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Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman, eds., *Concentrationary Art: Jean Cayrol, the Lazarean and the Everyday in Post-war Film, Literature, Music and the Visual Arts*. New York: Berghahn Press, 2019. xi + 250 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. \$135.00 U.S. (hb). ISBN 9781785339707.

Review by Nikki M. Moore, Wake Forest University.

In *Concentrationary Art: Jean Cayrol, the Lazarean and the Everyday in Post-war Film, Literature, Music and the Visual Arts*, editors Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman have assembled a series of essays exploring the possibilities for art drawn from the work of French theorist and former prisoner of the dehumanizing and brutal Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp, Jean Cayrol, while also translating two of Cayrol's essays for their first English-language debut. Pollock and Silverman aim to bring Cayrol's contributions to art and theory in the wake of the Nazi concentration, labor, and extermination camps to visibility and parity with theories on the subject put forward by Theodor Adorno, Maurice Blanchot, Primo Levi, Elie Wiesel, and others.[1] In this fourth and final book in the editors' series on the concentrationary, a case is made for the application of the Lazarean lens to close readings of the visual arts.

As Silverman, Pollock, and the volume's contributors illustrate, two dominant principles structure both Cayrol's contribution to the field and the foci of the essays in this edited volume: the memories and imaginary built from the concentrationary universe, and their return in the figure of the Lazarean remnant or gesture. Cayrol's concepts of the Lazarean and the concentrationary call for ways to register the lingering, prescient impact of dehumanization through labor-unto-death which structured the labor camps of World War II, even as--or particularly as--one faces the same logic of the camps in the structures underpinning modern daily life. Cayrol's work searches for the creation of both an art that remembers and one that warns. It is not a quest for first-person accounts but instead a contemplation of the type of works that could speak to the survival of a state which holds in the same space and time both something akin to Giorgio Agamben's "bare life" [2], and the potential for humanity through spontaneity as illuminated by the work of Hannah Arendt.[3]

The chapters that follow the editors' English translation of Jean Cayrol's "Lazarean Dreams" and "Lazarean Literature" argue for various readings of said themes across a broad set of art genres in North America and Europe. As Cayrol's search for an art of the concentrationary and the Lazarean took place in the sphere of literature, the first chapter of the book, offered by Patrick French, traces the movement of the Lazarean through literary sources from both pre- and post-camp sources, moving from Albert Camus to Cayrol via David Rousset. Griselda Pollock's

contribution in the second chapter probes the relevance and problematics of the figure of Lazarus, part of the Christian imaginary, for envisioning art after the concentration camps and the Holocaust, which was marked by such a targeted elimination of the Jewish people. Noting that Cayrol was a political prisoner rather than a member of an ethnic group targeted for genocide, Pollock argues for Cayrol's political reinterpretation of Lazarus. She traces the transformation through two works by Rembrandt (*The Raising of Lazarus* from c. 1630, and an etching of the same name from 1632), to Vincent van Gogh's *The Raising of Lazarus (after Rembrandt)* (1890), in order to excise the theistic or supernatural from this once biblical figure, before transitioning to an examination of the film *Nuit et Brouillard* (1955). Max Silverman reads the concentrationary through Chantal Akerman's examination of the everyday in *Jeanne Dielman, 23, Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975). This essay examines the underpinnings of the concentrationary within the banal as read through the work of Henri Lefebvre (amongst others), focusing, in the manner of the surrealists, on the body of the woman who centers Akerman's film. The volume continues with an examination of the concentrationary in modern capital and factory life with Laurent Cantet's *Ressources Humaines* (1999) by Matthew John, followed by a particularly clear exposition of the Lazarean project in an essay on Nick Cave's *Dig, Lazarus, Dig!!!* album from 2008 by Benjamin Hannavy Cousen. Griselda Pollock brings the volume to a close through her essay on Susan Philipsz' sound installation *Night and Fog* (2016). Her compelling conclusion then situates the book's project in terms of actions taken to trumpet the warning signs that the logics of the concentration camps are still with us, in forms ranging from the workings of modern capitalism to the 2016 election of Donald Trump.

This volume strikes a prescient cord, asking how scholarship might sound the alarm against concentrationary logics in the modern world. But it seems a missed opportunity--or potential impetus for a fifth book--that in the editors' attempt to expand Cayrol's reading of "the concentrationary," they've not included a wider, global scope of human experience within the rubric of both the concentrationary and the Lazarean. While the target audience for the book is clearly the circle of European discourse on art after the camps, one can imagine an essay on Guillermo Kuitca's *Untitled* (1992) which employs the mattress in all its familiarity and banality to point to the usage of furniture and household items as means of state-sanctioned torture during Argentina's Dirty War. Artists addressing the current detention centers at the U.S. and México border, as well as China's Uyghur camps seem more than ever poignantly relevant to this discourse.

Having read this book across the rise in activism against George Floyd's death at the hands of United States police officers and the global import of Black Lives Matter protests, one can further imagine the value of bringing Cayrol's essays into discussion with artists working through the architectures of the enslaved labor that lay at the heart of the trans-Atlantic economies during the first and second Atlantic systems. Opening conversations in this direction would not only bring the question of race to the fore in a way that feels under-studied in the current volume, but would also trouble the idea that the concentrationary is a modern operative invention, as we see its logics abound in the rationale, space, and execution of the armories of Trans-Atlantic enslavement. While today, as Pollock's epilogue notes, we see the return of both symptoms and sites of the concentrationary explode around the globe, one can't help but wonder if warning and remembrance are enough. This fact alone makes this volume an important contribution to thinking through the role and possibilities for art in the face of the political.

## LIST OF ESSAYS

Max Silverman, "Introduction: Lazarus and the Modern World"

Jean Cayrol, "Lazarean Dreams"

Jean Cayrol, "Lazarean Literature"

Patrick ffrench, "Lazarean Writing in Post-war France"

Griselda Pollock, "The Perpetual Anxiety of Lazarus: The Gaze, the Tomb, and the Body in the Shroud"

Max Silverman, "Concentrationary Art and the Reading of Everyday Life: (In)human Spaces in Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975)"

Matthew John, "Cinematic Work as Concentrationary Art in Laurent Cantet's *Ressources Humaines* (1999)"

Benjamin Hannavy Cousen, "After Haunting: A Conceptualization of the *Lazarean* Image"

Griselda Pollock, "Lazarean Sound: The Autonomy of the Auditory from Hanns Eisler (*Nuit et Brouillard*, 1955) to Susan Philipsz (*Night and Fog*, 2016)"

Griselda Pollock, "Concluding Remarks"

## NOTES

[1] Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Christian Lenhardt (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984); Maurice Blanchot, "The Instant of My Death," in *The Instant of My Death / Demeure: Fiction and Testimony* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (New York: Collier Books, 1959); Elie Wiesel, *Night*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1960).

[2] Giorgio Agamben's use of the term "bare life" is derived from a distinction made by the Ancient Greeks between *zoë*, or sheer biological facticity, and *bios* which pertains to the way in which life is lived. See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

[3] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1951); and *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

Nikki M. Moore  
Wake Forest University  
[mooren@wfu.edu](mailto:mooren@wfu.edu)

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