

Introduction

Twenty Years of Revolt

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“Intimacy is not the new prison.
The need for connection might one day initiate another politics.”

—Julia Kristeva, “New Forms of Revolt”

The notion of intimate revolt has been a continuing theme in Julia Kristeva’s writing for almost twenty years. Since its initial formulation in *The Sense and Nonsense of Revolt* (1996), Kristeva has theorized it in numerous texts, from her studies of religious belief and artistic production to her series on feminine genius and her series on the “powers and limits of psychoanalysis.” Across this ever-growing body of work, she describes revolt as a basic condition of social life imperiled by global crises. It is an event that regenerates symbolic bonds and empowers individuals to make meaning. Yet today, she warns, it is not clear *who can revolt* or *against whom*. From economic collapse to climate change, from terrorism to social inequality, our psyches are deprived of supportive social relations and deep inner experiences. In this context, against whom or what should our fragile psyches revolt? It is hard to locate contemporary power because it is disseminated in numerous institutions, parties, and normalizing forces. And if power cannot be located, how can it be opposed or overthrown?

This volume engages with the theory of revolt, focusing especially on its maturation. Kristeva’s shift away from the revolutionary stance of *Revolution in Poetic Language* (1974) has been addressed in countless publications. However, few texts engage with the development of intimate revolt itself.

How is psychic revolt a mode of political action? What is the meaning of politics, for Kristeva? Which social and political conditions encourage and support this event? Conversely, which conditions challenge or imperil it? How accurate is Kristeva's account of contemporary power? Is it elitist or Eurocentric? By posing these questions, the chapters in this volume consider the contemporary political relevance of revolt. They examine xenophobia and psychic estrangement; Kara Walker's antiracist art; media spectacles and global capitalism; Hannah Arendt and Ferdinand Saussure's politics of language; colonization and linguistic identities in Latin America; radical caregiving and doctor-patient relationships. Kristeva's own eponymous contribution, "New Forms of Revolt," is a wide-ranging commentary on today's "popular uprisings, indignant youth, toppled-down dictators" (2014, 1). In her view, revolt is not only relevant but also urgent; without the psychic resources provided by revolt, there can be no social bonds, let alone social change.

From Poetic Revolution to Intimate Revolt

Many Anglophone readers first became familiar with Kristeva's politics through her 1974 text *Revolution in Poetic Language*, translated into English in 1985. There, Kristeva famously posits the notion of a *semiotic chora*, understood as the drives, rhythms, and charges that compose early psychic space. Unlike patriarchal narratives that associate the Symbolic with disembodied masculinity and embodiment with nonlinguistic femininity, Kristeva draws on the semiotic *chora* to affirm the body's relation to language. As a *chora*, semiotic drives are both motile and regulated. They are not opposed to language but rather exhibit its logic, supporting the child's later transition into the Symbolic. For instance, in the early mother-child relationship, the two fused semiotic bodies physically communicate and signal to one another in ways that ultimately encourage language development (Oliver, 34). Given its association with the maternal body, it is not surprising that the notion of the semiotic earned Kristeva a wide, and sometimes wary, readership among Anglophone feminists. Some celebrated the semiotic as an important intervention in psychoanalytic theory and phallogocentric philosophies of language; others worried that the *chora* essentializes maternity or makes it compulsory for women (Oliver, 48).

In the 1970s, Kristeva herself embraced a revolutionary vision, broadly construed, and resisted feminism, which she narrowly associates with a poli-

tics of parity. In her view, language itself can be revolutionary because it is heterogeneous. Just as the semiotic is already and not yet symbolic, the Symbolic is still but no longer semiotic; amid its logical and grammatical structures, there is the insistent presence of drives. The Symbolic order may attempt to repress or obscure them, but semiotic drives are an essential, and sometimes disruptive and revolutionary, aspect of meaning making. In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva highlights poetry and avant-garde writing as examples of how “the signifying process joins social revolution.” Poetry and avant-garde writing neither destroy the Symbolic nor allow semiotic drives to devolve into chaos. Instead, they transform the Symbolic order by provoking reflection on its heterogeneous elements. Poetry exposes the materiality of language through its music, tones, and rhythms; avant-garde writing transgresses and loosens grammatical rules, opening language to bodily conditions.

