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What Counts as Literature?

Located on the northern hemisphere of Mercury, the Goethe impact basin is a large depression on the planet's surface that was caused by an ancient meteor strike. Mercury's surface is punctured by a large number of such craters and, although some of the features that cover this planet take their names from astronomers and mythological figures, the nomenclature adopted for its many impact craters draws upon celebrated writers, artists and composers, from Apollodorus, Berlioz and Calvino to Villa-Lobos, Warhol and Zola. Boccaccio, Giotto and Petrarch each has a crater named after him; curiously, their contemporary Dante does not.

Goethe is both a fitting and an unfortunate choice for the name of one of these craters. As the previous chapter has noted, one of Goethe's remarks on astronomy associates enlightenment with the departure both from the pieties of religious thought and from the pre-modern empiricism in which immediate sensory information is associated with comprehension of the world. Such an association suggests that Goethe is indeed an appropriate figure in the naming of Mercury's impact craters. According to the Copernican model that he salutes, planetary bodies are not autonomous astrophysical entities, but are dependent on the Sun's celestial pre-eminence; stamped and reshaped by countless encounters with falling objects, Mercury's surface offers a compelling testimony to the humbling recognition that no planet moves in sovereign space. And yet, in his tribute to Copernicus, Goethe does not dispute the integrity of astronomical bodies or the pre-Copernican conceptualization of the world as a spherical plenitude; it is only the notion of the earth's primacy that is contested in his description of the monumental shift from geocentrism to heliocentrism. Meteors catastrophically rupture the sense of abundant self-containment that neither Copernicus nor Goethe question: when these extraterrestrial projectiles descend and strike the surface of a planet, they dramatically alter both its surface and substance. What the Goethe impact crater on Mercury bears witness to, then, is a remaking of

planetary bodies by objects that traverse orbital space. These global spheres do not revolve in a sequestered and indivisible state but are revealed by the Goethe crater to be both inescapably tied to the stuff of the universe and neither whole nor complete because of this attachment.

‘Ultima regna canam, fluido contermina mundo’. As the previous chapter has discussed, this abandoned incipit for *The Divine Comedy* points to the uncertain and impermanent condition that is revealed by the Goethe impact basin. I shall sing ambiguously, this poem suggests, of an uncertainty about where we are, about the ground below or the stars above, about materiality and transcendence. Because *mundus*, like the Greek *cosmos*, can be rendered in English as, among other things, ‘universe’ and ‘world’, Apter places this term in ‘the longer sequence of Untranslatables’ which also includes *Welt*, *Terre*, *Chôra*, *Globe* and *Planetarity*.¹ Efforts to overcome this untranslatability have resulted in the selection of English terms which, despite suggesting equivalence, sacrifice the elaborate cosmology that Dante’s phrase conveys. Translating *mundo* as ‘universe’ suggests an undifferentiated universe that is at one with itself; translating this term as ‘world’ separates the remote domains and kingdoms of Dante’s song from the fluid territories of the inhabited planet. Dante’s Latin preserves the sense of a world and a universe that belong together and actualize each other; the world signified here is not complete in itself, and neither is the space of the universe seen to reside beyond the earth’s orbit. Unlike Goethe, Dante might not have an impact basin on Mercury named after him, but he launches world literature with a phrase that is just as devastating to the idea of planetary identity as the craters that signify the impossibility of orbital containment.

When Auerbach’s ‘Philology and *Weltliteratur*’ opens with the description of a world that is contracting, becoming ever closer to itself, and increasingly uniform (‘Our earth, the domain of *Weltliteratur*, is growing smaller and losing its diversity’²), it risks neglecting the expansive cosmological and metaphysical reach of such works as *The Divine Comedy*. Auerbach’s essay, the previous chapter has noted, is primarily given to tracking literature’s diminishing attachment to national traditions, and his earlier book, *Dante: Poet of the Secular World*, anticipates such a sense of the worldly context of writing by re-reading *The Divine Comedy* as a poem that regards the earth from a celestial perspective (rather than one that looks at the divine from below). Apter observes that Ralph Manheim’s translation of Auerbach’s title – *Dante als Dichter irdischen Welt* – substitutes *Secular* for *irdisch*, for her another term in the sequence of ‘Untranslatables’ that also includes *mundus* and *cosmos*. The German term,

she notes, is 'normally defined in English as earthly, temporal, or transient'.³ Preserving the possibility of a sacred domain that complements the concrete realm of human affairs, Manheim's choice of *Secular* detracts from the earthly trajectory of Auerbach's book. 'As distinct from the philosophical ascriptions of *Abgrund*, or the Heideggerian terms *Grund* and *Erdherrschaft* (tainted by a nationalist rhetoric of nation and soil)', she writes, '*irdisch* connotes spirit imbued with the terrestrial, the fleshly, the material, the mundane'.⁴

This elaborate history of translation and mistranslation suggests that world literature, as it opens with Dante's discarded incipit ('*Ultima regna canam*') and continues in Auerbach's reading of literature's terrestrialization of the world, begins in, and remains shaped by, the untranslatable. In his 1929 essay on Joyce's *Work in Progress*, Samuel Beckett equates this question of translation and untranslatability with the question of calculation and incalculability. In the first paragraph of this essay, Beckett makes an uncompromising declaration: 'Literary criticism is not book-keeping'.⁵ This assertion is motivated in part by Beckett's aversion to the mode of literary scholarship that has surrounded Dante's work – often a mania for numerology that has been preoccupied with counting the various elements of *The Divine Comedy*, or with trying to determine how and what numbers signify in this poem.

Against such efforts to systematize literary interpretation and to quantify the value of writing, Beckett finds in Joyce's *Work in Progress* a series of abstractions that refuse classification or arrangement into well-ordered categories. For this reason, Beckett tells us that there are parallels to be observed between Joyce and Dante. Whereas commentators have sought to distinguish Joyce's unfamiliar and unspeakable English ('The language is drunk. The very words are tilted and effervescent', Beckett writes) from the daily language of *The Divine Comedy*, for Beckett we need to acknowledge that there is something elusive about both Joyce's and Dante's work:

It is reasonable to admit that an international phenomenon might be capable of speaking [the language of *Work in Progress*], just as in 1300 none but an interregional phenomenon could have spoken the language of the *Divine Comedy*. We are inclined to forget that Dante's literary public was Latin, that the form of his Poem was to be judged by Latin eyes and ears, by a Latin Esthetic intolerant of innovation, and which could hardly fail to be irritated by the substitution of '*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita*' with its 'barbarous' directness for the suave elegance of '*Ultima regna canam, fluido contermina mundo*'.⁶

Drunk, tilting and effervescent, the language of Joyce's *Work in Progress* might justifiably be seen as resisting interpretation (which is to say, resisting translation

into daily language). But for Beckett, Dante's poem too needs to be seen as defying comprehension. Describing the effect that Dante's Florentine vernacular would have had at the time of this poem's appearance (a 'barbarous directness'), Beckett suggests that this idiomatic language would have been received not only as unpolished, unsophisticated and illiterate. It would also have been seen as having something foreign or outlandish about it. Even as this poem reached most candidly to readers, like Joyce's writing it also sought out those versed in linguistic and cultural difference and appealed to the sense of an uncanny elsewhere. It is this unsettling otherworldliness that, for him, places *The Divine Comedy* alongside *Work in Progress* as texts that defy both the perception of linguistic equivalence and the idea that they will surrender to the kind of criticism that would merely enumerate their various features.

