ‘trans-’” rather than its attachment to substantive terms like gender or nation helps us see “categorical crossings, leakages, and slips” in and around the term and to recognize its capacity to “disrupt or unsettle the conventional boundaries,” disciplines, and ideas about gender.¹⁵ As Pamela Caughie puts it, writing about Woolf, “[w]hen used in such words as transvestite, transsexual, and transgender, ‘trans’ connotes movement, and while these concepts are often read in terms of movement from one identity category to another, . . . such movement also works to defy fixed categories” (“Temporality,” 508). Asking “is the ‘trans’ in ‘transnational’ the ‘trans’ in ‘transgender?’” as an open comparative question without a singular, universal answer allows us to see the important ways that the prefix “trans” can work to destabilize discourses of both nationality and gender without erasing their specific nuances or foreclosing their possibilities of divergence.

In particular, asking this question allows us to recognize the disruptive, critical energy of the prefix “trans” and the slippages it marks out when paired with terms like “nation.” It also highlights the specific valence of the term “transnational,” as distinct from other current critical categories describing “world,” “global,” or even “planetary” literature. Like the critique of the sex/gender system instigated by the “trans” in transgender theory, the “trans” in “transnational,” as I conceive it, serves to decenter the “national tradition” as an object of inquiry, exploring texts in relation to other, transnational horizons of expectations, even while recognizing the importance of their local commitments.¹⁶ In this guise, it functions as catechesis, much as postcoloniality does for Gayatri Spivak, “reversing, displacing and seizing the apparatus of value-coding” rather than attempting to argue as though from entirely new ground.¹⁷ In other words, it marks the struggle with the ongoing problematics of nation, empire, and globe, while opening up a space of resistance to their hegemony.

In this way, the transnational functions as a critical optic, practice, or critique of the discursive categories of nationalism, rather than describing a new internationalism or global canon (Ashcroft, “Beyond the Nation,” 13). The transnational shares the oppositional valence of the prefix in such words as “transgress” and “transform,” just as the “post” of postcolonial implies a critical position rather than a temporal-historical location. When we use the prefix “trans” to mean not just “across, through over . . . or

on the other side of” but also “beyond, surpassing, transcending,” it represents a challenge to the normative dimension of the original entity or space, a crossing over that looks back critically from its space beyond.¹⁸ The “trans” dimension of the practice of transnational literary study, or of postcolonial or world literature, then, can serve to denaturalize the connection between modern and contemporary narratives and their Euro-metropolitan contexts, as, more generally, between the nation-state and its literary traditions. It also brings attention to the ethical dimensions of texts that operate both within and across national horizons of expectations and highlights the political implications of this non-normative movement on both local and global levels.¹⁹

Under this rubric, a transnational *and* transgender approach to *Orlando* would not simply juxtapose male and female Orlando, or Orlando in Turkey with Orlando returned to England, but would rather explore the challenge to embodied normative nationality that emerges throughout the middle sections of the book, making national belonging both what Orlando longs for from the hills of Turkey and what her transformative experience in Turkey forever undoes. Throughout the novel, as the narrator claims, Orlando’s sex may often be the “very opposite” from “what . . . is above” (139). From its troubling first pages, this transgendered status also lies at the heart of the novel’s critique of empire, in which bodies must be identifiably marked, categorized, and placed in hierarchies. Reading this novel under the rubric of the oppositional prefix “trans” thus highlights the extent to which Orlando’s sex change in Turkey is also—and always—a challenge to the embodiment of nationality and empire, and invites us to recognize the importance of this confluence in other texts, both from the early decades of the twentieth century and beyond.

Contemporary transgender and transsexual theory offers important insight into the ways that the prefix “trans” can operate as an important optic or “analytic,” its significance for our understanding of gender, and its relevance to literary study.²⁰ While recent queer and feminist studies have moved into closer alignment with transgender theory, it is important to recognize the specific contributions of trans theory, which are still too little acknowledged. In particular, transgender theory has reminded us of the importance of decoupling gender from sexuality, moving beyond a binary view of sex/gender, and especially pushing towards a reassessment of the role of embodiment in gender identities and performances. It shares a certain genealogy and critical vocabulary with queer and feminist theory, but also pushes back against some of the assumptions of both fields, especially those that have at times mischaracterized trans people as gender conservatives reinforcing patriarchal gender systems.²¹ As Talia Bettcher and Ann Garry point out, “trans studies at its inception was bound up with the tensions between (non-trans) feminist outlooks and trans lives. In fact, trans studies began to emerge in response to some (non-trans) feminists’ unfriendly theorizing about trans people” (Introduction to “Transgender Studies and Feminism,” 2).

Even within the more hospitable poststructuralist analyses of gender catalyzed by Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble* (1990), the trans position has often been marginalized or seen as problematic in its insistence on bodily experience. As Butler put it in a recent interview, at the time *Gender Trouble* was written

I did not think well enough about trans issues . . . I needed to pay more attention to what people feel, how the primary experience of the body is registered, and the quite urgent and legitimate demand to have those aspects of sex recognized and supported. I did not mean to argue that gender is fluid and changeable (mine certainly is not). I only meant to say that we should all have greater freedoms to define and pursue our lives without pathologization, de-realization, harassment, threats of violence, violence, and criminalization.²²

Gayle Salamon's work has sought to bring a Butlerian notion of gender performance into closer connection with the "felt sense" of lived bodies so often articulated in trans theory by challenging "the notion that the materiality of the body is something to which we have unmediated access" while at the same time "mark[ing] the specificity of trans bodies and subjectivities."²³ She points out that "a consideration of trans bodies might help us understand how relations between the phantasmatic and the material can be embodied and lived" (*Assuming a Body*, 2). Her work highlights the specific insights that trans experience and theorizing bring to the study of gender and embodiment in both contemporary culture and literary texts.

In much contemporary transgender theory, the prefix "trans" has come to stand not for gender or sexual identities that have moved from one side of a binary field to the other, but rather for "anything that disrupts, denaturalizes, rearticulates and makes visible" the links we assume to exist between a sexual body and the social roles it is expected to play. Transgender studies thus engages with the ethical and moral dimensions of the fact that "people experience and express their gender in fundamentally different ways" and concerns itself with combating the political "injustices and violence that often attend the perception of gender nonnormativity" (Stryker and Whittle, *The Transgender Studies Reader*, 3).²⁴ As Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle put it, "[u]ltimately, it is not just transgender phenomena per se that are of interest, but rather the manner in which these phenomena reveal the operations of systems and institutions that simultaneously produce various possibilities of viable personhood, and eliminate others" (3).

A transgender critical perspective thus invites us to recognize the deep connection between transgender phenomena and the discourses of power in which they are inscribed, to challenge their normativity, and to recognize the ethically and politically productive dimension of that challenge. As Leslie Feinberg and Susan Stryker both remind us, transgender studies has always been linked "to a broader struggle for social justice."²⁵ But note the spatializing metaphor at work in this comment. A "broader struggle" implies not just a more capacious way of conceiving transgender justice, but also the necessity of a wider arena for its struggle. If transgender phenomena are perceived as exotic or strange, they are transported away beyond the territory of the familiar or of the home domain. To put it in political terms, the trans subject, because outside the gender binary presumed by most states, also often moves beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of justice, and the possibility of claiming standing as a full citizen with the ability to make claims for redress within national borders. Although, since the 1990s, gender and sexuality studies have explored the ties between nationalism and sexuality—and between nationalism and gender, especially in terms of the treatment of women and sexual minorities by nationalist forces—transgender theory opposes

in a very specific way the primacy of a Western “Westphalian” view of citizenship or jurisdiction.²⁶ This is what Nancy Fraser calls one of the key political questions surrounding globalization—the issue of “who” counts as a subject or citizen with standing to make a claim for justice.²⁷ Stryker, Currah, and Moore have described “genders as potentially porous and permeable spatial territories” (“Trans-, Trans, or Transgender?,” 12). Judith/Jack Halberstam has called our attention to the challenge queer and trans identities pose to conventional notions of time and space.²⁸ I would argue that we should consider the transnational as a dimension of trans space and attend closely to its political ramifications.²⁹

Even today, the rights of transgender individuals vary greatly from state to state within the United States, from nation to nation within the European Union, and certainly among other states around the world. For example, in France it is still necessary to show proof of sex reassignment surgery in order to change one’s gender on one’s passport (as it was up until 2010 in the United States). So, the transgender individual who has chosen not to have surgery, or is too ill or too poor to be able to undertake it, is not accorded the rights of full citizenship that an accurate passport represents. On the other hand, since 2011, Australia allows for three gender designations on passports: male, female, and indeterminate. While much progress has been made in recent years, trans individuals are still subject to special screening practices, heightened scrutiny, and extensive searches at international border crossings.

