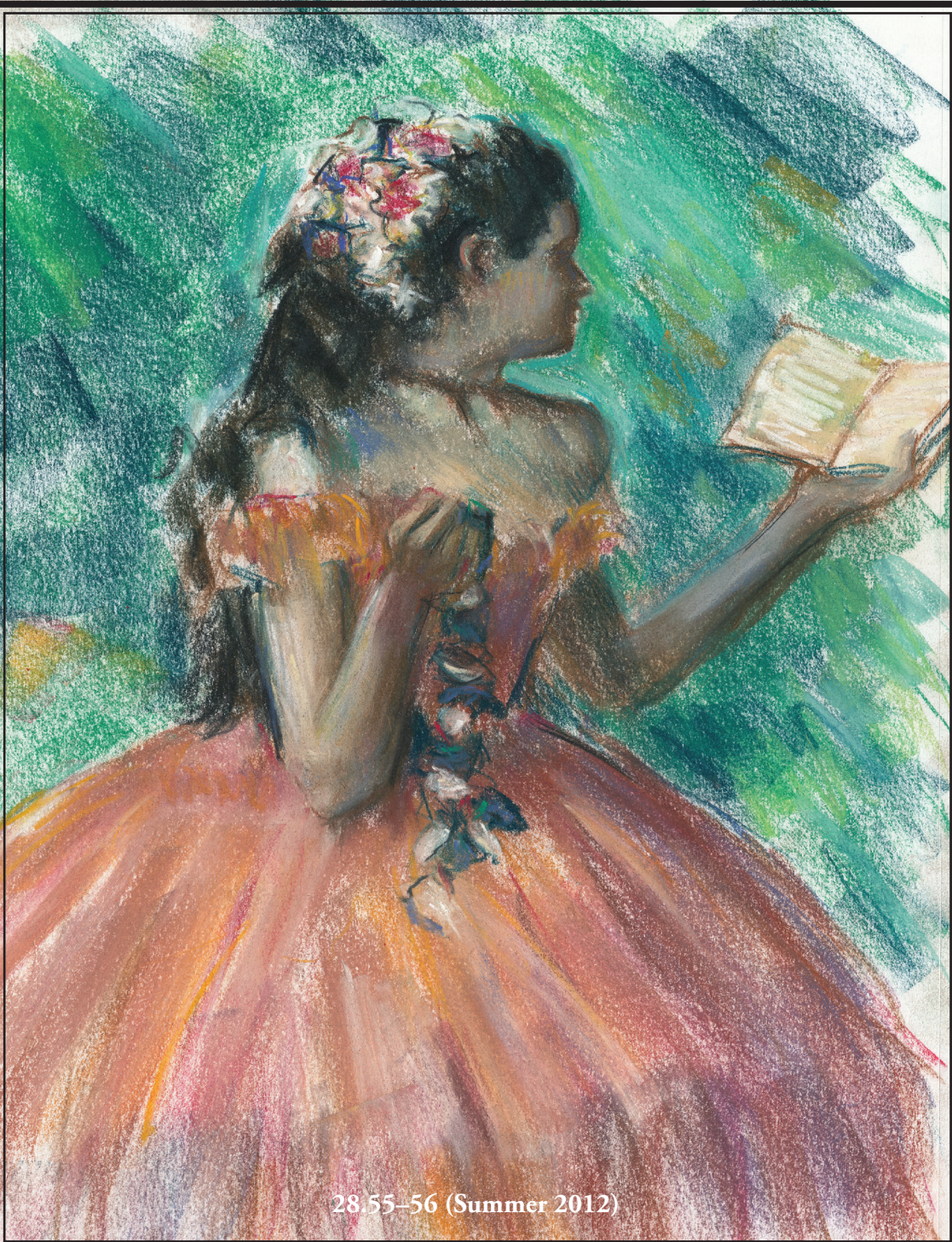


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LITERARY RESEARCH



28.55–56 (Summer 2012)

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En tant que publication de l'Association internationale de la littérature comparée, *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research* a comme but de communiquer aux comparatistes du monde entier les développements récents de notre discipline. Dans ce but la revue publie les comptes rendus des livres notables sur les sujets comparatistes, les nouvelles des congrès professionnels et d'autres événements d'une importance significative pour nos membres, et de temps en temps les prises de position sur des problèmes qui pourraient apporter beaucoup d'intérêt. On devrait souligner que RL/LR ne publie pas de recherche littéraire comparée.

Les comptes rendus sont typiquement écrits ou en français ou en anglais, les deux langues officielles de l'AILC. Néanmoins, on pourrait faire quelques exceptions étant donné les limites des ressources à la disposition du rédacteur. En général, un compte rendu prendra une des formes suivantes: des annonces brèves de 500 à 800 mots pour les livres courts ou relativement spécialisés, des comptes rendus proprement dits de 1.200 à 1.500 mots pour les livres plus longs ou d'une portée plus ambitieuse, ou des essais de 2.000 à 3.000 mots portant ou sur un seul ouvrage d'un grand mérite ou sur plusieurs ouvrages qu'on pourrait traiter ensemble. En vue de l'importance des ouvrages collectifs pour accomplir une étude assez large de certains sujets comparatistes, RL/LR acceptera les comptes rendus de recueils d'essais bien organisés, y compris les numéros spéciaux des revues. Nous sommes prêts à publier les comptes rendus un peu plus longs de ces textes quand la situation le demande.

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As a publication of the International Comparative Literature Association, *Recherche Littéraire / Literary Research* has the mission of informing comparative literature scholars worldwide of recent contributions to the field. To that end it publishes reviews of noteworthy books on comparative topics, information about events of major significance for comparatists, and occasional position papers on issues of interest to the field. It should be emphasized that RL/LR does not publish comparative literary scholarship.

Reviews are normally written in French or English, the two official languages of the ICLA, though exceptions will be considered within the limits allowed by the editor's resources. Reviews generally fall into one of the following three categories: book notes of 500 to 800 words for short or relatively specialized works, reviews of 1,200 to 1,500 words for longer works of greater scope, and review essays of 2,000 to 3,000 words for a work of major significance for the field or for joint treatment of several related works. Given the importance of collaborative work in promoting broad-based comparative scholarship, RL/LR does review well-conceived edited volumes, including special issues of journals, and will publish somewhat longer reviews of such scholarship when the situation merits.

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Présentation du rédacteur / Editor's Introduction

IN KEEPING WITH THE TRADITION reestablished by my predecessor, John Burt Foster, Jr., *Recherche Littéraire/Literary Research* has returned to its initial mission as a review journal. It is subsidized in large part by the ICLA and it was never the Association's intention to have it compete with the comparative literature journals produced wonderfully by various national organizations. The ICLA sees itself as a parent and not as a competitor with its affiliated member organizations. Part of our mission involves supporting the various national organizations. Toward this end, we have expanded our mandate to include, in addition to the reviews of international works in comparative literature, reports publicizing the work of these national organizations in their various initiatives, workshops, and conferences. This issue offers reports on conferences in India, Japan, and Estonia. I am particularly proud of these reports, as they allow our readers to keep abreast of activities that their schedules and pocketbooks might not afford them the luxury of attending in person. They also provide insight into how comparatists from one country view conceptualizations of the field in another country and, more importantly how they practice their vision of comparative literature. In a subtle manner, they offer from a distance brief state-of-the-discipline-as-it-is-practiced commentaries. Such reports are important because there really is considerable activity in comparative literature beyond the dorsal head and tail of Amero-European university centers. This larger and more expansive view of the discipline is also exhibited in the variety of discourses we find in the review essays, book reviews, and book notes included in these pages. The value of the ICLA resides in its many conceptualizations and its diverse cross-section of critical voices.

I have long felt that the breadth of the scholarly activities of the ICLA is not fully known to its members and comparatists who are not yet members. In addition to the triennial conference, the ICLA consists

mainly of its standing research committees and time-limited committees. The work of these committees needs to be highlighted not only for its high quality, but also in order to encourage members who are interested in the various topics of these committees so that they might connect with other scholars working outside their countries. The manner in which such connections can be made is ideally and perhaps initially through the triennial congresses and then subsequently through individual conferences sponsored by these committees. For this reason, we have posted the list of the committees presently active and their chairs in order for the general members to query them if they are interested in joining in their work. A number of the books we review are the fruit of conferences organized by these committees. It is hoped that these conference reports and the reviews of their publications will give our readers a clearer idea of the important work of these committees and encourage member participation in their activities.

Finally, we have included in this issue the English translation of the keynote address from the Rio Congress of the noted Cuban critic Roberto Fernández Retamar. Although this article has appeared in Spanish in the Brazilian proceedings, we thought it deserved greater dissemination to the general membership. In our field, we so often speak of “crossing boundaries” and “making minority voices heard.” To do so demands that we move outside our individual national or regional perspective and engage these voices more intimately. As I write this introduction to an issue that concludes with Roberto Fernández Retamar’s keynote address, I am reminded of a discussion a number of years ago during a board meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA). The ACLA Board was bruited the idea of going to Cuba for its annual conference. I remember thinking at the time how little practical experience these board members must have with the vagaries (and harsh realities) of US immigration—failing to realize that some of our non-native born or non-citizen colleagues might not be able to cross borders in anything more than a literary and metaphorical sense. Of course, that some of our Hispanic colleagues might not welcome the experience of going to Cuba was never even discussed. For good or ill, this conference never materialized. However, the appearance of our Cuban colleague’s keynote in these pages has made me reflect back upon this episode. The ACLA would have taken a US conference to Cuba. Academics based in the United States would have “experienced” Cuba in some manner and, presumably, in

suitable hotel accommodations. The theme of the conference would reflect US-European epistemes and configurations of the field. Some Cubans would be invited to participate but in essence it would have been a US conference in a Third World touristic venue. I did, I remember, question this aspect and an eminent US comparatist responded blithely that criticism is best “couched” from within. All talk of “positionality” aside, I personally do not like conferences on topics such as “alterity” or “Otherness” that take place at resorts in poor countries. I relate this anecdote because, to my mind, this form of engagement defines the work of national organizations. They are, by definition insular and hegemonic. The purpose of a national organization is to promote its particular brand of scholarship. The ICLA thus differs radically from its various member organizations in this respect, it reflects and promotes multivocal discussion. Since *Recherche Littéraire/Literary Research* is the ICLA’s official organ it should also expose its international audience to a variety of ways of understanding our field. It should examine the different perspectives, methodologies, and visions of what comprises literary scholarship in the world today. Placing these different perspectives side by side highlights difference and enriches our conversation. For this reason, *Recherche Littéraire/Literary Research* highlights the extent to which the ICLA speaks a multitude of languages. Some of these languages might strike us as different; their visions of the field may diverge from those of our home countries and comfort zones, their notions of what constitutes interesting scholarship may also vary from our own. But, it is the actual confrontation of different discourses—and significantly, consciencing the very possibility of different discourses—that is to be celebrated. It is what separates Comparative Literature from national language departments, World Literature as it is currently being constructed by the First World, and other disciplines in the Humanities. My fondest ICLA memories are when someone presents a paper or an idea and a colleague from another time zone asks, “Do you really conceive of “X” in those terms? Do scholars make such analogies in your country?” Such questions snap us out of our complacency; they temper our arrogance. I think they make us better scholars. This openness and willingness to engage different ways of thinking is what drew me to this field in the first place and it is certainly what I wish to honor in these pages.

Recherche Littéraire/Literary Research was relaunched four years ago under the generous funding of George Mason University and the

able editorship of John Burt Foster, Jr. I am honored to now take up the editorial reigns, as it were, and continue to disseminate thoughtful and challenging reviews and reports that will help us all gain a greater understanding of the various international contours of comparative literature today. This present issue has been subsidized by my home institution, the University of Georgia, as well as the ICLA. I want to thank the ICLA members who have contributed to the effort of producing this volume. I also wish to thank Dean Noel Fallows of UGA for his support. I am ever grateful to Jenny Webb of Webb Editorial, the production crew in the Office of Print Services at Brigham Young University, Nell Burger, and Sharon Brooks. I also wish to thank John Schweppe for volunteering his artwork to grace the cover of the volume. In subsequent issues we hope to offer other *hommages* to famous works of art.

DOROTHY FIGUEIRA

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Essai / Review Article

Libuša Vajdová and Róbert Gáfrik, eds. “*New Imagined Communities:*” *Identity Making in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe*. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010. ISBN: 9788081014017.

This collective volume comprises a selection of papers that were originally presented at an international conference on “‘New Imagined Communities’: Identity Build-Up in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe,” which took place in Bratislava on 14 and 15 May, 2009, under the auspices of the ICLA Research Committee on Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and the Institute of World Literature of the Slovak Academy of Science. As the title of the volume (and of the conference) indicates, the contributors apply to Eastern and South-Eastern Europe some of the theoretical insights of “cultural studies” as developed in England and the United States in the 1970s and 1980s. The editors lay out this Marxian and post-Marxian methodological program in their preface to the volume. They mention Benedict Anderson’s influential book, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) as their main point of reference in approaching the issues of group identity in the region and adopt the definition of “identity” proposed by Stuart Hall (Director of the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham, the UK).

For Stuart Hall (1977) and his colleagues, and, in their wake, for the editors of the present volume, “identity” is not an essentialist, but a “strategic” and “positional” concept, meaning that “identities are constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions; they are subject to a radical historicisation and are constantly in a process of transformation” (“*New Imagined Communities*” 9). In turn, cultural discourses that build identities and their orientation “play a role in the construction of imagined communities, which are also unstable and historically erratic” (9). Consequently, according to the editors, the papers collected in this volume “focus on the current and former

forms, causes, and manifestations of recent changes and different strategies and objectives of discourses of identity that shape them,” resulting in “new imagined communities” (9).

The editors also point out that the process of identity making is closely related to the processes of modernization within and without Eastern and South Eastern Europe. In turn, these processes involve a complex mixture of modernization and conservatism, and even though their discourses are “often very different, almost contradictory,” they are also “closely related, mixed and intertwined, forming incoherent and heterogeneous wholes” (13). According to the editors, it is the complex identity making in the context of modernization in the region, as well as in the larger context of globalization, that the present collection seeks to explore.

The editors divide the seventeen contributions into three parts, presumably according to their common thematic focus and affinities. Part One, “Notions and Methods,” deals with “the fundamental terms and categorisations” (presumably of identity making). The first contribution, by one of the editors (Róbert Gáfrik) is a tribute to the Slovak literary theorist Dionýz Ďurišin, who, according to Gáfrik, developed the fundamental principles of “cultural studies” in parallel to his colleagues in the West. Like them, Ďurišin refined the Marxist concept of the socio-economic “base” as a generator and determinant of the “superstructure” of cultural phenomena in general and literature in particular. As Gáfrik puts it, both “Ďurišin’s theory and cultural studies work with a [Marxist] notion of base and superstructure directly associate literature with the general social process, i.e., they both share the same breeding-ground” (25).

The second contribution in Part One, Monica Spiridon’s “Europes’: Real and Made Up Patterns” is a useful review of various conflicting and competing theories of European identity in terms of imaginary and real geographies. She focuses particularly on the concepts of *Mitteleuropa* (Middle Europe) and Central Europe. The first concept was used in German cultural and political discourse before and during the two World Wars to promote German hegemony; whereas the second was used, after World War II, to define a separate cultural and geopolitical space between Western Europe and the Soviet Union.

In turn, the third essay in Part One, “The Cosmopolitan Literary Imperative” by Vladimir Biti, offers an extended critique of Pascale Casanova’s controversial book, *La République mondiale des lettres* (1999), which can be seen as the French bid for European, if not global, cultural

hegemony against the German one, as well as positing a simplistic opposition and/or choice between nationalism and cosmopolitanism in cultural matters. The fourth and last contribution to Part One, Ivo Pospíšil's "Central Europe (Mitteleuropa), East-Central Europe (Ostmitteleuropa), East and South-East Europe: Problems of European Areas," points out some of the terminological difficulties involved in such area studies. More importantly, it proposes a cross-disciplinary research program in "comparative cultural studies" comprising sociology, philology, linguistics, political science, psychology, mass media studies, and information and communication technology. One of the practical objectives of this program would be to create on-line catalogs and unified university information systems about the regions in question. It would also widen the areas of research from Europe to other parts of the world, and it would presuppose "two types of multidisciplinary: 1) vertical, combining various scientific disciplines, mainly philologies [sic], humanities, and social sciences; and 2) horizontal, tending toward the analysis and interpretation of the cultural contact of European and non-European traditions and values: especially literature could bring some important and unsubstitutable data" (53f).

According to the editors, the essays in Part Two, "Globalism and East European Identity Making," deal with the issue of various European constructions of identity in the context of the current processes of globalization. The first contribution, "Cultural Realities in View of Dialogism and Narrative Identity" by Jola Skulj, appears to focus mostly on the interaction of various European literatures and cultures within the European Union, moving on to a global perspective only toward the end of the argument. Skulj suggests that intercultural relations in general should be rethought in terms of Bakhtin's notion of dialogism and Mignolo's concept of "border gnosis" (2000) as instruments of negotiating cultural "otherness" and the current "culture wars," which are a direct result of Western imperialist policies.

In a brief but excellent paper on "The Construction of 'Europe' in Serbian Culture in the First Half of the Twentieth Century," Zoran Milutinović lists the various images of "Europe" promoted by Serbian artists and intellectuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including "Europe" as the world's most valuable cultural treasure trove; "Europe" as a model of modernization, rationality and technological progress; decadent and de-spiritualized "Europe;" imperialist, greedy and

heartless “Europe,” and so on. Milutinović concludes that these constructions hardly differed from their counterparts in other corners of the continent and that there was no such thing as a uniquely Serbian “Europe.” Instead, there circulated, throughout the continent, many images and discourses of “Europe,” in which “Serbian intellectuals participated, from which they borrowed and to which they contributed” (84).

The next paper on “The European Cultural Identity from the Perspective of the Periphery” by Sonja Stojmenska-Elzeser deals with the predicament of a “small culture” (in this case the Macedonian one) in relation to the binary opposition of center and periphery that remains operative in the current European context. Stojmenska-Elzeser places her hope for social and cultural change in comparative literary studies, especially in their new guise of cultural and postcolonial studies with their sub-discipline of “xenology” or “heterology” (theory of otherness). For “the less powerful, subaltern, peripheral cultures, such as Macedonia, these discourses [of otherness] give an opportunity to express their historical pain and trauma as an academic and creative act, or even to make an effort to step forward in finding a solution for overcoming the problems of the centre-periphery opposition” (94).

In “A Place for the Tragic: Individuality and Imagined Community in Semezdin Mehmedinović’s Poetry of Exile,” Guido Snel shows how in the work of Mehmedinović—a Bosnian poet who currently lives in the United States—several historical models of cosmopolitan communities intersect and engage in an imaginary dialogue: the Islamic Bosnian community that has its roots in the Ottoman Empire, the multinational community of the former Yugoslavia, the larger, multiethnic community of Europe, and the even larger Western community, including North America, where the poet from Sarajevo has emigrated. According to Snel, Mehmedinović seeks, half-heartedly, to construct a personal identity by negotiating between all of these communities, as well as between the tragic stance of a homeless exile and the inauthentic position of casting oneself as a victim (of nationalism, ethnic cleansing, religious fanaticism and so on). Whereas the poet is uncomfortable with all of these postures, Snel argues, he is nevertheless in the process of constructing, through his poetry, a third, in-between, imaginary geography, not unlike other exiled poets from the region, such as Milan Kundera, Czesław Miłosz and Danilo Kiš, who employ the imaginary construction of “Central Europe” (mentioned also by Monica Spiridon in her contribution) to develop a new personal identity.

In turn, Mária Bátorová, in “On the Acceptance of Individual Identities and the European Identity”—the last essay of Part Two—also chooses a literary figure, the dissident Slovak writer Dominik Tatarka (1913–1988), to explore the dynamics of constructed individual and collective identities, this time in the context of an enlarged European Union. She concludes, on the strength of Tatarka’s exemplary life, writings, and political stances, that “democracy and Christian universalism are the two principles on which human existence can operate in such a way that it will respect diversity in unity” (Bátorová’s emphasis, 120).

According to the editors, the essays in Part Three, “Conceptual Landmarks,” explore the problems of the “specific understanding of the individual elements at work in the construction of group identities and imaginary communities” (12). The first essay on “Ethnicism, Land, and City” by Péter Hajdu deals with the adverse effects of globalization, particularly in Hungary, and should have been included in Part Two of the volume. It points out that globalization results in a number of paradoxes, including the rise of “ethnicism” (as cynically manipulated by the local political elites) over both nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Whereas cosmopolitan attitudes may prevail in a metropolis such as Budapest, ethnically homogeneous communities are strongly supported by rural populations in Hungary (and, one might add, other countries, e.g., Romania). Hajdu correctly notes that the new ethnicism in Hungary (as well as elsewhere in the region) is directed particularly against the Roma population as it is chased out of the metropolis, but it is even less welcome in the countryside.

One may add that relatively small sections of the Roma population have taken advantage of the new mobility offered by globalization, liberal democracy and “free enterprise,” and have filled the main tourist spots of France, Italy and other Western countries especially during the summer. These seasonal migrations have in turn elicited resentment in the host cultures and have revived all kinds of ethnic prejudices and “imagined” cultural clichés about the Roma’s Eastern European countries of origin.

In “Serbian Darkness: History according to Dušan Kovačević,” Nevena Daković examines the treatment of the Serbian key national *mythos* in the plays and film scripts of Dušan Kovačević, one of the most prominent contemporary Serbian writers. This key *mythos* arose in the wake of the battle of Kosovo in 1389, which resulted in a crushing defeat of the Serbian forces at the hands of the Turks. According to Daković (and many

other contemporary cultural historians), the “magic of Serbian nationalism is defeat, miraculously changed into destined victory” (135). This nationalist myth supported national stereotypes and prejudices throughout Serbian history and culminated in Milošević’s disastrous policies aimed at reviving a “Greater Serbia.” Throughout his dramatic and cinematic works, Kovačević deconstructs (but, one might say, also reinforces) this self-defeating and self-destructive *mythos* through dark satire, sardonic irony, and relentless parody. According to Daković, Kovačević implies that war is an inevitable and “gloomy destiny caused by the paradigmatic feature of Serbian national mentality—everlasting discordance” and “fractioning among the diverse identity groups” (134). The divisions along various lines of difference—“old/young, urban/rural, insiders/out-siders, communists/royalists, democrats/radicals—culminates with the division of Serbs versus Serbs” (135).

In turn, Jana Dudková, in the next essay on “Self-Colonisation, Urbicide, and Vampirism: The Representations of the Balkans after 1989” explores some of the same myths and discourses that Milutinović and Daković mention (if now viewed mostly from outside Serbian culture) in the Serbian cinema of the 1990s. Dudková starts from Alexander Kiossev’s theory of “self-colonization” (1999), which posits a willing acceptance and importation of ‘Western’ cultural models or values by Eastern European countries, revealing feelings of inferiority toward their own culture. She goes even farther, however, by concluding that Serbia has experienced, especially since the Bosnian war, “an inverted self-colonialisation thanks to which, instead of adopting Western cultural models, we face a country/nation that is becoming similar to the former colonies of Western Europe” (159).

In “Decadence and the Balkans,” Libuša Vajdová, the other editor of the volume, starts from a detailed analysis of Matei Caragiale’s (in)famous novel, *Craii de Curtea Veche* (1929; *The Idle Princes of the Old Court*) to make essentially the same arguments about the self-defeating and self-colonizing mentality of South-Eastern Europe, deployed in the essays by Daković and Dudková, but in relation to the Romanian culture between the two world wars.

Michael Mueller’s essay, “About the Rhetorical Manoeuvres during the Transition from the Second to the Third Yugoslavia: The Example of the Belgrade Sports Magazine *Tempo*,” returns to Serbia, describing the various identity crises that the Serbs underwent during the dissolution of

Yugoslavia, which, according to Mueller, was desired by everyone in the Federation except for the ethnic Serbian population. He traces this process through a textual analysis of various issues of the very popular Sports Magazine *Tempo*. But this analysis appears rather superficial and one-sided. Although Mueller is right in asserting that *Tempo*, like any other major Serbian magazine, was subject to the political manipulation on the part of the Belgrade authorities in the 1990s, he discounts the fact that many Yugoslavs, not just athletes, identified themselves as such (in addition to being Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, etc., as well as Muslim, Eastern Orthodox or Catholic), were proud of the Yugoslav Federation, and did not want to see it dissolved. For example, Mueller himself undermines his argument when he mentions that the departure of Montenegro from the Federation was decided by less than 2,000 votes and that the Montenegrin authorities manipulated the popular referendum on this issue (188).

Nor does Mueller consider the intense propaganda on the side of the Croatian and other nationalists, as well as the misgivings that any kind of nationalist program elicited in a large number of Yugoslav people of good will and of all ethnic and religious backgrounds, who anticipated and tried to prevent the conflagration and carnage that followed. Nor should researchers dismiss the possibility that the Yugoslav federate model (minus communist or other type of "strong-man" dictatorship, ethnicism, and Serbian or Croat pretensions to hegemony) may again become, at some point in the future, a viable cultural, economic and political union for the Slavic people in the region. In a word, the situation was much more complicated than Mueller's simplistic, biased approach (typical of certain American pop-culture studies) implies, even though this is not the place to engage it in detail.

In any case, Mueller could have benefited from reading František Šitek's essay on "Pan-Serb Golden Age and Montenegrin Heroic Age: Reconstructing History and Identity Narratives in Montenegro, 1905–1914," which follows his own. The essay details the complex relationship between Serbian and Montenegrin communities as part of the same, yet differentiated, "imagined" ethnic and national *mythos*. This common bond, which is no less strong for being "imagined," may explain why the Montenegrin leaders who orchestrated the plebiscite on the separation from Serbia were so worried about its outcome.

The next essay on the "East-West Relations in *The White Castle* by Orhan Pamuk" is a useful analysis of the prominent Turkish novelist's

work, which might have fitted better in Part Two of the collective volume, which presumably deals with global issues. Its author, Dušan Živković, cogently argues that Pamuk, in *The White Castle*, “has emphasized the idea that the East and the West must never be considered as contrasts, but always as complementary, so that their specific qualities can be preserved” (207).

Finally, the last and one of the best essays in the volume, “Identity Crisis and Identity Formation in the Greek-Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church in Eastern Slovakia” draws attention to what its author, Václav Ježek, calls “the organic character of history in relation to small communities” (217). According to Ježek, the “identity of any group (be it a nation, religious community, etc.) is always determined by interaction with other groups.” Therefore, he continues, it is “an illusion to believe that any given community is ‘culturally self-sufficient’ or is able to be sufficient in itself. Even greater communities sooner or later will be divided into smaller units and *vice versa*, and this is the fundamental organic structure of history” (217f). Ježek correctly believes that once humans truly understand this interconnectedness, they will be able to “avoid conflicts and empty nationalism” (218).

From the foregoing brief survey, it has hopefully become clear that the seventeen contributions to the volume are too diverse and heterogeneous in their subject matter to be easily categorized. This is, in my view, a mark of their strength, rather than weakness. Nevertheless, the editors could have done them more justice by finding better criteria of organizing them than they did. For example, the titles of Parts One and Three of the volume are redundant, as well as vague: “notions and methods” may also be “conceptual landmarks,” and both say very little about the thematic of the essays included in those sections. Part Two, supposedly dedicated to Eastern European identities in the context of globalization, comprises several essays that touch on this topic only tangentially, whereas some essays from Part Three could have fitted well in Part Two. Furthermore, a number of essays deal with Eastern European identities in the context of the enlarged European Union, so the editors could have dedicated a special section to them.

But, more substantially, there is only one major theoretical approach to “identity making in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe” which dominates the volume and which is reflected in its title. Most essays fall under the general category of Marxian or post-Marxian “cultural

critique” and take their cue from Anglo-American “cultural studies.” Along these lines, in addition to Benedict Anderson’s influential book, one may mention Edward Said’s equally influential *Orientalism* (1978), in which the Palestinian thinker “exiled” in the United States developed his seminal concept of “imagined geographies.” In turn, Said’s book has inspired influential critiques of the Western European attitude toward other cultures, specifically East European, Central European, and South European ones. Among these critiques stand out Larry Wolff’s *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (1994); Milica Bakić-Hayden’s “Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia” (1995); Maria Todorova’s *Imagining the Balkans* (1997); and Vesna Goldsworthy’s *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (1998). All of them are cited in several contributions to the present collection, and the editors, in their Preface, make no secret of the fact that they favor this kind of approach.

