

N°1 : Origins

Weavers Discourse: Fragments

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“To a whole bunch of
people. ‘Family.’”

-Taylor Mead

Nowadays my grandmother always says she slept well. The weather has always been great, and everything is always agreeable to her. I am crawling around in a huge painting on the floor listening to Mick Jagger singing and when he says “lose your dreams and you will lose your mind” I think of her. I imagine that she must have dreams, but considering them unsuitable for the empty conversation which is the fashion in my family, she has stunted her ability to articu-

late them at all, first to others, then to herself. You could say she's lost her mind, although she's still a very sweet woman. I am outside at my easel painting grapes on the edge of a field when she wanders up and asks, "Are you happy where you live now?" She has no idea where I live, but I am happy to be able to say yes and mean it.

My grandmother willed a loom to me, which belonged to her mother before.

It is in an attic in Kristiansand, Norway.

Her mind is a slinky now, its rings gone lame from so many polite little expansions and contractions. It cre-

ates a small wake of open refrigerator doors, glowing hot plates, and frightened children whose mother's body gets lost in the woods. So they put a GPS on it.

A loom is for making a grid. You move horizontally through the vertical preparations. There's a rigidity to this set-up, it's strictly perpendicular. You don't have to think very much as you put the shuttle through.

We were getting drunk at Ariana Reines's ANCIENT EVENINGS writing group, reading a Dogon creation myth about dual sexes and the weaving of language, and other things. There were tassels too. A plaited skirt with a fringe, was specially made to

convey the good whisperings of a moist, dewey dell. The origin of the world was an anthill with teeth. It had been raped, evil had issued from it, but still it was a shelter for those who would fix everything.

Those who would be transformed and empowered to do good were welcome to sink into it.

“By their moist, luminous, and articulate presence, they were purging that body which was forever defiled in the sight of God, but which was nevertheless capable of acquiring in some degree the purity required for the activities of life.”

Later this anthill organ turns into a

mouth, it then turns into a loom. A strange reptilian tongue is seen forcing thread through it to weave language. Language woven by an ambivalently described sex act. I can't help thinking that the inherent perpendicularity of the loom structure is bad for the sex dynamics woven into this language. I wish instead that tassels were magically being spit out of this joyous crevice.

Then I'm really drunk and we talk about the wedge. And I love this wedge idea for being the answer to the sex grid metaphor of the loom, which is also a language metaphor. Because a wedge is a combination of vertical and horizontal, it's moving both ways at once like the knight

in the chess game. Or the bishop I guess, though the horse is more queer. And language is woven on the loom, and language is constricted by this grid of sexualities. But there are wedges.

There are different ways to use a loom. When I get this loom set up I will use it differently than my grandmother, who always obeyed the grid, going back and forth, back and forth, all the way across, like a slinky with one clear path to the bottom of the staircase. I will use it instead to make a tapestry, which will require a different butterfly hanging loose from the warp for each of the colors I choose to wedge into place. This is called a haute lisse or basse lisse, accumu-

lating its imagery by the weaver's will and fingers rather than the scheme prescribed by the grid and the obedient shuttle.

Like the unicorn tapestries.

Wherein the unicorn purifies the whole world from all its sins every morning by dipping its horn in the stream. And how the only way for the bad people to capture it and kill it is to tempt it with the love of a young virgin who takes its head on her lap and strokes its mane until, oblivious upon her bosom it can be brutally speared and ripped apart by dogs. All of this pictured in scenes woven with most beautiful threads -- you must see it, I said.

The lissier works on the back, facing,
across the warp, the sunlight. She
controls the result across the warp
using a mirror.

When I was little I liked to

make bouquets

climb on my grandmother's loom (I
fell off it once, hit my head and cried)

climb trees

arrange little plates of chocolate

watch the fortune telling fish curl and

flip in my hot hand

I liked swings, hammocks

an octagonal swimming pool dug
and poured by my grandfather. The

whole family would swim around the
periphery until a fantastic centrifuge
was underway. Everything that had
fallen out of the woods into the pool
converged at its center. Children
too were pulled along in the current,
swiftly, around and around the edges
of this pool. And if a large man stood
in the center and jumped up and
down, a centrifugal wave got going,
so that all the water went to the edg-
es and suddenly surged back to the
middle again tossing you straight up
out of the center.

One day my father came back from
the woods with two black eyes. His
nose was broken.

Even in the winter he slept in his tent

in the woods. I, in the city, would step outside a bar to smoke, and I would think I wanted to get back inside soon because the cold was unbearable. I would think of him in his meager shelter.

He said, “the first thing I do when I wake up is build a big fire and then I run in place next to it for 25 minutes.”

One morning he was carrying the logs for his fire up a steep hill. The snow had turned to ice. He slipped and smashed his face into the logs he carried in his arms.

