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"Are There Any Questions?": Fiction, Religion and Politics in The Handmaid's Tale. Editorial

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“Are There Any Questions?”

Fiction, Religion and Politics in *The Handmaid’s Tale* Editorial

And therefore it is by its very nature an act of hope, since writing implies a future in which the freedom to read will exist.
Margaret Atwood, “Formal Invocation to the Reader”¹

In the four decades since Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* was published, in 1985, the novel has been adapted to appear in various translations and media. This remarkable work has developed into a global narrative that continues to be (re-)read and adapted. Staging a future dystopian state based on a toxic mix of male-designed religion and authority on the one side and womens’ suffering and oppression on the other side, *The Handmaid’s Tale* explores mechanisms of power and control that lead to the historically well-documented subjugation of women – the means may have changed but the ends have not.²

The novel contains the diary of a woman who is being kept as a reproductive slave in the household of a member of the elite who rule the state of Gilead, a theocracy based on an (allegedly) literal reading of selected parts of the Bible and established largely on the territory that used to compose the United States of America. Although the narrative is fragmented and the description subjective, Gilead is effectively depicted by the protagonist. A dramatic decline in the birth rate as the result of an anthropogenic ecological disaster has jeopardised the survival of the human species and is a key factor behind the creation of the Gilead dictatorship.

Pre-eminent within the dystopian society are the families of the elite, where so-called “handmaids” are on reproductive duty. Believed to be fertile and deprived of all rights, the handmaids are raped by the chief of the

1 Atwood 2022a, 132.

2 See e.g. Bacci 2017.

household in a religious ritual once a month, in hope of a pregnancy. To be able to carry out this duty, the handmaids undergo a gruesome training during which their identity as a “two-legged womb”³ is moulded. Gilead is an absolutist state that rejects science and technology in favour of a singular idea of the natural order. It dictates a strict division between genders: women care for the house, the garden and, in the few cases, the children; men attend to politics and surveillance. Dress is determined by status, with black, blue, red, brown, or stripped clothing identifying roles, positions and duties in the private and public space.

In describing her novel as speculative fiction, Atwood emphasises that *The Handmaid's Tale* depicts a fictional future but on the basis on events that are historically documented.⁴ Therefore, the novel plays with a future that has roots in historic experiences and appears a plausible development of our society. Atwood has recorded,

One of my rules was that I would not put any events into the book that had not already happened in what James Joyce called⁵ the “nightmare” of history, nor any technology not already available. No imaginary gizmos, no imaginary laws, no imaginary atrocities. God is in the details, they say. So is the Devil.⁵

The title of this introductory essay for the *Journal of Religion, Film and Media* quotes the final sentence of *The Handmaid's Tale*. Presented as “Historical Notes”, the last chapter of the novel provides a historical framing of the protagonist’s fragmentary personal experience in Gilead. At the Twelfth Symposium on Gilead Studies on 25 June 2195, the well-known Cambridge professor, keynote speaker and outstanding expert James Darcy Pieixoto concludes his lecture by asking, “Are there any questions?” The question is addressed not only to the conference audience but also to the readers. And there are indeed many questions to be explored!

In this issue we consider a number of these questions, focusing on the complex interdependence of fiction, religion and politics in the *Handmaid's Tale*, a highly generative narrative received and transformed in so many ways to articulate widespread fears about contemporary society and its

3 All quotations from *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) are from the 1996 edition: here p. 142.

4 Neumann 2006, 172; Winstead 2017, 228; Walsh 2020.

5 Atwood 2017.

possible – dystopian – development. The articles gathered together in this issue approach these topics in light of the novel of 1985 and the Hulu series that began in 2017.

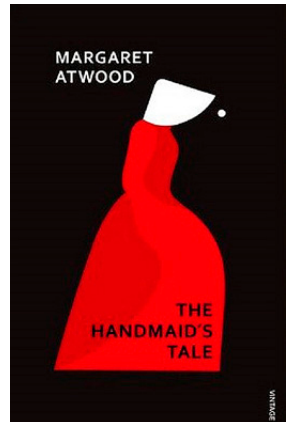
The interdependency between fiction, religion and politics is paramount not only in Atwood's novel of 1985, but also in the multi-layered reception that *The Handmaid's Tale* has stimulated over the years. To deepen this interdependency, in this introductory contribution we proceed here in three steps. First, we focus on the global dissemination of the narrative, second, we explore the political significance of reconstructing history in *The Handmaid's Tale* and third, we turn to the Bible and its striking role in the tension between the fictional narrative and the reader's reality. We conclude with a short overview of the articles related to Atwood's book that are collected in the main section of this issue.