It is difficult to dispute much of what Beckett writes, if only because of his resistance to ratiocination (or, more precisely, to deliberation as calculation). But he does need to be questioned on the issue of whether literary criticism is book-keeping. 'Clearly Beckett's own literary criticism is nothing like the marketplace symmetries of book-keeping or the slow measure of the ledger,' Laura Salisbury writes, 'it lurches untidily from impersonal exposition, through expressions of a personal reluctance to partake in criticism ... into a sarcastically superior attack on those ... unable to recognise Mr Joyce's achievements.'⁷ Even if 'good criticism (in its twentieth-century modernist manifestation) does have a fair amount of book-keeping in it,' Beckett's criticism cannot be 'be tidied up into book-keeping,' because 'like art, [it] refuses to "work".'⁸ On the other hand, according to Peter John Murphy, in his story 'Assumption' – published in the same year as *Our Exagmination* – Beckett offers a fictional calculation and quantification of the value of Dante, Bruno and Vico: his 'first creative venture in this very short story seems, in large part, to consist of "book-keeping".'⁹ Steven Connor recalls one critic who

finds in the work of Flaubert, Joyce and Beckett the evidence of a specifically typographic writing that is mathematical in two senses. First of all, it has, like mathematics, liberated itself from the occasion of utterance ... The second feature of this kind of writing is that it consists of finite quantities, closed sets of information, from which the text selects, rather than seeming to emerge out of nothing in an unbroken, sourceless stream.¹⁰

Extracting the finite and measurable from an indistinct flow shapes Beckett's cosmological announcement, in his 1932 novel *Dream of Fair to Middling Women*, that 'the greatest triumph of human thought was the calculation of Neptune from the observed vagaries of the orbit of Uranus.'¹¹ This planetary calculation

're-merges several times Beckett's writing',¹² Peter Boxall notes, suggesting both the revelation and retreat of hidden movements: 'There is beauty to be found ... in the way that an unseen heavenly body makes a legible mark on the unseen universe, something compelling about the deduction of the unknown, undreamt thing, from the slight distortion it causes in the path of the known'.¹³ It would appear, then, that Beckett's own writing adheres to the principle and practice of accounting even as it appeals to a sense of unquantifiable artistry. The known in this novel becomes actualized and is maintained (it adds up) through a subtraction of the unknown.

Beckett's effort to align criticism with a non-propositional art that is removed from reason, rationality and quantification operates in the register of the normative rather than the descriptive: this is a declaration not of what criticism is, but of what it ought to be. Book-keeping is precisely the method of analysis that literary criticism has often adopted. Perhaps not immediately recognizable as an exercise in calculation, efforts to establish the greater value of literature in the pursuit of understanding nevertheless demonstrate an appetite for quantification. With Philip Sidney's 1595 'Defence of Poesy', the English critical tradition begins with a description of poetry as a mode of understanding that surpasses the merely technical knowledge that develops in astronomy, philosophy and mathematics. Despite attending to the order of things, these disciplines are limited by their inattention to the pitfalls of being human or worldly: 'The astronomer, looking to the stars, might fall in a ditch', the philosopher 'might be blind in himself' and the mathematician 'might draw forth a straight line with a crooked heart'.¹⁴ And yet, in order to establish poetry as the most noble discourse, Sidney turns to the act of comparative measurement: the poet, he writes, 'doth draw the mind more effectually than any other art doth'.¹⁵ For Marx too, literature's significance is to be found in its comparative value: in a review of 1854, he celebrates 'the present splendid brotherhood of fiction-writers in England, whose graphic and eloquent pages have issued to the world more political and social truths than have been uttered by all the professional politicians, publicists and moralists put together'.¹⁶ The singularity of literature is therefore a matter of calculation; its exceptionality is derived from the greater quantity or degree with which it reveals truths and essences. More than lawyers, historians, grammarians or physicians, more than politicians, publicists and moralists, more than astronomers, philosophers and mathematicians, the writers of literary works are, according to both Sidney and Marx, equipped to disclose the nature of the world.

As well as authorizing declarations of literature's power and primacy, calculation is more readily observable in the acts of quantification that have

often provided criticism with primary data for analysis. ‘The act of counting has always been central to literature, in the sense that poetic measure relies on number and pattern’,¹⁷ Baylee Brits writes. Despite its position today as a familiar term in the lexicon of organizational management and associated with audit culture, for the *OED* ‘metric’ is to be defined primarily as ‘Senses relating to poetic metre’ and ‘The branch of study that deals with metre, esp. in poetic metre (now superseded by metrics)’; only in its secondary sense does it refer to ‘Senses relating to measurement generally’, ‘A system or standard of measurement; a criterion or set of criteria stated in quantifiable terms’ or ‘Measurement, figures, statistics’. The legacy of this sense of quantification is to be found in the statistical, computational or structural analysis of particular literary works, where the counting of textual elements is seen to yield a sense of what a text means, or of how its signifying elements are arranged in a manner that allows it to appear meaningful. Calculation and enumeration are also fundamental to the more recent practice of producing data visualizations – word clouds, network and information graphics, and other graphical representations – that are often associated with a reliable disclosure of what is most essential to a text. Quantification continues in cartographies of world literature which track not only the movement of texts over territories and beyond national cultures, but also the historical and geographical efflorescence of particular literary genres and the trafficking of cultural forms. Such a data-driven tracking of literary practices across the world is most evident in the cartograms; scatterplots; and line, radar and Gantt charts that are often produced in the analysis of statistical information and data relating to the migration of aesthetic practices.¹⁸

II

Beckett’s misgivings about criticism as measurement and enumeration arise because of the quality of non-systemizable abstractions that, for him, characterizes literature. Similar objections are voiced about the turn towards data analysis in the tracking of world literature. ‘When we ... strip the world of motley, fractal texture through large-scale data mining’, Newman writes:

what we lose is the sense of the ways in which any one of World Literature’s intriguingly dense and detailed texts both contains its own universe and fits into an equally as variegated world-literary whole that is ‘unified’ precisely in its heteronomous ‘multiplicity’, as another great theorist of World Literature, Erich Auerbach, once wrote.¹⁹

Vilashini Cooppan writes that ‘world literature is not an ontology, but an epistemology, not a catalogue of literary data but a way of reading and even, dare one suggest, thinking: a philosophy in, and of, motion’;²⁰ according to Sarah Lawall, ‘The more data we collect, the harder it is to coordinate a reading of the world’.²¹

Responses such as these point to more a generalized context in which misgivings are stated about the use and social function of data. The idea of the ‘quantified self’, for example, has emerged in recent years as a mode of subjectivity in which data and devices (including GPS wearables) are used to monitor and measure the daily functioning of the body.²² As Btihaj Ajana notes, this shift has been regarded as another moment in the long history of biopolitical control in which the self continues to be subjected to management and regulation techniques: the quantified self is ‘often seen as a key illustration of a neoliberal attitude towards the self and its governance ... encourage[ing] individuals to become rational entrepreneurs of themselves and embrace its metric culture of self-improvement’.²³ Recent efforts to comprehend world literature through acts of tracking and data analysis are vulnerable to the similar claim that these methods are determined to make the literary text untroublesome: in their pursuit of the text’s worldly significance and location they risk discarding the variability of writing, as well as neglecting earlier critical work that seeks to maintain a sense of literature’s simultaneous condition of becoming unified in the world and remaining external to this unity.