The potential disenfranchisement faced by trans men and women under some of the recent US state voter identification laws and the controversy surrounding the regulation of restrooms since Spring 2016 also point to the continuing challenge that transgender identity poses to models of civic citizenship and civil rights that are based in immutable, binary categories of gender within the United States. According to the 2009 report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, “of those who have transitioned gender, only one-fifth (21%) have been able to update *all* of their IDs and records with their new gender. One-third (33%) of those who have transitioned had updated *none* of their IDs or records.”³⁰ Currah and Moore point out that the problem of inaccurate ID documents is not only one of access, but also of the enforcement of immutable binary categories by governmental power: “[H]ow is a mutating, trans-sexed body to be fixed, kept in place, and securely moored to the document that purports to describe its subject? What happens when state actors, insisting on the immutability of sexed bodies and their stable alignment to gender identities, are confronted with those whose bodies and gender identities fail to conform to gender expectations?”³¹ Because the state has a clear and continuing interest in assigning and regulating the identities of its subjects, which is an essential component of its ability to govern, even increased recognition of transgender peoples’ right to accurate documentation will not make this problem disappear. As Currah and Moore put it, “[a]lthough the taxonomies used to classify individuals as of *this* or *that* type (race, sex, national origin, for example) may shift as newer accounts of social difference displace earlier reigning disciplinary knowledges and ontological cartographies, the legitimacy of the traditional ‘police powers’ of the state to establish classifications remains intact” (“We won’t know,” 114, emphasis in original).

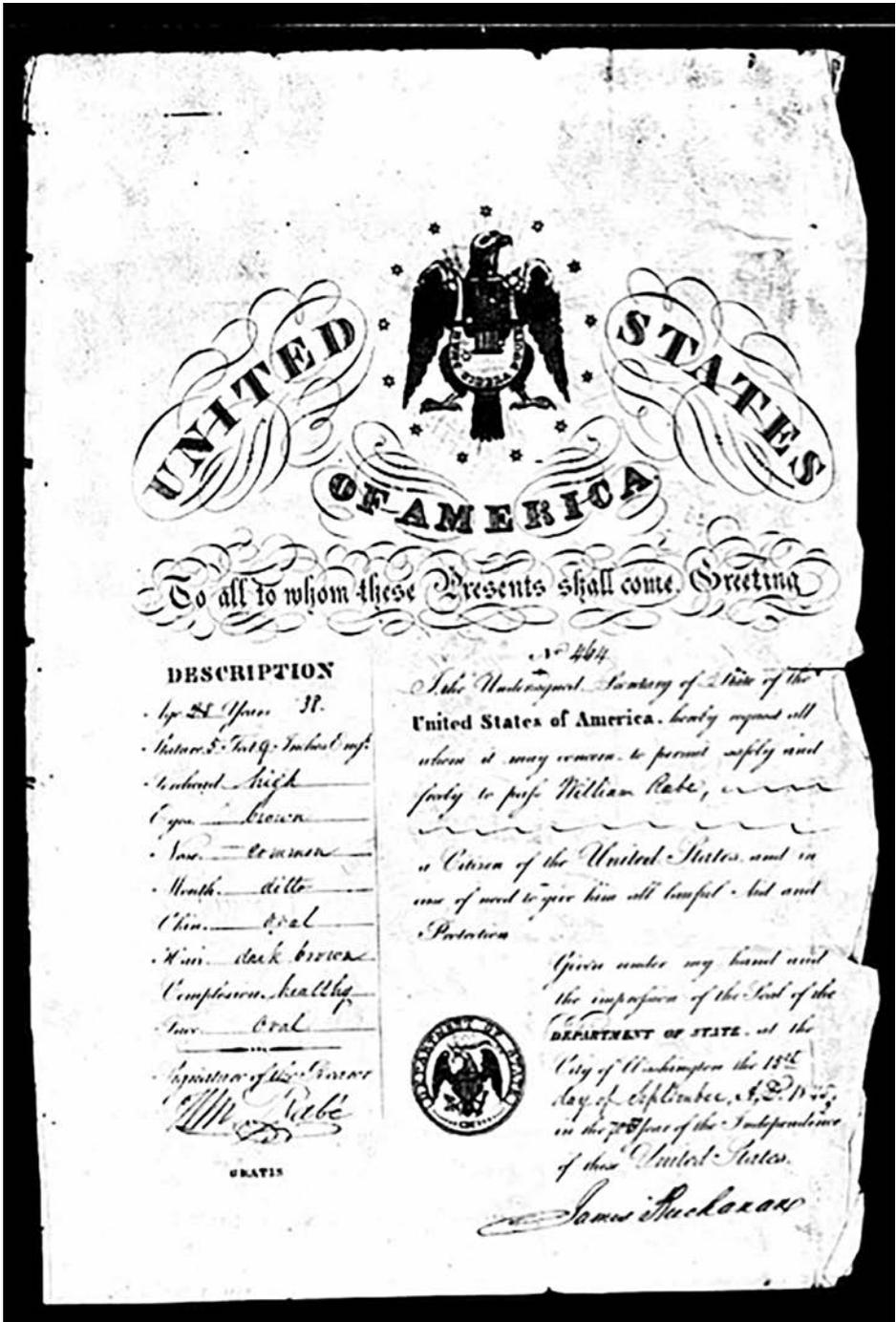
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The binary model of gender identity in the West has developed its primacy only since the eighteenth century—in other words, it arises along with the modern nation-state. In his classic study, *Making Sex* (1990), Thomas Laqueur points out that in Europe prior to the Enlightenment physical sex was understood as a single system, where male and female sex characteristics were seen as variations on the same theme. As he puts it “sometime in the eighteenth century sex as we know it was invented. The reproductive organs went from being paradigmatic sites for displaying hierarchy . . . to being the foundation of incommensurable difference.”³² I will not here rehearse the nineteenth-century history of the further consolidation of sexual difference. Laqueur’s history makes clear the extent to which the description of individuals within a rigid binary system of gender identity is a matter of the social understanding of embodiment rather than (only) the cultural construction of gender, and is linked in Europe and the United States, as in many other countries and regions around the world, to the very definition and policing of national identities.

The history of passports is also instructive on this point. In Europe and the United States, passports became a function of the state at the end of the eighteenth century. They were designed to facilitate passage into a foreign country—a request from one nation to another to “laissez-passer”—not as a system of individual identification. Whole families traveled on one passport, married couples shared their document, and parents sometimes requested passports on behalf of their grown children already traveling abroad.³³ In the age before easy photography, identifying descriptions on passports were written longhand and functioned not as lists of objective “facts” but as transcriptions of values. Passports in both the United States and Great Britain carried printed lists of features to which qualities or attributes were assigned. A person might be described as such: “Forehead: broad. Nose: large. Chin: sharp. Eyes: small. Complexion: clear.” Most entries in the US passport application archives insert one-word responses in the blanks, but some clearly show the value judgments within the rhetorical ethos of the passport description. For example, next to “nose:” one applicant originally wrote “middling size and nearly straight,” crossed it out and overwrote simply “medium”; the same applicant struggled similarly with the proper way to describe his mouth.³⁴ Complexions range from “reddish” to “clear” or “healthy” (figs. 1 and 2).³⁵

Within both the US and UK passport application process of this period, gender was a category no more objective than these other characteristics. Presuming the masculinity of the applicant, the US printed form included the phrase “I hereby apply for a passport for myself, accompanied by my wife _____ and minor children.”³⁶ The form thus relies upon the juridico-social category “wife” to designate the family group issued a passport, rather than determining the embodied facts of an individual in that role or policing its biological expression. When women filled out the form they sometimes elaborated on their marital or naturalization status, though few women applied for passports in their own names before the twentieth century.³⁷

But passports, including photographs, became required for foreign travel around World War I as a means of identifying citizens and keeping foreign nationals and spies



▲ Fig. 1. National Archives and Record Administration (NARA), *Passport Applications, 1795-1905*, microfilm publication M1372, roll 50, image 10, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.