From Tapes to Protesters' Disguises: *The Handmaid's Tale* as a Global Phenomenon

The concluding pages that form the “Historical Notes” encourage the reader to rethink the whole account they have just read, right from the beginning. They provide a framing that projects the handmaid's diary back to around 1955, which is likely surprising to the reader, for the text had not indicated a time period and the nature of the account seemed to suggest a future society. Now, however, the reader learns that the totalitarian state of Gilead was established in the middle of the 20th century and did not last. Furthermore, the “Historical Notes” reveal that what we have just read was in fact a scholarly reconstruction based on transcripts of cassettes made by two men, the professors Wade and Pieixoto, and that the title – *The Handmaid's Tale* – is in fact a sexual joke, a pun on “tale” and “tail”:

[...] but those of you who know Professor Wade informally, as I do, will understand when I say that I am sure all puns were intentional, particularly that having to do with the archaic vulgar signification of the word *tail*; that being, to some extent, the bone, as it were, of contention, in that phase of Gileadean society of which our saga treats. (*Laughter, applause.*)⁶

6 Atwood 1996, 309.



Figs. 1a–c: Covers of *The Handmaid's Tale* through time: 1a. The cover of the first edition, published in 1985 by McClelland & Stewart in Toronto and designed by Tad Aronowicz. 1b. The cover of the 1986 edition published by Jonathan Cape in London. 1c. The cover of the edition published by Vintage in London from 1996, whose design by Noma Bar has significantly contributed to the iconic representation of the protagonist.

The “Historical Notes” reframe the protagonist’s ordeal (she is called “Of-fred”, a patronymic expressing that she is owned by, or of, Commander *Fred*) in terms not only of the fiction’s chronology but also of the relationship between the dystopian state and the reader’s reality. They also unveil fundamental aspects of the entanglement of politics, history and fiction that characterises *The Handmaid’s Tale*.

The novel is presented as an accurate reconstruction of recordings of a female voice hidden between songs from the 1950s and scattered across 30 cassettes original to the period. Offred’s voice is a testimony across time and media: the diary notes, which correspond to parts I. to XV. of the novel, are stored on magnetic tapes and, after having been found, were transcribed and used as scholarly sources.

The diffusion of the narrative of *The Handmaid’s Tale* in the reader’s reality is the product of broad transmission through various adaptations, with striking interaction between text, image and other means of expression. Even a glance at the cover reveals the complicated intermediality (figs. 1a–c). The first edition of the novel, published in Canada by McClelland & Stewart, was designed by Tad Aronowicz. It shows on the cover a small, childlike naked woman, who is held tightly by a huge man in dark clothes.⁷ The cover image borrows from

7 <http://tinyurl.com/57zmuhp> [accessed 26 January 2024].



Fig. 2: THE HANDMAID'S TALE (Volker Schlöndorff, US 1990), screen shot, 00:24:14.

futurism and surrealism, which in light of the content seems very fitting, for it makes tangible both the subjectivity of the experience and the dystopian vision. The cover of the 1986 edition published by Jonathan Cape, London, shows the red robes and white bonnets, the dress code of the handmaids that thanks to the Hulu series has become instantly recognisable. The cover of the 1996 edition published by Vintage, London, was designed by Noma Bar and also contributed to that iconic representation of the protagonist.⁸

Alongside translations of the novel into many languages, performative and audiovisual media have also influenced the reception of the work worldwide. In 1990 the film *THE HANDMAID'S TALE* by the German director Volker Schlöndorff was released (fig. 2). A ballet choreographed by Lila York and with music by James MacMillan, Arvo Pärt, Alfred Schnittke and others was premièred in Winnipeg by Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet in autumn 2013 (fig. 3).⁹ On 6 March 2000, an opera with the same title written by the composer Poul Ruders was presented in Copenhagen (fig. 4);¹⁰ also in 2000 John Dryden and Nick Russell-Pavier produced a radio drama for BBC Radio 4.¹¹

8 <https://www.dutchuncle.co.uk/noma-bar> [accessed 26 January 2024].