For Michel Foucault, the relationship between calculation and knowledge needs to be approached in terms of its place in the history of European thought. In *The Order of Things*, he describes how this relationship arrives forcefully with the coming of systematized rationality in the Classical Age and becomes entrenched as a core element in the emerging science of order that takes mathematical calculation as essential to the comprehension of actuality. *Mathesis* is the ‘science of calculable order’;²⁴ Foucault writes, ‘a science of equalities, and therefore of attributions and judgements; it is the science of *truth*’. This science combines with *taxinomia*, a practice that ‘treats of identities and differences; it is the science of articulations and classifications; it is the knowledge of *beings*’.²⁵ Both of these elements work in conjunction with *genesis*, ‘the analysis of the constitution of orders on the basis of empirical series’.²⁶ *Mathesis* separates entities into units and calculates their character or quality, *taxinomia* arranges these entities into a catalogue of comparable characteristics and *genesis* provides a narrative of the past that conjures away the emergence of this system as a particular moment in the history of knowledge. These three elements for Foucault coalesce to

forge the Classical *episteme*, and what this system seeks to know are the various elements that combine to produce the perception of the world as a finitude. In this moment of technical thinking, 'The sciences always carry within themselves the project, however remote it may be, of an exhaustive ordering of the world'.²⁷

Mathesis and *taxinomia* are often taken to be the major features of the analysis that Foucault sets out in *The Order of Things*: the calculability of actuality and the classifiability of things in the world are the conceptual operations that structure thinking in the Classical Age. But this system is possible only because of the genetic element that legitimizes it: the ideas and assumptions that guide this age become established only through the elimination of the thinking that it replaced. For Foucault, the order of knowledge that the Classical Age displaces is configured around the notion of similitude. Things in the world are not, in the pre-Classical period, understood as inherently meaningful and yielding themselves to measurement, quantification and categorization. Rather, they are seen to be invested with significance from an elsewhere that they resemble; instead of being immanently meaningful and referring to themselves, things in the world in this earlier age are treated as signs that metonymically indicate the sublime order of a creation that includes the world but also extends beyond it. In pre-Classical thought, Foucault writes, the 'ancient notion' of the microcosm reappears and becomes central to the conceptualization of the earth as a planetary body, albeit one that interacts with a higher order. Examination of the world does not result in a sense of its isolation or self-sufficiency. Instead,

it affirms ... that the visible order of the highest spheres will be found reflected in the darkest depths of the earth ... It indicates that there exists a greater world, and that its perimeter defines the limit of all created things; that at the far extremity of this great world there exists a privileged creation which reproduces, within its restricted dimensions, the immense order of the heavens, the stars, the mountains, rivers, and storms.²⁸

Of crucial importance here is that the world as microcosm and the greater world of which it is part do not make themselves immediately recognizable. Instead, they are hidden from view. They form part of an occult or secret substratum, the meaning of which is encoded or encrypted both in things in the world and in language about creation. 'There is no difference', Foucault writes,

between the visible marks that God has stamped upon the surface of the earth, so that we may know its inner secrets, and the legible words that the Scriptures, or the sages of Antiquity, have set down in the books preserved for us by tradition. The relation to these texts is of the same nature as the relation to things: in both cases there are signs that must be discovered.²⁹

Because these inner secrets lie behind signs that communicate obliquely, we cannot access them directly. Disclosure will not come through acts of quantification, measurement, calculation or enumeration, or between the cataloguing of things according to their shared characteristics. In this period, it is the work of decipherment and interpretation – in other words, translation – that will provide a route to knowledge of the larger scheme of which the world is only a fragment. This hermeneutics of the miraculous Foucault terms *divinatio*, and it is this mode of thinking that is made obsolete by the Classical Age. *Mathesis* and *taxinomia* displace *divinatio*, and the narrative that accompanies the arrival of this Age – for Foucault, the thinking of its *genesis* – is what allows this particular structuring of knowledge to be treated as the one that finally accesses the true.

III

Foucault's account of the transition to the principle of calculable order hints at the thinking that irritates Beckett: the notion that enumeration or quantification can reveal what resides eternally at the heart of literature and is able to solve the problem of what writing means. Following Foucault, the book-keeping that Beckett dismisses is contestable because it can be seen as belonging to a particular moment in which calculation becomes equated with truth; its claims to truth are made contingent by the recognition that they emerge and take root, rather than being based on an ability to extract something intrinsic and permanent that is encoded within the text. Two further consequences extend from this challenge to counting. First, Foucault's account of the shift from pre-Classical thought to the Classical Age – from *divinatio* to *mathesis*, *taxinomia* and *genesis* – troubles the way in which counting is central to what is now a canonical approach to world literature. Responding to Goethe's plea for a writing that transcends national tradition, Franco Moretti devises a criticism that proceeds through a combination of interpretation and data analysis. The categories that shape criticism need to change, he writes, if the asymmetrical movement and dissemination of literary forms – and their relationship to the hierarchical distribution of cultural authority and transnational power – are to be grasped. To address this asymmetry, Moretti recommends not a theory of textual dispersal, where stylistic differences are seen to develop as a result of local or regional influences, transforming writing into an infinite (and innumerable) miscellany of diverse literatures. Rather, he proposes a bifurcated criticism that recognizes both the system that shapes the emergence of world literature and

the discrepancies that exist within (and, indeed, are required by) this system. In his famous initial formulation of this hypothesis, Moretti looks to ‘the world-systems school of economic history’, according to which:

International capitalism is a system that is simultaneously *one*, and *unequal*: with a core and a periphery ... that are bound together in a relationship of growing inequality. One, and unequal: *one* literature (*Weltliteratur*, singular, as in Goethe and Marx), or perhaps, better, one world literary system (of inter-related literatures); but a system which is different from what Goethe and Marx had hoped for, because it’s profoundly unequal.³⁰

Tracing the unfolding of this hypothesis across Moretti’s work, Apter states that ‘what he means by “system” often remains elusive’; it too is an Untranslatable, ‘a loose name for a practice of World Literature shaped by quantitative analysis and computational skills.’³¹ Apter notes what are, for her, several problems with this model, including a tendency towards Eurocentrism, but also ‘its push to reconcile literary history with ecology.’³² This model is limited, she proposes, because the ecosystem that it maps recognizes only the relationship between literary and technical systems. It ‘spell[s] out less concern with ecosystems (and their organicist, genetic, evolutionary applications) and more concern with computational systems tout court, albeit in the service of literary and social history ... the expansive “world” of this quant-driven ecosystem tends towards contraction of the economy of interpretation.’³³