While, in principle, cultural critique is of some use in tackling the very complex problems of identity in that part of Europe, viewing these problems entirely through that lens may lead to gross distortions. Additionally, it is symptomatic of the endemic, and much debated, historical practice of some East-European liberal elites of adopting Western cultural concepts or “forms” that become void of substance, or are even counterproductive, when imported to foreign soil. This is certainly the case with the contemporary field of “cultural studies.” As it has developed over the past four decades in the West, this field has employed largely Marxian and post-Marxian approaches to literature and society. It had its origin, reputedly enough, in the Frankfurt school of critical theory (headed by Theodor Adorno) on the one hand, and the Birmingham school of sociology (headed by Stuart Hall) on the other. As cultural studies moved from Germany and England to the United States, it became seasoned with a pinch of Derridian rhetorical deconstruction and a dash of Foucauldian historicist discourse analysis, finding its home in the various academic departments of English and/or Comparative Literature at major American universities. Thus, Comparative Literature in particular moved from an in-depth, comparative study of the literatures of the world in their specific cultural contexts to parochial gender, ethnic, and other special-interest-group studies (not least because its younger practitioners, unlike their older, European-trained predecessors, were monolingual and monocultural, and no longer had

the necessary linguistic, philological and philosophical tools to cope with complex global, intercultural issues).

Even worse, during the past two decades, the various disciplines within the humanities have been dominated, especially in North America, by “postcolonial” theory or by what one may call, more generally, *third-worldism*. In turn, this intellectual trend can be divided into the sincere and the hypocritical, or the politically correct, types. In its sincere versions, third-worldism is anti-cosmopolitan, parochial, fragmented and full of social and ideological *ressentiment*. It seems to be a partial return to the nationalist and ethnic fragmentation of late Romanticism. For this reason, it has easily been taken over by contemporary cultural theorists in the Eastern and South-Eastern parts of Europe as well.

Third-worldism can also be politically opportunistic and easily adoptable by a capitalist consumerist society. It is this hypocritical type of third-worldism that usually assumes the form of political correctness. In the United States, for example, there are many academic departments of cultural and postcolonial studies where white, often Ivy-League educated, scholars join their exiled colleagues (who belong, in turn, to the privileged groups of their own, “third-world,” countries) in churning out endless studies about the “colonial other” outside their historical and intellectual contexts. They have created an entire academic industry that has also spilled into the American mass culture and politics, leading to the so-called “culture wars”, as well as to a number of either sincere or cynical (but equally wrong-headed) policies toward minorities in academia and outside it.

Unfortunately, it is to this latter, Anglo-American version of cultural and postcolonial studies that many of the contributors to the present volume subscribe, in a “self-colonizing” cultural gesture (to adopt Alexander Kiossev’s provocative phrase) which is, ironically, decried by some of the same contributors. This is unfortunate not only because the European region in question is still struggling with various Marxist concepts, discourses and practices that have visited so much harm on it in the past, but also because what is now needed in that region (and not only there) is less an importation of fancy academic theories, and more of a moral and civic rejuvenation, especially of its cultural and political elites. In this respect, the notion that Eastern Europe has now turned into a colony of the West (instead of the former Soviet Union) may be provocative and may even contain a grain of truth in it, but it is also counterproductive. In my

view, it bespeaks the “self-colonizing” tendency of certain liberal intellectual circles in the region, either justifying political cynicism and corruption or leading to an abdication of personal responsibility (so typical of communities that blame others for the plights of their own making).

My suggestion to the academics and researchers in the region would, therefore, be to abandon the cultural and postcolonial studies model imported from the United States and, perhaps, adopt an eclectic model of *intercultural* studies in which cultural critique would play only a limited role, alongside other methodologies. Judging from the world historical events of the past century, excessive cultural critique, especially of the Marxist type, can only delay intellectual (and ethical) development, instead of helping it along. Moreover, when combined with deconstruction, it becomes just a rhetorical power move, which may nevertheless cause quite a bit of havoc in societies that are already saturated with power, often of an arbitrary and violent kind. At best, deconstructive cultural critique tends to render itself vacuous, like a mill run out of grist that foolishly keeps grinding away, which is often the case in the United States. But it may also cause harm by entering a continuous state of its own dissatisfaction, particularly in societies whose cultural elites are already replete with pessimism, demoralization and *amor fati*. This is the reason why I felt that Kovačević’s work, for example, may have the effect of reinforcing precisely the self-defeating and self-destructive Serbian national *mythos* that he seeks to explode through his dark satire. There are plenty of other “imagined” Serbian and European cultural models which are specific to the region (as Zoran Milutinović aptly points out in his contribution) and which are much more productive than the “victory in defeat” model. For example, the model of “Central Europe,” as imagined by Kundera, Miłosz and other cultural figures (and mentioned by Monica Spiridon and Guido Snel in this volume) could be a useful Platonic political fiction, worth implementing. Be that as it may, it is up to the local cultural and political elites to choose the models that best suit the interests of the entire population, not just those of their own narrow interest-groups.

As far as the Eastern- and South-Eastern European academic and research communities are concerned, I believe they would greatly benefit from more cross-disciplinary and intercultural projects of the type envisaged by Ivo Pospíšil and his colleagues at the Masaryk University in Brno. Such projects need not be informed by Marxian or deconstruction-based cultural and postcolonial studies, but neither should they be entirely

purged of such approaches, thus “throwing out the baby with the bath-water.” On the contrary, one should preserve some of their valuable insights as long as they are not turned into “forms without content” and are applied organically, rather than mechanically, to the object of research.

Given the limited space I have here, I shall exemplify what type of approach I have in mind by briefly examining just one vexed issue that will take more than cultural studies and cultural critique (as practiced today) to address successfully: it concerns precisely ethnic groups, “minorities,” and the politics of identity, which constitute a central theme of the present volume (and which I have discussed at some length elsewhere, e.g., in Spariosu 2004; 2006).

One particularly stubborn problem, not only in sociological and anthropological research or in cultural studies but also in public policy making, has been how to define an ethnic group and, by extension, an ethnic “minority.” In the European Union, there has been no dearth of definitions and corresponding policy recommendations; on the contrary, they have greatly proliferated in the past few decades, especially with the creation and continuous expansion of the European Union. For example, Christoph Pan and Beate Sibylle Pfeil (2004) have compiled a huge list of ethnic groups and “minorities,” based on the relative size of the heterogeneous populations living on the territory of a certain European nation-state. The numbers are staggering: over 300 minorities with over 100 million members can be found in Europe, which means that every seventh citizen belongs to a minority group.

According to Pan and Pfeil, the vague definitions of ethnic groups have led to the lack of effective minority rights policies within the European Union and have in turn had undesirable consequences in terms of social exclusion and discrimination. But they also recognize that the term “minority” is vague and needs a qualifier such as ethnic, religious, linguistic, and national to gain some meaning; moreover, these categories overlap and in many cases cannot be separated. No wonder then that the European Union policy makers have had such a hard time with ethnic and minority issues.

On the other hand, should one not consider the possibility—anathema to cultural critique—that the constructed categories of class, gender and ethnicity/race (the Unholy Trinity of Marxian-based cultural and postcolonial studies) have themselves created social discrimination and exclusion, which have in turn led to identity politics? In this light, the entire

ethnic and minority issue should be reframed and approached from a different direction. One can indeed start from the “constructivist” theories in the social sciences and humanities on which some of the contributors to the present volume have also drawn. These theories do question the traditional, essentialist view of ethnic groups, pointing out that the identity of such groups is constructed, often in the process of political struggles. Thus ethnic identifications often involve a relational, conflictive element, whereby the groups define themselves and are defined by others as what they are not (e.g., a Serb is a “Serb” because he is not a “Croat” and vice versa). This relational or mimetic way (Girard 1977; 1986) of constructing identity—ethnic, national, class-based, religious, or other—will invariably lead to violent clashes, all the more so since certain cultural theorists (e.g., Huntington 1996) essentialize it and decree it to pertain to human “nature,” rather than to improper human practices.

Contemporary cultural theorists further point out that ethnic groups are far from being internally homogeneous and that individuals within these groups may, in addition to their ethnic self-identification, define themselves in many other, often contradictory, terms. (Here the “Yugoslav” identity of many Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, and so on is a good case in point.) They argue that ethnicity, no less than race and nation, are not objective realities, but historical perspectives on the world: ways of seeing, interpreting, and representing human societies that are subject to change. Thus, they shift the analytical focus from identity to (self-) identifications, from groups as entities to group-making programs, from substance to process (Brubaker 1996; 2006).

These recent theories of ethnicity are inextricably linked to the idea of culture, which relies in turn on the concept of identity and difference. One may roughly discern two main views of culture in contemporary social science: the first one is an essentialist view, which posits culture as a durable, substantial, and, ultimately, universal category that determines the identity, coherence, and solidarity of a larger or smaller social group. According to this view, cultural identity creates cultural differences, which are, as a rule, contingent, insubstantial and nonessential and can eventually be amalgamated into an all-encompassing global culture.

The second view of culture appears to be the symmetrical opposite of the first one: it raises cultural difference to an essential status and, consequently, sees cultural identity as a fluid, unstable, and insubstantial state in the ceaseless play of cultural differences. However, both of

these views perceive the play of differences as a conflictive or an agonistic one. They are the two Janus-like faces of the same mentality of power (Spariosu 1991; 1997). It is just that, whereas the second view advocates a perpetual power contest, the first one wants to arrest and strictly control it. Modernist political and cultural theories, including “classic” Marxism-Leninism, Stalinism and Fascism, prefer the first model. Postmodernist schools, including post-Marxian and deconstructive ones, generally prefer the second view. From the passages on cultural identity that I quoted from the editors’ introduction at the beginning of this essay, I hope it is clear that they have adopted, along with the majority of the contributors to the volume, the second model.

One very useful project for the academic and research community would be to employ advanced information and communication technology, including AI-based social modeling, to test the various sociological and cultural anthropological theories based on power and violent conflict. These theories remain very much in vogue today, particularly within the field of cultural and postcolonial studies, but rely mostly on anecdotal, rather than on solid, empirical evidence. In fact, from an empirical standpoint, just the opposite might turn out to be the case: it appears that when heterogeneous populations engage in violent conflict, everyone loses, including the winning party. The troubled history of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe (and of many other regions) has shown that one population may succeed in subjugating or even wiping out another, but the victor may lose out as well: in the first case, because the defeated population will accept subjugation only temporarily and will continue rising against their oppressors, thus destabilizing the victor’s society; in the second case, because genocide may generate instability, perhaps by doing damage to the collective psyche of its perpetrators, arousing and then suppressing feelings of guilt and remorse, thus dividing the individual members of their community. These are testable hypotheses. They are worth testing before we adopt the simplistic logic of the “culture wars” that is currently in vogue in the global mass media and on the Internet. If the result of winning such wars is only more war, then there is an argument for peace.

Contemporary social and humanist studies should continue to expose the ignorance and/or prejudices of those journalists, policy-makers, and researchers who continue to present ethnic, racial, and religious groups, or even entire nations, as monolithic social entities and social

agents. This kind of casting has often led to ethnic, racial and religious prejudice on the one hand, and to political correctness on the other. As I have already pointed out, political correctness in particular is a treacherous pitfall for Eastern European scholars, no less than for their Western European counterparts. During the last few decades, the same wrong-headed cultural policies were imported from the United States and introduced in the European Union, with the same counterproductive results.

Yet, although European and other intercultural researchers and practitioners should stay away from political correctness, they should also make sure that the recent declarations of several prominent European leaders that the multicultural policies of the European liberal democracies have failed should not lead yet again to the opposite pole, i.e., to ethnic prejudice, chauvinism and racism. On the contrary, these declarations should occasion a thorough re-examination of the binary opposition itself: the two symmetrically opposite attitudes of cultural prejudice and political correctness have a common base in ethnic and/or racial stereotyping and unwittingly perpetuate the social conflicts that have been associated with ethnicity and race ever since the advent of the modern nation-state.

In turn, this re-examination, which could well be the task of another intercultural research project, should start from the insight that it is counterproductive to devise and conduct policies based on ethnic and racial stereotyping of any kind, no matter how well intentioned such policies might be. Therefore, our duty as responsible humanists and scientists is to be wary of any ideological or political program, be it “progressive” or not. Avoiding, as much as possible, any ideological bias, we should carry out extensive and thorough research into the basic claims and assumptions of any cultural theory, in order to test and establish its validity, and only then advocate its implementation in the social arena.

In this connection, I would like to mention one last area of research, which is only marginally (and largely unreflectedly) discussed by some of the contributors to this volume: the decisive role played by the cultural and political elites in imagining and actualizing certain cultural, sociopolitical and economic models in their communities. Again, anecdotal evidence would not be enough. One should launch a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural project, with researchers from the entire region, to study what seem to be rather complex feedback loops not only between the various populations that live side by side, but also between an individual

population and its own elite, as well as those between the heterogeneous elites themselves; in many cases, the larger and the smaller sections of the same population may be at variance, which often results in unsuccessful, violent relations at the intercultural level as well. One should also examine the complex reasons why the current political and cultural elites in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe (and elsewhere) have largely abdicated their role of dedicated servants of their communities and have chosen to pursue their own narrow, selfish interests to the detriment of the common good.

Finally, one should explore alternative ways of educating, rather than merely training, the future cultural and political elites in the region in order to bring about the civic and moral revival of their communities. But this is a subject too complex and important to be tackled here and will need extensive separate treatment, perhaps in a future collective volume like this one. In this respect, I would like to note, by way of conclusion, that the present collection of essays would constitute a good starting point for serious academic debate and intensive research on cultural issues that are central not only to Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, but also to other regions of the "Old Continent" and beyond.

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Comptes rendus / Book Reviews

Cóilín Owens. *James Joyce's Painful Case*. The Florida James Joyce Series. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008. Pp. xx + 248. ISBN: 9780813031934.

With the book *James Joyce's Painful Case*, Cóilín Owens has written more than 250 pages about a short story by James Joyce of less than 13 pages! There are obvious principal, hermeneutical benefits as well as disadvantages of such a voluminous and extensive critical approach. The reader is allowed to zoom in on the wide-ranging context of the work and to get an adequate taste of the layers and dimensions of the text's multifaceted meanings. By covering so much material pertaining to the text and by illuminating so many perspectives of the contexts of the text, one is afforded the possibility of fully appreciating a comprehensive range of its nuances, traces, allusions, and echoes. However, there is always a danger of losing sight of the big picture since such an approach can lead to a kind of near-sighted pointillism, where the contextual nodes take the focus away from the text.

Cóilín Owens, however, brilliantly succeeds in steering clear of this hermeneutical Scylla and Charybdis. In addition to offering a full-scale reading of the short story's diverse aspects, Owens exhibits substantial knowledge of the intellectual and cultural atmosphere of the time. Owens never loses sight of the text as he offers close readings fused with a rich and thorough investigation of sources.

Leading the reader through the story's genesis, composition, popular culture, and history—in addition to its topographical, musical, literary, philosophical, and religious dimensions—the basic and central argument of the book is as follows:

The emotional dilemma faced by James Duffy is the product of an early modern Irishman's encounter with what we now call a "post-Christian" world. A man who in childhood accepted the Catholic assumptions

about the perfectibility of nature “with the help of God” (grace), and having abandoned the spiritual discipline enjoined by his religious tradition to achieve that end, finds himself disabled from the prospect of any engaging human bond. To adopt such a line of criticism is neither to advance nor criticize Catholic belief in particular, but seeks to understand how an intense commitment to such an ethos, when surrendered, affects a sensitive and intelligent personality in a destructive way. The particular variant on general apostasy that Joyce is concerned with in this story is known in Irish folklore as a “spoiled priest”: the man who rejects the gift of a priestly vocation. “A Painful Case” is its classic articulation in the literature of Ireland. (xv–xvi)

Carefully examining the content of Duffy’s bookshelves, Owens discloses the protagonist’s intellectual and moral development from the Maybooth Catechism to the pantheistic worldview of William Wordsworth to the ascetic scepticism of Arthur Schopenhauer and finally to Nietzsche’s “gay science,” declaring the death of God. What we have here, Owens claims, is a veritable fall from belief to melancholy distress, from hope to hopelessness, i.e. a fall from meaning to meaninglessness. Having abandoned the priestly vocation, Mr. Duffy lives a resolutely secular life that turns the religious virtues upside down; however, by doing so the bachelor’s “final condition is worse than his first,” and “the gradual evacuation of theological, metaphysical, and social communions in ‘A Painful Case’ cumulates in its last word: ‘alone’” (110–11). Moreover, Owens associates Mr. Duffy’s moral implosion with his decision to turn his back on the Church. In this manner, Owens perceives Mr. Duffy’s rejection of Mrs. Sinico’s offer of (erotic) love as a repetition of his earlier rejection of divine grace. As a “spoiled priest” Mr. Duffy displays a “failure of the heart: in the first place to respond to the offer of God’s love, and in the second to respond to that of Mrs. Sinico” (13). In other words, Owens directly links Mr. Duffy’s rejection of the prospect of sex and love and his subsequent termination of the relationship with Mrs. Sinico to a rejection of God’s divine love. The loss of love and happiness with another is the bitter, yet necessary outcome for the loss of God, since “Mrs. Sinico is Christ in female form, her sensual gesture, paradoxically unveils the face of God” (212). Even though Owens admits that the story also gives voice to “an implied criticism of the hegemony of Catholic clericalism in Irish life,” he maintains that “the narrative exhibits Duffy’s despair as a caution to those who would consider themselves free thinkers” (2). On one hand, Owens reluctantly (and with clear discomfort) recognizes that “Joyce considered the effects of Catho-

lic hegemony in Ireland the source of paralysis—the standard received view”; on the other he insists that the author shows how “the embrace of a reactive scepticism is similarly paralyzing” (14). To put it plainly, the story is consequently a Christian *apologia*: “The story is a caution to freethinking” (14). The tendency to interpret Joyce in terms of Christianity is evident in Owen’s “spoiled priest” thesis, yet this Christian leaning reaches one of its most outrageous culminations when Owen, at one point, comments: “In Joyce’s revised ending to the book [*Dubliners*], at the conclusion to ‘The Dead,’ the symbol of the snow enveloping all of the natural universe expresses a serious Christian parable of the miracle of grace: God’s continuous creation” (4).

Though I have much sympathy for Owens’s endeavour I must stress that I find his main argument highly problematic and flawed. One has to be quite inattentive to overlook Joyce’s harsh showdown with Christian theology: it is difficult to accept this presentation of Joyce as an advocate for Christian ideology and principles. Joyce was not a Christian and his entire work was (amongst many other things) a relentless indictment of the moral corruption of Christian praxis and beliefs. In a telling letter to Nora the infatuated Joyce informs her: “How I hate God and death! How I like Nora!” (Joyce 1966: 50). In other words, God is, for Joyce, just another metaphor for death and nothingness and if God is love, as is in fact the very definition of his essence, this love seems to be directed towards death rather than life. Joyce’s love for Nora stands in an antithetical relation to Christianity, which paralyzes and poisons human existence, seeking to annul love between men and women by turning it towards a personified nothingness instead. Does Owens really believe that the man that wrote the letter above also wrote “A Painful Case” and “The Dead” as expressions of Christian visions and values? The postulate that the short story is a caution against scepticism and free-thinking is also, I think, falsified by almost everything Joyce wrote and said. Joyce’s whole socio-political—as well as sexual, gender, and feminist—thematic bears witness to a courageous, unprejudiced free-thinking. With regard to Joyce’s view on scepticism there is no doubt that it was positive. Richard Ellmann notes an episode where Joyce asked Arthur Laubenstein: “Which would you say was the greater power in holding people together, complete faith or doubt?” Laubenstein said faith, but Joyce insisted: “No, doubt is the thing. Life is suspended in doubt like the world in the void. You might find this in some sense treated in *Exiles*” (Ellmann 1983: 557). Rejecting the metaphysical

and religious idea of the “onecertain allsecure” (Joyce 1975: 22), which petrifies and freezes life, Joyce contrarily (like Shem) prays to “the cloud Incertitude” (Joyce 1975: 178).

The problem with Owens’s interpretation is that Mr. Duffy is *not* a free-thinker *nor* a real sceptic. The problem with Mr. Duffy is rather that he—like so many of the protagonists of *Dubliners*—entertains self-deceptive ideas about himself. The fact is that he is more a monkish celibate guided by Catholic rules than a Nietzschean *Ja-sagender*. In other words, it is not because he has turned his back on Christian grace and love that he turns his back on Mrs. Sinico—quite the opposite. It is contrarily because the Christian dogmas still run in his veins that he is unable to react with anything but disgust to the amorous advances of Mrs. Sinico. In this respect it is telling that Owens’s Christian, interpretative prejudices make him overlook the significance of the text’s allusions to the myth of Tristan and Isolde as well as Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*.

Juxtaposing “The Dead” with the myth of Tristan and Isolde—“‘A Painful Case’ is, therefore, Joyce’s first, and qualified subscription to *Tristianisme*” (151)—Owens positively equates the narrations of each story, failing to notice the exorbitant irony inherent in the parallel: if one applies the schema from the myth of love to the short story, one gets the following result: Mrs. Sinico is Isolde the Blonde, whose love is aroused outside lawful marriage, while Mr. Sinico is to be considered as a contemporary King Mark, who in contrast to his predecessor remains absolutely indifferent and phlegmatic to the thought of his wife’s potential infidelity, and finally Mr. Duffy is an inverted Tristan, who turns away from his “Isolde” in disgust and loathing when she declares her yearnings for love and her cravings for the consummation of their relationship. Thus the story does not end with a *Liebestod*; it is true that Mrs. Sinico dies in the end, but this is not due to an amorous excess—on the contrary, it is Mr. Duffy’s rejection and denial of her that results in her comedown, which finally causes her death on the rails a few years later.

Nominating “A Painful Case” as Joyce’s “first homage to the Russian master” (183), Owens displays many parallels between the short story and Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*, stressing mainly the moral castigation of betrayal and loss of spiritual faith. For Owens, Tolstoy’s stout defence of Christian morality—cf. the novel’s epigraph: “Vengeance is mine; I will repay” (from *Romans* 12:19)—becomes a sounding board for the presentation of the spiritual paralysis of this “spoiled priest.” The pivotal

point for the two stories is, of course, that Mr. Duffy one day reads in the newspaper that Mrs. Sinico has been killed on the rails as a Dublin Anna Karenina. However, the difference between the two situations is (as was the case in the parallel to the legend of Tristan and Isolde) that Mrs. Sinico suffers her sorry fate, because she did *not* become an adulteress, whereby she did *not* obtain the chance of experiencing love and happiness. As was the case with the invocation of the myth of Tristan and Isolde, the invocation of Anna Karenina is obviously ironic. Nonetheless, this irony is lost on Owens as he strives to mollify Joyce's criticism of the Christian ethos.

If Mr. Duffy had really overcome Christian dogmas, and if he was a free-thinker and *Ja-sagender* in more than name, he would not have shied away from engaging in an adulterous affair (condemned by Church and God alike) with Mrs. Sinico; and if he was not under the sway of petty bourgeois notions sanctified by the Church, and if he did not suffer from the priestly and monkish physiology instilled in him from an early age, there would in principle be no hindrance to his relationship with Mrs. Sinico blossoming.

Having no theoretical pretences, striving instead to "explore the imaginative world of which his work is an expression" (xvii), Owens explicitly aims at assuming the position of "Joyce's ideal contemporary Irish reader a century ago" (4). Attacking existing criticism for historicizing and contextualizing the story insufficiently, Owens posits this explicit reader, claiming that Joyce wrote "A Painful Case" for an Irish Catholic readership that tended to think in moral terms. But how can we assume that such a reader has privileged access to the meaning of the text? Is the aesthetic quality of a literary text really exhausted by the knowledge contained by an ideal contemporary reader? Does a mastering of the biographical and genealogical sources, a full knowledge of the multiplicity of references to "other works of literature, music, religion, philosophy, popular culture, history, and linguistic usages, high, low, and middle" (19) secure the aesthetic meaning of the text?

To conclude, I find Owens's basic claim for the short story—"The sin of despair, the rejection of the grace offered by the Holy Spirit, is as we have seen, the core of 'A Painful Case'" (214)—highly dubious, not to say, unfortunate. Having said that, Owens's work must be recommended for its delightful detective-like quality (where some findings, though, are more persuasive than others) and its competent close reading that excel-

lently succeeds in illuminating the text. From the paranormal study of “A Painful Case” as a ghost-story to the short story’s Schopenhauerian literary parallels with Turgenev and Tolstoy, to the revealing material in Joyce’s own translation of Hauptmann, the book remains an impressive endeavour whose portrayal of an entire *Zeitgeist* makes it interesting to read as more than an in-depth study of a short story by James Joyce.

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Christine Baron and Manfred Engel, eds. *Realism/Anti-Realism in 20th-Century Literature*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010. Pp. 236. ISBN: 9789042031159.

Those of us trained in the heyday of deconstruction learned to consider mimetic realism as an illusory effect of language rather than as a form of representation grounded in an external reality. It did not matter that the foundations of Western literature until the twentieth century had been understood as mimetic or that prominent critics, especially Marxist critics, had treated the realist novel as a serious instrument of historical and sociological analysis. Nor did it matter that most students of critical theory were unfamiliar (or unconcerned) with versions of mimesis other than as a residual myth of “Western metaphysics.” Indeed, as Gerald Graff suggested back in 1979 in *Literature Against Itself*, mimesis symbolized the height of “squareness,” the benchmark against which literary and intellectual sophistication was measured:

Where the mimetic perspective survives in twentieth-century literature [...], it tends to go unnoticed. This is because our critical vocabulary either has no place for it or is committed to denying that it is there at all.... [T]he words for describing what literature *says*, what it is “about,” are all marked with the stigmata of squareness and banality. There is no up-to-date jargon for talking about referential values of literature (13). In the

rhetorical world of current criticism, one is free to write as if “everybody knows” that mimesis is a dead issue. (5)

The shift in the late 1980s and early 1990s to new historicism and to post-colonial theory brought with it a more pragmatic understanding of the epistemological potential of literary representation. Critics renewed discussion of what texts “say about” human reality rather than focusing exclusively on how effects of reality are linguistically or rhetorically generated. At the same time, the lessons of anti-realism—crystallized for my generation under the names deconstruction, semiology or, more generally, post-structuralism—had so profoundly shaped the *Zeitgeist* of late twentieth-century critical theory that even the documentary value of the historical archive became subject to its scrutiny. Thus, even if the most extreme—“there-is-no-outside-the-text”—versions of anti-realism eventually subsided, the “return of history” did not necessarily entail a thoroughgoing, retrospective critique of anti-realism’s philosophical limits or errors. On the contrary, with very few exceptions, critics simply moved forward and extended the by-now conventional poststructuralist assumptions to new objects and avenues of research.

The significance of this new volume edited by Manfred Engel and Christine Baron is its coordinated effort to situate twentieth-century anti-realism within broad historical, philosophical and cultural contexts so that readers can both take stock of its insights and identify realist elements in modernist and postmodernist literature that were previously ignored, mis-recognized or undetectable. By insisting on the conceptual porousness between realism and anti-realism and by resurrecting a history of the shifting philosophical alignments and realignments that have occurred within this terminological pairing, the contributors to this volume want to insist on the *paradoxical* nature of literature while generally refusing the temptation to situate our understanding of it on either side of the theoretical divide.

Theory, too, is thus paradoxical by this volume’s account because as Engel, Baron and Jean Bessière suggest, any attempt to theorize representations of human reality in the wake of the “crisis of representation” will naturally be articulated in innovative, self-reflexive forms that mirror the anti-realist strategies of literature. Theory, as we know from experience, can easily devolve into a verbal hall of mirrors and appear as unhinged from reality as the literary objects it wants to explain. The way out of this predicament, maintain several of volume’s contributors, is to consider literature’s realist and anti-realist dimensions

on a continuum or in an unbreakable tension rather than as two sides of an epistemic rupture.