9 <http://tinyurl.com/3rt38dt9> [accessed 26 January 2024].

10 <http://tinyurl.com/3wy23htw> [accessed 26 January 2024].

11 <http://tinyurl.com/44uwmyen> [accessed 26 January 2024].



Fig. 3: Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Trailer of *The Handmaid's Tale*, 12–16 October 2022, screen shot, 00:01:00, <http://tinyurl.com/3rt38dt9> [accessed 26 January 2024].



Fig. 4: English National Opera, Trailer of *The Handmaid's Tale*, Season 2023/24, screen shot, 00:01:00, <https://tinyurl.com/k2kma936> [accessed 26 January 2024].

In April 2011 the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company staged the world premiere of the theatre adaptation by Joe Stollenwerk (fig. 5).¹² Since 2017, Hulu has released five seasons of a very successful series – with 76 Emmys nominations and 15 awards¹³ – with the sixth and final season expected to be available in 2025 (figs. 6a–c). This series, which adapts and develops the narrative, has

12 <https://www.drjoesto.com> [accessed 26 January 2024].

13 <https://www.emmys.com/shows/handmaids-tale> [accessed 26 January 2024].

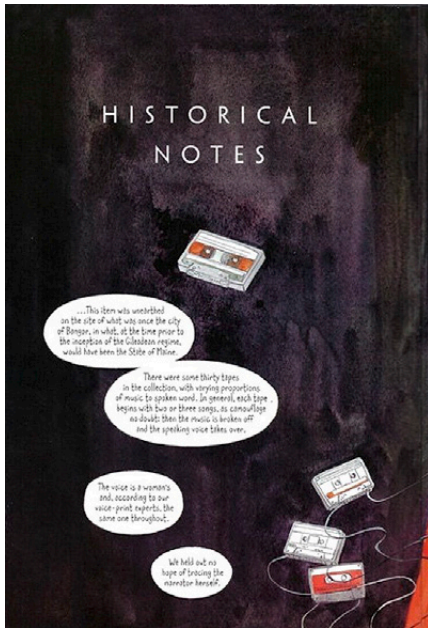
Fig. 5: Theatre adaptation by Joe Stollenwerk, scene photograph, <https://www.drjoesto.com> [accessed 26 January 2024].



Figs. 6a–c: THE HANDMAID'S TALE (Bruce Miller, US 2017–present). 6a. "Offred", Season 1, 2017, 00:46:07; 6b. "Mayday", Season 3, 2019, 01:01:10; 6c. "Safe", Season 5, 2022, 00:46:36.

The three images have been selected to highlight the transformation of Offred, from a scared prisoner to "June", a freedom fighter.





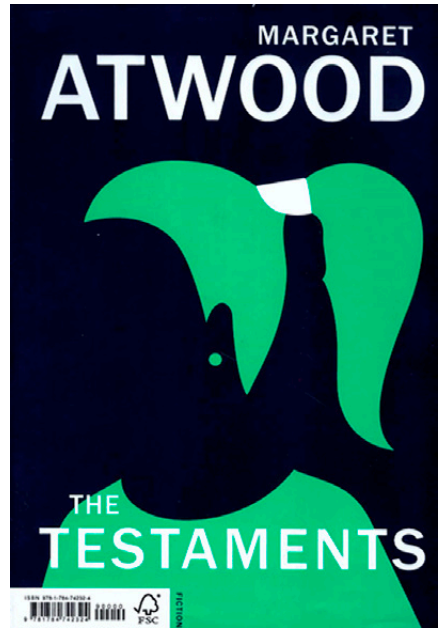
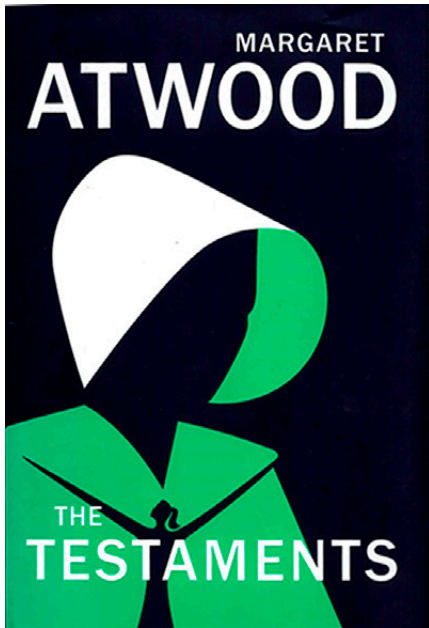
Figs. 7a and b: "Historical Notes", in: Margaret Atwood, 2019, *The Handmaid's Tale, The Graphic Novel*, adapted by Renée Nault and Margaret Atwood, art by Renée Nault, New York: O. W. Toad.