Then he built his fire and ran in place for 25 minutes.

Yayoi Kusama wrote:

My mother said that the art world was the lowest. Art dealers are dirty & tricky. Art critics have big mouths & are not true to themselves. Artists are beggars who live under bridges.

Yes I feel that. If I want to be professional artists I must associate with these lowest of the low. It is not healthy for humans. I'll get sick. However I have already been sick for many yrs so it will not matter. I wanted to be a gorgeous woman like a flower in full bloom but I chose to be an artist because I knew I could not love anybody & also

The page was taken out of context,
frozen under glass, so I do not know
what else she wrote. But I think what
she means is,

I mainly want to be capable of ac-
quiring in some degree the purity
required for the activities of life.

Yes I feel that.

2012

Weavers Discourse.

When 3 women are lying in a bed
and the two on the edges are under
the blanket, whereas the one in the
middle is on top of the blanket, this is
a form of weaving.

When an airplane flies low over the
house where the women sleep, car-
rying hundreds of bodies across the
sky in a pattern relative to other sim-
ilar vessels, this is another kind of
weaving.

April 13

Here are the activities of my after-
noon, I offer you this weaving on an
early spring day
An ominous date, an unlucky number,
and yet the birthday of a friend.

Part of the morning is spent thrust
into the chilly sea in the bright April
sunshine at Rockaway, running over
the sand, divesting my body of cloth-
ing, about 10:30 AM

Cold sun

A beach of ones own

A jolt

Catapulting me forth from the resid-
ual wintertime bitterness of an early
30s single woman artist too often
disgusted and always wondering how
to chanel this disgust, how to spin
hay into gold

On the drive home from the beach
the driver says "I know we're still so
young but on the other hand some-
thing IS changing in my body, I feel
less bouncy"

Then i'm home again. Spackling the kitchen. I resolve to turn a weed-lube experiment into pot brownies. I melt the THC coconut oil which I had originally intended to absorb through my asshole and bake it into brownies instead.

The new plumbing under the sink has been leaking. I unscrew all the pipes and put them in a tote bag.

I go to the Botanica and ask about substances for courage. The woman gives me a "Strong Arm" fragrance with picture of said arm on bottle. It just smells like cheap ultra masculine cologne. Like mens deodorant.

I buy Chinese food and read about murdered students in Kenya at a greasy table. The woman who started the Living Theater died.

I lie in bed reading about herbs for courage, and watch part of a Simpsons episode called Lard of the Dance about stealing used grease. I watch Louis Farrakhan being interviewed by Phil Donahue. I read the titles of different kinds of weave drafts and attempt to make sense of how they are to be used to dress my loom.

I still have a painting sitting around with photos of old men blowing each other woven together with gouache paintings of flowers that I had collected around this time of year three years ago in Highland park New Jersey. Was I less disgusted then?

I mop the bathroom. The new plumbing is still leaking because the man at the hardware store cut the pipe too short.

I do not like David Brooks' new char-

acter building campaign. I feel even more disgust. I watch porn, massage themed. It's got some great parts. I watch the same video again later. I'm very horny because it is springtime. I feel optimistic about sex while watching the porn. But when I go on Tinder I feel absolute disgust. The person I attempted to advance a small seduction on via email earlier in the day has not responded and i check too frequently for his response which also causes me disgust.

I did not feel any disgust at all while interacting with the men at the hardware store. Comparing the lengths of copper pipes with them and watching them use wrenches to tighten the joints extra tight was very pleasurable

to me despite our somewhat vast age difference.

I read about feverfew, black cohosh, rosemary.

I am still thinking about weaving.

I leave the house and see the BQE is like the warp threads I dreamed about, elevated, going right across my field of vision with a backdrop of night sky over Staten Island, with some ocean in between., but really a filthy urban landscape of speeding trucks and their fumes at the same time as being very romantic and refreshing because there are some stars in the evening sky and the temperature hints of a time of year that

has certainly been lusty and verdant since time immemorial and my body is responding to it. The city and this, together, are a radical form of weaving. Looking at this weaving I know also that Emily Sunblad is singing in a church somewhere, because I saw it on instagram. It feels remote, but still part of this weaving.

A man in a gay bar tells me about a video game called LOOM. He also asks me, why is the thread made of many fibers stronger than the one big thread?

I don't know, but I become fascinated by just the idea of the many fibers.

What if it was possible to pay attention to every fiber? Every person in the subway a fiber? Every word,

every sign, every shoe, every mouth. This would surely give one confidence in the strength of the greater filament, this would reduce disgust, increase courage.

Reading about how prisons are the new mental institutions but without care, only confinement and violence for our mentally ill.