This view, of course, is not altogether new. Even a committed anti-realist author like Alain Robbe-Grillet argues something similar in his famous tract, *Pour un nouveau roman*:

Realism is the ideology which each brandishes against his neighbor, the quality which each believes he possesses for himself alone. And it has always been the same: out of a concern for realism each new literary school has sought to destroy the one which preceded it; this was the watchword of the romantics against classicists, then of the naturalists against the romantics; the surrealists themselves declared in their turn that they were concerned only with the real world. (157–58)

Robbe-Grillet's point is that the way to express our essentially "romantic" distaste for realism's constrictions is to smash and replace its existing conventions. The postmodern twist on this is the self-conscious realization that the only reality we have is "constructed" and imperfectly representable and that any attempt to break free can only be expressed as self-irony ... or madness.

Should we be surprised, given Baron's and Engel's anti-systematic approach to realism, that this volume is composed of a variety of theoretical negotiations and case studies? The volume, indeed, taps into a broad spectrum of historical and philosophical traditions; it proceeds comparatively to unravel the complex process of realism's conceptual sedimentation; and it extends its theoretical purview to a wide range of media (poetry, fiction, film, the internet) and cultures (European, American, African, and Asian). The unity of the essays, if we were required to identify one, stems from a common desire to uncover a "third way" between the extremist traps of ontological essentialism, on the one hand, and pure textuality, on the other.

An example of a careful negotiation between extremes is found straightaway in Christine Baron's chapter "Réalisme et antiréalisme: Une généalogie complexe," which reconstructs the winding evolution and surprising reversals of the term "realism" from ancient Greece to the current period. By tracing the conceptual genealogy of the expression "crisis of representation" and by showing how a complex series of terminological oppositions narrowed into a false dichotomy, Baron provides strategies for liberating critical thought from its twentieth-century forms and for thinking about realism in more nuanced and

pragmatic ways. Jean Bessière adopts a similar tactic in his chapter, "Égalité de la mimesis et de l'antimimesis," but from a slightly different angle. While the terms mimesis and anti-mimesis have generally been defined in terms of a *logical* opposition, the *historical* opposition of the twentieth century resulted in a mistaken teleological alignment of anti-mimesis with modernity and post-modernity, and mimesis with historical obsolescence. Bessière challenges this lingering view by arguing that literature of every period is both an imitation and a subversion of social and linguistic institutions; its paradoxical nature thus always features both mimetic and anti-mimetic dimensions, but in varying degrees depending on historical circumstances.

Manfred Engel provides the most in-depth analysis of this volume in his delineation of the varieties and techniques of realism and of the limitations of conventional realist assumptions for understanding the emergence and functions of anti-realism. The logic of Engel's essay, like Bessière's and Baron's, is anti-oppositional or even paradoxical in that he sets out to isolate various forms of realism in places usually considered anti-realist. Although mimetic painting, for example, has been the traditional way to figure literary realism, Engel proceeds counter-intuitively by drawing an analogy between non-representational painting and elements of realism in modernist and postmodernist literature. The point of his analogy is to call attention to a shared vision of a modern reality beyond the rationalism and materialism of nineteenth-century realism while avoiding pure obscurantism or non-sense. By way of examples from Woolf, Proust, and Kafka, and others Engel suggests that the realism of modernism is not found in descriptions of external social realities or in naturalist causes of behavior, but in complex and subtle renderings of inner experience. In this, he opens up realism to a diversity of idiosyncratic mental phenomena and perspectives that have formerly been understood as anti-realist.

Several essays expand on the (anti-) theoretical framework laid out by Engel, Baron and Bessière. Micéala Symington, for example, focuses on the relation between text and image in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century "livres de peinture" with the aim of showing how visual illustration moved away from the traditional imitation of textual meaning in favor of anti-mimetic strategies of juxtaposition and abstraction. She points to an increasing liberation of poetic representation from its referential basis, even when the text clearly refers to an

external reality and the image is photographic. Her point is not to suggest an evolution toward pure anti-mimesis but rather the evocation of an intangible state of mind generated by the strategic interplay of text and image. Monika Schmitz-Emans echoes this approach but focuses on the hyper-realism of the photographic image. Through a rich and detailed analysis of textual and photographic relationships in the works of Barthes, Hartling, Nooteboom, Vargas Llosa, Beyer, and others, Schmitz-Emans demonstrates how even realist photography can direct attention to an imaginary or spiritual reality beyond the world of tangible things. Sieghild Bogumil-Notz, for her part, pursues a similar idea in her investigation of the distinction between anti-mimetic poetry and mimetic fiction. By applying Bakhtin's theory of dialogism to examples from Rilke's poetry, she uncovers a hybridity of mono- and dialogism that both evokes a mimetic reality and calls it into question. Timo Kaitaro uncovers a similar mimetic/anti-mimetic tension in a reading of surrealist poetry in light of Gaston Bachelard's "open realism."



In two chapters on cinematic neorealism, Alberto Hernández-Lemus and Nathan P. Devir expose to view subtle levels of causality unrecognized by conventional neorealist criticism. Pressing Deleuze and Bergson into theoretical service, Hernández-Lemus attempts to locate a temporal *durée* below the spatio-temporal sequencing of conventional realism and argues for an "open-ended" version that includes "unactualized possibilities ... underlying or influencing the actual, that which takes place" (129); whereas Devir analyzes obscure social and moral determinants of action in Kazantzákis's *The Last Temptation of Christ*.

In yet another angle on this question, Virgil Nemoianu reinterprets the use of the "fantastic" mode by three utopian/dystopian writers (Alfred Kubin, Jean Raspail, and Mircea Cartarescu) in order to show how it figures the presence of an invisible violence or evil that can explode onto the scene at any moment. Nemoianu distinguishes his three writers from previous examples of the fantastic by insisting that fantasy is not a parallel reality; it is an integral part of it: "Reality is never complete without the fantastic, while the fantastic is never a flight from reality. The two are complementary faces of an integral whole" (157). Rose Hsiu-Li Juan makes a similar point in her analysis of the "spiritual realism" or "shamanic realism" in the Native-American novels of Louise Erdrich. The volume

closes by extending its insights to include non-Western and postcolonial literature, only in reverse. Both Tumba Shango Lokoho and Mun-Yeong Ahn argue that the return to naïve realism in contemporary non-Western literature is an illusion; both African and Korean literature include a post-modernist self-consciousness and meta-reflexivity that call into question an apparently traditional, correspondence theory of realism.

Overall this volume makes a convincing case for revisiting twentieth-century anti-realism. However, as is often the case with proceedings or proceeding-like volumes (this one emerged from a workshop conducted at the ICLA Triennial Conference in 2004 in Hong Kong), the papers are somewhat uneven, go in many (perhaps too many) theoretical directions, and thus at times work at cross-purposes. If the strength of this volume, for example, is its insight that important dimensions of realism can be identified in places where critics conventionally do not look, such as in paradox, anti-realist postmodernism, or in the realm of fantasy or the fantastic, this point is weakened by essays that lean too far in the direction of pure anti-realism or that revert to the either/or dichotomy they claim to be abandoning. Another point treated only tangentially, but which should have been moved closer to the center, is mimesis (and realism) as a “logic of narration” or “sequencing of human events or actions” rather than as a question of “adequacy” between images or texts and “objects.” Insisting on Aristotelian approaches to mimesis, which phenomenological and anthropological critics took in innovative directions in the late twentieth century, would have opened the discussion in a way that avoids the residual Platonism of the de-constructive approach. The works of Paul Ricoeur, to name the most obvious example in the phenomenological tradition, and René Girard or Eric Gans, in the anthropological, would have provided an alternative basis for accomplishing both the desired “opening” of mimesis and a capacious method of inquiry that can account for the diversity and complexities of the imaginary (or “anti-realist”) phenomena that so many twentieth-century writers sought to render as “real.”

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Virgil Nemoianu. *Postmodernism & Cultural Identities: Conflicts and Coexistence*. Catholic University of America Press, 2010. Pp. 392. ISBN: 9780813216843.

*... Where the great vision of the guarded Mount
Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold ...*

So wrote John Milton in his poem "Lycidas," in which he mourns the untimely death of a young man who was destined, in Milton's opinion, to be a great priest, scholar, and poet. In that poem he defines the Christian humanist values, castigates the false shepherds of the cultural flock, and defends the enchanted isle or walled garden of true art and true religion. His culminating symbol and exemplar of that island is St. Michael's Mount, near the extreme southwestern tip of Britain. It is and was a fortified garden isle, accessible only by a causeway that is covered by water at high tide—a fitting symbol of Nemoianu's important and courageous book. A past secretary-general of the International Comparative Literature Association and a Fellow of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Nemoianu here sums up his career in a work that collects together most of his most important ideas and insights and presents them in a way that is of special relevance to the current state of literary culture.

First and foremost, the book is a definitive and critical assessment of postmodernism as a cultural-historical period, as a paradoxically non-teleological program for the future, and as a lens for viewing the cultural past. Though Nemoianu's main focus is on what is called "the West," his *conspectus* is worldwide.

The book is not only a description of postmodernism but also an explicit defense against it. But *Postmodernism and Cultural Identities* is not, as I take it, a defense against post-modernity itself, which is for him another richly complex moment in humanity's struggle to find meaning; nor is it the usual diatribe against science, the market, technology, and the global *ecumene*, about all of which he is cautiously optimistic. Instead, he seeks the fault in ourselves before he shifts the blame to others. If modernism, at its worst, was an act of cultural destruction motivated by a sort of Oedipal temporal self-congratulation by the now against the then, so postmodernism, Nemoianu shows, is not even original in that barren form of narcissism.

Modernity and postmodernity are, to the extent that they are meaningful terms at all, summations of various economic/political/cultural/

technological facts of history. It is what writers, critics, philosophers, pundits, and journalists have made of those facts that Nemoianu addresses; and he does so with a voice earned by a simply staggering erudition. That erudition, however, does not announce itself with jargon and unnecessary parade; the voice is always direct, clear, honest, and self-deprecatory, forgoing the sly irony of many of his contemporaries.

Nemoianu is neither a Luddite nor a pessimist: but he does give a picture of the arts and humanities, and of contemporary religion, as in a state of beleaguered crisis. He is not alone in this perception, but his diagnosis is perhaps the most comprehensive, compelling, and original in the last several decades. For him the culprits are not, as already mentioned, the usual suspects, but, sadly, a large disaffected moiety of the cultural tradition itself. There has been something of a self-destructive coup, motivated perhaps by despair at the impossibility of cultural emulation of our own past. But Nemoianu is almost always gentle and moderate in his complaints, and generous whenever he can be.

The book is also a comprehensive and courageous account of the relations between religion on one hand and the arts and humanities on the other from the Renaissance onward. I say courageous because to take religion seriously as an intellectual participant in the humanities' debates has for many decades been taken as a sign of bias, dishonesty, or ignorance. Nemoianu actually points out that many of the "cultured despisers" of religion (in Schleiermacher's phrase) have recently had second thoughts (late Derrida is not by any means the same as early Derrida)—but perhaps the damage has already been done.

To this reviewer's ear Nemoianu's defense of Roman Catholicism against the chorus of its haters is a bit shrill; in his indignation he abandons for a moment his usual generous, tolerant, and self-effacing presence. But even here he cannot be accused of bias, since his own formation is Eastern Orthodox and he does not, as we say in Texas, have a dog in this fight. In arguing for the arts and humanities and for their partnership with religion he is always genuinely concerned with the health and happiness of the human person and the freedom that comes from a proper commitment to subsidiarity. For him beauty trumps moralism as our true intellectual guide.

Nemoianu has actually pulled off a rather subtle piece of rhetoric, to be appreciated by students of "Theory" with a sense of irony. Using the language of political post-structuralism to describe the plight of the

“Western canon,” he baldly casts the traditional humanities and Christian culture as the victims of oppression, marginalization, and reduction to subaltern status. The literary humanities are the new “Other.” The same sense of pathos and indignation that post-colonialist, feminist, queer, and Foucauldian critics bring to the oppression of other minorities, he brings to the peaceful tribe of poetry-lovers and religious mystics. And at a time when such types are increasingly ridiculed and marginalized in the academy, the market, and the press, his equation strikes home.

Nemoianu is recognized as the champion of “resistance,” “imperfection,” “failure,” “loss,” and “defeat,” against modernist progress and triumph. And he is also known for his strong argument that it is only upon such unfashionable foundations that a human being can construct an authentic individual identity. Here he completes his argument by adding a warning against the comfortable state of anomie and terminal irony to which postmodernists threaten to reduce all ancient and dear eccentricities, and he hammers his point home by close analysis of several representative texts both well known and obscure. The “reactionary” changes in his text from the sign of obscurantist oppression to the sign of cultural vitality; liberalism, in the sense of the cultivation of freedom, can only exist, as Edmund Burke argued, upon a conservative basis.

Another way of describing this book is as a definitive account of the literary canon itself. Though he himself denies any prescriptive intention and insists that he is only sharing his own favorites, Nemoianu’s own identity as one of the most learned and passionately committed literary scholars of our time is by itself a warrant for taking his selection of texts seriously as representing our era’s canon. I will use his list of the most important works as a guide for repairing my own gaps in reading, and refer my students to his arguments for the psychological, spiritual, and cultural benefits of the pursuit of literature. Certainly this book would be a hugely valuable tool in any graduate or advanced undergraduate humanities curriculum, collecting together in one place (and with force, coherence, clarity and feeling) the Western literary heritage.

*Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watry floar ...*

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Michel Arouimi. *Jünger et ses dieux: Rimbaud, Conrad, Melville*. Paris: Orizons, L'Harmattan, 2011. Pp. 248. ISBN: 9782296087774.

It has become increasingly obvious that the best critical approach to Ernst Jünger is that of comparative literature. While the massive new studies by Heimo Schwilk and of Helmut Kiesel are straightforward monographs, they also include serious comparatist dimensions. Earlier seminal studies by Karl-Heinz Bohrer and by Martin Meyer are also largely comparative, as is the foundation and the background of Klossowski's work, the reference to the "epic" and mythical tradition is always present in it.

The present volume is inscribed in this mode. It minimizes the rather futile (and, in my view, injudicious) political-ideological debates of an earlier generation and instead resorts to genuine critical strategies. I myself applaud this approach in as far as I consider Ernst Jünger, along with Thomas Mann and Robert Musil, one of the truly great masters of twentieth-century German prose.

Arouimi deals with his topic along two lines, which we ought to regard separate even though the author tries hard to combine them. The first of the two foci is treated in a quite efficient and convincing manner. He shows where and how Joseph Conrad, Arthur Rimbaud, and Herman Melville may have influenced the thinking and the poetic organization of Jünger's works. (This argument is followed in the conclusion, like a kind of afterthought, by references to Marcel Proust and to Edgar Allan Poe). The set of parallels is not surprising, nor is it particularly original. We do know that these authors, among others, were held by Jünger in high esteem, and were read by this self-taught and omnivorous reader. Number two: the broader framework, particularly in as far as Melville and Conrad are concerned, was Jünger's passionate and obsessive interest, in narratives of shipwrecks and of naval disasters. (He left behind, as part of his huge library, a fine collection of books dealing with such events).

With respect to these two lines of inquiry, Arouimi's book has two great merits. One is that in examining these influences he resorts and refers to the *entire oeuvre* of Ernst Jünger, the youthful works, as well as the late and mature works. We do know that unfortunately most critics, even the best ones, tend to focus on Jünger's early, pre-1939 and barely touch on his later (much more important) fictional or essayistic production. Thus it is particularly gratifying to observe Arouimi's good and complete

grasp and estimation of the crucial philosophical work *An der Zeitmauer* (1959). The second merit of Arouimi's book is how he chooses as referential levels some unexpected literary highlights and thus enriches our reading and understanding of Jünger's meanings.

For instance, in the case of Melville we tend to think immediately of *Benito Cereno*, simply because this short story is often evoked in Jünger's diaries and other texts. Arouimi concentrates with brilliant skill on *Billy Budd* and shows how a cross-reading of this late (posthumous) story helps us read (through it) the novel *Die Zwille* (1973), as well as certain sections of Jünger's mature diaries (1980–1996). This is perhaps the appropriate place to mention that Arouimi is endowed with some very special analytical skills. He goes for microscopic details and insists on dissecting images and references in order to support his arguments. In recent scholarship, one rarely encounters this methodology. Such a microscopic/dissecting technique is particularly noteworthy in the chapter dealing with the influence of Rimbaud. Again, what comes to mind immediately is Jünger's very early essay "Lob der Vokale" (included in the volume *Blätter und Steine*, 1934) and this work is duly mentioned and discussed by Arouimi. However, the critic goes well beyond this obvious parallel, and speaks about the two authors' common preoccupation with the apocalypse, the nostalgia for the Golden Age, and mythical modes in general, the dialectic of the One and the Multiple, and finally even biographical facts, such as the premature demise of Jünger's son Ernstel.

Arouimi also points to the possible influence of Rimbaud on Joseph Conrad. It is true that Conrad is a major comparatist crossroad figure: by the tension between his ethnic origin and the cultural/linguistic choices of his literature, as well as by the curious way in which he was recognized as emblematic by many writers or artists, from T.S. Eliot and Evelyn Waugh to Francis Ford Coppola. Arouimi bases his analysis primarily on Conrad's short novel *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Jünger showed himself often fascinated by "prophetic" historical facts, in other words by deeply significant patterns that were later seen to be repeated in real events on a large scale or in numerous and insistent forms. A good example would be his insistence on the "Titanic" shipwreck as the annunciatory prologue to the collapse of the European cultural tradition in the twentieth century. In a similar vein, he viewed *Heart of Darkness* as a prediction to the genocidal horrors of the great twentieth century tyrannies. Such comparisons focus primarily on the short novels *Auf den Marmorklippen* (1939) and to some

extent, *Eine gefährliche Begegnung* (1985). Arouimi's most efficient or remarkable conclusions derive from examining the filiation of color usage.

Now, to turn to the more "theory"-bound commentaries, I suppose we could summarize Arouimi's work in three directions: the Girardian, the Freudian, and the Neo-Platonic. Personally, I have long considered Jünger a descendant of Neo-Platonism, and see him firmly inscribed in this philosophical tradition. Arouimi chooses just a few categories of this intellectual discourse and emphasizes (perhaps excessively) their presence in Jünger's writings (such as One/Multiple and a few others). The most questionable move on this critic's part is to inject Freudian analytical categories into the fictions and "diary-dreams" of Jünger (adversity toward the father, echoes of androgyny, and such). It is, however, ingenious and useful on his part to discover that Girardian strategies, such as "the double bind," mimetic rivalry, "violence and sacrality," and others can help us unravel certain narrative meanings in Jünger. I believe Arouimi is the first commentator to resort to these approaches and he deserves congratulations for this effort. The results are gratifying. Unfortunately I, along with perhaps other readers, am unsatisfied with the way in which these theoretical mixtures impinge upon the stricter textual comparatism. The outcome is more than once jargonistic and confusing, not only in the first, more general, chapter, but, more irritatingly, in the separate author chapters. The actual parallels and analogies are weakened as a consequence of the simultaneous usage of several theoretical idioms of varying weight. The principal merit of these juxtapositions is announced in the book's subtitle. Arouimi shows himself entirely aware of Jünger's oft-expressed conviction that we enter an age of the "withdrawal of the gods." This critic responds by arguing that Jünger had established some great literary figures as their replacement. It is a bold assertion, perhaps not entirely persuasive for everybody, but probably interesting and seductive for a good number of readers.

As I said at the beginning of this review, Arouimi's book-length essay clearly proves that the comparative approach is the best method for studying Jünger, the "most French" of all German writers as has been suggested. The flaws of this book are not fatal. Beyond the disadvantages of unclear jargon, an incomplete bibliography, and the absence of an index, the author's correct choice of direction produces momentous and fruitful results.

I would like to close by suggesting options among several possibilities for future comparative work on Jünger. One refers to Jünger's

early (and, in my view, immature) writings. His virile/heroic tones are not unique and idiosyncratic, but rather align with those of many major contemporaries: communists such as Fadeyev and Babel (or even occasionally Brecht), then people of diverse ideological backgrounds such as Montherlant and Malraux, Hemingway and Saint-Exupéry, the occasional poem by W.H. Auden and Robinson Jeffers, and others. This common masculinist emphasis deserves further exploration. The second approach is even more important: we might examine the tradition of cosmic unity (myth and religion, nature, and history), as illustrated by the genius of Goethe and Chateaubriand, as well as by a number of fore-runners and believers in the “Great Chain of Being”, whether Neo-Platonists or not. And finally, attention should be paid to the more specific issue of science and culture. Jünger was an early ecologist, perhaps in part under the influence of his brother, Friedrich Georg. Inevitably he got involved in science-fiction. *Heliopolis* (1949) is largely science-fiction despite its retrospective subtitle as is the mild dytopia of *Gläserne Bienen* (1957). *Eumesvil* (1977) is also science-fiction, cloaked in an allegory of the present (a kind of dialectic that is all too often encountered in works of this genre.) So is *Aladdin's Problem* (1983) to a large extent. While technology is usually dealt with in general, philosophical terms, Jünger also points prophetically to key technical innovations. In *Eumesvil* (and elsewhere) we have the “luminar,” a complex and sophisticated cybernetic environment that points to the internet and Google. In *Heliopolis* and elsewhere the “phonoform” is nothing but a splendid fore-runner of, say, the Blackberry, iPhone, or similar multi-app devices. The aggressive “glass bees” can be seen as (military?) micro-drones that are just as of this writing in the process of being developed by the industries of advanced countries. Why all these gizmos? From my perspective they are just small pieces of evidence: Jünger must have had an appropriate understanding of historical evolution. He must have grasped correctly the matrices of human ingenuity, in order to be able to predict calmly future advances in technological objects and practices. His position as an outstanding, serene, objective and wise observer of human events over a whole century seems to me unshakably secure.

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Remo Ceserani. *L'occhio della medusa: Fotografia e letteratura.* Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2011. Pp. 389. ISBN: 9788833921075.

Ceserani's identity as a comparatist and his interest in the intersection between technical inventions and literature converge in this remarkable book on the presence of photography in literature. He focuses on the influence of photographic procedures in fictional imagery. The literary texts that Ceserani considers range from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present, although he does not organize his material chronologically, but rather typologically.

In the introduction, Ceserani delineates the theoretical positions of those authors who tried to catch the essence of photographic procedure. With insights culled from the work of theorists such as Benjamin, Sontag, Barthes, and more recent works by Dubois and Schaeffer, Ceserani broadly characterizes five approaches: the psychological-epistemological, phenomenological, anthropological, sociological, and cultural. In the first chapter he presents the theme of photography in its most simple form—in novels that stage a photographer among their characters (Hawthorne, Tournier, Theroux).¹ As the volume progresses, however, this theme is seen to play a more substantial and subtle role. It becomes a metaphor for a frozen or stolen life in Chapter 2 (Ondatjie, Pirandello, and James) and in Chapter 4 (Brookner, Grass, Ibsen, and Faulkner). In the texts discussed in Chapter 3, the focus is on autobiographical representation, and on the connection between photography and the construction of the self. Providing extensive quotations, Ceserani demonstrates how pictures become a door to a lost world for writers such as Nabokov, Sebald, and Barthes. Pictures are seen as precious relics around which memories coalesce to form identity. The last chapter (Cortázar, Perec, Tabucchi, and Bernhard) deals with special uses of photography, such as manipulation or enlargement. Details become significant in the story, faded pictures are clues or riddles to be deciphered.

The great merit of the book is to highlight the manifold possibilities inherent in photography on a linguistic and a symbolic level. Ceserani points out the use of specific words, metaphors, and images. Most of the literary texts he discusses are fictional (novels and short stories), but poetry (Apollinaire, de Andrade) is also taken into consideration. Marcel Proust, a writer known for being particularly responsive to the figurative world, occupies a rather conspicuous place in this

study. In *À la recherche du temps perdu* the image of the beloved person stirs memories, desires, and fears, often setting in motion the speculative process. Ceserani also closely examines other French authors such as Michel Tournier and Claude Simon. He touches upon the role of photography in English, Italian, and Spanish novels as well.

One of the consistent achievements of this book is that it shows how terms related to the photographic procedure pass into fictional language and how the imagery elicited by photography enriches narratives. In the introduction, Ceserani lists a number of expressions from the field of photography as they appear in six different languages and links them to metaphorical fields such as sexuality, anatomy, or hunting. Ceserani also points out single words related to the thematic field of photography that are used in the novels, quoting them in brackets in the original language. To support the thesis of photography's contribution to the creative literary process, the author draws attention to associated symbols, like windows, frames, mirrors, or screens. The reader is also presented with the evidence that the concepts of close-up perspective, focusing, and exposure are used by authors to develop narrative structure.

The images and metaphors elicited by photography in the literary texts mostly refer to the earlier, analog technique of the medium. Many of the authors contemporary with the birth of photography were fascinated by its magical aspects. It was believed that shooting a picture influenced the living subject, transforming it and possibly even stealing its soul. The Medusa's eye in the title of the book, with its power to petrify with its gaze, represents the camera. The photographer as a hunter who transfixes his subject through the viewfinder is a recurring trope, from the photograph of Zola with a camera, reproduced on the cover of the volume, to Antonioni's photographer in *Blow Up*, considered in the last chapter. The process of developing a picture in the darkroom also has great metaphorical potential as Ceserani shows in numerous examples. The photographer—like the writer—gradually develops a scene and manipulates the entire process of representation. Like literature, photography questions the relation between reality and appearance. The subject, whose contours gradually develop on the plate, has a ghostly character. It is a simulacrum.

In many of the texts examined, the photographic portrait assumes the function of the objective correlative. Its contiguity to painting is self evident, as Ceserani notes. The debate on *ut pictura poesis*, the topic of

ekphrasis, and the rivalry between the arts in representing life provide a fascinating background to this topic. Ceserani concentrates on novels in which pictures, photography, or the photographer play an explicit role. He does not include fiction in which photography effects the narrative while not concretely appearing, such as in the works of the *école du regard* or in the early novels of Peter Handke. The step from photography to cinema is, of course, short and the influence of film on literature is undeniable. Ceserani insists on a strict distinction between the two arts. However, the author is not interested in the field of intermediacy, since images in motion elicit quite different narrative potential than a snapshot does. Nevertheless, Ceserani's analysis awakens the reader's interest in further lines of research beyond the scope of his book. How, for example, do digital techniques influence literature? What associations and metaphors do these relatively new techniques inspire? Another interesting question is whether there is also a reverse influence of narrative structure on photograph as, for example, in the case of portraits by Cindy Sherman or staged scenes by Jeff Wall.

A very valuable aspect of *L'occhio della medusa* are its indices. We find an "open list" of approximately four hundred novels in which photography plays a role, starting in 1840 with Edgar Allan Poe's *The Daguerreotype* and ending in 2010 with Silvia Albertazzi's *Il nulla, quasi*. A seventy-page bibliography follows, containing both fictional works and scholarly contributions. Ceserani's prose is enjoyable. The reader is led effortlessly from one novel to the next. We plunge rapidly into the plots and can easily assess how photography has inspired novelists.

Remo Ceserani coauthored with Lidia De Federicis an anthology for Italian high schools, *Il materiale e l'immaginario* (1979–96), that revolutionized the traditional approach to textbooks in the Italian curriculum. Later he wrote about postmodernism, *Raccontare il postmoderno* (1997), and in more recent years he published a book on the impact of the train on literature, *Treni di carta. L'immaginario in ferrovia: l'irruzione del treno nella letteratura moderna* (2002). These volumes are all clear forerunners to the present book.

1. The authors mentioned in parenthesis are only some of those whose works Ceserani takes more closely under scrutiny.

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Catherine Brown. *The Art of Comparison: How Novels and Critics Compare*. Legenda Studies in Comparative Literature 23. London: Modern Humanities Research Association and Massey Publishing, 2011. Pp. 192 + xviii. ISBN: 9781906540814.