▲
 Fig. 2. National Archives and Record Administration (NARA), *Passport Applications, January 2, 1906–March 31, 1925*, microfilm publication M1490, roll 63, image 685, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

out. Binary sex/gender, then, became a primary category of individual identification and a subject of deliberation among legislators, much as it was in the racialized debates on eugenics, immigration, and naturalization in the decades that followed. In other words, the enforcement of the distinction male/female became part and parcel of a state-based interest in determining the specific, factual, and immutable bodily identities of its citizens in order to separate them from infiltrators, enemies, and undesirables, and to enforce colonial relationships and hierarchies of race, in the early decades of the twentieth century.³⁸ At the same time, growing scientific interest in the mechanisms of bodily sex promoted increased scrutiny of bodies and practices—what Michel Foucault calls the medicalization of sex and gender in *History of Sexuality*. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the notion—popularized by Otto Weininger, Havelock Ellis, and Sigmund Freud, among others—that humans held an inherent potential for inversion or bisexuality created a concomitant need for the scientific study, supervision, and policing of sexual identity.³⁹ Further, in Great Britain gender or sexual deviance, long “linked to espionage and potentially to treason” became tied to fear of German “perversion” during World War I, creating more impetus to police the bodies of those granted passports.⁴⁰

This history of the links between biological sex and state-determined civic identity helps us understand Woolf's *Orlando* in a broader context. Recall the difficulty Orlando's sex change poses to her civic identity and her ability to inherit her ancestral estate. Returned to England more female than male, but often prone to shifts in gender expression, Orlando's identity is nonetheless recognized by her friends, her servants, and her dogs. But until a court fixes her gender status, the state cannot recognize her/him. Orlando's shifting gender poses a problem to social codes, domestic mores, and property law in the nineteenth century, but the primary matter is a broader one of civic identity and standing as a full citizen of Britain. As Currah and Moore point out, "a mutating, trans-sexed body" challenges the essential classificatory systems upon which state power derives ("We won't know," 113). Having no category for a transgender subject, the nation must domesticate Orlando by naming her as immutably female, and assigning her the diminished rights and opportunities of women in late-Victorian England: "The lawsuits are settled. . . . My sex . . . is pronounced indisputably, and beyond the shadow of a doubt. . . . Female. The estates which are now desequestrated in perpetuity descend and are tailed and entailed upon the heirs male of my body" (*Orlando*, 186–87).

Orlando's ultimate loss, as a woman, of the right to inherit demonstrates not only women's political and economic poverty within the Victorian gender system, but also the degree to which the state depends on this binary system as a basis for assigning citizenship roles, policing its borders, and determining who has legal standing to inherit, hold property, or sue for redress. A non-male British Orlando cannot exist until s/he has been made over into a normative Victorian woman with specified and diminished legal rights. Being without specific sex within a binary system also means being outside of the nation and its regime of justice. Like Stephen in Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, Orlando becomes what Heather Love calls "radically unhoused," exiled from the material patrimony of England in a two-step process that is first initiated by her gender transition and made formal by her assignment to the category "female."⁴¹ In other words, despite Orlando's seeming reinscription into national norms of femininity, attending to her trans status shows how, in the novel, a transgender identity produces a kind of internal exile and generates transnational critique.

This connection between citizenship and gender status is made even clearer by a less fantastical transgender text of the same time period, the 1933 biography *Man into Woman*, based on the letters and diary of Lili Elbe (recently fictionalized by David Ebershoff and made into the movie *The Danish Girl*).⁴² Often billed as the history of the first transsexual, *Man into Woman* details the travails of the Danish painter Einar Wegener as he transitions into life as a woman named Lili Elbe. Whereas for Woolf Orlando's shifting gender status is sometimes a masquerade, for Wegener/Elbe the quest is to bring his/her body into permanent accord with her gender expression through a series of surgeries that ultimately precipitate her death. Yet, as with Foucault's Herculine Barbin, who wrestles with the necessity of being assigned a "true sex" under French law, the primary struggle in *Man into Woman* has little to do with biology.⁴³ Constantly aware of two gendered identities inhabiting his/her persona, Wegener/

228 Elbe tries to shuttle between the two. Finally choosing to live as a woman, Elbe must banish Wegener and his career as a painter, end his marriage, and re-establish herself as a citizen-subject entirely anew. When, after the first operation, Lili says “Is he not yet dead within me?,” she makes clear that her trans status is impossible without doing violence to one aspect of herself or another (*Man into Woman*, 155).

The most dramatic expression of this violence concerns the legal dissolution of Wegener’s marriage along with his Danish identity and the creation of the new citizen, Lili Elbe. Ebershoff’s fictionalization elaborates on this process and forcefully demonstrates the imbrication of the regimes of gender and national identity. As is evident in both *Orlando* and *Herculine Barbin*, the state’s insistence on a binary model of gender identity requires an end to any potential gender fluidity. The trans subject is not legible within the codes of state and becomes further unhoused or disenfranchised by the violence of the state’s attempt to impose an acceptable gender identity. But the twentieth-century situation of the post-operative transsexual poses an even more vexing problem of citizenship: Wegener must be declared dead and his passport invalidated for Elbe to be divorced and allowed to live as female. Lili Elbe, a non-citizen (because a non “person”) who is not listed on the marriage certificate, has no standing to sue for redress and therefore cannot be granted a divorce.⁴⁴ But the marriage also cannot be continued between Wegener’s wife and the new woman, Lili. The state must kill off the former male citizen and issue a new passport to Lili, in the process nullifying the marriage.

In her book *Trans Liberation* (1998), Leslie Feinberg discusses the ways in which transgender identity continues to be problematic from the perspective of the state, describing her own experiences navigating the labyrinth of official identification forms. Since most US forms of identification require a definitive statement about gender (M or F) and also a picture, the applicant can be caught in a bind if one seemingly contradicts the other. Feinberg chooses to mark “down ‘M’ on [her] driver’s license application for [her] own safety” during any traffic stops.⁴⁵ The practice is, of course, illegal, pitting her personal safety against the juridical demands of the state. When applying for a passport Feinberg is told to check the “M” box if she has proof of genital surgery, but that the determination would only be based on “how passport agents saw [her] sex.” Feinberg decided once again to check the “M” box and present herself to the passport office, which easily accepted the application. When the passport arrived, Feinberg became “a felon” (21). In other words, despite the clear evidence from the passport agent who received the application and the many others who routinely examine her driver’s license that gender as it is performed and exhibited is what matters for purposes of identification, Feinberg’s act of transgender identification created the danger of forfeiting rights to full citizenship.

While US passport rules have recently changed, and there is an increasing public awareness of trans issues especially given legislation since 2016 surrounding restroom access, the matter of procuring accurate ID is one of the most significant obstacles facing trans people in the United States.⁴⁶ Many states have recently adjusted their license requirements, but others, such as Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, still require

sex reassignment surgery for an amended driver's license.⁴⁷ As Salamon points out, the "primary anxiety" exhibited in such laws is that transpeople "will walk among us, but we will not be able to tell them apart *from* us," an anxiety that carries the implication that transpeople pose a potential threat to the state and that clearly echoes the concerns about spies and infiltrators motivating the post-World War I passport regime (*Assuming a Body*, 192, emphasis in original). While many officials argue that the issue of appropriate identification documents is a matter only relevant to a small minority, Currah and Moore remind us that this kind of regulation of identities has repercussions for all citizens:

One effect of positioning "trans" as the revolutionary subject occupying the liminal spaces at the extremes of gender is the implication that there *is* a class of non-revolutionary, gender-conforming subjects who *are* correctly interpellated by the gender regime . . . Ironically, this trans "exceptionalism" mirrors the approach of state bureaucrats who, when presented with the anomaly of "sex changes," work to come up with a response to a problem they see as limited to a very small class of people. Receding into the background and left largely unexamined, once again, is the attempt to secure the relationship among any bodies, identities, and documents—even those of the unmarked class of the gender normative—through anything but the force of law. ("We won't know," 116)

In other words, the state's suspicion and scrutiny of gender for the purpose of identification and access to public accommodations imposes a regime of state-enforced surveillance on all citizens.

While clearly addressing a different set of social codes, current disability theory also underscores the challenge to citizenship posed by individuals who exhibit non-normate bodies and the importance of recognizing how the non-conforming body gets positioned outside the body politic. If the "normate," as Rosemarie Garland Thomson defines it, indicates "the figure outlined by the array of deviant others whose marked bodies shore up [its] boundaries," it is also the "constructed identity of those who, by way of the bodily configurations and cultural capital they assume, can step into a position of authority and wield the power it grants them."⁴⁸ In other words, the normate body is defined by and helps to define the biopolitics of power, is linked to the forms of authority and the regimes of rights associated with the modern state, and has been crucial to the development of discourses surrounding human rights, gender and racial equality, and decolonization throughout the twentieth century. Dean Spade makes clear that "regimes of knowledge and practices in every area of life establish norms of 'healthy' bodies and minds, and consign those who are perceived to fall outside those norms to abandonment and imprisonment" (*Normal Life*, 4). Less visible are the ways that queer, trans, or disabled bodies push against the cultural authority that establishes the "normate" as the standard or universal body upon which civic status devolves. This cultural authority can create what Robert McRuer defines as "compulsory able-bodiedness," in which able-bodiedness "masquerades as a nonidentity, as the natural order of things," thereby making pathological any bodily expression outside this norm.⁴⁹ But it can also create an abundance of situations, like Feinberg's passport

230 dilemma, in which disabled or trans bodies are directly marked and marginalized, often with serious legal ramifications. Butler puts it this way: “the terms by which we are recognized as human . . . have far-reaching consequences for how we understand the model of the human entitled to rights or included in the participatory sphere of political deliberation If I am a certain gender, will I still be regarded as part of the human?” (*Undoing Gender*, 2).