greatly heightened awareness and the popularity of the narrative.¹⁴ In 2019 an adaptation into a graphic novel by Atwood and Renée Nault appeared (figs. 7a and b), and in September that year Atwood published a sequel, *The Testaments*. The cover of the later work, designed by Noma Bar, quotes the iconic figure he developed for the 1996 Vintage edition of *The Handmaid's Tale*. For the sequel, the depictions of the protagonists, one on the front cover and one on the back, mirror each other, alike but not identical (figs. 8a and b).¹⁵ The various adaptations of the narrative in different media have brought a range of versions, specific readings and new interpretations of Atwood's novel.

The mediatisation process of *The Handmaid's Tale* is complicated. The core narrative has been widened in different ways in the various adaptations. Margaret Atwood herself not only initiated this process, but also interacts with it with cooperation or criticism, and in 2019 she gave a new impulse by publishing the sequel.

14 See Somacarrera-Íñigo 2019.

15 <https://www.dutchuncle.co.uk/noma-bar> [accessed 26 January 2024].



Figs. 8a and b: Noma Bar's cover design for the first edition of *The Testaments*, published by Chatto & Windus in London in 2019.

The merging of fiction and social criticism inherent in the original narrative can be deployed in very different social contexts worldwide, particularly when it comes to the unequal treatment or oppression of specific people or groups – especially women. In recent years, women worldwide have assumed the distinctive traits of the Gileadean handmaids in protests related to women's rights and, consequently, human rights: in Buenos Aires, Washington DC, Dublin, London, Tel Aviv and elsewhere, protesters have dressed in the handmaid's distinctive red robe and white bonnet (fig. 9).¹⁶ In doing so, they link political agendas with the narrative, now an iconic depiction of a male-designed totalitarianism rooted in (sexual) violence against women. Their garb speaks of, on one hand, subjugation to a regime and, on the other hand, women's agency as freedom fighters.¹⁷ The motif of *The Handmaid's*

16 In a series of newspaper articles and magazine essays, Margaret Atwood has expressed her support for those demonstrating for women's rights and human rights. See e.g. Allardice 2019; Atwood 2022b; 2022c.

17 Beaumont/Holpuch 2018; Fritz 2023.



Fig. 9: Demonstration in Haifa on 11 March 2023. Women dressed as handmaids protest against planned judicial reforms in Israel. © Hanay, CC BY-SA 3.0 Deed, Wikimedia Commons.

Tale recurs as protestors demand women's self-determination and condemn the state's intention to regulate women's bodies. The brand awareness created by the handmaids' clothing is enormous, with its message conveyed visually and instantly, even before a viewer asks a fellow onlooker, reads a caption or clicks through on social media.

The Hulu series, in which Elisabeth Moss plays Offred/June, has reinforced these movements. The development of characters on the screen does not align with their development in the novel. In particular, the Hulu series stages the protagonist in a very clear, almost-bold role, transforming the elusive Offred of the novel into the fighter June, who confronts the regime with relentless determination and irreducible will and endures all kinds of torture and suffering to find and free her daughter (figs. 6a-c).

References to the handmaids, and to Offred/June in particular, expect the audience to actively engage in reconstructing fragments, relationships and perspectives. The iconic figure is an invitation to merge fiction with the politics of the lived reality of the receivers. In the novel, power over women is

politically legitimised and enforced with reference to a divine order. Today, knowledge of the fictional story of Gilead serves as a matrix for demonstrators who take to the streets worldwide. Their clothing as handmaids materialises the reference to contemporary reactionary positions and serves as a visual warning to prevent a similar social order.