This book is the product of a joint venture between the British Comparative Literature Association and the entities named in the heading. Other recent titles in the series, whose authors spoke at a reception after last year's AILC/ICLA Executive Board meeting at the University of London's Goldsmiths campus, were Sibylle Erle's *Blake, Lavater, and Physiognomy* (number 21) and *Borges and Joyce: An Infinite Conversation*, by Patricia Novillo-Corvalán (24). As the author explains, the title of her book is meant to highlight the major role that an ongoing series of comparative insights provoked by texts play in guiding responses to specific literary works. As a result, issues pertaining to comparative literature as a discipline take backseat in the discussion. To illustrate this "art of comparison," Brown has chosen three big novels written between 1870 and 1920: George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, and D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*. What these works share is a double-plot structure that centers on two couples and on changes in the men's and women's relationships, a structure that encourages complex processes of comparison and contrast in readers' minds and attitudes as the novels move back and forth between the two stories.

Brown excels in drawing out just how complex these processes can be. To what extent, for example, does the Levin story in *Anna Karenina* stand in opposition to the Anna story and to what degree does it also become something of a parallel? Other grounds for comparison emerge once readers focus on individuals rather than couples as the basis for judgment. The situation becomes notably complex in Lawrence, whose novel plays all four major characters against each other in addition to juxtaposing their evolving relationships. When possibilities multiply to this extent, selectivity becomes essential; and in this regard Brown provides thought-provoking commentary on the choices of previous critics.

She also makes a definite choice of her own. Drawing on René Girard's *Le Bouc émissaire* (1982), she relies especially on his key distinction between characters who are scapegoated *in* a text and those who become the scapegoats *of* that text (65). This distinction suggests that Brown wishes to stress the ever-present potential that comparisons

possess to turn invidious (and thus, implicitly, to constitute a built-in threat to our field's ideals of greater inclusivity). But she is also alert to how exclusions can occur at different levels in the text and can have different intensities. Thus Anna is clearly scapegoated *by* Russian high society when it ostracizes her, but to what extent can she be said to be victimized with equal severity *within* the novel? Early drafts of *Anna Karenina* reveal a character treated with far less sympathy than in the novel we read, and her treatment in this final version also undergoes significant fluctuations from scene to scene. Scapegoating gains a sharper historical resonance in *Daniel Deronda*, with its double-plotted oscillations between British high society and Jewish life in Europe just before the explosive rise of modern anti-Semitism.

As already indicated, Brown's focus on comparison as a basic mental process continuously at work while we read specific novels does not exclude a narrower interest in comparative literature as an academic discipline. She is well-read in the field's history, from the nineteenth-century initiators (she can cite Joseph Texte and H.M. Posnett and not just Goethe on *Weltliteratur*) to contemporary figures like Bassnett, Spivak, and Saussy; and she concludes that "analysis of the use of comparison in literary criticism should form part of literary theory" (174). In this spirit, she argues for giving a new, more powerful intellectual force to the "comparative" half of our field's name, whose fortunes as a "brand" have varied so widely, at least in the United States. Thus the adjective could be excluded as irrelevant when Duke University opened its theory-oriented "Literature" department in the 1980s, only to be reinterpreted in a cross-cultural sense and glorified as "comparative cultural studies" in the 1990s. For Brown, "comparison *per se*" (as she calls it [16]) is an indispensable attribute to thinking itself, such that "comparison and comprehension [become] inextricably connected" (18) in a process that elaborates upon and gives a more explicit grounding to metaphoric leaps of insight. She also alludes to "the connection of comparison to democratic choice" (173).

As for her novels, Brown points out that in their distinctive ways they are all explicitly international, so that they may be said to represent "comparative literature" in a more literal sense than academic usage allows. As a result, her treatments of Lawrence and especially of Eliot, whose novel stands out for its more frequent use of comparison-oriented words (56), have a broader cultural purview than the influential England-centered

readings of these authors associated with F.R. Leavis. Overall, however, Brown reserves highest praise for Tolstoy who, from his position at a far frontier of novel writing as it was understood around 1880, chose to characterize *Anna Karenina* as an “endless labyrinth of connections” (175). This metaphor evokes not just the complexity of comparison *in* literature, nor the many links Brown identifies among Tolstoy’s, Eliot’s, and Lawrence’s novels, but also the richness and the challenge of comparative literary study itself.

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Robert Henry Moser and Antonio Luciano de Andrade Tosta, eds. *Luso-American Literature: Writings by Portuguese-Speaking Authors in North America*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2011. Pp. 416. ISBN: 9780813550572.

Aware of the fact, as stated in the Introduction, that “Luso-Americans represent one of the last minority groups, with both a long history and a sizable current presence in North America, whose writings have not been brought together in a standard anthology,” Robert H. Moser and Antonio Luciano A. Tosta, both professors of Portuguese at American universities (Georgia-Athens, and Illinois-Urbana/Champaign, respectively), have addressed this lacuna by editing *Luso-American Literature. Writings by Portuguese-Speaking Authors in North America*, a collection of carefully selected texts from three Portuguese-speaking diasporic groups living in the United States and Canada: the Portuguese, who migrated in the nineteenth century and established firm roots, the Cape-Verdeans, another group with a strong historical imprint and a consolidated tradition, and the Brazilians, a very recent immigrant community, already endowed with a considerable literary output. Although the majority of these writers are either members of these groups or their descendants whose works articulate their experience of dealing with a culture different from their own, the anthology also includes the perspectives of sojourners, exiles or even visiting scholars, whose experience in North America may be seen as more transitory, yet no less significant.

The texts selected for this anthology come from different genres—

poetry, prose-fiction, essay, drama, memoirs, diary entries, and reports. As modes of expression, they are all bound by questions of identity, assimilation, nationality, race, gender, language, and memory, as well as various degrees of deference to or defiance of North American society. This vast array of texts ranges from canonical works to selections by authors who have not yet gained widespread recognition. In every case, they were selected due to the quality of the writing as well as to the ties they establish between their authors' Portuguese culture or that of their ancestors and the North American worldview. The authors included are themselves all translators in the broad sense of the term, for they are interpreters between two or more distinct, yet frequently overlapping, cultural and imaginative spaces. The Portuguese language is the common denominator that ties them together, but the notion of "Lusophonia," rather than referring to a fixed ethnic identity, marks here the intersection of two or more historical experiences, "of which one is rooted in the author's Lusophone identity," and the other "formed by the negotiation of this identity with a North American cultural context."

Since the anthology was conceived not only for specialists but also for a broad spectrum of readers not necessarily acquainted with the Lusophone world, the texts selected are either originally written in English or translated into it. Yet, in a few cases, they reflect the composite linguistic reality of transnational communities and, as such, contain examples of "Port-English," a bilingual code-switching, and the idiomatic and cultural transference in both English and Portuguese. The book is divided into three sections and each one of these includes a brief overview of the ethnic group's immigration history and literary tradition, as well as general comments regarding the works in question. Each text included is also preceded by its authors's biographical note, a concise exploration of the text, the contextual data regarding its publication, and its importance within the author's corpus of works. At the beginning of the anthology, there is also a useful chronology that highlights the main moments and figures within Luso-American and Portuguese colonial history. The volume concludes with brief biographical notes on the contributing authors.

The first section of the anthology, which deals with peninsular Portuguese, is subdivided into three parts entitled "Origins and Destinations," "Saudade" and "Cultural Clashes," and includes a wide range of authors: canonical figures born in Portugal, such as Jorge de Sena and Jose Rodrigues Migueis; successful contemporary authors of Por-

tuguese descent who write mainly in English, such as Katherine Vaz, Frank X. Gaspar, Anthony De Sa and Erika de Vasconcelos; recently re-discovered writers of an earlier generation, such as Alfred Lewis, Olga Cabral, Charles Reis Felix and Julian Silva; prominent scholars linked to Amercian universities, such as Onesimo T. Almeida, George Monteiro, Franciso C. Fagundes, Thomas J. Braga, and Jose Francisco Costa; and young authors whose work is only now being discovered, such as Brian Sousa and Amy Sayre-Roberts. The texts that compose this section extend from canonical pieces to extracts from newspapers, folktales, reports of visitors or “transplanted” Portuguese writers and essays of a more scholarly nature. They respectively mark the experience of the first immigrants, the feeling of *saudade* that characterizes the group’s experience in the new context, and the ongoing negotiation that takes place within communities and the selves for whom identity is hyphenated.

The section on Brazilian voices portrays, as the editors state, “the experience and creative endeavors of Brazilian immigrants, travelers, exiles and sojourners, as well as of second or third generation Brazilian Americans.” It contributes not only to the study of Brazilians in the United States, but also to the dynamic cultural ties that have been forged between the two countries over the last century. Dealing with texts by both canonical writers and talented newcomers, the section is also subdivided into three parts: “Sojourners and Travelers,” which includes works by well-known figures such as Gilberto Freyre, Marcus Freitas, Sousandrade, Haroldo de Campos, Moacyr Scliar, Luis Fernando Verissimo, Silviano Santiago, and Brazil’s former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso; “Brazuca and Beyond,” which features texts by authors whose experience in the US is of longer duration, and includes individuals such as Angela Breta, Sergio Vilas-Boas, Tereza Albues, Carlos Stozek, and the exile Henfil; and “Reimagining the Hyphen,” which juxtaposes Brazilian-American writers such as Kathleen de Azevedo, Claudia Nogueira, Johnny Lorenz, and Luana Monteiro to other Brazilian authors who lived or spent a long time in the States: Lidia Santos, Regina Rheda, and the anthropologist Roberto DaMatta.

The third and last section of the anthology, which deals with the Cape Verdean diaspora, is shorter than the previous two sections, yet is no less significant. Here, the issue of conflicted identity (ethnic, racial, national, linguistic) is examined in works that include an excerpt from Belmira Nunes Lopes’ autobiography—a first generation Cape-Verdean American born in Massachussets—written through interviews with her niece, Maria

Luisa Nunes; a play by Donaldo Macedo, published originally in the country's Creole language; some poetry by Teobaldo Virginio and prose by Viriato Goncalves two writers born in Cape Verde but who lived for long periods of time in the United States; poems by Jorge Barbosa, who, though never a resident of the US, is the founder of the Cape Verdean modernist periodical *Claridade* and is famous for his *mornas*, lyric genre consisting of poetry put to music and conveyed through gestures and dance; and sonnets by Eugenio Tavares, the poet who founded *A Alvorada*, the first Cape Verdean immigrant newspaper in the United States.

The three sections that form the anthology, though distinct from one another because of the different types of experience characterizing each diasporic group, are in perfect dialogue with each other, and together they constitute a well-selected sample of the production of Luso-Americans, a group that has often been known as an "invisible minority." In addition to being the first anthology in English of prominent Lusophone writers, it also represents an unprecedented collection of published, unpublished and forgotten writings.

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Peter V. Zima. *Komparatistische Perspektiven: Zur Theorie der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft*. Tübingen: Narr Franke Attempto Verlag, 2011. Pp. ix+169. ISBN: 9783772084072.

Peter V. Zima. *Komparatistik: Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft*. 2., überarbeitete und ergänzte Auflage. Tübingen, Basel: A. Francke Verlag, 2011. Pp. xii+425. ISBN: 9783825217051.

Pierre V. Zima. *Texte et société: Perspectives sociocritiques*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011. Pp. 223. ISBN: 9782296559264.

While this review will concentrate on *Komparatistische Perspektiven*, it is helpful to acknowledge briefly the companion books by the prolific commentator on comparative studies, Peter (Pierre) V. Zima, who has enjoyed a stellar year in 2011. These three volumes have several features

in common: detailed awareness of the intellectual history of theorizing about comparative studies, an ability to focus sharply on key phenomena and issues, and a willingness to venture qualitative judgments on specific theories. The cultures of Europe, both west and east, and of North America are Zima's realm, and he often illustrates points by reference to a generous range of literary works, drawing especially on Enlightenment, Romantic, and Modern writers. The common purpose of Zima's contributions is to promote a serious conversation across disciplinary lines between a reconstituted Comparative Literature and the social sciences.

The thoroughly updated *Komparatistik* belongs to the crowded genre of introductory handbooks for the field, but Zima's guidance goes well beyond any simple enumeration of suppositions, approaches, and methods. Like Wellek before him, Zima concentrates initially on the historical roots of French, German, East European, and American contributions, but he then expands broadly upon general approaches and trends of more recent interest—e.g., dialogue and discourse theories, genetic patterns, reception and translation studies, the rationale of periodization, theme and myth studies, especially as reflective of ideologies. He elaborates upon the modern novel to provide a schematic for a comparative analysis of genre, and in many other chapters of *Komparatistik* novels furnish cogent illustrations of specifics. In my estimation, some very short opening sections of *Komparatistik* defining basic intellectual frameworks—notably those characterizing “comparative” as against “general” literature, and aligning a variety of comparative studies in a larger semiotic universe—are valuable anchor points. Starting out from the formalist avoidance of reducing literature to ideology and the structuralist focus on discourse systems, Zima's more specialized *Texte et société* takes us on a grand tour of semiotic and socio-linguistic theorizing. It is a rich exhibition of how a wide range of critics have dealt with such problems as whether, how, or to what extent “text” and “intertextuality” relate to societal sharing or transferences, and how human subjectivity relates to various sociolects; and how and whether ideology or a dominant episteme informs not just modes of writing but modes of reading and the patterns that we subsequently demarcate in periodization. Zima acts as an honest broker in witnessing how critics evaluate the efficacy of psychoanalytic, deconstructive, and other probings of literary expression, and how artists (again, principally novelists) appear to produce works reflective of the same questions. With a vibrant series of illustrations he takes us over Modernism and to the current threshold many artists have experimented

with—and sometimes (e.g., Camus, Barth) have directly commented on the cultural implications seen in—sensational phenomena of Postmodernism such as indeterminacy, indifference, violence, “desematisation” of language, and the like.

Komparatistische Perspektiven is close to *Texte et société* but offers its own distinct content and flavor by advancing, in its concluding sections, an honest account of the postmodern condition as it has been put forward in critical and imaginative literature. Here Zima formulates a sober picture that in my judgment belongs as well to “final” or judgmental criticism, not just to a reasoned historical portrayal of the formal and genetic features under study. If pressed to name the book’s central virtue, I would say this: Zima does a yeomanly job of sorting out crucial differences in the use of terminology and of some corresponding differences prevailing in the institutional structures and practices as these vary from one geo-cultural territory to the next. He sets a very high standard of awareness for any reviewer, because the working language in question (in my case here, English) virtually limits how far I can rely on key abstractions in a kind of shorthand. Limited to only one language for practical reasons, the reviewer may not be able to drag certain readers out of their unconscious misprisions about basic concepts. The late Tania Franco Carvalhal (not cited), while president of ICLA, was on this track in her valiant effort to publish a set of collaborative, coordinated multi-lingual volumes taking stock of *actual* practices and theories of comparative literature in several great regions of the world at the end of the twentieth century: the prerequisite basis for any Rosetta Stone.¹

Zima opens Part 1 of *Komparatistische Perspektiven* on “theory construction” by schematizing how various social sciences use comparison to advantage, profiling and contrasting specific phenomena and the values attached. He illustrates the distortions and insufficiencies that arise when scholars approach things from their own extreme positions and fail to link realms which beg for connection. He engages in an extended close examination of the literature of existentialism and of avant-garde movements to demonstrate how literary comparatists can actually relate hetero- and homogeneous elements across as well as inside cultural borders and at least evaluate historical-genetic features better. The next level, Zima thinks, is to grasp attempts at comparison as a kind of dialogue that ultimately will reveal the need for an intercultural comparison of theories—a step which the late Earl Miner (not cited), a former ICLA president, has

suggested.² Ultimately, by such efforts, we arrive at a dynamic sense of how comparatists can operate within a world system-of-systems in motion. While himself choosing to move steadily toward defining a Comparative Literature strengthened by sociological-semiotic awareness, Zima argues firmly against the notion that CL can be replaced by cultural sociology, semiotics, media studies, or other social science approaches, because such frameworks inevitably blunt or ignore the importance of intercultural and verbal relations, whereas CL grasps the role of language and always returns to it as its primary research object. Here he affirms an insight we find in earlier philosophers of culture such as Suzanne Langer (not cited) who recognized that language's doubleness includes its powerful function as a carrier of discourse.³ It is refreshing to follow Zima as he politely but clearly dismisses all manner of reductionism, such as attempts to declare only a single area or historical episode of literary life or a single philosophical position—e.g., translation studies, cultural studies, speech act theory, deconstruction, etc.—as the new be-all-and-end-all replacement for CL.

Part 2 of *Komparatistische Perspektiven* turns to comparison as an indispensable tool in literary history and pays special attention to sociolects and discourses, marching through five densely stocked chapters that carry us from Romantic thought and through a good part of Modernism and Postmodernism to our present scene. We encounter dozens of major literary figures in the process. These chapters will suit the palate of comparatists who are happier when the fare is important literature. They will have even greater piquancy for lovers of literature who also delight in hearing excellent commentary on formulations of and shifts in worldview as they surface in works of art. Zima correlates intellectual and cultural history with pregnant moments in imaginative works, and that is why, in my opinion, his book ineluctably moves into the sphere of evaluative or final criticism as he arrives at the threshold of the twenty-first century. We are invited on a very interesting survey of deep problems that have been brewing in Western culture since the time of the American and French Revolutions and since the subjective turn in philosophy when the Enlightenment morphed into Romanticism and Romanticism too was recycled in dozens of waves and offshoots. I warmly recommend that readers dwell on the closing section of this book that deals with the interface of "deconstruction and CL." Zima assumes a position that (if I may be permitted a formalistic analogy) reminds me of what ICLA is

attempting to accomplish collectively on the global plane. As a body of persons from disparate cultures whose interaction gradually creates and modifies an inclusive mega-narrative and super-discourse, ICLA's combined array of supra-national and supra-regional discourses gives recognition to but transcends a series of longer lasting trends and passing favorite fads mostly of Western origin. This complex of discourses likewise promotes recognition of but never entertains submission to non-Western trends and fads. Operating quite consciously only within the huge Western and Eurocentric zone, Zima encompasses the assertions of negative approaches, acknowledges doctrines proclaiming inherent turbulence, contradiction, confusion in human communication, and the treachery of language, etc., as elements developed in our Western super-system, but he contextualizes them by observing how they relate to the larger cultural story, where they fit in the enormous, ever metamorphosing cultural repertory. Even misprisions, it is well known, have a place in literary history. Zima gently advises us not to be content, however, with any of them as salvational, even if apophatically salvational in the recent fashion. Because Zima is instinctively a comparatist, he does finally render a judgment and lay it right on our doorstep as our contemporary: by comparison with our efforts to compare things, deconstruction and its nearest relatives block fuller understanding of the arts.

1. ~~See, for example,~~ the two volumes: Tania Franco Carvalhal, ed. *Comparative Literature Worldwide: Issues and Methods/La Littérature Comparée dans le monde: Questions et méthodes*; and *Literatura Comparada no mundo: Questões e métodos/Literatura Comparada en el mundo: Cuestiones y métodos*. Porto Alegre: L&PM Editores S/A, 1997.

2. Earl Miner. *Comparative Poetics: An Intercultural Essay on Theories of Literature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

3. Suzanne K. Langer. *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study of the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963.

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Brefs comptes rendus / Book Notes

Li Sher-Shiueh. *Zhongguo Wanming yu Ouzhou Wenxue: Mingmo Yesuhui gudianxing zhengdao gushi kaoquan* [Late Ming China and European Literature: A Philological Study on the Late Ming Jesuit Appropriation of the Classical Exemplum]. Taipei: Taipei Lianjing, 2005. Pp. 437 + xiii. ISBN: 9570828285.¹

Though it is commonly believed that the influence of Jesuit missionaries in late Ming China was mainly religious and scientific, some recent studies have shown that Western knowledge, including painting and music, also spread in late Ming China. With *Late Ming China and European Literature* (Taipei Lianjing, 2005), the Taiwanese scholar Li Shixue adds to this line of inquiry by posing the question: Was literature included in the Western knowledge introduced by the Jesuits to late Ming China?

As Qian Zhongshu has noted in *Rong'anguan Zhaji* 容安馆札记 [Notes Written in Rong'an Pavilion], late Ming Chinese literati paid considerable attention to literary devices, plots and themes in Western missionary writing. Qian has maintained that “people in the Ming Dynasty had a truthful understanding of Western religion; they were much better than their ridiculously arrogant counterparts in Qing Dynasty” (Note 749 of *Rong'anguan Zhaji*). One might even argue that this exposure led to the Xinxue (literarily “philosophy of the mind”) tradition in the Ming Dynasty’s vision of humanity’s common understanding that can be described in the following manner: “From the Eastern sea to the Western sea, people’s hearts and minds are the same.” In other words, the reliability of a novel idea is justified when it is found to also exist in other cultures. For example, the Jesuit concept of heaven and hell reminded Chinese literati of the notion of the underground world—it is recorded in Youyang Zazu 酉阳杂俎 [Unsorted Notes from Youyang] that someone heard noises of horse carriages from beneath the ground while digging of an unusually deep well

(see Vol. 4, “There is a World Underneath” in *Yiyao* 疑耀 [Doubts and Illumination], by Zhang Xuan). Li Shixiong finds that “the essence of Western culture is the same as our Confucian ideas” (see Vol. 4, “Yuleifujiu” 与雷扶九 [To Mr. Leifujiu] in *Hanzhierji* 寒支二集 [The Second Collection of Hanzhi]²). In an article entitled *Daxiguolimadou* [Matteo Ricci from a Western Country] (Vol. 3 in *Yuanxueji* 愿学集 [A Collection Concerning the Will to Learn]), Zou Yuanbiao maintained that the Catholic ideas advocated by Matteo Ricci “were no different from the words of our saints,” and that “some minor differences are only generated by the various conventions.”

How did Matteo Ricci and the other Jesuits stimulate the interest of late Ming scholars? What topics did these Chinese literati find most persuasive during their conversations? It is traditionally thought that they were interested in imported objects, such as the clock, telescope, and calendar. Western visitors were often associated with Persian and Indian magicians. Moreover, Li’s research, focusing as it does on linguistic concerns, uncovers another perspective for the same period of history. The Jesuits, including Michele Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci, found themselves in a peculiar situation of not being able to effectively communicate during their journeys northward. Considering the fact that the dialects they had learnt were not applicable, they resorted to the alternative *lingua franca* of written Chinese. In this situation, Aristotelian rhetoric came in handy. In the Western classical tradition, rhetoric was an important art for oral literature. The “Western memorization method” that Ricci used in his initial preaching provided a wonderful example of its application. To meet the challenge of Chinese written culture, the Jesuits had no choice but turn to a written preaching method for their target audience of Chinese scholar/ officials.

The book’s title *The Late Ming China and European Literature*, calls to mind Ernst Robert Curtius’s *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*. In fact, the author points out this association in his prologue. Actually, this association is more than textual. As the readers may find, Li’s unrivalled investigation of late Ming Jesuit learning is based on the author’s solid knowledge of Medieval Latin literature. The author also discusses how divergent opinions exist with regard to the earlier research on this topic. Some scholars trace Western origins to the ancient Greco-Roman classics, while others depict the Jesuits as the “Humanists” who preserved the Classical tradition in the Renaissance era. Li claims that both interpretations reveal an unfamiliarity with medieval Western literature and scholarship and he seeks to remedy it by offering a holistic view of the

Jesuits. He notices that, unlike modern Western evangelism in Africa and America, late Ming Jesuit writing and publication in Chinese evolve into a surprising body of work, numbering four hundred and fifty texts. These *exempla*, while written in Chinese, emulated the narrative style of the classical European Church Fathers in their endeavors to convert pagans through imitation and allegorical methods that can be traced back to classical literature. They also reflect the Jesuit mastery of classical knowledge as well as medieval scholarship.

The subtitle of this book is “a philological study on the late Ming Jesuit appropriation of the classical *exemplum*.” This Latin term (plural: *exempla*) meaning “to give an example” refers to short narrative literary works that instruct or admonish people with moral lessons. Cornelius Nepos, the author of *Liber de Excellentibus Ducibus Exterarum Gentium*, produced a now-lost work entitled *Exempla* that consists a collection of anecdotes of Roman history. This category also includes Plutarch’s *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans* and Suetonius’s *The Twelve Caesars*. Despite the flourishing of *exempla* literature in medieval times, the use of classical stories were not the prioritized rhetorical method for preaching, since pagan stories were not deemed as authoritative as the Bible. However, Li finds that “Aesop’s fables and Western classical anecdotes, used in the medieval art of preaching, became the main resource for late Ming *exempla* and the preferred preaching medium of the Jesuits in China” (146). The reason for this appropriation is twofold: the Jesuits tried to minimize the hostility of the Confucian scholars in China and they were influenced by the twelfth-century renaissance. Apart from *De Arte Praedicatoria* by Alain de Lille that Li duly cites, other works such as *Moralium Dogma* by Gauthier de Châtillon also inspired Jesuit writings. Even during the long Dark Ages, a period when enlightened sages were not active, heterogeneous literary and scholarly traditions still resisted intellectual monopoly. Thus, it would be an oversimplification to accuse medieval clergymen of textualism or to portray the Jesuits merely as Renaissance figures because of their embrace of ancient Greco-Roman culture.

Li’s survey of the *exemplum* in the Catholic evangelical literature in late Ming China constitutes the main body of this book. In its four chapters, he discusses respectively the four categories of the *exemplum*: the *fabula*, *chreia*, *mythos*, and legend. The first Chinese translation of the fable that comes to mind is *KuangYi* 况义 [To Give Meaning] (1625) narrated by Father Nicolas Trig Ault and copied by Chinese follower Zhang Geng. We also know that selections from Aesop’s fables have

also been translated by Ricci. Li's book is distinctive in that it deals not only with Jesuit attempts to Catholicize, but also with their efforts to domesticize these stories in a Chinese context. To illustrate their attempts to Catholicize, Li firstly teases apart the various European versions of Aesop fables in order to show how Jesuits selected, elaborated and appropriated these stories in light of their faith. For example, Ricci introduced a story of the fox in his *Jirenshipian* 畸人十篇 [Ten Pieces of the Disabled Man]: "The fox is very cunning. It happened to approach the lion's den without being noticed. But it immediately ran out of there frightened by the sight of the remains of other animals that indicate movement inward not outward." The same story in Babrius's version in Greek verse was used to demonstrate the fox's wit to learn from other's tragic experiences. Ricci's appropriation, however, conveys the heavenly message of good people passing the gates of Paradise. Besides this Catholicization, Li also calls the readers' attention to the flourishing of allegorical literature in the Ming Dynasty, what the Chinese contemporary scholar Zheng Zhenduo has called "the revival of allegory." Besides the preaching needs and the Chinese literary fads of that time, the Jesuits even tried to co-opt Aesop's fables into Confucianism, thus arousing the suspicions of Chinese literati. For instance, the above-mentioned Chinese scholar Li Shixiong had written two volumes of *Wugan* 物感 [Reflection over Some Objects] imitating both the plot and the allegorical style of *Kuangyi*.

Li uses the word "Shishuo" 世说 as the Chinese equivalence to *chreia*, a Greek word meaning "useful." Historical examples of *chreia* can be found in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. The Chinese scholar Luo Niansheng translates *chreia* as "something that had happened." The *chreia* seems to correspond to the Chinese traditional idea of viewing history as a mirror reflecting the future. Western missionaries took their material mostly from anecdotes of Greco-Roman historical figures, which were thought to be more akin to the wise words and exemplary conduct recorded in the *Shishuoxinyu* 世说新语 [New Anecdotes of Social Talks]. The Jesuits managed to preach by recounting *chreia* articulating the private words and thoughts of ancient notable people. Conventional protagonists of European medieval literature such as Diogenes, Socrates, and Alexander the Great were frequently mentioned in their sermons. Moreover, they drew rather far-fetched analogies and conclusions from fabricated anecdotes. In such instances, the *chreia* is no longer a true account of history but "the fruit of rhetoric" as Li observes. The *mythos* and legends also derive from Greco-Roman tradition. These ancient stories of the pagan

gods were used to explain Holy Scripture and the works of Christian writers, such as Justin Martyr (second century), Clement of Alexandria (third century) and Fulgentius (at the turn of sixth century). In the Jesuit works written in Chinese, these stories became the discursive vehicles for Confucian ideas. It is noteworthy that a similar strategy also inspired the Chinese side of the cultural encounter. Investigation of the cultural affinities between China and the West were also found in Chinese scholars' works, such as Li Yuanyin's *Shisanjingxixuetongyi* 十三经西学通义 [A Comparative Study on the Thirteen Confucian Classics and Western Learning] and Liu Ning's article "Tianzhuzhiming feichuangzi xiyu taixi" 天主之名非创自西域泰西 [The Name of Heavenly God is not Created in the West] and in his *Juesilu* 觉斯录 [Records of the Awareness].

