Discussion

Rebecca Spang: Now I will hand things over—as soon as she sits back down…[laughter]

Constance Furey: I'm just enacting my experience of trying to write these comments…

Spang: And I suppose we should have an empty chair in between Constance Furey and Jimmy Casas Klausen for Jean-Jacques?

Furey: So, I will reintroduce Jimmy and share with you all my experience of finding a way into this paper; and then finding a way to articulate my way into this paper; and finding ways that my articulation was totally inadequate to the riches of, then, not just the paper, of course, but of all the readings we have today. [See her comment, "Unqueer Rousseau."]

Jimmy Casas Klausen: Wow. [group laughter] I don't even know where to start with that. I do want to say that, yes, I am thinking of this very much in the Christian terms. But the notion of host as compensatory offering, you know, predates that… so there are some interesting questions there about how within the various strands of Christian theology, the notion of host actually gets taken out from, I think, questions in Roman law and Roman religion. But that is work that I haven't actually done much of yet. I have been meaning to consult Georges Dumézil and others who do that sort of work. But I'm struck, actually, by the sense that my version—my vision—of consent is actually traditional: that the queer version of consent is very traditional. That strikes me as right, in a way, but I think what I want to say is that it is a version of equality that kind of folds back in on itself—I'm not sure if that makes sense. But that…You sort of did pick up on these kinds of mathematical or, like set logic, ways of thinking in my paper, and I do think of… The traditional way of talking about consent as not being fully, um…Ok, so this is a problem that I get into discussions with friends about because I'm often accused of being a libertarian, and I think that that's not true at all. But traditional versions of consent—as one's rights over one's self—I think are anti-hospitality in a certain sense. But at the same time, the idea of Christian sacrifice as not being a question of right at all, and of both exceeding any kind of question of right, is a radicalizing of the notion of one's right to one's self, right? So I think in some sense there is implicitly a sense that in order to sacrifice yourself, you had to have had a right over yourself. So I think there is a line that I am trying to transgress and yet confirm there at the same time. And obviously I'm struggling for ways to talk about it. And I think of that as a question of hospitality: of giving yourself over to the other, but (at the same time) recognizing that that also—that the risk of that is often the risk of death. And that one's, you know… living of one's life without thinking about it as a question of the right to one's life is very difficult to think. So I take your point that there is kind of a very traditional vision in there, but when I say that I'm trying to fold it back in on itself, I want to think that the line of right is actually dissolved by the possibility of risking that right. I don't know if that makes sense.

Furey: Mary.

Mary Favret: Just want to follow up on that question that Connie raised at the end about emerging nationalist discourse. In this case, the Israelites—the men—are risking their lives by going to war. I'm curious, because that figure of the host is both the sacramental host but also the host of

an army. What if you were to say: "Well, in fact the men are giving themselves up, risking their lives for Israel, for this sort of communal understanding; that the men have had, and have had for quite a long time, a way of offering themselves up, giving their bodies up to death?" What's the difference between your image at the end and that kind of sacrifice that (especially in the eighteenth- going into the nineteenth centuries) is inscribed as very painful, but what any soldier would do for love of country.

Furey: Dave wanted to add on to that.

David Simpson: I actually wanted to make very much the same point. I have always found this a terrifying story and it's terror for me… it's about the terror of nation-state formation. And the unexplained thing, which Mary has just put her finger on, I think, is: why is it that one of the Twelve Tribes cannot be allowed to disappear? Why is that? Because there is no constituted nation-state from which they would be disappearing. If you were an anthropologist, you might say it's a gene pool…but it's something vaguer and murkier that's never explained in the story. Is it race? Is it language? Is it religion? It's some notion of an "Israel" that hasn't yet come into being; but will come into being as one of the functions of the story. Israel will have a king. And so the blood sacrifice, and the destruction—the total war scene—occurs on behalf of a state that hasn't yet come into being. But in the name of that state.

I find this deeply troubling, not only in terms of eighteenth-century politics, but in terms of contemporary politics. If Rousseau's narrative is indeed that perfect love (in good Protestant style) turns out to be boring, and the end of it is you have this bloodletting.. ALL at the expense of women. And you can talk about Axa's consent, but it isn't; if it's all punishment for what you (in a footnote) brilliantly describe as "antisocial amorous devotion," I find this deeply chilling, and not open to any kind of optimistic or non-violent future.

Furey: So your comment and Mary's were actually two instances…

Simpson: Yeah. We're making the same …

Klausen: I guess this is me trying to be a utopian or something. The promise of the queer as somehow sapping the energies of the nation-state is something that sort of arises here and there within queer theory, queer ethics, I guess… But I take your point that in some ways these sacrifices by the men are very much on behalf of a community that is coming into being, and maybe the sense is that precisely because it's not yet formed, the stakes are that much higher. That in part what's at stake in the Biblical story—so in Judges itself—but in Rousseau also, is that individuals need to learn to, or to teach each other, to aspire to that future nation. So that last scene is a teaching of Axa, a teaching of the father to have given up his daughter. He didn't intend that; he probably thought that it might be a collateral effect of his telling the 200 Benjaminites to kidnap daughters. There is something about that learning that goes on through the story that is about this: both a community and a form of self-sacrifice, military self-sacrifice, that are not yet formed and have to be... And so I guess what I'm trying to do is to say: could we have stopped before that moment? Is there a way to read into the story a different set of possibilities, where the self-sacrifices of men would not be for future nations but for each other? And of course the homosociality in nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century war, of course, becomes…

Simpson: Or more simply, what's the difference between twelve tribes and eleven? Why does it matter?