The potential exclusion of the non-normate from the category of the human is not limited to the physically different. Writing about the mentally disabled in Woolf’s British context, Janet Lyon discusses the far-reaching power of the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913 to segregate those with “moral imbecility” or “feeble-mindedness” into asylums, thus denying them access to the category of the “human”: “Once singled out and signified as feeble-minded . . . they became a part of an institutional sign system associating mental deficiency with the condition of civil death—*civilliter mortuus*, the stripping of civil rights and political identity from persons deemed to be law-breakers or *non compos mentis*.”⁵⁰ While such a complete stripping of civil rights from a disabled person represents the limit case, it is not different in kind, I would argue, from the felonization of Leslie Feinberg as a trans individual or the death *cum* divorce of Einar Wegener. If the cancelling of a passport or the felonization of an identity does not equal “civic death,” then nothing does.

The status of the (gendered) body as the locus of human rights also has resonance within contemporary discussions of globalization and justice. As Joseph Slaughter points out, current discourses of human rights are always normative. They “begin by imagining the normative, rights-holding citizen-subject—an abstract ‘universal’ human personality,” historically embodied as white, male, propertied and, I would add, able.⁵¹ The very notion of the “human” or “person” upon whom natural rights devolve emerges in modern Western thought already attached to specific assumptions about the normate, gender-conforming body. Those who live outside these assumptions, as Butler puts it, become “unreal,” “the other against which the human is made[,] . . . the inhuman, the beyond the human, the less than human,” whose function is to secure “the human in its ostensible reality” (*Undoing Gender*, 218).

Further, although justice depends on how we understand the global positioning of legal persons in regard to various loci of capital and power, this positioning invariably overlaps a determining sex/gender system, with clear and unequal differentials of power. As Anne McClintock long ago pointed out, “[a]ll nationalisms are gendered, all are invented, and all are dangerous” (“Family Feuds,” 61). Even when it aspires to the universal, and is used to invoke concepts of natural human rights, the notion of the normative citizen derives from and is inscribed within local histories of gender and sexuality, in addition to those of race, ethnicity, and class. Indeed, personhood, as it is understood in post-Enlightenment Western legal systems and in such documents as the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), does not mark the “human as such.” Rather, it constructs “a person as a member of a people or nation—a particular kind of human activated as a legal and moral unit” (Slaughter, *Human Rights, Inc.*, 58). The “person” therefore becomes embodied as a normative entity

with specific rights, responsibilities, and duties under existing social, cultural, moral, and juridical systems and remains inscribed within—and often subjected to—existing hierarchies of gender, power, and value (Spade, *Normal Life*, 30, 37). By implication, the non-conforming “human” risks losing access to “human rights.”

Narrative Positions

Within later twentieth-century literature, the trans position often challenges the power of social and juridical hierarchies to construct the human in terms of both gender expression and other racial or ethnic categories in a way that was not possible for Woolf or Elbe. It thus raises more overtly the implications of the gender non-conforming body/subjectivity within the (national) public sphere. This is most notable in the extraordinary array of science fiction from the 1960s on that posits gender nonconformity as crucial to transcending conventional human social organization while positing the extraterrestrial as a model for a potential transnational sphere. Classic novels like Ursula K. Le Guin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) or Joanna Russ’s *The Female Man* (1975) produce an extraterrestrial future in order to discover a jurisdiction for the trans or inter-sex subject. *The Left Hand of Darkness*, an early entry in feminist science fiction, posits a future world where the intersexuality of its planetary citizens is dependent upon and crucial to the permanent absence of war.⁵² The book’s not-so-hidden assumption is that the intersexuality common to all the planet’s citizens militates against a culture of entrenched dualities and national conflicts. The sex-gender system, Le Guin seems to suggest, produces social discord through its production of difference, which intersexuality ultimately undoes.⁵³

In *The Female Man*, the circumstances of the four main characters—who represent the same woman in different times and places—produce a range of sexualities and ways of expressing gender within a multi-layered critique of contemporary modes of social organization. In one of the worlds of the novel, the future time/place called Whileaway, the character Janet, a police officer, lives as a lesbian who is married with children in a world without men, while Joanna, her counterpart on earth in the 1970s (when the novel was written), must style herself as a “female man” in order to access similar powers of sexuality and self-assertion. The novel positions the “female man” as the role that mediates between worlds, linking the problems of women’s poverty, inequality, and vulnerability to violence, in an array of narrative styles and voices. The only future visible in the novel is a world with no men (but where marriage still seems to produce power imbalances). Thus, by creating the trans position as an oppositional one, unbound to gender warfare or separation and tied to a disruptive narrative structure, Russ also foregrounds its potential to create an outsider status that might challenge gendered hierarchies of power even while describing an alternate path from our world to the future.⁵⁴

A later novel, *Last Letters from Hav* (1985), by the travel writer Jan Morris, both participates in this feminist SF tradition and breaks from it by positing its alternate world as a place apart, perched between East and West, but within our contemporary

232 space/time.⁵⁵ *Last Letters from Hav* masquerades as a travel narrative, like so many other works penned by Morris, a mode that, like much SF, ties insight to dislocation instead of belonging.⁵⁶ Like Woolf's *Orlando*, it often flirts with Orientalism, using travel beyond the West to inaugurate movement into the unknown. The narrative meanders as Morris insinuates herself into life in Hav, meets with its governor, and dines at its finest establishments. The topic of belonging is everywhere; the matter of gender is not.

Yet the novel also plays with the dialectic between (gender) identity and belonging, refusing our desire for conclusiveness and our assumptions about the dangers of disassociation. The narrative begins from an unmarked, unnamed first person, only later identified as Morris. Though she is sometimes addressed as "Dirleddy" and refers to herself once as "Jan Morris from Wales," she remains mostly unfettered by gender constraints and cultural allegiances (Morris, *Hav*, 12). The process of deracination seems to accelerate as the narrator becomes more and more resident in Hav. By the end of the novel, when violence threatens to erupt, the British agent asks, "whether in fact you consider yourself a British subject," as though to confirm that her time in Hav has made that early identifying phrase, "I am Jan Morris from Wales" meaningless (181). Like many of the other residents, the narrator seems to have become a sort of refugee, shedding her national past and her specific (gendered) identity as she enters the life of the place.

Yet the narrative position of *Last Letters from Hav* is more complicated than that. Marks of gender emerge despite the narrative's efforts to exclude them—in offhand comments about marriage, in the governor's attentive largesse, or within the ladies' table talk at lunch. Further, the text's nonfictional guise clearly invites us to associate the narrating "Jan Morris" with Morris the author, to link this novel intertextually to her other work, and to read it as a "trans" text of another sort, one that, like Woolf's *Orlando*, confounds the generic boundaries between travel narrative and speculative fiction. Its "credibility" as a (pseudo) travel text relies upon our recognizing its celebrated author and trusting her experience and authority.

Reading *Last Letters from Hav* alongside *Conundrum* (1974), Morris's moving memoir of her personal journey from male to female, also introduces a more complex problematic of gender identity and personhood into the text, especially since Morris calls "her entire oeuvre . . . 'disguised autobiography'" (*Hav*, ii).⁵⁷ Seen in this light, the novel's striking avoidance of gendered references, especially regarding the narrator, or its refusal to create male and female categories of experience, creates an intensely personal, profound challenge to the binaries of gender. The reference to "dirleddy" repeated throughout the narrative can be read as both a corruption of "dear lady" and the concatenation of "sirlady"—a new sign for the possibility of becoming something other than a conventional British "lady," while still not a "gentleman." In other words, the novel begins to posit gender in other than binary terms and to link it to the refusal of standards of British nationality and propriety. Morris's travels to Hav, like the travels to Morocco she describes in *Conundrum*, not only help her slip through the state-patrolled boundaries of gender, moving beyond what she calls the "frontier between the sexes," but also help define possible new terms for a trans-gender and potentially transnational identity (116).⁵⁸

Though she writes from a dramatically different historical moment, especially as it concerns the bodily transformation of sex, Morris's narratives gesture back to the complex textual landscape of Woolf's much earlier *Orlando*, in which travel fuels a more extensively interwoven critique of gender and nation.⁵⁹ Both Morris and Woolf trade on a certain Orientalist fantasy in which, behind closed doors and beneath draped clothing, mysterious sex transformations more easily take place.⁶⁰ Both deploy masquerade not only as gender performance but also as a kind of narrative cross-dressing—which Caughie calls “transgenre”—confusing the boundaries between biography, autobiography, travel writing, and fiction (“Temporality,” 502). Indeed, both narratives make manifest Jay Prosser's argument that “resexing . . . is made possible through narrativization” and that “transsexuality is always narrative work” (*Second Skins*, 5, 4). Narrative in much feminist science fiction is also driven forward by the pressure of gender shifts and by the ways the texts work through the challenges that gender non-conformity poses to our expectations of narrative form and progress. But while for Morris the transnational search for a new embodiment focuses on the kind of physical transformation through sex reassignment surgery barely possible in Woolf's day, that search also skirts the question of civic identity. On the other hand, the trance that befalls Orlando addresses the pageantry of nation as much as it accomplishes his singular transformation of sex. It catapults Orlando into the alternative space of the gypsies, who, the narrator claims, not only make little distinction between women and men, but also, in Woolf's era as in our own, stand for the very principle of resistance to the nation/state. In other words, the gypsy occupies the trans position vis-à-vis nationality and Orlando, in joining them, shares, for a time, their attitude.