In a trilogy of texts published in the 1980s—*Powers of Horror* (1985), *Tales of Love* (1985), and *Black Sun* (1987)—Kristeva begins to revise the positive revolutionary claims of *Revolution in Poetic Language*. To be sure, the 1974 text never imagined revolution in the sense of a full-scale destruction of or emancipation from the Symbolic. However, the 1980s trilogy tempers even promises of subversion and disruption. In this period, Kristeva begins to rethink the semiotic-Symbolic relation and reassess the shape of contemporary power and values. Where *Revolution in Poetic Language* emphasizes how some texts might mobilize semiotic elements in the Symbolic to promote revolution and *jouissance*, the trilogy more deeply explores symbolic elements in the semiotic and the “conditions in which resources are lacking for the semiotic to take on symbolic form” (Beardsworth, 45). The three volumes are effectively case studies of *abjection*, *idealization*, and *primal melancholia*, three psychic processes that are necessary for the child’s separation from the semiotic *chora*. If they fail or go awry, children struggle to develop social bonds and make meaning in basic ways, let alone to write poetic texts or to be moved by them. Instead of pointing to literatures that agitate the semiotic-Symbolic relation in transformative ways, Kristeva highlights how this entanglement can leave subjects silent and suffering or violent and alone. When she talks about artistic forms, such as the literature of abjection or stories of loving connection, it is to encourage healing practices rather than to mobilize “social revolution.”

In many ways, the pessimism and seriousness of the 1980s trilogy deepens in Kristeva’s 1990s writings on revolt as she develops a more sustained critique of the “empty” Symbolic order that imperils revolutionary

texts and speaking subjects. To be subversive, poetry or avant-garde writing must transgress or oppose substantive laws, authorities, and values. Twenty years after the publication of *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva begins to wonder if such laws, authorities, and values can even be found. In *The Sense and Nonsense of Revolt* (1996) and *Intimate Revolt* (1997), she argues that the form-giving aspects of social life (“symbolic laws”) are eroding. In their place, “disciplinary and administrative punishments multiply, repressing or rather normalizing everyone” (1996, 5). Kristeva uses the term “power vacuum” to describe this expansion of disciplinary power and the loosening of contemporary authority. In the power vacuum, “there are no longer laws [as much as] measures [. . .] susceptible to appeals and delays, to interpretations and falsifications” (1996, 5). Legal interpretation amounts to the pursuit of loopholes, to “finding omissions in the law that allow otherwise unlawful acts to be carried out within the terms of the law” (Oliver 2009, 67). The media also exacerbate the power vacuum. Across their spectacle of images, the absence of authority is confirmed on every stage, from the celebrity judges to the incessant and ever-revising judgment of celebrities themselves. In this context, Kristeva offers a difficult picture of resistance. She asks: How can individuals revolt against authority if they cannot find it? How can individuals challenge authority if they are too rapt by the spectacle to even search for it? “Who can revolt and against what? Can a patrimony of organs revolt against a normalizing order? How? Through remote-controlled images?” (Kristeva 1996, 8)

Intimate Revolt in Dark Times

Kristeva’s questions reflect a critique of the social order, but they are not meant to retreat from it, as some have charged. On her view, intimate revolt is a political and cultural necessity because it “keeps our inner lives alive” (1996, 8). But how, exactly? “Through remote-controlled images?” The French etymology points to some of its operation—sullyng, reversal, detour, cycle, stalling, upheaval, recovery, and reassessment, among other meanings and mutations. Where “revolution” has intellectual associations via *revolvere* (to consult, to reread, to tell), revolt is more surprising. It “twists and turns—indeed, veers off—depending on history” (1996, 1–3). The Freudian history of revolt is also suggestive, for Kristeva. In his well-known fable of the origin of civilization, Freud describes how primitive men live in hordes where the father prohibits his son’s access to women. One day, in an act of

rebellion, the sons murder the father, replace him with the totem symbol, feast, and, in their guilt, develop a social bond. This “Oedipal revolt” is not a transgression of law but a surprising confrontation with and displacement of power that authorizes the individual. Drawing on Freud’s twists and turns, Kristeva celebrates a broad practice of revolt that confronts, displaces, and assimilates authority in the psyche. For the developing child, the rebellious incorporation is a condition for entering the Symbolic order. In adult life, revolt is a regenerative return to the past that questions and renews symbolic ties. In each case, it is a necessity. Only through revolt can one find and make meaning. Its “fruits” lie in the social belonging and the capacity to represent; its failure marks the onset of nihilism and what Kristeva calls the “new maladies of the soul.”

