

The 2022 Emily Dickinson International Society Conference in Seville,
“Dickinson and Foreignhood”

Abstracts, in alphabetical order

Alfonso, Ricardo Miguel, “Dickinson Outside the American Renaissance”

When F. O. Matthiessen published his groundbreaking *American Renaissance* (1941), the absence of Emily Dickinson did not strike anyone. Her name is mentioned only three times in this 670-plus page book, and each of the three comments reveal little to no acquaintance with her work. Dickinson’s poetry was automatically left out of the canon of nineteenth-century American writers, a canon that prevailed in academic studies for decades. The publication in 1955 of the first important academic edition of Dickinson’s poems helped recuperate her work for the reading public in general, as did the subsequent work of many scholars.

However, Dickinson was not an unknown author before Matthiessen. Studies and manuals of American literature between the early 1900s and the late 1930s devote different sections to her work and to the influence that Transcendentalist thinkers—especially Emerson—had on her poetic theory and practice. Books ranging from William B. Cairns’s *A History of American Literature* (1912) to Russell Blankenship’s *American Literature* (1931) and Bernard Smith’s *Forces in American Criticism* (1939) make it clear that Dickinson was already present in American literary history. This paper analyzes the role her poetry played in the emergence and consolidation of American literary history between the early twentieth century and the publication of Matthiessen’s book. More particularly, my interest is to explore why Dickinson was left out of Matthiessen’s famous canon of American Renaissance writers, as well as the reasons, literary and political, he may have had to exclude her.

Almallah, Ahmad, “The Past the Past the Present: Translating Dickinson into Arabic”

As an Arab-American poet, I have found in Emily Dickinson’s poetic world an abode. Her English language is an English spacious enough to house my exile, and exacting enough to give me voice, to guide me to an English I can claim as my own. Thus, it is very tempting for me to invite her into Arabic in an attempt to lay a claim there too, an attempt to own an Arabic that is not imposed or inherited or learned, but an Arabic found within the poet’s dwellings in possibility. By presenting my reading of Dickinson poems, I argue that she reveals exile as a fact of life, where all surroundings become alienating ruins. In contrast with previous attempts at translating her into Arabic which are concerned with presenting her “newness” or “foreignness,” I launch my translations from establishing a connection between Dickinson and the Bedouin poets of the archetypal pre-Islamic Arabic ode, and especially with their stance upon the ruins of what was once familiar: the departed beloved, the undecipherable traces of the abodes, and their silence. It is the stance in which the poet, discontent with the “typic ‘Heres,’” journeys and returns to “fathom” and rediscover “His Native Land.” Here, as I will demonstrate, lies the poetic essence that connects Dickinson’s work to those classical examples of Arabic poetry, and it is the launching point to translating her more fully into the Arabic tradition. Finally, I will demonstrate how this defamiliarized new Arabic

I arrive at through these translations is not an attempt at alienating the Arabic tradition from itself, as it also aims to place itself within works of young contemporary poets in Arabic who continue to reimagine the language and their relationship to it.

Alvergue, José Felipe, “Foreign after Nation”

Readings of the “stranger” through intersecting lenses within affect studies have generated exigent critiques of normativity, power, and prophetic paradigms that give structure to the phenomenological and political ways we experience “otherness,” home/land, and our bodies. Rather than remain only in the negative registers of “otherness,” however, there is a reparative potential in the knowledge the “stranger” and the “foreigner” carry (those who approach sovereign doors from outside); a disruptive spatiotemporal knowledge that disorganizes the polar values of freedom and permission, admission and negation. In a reading of Dickinson’s “Where every bird is bold to go,” I wish to explore the disorganization of normative values in the “foreigner’s” approach to the interval that articulates itself towards the door, but “before he knocks.” This is a vatic approach, to call on Culler’s theories of the lyric. The embodied demonstration of it, moreover, draws on the theories of Sara Ahmed and Fred Moten, namely exceptional portrayals of “otherness” and the “stranger,” as well as the “fugitivity” of subjectivities always outside the sovereign rule of normative paradigms, as subjects who demonstrate an insistent negation that creates opportunities for a collaborative redesignation of shared space, and collective time. The historical context of the poem, collected amidst works between 1830-1886, also registers with the return of a national kin to the state of union itself. This prompts me to consider nation and vatic demonstration. The crux of affective reading, and reparative reading, is recognizing the excess of energized emotional signification as evidence of “event.” It is, in other words, epistemo-ontological. The spatiotemporal, vatic demonstration of emotional contemplation is a disruptive performance against the authoritarian logic, at the doorstep of Nation *after* a prophetic opening.

Baghli Berbar, Souad, “‘Infinite to Venture’: Dickinson and the Trope of Travel”

Emily Dickinson is best known as a reclusive poet who is not readily associated with travel, yet her poems are teeming with travel imagery and references to trips. Whether in tropes for death or foreign encounters, travel figures prominently as an imaginative outlet for Dickinson to compensate for her lack of physical journeys. The present paper seeks to examine references and allusions to travel in several of Dickinson’s poems and unravel the mental journeys lying behind her symbolic travels. The paper thus purports to analyze the network of figures that underly her travel-related imagery and how she can generate unfamiliar meanings for representations of everyday events thanks to tropes of travel.

Balaam, Peter, “Our lives are Swiss’: Dickinson’s Geographies of Regulation and Revelation”

“Emerson and Milton could at least be put to rest unopened on the bookshelf,” Cynthia Griffin Wolff writes of the influences surrounding Emily Dickinson; but in Amherst “she mingled daily with dictatorial Trinitarians.” As is quite well known, Dickinson mapped life and work looking far beyond the mountainous strictures of local Calvinism. To do so, she became a connoisseur of the unregulated, alert to the novel, the exotic, the other, the “foreign.”

I propose a talk that will plot the coordinates for grasping the *Swiss-ness* of Dickinson’s thinking in F129 (“Our lives are Swiss”). The “solemn Alps” are also “siren” in that poem, indicating some kind of appeal. The figure of shady northern mountains blocking the sunny south makes sense, but from Dickinson’s outlook in western Massachusetts, why *Swiss*? The climatic struggle between Switzerland’s “Cool” and an (italicized!) *Italy* was not only inheritable from much *ultramontane* European love of the sunny south as “*das Land wo die Zitronen blühen*” (Goethe), but serves here as a figure for the *Genevan* influences with which, as Wolff suggests, she “mingled daily.”

I will explicate the heroic political valences of Switzerland’s reputation among nineteenth-century Americans as model of Protestant virtue and Republican independence and open up some of the contrivances of “*Genevan skill*” revealed as powerless to restore life in F259 (“A Clock stopped”). The goal of my talk will be to reveal the underpinnings of Dickinson’s turning from the regulated *Swiss-ness* in religion, domesticity, and natural history in order to open the work of generative allegiance to the less tractable demands of unregulated light and darkness, that *Italy* that “stands the other side” in so much of her work.

Bergland, Renée, “Dickinson’s Darwinian Poetics: ‘fight, or flight – or the foreign land’”

“Master. / If you saw a bullet” (A828, J233, F190, M528) is the longest of Dickinson’s Master documents. As Marta Werner has recently argued, it is hard to categorize these mysterious texts. Personally, I prefer to read “Master. / If you saw a bullet” as a statement about poetics rather than a letter. Of course, it could be both. John Keats’s musings on “Negative Capability” were penned as part of a letter to his brothers. If we dismiss the question of the addressee altogether (as scholars have long disregarded George and Thomas Keats in their discussions of “Negative Capability”) and turn straight to the ideas, what emerges?

In this conference paper, I will read “Master. / If you saw a bullet” in conversation with British romantic poets and men of science. Prompted by Werner’s discussion of “the mysteries that these radiant documents both make visible and keep hidden” (*Writing in Time* 11), I will frame Dickinson’s work as a response to Wordsworth, Keats and Barrett Browning and argue that her Master documents allow us to imagine a profoundly mysterious yet deeply scientific poetic practice that realizes romantic ideals in a Darwinian world.

In his “Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*,” Wordsworth writes, “The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet’s art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the

followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings.” I contend that in “Master. / If you saw a bullet,” Dickinson draws on her own mastery of nineteenth-century natural science to make the Darwinian world palpably material without diminishing its radiant mystery.

Biblis, Pola, “‘To Fall in Love with a Poet’s Mind’: Dickinson and Her Polish Translators”

Emily Dickinson has been present in Polish culture since at least the 1950s, in multiple translations and poetic adaptations. This paper aims to critically investigate and compare the works of five major Dickinson translators. It also explores how their strategies reflect the shifting image of Dickinson’s poems and presents the evolution of Polish poetry, given that the majority of the translators were poets themselves. The paper also attempts to show how the concept of translation process was changing.

Kazimiera Iłakiewiczówna’s 1965 edition introduced Dickinson to a broader Polish audience. Although critically acclaimed, it was based on a pre-Johnson edition, lacking dashes and capital letters. What’s more, it’s exaggeratedly archaic and stylised for 1890s conventions. Ludmiła Marjańska’s 1960s translations are more subtle and sensual and led to the claim of their being “the poet’s shadow.” The 1990s selections by Stanisław Barańczak are considered canonical and are frequently reprinted. However, although Barańczak matches Dickinson in linguistic virtuosity, his translations are visibly affected by his individual style. His theory of what is “saved” and “improved” in translation, although compelling, is rather disputable. Krystyna Lenkowska’s 2018 selection uses contemporary language and remains the boldest attempt to translate Dickinson’s irregular syntax and ambiguities. Finally, in 2021, Janusz Solarz published the first translation of the complete poems. It is also one of the rare attempts to preserve original metric regularity.

This paper especially emphasises gender issues. While Marjańska writes about “subtleties of female poetry,” Lenkowska considers Dickinson’s poems “brutal” and claims previous translations were “too feminine.” What’s more, all Polish nouns are gendered, which poses a considerable challenge for a translator and is especially visible in “Because I could not stop for Death.” Ultimately, the paper aims to contribute to the discussion about the translator’s competence and the various strategies of transferring Dickinson’s innovativeness.

Bontell, Stephanie Ann, “‘And One in the Eden of God’: The Influence of George Sand’s Performative Ecologies on the Life and Work of Emily Dickinson”

This paper will explore through an ecocritical lens the influence of foreignness and virtuality that the French writer George Sand exerted upon selected excerpts of Dickinson’s writings. Consistent with sentiments expressed in poems such as “To learn the Transport by the Pain” and “There is no Frigate like a Book,” among others, the notion of travel that did not require physical departure from Dickinson’s home in Amherst will be examined in the context of the geographical imaginaries paved by Sand that enabled Dickinson to experience connection, belonging, and community with the openly bisexual, androgynous French writer and the environmental settings within which she situated her novels. I argue that this, in turn, paradoxically alleviated

Dickinson's own sense of enigma and corresponding societal dispossession in a manner comparable to the virtual literary companionship she experienced with her idol, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whom she once affectionately referred to as "that Foreign Lady." Like Browning, who also maintained a fondness for Sand, a particularly outstanding result of Dickinson's reliance upon the novelist was her active contestation with the supposed unattainability of "outside" territory that is often assumed when one remains constricted to the domestic sphere. This includes expectations around gender performance and queer identity that were deemed impossibly distant for most women, including Dickinson, to access at the time of the poet's writing. This latter element will be moreover explored alongside ecocritical and place-situated imageries Dickinson borrowed from Sand, particularly from her novel *Mauprat* and the prominence of the woods as a site of identity performance, in an effort to facilitate a greater recognition of Sand's feminism that, I maintain, was not so alien to Dickinson after all.

Calvillo Reyes, Juan Carlos, "Portrait in a Convex Mirror: Dickinson's Influence on Contemporary Spanish-Language Poets"

The story of Emily Dickinson's reception in Spanish-speaking cultures is a fascinating tale in its own right—the chronicle of an unexpected passion between a poet and a language she did not speak, teeming with moments of rapture and enchantment, of seduction, of harmony and discord, of declarations of faith, and truth be told, not without the occasional bout of jealousy. The strongest or most tangible impressions were made on the myriad poet-translators of renowned prestige who took it upon themselves to render her poetry in Cervantes's tongue, a language with a whole different lexical wealth and a prosodic system all its own. Maybe because they are particularly attuned to the workings of creative processes, poets who translate are the clearest example of those who have found a way to incorporate the themes, techniques, interests, and aesthetic explorations of their source into their own work. However, and large though that group might be, they are far from being the only ones who have made Dickinson an essential part of their poetics. Reading Emily Dickinson, trying to talk or somehow relate to her, rewriting her poems in a kind of identity play, and even reacting critically to her, have been modes of appropriation and critical engagement that have deeply impacted a strain of Spanish-language poetry in the last century or so. This presentation will attempt to demonstrate that Dickinson's influence on a handful of contemporary Hispanic poets has been crucial not only in the development of their style, but also in the willingness of a culture to hold a mirror up to itself.

Caro Rodríguez, Inmaculada, "Emily Dickinson and Magda Bello"

Emily Dickinson continues to have a great impact today, and her influence is clearly evident in the Nicaraguan poet, theologian, essayist and editor Magda Bello, who dedicated a book of twenty poems, titled *Emily*, to Dickinson in 2017. Bello delves into the work after fully identifying with the Amherst writer, taking the time that Dickinson studied at Mount Holyoke Female Seminary as a point of reference. The volume of poems was presented at the inauguration of the Emily Dickinson Public Library at the North American and Nicaraguan Cultural Center in Managua.

In Bello's work, there is an identification with Dickinson in phases of experience that range from the contemplation of Dickinson's life in poems where Bello is a mere

spectator, to others in which the Nicaraguan poet goes through an ascetic-type process where the transmigration of both writers' souls does not reach a complete union until there is a mystical experience where the voices of Bello and Dickinson are indistinguishable. Consequently, these phases of experience can be understood as a palingenesis where the North American author returns through Bello, demonstrating that Dickinson has not really died, as she herself anticipated: "Dying is a wild Night and a new Road" (L332).

Chan, Amy Yue-Yin, "Gathering 'Paradise': Perfect Shared Silences in Dickinson's Lyric"

Emily Dickinson's oeuvre frequently invokes "Paradise." It is by turns a moment of pure "Possibility" (F466), a "certain Slant of light" (F320), "Wild nights" with a lover (F269), and "Eternity" (F479). At once ephemeral and permanent, physical and spiritual, Dickinson's "Paradise" and its ambiguities have eluded consistent interpretation. Some scholars claim "Paradise" as evidence of Dickinson's Calvinist influence, while others have treated it as an invocation of the Romantic sublime—a conflict mediated in Linda Freeman's *Emily Dickinson and the Religious Imagination*. Still others see the notion as one of Dickinson's "subjects of which we know nothing" (L3:723), her way of recognizing human knowledge's limits. However, in debating over the term, scholars have missed how Dickinson's "Paradise" reveals her integrative poetics.

This paper will examine how Dickinson's "Paradise" is built on the participation of both writer and reader in the silences that interrupt her lyric. "Paradise," for Dickinson, begins with writing poetry—the "word made Flesh" (F1715)—but only in the breaks that punctuate her poems and invite the reader's speculation does the "word" become "Spirit," and thus perfect. As in F1588, dashes, caesurae, and silences in Dickinson's poetry are leaps into the unknown, unifying Dickinson's thought and "Possibility." These ruptures are invitations for all three parties—the poet, the universe, and the poem's addressee—to work together in linguistic absence to contemplate the aftermath of the poet's words, creating "intersubjective improvisation," as Ryan Cull notes, and expanding the possibilities of the lyric ("Beyond the Cheated Eye: Dickinson's Lyric Sociality" 63). In conversation with Cull, James McIntosh, Jed Deppman, and others, my paper will nuance how the "Paradise" of Dickinson's lyric depends on the succession of language and silence, because the words of Dickinson alone cannot answer the question of "Paradise"—but shared imagination can.

Chevrier-Bosseau, Adeline, "Choreographing Queerness," in the panel "Queering Dickinson – As 'Foreign' as 'Firmament to Fin'?"

Is "queering Dickinson" in various media, with sexual expressions that celebrate nonstandard emotional/erotic alliances outside of cisgender predictabilities, "as 'Foreign' as 'Firmament to Fin'"? This panel examines recent productions in dance, visual poems, and portrayals in film and television to show how queer artistic responses to Dickinson's writings are not at all foreign to her poetic vision, aspirations, and own performances.

In "Choreographing Queerness," Adeline Chevrier-Bosseau explores how queerness can be performed in the very gender normative grammar of classical ballet.