Klausen: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah… I don't recall why… There's a discussion in some of the secondary literature about whether, when the Levite divides up the body, it really is twelve parts, and whether that matters or not.

Furey: The body has to come back together. I mean, that figures in the story.

Klausen: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah… That's a good question. The easiest thing to say is that it would be about religion: they've made a covenant with God that they have to continue, to what future end they don't yet know. And so they can't let one of the tribes die. But that would be the easy answer, I think it's probably infinitely more complicated than that.

Furey: Oz.

Oscar Kenshur: Yeah, I want to raise a question that strikes me…. It's about a passage in the Rousseau text that you mention or refer to sort of in passing; I don't think you say very much about it. But it struck me as very interesting, especially in the context of discussions that we've had whether hospitality as an individual… The relationship between personal and communal hospitality. And I'm thinking of the fact that members of the racist mob have seen the Levite when he was sort of sitting out there, and they thought he was beautiful. But they didn't invite him home because they wanted to rape him, and they thought it would be a breach of hospitality to rape him if he was their guest at home. So there is this idea in Rousseau—and that idea is not in the Biblical text… There is this idea that there is a difference between personal and communal obligation, a difference between personal and communal hospitality. But nevertheless it seems the entire town is seen as being guilty of a breach of hospitality. So I guess what I'm asking you to do is simply, if you want to, to focus on that issue which you didn't focus on in your paper…

Klausen: Yeah.

Kenshur: Because it seems to me it has lots of implications for the overall discussion.

Klausen: Certainly, certainly, yeah. Rousseau seems to imply that personal hospitality comes with rites and is itself a rite in a religious or ritual sense. And yet at the same time there is this sense that the whole town has transgressed. I wonder whether there is a way that it's impersonality becomes… Or whether this is a way in which the Benjaminites are perceived as trying to play with the letter (versus the spirit) of the law. Precisely by not letting them in the house … implies that they sort of know what they should have been doing, but they refuse to take the next step: it doesn't matter that he's in someone's house or not, he's still owed this. But they are cleaving far too much to the letter of the law of hospitality, and that's a way for them to transgress it… or not to seem to have transgressed it.

Kenshur: Well the question is: does that reflect Rousseau's own explanation for what's going on? In a certain way, that explanation could be seen as being made independently of Rousseau's personal attitude.

Klausen: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah… I think he wants to think that it is a general obligation … I think Rebecca was sort of joking about this this morning, right? That really all of the citizens should have been competing with each other to take them in, right, and that that would have put everyone in a good light and not just the one who finally takes them in: him and his concubine, the servant, and the asses, right… And that would be similar to other scenes in Rousseau—the famous scene at the end of the *Letter to D'Alembert* of people dancing around the fountain—this sense that it should be a collective obligation, though someone does eventually have the privilege of being able to taking the guest in. That is what he really thinks should have happened, and instead you have the opposite, the opposite for very nefarious purposes, the opposite of a competition: a sharing of the gang-raping of them, a gang rape, right? Yeah…

Furey: Rebecca.

Spang: David? Does David have a little one?

Simpson: No, it's sort of a little bit further along.

Furey: Rebecca, then Erin, then…

Spang: I have many, many comments, I will try and be concise. I'm thinking about the question of the war for an Israel that doesn't yet exist. In the Rousseau text, it is set up as an army of Israel against the Benjaminites, and so in that sense it is a civil war, right? So this is a civil war even within a polity that doesn't have a king; it is the imagining of a nation that exists before a state that threatens to tear itself a part. And it is constituted by twelve tribes who are the descendants of twelve brothers, so we're back again to the link between fraternity and the nation as being categories both constituted by blood. So that is one set of themes and thoughts.

Another line in Jimmy's paper that I thought was tremendous, on page 125 of the reader: "Given how devoted he has been to her, the Levite had only intended to extend usufruct of the concubine's body to the townspeople." So the question about can you sacrifice yourself if you don't have property in yourself: clearly this is all structured around the idea that women never have property in themselves, because they're somebody else's property. It, you know, seems like you should have some sort of contract: that they needed the letter of the law there. That was really gripping to me.

A passage—sorry, I told you I have very scattered comments here—in the Rousseau text, *The Levite of Ephraim*, which struck me as bringing us back to David Clark's point about limits and is this just about the human… Does this creep anybody else out the way it does me? Sorry, we're on page 140 to 141 in the reader: "Sometimes the Levite in the foliage of the olive trees set deceptive traps for birds and carried to her a fearful turtledove which she kissed while stroking it. Then closing it up in her bosom, she shivered with joy feeling it struggle and beat." Yeah, ok, whatever. [laughter]

Furey: That's Rousseau's pastoral? [laughter]

Spang: Yeah, Rousseau's pastoral… I mean, it's not exactly the death of the turtledove, but the turtledove doesn't want to be there.[laughter]

Furey: I want someone to tweet that line: "The turtledove doesn't want to be there". [laughter]

Spang: And then finally, in *The Confessions*, I wanted to call attention to the difference between being hospitable to a text and hospitable to an author. Because Rousseau is thinking, "It's okay. The Parlement will go after the book, but I'm okay." And he's then astonished to discover that, no, they're actually going to go after him. And so it seems to me those are two different kinds of hospitality to think about. All right, sorry…

Klausen: No, that's all great, and I guess I want to look at the last one first. This is, I think, where there may be further evidence for how I answered Oz's question. What I think Rousseau wanted was to have written the kind of text that may have caused some grumbling, but where people would be competing with each other to protect him. I think you get a sense of that in *The Confessions*' passage. You get a sense of that mainly by his surprise and disappointment. He doesn't say outright, "These people should have been protecting me." He is surprised when somebody who once was chilly to him—I forget which of the figures, but someone who once was chilly to him—suddenly shows some emotion, whereas others go in the opposite direction. I think he really wants there to have been a competition to protect him, to take him in, to give him safe haven a safe house.