Today the power vacuum makes these failures more likely. For instance, when authority cannot be located, subjects struggle to abject the maternal semiotic body, an important process undertaken in primary narcissism. The inability to abject can lead to depression at the individual and cultural levels (2002a, 83). Disempowered, excluded, and lacking social bonds, a depressed culture experiences (and economizes) the symptoms a depressed individual feels in isolation—despair, symbolic collapse, a severance of social ties. Alongside depression, the power vacuum also bears another destructive trajectory—the eruption of abjection in social life. When identification with power no longer works, individuals feel excluded in a depressive mode, or, in an attempt to overcome that feeling, they lash out, renewing exclusions at the lower echelons of the social edifice (1996, 14). Subjects in search of a nonlocatable authority or a purified social order can reinvoke violent processes of identity differentiation against the lower echelons of society. In the absence of resources to give meaning to the archaic processes of loss and abjection, “life becomes a life of death, a life of physical and moral violence, barbarity” (1996, 7).

Kristeva’s accounts of cultural depression and abject violence have perhaps earned her “an image as someone who willfully depicts and even enjoys exaggerating the seriousness of the present state of affairs” (2014, 4). Nevertheless, she does offer a way to navigate and perhaps avert the “barbaric” threats of the power vacuum—loving social supports. Her model of loving support is the “imaginary father,” or what Freud referred to as “the father of individual prehistory.” In the process of separating from the maternal body within primary narcissism, the child identifies with and idealizes the site of the mother’s love, an “accepting or loving third” or “imaginary father.” Kristeva describes this site as “not a ‘pure signifier’ but as the very

space of metaphorical shifting: a condensation of semantic features as well as non-representable drive heterogeneity that subtends them, goes beyond them and slips away” (1983, 38). In effect, the loving third is a figure of the semiotic element of language, “not just the semiotic rhythms of the maternal body, but those rhythms as they show up in the speech of the other” (Oliver 2005, 83). Identifying with the third, the child transfers drives and affects to the site of meaning and begins the entrance into the Symbolic order. In this way, the figure of the semiotic in language is an important aid to revolt and symbolic authorization. By mobilizing loving support in the power vacuum, Kristeva hopes that we might encourage the upheavals of revolt. Without supportive sites of transference for drives, with only empty laws and regulatory mechanisms, individuals in the power vacuum lose their sense of belonging to the social order, their openness to finding and making meaning. Today, loving relations are urgently needed. “It is not the time of great works, or perhaps, for us, contemporaries, they remain invisible. Nevertheless, by keeping our intimacy in revolt we can preserve the possibility of their appearance” (1997, 13).

The loving third makes clear that intimate revolt is not a “retreat” to the psychic realm. For Kristeva, the boundary between psyche and social, personal and political, is porous, ambiguous, and exposed. Troubled psyches can pose real social and political dangers; loving connections can provide real psychic support. This aspect of revolt culture is often misunderstood. Lacanians, feminists, and Marxists have all criticized Kristeva for “individualizing the political and ignoring the need for new forms of solidarity” (Sjöholm 2004, 80). For instance, Nancy Fraser has suggested that Kristeva’s speaking subject is split between two politically useless halves that cannot be united (Fraser 1990, 98). In her view, Kristeva’s semiotic subject cannot be a political agent because she is “beneath, rather than within, culture and society,” forever caught in an apolitical realm (1990, 98). However, far from positing a divide between realms—apolitical and political, psychic and social, semiotic and Symbolic—Kristeva laments any severance between the two. As Sara Beardsworth puts it, such a “categorical distinction can appear only in conditions where modern institutions and discourses have *failed* to provide everyday social and symbolic sites or practices for the adequate connection of the semiotic and symbolic” (2004, 14, authors’ emphasis). By calling for loving relations, Kristeva attempts to redress the failures of the power vacuum and repair the severed bond between drives and meaning. Instead of turning away from the political, she argues for the need to rehabilitate the political potential of the psychic space—a space that

still harbors the possibility for interrogation, thought, and resistance to the normalizing, technocratic forces of modern society.