The idea of system is therefore a non-systematic one because it moves elusively through Moretti’s work, but also because its operations are contrary to the method that it promotes. However, it is also necessary to situate this modelling of a system in the epistemic history that Foucault describes. *Mathesis* and *taxinomia* structure this work of literary critical measuring and quantification, which is to say that it describes how writing practices combine to produce a system of interacting and integrated textual units that are transplanted and displaced across social and economic space. The world that appears through this method is presented as a complete and inherently meaningful entity that becomes disclosed through computational analysis of data relating to the transmission of texts and practices. That this association of measurement and calculation with the revelation of the real and the true belongs to a particular moment in intellectual history is not, however, sufficiently acknowledged. In other words, this model presents *mathesis* and *taxinomia* as essential to the analysis of literary data, but because it does not contextualize the emergence

of this analytical mode, it does not acknowledge its own *genesis*. And, because this method does not reveal its own situatedness in epistemic history, the world surfaces in it only as a field of socio-cultural practices. What the world itself might be – what *divinatio* might tell us about how the world as a cosmological or ontological entity – is not a consideration here. This means that when world literature is made comprehensible through data analysis, the question of what the world is becomes overlooked. It turns into a remainder that is left over when the world is counted as one.

The idea of an incalculable remainder preoccupies Giorgio Agamben in his seminar series on the *Epistle to the Romans*, *The Time That Remains*. In the third seminar, Agamben's commentary echoes Auerbach's *Dante: Poet of the Secular World* and *Mimesis* by focusing on the state of being separated. Agamben's interest in this idea is triggered by its appearance in the opening sentence of Romans, which establishes Paul's exceptional capacity to convey the divine word. The Latin Vulgate translates this opening sentence as 'Paulus, servus Jesu Christi, vocatus Apostolus, segregatus in Evangelium Dei'; in the King James translation, this sentence becomes 'Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God'.³⁴

For Agamben, the proposition that Paul should be set apart in this way is curious because it is at odds with the idea of Paul as 'the apostle of universalism'.³⁵ Agamben's commentary on *Romans* defends this tension by focusing on the term for separation or setting apart that is used in the Epistle: *Aphōrismenos*. '*Aphōrismenos* is nothing more than the Greek translation of the Hebrew term *parush* or the Aramaic *p'rish*, that is, "Pharisee"',³⁶ he writes. The Pharisees, he notes, differentiated themselves from the masses, 'not only and as much from the pagans, but also and above all from the "*am-ha'aretz*", the people of the earth, meaning, the ignorant farmers who do not follow the law'.³⁷ What Paul separates himself from is not 'the people of the earth' – he does not claim an exceptional position apart from the multitude – but from his own past as a Pharisee. This separation, Agamben writes, is a separation from the principle of division, distinction or setting apart, and in this separation from separation he is able to embrace the messianic idea of community.

Agamben's remarks on the remainder that is produced by such an act of separation speak directly to the idea of a writing that can be counted and quantified, and of a world literature that communicates the oneness of the world. The condition of being separated – the *Aphōrismenos* that opens *Romans* – does not allow an entity, an identity or a community to be fully at home or at one with itself. The wholeness to which Paul's universalism aspires can only

ever be partial – a remnant – because it needs to be distinguished from the particularism that it negates. Universalism must be incomplete – community is always divided – because the remnant, Agamben writes, inserts itself ‘between every identity and itself’.³⁸ These comments relate not only to *Romans*, or to the division between Jew and non-Jew that is the focus of the third seminar of *The Time That Remains*. They also apply to the notion of a shared world that inhabits its own space, and to Auerbach’s reading of *The Divine Comedy* in which world literature emerges as a secular writing that places the world in a particular astronomical or cosmological space. But where Auerbach finds in Dante a separation of the world from the universe or the immensity of the heavens, Agamben suggests that the otherworldly or celestial cannot be forsaken so easily. While the otherworldly or celestial appear as conceptual leftovers to be discarded by secular thinking, they remain essential to the formation of the idea of the world as a finite entity.

By the same token, the more recent description of world literature as a quantifiable (though unequal) system of production is also troubled by the notion of the remnant. Here, counting is seen to reveal the passage of aesthetic and social practices, but even though these practices are understood as a manifestation of the world itself, counting does not yield a world that can be quantified as a oneness that is in fully possession of itself. The separation that occurs here is between world literature and the world, one fully subjected to the notion of calculable order, the other uncountable. World literature must therefore be treated as something partial, rather than complete; something divided and unequal, rather than one and unequal. What is missing from world literature – what cannot be translated into a number or into thinking – is the world.

IV

For Foucault and Agamben, calculation must always be frustrated in its quest to determine the one. It is, however, important to consider modes of quantification and measurement that depart from notions of accountability, standardization or arithmetical determination. Alternative numerologies, counting but finding something more or less than calculable at the heart of calculation, circulate in abundance. Reading Edmond Jabès’s *Book of Questions*, Derrida describes how repetition requires a ‘ternary essence’ that multiplies, rather than duplicates, sense:

Once the centre or the origin have begun by repeating themselves, by redoubling themselves, the double did not only add itself to the simple. It divided it and supplemented it. There was immediately a double origin plus its repetition. Three is the first figure of repetition. The last too, for the abyss of representation always remains dominated by its rhythm, infinitely. The infinite is doubtless neither one, nor empty, nor innumerable. It is of a ternary essence.³⁹

In Philippe Sollers's *Numbers* we are, Derrida writes elsewhere, caught in a 'mathematicogenetic theory of groups' and 'a kind of writing of innumerable number'.⁴⁰ Invoking a silent instrument that circulates above, Sollers hints not only at orbital observation but also at the world's enumeration from orbit: 'Night is turning and forming itself above the cities – where the mute machines are henceforth capable of reading, deciphering, counting, writing, and remembering'.⁴¹ The notion of a machinic production of meaning guides Derrida's commentary on *Numbers*, a novel that seeks a break in representation (which would allow 'a pure appearance of appearing through which the present seems to free itself from the textual machine'⁴²) but also exposes the making present that must occur when this break is articulated. "Presence," or "production," is but a product', Derrida writes, 'The product of an arithmetic operation'.⁴³ In this perpetually ambivalent operation, measuring and counting (like naming and enciphering) disclose both sense and the impossibility of sense: 'E-numeration, like de-nomination, makes and unmakes, joins and dismembers'.⁴⁴