As for the hospitality toward the book, *Émile*… This is where the self-delusional Rousseau is just so difficult to deal with sometimes…[laughter]... because surely he knew that he was stepping on toes. I guess he thought that he was stepping on toes personally, right, because he mentions in the passage about the gardener and the treatment of a gardener in *Émile*, he thought somebody might read that he was thinking of them… He personalizes what I think should have been a sense that he was actually writing something that… Even if specific intellectuals at the time might think this was an important… But they don't want to sign their names to the letter… He really should have been aware that this was going to have a different kind of effect: not a personal one, but an impersonal, rule-of-law, effect. So this is, again, Rousseau just being the kind of crazy that we all love to read about and would not want to know. [laughter]

But you know, I actually hadn't even paid much attention to the turtledove passage…

Furey: Me too. I completely agree with you.

Klausen: Yeah.

Furey: It's striking, especially given that it's totally… got so much investment in this particular framing of it.

Klausen: Yeah.

Furey: And why put that detail in there?

Klausen: Yeah, yeah… And entrapment is… I was saying to Constance yesterday that Rousseau's identification within the text… I mean, it shifts all the time. I had not thought that he might actually, to some extent, want to identify with the turtledove, as well as all the others. I think he identifies for part of the text with the wife herself, and then sometimes with the Levite,

and then sometimes with the father at the end, and then also with Axa herself. This is an interesting moment where possibly he's seeing himself as the object of a trap. Because when you read this alongside the *Confessions* passages, you get the sense, more and more, that he thinks he might have been trapped; that he's not sure who he should have been trusting. But, again, that's all sort of delusional.

Furey: But also he's sort of foreshadowing… I mean, if the Levite's perfect lover—that initial thing—is actually boringly wonderful; and yet there is this drama, even in that moment, that he's foreshadowing.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah, absolutely… As for fraternity, this is where, again, the queer promise that I was trying to think about towards the end… About a fraternity that's not about a fraternity of war or blood, but of affiliation, which, I think, is different from filiation, right; and fraternization, which is different from fraternity. The idea that these men could have been hosting each other in each other's bodies, rather than fighting each other… you know, is again me being utopian. But I'm trying… What I think I want to do in the set of essays that this is related to is to queer the host-guest relation, the friend-enemy distinction, but then also the question of fraternity as well. I think I mention in the footnote that this is conceptually related to a piece that I have written that will come out (at some point in the future) in the journal *Political Theory*, where I do a reading—a second text that I've written on Diderot's *Supplément* about the exchange of women.[1] Because that text is also about sexual hospitality in a very clear way, but not in as brutal a way as this. The brutality is there as well, but it's not… you know, Diderot is not luridly representing it, in the way that Rousseau is doing.

And I still need to think through the imagining of the future Israel and what it means to fight for that. Because I think that my answer to David wasn't fully adequate, and I want to think through that more, certainly.

Furey: Robby had a short comment.

Robert Schneider: Just following up Rebecca's wonderful point about the fraternity of real brothers... But going back to the story where they sort of emerge, it was fratricidal to begin with: with the sort of false murder of Joseph and selling him into bondage. From the bond which connected them at the very start of their lives together, it was fractious. And I think that just reminds us of the specter of civil war within a polity or within an assortment of units (tribes, whatever you want to call them), is something that is throughout this story. It seems to me one of the ways in which he's—maybe it's very simplistic and too obvious—but the specter of civil war, of course, is very real, not only in Roman history, but in French and contemporary history. And political thought in this period—think of Hobbes and many others—is so much bound up with 'how do we avoid civil war and what is the locus of authority?' For Rousseau, of course, the monarchy is not that, but something that is a general will which supersedes the self—or the selfish self—as well as any other sorts of divisions.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah… I think this actually brings up an important point: the interest in Schmitt and Agamben recently, not only in political theory but also in literary studies. One of the things Schmitt says… And I think this was brought up earlier and it's related to Derrida's reading of

[1] "Empire and Compulsory Heterosexuality in Diderot's *Supplement to the Voyage of Bougainville*."

hospitality as for a certain kind of stranger (not the absolute stranger), right. The opposite side of that is: the enemy within civil war versus the completely outside enemy, and Schmitt makes the distinction between *hostus* and *animicus*. What I think is on the edges of both the biblical text and Rousseau's text is, you know: the Levites sense that he does not want to stay with people who are not of the Tribe of Israel, right? His servant says, "Well we could can stay right here, it's really close; we're right here." And he says, "No, I don't want to stay with strangers." It's actually… There's a question of which kind of hospitality. He thinks he won't get hospitality with strangers, but then he ends up finding hostility; he finds the *hostus* instead, which is an intimate form of enemy. But what is the unthought of the text, or what is maybe implied, is the question of whether those people—I forget which town it was, where they could have stayed—whether they would have been actual *animicus*, or whether they would have truly been giving the most absolute kind of hospitality precisely because they had no links and bias. So I think there's a set of very complicated questions about near and far and how that maps onto different kinds of enemies, and how that maps onto different kinds of filiations or affiliations. So, yeah, I'm not sure what to do with that, but I should say something about civil war versus a very different kind of war between peoples who are strangers.