New Forms of Revolt

Given her call for an intimate politics, it is not surprising that Kristeva's most recent writings wade into the psychic stakes of current events, from disability rights to terrorism, immigration to social inequality. Across various texts, Kristeva argues that the retrospective returns of revolt can shape these debates by provoking reflection on broader political ideals. For instance, in *Hatred and Forgiveness* (2005), Kristeva makes a case for vulnerability. On her view, vulnerability lies in the "crossroad" of "biology/language" and is "integral to the identity of the human species and the singularity of the speaking subject" (2010, 42). Failure to acknowledge the vulnerable junction of bodies and words encourages "rejections caused by race, social origin or religious differences" (2010, 43). Subjects either disavow vulnerability, in a manner that promotes violence against others, or they are swallowed up by vulnerability, in the sadomasochism of depression and other flimsy defenses. In *Hatred and Forgiveness*, these threats are real, but there is an alternative. Through revolt, one can return to the early crossroads of biology/language and recover the love and pleasure that also characterize vulnerability. The indefinite questioning of revolt allows subjects to work through rather than act out psychic wounds. Quite dramatically, Kristeva promotes vulnerability as the absent fourth term of the French Enlightenment; it "inflects" liberty, equality, and fraternity "towards a concern for sharing" (2010, 42).

In addition to vulnerability, Kristeva's recent writings also celebrate humanism as part of her intimate politics. In "New Forms of Revolt" and elsewhere, she argues that this humanism might be mobilized against the power vacuum, in particular its threat of "soft totalitarianism." When the ambition of power is to normalize and manage life, it bears the totalitarian threat of destroying life after having devalued the question of its meaning (2001, 13). Deprived of supportive social relations and deep inner experiences, human beings are reduced to "patrimonial individuals" or "conglomerates of organs" (2002, 4). Patrimonial individuals are normalized, unquestioning, and dogmatic. They are not subjects who can transgress authority; they are not subjects of revolt. In "New Forms of Revolt," Kristeva attempts to reinvigorate the question of life's meaning by setting

forth a humanism that “puts ‘a big question mark on matters of weighty seriousness’” (2014, 3). As she sees it,

we are undergoing not only an economic, political, and social crisis, but also an existential one in which we are confronted with a major unknown: *What is a man? What is a woman? What is humanity?* The interminable response to this question associates, I believe, today’s crisis with the crisis of *Homo Sapiens*. Concretely speaking, it is a question of human identity in general, and subsequently of the crisis of our multiple identities: sexual, ethnic, racial, national, religious, familial, and so on. (2014, 3)

Averting the threat of “soft totalitarianism” requires restoring our capacity for revolt and reinvigorating humanism and humanistic questioning. For Kristeva, it is a process that spurs the “knowing subject’s questioning of himself and his truth” (2002, 8).

While her recent writings on vulnerability and humanism can hardly be accused of being apolitical, their political content itself has been widely criticized. Many commentators charge that Kristeva’s interest in vulnerability and humanism reflects her failure to attend to the role of racism and colonialism in the “power vacuum” (see Ahmed 2005; Gratton 2007; Miller 2014). These critics worry not only that her work effaces colonialism and racism, but also that, as a result, she misunderstands how the power vacuum operates and its psychic effects. For instance, Peter Gratton raises this concern with respect to Kristeva’s analysis of France’s national depression. Gratton argues that Kristeva consistently betrays a “resistance to thinking the colonial apparatus, notably absent in works that again and again consider nations and nationality, particularly the French nation-state” (2007, 9). Similarly, Elaine P. Miller criticizes Kristeva’s contention that religious fundamentalism and the psychic “need to believe” caused the 2005 French suburban uprisings. According to Miller, Kristeva does not address the history of French colonialism in Africa and thereby distorts France’s “suburban troubles” as problems of religion (43). For the predominantly North African immigrant population of the French suburbs, however, “it is not religious concerns that cause most unrest . . . but rather unemployment and discrimination and a *de facto* second class citizen status” arising from a history of colonialism (Miller, 41).

Kristeva’s calls to embrace vulnerability and to question humanity may evidence a universalizing tendency, but Miller and Gratton’s criticisms

highlight a reductionist tendency as well. If Kristeva fails to explore the role of racism and colonialism in the power vacuum, her account of intimate revolt applies to a very narrow subject position unaware of its own racialization. Indeed, during the 2014 meeting of the Kristeva Circle at Vanderbilt University, Elaine P. Miller questioned Julia Kristeva about the role of structural racism in the 2005 uprisings. Kristeva's answer was telling.

EM: In particular, I wanted to ask you about the role of racism in France, the U.S., and in other parts of Europe and all over the world in the development of a kind of adolescent pseudo-rebellion. You talked about the failure of the French model of secularism. What kinds of ways have you thought about [. . .] addressing the issue of racism, not only at the personal level, but also at a structural level?