Doing so, she will reflect on her own “Poetry in Motion: Translating Emily Dickinson’s Poetry into Dance” project, part of which will be performed at the Seville Conference. Her scholarly work has focused on the dialogue between literature and dance, and one of Chevrier-Bosseau’s fundamental investigations is “how a literary text might be danced.” Her attention to the body’s poetry and the poetry in choreographed bodily movements will be featured in this presentation analyzing dance that represents Dickinson’s queer prosodies and stylistic innovations.

“Queering Dickinson” plumbs ways in which rejuvenating artistic productions translate Dickinson and excite and cultivate diverse readers and reading in our twenty-first century world. The “foreign,” aka the “faraway,” is in fact nearby.

Cook, Vanessa E., “‘A still – Volcano – Life’: Dickinson and Hysteria”

There is a long scholarly tradition of viewing Emily Dickinson as a “volcanic” writer. In *After Great Pain: The Inner Life of Emily Dickinson* (1971), John Cody used her volcano poems to denote her poetry and her behaviour as hysterical. Cody maintained her work revealed “the dark and smoldering reaches of [her] personality” and “the menace of mental illness”. The poet Adrienne Rich attacked his psychobiography in her landmark essay of the mid-1970s, “Vesuvius at Home: The Power of Emily Dickinson.” The volcano poems conveyed that “[t]he woman who feels herself to be Vesuvius at home has need of a mask, at least, of innocuousness and of containment.” Rich’s Dickinson was “a woman genius” who “had to [...] retranslate her own unorthodox, subversive, sometimes volcanic propensities into a dialect called metaphor: her native language.”

This paper suggests that scholarship has overlooked Dickinson’s dialogue with contemporary discourse on hysteria and female embodiment in her volcano poems and tended to re-inscribe paradigms of disorder and diagnosis which her work destabilizes. I show that nineteenth-century medical and psychological tracts and textbooks employed a visual and verbal idiom of eruption to conceive female sexuality and hysteria. I suggest that Dickinson re-mediate this idiom in thinking about the relationship between ideals of reticent femininity and cultural disgust surrounding women’s bodily processes. Her volcano writing implicitly critiques pathologization of female pleasure and embodiment and suggests that anxieties about female “otherness” imbue women’s speech with a hugely destructive power.

Corsiglia, Trevin, “‘I – feared the Sea – too much’: Dickinson, Race, and ‘Dark Epistemology’”

This talk works through Emily Dickinson’s conception of the “foreign” as it relates to the rational uncertainty, or what I would like to refer to as “dark epistemology,” that she dramatizes at her most philosophical. I am interested in historicizing the poet who wrote in 1863, “This timid life of Evidence / Keeps pleading – ‘I don’t know.’” To use Evie Shockley’s term, can we “dis-read” Dickinson’s “I don’t know” as an encouragement of open/undogmatic debate, or does it merely signify false humility as well as the luxury of self-exclusion? In particular, does her epistemic pessimism qualify her otherwise questionable handling of race/class? In short, I believe Dickinson had enough self-awareness to understand that her inadequacies as a knower

did not necessarily represent the epistemic fate of others, a fact that does not excuse her racism but does bound her views by the limits of an “I.”

The work of various scholars—Vivian Pollak, Betsy Erkkila, Domhnall Mitchell, among others—suggests that Dickinson did not ignore the events of her day and in fact expressed reactionary, conservative, and anti-democratic sentiments. While we are stronger readers of Dickinson when we acknowledge the public/political nature of some of her poems, often when it is most crucial, she refuses to universalize her fallibility, recognizing implicitly that her own limitations are not necessarily others’ as well. In “The Malay – took the Pearl –,” perhaps her most problematic portrayal of racial difference, Dickinson implicates herself in her failure to procure the object of her desire when she says, “I – feared the Sea – too much.” Speaking as herself, she does not tell us what to think. We can thus use her “I” as a free means to navigate problems of race, class, and society since her self-imposed exclusion from the “Sea” does not have to be ours.

Crumbley, Paul, “Fascicle 39 and the Foreignhood of Future Creation”

Dickinson’s poem “A South Wind – has a pathos” (M 401, Fr883) appears in Fascicle 39, where it contributes to that fascicle’s poetic exploration of what it feels like to move from the past to the future in a continuously evolving universe. The poem arrives at “foreignhood” (8) as a neologism suited to the aesthetics of life perceived through the lens of Darwinian natural selection, with particular emphasis on the collision of external and internal forces that inform both body and mind. Dickinson’s references to “pathos” (1), “an Emigrant’s address” (4), and “much not understood” (6) bring departure and arrival to the foreground in a poem very much about the uncertainty that attends future creation. Other poems, such as “None can experience stint” (M 397, Fr870) and “The Hallowing of Pain” (M 397, Fr871), that open the fascicle, perform as verbal algorithms that map patterns of thought on bodily sensations, making poetic expression a unique and fundamentally democratic contribution to the unfolding future. Still others, such as “The Service without Hope –” (M 400, Fr880) and “Severer Service of Myself” (M 403, Fr887), wrestle with questions of loss and reward that threaten to obscure the future. Melanie Hubbard’s recent work on associationism and Dickinson’s democratic poetics is especially useful in explaining the affective dimension of these and other fascicle poems, while Timothy Morton’s concept of subsistence and solidarity with the nonhuman helps to account for Dickinson’s ecological awareness and her concern with what he terms the “symbiotic real” (1). My reading of Fascicle 39 proceeds horizontally, focusing primarily on the way poems jostle and play off each other, suspending meaning rather than seeking to stabilize it. Such an approach is consistent with Dickinson’s skepticism and her resistance to epistemological closure. It is also consistent with associationism’s contention that the current of thought is frequently interrupted, subject as it is to analogy and habit, not purely the dictates of reason.

Cull, Ryan, “The ‘General Sum’: Dickinson Thinking Beyond Foreignness or Familiarity?”

Though Emily Dickinson’s life and art can (and should) be measured in terms of distances (with regard to cultures and classes, genders and sexualities, geographies,

languages, mental or physical (dis)ability, religious beliefs, races and ethnicities, and so on), which she variously interrogated, mourned, at times treasured, and at other times sought to traverse, she also occasionally appeals to what she calls the “general,” a category that hypothetically defies distances and proximities, foreignness and familiarity, or any other contingencies. Poems reference, for example, “the general Earth,” “Nature’s General Sum,” “the General Nature,” “That General Attendance,” “The General Heavens,” “general Homes,” and a “general...Grace.” This presentation would seek to track what Dickinson says about the degree to which it is possible to “general[ize]” in this way, when one should (and should not) try, and what the resources of poetry, with its attentiveness to form, address, trope, and musicality, can contribute to an evocation of what is ontologically shared.

Dickinson anticipates that the form of “Consciousness” achieved on Judgment Day, though “August” in its “General” comprehensiveness, would signal an “individual doom” that leaves one “numb” (Fr653, M 310). Until then, amidst life, Dickinson often finds the “general” just out of reach, the product of an inscrutable, possibly Darwinian sequence of events “Without Design” (Fr778, M 382) or a lost opportunity to savor a post-Romantic/transcendentalist sense of unity with Nature (Fr1226, M 508). She is ambivalent about this inability to experience the “general,” even as her poems occasionally attest to and attempt to trace a larger shared ontological relation. This characteristically Dickinsonian near paradox (how can art reflect something unknown beyond simply registering it as unknown?) is a result less of intellectual limits (though Dickinson acknowledges these) than moral ones. For Dickinson warns about how “seeking...Resemblance,” as evidence of “Nature’s General Sum,” can cause that which is sought to “perish in my Hands” (Fr 843, M 421). In this way, a “general” ontological relation, both the perception and practice of it, may be ruined by epistemological possessiveness. Any art or sociality adequate to evoke this sense of the general “soars - and shifts - and whirls - / And measures” in other ways sufficient to the risk—and perhaps imperative—to frame not just the distances and differences between us but what we share (Fr462, M 232).

Dyzak, Katrina, “‘This World did drop away’: The Social and the Scientific in Dickinson’s ‘Balloon’ Poems”

Amidst the unprecedented hurricane season of 1863, Emily Dickinson wrote her first poem about balloons. The poem, “It was a quiet way - ,” opens with a charged reply by one speaker—“I made no answer of the Tongue”—when “He asked if I was his - ” (F573). What is not spoken is still conveyed in gesture—“But answer of the Eyes - ”—before “He bore me on,” and all at once, the world collapses, “Of one that leaneth from Balloon.” “Gulfs” converged, “Continents were new,” “Eternity” extended in every direction, and “Night” and “Dawn” “stopped” and “fastened” tightly to one another. The poem relates world-altering dynamics between eager intimates to the world-altering vision one might experience from a “Balloon.” Here, regions emotional and material compress, history renounces any linear progression, and fear and hope compound each other.

By the late eighteenth century, the weather balloon had been designed by French scientists as a tool bent on traversing the outer layers of the Earth, what Dickinson calls the “Ether street.” By the mid-nineteenth century, the weather balloon had also become a spectacle, a fun-ride, and an alternative means of short travel. Balloons uniquely moved primarily vertically as opposed to horizontally, making a singular place suddenly

taken in the strangest range. The delicate design of the balloon, further, registered day to day atmospheric pressures otherwise undetected on the ground, often resulting in disastrous crashes, and again newly representing the bounds and behavior of a given space. In Dickinson's balloon poems, four in total, each expands the other in tracing how scientific discourse proves, on the one hand, useful for describing social relations, and on the other hand, a vector for already established cultural rhetoric. By paralleling social interactions and these strange new findings, Dickinson's "Balloon" poems betray how foreign the local and how social the individual always are.

Elmer, Jonathan, "My Blue Peninsula—Is a Gulf—not—A Promontory"

For several years now, I have been engaged in an experiment on criticism. As I make my way through Emily Dickinson's complete poems, I offer a "translation" of a kind—a transposition, a reply, an attempt at resonance. These "translations" are sometimes analytical and sometimes more poetic. My title reproduces the entirety of my "translation" of "It might be lonelier" (F535). Considerably more imitative than most, this translation also radically reduces Dickinson's four stanzas to a single dialectical image—the "Blue Peninsula" of the second-to-last line of Dickinson's original.

My paper will report on a process of "working out" from this initial translation. What happens when we test what is, after all, a gnomic "take" on a rich poem? Dickinson uses the words "peninsula" or "peninsulas" in nine poems, from "It might be lonelier" (1863) to "The Inundation of the Spring" (1877). Can it serve as a guide to a more complete interpretive uptake, or does it remain merely idiosyncratic?

Rebecca Patterson suggested that Dickinson borrowed the image of a "blue" peninsula from E. B. Browning's "white walls, blue hills, my Italy" (*Aurora Leigh*), though she also concedes that the image of "peninsula" is also a "dream-symbol," and thus traceable, ultimately, only to the poet's creative soul.

I will argue that an image like "blue peninsula" can never be fully saturated by context: it rises from all context like a promontory from a sea. At the same time, the image does, in fact, form a node in a matrix of poetic logic. I will look especially at three other poems unfolding this logic: "the Sea—with a Stem" and "giddy Peninsula" from F849; "Her unsown Peninsula" from F708; and the peninsula foresworn in "the inundation of the spring" (F1423).

Fang, Siyun, "I'm ceded – I've stopped being their's': Feminism in Patriarchy"

Similar to Emily Dickinson, who is a distinguished poet in American literature, Xi Murong, a well-respected Chinese poet, also composes lots of poems on women and nature. Both Dickinson and Xi Murong can be defined as feminists living in a patriarchal society. However, different from some feminists who define feminism as an ideology, these two poets consider feminism more as a strategy or even a literary technique. For Dickinson, feminism is a strategy to understand and experience life in order to realize the independence of her spirit and personality. In doing so, she states her resistance toward patriarchy in a straightforward way. Some radical critics, such as Mary E. Galvin, even suggest that Dickinson is a lesbian and "by placing her on the

continuum of lesbian existence, we can begin to appreciate her resourcefulness in resisting the compulsory subservience of women under heterosexism.” Different from Dickinson’s feminist point of view, for Xi, feminism is a strategy, or a literary device to express her innermost desire for love. She does not believe that women have to revolt against patriarchal society for their freedom. However, women should be brave especially when seeking love and talking about their romantic desire. To put it another way, Xi Murong challenges patriarchy in an indirect way—she encourages women to, at least, be brave (modernized) in love. Using Simone de Beauvoir’s feminist theory as the framework, in which she declares that “women need access to the same kinds of activities and projects as men,” this paper aims at exploring the theme of gender and the embodiment of feminism in Dickinson and Xi Murong’s poems. Furthermore, because both Dickinson and Xi Murong are nature poets, this paper also addresses their attitudes toward nature through an interdisciplinary approach (interconnections among all forms of relationships and oppression: the oppression of women, the relationship between human and nature, etc.) and brings up the concept of eco-feminism (a minor aspect) revealed by their poems.

Farrar, Stephanie M., “Exploring Dickinson’s Racialized Foreignhood”

Even the briefest exploration of Dickinson’s poems on racialized foreignhood reveals a wide variety of perspectives and possible attitudes towards racial difference. For instance, Dickinson denotes the categories of “Color - Caste - [and] Denomination” (1864) as trivialities of “Time,” which pale before the grander “Democratic fingers” of death, in which all are equal. Similarly, the speaker of her 1862 “What if I say I shall not wait!” may be a slave, announcing a revolutionary escape to “Liberty.” However, “The Malay - took the Pearl - ” evidences a jealousy, and even fantasy of possessing a “Negro.” Another “Brown Malay” in “Removed from Accident of Loss” (1862) is described as “unconscious” of the worth of “Pearls” and possesses a “slow conception,” thus presenting a troubling stereotype. The 1863 line “No Black bird bates his Banjo” evokes an image from minstrelsy that Dickinson may or may not have recognized as degrading. Faith Barrett has convincingly argued against searching for a unified political statement in relations to Dickinson’s Civil War poems, noting that, instead, “scholars need to track the complex pattern of ideological commitments, reversals, critiques, and elisions that unfolds across these pieces.” This same principle, I believe, can and should be applied to thematic investigations of Dickinson’s representations of racial difference. This presentation discusses a sampling of Dickinson’s potentially conflicting, multiple conceptions of race and foreignhood, recognizing that the attitude of a speaker in any given poem may not stand in for Dickinson’s own views. While Dickinson’s engagement with her culture in general once seemed opaque, and her thoughts about the war long seemed non-existent, perhaps we will eventually discover Dickinson’s considerations of race to be as deep and varied as other now well-recognized influences of her historical moment.

Finnerty, Páraic, “‘The Past is such a curious Creature’: Foreignhood and Dickinson’s Historical Imagination”

Recent scholarship has challenged a long prevailing critical and popular view of Dickinson as a poet who, according to her editor and biographer Thomas Johnson, “did not live in history and held no view of it.” While scholars have examined Dickinson’s engagement with the literary, social, cultural, religious, and political ideas and movements of her time, few have considered how her writings engage with humanity’s relationship to and representation of the past. Dickinson lived in an Anglo-American era in which there was a general fascination with history; its cultural centrality was owing in part to its connections with questions of national identity, and this meant that Americans were especially encouraged to use a range of genres to record their nation’s history and position within larger world history. Dickinson had ample exposure to historical texts during her schooling at Amherst Academy and Mount Holyoke, and owing to her access to contemporary periodicals and her family’s library. Although Dickinson is less engaged with history than her contemporaries, it is clear that historical writings and an historical understanding were part of her public and private life. This paper examines Dickinson’s incorporation of historical phenomena into her poetry and particularly her allusions to historical figures. It argues that in these often brief historical references Dickinson participates in contemporary conceptions of history as a way of understanding social, political, and cultural change, but also as a narrative that gave access to an interconnected individual and collective identity, and private and public figures. More specifically this paper explores how Dickinson’s representations of the past repeatedly draw on tropes of curiosity and foreignness that show the global nature of her historical imagination.