At the vegetable stand a man offered me a fresh almond, green, like an olive, kernel housed in a sour husk of flesh. Slimy and transparent inside. I tried hard all day to notice every thread in order to be less disgusted.

Those demons who embrace bad health are beginning to come out and dance and I have removed my shoes.

I promised myself to write about weaving tonight. Drinking a bottle of wine and writing is a form of weaving.

To Hayley: my experience of weaving comes from two important things: that of having played near my grandmother's loom as a child, and that of living with your mother's loom, calling it my own, learning to use it and feeling connected to something through it.

To anyone: it has helped me in times of disgust to see weaving as an overarching metaphor. When I look at everything around me, and try to dissolve categories and merely observe unanchored details, I enjoy

thinking of each of these details as a fiber that is being spun together with all the rest. When I walk through Atlantic Pacific I try to see each person I pass and every sign, perhaps a newspaper headline when I pass the newsstand – as all being fabulously interspersed.

Why does this make me feel better? What is this fantasy of organization, fantasy of a whole thing that encompasses all those fibers?

Perhaps in weaving everything is equal. There is no hierarchy, there is no detail, there is only structure. Color is superficial. The pattern would exist without color. Decorum is possible but not necessary. If you pay

attention to the weave you are paying attention to a superstructure that every fiber can be made to participate in.

Does it sound fascist?

Holistic?

People say “the fabric of” for instance of “everyday life.” Everything is part of this fabric because of weaving.

Weaving builds structure out of the disparate threads of wine bottle and goose, young woman and sawhorse, extension cord and cloud, baseball cap and lightbulb, pink felt blanket and tourist, sidewalk and kitchen – any two threads, structured as warp and weft, cross each other to pro-

duce strength and meaning.

Here are some names of different ways of crossing things, different “weave drafts” – recipes or patterns for weaving your subjects together:

BIRDS EYE

ROSE PATH

CROWS FOOT

DOVES EYES

WALL OF TROY

VERTICAL STRIPES OF MONKS

CLOTH

BACHELORS BUTTON

EASTERN WHEELS

POOR MAN'S DAMASK

LILY AMONG THORNS

SUMMER AND WINTER

IRREGULAR DESIGN

Travis spoke about the similarity of loom and harp. And he said it was to do with the female pubis. I asked why and he couldn't explain exactly. But suddenly we sat closer with new intention in our conversation. He gestured around his own pubis, his HBA belt, explaining the twisting of threads into a stronger thread, tension, balance.

Is the greatest painting in the Louvre not unlike the list of dishes offered on a Chinese take-out menu in New York City, to you?

Is French kissing like weaving?

Why is a harp like a vagina?

Have you ever eaten a spiderweb?

If, first thing in the morning, when you take a stranger you just woke up with down to the old pier and see a couple of geese and their astonishing little yellow chicks nesting in the spring grasses, does it mean you're going to make a family?

I meet my brother for an Ozu film, the Only Son.

The opening credits roll over a background of woven cloth. The first subtitle that appears says, "all tragedy begins in the bond between parent and child."

The movie is partly about debt. A

female factory worker is convinced to send her son to high school and beyond, despite the fact that she is raising him alone, poor, and “getting old.” She works very hard spinning wool. A young teacher convinces her she must send her son to school. “Who will take care of me?” she asks. “I will study hard and will become a great man,” her son says.

Years later she visits him in Tokyo. He is poor and borrows money from other teachers at the night school where he teaches geometry, in order to feed and entertain his mother.

The most awful part of the film is after mother and son sit in an open landscape near an incinerator and

he confesses how disappointed he is with how his life has turned out. “I wish I never came to Tokyo, i wish i never went away to school” he says. The mother is terribly upset. At night she reveals to her son that she had to give everything up to pay for his education, has sold her house and all her property. “I live in the factory dormitory now,” the old mother says to our shock, while her sons wife sobs in the next room. “It would all be for the good if you were happy,” the mother says.

I meet a much younger man or boy. He tells me about the tapestry in the book “OF HUMAN BONDAGE.” He says surely i know of Hegel’s use of the weaving metaphor. Yes, I am

down with those dialectics. Originally he had only asked me out to lunch, calling it the least assuming meal date. I say, sorry an unassuming lunch has turned into such a tapestry! meaning, lots of time in bed, weaving, weaving bodies, telling stories, listening to records, sharing meals, looking at the harbor at close proximity from various vantages, chasing geese, kissing relentlessly. Truly a lot of weaving.

Rachel comes over to help dress the loom. First is a lot of counting, tracing a path around a warping board for hours. While I do this Rachel sits with an unruly ball of yarn, slowly untangling it and winding it into neat balls on the wool winding machine that

came with Hayley's mom's loom. I like this, she says. It reminds me of being close to my mom on the couch where she sat with her balls of yarn.