JK: Thank you very much for the question, especially because it reaches a very conflictual situation. I've been asked this question quite often in stronger terms than you—you did it with a lot of the delicacy. Because I don't ignore the political lacks, the feminine lacks, and the lack of education that is criticized and developed by politicians, sociologists, and social workers, and philosophers also. I took a tiny portion of this big problem—which is the relation of this age of the human behavior [adolescence] with the need to have ideals. So my interest is focused on this very slim portion, but I do not ignore the other aspects.

Kristeva's response to Miller's query is striking in its description of the psychic space as "slim" or "tiny," language that seems to treat the intimacy as if it could be portioned from bigger problems like economic and structural inequities. Kristeva claims that she "does not ignore other aspects." However, when she continues on to reconnect the intimate and the political, she refers only to reductive abstractions like public space, modern democracy, and the French revolution.

When we say *liberté, fraternité, égalité*, and other examples that teachers and politicians have in order to make rules for behavior in the city, we don't have the narrative, the personal experience, the sexual experience, the hallucinatory experience, the place for the need, of the belief, the desire, of the reflection upon death.

All these aspects are kept from the public space and [placed] into the fetish of art or are forgotten. We see this in the political space in modern democracy. We have the parliament that deals with social works and to discuss if it is necessary or not to make social security. On other hand, we have religious people who can deal with the solidarity, with the critique, and so on. What the French revolution tries to do and what the republic tries to do through secularism is to develop humanism and to develop more proximity and more closeness with individuals. This is the program, but it is not yet the reality. This is why we fail in the suburbs. But, it continues to be discussed and we continue to try to work with the mothers, with the families, and with adolescents and try to make more specific our attitude towards them.

Instead of separating the “slim” or “tiny” psyche from the social, Kristeva now speaks of the politicized dimensions of intimacy like “proximity,” “closeness,” personal, sexual, and hallucinatory experiences. Nevertheless, she fails to frame the political in concrete terms that are relevant to an analysis of the 2005 uprisings, for instance, histories of racism, colonialism, immigration, and segregation. The effect of her abstractions is most evident when she describes the analysis as trying “to make more specific *our* attitude towards *them*.” In this moment, the subject of revolt is not abstract; she is a white, Francophone, European, non-Muslim woman. In this exchange, Kristeva’s reductions not only compromise the political potential of revolt, but they also ensure that it will be complicit in the histories she ignores.

It could be otherwise. With deeper analyses of racism, colonialism, and segregation, intimate revolt might play an important role in antiracist political practice. In the United States, the peculiar psychic manifestations of racism have been on horrifying display in the recent killings of Terence Crutcher, Korryn Gaines, Philando Castile, Alton Sterling, Samuel DuBose, and Jessica Hernandez. Public discussion and media coverage of these cases suggest that the most dangerous and insidious form of racism lies in individuals who refuse to question themselves and unravel their own implicit racist attitudes. Intimate revolt—a relentless refusal to give up self-interrogation—might help to combat this pernicious form of racism, but only if it attends to the concrete psychosocial realities of white supremacy and other relevant dimensions of racist Symbolic orders. For white writers like Kristeva, this attention may be more difficult to achieve. In racist

societies that prohibit the acknowledgment of white domination, whites are taught to “see the world wrongly, but with the assurance that their mistaken ways of making sense of events count as accurate explanations” (Bailey 2007, 80). Like the adolescent, whites move out of questioning into a stubborn assurance of the accuracy of their worldview. Their need to believe is deeply rooted because it is a form of “not knowing”—a constant disavowal of the “erasing, dismissing, distorting, and forgetting about the lives, cultures, and histories of peoples whites have colonized” (Bailey 2007, 85).

Because Kristeva’s comments about the 2005 uprisings betray her participation in this “not knowing,” imagining an antiracist intimate revolt may involve *revolting* against her texts. For instance, readers might displace and question her authority in order to identify some of her theory’s white adolescence. By disrupting her unmarked, unraced persona, readers could also expose the heterogeneous subject behind comments about “us” and “them.” This mode of reading promises to unsettle and surprise, but isn’t this the spirit of revolt? As Kristeva says, “it is our responsibility to be interpreters, givers of meaning” (1996, 8). Indeed, many of the essays in this volume can be described as revolts against and through Kristeva’s texts. There is an emphasis on revolt in non-European and nonwhite contexts, an attempt to shift Kristeva’s center and reimagine and reassess concepts accordingly. There is also a continuing interest in heightening the subversions of Kristeva’s intellectual inheritances, from Ferdinand Saussure to Hannah Arendt. The essays take up many specific political foci—from Latin American linguistic identities to the aesthetic representation of slavery and trauma—but they are united in their reckoning with Kristeva’s theorization of intimate politics over the last twenty years.