Fusco, Gianna, “‘Periods of Seas – / Unvisited by Shores’: Spatiotemporal Foreignhood in Dickinson’s Poems about the Sea”

“I never saw the sea,” Dickinson famously writes in one of her poems (F800). A literal understanding of such a claim is cherished by some readers as further evidence of the speculative powers of the semi-recluse poet and her capacity to describe the unknown, while others challenge it on account of her infrequent travels, especially to Boston, where she likely visited the harbor area. Regardless of the biographical truth, however, as usual with Dickinson what really matters is the way in which the reiterated use of a cluster of images drawn from the same semantic field is turned into a syntax of meanings dispersed throughout her canon. With specific reference to marine and maritime images, to which Dickinson devotes about a hundred poems, it has been noted how “the sea’s materiality pushes against the boundaries of her language, even as her language pushes back” (Yothers 2017). This agonistic encounter incessantly calls attention to issues of experiential and existential limits and possibilities. The present paper aims to investigate the poems in which Dickinson’s deployment of images and themes connected to the sea constitutes a way to address a foreignhood of time (eternity) through what we might refer to as a foreignhood of space (the limitlessness of waters), the overlapping of the two dimensions of space and time clearly having both religious overtones and philosophical implications to be analyzed within the wider framework of the poet’s ongoing confrontation with the doctrines and dogmas of her time.

Gao, Yanyu, “Letter Contexts for Understanding Dickinson’s Poems”

This paper focuses on the relevant contexts that readers need to interpret the meanings of Dickinson’s poems. Some of Dickinson’s poems are included in her letters to her family or friends, and thus the letters constitute one of the contexts for interpreting these poems. In my paper, one poem illuminated by its letter context will be discussed. In order to understand and interpret “Sleep is supposed to be,” we focus on a letter to Susan in which the poet writes about her father, who apparently used to knock on her door before daylight to wake her up. According to the letter context, Dickinson shares the joke with Susan that her father wakes her up quite early every morning. From this viewpoint, the poem can be understood and interpreted as an interesting story between the father and the daughter. However, on a deeper level, the poem has a metaphorical meaning, and perhaps it can be interpreted as a philosophical one about death or hope. The letter context is a good way to understand the original meaning of the poem and the original source of poetic creation. Interpreting the poetry is like a process of filling in the blanks for a non-logical story or a not-well-organized story. On the basis of the letter context, the metaphorical or extended meanings can further be interpreted. Therefore, without the help of the letter context, the process of reading and interpreting some of Dickinson’s poems cannot be completed well.

García Candeira, Margarita, “The World as Garden: Versions of Pastoral in Dickinson and Olvido García Valdés”

This paper contributes to the exploration of Emily Dickinson’s influence on contemporary Spanish poetry through an examination of the trajectory of Olvido García Valdés (1950-). Most of García Valdés’s books (*El tercer jardín*, 1986; *ella, los pájaros*, 1994; *Esa polilla que delante de mí revolotea: Poesía reunida [1982-2008]*, 2008; *El mundo es un jardín*, 2010; *Lo solo del animal*, 2012; *Confía en la gracia*, 2020) point to the key role that both nature and sacredness play in her poetics. These can be traced to the impact of Dickinson, a poet she explicitly acknowledges as a precursor (Bloom) in several critical texts and interviews. Employing theoretical notions from ecocriticism (Love) and deconstruction (De Man, Derrida), I will first explore how both poets depict nature as a realm of strangeness and otherness where the event (Badiou) of truth can nonetheless be encountered. Secondly, I will show how this possibility is linked to a poetic language based on minimalism and tension. To the extent that both authors adopt the garden as a symbol of the “retreat from life” that William Empson identified as central to the category of pastoral, I will finally reflect on the two poets’ use of this genre as a strategy of resistance to hegemonic poetics in their respective contexts.

Ginsberg, Lesley, “The ‘Foreign’ in Dickinson and Helen Hunt Jackson”

Dickinson exhibits her ambivalence about publishing in her June 1862 letter to Higginson, “I smile when you suggest that I delay ‘to publish’ – that being foreign to my thought, as Firmament to Fin –....” But it was not just Dickinson who highlighted publishing as “foreign”; so did her counterpart Helen Hunt [Jackson]. When declining an invitation to speak publicly in 1873, H.H., as she was known, demurred, “You would no doubt quite despise me if you had the least idea, how foreign to my instincts and

tastes, such a thing would be” (qtd. in Pollak, who reads this as an example of conventional female abnegation). At risk was exposure of feeling: “It is often almost more than I can bear the slight publicity which I have brought upon myself by saying, —behind the shelter of initials, and in the crowded obscurity of print—a few of the things I have felt deeply.” Both poets implied that fame was something they “Excluded”; it was “extraneous; not belonging; unconnected...,” as the foreign was defined in Dickinson’s *Webster’s*, where to publish is to “Utter;...express audibly...share verbally...sing...” Despite her reluctance to speak in public, Jackson encouraged Dickinson to “sing aloud.” She badgered Dickinson for a contribution to Roberts Brothers’ *A Masque of Poets*, the title connoting a “party” and “disguise; deception” (*Webster’s*). While the “shelter of initials” may have been a glass house for H.H., she offers Dickinson “the shelter of such *double* anonymousness as that [‘no name’ collection] will be” (August 1876). With reference to the “strategies of reticence” Dobson identifies as a core conundrum for nineteenth-century American women writers, and with attention to the ethos of female self-sacrifice Petrino sees in Jackson’s pleas to Dickinson, this paper explores how the “foreign” illuminates larger tensions informing the poetics and practices of Dickinson and Jackson.

Gronow Smith, Miguel Juan, “Emily Dickinson: Intimately Foreign to Herself”

A strategy based on risk-taking, as far as the practice of literary criticism is concerned, is opted for in this communication in order to explore the extent to which it is possible to discover the Dickinson-as-person who may be considered to be foreign to the Dickinson-as-poet (genius), even though, paradoxically, it is the actual text material, or substance, of the poems that requires examination in order to postulate such a division in her “being.” Moreover, what is argued is that it is “the terror” of motherhood that constitutes the mechanism by which that same scission becomes detectable. This process of detection involves approaching a series of compositions (exemplifiable in F259, 320, 340, 355, 479, 1651, 1652) from a phenomenological perspective, while, in a metonymically representative way in each case, tending to deconstruct the texts. This undertaking also involves the exploration of the etymological dimension of the language employed in the verse which, it is hoped, will take the measure of “the Distance / On the” woman-poet issue in the case of Dickinson, a distance which also implies coming to terms with the unravelling of the discursive umbilical cord that conjoins the dichotomous phenomena of instantaneity and entanglement (self and risk-laden foreign excursions beyond the self). The Emily Dickinson enigma will be found to be journeying beyond its habitual, foetal safe haven, therefore.

Herrero-Puertas, Manuel, “Brain Corridors and Planks That Break: Dickinson’s Accessible Architecture of the Self”

This paper argues for disability studies’ booming subfields of critical access studies and neurodiversity aesthetics as productive lenses through which to reconsider Emily Dickinson’s poems on the self. These poems tend to conflate the self with the house it inhabits. As container and contained become indissoluble, psychological intricacies morph into gothic nooks and recesses: the “Brain’s” infinite “Corridors,” a “Plank in Reason” that breaks, “Treasures” and “Tomb[s]” hidden in seemingly “Sweet

– Safe – Houses –,” etc. Such an unpredictable architecture contrasts with rigid or, at best, retrofitted environments that continue to exclude people with disabilities today. From a disability rights angle, hidden trapdoors and unconventional corridors may not constitute entrapments as much as points of opening, possibility, and contact. If, in *The Architectural Uncanny*, Anthony Vidler defines “haunted house” as a locale “that pretends to afford the utmost security while opening itself to the secret intrusion of terror,” Dickinson’s haunted houses/selves challenge this definition: terror rather lies in un-haunted, unyielding space. While “Wise Men” tell the poet that safe “Mansions must exclude the storm!”, she upholds the right of “Children” to “trudge” there “tonight.” Reconsidering this and related poems, my paper tracks accessibility in Dickinson as an ethos that unfolds on cognitive, architectural, and syntactic levels: an openness that disguises itself as arcane.

Heryford, Ryan, “...an instant’s act’: Dickinson’s Ruins”

“[R]uins,” writes poet and art historian Susan Stewart, “are the architectural equivalent of the syntactical anacoluthon, or non sequitur. They do not follow or precede—they call for the supplement of further reading, further syntax.... They stand poised between the forms they were and the formlessness to which, in the absence of restoration, they are destined. They lose their original purposes and have the singularity of artworks, yet they are severed irremediably from their contexts of production” (*The Ruins Lesson* 3). Following Stewart, this paper will explore ruins in the work of Dickinson, with regard to her aesthetic representation of famous ruins around the world, the grammatical similarities between the syntactical function of ruins and instances of anacoluthon in Dickinson’s poems, and in consideration of Dickinson’s material archive as a set of nineteenth-century “ruins.” Focusing most specifically on Dickinson’s writings during the US Civil War, my paper begins by figuring ruins in Dickinson as sites for anticipating mass death and radical shifts in social formation. Ending with a reading of “More Life – went out – when He went” (Fr415), I ultimately suggest that Dickinson’s global meditations on ancient ruins help the poet to imagine a human architecture and an anthropogenically-altered earth capable of living beyond the individual and, more presciently, the human species. Reading and writing in our unevenly shared Anthropocene, that proposed geologic epoch wherein human activity has rendered irreversible consequences for global climate and conditions for life on earth, Dickinson’s ruins aid us in imagining worlds beyond our own, embracing an expansive ethic of care that looks towards the myriad possible lives that might thrive apart from, or without us.

Horst, Emma, “Defamiliarization in Manuscript Studies: A Textual Close Reading of Dickinson’s ‘Two Butterflies’”

My paper contributes to the conference theme of “foreignhood” primarily through my application of Textual Studies to Dickinson’s manuscripts as a way of understanding her poetics of estrangement. My work builds on Marta Werner’s observation in *Writing in Time* that readers and transcribers of Dickinson’s manuscripts are bound to experience a distance from the poet—a distance Werner links to the Formalist concept of defamiliarization. But instead of demonstrating the way the author is defamiliarized to her reader, I show how a later Dickinson manuscript defamiliarizes

an earlier one through a comparative, textual close reading of two versions of the poem “Two Butterflies.” According to R.W. Franklin, Dickinson likely copied and bound the fascicle version of this poem in the summer of 1863, then returned to it in 1878, when she copied another version onto the recto and verso of a loose leaf and revised significantly. I argue that the revisions in the 1878 loose leaf manuscript of “Two Butterflies” defamiliarize the earlier 1863 fascicle version of the poem. While defamiliarization is most associated with the Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky, I suggest that it is present in nineteenth-century poetics, as evidenced by the writings of Coleridge and Hegel. Thus, although it is often considered a twenty-first-century literary-theoretical concept, I demonstrate that defamiliarization was a technique available to Dickinson in her time and is central to her poetics of estrangement. In the end, I assert that studying manuscripts through the lens of defamiliarization can help textual scholars observe these documents with a sense of curiosity and possibility, enabling them not, of course, to eliminate the inevitable “foreignhood” between author and reader, but instead to explore the sensation and impression that an author’s work imparts to a reader and thus/in turn to consider how their transcriptions might honor that aesthetic.

Houghton, Sophia, “To Know Not What ‘Lasts’: Dickinson, Thermal Energy and Limited Perception”

This presentation explores how Dickinson’s use of fluid subjectivity models an ecological consciousness informed by relational identification with the nonhuman. I address how Dickinson casts subject-alignment with the nonhuman as an aspirational outcome by acknowledging—even embracing—the limits of her perception. This self-avowed limitation, I argue, is a response not to a categorical absolute of “The Nonhuman,” but to specific organic qualities that she discerns through a combination of scientific inference and poetic observation. I examine how this reflects in Dickinson’s portrayal of thermodynamic energy. The materiality of thermal energy, a product of entropy, is ambiguous to the unaided human observer: it is opaque and impenetrable. Thus, it exhibits recalcitrance to conceptually-unifying figurative devices designed to align the atomic processes underlying heat with conscious human experience. Through readings of two “energy poems” (F1143A: “The smouldering embers blush” and F401A: “Dare you see a soul at the white heat?”), I explore the formal processes by which Dickinson acknowledges, even celebrates, the mystery, or “foreignhood,” of smoldering coal. To do this, I situate her poems in scientific and historical frameworks, foregrounding a contrast between Dickinson’s peculiar use of figurative and scientific language and the romantic bi-polarity of her contemporaries’ depictions of fire. I show how Dickinson conveys the science and symbolism of smoldering combustion towards a “liminal” juncture where neither are “actualized”—smoldering retains its mysterious potential both as chemically (literally) transitional and conceptually (figuratively) opaque. Her use of this device, together with the interrogative subject-voice, capture a way of relating to nonhuman matter via “asking,” rather than knowing. Ultimately, my paper suggests an alternative to the theory that Dickinson’s posthumanism is characterized by subject-alignment—it may originate, rather, in a reverence for the qualities that render the nonhuman foreign to human perception, and *beyond* the need for alignment.

Howard, Thomas W., “Dickinson’s Scattered Fragments: Alienation and Affect in the Aphoristic Prose”

In this presentation, I argue that Emily Dickinson’s prose habits reveal a larger trend in the nineteenth century toward the aphorism, or prose that relies on poetic elements like ambiguity, suggestiveness, and an appeal to affective experience. Building on Virginia Jackson’s study of the arbitrary genre distinctions of Dickinson’s writing, I claim that the prose and poetry are not so foreign from each other. Instead, by examining Dickinson’s correspondence and “prose fragments,” I show how Dickinson maintains the ambiguity between the genres, thus creating prose that communicates affective experience through experimental language. In writing aphoristically, Dickinson joins an international movement—from Bacon’s and Pascal’s empirical writings, to Nietzsche’s appeal to take the aphorism more seriously, and to Eastern mystical writings—that produces open prose encouraging continuous reinterpretation. By focusing on the affective role of the aphorism, this paper questions the importance of lyric alienation in Dickinson’s writing, instead emphasizing an affective ambiguity that feels intimately known to the reader. The aphorism builds this “knowledge of acquaintance,” to borrow William James’s term, through affective experience which feels simultaneously personal and extra-personal. The experience seems to be at once the reader’s *and* the writer’s own, and therefore we simply choose not to parse its origin. While Dickinson’s tendency to choose not to choose has been well established, this paper pushes this scholarship forward by appealing to her prose work, showing how her poetic practice is related to, but not dominant over, her prose writing, a stubbornly persistent interpretation that can be traced back at least as far as Charles R. Anderson in 1959. Instead, by looking at both Dickinson’s poetry and prose in terms of affective experience, and by making the border between them permeable, I suggest that Dickinson models aphoristic strategies that flourish in the nineteenth century and beyond.

Hsu, Li-hsin, “‘But nature is a stranger yet’: Dickinson’s Ecogothic and Morton’s Ecognosis”

This paper proposes to look at Dickinson’s notion of “foreignhood” in relation to Timothy Morton’s “Dark Ecology,” rethinking how ecological awareness in Dickinson is conveyed through what Morton calls “ecognosis”—a form of ecological knowing that is uncannily familiar and yet dark and strange. By examining a number of Dickinson poems about nature, the paper hopes to show how Dickinson’s eco-poetics consistently challenges preconceptions about what might be demarcated as properly pastoral, healthy or pure. In poems such as “She died at play -” (Fr141), “An awful Tempest mashed the air -” (Fr224), “There’s a certain Slant of light” (Fr320), “A Bird, came down the Walk -” (Fr359), “I died for Beauty - but was scarce” (Fr448), “A narrow Fellow in the Grass” (Fr1096), “Crumbling is not an instant’s Act” (Fr1010), “What mystery pervades a well!” (Fr1433), “A faded Boy - in sallow Clothes” (Fr1549), “There came a Wind like a Bugle -” (Fr1816), and “Apparently with no surprise” (Fr1668), there is a subtle critical turn from ecophobic othering to ecognostic recognition, from fear of the unknown other in nature, to the act of knowing through acknowledging the unknowable nature of the nonhuman world. Juxtaposing pastoral ideals / impulses alongside a dark or even anti-pastoral perspective, these poems demonstrate Dickinson’s Ecogothic dictum “But nature is a stranger yet” through a variety of degrees of epistemological

manifestation. In particular, by probing the “strangeness” or unknowability of nature through its seemingly ordinary and everyday existence, the presentation hopes to show how Ecogothic plays a central role in Dickinson’s poems about nature, and how, by resonating with what Morton considers to be the “unspeakable” nature of ecological awareness, Dickinson also destabilizes the notion of “foreignhood” with a shifting ecological aesthetics from ecophobia towards an ecognostic understanding of multi-species co-existence.