But an earlier scene, just before Orlando's transformation, already links performances of gender, race, and nationality and shows how profoundly those terms are connected throughout the novel. “About seven” the narrator tells us, Orlando “would rise, wrap himself in a long Turkish cloak,” and stand “gazing at the city beneath him, apparently entranced” (*Orlando*, 88–89). In the mist over Saint Sofia, he watches “the turbanned pilgrims,” and “the shawled women” while “he, who was English root and fibre” imagines, in an Orientalist reverie, a dark cast to his complexion and wonders if perhaps he has a Turkish ancestor (89). As so often in this novel, clothes indicate the tension between sex and gender, the disjunction between apparent reality and a hidden difference that can never be dissociated from the discourses of race and nationality. The “shawled women” in this passage must, from Orlando's English perspective, of course, be covered Muslim women. The Orientalist gaze presumes that these women's clothes must match an immutable bodily identity, just as the turbanned pilgrims must be simply Turkish men with no potential for complex identities or the ability to engage in masquerade, as can Orlando. But is Orlando in a Turkish cloak immutably “English in root and fibre”—or might we say that the clothes “make the man?” The asymmetry of Orientalism creates the assumption that the bodies of the pilgrims approaching the Saint Sofia may be easily read and assigned to roles even while Orlando in his Turkish garb is assumed to be bodily complex and irrevocably English. If in cloaking himself in the Turkish fashion Orlando initiates the change—the transnational, trans-sex, and trans-

234 gender transformation that comes more forcefully a few pages later—might it not be possible to suppose that the turbaned pilgrim and the shawled women—or indeed any one of the other characters in the novel—also have this capacity at self-transformation? Further, this scene of what Jaime Hovey calls masquerade, or what we might term, following Butler, gender, ethnic, and national improvisation, carries profound implications for our understanding of the practices of embodiment. By ruminating on the potential disconnection between clothing and embodiment, Woolf not only mobilizes a familiar Orientalist trope but also and perhaps more importantly demonstrates that we never have “unmediated access” to “the materiality of the body” nor do we ever know it with certainty (Salamon, *Assuming a Body*, 1). As in many other moments in Woolf’s text, this scene shows us that lurking beneath every clothed, draped, cloaked, hatted, or turbaned body—whether in East or West—lies the perpetual disjuncture between embodiment and the biopolitics of gendered, and racialized, national identity.

This dynamic infuses the entire chapter set in Turkey, a location so often defined by its dual European/Asian identity. Turkey becomes not only an (Orientalist) site of travel and transition, as will be Morocco for Morris, but also a place of constant mediation, where identities never fully reveal themselves and are caught in never-ending vacillation between exterior and interior, surface and depth. While in this scene putting on Turkish garb works against Orlando’s English masculinity, in a later one a clothing change prompts an opposite turn towards English femininity. It becomes clear that the English attitude bears with it a normative, binary model of gender. When we find Orlando clad “in the dress of a young Englishwoman” on her way back to England, the novel reminds us that Western normative discourses of embodiment and national identity are mutually reinforcing and constrain practices of gender (*Orlando*, 113). While the gender-neutral Turkish trousers had “distract[ed] her” from the question of her sex, English garb insists upon it, and demands that she change clothes as she vacillates among gender identities, slipping in and out of womanhood during the succeeding pages (113). Still, for a time, even within the confines of English mores, a trans attitude seems possible and, when she enters the eighteenth century at the end of the chapter, Orlando starts her day in a “China robe of ambiguous gender” her gender nonconformity once again cloaked in a transnational attitude (176, 161).⁶¹

For Woolf’s Orlando, as for so many other characters in the texts traced here, this trans attitude is ultimately tempered by nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western systems of law and jurisprudence, which cannot accommodate gender fluidity or the threat to normative models of national identity it often carries. Orlando’s loss of her house—that 365-room symbol of England—occurs because English law cannot grant civic status to a non-normate body and must mark Orlando as irrevocably female, and therefore unable to inherit. In this way, the potentially transgressive power of her gender transformation is diminished by the operation of jurisprudence, its “trans” status erased by the state’s insistence on a binary logic of identity within an asymmetrical sex/gender system. Orlando becomes like other trans subjects forced into the immutable, binary gender system imposed by the passport or identity card regime. At the same time, Woolf’s *Orlando*, like many of the other texts examined in this article, foregrounds

the deep imbrication of enforced regimes of nation and gender formation and their commingling, along with discourses of race, class, and ethnicity, in the production of the civic and social status of bodies in the twentieth century.

In other words, these texts all respond in a variety of ways to the comparative question of my title—"Is the trans in transnational the trans in transgender?"—by exploring the complex linkages between these two terms in different historical, embodied, and generic guises. Understanding the variety of relationships between these terms prevents us from mistakenly viewing the transnational as a purely spatial or political attitude that can be put on or taken off without affecting other more "core" aspects of identity or, on the other hand, understanding transgender identity as a personal or biological matter, essential and separate from the historical and political concerns of nationality, identity, or allegiance. These texts also point to the danger of ascribing the transgender or transnational to an Orientalist fantasy about what can take place in future or fantastic lands without unsettling the categories set by state-based regimes of jurisprudence. I would argue that Woolf reaches for Orientalist tropes in *Orlando* not because of her fantasies about Turkey or the gypsies (which she may well have harbored) but because she rightly recognized that English civic discourses about gender and nationality allowed no room for narratives of transgression or change on her home turf. For the British subject, both the national and gender trans positions are much harder to put on and take off than Orlando's Turkish trousers, and both mark the mediated quality of embodiment as well as the multiple ways our bodies and their situations challenge normate regimes of civic identity and power. However represented on our passports or other identity cards, our bodies often slide between and among the categories of twentieth- (and twenty-first-) century citizenship, resisting and, at times, we hope, remaking, in a kind of catachresis, the forms and values of gendered national identity.

Trans and Global Reading

This way of understanding a trans perspective has deep ramifications for current discussions of world, global, or planetary literature as well as for our transnational reading practices. Scholars like Wai Chee Dimock, Lawrence Buell, and Spivak have refocused our attention on the scope of literary study, moving us from national or regional frames of reference to the global or planetary. Dimock teases out the "criss-crossing set of pathways, open-ended and ever multiplying" that constitute what we call American literature over the *longue durée*, and the "complex tangle of relations" that they create.⁶² She ties these relations to the matter of civil society, drawing out the ways in which currents of thought from around the world intervene in the genesis of American social and political thinking. Spivak, for her part, insists that the planetary "overwrites" the political constitution of the globe, obviating the lines of latitude and longitude that mark it with human activity and the movement of global capital. At the same time, the planet stands for the being-toward-otherness that is crucial to the human condition. In this sense, Spivak's planetary thinking and her focus on its importance for subaltern subjects becomes one source of what I have been calling a trans position: "to think of it is already to transgress" (*Death*, 73).