To sum up, the academic significance of Li's book lies in three aspects. First, it draws our attention to the literary aspect of the Jesuit introduction of Western learning to late Ming China through their appropriation of the classical *exemplum*. Secondly, it broadens the horizon of research in the history of Chinese translations from Western medieval literature. For example, current studies find that the earliest Chinese translation of *Gesta Romanorum* is the *Haiwaichuanshuoji* 海外传说集 [Collections of Legends from Overseas] by Xie Liuyi 谢六逸 in 1922. Li's research shows that ideas from *Gesta Romanorum* had already been introduced in the translations of Matteo Ricci. To give another example, Li's work also reveals that the first Chinese translation of a Western poem is the *Shengmengge* 圣梦歌 [The Song of the Holy Dream], translated by Giulio Aleni from English medieval poem entitled *Visio Sancti Bernardi*. Last but most importantly, Li's book is methodologically innovative since it addresses the factor of rhetoric, which has been generally undervalued in research on the cultural and academic exchange between China and the West. In other words, rather than confining his discussion to "what was told," Li's book shows that we should pay more attention to "how it was told" in order to investigate the various perspectives and positions of the speaker.

Based on the Taipei Lianjing version (2005), the Beijing Sanlian version (2010) of Li's book makes a few minor changes. For example, Chapter 6 in the Beijing Sanlian version is an expansion of the Appendix in the Taipei Lianjing version, in which Li mainly discusses the influence of Indian literature on Jesuit writing. The Beijing Sanlian version is enriched with updated research on Li Shixiong's subsequent work (see fn. 2, p. 72) and adds book images and illustrations. To my regret, typographical

errors in Greek abound in the Beijing Sanlian version (see p. 142). However, as the Chinese idiom goes, one flaw cannot obscure the splendor of the jade. Although appearing five years later than the Taipei version, the Beijing version in simplified Chinese characters presents a scholarly model for future study. It is rumored that Professor Li is composing a new book on late Ming translation literature and I look forward to its publication in simplified Chinese in mainland China.

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1. Originally in Chinese, published on Shanghai Book Review, March 29th, 2011.
 2. Hanzhi is the alternative name of Li Shixiong.

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Marc Maufort. *Labyrinth of Hybridities: Avatars of O'Neillian Realism in Multi-ethnic American Drama (1972–2003)*. Series Dramaturgies 25. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2010. Pp. 241. ISBN: 9789052010335.

Marc Maufort's *Labyrinth of Hybridities* is an ambitious book. Only a scholar with Maufort's extensive background in the study of Anglophone, and particularly North-American, drama could attempt a volume like this. We have many examples of studies of American "minority" plays: Harry Elam's studies of African-American drama or Karen Shimakawa's work on Asian-American plays or Christy Stanlake's studies of Native-American drama, for example. But in this volume, Maufort takes on the four dominant American ethnic dramatic traditions simultaneously. This allows him to think comparatively across the materials of African-American, Asian-American, Latino/a, and Native-American (or as he says in the more Canadian mode, "First Nation") drama. The comparative interplay among these traditions and of each of these traditions with earlier mainstream drama makes for a very invigorating analysis that will be of interest to all of us interested in American drama in its most inclusive and hybrid sense.

Maufort begins his study by setting two paradigms that he will use to interrogate the individual multi-ethnic materials he investigates. The first

is founded on the work of the Irish-American playwright Eugene O'Neill. Maufort stresses O'Neill's own outsider, ethnic status by outlining his themes of non-belonging as well as of the failed American dream. In his historical context, O'Neill's Irishness would have marked him as descending from one of the waves of ethnic minorities that emigrated from Europe in the early part of the century. But Maufort also stresses O'Neill's challenging of the idea of mimesis in drama. Maufort's earlier work on O'Neill (see the several essays on O'Neill enumerated in the extensive Bibliography to this volume) allows him to contribute a refined analysis of O'Neill's work as a foundational paradigm that later multi-ethnic authors will (consciously or unconsciously) reinterpret, challenge, and reinvent. The second paradigm that Maufort employs productively is that of Magic Realism. Maufort expands our usual association of Magic Realism from its embodiments in Latin-American novels to its use in post-colonial aesthetics in general. As Maufort puts it, Magic Realism "can be regarded as a literary movement intent on rejecting binary forms of Western rationalist perception, i.e., the clear distinction between ordinary reality and the supernatural" (28). In the body of his study, Maufort will demonstrate how this challenge to the dominant realist tradition allows ethnic dramatists to invoke traditions of their cultural past to redefine their identities in a hybrid cultural present. (See, for one example among many, Maufort's compelling examination of August Wilson's plays.)

These two underpinnings of O'Neill's work on the one hand and Magic Realism on the other, provide the tools for convincing comparisons and contrasts for plays that might otherwise seem unrelated to one another. Maufort is careful in his discussions to try to retain the cultural specificities invoked by playwrights working from differing cultural backgrounds and (at least) four different sets of historical circumstances within broader American culture. His title of a "Labyrinth of Hybridities" is well suited to the complexities of the material at hand. Maufort acknowledges that his study is working primarily from the published texts of the dramas because of the rarity of European (and often even of American) productions of many of these plays. While he acknowledges that "plays do come fully alive only in performance," he hopes that his "close readings offer the preparatory dramaturgical analysis of scripts that should precede staging" (32). I believe that his readings offer us a good deal more—particularly for those of us who have not had the opportunity to see many of these plays on this side of the pond either!

I found Maufort's section on African-American Drama (including writers George Wolfe, August Wilson, Robert O'Hara, Anna Deavere Smith, and Suzan-Lori Parks) particularly illuminating. His close readings of the texts of the plays helps to outline the intersections of African cultural heritage and myth and the constraints imposed by mainstream (mainly white) American assumptions about black Americans. Maufort examines the varied stage techniques, musical reinforcements (particularly from jazz), and language to show the ways in which the African-American stage reinvents many of the themes and issues embodied in O'Neill's work while at the same time creating whole new dramatic interventions into American culture's treatment of ethnic minorities.

The section on Latina/o Drama is a bit more problematic—not because the readings and analysis are any less compelling, but rather because the ethnic minority populations conflated under the term Latina/o are so incredibly various in the United States. Whether one's heritage is Mexican, South or Central American or Caribbean makes a significant difference to the mythologies and cultural traditions invoked as well as to the historical treatment the progressive groups of Latina/o immigrants have experienced in the United States. Maufort is quite aware of this difficulty and the vast amount of material it could invoke. He chooses to select three dramatists from different backgrounds. As he puts it, "In view of the vast landscape of Latina/o and Chicana/o drama in the U.S., I shall focus on significant plays by contemporary male and female writers from different backgrounds, i.e. Puerto Rican, Chicano as well as Cuban ethnic constituencies" (102). The playwrights he chooses are José Rivera, Cherrie Moraga, and Nilo Cruz. While these choices are reasonable and do "offer a sample of the contrasting realist aesthetics Latina/o artists have devised in the late twentieth century" (102), it remains a very small sample. (Maufort might argue that leaving the ethnic communities from ;.

Perhaps the most enlightening section of the book for me was that on "First Nation" drama. Maufort is conscious of the minefields that exist in lumping many culturally different tribal groups under the homogenizing term "native American," and hopes to avoid some of those tripwires by using the "First Nation" designation. He also acknowledges the artificiality of choosing plays written in the United States rather than Canada, given that tribal peoples do not recognize the geo-political boundaries imposed by colonizing European powers. With all the caveats in mind, Maufort presents a fascinating group of plays not yet well enough known on the mainstream American stage. He includes works by Hanay Geiogamah, William

S. Yellow Robe, Diane Glancy, Annette Arkeketa, and the "Spiderwoman" collective of writers/actors Lisa Maya, Muriel Miguel, Gloria Miguel, and Hortensia Colorado. The plays draw on mythic Native-American traditions as well as European absurdist work to explore damaged communities and families that might recall O'Neill's dramas. In these dramas, a return to Native-American spiritual traditions and practices often provides the means to heal the abuse, identity ruptures and alienation experienced by the characters.

Maufort's fourth chapter deals with the again wide-ranging and very extensive body of plays that fall under the Asian-American rubric. Because of the sheer mass of the materials, Maufort once more chooses a subset of four playwrights, including: David Henry Hwang, Velina Hasu Houston, Philip Kan Gotanda and Chay Yew. For a resident of Los Angeles, this section has particular resonance. Hwang (whose first play *FOB* was coincidentally developed at the national playwright's conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater) was born in Los Angeles, Velina Hasu Houston attended both the University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Southern California as well as serving as a faculty member at USC, Philip Kan Gotanda is another California native and resides in Berkeley, Chay Yew was director of Los Angeles's Mark Taper Forum's Asian Theater Workshop for ten years, and Asian-American drama arguably came into its own with the establishment of the East West Players theater company, which was founded in and still thrives in the Little Tokyo section of Los Angeles. The Chinese, Japanese and Singaporean heritages of these dramatists that Maufort studies in this chapter thus interact with the American west coast to produce a complex hybridity appropriate to his study. Maufort sees Hwang especially as "a true heir to the O'Neillian tradition, particularly in his focus on family dynamics and identity formation. Of all the playwrights examined in this book, Hwang seems the only to explore in depth the potentialities of the O'Neillian motif of illusion versus reality in its impact on stereotypical representations" (189). The first three Asian-American dramatists stress the in-between-ness of being multicultural in the United States, while Chay Yew (born in Singapore himself) focuses more on a diasporic vision and more pessimistic view of what it means to be of Asian heritage in America. Chay Yew also complicates the issues of identity by introducing communities of sexual affinity and sexual transgression in addition to ethnic communities.

This last chapter also provides Maufort the opportunity to point out cross-fertilization among the four ethnic groups he is examining. David

Henry Hwang, for example, acknowledges his debt to African-American playwright Ntozake Shange, and Velina Hasu Houston is the daughter of a Native-American and African-American father and Japanese mother. In his Epilogue, Maufort elucidates the many similarities among the ethnic dramatists he is examining without flattening them into a single mold. His analysis makes us aware of the intensely vibrant and experimental theater scene that these playwrights were helping to create at the end of the last century and the dawn of the twenty-first. Maufort's book reminds us of the richness and complexity of the many cultures that make up the "American." And even while he shows us the frequent marginalization of ethnic work, he helps to embed that corpus more firmly in mainstream American drama. This is a volume that should be of great interest to anyone interested in Ethnic Studies, American Studies, and Theater Studies as well as literary scholars and comparatists.

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Marc Maufort and Caroline De Wagter, eds. *Old Margins and New Centers: The European Literary Heritage in an Age of Globalization* / *Anciennes marges et nouveaux centres: L'héritage littéraire européen dans un ère de globalisation*. New Comparative Poetics 9. Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2011. Pp. 346. ISBN: 97852017457.

Old Margins and New Centres / *Anciennes marges et nouveaux centres* gathers papers given at an international conference held in August 2009 at the Université Libre de Bruxelles. Marc Maufort's introduction succinctly states the scope of the collection. By "reflecting the awareness that the very concept of 'Europe' is in itself far from homogeneous, this volume suggests that former European cultural centers could become tomorrow's new literary margins" (12). Maufort advocates concepts of "planetarity" and "new cosmopolitanis," which enable one to (in Gayatri Spivak's terms) "truly encounter the other" (13).

In the volume's first essay, Haun Saussy reflects upon the depiction of Otherness in Chinese literature. His point of departure is the monolithic impression ("unilingue," "invariable," "centralise" [22]) Chinese

literature conveys from a historical perspective. In the light of this tendency, the few authors that question identity and the state become all the more interesting. One example Saussy explores is an anecdote by Zhuangzis that displays a remarkable openness toward the culturally Other. He considers it a text “qui n’est pas tout à fait ‘chez lui’ dans la tradition nationale, et qui, par là invite la médiation ou l’occupation du sol familial par l’étranger” (28).

Gerald Gillespie discusses European authors “who express kinds of culture shock in moving across boundaries” (41). He arranges them in three clusters: “The first cluster involves the interlinked phenomena of modern anarchic and nihilistic writing that often blends into appeals to revolution and infiltrates fascist, communist, and related totalitarian world views” (31). Within this first group, Gillespie only finds praise for “writers like Malraux, Hemingway, and Jünger,” because “they do not cross the *limes* into the interior of mere anarchic rage or nihilistic acceptance” (34). The second cluster “involves authors who directly experience their own existence as liminal and palimpsestial” (31). Still, a meta-novel like Flann O’Brien’s *At Swim-Two-Birds* manages to convey “the joy of migrating into an alternate world from the quotidian present” (38). The closely related third and fourth clusters “involve the distinction between philosophic existentialism” (31): “that of philosophic revaluation [Sartre’s *La nausée*] and that of apophatic reaction [Beckett’s *Watt*]” (39).

Anders Pettersson and Theo D’Haen give a report of their work on a new four-volume history of literature in English. Although there have been histories of literature since the turn of the nineteenth century, especially in Germany, most of these have been decidedly Eurocentrist in their approach: “histories of Western literature with excursions about other literary cultures [...] written by Western scholars” (44). In order not to privilege a European perspective, their project, “Literature: A World History,” will be divided into six macro-regions and four macro-periods. This very promising volume is scheduled to appear in 2013.

Hans Bertens draws attention to the dangers to comparatist research inherent in the European Science Foundation’s “Reference Index,” an instrument meant “to explicitly identify excellence and influence within a given field” (58). By categorizing scholarly publications as A, B, or C, with A signifying publications “regularly cited all over the world,” publications in English are decidedly privileged. Bertens expresses his concern that, among other effects, such a restriction to a single *lingua franca*

will result in research that focuses on examples pertinent primarily to the English-speaking world.

Steven Shankman's article proposes to read the *Iliad* not as a war epic, but "as a plea for peace" (65). Taking his cue from Chinese literary history's beginnings with the pacific *Shijing*, Shankman understands "the entire *Iliad* as building towards the great scene between Achilles and Priam in Book 24" (67). "Pity for the Other is about to interrupt the cycle of revenge that fuels the economy of war" (69). Stressing the text's importance in today's political climate, Shankman identifies hospitality, even "to the potentially dangerous stranger" (71), as the *Iliad's* central concept.

Vladimir Biti's contribution is concerned with a reevaluation of Herder's cosmopolitanism, which—especially compared to Kant's—is distinguished by its "discriminating character" (81). Herder's idea of a "'natural' distribution of merits between races and peoples," Biti argues, has rightfully led to his views being discredited as "politically disastrous" (81) by Robin G. Collingwood.

Hubert Roland discusses German romanticism as a prime example of the problems of supranational historiography. Starting with a discussion of Rüdiger Safranski's *Romantik: Eine deutsche Affäre*, which portrays romanticism as a specifically German *Geisteshaltung* (mentality) which transcends epochs, Roland traces the much older controversy of this concept and searches for new approaches to romanticism in a Franco-German context.

John Burt Foster's paper points out analogies between the current discussion of Eurocentrism and the conflict between "the Westernizers and the Slavophiles" in nineteenth-century Russia. His analysis focuses on Dostoevsky's *The Gambler*, set entirely in Europe, and Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (the chapters with European settings in Parts Two and Five). Though neither Tolstoy nor Dostoevsky fully identified with Slavophiles or Westernizers, "*The Gambler* is more obviously critical of the West than the corresponding scenes in *Anna Karenina*" (101).

Stéphane Michaud demonstrates how contemporary European poetry of writers such as Yves Bonnefoy, Michel Deguy, and Wulf Kirsten are still "en avant" in their raising awareness of "altérité" and "différence." By resisting translation through means such as Kirsten's use of his "Saxe natale" or Deguy's reliance on "homophonie," they contribute to a literary multilingualism.

Steven P. Sondrup's contribution focuses on the literatures of Scandinavia. Starting at the marginalization of the north in antiquity,

he explicates this region's special "social and political organization of communities" (127). This different way of living finds its expression in the Sámi's traditional religious-ethnic practice, the *joik*, "a form of oral poetry that grounds a community and lies at its very center" (130). Taking Nils-Aslak Valkeapää's works as an example, Sondrup demonstrates the deep spiritual connection of the Sámi with their land.

Dorota Walczak explores how the writing styles of the Polish poets Julia Hartwig and Tadeusz Różewicz have changed with the advent of the twenty-first century. Discarding an old style that had proven inadequate, Walczak argues, their "nouveau poème" is characterized by "dispersion, éclatement, collage, déjà-vu, refrain, chanson, multiplication et division" (149).

Randolph D. Pope gives an appreciation of Roberto Bolaño as a true "world" author, "an exception that can conveniently make us forget about the resilient persistence of the local and regional" (158). Pope outlines the international success of Bolaño's novel 2666 and uses press reviews to show how Bolaño has "become truly global" (159). To Pope, Bolaño is an example of authors who "break through the margin and become integrated in many different literatures, not as a foreign or exotic element [...], but as an admired model of great literature" (159).

K. Alfons Knauth shows that, with respect to Latin America, the Tower of Babel has often been used as a positive image of literary polyglossia. Starting with Athanasius Kirchner in 1679, the Great Pyramid of Cholula (Tlachihualtepetl) became a monument of "Turris Babel autochthone" (168) and the idea of a "langue bifide" of the gods. Mexican polyglossia has influenced Rabelais's *Gargantua et Pantagruel*, Knauth argues, "ce roman d'un monde nouveau à la suite de la découverte du Nouveau Monde" (170). He traces this tradition to Brazilian modernismo and concepts of polyglossia in Jorge Luis Borges's writings (*La Biblioteca de Babel*, in particular) as well as the work of the Brazilian poet and translator Haroldo de Campos and the Nobel Prize laureate Miguel Ángel Asturias ("Babel de los Babeles").

Laurence Denooz presents a thorough analysis of Ali Ahmad Bakatir's new approach to the Faust motif in *Le Nouveau Faust*. "L'inspiration est clairement goethéene" (188), but Bakatir adds characters and arranges them in "couples symétriques" (197). He integrates the subject matter into his own cultural context. His Marguerite "représente toutes les

valeurs morales de la religion musulmane” (191). This transformation is complemented by allusions to current political developments.

Christophe Den Tandt’s paper scrutinizes “locally focused post-modern realism” (201), which is understood as a reprisal of the nineteenth-century local color realism of authors like George Sand or Kate Chopin that “focused on pre-industrial communities living in the shadow of industrialization and urbanization” (203). Den Tandt describes the New Local Color movement as encompassing contemporary works that “address the link between a shifting network of global interactions and various heterogeneous locales that ignore, escape, or resist the pressure of planetary standardization” (204). In addition, these texts use postmodern devices such as “textual discontinuity, metafiction, and textual playfulness” (205). His argument closes with “an analysis of a representative instance of contemporary local color” (201), Danny Boyle’s movie *Slumdog Millionaire*.

Thomas and Dorothy M. Figueira analyze Ryszard Kapuściński’s non-fiction book *Travels with Herodotus*. The Polish journalist identifies Herodotus as “our first reporter” (217) and thus equates their respective work. Thomas and Dorothy M. Figueira stress the difference between both authors and their methods of representing others: “*Travels with Herodotus* does not, as a travel narrative would (and Herodotus seems to have done), interpret cultural encounters or articulate any analytic discourse about human diversity” (218). Kapuściński’s portrayal of Herodotus as “a clear enemy of Asian tyranny and a champion of European democracy” (218) is superficial, they argue. “Herodotus initiated the study of comparative culture by posing two basic questions. He questioned what an alien society has in common with his own. He also asked in what way one culture could differ from another. In Kapuściński (and in multiculturalism), the referent is not the self and the other, but the self’s experience of the other” (225).

Micéala Symington scrutinizes the interrelation between literature and historical fact in Irish literature, focusing on treatments of the Great Famine as a pivotal experience for the Irish national identity. She argues that even the term Irish literature is fraught with problems, implying either an element of European literature or the tradition of a previously colonized land. By foregrounding these issues, Symington argues, “categorization risks becoming more important than the writing itself,” and “the model of central and peripheral literatures can become an obstacle

to literary interpretation" (231). She shows how the few treatments of the Great Famine, especially Joseph O'Connor's *Star of the Sea*, offer a deeper understanding of Irish identity.

Stéphanie Loriaux's contribution compares the two waves of multicultural literature ("littérature allochtone") in the Netherlands in the 1980s and 1990s. One group, represented by Marion Bloem, an author from the "Deuxième Génération d'écrivains indo-néerlandais," views the problems of immigrants as central, as Loriaux shows with respect to her novel *Geen gewoon Indischmeisje*. The other group, represented by writers such as Hafid Bouazza, are often perceived as "foreign" authors, although neither they nor their texts focus on cultural alterity. Loriaux takes such a representation as indicative of the current political climate in the Netherlands.

Isabelle Meuret analyzes Salman Rushdie's transcultural and transnational novel *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008). She demonstrates how "Rushdie reconciles East and West in a fable that blends the magic of India and the extravaganza of Western Europe" (261). The author uses a "subtle mixture of realistic and surreal elements" (261). By fusing East and West in an unconventional way, Rushdie succeeds at "an original and thought-provoking treatment of diversity and multivocality," a "reflection on identity and alterity" (261), which always stresses that the perception of something as "exotic and surreal" (263) is dependent on a particular perspective that can also be levied by the East vis-à-vis the West.

Franca Bellarsi's contribution deals with Canadian prairie poets Walter Hildebrandt and Andrew Susknaski. Origin and cultural background are central to Bellarsi's argument: Hildebrandt is a "descendant of Russo-Germans from the former Volga Republic" (281), whose Mennonite father "had to endure persecution from both the Soviets and Nazis alike" (281), while Susknaski is "the son of a Ukrainian father and Polish mother" (283). Both authors connect the old home country with the new, but in their works, "the reader experiences not so much contrast as correspondences" (284). Bellarsi finally stresses how both authors cross the boundary from postcolonial to ecocritical thought.

Sylvie Vranckx analyzes two Native Canadian novels in English (*The Lesser Blessed* and *Kiss of the Fur Queen*) by authors (Richard Van Camp and Tomson Highway) from different generations and ethnolinguistic groups. "They present the strategies through which young native men negotiate their identities in Canadian towns and cities. Cultural *métissage* and the adoption of countercultures play an ambivalent role in the

main characters' development and are mirrored by syncretic techniques such as intertextuality, a blending of Native and Western imagery, and the crossing of several genres and artistic traditions" (292).

Tomson Highway is also one of the authors discussed by Caroline De Wagter, who compares his *Ernestine Shuswap Gets Her Trout* (2004) with August Wilson's *Radio Golf* (2005). Both authors' work appears to De Wagter as a "turning point in the dramatic production of the U.S. and Canada" (307). Her title, "(W)riting history," suggests how the dramatists arrive at "resurrecting cultural memories from moments of historical fracture" (307). "Each play takes history as its base and problematizes dominant cultural memory by eschewing the simplistic patterns of the conventional narrative of History" (320).

In the last contribution to the volume, David O'Donnell discusses contemporary Australasian drama. He traces its roots to the nineteenth century, "dominated by English plays" (327), and its development of an original voice in the 1950s. In the 1970s and 1980s, a "New Wave" of white playwrights brought "indigenous characters" to the stage, but only indigenous writers provided "the most potent examples of post-colonial unease" (329). O'Donnell further states that "while post-colonial themes remain prominent in Australasian drama, works by new immigrant playwrights bring more global perspectives" (334). By taking Lynda Chanwai-Earle's *Heat* (2008) and Andrew Bovell's *When the Rain Stops Falling* (2008) as examples, he demonstrates how ecological questions have become a central issue in these plays.

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Comptes rendus de congrès / Conference Reports

TWO COMPARATIVE LITERATURE MEETINGS IN INDIA

The Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI) co-sponsored two thought-provoking and well-attended conferences on February 26–28 and March 2–4, 2012. The first, on “Minority Discourses across Cultures,” was held at the recently founded Central University of Rajasthan, in Kishangarh (about 200 miles southwest of Delhi), under the immediate direction of the Department of English. The other, on “Translation, Ideology, and Politics in the 21st Century,” took place at the newly built Conference Centre of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in Delhi. This conference was organized by IGNOU’s School of Translation Studies and Training, with assistance from the National Translation Mission.

The Rajasthan conference brought together some two hundred participants in a variety of venues, beginning with an inaugural session that featured a keynote address by Keki Daruwalla, a well-known poet and novelist writing in English. As a member of the national government’s Commission for Minorities, he shared his insights from working there, including a telling example of the quantity/quality distinction crucial for thinking about minority status. As a Parsi, Daruwalla comes from a relatively small minority that has nonetheless made major contributions to Indian life.

Senior faculty gave papers in seven Plenary Sessions distributed at intervals over the three-day conference, three of which were full plenaries while the other four were scheduled in concurrent pairs. Younger faculty and graduate students presented their papers in six sets of “technical sessions” running in parallel; these panels were chaired by senior faculty who intervened with useful commentary in addition to leading the question period. The conference ended with a valedictory session highlighted by Jasbir Jain’s timely address on “Living in Times of Terror.” In the spirit

of the ICLA's newly established research committee on the literatures of India and the Indian subcontinent, Jain focused on recent fiction from throughout that area as well as Afghanistan. The conference also had a "book launch" of eight titles on comparative topics; a cultural program of dance, music, and song; and an evening of literary readings showcasing fiction, poetry, local folklore, and satire in several languages.

The issues addressed in the technical sections gave this observer a useful overview of what is seen as "minority discourse" in India. The writings of Dalits (formerly known as "Untouchables"), the situation of Muslims, the experiences of tribals (especially of groups in India's mountainous border regions), and the continuing struggles to advance women and women's writing stood out, along with the basic question of what constitutes a minority. There were also sessions on the allied cross-cultural issue of African-American literature as well as panels on oral narrative, on Indian diasporic writings, and on the transfer of written narratives into film.

In a lead-off plenary talk, Harish Trivedi, vice president of CLAI, commented on the complex array of meanings covered by the term minority. He drew special attention to the paradox in Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "minority literature," insofar as they chose to deal mainly with Kafka, who by now has clearly become a *major* figure in world literature. In his closing comments on the third day Trivedi returned to this paradox, suggesting that in current literary studies minority status may have turned into a "majority" topic for researchers. Dorothy Figueira, in her accompanying plenary address, cautioned that spokespersons for minorities may not themselves be legitimate authors of minority discourse due to a disjunction between their "literature of empathy" and a more authentic "literature of experience" created by actual members of minority groups. The author of this report, whose paper discussed Tolstoy's efforts in his later fiction to write about peasant life in a manner accessible to peasants, may have inadvertently supported the findings of these two papers, given that this major novelist's venture into writing for the minoritized illiterate masses may have been considered paradoxical or even mistaken by these two speakers. However, in neglecting this turn in Tolstoy's career, recent anthologies of world literature have filtered out his challenging idea that world literature should have at least some features of a "minority discourse" in the sense of being meaningfully accessible to previously excluded audiences.

Other plenary talks offered detailed insights into aspects of minority discourse in India. Both Anisur Rahman and E.V. Ramakrishnan presented many-sided meditations on the situation of Muslims, against the backdrop of Indian history antedating the partition of 1947 and Pakistan's and Bangladesh's emergence as Muslim-majority nations. Rahman's ambitious overview proposed that every minority should be understood as a "site of contestation," while stressing the ease with which misconceptions can form and proliferate. Ramakrishnan, while agreeing on the nefarious role of stereotypes, brought out the importance of regional differences by focusing on the Muslims in Kerala, on India's southwest coast. Lakshmi Kannan discussed the recent autobiographies of two women artists, stressing their tenacious commitments to art despite major obstacles and their complex situations as mothers, widows, and people striving for full humanity. Tapati Mukherjee, on the other hand, invoked the silencing of women in ancient Indian writings while commenting on long-term continuities in Mahasweta Devi's tribal Draupadi whose agonies echo those of her namesake in the *Mahabharata*.