Jensen, Melba P., “Intoxication: Emily Dickinson’s Vocabulary of Vocation”

In January 1850, Dickinson identified her fascination with language as the source of her reluctance to “give up all for Christ.” Later that year, Dickinson recognized that her work was “not for Heaven” and embraced her vocation as a poet. Connecting these events was Amherst’s 1850 Revival. Multiple forces converged to produce this Revival. 1) Edward Dickinson’s political fortunes were rising among Massachusetts’s Whigs as Nativists abandoned the party. 2) Whigs had embraced Temperance reform to rally their shrinking base. 3) Amherst’s Congregationalists had called for a Temperance-themed Revival to link Temperance with Trinitarian doctrine. Individuals who answered this Revival’s call—including Austin and Lavinia Dickinson—took on a complex web of Trinitarian religious doctrine, Whig politics, and a Temperance-based model for moral reform. For Emily Dickinson, these intellectual commitments would have stifled her ability to think about the poetic basis of religious thought, so she embraced poetry *solus*.

Dickinson parodied her choice with the vocabulary of Nativism. In a letter to Abiah Root, Dickinson described herself as the victim of a foreign *creature* (from Switzerland) who infected her (with a cold) that left her holding a large handkerchief (bar towel) to her red nose (drunk). Dickinson may have intended satire too. If the creature from Switzerland was John Calvin, Dickinson was pointing out that—at one time—Trinitarians had been members of an immigrant sect.

Dickinson’s corpus extended her *intoxication* metaphor to include *liquor*, *distilling*, and *tippling*, but bees replace immigrants as her intoxicants. Her bee poems celebrate the joy of poetry and poetic inspiration with images of intoxicated bees reeling from nectar. However, there were no Temperance Whigs to parody or Congregationalists to satirize in the bees’ world. As a result, the nativist residue of Dickinson’s original *intoxication* metaphor inflects these poems more strongly and uncomfortably.

Kohler, Michelle, “‘Go[ing] / White’: Temporality, Race, and the Body in Dickinson’s Poetry”

In many of her poems, Dickinson critiques temporalities of national progress that justified or obscured many kinds of violence in the nineteenth century. But even as she shrewdly rejects this teleological framework, another teleology emerges through her work, one that is not clearly subject to her critique. In a substantial number of poems, Dickinson’s speakers look forward to beholding men in “epauletted white,” to breaking through the dark sod with a “White foot,” to achieving “the White Exploit,” to “go[ing] / White – unto the White Creator,” or to ascending to the ranks of those “Denoted by the White”; she also repeatedly depicts a material whitening of the body at death. This is

not just a valuing of whiteness; it is specifically a teleology of whiteness: a going-toward whiteness, a whitening, a “go[ing] / White.” It is a racialized conception of world history and futurity that moves away from foreignized color and darkness toward increasing whiteness (or colorlessness in some cases), and this temporal model shapes human lifespans and bodies, death, history, and the movement toward heaven in many of Dickinson’s poems: there is something unwhite, or not-white-enough, about the body that can (or will) be removed. Through readings of poems like “Color – Caste – Denomination,” “Publication is the Auction,” and “Of Tribulation – these are They,” this paper examines the racial thinking underlying Dickinson’s temporality of whiteness and considers how such temporal frames are rooted in nineteenth-century US conceptions of human consciousness, world history, racialized bodies, and post-racialism. I also consider the disjunction between her critique of a national telos on the one hand and her apparent embrace of a racial telos on the other.

Kondi, Brunilda, “From *Alabaster Chambers* to *Oda Alabastrri*: Dickinson in Albanian”

The only book-length translation of Dickinson we have in Albanian is a selection of 126 poems published in a volume titled *Emily Dickinson, Oda Alabastrri: Poezi të zgjedhura* (2017). The translator (and poet) Arben Dedja claims not to have read any analysis, comments, or interpretations of the poems chosen at the time of translation, and not to have read Dickinson’s letters, with the aim of approaching the poems with the curiosity and admiration of a child. The outcome, he says, is free translation, or lines transported to another country at another time through the filter of another mind.

Looking at the poems in Albanian, I am interested in their immediate effect on the reader. Furthermore, I want to explore how the translator’s choices, especially of vocabulary and syntax, affect the reception of Dickinson and her modernism in Albania. What about what lies beneath—does it beckon and baffle as it does in the original? An interview with the translator and an experiment with back translation aim to assess how the poems in Albanian have been received so far.

Krakaur, Nancy, “Dickinson’s Metaphors of Mind”

William Carlos Williams called a poem a “machine made of words.” Over the last three years, I have studied, again in Williams’s words, the “intrinsic, undulant, and physical” mechanics of Emily Dickinson’s poetry and the enigmatic visual design of her manuscripts. I have focused on particular visual features of her work—shafts of negative space that often penetrate manuscript verses, and the notable frequency and patterns of double-letter usage (two identical letters used consecutively in a single word)—to discover how they function. I have translated my findings into works across a variety of media, including kinetic sculptures, installations, sound and light.

I will discuss my work over the last three years connected to my Dickinson research. In *Bird Brain* (2019), I explore Dickinson’s metaphors of mind, using light, sound and moving sculpture. *Groove* (2020) comprises 21 kinetic sculptures in response to the 21 poems where Dickinson uses the word “brain.” *Recalll* (2021) is a digital data work that presents my tabulations and theories concerning double letters. Finally, *Shaft* (2021) is a series of maps detailing visual features of the manuscripts, in the style of Orra Hitchcock’s geological illustrations.

La, Yilin, “Transcendental Foreignhood: Dickinson’s Postlapsarian Poetics of Prayer”

To come of age as a poet, Helen Vendler has noted for us, one must find a coherent style for three things: inner tensions, social relations, and “a world-cosmology that goes beyond earthly elements.” Dickinson’s first fruit in this sense is not the earliest poems she assembled into fascicles, but an early 1860 composition that marks her turn, thus far neglected by critics, to address the divine only in poetry. This paper discusses the poet’s conception of the transcendent as foreign to postlapsarian mankind and approachable through verbal prayer, with particular attention to how poems react to a new pattern of converting that Lincoln Mullen summarizes as the sinner’s prayer and enact a poetics of presence that differs from Whitman’s attachment to bodily materiality.

Drawing on personal letters and intertextuality, I first present “‘Unto Me’? I do not know you –” (Fr825), a first-person conversation with the risen Christ, as a sensitive critique of contemporary conversion experience. The poem highlights ways in which words exceed their anticipated meaning, thereby questioning how human language signifies for the divine, while its careful balance between contrasting alternatives lets meaning reside in the addressee. Having noted Dickinson’s openness to linguistic signification, I then turn to “Presence” as the key to her definition of prayer (Fr623), in which language is not tasked with overcoming divine absence, or in the poet’s own words, “[bringing] Christ down” (L35). Instead, I shall argue, prayer mediates between two forms of human presence—mortal existence and a lost prelapsarian existence—and it is only through this mediation, made possible by poetry’s rich verbal affordances, that human understanding accesses the transcendent despite its foreignhood and that the poet arrives at divine duplicity in her last prayer, “‘Heavenly Father’ – take to thee” (Fr1500).

Lambert, Nelly, “Freeing the Sonnet’s Gown: Essence of Form in Dickinson”

Emily Dickinson did not write sonnets *per se*, yet the essence of sonnet form suffuses some Dickinson poems. Her oblique engagement with this form tells another story, that of her treatment of European models and the path she lays for later American poets to transform sonnet practice; she heralds their freedom. This presentation situates Dickinson at a crucial point of reinvention, distilling a classical, well-wrought European form quite literally to its essence and wafting that fragrance forward to her modernist lineage, to E.E. Cummings, to Marianne Moore, to Elizabeth Bishop, to Gwendolyn Brooks, to Robert Hayden—all explicit if ironic practitioners of the sonnet. Dickinson’s authentic deference to European forms was also an unfettered, detached fascination; she was free to distill those forms, retaining just their essence—in the case of the sonnet, that essence conveys the power of the revolution at the *volta* and a rhythmic power that builds towards ecstatic resolution. This presentation touches on some modernist descendants as well as European forebears but begins and ends with two manuscript versions of the fourteen-line “He fumbles at your soul.” This talk is also an opportunity to highlight Dickinson’s unusual combination of autonomy and receptivity in the face of influence. The frequent quips in her letters that “Shakespeare remains” connote on the one hand his enduring prominence in her library and on the other hand his ashen fadedness—his work as artefact, as remains. As such, Dickinson’s lexicon is imbued

with Shakespearean verbal richness yet free, I argue, of any specter of Shakespeare. Similarly, Dickinson does not write sonnets as Shakespeare did, yet some poems carry the cadence of a sonnet's progression. I suggest here that Dickinson recalibrates the sonnet for American poets and in doing so becomes herself a pivot, a *volta*, one might say, of sonnet revolution. It seems crucial to see Dickinson's role as that of expert refiner rather than angry arsonist. Delicately, confidently, imperceptibly she reclaims and amplifies the essential power of a love sonnet—without ever having to put one on.

Lee, Naihao, "Dickinson's Neighbors"

Dickinson calls God "our Old Neighbor" in "It was too late for Man," "The nearest Neighbor" in "Have any like Myself," "a Neighbor" in "The Crickets sang," and "our portentous Neighbor" in "Facts by our side are never sudden." In "We grow accustomed to the Dark," the neighbor is the one who "holds the Lamp" to witness the fading away of light. The ideas of "newness of the night," "fit the Vision to the Dark," and "Either the Darkness alters – / Or something in the sight / Adjust itself to Midnight" in "We grow accustomed to the Dark" suggest a contrast to the Enlightenment notion of the light of reason fighting the surrounding darkness. Night in this poem represents the core of a subjectivity which remains in tension with an impenetrable Other. Dickinson acknowledges one's being overwhelmed by Otherness and entangled in pretexting conditions. Nevertheless, for Dickinson, it is not incompatible with one's radical autonomy. Dickinson is aware that she always confronts both the impenetrability of the Other and her own impenetrability to herself. In this paper, I would like to compare Slavoj Žižek's exposition of the idea of a neighbor as an inert, impenetrable, enigmatic presence that hystericizes us in "Neighbors and Other Monsters" with Dickinson's God / Neighbor.

Li, Dongqing, "Benevolence and Foreignness: Dickinson's Perception of Nature"

Taoism, an important philosophical school in China, has influenced the way of life and thinking of Chinese people for more than two thousand years. It emphasizes Tao, or the law/way that governs the universe. By emphasizing living in harmony with nature and a simple life, Taoism bears rich ecological wisdom, which is badly needed today, when the ecological crisis is getting worse. It even goes so far as to say that Taoism is the foundation of environmental ethics.

Dickinson's extensive reading created opportunities for her to come into contact with different cultures, including Chinese culture. Cristanne Miller has pointed out that orientalism, which influenced Dickinson's epistemology and ontology, was at its heyday during the 1850s in the United States and that Dickinson wrote around 70 poems referring to Asia or mentioning people, animals, or products from Asia. Uno has argued that the poet's visit to a Chinese museum in Boston at the age of 16 acquainted Dickinson with Chinese culture, including Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Northrop Frye calls Dickinson's "manner of existence" "Oriental." And Kang Yanbin's doctoral dissertation, together with several academic papers, discusses the similarities between Dickinson's view of nature, her way of living, and Taoism.

Current research, however, mainly focuses on the Taoist ideas reflected in Dickinson's way of life and thinking, most notably a harmony of man and nature,

seclusion, inaction, and a simplicity of life. Few studies focus on animal ethics in Dickinson's poems. This presentation will discuss similarities between Dickinson's poems and Taoist classics from the perspective of animal ethics.

Ling, Li, "Dickinson's Non-human, Minute Biological Imagery and Imagination of Eco-community"

Emily Dickinson's poetry is full of non-human, minute creatures such as flowers, birds, insects, and grass, forming an idiosyncratic imagery that shows Dickinson's compound poetics and her imagination of eco-community. This non-human, minute imagery differs from the depiction of the wilderness in American literature. Dickinson treats non-human, minute creatures as the equal counterparts of human beings, taking both as the inseparable subjects of nature. The poet thus blurs or removes the boundaries between human and non-human creatures, and her poetry shows a de-anthropocentric view of nature, acknowledges the value of non-human life forms, and implies such post-humanistic beliefs as a simple and transcendent environmental humility, environmental subjectivity, and eco-holism. The combination of non-human, minute biological imagery and the imagination of eco-community reflects a new vision of the human-nature relationship and reveals a recognition of nature's unspeakable Otherness.

López Sánchez, Irene, "Foreign (Representations of) Happiness in Dickinson's Writings"

This paper explores the ways in which predominant representations of happiness in nineteenth-century America—such as theological, sentimental, and transcendental ones—seemed foreign in Dickinson's writings. Although the pursuit of happiness—or a life worth living—has been a global concern for millennia, the roots of which have been found in numerous cultural and religious traditions, its definition is still—and may always be—elusive. However, in the Declaration of Independence, happiness was declared as a right to be pursued by all citizens. In the nineteenth century, the classical idea of *eudaimonia* had transformed and evolved into a concept rooted in sentimentalism—where happiness was reified either as a reward in the future or as a positive, private, and determinate emotion in the present. In a similar way, this idea was also rooted in the literary tradition of the trial narrative which, simultaneously, was influenced by, or rooted in, theological interpretations of the notion. Although nineteenth-century conceptions of happiness have mostly shaped the interpretation and judgment made of the poet's oeuvre, I argue that Dickinson's views on a life worth living were closer to classical interpretations of the idea, since the poet's writings placed value on the contingency of life, the gift of mortality, and the possibility of happiness in this life. By placing the poet's writings in conversation with her nineteenth-century broader context, this paper aims to identify some of the strategies that Dickinson used to challenge and dismiss the nineteenth century's reified conceptions of happiness. The paper is thus rooted in the belief that Dickinson's ways of writing, thinking, and living might offer a new standpoint in the path towards a better understanding of what a life worth living might be.

Luo, Lianggong, “Materialization of Language in Dickinson’s Poetry”

Materiality of language refers to the quality of language that is associated with or rooted in the material world or sensory experience, while materialization of language is an endeavor to draw the encoded signs of language back to our sensory experience or sensory imagination. This paper examines Dickinson’s strategies of materializing her language in poetry by taking advantage of imagery, sound and visual form. The paper also explores her innovative poetics based on the materialization of language in her poetry from the perspectives of her view of language and concept of poetry. The paper attempts to reveal the significance of Dickinson’s innovative poetics of materialized language and its impact on twentieth-century American poetry, namely in modernist poets like Ezra Pound and LANGUAGE poets like Charles Bernstein.

Machová, Mariana, “Transnational Dickinson: Familiarity in Foreignness”

In my paper I would like to examine some of the ways Dickinson’s poetry is capable of crossing the boundaries of its own language and its own cultural context, so as to enter into a foreign environment and become a part of it. Focusing on the example of the Czech poet and translator Jiřina Hauková, who published the first book of selected poems by Dickinson in Czech in 1948, I will show how Dickinson’s poetry resonated with a poet whose own poetics is different, yet when we read her works next to Dickinson’s, the distance is overcome, and a sudden familiarity between the two poets appears. The eminent Czech literary critic Bedřich Fučík wrote that Hauková and Dickinson are “close relatives [... and] only the time is different, the environment is different.” I will try to explore this closeness that crosses time and space and enables one poet to enter the culture of another.

Mamoli Zorzi, Rosella, “Emily Dickinson and European Painters”

In Dickinson’s poem “How the old Mountains drip with Sunset,” the final lines mention European painters: “These are the Visions flitted Guido – / Titian – never told – / Domenichino dropped his pencil – / Paralyzed, with Gold –.” In my paper, I will analyze the use of foreign painters in Dickinson’s poetry in the context of American writers’ knowledge of European painters and within the change in taste that took place mostly due to Ruskin.

Manson, Michael L., “Dickinson’s Aspirations Among the Other Spasmodics”

In this paper, I contrast the first poems Emily Dickinson sent to T.W. Higginson with those she sent in her fifth letter (L271). Higginson recommended changes after her initial letters, and she responded to his advice. I explore what his advice may have been, how she responded to it, and—most importantly—the aesthetic context for their conversation. The spasmodic poets of 1850s were some of the alive voices she hoped to join if she could find the right form for her own distinctive voice.

In her early correspondence with Higginson, Dickinson requests his advice regarding her efforts to achieve on the page the art she has in her head. She is trying to create poems that are “alive,” she says. In her head, she can “make the distinction” between their varied “thought[s,]” but when she puts “them in the Gown – they look alike, and numb.” She asks Higginson to perform “surgery.” She is worried about a “fracture” in her verse.