236 Such profound and provocative thinking serves us well by offering an expanded view across space and time of the potential spheres of activity for any literary text. Still, while Spivak continues to remind us that recognition of local languages and knowledge must undergird any move to planetary consciousness, for many critics a more expansive world-wide view often leaps over the implications of global, planetary, or transnational thinking for local systems of meaning. The critique of a mode of reading organized around national literatures or loyalties must intersect with discursive categories surrounding not only the nation/state but also the sex/gender and other normative systems that undergird it. As many have long argued, gender and sexuality are constitutive practices of nationality.⁶³ A trans critical optic, practice, or way of reading should, therefore, imply not only a matter of looking beyond borders of time and space or reshaping the outlines of the literary globe, but should also provide a lens through which to see the many spheres of operation of global texts and the challenges they can pose to normative regimes of embodiment and subjectivity.⁶⁴

One last example from outside the canon of Euro-American modernism and feminist science fiction will help show the potential value of deploying “trans” as a critical practice across domains of nationality and gender and of using it as a key critical optic within new modes of comparative, global, or planetary literary study.⁶⁵ Moving outside the Euro-American context also helps take us beyond the Orientalist sensibility that often lurks within, for example, Woolf and Morris’s texts. The novel *Purdah and Polygamy* (1944), by Iqbalunnisa Hussain, likely the first written in English by a Muslim Indian woman, is another text that mobilizes what we might call a trans critique on several levels.⁶⁶ It is a remarkable work that helps inaugurate a model of domestic fiction for India even while challenging assumptions about the roles and identities of Muslim women.⁶⁷ The novel takes place almost entirely within the zenana of a polygamous household, as the son searches through three successive marriages for the woman who will be his perfect wife, raising questions about the nature of the private sphere as well as the status and bodies of the women confined within it. The matter of polygamy in this novel represents the family’s quest for a woman/body who will submit to supervision, domestic service, and strict enclosure while retaining her strength and feminine beauty—a search that ultimately proves futile. Wife one is too beautiful and physically frail to survive—in other words, too feminine. Wife two, who is described in animalistic and racialized terms, is fully domesticated but not feminine enough. The third wife, Maghbool—a beautiful, modern, educated woman—seems poised to resolve the zenana’s dialectic, figured as beautiful, active, and vigorous. Yet it is not to be. Maghbool’s modernity marks her instead as non-female:

She was an institution in herself. Her mastery over the Urdu language had made her crazy after papers, magazines, romance and poetry. . . . She was a good organizer and an economical manager of the house. . . . Her father often said that she was a son to him, his secretary and his right hand. (*Purdah and Polygamy*, 139)

Maghbool publishes poetry under her own name and participates in the monetary economy, directly transgressing household expectations for women. She is further

marked as an unsuitable woman when her body is scarred in a kitchen accident, transforming her from desired wife to isolated outcast. Maghbool is still clothed in the manner of a woman and living in purdah like her fellow wives, but reviled by them as not suitably female.

While not overtly transgender in the sense that is Orlando, Maghbool is in many ways a trans figure, one who not only crosses over the gender binary, but also challenges the assumptions that this household (and by extension, the institutions of purdah and polygamy) make about women. And it is important that we recognize Maghbool as a potentially trans figure even when she does not conform fully either to contemporary Western models of transgender identity or to Indian notions of hijra.⁶⁸ As recent transgender theory has made clear, what we understand to be “[t]ransgender . . . is context-dependent” and multiple, taking on different forms and guises in different situations.⁶⁹ We must be wary of expecting a certain set of transgender attitudes or behaviors to be displayed across a variety of national, cultural, or literary contexts. Just as we might recognize trans status in the main character of *The Well of Loneliness* because s/he takes on the name Stephen, dresses in male clothing, and otherwise rejects the feminine norms of behavior expected in English society of the early twentieth century, so we might recognize Maghbool as inhabiting a trans position within *Purdah and Polygamy* because she takes on a public name, handles her own money, has a body marked as unfeminine, and increasingly, over the course of the novel, rejects the behavior expected of women within the confines of the female quarters.

While Maghbool never permanently embraces masculinity, her role can also be understood as part of what Roshanak Kheshti, writing about cross-dressing in Iranian film, calls a “transgender move” that “enables the manifestation of complex and contradictory openings in which gender and sexual transgression take place alongside other forms of social transgression, projecting . . . a space of polymorphous transformative potential.”⁷⁰ Viewing Maghbool in this light pushes us to recognize the diverse attitudes, behaviors, and lived experiences within a variety of global contexts that might coalesce and be mobilized under the rubric “transgender.” It helps us understand the many ways in which trans is not a “gender category necessarily distinct from more established categories such as ‘woman’ or ‘man,’” not a single universalized identity or body marked by a specific difference (Stryker et al., “Trans-, Trans, or Transgender?,” 12). For these reasons, many contemporary trans critics have called for a new trans theory that moves beyond the focus on identities. The “lived social realities of ‘transgender’ embodiments, subjectivities and communities” challenge any conception of gender as a category that contains “only one kind of thing,” experience, habit, action, or embodiment (12).

Further, gender diversity always intersects and intertwines with other forms of diverse human expression and embodiment and the power relations attached to them. As Stryker, Currah, and Moore claim, “[a]ny gender-defined space is not only populated with diverse forms of gendered embodiment, but striated and cross-hatched by the boundaries of significant forms of difference,” along with their politics (12). When the non-normate, “modernized” female body challenges the regimes of purdah and

238 the expectations of female identity in Hussain's novel, it also necessarily engages both conversations about Muslim women in the emerging Indian nation, and broader debates about purdah and polygamy that engage with the discourses of empire. Herself raised in strict seclusion and married at fifteen, Hussain became a vocal opponent of both purdah and polygamy, speaking at the 1935 International Women's Congress in Istanbul, becoming a member of the All India Women's Congress, and publishing her essays in a 1940 collection entitled *Changing India: A Muslim Woman Speaks*.⁷¹ In these essays, Hussain joins other Muslims of the period to argue that neither purdah nor polygamy had a scriptural basis. *Changing India* also discusses the position of women in Islam, the obstacles purdah presents to social progress, and the principle that "There is no Polygamy in Islam" (24).⁷² *Purdah and Polygamy* thus forms part of Hussain's lifelong critique of gender, religious, and national/social standards. Its non-normate women mark the broadly transgressive potential of this domestic novel of manners, its potentially wide sphere of activity, and its engagement, from beginning to end, with the problematic of modernity in 1940s India.

Hussain's work also raises the question of women's bodies within the context of India's struggle for independence and in particular Muslim women's roles in the national future. The book can be seen to push back against both Western fantasies about Oriental bodies and the marginalization of Muslim women in the Indian national story, though caught up in the complex colonial dynamic surrounding the veiled woman (Ahmed, "The Veil Debate—Again," 154). *Changing India* is deeply invested in Islamic identity, claiming that "[r]egeneration of the Muslim nation is only possible when its women are educated and are efficient and independent" (23). But Hussain's final essay shows how the unveiled bodies of *both* Hindu and Muslim women can exhibit "a feeling of freedom and of equality" and challenge the restrictive paradigms of a feminized "Mother India" that lurk within 1940s' nationalism (226).⁷³ The complex modernity of Maghbool in the later *Purdah and Polygamy* challenges a self-complete and self-identical Indian nationality in similar ways, her trans status a matter of her non-conformity to static gender identities, and the social, religious, and political scaffolding built around them.

Thus the "trans" not only crosses over borders of identity but also highlights and challenges their geographical determinism, the primacy of a Western view of selfhood, citizenship, and jurisdiction, and the global political and economic regimes that emerge from that primacy. If the question of who counts as a citizen with standing to make a claim for redress is essential to any contemporary effort towards global democratic justice, then creating parity of access and participation means confronting the ways that global economic, social, and political arrangements define particular (normate) subjects as citizens and exclude others. As Fraser reminds us, questioning "who is included in, and who excluded from, the circle of those entitled to a just distribution and reciprocal recognition" remains crucial to any revisioning of global justice (*Scales of Justice*, 17).

Transgender texts often revolve around these very questions, tying the becoming-of-self in narrative to the impossibility, instability, and sometimes illegality of the available trans identities and their potential for exclusion or misrecognition. Hussain's *Purdah and Polygamy* also links the problem of narrative creation of the self to the impossible

position of (gendered) non-citizenship in the colony. Texts that emerge from within this kind of “un-homely” situation, in which the question of “who” always implies a political or juridical misrecognition on the global level, do not simply attempt to mediate between local and global perspectives, or to erase the lines of longitude and latitude that mark human activity on the globe. Rather, they limn the boundaries among a variety of impossible identities that a trans perspective can help make visible. Thus deployed, the “trans” might become not only a critical optic, practice, or way of reading the texts, bodies, and individuals that operate outside and beyond the (gendered) regime of justice and state citizenship, but also a crucial tool for addressing the complexity of “who” counts as a civic subject or citizen worldwide, and for developing new habits of reading global justice.