Essays on Intimate Politics

The volume begins with a section titled *Kristeva: Revolt and Political Action* and Julia Kristeva’s own contribution, “New Forms of Revolt.” Given as a keynote address at “The Kristeva Circle” conference at Vanderbilt University in 2014, this essay is a representation of Kristeva’s mature theory of revolt. She stresses the totalitarian risks that accompany the power vacuum and argues forcefully for revolt’s promise and political relevance. Surti Singh’s and Sara Beardsworth’s essays discuss figures that might refine and sharpen Kristeva’s grip on these totalitarian risks. In “Spectacle and Revolt: On the Intersection of Psychoanalysis and Social Theory in Julia Kristeva’s Work,”

Singh interrogates Kristeva's inheritance of the figure of the spectacle and asks whether Guy Debord's masculinist perspective makes its way into the analysis. In "The Chiasmus of Action and Revolt: Julia Kristeva, Hannah Arendt, and Gillian Rose," Beardsworth introduces the figure of *chiasmus* to characterize the surprising experience of being "strangers to ourselves." For Beardsworth, the *chiasmus* provides a lens through which to observe Kristeva's and Rose's different approaches to the impasses of modernity and the motility of the modern subject.

In the section "Imagining New Intimacies: Antiracist, Aesthetic, and Clinical Revolts," Elena Ruiz and Amy Ray Stewart consider revolt vis-à-vis non-European and/or nonwhite traditions and contexts. In "Revolt and the Lettered Self," Ruiz problematizes several Eurocentric tendencies at work in Kristeva's notion of subject formation. She aims also to rehabilitate a Kristevan insurrectional subject for *non*-European indigenous resistance and Amerindian dissent. Similar themes emerge in Amy Ray Stewart's "Extimate Trauma, Intimate Ethics: Kristevan Revolt in the Artwork of Kara Walker." Stewart argues that Kara Walker's "cutting" style attempts to work through legacies of racial abjection and cultural trauma. Finally, Melinda C. Hall's essay, "Patient Interpretation: Kristeva's Model for the Caregiver," applies Kristeva's practice of "patient interpretation" to doctor-patient relationships. Emphasizing the stakes for vulnerable populations, Hall attempts to break from doctor-patient models that are stuck in the twin stranglehold of authoritative diagnostic criteria and purely somatic understandings of disease.

The book's final section, "Language and Narrative in Kristeva," reframes language as the long-standing and varied terrain of Kristevan revolt—myths, mystery novels, biographies, artworks, and more. Beata Stawarska's chapter, "Language as *Poiesis*. Linguistic Productivity and Forms of Resistance in Kristeva and Saussure," shows how recently discovered writings reveal subversive, and underappreciated, dimensions of Saussure's semiotics. She wonders whether Kristeva might inherit or mobilize these subversions. In "Peregrine Genius and Thought-Things: Julia Kristeva and Hannah Arendt on Salutary Estrangement," Elaine P. Miller traces the theme of estrangement in Kristeva's writings, from "The Ruin of a Poetics" to the recent trilogy on feminine genius, illustrating how estrangement is figured in extralinguistic, protolinguisitic, and aesthetic modes. Sarah Kathryn Marshall's "Eurydicean Revolt and Metam-Orphic Writing in Arendt and Kristeva" compares Arendt and Kristeva's discussions of the myth of *Orpheus*, a myth that represents the abstract thinking of the philosophical tradition and the "burning need" for

truth. For Kristeva, Arendt's use of the Orpheus myth is a kind of revolt against, and subtle transformation of, the Western philosophical tradition. The volume concludes with Alice Jardine's autobiographical reflections on Kristeva's life and friendship, "At the Risk of Thinking: On Writing an Intellectual Biography of Julia Kristeva." Jardine argues that autobiographies can help develop new models of the intellectual in the twenty-first century, but only if they are "strong," highly personal, and intensely honest. For Jardine, the experience of reading and writing such an autobiography is risky, but it offers the possibility of revolt and rebirth.

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