Two plenary talks drew attention to cross-cultural "limit cases" of special historical significance. Somdatta Mandal discussed multi-media representations of the hybrid "Anglo-Indians" still in Bengal as a tiny remnant from the colonial era, isolated from both England and India. Kunal Chattopadhyay argued for assigning minority status to autobiographies by Leon Trotsky and Aleksandra Kollontai, given the dissident position of their works within the standardized format demanded of Soviet life-stories by the late 1920s. Three further plenaries focused on theoretical topics, beginning with Sieghild Bogumil Nötz's paper on the positions of Gadamer, Levinas, Bakhtin, and Bhabha, for whom any full sense of identity depends on challenges from interacting with strangers and minorities. Ipshita Chanda surveyed varied meanings associated with the concept of a minority, pointing out (for example) that every person is a "minority of one," that the term can be construed in qualitative (not male or not white) or quantitative terms (less than 50 percent), and that even "official" minority status is relative in nature, as seen in the shifting meanings for "black" in the US, London, or Africa. T.S. Satyanath, in an exceptionally detailed talk based on research on Kannada literature, discussed "marginocentricity," as illustrated by hunters and forest life within a larger agrarian kingship culture. Patterns of inclusion and exclusion reappear inside every minority,

Satyanath indicated, producing a nested structure of majority and minority within what from the outside looks like a minority culture.

Every conference this size must include more than any observer can cover, but no report would be complete without acknowledging the steady oversight of Dr. Supriya Agarwal, English department chair of the Central University of Rajasthan; the enthusiastic support of Professor M.M. Salunkhe, the Honorable Vice Chancellor of that institution; and the exceptional organizational skills of Dr. Chandra Mohan, the General Secretary of CLAI. The two cultural events, one dedicated to the word in a variety of modes and languages and the other to dance and music, were a welcome addition to the conference's rich array of reflections on minority discourse across the cultures of India and including some situations in the world at large.

Three days later in Delhi many members of the Rajasthan group met again at a conference on translation, organized by Professor Avadhesh Kumar Singh, Director of the School of Translation Studies and Training at IGNOU. This conference with about seventy-five participants also began with an opening ceremony, ended with a valedictory session, and alternated in the interim between five plenary sessions for senior scholars and three sets of parallel sessions for younger scholars and students. Regrettably, the requirements of an impending international flight kept this observer from attending all but one of the parallel sessions. However, the papers heard there suggested that translation had been defined flexibly enough to include broad cultural issues. Among the latter topics were the difficulties in identifying Dalit literature in Bengal, the invention of a sign language for the deaf and dumb, and the influence of market forces in shaping the selection of recent Indian literature in anthologies. More traditional topics included controversies over translations of sacred texts and the much greater number of translations going from French to English in a bilingual society like Canada.

Harish Trivedi's keynote address stressed the one-way nature of translation in Indian history, from India to China with Buddhist scriptures, but from the Arab/Persian world and the West into India later on. Any repetition of Tagore's Nobel Prize will depend on increasing the number and quality of translations from Indian languages into English, leading Trivedi to question both the current domination of English in India and the world and the nature of what counts as a "good" translation. Later plenary talks divided fairly evenly between theoretical topics and

specific questions of translation practice. Examples of the first type included Dorothy Figueira's critique of an overreliance on translations into English; Anisur Rahman's intriguing point about the "companionship" of Indian texts written in the nation's different languages; and Sieghild Bogumil Nötz's discussion of poetic translation as a form of literary interpretation. Dr. Anamika, from her own experience as a literary translator, spoke suggestively about translation as a gesture of inclusivity across linguistic boundaries. Speakers of the second type included T.V. Satyanath on the early twentieth-century shift in Karnataka from rather free adaptations of foreign texts to translations that practiced fidelity and Ipshita Chanda on her experiment with ways to signal a text's different speech registers in a translation that strives to preserve a sense of the source work's alterity. In a similar spirit, this reporter considered the semantic fields associated with realism and modernism as literary terms in both Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and two major English translations from several decades later, before the terms were sharply polarized due to Cold-War polemics. On a broader historical scale Kamigaito Ken'ichi discussed the spread of Buddhism in East Asia, initially using Indian texts translated into Chinese, but later gaining closer contact with the originals, though for some sutras the Chinese or Tibetan renditions are the only surviving sources.

The valedictory session, with talks by two Sanskritists, Professors Radha Vallabh Tripathi and Kapil Kapoor, opened entirely new vistas. Like some other scriptural languages, Sanskrit resisted being translated, so for many years it lacked a real concept of translation. Once rendition of *The Upanishads* reached the world, they had a major influence on figures like Emerson and Schopenhauer, while Jones's translation of *Kalidasa* led Goethe to find in it the expression of a distinctive worldview. Sanskrit also had other major intellectual and linguistic impacts on world culture, especially (as also noted in other papers) on the spread of Buddhism, on Arab and Persian Islamic culture from the seventh to the eleventh centuries, and on Saussure, Jakobson, and Trubetskoy. As chair of this session, Indra Nath Choudhuri, a former secretary of the Sahitya Akademi, used the occasion to comment on the current centrality of English within India's translation culture. Not only has this situation constrained Hindi's potential as a "link language" among the country's languages, but the fact that translations from one Indian language into another often depend on an English intermediary has led

to a “deculturalization” of distinctively Indian features of those works. The priority of English also obscures the true nature of Indian literature for readers abroad. As recourse, Choudhuri applauded Achebe’s idea of subverting English from within, in this case by giving it an Indian rather than a Nigerian twist.

For a comparatist acquainted, in a rather broad way, with India’s linguistic diversity, this conference provided a fascinating expansion of knowledge and understanding. The overall richness of this cultural terrain, along with the challenges it offers for translation practices, promises to contribute in major ways to comparative literary study in general. CLAI and its General Secretary Professor Chandra Mohan are to be saluted for helping to sponsor this second meeting.

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“SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL” IN TARTU

9th International Conference of The Estonian Association of Comparative Literature: World Literature and National Literatures
Tartu, 25–28 September 2011

First and foremost, the Tartu Conference was singular in bringing together representatives of academic communities that (in the global code of the contemporary textile industry) would qualify as S(mall). A Goethean simile for the notion of world literature frequently evoked during the conference was that of small pebbles which in time build an imposing temple. What Goethe had in mind was an addition of literary masterpieces, but, elaborating on his association, we could imagine the Tartu event as a heap of representatives of “pebble” nations. Besides the Estonian hosts, the large majority of the participants came from Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Slovakia, and, a rather surprising number of scholars (eight) from five different Romanian universities.

As everything that seems surprising and spontaneous, this small-size pattern could not have emerged without the careful planning of the organizers—among whom our arch-host, Jüri Talvet, not only a remarkable literary scholar and editor-in-chief of *Interlitteraria* (one of the most dynamic European comparative literature reviews), but also an outstanding

Estonian poet and thinker. It is quite rare for “small” cultures to connect so directly and socialize, since, as a rule, they learn about each other through the agency of “big” cultures. Even if inevitably resorting to English as a *koiné*, and adopting a conceptual lingo forged in the dominant academic headquarters of America and western Europe, the participants were encouraged not only to remember Fritz Schuhmacher’s “small is beautiful,” but also to indulge in the mental experiment of a confederation of the “small” that could not really counterbalance the “big,” but at least file its own “minority report” on the state of global culture.

That “small” and “big” are radically relative concepts was made apparent by the very participation of one German and three Chinese literary scholars. On the one hand, Germany is the textbook example of a major cultural and political player having fully explored and morally condemned its own historical ambitions of global hegemony (a process directly mirrored in the analysis Silke Pasewalck, a DAAD scholar at the University of Tartu, on the stakes of “Teaching ‘German Literature’ in Germany Today”). On the other hand, even if having been an uncontested cultural flagship in the East since times immemorial (as implicitly acknowledged by Chen Qi, a doctoral student at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, in her comparative analysis of the Chinese and European mindsets as reflected in the literary expressions of their respective “sciences” of reading facial and body language), China developed a powerful marginality complex at the time of its integration in a Euro-centric world system (as explicitly acknowledged by Yip Terry Siu-Han, from the Hong Kong Baptist University, and Kwok-Kan Tam, from the Open University of Hong Kong, in their papers addressing different phases of the modernization and Westernization in Chinese literature).

Another apparent exception from the small-is-beautiful rule was the contribution of Dorothy Figueira, University of Georgia, USA, former president of the ICLA. “Contribution” and not “participation” because unfortunately Figueira could not come to Tartu to personally deliver the keynote address of the conference. Nevertheless her paper on “Comparative Literature and Postcolonial Criticism” was read to the plenum, and positioned from the beginning the theoretical debate on the lines of critically confronting the current prejudices on the center-periphery dynamics. Actually, Dorothy Figueira produced something very close to a manifesto calling comparatists to temper their globalist ethical commitment with an increased intellectual self-awareness. The paper criticized a) the

tendency of turning the cultural-literary Other into the rhetorical ornament of a self-righteous ideological narrative (i.e. of the West boldly going to the roots of its colonial/imperial guilt), and b) the side-effect of well-meaning theories, such as David Damrosch's pragmatic re-definition of the notion of "World Literature," of downplaying the hermeneutical and empathetic effort needed to reduce the mental distances between cultures.

Coming from a scholar who has elaborated on her own condition as a woman with a Latin-American cultural background within US academe, Figueira's intervention naturally fitted the conference's implicit celebration of the force of fragility, i.e. of "minority" and "marginality." But the most stimulating turn was that Figueira threw her well-established prestige as a scholar of Sanskrit literature and its Western reception in support of the idea that the reflection on and the research of intercultural exchange should be disembedded from all ideological allegiances, no matter how commendable, and placed instead under the guidance of a somewhat classical ethos of patient philological accuracy and careful conceptual distinctions.

The following presentations explored a variety of understandings of the conference theme, sometimes overlapping, more often than not cutting across the boundaries of the panels. Some papers meritoriously concentrated on literature as an essentially aesthetic endeavor, as in the subtle analyses of Lauri Pilter (University of Tartu, Estonia), of "stoppages of imagery" in the works of modern Estonian and American poets, or of Indre Zakevicienė (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania), of the English influences exercised over Lithuanian modern poetry. But most of the approaches extended the notion of "literature" by including: mediating and conceptualizing structures and agents (translators, critics, hermeneutical habits); the functioning of literature and literary scholarship as discourses of ideological legitimation; self- and identity-building processes; the international economic-cultural and political-cultural environment shaping the representation of "world literature" and the generation of global canons; curricular policies that determine not only the national literary canons but also the very substance of the notions of "world," "national," and "literature." In what follows, I will summarize the papers presented according to what I perceived as being their dominant intellectual stakes.

World Literature and the Theory of Cultural Mediation

New conceptualizations of the world-national dynamics could emerge from shifting the focus of comparative research from individual authors

or literary trends to agents/vectors of the literary field who sponsor the processes of conceptual framing and cultural mediation. A perspective taken, for instance, by Ladislav Franek (Constantine the Philosopher University of Nitra, Slovakia) who contended that: a) the translation of poetry as a fringe case functions as a test case for intercultural communication and b) translators should be trained to mediate not only between languages, but also between different cognitive fields, from linguistics, to social history, political science, or cultural anthropology.

From the position aptly described by Jüri Talvet as that of an “almost keynote speaker” (a side-effect of Dorothy Figueira’s physical absence), I proposed that the emergence of a concept of “world literature” should consider the different understandings of “literature” as reflected in the practices and social functions the literary criticism develops in different cultural traditions. In order to articulate this natural plurality, we further need a comparative study of literary criticisms simultaneously focused on their explicit philosophical divergences and on their embeddedness in specific cognitive traditions and cultures. The paper also implied, at least half-seriously, that the specific nexus of intellectual skills represented by different traditions of literary criticism might come under the provisions of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In a similarly ironic vein, Aarne Ruben (University of Tallinn, Estonia) alluded to the strikingly different manners of reading that developed in liberal democracies as opposed to Communist societies for which ideological censorship and the necessity of circumventing it were central and determining factors. Quite extraordinarily, Ruben chose his illustrations of “schizoid” reading practices from a no less culturally- and ideologically-exotic area than North Korea.

Legitimation Discourses

Another approach focused on the analysis of legitimation discourses (in both senses of the word *discourse*, i.e. an articulated argument as well as patterns and mannerisms of thought) developed in and around different “national” literatures. Given the history and geographical location of most of the nations represented in Tartu, the papers dealt especially with the manner in which “European-ness” was literarily constructed in different “peripheral” European areas.

Adrian Lăcătuș (Transylvania University of Brașov, Romania) analyzed the manner in which the fiction and essays of East European authors of the 1970s and 1980s subverted the claim of the Communist regimes of being the only legitimate heirs of the great European/Western humanistic and emancipatory legacy. According to Lăcătuș, the East-European dissenting literary counter-elites covertly made a rival claim to representing the “true” spirit of Europe—one that could be approximated with the concept of “negative liberty” developed by Isaiah Berlin, as opposed to the official “positive liberty” (that is to say: one bound to an ideological definition so strict that it actually voided its core notion of any meaning).

Rodica Maria Ilie (Transylvania University of Brașov, Romania) focused on the Romanian situation and dealt with the attempts made by liberal-minded authors of the post WWII period to “naturalize” European values in their representation of the national ethos, while under pressure from both the Communist cultural ideology and the “anxiety of influence” derived from the success stories of émigré authors such as Cioran, Eliade, and Ionesco. The analysis of legitimization discourses and practices proved to be a wider Romanian concern, since the papers of Carmen Popescu and Emilia Parpală (both from the University of Craiova, Romania) equally dealt with the topic: the use of parody can be viewed as a legitimizing tool at various stages of Romanian postbellum literary history (Popescu) or as an attempt to build “alternative canons” before and after the fall of the Communist regime (Parpală).

Vanesa Matajč (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) developed a particularly subtle analysis of the paradoxes of the legitimizing discourse of Slovenian literary modernism in the Communist era. In spite of the international “manifest destiny” of modernism and the Avant-Garde, Slovenian authors indebted to such aesthetic creeds came to perceive the internationalist ideology of the one-party system as a direct threat to their intellectual freedom. Later on, “literary modernism” became an ideological motive of nationalist discourses priding itself on the inherent Western-ness of Slovenians as opposed to other Yugoslav nations.

The interest in the direct or implicit (self)legitimation discourses of the literary intelligentsia was also shared by Tetiana Narchynska (National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy,” Ukraine), who analyzed from a postcolonial perspective the intricacies of canon- and nation-building in the case of the post-Soviet Ukraine. Eva Eglāja

(University of Latvia) looked at the use of the literary methodology as a tool for ideological legitimization from the reversed perspective of Soviet imperialism.

Identity Formation

The world-national dynamics were also investigated with the presumption that literature is a cultural area that exposes in most relevant ways the process of personal identity formation, understood as an internalization of values/value systems. This orientation, necessarily relying on phenomenological or phenomenology-compatible premises, tends to define world literature through those national bodies of works bearing witness to an intimate absorption and personalization of values generally seen as universal or at least trans-national. At the same time, this quest for the "sources of the self" tends to expose the hybridization or fusion of "universal" and "national" beliefs and attitudes.

Such investigations should necessarily concentrate on individual case studies. Marko Juvan (Slovenian Academy Of Sciences And Arts) and Benedikts Kalnačs (University of Latvia) offered two state-of-the-art analyses of the impact of a universalist/multicultural ethos on the self-perception of literary intellectuals. Juvan focused on Slovenian authors from the beginning of the nineteenth century, Kalnačs on Latvian authors with different ethnic backgrounds writing at the same time. Both critics discussed the experience of cultural diversity/hegemony, with particular emphasis on the mental transformations brought about by modernization: each touched upon the construction of the self as a symbolic strategy of social-cultural adaptation.

Other, mostly Baltic case studies ranged from German language autobiographical writings of sixteenth-century Tallinn (Maris Saagpakk, University of Tallinn, Estonia), to seventeenth-century literary expressions of multicultural identities (Aigi Heero, University of Tallinn), to various nineteenth-century individual literary experiments of collective identity formation (Maija Burima, University of Daugavpils, Latvia and Eneken Laanes, Tallinn Under-Tuglas Literature Centre, Estonia), to the historical Avant-Garde (Arne Merilai, University of Tartu), and finally to contemporary literature (Livija Mačaitė-Kaseliene, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania).

Another perspective of understanding the "organicity" of trans- or multiculturalism on the basis of individual case studies was explored by

Levente Szabó (from the Hungarian Studies department of the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj, Romania). Szabó examined the personality of Hugo Melzl von Lomnitz, the Transylvanian scholar who initiated the first international review of comparative literary studies, *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum* in 1877. This analysis fit very nicely with that of Audinga Tikuišienė-Peluritytė (University of Vilnius, Lithuania) who investigated Polish and Lithuanian avatars of the neoclassical ideal from the seventeenth to the twentieth century.

Special mention must be afforded the contribution of Jüri Talvet, the *spiritus rector* of the annual Tartu comparative literature conference: Talvet argued that radical social marginality within an already “marginal” culture could paradoxically lead to highly universalizable spiritual dispositions. His paper elaborated on the work and personality of the Estonian *fin-de-siècle* poet Juhan Liiv, who throughout his adult life struggled against poverty, rejection by the literary community, and mental illness. With the contained passion that is one of his most distinctive features, Talvet presented us with Liiv’s struggle between despair and dignity as expressed in the world-class poetry he was able to create from his overwhelming inner conflicts.

World Literature and the World-System Theory

This “new” pedagogy was, of course, too tempting to be ignored. It is arguable whether international relations’ and globalization’s “big theories” would have exerted such a magnetic attraction over the minds of “small nation” scholars were it not for the international reputations of literary Immanuel Wallersteins such as Franco Moretti. Nevertheless, the scholars who explored this deterministic pattern of explaining the world-national cultural interaction were in no way mechanically reproducing any magisterial theoretical tenets.

Starting from a critique of David Damrosch’s confidence in the natural tendency of the powerful literary creations to irradiate over language and cultural divides, Andrei Terian (Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania) pointed back to the determining (in his view) influence the traditional tri-worldish representation of international relations has on the circulation of the literary values. His provocative conclusion was that the real losers of the international game of fame are not the Third World authors and literary traditions, but those of the “Second World,”—a notion that used to denote the states of the Soviet camp, and

that now describes the condition of countries no longer under the grip of the Communist ideology and Russian imperialism, yet only formally and superficially integrated in the European part of the "First World." A sense and/or rhetoric of postcolonial guilt, on the one hand, and the provocations coming from Muslim radicalism and emerging powers like China and India, on the other hand, constantly direct the attention of the global canon-makers towards the Third World. In other words, the periphery of the world literature, or, better phrased, of the world literary system, is actually the Second World. According to Andrei Terian, this is a direct consequence of mental maps generated not through real intellectual exchanges, but as direct reflections of the international balance of powers.

Jeanne E. Glesener (University of Luxembourg) argued that cultural peripheralization is not only an effect of geo-strategical *de facto* marginality. The central geographical position and direct access of German and French speakers, to two highly visible literary stages does not facilitate the positioning of authors from Luxembourg on the world's literary scene. The case of Luxembourg contradicts crude economic determinism: being close to the center of the world economy doesn't automatically imply sharing in world cultural hegemony. But at the same time the "exclusion" of the "small" Luxembourg confirms that "world literature" is framed by power relationships and functions on a hierarchical, exclusivist, and hegemonic basis. In matters of international culture, visibility does matter. But, to her credit, Glesener did not limit herself to demonizing the "System." Her conclusion was that the peripheralization process could be reversed through creative "equal opportunity" cultural policies.

Andrei Bodiu (Transylvania University of Braşov, Romania) took a similar position in his analysis of the competition between literary translations and the domestic literature on the Romanian book market. Bodiu's main thesis was that the effects of the world-national literary dialectics can most effectively be revealed by examining the pressure that global players in the book industry place on the domestic fictional production of the "small" nations. Considerable pressure is, indeed, exerted: but it is not homogeneously detrimental, since, to a certain extent, it can be construed by local authors and cultural strategists as both a provocation and an incentive. This paper does not deride the market, cultural globalization or the famous "commoditization." Rather, it translates the

traditional vision of the world-national interaction as purely intellectual intercourse into terms suggesting a process of adaptation to (ever)changing cultural-economic environments.

Literature and/as Public Policy

Not only do markets or international political forces shape universal-national literary dynamics. National educators and policy makers also play an important role in the process. This theme was the theoretical starting point for another research vector exhibited at the Tartu conference. If the “legitimization discourse” scholars focused on the articulation of explicit or implicit ideological arguments embedded in the construction of literary canons, those interested in “public policy” were interested in the social impact of the canon in school curricula and other national educational programs. The approach was not only descriptive but also proactive—e.g. what should be the effective pedagogical rationale, public advocacy, or civic agenda needed to enlarge the presence of “world literature” in national curricula?

This task of understanding the world and its intersection with national concerns was a leitmotif of the conference, finding expression in such varied discussions as an analysis of the criteria for state-funded publications of world literature translations as a form of “character building” literature in interbellum Estonia (Katiliina Gielen), to the treatment of German classics in the Estonian curricula (Liina Lukas), to the comparative approach of French and Estonian pedagogies with respect to the concept of “world poetry” (Katre Talviste), and on to exploring the consequences European educators might draw from the Canadian experience of multiculturalism (Eva Rein).



Provided that the academics reunited at the Tartu Conference were sociologically representative, if not for their corresponding nations in general then at least for their national academic communities (but I am afraid we cannot take this assumption for granted), one might be inclined to hypothesize on the dissolution of the intellectual inferiority complexes that have plagued “small” European, mainly “Second World” countries. The general atmosphere of the conference was one of professional self-confidence derived from a sense of being connected to global networks of intellectual exchanges. To which the participating scholars

added a robust sense of humor equally oriented towards a) the patronizing superiority with which the “enlightened” cultural centers approach (if ever) the allegedly obscurantist “peripheries,” and b) the vindictive jingoism supplanting the past and occasionally the present of their respective “small” (or just “marginalized”) nations. One could barely hear any grudge and resentment against the global players (surprisingly enough, not even against the ex-Soviet Union). The participating scholars were not into constructing mythologies of symbolic compensation and revenge, but rather into identifying the opportunities of what we could define as a “cosmopolitan marginality.” One of these opportunities being the very possibility of freely evaluating, comparing and, synthesizing the schools of thought of the rather self-centered “world cultural powers.”

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TRANSLATING / COMPARING POETRY

Otemae University, Japan

November 18 and 19, 2011

Academic commemorations and celebrations have much in common. They both pay appreciative tribute to colleagues who have made distinctive contributions that have often changed the direction of the profession. In the one case, the view is backward to a body of work that has been completed; the other also looks to the past but to the present as well in anticipation of equally significant work yet to come. Such is the case with an international symposium convened in Osaka at Otemai University on November 18 and 19, 2011. Scholars from several parts of the world assembled to pay tribute to the memory of the late Earl Miner and offer appreciation and congratulations to KAWAMOTO Koji, two towering figures in the field of comparative literature, who share many scholarly interests although coming from very different but in many respects complementary backgrounds. As distinguished comparatists they both not only excelled individually as practitioners of the discipline, but also played noteworthy roles in developing and extending its purview in their respective countries in terms of both the breadth of

its subject matter as well as the techniques of comparative analysis that were readily brought to bear upon it.

Earl Miner's scholarly commitment can be divided between his acclaimed and wide-ranging expertise in British literature of the seventeenth century on the one hand and his distinguished study of the literary history of Japan as seen from an international perspective on the other. His publications began in 1956 with an edition of a selection of the poetry of Dryden, which was quickly followed by his frequently-cited pioneering study *Japanese Court Poetry* written in conjunction with Robert H. Brower. His career as a literary scholar continued for forty years with subsequent studies of Dryden, the British Restoration Period, typology, and the theory of comparative literature, most notably represented by his seminal *Comparative Poetics*. Alongside the numerous volumes devoted to those topics, he wrote broadly-encompassing studies of Japanese literature, which consistently embraced an international and comparative approach—e.g., *Naming Properties: Nominal Reference in Travel Writings by Bashō and Sora, Johnson and Boswell*—in contrast to the nativist, traditional view that had long dominated the Japanese critical arena. This internationalizing approach to Japanese literature went a very long way toward drawing Japanese and indeed all of East-Asian literature into the purview of Western scholarship and most especially the activities of the International Comparative Literature Association at whose helm he served a three-year term as president while the Townsend Martin, Class of 1917 Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Princeton University.

KAWAMOTO Koji also served as president of the ICLA and remains an eloquent and highly articulate voice mediating between Japanese literature understood in terms of traditional criteria as well as from a comparative and international perspective. His primary efforts along with penetrating studies of native Japanese cultural traditions have been directed toward clearly delineating the complexities of the relationship between Japanese literature on the one hand and that of France and the Anglophone world on the other. Among his most significant and widely acclaimed publications, *The Poetics of Japanese Verse: Imagery, Structure, and Meter*, has appeared in both a Japanese as well as an English edition. It is widely respected and has given numerous scholars and the occasional casual reader a heightened understanding of the subtlety and expressive power of haiku. In particular, it has clearly delimited what haiku is and

what it is not for many English-language readers. While this symposium celebrates in part his retirement as president of Otemae University, a position he had held for more than eight years after a distinguished career at Tokyo University as professor of Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies, it perhaps more significantly extols his election to the Japan Academy, an organization that accords special recognition to researchers with the most eminent records of academic and scholarly achievement. Notably, Prof. KAWAMOTO is the first scholar to be so honored drawn from the ranks of literary comparatists, a fact that will give comparative literature a new and distinctive prominence in the Japanese academic and broadly cultural world.

The symposium honoring these two distinguished and erudite gentlemen brought scholars from throughout Asia as well as other parts of the world to Otemae University for lively and at times provocative discussions of the topic "Translating/Comparing Poetry," a theme paralleling the scholarly interests of both honorees. The papers represented a wide range of topics as well as different critical approaches to comparative literature, but all in some way or other engaging the question of the degree to which translation is in and of itself a critical mode of literary analysis. Taken together they clearly demonstrated the continuing viability of comparative literature in terms of both its long-established methodologies as creatively applied to new questions and problems as well as more recently emerging ways of investigating a variety of seemingly divergent issues. Some of the presentations compared texts from different literary traditions or backgrounds; some examined the dynamics of literary mediation with reference to particular literary figure of speech; some addressed the always vexing problem of literary translation in highly specific terms; and others turned their attention to the relationship between literature and other arts, notably music, dance, and the visual arts. The range of topics extended from the juxtaposition of works whose fundamental differences were not immediately obvious in order to tease out striking underlying contrasts while others drew on more widely divergent works and traditions in which their heterogeneity revealed important aspects of both. Beneath this rich diversity, there was a consistent and often obvious commitment to the proposition that works of aesthetic merit and consequence are best understood in a broad intercultural context that involves a diversity of languages, traditions, and critical foundational assumptions. As would thus be expected,

national, cultural, and linguistic boundaries were eloquently crossed in order to illustrate both parallel structures and modes of thought as well to highlight telling differences.

The linguistic dimensions of the symposium offered ample and compelling evidence of widespread, erudite multilingualism seen most obviously in the ability of participants to engage one another's thinking in various languages. The official working languages of the symposium were Japanese and English in which all but one of the presentations were given, but the exception proves the rule: a paper on the translation of Chinese poetry into French was given in Mandarin Chinese with a fluid accompanying parallel oral translation into Japanese. Comparative literature at the highest levels, as this symposium epitomized, remains an area of scholarly investigation that should be firmly grounded in broad-based multilingualism. This long-established fundamental characteristic of the discipline is in significantly greater need today than it was decades ago as this symposium so clearly demonstrated. The number of presentations that dealt either directly or indirectly with questions of translation and the varying strengths, weaknesses, and consequences necessarily part of the procedure—and one of the themes of the symposium—forcefully stressed the continuing, if not heightened, need for the expanded and broad-based study of diverse languages—both modern and classical—at all levels of educational systems throughout the world. Perhaps the greatest challenge in this regard resides in making the case for the need of the native speakers of widely understood languages to cultivate a mastery of less rarely disseminated and more distinctly foreign modes of expression and ways of construing the world.