From the Great Darkness of History to the Horrors of Historical Synthesis

The “Historical Notes” transform the story the reader had derived from the novel’s main plot so far, using a striking hermeneutical device based on self-reflexive elements in the narration. Accordingly, the concluding notes can be understood as a *mise en abyme*.¹⁸ The fragmentary nature of the protagonist’s reports is mirrored in the fragmentary nature of the reconstruction by the professors, which in turn mirrors the fragmentary nature of the reconstruction of history in general, and finally, the fragmentary process of its interpretation. Professor Pieixoto summarises this thought: “As all historians know, the past is a great darkness, and filled with echoes.”¹⁹

One fundamental aspect of the hermeneutical reflection at work in *The Handmaid’s Tale* concerns this awareness of historical – in this case, fictional historical – reconstruction as a never-ending task that involves putting together pieces while knowing the image can never be complete. Each attempt to represent history is linked to a specific vision of society, of interpersonal relationships and of the individual and each is differently legitimised.²⁰

The novel also emphasises a second hermeneutical aspect integral to the reconstruction of history. That reconstruction requires fragments to be gathered into a whole, but in the process the gaps between the pieces are neglected. The complete and harmonic overview that is crafted neglects inconsistencies. In the totalitarian ideology of Gilead, the stratifications and contradictions are silenced: the destructive power is presented as a new and

18 Dällenbach 1977; Fevry 2000.

19 Atwood 1996, 320.

20 The name Pieixoto can be read as a pun on the name Pope Pius IX, the pope who on 8 December 1854 established the immaculate conception of Mary as Roman Catholic dogma (<http://tinyurl.com/2feav49b>, accessed 6 February 2024). In the “Historical Notes” Pieixoto is the leading expert on the “correct” interpretation, although he seeks to appear modest. Overall, the novel emphasises – with irony – that it is always men who know best.

coherent vision of history. Professor Pieixoto explains to his academic audience this fundamental trait of Gilead's theocracy:

As we know from the study of history, no new system can impose itself upon a previous one without incorporating many of the elements to be found in the latter, as witness the pagan elements to be found in Medieval Christianity and the evolution of the Russian "K.G.B." from the Czarist secret services that preceded it; and Gilead was no exception to this rule. Its racist policies, for instance, were firmly rooted in the pre-Gilead period, and racist fears provided some of the emotional fuel that allowed the Gilead takeover to succeed as well as it did.²¹

And, later, he concludes, "As I have said elsewhere, there was little that was truly original or indigenous to Gilead: its genius was synthesis."²² Pieixoto thus describes history as a process of stratification, characterised by re-readings and adaptations. The totalitarian ideology of Gilead enforces this process by extracting all kinds of gruesome practices from the multi-layered darkness of history and presenting them as a coherent ideological system. As we will see shortly, the Gilead regime tries to use religious, particularly biblical, echoes as the glue that holds all the different pieces together.

At the Twelfth Symposium on Gileadean Studies in 2195, historians in the future perform as did the Gilead regime and the author of *The Handmaid's Tale* (and of *The Testaments*): they revisit history, speculating on which fragments might fit together to tell a convincing story.²³ Those re-readings of history are distinguished, however, by their purpose. The Gilead regime re-reads (religious) history in order to legitimise a totalitarian system based on oppression and violence, particularly of and against women but also of and against people defined as inferior. Professor Pieixoto and his colleagues seek to provide a historical reconstruction of the failed despotic regime by transcribing and ordering Offred's recordings. Their power may be different, but they are still deciding how (his)story is to be read.

Atwood has re-read history to help her readers imagine a dystopia that could happen anytime and everywhere.²⁴ Directors, choreographers, graph-

21 Atwood 1996, 313.

22 Atwood 1996, 315.

23 On the implicit political agenda in "making history" in the novel, see Davidson 1988.

24 Winstead 2017, 231 sums up the reinterpretation inherent in Atwood's speculative fiction: "However, what is unique about Atwood's understanding of how speculative fiction

ic designers and protesters on the streets re-read history through *The Handmaid's Tale* in order to denounce dystopian traits of contemporary policies within democracies. *The Handmaid's Tale* is thus far more than a patchwork of the horrors of history. It stages the agency of a novel as a device that stimulates interpretation.