Furey: Right, and familiarity as a premise of a certain… In Rousseau, that's a great line, right: "God forbids that I lodge among an infidel people and that a Canaanite give shelter to the Lord's minister." And then chooses the place that is most dangerous. Erin, sorry…

Erin Myers: I was struck by the same thread of sentimentality or lack thereof that Robert and Rebecca were and I think it goes back much further, actually, and that there are really interesting resonances. So, Joseph, accepting his brothers in Egypt, providing hospitality, and then turning around and accusing Benjamin of stealing his golden cup (or silver cup, whichever it was) falsely, because he planted it in his sack, is sort of an interesting case of this trouble that goes back even further than Benjamin's own birth in transit (and Rachel dies as a result and is buried under a tree somewhere while they're travelling). And in fact, Rachel's stealing of her father's household gods—Laban's household gods—also, almost, in some way, has a resonance with the initial sin of stealing something [inaudible]. I'm just wondering what you could do with that…

Klausen: I don't actually know about that, or maybe I just haven't remembered the story of the accusation; so maybe that would be something interesting to include. But the thing that does come up in the scholarly literature is precisely that Benjamin is born under the sign of unhappiness, woe, and trouble, and that is transmitted to the descendants themselves. So tracing it back would actually be quite interesting… And to Egypt, where they are strangers, and they have to be hosted by themselves—or by, as you said, Joseph hosting the brothers… This could be quite a large project! [laughter]

Furey: Rebecca had a short comment and then David.

Spang: It's a very large project that would also do more with the *Confessions*, which is of course also the story of a fall: you know, thrown out of the Garden of Eden (which was how nice Jean-Jacques' life was with his father, crying about his mother). And then I think it's at the end of Book One of the *Confessions*: the wrongful accusation about theft? So that would fit with this script.

Kenshur: Oh, yes.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah, that's right. I think I cite a work by Simons written in French that does make the connection: Rousseau, being born, having caused the death of his mother; and Benjamin causing the death of his mother. It seems like the implication of this chapter is Rousseau's difficulty with—difficult relationship with—homosexuality and the Benjaminites; that there's something complicated there, a semi-psychoanalytic reading. It's a very rich chapter to read, but I didn't want to go to the birth of the mother. [laughter]

Simpson: Well an extremist response, then, prompted by Rebecca's mention of fraternity, which rings all kinds of bells for me (and I realize I'm sounding a bit like Hannah Arendt with Saint-Just in mind): absolute fraternity is the end of civil war, but the maintenance of absolute fraternity is only by means of terror. And I think that's a narrative in this story too, because absolute fraternity is also the end of any need for hospitality. What you ultimately show is that hospitality in every instance in the story goes wrong: the bride's dissatisfaction being in her husband's country, that form of hospitality—that goes wrong; the husband stays too long in the house of the father and consequently starts late—that goes wrong; and what happens with the Levite in the house, we know all about. So, in some ways, the future that fraternity holds out is not perfect hospitality, but the end of any need for hospitality, because it's the end of difference; and the end of difference is terrifying.

I'm reminded just suddenly, out of nowhere, of a comment that I heard Jacques Rancière make negatively about Derrida; he said, "Derrida cannot stand fraternity." He meant it as an insult, and I'm now beginning to see why it might be read quite differently.

Klausen: Yeah, that's interesting. And I think this is actually related to your question about the future nation because, in some sense, this is the chilling part where terror and fraternity as hospitality—or as the end of hospitality—come together, because in some sense civil war is about terrorizing the future nation into not needing to be anything but brothers who therefore will never need to ask for hospitality, right. It's about purging, the purging of difference; in my view that's a purging of difference in favor of a kind of consensual heterosexuality that is based on a kind of complementarity.

Simpson: Well except that the job of women is to produce children for the state.

Klausen: Yes, yeah, yes. And one of the things we might remember from *Émile*, which is of course the text that causes him, in some sense, to write *The Levite*… I think it's toward the beginning of *Émile*, that Rousseau speaks of the Spartan mother who is not interested in hearing whether her sons died…

Simpson: … But about whether they won.

Klausen: … Whether they won, yeah.

Furey: So this is the moment to say, if you have been scared off by the length of the queue, you have the opportunity to get into it now because we are, in fact, actually at a break. Yeah, Oz…

Kenshur: Well I just wanted to revive—when Rebecca went down a list of things that were interesting, you answered or addressed most of the things she raised. But the one I think you didn't address has to do with the fact that the Levite was upset that a temporary arrangement—a finite amount of raping—turned into something permanent. And that seems to me to require some… or let's say, that it could elicit some commentary, and I was just wondering what you want to say about that. Because it was one of the things you were alluding to…

Spang: Yeah, yeah.

Kenshur: … And it's just fascinating.

Spang: And that does relate to the point somebody else made about relations of hospitality being finite in time.

Kenshur: Right.

Spang: So he thought he was just being a good host? No, but…

Kenshur: Well he was acting under constraint.

Spang: Right, right.

Kenshur: It was a response to constraint, but somehow he seemed to think there was a deal being made of some sort, right? Even though it was constrained. That's a very interesting aspect of it.