Higginson evidently focused on issues of form in his recommendation. He urged her to “drop the Bells whose jingling cooled my Tramp,” deeming her “gait ‘spasmodic’” and “uncontrolled.” He recommended she write in a “more orderly” way. Looking back years later, he recalled, “She almost always grasped whatever she sought, but with some fracture of grammar and diction on the way.” In other words, like Dickinson, he identified a “fracture” in the forms of her verse.

This presentation explores what it meant for Higginson to criticize Dickinson’s gait as “spasmodic.” The spasmodic poets inspired both Dickinson and Higginson, and at the time, their verse was widely seen to exemplify the kind of verse that was alive in ways that Dickinson aspired to. Though Dickinson worried that the poetry of Alexander Smith was “not very coherent,” she did find in it a “good deal of exquisite frenzy, and some wonderful figures” (L128). Higginson may have recommended she tone down her spasmodic effects, but she may have found his advice failing to address the issues of formal vitality that were her paramount concern. Gait is never merely metrical, nor are the other terms that Higginson and Dickinson share—among them, *tramp*, *control*, *bone*, *order*, *rules*, *traditions*, *irregularity*, and *fracture*. The perception of meter is always bound up with syntax, rhyme, and visual form. When syntax aligns with meter, then both meter and rhyme can be heard. In the “orderly” poems she sent, we see her not merely aspiring to the regularity Higginson recommended but more complexly negotiating between the various components of gait to achieve the aliveness without leading into the “numb” qualities she associates with conventional orderliness. She walks a fine line and asks Higginson to see if she was succeeding.

We appreciate more fully the formal expressiveness of Dickinson’s poetry by considering the changes she was willing to make, the ones she was not, and the ways her efforts align with those of the spasmodics. Higginson evidently did not turn out to be the ideal reader she had been seeking, but Dickinson did find in him something else she valued—a correspondent alive to her ambition and her originality.

Some scholarship that I will build on includes Jason Hoppe, “Personality and Poetic Election in the Preceptual Relationship of Emily Dickinson and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, 1862-1886,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 55:3 (2013), pp. 348-387; the special issue of *Victorian Poetry* on Spasmodic Poetry and Poetics, 42: 4 (2004); Cristanne Miller’s *Reading in Time* (2012); and Gary Stonum’s *The Dickinson Sublime* (1990).

Maragou, Helena, “‘Foreignhood’ and Dickinson’s Poetics of Horror”

In poems such as “A South Wind – has a pathos,” Emily Dickinson signifies “foreignhood” as the allure of “far,” as the promise of creative renewal through imaginative exploration of things “not understood.” But if Dickinson finds “foreignhood” a liberating alternative to the restrictions of the mundane in some poems, in others she constructs the mind’s venturing into the sea of the unknown as a terrifying process of estrangement and self-loss, dramatized through spatial and temporal discontinuities and a poetics of alienation that negates the very concept of discourse.

Dickinson's aesthetics of estrangement yields some of her most striking linguistic experiments, but what I would be most interested in exploring here is the ways in which this cluster of poems produces the element of horror: horror of exclusion, of loss of community and of the certainties of faith, of contemplating the self as an alien double. I will be examining closely three representative poems, "Two Butterflies went out at Noon—" (J533), "I tried to think a lonelier Thing" (J532), and "That after Horror – that 'twas us –" (J286), not as reflections of the poet's individual personal experiences, but rather as examples of what Paul Giles has referred to as Dickinson's "global consciousness," her "remapping of selfhood onto more extensive spatial and temporal domains." These poems display Dickinson's diachronic and transnational appeal through their thematization of horror, a psychic condition most pertinent to contemporary experience, and through their testing the limits of language signification in a world where meanings and truth are shown to be at best provisional.

Martínez Serrano, Leonor María, "‘A Blossom, or a Book’: Dickinson on the Poetry of Earth"

Writing with great lucidity on the Amherst poet in her landmark volume *My Emily Dickinson* (1985), Susan Howe contends that Dickinson "built a new poetic form from her fractured sense of being eternally on intellectual borders" (21), which is to say an outsider, a foreigner, an alien. It was her unquenchable thirst for knowledge and her radical vision to make things cohere that prompted her to pull pieces from a wide range of disciplines, including philosophy, biology and philology "from alien territory" and invent "a new grammar grounded in humility and hesitation" (21). In her encounter with reality she hesitated, from the Latin word meaning to stick, and yet produced a body of 1775 radically new poems that are her response to a world to which she remained alien—a foreigner living in self-imposed seclusion—yet an avid visitor, wavering between introspection in the dominions of her "undiscovered continent" (her soul or spirit) and alertness to an alluring world of vibrant matter (Bennett, 2010). "Emily Dickinson's life was language and a lexicon her landscape" (27), argues Howe. An "omnivorous gatherer" herself with "a natural capacity for assimilation [...] fertilized by solitude" (28), her wakefulness to a world of agentive entities and her "intellectual conscience" (28) as a self-exacting poet-thinker are not to be underestimated, for her daily commerce was with Earth's Poesy and with words as the tools she wove her poems from. Drawing on ecophilosopher David Abram's notions of *Eairth* (2010) and of 'Commonwealth of Breath' (2014), this paper explores several Dickinson poems where the poet interrogates Earth's Poesy (J314, 378, 668, 1097, 1302), perception and language being central to her craftsmanship (J276, 1261, 1651, 1700). She was sensitive not just to human words, but also to the polyphonic place the biosphere revealed itself to be to her imagination—a vast entanglement of more-than-human beings that spoke languages of their own. Flowers, bees, trees, birds, clouds, winds, brooks, the sky and the sea—all figure prominently in her biocentric vision of the Earth. To capture their voices, Dickinson, endowed with the inquisitive eye of a naturalist, invented a new language that sought to convey the protean nature of a world perpetually in the making.

Miller, Cristanne, "All the letters I can write': Insights from a New Letters Edition"

The new edition of Dickinson's letters being prepared by Domhnall Mitchell and myself will, we think, significantly alter how we read the author's poems and how we understand her individual correspondences and the narrative of her life. This is because in 1958 Johnson and Ward included very few of the poems Dickinson mailed as letters ("letter-poems") and we are including well over 200 such "letters." Those poems/letters are typically dated vaguely by Ralph Franklin—as "about 1872" or "about spring 1863," but including them with Dickinson's other letters requires more precise placement. For example, a stanza or poem about death sent to Mary Bowles or Elizabeth Holland may respond to an event in their lives, and should be dated close to the time of that event. Or a loving note sent to Sue "late" in some year may be a birthday message, sent around Susan's birthday, on 19 December. Our editorial work convinces Mitchell and me that Dickinson's correspondence is typically occasional—that is, even if a poem was written much earlier and does not have an apparent occasional impetus, her sending it to a particular person is likely to be a response to something. This presentation will analyze a short section of letters and letter-poems to indicate how the demands of presenting documents in sequence can change our understanding of their resonances in the context of an historical event or relationship. I will also argue that Franklin's sequencing of poems distorts the possibilities for thinking about circulated poems contextually.

Monzón Blasco, Aitana, "The Foreign in the Self: Dickinson and Her Poetic 'Other'"

Is Emily Dickinson her own Otherness? The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how the concept of foreignness in Dickinson's poetry reaches the personal but also the universal. For this purpose, poetry must be regarded hermeneutically as a genre of fiction, thus subverting the idea that it is possible to build an author's biography on the basis of his/her corpus alone (Ardanaz 2021), as is the case with Dickinson. In this analysis, we will apply Levinas's idea of the facing relationship between the Ego and the Other (Peperzak 1993) to the correlation of the poetic voice and the author. The poet is an alter ego of the creative self (persona), and by unfolding him/herself into an infinity of voices, s/he attains his/her own Other.

This tension between the known and the foreign, between the quasi-metaphysical not-knowing and the absolute ("All things swept sole away / This –is immensity –," J1512) is what makes Dickinson's poetic voice sympathetic to the Other—who may be the oppressed, sick, slave, migrant, but also her own self. By positioning itself next to the Other and not in front of him/her, the poetic voice is able to feel compassion for Otherness, as is the case of poem J1666 ("I see thee clearer for the Grave / That took thy face between / No Mirror could illumine thee / Like that impassive stone") and J640 ("Nor could I rise – with You – / Because Your Face / Would put out Jesus"). Thus, the question "Who in Dickinson is the Ego and who is the Other?" establishes three different cognitive levels (the person > the poet > the voice), all converging in the idea that Dickinson's poetic voice is its own foreignhood.

Müller, Adalberto, “‘Like Her Translated Faces’: Reading the Untranslatable”

In a poem from fascicle 16 (Fr378; M201), Dickinson alludes to a tune supposedly “Better than music” and yet different from any song or “legend” ever known. The reader is not sure what this “thing” around which the poem revolves might be, since she defines it obliquely: “’Twas Translation – / Of all tunes I knew – and more –.” Upon translating almost eighteen hundred poems by Dickinson, including the alternatives (thus increasing exponentially the number of poems), I often felt that that every poem has some tricky secret that remains ungraspable to the translation—as much as to the reading of it. Differently from other forms of reading (e.g., for pleasure or scholarly reasons), the one the translator effectuates must consider not only the meaning of sentences (or the lack of it), but all possible meanings for every word or sign in the poem, not to mention the syntactical structures, the disposition of metrics and rhymes, the auto- and inter-textual references and finally the way it relates to history. Meanwhile, on a deeper level of reading, the translator (as the critic) should be able to understand complex rhetoric and discursive devices such as irony, figuration and heteroglossia (Bakhtin). However, despite any attempt of a *reading grammar*, there’s always something shady in a poem. Much like the “face” described in “You see I cannot see – your lifetime –” (Fr313; M 149), the act of reading/translating supposes therefore both seeing and not seeing a “face” which is constantly deferring its utter meaning. As the poem surface changes according to the viewer’s perspective, the act of reading—or translating—operates like a photographic image, if not as a mortuary mask (what photography is supposed to be, according to André Bazin). My aim is to show that translation is nothing more than a way of reading that re-frames the poem in light of its very untranslatability.

Nestor, Amy R., “an... of—Dickinson. Pain. Estrangingness”

The most foreign inhabitation, most intimate otherness, pain in Dickinson estranges the self from its selves, makes strange the closest, the most familiar. Synapse to sinew, Dickinson’s pain provokes self-departures, the self’s parting upon uncontainable differencings.

In Dickinson, pain does not give itself (*pace* Michael Snediker) in a figure: it does, acts, works through, upon, athwart figures, lines, blank spaces, words, an inhabiting energy that detours the bodymindspiritflesh—their selfhood-giving with thoroughness—into non-metric time, speeds, slownesses, intensities, blanks. Hence the surfacing of temporality in so many of Dickinson’s pain poems. Hence the call to rethink her temporalities gone foreign through pain. Then, too, in pain Dickinson parts from the now canonical pronouncement of Elaine Scarry: “Physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior.” First, unworking the binaries holding Scarry’s thought in place, in Dickinson pain never gives itself as simply, solely, clearly, a matter of the physical or the emotional, their opposition determinant, graspable—nor collapsible into unruffled samings. Pain in Dickinson emerges at any, every, some, no place, slips from mind to eye, muscle to emotion, resisting settlement, domestication by designation as being, definitively, pain of this or that kind. It slivers off sections of bodymindspiritflesh, turns them less against than otherwise to not only that from of which it was cut, but from all those through which it lived, each through the other. Again else. Unending otherwise.

Elsetime. Second, pain in Dickinson does not “actively destro[y]” language—it rather shivers, striates language; sends words, rhythms, syntax swerving, splintering, asiding; shutters their images aslant sight; sets all lingering upon senses’ edge. This shivers, striates, spurs language, its movement, its inventiveness. And to read here would give newly estranged understanding to her rhythms, her syntax, her poetics, the foreignness there subtending. Spirit gone astray in flesh.... Flesh gone hungering upon spirit.... Spirit gone lost through mind.... Mind gone....

Noble, Marianne, “Emily Dickinson’s Surprising Allusions: Buried Treasures”

This talk discusses the *Index to Emily Dickinson’s Allusions* database that Dan Manheim and I are working on. In it, I first explain the *Index* project, and I then indicate a number of sources that have been mentioned yet undeservedly forgotten.

While Dickinson’s first readers viewed her as a solitary genius whose poetry bore few traces of the influence of others, scholarship increasingly shows that Dickinson’s poetry is intertextual to its very core, alluding either directly or indirectly to materials she read, both in literary culture and in popular culture. Unfortunately, while scholars have noted intertexts, many have gotten buried. We hope that the *Index*—a database with links to scholarship on Dickinson’s allusions—will restore these to view.

This paper showcases some of the most fascinating sources that scholars have discussed that were news to one or both of us as we worked on the project. Hopefully examples like these will persuade listeners that attending to intertextual imbrications enhances the delight we take in Dickinson’s poetry.

Norton, Holly, “On the Inside Looking Out: Dickinson’s Window on the World”

Many of Dickinson’s poems portray the speaker looking out, sometimes in bemusement, other times with wistfulness, and often times with loneliness, but always with a level of detachment, as if not a true participant, but an observer who does not feel a true connection with the outside world but longs to be at one with it. The poems are this observer’s “letter to the World / That never wrote to [her]” (J441). This detachment is part of the speaker’s identity: “It might be lonelier / Without the Loneliness – / I’m so accustomed to my Fate – / Perhaps the Other – Peace – / Would interrupt the Dark –.” Along with this resignation to her “fate,” however, is the hope that that she might find a “Duplicate...one other Creature / Of Heavenly Love – forgot –” (J532). It is as if the “thing with feathers” (J254) is flying out to meet a kindred soul or, in another metaphor, encased in a cocoon that “tightens,” the speaker “feeling for the Air – / A dim capacity for Wings” that “Demeans the Dress” she wears (J1099). She concludes, “A power of Butterfly must be – / The Aptitude to fly.” This tension between the safety of the observer and the wish to take the risk to be at one with nature and humanity shows the conflict between Dickinson’s vision of what could be and her knowledge and experience of reality, a condition not only related to the culture in which she lived but also to her gender. The cocoon she described might just as well have been a corset. In poems that show confinement and the longing to break free, Dickinson shows how she was not only ahead of her time but also a product of it.

Panizza, Nicole, “‘La Voce Sublime’: Dickinson and the Art of *Bel Canto*”

Whilst the nature and specificities of *bel canto* vocal practice were a somewhat foreign entity within Emily Dickinson’s everyday life and work, there nevertheless remains a compelling relationship between Dickinson’s intersections with lyric composition and that of the fundamental building blocks of *bel canto* construction. Several examples of *bel canto* operatic piano transcription can be found in her personal music folio (most notably derived from the operas of Vincenzo Bellini). Hand-written annotations denote her personal engagement with the material in both study and practise. These distinctive creative acts, reflecting the cornerstone of nineteenth-century Italian operatic tradition, inform this study.

Building on critical theories of renowned scholars such as Skaggs (2006), Smart (2000), Burt (2016), and Barolini (1994), and Dickinson’s own encounter with *bel canto* performance via renowned soprano Jenny Lind, this presentation serves as a critical investigation of the influence of this musical practice on Dickinson’s poetic style. Via musical score and audio/visual examples, it will discuss key technical and musical elements of *bel canto* craft (and their translation within piano transcription), creating a viable route to a more critical understanding of lyric vernacular within Dickinson’s creative oeuvre. Reference to phraseology, breath, syllabic placement, and prosody will provide specific opportunities for analysis, debate, and reflection.

This research offers a rare opportunity to observe Dickinson’s innovative approach to lyrical enterprise through the lens of a vocal technique synonymous with Italian operatic practice. As such, it provides a platform where we may explore her relationship to “foreignhood” and experience the sheer power and performance of her “beautiful singing.”

Pérez Calvillo, David, “‘After great pain, a formal feeling comes’: Dark Comedy as Otherness in Dickinson’s Poetry and the Apple TV Series”

Among the many themes that Emily Dickinson developed in her poetry, the “early and lifelong fascination” (Pollak 1996) with illness and death seems to be at the forefront, insofar as it seems to be crucial for the personal life of the author. Therefore, it may seem surprising at first glance that Dickinson also resorted frequently to humour, irony, and satire (Wolff 1986). What might be considered a thematic contradiction is, in fact, a coping mechanism through which the poet dealt with her psychological complexities and the world around her, very much like what we now call *dark comedy* does.