The general organization, the centrality of the theme, and the array of participants elicited presentations on topics at the heart of comparative literature as an internationally viable discipline. In spite of the occasional death knell that is sounded with regard to comparative literature as it is pursued at numerous universities around the world and notwithstanding the claim that it must be replaced by other critical methodologies, this symposium clearly demonstrated that, on the contrary, comparative literature continues to embody an indisputable vigor, vitality, and potential for penetrating scholarly research. It illustrated the wide range of its purview and enduring applicability of its traditional and varied methodologies. It clearly demonstrated how the comparative positioning of a text or a detailed understanding of a particular body of knowledge in

a broad and revealing context brings to light facets of understanding that in the isolation of one language or intellectual domain may well remain at best only partially accessible.

Given this symposium's appreciative recollection of one of comparative literature's most capable and broadly informed practitioners and the celebration of the election of the other to a position of conspicuous distinction as one of its most respected current advocates, it was a fitting and well deserved tribute. On the basis of their accomplishments and the symposium that recognized their contributions, no one can reasonably doubt the discipline's continuing intellectual stature.

STEVEN P. SONDRUP

Brigham Young University (USA)

Rapports des Comités d'Etudes et de Recherche / Research Committee Reports

RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON LITERARY THEORY

The Literary Theory Research Committee held their annual workshop this year at the University of Richmond (May 18–20, 2012) on the topic of “Animals and Literary Theory.” For the upcoming Paris Congress, the Committee has organized a series of sessions around the theme “The Art of Not Thinking.” On April 1, 2012, John Zilcosky (Toronto) assumed the chairship of the Committee, replacing Robert Stockhammer (Munich).

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The Research Committee on Literature in the Digital Age inquires into both the poetics of “New Media” and the impact of digital production, distribution, and archival systems on literature. At the upcoming Paris Congress, the Research Committee has organized a workshop entitled “Comparative Approaches to Digital Literature,” to which scholars from seventeen nations have made proposals.

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON GENDER STUDY

The Research Committee on Gender Study, which came into existence in 2004 under Margaret R. Higonnet, aims to further the comparative study of gender and sexuality through organizing innovative seminar programs at the ICLA and at the ACLA, and through supporting research and publication in the relatively new fields of comparative gender and comparative queer studies. We define “comparative” in its broadest sense as an approach to the study of literature and culture that includes a) traditional comparisons across national and linguistic borders as these relate specifically to gender and/or sexuality; b) comparative work across historical, postcolonial, and transnational contexts focusing on gender and/or sexuality; and c) scholarship using gender and/or sexuality as sites of comparison themselves, or in relation to race, class, ethnicity, national and religious affiliation, and other sites of difference. We also support work in the gender and sexual politics of textual and/or cultural translation in all historical periods. At the upcoming Paris Congress, the Committee has organized a series of five seminars around the topic “Comparing Queerly/Queering Comparison: Transformative Approaches to Comparative Studies,” which add an important dimension to the conference theme “Comparative Literature as a Critical Approach” by asking how comparing queerly, or queering comparison, challenges the normativities of the discipline and creates new sites of knowledge production in comparative literary and cultural study. Papers will be given either in English or in French.

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MAPPING MULTILINGUALISM IN
WORLD LITERATURE

Recent publication of *Translation & Multilingual Literature. Traduction & Littérature multilingue* (Ed. Alfons Knauth. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2011, 353 pages). This volume contains the papers of the Workshop held by the Committee at the Congress in Seoul (2010).

Current preparation of the volume *Imaginaire et idéologie du plurilinguisme littéraire. Immaginario e ideologia del plurilinguismo letterario*.

(Eds. Hans-Georg Grüning and Alfons Knauth, Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2013, ca. 300 pages). This volume contains the papers of the Symposium held by the Committee at the Università degli Studi di Macerata, Italy (2011).

Symposium held by the Committee at the University of California San Diego in August 2012 on the theme *Migrancy and Multilingualism* (Organizers: Ping-hui Liao and Alfons Knauth).

Workshop to be held by the Committee on the theme "Figures of Transcontinental Multilingualism" at the XIIIth Biennial Conference of the Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI) on the theme "The Journey of Comparative Literature: India and Beyond." This conference is scheduled for January 2013 at Jadavpur University in Kolkata, India. (Organizers of the workshop: Subha Chakraborty Dasgupta and Alfons Knauth.)

Additionally, some Committee members will participate in the workshop "Plurilinguisme littéraire 1900" held at the upcoming Paris Congress. This workshop is to be organized by Britta Benert, a participant of the Korean workshop "Translation & Multilingual Literature" and contributor to the above-mentioned book.

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON LITERARY AND CULTURAL INTER-RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDIA, ITS NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, AND THE WORLD

A specially convened panel workshop on *Literary and Cultural Inter-relationships between India, its neighboring countries and the World* is scheduled to be held at the forthcoming Congress in Paris. The event has attracted fifteen distinguished scholars, including first time participants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Professor Chandra Mohan, General Secretary of the Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI) is the coordinator of the project and the workshop.

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON SCRIPTURAL REASONING AND COMPARATIVE STUDIES

This committee intends to deepen current tendencies that aim to offer comparative readings of the scriptures from the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions along with the Chinese classics. The project is thus strongly intercultural, interlinguistic, and interdisciplinary.

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RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE AND NEUROSCIENCE

As Chair of the Research Committee on Literature and Neuroscience, Professor Suzanne Nalbantian has been organizing a series of three interdisciplinary symposia over the period of 2012–2014, treating, successively, memory, consciousness, and creativity. Participants are comparatists and neuroscientists. She directed the first of these meetings, on literature, memory, and neuroscience, at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on Long Island on April 19–21, 2012. She has now planned a Group Section (Topic 43) called “Consciousness and the Brain” of four sessions for the 2013 Congress in Paris. These sessions will treat the mapping of consciousness, the construction of consciousness, pathologies of consciousness, and culture and consciousness. Planning of the third symposium on “Creativity and the Brain” for 2014 is also under way and open to an even wider participation and audience.

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Different Ways to Look at a Blackbird, that is, at a Literature

I HAVE OBVIOUSLY BORROWED my title from the American poet Wallace Stevens, who wrote “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird,” which the Cuban poet Eugenio Florit translated into the felicitous, hendecasyllabic, sapphic, “Trece maneras de mirar a un mirlo.” In these lines, however, I invite you to see, from different perspectives rather than specific methods, not a bird, but rather a literary tradition, the Cuban tradition. I will dispense with, as will become clear, suggesting the oft repeated saying that literature is to be seen only from its *Selbigkeit*; it is unacceptable in general and in particular when speaking of comparative literature. With regard to the relationship between comparative literature and national literatures, see Eduardo F. Coutinho’s essay “Literatura comparada, literaturas nacionais e o questionamento do cânone” (Comparative Literature, National Literatures, and Questioning the Canon). Moreover, I know that many of the terms/concepts with which we work have been and continue to be called into question. Addressing “Emergent Literature and the Field of Comparative Literature” Wlad Godzich wrote:

We may not have much understanding of what lies behind the theoretical agitation of recent years, but we know what some of its consequences have been. Indeed, these have figured prominently in the controversies. One of the foremost has been the sudden uncertainty surrounding the very object of our study. (276)

Victor Barrera Enderle offers a similar opinion in “Ejercer la crítica literaria cuando nadie tiene la certeza de lo literario” (The Practice of Literary Criticism When Nobody is Certain of What is Literary).¹ He speaks of “la incertidumbre de un oficio cuya materia prima se ha venido disolviendo con el paso de los años.... Nuestro oficio, tiempo atrás calificado de ciencia en potencia, hoy en día se esparce y se difumina entre los interminables campos de los estudios culturales” (113) [the uncertainty of

a trade whose raw material has been dissolving over the years Our profession, at an earlier time described as persuasive scholarship, today spreads and diffuses itself between the endless fields of cultural studies]. I believe it was Chesterton who wrote that one should avoid the thought whose production prevents the progress of said thought. I do not want to enter the jungle of terminological polemics that are often incarnations of the “new planetary vulgate” about which Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant warned us. However, even though those authors pointed beyond our study, it is useful to have their words in mind:

La diffusion de cette nouvelle vulgate planétaire ... est le produit d'un impérialisme proprement symbolique. Les effets en sont d'autant plus puissants et pernicioseux que cet impérialisme est porté non seulement par les partisans de la révolution néolibérale, lesquels, sous couvert de modernisation, entendent refaire le monde en faisant table rase des conquêtes sociales et économiques résultant de cent ans de luttes sociales, et désormais dépeintes comme autant d'archaïsmes et d'obstacles au nouvel ordre naissant, mais aussi par des producteurs culturels (chercheurs, écrivains, artistes) et des militants de gauche qui, pour la grande majorité d'entre eux, se pensent toujours comme progressistes.... [A]ujourd'hui nombre de topiques directement issus de confrontations intellectuelles liées aux particularités et aux particularismes de la société et des universités américaines se sont imposés, sous des dehors en apparence déshistoricisés, à l'ensemble de la planète.... C'est ... un discours américain, bien qu'il se pense et se donne comme universel, en cela qu'il exprime les contradictions spécifiques de la situation d'universitaires qui, coupés de tout accès à la sphère publique et soumis à une forte différenciation dans leur milieu professionnel, n'ont d'autre terrain où investir leur libido politique que celui des querelles de campus déguisées en épopées conceptuelles. (6)

The diffusion of this new planetary vulgate ... is the result of a new type of imperialism. Its effects are all the more powerful and pernicious in that it is promoted not only by the partisans of the neoliberal revolution who, under cover of ‘modernization,’ intend to remake the world by sweeping away the social and economic conquests of a century of social struggles, henceforth depicted as so many archaisms and obstacles to the emergent new order, but also by cultural producers (researchers, writers and artists) and left-wing activists, the vast majority of whom still think of themselves as progressives.... [T]oday many topics directly issued from the particularities and particularisms of US society and universities have been imposed upon the whole planet under apparently de-historicized guises.... this is.... [an] American discourse, even though it thinks of itself and presents itself as a universal discourse, to the extent that it expresses the contradictions specific to the predicament of US

academics. Cut off from the public sphere and subjected to a high degree of competitive differentiation in their professional milieu, US professors have nowhere to invest their political libido but in campus squabbles dressed up as conceptual battles royal. (2–4)

I now offer the following: “Globalization is only another word for US domination.” (qtd. in Gnisci, “Historia Diferente” 35) We owe this memorable definition to an authority on the subject (although not exactly in the field of culture): Henry Kissinger. We cannot always depend on such brutal confessions.

I return now to my theme and begin with the Spanish perspective. In the coming year, my country will commemorate four centuries of Cuban literature. The epic poem *Espejo de paciencia* (Mirror of Patience), written in 1608, is considered our first literary work. Since there are no surviving *areítos*—religious ceremonies that included songs and dances of the aborigines (they too were quickly eliminated)—there is no doubt that Cuban literature began as an offshoot of Spanish literature. An offshoot, to be more specific, from Castilian literature (which became the imperial language) because unlike Spain, Cuban Literature has no works in Catalan, Galician, or Basque. José Juan Arrom studied “Las letras en Cuba antes de 1608” (Texts in Cuba Before 1608). These are, of course, texts written mostly by Spaniards. The first of these texts, however, is by the messianic and picturesque Genoese Christopher Columbus, who penned the initial description of our island. With regard to the version of his *Diario de viaje* that we have, along with other texts more or less connected to Christopher Columbus, Beatriz Pastor has written an excellent book *Discurso narrativo de la conquista: mitificación y emergencia* (The Narrative Discourse of the Conquest: Mystification and Emergence). Arrom examines the roots of Cuban writing in the works of mariners, reporters, and colonizers who wrote in Cuba, wrote about Cuba, or who were closely connected to the later development of Cuba’s culture. Of course, he imbues it with an extensive sense of literariness. He considers Columbus’s *Diario de viaje* “la piedra angular de las letras de Cuba” (18) [the cornerstone of Cuban writing]. José Lezama Lima, in his *Antología de la poesía cubana* (Anthology of Cuban Poetry) later says of the *Diario* that it is a “libro que debe estar en el umbral de nuestra poesía” (I: 3) [book that should be on the threshold of our poetry]. Arrom also refers to Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, who dedicated himself to the task of defending, “en lenguaje vibrante y apasionado”

(18) [in vibrant and passionate language], the right of the indigene to be free. Arrom affirmed that it would be an act of justice to make space in Cuban literature for those texts of Las Casas that directly concern the island. The rest of the authors presented by the erudite, former professor at Yale do not have the importance of the Admiral nor of the grand Dominican. Juan de Castellanos can also be added to this corpus for having included in *Elegías de Varones Ilustres de Indias* (Elegies of Illustrious Men of the West Indies) poetry that makes it clear that he was at some point in time in Cuba. The *Antología de la poesía cubana* (Anthology of Cuban Poetry), republished in 2002 and compiled by Lezama Lima, Álvaro Salvador, and Ángel Esteban gives preeminence, in its opening pages, to “un canto de 74 octavas reales que pertenecen a un conjunto de varios miles de versos dedicados a describir el periplo americano de fray Alonso de Escobedo, franciscano andaluz” (Vol. I: xiv) [a song of seventy-four *ottava rimas* that belongs to a collection of several thousand lines of poetry dedicated to describing the american journey of fray Alonso de Escobedo (an Andalusian Franciscan)]. This poem about “Florida” alludes to Baracoa and La Habana, other places the author visited. It is thought to have been written between 1598 and 1600. Thus, sixteenth-century Cuba can be seen to offer a sampling, albeit meager, of a certain literary production. Unsurprisingly this literature consists of completely colonial texts, whose authors are not even Cuban. Well into the future, Cuban literature would continue to be “colonial.”

As is well known, the indigenous people of Cuba did not survive the impact of the Europeans. With reference to this topic, Las Casas has left behind ample condemnation. The survival of the aborigines took place only in words (the first American words to penetrate European Languages). They were especially prominent in place names (the very name of the country is testament of this claim, as it resisted names such as Juana and Fernandina). Aboriginal words also appear in the names of common objects such as humble dwellings, foods, and customs. Although there are millions of direct descendants of the visionaries portrayed by Miguel León Portilla in books such as *Visión de los vencidos* (1959) and *El reverse de la conquista* (1964), the aborigines themselves were completely and utterly defeated. As a consequence, Cuba does not have, parallel to its texts of Spanish origin, an indigenous literary tradition, oral or even one that is adorned in Spanish clothing, contrary, as Martin Lienhard and Gordon Brotherston have pointed out, to what one find in other American coun-

tries even up to the present day. It is curious, however, that some forty years ago Lezama Lima would give his protagonist in the novel *Paradiso* (1966) the name José Cemí: *cemí* is the name of an Indo-Cuban image of religious significance and perhaps even a deity.

An entirely different case to that of the so-called "Indian" situation is that of the blacks, "Indígenas 'importadas'" (7) [imported indigenes], as they are called by Alejandro Lipschütz with reference to America at large. This other "indigene" has become an essential factor in later Cuban identity. Because none of the African languages brought by the slaves were established, Castilian became the *lingua franca*: which, in essence was what happened to the conquistadors and colonizers from Spain with Castilian. The Africans, called blacks because of the variety of their ethnic origins, were required to express themselves in Castilian, even though various ritual languages survived, especially Yoruba. They would leave behind in Castilian a literature consisting of prayers, songs, folktales, stories, and proverbs produced originally in African languages such as the aforementioned Yoruba, Ewe, and Bantu. According to Fernando Ortiz, this literature would be collected in the twentieth century by authors such as Ramón Guirao, Lydia Cabrera, Rómulo Lachatañeré (qtd. in Fernández Retamar, "Introducción" 221) and even Lezama Lima in his *Antología de la poesía cubana*.² This might be an opportune moment to remind the reader that in Cuba's case, according to Darcy Ribeiro's classic division, we are talking about neither "Testimony People," nor "Transplanted People," but rather "New People," all of whom have come from abroad, and fused in a manner that in 1940 Ortiz called "transculturación;" a process in Cuba that is not yet finished. As Antonio Cornejo Polar has pointed out, the term "transculturación" and others that are more or less similar, such as *mestizaje* and hybridity, are not unproblematic. This concern, however, cannot be adequately dealt with in this essay; it is a discussion which I have already treated in a commentary on a text by Cornejo³ in a book on Cuban literature and art entitled *Alma cubano: transculturación, mestizaje e hibridismo* (2006; *The Cuban Spirit: Transculturation, Mestizaje, and Hybridism*).

In the middle of the sixteenth century, Cuba was a worn-down factory, in which the monopolist system that Spain imposed only on its colonies had broken down due to international piracy and frequent smuggling. In this context, the first consciously literary work originating on the island was written: *Espejo de paciencia* (Mirror of Patience), whose

ingenious *ottava rima*s, composed in the small town of Puerto Príncipe, describe a meeting not between the Spanish and the Indians, as in *La araucana* (The Mapuche) by Alonso de Ercilla, but rather between natives and pirates. Its author, Silvestre de Balboa Troya y Quesada, native to the Canary Islands, settled in Cuba, and most probably participated in the poetry academy based in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and run by Bartolomé Cairasco de Figueroa, who, according to Belén Castro, “Influyó en la gestación del barroco español ..., fue el inventor de la primera mitificación poética de su isla ..., [y] trató temas muy afines a los de *Espejo de paciencia*: el de la piratería, que también amenazaba las costas de las Islas Canarias, y el de la defensa colectiva del patrimonio insular” (139) [influenced the gestation of Spanish baroque ..., was the instigator of the first mystification of his island ..., [and] treated themes closely related to those of *Espejo de Paciencia*: piracy (that also threatened the coasts of the Canary Islands) and the collective defense of the island’s assets].

Thus *Espejo de paciencia* is not the result of an internal literary evolution, which at that time still did not exist, but the transplant from the Canaries adapted to a theme and environment of the poet’s new home. But the name Balboa is not limited to his work alone. In accordance with what they learned in the aforementioned Canary poetry academy, various inhabitants of the region were fascinated by his work and six of them subsequently dedicated laudatory sonnets to him. It is worth noting that the term “criollo” appears for the first time in Cuba in the *Espejo de paciencia*. I should here once again cite Arrom, whose investigation “Criollo: definición y matices de un concepto” (Criollo: Definition and Nuances of a Concept) is the best study, to my knowledge, on the topic. According to Arrom, the term originated in Brazilian Portuguese, from there it spread to other languages, and before the end of the sixteenth century it was commonly used throughout the New World, where it implied being born here with ancestors from the Old World. At least originally the term did not refer to color of skin, political state, or social position. For example, in the *Espejo de paciencia* a young, attractive white man is called “criollo del Bayamo,” (76) [Criollo from Bayamo] and a black man, “Salvador criollo, negro honrado” (84) [Savior Criollo, honored black]; while Captain Pedro de las Torres Sifontes offers Balboa a “soneto criollo de la tierra” (47) [Criollo sonnet from the soil] in which an American (in this case Cuban) is seen to differentiate himself from the Old World. You will recall that, at the same time, an important figure in Alejo Carpentier’s

jovial *Concierto barroco*, Filomeno, is presented as “biznieto de un negro Salvador, que fue, un siglo atrás, protagonista de una tan sonada hazaña que un poeta del país, llamado Silvestre de Balboa, la cantó en una larga y bien rimada oda, titulada *Espejo de paciencia*” (20) [great-grandson of a black Savior, that was, a century ago, the protagonist of such a celebrated feat that a national poet, named Silvestre de Balboa, sang to him in a long and well rimed ode, entitled *Espejo de paciencia*].⁴ The desire of two important Cuban authors of the twentieth century, Lezama Lima and Carpenter, to link up the local history in their works of fiction is noteworthy.

We need not spend much time discussing the multi-secular process of differentiating Cuban literature from that of Spain. Regarding this topic, there are various viewpoints, the first of which, attributed posthumously to Aurelio Mitjans, appeared in 1890 incomplete, with the title *Estudio sobre el movimiento científico y literario de Cuba* (A Study on the Scientific and Literary Movement of Cuba); and the most recent being *Historia de la literatura cubana* (History of Cuban Literature), a collective work prepared by the Instituto de Literatura y Lingüística de Cuba (Institute of Literature and Linguistics of Cuba). The first two volumes of this history appeared in 2002 and 2003 and the publication of the third and last volume is forthcoming. Suffice it to say that before the nineteenth century Cuban Literature did not measure up to the masterpieces found in works of authors of the caliber of Inca Garcilaso de la Vega or Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The difference between the Spanish and the white Criollo did not advance much until the eighteenth century. At the end of that century, however, the separation between Spaniards and Criollos begin to erode as does that of their respective literatures. Among the many remarkable events at that time, none was of greater importance for Cuba than the war of the then French colony Saint-Dominique that brought about the end of slavery, and in 1804 ended with independence. Saint-Dominique thereafter assumed her indigenous name “Haiti.” However, in the aftermath of the Revolution, Haiti was greatly diminished and her industries ruined. Cuba assumed the role of the richest colony in the world—a role that brought with it the expansion of land plantations (mainly of sugarcane) and a greater demand for slave work. It was precisely this latter increase that, at the beginning of 1810, deterred the Cuban oligarchy from getting involved in other independence movements with other Spanish holdings on continental America, out of fear that were they to get involved in the fight for independence, it might lead to the type of events that had taken

place in Haiti. The contradiction of country/colony and slaveholder/slave overlapped. Nineteenth-century Cuba is replete with such contradictions that progressively find expression in literature. It is not an exaggeration to suggest that the most estimable literature of nineteenth-century Cuba in this century deals with the topics of independence and the end of slavery. Cuba's first two great literary figures, the intellectual and essayist Félix Varela and the poet José María Heredia, opted for independence as their subject of choice. Because this theme was inappropriate material for their social class, they both died in exile. The poets Plácido and Juan Clemente Zenea, who also favored this theme, were sent to the firing squad by the Spanish colonialists. The matter of slavery (which in Cuba was not officially abolished until 1886) appears in novels such as *Sab* (1841) by Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda and *Cecilia Valdés* (1839 and 1862) by Cirilo Villaverde. By the end of the nineteenth century, first rate Cuban writers depended very little, if at all, on contemporary Spanish literature which was in decline. Of that period, two authors of a recent history on Spain wrote: "Sin pena ni gloria para las letras transcurre el siglo [XIX]" (Cortázar and Végas 518) [the nineteenth century comes and goes with only mediocre writing], Larra, Bécquer, and Pérez Galdós notwithstanding. José Martí, whose work was nurtured not only by foreign literature, but also from the best of the classics in his own language, had written that "los pueblos de habla española nada, que no sea manjar rehervido, reciben de España" (5: "Francisco Sellén" 189) [the Spanish-speaking peoples receive nothing, save reheated delicacies, from Spain]. Mercelino Menéndez and Pelayo noted that "el espíritu general de los literatos y de los hombres de ciencia en Cuba ha solido ser sistemáticamente hostil a España y manifestarse francamente como tal" (qtd. in Fernández Retamar 13) [the general feeling of the artists and men of science in Cuba has usually been to be systematically hostile to Spain and to manifest that feeling openly]. It was not in vain that Cuba waged war for thirty years (1868 to 1898) against Spain to gain independence (and in its last phase they were also combatting the imperialism of the United States). In the end, they lost both conflicts. In 1898, the United States intervened *pro domo sua* in the war of independence and ended up keeping Cuba, first as occupied land, and later, until 1958, as a protectorate or neocolony.

Cuba emerged from those conflicts beleaguered, as can be seen in the poor cultural life during the first decades of the twentieth century. Spain, however, from the *Generación del '98* to the Civil War, lived through a

cultural rebirth that positively impacted Cuba. Intellectuals and essayists such as Unamuno and Ortega y Gasset, poets such as Juan Ramón Jiménez and other members of the *Generación del '27* inspired Cuban literary creativity, as did those authors who gathered around publications such as the *Revista de Avance* (1927–1930; Journal of Progress), in which Dulce María Loynaz and Nicolás Guillén did not collaborate, and *Orígenes* (1944–1956; Origins). But at end of that miserable Civil War, the regime imposed on Spain terminated this relation. Even after the death of Franco, Spain has not returned to its former literary glory.

I will add that the language Cuban writers employed is of no small concern. When, at the beginning of the twentieth century, people of mediocre standing in Spain suggested that Rubén Darío was “meteco,” [a foreigner], the eminent Nicaraguan poet who initiated a new school of poetry in Spanish replied that he was “ciudadano de la lengua” (301) [citizen of the language]. We might plot fantasies and other realities in our language, which we have commonly forged for more than half a millennium on both sides of the Atlantic. But we do not have to accept the *reductio ad absurdum* proposed by Octavio Paz when he noted: “No hay una literatura peruana, argentina o cubana; tampoco hay una literatura española, al menos desde el siglo XVI ... No se clasifica a los escritores por su nacionalidad o su lugar de nacimiento sino por su lenguaje” (qtd. in Guillén 300) [there is not a Peruvian literature, nor Argentine, nor Cuban; there also is no Spanish literature, at least since the sixteenth century. Writers are not classified by their nationality or their place of birth, but by their language]. After citing this quote, Claudio Guillén added: “La lengua dista mucho de ser suficiente en bastantes casos. Una pluralidad de literaturas pueden compartir perfectamente un mismo idioma y sin embargo considerarse a sí mismas como específicas y nacionales” (300–1) [The language differentiates enough to be sufficient in many cases. A plurality of literatures can perfectly share the same language and nevertheless consider themselves specific and national]. Let us recall that today nine out every ten Spanish speakers live in America. A similar phenomenon of expansion on American soil can be seen to take place also with English and Portuguese. In contrast, a number of Cuban writers living outside of the country write in other languages, in particular, English. It remains to be seen if they will continue being Cuban writers or if they will be integrated in other literatures, even though their themes may continue to be Cuban. Concerning this and

other points, I call your attention to *Memorias recobradas: Introducción al discurso literario de la diáspora* (Recovered Memories: Introduction to the Literary Discourse of the Diaspora), selection, prologue, and notes by Abrosio Fornet.