Klausen: Yeah, I think this is something that we've been sort of been grappling with, right: to what extent hospitality relations depend on codification, contract, explicit rules, formalization, right? So I think you're right that there is an implicit understanding that he will get her back in the morning, right; and that she'll be alive, and he'll continue to do as he will with her (giving her frightened turtledoves, etc.). This is where I think the vision of consent that I'm trying to think through is, in some sense, anti-traditional in that it depends on a non-formalization; and yet, at the same time, recognizes that formalization is something that can be a final recourse, or that we can think of as a final recourse, when the risk becomes death, right. But had he had a formal understanding with them and she still died, then where would he be left anyway? So, for me, it's the question of death that I want to…

Actually, I sort of mentioned that I wanted to include this discussion of Aristotle in here because in his discussion in the *Politics* of the master-slave relation, he says something that is very chilling, but also very fascinating. He says that it's in the master's interest never to abuse the slave to death. Because it's an extension of his own body, and that the very relation master-slave depends on the slave not dying. In other words, the slave can be taken advantage of right up to the point… right? So I'm sort of interested in trying to think of how friend-enemy, ghost, guest-host, and self-sacrifice can be thought of right to that point of death …without there having to be a formal recognition of right in some kind of liberal, contractual sense. I'm not sure that that can ever really be articulated, and I think that maybe one understanding of hospitality is precisely

that it shouldn't be articulated. But at the same time, you know, guests shouldn't be murdered, or gang-raped to the point of death.

Furey: Or, at all.

Klausen: Yeah, so how do you articulate that: that getting over of one's self, that willingness to be available for the other—however physically or sentimentally—for the other, but that the risk of death is still the threshold that can't be passed. I'm not sure we can do that with a language that is either formal or informal, codified or not codified; I think it is precisely on that limit between the two that it is difficult to articulate it.

Furey: Now we have Richard…

Richard Nash: It is an understatement to say that this is a tale of excess. But I'm thinking about this particular question and what you didn't mention there…It seems to me there's something about the expectation 'gang rape, but not gang rape to the point of death' [laughter] *–that's* carrying things a little too far. Which seems in some ways to be related to or connected to that when he goes to recover the concubine, there is a guest-host relationship that is supposed to last (I think it's originally) three days, and that expectation of hospitality keeps extending. That's the other moment that seems to be the companion moment where he has underestimated the obligations entailed in the transaction. I don't know how to connect those, but as I was listening to Oz's question, I was thinking there seems to be a relation between the two: a kind of symmetry of some weird, unspeakable nature.

Klausen: Yeah. I think it's important that you can talk about the excess. Originally it's a gentlemen's agreement: "You're my father-in-law; yes, I respect you, I'll stay three days (even though I want to leave because she's mine)." Then it's seduction/persuasion by her via the father, and then it's force: the language of force, forcing him to sit to breakfast. The contract and consent are constantly being eroded and exceeded by persuasion, seduction, and finally force. So I think that's the relationship between the two. What is an unspoken gentlemen's agreement (when he pushes her out the threshold) is that he will get her back in the morning: you don't really have seduction or persuasion there, but you have force all night. What ultimately overwhelms the possibility of a gentlemen's agreement there (that functions as an implicit contract) is this notion of force. So I think you're right to connect them, and I think there's more to be said about that.

Schneider: This is going to seem hopelessly banal, but, you know, we talk about gentlemen's agreement: insofar as the thought and metaphor or mirror of civil war is here… Just to remind us that (and again I think of the French Wars of Religion) truces or separation of forces were adjudicated *ad hoc* for treaties and the treaties had to do with terms. Now, it wasn't the exchange of hostages or women, but it was places where people could be secure, fortresses that could be maintained—and they were violated, which is why the civil wars continued—but they were drawn up. So this idea of sort of the separation of forces or exchange as being not legal from the outset, but adjudicated and signed—and then of course could be violated—I think that's really something that's somewhere in the background here.

Klausen: Thank you, yeah. I'm not sure what to say about that yet, but I will write it down!

Furey: Thoughts? Yes, Erin…

Myers: I'm wondering how to triangulate to *The Discourse on Inequality*, actually. In which before there's private property, there's first fear of the giant—who turns out to be your equal, your same species. And then cooperation in the form of the hunt—men working together to trap or to kill food. Self-interest, in the man who sees a rabbit passing and grabs it—he doesn't care whether anybody else eats, he has his. And, finally, after that comes conjugal love and the domestic hearth. So there's kind of a sequence that seems important also in this story.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah. I think that in the *Second Discourse*, I would connect the rendering of relations here to what is sometimes called "the Golden Age" or "the Golden Ethic" in Rousseau precisely because the patriarchal units in that phase remain independent, and yet still social. So they guard their independence, yet they are still social with each other, and they adjudicate relations between themselves through the terror of vengeance, as he puts it. So this is *ad hoc* also, right? If you feel slighted by someone's way of viewing you, then you punish it yourself with your family. So that would be precisely… So, you know, I say (I think in a footnote only) that I think that Rousseau's interest (or maybe I put it in parentheses)… I think that Rousseau's political interest in Judges 19-21 is that recurring phrase that Constance mentions: this is before there were kings in Israel and everyone was his own judge. And I think there's a similarity there between sociality and independence and the avenging of one's wrongs—you know, personal avenging of wrongs—rather than some kind of constituted political power. So, you know, I think he's interested in it because it could be an example of the "Golden Age": this vision of a society where people are still independent and you don't have the dependence. But you don't, on the other hand, have interdependence (which is, I think, the vision of *The Social Contract*). So that "social" means, for him, a time when there is no constituted authority and you punish others yourself, personally.

Furey: And you think that is what he's endorsing? That's why of course I'm sort of obsessed with that question of what he thought he should be praised for by rewriting this story. I get that you say hostility, he's exposing the hostility. But what is he endorsing?

Klausen: Yeah.

Furey: Is he endorsing vengeance?