Derrida's description of number as both one and more than one, as well as his account of the proliferating effects of the double, is therefore at odds with the idea that arithmetical operations are to be avoided. It also radically challenges earlier work that appeals to the notion of an unsystematizable innumerability, such as Roland Barthes's declaration that 'the narratives of the world are numberless'.⁴⁵ The idea of a 'writing of innumerable number' in this manner both extends the earlier rethinking of number and anticipates the uncanny numerology that has emerged in recent theory. For example, Derrida's comments echo '... Poetically Man Dwells ...', where Heidegger puzzles over the significance of measurement in Friedrich Hölderlin's poem 'In Lovely Blue'. In this poem, dwelling is taken as 'the basic character of human existence', and Hölderlin 'sees the poetic ... by way of its relation to this dwelling, thus understood essentially'.⁴⁶ One of the primary concerns of this poem, then, is to establish a connection between dwelling and the poetic; indeed, Heidegger writes, 'Poetry is what really lets us dwell'.⁴⁷ 'Poetically man dwells' is the fragment from Hölderlin's poem that detains Heidegger, although what preoccupies him most are the words that follow: 'on this earth'. Poetry, Hölderlin suggests, is what grounds us; it departs from the

aspiration to achieve a cosmological – or orbital – perspective that would allow us to look down upon, and fully to see and know, the earth. ‘Poetry does not fly above and surmount the earth in order to escape it and hover over it,’ Heidegger writes, ‘Poetry is what first brings man back onto the earth, makes him belong to it, and thus brings him into dwelling.’⁴⁸

In Hölderlin’s poem, making sense of this dwelling occurs through measurement. Our eyes are lifted from the ground and in the act of looking up to the sky we assess the distance between the ground and the beyond. ‘This between is measured out for the dwelling of man’⁴⁹ for Heidegger. Reflecting on this ‘measuring out’ is not, however, the same as undertaking an act of precise mathematical calculation that would determine the dimensions and character of the earth. It is ‘measure-taking,’ rather than measurement, that concerns Hölderlin. Measure-taking

not only takes the measure of the earth, *ge*, and accordingly it is no mere geometry. Just as little does it ever take the measure of heaven, *ouranos*, for itself. Measure-taking is no science. Measure-taking gauges the between, which brings the two, heaven and earth, to one another. This measure-taking has its own *metron*, and thus its own metric.⁵⁰

With its own metric, the measure-taking that Heidegger refers to here is not the simple act of enumeration. According to Stuart Elden, measure-taking ‘is not a question of understanding nature as *res extensa*’, nor is it ‘a simple earth-measuring’ or ‘earth-writing’⁵¹; for Christopher Yates, ‘The “hands” that measure and build ... do not belong to *ideas* of presence and do not serve the security of categorical knowing.’⁵² Measure-taking is, instead, a ‘rethinking of measure’⁵³ because it stands apart from the act of measuring by considering the nature of gauging and calculation. Poetry provides us with an image of the calculation through which we make sense of the earth as a dwelling, but it does not itself participate in such a calculation. ‘The poet,’ Heidegger writes, ‘does not describe the mere appearance of sky and earth. The poet calls, in the sights of the sky, that which in its very self-disclosure causes the appearance of that which conceals itself.’⁵⁴ The earth is not, then, a self-revealing body that makes itself known to us but discloses itself as something that remains concealed. Poetry provides us with an insight into the earth’s ambivalent appearance and concealment; it is a writing of the measurement that, in Derrida’s terms, ‘makes and unmakes, joins and dismembers.’

Attention to knowledge as a mathematical operation continues more recently in work that, according to Apter, emphasizes ‘the existentialization ... of

calculation and the count.⁵⁵ These tendencies Apter finds in the work of Alain Badiou, Bruno Latour, Frédéric Gros, Luc Boltanski and Quentin Meillassoux. 'These authors diverge to be sure', she writes, 'but what draws them into orbit is their common focus on calculated existence'.⁵⁶ When thinking about the acts of planetary and global individuation that have, at least since Plato, shaped ideas about the world, Badiou's work on the determination of oneness is particularly significant. Apter cites *Number and Numbers*, where Badiou elaborates on his earlier claim in *Being and Event* that it is necessary to think with and through number to conjecture on a multiplicity that will not yield to calculation. 'Philosophers ... have placed mathematics, ever since Plato, as a model of certainty, or as an example of identity', Badiou submits in *Being and Event*, and in *Number and Numbers* he describes this tradition of associating calculation with certainty as tyrannical: 'We live in the era of number's despotism; thought yields to the law of denumerable multiplicities'.⁵⁷ This despotism functions to secure and maintain thought as calculable truth, and is a 'numerical exegesis' that 'governs our conception of the political [because] ... Every "political" convocation ... is settled with a count'.⁵⁸ Number's despotism also provides the foundation for a cosmology in which the notion of an infinite oneness becomes attached to the world. Like Foucault, Badiou finds this cosmology evident in modern science's overturning of medieval Christian metaphysics, where nature is replaced by God as the manifestation of infinity.

For Badiou, this process of actualization produces the world as a corporeal finitude that is an element in nature's infinity (i.e. as 'a being-of-the-one'⁵⁹). And yet, this process fails in its efforts to distinguish between quantifiable being and an infinity that is both otherwise than being and beyond calculation because it regards infinity not as pure multiplicity but as a oneness. It is, he writes, a 'mathematical ontologization of infinity'.⁶⁰ For Badiou, then, the world is not an observable corporeal facticity, but is manufactured in a conceptual tradition that insists on the oneness of entities. 'What has to be declared is that the one, which is not, exists as *operation*', he writes, 'there is no one, only the count-as-one. The one, being an operation, is never a presentation'.⁶¹ Or, as Peter Hallward explains, 'Only mathematics can think multiplicity without any constituent reference to unity'; this is because 'the theoretical foundations of mathematics ensure that any unification, any consideration of something as one thing, will be thought as the *result* of an operation, the operation that treats or counts something as one'.⁶² What is also notable about this account of the world's production as a finite oneness, however, is that it attaches primacy to the act of counting. The world is made in thought not as a concept of home or following the geocentric

detachment of secular space from the celestial realm of the universal or the divine. Philosophy's search for the absolute therefore begins as mathematics, and it is as an expression of this essential and original pursuit of the calculable that the world is forged in the operation of the count-as-one.

V

A more sustained account of how this quantifying operation relates specifically to the conceptualization and quantification of the world is provided by Sloterdijk in volume two of his Spheres trilogy, *Globes: Macrosphereology*. This book charts a course through many accounts of 'world', describing a vector that remains persistent despite the apparent differences of these accounts. This vector originates, according to Sloterdijk, in Greece between the sixth and third centuries BCE with the arrival of what he variously describes as 'spheropoietic', 'spherological' and 'monospherical' thought: 'The representation of the world-whole through the orb was the decisive act of the early European Enlightenment. One could, by way of definition, say that original philosophy was a shift to monospherical thought'.⁶³ Following this emergence, monospherical thought has mutated to operate in three principal modalities, each dominating a particular moment in history. In the first moment – of classical and medieval metaphysics – the orb appears as a cosmological motif for all that is, with everything encompassed intimately and endospherically within its own domain. This orb is 'the origin and archetype of all things its contains, it is the necessary, sufficient, and excessive reason for itself and its contents ... [it is] animated *everywhere* from its centre, and ... infused with magical symmetries, is capable of revolving around itself by its own agency'.⁶⁴ Second is the moment that Sloterdijk names 'terrestrial globalization'. Characterized by a determination to circumnavigate and encompass the earth, terrestrial globalization turns away from cosmology and becomes fascinated by the planetary. The orb that it celebrates is the telluric earth at one with itself, an immanent ground to be described and circumscribed by narratives and images of traversal, expansion and capture. 'In the Modern Age', Sloterdijk writes, 'the task of designing the new image of the world no longer fell to the metaphysicists, but rather to the geographers and seafarers'.⁶⁵ This modernity extends into the late twentieth century, taking the form of different social practices and enabled by different technologies that maintain, intensify and accelerate the perception and experience of a contained world:

Half a millennium after the four voyages of Columbus, the circumnavigated, uncovered, depicted, occupied and used earth presents itself as a body wrapped in dense fabrics of traffic movements and telecommunications routines. Virtual shells have replaced the imagined ethereal sky; thanks to radio-electronic systems, the meaning of distances has effectively been negated in the centres of power and consumption. The global players live in a world without gaps. In aeronautical terms, the earth has been reduced to a flying route of fifty hours at most; for the orbits of satellites and the *Mir* station, and recently the International Space Station (ISS), units of ninety minutes became the norm. For radio and light messages, the earth has shrunk to a static point – it rotates, as a temporally compact orb, in an electronic layer that surrounds it like a second atmosphere.⁶⁶

This attainment of such a ‘synchronous world’⁶⁷ is also, however, the culmination of monospherical thought, and for *Globes* we are currently witnessing the end of terrestrial globalization as the enclosure and individuation of the corporeal earth. For Sloterdijk, we live in the period of ‘the last orb’⁶⁸ and are experiencing the emergence of the third moment of spherical thought where ‘there will be no more sphere of spheres – neither an informatic nor a world-state sphere, let alone a religious one.’⁶⁹ Rather than a smooth – shared and undifferentiated – space, according to *Globes* the world is now becoming an assemblage of micro-spheres.⁷⁰

Globes offers a striking revision of globalization as a historico-ontological condition. In the most obvious sense, its morphology of the concept of the world is rooted in a radical rethinking of globalization’s historicity. Challenging what he describes as the ‘noisy monotony of the current sociological and political literature on globalization,’⁷¹ Sloterdijk proposes that ‘globalization or spheropoiesis on the grandest scale is the fundamental event of European thought, which, for two and a half thousand years, has not ceased to provoke radical changes in human thinking and living conditions.’⁷² This means not only that globalization begins in the conceptual recesses of the past (rather than with the intensification of social relations at the end of the twentieth century, or with the punctual isolation of the now as an unprecedented moment) and will come to an end, but that the world has emerged as a fixed and finite body. It is not simply there, inertly waiting for us to discover it, but has had meaning and significance bestowed upon it; ‘world’, in other words, is the name for that which presents itself to being and must somehow be comprehended. In this manner, *Globes* points to and extends another motif of Sloterdijk’s work: a rethinking of being that magnifies the sense of being-in-the-world that Heidegger substantially

undertakes, but does not complete, in *Being and Time*. For Willem Schinkel and Liesbeth Noordegraaf-Eelens, the Spheres trilogy

asks not the question ‘who or what is man?’, but ‘where is man?’ and it finds the answer in the creative building of spheres as psycho-social containers in historically varying shapes. Being-in-the-world is being-in-spheres. That is to say that it is always already both spatial and social.⁷³

Being-in-the-world is, then, a spacing: to be human is to be positioned in relation to the world as an environment (regardless of the particular cosmological or terrestrial location of the world). This being-in is social because it is also a being-with or a being-together for Sloterdijk. ‘Spatial being is always a co-existence’,⁷⁴ since the world is never experienced by subjects in isolation.

Sloterdijk’s account of world’s appearance therefore corresponds with Badiou’s claim that the world always arrives through an operation, rather than as a presentation. A further correspondence can be seen in Sloterdijk’s association of spherology with mathematics, and with geometry in particular. ‘Globalization began as a geometrization of the immeasurable’,⁷⁵ he writes, echoing Badiou’s account of the ‘mathematical ontologization of infinity’. This geometrization unfolds in the repeated determination of the world as an entity that is not only measureable but can be counted as one. *Globes* opens with a reading of a mosaic (probably from the first century BCE) that shows a group of philosophers who are gathered around ‘a *sphaira*, an orb of the earth and the heavens, that symbol of totality that has been revered by geometers and metaphysicians alike since the days of Empedocles and Parmenides.’⁷⁶ What is notable about this mosaic for Sloterdijk is that it depicts the orb – the earth and the heavens – as quantifiable:

The *sphaira*, the One as a form, is the God who makes humans think. It is not through prayers and invocations that this One can be reached, but rather through analysis, measurements and proofs ... The orb wants to be viewed and honored as much as calculated and assessed. Its interior demands a congenial spirit to enliven it – and enlivening here means producing and gauging.⁷⁷

This sense of the world as an entity that is conceptualized through early acts of quantification often returns in *Globes*. It describes how Parmenides celebrates ‘the unanimous “structure” of the universally round’, and how this ‘simplest geometric form ascends to the rank of the absolutely valid ideal, which would be the measure of all things.’⁷⁸ It proposes that ‘mathematical globalization preceded its terrestrial variety by over two thousand years.’⁷⁹ And it observes that ‘when Greek philosophers and geometers began to measure the universe mathematically two and a half thousand years ago, they were following an

irresistible formal intuition: their interest in the world was kindled by the easy constructability and symmetrical perfection of the spherical form'.⁸⁰ At the point at which the world became subject to a spherical determination of all that is, it was also, therefore, subject to a mathematical determination of the one. Put otherwise, if globalization begins as a geometrization of the immeasurable then it is necessary to record this as an operation in number as well as space.

VI

If, for Badiou, 'we live in the era of number's despotism', then thinking through the numerical systematizing of thought allows us not only to accept that we live in the domain of the count-as-one, but also to subtract from this domain a realm of the 'not-one'. Because determination of the one is a mathematical operation, we can 'presume that whatever was thus counted, or unified, is itself not-one'.⁸¹ The number zero, or more precisely the figure $\emptyset$, is the name for this not-one. Derived from Parmenides and the pre-Socratics, as well as Frege, Lacan and set theory, this figure allows us to conjecture on a nothingness or void – an emptiness or pure absence that contrasts with the world that we invest with ideas or propositions. Zero/ $\emptyset$ for Badiou is the number of the unthinkable, unclassifiable, incalculable and uncountable. In *Being and Event*, he writes:

To write it, this name of being ... the mathematicians searched for a sign far from all their customary alphabets; neither a Greek, nor a Latin, nor a Gothic letter, but an old Scandinavian letter, $\emptyset$, emblem of the void, zero affected by the barring of sense.⁸²

A zero affected by the barring of sense: what we do not see, touch, taste, smell, hear or think – this void is beyond what we experience in the world and it will always be inaccessible to us. This non-number for Badiou allows us to think beyond the world of the count-as-one and to arrive at an articulation of being as pure multiplicity. Departing from the tradition of transcendental thinking that seeks to identify a foundational or essential unity (such as God, Nature or the World), $\emptyset$ is a symbol of erasure that ruptures circumferential or spherical thought.