I will now speak from the Hispanic-American perspective. It would have been desirable that this adjective had retained the meaning that Pedro Henríquez Ureña, being equally Hispanic and Iberian (the name of the entire western peninsula of Europe, that is to say Spain and Portugal), gave it by saying that "Hispanoamericano" implies Brazil too. With this criteria he published the foundational book *Literary Currents in Hispanic America* (1945). Even without maintaining the syntactic sense proposed by Henríquez Ureña (which is generally not accepted), American literature in Spanish and Portuguese (and including some Caribbean literature in French and English) was examined in *América Latina: palavra, literatura e cultura* (1993–95; Latin America: Word, Literature, and Culture), a work that, according to its editor, Ana Pizarro, "comenzó proyectándose como una Historia de la Literatura Latinoamericana en el marco de la Asociación Internacional de Literatura Comparada," [began envisioned as a History of Latin-America Literature in the framework of the International Comparative Literature Association], but because of "todas las dificultades con que se lleva a cabo la investigación de largo aliento en la cultura del continente" [all of the difficulties that arose with an investigation of such geographical and cultural breadth] was transformed "en tres volúmenes de ensayos dispuestos en orden cronológico" (1: 13) [into three volumes of essays arranged in chronological order]. Some of the essays are in Spanish and others in Portuguese. In 2004, *Literary Cultures of Latin America: A Comparative History* edited by Mario J. Valdés and Djelal Kadir appeared in print. It was conceived, according to Valdés, to reach "Beyond Literary History" (1: xvii). In the introduction to the first volume, Luisa Campuzano explains that this history incorporates, Spanish-American literature, Brazilian literature, the different cultural expression of the Amerindians and Afro-Latin American, the literature of Hispanic communities in the United States, and others from minority and alternative cultures, including works by Jews, women, gays, and lesbians. It did not explicitly examine cultures from the English-, French-, and Dutch-speaking communities in the Caribbean.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Alexander von Humboldt wrote: "Los criollos [término que a la sazón implicaba a los considerados

blancos] preferen que se les llame *americanos*; y desde la paz de Versailles, y especialmente después de 1789, se les oye decir muchas veces con orgullo: ‘Yo no soy *español*: soy *americano*’” (qtd. in Arrom, *Certidumbre* 22) [The Criollos (a term that at that time implied those that were considered white) preferred to be called *Americans* and since the peace at Versailles, and especially after 1789, one can often hear them saying with pride: “I am not *Spanish*: I am *American*”]. The national consciousness ultimately led, in continental Spanish-American countries, to the violent political separation from Spain in 1810, while Portuguese America experienced an evolutionary process that would result in its independence in 1822. It has often been said, political independence is accompanied by the will to achieve intellectual independence. The *silva* by Andrés Bello “Alocución a la Poesía” (Speech to Poetry), appearing by editorial good fortune in the first volume of *Biblioteca Americana* (American Library) published in London in 1823, illustrates this point. This volume, dedicated to “Al Pueblo Americano” [to the American people] (that’s to say, of our America) is rigorously contemporary to the Monroe Doctrine. This programmatic poem has been compared to Emerson’s text “The American Scholar,” published in 1837.⁵ In 1824, the victorious battle at Ayacucho would seal the political secession of continental Spanish America. Yet Cuba would continue as a Spanish colony for almost the entirety of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, in many ways Cuba felt similar to independent America especially if we accept the thesis of Rosalba Campa regarding the first anthologies of poetry in Spanish America. The first anthology, *América poética* (Poetic America), beginning with the *silva* by Bello, was compiled by the Argentine Juan María Gutiérrez and printed in 1846 and 1847 in Valparaíso. The second anthology, with the same title, had as one of its compilers Rafael María de Mendive (who would become the teacher of Martí). Its two volumes were published in Havana between 1854 and 1856. Of the authors anthologized, Heredia has been compared to Bello and Olmedo who in turn have been considered by some as Neo-Classical, and by others, myself included, as forerunners of American romanticism. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, Hispanic-American modernism began to manifest itself (represented in Cuba by authors such as José Martí and Julián del Casal) and positively influence literature in Spain. In the twentieth century and today, Cuban literature is without a doubt an essential part of Hispanic-American literature. Following the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959, it receives

worldwide reception. Among its representatives or beneficiaries (over and above the opinions of each about the historic events that caused the planet to turn its gaze to our America), one finds Cubans such as Alejo Carpentier, José Lezama Lima, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Severo Sarduy, and Reynaldo Arenas. The close relation between Cuban literature and the rest of Hispanic America is *interliterariedad*, in agreement with the term proposed by Dýonisz Ğurišin, and it has resulted, according to Franca Sinopoli, “della relazione reciproca tra comunità interletterarie, ad esempio quella delle letterature europee oppure quella delle letterature latino-americane” (4) [out of the reciprocal relationship among the interliterary communities; for example those of European literatures and Latin-American literatures].

Is it possible to speak of a common American literature? Of course it is possible to compare, often with positive results, works of our America with others from the United States and Canada. This approach is followed by José Ballón in *Autonomía cultural de América: Emerson y Martí* (America's Autonomous Culture: Emerson and Martí), Bell Gale Chevigny and Gari Laguardia in *Reinventing the Americas: Comparative Studies of Literature of the United States and Spanish America* (a volume with contributions from the Cubans Pablo Armando Fernández and Edmundo Desnoes), and Vera Kutzinski in *Against the American Grain: Myth and History in Williams Carlos Williams, Jay Wright, and Nicolás Guillén*. But these books do not give the impression that they are dealing with works from the same literature. In contrast, Gustavo Pérez Firmat asks the pertinent question in the title of his compilation: *Do the Americas Have a Common Literature?* In the introduction, Pérez Firmat asks whether the question raised by the Mexican philosopher Edmundo O'Gorman and myself should be answered in the negative.

Fernández Retamar is certainly correct in pointing to the huge historical and political differences between the United States and Spanish America ... even so, historical position is not always identical to cultural position, and the essays in this volume tend to demonstrate that even when the comparison involves authors and texts from the First and Third Worlds it is possible to find substantial common ground.

But as he adds:

Having said this much, I should point out that the book's title is not intended as a question to which its contents provide an answer. In fact, the essays themselves raise questions that suggest how difficult it would be to

answer the title, both because of the scope of the question and because of the terms in which it is couched. (5)

I do not know what the author of these lines thinks today, seventeen years after their publication. For my part, I like to think that the same old question could be answered in the affirmative, although presently it seems unlikely. It is interesting to me that of the thirteen essays included in this volume, six deal with Cuba, Pérez Firmat's place of birth.

Even though he does not mention Pérez Firmat's book, Earle E. Fitz seems to echo its thesis on a broader scale, in *Rediscovering the New World, Inter-American Literature in a Comparative Context*. In the introduction Fitz affirms:

My purpose in writing this book was to show that, given the unique set of historical circumstances that governed the European discovery, conquest, and settlement of the New World, one could approach English and French Canada, the United States, Spanish America, and Brazil as constituting a community of literary cultures related to each other by virtue of their origins, their sundry interrelationships, and their sociopolitical, artistic, and intellectual evolutions. Their very real differences notwithstanding, the nations of the New World share enough of a common history that they can legitimately be studied as a unit. (xi)

Is it really true that nations from the New World have enough history in common that they can be legitimately studied as a single unit? I doubt this claim very much. But it is noteworthy that in 1993 someone as reliable as Mary Louise Pratt would have published "La liberación de los márgenes: literaturas canadiense y latinoamericana en el contexto de la dependencia" (The Liberation of the Margins: Canadian and Latin-American Literatures in the Context of the Dependency). For this author,

el tema general que anima este ensayo ha sido obsesivo tanto en la crítica canadiense como en la latinoamericana desde los comienzos de ambas. Se trata, por una parte, del proyecto de formular los vínculos existentes entre esas literaturas, y entre sus historias, como sociedades dependientes coloniales y neocoloniales, por la otra. (25)

(the general theme of this essay has been the focus both on Canadian and Latin-American criticism from their inception. It deals, on the one hand, with the project of identifying the extant links with their literatures, and on the other between their histories as dependent colonial societies and as neo-colonies.)

Pratt references novels by Carpentier and Lezama Lima and concludes by pointing out the similarities between the two literatures, essentially annotating work by Jean Franco. Nevertheless, it is evident that today one could not present U.S. literature as the work of a colonial dependent society or neo-colony, and consequently I disregard the contributions that have recently been made.

In the final portion of this essay, I will focus on the Caribbean perspective. In various circles the importance of the Caribbean region has been recognized for decades; it is the American region where Columbus arrived for the first time and where Spanish colonialization began. In this region, with a limited amount of precious metals, plantation systems were very quickly established, especially for the sugar industry, a system that above all required the slavery of millions uprooted from Africa, and later, from Asia. In these modern and terrible factories, various European countries participated leading to the plurality of language and political histories. The first country in the area to obtain its independence was the very Caribbean Haiti, in 1804. Others, in contrast, are still colonies, though not in name, of countries such as France, Holland, and the United States; the English Caribbean began to obtain its independence in 1962. In the case of Cuba, due to the fear felt by its oligarchy of seeing a repeat of the Haitian successes, it (the oligarchy) not only, as we have noted, distanced itself from the fights for liberty initiated on the Spanish-American continent at the beginning of 1810, but made it so that, at the beginning of the second stage of their delayed war for independence against Spain (1895), the classes in the forefront of political activity were already involved in popular secession. The objectives of these anti-colonialists would morph into anti-imperialism and the fight for social justice, in accordance with José Martí's radical project. Due to the U.S. intervention in that war, its goals would not be achieved until 1959 when the country, notwithstanding the violent harassment of the United States government, would initiate the construction of socialism. The Caribbean includes, then, along with colonies from the old countries and from those relatively new ones, the first country to be free in our America (and the first in the world to abolish slavery), and its first socialized country. In the Caribbean, ethnic groups and beliefs of European, African, and Asian origins merge; four languages of European origin are spoken, various Criollo languages, and probably what linguists would call a *sabir*: Papiamentu. But beyond those matters that make them different, there are others that unify them in

original ways—challenging ideas and intense music—that some consider to presage the future of humanity.

It has taken some time to see the Caribbean as a unity or sub-unity. Perhaps, where it first occurred was in the entertaining and superficial book by Germán Arciniegas *Biografía del Caribe* (1945). It was not until 1970 that serious visions of that unity appeared in the same year with practically homonymous titles: Juan Bosch, *De Cristóbal Colón a Fidel Castro: El Caribe frontera imperial* (From Christopher Columbus to Fidel Castro: The Imperial Caribbean Border); and Eric Williams, *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean 1492–1969*. Those similar titles may well be indebted to the epilogue of the second edition (the first was in 1938) of the great book of C.L.R. James *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. The epilogue is entitled “From Toussaint L'Ouverture to Fidel Castro.”

If it took so long to write an acceptable history of the Caribbean, it is not surprising that it would take even longer to create a collective history of this region's literature as in *A History of Literature in the Caribbean*, whose three volumes were published in English between 1994 and 1997 and were edited by A. James Arnold, as part of *A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages* sponsored by the International Comparative Literature Association. In the first volume Spanish (and therefore Cuban) and French literatures are examined. The second volume examines the English and Dutch, and in the final chapters, Criollo literatures. The third volume is devoted to “Cross-Cultural Studies.”

In nineteenth-century Cuba, it was not common to even speak of the Caribbean, but rather the West Indies. They were the principal concern of José Martí, who felt attracted, along with the Puerto Ricans Ramón Emeterio Betances and Eugenio María de Hostos and the Haitian Antenor Firmin, by the idea of a West Indies confederation.⁷ Among the many examples of the interest that Martí had in the West Indies, which he called “las islas dolorosas del mar” (6:23) [the tormented islands of the sea], can be found his last letter to his brother-like friend, the Mexican Manuel A. Mercado. This letter was written the night before he died fighting and has been considered his political testament: “ya estoy todos los días en peligro de dar mi vida por mi país y por mi deber ... de impedir a tiempo con la independencia de Cuba que se extiendan por las Antillas los Estados Unidos y caigan, con esa fuerza más, sobre nuestra tierras de América” (20:161) [every day I am in danger of losing my life

for my country and my duty ... to stop time with the independence of Cuba that extends to the West Indies to the United States and falls, with this last force, upon our American lands].

Twentieth-century Cuban scholarship evokes the tone and thematic of much of Fernando Ortiz's work; e.g., the work of Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, *Azúcar y población en las Antillas* (1927; *Sugar and Society in the Caribbean*), and, in a strictly literary sense, the book of poems by Nicolás Guillén, *West Indies LTD* (1934). Ten years after the publication of that book, Guillén became one of the editors of the Havanese *Gaceta del Caribe. Revista mensual de cultura* (Caribbean Gazette: Monthly Journal of Culture). In his first editorial he wrote:

Si se nos pidiera justificar el título, diríamos que arrancando de lo hondo de esta isla nuestra, centro geográfico del mar de las Antillas, queremos dar el latido pleno del archipiélago dentro del ámbito continental, pero con una alerta conciencia de universalidad. Por otra parte, huelga declarar que no pretendemos imponer determinado "meridiano," y que sólo nos guía el afán de servir a la cultura en esta parte del mapa con un limpio espíritu solidario hacia los pueblos con los que estamos hermanados en el Caribe.

(If we were asked to justify the title, we would say that we tore it out of the depth of our island, geographic center of the Caribbean Sea, and we desire to give the heartbeat of the archipelago inside of the continental confines, but with an alert consciousness to universality. On the other hand, I stop here to declare that we do not claim to impose a predetermined "meridian," and that the only thing that guides us is the desire to serve the culture in this part of the map with a shining spiritual solidarity for the people with whom we form a brotherhood in the Caribbean.)

In 1948 Guillén released his *Elegía a Jacques Roumain, en el cielo de Haití* (Elegy to Jacques Roumain, in the Heaven of Haiti). And in 1949 Alejo Carpentier, at the beginning of his eye-opening journey to Haiti, published *El reino de este mundo* (The Kingdom on Earth), and thus began a cycle of novels with the Caribbean as their central theme.

Even though I was already well acquainted with these works in 1960 and considered myself Latin American, my friendship strengthened that year in Paris when the Martinique writer Édouard Glissant made me aware of my position, also, as a Caribbean. Both of us planned to publish a journal in Paris with Latin American texts for which we solicited and obtained the support of Alejo Carpentier. For various reasons, the project did not come to fruition. Much later, in 1975, I dedicated an issue of

the journal that I was directing (and which I continue to direct), *Casa de las Américas*, to *Las Antillas de lengua inglesa* (English Speaking West Indies).⁸ In a long editorial, I objected to the use of the term “West Indies,” the consecration of a geographic error to name the Anglophone Caribbean. I suggested that the nominal phrase “Latin American” should be sufficient, beyond what it originally signified, to cover all of our countries. I maintained a similar position at the 1976 Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association that took place in Budapest, where I read the paper “La contribution de la littérature de l’Amérique latine à la littérature universelle au XX siècle,” whose theme and title were suggested to me by the organizers of the Congress. In 2007, Caribbean Anglophone literature was included in the *Premio Literario Casa de las Américas* (Casa de las Americas Literary Prize), well after Caribbean Francophone literature, and its corresponding Criollo literature, were added in 1979. In that same year (1979), the *Centro de Estudios del Caribe* (Center for Caribbean Studies) was created by the Casa de las Américas (at the beginning of 1981, the *Anales del Caribe* [Records of the Caribbean]). In Cuba, after having been in Guyana and Jamaica, the *Carifesta III*, the Caribbean festival of arts took place. It included a symposium at the Casa de las Américas on Caribbean cultural identity; the materials from this symposium were later compiled in the journal *Casa de las Américas*.⁹ The expression “Latin America and the Caribbean” had still not been adopted, as evinced in the useful *Panorama histórico-literario de nuestra América* (Volume I, 1900–1943; Volume II, 1944–1970), edited by the Casa de las Américas in 1982. Such a title (clearly tracing its origins to Martí) endeavors to show that the panorama includes all the regions in our America. Even recently, in 2007, we have changed the name of the most important collection that the Casa publishes, the *Colección Literatura Latinoamericana* (Latin American Literature Collection), to the *Colección Literatura Latinoamericana y Caribeña* in order to include *Los placeres del exilio* (The Pleasures of the Exile) by George Lamming, who published in this collection in 1979, when it was still named *Literatura Latinoamericana*, his first novel *En el castillo de mi piel* (In the Castle of my Skin).

In that celebrated symposium of 1979 in the Casa de las Américas, Victor Stafford Reid said: “Nosotros, los del Caribe, somos hoy día el último conglomerado importante de cultura en llamar la atención” (48) [We, those of us from the Caribbean, are the last conglomerate of cultural importance that deserves attention today]. In effect, in significant mea-

sure, we are an emergent literature. The opening section of *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Verse*, published in 2005, confirms this: "A hundred years ago it would have been inconceivable that the Caribbean, for centuries the site of some of the worst atrocities of human history, would produce what is arguably the most life-affirming and spiritually uplifting body of poetry of the twentieth century." (xvii) But the anthologizers apparently do not have sufficient knowledge of Spanish poetry. In any event, they admit that "the culture of, say, Cuba differs in fundamental ways from that of Haiti or Jamaica," and that "the 'English language' poetry of the region forms the core of this collection" (xx). They assert:

Caribbean poetry has grown in both volume and stature through the twentieth century from something that hardly existed—at least as far as the literary mainstream was concerned—into a body of world-culture ... that is generally acknowledged to be among the richest, most accessible, and yet technically adventurous libraries of contemporary verse.... Indeed, West Indian poetry is essentially a twentieth-century phenomenon. (xvii)

It is not possible to accept that Cuban poetry is the creation of the twentieth century. From the romantics like José María Heredia and Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda to the modernists like José Martí and Julián de Casal, its poetry was already authentic and major in the nineteenth century. As for the twentieth century, there are appalling absences in the Oxford anthology—poets such as Dulce María Loynaz, Eugenio Florit, Emili Ballagas, and all of the members of the *Grupo Orígenes* (Group of Origins). In particular, it omits Lezama Lima, whose Caribbean affiliation has been put in relief by David Huerta in a valuable anthology of poetry of 1988,¹⁰ who places him on the level alongside of Saint-John Perse, Aimé Césaire, and Derek Walcott. The literature of Cuba, we should conclude, is a Caribbean literature without ceasing to be Latin American, as it is a literature of the Spanish language when it no longer is a literature of Spain.

From Edward Said come these well known words: "I suggest that we look ... at what comparative literature ... was, as vision and as practice; ironically ..., the study of 'comparative literature' originated in the period of high European imperialism and is irrecusably linked to it" (43). It is difficult to deny the validity of that observation, from someone to whom we owe so much and who was, among other notable things, an eminent professor of comparative literature. But Armando Gnisci in "La literatura comparada como disciplina de descolonización" (Comparative

Literature as the Discipline of Decolonization), suggested that for many scholars Comparative Literature is a discipline on the point of extinction, if not already extinct. Asking himself with what he proposes to replace it, he proposes two options: that it is absorbed by a theory of literature, conceived as the central and most powerful discipline in literary studies, or that Comparative Literature be absorbed by studies such as Translation Studies, Post-Colonial theory, Intercultural Studies, and Gender or Women's Studies. Gnisci rejects the first of these options, which, according to him, expresses a typically Euro-North-American-centric position that results yet again in old imperialist and hierarchical conception of the Western science. He concludes that the second option is both plural and articulate. It provides for the concrete developments of literary studies with a perspective that is truly worldwide and not just centered on the Euro-United States. Moreover, Translation Studies, Postcolonial Theory, Intercultural Studies, and Women's Studies do not present themselves as alternatives or mutually indifferent, rather they appear to work together in the same direction. Since comparative literature is a confederate form of knowledge and of teaching, these fields of inquiry can be considered in conjunction, inside of a truly "universal" colloquy, and as an image of the future that takes into account all cultures. If comparative literature, Gnisci concludes, is a mode of understanding, study, and cultural decolonization by the countries that have been decolonized from the West, then for us, studious Europeans (remember that Gnisci is an Italian), it represents the form of thought, of self-criticism, and of education, in other words: the discipline to decolonize ourselves from ourselves.

I have devoted these pages to an attempt to consider, from different perspectives, the profile of the literature of one small country, not necessarily the small literature of a country, to say nothing of "a minor literature," in the rebellious sense that Deleuze and Guattari, speaking of Kafka, use that expression. Heraclitus invited us millennia ago to: "Enter with confidence, because here the gods are also present."

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Translated by JON WILLIAMS

NOTES

1. A lecture presented at the international colloquium (2002) in Valparaíso on the orientations of literary and cultural criticism.
2. See Lezama's "Cantos negros anónimos."
3. See Antonio Cornejo Polar's "Mestizaje, transculturación, heterogeneidad," and my commentary on that book in *Asedios a la heterogeneidad cultural: Libro de homenaje a Antonio Cornejo Polar*, edited by José Antonio Mazzotti and U. Juan Zevallos Aguilar. Also see "Mestizaje e hibridez: Los riesgos de las metáforas" by Antonio Cornejo Polar.
4. Carpentier examines *Espejo de paciencia* on pp. 20–26.
5. See Nara Araújo, "Raza y género en *Sab*" and Luisa Campuzano's "*Sab*: la novela y el prefacio."
6. See Ureña 100.

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ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE
DE LITTÉRATURE COMPARÉE
INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION

XXème Congrès, 18-24 juillet 2013. Paris Sorbonne (Paris IV)

<http://icla-ailc-2013.paris-sor-bonne.fr>

THÈME DU CONGRÈS :

LE COMPARATISME COMME APPROCHE CRITIQUE

Depuis la fin du XIXe siècle, les comparatistes ont mené une réflexion continue sur la définition de leur discipline, ses domaines d'application, les extensions possibles du champ de leurs recherches. A l'ère de la mondialisation, le dialogue entre réflexions émanant de pays occidentaux et théorisations émanant de pays extra-occidentaux enrichit et multiplie les perspectives. C'est en présentant les différents axes de recherche du Congrès sous la forme de questionnements, plutôt que d'orientations figées, qu'une telle réflexion sur l'apport du comparatisme à la critique littéraire permettra de mesurer les mouvances et l'évolution de la discipline. Nous vous invitons donc à venir débattre de ces questions à Paris à l'occasion du XXème Congrès de l'AILC, et à soumettre une proposition qui puisse rentrer dans l'un des cinq axes suivants :

AXES DU CONGRÈS

(DESCRIPTION COMPLÈTE DES AXES SUR LE SITE DU CONGRÈS)

- 1) La littérature comparée : une science comparative parmi d'autres ?
- 2) Comparables et incomparables ?
- 3) Littérature comparée et traductologie : la traduction est-elle une approche critique ?
- 4) De nouvelles théories, pourquoi et comment ?
- 5) Au-delà des nations : aires linguistiques, continents littéraires, mondialisation ?

SECTIONS D'ATELIERS OUVERTS AUX

PROPOSITIONS INDIVIDUELLES

(DESCRIPTION COMPLÈTE DES ATELIERS SUR LE SITE)

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Affronter l'ancien | – 4 ateliers distincts |
| 2) Traduction, traductologie | – 7 ateliers distincts |
| 3) Plurilinguismes | – 2 ateliers |
| 4) Transcontinentales | – 5 ateliers |

5) Théories et pratiques comparatistes	– 11 ateliers distincts
6) Mondial	– 5 ateliers distincts
7) Littérature et arts, intermédialité	– 3 ateliers distincts
8) La littérature et le numérique	– 3 ateliers distincts
9) Littérature et sciences	– 6 ateliers distincts
10) Littérature et sciences humaines	– 9 ateliers distincts
11) Littérature et territoires	– 7 ateliers distincts

Figure également sur le site la liste des ateliers déjà constitués et n'acceptant plus de propositions individuelles.

DATE LIMITE POUR SOUMETTRE UNE PROPOSITION: 1ER JUIN 2012

Toutes les propositions, pour des sessions du congrès correspondant aux axes du congrès ou pour des sections du congrès dans les ateliers ouverts aux propositions individuelles, doivent être faites directement sur le site.

INSCRIPTIONS AU CONGRÈS À PARTIR D'OCTOBRE 2012, SUR LE SITE :

Tarifs pour les membres de l'AILC :

- Inscriptions avant le 28 février 2013 :	135 € / 197\$
- Inscriptions avant le 30 mai 2013 :	145 € / 211 \$ *
- Inscriptions sur place :	180 € / 263 \$ *

Tarif plein pour ceux qui ne sont pas membres de l'AILC : 180 € / 263 \$ *

Tarifs réduit étudiants/ membres d'un pays classé « économiquement défavorisé » :

- Inscription avant le 28 février 2013 :	50 € / 73 \$ *
- Inscription avant le 30 mai 2013 :	85 € / 124 \$ *
- Inscription sur place :	110 € / 160 \$ *

Tarif « accompagnants » : 75 € / 109 \$ quelle que soit la date d'inscription.*

* Valeurs en dollars données à titre indicatif, selon le taux en vigueur en juin 2011.

L'inscription se fera sur le site internet du congrès, à partir d'octobre 2012. Elle se fera en euros, le taux de change appliqué sera celui de la date de l'inscription (les valeurs en dollars ne sont données qu'à titre indicatif). Elle sera close le 30 mai 2013 à 18 heures (heure GMT). Toute inscription après cette date sera considérée comme une inscription sur place.

HÔTELS: Il sera possible de faire une réservation à partir du site internet du congrès.



ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE
DE LITTÉRATURE COMPARÉE
INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION

XXth Congress, July 18-24 2013. Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV)

<http://icla-ailc-2013.paris-sor-bonne.fr>

CONGRESS THEME: COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AS A CRITICAL APPROACH

Specialists of comparative literature have regularly questioned the nature of their discipline, its domains of application, and the possible developments of their field of research. In our era of globalization, the dialogue between theoretical constructs coming from Western countries and those from non-Western nations contributes to diversification and multiplies perspectives. To provide an opportunity for discussing what comparative literature brings to literary criticism and for assessing the evolution of our discipline, we have chosen to present the various sessions of the Congress in the form of questions rather than fixed and assertive directions. We invite you to come to Paris to discuss these issues during the XXth Congress of the ICILA, and we invite you to submit a proposal for one of the following sessions:

CONGRESS SESSIONS

(FULLER DESCRIPTION OF TOPICS ON THE CONGRESS WEBSITE)

- 1) Comparative Literature: Just Another Comparative Science Among Others?
- 2) Comparable and Incomparable Literary Objects?
- 3) Comparative Literature and Translation Studies: Is Translation a Critical Approach?
- 4) New Theories, How and Why?
- 5) Nations and Beyond: Linguistic Areas, Literary Continents, Globalization?

CONGRESS SECTIONS (FULLER DESCRIPTION OF ALL WORKSHOPS ON THE CONGRESS WEBSITE)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 1) Facing the Old | – 4 workshops |
| 2) Translation Studies | – 7 workshops |

3) Multilingualism	– 2 workshops
4) Transcontinental Studies	– 5 workshops
5) Theory and Practice in Comparative Literature	– 11 workshops
6) Global	– 5 workshops
7) Literature and the Arts, Intermediality	– 3 workshops
8) Digital Studies	– 3 workshops
9) Literature and Science	– 6 workshops
10) Literature and Social Sciences	– 9 workshops
11) Literature and Territories	– 7 workshops

The list of already constituted workshops is also on the website: these do not accept any individual proposals.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: JUNE 1ST 2012

All proposals (for Congress sessions or for workshops within the Congress sections) must be made online, on the website dedicated to the Congress, and written either in French or English.

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN IN OCTOBER 2012, ON THE CONGRESS WEBSITE:

Fees for ICLA Members:

Early-bird registration, before February 28, 2013: (06/2011 rate)	135 € / approx. 197\$
Regular registration, before May 30, 2013:	145 € / 211 \$
On-site registration:	180 € / 263 \$

<i>Non-Member Registration:</i>	180 € / 263 \$
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Student Rates / Members of Countries Listed as “Economically Disadvantaged”:

Early-bird registration, before February 28, 2013:	50 € / 73 \$
Regular registration, before May 30, 2013:	85 € / 124 \$
On-site registration:	110 € / 160 \$

<i>Accompanying Person:</i>	75 € / 109 \$
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Registrations will be made on the website and in euros (the exchange rate will be that of the day of the transaction). Amounts in dollars given here are merely indicative. The on-line registration will be available as of October 2012. It will close on May 30, 2013 at 6:00 pm GMT. All registrations made after this point will be considered on-site registrations.

ACCOMMODATIONS: On-line reservation will be available on the website. Hotel reservations can also be made directly.

Prix Balakian / Balakian Prize

Appel à soumissions / Call for Submissions

The Anna Balakian Prize, consisting of US\$1000, is awarded to promote scholarly research by younger comparatists and to honor the memory of Professor Anna Balakian. It will be awarded at the 2013 AILC / ICLA Congress in Paris for an outstanding first book in comparative literature studies by a single author under forty years of age. Books published from January 2010 through December 2012 will be eligible.

RULES FOR SUBMITTING BOOKS:

1. Books can be submitted if they are a first book in comparative literature studies by an author under forty years of age at the time of the book's publication.
2. The book must have a literary-critical approach that deals with areas such as the following through a comparative optic: literary aesthetics or poetics, literature and the arts, literary movements, historical or biographical influences on literature, cross-fertilization of regional or national literatures, or literary criticism on an international plane. Studies that are primarily ethnic or gender-related or that are restricted to single literature are not eligible for the Prize. Electronic publications are excluded.
3. The winner will be invited to attend the AILC / ICLA Congress in order to receive the award. Travel costs will be reimbursed by the AILC / ICLA Treasurer up to a maximum of US\$1000.
4. All material must reach the office of the ICLA President by January 15, 2013. The author should also provide a permanent mailing address as well as their current e-mail address. The mailing address of the office of the President is Prof. Steven P. Sondrup, Balakian Prize, Dept. of Comparative Literature, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602-6118, USA.

AILC / ICLA

Association internationale de littérature comparée
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Frederick Turner reviews *Postmodernism & Cultural Identities: Conflicts and Coexistence* by Virgil Nemoianu

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Gerald Gillespie reviews three recent works by Peter V. Zima