Notes

1. Virginia Woolf, *Orlando: A Biography* (New York: Harcourt, 2006), 93.
2. Urmila Seshagiri, *Race and the Modernist Imagination* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 167; and Jaime Hovey, “Kissing a Negress in the Dark: Englishness as a Masquerade in Woolf’s *Orlando*,” *PMLA* 112, no. See also Elizabeth Meese, “When Virginia Looked at Vita, What Did She See; or, Lesbian: Feminist: Woman—What’s the Differ(e/a)n(ce)?,” in *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, ed. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, rev. ed. (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 467–81; Karen Kaviola, “Revisiting Woolf’s Representations of Androgyny: Gender, Race, Sexuality and Nation,” *Tulsa Studies in Woman’s Literature* 18, no. 2 (1999): 235–61; Erica Johnson, “Writing the Land: The Geography of National Identity in *Orlando*,” in *Woolf in the Real World: Selected Papers from the Thirteenth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf*, ed. Karen V. Kukil (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Digital Press, 2005), 105–09; Pamela Caughie, “Virginia Woolf’s Double Discourse,” in *Discontented Discourses: Feminism/Textual Intervention/Psychoanalysis*, ed. Marleen S. Barr and Richard Feldstein (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 41–53; Makiko Minow-Pinkney, *Virginia Woolf and the Problem of the Subject* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987).
3. See Pamela L. Caughie, “The Temporality of Modernist Life Writing in the Era of Transsexualism: Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando* and Einar Wegener’s *Man Into Woman*,” *Modern Fiction Studies* 59, no. 3 (2013): 501–25; Chris Coffman, “Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando* and the Resonances of Trans Studies,” *Genders* 51 (2010): www.atrria.nl/eazines/LAV_606661/LAV_606661_2010_52/g51_coffman.html; and Stef Craps, “How To Do Things With Gender: Transgenderism in Woolf’s *Orlando*,” in *Image into Identity: Constructing and Assigning Identity in a Culture of Modernity*, ed. Michael Wintle (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 175–89.
4. Jay Prosser, *Second Skins: The Bodily Narratives of Transsexuality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 168.
5. See especially Hovey, “Kissing a Negress in the Dark.”
6. My use of the term “trans” bears affinities with the ways that theorists deploy “queer” as an attitude, activity, or process rather than a substantive identity or specific sexuality. See Madelyn Detloff, “Woolf and Lesbian Culture: Queering Woolf Queering,” in *Virginia Woolf in Context*, ed. Bryony Randall and Jane Goldman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 342–52; and Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
7. At least since the 1990s there has been a long critical discussion of the ties between nationalism and sexuality, and nationalism and gender, especially in terms of the treatment of women and sexual minorities by nationalist forces. Along with foundational work by George Mosse (*Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985]); and Michel Foucault (*History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley, vol. 1 [New York: Vintage, 1980]), see the influential volume *Nationalisms and Sexuality*, ed. Andrew Parker, Mary

240 Russo, Doris Sommer, and Patricia Yaeger (New York: Routledge, 1992), and Anne McClintock's important essay, "Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family," *Feminist Review* 44 (1993): 61–80. But while some theorists, most notably Gayatri Spivak, have positioned gender at the heart of new concepts of world, global, or planetary literature, it has been remarkably absent in much of the recent conversation surrounding these terms. More specifically, transgender theory, has rarely been brought to bear on the question of global literature as I hope to do in this article.

8. See Jeanne Dubino, "Turkish Tales: Mary Wortley Montagu's Turkish Embassy Letters and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*," in *Woolf: Across the Generations: Selected Papers from the Twelfth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf*, ed. Merry Pawlowski and Eileen Barrett (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Digital Press, 2003), 131–35.

9. Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial?," *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 2 (1991): 336–57, 353. I reference Appiah despite the problematic nature of many of his claims about contemporary African literature.

10. Jennifer Wenzel, *Bulletproof: Afterlives of Anticolonial Prophecy in South Africa and Beyond* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 197.

11. Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Ifeoma Nwankwo, *Black Cosmopolitanism: Racial Consciousness and Transnational Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

12. See, among others, Peter Kalliney, *Commonwealth of Letters: British Literary Culture and the Emergence of Postcolonial Aesthetics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Sangeeta Ray, *Engendering India: Woman and Nation in Colonial and Postcolonial Narratives* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); and Peter Childs, *Modernism and the Postcolonial* (London: Continuum, 2007).

13. See the introduction to Jessica Berman, *Modernist Commitments: Ethics, Politics, and Transnational Modernism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 1–36.

14. Natalie Melas, *All the Difference in the World: Postcoloniality and the Ends of Comparison* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), xii. On this subject, see also Rita Felski and Susan Stanford Friedman's introduction to "Comparison," ed. Rita Felski and Susan Stanford Friedman, special issue, *New Literary History* 40, no. 3 (2009): v–ix.

15. Susan Stryker, Paisley Currah, and Lisa Jean Moore, "Introduction: Trans-, Trans, or Transgender?," in "Trans-," special issue, *Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 3/4 (2008): 11–22, 11.

16. I share Bill Ashcroft's use of the term "transnation," to "extend the post-colonial critique of nation" ("Beyond the Nation: Post-Colonial Hope," *The Journal of the European Association of Studies on Australia* 1 [2009]: 12–22, 13). My formulation resembles also what Eric Hayot calls a "trans-concept" (*On Literary Worlds* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2012], 148). See also Matthew Hart, *Nations of Nothing But Poetry: Modernism, Transnationalism, and Synthetic Vernacular Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) and Jahan Ramazani, *A Transnational Poetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

17. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality and Value," in *Literary Theory Today*, ed. Peter Collier and Helga Geyer-Ryan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 219–44, 228.

18. *OED Online*, January 2017, "trans-, prefix."

19. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, introduction to *The Transgender Studies Reader*, ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1–18, 3.

20. In her review essay, Regina Kunzel points out the increasing use of "trans" as an analytic in contemporary trans theory and also claims, "Transgender is a way of seeing; it is also . . . a way of knowing" ("The Flourishing of Transgender Studies," *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 1–2 [2014]: 285–97, 289).

21. Talia Bettcher and Ann Garry, introduction to "Transgender Studies and Feminism: Theory, Politics, and Gendered Realities," special issue, *Hypatia* 24, no. 3 (2009): 1–10, 4.

22. Cristan Williams, "Gender Performance: The TransAdvocate interviews Judith Butler," *TransAdvocate*, 2014, www.transadvocate.com/gender-performance-the-transadvocate-interviews-judith-butler_n_13652.htm#sthash.qkwzulvr.dpuf.

23. Gayle Salamon, *Assuming a Body: Transgender and Rhetorics of Materiality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 1.

24. See also *Transgender China*, ed. Howard Chiang (New York: Palgrave, 2012); David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Salamon, *Assuming a Body*; and Stryker, Currah, and Moore, "Introduction: Trans-, Trans, or Transgender?"

25. Susan Stryker, "Transgender Studies: Queer Theory's Evil Twin," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10, no. 2 (2004): 212–15, 212.

26. See Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*; Michel Foucault, *Herculine Barbin: Being the Recently Discovered Memoirs of a Nineteenth-Century Hermaphrodite*, trans. Richard McDougall (New York: Pantheon, 1980); *Nationalisms and Sexuality*, ed. Parker et al.; and McClintock, "Family Feuds."

27. Nancy Fraser, *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 25. While the use of the term "Westphalian" has been challenged both for its Eurocentrism and its over-estimation of the scope of the Treaty of Westphalia, I use it here to indicate the long-standing Western notion of nation-state sovereignty and the balance of power between states. Like Nancy Fraser, I am convinced that the Westphalian framework is insufficient to account for regimes of justice, especially in our current globalized world.

28. Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

29. Here I wish to acknowledge my position as a cisgender feminist woman who has learned much from trans people and who believes that trans theory deserves to be more broadly acknowledged and mobilized in wider contexts. I have tried to write this article in the spirit of Jacob Hale's "Suggested Rules for Non-transsexuals Writing about Transsexuals, Transsexuality, Transsexualism, or Trans_" (last modified November 18, 2009, www.sandystone.com/hale.rules.html). As Cressida Heyes points out, "Non-trans feminists have a responsibility . . . to consider trans issues" in light of the specific social realities lived by trans people ("Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory: The Case of Transgender," *Signs* 28, no. 4 [2003]: 1093–1100, 1097). I have tried to be mindful of that responsibility in drafting this article.

30. Jaime M. Grant, Lisa A. Mottet, and Justin Tanis, *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report on the National Transgender Discrimination Survey* (Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011), 5.

31. Paisley Currah and Lisa Jean Moore, "'We won't know who you are': Contesting Sex Designations in New York City Birth Certificates," in "Transgender Studies and Feminism: Theory, Politics, and Gendered Realities," special issue, *Hypatia* 24, no. 3 (2009): 113–35, 113.

32. Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 149.

33. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), *Passports Applications, 1795–1905*, microfilm publication M1372, roll 50, image 3, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

34. National Archives and Record Administration (NARA), *Passport Applications, 1795–1905*, microfilm publication M1372, roll 50, image 7, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

35. National Archives and Record Administration (NARA), *Passport Applications, 1795–1905*, microfilm publication M1372, roll 50, image 1, 7, 10, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

36. National Archives and Record Administration (NARA), *Passport Applications, January 2, 1906–March 31, 1925*, microfilm publication M1490, roll 63, image 685, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

37. This is prior to the 1922 Married Women's Independent Nationality Act, which gave women the right to naturalize and prevented them from losing citizenship by marrying an alien man (Marian L. Smith, "'Any woman who is now or may hereafter be married . . .': Women and Naturalization, ca. 1802–1940," *Prologue Magazine* 30, no. 2 [1998]: 1–5). In the United Kingdom, it took until 1948 for women to be entitled to retain their citizenship after marrying a foreigner, a fact that Virginia Woolf bemoans in *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt, 2006), 148.