According to Badiou, the not-one as $\emptyset$ or pure multiplicity is not revealed in the world of knowledge or experience. It is not to be confused with the multitude of voices and meanings that collide, merge and deviate to produce an abundance of signification and sense. The idea of a plural many – of a

multiplication of discrepant things in the world – is not to be equated with the being that is beyond enumeration. For Sloterdijk too, plurality does not represent an escape from the realm of calculable or measureable. When, in *Foams: Plural Spherology* (the third volume of the Spheres trilogy), he sets out the decline of modernity's persistent attachment to monospherical thought and describes our age as the epoch of 'the last orb', he does not associate today's world of micro-spheres with the arrival of an infinitely diverse and innumerable condition. In the present age, "life" unfolds multifocally, multiperspectively, and heterarchically ... Life articulates itself on nested simultaneous stages.'⁸³ According to *Foams*, one such stage is orbital space. This is a place where individuation or isolation appears to be absolute, but it is also where being-with is most evident.

Sloterdijk rejects the idea of space travel as the latest manifestation of a human yearning to journey and explore:

From a philosophical perspective, the meaning of space travel is not that it offers the means for a possible exodus of humanity to outer space or is allied with the supposed human need to keep pushing the boundaries of what is possible; we can safely pass over the romanticism of exodus.⁸⁴

Against the association of space travel with an expansive moving beyond, a detachment from the earth or a floating free from the constraints of planetary life, space travel should instead be understood as the disclosure of how we live on the ground. Being-in-orbit is the encapsulation of being-in-the-world, Sloterdijk writes, because this place reveals that we exist in a state of dependency:

Manned space stations are anthropological demonstration fields because the being-in-the-world of astronauts is no longer possible except as being-on-the-station ... the station, far more than any terrestrial island, constitutes a world model, or more precisely an immanence machine, in which existing or being-able-to-reside-in-a-world becomes completely dependent on technological world givers.⁸⁵

Inverting Heidegger's description of orbit as the site of technicity's triumph, Sloterdijk here describes technology and humanity as co-constitutive, and orbit is where this essential bond is exposed: to be without prostheses in this place is not to be. Furthermore, for Sloterdijk, the need to attend to the conditions of life – to be focused on how life is to be maintained – puts those in orbit in an inescapably philosophical mode. Space travel

is the hardest school of naiveté-breaking procedures with regard to the human condition, for through its radically eccentric replacement formations for

the coexistence of humans with their own kind and others in a shared whole it enforces an unrelenting spelling course for even the most details of the immanence machine.⁸⁶

Being-in-orbit therefore reveals that constitution of a world and coexistence with others are primary needs. This act of world formation is not, according to Sloterdijk, to be understood as the extension of planetary space; it does not reflect an expansionist drive to magnify the reach of earthly space. It is not a continuation of Dante's determination of the world as a separate cosmological entity or a place from which the travel of social and cultural practices can be mapped and measured. Rather than the intensification of terrestrial globalization and the enlargement of the monospherical world – rather than confirming the notion that the world can be encompassed within or as a single orb – being-in-orbit reveals our age as the moment in which the concept of the world whole collapses. The space station and other orbital capsules are where humanity's explication is taking place, demonstrating today's condition of “connected isolation” in a very pure form.⁸⁷ This is not the pure multiplicity that Badiou discerns through the thinking of a number beyond calculation or measure. Another occurrence of ‘the mathematical ontologization of infinity’ or another instance of the ‘geometrization of the immeasurable’, orbit is a zone of interdependent isolation that bears witness to the production of the one and the many. In other words, orbit is where measure-taking can be observed; it is the space of *poieisis*, where the making of number is disclosed.

Notes

- 1 Apter, *Against World Literature*, 216. Intriguingly, for the book – Barbara Cassin's *Dictionary of Untranslatables* – from which Apter derives this term, ‘satellite’ is drawn into the semiotic chain that unfolds around another such ‘Untranslatable’, the Russian term *Drugoj*: “The old Slavic root *drug* is still found in most Slavic languages: in the Russian *drug* ..., the Polish *druh*, “friend”, the Serbo-Croatian *drug*, “companion, comrade”, the Czech *druh*, “species, kind”. It has in addition a number of derived forms that express, in one way or another, the idea of association: Russian *družba* ... “friendship”, Serbo-Croatian *družba*, “organization, group, coterie”, Czech *družice*, “satellite”. Barbara Cassin (ed.), *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, translation edited by Emily Apter, Jacques Lezra, and Michael Wood (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 236.
- 2 Auerbach, ‘Philology and *Weltliteratur*’, 2.

- 3 Apter, *Against World Literature*, 216.
- 4 Apter, *Against World Literature*, 216. James Porter makes a similar observation: 'The rendering [of *irdisch* as *Secular*] is unfortunate, as it gets the accent wrong. Of concern to Auerbach in this study is not the world as a secular entity, but the earthly character of the world in its experiential particularity, vividness, and proximity to life.' James Porter, *Time, History, and Literature: Selected Essays of Erich Auerbach* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), xviii.
- 5 Samuel Beckett, 'Dante... Bruno. Vico... Joyce', in *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress*, ed. Samuel Beckett et al. (New York: New Directions, 1962), 4. This peremptory rejection of quantifying criticism returns in 1936, when Beckett distinguishes art from criticism: 'The chartered recountants take the thing to pieces and put it back together again. They enjoy it. The artist takes it to pieces and makes a new thing, new things.' Samuel Beckett, *Disjecta: Miscellaneous Writings and a Dramatic Fragment* (London: John Calder, 1983), 89. Further discussion of Beckett's writing on numbers is provided by Steven Connor in *Living by Numbers: In Praise of Quantity* (London: Reaktion, 2016), *passim*.
- 6 Beckett, 'Dante... Bruno. Vico... Joyce', 19.
- 7 Laura Salisbury, *Samuel Beckett: Laughing Matters, Comic Timing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 58.
- 8 Salisbury, *Samuel Beckett*, 58–9.
- 9 Peter John Murphy, *Beckett's Dedalus: Dialogical Engagements with Joyce in Beckett's Fiction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 31.
- 10 Steven Connor, 'The Horror of Number: Can Humans Learn to Count?' Available online: <http://stevenconnor.com/horror.html> (accessed 30 March 2018).
- 11 Samuel Beckett, *Dream of Fair to Middling Women*, cited in Peter Boxall, 'Still Stirrings: Beckett's Prose from *Texts for Nothing* to *Stirring Still*', in *The New Cambridge Companion to Samuel Beckett*, ed. Dirk Van Hulle (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2015), 37.
- 12 Boxall, 'Still Stirrings', 37.
- 13 Boxall, 'Still Stirrings', 37. Boxall also notes that Beckett came to relax his early separation of an art beyond measure from a criticism that sees only a balance sheet of regularities, and correspondences, and equivalences. 'As his work matures,' Boxall writes, 'one can see an increasingly tight focus being brought to bear on the movement of the creating mind, and an increasingly powerful analysis of the ways that the resources of the literary tradition allow for the imagination not only to test and locate the limits of what it is possible to see and to say, but also to exceed those limits.'
- 14 Philip Sidney, 'Defense of Poesy', in Sidney's *'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism*, ed. Gavin Alexander (London: Penguin, 2004), 13.