When the reader reconstructs the timeline of the novel, it is evident that “future” refers only to the scholarly conference, for Offred’s diary depicts a society of 30 years before the first edition of *The Handmaid's Tale*.²⁵ Gilead belongs to the past in many senses, but what of 2195’s society? We learn little at all, but for the academics it seems to be business as usual: male professors are experts giving keynote presentations, their female colleagues introduce them humbly to the audience.

The Bible as an “Incendiary Device”²⁶

Religion plays a crucial role in *The Handmaid's Tale*.²⁷ A cross-reading of Atwood’s novels finds the Bible as a leitmotif, both directly, with reference to the presence of the Old and New Testaments within Christian practices and traditions, and more broadly, in association with writing, reading and interpreting as cultural achievements. Ideologies and practices drawn from a particular reading of the Bible are highlighted in *The Handmaid's Tale* and its sequel, *The Testaments* (2019), with many explicit references to biblical and Christian traditions.²⁸ The “Historical Notes” contain, however, a subtle (or ironic?) reference to the possibility of interpreting Gilead in light of

might do political work is that she does not cite, as the aforementioned critics do, the political potential of imagining and exploring new worlds, or the ways speculative fiction can be particularly rhetorically persuasive. Instead, Atwood looks to speculative fiction’s autonomous agency as a technological object in order to imagine how her fiction might change readers politically, reimagining the reading process as material interaction between novel and brain.” For the role of dystopia in Atwood’s œuvre, see e.g. Howells 2021.

25 See Neumann 2006.

26 Atwood 1996, 94.

27 A number of authors have addressed the role of religion in *The Handmaid's Tale* and in Atwood’s works as a whole: see e.g. Filipczak 1993; Tennant 2019; Graybill/Sabo 2020a; Pezzoli-Olgiati 2021; Burnette-Bletsch 2023; Naglieri 2023.

28 For an overview of the complexity of biblical references in the novel (and the Hulu series), see Tennant 2019. Naglieri 2023 traces biblical references in *The Handmaid's Tale* through selected examples in the visual reception history.

other religious traditions: Professor Gopal Chatterjee of the Department of Western Philosophy of the University of Baroda is to give a lecture entitled “Krishna and Kali Elements in the State Religion of the Early Gilead Period”.²⁹

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, the Bible is applied to legitimise Gilead's oppressive totalitarian regime and unrestrained use of physical and psychological violence. Only men are allowed to read the Bible, restricting access to knowledge and undermining the power of writing, reading and interpreting. At the same time, however, the Bible is an existential resource for the protagonist as she resists and challenges the regime. Religious belief and practice thus assume ambivalent significance. On one hand, state religion is the most powerful instrument for justifying the dictatorship of a few male commanders, their gruesome practices of oppression, the ideology behind the enslavement of women thought fertile, their training and forced surrogacy. Religion is used to justify the arbitrary “justice” at the core of Gilead and the exclusion of people from other religions, races and origins.

On the other hand, religious practices and memories and even memorised Bible texts from her previous life allow Offred to develop an intimate inner space that nurtures her resilience and subversion within her hostile environment. By addressing God in desperate prayers, she keeps alive the conviction that she is not Offred and strengthens the link to her previous identity as an independent woman, partner and mother in pre-Gilead society.³⁰

These contrasting aspects are well-rooted in the history of religion, which largely informs the novel and, consequently, its deployment in the decades following the novel's publication. In the *Handmaid's Tale*, as more generally in Atwood's fiction, the Bible is not simply a material object – a volume that exists in many translations, forms, sizes and media – or a collection of specific books. The Bible exists in memorised fragments, in hymns, in broad imaginings from its complex reception. And it serves as an ethical and moral guide, although interpreted differently by individuals and institutions in Atwood's universe, which reflects its use as an instrument of power.