38. Modernity as I refer to it is a social, historical, and economic situation of late capitalism, characterized in part by advancing industrialization, technological change, expanding division of labor, and the increasing globalization of capital, as well as a range of attitudes associated with that situation as it emerges in different shapes and guises worldwide. These might include an aesthetic attitude of contingency, investment in “the new,” shifts in modes of perception, experiences of double- (or poly-) consciousness, and a tendency towards self-reflexivity. See Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989); Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993); Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995); Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Fredric Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present* (London: Verso, 2002); Rosa María Rodríguez Magda, *Transmodernidad* (Barcelona: Anthropos Editorial, 2004); Susan Stanford Friedman, “One Hand Clapping: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and the Spatio/Temporal Boundaries of Modernism,” in *Translocal Modernisms*, ed. Irene Ramalho Santos and António Sousa Ribeiro (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 11–40; Françoise Meltzer, *Seeing Double: Baudelaire’s Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); *The Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms*, ed. Mark Wollaeger and Matt Eatough (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Ramazani, *A Transnational Poetics*.

39. Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 23–26.

40. Erin Carlston, *Double Agents: Espionage, Literature and Liminal Citizens* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 30–31.

41. Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 109.

42. See Lili Elbe, *Man Into Woman: An Authentic Record of Sex Change* (New York: Dutton, 1933); and David Ebershoff, *The Danish Girl* (New York: Viking, 2000). I thank Pamela Caughie for calling my attention to these books. See her essay “Temporality” for another discussion of the connections between this memoir and Woolf’s *Orlando*.

43. Foucault, *Herculine Barbin*, vii. However, the text as edited by Elbe’s friend, Ernst Jacobson (Niels Hoyer), problematically focuses on her supposed hermaphroditism (Eliza Steinbock, “Speaking Transsexuality in the Cinematic Tongue,” in *Somatechnics: Queering the Technologisation of Bodies*, ed. Nikki Sullivan and Samantha Murray [Burlington: Ashgate, 2009], 142–43; Sandy Stone, “The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto,” *Camera Obscura* 10, no. 2 29 [1992]: 150–76).

44. I here use the term “person” in the post-Enlightenment, Western legal sense—as a category defining the individual to whom rights, duties, and privileges are ascribed—in order to point out the critique of this limited definition that is performed by the matter of the transgender subject. See *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

45. Leslie Feinberg, *Trans Liberation: Beyond Pink or Blue* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), 20.

46. Dean Spade, *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law* (Brooklyn: South End, 2011), 12.

47. “Driver’s License Policies by State,” National Center for Transgender Equality, www.transgender.org/documents.

48. Rosemarie Garland Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 8.

49. Robert McRuer, *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 1–2.

50. Janet Lyon, “On the Asylum Road with Woolf and Mew,” *Modernism/modernity* 18, no. 3 (2012): 551–74, 553, emphasis in original.

51. Joseph Slaughter, *Human Rights, Inc.* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 43.

52. Joanna Russ, *The Female Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975); Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969; rpt., New York: Penguin, 1987).

53. Still, the novel's gender politics have been long debated. See Christine Cornell, "The Interpretative Journey in Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*," *Extrapolation* 42, no. 4 (2001): 317–27; and Wendy Gay Pearson, "Postcolonialism/s, Gender/s, Sexuality/ies and the Legacy of *The Left Hand of Darkness*: Gwyneth Jones's Aleutians Talk Back," *Yearbook of English Studies* 37, no. 2 (2007): 182–96.

54. The novel bears affinities with Monique Wittig's *Les Guérillères* (Paris: Minuit, 1969) and *Le Corps lesbien* (Paris: Minuit, 1973). See Susan Ayres, "The 'Straight Mind' in Russ's *Female Man*," *Science Fiction Studies* 22, no. 1 (1995): 22–34. For the importance of the novel's fragmented style, see Heather J. Hicks, "Automating Feminism: The Case of Joanna Russ's *The Female Man*," *Postmodern Culture* 9, no. 3 (1999).

55. Included in Jan Morris, *Hav* (New York: New York Review Books, 2006).

56. So much so that some early readers requested their travel agents to help them book flights to Hav (Ursula K. Le Guin, "Magical History Tour: Ursula K Le Guin enjoys a return visit to Jan Morris's extraordinary, enigmatic fictional city in *Hav*," *The Guardian*, June 2, 2006, 7).

57. Jan Morris, *Conundrum* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974).

58. See Salamon, *Assuming a Body* for an astute discussion of *Conundrum*.

59. Indeed, Morris cites Woolf in *Conundrum*, and later edited her travel essays. See Erica Gene Delsandro, "In the Classroom: Virginia Woolf and the Possibilities of Queer History," *Virginia Woolf Miscellany* 82 (2012): 18–20.

60. In *Conundrum*, Morris describes her Morocco surgery in such terms (139). See Stone, "Empire Strikes Back," 151.

61. Though this moment is once again mobilized within an Orientalist frame, I read it nonetheless as a movement beyond the national and its insistence on normative, binary gender.

62. Wai Chee Dimock, *Through Other Continents: American Literature Across Deep Time* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 3. See also Wai Chee Dimock and Lawrence Buell, *Shades of the Planet: American Literature as World Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

63. See Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*; McClintock, "Family Feuds"; *Nationalisms and Sexuality*, ed. Parker, et al.; and Spivak, *Death of a Discipline*, among many others.

64. Here Spivak's careful work and her insistence on the deep imbrication of discourses about gender and nationality are especially instructive. See also the increasing focus on a "trans optic" rather than a specific (universalized) trans identity in contemporary transgender theory (Regina Kunzel, "The Flourishing of Transgender Studies," 287).

65. For a collection of essays that explore this potential in a variety of directions in the context of South and Southeast Asia, see *Trans-Status Subjects: Gender in the Globalization of South and Southeast Asia*, ed. Sonita Sarker and Esha Niyogi De (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

66. Iqbalunnisa Hussain, *Purdah and Polygamy* (Bangalore: The Hosali Press, 1944). The novel will be reprinted by Oxford University Press in 2017.

67. For a more extensive discussion of this novel, see Jessica Berman, *Modernist Commitments* and Suvir Kaul, "Women, Reform, and Nationalism in Three Novels of Muslim Life," in *A History of the Indian Novel in English*, ed. Ulka Anjaria (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 133–46.

68. Contemporary scholarship discusses "hijra" as a practice or way of living that goes beyond categories of gender and sexuality and "is intersected by a variety of other axes of identity, including religion, gender, kinship, and class" (Gayatri Reddy, *With Respect to Sex* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010], 17). In addition, "hijras are typically phenotypic men . . . who wear female clothing, grow their hair, and enact an exaggeratedly feminine performance. Hijra lifeworlds encompass a range of corporeal possibilities but tend to be characterized by hierarchies of authenticity, at the apex of which stand those who undergo complete excision of the penis and testicles" (Rahul Rao, "Hijra," in Rachel Dwyer, Gita Dharampal-Frick, Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach, and Jahnvi Phalkey, *Key Concepts in Modern Indian Studies* [New York: New York University Press, 2015], 99). While, as I have been arguing, Maghbool's gender identity in *Purdah and Polygamy* also raises questions surrounding religion, class, and nation, it overlaps very little with these aspects of hijra practice. It is therefore important to find other ways to characterize the challenge Maghbool poses to prevailing gender norms.

244 69. Susan Stryker, "De/Colonizing Transgender Studies of China," in *Transgender China*, 287–92, 289.

70. Roshanak Kheshti, "Cross-Dressing and Gender (Tres)Passing: The Transgender Move as a Site of Agential Potential in the New Iranian Cinema," *Hypatia* 24, no. 3 (2009): 158–77, 173.

71. Iqbalunnisa Hussain, *Changing India: A Muslim Woman Speaks* (1940; rpt., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). One might argue that Hussain herself becomes what Sonita Sarker and Esha Niyogi De term a "trans-status subject"—one who uses a range of trans-local and trans-temporal affiliations and a range of tactics to reconceive their own "time and place and to create new solidarities" (*Trans-Status Subjects*, 20).

72. For the complex history of the anti-veiling movement and contemporary Muslim women's decisions to wear the veil, see Leila Ahmed, "The Veil Debate—Again," in *On Shifting Ground: Muslim Women in the Global Era*, ed. Fereshteh Nourae-Simone (New York: Feminist Press, 2005), 153–71; and Saba Mahmood, "Agency, Performativity, and the Feminist Subject," in *Pieties and Gender*, ed. Lene Sjørup and Hilda Rømer Christensen (Boston: Brill, 2009), 13–45.

73. On the complex creation of the paradigm of "Mother India" and its construction of female reproductive bodies, see Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); and Asha Nadkarni, *Eugenic Feminism: Reproductive Nationalism in the United States and India* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).