- 15 Sidney, 'Defense of Poesy', 25.
- 16 Karl Marx, 'The English Middle Class', in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels *Collected Works*, Volume 13 *Marx & Engels 1854–1855* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2010), 664.
- 17 Baylee Brits, *Literary Infinities: Number and Narrative in Modern Fiction* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 1.
- 18 See, for example, the website for the 'Europe: A Literary History' project. Available online: <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~dwallace/europe/about.html> (accessed 27 March 2018); also see the volumes that accompany this site: David Wallace, ed., *Europe: A Literary History, 1348–1418* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). Also see pamphlets published by the Stanford Literary Lab. Available online: <https://litlab.stanford.edu/pamphlets/> (accessed 27 March 2018).
- 19 Newman, 'Auerbach's Dante', 42.
- 20 Vilashini Cooppan, 'World Literature between History and Theory', in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London: Routledge, 2012), 200.
- 21 Sarah Lawall, 'Preface', in *Reading World Literature: Theory, History, Practice*, ed. Sarah Lawall (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), ix.
- 22 See, for example, Deborah Lupton, *The Quantified Self: A Sociology of Self-Tracking* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016).
- 23 Btihaj Ajana, 'Digital Health and the Biopolitics of the Quantified Self', *Digital Health*, 3 (2017): 4.
- 24 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, trans. Anon (London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1970), 73.
- 25 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 74.
- 26 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 74.
- 27 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 74.
- 28 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 31.
- 29 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 33.
- 30 Franco Moretti, 'Conjectures on World Literature', *New Left Review* 1 (2000): 55–6.
- 31 Apter, *Against World Literature*, 45.
- 32 Apter, *Against World Literature*, 52.
- 33 Apter, *Against World Literature*, 55–6.
- 34 Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Daley (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 7.
- 35 Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 51.
- 36 Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 45.
- 37 Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 45–6.
- 38 Agamben, *The Time That Remains*, 52.
- 39 Derrida, 'Ellipsis', 299.

- 40 Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 335.
- 41 Philippe Sollers, *Numbers*, cited in Derrida, *Dissemination*, 336.
- 42 Derrida, *Dissemination*, 308.
- 43 Derrida, *Dissemination*, 308.
- 44 Derrida, *Dissemination*, 364.
- 45 Roland Barthes, 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives', in *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), 79.
- 46 Martin Heidegger, '... Poetically Man Dwells ...', in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (London: Harper and Row, 1975), 215.
- 47 Heidegger, '... Poetically Man Dwells...', 215.
- 48 Heidegger, '... Poetically Man Dwells...', 216.
- 49 Heidegger, '... Poetically Man Dwells...', 220.
- 50 Heidegger, '... Poetically Man Dwells...', 221.
- 51 Stuart Elden, *Speaking Against Number: Heidegger, Language and the Politics of Calculation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), 174.
- 52 Christopher Yates, *The Poetic Imagination in Heidegger and Schelling* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 152.
- 53 Elden, *Speaking Against Number*, 174.
- 54 Heidegger, '... Poetically Man Dwells ...', 225.
- 55 Emily Apter, 'Shareholder Existence: On the Turn to Numbers in Recent French Theory', *Textual Practice* 28, no. 7 (2014): 1324.
- 56 Apter, 'Shareholder Existence': 1324.
- 57 Alain Badiou, *Number and Numbers*, cited in Apter, 'Shareholder Existence': 1326.
- 58 Badiou, *Number and Numbers*, cited in Apter, 'Shareholder Existence': 1326.
- 59 Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, trans. Oliver Feltham (London: Continuum, 2006), 144.
- 60 Badiou, *Being and Event*, 145.
- 61 Badiou, *Being and Event*, 24.
- 62 Peter Hallward, 'Introduction: Consequences of Abstraction', in *Alain Badiou and the Future of Philosophy*, ed. Peter Hallward (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), 4.
- 63 Peter Sloterdijk, *Spheres Volume 2. Globes: Macrospherology*, trans. Wieland Hoban (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2014), 48.
- 64 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 32–3.
- 65 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 773.
- 66 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 935.
- 67 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 935.
- 68 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 948.
- 69 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 948.
- 70 In *Globes*, Sloterdijk begins to set out the shape and character of this third age. For a full account of this moment, see the final volume of the *Spheres* series: *Spheres*

Volume 3. *Foams: Plural Spherology*, trans. Wieland Hoban (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2016).

- 71 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 951.
- 72 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 46.
- 73 Willem Schinkel and Liesbeth Noordegraaf-Eelens, 'Peter Sloterdijk's Sphereological Acrobatics: An Exercise in Introduction', in *In Medias Res: Peter Sloterdijk's Sphereological Poetic Being*, ed. Willem Schinkel and Liesbeth Noordegraaf-Eelens (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 11.
- 74 Schinkel and Noordegraaf-Eelens, 'Peter Sloterdijk's Sphereological Acrobatics', 12.
- 75 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 45.
- 76 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 15.
- 77 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 16.
- 78 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 49.
- 79 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 46.
- 80 Sloterdijk, *Globes*, 765.
- 81 Hallward, 'Introduction: Consequences of Abstraction', 4.
- 82 Badiou, *Being and Event*, 69.
- 83 Sloterdijk, *Foams*, 23.
- 84 Sloterdijk, *Foams*, 299.
- 85 Sloterdijk, *Foams*, 299.
- 86 Sloterdijk, *Foams*, 301.
- 87 Sloterdijk, *Foams*, 307. Sloterdijk's *In the World Interior of Capital* makes a similar claim. If modernity's major urban projects such as the Crystal Palace in London and the Arcades Project in Paris represented the expansion of the interior space (endowing 'the outside world as a whole with a magical immanence transfigured by luxury and cosmopolitanism'), then today 'a fundamental reorientation' is needed if we are to understand today's interiorities. Other modes of architectural and urban criticism are prompted by 'the shopping malls ... exhibition centres, major hotels, sports arenas and indoor amusement parks. Such studies would then bear titles closer to *The Crystal Palaces Project* or *The Hothouses Project*, or ultimately even *The Space Stations Project*'. Sloterdijk, *In the World Interior of Capital*, 170; 174–5. The transformation that Sloterdijk indicates here might otherwise be described as the shift from the Crystal Palace to the Heavenly Palace (or Tiangong -1), China's space station that was launched in 2011 and dramatically de-orbited in Spring, 2018. That China had lost control of this station, and that some parts of it survived re-entry and crashed in the spacecraft cemetery in the Pacific Ocean, seems to confirm Sloterdijk's claim that today's interiorities are both connected to and separate from each other.