This presentation aims at identifying some of the reasons why death and humour are treated in a relation of otherness in Dickinson’s poetry, and the way in which they are combined to imbue the Apple TV show *Dickinson* with a hint of dark humour that would make this master of literature very proud. In *Dickinson* we find an appealing blend of dark, deathly topics and a sharp sense of humour that often resembles the author’s own writings. In fact, Death itself makes its appearance as—probably—one of the most sarcastic characters in the show, thus evidencing the connection between the two in a world that, more than ever, needs humour even in the darkest of times.

Petrino, Elizabeth, “The Sea, the Brook, and a Camel: Dickinson’s Reading and Literary Influence”

In a cluster of poems employing images of the sea, rivers, brooks, wells, and, finally, a camel, Emily Dickinson depicts the refreshment books provide and the potentially overwhelming power of literary influence, locating the true source of the creative imagination and its transgressive power in the self. As Alfred Habegger claims, Dickinson used books and reading as a “kind of field work, something experimental” (243) to explore personae and develop poetic voices inspired by her favorite books. I analyze several echoes or potential parallels between Dickinson’s poetry and Emerson’s “The American Scholar” (1837), which serves as a touchstone on reading and books for her generation. Examining the lyrics beginning “My River runs to Thee –” (Fr219, M107), “Have you got a Brook in your little heart” (Fr94, M61), and “The Well upon the Brook” (Fr1051, M473), I consider the poet’s desire to merge with and stand apart from an overwhelming other. Her imagined dialogue casts the speaker as a river who expresses her desire to join the sea (perhaps inspired by George Eliot’s novel, *The Mill on the Floss*). Using a Shakespearean allusion, Dickinson implies that “brooks” (or books) may sustain the poet, but they also threaten to overflow their banks or dry up. In contrast, the “well,” insular and self-contained, connotes the “failless” reliance on the self and poetic imagination. Far from inundating her, as the lyric “Strong Draughts of Their Refreshing Minds” (Fr770, M358) implies, books enable Dickinson to have an “elastic” mind and attain the “Camel’s trait”— to subsist on inner resources for long periods. I plan to attend throughout my discussion to the way the speakers move from local and global, from familiar to exotic, in these readings and others that give insight into her reading process.

Piemont, Erin Elizabeth, “Dickinson, Portraiture, and the Estrangement of the Face”

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose portrait Dickinson displayed above her desk, appears in “I think I was enchanted” (1863) as “that Foreign Lady.” Just as Dickinson’s reference to the “Foreign” Barrett Browning subverts the portrait as a representation of a subject that renders that subject familiar, in Dickinson’s poems the face often creates an experience of estrangement for the poet. This paper traces Dickinson’s poems that treat the face or a portion of it, such as a cheek, a brow, or an eye, as a foreign entity. For instance, in “Whose cheek is this?” (1859), the poet partially covers the face of a dead figure, writing, “But which the cheek – / And which the pall / My scrutiny deceives –” (M699). The poet’s difficulty distinguishing a portion of the face from the cloth that defaces it estranges that face from the figure to whom it belonged. Moreover, when Dickinson refers to faces, parts of faces, and partially-covered faces, she often does so by describing an image or artistic description of a face, explicitly invoking visual portraiture.

This paper argues that Dickinson’s estrangement of the face in poems that borrow the language of visual portraiture—such as “A charm invests a face” (1862) and “The Outer – from the Inner” (1862)—undermines portraiture as an adequate representation of a subject, whether that subject is the poet or someone else. These poems treat the portrait not as a transparent representation of its subject but as a distinct, and thus foreign, entity. Consequently, Dickinson’s estrangement of the face belies critical treatments of her poetic subjectivity as lyric. These poems suggest a model of what I

call “poetic portraiture” that, outside theories of lyric, approaches the portrait and its subject, whether first- or third-person, as distinct objects of contemplation. This paper draws on art-historical analyses of portraits and self-portraits in order to describe the model of poetic subjectivity in this body of poems outside the familiar lines of lyric.

Poll, Ryan, “‘Citizen Gardener’: Emily Dickinson, Gardening, and Re-Imagining Citizenship”

Since the publication of horticulturist Marta McDowell’s *Emily Dickinson’s Gardens: A Celebration of a Poet and Gardner* (2004) and literary scholar Judith Farr’s *The Gardens of Emily Dickinson* (2005), the importance of Dickinson’s lifelong passion for gardening is recognized as inextricable from her poetry. In this paper, I argue that Dickinson’s gardening aesthetics is central to her critique of US citizenship, and moreover, to the radical, ecological conception of citizenship she practiced and developed, anticipating what theorists will later call a “citizen gardener.” This paper engages with scholars who have focused on Dickinson’s work on citizenship (Gordon, Staley, Zapedowska) and demonstrates that the poet’s radical reimagining of citizenship is inextricable from her engagement with beings marked “foreign,” and that this reimagining extends from her work with “foreign” plants which she intermingled with “native” plants to her engagement with Irish immigrants who fled the 1848 potato famine, only to find themselves branded as “foreign” to the US national community. In Dickinson’s gardening, poems, and letters, the binary between “foreign” and “native” is challenged, and more productively, her creative work across all three media reimagines citizenship to include all genders, ethnicities, and species.

Pollak, Vivian, “Emily Dickinson and the Cecil Dreemes of Literature”

When Emily Dickinson wrote to Thomas Wentworth Higginson for the first time in 1862, she was responding to his “Letter to a Young Contributor” in the April issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. The essay’s opening sentence refers to “the Cecil Dreemes of literature who subscribe their offered manuscripts with very masculine names in very feminine handwriting.” In *Dickinson The Anxiety of Gender*, I suggested that “Dreeme,” Higginson’s prototype for a female contributor, was a problematic role model for Dickinson. The artist-heroine of Theodore Winthrop’s posthumously published novel is a woman disguised as a man, a recluse who goes out only at night, a tormented woman with a sensational secret. “Dreeme,” née Clara Denman, spurns fame, is estranged from her family, and has narrow brushes with suicide and madness. I noted “the uncanny closeness of these conventionalized materials to the stuff of the Dickinson legend.” In my talk for the Seville conference, I would like to expand and update my analysis of the novel, using the annotated edition introduced by Christopher Looby, who describes Winthrop’s investment in passionate love between men. I will describe passionate love between women as it plays out, or doesn’t, in Winthrop’s complexly plotted text. In particular, I am interested in the heroine’s mysterious sister, Emma Denman, whose gender transgressions may be even more extreme than her sister’s. The talk I propose is part of my larger project on the cultural codes by which a queer Dickinson was understood by her contemporaries.

Porcel García, María Isabel, “Dickinson’s Reception in Spanish and Peninsular Languages and Latin American Scholarship”

This study aims to offer a bibliographical account of Dickinson and her literary work in Spanish. The information provided in this paper would be organized according to different types of headings, one being a bibliographical list concerning the academic criticism published in Spanish (both in Spain and Latin America). Other sections will deal with bibliographies of translations, adaptations of the writer’s works in Spanish (both in Spain and Latin America). It is worth mentioning that this specific bibliography about Dickinson in Spanish has never before been compiled, and it would bring forth the importance that Spanish scholarly publications have in the study of Dickinson as a figure and her works, and it would demonstrate the sociocultural impact the poet has had in Spain and in Spanish-speaking countries. It is also worth listing publications in other peninsular languages in Spain.

This bibliographical study is also conceived as an essential research tool that would be very useful for scholars not only in Spain, but also for English and American scholars, so as to retrieve these sources directly from the specific bibliographical list. Since Spanish is the third most-spoken language worldwide, and it is becoming increasingly significant in American culture and in the academic world, it goes without saying how helpful this can be. This structured bibliography of academic sources will thus render proof of the manifold interest in Spain and Latin America in Dickinson and her production, moving from the great Andalusian modernist poet Juan Ramón Jiménez to the present day, both in academic and in popular culture in Spanish.

Ramirez, Anne, “‘Away from Home’: Dickinson as Eternal Emigrant”

Paradoxically, the signature poem for this conference is both atypical and representative of other Dickinson poems that directly employ the vocabulary of “foreignhood.” In “A South Wind has a pathos” (F883), the wind’s voice resembles an “Emigrant’s” accent evoking “A Hint of Ports – and Peoples – / And much not understood” by the listener, who as speaker of the poem calls attention to her own lack of understanding rather than to any presumed shortcomings of the emigrant—whose place of origin seems “fair” to her. Among approximately forty-five other Dickinson poems containing the words *foreign*, *emigrant*, *alien*, *exile*, and *stranger*, scarcely any refer literally to persons from other countries, or to distant lands. When mentioning the latter, Dickinson often employs precise geographical nomenclature, but in roughly three-fourths of the examples found, the generic terms just listed are used metaphorically to represent psychological/ emotional remoteness, the loneliness of feeling “Away from Home” (F807), though whether “Home” is in this world or the next varies considerably. Such language reflecting her figurative self-identification as eternal emigrant may merit further consideration in the context of her interaction with literal emigrants in her own household. Although her references to foreignhood are more temporal than spatial, it seems noteworthy that her poems never use the word *immigrant*, which has become more common than *emigrant* today. Granted that the poet herself did not suffer the disadvantages experienced by actual emigrants in her society, it also seems significant that the poems using the generic vocabulary under consideration tend to convey empathy even more than compassion. Exceptions to Dickinson’s metaphorical use of *foreign* and related words include the well-known mention of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (F267), the divine “Stranger” who wrestles with

Jacob (F145), a few uses of *foreign* as a simple synonym for “unfamiliar” or “different,” and several descriptions of transient natural phenomena; even some of these last-mentioned arguably include symbolic resonance with human experience. Examining the patterns described may be one means of illuminating Dickinson’s complex conceptions of foreignhood.

Razzi, Francesca, “Imaginary Transatlantic Crossings: Textual Configurations of Domesticity and Foreignhood in Dickinson’s Italian Atlas”

Theoretically intersecting transnational and spatial perspectives (Giles 2011; Ljungberg 2017; Finnerty 2019), the present proposal aims at expanding Dickinson’s relation to the issue of foreignhood by discussing the multifaceted textual implications of its domestic reconfigurations. On the background of a wider phenomenon of restyling of European traditions and images in the American literary nation-building process, Dickinson’s role in literary history and print culture (see Ickstadt 2001; Ladin 2004; Loeffelholz 2008) cannot be conceptualized apart from her confrontation with the transatlantic sphere, in a virtual dialogue also contextually involving the significance of European travel in nineteenth-century America (Buzard 1993; Stowe 1994; Hamera and Bendixen 2009).

In fact, given Dickinson’s cultural use of icons and symbols connected to Italy (Rich 1975; Barolini 1994; Reynolds 2002), her imaginary transatlantic crossing plays a crucial part in defining her strategies of negotiation with the foreign, especially on a thematic level (Finnerty 2009). However, Dickinson’s itinerary sweeping across the Mediterranean and the Alps testifies to a subtler, even less straightforward use of Italy; it represents a textual object expressive of both geographic imagery and travel rhetoric, which is directed at the metaphorical rearrangement of a domestic realm—intended simultaneously as social and private (Buckingham 1996; Stevenson 2007). As the frequent references occurring through the whole of Dickinson’s canon show (as in the 1859 poem “Our Lives are Swiss”, or in an 1855 letter to Jane Humphrey, for instance), by drawing her own Italian atlas Dickinson not only ideologically engages with a set of transatlantic impressions, but also dramatically partakes in the aesthetic construction of the nineteenth-century textual space of the United States (Fluck 2005; Schulten 2012).

Rhee, Margaret, “Queer Dickinson: On Visual Cultures and the Intervention of Queer”

Is “queering Dickinson” in various media, with sexual expressions that celebrate nonstandard emotional/erotic alliances outside of cisgender predictabilities, “as ‘Foreign’ as ‘Firmanent to Fin’”? This panel examines recent productions in dance, visual poems, and portrayals in film and television to show how queer artistic responses to Dickinson’s writings are not at all foreign to her poetic vision, aspirations, and own performances.

Margaret Rhee’s “Queer Dickinson: On Visual Cultures and the Intervention of Queer” discusses her series of queer Dickinson visual poems such as the Dickinson Queer “E-Chart” that is a current contribution for an exhibition on the *Dickinson Electronic Archives* (December 2021). Drawing from scholars such as Martha Nell Smith, Cristanne Miller, and from popular representations of Dickinson, Rhee’s project analyzes the intervention of queerness and the interplay of queer feminist scholarship,

media representation, and visual arts informed by Dickinson in our contemporary period.

“Queering Dickinson” plumbs ways in which rejuvenating artistic productions translate Dickinson and excite and cultivate diverse readers and reading in our twenty-first century world. The “foreign,” aka the “faraway,” is in fact nearby.

Rice, Kylan, “‘Paralysis / Done Perfecter in Stone’: Dickinson’s Gem-Poetics”

In 1870, Emily Dickinson told Thomas Wentworth Higginson, “if I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can warm me I know that is poetry” (L342A), a conviction recalling the “Hour of Lead” in her poem “After great pain” (F372), which describes the freezing numbness, “formal feeling,” or “quartz contentment” that comes in the aftermath of deadening trauma. Considered alongside her statement to Higginson, Dickinson’s poem associates poetic artifice with an icy, quartzite crystallinity, a formal or formalized response to emotional disturbance. Exploring other, similar images of crystallization, encrustation, and lithification that propagate in her work, this paper considers how Dickinson conceptualized poetry as a means to stabilize by scaffolding, structuring, and even enshrining psychic wounds that result from shock or allostatic overload. Frequently making use of the figure of the jewel or gemstone to guide her efforts to aestheticize, miniaturize, and ultimately exert a kind of gorgeous control over situations of internal crisis, Dickinson envisions poetry and poetic form as a means of registering overstimulating, potentially destabilizing sensory experiences in a way that also renders them inert but opulent. For Dickinson, the encrustation of organic bodies by inorganic jewels and crystals becomes a form of talismanic armoring that protects but also honors and adorns the nervy, nervous vulnerability of mind and body with a baroque carapace or myelin sheath of sharp flashing facets, fragments, and minute effects. By arguing that her crystalline poetics is therapeutic at the same time as it secures healing by calcifying and devitalizing organic life, I suggest an alternative to scholarship that focuses on Dickinson’s biopoetics, offering a broader, nonbiological conceptualization of what constitutes well-being and even “body” in Dickinson’s poetry.

Richards, Eliza, “‘The Obstructions of Genius’: Manuscript, Print, and Orality/Aurality in the Editing of Emily Dickinson and George Moses Horton”

The distinguished history of editing Emily Dickinson’s poetry may seem to shed little light on how to approach the first critical edition of George Moses Horton’s writings, in part because the poets’ archives are entirely different. A self-educated field laborer enslaved in North Carolina, Horton composed poems on commission for wealthy, white southerners even before he learned how to write; he published two books of poems while still enslaved. His fame as the “Black Bard” arose largely through newspaper publication. Few manuscripts are extant, and most are in the handwriting of his patrons. Dickinson’s archive presents a counterpoint. Well-educated, with ample time, space, and resources to devote to her art, she preserved her manuscripts with care and shunned “print,” the form in which most of Horton’s work is extant. Dickinson’s editors have attended thoughtfully to the question of how to represent the manuscripts;

they have inferred compositional process, context, and intent from their surfaces in order to make decisions about editorial arrangement and presentation. Horton's laborious script reveals mostly the challenges of writing legibly without extensive schooling. The transcriptions of his poems by patrons, in contrast, indicate the extent to which handwriting, for the socially privileged, was an expressive extension of status and personality. But while Horton and Dickinson exemplify two radically different relations to the social codes of handwriting, they are in full agreement about what "poetry" is and what it can enable. For both poets, orality and auralness are central to poetry's capabilities, whether the poem is printed, written, read aloud, or recited in the mind. Dickinson and Horton locate poetry's expressive powers in verbal melody and identify poetic "genius" with the ability to access those powers. Both rely centrally on hymn or ballad meter and conflate poetry with song. Considering the sonic qualities of poetry adds a third dimension to editorial discussions of print and script. Juxtaposing manuscript images of the same poem written out by Horton and a patron, for example, can teach us about shared notions of poetry's sonic underpinnings: patrons regularly converted Horton's recitations and writings into familiar poetic forms, and publications of these poems suggest that Horton and his publishers concurred. The translation across voice, manuscript, and print media shows a way to attribute forms of authorial agency that extend beyond the manuscript page and print publication. Dickinson's editors have debated the extent to which meaning and intent inheres in even the smallest marks on the page, as well as the extent to which Dickinson adhered to poetic traditions grounded in song that lift away from the page. This rich discussion has helped me develop principles of presentation and contextualization in my work on Horton; I hope that my study of Horton's relation to print, manuscript, and orality/aurality will in turn contribute to editorial work on other poets, including Dickinson. Determining a working definition of what poetry means for 19th-century writers can help ground and extend editorial principles beyond individual authors, who work in relation to literary norms and in a specific communicative medium because of its perceived capabilities.