Klausen: No, I don't think… Well, I think he's endorsing a guarded vengeance. The language suggests that some forms… I mean, sometimes they go too far, but sometimes it's not bad, right? You shouldn't be like the people of Jabesh-gilead who are, you know, didn't do anything and seemed to condone what had happened because they were too weak to have a vision of vengeance and punishment. But on the other hand, you don't want to go too far with the vengeance. The language in the text seems to suggest that there's… That he's recognizing there's an excess. But he's not opposed to taking vengeance in your own hands when there isn't a law to speak of.

Furey: Right, but then you and Rousseau really go in very different directions. Your conclusion goes in one, and then really you are… In Rousseau's way of thinking through hostility, the hospitality really drops out.

Klausen: Yeah.
Furey: Or hospitality, then—as you're concluding it, or putting it together, here—then sacred hospitality meets static hospitality. It's a vision of what it's supposed to be, and he's only interested in the violation of it and how those without a king to guide them might respond to the violation…

Klausen: Yeah.

Furey: … and ways that it might be guarded or tempered or not. Or: excessive. Or, all those things.

Klausen: Yeah.

Furey: And so he's not actually interested in hospitality.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah.

Furey: So, in other words, he's not interested in the tension between hospitality and hostility. He's just interested in hospitality as the event for the possibility of hostility.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That makes sense. Yeah, yeah. He thinks it's an important virtue, but he's not interested in articulating why it should be a virtue, what the practice of the virtue looks like. It comes out mainly as transgression of the virtue. In some sense, that's a completely patriarchal mentality on Rousseau's part, right? Because what is a father interested in (maybe this is being too psychoanalytic)… The father is interested in punishing transgressions of the law, not interested in the law itself. So Rousseau is taking on the punitive father role here…

Furey: Right.

Klausen: … even as he thinks that it's possible to move beyond it.

Furey: I think, Mary, you said yesterday (I have it written at least in my notes under your talk) that "hospitality is the sign that something traumatic has happened here." It came up in that… I don't know if you said it? or if it came up during that time… [to Klausen] But that's how you're figuring it too.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah.

Furey: We've really let hospitality go. Yeah, Mary…

Favret: On this point, I have a question, and I'm going to ask it of you, Jimmy, but it's sort of a general question. And it has to do with the status of "this was a time when there was no king in

Israel"—that political status and its relation to hospitality. Yesterday in Ana's paper there was a brief discussion of Derrida's discussion of hospitality, where he talks about a Platonic dialogue, and there she paraphrases it—and I didn't go back and check the Derrida—but the notion was that self-sovereignty… In order to be able to be hospitable, you have to have a certain kind of self-possession, and that that self-possession is dependent on the sovereign state. And I wonder if—and I think David was saying this—there can't be any good hospitality in Israel because there is no sovereign state. I mean, we keep getting failed moments of hospitality in this story. Maybe it's not about hospitality: they are not in a situation that is supportive of—not hospitable to—hospitality. I just noticed (fortunately) that Walter Scott, when he's writing in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, it's a moment—The Act of Union—where it's not really clear who's going to be king, monarch; and he quotes that line too, he says, "this was a time when there was no king in Israel," speaking about England and Scotland. And that book is all about…

Scott Juengel: Hospitality.

Favret: ... *bad* hospitality, and the impossibility of proper hospitality, in some sense. But I wonder about that: that hospitality depends upon a certain political order which is not available. We assume there is some kind of ancient hospitality, but in fact it isn't operative yet; it can't be operative yet.

Furey: Richard, do you want to get in on that?

Nash: Just as a hook on that… I would add, remembering Dana's paper [on Jacobite hospitality], the issue is competing forces voicing that there is no king in England, right…

Favret: Right, right.

Nash: … that the king *in* England is not…

Favret: Right, right. Well: exactly. But then I wonder how Rousseau reads all of this…

Furey: Yeah, whether Rousseau would be doing it… I understood David to be saying, with the Arendtian point… But what would that state look like, where there *could* be hospitality? And that would be a state of terror, you said, or absolute…

Simpson: The absolute state would preclude the need for hospitality. That's my position.

Furey: Right. The way you were mapping it, there's no place for hospitality; there's the lack of the appropriate context itself.

Schneider: What I think Mary… At the beginning of your comment, when you refer to Derrida's sense of the self, that would be a state that could ensure the right of the self: not just a terrorist state, but a more liberal state could secure the right of one's selfhood. So that one would be secure to be hospitable, that's the ultimate logic of the political order…

Favret: You know, I would like to go look at the Derrida, because that doesn't sounds like a Derridean notion on the face of it…

Schneider: No.[laughter]

Furey: That's where I think also it's interesting to think about your conclusion in terms of—and I'm sure you have, I'm interested to hear more of your thoughts on this—political theology, right. Because on the one hand, it's the liberal state: this certain notion of equality. But as you say, it's a radicalization of that notion of equality and of sacrifice, and so in a way that brings back an innately religious understanding of the thing. But of course that's always the danger of that sort of political theology: it brings up the specter of nothing like a kind of liberal state, but an absolute state, in some sense.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah. Because my first impulse is to say that, in Judges 19-21, God is the guarantor, God is the sovereign. God is the guarantor, and in some sense, the punishment of hostility and the abuse of the Levite becomes—or the abuse of the Levite by way of his wife—is punished by God through the other tribes. So, yes, they're actors, but they're also just instruments in that sense. But this is related to the question of what would it look like to have a form of hospitality where… So this is where, I guess, I'm sort of picking up on Derrida's negative theology, right; so what would it be like to have a form of hospitality where you can't assume that there is—you can't attribute—a God (or characteristics of a god) to be the one to guarantee the hospitality between you and the Other. And, moreover, the Other might be God. So going back to the ancient notion—going back to the Genesis story, going back to (and I put it in a footnote) the circum-Mediterranean ideas that, in Homer for example, in the *Odyssey*—"Are you a human or a god?" that is always the first thing asked when someone shows up on the shore. [laughter] … At least in Homer. Probably, you know, they didn't really ask that. [laughter]