The Handmaid's Tale also understands the Bible in terms of its relationship with those who grasp it in a sophisticated process of writing, receiving and interpreting.³¹ It assumes a symbolic role as the book par excellence. The

29 Atwood 1996, 308.

30 Filipczak 1993; Graybill/Sabo 2020b.

31 Pezzoli-Olgiati 2021.

“readings” of the Bible in *The Handmaid’s Tale* are always fragmentary. The political system justifies itself by selecting and bending Biblical quotations, which Offred compares to the (correct) citations she remembers. The fragmentary character of Offred’s account and the scholarly efforts to bring all the pieces together seem to allude to the fragmentary nature of the sacred book and the exegetical efforts of Biblical Studies. In both instances, learned men seek to fill gaps in a text that has reached them from the darkness of the past.

In Offred’s time, the Bible is kept away from women’s hands and minds. In the households of the elite, the book is kept in a locked box and only a Commander has the right to read it:

The Bible is kept locked up, the way people once kept tea locked up, so the servants wouldn’t steal it. It is an incendiary device: who knows what we’d make of it, if we ever got our hand at it? We can be read from it, by him, but we cannot read. Our heads turn toward him, we are expectant, here come our bedtime story.³²

The reading of the Bible launches the “Ceremony”, a ritual in which a handmaid is raped once a month in the Commander’s marital bed – “bedtime story” in the passage quoted above has a caustic undertone. What happens when women take the Bible into their own hands is explored in *The Testaments*. Indeed, in Atwood’s sequel to *The Handmaid’s Tale*, a few selected women in Gilead are allowed to learn to read and write in order to be able to interpret the Bible themselves. This is the turning point that destroys the theocratic state from within.

At the core of the entanglement of fiction, religion and politics in *The Handmaid’s Tale*, both in the original novel and in its subsequent forms, is the Bible. For the thematic section of this issue, we therefore selected three contributions that address the presence of the sacred book. Friedhelm Hartenstein offers a close reading from the perspective of a scholar of the Old Testament and with a particular focus on moments in which the Bible is quoted in the novel. Ann Jeffers, a scholar of the Ancient Near East and Second Temple Judaism who draws from Gender Studies, unravels biblical allusions in *The Handmaid’s Tale*. Bina Nir, a scholar in Cultural Studies who is living in Israel in this challenging and precarious time, addresses a similar

32 Atwood 1996, 94.

topic, for her reading of biblical narratives in Atwood's book highlights the link between patriarchy and the Bible, not only in the work itself but also in contemporary political attempts to (re)instaurate that authority. Finally, Simon Spiegel, a Film Studies scholar, looks beyond the novel to the TV series. Focusing on the development of the main character, June/Offred, he explores the transformation of a dystopian work into a still-not complete serial drama, and the paradoxical challenges of that series' success.

"Are there any questions?" Yes, there are so many. The articles presented in this issue of the *Journal of Religion, Film and Media* cannot provide all the answers for the global phenomenon that is *The Handmaid's Tale*. Even as they focus on the presence of the Bible, however, they do explore from a range of perspectives how a fictional narrative can shape contemporary culture through a variety of media and by addressing diverse audiences. The story within *The Handmaid's Tale* shows how important critical questions are and also how important it is to be permitted to ask them at all. That fundamental democratic right is not safe beyond the novel either. Why over the four decades since it was written, we might ask, has Atwood's story been received by multiple audiences, in multiple languages and through multiple media as a vehicle for critical public engagement with social and political processes? The answer lies surely in its relevance.

Quoted Media

Dance

The Handmaid's Tale, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Choreography: Lila York, Music: James McMillan, Arvo Pärt and others, 2013–present.

Film and Series

THE HANDMAID'S TALE (Volker Schlöndorff, US/DE 1990).

THE HANDMAID'S TALE (Created by: Bruce Miller, Hulu, US 2017–present).

Graphic Novel

Atwood, Margaret, 2019, *The Handmaid's Tale, The Graphic Novel*, adapted by Renée Nault and Margaret Atwood, art by Renée Nault, New York: O. W. Toad.

Novels

Atwood, Margaret, 1996 [1985], *The Handmaid's Tale*, London: Vintage.

Atwood, Margaret, 2019, *The Testaments*, London: Chatto & Windus.

Opera

Poul Ruders, *The Handmaid's Tale*, 2000, Libretto: Paul Bentley.

Drama

The Handmaid's Tale, adapted from Margaret Atwood's novel, produced at the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company 2011, <http://tinyurl.com/359c2xaa> [accessed 26 January 2024].

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