Sánchez, María Carla, "Emily on Instagram: Instapoetry and Social Media Adaptations of Dickinson"

What cultural shift is signaled by typing "Emily Dickinson" into the search engine for Instagram, and finding dozens of photos of actor Hailee Steinfeld competing with stylized images of verse? In this essay, I examine how the discursive trends informing poetry on the social media platform—particularly the development of "Instapoetry"—influence how the works of established, "major" poets like Dickinson are adapted for and by new audiences. Instapoetry, as demonstrated by the commercial success of writers such as Rupi Kaur and R. M. Drake, privileges brevity, the world of affect, and of course, the visual: poets who once utilized the platform to disseminate poetry, intermixed with frames featuring selfies and pithy takes on relationships, have found themselves able to circumvent long-standing literary gatekeepers and reach, nurture, and capitalize on audience/readers directly. (The poet Rupi Kaur, for example, boasts nearly 4.5 million Instagram followers and equivalent book sales despite beginning as a self-published author rejected by multiple established presses.) Those readers in turn engage with their admired poets through simple comments and more elaborate tribute pages. Writers such as Dickinson are well suited to the social media platform's emphasis on quick, emotional impact. Yet her poetry and portrait are increasingly crowded out by an audience eager for that same engagement encouraged by living poets: images of

Steinfeld, portraying Dickinson in the Apple TV series, are now superimposed with lines from “Wild Nights – Wild Nights!” After analyzing the adaptations and audience/reader interaction with several pages ostensibly devoted to Dickinson, I suggest means of understanding how social media reshapes canonical authors for a digital age and reader/viewership.

Sánchez-Eppler, Benigno, “‘But I guess guessing hurts’ ... ‘Until my faint rehearsal drops into tune’: Reading Dickinson’s Variants and Versions as a Translator”

The translator, moving from one language to another (sense-to-sense, word-to-word, or nearness to nearness), seeks and finds, or humbly proposes, *correspondencias* among mismatched semantic fields, morphological structures, effects and affects. I am a translator who finds it useful to read Emily Dickinson’s poems with attention to her variants and versions, both at the word-choice level of the multiple options she considered possible or weighed during redaction, and at the level of the variety of versions that have risen to fair copy or have been sent in a letter to a specific reader. In her weighing of words, meanings, and resonances, Dickinson makes visible how the convening of alternatives, and the resolutions or undecidability of “variants” in the work of the poetry writer, replicate the struggle of the translator to arrive at the best “correspondence.”

It could be argued that the poet’s freedom in this process is guaranteed by the absence of an original demanding fidelity. But in Dickinson’s work, the poet has left clear and suggestive traces of her efforts to be faithful to something that needed restating and/or refining.

I am not engaging her poems as a translator of Dickinson, but I am reporting on the experience of reading Dickinson’s poetry as a translator, phenomenologically juxtaposing her practice of “versions and variants” with my practice of weighing alternatives while I translate. Both for the poet and the translator, the crossing from inkling to image and utterance provides the key frustration and the enchanted arrival.

Saucedo Dimas, Rocío, “Dickinson Speaks Spanish: *Archivo Dickinson* (2018), a Book of Poems by María Negroni”

Inspired by the *Emily Dickinson Lexicon*, Argentinian poet María Negroni (1951-) published *Archivo Dickinson* (Vaso Roto, 2018), a book of prose poems. Each one of these seventy-eight poems explores a word featured in the *Lexicon* from the point of view of an imaginary Emily Dickinson, the speaker. Some of the titles of the poems in this book are “Dolor,” “Peligro,” “Circunferencia,” “Maestro,” “Duda,” to mention just a few. Negroni, also a translator of Dickinson (*Carta al mundo y otros poemas*, Libros del Zorro Rojo, 2016), has acknowledged her long-standing identification with the poet from Amherst: “Her unruly diction, the misadjustments her syntax introduces into the English language, creating an idiolect of her own, and, above all, the syncopated rhythm with which she dissolves the trap of thematic comprehension in order to privilege the imprudence of thought, have always seduced me” (*Archivo Dickinson*, 8, my translation).

The purpose of this paper is to discuss some of the transactions involved in writing a book like *Archivo Dickinson*. First, there is Negroni’s cross-cultural

recognition of and identification with a sense of *strangeness* in Dickinson's poetic style. Then, there is a process of translation as such of a selection of words from the *Lexicon*, which function as points of access to re-create, in Spanish and as imagined by Negroni, how Dickinson poetically and even "personally" responded to them. Finally, Negroni negotiates aspects of her own authorial figure by implicitly emphasizing some characteristics of Dickinson as a poet and as a cultural icon.

Scholes, Judith, "Dickinson's Foreign Reader"

Emily Dickinson's overt distancing of herself and her work from aspects of her surrounding literary culture—print publication, mass readership, literary professionalization— suggests the poet found something foreign in its public nature. Dickinson scholars have continually returned to the poet's admonishments of fame over her lifetime, as they draw our attention to the small, local, private power of her work, as it played out with her familiars. In this paper, I consider how we might look to those she seemingly avoided during her life—a mid-nineteenth-century American mass readership, an "admiring bog"—as a foreign people. To what extent might we cast her anonymity and even her amateurdom in the public eye as a means to maintain her own foreignhood in that crowd? How could this exploration help us imagine further who the unknown, unfamiliar reader was to Dickinson, and, indeed, who we might be to Dickinson, today? I reflect on these questions via a reading of Dickinson's relationship with author Helen Hunt Jackson, who was in many respects not only one of Dickinson's most accessible means to a mass readership, but also the very figure of the professional poet Dickinson would not become. I look specifically at Jackson's persistence in getting Dickinson to contribute to *A Masque of Poets*, a volume of poetry published by Roberts Brothers, as part of their No Name Series. I then explore what Dickinson encountered, when she read her little poem in November 1878, under the title "Success," published in a gift book for foreign eyes.

Schweitzer, Ivy, and Al Salehi, "Reckoning with Dickinson: On Otherness and Repair"

As Al Salehi planned an independent study course on Dickinson's poetry, which Ivy Schweitzer supervised in Fall 2020, we could hardly ignore the dramatic national reckoning brought to a head by the murder of George Floyd and fueled by years—centuries—of discrimination, oppression, injustice, and broken promises for people of color.

Nor could we ignore the fact that Dickinson's most prolific years of poetic productivity took place during the Civil War, the first national conflict on the question of otherness: whether Black people were chattel or human beings with full rights under the law. As we worked through Dickinson's poetry, we were amazed by the number of poems that speak about the War and its issues, and how many spoke directly to us—two relatively privileged people wrestling with our various privileges—and to our current moment: "As in sleep – all Hue forgotten," "the Slave – is gone," "a Plated Person," "Brave Black Berry," "the Palate of the Hate," "Crisis is a Hair," "Hope is a strange invention," "To offer brave assistance," "the White Exploit," "Piles of solid Moan," "It feels a shame to be Alive."

Many poems we had not considered before took on new meaning, asking us to reckon with our white supremacist society; institutional violence and injustice; our painful but necessary sense of racial difference as otherness within; and what changes are required to our lives, laws, institutions, and our very language to make Black Lives Matter. For this talk, we propose to select several clusters of poems from our manuscript, “Emily Dickinson in the 21st Century: Black Lives Matter,” in which we are in conversation with Dickinson, and explore her various visions of “color, caste, denomination,” and how they pushed our thinking and shaped our poetic responses to issues of otherness and to the work of reckoning and repair.

Serrano Elena, Paula, “The Power of the Ideal: Analysis of the Effects of the Ideal of Motherhood in Dickinson”

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, patriarchal domination of culture, politics and above all the economy placed motherhood at the center of American notions of women’s role and virtue. It constructed a vision of women’s superior virtue and natural tenderness which soon became one of the strongest symbols of nineteenth-century American society. Accordingly, it did not take long for this vision to be articulated in the literature of the time, especially in poetry, where the use of sentimental imagery helped develop an extreme version of sentimental motherhood. As I examine Dickinson’s poem “Nature, the Gentlest Mother,” I elaborate on the author’s way of representing motherhood in it. The instincts of love, care, protection and unbiased compassion inherent in the ideal of motherhood are reflected beautifully in nature through this poem. In my paper, I intend to prove that Dickinson’s relationship with her mother and her own isolation from society may have led the poet to have a vision of motherhood that did not correspond to that of the time. However, the deep consolidation of the ideal of the “Good Mother” in the American society of the nineteenth century offers an explanation for Dickinson’s depiction of motherhood in her poem.

Sharpless, Susannah, “‘Love Marine:’ Cargo and Commodified Romance in Dickinson”

My paper investigates how Emily Dickinson’s metaphors of “cargo” complicate the “Requirement” of nineteenth-century heterosexuality (Fr 857). I argue that Dickinson’s images of the sea, its ships, and their cargo combine erotic and economic desires into a material critique which clarifies accepted feminist glosses of Dickinson’s rejection of heterosexual norms. By analyzing “cargo,” I suggest it reveals Dickinson’s awareness of how white femininity was sustained by the exploitations of the colonialist metropole.

I will focus on “How sick to wait in any place but thine” (Fr 410) and “I gave Myself to Him” (Fr 426), among others, to argue that Dickinson’s comparison of romantic love to cargo insists that gender be understood as a historical force driving international trade. The cargo of these poems is associated with networks which brought sugar, rum, and spices to the Northeast from foreign islands—the “isles enchanted”—on which enslaved workers produced them. Scholars have conflicting opinions about where these geographic allusions leave Dickinson, and my argument will make gender central to these interpretations, suggesting Dickinson’s metaphors arise from the problematic

connection between whiteness and womanhood identified by scholars like Sara Ahmed and Kyla Schuller.

My paper's central questions will be: how does Dickinson's distaste for the commodities associated with American womanhood explain her own rejection of those norms? How does the sea function in these poems, as a metaphor and as a material mode of economic loss and gain? And how do these questions reveal white femininity's imbrication in the racially exploitative systems of nineteenth-century capitalism? In order to bring the relationship between gender, race, and capital into clearer view, my project will consider how these metaphors reveal the tension between Dickinson's private political sentiments and an increasingly global economic system fueled not only by human desires, but by humans themselves.

Sielke, Sabine, "The "Undiscovered Continent" – No Settler had the Mind –,’ or: Travelling with Dickinson"

Emily Dickinson would not have had an issue with COVID-19 regulations and the threat of quarantine. Her travels did not require her to move about much, and yet she made it to places that have remained foreign to most of her contemporaries as well as to us. Cherishing this idiosyncratic mobility, my talk takes you on a tour to one of Dickinson's privileged destinations: consciousness. More precisely, my contribution explores how Dickinson's verse deals with what philosopher David Chalmers in 1995 termed "the hard problem of consciousness": the question how brain becomes mind—a question that is so far unresolved, and may most likely never be resolved.

Focused not so much on things and phenomena themselves, but on how they affect our body and mind, many of Dickinson's poems are preoccupied with physiological operations and, more significantly, their disruption and failure. Loss of consciousness, paralysis, pain, and the limits of perception are central to her poetry and poetics—a poetics that explores the lacunae and gaps of cognition and seems to expose the brain's capacity to break down information and account for experiences and sense impressions in a highly selective and associative manner. But how do these texts reflect on the aforementioned "hard problem," the path perception takes from neural activity in the brain to what we experience as vision or memory? And do Dickinson's poems in fact hint how our immeasurable mental landscape evolves from bounded substance, how "[t]he Brain" becomes "wider than the Sky –" (Fr598)? My talk explores what Dickinson discovered during her travels through this "Undiscovered Continent" and what her poems may offer to what remains still foreign and undiscovered in cognitive sciences' ongoing and open debate.

Smith, Martha Nell, "Wild Nights and Twerking: Emily Dickinson in the Movies and on TV," in the panel "Queering Dickinson – As 'Foreign' as 'Firmament to Fin'?"

Is "queering Dickinson" in various media, with sexual expressions that celebrate nonstandard emotional/erotic alliances outside of cisgender predictabilities, "as 'Foreign' as 'Firmament to Fin'?" This panel examines recent productions in dance, visual poems, and portrayals in film and television to show how queer artistic responses to Dickinson's writings are not at all foreign to her poetic vision, aspirations, and own performances.

In “Wild Nights and Twerking: Emily Dickinson in the Movies and on TV,” Martha Nell Smith examines how Dickinson’s evocative, provocative, unique poetic writings are celebrated by director Madeleine Olnek in *Wild Nights With Emily* and showrunner/creator Alena Smith in Apple TV’s *Dickinson*. Inspired by Dickinson to enact their own bold, queering artistic visions, both Olnek and Smith chose to highlight what might be called, to adapt Jay Leyda’s term, the “omitted center” in our understanding of Dickinson’s creative wellspring. In different ways, each focuses on Susan Dickinson, the woman to whom Dickinson proclaimed, “With the Exception of Shakespeare, you have told me of more knowledge than anyone living.”

“Queering Dickinson” plumbs ways in which rejuvenating artistic productions translate Dickinson and excite and cultivate diverse readers and reading in our twenty-first century world. The “foreign,” aka the “faraway,” is in fact nearby.

Sreedharan, Chitra, “Daughters of the Sacred Muse—Emily Dickinson and Bahinabai Chaudhari”

Bahinabai Chaudhari was born in 1880 in a remote village in North Maharashtra, India, just six years before Emily Dickinson died in Amherst, Massachusetts, in May 1886. Chaudhari did not have formal education and composed all her poetry in the oral tradition in her native Ahirani/Khandeshi dialects. Her son, Sopandev, transcribed her poems and published them posthumously in 1952, a year after her death. Chaudhari definitely could not have heard of, let alone read, Emily Dickinson. But one finds a striking resemblance in their modes of expression—the spontaneity and ease of the spoken voice, the unusual perspectives, the undercurrent of humor and irony, the sheer range of subjects, and the fantastic ability to capture the essence of the world around.

This paper attempts to capture the similarities in the poetry composed by these two women, who were so remote from each other geographically, culturally, and linguistically. A couple of examples can highlight the similarity. Chaudhari’s poem “Maazhi Maay Sarasoti” (My Mother Saraswati) provides a striking parallel to Dickinson’s poem “Some keep the Sabbath going to Church.” Chaudhari talks of how the Goddess Saraswati (the Muse in Hindu tradition) continually reveals the secrets of the Universe to her and helps her articulate them through her poetry. As Dickinson’s persona finds God’s voice (the “sermon”) in nature, Chaudhari’s persona finds the gospel (the *Bhagvad Gita*) in the sound of the rain, the fertile soil, and the rustle of the leaves. All of nature seems to conspire to offer her a glimpse of the Divine Presence. Another poem by Chaudhari, “Man” (literally “Mind”), is akin to Dickinson’s poem “The Brain – is wider than the Sky –.” Here is a transliteration of the last lines of Bahinabai’s poem: “How big is the mind? / Just the size of a tiny grain. / How big, how big? / It can’t be contained in the sky.”

In this paper, I hope to analyze more of the poetry written by these two women poets to show how creative writers across the globe often speak the same language and to bring out similarities in the content and the nuances in the mode of articulation.