So I wanted to connect to that negative theology of the inability to know the status of the Other. And for that reason, I guess, this is where you have to give yourself over, because you don't know. That's the kind of Derridean point I'm picking up on and really pushing hard in a particular direction. I think it really does, in fact, collapse and overrun the categories of individual right or rights, or this kind of liberal idea of contract and consent. Because it is… The self-sacrificial vision, I guess, is, I think, bound up with that political-theological—negative political theological…

Furey: Right… It's a small one, and then David… But you don't have to go as far as negative theology. This is why I think the scenes of sacrifice are important: God isn't just a guarantor, God has to be engaged through sacrifice in order to get the message of what it is that's going to happen. I think that's really crucial: the staging of the interaction is the kind of catalyst for God's action and presence. And if sacrifice is the model for hospitality: it's always a giving over, but it's exactly, as people have mentioned several times, relationally enacted… Negative theology would lead one to leapfrog over those dynamics: the dynamics of the actual going through the offerings, and weeping, that kind of stuff…

Klausen: Yeah, yeah, no, you're right.

David Clark: Thank you. I was just going to respond to Mary's query about what actually is happening in Derrida's *Seminars*, and having taught them so many times… The scene that we were thinking of yesterday, that was evoked so nicely for us yesterday, is one thing. Later in the *Seminars*, Derrida, of course, returns to the question of the nation state and what it is to be "sans papiers" and those sorts of questions. But earlier in the *Seminars*, where we have the example of the stranger who approaches the philosophers (who were talking) and says, "I'm worried I'm going to commit a kind of parricide here; I'm going to kill a kind of father or ruler."[2] But what Derrida fastens on is that it's not so much the city or *polis* under threat there, but it's thinking itself that is threatened. That is the inhospitality that Derrida circles around in the early part of the *Seminars*. Because the stranger says, "I have an idea here that I'd like to float with you, but it's a killer. And that is: can something be and not be at the same time?" So the most inhospitable thought possible to a certain notion of philosophy, or a certain notion of thinking: that something could be and not be. In other words, to be a specter—you know, that thing Derrida will call a specter. That is the threat. The question is whether or not the discussants are willing to let that into the seminar room, or not.

Klausen: Rousseau would love to identify with *that* stranger; to be the one who… Yeah.

Furey: Richard?

Nash: This is a question that's not really an eighteenth-century question, it's a Twitter question. But I've been trying to keep it back throughout this discussion, and it just keeps coming up more and more for me. So I'm wondering how this helps us think about "#BringBackOurGirls" and what "our girls" means there. Within this particular… This strikes me as very much this anecdote, right? So I'll just drop that out there and say, "do you have anything to offer [inaudible]?" [laughter]

Klausen: So I dare not tread too far into this discussion. But I will say that at least in the contemporary—in the way that it's cast now—this is a question of barbarism, right? Rousseau is very happy to inhabit the barbaric Israel, but we (whoever "we" are who are hashtagging that) we think of the kidnapping of women and all of the horrible things that could happen to them as something that we are now beyond and that should not happen in the kind of world that we live in. And it has to do, I think, with… It's funny how it's a kidnapped schoolgirl who becomes the figure of someone who has rights, and someone who should be protected, and around whom security and war can be mobilized. I see this as a continuation of a kind of patriarchal hostility within a liberal, civilizationalist model. Because this is about saying certain kinds of Islamic sexualities might be a bad thing, or African sexualities might be a bad thing, and we have to protect…

Nash: As opposed to the group that is specifically saying, "Western education for women is a bad thing, so we will name ourselves 'No Western Education for Women'".

Klausen: Yeah.

[2] "Foreigner Question: Coming from Abroad/From the Foreigner" fourth seminar (10 January 1996) in Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

Nash: Which strikes me as… There is a way to read this as what's going on now… I find myself reading this tale and thinking, "To what extent is Boko Haram enacting 'Bring back our girls?'" That is, that their action is quite literally what we are now fighting back on Twitter by saying "Bring back OUR girls"… Who's girls are they? And it's the same sort of tension that is running throughout this tale.

Klausen: They're *ours*, but they should have their own rights; they should have access to their own future; they should be able to be self-actualized agents, and *you* are preventing that. But they're *ours*, right? So it's very complicated because there's an ownership question, and yet it's a proxy ownership. Question: they're ours, but they should also be self-owners. The rhetoric around it is very interesting and complicated.

Nash: What prompted me to ask that was precisely when you said (in response to Mary) that here in the Bible, the authority is God…That's precisely the authority that's being invoked in the act of kidnapping.

Klausen: Yeah, that's true.

Furey: Unless anyone else wants to get in, we'll let Oz…

Kenshur: No, actually, I'm going to pass.

Furey: Oh, okay. Scott and Fritz…

Juengel: Should I go ahead? I've been loathe to raise my hand because I'm not sure if this is going to make any sense. But I've been thinking about this in relationship to—and this is a really bad Rousseau pun—a history of the dangerous supplicant. [laughter]

So if you go back to Exodus and Numbers, the whole notion of alter-asylum is about accepting the wretched and the wanderer all the way up to and including the manslaughterer, but you can't accept the assassin. That makes this kind of weird, lurid, conceptual boundary out of intention itself: how would you know the difference when somebody comes to your door? So there's that. And then there's (and Johannes mentioned this yesterday) there is Kant on the supposed right to lie, where he says if an assassin comes to your door and asks if the person is a guest of yours, you can't lie to the assassin because that would undermine the whole infrastructure of ethics itself. And then here you have this dangerous supplicant who comes, and there's actually a question about lying at one point that comes up (I think) in a footnote.

So I'm sort of wondering: what happens to hospitality when the person who comes to the threshold is antithetical to sociality as such? Because it seems like that comes up periodically and this just seems like another (although different) iteration of that same kind of question. And I don't know if that's something you've thought a little bit about, or... But that just strikes me. I feel like we keep finding new limits for what hospitality can do; this seems like one of the most terrifying in many ways.

Klausen: Yeah, I mean, it's a paradox… Are you thinking about… when you're asking that question... Because there's a short Levinas piece about asylum and he discusses this a little bit. I

don't remember the title of it: it was a short piece about the manslaughterer versus assassins, I think…

Juengel: Oh, no, I don't know that actually.

Klausen: I don't know what it's called now… So yes, the question of asylum is certainly a hospitality question and has to do with, to some extent, either the rule of law in one place versus another, or with codes that have been breached in some ways. But the beautiful thing about asylum as hospitality, and just with hospitality in general, is that it's a form of hospitality that can take in the antisocial. Before you have networks of laws all over the world and passports, right, you do have to take things on faith and risk the possibility that the stranger is an assassin rather than a manslaughterer, or might harm you in a series of other ways.

So I think, for me, that's the sort of utopian moment: the beauty of the risk of hospitality is that it's a form of sociality that risks the antisocial, and that can be undone. And that is the greatest self-sacrifice, perhaps, to risk undoing your own form of sociality by taking in the unknown, in the worst sense.

Clark: Thank you. Just a tiny point though. I think it might be useful to be a little more fine-grained here and to maintain provisionally a difference between the antisocial and the asocial. It strikes me that the other who arrives who is antisocial is one kind of cat, but the asocial isn't necessarily one hostile to civility, but indifferent to it. And the only reason why I'm thinking about that—if that can be held apart for a moment—is because of the queer utopianism with which you finish your own essay. Because there is really great work out there right now on queer forms of asociality that are received as antisocial but are affirmed as asocial.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah.

Clark: It strikes me that there is an important distinction there.

Klausen: Yeah, yeah.

Furey: Let me let Fritz in and then Johannes and we can have final remarks.

Fritz Breithaupt: I can actually be extremely short now because that was the discussion I also wanted to engage in… maybe from a different angle. There is one small thing that we haven't really brought out much yet, which is a completely different dimension of the text: altruistic punishment. How do these people, I mean… What is another very interesting lesson of the text independent from all of the sexual exchanges and passions here is a very basic sense of a justified case of punishment where everyone has to come together. The whole logic, then, of the action of the Israelites is they come together and they know they have a just case, and they follow the logic of altruistic punishment to the letter, in the sense that they also punish the freeloaders, the ones who don't join into the punishment. This is the classic case of altruistic punishment where you don't have any self-gain from punishing—that brings the people together here. That is a different story from what you tell, but I would like to say that, after all, this is the classic text of justification of altruistic punishment that has been used in the twentieth century in political theory. In that sense, I just want to throw that out because we have ultimately not engaged with that.

Furey: And Johannes?

Türk: Yeah. I think that has a lot to do with the coming into being of a type of universal law. Because Kant tries to even split the subject and say, "Look, in a way, the transcendental, as a free being, man has to agree to his own punishment, because, in a way, as human he is part of the order of a universal law. So he even agrees to his own body being subjected to punishment." So in many ways, then, the text is a text about what it actually means to cross the threshold to something like a universal law. It implies a certain sacrifice, actually. And in a way there are also disorganized forms of sacrifice that actually are not part of crossing the threshold, and others that are. So in a strange way, the articulation or disarticulation of the threshold of the universalization is, in many ways, at stake.

But my real short remark was more directly related…[laughter]… to something like the disappearance of marginal spaces. It seems to me that in the order of privilege—so in the space of royal sovereignty—there is a way that the sovereign includes or excludes marginal zones. And that has to do with immunity: so with asylum, for example, with the fact that royal agents cannot enter church territory if it has been declared "immune." So there is a way in which it is actually more permissive of marginality and has more space for exclusion than actually the universal order that the modern state and universal human laws create. Then in a very paradoxical way, in what Foucault also talks about as the disappearance of the marginal—of those spaces for robbers, these a- or non-legal existences that are not necessarily antilegal—that that happens in the eighteenth century. In a strange way, today, in a new form, a total inclusion and the space for marginality is at stake. So you could attempt to recast a lot of the contemporary conflicts by saying that certain types of marginality existing in non-Western parts of the world are actually disappearing. So you could try to interpret, say, a history of terrorism, a history of a lot of these political conflicts, as actually the absence of this possibility to exist in different ways. And then they would take on a different color, right, not just the color that they have currently.

Klausen: Well thank you for all of these comments. I would just say quickly, Rousseau would be very happy… Well I'm not sure he would use the word "universal"… But *The Levite* traces a move of the depersonalization of authority: it is patriarchal at first but, at the end, its authority is for the people, for the nation, of Israel. It's no longer connected … it really is the coming into being of a nation form, but part of that coming into being is the depersonalization of authority. So it's not universalization that comes into being through the altruistic punishment: it has to be the punishment of and by patriarchs, who then—over the course of the war and in order to repair the war, depersonalize their own authority—because then they've moved on to a different kind of understanding of themselves in relation to each other.

Furey: Thank you all.

Klausen: Thank you very much.