Stephens, Ronnie K., “Foreignhood and Liminality in Dickinson’s ‘The Wind begun to knead the Grass’”

There are five known variants of “The Wind begun to rock the Grass,” with four extant versions all written in fair copy and contained in correspondence. Revisions

range from the replacement of one word for another to the shift from one stanza to quatrains in the third variant, only to return to a single stanza in the fourth and fifth variants. These revisions display calculated and deliberate adjustments that offer insight into Dickinson's proximity to both domestic and literary spaces. The most significant revision, I argue, is the removal of references to kneading dough in the first two lines. This shift coincides directly with Dickinson's decision to share the poem with T.W. Higginson and Thomas Niles, men whom she associated with the publishing industry. My talk argues that Dickinson's excision of any reference to womanhood or the domestic illustrates a clear and distinct division between Dickinson's living space and the professional literary space, one that necessitated shifts in literal and figurative language. Her revisions further suggest that Dickinson associated the baking process with the private domain and believed employing such imagery would hinder the poem's success with male readers. Thus, I contend, Dickinson associated the publishing industry with the male perspective. By offering the poem to known editors without formally submitting it, Dickinson also signals a certain foreignness with the publishing process, and with male readership in general. The passive rejection of the poem by both Higginson and Niles highlights Dickinson's liminality and inability to wholly assimilate into either space, thereby exacerbating her foreignhood inside and outside the home. Dickinson's revision of "The Wind begun to knead the Grass," then, acts as a microcosm of the nineteenth-century dichotomy between domestic and literary, effectively situating the domestic space as inherently foreign and inaccessible to male readership.

Torvaldsen, Anna, "Dickinson's Satin Cash: Floral Gifts and Poetic Sociability"

Of all Emily Dickinson's social encounters, none has been so repeatedly recounted and mythologised as her meeting with T. W. Higginson. After leaving the Dickinson Homestead, Higginson immortalised his visit with the memorable line: "I never was with any one who drained my nerve power so much." Dickinson's unconventionality suffuses accounts (and dramatic re-enactments) of this historic social call, which the poet began by offering daylilies to Higginson and declaring, "These are my introduction." My paper re-contextualises this now notoriously idiosyncratic floral gift within Dickinson's substantial, lifelong investment in the conventional nineteenth-century social practice of sending flowers to friends, neighbours and correspondents. The poems Dickinson wrote to accompany these floral gifts are an overlooked subsection of her output, partly because they were (as Cristanne Miller's complete edition documents) infrequently retained by Dickinson herself, seeming to function as straightforward social acts rather than complex literary exchanges. Nevertheless, Dickinson also wrote and retained many poems ("I pay – in Satin Cash –," "'Tis Customary as we part," "I could bring You Jewels – had I a mind to –") that reflect on the practice of floral gift-giving and for which there are no recorded recipients. I argue that it is worth revisiting Dickinson's investment in the occasion poem and the persistence with which she takes up the connection between poems, flowers and social relationships as a poetic subject. My analysis of Dickinson's "satin cash" offers an encounter with her poetry that relies upon established rituals of nineteenth-century social life. By doing so, I offer a less alienated Dickinson, revealing one way her poetry productively embraces the social world.

Tronrud, Wendy, “‘Vesuvius at Home’: Foreignhood and Dickinson’s Volcano Poems”

When Dickinson starts one poem with “Volcanoes be in Sicily” and ends it with “Vesuvius at Home,” to what kind of foreignhood is she signaling within a domestic or U.S. national context? Most often located in a Southern, foreign geography, the volcanoes Dickinson names across her at least eight poems that feature them include Vesuvius, Etna, and Popocatepetl. During the 1970s into the 1980s, several poets and scholars, from Adrienne Rich to Cristanne Miller, observe just how bodily, oozing and sputtering Dickinson’s volcanoes are. Building upon these readings, my paper will argue that Dickinson’s volcanoes are not only a part of her personal lexicon, but they also correspond to the volcano’s larger national import: it symbolizes slavery during the antebellum into the Civil War periods. With abolitionists like Frederick Douglass galvanizing attention around the antislavery cause through speeches like “Slavery, the Slumbering Volcano” (1848), and artists like Frederic Church representing slavery through depictions of a smoking Ecuadorian volcano in his painting *Cotopaxi* (1863), the volcano elliptically circulated across various kinds of media through the Civil War. However, if the volcano symbolized slavery, what exactly did it say about it? My paper will consider how Dickinson manages an already heavily mediated and opaque symbol, one she often attaches to both geographical foreignness and a state of being foreign that relies on racial and gender liminality. Some questions I hope to address are: How do Dickinson’s volcano poems document and manipulate how the volcano mattered rhetorically and politically as a symbol of slavery during the antebellum and Civil War periods? How does Dickinson work with the volcano as a foreign, geological body within the space of the poem as a figure capable of disrupting meaning?

Valli, Elena, “‘Unacknowledged Clay’: Foreign Lands and the Representation of Fertility in Dickinson’s Poetry”

While Dickinson’s natural imagery has often been discussed in relation to the themes of paternity and friendship, only little attention has been given to her representation of maternity at a textual and symbolical level. This concept is directly connected to the idea of nourishment, which also recurs in her poetry in the form of food and drink, and which has often been linked by the literature to religious symbolism. Moving from these premises, my paper investigates images of thirst and starvation in Dickinson’s poetic practice in relation to their primary cause, an infertile, often exotic, land. This becomes a metaphor of failed motherhood or kinship and is employed by the poet to explore the opposing concepts of sterility and fertility in more general terms: aridity comes to represent not simply the impossibility to conceive life or to offer nourishment, but mainly an ambivalent personal state which interferes with mutual or erotic love and which, ultimately, sets the poet apart from society.

By representing herself and her loved ones as landscapes threatened by either overwhelming invasion or isolated retreat, as well as by continuously expanding this metaphor into an increasingly large set of paradigmatic symbolic opposites (the hungry predator and the desert, the water and the sand, the garden and the frost), Dickinson manages to explore her own limitations in response to intimacy and motherhood, along with the negative consequences deriving from said limitations. At the same time, by imagining throughout her production an increasingly detailed land which becomes a substitute for her persona, and by intentionally connoting such land as foreign and

“removed from human experiences,” she manages to recover the productive potential implicit in her lands and in her own apparent sterility by asserting the possibility of autonomous procreation in terms of artistic creation.

Vera Arias, María Camila, “Dickinson, Amante: Tracing Queer Emily in Spanish”

The discussions surrounding Emily Dickinson’s presumed queerness and the presence of homosexual desire and relationships in her writing are not new. In addition to the extensive scholarship on the matter (Hennenberg, Smith, Farr, Pollak), more recent pop culture material has been added: the 2018 film *Wild Nights with Emily* by Madeleine Olnek and Alena Smith’s Apple TV series, *Dickinson*, explore the romantic and sexual nature of the poet’s relationship with Susan Gilbert in particular. The correspondence between the two women—published in 1998 in the volume *Open Me Carefully*—is often cited as one of the core arguments to encourage the revisiting of the canonical, primarily heterosexist views and readings of the poet. Translation, of course, cannot be spared by this review. In this paper, I compare some of Dickinson’s poems as translated by Silvina Ocampo, José Manuel Arango, Alberto Blanco, Ana Mañeru Méndez, and María-Milagros Rivera Garretas to trace the homoerotic spirit of Dickinson’s work, in the hope of expanding the discussion of her queer identity to her Spanish-speaking readership. When translated, how does homosexual desire take form? How have the queer tonalities of Dickinson’s poetry been captured, erased, or shifted when rendered into Spanish?

Vogelius, Christa Holm, “Seeing New Englandly: Landscape and the Local”

Dickinson’s poems, especially her landscape poems, have often been read imagistically, or as translations of visual works such as the paintings of the Hudson River School, which her brother Austin collected. These landscapes are in line with our idea of Dickinson as a writer whose poetry proclaimed to “see” “New Englandly,” and whose natural vocabulary is carefully attuned to the flora and fauna of her home region.

In this paper, I will explore how Dickinson’s poetic proclamation to see “Provincially,” often through the landscape, directly opposes other consolidated national identities. Regional and national identity were fraught terms in 1850s and 60s America, and Dickinson’s regional allegiances must be seen in light of these tensions. Dickinson’s use of foreign national identities during this period, in such poems as “Our Lives our Swiss” and quasi-ekphrastics such as “The Trees like Tassels” and “How the Old Mountains Drip with Sunset,” benefits from being read in light of not only the American Civil War but contemporaneous European efforts to consolidate national boundaries. European countries—Italy, Switzerland, Holland—take on a weight of defined characteristics that Dickinson eludes in her own verse by locating her own voice within the concrete and regional rather than the imagined and national. In this sense, her writing directly defies calls for an American literature in work such as Higginson’s “Letter to a Young Contributor,” displacing the notion of national identity onto Europe. Landscape becomes a simultaneously provincial and universalized vehicle for this defiance.

Wang, Baihua, “Science and Sensibility: Dickinson’s Botanical Imagination and Sexual Politics”

Plants have sex and sex life. However, the vast majority of humans, including early botanists, have ignored or avoided this fact. To what extent are scientific models of plant sex influenced by humanity’s changing sexual politics and cultural norms? According to the orthodox Christian concept, plants reproduce without sex and therefore are the most innocent representatives among living creatures; for example, lilies have long been associated with the Virgin Mary. The situation has changed since the eighteenth century. Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) established a new, gendered botanical taxonomy mainly based on the “stamens” in flowers. Subsequently, Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) wrote his long poem “The Love of Plants” by borrowing metaphors and other rhetorical expressions used to describe human sex by European writers since ancient Greece. The rise of the theory of evolution and the recognition of plant sex life in the nineteenth century inspired new sensibilities and imaginations for poets. Drawing upon this scientific context, this article examines how popular botanical knowledge and discourses, together with her horticultural education and gardening practice in daily life, shaped Dickinson’s work. As a female poet who was also a lifelong gardener, how did Dickinson engage with this culture? What is the connection between her botanical imagination and the sexual politics in her time? This article argues that Dickinson cultivated images of androgynous power and self-reliant personality based on her botanical knowledge and her daily gardening practice. Her botanical poetry is a record of the development and the “growth” of a gardener-poet, who like the lily pass “Through the Dark Sod - as Education” and eventually blossomed “In Extasy” (F559 [1863]).

Werner, Marta L., “Intercepting Dickinson’s Master Documents: Experiments in Intimate Editing”

The archival document, as Arlette Farge asserts, is a tear in the fabric of time. Dickinson’s Master documents—the five texts in prose and verse in their embodied forms—tear the veil away from Dickinson’s writing life in the years between 1858 and 1861. What they reveal is astonishing: an exploration of love and writing more radical than we could ever have imagined by looking at the remediated versions of the works in their printed dress. These documents, neither “letters” in the usual sense nor a cerebral “language experiment,” offer a singular experiment in writing (to) the Other—not a particular other, though they may have initially arisen in response to an actual person in the world—but a beloved Other describable only in writing and perhaps only fully real in the time of composing. In my own practice, studying these documents began with learning them by heart and so affording them what the scholar George Steiner calls “an indwelling clarity” and agency within my own consciousness. It meant reconceiving the allegedly objective editorial enterprise as “love’s work”: a critical meditation and a devotional exercise, a form of radical attention in which I followed Dickinson, walking among her lines and strikethroughs and variants, making my hands the channels for her written syllables, tracking her not only word by word but also moment by moment in order to disclose the singular gait of her thought. This reading bears witness to the coordinates of an affective editorial process and to the fruits such a process may bring to fruition.

Wolosky, Shira, “Celan Translating Dickinson: At the Edge of Address”

There is a striking conjunction between Emily Dickinson, a nineteenth-century, reclusive, Protestant woman, and Paul Celan, a twentieth-century, German-speaking, Jewish writer of World War II. Dickinson is one of the very few English-language writers Celan translated, even before she emerged from her still relative obscurity after the Johnson edition of the *Complete Poems*. Still, the question remains: why would a twentieth-century German-speaking Jewish Holocaust poet translate a poet whose complete work in the 1950's was just becoming known? Celan's translations, as ruptured and riddling as his firmly post-modernist texts, demonstrate and respond to the strangeness of Dickinson's English-language writing. In both, the disturbances of language register a sense of mismatch between word orders and world orders, of challenge to traditional structures of understanding, and redefinitions of aesthetics as relationship to multiple dimensions of experience including history, religion, and identity, rather than as sequestered from them. Through the lens of Celan's renderings, aspects of Dickinson emerge with new power: here, the dialogical trajectory of her verse refracted as interrupted address.

Wolverton, Nan, “A Hint of Ports – and Peoples’: Dickinson’s Material World and Foreignhood”

When Emily Dickinson penned a brief note in 1859 to her sister-in-law, Susan Gilbert Dickinson, excusing herself from an invitation to an evening of amateur music at Susan's home, she ended the note in whimsical fashion, “Please reserve an Ottoman for my spirit...” She concluded a letter earlier that same year to her cousin Louisa Norcross by expressing, “I keep an ottoman in my heart exclusively for you.” These were not simply metaphorical references; the ottomans were pieces of furniture that Dickinson knew—both in her own home and in Susan's home next door at The Evergreens. Other examples of decorative arts and artworks in the homes pointed to the growing trend of “Orientalism” in fashionable decorating. Colorful framed prints of Turkish scenes titled “Arab Market,” “Arab Smoking a Pipe,” and “An Arab in Prayer” corresponded aesthetically at The Evergreens with Near Eastern lamps and Persian rugs in the family library. These objects were just a few of those in Emily Dickinson's material world that would help inform how she understood the foreign, especially the Islamic “Other.” When Susan Dickinson wrote to her daughter Martha in February 1885 that new wallpaper was going up in the home, she added, “It will be very rich and foreign.” This proposed paper will consider what that expression meant to Susan and, more significantly, what “foreignhood” meant to Emily in conjunction with the family's changing home décor. Evidence for understanding the foreign, broadly understood, by Dickinson will include rich evidence from the material world alongside her writings.

Xu, Cuihua, “Dickinson’s Celebrations of Being Alive in ‘I am alive – I guess –’”

Emily Dickinson's “I am alive – I guess –” (Fr605) appears to be a piece of expository writing that gives reasons to explain the speaker's state of being alive. Perhaps because Dickinson's attention to the issue of death is so rooted in her readers'

mind, this poem is hardly recognized as a celebration of the speaker's normal state of existence. This essay, by seeking the inner connection between the poem and her works as a whole and by viewing the poem as a reflection of her own life experience, intends to unravel Dickinson's confirmative celebration of her two folds of life. The paper does so by examining the writing style, the grammatical consistence between each stanza, the power of words, and the messages conveyed. These all lead to an understanding of Dickinson's notion of being alive as a person and as a poet. A close reading of the structure of the poem and the possible meaning of the words can help reveal that the poem, with seven four-line stanzas, is arranged with structurally logical consistence between the celebratory ending "How good – to be alive!" and each one of the three supportive reasons given respectively in every two stanzas.

Xu, Jing, "Dickinson's Depression and Buddhist Solution"

Emily Dickinson's poetry was closely related to her psychiatric health. Dickinson's poems and letters to her friends all suggest that she might have had a serious psychiatric illness: depression, panic disorder, or schizophrenia. Her mental imbalance is related to the crisis of her faith and to her one-sided romantic fantasies. She first tried to combat her psychiatric illness and religious crisis with romantic love fantasies, but it is Buddhism that inspired and helped her to attain tranquility, harmony and transcendence.

Buddhism spread to New England in the middle of the nineteenth century. Its mystic, romantic and oriental ideas inspired some American intellectuals then. Dickinson was one of them. She had been doubting Christianity for a long time and was later drawn to Buddhism. We can guess from certain evidence that Dickinson practiced Zen Buddhism in her daily life. Her 1775 poems showed that her Zen practice led to her Buddhist enlightenment to a certain degree. Her way of life, which was regarded as eccentric by her contemporaries, may be regarded as a Buddhist retreat for practice and enlightenment. Dickinson's religious belief was free, flexible and mysterious, not centered on God, but showing many Buddhist elements. And her poems written in the 1870s show Buddhist ideas about impermanence, nirvana, reincarnation and the cycle of life.

Zhang, Xiaoquan Raphael, "Sinicizing Di Jinsen: The Canonization of Dickinson and Her Poems in Post-1980s China"

This paper focuses on the introduction, translation, reception, and canonization of Dickinson and her poetry in contemporary China and the politics behind a visible Sinicization of Di Jinsen (Dickinson's name in Chinese) in this largest country in the world. I examine Dickinson and her works by comparing her with another great poet of the United States, Walt Whitman, who was also canonized in China before. The two poets' experiences and receptions in China are both comparable and contrastive. Special attention is given to the officially endorsed reception of Dickinson's selected poems among the younger generations. The process of this reception includes selecting, translating, rewriting, commenting, and interpreting a limited number of her poems in an official way appropriate in the context of China. Participants in this endorsing include but are not limited to publishers, translators, and educators. I argue that in addition to a role in liberal arts education, the manipulative canonization and

Sinicization of Dickinson may also help maintain the social order that the government desires to see and promote.